CONTENTS

WIOA State Plan for the State of Illinois FY-2018 1
Overview 3
Options for Submitting a State Plan 3
How State Plan Requirements Are Organized 4
I. WIOA State Plan Type 8
Combined Plan partner program(s) 8
II. Strategic Elements 9
a. Economic, Workforce, and Workforce Development Activities Analysis 9
b. State Strategic Vision and Goals 70
c. State Strategy 78
III. Operational Planning Elements 92
A. State Strategy Implementation 92
b. State Operating Systems and Policies 142
IV. Coordination with State Plan Programs 202
V. Common Assurances (for all core programs) 206
VI. Program-Specific Requirements for Core Programs 208
Program-Specific Requirements for Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Activities under Title I-B 208
Program-Specific Requirements for Wagner-Peyser Program (Employment Services) 252
Program-Specific Requirements for Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Programs 270
Program-Specific Requirements for Vocational Rehabilitation 292
VII. Program-Specific Requirements For Combined State Plan Partner Programs 347
Appendix 1. Performance Goals for the Core Programs 348
Table 1. Employment (Second Quarter after Exit) 349
Table 2. Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit) 350
Table 3. Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit) 350
Table 4. Credential Attainment Rate 351
Table 5. Measureable Skill Gains 352
Table 6. Effectiveness in Serving Employers 353
Table 7. Additional Indicators of Performance 353
Appendix 2. Other State Attachments (Optional) 355

OVERVIEW

Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the Governor of each State must submit a Unified or Combined State Plan to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Labor that outlines a four-year strategy for the State's workforce development system. The publicly-funded workforce development system is a national network of Federal, State, regional, and local agencies and organizations that provide a range of employment, education, training, and related services and supports to help all job-seekers secure good jobs while providing businesses with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy. States must have approved Unified or Combined State Plans in place to receive funding for core programs. WIOA reforms planning requirements, previously governed by the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA), to foster better alignment of Federal investments in job training, to integrate service delivery across programs and improve efficiency in service delivery, and to ensure that the workforce system is job-driven and matches employers with skilled individuals. One of WIOA's principal areas of reform is to require States to plan across core programs and include this planning process in the Unified or Combined State Plans. This reform promotes a shared understanding of the workforce needs within each State and fosters development of more comprehensive and integrated approaches, such as career pathways and sector strategies, for addressing the needs of businesses and workers. Successful implementation of many of these approaches called for within WIOA requires robust relationships across programs. WIOA requires States and local areas to enhance coordination and partnerships with local entities and supportive service agencies for strengthened service delivery, including through Unified or Combined State Plans.

OPTIONS FOR SUBMITTING A STATE PLAN

A State has two options for submitting a State Plan — a Unified State Plan or a Combined State Plan. At a minimum, a State must submit a Unified State Plan that meets the requirements described in this document and outlines a four-year strategy for the core programs. The six core programs are—

- the Adult program (Title I of WIOA),
- the Dislocated Worker program (Title I),
- the Youth program (Title I),
- the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act program (Title II),
- the Wagner-Peyser Act program (Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III), and
- the Vocational Rehabilitation program (Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by Title IV).

Alternatively, a State may submit a Combined State Plan that meets the requirements described in this document and outlines a four-year strategy for WIOA's core programs plus one or more of the Combined Plan partner programs. When a State includes a Combined State Plan partner program in its Combined State Plan, it need not submit a separate plan or application for that particular program. If included, Combined State Plan partner programs are subject to the "common planning elements" (Sections II and III of this document) where specified, as well as the program-specific requirements for that program where such planning requirements exist separately for the program. The Combined State Plan partner programs are—

- Career and technical education programs authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.)
- Employment and Training Programs under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (Programs authorized under section 6(d)(4) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(d)(4)))
- Work programs authorized under section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(o))
- Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers Programs (Activities authorized under chapter 2 of Title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2271 et seq.))
- Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program (Programs authorized under 38, U.S.C. 4100 et. seq.)
- Unemployment Insurance Programs (Programs authorized under State unemployment compensation laws in accordance with applicable Federal law)
- Senior Community Service Employment Program (Programs authorized under Title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056 et seq.))
- Employment and training activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Community Services Block Grant Program (Employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.))*
- Reintegration of Ex-Offenders Program (Programs authorized under section 212 of the Second Chance Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17532))

---

* States that elect to include employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.) under a Combined State Plan would submit all other required elements of a complete CSBG State Plan directly to the Federal agency that administers the program. Similarly, States that elect to include employment and training activities carried by the Department of Housing and Urban Development and programs authorized under section 6(d)(4) and 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 that are included would submit all other required elements of a complete State Plan for those programs directly to the Federal agency that administers the program.

HOW STATE PLAN REQUIREMENTS ARE ORGANIZED

The major content areas of the Unified or Combined State Plan include strategic and operational planning elements. WIOA separates the strategic and operational elements to facilitate cross-program strategic planning.

- The **Strategic Planning Elements** section includes analyses of the State's economic conditions, workforce characteristics, and workforce development activities. These analyses drive the required vision and goals for the State's workforce development system and alignment strategies for workforce development programs to support economic growth.
- The **Operational Planning Elements** section identifies the State's efforts to support the State's strategic vision and goals as identified in the Strategic Planning Elements section. This section ensures that the State has the necessary infrastructure, policies, and activities to meet its strategic goals, implement its alignment strategy, and support ongoing program development and coordination. Operational planning elements include:

- State Strategy Implementation,
- State Operating Systems and Policies,
- Assurances, and
- Program-Specific Requirements for the Core Programs, and
- Program-Specific Requirements for the Combined State Plan partner programs. (These requirements are available in a separate supplemental document, Supplement to the Workforce and Innovation Act (WIOA) Unified and Combined State Plan Requirements. The Departments are not seeking comments on these particular requirements).

When responding to Unified or Combined State Plan requirements, States must identify specific strategies for coordinating programs and services for target populations.* States must develop strategies that look beyond strategies for the general population and develop approaches that also address the needs of target populations.

_____

* Target populations include individuals with barriers to employment, as defined in WIOA Sec. 3, as well as veterans, unemployed workers, and youth.

TARGETED POPULATIONS

The concentration of growth in higher-skill occupations will require more targeted initiatives with populations requiring assistance to attain the credentials necessary to pursue opportunities in in-demand occupations in key sectors. Estimates of need for many of these targeted populations are included in Attachment D (https://www.illinoisworknet.com/WIOA/Resources/Documents/Attachment%20D-Targeted%20Populations.pdf). Targeted populations in Illinois will include the following:

- Long-term unemployed
- Low-income adults
- Individuals with disabilities, including youth with disabilities
- Those receiving public assistance
- Out-of-school youth
- Veterans
- Migrant and seasonal farmworkers
- Re-entry individuals (ex-offenders)
- English Language Learners
- Older individuals
- Homeless individuals
- Single parents
- Youth in the foster system or who have aged out
- Displaced homemakers
- Veterans with disabilities
- Low literacy adults, including those without a high school diploma
- Low skilled adults
- Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians

Illinois has launched statewide initiatives to address the needs of specific populations facing barriers to employment, and the WIOA partners will identify effective practices and resources to address the employment needs of each of the targeted populations listed above. The following examples describe the types of approaches that will be used to meet the needs of these populations.

LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED

According to the USBLS, Illinois leads all six of its neighboring states in percentage, number and duration of long-term unemployed, with an average duration of 26 weeks for 2017, the same as the 26-week limit on individual unemployment insurance benefits.

INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

Unemployment among individuals with disabilities is a national epidemic and Illinois is no exception. In a report from the USBLS, the U.S. unemployment rate in 2017 for those with a disability, ages 16 and over, was 9.2 percent, more than twice that of individuals that do not have disabilities. The labor force participation rate in 2017 for those with disabilities was 20.6 percent. Those without disabilities were recorded at 68.6 percent. Illinois works to address that disparity through better service alignment between the partner programs, in addition to Disability Employment Initiative projects in targeted geographies throughout the state that build the capacity of American Job Centers to address the needs of adults with disabilities. Illinois also prioritizes multilevel partnerships between the workforce, secondary and post-secondary systems to provide career pathway programs to youth with disabilities.

OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH

Approximately 169,000 youth age 16-24 in Illinois are considered "disconnected", meaning they are not attending school and are not working. This number is approximately 10% of the 16-24 population statewide. Meanwhile, unemployment among this group stands at 14.2%, according to USBLS data, approximately three times that of the state as a whole. To address these issues, the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB) created the Disadvantaged Youth Career Pathways Task Force to develop recommendations for building pilot projects that will seek to blend different sources of public funds, engage businesses for work-based learning and other initiatives and create sustainable career pathways for youth throughout the state. The "Report of the Illinois Disadvantaged Youth Task Force" was accepted by the IWIB in February 2016. Recommendations include: reinvigoration of cross-agency and cross-sector statewide supports for career pathway system development under the framework of Illinois pathways, creation of regional opportunity youth systems and the continuation of the work of the Youth Task Force as a function of the IWIB. The full report is available in Attachment E (www.illinoisworknet.com/wioastateplan). Title II Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) has expanded the availability of high school equivalency (HSE) to three tests and as a result make it easier for out-of-school youth to complete their high school equivalency. Title II also administers the Early School Leaver Transition Program (ESLTP) designed to enable students 16 years and older that have separated from high school to obtain their HSE and transition to postsecondary education or training.

VETERANS

Serving Illinois' 724,000 veterans is a high priority of the workforce system in Illinois. Veterans receive priority of service as required by WIOA. The Illinois workforce centers are committed to helping veterans find a job, training and other services. Employment Security employs veterans' employment representatives, who are fellow veterans and specialists in providing employment

services. Illinois veterans have been served over the years though targeted initiatives administered by the workforce and education partners and the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Approximately 2.8 million Illinois residents speak a language other than English as the primary language in their homes, and more than 350,000 immigrants are currently residing in Illinois. An English language learner is an individual who has limited ability in reading, writing, and speaking or comprehending the English language, and whose native language is a language other than English or who lives in a family or community environment where a language other than English is the dominant language.

LOW LITERACY ADULTS (INCLUDING THOSE WITHOUT A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA)

Employers increasingly require postsecondary credentials when hiring workers for good jobs that provide family-supporting wages and career advancement opportunities. Almost 1.2 million of Illinois' 10.1 million adults have less than 12 grades of formal education. Included in this number are 470,138 people with less than a 9th grade education. Low Literate adults are individuals who are basic skills deficient with academic skill levels below the postsecondary level, and who do not have the ability to read, write, speak in English and perform mathematics or other activities of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalency. The core partners are working with local workforce and education system staff and providers to emphasize the importance of reaching and helping individuals that are basic skill deficient. State Title IB staff are tracking local services to this target population and providing guidance and technical assistance to local areas for improved service delivery and outcomes.

LOW SKILLED ADULTS

With good jobs becoming harder to find for people with a high school diploma or less, it is critical to help low-skilled workers obtain the skills that are needed to be successful in postsecondary employment and training. According to a Report by the Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education (OCTAE formerly OVAE) Promoting College and Career Readiness: Bridge Programs for Low-Skilled Adults, defines Low-skill adults as individuals who lack the necessary skills and knowledge to succeed in postsecondary education and training, or meet the demands of the current labor market.

I. WIOA STATE PLAN TYPE

Unified or Combined State Plan. Select whether the State is submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan. At a minimum, a State must submit a Unified State Plan that covers the six core programs.

Unified State Plan. This plan includes the Adult Program, Dislocated Worker Program, Youth Program, Wagner-Peyser Act Program, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program, and Vocational Rehabilitation Program. Yes

Combined State Plan. This plan includes the Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Wagner-Peyser Act, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, and Vocational Rehabilitation programs, as well as one or more of the optional Combined State Plan partner programs identified below. No

COMBINED PLAN PARTNER PROGRAM(S)

Indicate which Combined State Plan partner program(s) the State is electing to include in the plan.

Career and technical education programs authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.) No

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.) No

Employment and Training Programs under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (Programs authorized under section 6(d)(4) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(d)(4))) No

Work programs authorized under section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(o))) No

Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers Programs (Activities authorized under chapter 2 of title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2271 et seq.)) No

Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program (programs authorized under 38, U.S.C. 4100 et. seq.) No

Unemployment Insurance Programs (Programs authorized under State unemployment compensation laws in accordance with applicable Federal law) No

Senior Community Service Employment Program (Programs authorized under title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056 et seq.)) No

Employment and training activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development No

Community Services Block Grant Program (Employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.)) No

Reintegration of Ex-Offenders Program (Programs authorized under section 212 of the Second Chance Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17532))] No

II. STRATEGIC ELEMENTS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include a Strategic Planning Elements section that analyzes the State's current economic environment and identifies the State's overall vision for its workforce development system. The required elements in this section allow the State to 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. Unless otherwise noted, all Strategic Planning Elements apply to Combined State Plan partner programs included in the plan as well as to core programs.

A. ECONOMIC, WORKFORCE, AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES ANALYSIS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the economic conditions, economic development strategies, and labor market in which the State's workforce system and programs will operate.

1. ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE ANALYSIS

A. ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the economic conditions and trends in the State, including sub-State regions and any specific economic areas identified by the State. This must include-

I. EXISTING DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTORS AND OCCUPATIONS

Provide an analysis of the industries and occupations for which there is existing demand.

II. EMERGING DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTORS AND OCCUPATION

Provide an analysis of the industries and occupations for which demand is emerging.

III. EMPLOYERS' EMPLOYMENT NEEDS

With regard to the industry sectors and occupations identified in 1 and 2 above, provide an assessment of the employment needs of employers, including a description of the knowledge, skills, and abilities required, including credentials and licenses.

Economic, Workforce, and Workforce Development Activities Analysis

1. Economic and Workforce Analysis

A. Economic Analysis

Data and Information Collection

The Illinois Department of Employment Security (Employment Security) employs the state's labor market economists and provides data and information to support state, regional and local workforce and economic development initiatives. The economic and workforce analysis presented highlights data that is publicly available and that supports an analytic process that is easily replicable using no-cost data sources. The state also engages businesses and regional and local partners to regularly and systemically analyze and validate complementary data. The long-term

goal is to collect and develop the most robust data sources possible so that supply and demand projections benefit from as near to real-time information as possible.

The State of Illinois established an Interagency Data Team with representatives from the core program partners, including Employment Security, Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (Commerce), Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) and Illinois Department of Human Services Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) to select the data that is utilized in this economic and workforce analysis. The Illinois Workforce Innovation Board's Evaluation and Accountability Committee (IWIB EAC) joined the data team in reviewing and commenting on the new data represented within the modifications of the Unified State Plan.

Additionally, the IWIB EAC, in conjunction with the Integrated Business Services Team -- composed of IWIB business members, business outreach staff from the core partners, and other stakeholders -- has indicated a need to utilize current information from business owners, employer associations, partner agencies and other sources to compliment Bureau of Labor Statistics data from Employment Security to reflect real-time employment conditions and business needs. The IWIB's Strategic Plan requires development of appropriate data and information collection mechanisms for gathering and reporting on such data and information.

i. Existing Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations

Three of the most important economic benchmarks used by Illinois to understand our economic position, and to evaluate the effectiveness of our efforts to improve that position, are overall economic production, employment and earnings. Examining these three indicators across the past ten years provides an uncommonly stark description of Illinois' experience before, across and since the "Great Recession" during the final years of the first decade of the 21st century.

The main narrative told by the numbers in Table 1 is that Illinois was struck hard by the economic downturn — harder than the nation overall, but not as hard as our fellow states in the Great Lakes region (IL, IN, MI, OH and WI). Between 2006 and 2011, the state's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) decreased by 0.8 percent. The GDP in the Great Lakes Region fared even worse, falling by 1.3 percent. On the other hand, the US GDP grew by 1.7 percent during the same period.

The story through 2016, the latest year data are available, shows that Illinois has lagged both the Great Lakes Region and the Nation in GDP growth. The last ten years have seen the state's GDP increase by 4.9 percent, which is less that the region's growth of 6.5 percent and the nation's 12.3 percent growth. Illinois has also lagged in employment growth. The state's employment has fallen 1.2 percent compared to a loss of 0.9 percent in the region and growth of 4.9 percent in the nation. Conversely, earnings in Illinois over the last ten years have increased more than the region (25.7 percent and 24.8 percent). However, earnings in the nation have surpassed both Illinois and the region, growing by 33.5 percent.

Table 1: Illinois vs. Benchmark States vs. Nation:
Change in GDP, Employment and Earnings over 10 years

	Gross Domestic Product			Employment			Earnings		
	2006	2011	2016	2006	2011	2016	2006	2011	2016
ILLINOIS	**663,632**	**658,411**	**696,459**	**6,230,845**	**5,948,366**	**6,154,867**	**282,735,400**	**303,015,200**	**355,280,400**
Great Lakes Region*	2,126,436	2,098,238	2,264,585	22,562,628	21,140,893	22,355,545	906,517,200	949,849,900	1,131,176,400
United States	14,584,888	14,833,679	16,385,170	144,427,000	139,869,250	151,435,833	6,051,676,000	6,623,278,000	8,079,770,000

	Gross Domestic Product			Employment			Earnings		
	2006-2011	2011-2016	2006-2016	2006-2011	2011-2016	2006-2016	2006-2011	2011-2016	2006-2016
ILLINOIS	**-0.8%**	**5.8%**	**4.9%**	**-4.5%**	**3.5%**	**-1.2%**	**7.2%**	**17.2%**	**25.7%**
Great Lakes Region*	-1.3%	7.9%	6.5%	-6.3%	5.7%	-0.9%	4.8%	19.1%	24.8%
United States	1.7%	10.5%	12.3%	-3.2%	8.3%	4.9%	9.4%	22.0%	33.5%

*Defined by the US Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis to include: Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio and Wisconsin
Sources:
Gross Domestic Product: BEA/Haver Analytics; GDP in $2009 dollars
Employment: BLS/Haver Analytics; Household Employment, Not Seasonally Adjusted
Earnings: BEA/Haver Analytics; Data from Annual Personal Income, Components of Earnings by Place of Work, Wages and Salaries

The situation described by these numbers provides the setting for continuing implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The challenge for Illinois is to utilize WIOA and all of the partner programs to assist the state's businesses to increase productivity, employment and earnings throughout the state.

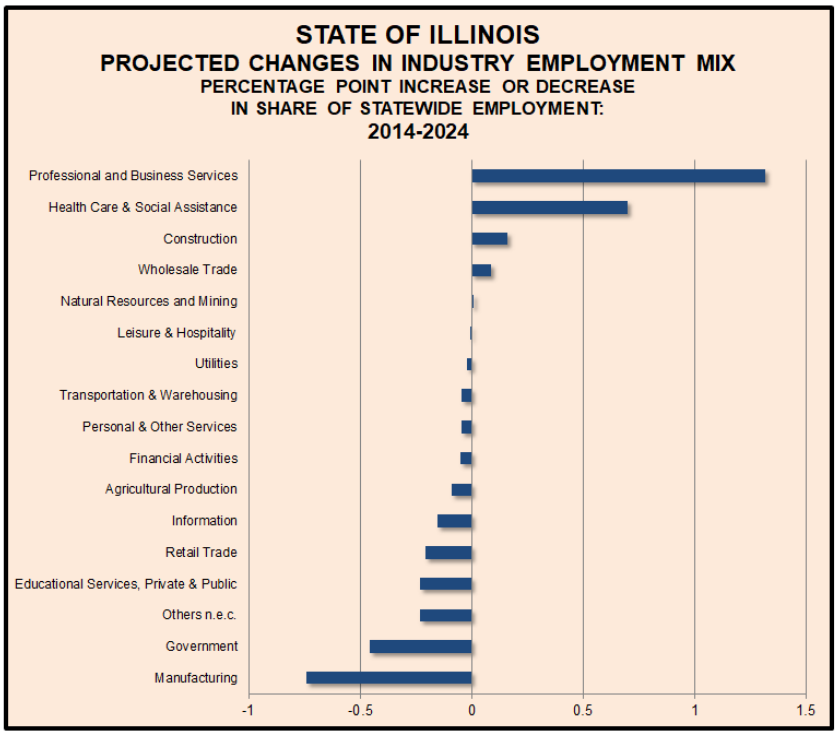
Table 2 shows projected employment demand through 2024 for major industry sectors across Illinois. It is expected that the largest number of job openings will be created within the business services and health care sectors. Large percentage changes in employment are expected in leisure and hospitality, as well as in a resurgent construction sector. The IWIB will explore methods of gathering real-time information from businesses, making it readily available in a regional and local

format that supports the information found within Table 2.

Table 2: Illinois Employment by Major Industry Sector

North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) Title	Base Year Employment 2014	Share of Statewide Base Year Employment 2014	Projected Year Employment 2024	Net Change 2014-2024	Ten-Year Percent Change 2014-2024	Location Quotient 2014
TOTAL, ALL INDUSTRIES	**6,263,919**	**100.00%**	**6,635,512**	**371,593**	**5.93%**	**1.00**
Agricultural Production	73,358	1.17%	70,148	-3,210	-4.38%	1.29
Natural Resources and Mining	9,833	0.16%	9,381	-452	-4.60%	0.25
Utilities	23,948	0.38%	23,874	-74	-0.31%	0.65
Construction	201,672	3.22%	226,721	25,049	12.42%	0.70
Manufacturing	579,027	9.24%	562,281	-16,746	-2.89%	1.03
Wholesale Trade	299,930	4.79%	318,781	18,851	6.29%	1.12
Retail Trade	604,463	9.65%	637,697	33,234	5.50%	0.86
Transportation and Warehousing	277,994	4.44%	299,620	21,626	7.78%	1.14
Information	99,093	1.58%	99,794	701	0.71%	0.75
Financial Activities	369,439	5.90%	388,402	18,963	5.13%	1.04
Professional and Business Services	915,447	14.61%	1,015,567	100,120	10.94%	1.04
Educational Services, Private and Public	566,444	9.04%	571,158	4,714	0.83%	1.01
Health Care and Social Assistance	764,153	12.20%	858,843	94,690	12.39%	0.84
Leisure and Hospitality	557,645	8.90%	616,483	58,838	10.55%	0.81
Personal and Other Services	287,622	4.59%	301,969	14,347	4.99%	1.47
Government*	351,610	5.61%	351,494	-116	-0.03%	0.39
Self Employed, Unpaid Family Workers and Others n.e	282,241	4.51%	283,299	1,058	0.37%	0.83

*Location Quotients for "Government & Self Employed, Unpaid Family Workers and Others n.e.c." are from 2012



Source: Illinois Department of Employment Security Statewide Long-Term Employment Projections

Figure 1 utilizes percentage growth and a measure of industry importance in the state (location quotient), with "bubble" size indicating the relative size of the industry. The location quotient is represented on the vertical axis of the chart and is a measure that compares employment in each sector with total employment in the state. A value of 1.0 indicates the industry is at equilibrium with statewide employment, values greater than 1.0 indicate the industry has a comparative advantage versus other sectors in Illinois, and values less than 1.0 indicate the industry has a comparative disadvantage versus other sectors in Illinois. The degree of comparative advantage or disadvantage increases as the value deviates from 1.0.

Figure 1: Bubble Chart Based on Table 2

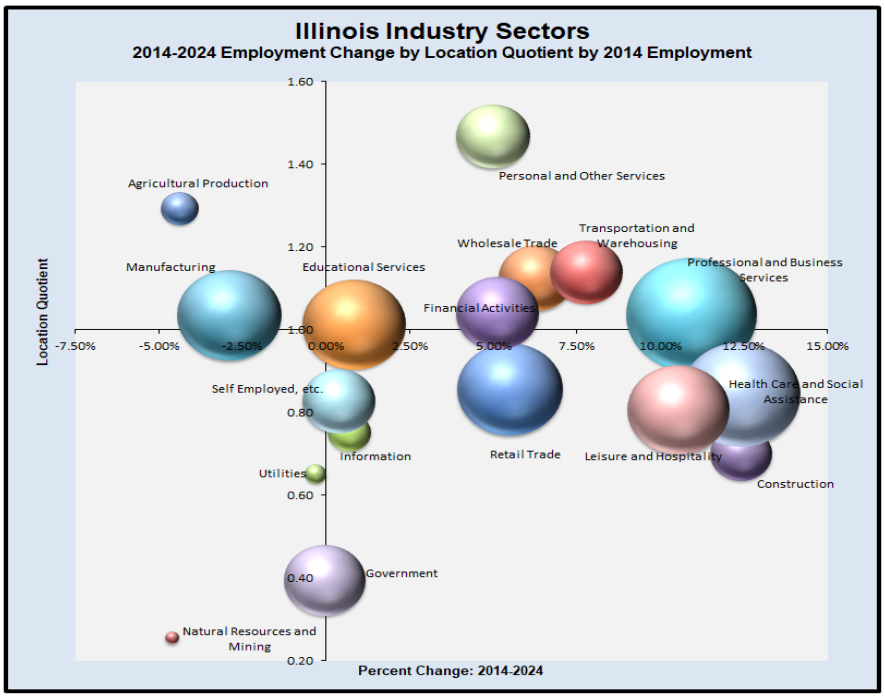


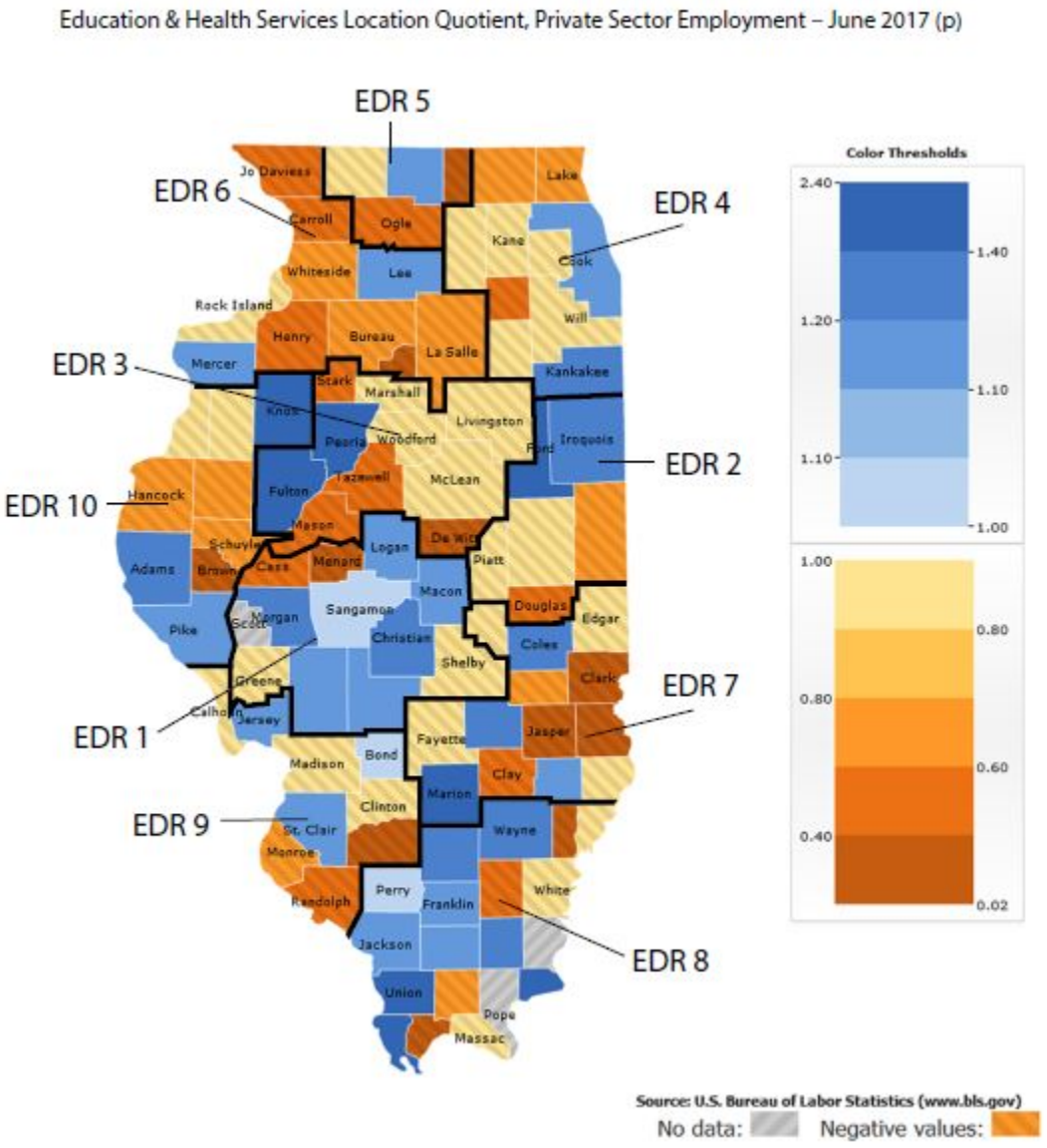
Figure 1 provides information on the "what" and "how much", the sectors, projected employment changes and location quotients, respectively. However, there is a vital data point not available in this chart, the "where". Using Bureau of Labor Statistics spatial analysis tools we are able to discern which regions and counties in Illinois enjoy a comparative advantage in each sector. (See beta.bls.gov/maps/cew/us)

The location quotient for selected major industries in each county and EDR is provided on the accompanying maps (see below). These maps indicate where each industry has a comparative advantage versus the rest of the United States based on private-sector employment. A value of 1.0 indicates the industry is at the national level, values greater than 1.0 indicate the industry has a comparative advantage versus the nation, and values less than 1.0 indicate the industry has a comparative disadvantage versus the nation.

The degree of comparative advantage or disadvantage increases as the value deviates from 1.0. Regions with a comparative advantage will be encouraged and supported in efforts to exploit their

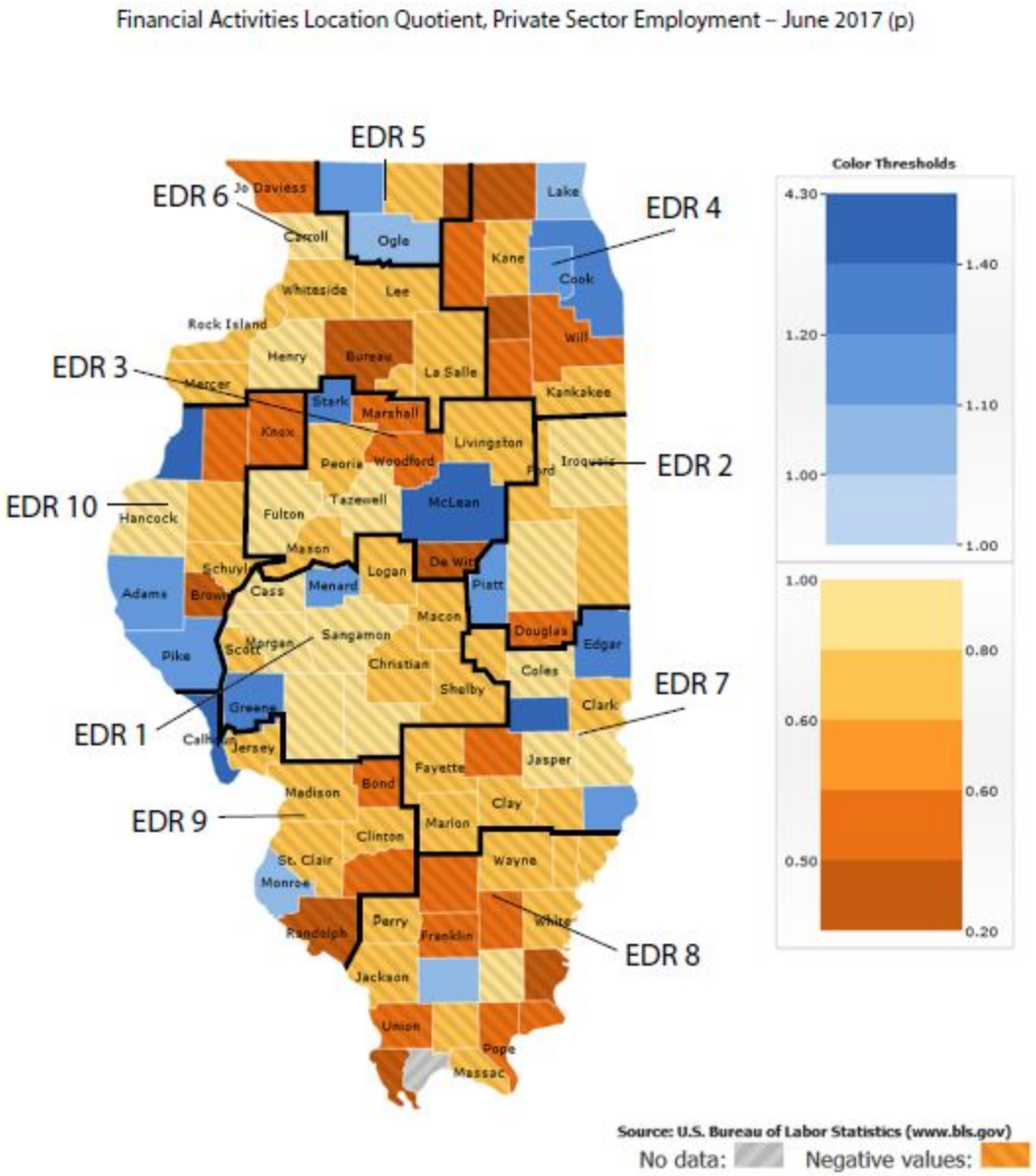
situation. Regions with a comparative disadvantage that is not prohibitive will be encouraged and supported in efforts to address the root causes of their disadvantage.

Map 1: Education and Health Services Location Quotient, Private Sector Employment



Education and Healthcare Services have higher location quotients in regions and counties with regional healthcare facilities or post-secondary educational institutions. While these maps display private sector employment, there may be private education-related employment in counties with large secondary schools or community colleges.

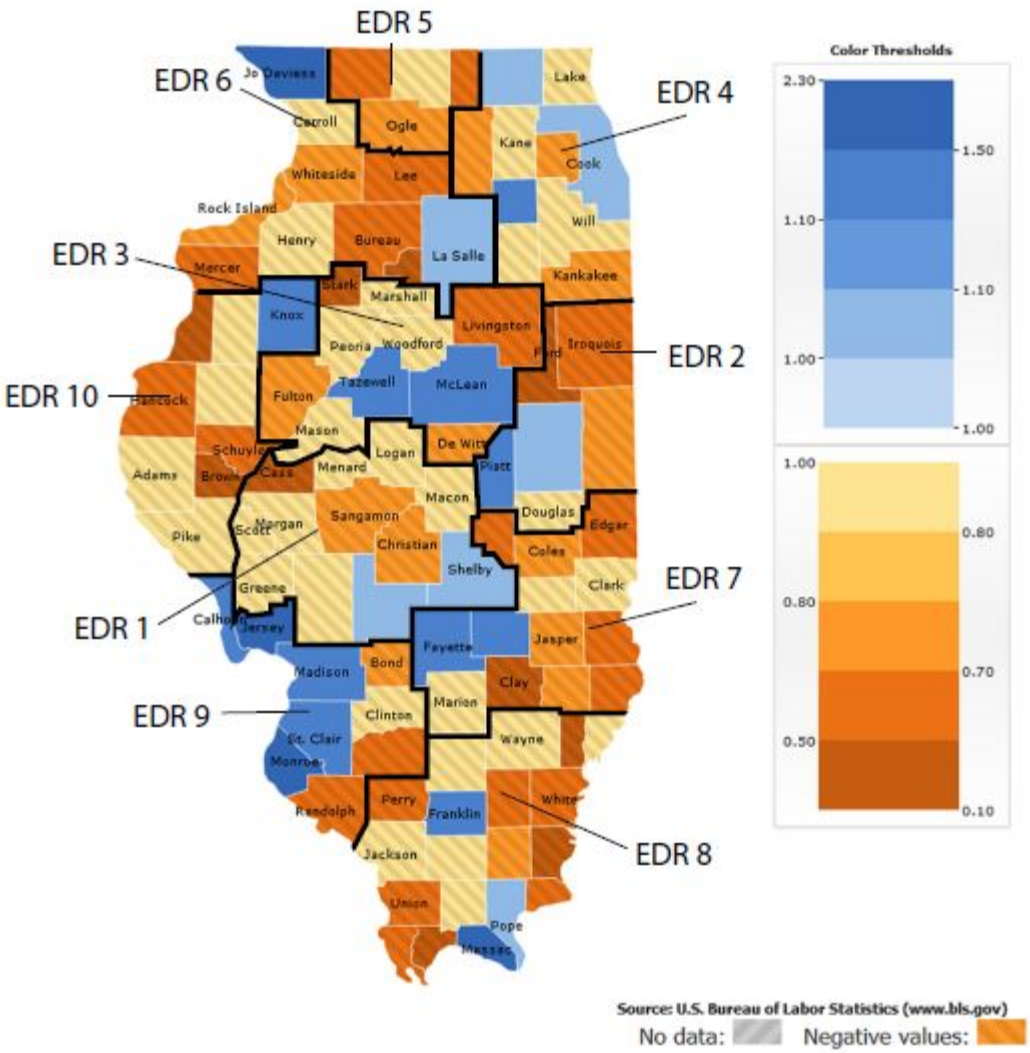
Map 2: Financial Activities Location Quotient, Private Sector Employment



Map 2 clearly indicates there are scattered small pockets where financial services has a comparative advantage. No region is either completely above or below the 1.0 benchmark save one; EDR 6 has no county above the line. This indicates workforce development efforts intending to build on existing strengths must be targeted at specific sub-regions.

Map 3: Leisure and Hospitality Location Quotient, Private Sector Employment

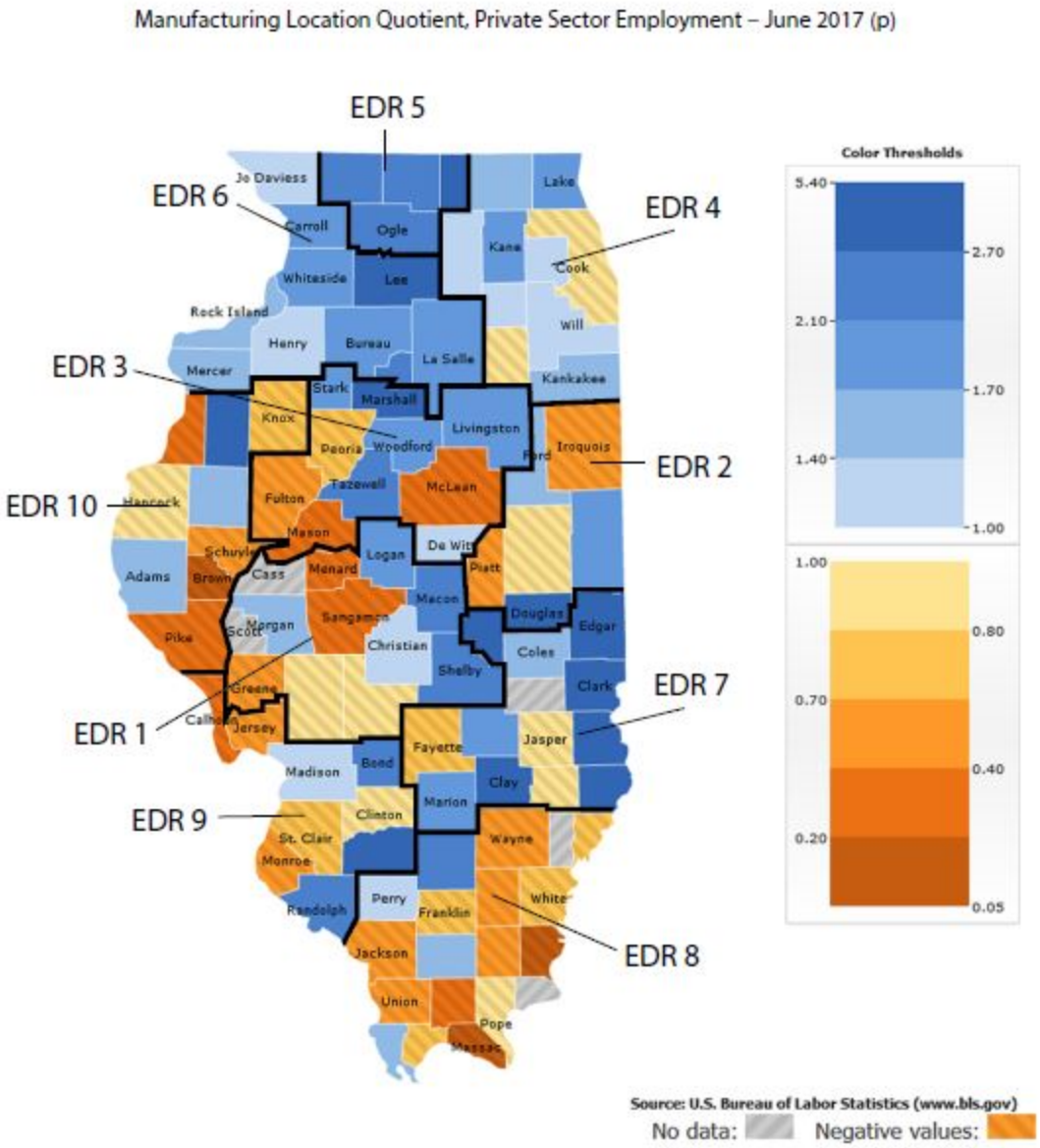
Leisure & Hospitality Location Quotient, Private Sector Employment – June 2017 (p)



"

Leisure and hospitality location quotients indicate that despite the large numbers employed, the majority of counties are at a comparative disadvantage. This indicates workforce efforts intending to build on current positions of strength must be targeted to specific regions and counties.

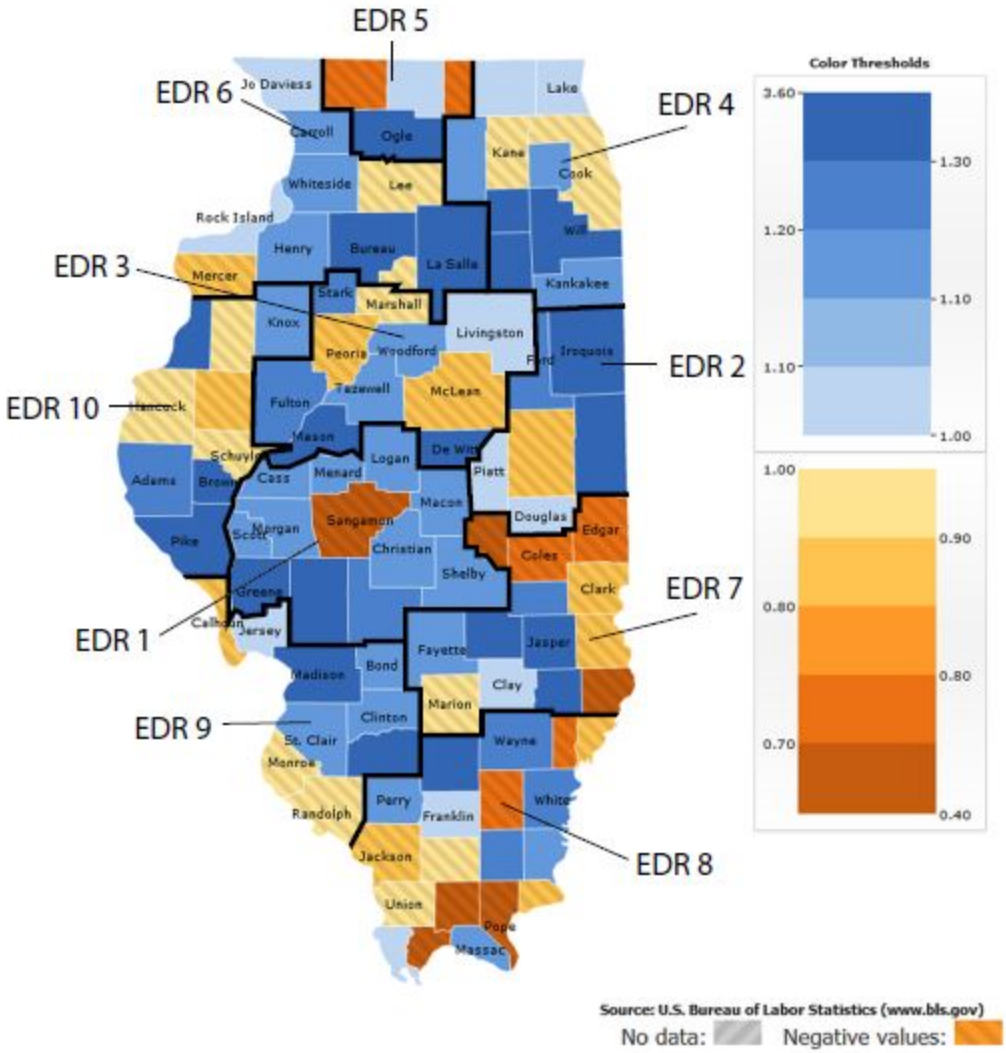
Map 4: Manufacturing Location Quotient, Private Sector Employment



The manufacturing map effectively illustrates the demise of this sector has been vastly overstated. Note the number of regions and counties with a very strong manufacturing presence; indeed the entire northern third of the state has a location quotient above the 1.0 line. There are also two branches of counties extending deep into southern Illinois where manufacturing makes a very strong showing. This map reinforces the need for manufacturing-based efforts in all regions.

Map 5: Trade, Transportation and Utilities Location Quotient, Private Sector Employment

Trade, Transportation & Utilities Location Quotient, Private Sector Employment – June 2017 (p)



Similar to manufacturing, trade, transportation and utilities is a high location quotient sector in all regions. A very large number of counties have a comparative advantage upon which workforce efforts may build. Areas with location quotients above 1.0 are located on or near the major transportation hubs and arteries (airports, interstate highways, rail lines, rivers and inter-modal facilities) or have a power plant in the area. Note this sector is strong even in very rural areas of the state.

Table 3 shows projected employment demand through 2024 for major occupational sectors throughout Illinois. The largest numbers of new jobs are expected to be created within the transportation and material moving, sales, healthcare, food service, business and financial operations and computer and mathematical occupation sectors. Large numbers of job openings (including replacement jobs) are expected in sales, food service, and office and administrative occupations. Despite an expected overall decline in employment, significant numbers of annual production and job openings are still expected, due to replacements of existing workers that will leave the labor force.

Table 3: Illinois Employment by Major Occupational Sector

Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) Title	Base Year Employment 2014	Share of Statewide Base Year Employment 2014	Projection Year Employment 2024	Net Employment Change 2014-2024 Number	Net Employment Change 2014-2024 Percent	Average Annual Job Openings due to Growth	Average Annual Job Openings due to Replacements	Average Annual Job Openings due to Total
TOTAL, ALL OCCUPATIONS	**6,263,919**	**100.00%**	**6,635,512**	**371,593**	**5.93%**	**42,732**	**147,453**	**190,185**
Management Occupations	483,634	7.72%	505,962	22,328	4.62%	2,392	10,833	13,225
Business & Financial Operations Occupations	317,015	5.06%	345,820	28,805	9.09%	2,962	6,259	9,221
Computer & Mathematical Occupations	171,846	2.74%	198,986	27,140	15.79%	2,885	2,599	5,484
Architecture & Engineering Occupations	89,186	1.42%	92,743	3,557	3.99%	412	2,196	2,608
Life, Physical & Social Science Occupations	33,709	0.54%	36,117	2,408	7.14%	242	921	1,163
Community & Social Services Occupations	102,873	1.64%	110,471	7,598	7.39%	760	2,254	3,014
Legal Occupations	54,324	0.87%	57,457	3,133	5.77%	325	913	1,238
Education, Training & Library Occupations	408,034	6.51%	418,051	10,017	2.45%	1,276	8,738	10,014
Arts/Design/Entertainment, Sports/Media Occs	95,526	1.53%	98,259	2,733	2.86%	332	2,410	2,742
Healthcare Practitioners & Technical Occs	344,182	5.49%	378,413	34,231	9.95%	3,425	7,454	10,879
Healthcare Support Occupations	167,226	2.67%	191,973	24,747	14.80%	2,494	3,716	6,210
Protective Service Occupations	150,957	2.41%	154,920	3,963	2.63%	407	3,574	3,981
Food Preparation & Serving Occupations	471,596	7.53%	522,357	50,761	10.76%	5,328	17,249	22,577
Building & Grounds Cleaning & Maint. Occs	227,921	3.64%	241,045	13,124	5.76%	1,313	4,604	5,917
Personal Care & Service Occupations	211,240	3.37%	230,991	19,751	9.35%	1,985	4,631	6,616
Sales & Related Occupations	651,369	10.40%	686,994	35,625	5.47%	3,628	19,201	22,829
Office & Administrative Support Occupations	926,052	14.78%	936,361	10,309	1.11%	3,605	19,327	22,932
Farming, Fishing & Forestry Occupations	18,343	0.29%	16,662	-1,681	-9.16%	9	467	476
Construction & Extraction Occupations	210,850	3.37%	229,537	18,687	8.86%	1,896	3,356	5,252
Installation, Maintenance & Repair Occs	204,707	3.27%	219,531	14,824	7.24%	1,561	4,734	6,295
Production Occupations	441,456	7.05%	440,156	-1,300	-0.29%	1,364	9,946	11,310
Transportation & Material Moving Occupations	481,873	7.69%	522,706	40,833	8.47%	4,130	12,072	16,202

Source: IL Department of Employment Security Statewide Long-Term Employment Projections

ii. Emerging Industry Sectors and Occupations

Based on the information contained in Table 2, major industry sectors were categorized according to the following methodology:

- LEADING industries are identified as those which are expected to grow during the projection period, and which are important within the state (i.e., have a location quotient greater than 1.0). These industries are found in the upper right-hand quadrant of Figure 1.
- EMERGING industries are identified as those that are not strongly represented in the current economy (i.e., have a location quotient that is less than 1.0), but are expected to grow during the projection period. These industries are found in the lower right-hand quadrant of Figure 1.
- MATURING industries are identified as those that are important within the state, but are not expected to grow during the projection period. These industries are found in the upper left-hand quadrant of Figure 1.

Similar to the discussion in the Existing Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations, the IWIB will address the need for more current information from businesses to ensure the data being used to make decisions regionally and locally is the most current and reliable information available. Ensuring the availability of this information to all interested parties for future planning efforts will be a focus of the new Technology Standing Committee of the IWIB.

Tables 4, 5 and 6 display the results of categorizing (according to this methodology) the major industries from Table 3. Major industry categories that are not included in one of these categories are now dropped from the analysis.

Table 4: LEADING Major Industry Sectors Statewide

LEADING INDUSTRIES NAICS Title	Base Year Employment 2014	Share of Statewide Base Year Employment 2014	Projected Year Employment 2024	Net Change 2014-2024	Ten-Year Percent Change 2014-2024	Location Quotient 2014
TOTAL, ALL INDUSTRIES	6,263,919	100%	6,635,512	371,593	5.9%	1.00
Professional and Business Services	915,447	14.6%	1,015,567	100,120	10.9%	1.04
Educational Services, Private and Public	566,444	9.0%	571,158	4,714	0.8%	1.01
Financial Activities	369,439	5.9%	388,402	18,963	5.1%	1.04
Wholesale Trade	299,930	4.8%	318,781	18,851	6.3%	1.12
Personal and Other Services	287,622	4.6%	301,969	14,347	5.0%	1.47
Transportation and Warehousing	277,994	4.4%	299,620	21,626	7.8%	1.14

Sources: IL Department of Employment Security Statewide Long-Term Employment Projections, Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity

Table 5: EMERGING Major Industry Sectors Statewide

EMERGING INDUSTRIES NAICS Title	Base Year Employment 2014	Share of Statewide Base Year Employment 2014	Projected Year Employment 2024	Net Change 2014-2024	Ten-Year Percent Change 2014-2024	Location Quotient 2014
TOTAL, ALL INDUSTRIES	6,263,919	100%	6,635,512	371,593	5.9%	1.00
Health Care and Social Assistance	764,153	12.2%	858,843	94,690	12.4%	0.84
Retail Trade	604,463	9.6%	637,697	33,234	5.5%	0.86
Leisure and Hospitality	557,645	8.9%	616,483	58,838	10.6%	0.81
Self Employed, Unpaid Family Workers and Others n.e.c.	282,241	4.5%	283,299	1,058	0.4%	0.83
Construction	201,672	3.2%	226,721	25,049	12.4%	0.70
Information	99,093	1.6%	99,794	701	0.7%	0.75

Sources: IL Department of Employment Security Statewide Long-Term Employment Projections, Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity

Table 6: MATURING Major Industry Sectors Statewide

MATURING INDUSTRIES NAICS Title	Base Year Employment 2014	Share of Statewide Base Year Employment 2014	Projected Year Employment 2024	Net Change 2014-2024	Ten-Year Percent Change 2014-2024	Location Quotient 2014
TOTAL, ALL INDUSTRIES	6,263,919	100%	6,635,512	371,593	5.9%	1.00
Manufacturing	579,027	9.2%	562,281	(16,746)	-2.9%	1.03
Agricultural Production	73,358	1.2%	70,148	(3,210)	-4.4%	1.29

Sources: IL Department of Employment Security Statewide Long-Term Employment Projections, Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity

For those major industries that are included, we can drill down the analysis to each of the industry sectors (3-digit NAICS-level industries) (North American Industry Classification System - http://www.census.gov/eos/www/naics/) found within these major industry categories. The tables found in Attachment B

(https://www.illinoisworknet.com/WIOA/Resources/Documents/Attachment%20B%20-%20Employment%20Projections.pdf) display the leading, emerging and maturing industry sectors within the major industry categories identified in the first step.

The regional planning process utilizes the same analytic steps to assist regional teams to identify leading, emerging and maturing industry clusters within each region. The regional planning process includes the development of crosswalks between the detailed (3-digit) industry clusters and the occupational pathway for each region. The results of this crosswalk pinpoint occupations related to the detailed industry clusters identified statewide as leading, emerging and maturing. These are considered starting points for conversations with employers regarding critical occupations within their industries during the complete regional planning process. Table 7 below summarizes the leading, emerging and maturing sectors identified for each of the statewide Economic Development Regions based on these current and projected employment data, along with a brief comment on each region.

Table 7: Leading, Emerging and Maturing Sectors Identified by Economic Development Region

Region	Leading Sectors	Emerging Sectors	Maturing Sectors	Comments
Central	Health Care Business Management	Marketing & Sales Hospitality & Tourism Law & Safety Education & Training TDL Construction Information Technology Research & Development	Finance Energy Agriculture Manufacturing	**Agriculture** remains significantly concentrated in this region, even as sector employment is expected to contract. **Health Care** is expected to continue to grow, as is **Marketing & Sales**.
East Central	Marketing & Sales Hospitality & Tourism Education & Training TDL Manufacturing	Health Care Law & Safety Business Management Construction Information Technology Energy Research & Development Finance	Agriculture	**Education & Training** employment is highly concentrated and growing (led by the University of Illinois). **Agriculture** is also highly concentrated in the region. **Manufacturing** employment is expected to grow slowly, but is still an important sector in the region.
North Central	Business Management Finance TDL Manufacturing	Hospitality & Tourism Marketing & Sales Health Care Law & Safety Education & Training Construction Information Technology Research & Development	Agriculture	**Manufacturing** employment is more highly concentrated in the region than in any other region of the state. Although employment growth is expected to be slow, overall employment in this sector will remain highly significant.
Northeast	Marketing & Sales Law & Safety Business Management TDL Information Technology	Hospitality & Tourism Health Care Construction Education & Training Finance Arts Research & Development Agriculture Energy	Manufacturing	**Business Management** is the most highly concentrated sector in this region. **Marketing & Sales** and **Hospitality & Tourism** are expected to be the largest job-creation sectors. **Information Technology** has a bigger footprint in this region than in any other region of the state.
Northern Stateline	Business Management TDL Manufacturing Agriculture	Marketing & Sales Hospitality & Tourism Law & Safety Health Care Construction Education & Training Finance Information Technology Research & Development Arts Energy	(None)	As in the North Central region, **Manufacturing** is extraordinarily important to this region in both job creation and (especially) employment concentration. **Transportation, Distribution & Logistics** is also an important sector to this region across both of those metrics.
Northwest	TDL Business Management Manufacturing Finance Agriculture	Marketing & Sales Hospitality & Tourism Law & Safety Health Care Construction Education & Training Information Technology Research & Development	Energy	Between rail, river and trucking traffic, **Transportation, Distribution & Logistics** is a major driver in this region, through both concentration and expected job growth. **Manufacturing** and **Agriculture** are also highly concentrated here and are expected to add some employment.
Southeast	Health Care Education & Training TDL	Marketing & Sales Hospitality & Tourism Business Management Law & Safety Construction Research & Development Information Technology	Agriculture Manufacturing	**Agriculture** and **Manufacturing** are the two most highly concentrated sectors in this region, but both are expected to contract in employment by 2022. Biggest job-creating sectors in this region are expected to be **Marketing & Sales** and **Hospitality & Tourism**. **Health Care** is also a significant, and growing, sector.
Southern	Marketing & Sales Hospitality & Tourism Health Care Education & Training Agriculture	Law & Safety Business Management TDL Construction Information Technology Research & Development Arts	Energy Manufacturing	**Hospitality & Tourism** and **Education & Training** are both highly concentrated in this region and are expected to create new jobs. **Agriculture** will create fewer jobs, but is still highly concentrated in the region.
Southwest	TDL Business Management Education & Training Manufacturing	Marketing & Sales Health Care Hospitality & Tourism Law & Safety Construction Information Technology Research & Development	Energy Agriculture	**Manufacturing** is expected to grow slowly, but is still tremendously concentrated and important to this region. **Transportation, Distribution & Logistics** is also concentrated in this region and is expected to grow more robustly.
West Central	Health Care Business Management Education & Training TDL Manufacturing	Marketing & Sales Hospitality & Tourism Law & Safety Construction	Agriculture	**Health Care** is a significant sector in this region, and is expected to create the largest number of new jobs through 2022. **Manufacturing** and **Transportation, Distribution & Logistics** are also significant in this region. **Agriculture** is the most highly concentrated sector in the region, but is expected to shrink in employment through 2022.

Source: IL Department of Employment Security Statewide Long-Term Employment Projections, IL Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity

iii. Employers' Employment Needs

An effective workforce system must address the basic need to ensure that a pool of appropriately skilled workers is available when and where businesses need them. The workforce and education systems must be aware and understand the key knowledge, skills and abilities required in the state and respective to each region.

Regional Economic Analysis for Employment Needs

In addition to an analysis of leading, emerging and maturing industries, the diverse Illinois economy requires an accompanying analysis in each of our ten economic development regions. The core partners provided the latest U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (USBLS) data to each of Illinois' regional planning teams, who used this data as a key part of their assessment of business needs in their regional economies. Planning teams were encouraged to augment the USBLS data with their own primary data sources, such as business interviews and surveys, discussions with business industries and associations, and staffing agencies.

Regional plans highlighted the need to understand challenges and opportunities in the private sector. Important to understanding these challenges is an awareness of the specific knowledge, skills and abilities in demand in each region. The local workforce boards recognized the importance of considering employers' employment needs as the foundation for prioritizing workforce system efforts. The following is a summary of the fundamental activities that are identified in Illinois ten regional plans that support the identification of employer needs:

- Be aware of regional business needs for skilled workers and other issues impacting their competitive position
- Understand the workforce impact of national, state and regional demographic trends
- Understand the effectiveness of regional talent pipelines
- Be aware of current and anticipated levels of demand for specific skills and how they are related to regional industries and occupations
- Understand the level of oversupply or undersupply of high-skilled, medium-skilled and low-skilled workers and the root causes of shortages and surpluses
- Ensure basic employability skills awareness and training are embedded into participants that need to improve those skills
- Work collaboratively to stay in touch with business needs through coordinated strategies that encourage companies to participate in developing talent pipeline solutions
- Be willing to share information that will improve companies' access to skilled workers
- Understand how their policies and program delivery strategies impact overall efforts to improve regional talent pipelines
- Ensure that talent pipelines incorporate career pathways concepts

Illinois Pathways

In the past year, Illinois' commitment to the needs of employers rapidly expanded beyond the post-secondary career and technical education system to include the P-20 system. The development of a college and career pathway system through Illinois Pathways is fully described under the "Partner Engagement with other Education and Training Providers" section of this plan. These strategic

initiatives act to increase the knowledge, skills and abilities of Illinois citizens so that they may obtain the portable, stackable credentials and licenses that businesses require. Examples described within the Unified Plan include state-level legislative initiatives, such as the Illinois Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness Act, ESSA College and Career Readiness, and local level demonstrations such as the Illinois 60 by 25 Network and the Career Pathway Endorsement programs.

The Illinois Pathways website (www.illinoispathways.com) is a resource that outlines education and career pathways leading to career options that require similar skills and preparation. The Illinois Pathways website allows users to research groupings of careers, labor market information, and the knowledge, skills, abilities and credentials that are required for each occupation. Illinois will build on this tool and update the information as a part of WIOA career pathway and sector strategies. Business engagement is critical to verify that this information accurately reflects employers' needs.

Illinois Pathways is an innovative public-private education partnership that is organized to support local implementation of career pathway systems in STEM-related application areas by coordinating and reducing the transaction costs among statewide networks of education partners, businesses, industry associations, labor organizations and other organizations. Education and career pathways are an integrated collection of programs and services intended to develop students' core academic, technical and employability skills, and to provide them with continuous education and training and to place them in high-demand, high-opportunity jobs. Illinois Pathways builds off of the National Career Clusters® Framework and supports career pathway systems in STEM application areas.

Built on longstanding strengths in Illinois, particularly in CTE Programs of Study, Illinois Pathways addresses two goals: first, to increase the number of Illinoisans who attain a postsecondary credential and are prepared for employment in high-demand, high-wage occupations; and second, to spur state and regional economic development by developing a homegrown talent pipeline for areas of workforce need. Illinois Pathways provides specific information regarding the knowledge, skills and abilities that are required for each occupation in each industry sector. A sample occupational profile that was downloaded from www.illinoispathways.com is outlined below. Illinois' regional planning process directs the workforce, education and economic development partners to validate, refine and expand the occupational profile information with the help of businesses in the key industry sectors. This process will continue as the State of Illinois and the regions develop and implement their sector strategy initiatives.

Example Occupational Knowledge, Skills and Abilities Profile from Illinois Pathways:

Industrial Machinery Mechanics - At a Glance

Industrial machinery mechanics install, maintain and repair factory equipment and other machinery.

Wages: Earn $52,685 per year

Ten Year Growth: Much faster than average

Annual Openings: Very High

Preparation

An industrial machinery mechanic typically needs to:

- Have a high school diploma or equivalent, plus post-secondary training or apprenticeship.
- Complete a long-term, on-the-job training

Working Conditions

In a typical work setting, industrial machinery mechanics:

- Have a low to medium level of social interaction. They often have discussions with machine operators, but also work alone.
- Often work indoors.
- Must be exact in their work and be sure all details are done. Errors could result in injuries to machine operators.
- Work at least 40 hours per week. Schedules are generally established.

Industrial Machinery Mechanics - Knowledge

Industrial machinery mechanics need knowledge in the following areas:

- Mechanical: The design, use and repair of machines and tools
- Engineering and Technology: How to use computers and rules of engineering to design and produce goods and services
- Production and Processing: How products are made and distributed
- Mathematics: The rules and uses of numbers
- English Language: The meaning and use of the English language
- Computers and Electronics: Computer hardware and software
- Design: Making and using plans, blueprints, drawings and models
- Building and Construction: The tools and methods used to construct buildings, roads and other structures
- Public Safety and Security: How to protect people and property
- Publications and Manuals: Read and comprehend technical publications

Industrial Machinery Mechanics - Skills and Abilities

Industrial machinery mechanics need to:

Communicate

- Listen to others and ask questions.
- Understand written information.
- Understand spoken information.
- Speak clearly so listeners can understand.

Reason and Problem Solve

- Follow guidelines to arrange objects or actions in a certain order.
- Notice when something is wrong or is likely to go wrong.
- Analyze ideas and use logic to determine their strengths and weaknesses.
- Recognize the nature of a problem.
- Judge the costs and benefits of a possible action.

- Combine several pieces of information and draw conclusions.
- Concentrate and not be distracted while performing a task.
- Use reasoning to discover answers to problems.
- Develop rules that group items in various ways.

Manage Oneself, People, Time and Things

- Check how well one is learning or doing something.
- Manage the time of self and others.

Work with People

- Change behavior in relation to others' actions.

Work with Things

- Maintain equipment on a routine basis. Determine when and what kind of maintenance is needed.
- Repair machines or systems.
- Watch gauges, dials and output to make sure a machine is working properly.
- Determine the causes of technical problems and find solutions for them.
- Inspect and evaluate the quality of products.
- Operate and control equipment.
- Determine the tools and equipment needed to do a job.
- Maintain equipment and systems
- Observe gauges, dials and output to make sure a machine or system is working properly
- Operate and control equipment and systems

Perceive and Visualize

- Imagine how something will look if it is moved around or its parts are rearranged.

Example Occupational Knowledge, Skills and Abilities Profile from Illinois Pathways: LPN

Licensed Practical Nurses - At a Glance

Licensed practical nurses (LPNs) care for people who are sick, injured or have disabilities.

Wages: Earn $47,465 per year

Ten Year Growth: Average growth

Annual Openings: Very High

Preparation

A licensed practical nurse typically needs to:

- Have a high school diploma or equivalent.
- Complete a practical nursing program.

- Have a license.

Working Conditions

In a typical work setting, licensed practical nurses:

- Have a high level of social interaction with patients.
- Are often exposed to diseases or infections when interacting with patients.
- Must be very exact in their work. Errors could seriously endanger patients' health.
- May work part time or full time. Most work full time.

Licensed Practical Nurses - Knowledge

Licensed practical nurses need knowledge in the following areas:

- Medicine and Dentistry: Injuries and illnesses and plans for treatment
- Customer and Personal Service: Providing special services to customers based on their needs
- Psychology: People, their actions and mental processes and how to treat problems
- English Language: The meaning and use of the English language
- Therapy and Counseling: The mental or physical problems and methods for treatment
- Mathematics: The rules and uses of numbers
- Education and Training: The methods of teaching and learning
- Administration and Management: How to run a business or group
- Chemistry: The properties of substances and the changes that occur when they interact
- Public Safety and Security: How to protect people and property
- Law, Government, and Jurisprudence: Laws, rules of the court and the politics
- Sociology and Anthropology: Where people come from and how they behave
- Clerical: General office work such as filling and storing information

Licensed Practical Nurses - Skills and Abilities

Licensed practical nurses need to:

Communicate

- Read and understand work-related materials.
- Understand spoken information.
- Understand written information.
- Listen to others and ask questions.
- Speak clearly so listeners can understand.
- Write clearly so other people can understand.

Reason and Problem Solve

- Notice when something is wrong or is likely to go wrong.
- Use reasoning to discover answers to problems.
- Analyze ideas and use logic to determine their strengths and weaknesses.
- Judge the costs and benefits of a possible action.

- Combine several pieces of information and draw conclusions.
- Understand new information or materials by studying and working with them.
- Follow guidelines to arrange objects or actions in a certain order.
- Recognize the nature of a problem.
- Concentrate and not be distracted while performing a task.
- Develop rules that group items in various ways.
- Think of new ideas about a topic.
- Make sense of information that seems without meaning or organization.

Manage Oneself, People, Time and Things

- Manage the time of self and others.
- Check how well one is learning or doing something.
- Go back and forth between two or more activities or sources of information without becoming confused.
- Motivate, develop and direct people as they work.

Work with People

- Look for ways to help people.
- Persuade others to approach things differently.

Perceive and Visualize

- Identify a pattern (a figure, object, word or sound) that is hidden in distracting material.

Other Current Initiatives

Additionally, these current initiatives are designed to support the workforce and education system to address employers' needs:

- Integrated Business Services Initiative - Beginning with a grant from the Department of Labor, Illinois developed a framework to provide a structured way for state and local WIOA partners to collaborate towards aligned and integrated business services across programs.
- Integrated Employment and Training (IET)- Through a partnership between Title II Adult Education and Literacy and Postsecondary Perkins CTE, a basic skill and training model was developed called the Integrated Career and Academic Placement System, which includes stackable and industry recognized credentials.
- Essential Employability Skills - Through Title II Adult Education, a state-level workgroup that includes private-sector employers was formed to create "The Essential Employability Skills Framework." This framework was developed in 2017 to address employers' expressed concerns regarding the lack of non-technical skills in new hires and existing employees.

B. WORKFORCE ANALYSIS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the current workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment, as defined in section 3 of WIOA.* This population must

include individuals with disabilities among other groups** in the State and across regions identified by the State. This includes: Individuals with barriers to employment include 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; farmworkers (as defined at section 167(i) of WIOA and Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 35-14); individuals within 2 years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program; single parents (including single pregnant women); and long-term unemployed individuals. ** Veterans, unemployed workers, and youth, and others that the State may identify.

I. EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT

Provide an analysis of current employment and unemployment data, including labor force participation rates, and trends in the State.

II. LABOR MARKET TRENDS

Provide an analysis of key labor market trends, including across existing industries and occupations.

III. EDUCATION AND SKILL LEVELS OF THE WORKFORCE

Provide an analysis of the educational and skill levels of the workforce.

IV. SKILL GAPS

Describe apparent 'skill gaps'.

Workforce Analysis

llinois' labor force in the 25-54 age group continued to decline by more than 125,000 (-2.8%) between 2011 and 2016, according the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey estimates. This was the result of shrinking population within that age group. A much smaller decline occurred in the 16-19 year-old labor force, while the 20-24 year-old age group had a slight increase. During that same period, the labor force in the 55-64 age group increased by over 60,000 (+6.0%). As the overall population gets older, the available labor force in Illinois will likely continue to decline.

i. Employment and Unemployment Unemployment rates for the 16-19 age group are much higher than the overall rate, and are especially high for African-Americans, Hispanics, and those in the "other" race category. Part of this discrepancy among racial/ethnic groups may be related to living in areas where few appropriate job matches are available. Unemployment rates are lowest among Caucasians for the 20-24, 55-64, 65-69 and 70+ age groups, while Asians have the lowest rates for the 16-19 and 25-54 groupings. Overall, statewide unemployment rates dropped significantly between 2011 and 2016 from 9.7% to 5.9%. This accords with a stronger overall economy in 2016 relative to 2011.

While unemployment rates for youth (ages 16-19) are high, the rates for older workers (65+) have remained relatively low. This is likely a result of many older individuals leaving the labor force after separation from work (voluntarily or involuntarily). Other targeted populations include veterans, single parent families (headed by either a male or female) and persons with disabilities. The

unemployment rate for all veterans is below the rate for the entire population. However, the rate for veterans in the 18-34 age groups is still higher than the overall state average. Nevertheless, this gap has closed as fewer veterans are being discharged in recent years, resulting in fewer making the transition from the military to civilian employment. Unemployment rates for single parent families remain higher for heads of households of both genders, but significantly higher for females compared to males. Rates for individuals with disabilities are higher than any other group except for youth.

Attachment C (https://www.illinoisworknet.com/WIOA/Resources/Documents/Attachment%20C%20-%20Illinois%20Labor%20Force%20Employment%20and%20Unemployment.pdf) provides additional demographic details regarding the Illinois labor force, employment and unemployment during this period.

ii. Labor Market Trends

Between 2006 and 2016, employment shifts occurred among U.S. industry sectors, featuring a reduction in goods-producing industries in favor of service-producing industries. This shift continued a long-term trend, with manufacturing employment declining due to strong productivity gains in high value-added industries and offshoring of low-value added production to lower cost economies. But not all service-producing sectors saw equal employment growth during this ten-year span.

Among goods-producing industries in the U.S., mining & logging was the only sector to show marked improvement between 2006 and 2016 as oil production surged during the period due to the growth in "fracking" over this time frame. "Fracking" activity has since moderated, but employment in these industries remains strong relative to 2006. Construction employment decreased as a share of total employment in 2016 relative to 2006 when the housing bubble was nearing its peak.

As shown in Table 8, none of the Midwestern states show significant gains in their industry shares towards mining & logging. It is important to note, however, that mining & logging employment is small in all the Midwestern states. Kentucky's employment activity in mining & logging as a share of total employment decreased relative to ten years ago. Missouri posted a very slight reduction in its share going to mining & logging. On the construction front where employment numbers are more meaningful as a share of total employment, Midwestern states were mixed. All states except Iowa saw a smaller share of employment in construction in 2016 than in 2006. In a few cases, states declined less rapidly than the U.S. (KY, MI, OH, WI, MN and IN). Illinois' share of construction employment declined by the same magnitude as the nation. Missouri's share of construction employment weakened slightly more than the national average.

In the Midwest, an important story is the manufacturing sector. Midwest manufacturing employment accounts for about one-third of national manufacturing employment. All the states in the Midwest (as well as the national average) recorded a drop in their share of manufacturing employment relative to total employment between 2006 and 2016. Iowa and Wisconsin saw the same percentage point reduction in their manufacturing employment shares as the nation. Missouri, Indiana, Illinois, and Ohio saw a greater reduction in their manufacturing shares than the nation, while Michigan, Kentucky, and Minnesota saw a smaller reduction in their manufacturing

employment share in the ten years spanning 2006 to 2016.

	Table 8: 2016 Employment Distribution by Industry as a Share of Total NonFarm Payrolls									
	US	**IL**	IN	IA	KY	MI	MN	MO	OH	WI
Mining & Logging	0.5%	**0.1%**	0.2%	0.1%	0.6%	0.2%	0.2%	0.1%	0.2%	0.1%
Construction	4.7%	**3.6%**	4.2%	5.1%	4.0%	3.6%	4.0%	4.2%	3.8%	3.8%
Manufacturing	8.6%	**9.5%**	17.0%	13.6%	13.0%	13.9%	11.0%	9.2%	12.5%	15.9%
Trade/Transportation/Utilities										
Wholesale Trade	4.1%	**5.0%**	3.8%	4.3%	4.0%	4.0%	4.6%	4.2%	4.3%	4.2%
Retail Trade	11.0%	**10.3%**	10.8%	11.6%	11.2%	10.9%	10.3%	11.1%	10.5%	10.6%
Trans, Warehousing & Utilities	3.5%	**4.8%**	4.7%	4.2%	5.6%	3.2%	3.5%	3.8%	3.9%	3.7%
Information	1.9%	**1.6%**	1.1%	1.4%	1.2%	1.3%	1.7%	1.9%	1.3%	1.7%
Financial Activities	5.7%	**6.4%**	4.3%	6.9%	4.9%	4.9%	6.1%	5.9%	5.5%	5.2%
Professional & Business Services	14.0%	**15.5%**	10.9%	8.8%	11.4%	15.0%	12.9%	13.3%	13.2%	11.0%
Educational & Health Services	15.7%	**15.2%**	15.0%	14.6%	14.1%	15.4%	18.0%	16.1%	16.8%	15.2%
Leisure & Hospitality	10.8%	**9.9%**	10.0%	9.1%	10.1%	9.9%	9.1%	10.6%	10.1%	9.4%
Other Services	3.9%	**4.2%**	4.1%	3.8%	3.4%	3.9%	4.0%	4.1%	3.9%	5.1%
Government	15.4%	**13.8%**	13.9%	16.4%	16.6%	13.9%	14.7%	15.3%	14.2%	14.1%

Decline from 2006
No Change from 2006
Growth from 2006

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Illinois Department of Employment Security

Manufacturing employment declined in the Midwest, as well as, in the nation, due to continuing long-term trends of improved productivity combined with offshoring to low-cost economies. However, it is important to note that demand for manufacturing employment remains strong in the Midwest and the nation because of the need to replace retiring workers. As "Baby Boomers" retire in Illinois, employers in the Midwest and across the nation will need to replace these workers. Occupations associated with manufacturing industries remain in demand locally (in the state) and in the region as well. Manufacturing's share of total employment is highest in Indiana and Wisconsin followed by Michigan, Iowa, Kentucky and Ohio. In the Midwest, Illinois and Missouri have a lower share of manufacturing employment than their neighboring states, but still higher than the national share. Some of the skills, knowledge and abilities required for those entering manufacturing production occupations in 2018 and beyond will differ from those who began their jobs 30 years ago with a greater reliance on technological skills.

While manufacturing remains a key industry in all Midwestern states, Illinois' share is smaller than its neighbors (except for Missouri); in fact, Illinois' share of manufacturing employment is more closely aligned to the national average. But Illinois is the largest state in the Midwest and consequently, its actual level of manufacturing employment is larger than all the other states in the region except Michigan and Ohio, which have benefited from the strong recovery in the motor vehicle sector within the broader recovery of the past eight years. Demand for manufacturing

occupations remains healthy in Illinois, and we will continue to compete with our neighbors for skilled labor.

Among trade, transportation and utilities, all Midwestern states saw a reduction in the share of employment in the wholesale trade sector except for Michigan and Wisconsin, which posted no change in 2016 in this sector relative to 2006. Midwestern states generally followed the same trend as the nation. In the retail trade sector, a majority of states also saw a reduction in their employment shares that was similar to the nation, although Michigan, Minnesota and Ohio posted a larger drop in their retail trade shares relative to the nation and their neighboring states. The nation recorded a drop in its share of employment in the transportation, warehousing and utilities sectors relative to 2006, but a majority of Midwestern states saw an increase in their share of employment in this sector, with the exception of Wisconsin (which posted a drop) and Missouri (unchanged). Kentucky, Illinois and Indiana have somewhat larger shares of their employment in this industry sector than the nation and their neighboring states. Illinois has long been known as a transportation hub due to its geographic location in the middle of the country, however both Indiana and Kentucky enjoy similar locational advantages.

Motor carrier businesses in Illinois are experiencing the impact of a national shortage of licensed truck drivers. Since 1994, the national average truck driver age has increased dramatically. An IWIB Transportation / Distribution / Logistics (TDL) Task Force Report issued in September 2017 identified several factors contributing to the shortage in addition to the aging of the workforce. For example, the number of new commercial driver's licenses issued in Illinois is on a downward trend, as is the number of license renewals. The number of trainees has remained relatively steady since 2014, but at a level 15 percent below 2013. The truck driver shortage impacts businesses in all regions of the state, however the preponderance of carriers is located in the Northeast, Northern Stateline and Southwest regions. The TDL Task Force Report is included as Attachment K (https://www.illinoisworknet.com/WIOA/Resources/Documents/Attachment%20K%20-%20Transportation%20Distribution%20and%20Logistics%20Task%20Force%20Final%20Report.pdf).

Professional and business services grew across the region, although all states except Illinois and Michigan have a smaller share of their employment in this industry sector than is the case nationally. In contrast, Illinois' share of employment in professional and business services is larger than the national average and higher than any of its neighboring states. Iowa and Minnesota saw a smaller increase than the nation during the ten years spanning 2006 to 2016, while Ohio rose at the same pace as the nation. Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Missouri and Wisconsin all grew faster than the nation.

Professional services include: accounting, legal, architecture and engineering, computer design and management consulting, as well as business headquarters. Business services include: temporary help agencies (with a wide variety of occupational needs), waste management services, business support services, and investigation and security services. Professional services tend to have a larger number of occupations with high wages, though business services can vary in wage structure.

Educational and health services recorded an increased share of overall employment in the nation and among Midwest states. This sector exhibited the fastest growth of any industry sector. The largest gain in employment share came in Minnesota, followed by Ohio, Illinois and Missouri. Other states saw somewhat smaller increases over this 10-year period with Kentucky posting the smallest growth relative to its neighbors. Occupations related to health care and education industries will be

in demand across the region as Midwestern states are likely to compete for workers in these occupational fields.

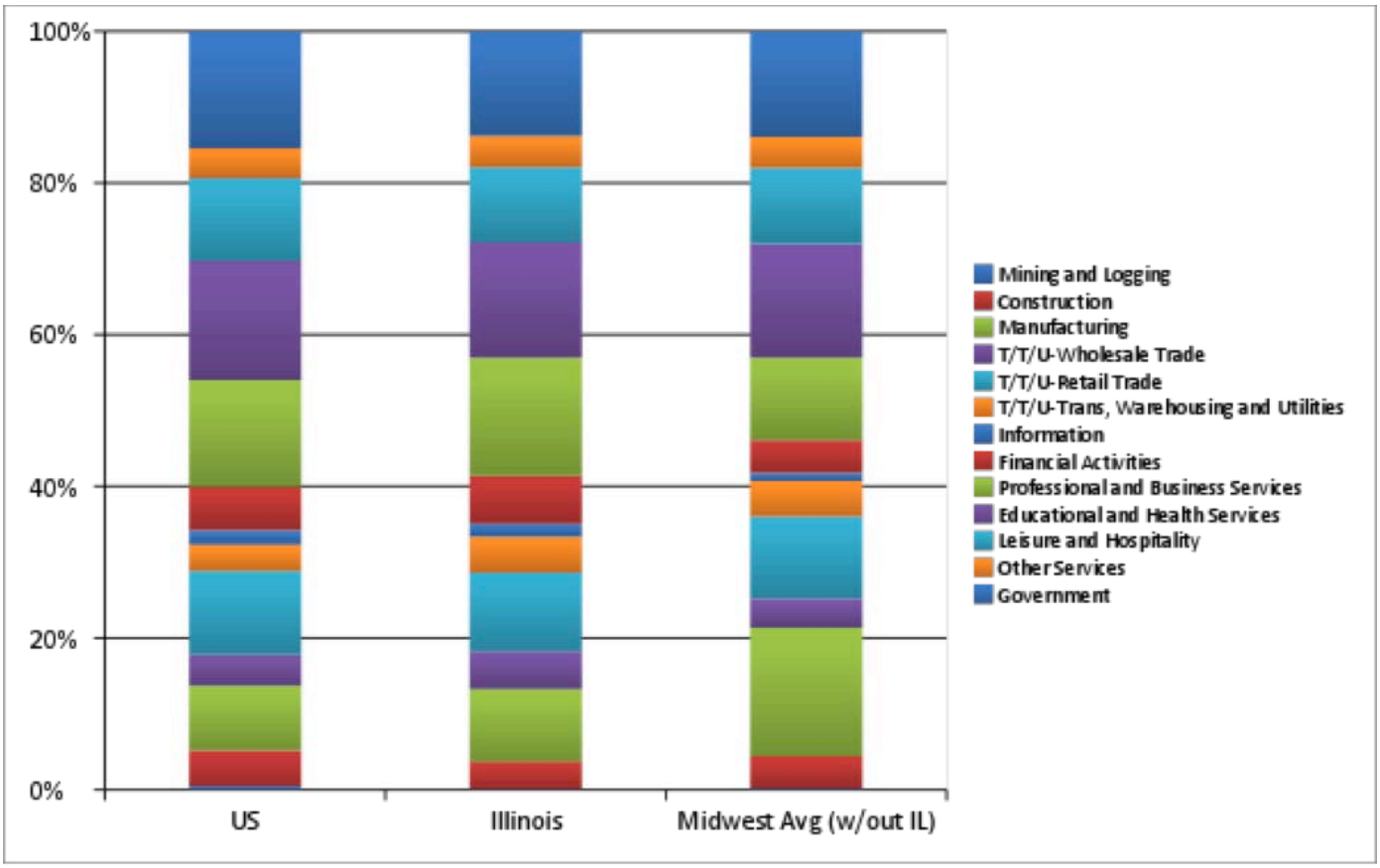
The leisure and hospitality sector saw increases across the board between 2006 and 2016 in the nation and among the Midwestern states. The nation posted an increase of 1.2 percentage points in its share of employment in this industry sector and this gain was matched by Illinois. All other Midwestern states posted smaller gains in their employment shares in this industry. Generally, Midwestern states have a smaller share of employment than the nation in this industry sector, but Missouri most closely approximates the nation.

The information sector saw a reduced share of employment in all Midwestern states and the national average. The largest drop, by far, came in Iowa. The rest of the states saw much smaller declines. Financial activities also saw a smaller share of employment in all Midwestern states (except Iowa and Kentucky where the share of employment in financial activities increased). Illinois' share decreased more than the nation and more than its neighbors. Illinois generally held strong employment in the financial activities sector and we remain one of the states with the largest share in this industry. This sector includes both high and middle-wage jobs and generally requires occupations with high levels of skill and education.

The government sector includes a variety of high, medium and low-skilled occupations. The nation, as well as a majority of Midwestern states saw a drop in their employment share in the government sector. Michigan posted the largest decline over the 10 years spanning 2006 to 2016, declining about twice as much as the nation. Illinois and the remaining states decreased much less. Illinois' share of government sector employment is smaller than the nation and smaller than all other Midwest states.

Chart 1, based on Table 8, provides a graphic representation of this analysis.

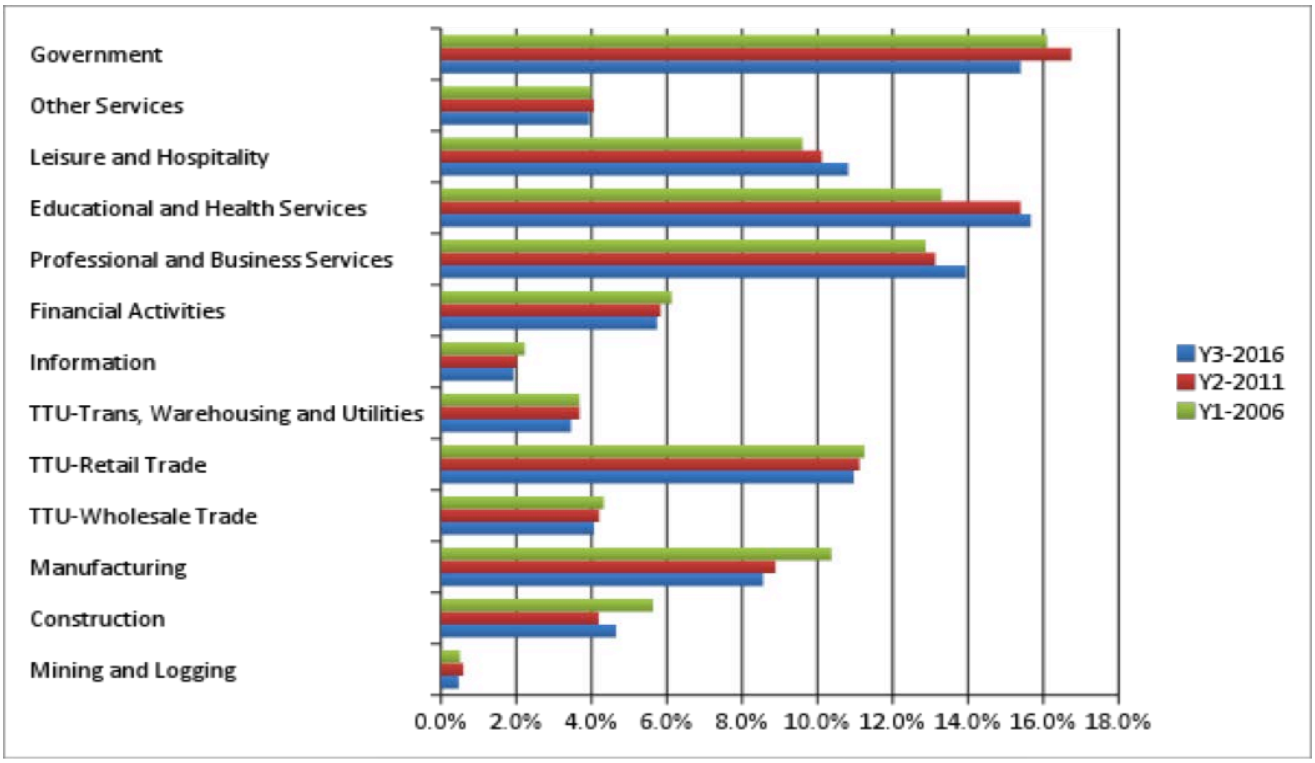
Chart 1 -- 2016 Distribution of Industry IL vs. U.S. and Average of Other Midwest States



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics Program 2016

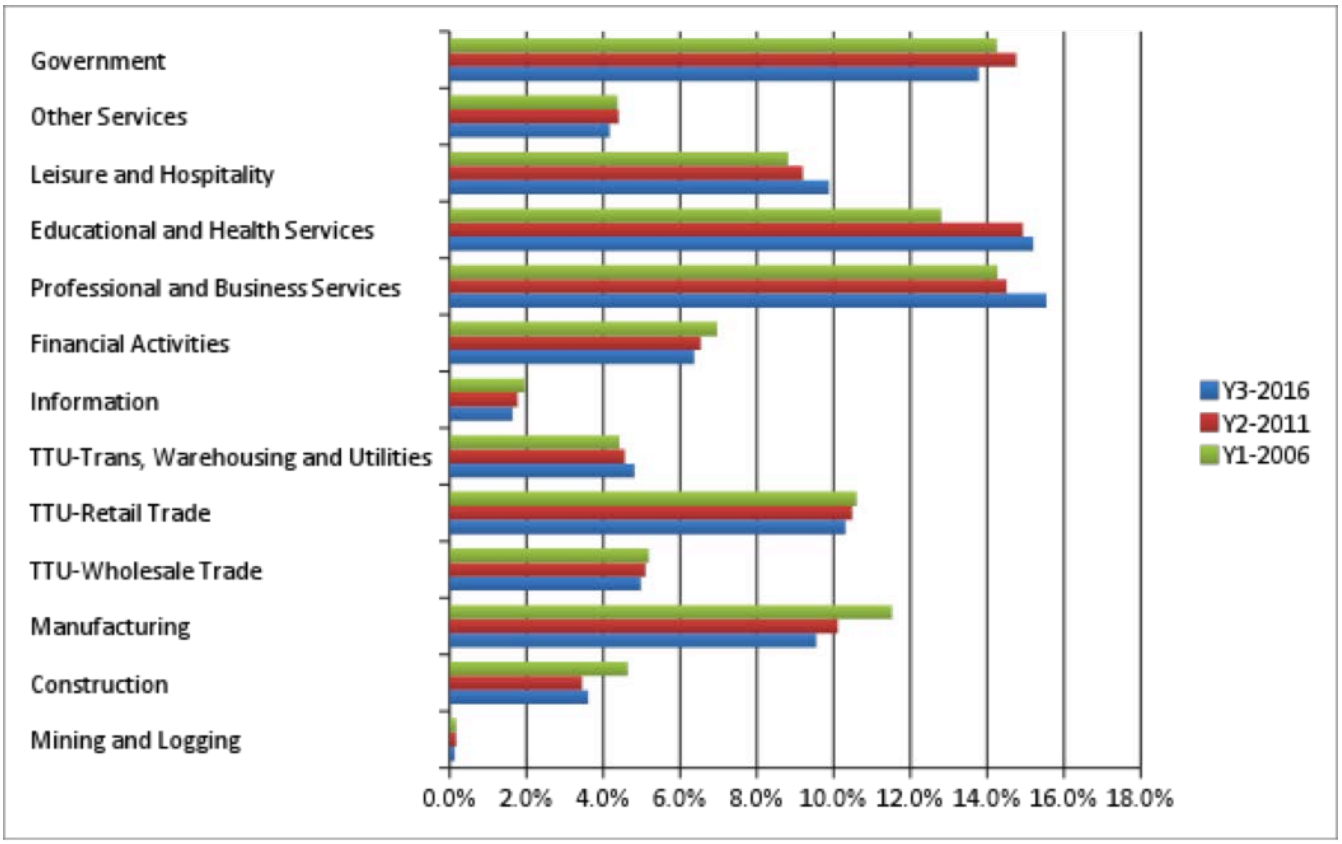
Charts 2-4 show how the industry distribution has changed over the last decade, with data shown for 2006, 2011 and 2016.

Chart 2 -- U.S. Employment Distribution by Industry as Share of Total Nonfarm Payrolls 2006, 2011, 2016



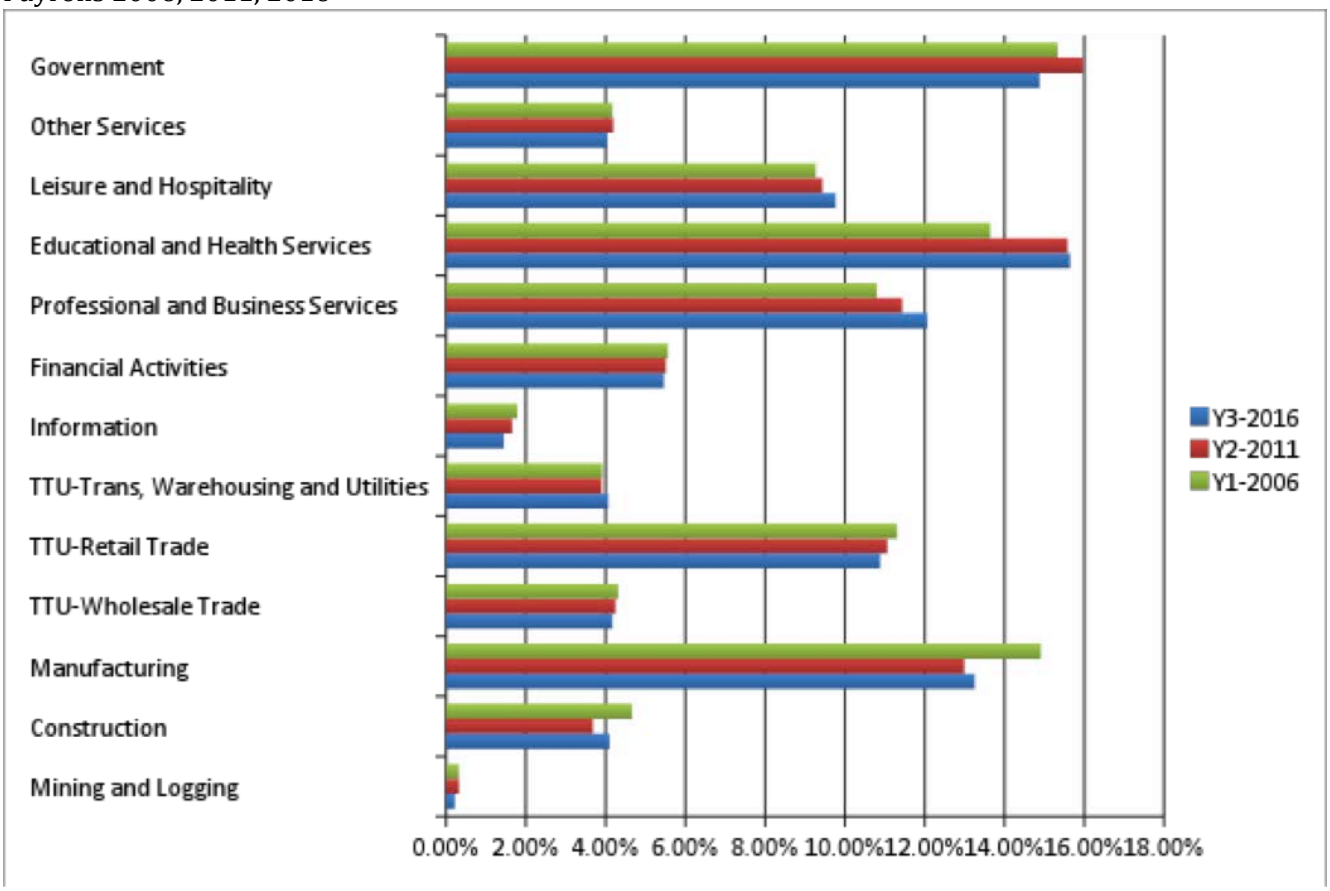
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics Program 2006, 2011, 2016

Chart 3 -- IL Employment Distribution by Industry as Share of Total Nonfarm Payrolls 2006, 2011, 2016



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics Program 2006, 2011, 2016

Chart 4 -- MW (outside of IL) Employment Distribution by Industry as Share of Total Nonfarm Payrolls 2006, 2011, 2016

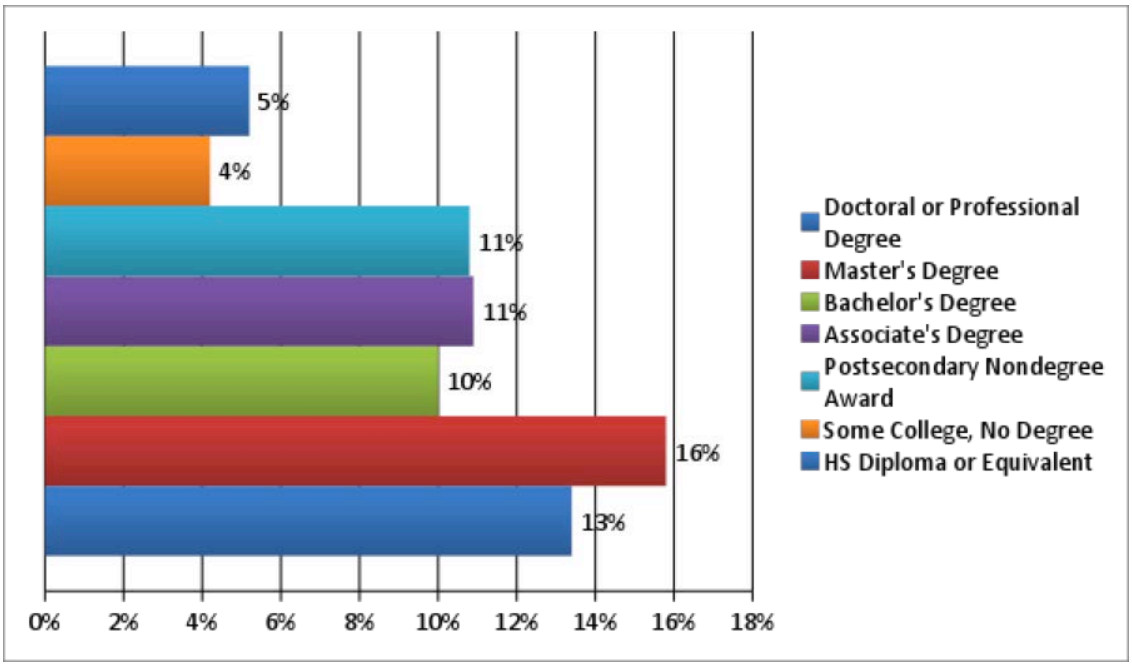


Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics Program 2006, 2011, 2016

iii. Education and Skill Levels of the Workforce

Occupational skill requirements are increasing across the workforce due to a number of factors, including the increasing pace of technological change and the increasingly global nature of the economy. In its most recent set of occupational employment projections, the USBLS shows the increasing need for advanced education and training to qualify for occupations with the highest growth rates.

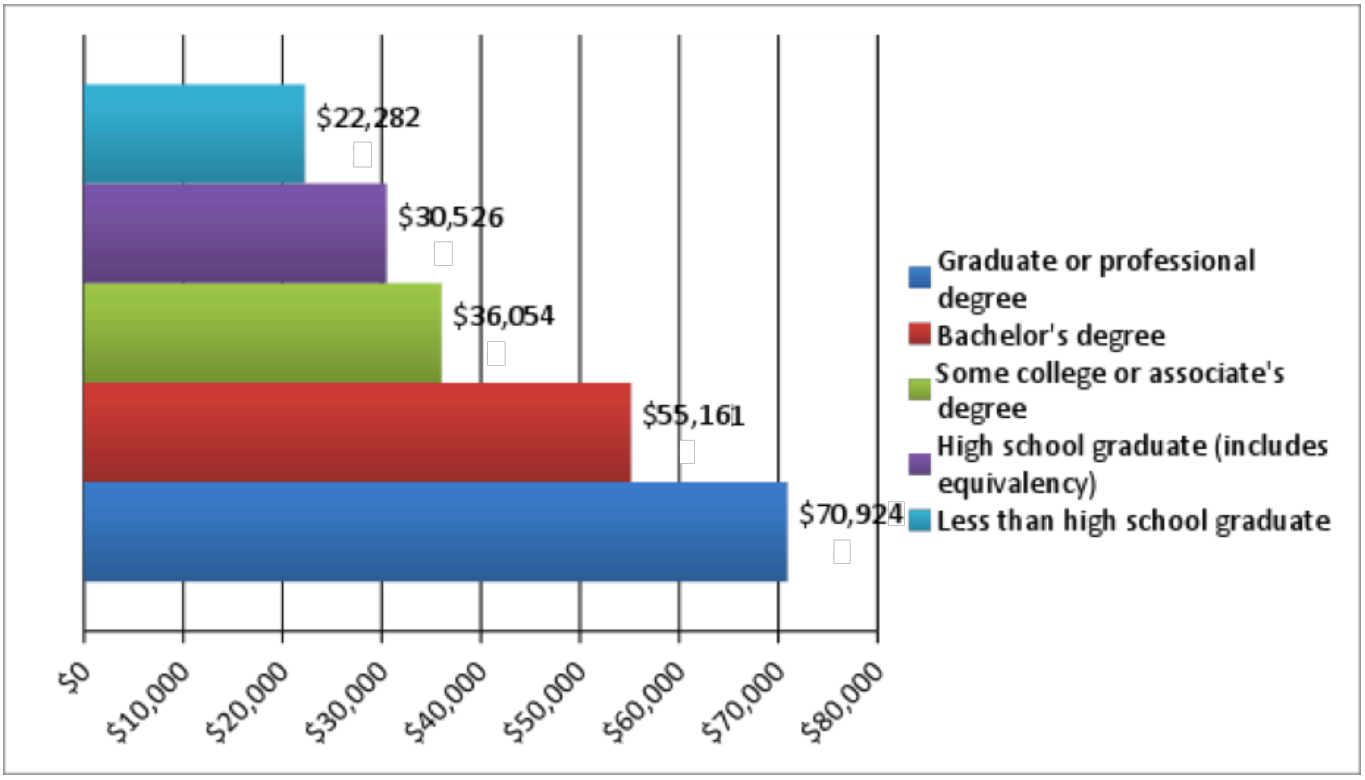
Chart 5 -- Projected U.S. Employment Growth by Educational Requirements 2016-2026



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics,, Employment Projections Program 2016-2026

Moreover, the education and skill requirements of occupations are directly related to the earning power of those occupations, as evidenced by Illinois' data from the 2016 American Community Survey.

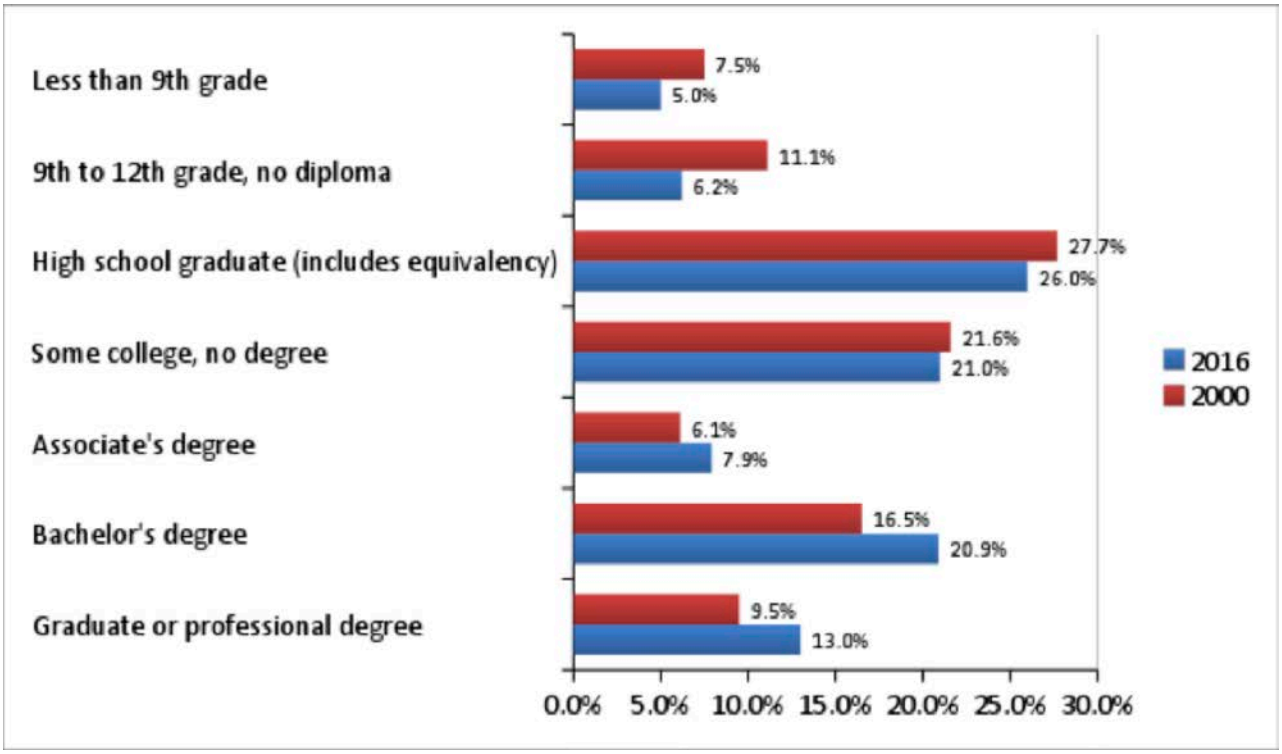
Chart 6 -- Illinois Median Income by Educational Attainment: 2016



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2016

These data sets highlight the importance and the value of educational achievement and degree attainment. For Illinois to compete in this globalized, technology-charged economy, we must train our workforce to meet the challenges of these increasing education and skill requirements. Since the turn of the century, Illinois has made progress in increasing the overall educational attainment of its population. However, the number of individuals with low literacy skills has remained a significant concern as we seek to meet the demand for an educated and skilled workforce.

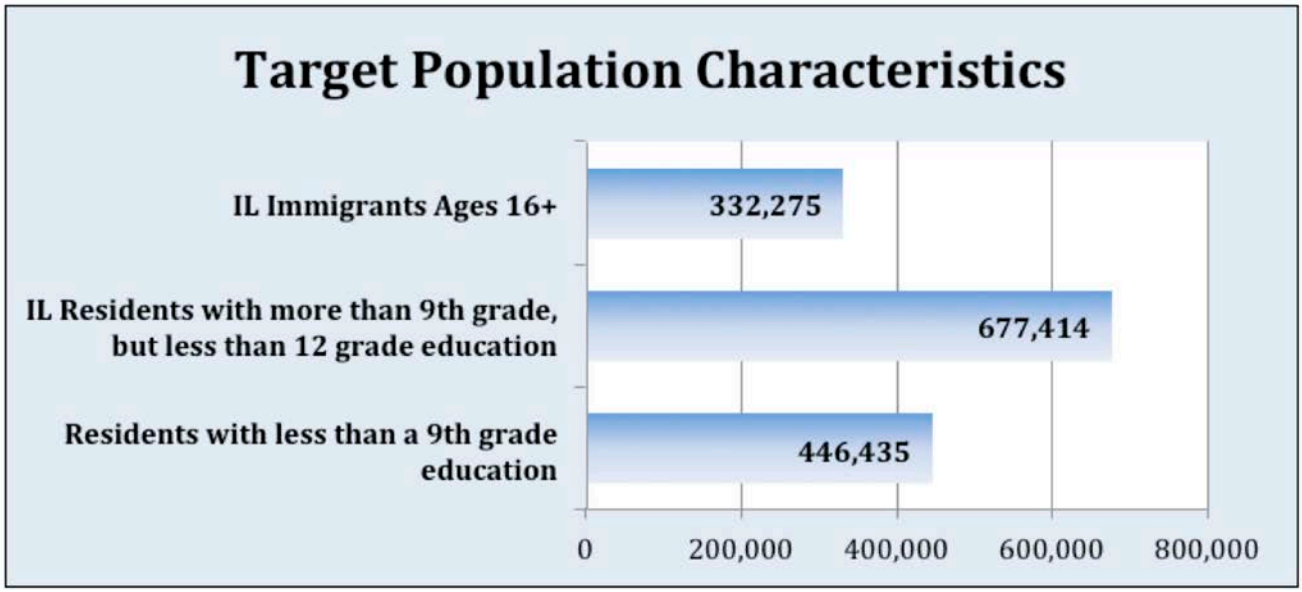
Chart 7 -- Percent of Illinois Population by Educational Attainment: 2000 to 2016



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census, American Community Survey 2016

The percentage of Illinois' population (age 25+) with some type of post-secondary degree increased from 32% in 2000 to almost 42% in 2016. However, this number is still too low. Illinois has committed to ensuring that 60% of the state's population has a high-quality degree or credential by 2025, an initiative referred to as "60 by 2025." As this data shows, the state is clearly moving towards that goal, but there is still a long way to go in the next decade. Illinois' continued economic and income growth is dependent on reaching the "60 by 2025" goal.

Chart 8 -- Target Population Characteristics



Source: 2017 Illinois Community College Board Index of Need Report

In Illinois, nearly 700,000 people have some high school education but do not have a diploma, and nearly 450,000 people have less than a 9th grade education. These individuals could benefit from a variety of workforce and adult education programs, especially bridge programs that incorporate English, reading and math skills contextualized for a targeted industry.

iv. Skill Gaps

During recent years, a number of projects and studies have examined the issue of "skill gaps" within major industry sectors in Illinois (or significant portions of Illinois). For example, in 2017, the Illinois Community College Board developed the Workforce Education Strategic Plan (WESP). The WESP focused on skill gaps, specifically under Strategic Goal 2: "Address Essential and Occupational Skill Gaps." This Strategic Goal is focused on embedding essential employability skills into curricula, addressing employers' concerns regarding on the job competencies and providing best-practices resources to Community Colleges.

The IWIB is also supportive of these activities and has placed continued emphasis on identifying skills gaps. Its strategic plan focuses on developing business profiles throughout the state to understand specific workforce needs that are directly identified by employers.

The following subheadings highlight three important industry sectors in Illinois -- manufacturing, healthcare and transportation, distribution & logistics (TDL) -- and provide a brief synopsis of the findings of skill gaps projects and studies.

Manufacturing

The Chicago Metropolitan Agency on Planning (CMAP) released a policy update in March, 2015 that examined quantitative labor market data to determine the extent of the manufacturing skills gap in metropolitan Chicago.

As of 2014, Economic Modeling Specialists International (EMSI) estimated that 28,000 unemployed individuals in the Chicago region were seeking work in the manufacturing sector. Despite this large

pool of job seekers, manufacturing companies claim they are having trouble finding skilled workers to fill open positions, both in the region and nationwide. Data indicate that there may be shortages of industrial machinery mechanics, computer numerical control (CNC) machine operators and programmers and welders in the region.

The skills gap is a complex issue with few direct measures. Data about wages, job openings and work weeks must be woven together to understand the full conditions in the labor market. Even with all three measures, it can still be difficult to determine whether individual occupations face a shortage of skilled workers. Within the Chicago region, skills gaps are evident in several key manufacturing jobs, such as industrial machinery mechanics, computer numerical control (CNC) programmers and operators and welders. The severity of this recent manufacturing skills gap may have intensified when demand for workers spiked as the economy began to recover in 2009.

While much of the manufacturing skills gaps dialogue has focused on technical skills, the challenge of finding employees may extend beyond technical competencies. Manufacturing employees also must have so-called "essential/soft skills" such as literacy, numeracy, reliability, problem-solving and the ability to work in teams. The “CMAP Manufacturing Drill-Down Report” indicates that firms throughout the region have reported being unable to find sufficient workers with these skills. Downstate manufacturers and those in more rural areas face similar and often greater challenges in filling their vacancies due to an aging workforce, outmigration of younger residents and smaller labor pools.

Health Care

In September 2014, the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB) accepted a report developed by its Health Care Task Force, consisting of IWIB business leaders and health care educators and practitioners. This report examined the workforce implications of issues regarding the implementation of new public health and coordinated, community-based healthcare delivery models in Illinois. These new models are being implemented in response to changing population and patient needs, federal and state healthcare reforms, and innovations in delivery models, professional practices and technology. These new models place stronger emphasis on prevention and primary care and use professional and paraprofessional healthcare workers in new roles with different skill requirements.

The Task Force determined that the shift to team-based delivery models and improved health information technologies will allow each primary care physician to efficiently and effectively manage a greater number of patients. Insofar as workforce staffing is concerned, the results of these changes will be the following associated shifts in demand:

• A reduction in growth rate for primary care physicians. While the demand for primary care services will grow chiefly because of policy and incentive (and demographic) changes, the provision of those services will be shared across all team members, not exclusively by primary care physicians.

• An increased demand for advanced practice nurses (APNs) and physician assistants (PAs).

• A significantly increased demand for front-line occupations such as community health workers (CHWs), home health aides (HHAs) and medical assistants (MAs).

In each of these occupational categories, apparent skills gaps can be identified. The gaps range from the need for increased managerial skills on the part of primary care physicians to the up-skilling of

APNs and PAs to meet more robust patient care responsibilities and to meet the need for new and updated certification protocols for CHWs, HHAs and MAs. Recently released long-term occupational projections support these shifts in health care employment.

Table 9 -- High Demand Healthcare Occupations

Occupation	Employment 2014	Employment Change (2014-2024)	Average Annual Job Openings
Registered Nurses	116,375	10.49%	3,967
Physical Therapists	10,978	20.23%	516
Nurse Practitioners	6,360	24.54%	306
Physical Therapist Assistants	3,755	22.29%	193
Physical Therapist Aides	3,405	21.12%	170
Physician Assistants	2,831	21.51%	125
Nurse Anesthetists	1,857	17.18%	76
Nurse Midwives	442	17.19%	18

Source: Illinois Department of Employment Security -- Illinois 2014-2024 Occupational Projections

Transportation, Distribution & Logistics

Industry economists predict a national shortage of some 240,000 commercial truck drivers by 2023. In this occupation, retention is as significant a challenge as talent pipeline management. Since 2009, truck driver turnover rates have been recorded at nearly five times the average rate of other industries. These statistics led the IWIB to reconstitute the TDL Task Force in 2015. The Task Force was charged with developing recommendations and strategies for developing the needed TDL workforce in all areas of Illinois. The Task Force submitted its final report in June 2017. This report (Attachment K) (https://www.illinoisworknet.com/WIOA/Resources/Documents/Attachment%20K%20-%20Transportation%20Distribution%20and%20Logistics%20Task%20Force%20Final%20Report.pdf) summarizes the latest supply and demand projections, model solutions and promising practices that could assist Illinois in addressing its labor force needs within the industry — particularly with regard to over-the-road drivers. The ultimate goal of the Task Force's work was to increase the number of CDLs in Illinois, support industry cluster growth and drive overall economic growth in Illinois. Working in four sub-groups, the task force members identified short-and long-term action goals resulting in nine recommendations to the IWIB for approval and to the industry for consideration. A small group of Task Force members will remain to review the results of these recommendations.

Additionally, in June 2015, JP Morgan Chase and Jobs for the Future released a report called "Growing Skills for a Growing Chicago," which sought to develop "data-driven solutions to address the mismatch between employer needs and the skills of current job seekers." In terms of TDL, the report found that there is a strong and ongoing demand for what it terms "middle-skill" jobs — jobs that require more than a high school credential, but less than a bachelor's degree. Examples of these occupations are diesel mechanic or supply chain specialist. The Chicago metro area creates more than 5,000 of these middle-skill jobs in TDL each year, but the need for an associate's degree or credentialing is often the source of the skill gap. To close that gap, the report outlines a series of recommendations, including the widespread institution of TDL-specific talent pipeline solutions that will increase the feedback loop between employers and training providers.

2. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, EDUCATION AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES ANALYSIS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the workforce development activities, including education and training in the State, to address the education and skill needs of the workforce, as identified in *Education and Skill Levels of the Workforce* above, and the employment needs of employers, as identified in *Employers' Employment Needs* above. This must include an analysis of –

A. THE STATE'S WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Provide an analysis of the State's workforce development activities, including education and training activities of the core programs, Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan, and required and optional one-stop delivery system partners.*

---

* Required one-stop partners: In addition to the core programs, the following partner programs are required to provide access through the one-stops: Career and Technical Education (Perkins), Community Services Block Grant, Indian and Native American programs, HUD Employment and Training programs, Job Corps, Local Veterans' Employment Representatives and Disabled Veterans'

Outreach Program, National Farmworker Jobs program, Senior Community Service Employment program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) (unless the Governor determines TANF will not be a required partner), Trade Adjustment Assistance programs, Unemployment Compensation programs, and YouthBuild.

2. Workforce Development, Education and Training Activities Analysis

A. The State's Workforce Development Activities

The Illinois Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Unified State Plan is designed to provide a vision of the Governor's integration of workforce, education and economic development policy while also serving as a federal compliance document for the United States Departments of Labor and Education under the federal WIOA. The Unified State Plan outlines the vision, principles and goals for the integration of workforce, education and economic development programs for the State of Illinois.

State Workforce System

The Governor, Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB) and WIOA core partners, including the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (Commerce), the Illinois Department of Employment Security (Employment Security), the Illinois Department of Human Services Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) and the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) determined that the state will submit a Unified State Plan. The state has developed this Unified State Plan with the intent to integrate the programs listed below (including the non-core programs) into the strategies outlined in the Unified State Plan.

• Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity

o Youth, Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs

o Employment and Training under the Community Services Block Grant Program

o Trade Act Programs

o Regional Economic Development

• Illinois Community College Board

o Adult Education and Family Literacy Act

o Career and Technical Education Programs at the postsecondary level authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006

• Illinois Department of Employment Security

o Wagner-Peyser Employment Services including Labor Market Information

o Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers Monitor Advocate System

o Veterans Employment and Training Services

o Unemployment Insurance Services

o Trade Adjustment Assistance

• Illinois Department of Human Services

o Rehabilitation Services for Individuals with Disabilities

o Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

• Illinois Department on Aging

o Senior Community Services Employment Program

• Illinois Department of Corrections

o Section 212 of the Second Chance Act of 2007

• Nationally Directed - Locally Administered Programs

o National Farmworker Jobs Program

o YouthBuild

o Job Corps

Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (Commerce)

Commerce is the state agency that leads economic development efforts for Illinois and is responsible for the WIOA Title IB activities. Key program activities include distributing WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth formula funds, Trade Act funds and National Dislocated Worker Grants to 22 Local Workforce Innovation Areas (LWIAs), monitoring the local areas' use of WIOA funds, and providing technical assistance to local areas. Commerce is responsible for the administration of the required and allowed Governor's Statewide Workforce Activities as outlined in WIOA. As the designated entity, Commerce issues formal guidance on behalf of the IWIB as well as specific guidance to the Title I entities. Commerce also provides staff support to the IWIB and its committees, ad hoc task forces and policy work groups. In 2017 Commerce created a new staff position to support the expanded duties of the IWIB. This position has the primary responsibility to provide staff support to the IWIB, particularly to its chair and executive committee. As part of the Bureau of Community Development, Commerce also oversees the employment and training programs under the Community Services Block Grant Program.

The Department has oversight of the Equal Opportunity (EO) provisions of Section 188 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act for Title I programs administered throughout Illinois' twenty-two local workforce innovation areas. In 2017, the Deputy Director of the Office of Equal Opportunity began working closely with the EO offices from the other core partner programs to ensure coordinated efforts among all EO Officers. This is an effort to minimize the potential for duplicative services at the regional and local level, while maximizing the expertise of each office and the unique challenges of their specific programs.

Illinois Community College Board (ICCB)

The ICCB has the responsibility of overseeing WIOA Title II activities under the Adult Education and Literacy Act. Services include, but are not limited to, assessment, basic skills instruction, English language acquisition instruction, high school equivalency instruction, career awareness, workforce preparation, online instruction, bridge programs, and accelerated education and training programs. Currently there are 81 providers of adult education and family literacy in Illinois, consisting of community colleges, community-based organizations, regional offices of education and other approved providers. The mission and vision of adult education is to provide every individual in Illinois with access to adult education and literacy services, in preparation for enrollment in

postsecondary education and training programs as well as employment. In Illinois, more than 1.1 million adults have less than 12 grades of formal education, approximately 2.8 million residents speak a language other than English in their home, and more than 552,000 immigrants reside here. ICCB seeks to prepare adult learners to compete for jobs of the present and the future. To accomplish this, it is necessary to build a system that is founded on education, training and workforce.

The ICCB also administers Postsecondary Perkins funds. During FY '16 and '17, roughly two-thirds (65.3%) of all Illinois community college graduates earned a CTE degree or certificate and 259 new CTE programs were approved to meet workforce demands. In Illinois, federal Perkins Title I funds are divided 60/40 between the secondary and post-secondary career and technical education systems where administration is shared between the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) and ICCB. The 57 Education for Employment (EFE) regions receive funds from ISBE to support secondary CTE programs, and the 39 community college districts receive funds from ICCB to support post-secondary CTE programs.

The Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006 (Perkins IV) is the most important piece of legislation affecting career and technical education (CTE) in Illinois. Perkins IV focuses state and local efforts on the continuous improvement of programs that facilitate the academic achievement of CTE students. This is accomplished by strengthening the connections between secondary and post-secondary education, by restructuring the way stakeholders, high schools, community colleges, universities, business and parents work together and by increasing state and local accountability standards. The intent of Illinois' post-secondary CTE is to provide students with the skills and knowledge necessary to excel in the global economy. Career and technical education equips students with foundational knowledge regarding a cluster of occupations and careers. As a student evolves through their educational experience, their focus is narrowed to a particular program. This process allows students to transition seamlessly while providing them with hands-on exploration, rigorous academics and the support necessary to succeed.

Illinois Department of Employment Security (Employment Security)

Employment Security is responsible for administering Title III activities for employment services under the Wagner-Peyser Act. The intention of Wagner-Peyser services is to sustain economic growth by meeting the needs of job seekers and employers, to increase awareness of resource providers and to expand employment opportunities. Services offered include assessments for job placement, job search assistance, and online job application processing. Employment Security is responsible for increasing community awareness about the services provided via job fairs, community collaborations, onsite recruitments, resource linkage and presentations to both job seekers and employers. Additionally, Employment Security is responsible for labor market and career information in Illinois through cooperative agreements with the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) to provide statewide and sub-state employment, unemployment, occupation, wage information and statewide and sub-state industry and occupational employment projections. These data products serve as the cornerstone for the Career Information System, a web-based tool for students and job seekers to identify Illinois' in-demand jobs and to make informed choices about future career pathways.

In addition to Wagner-Peyser Title III activities, the Illinois Department of Employment Security is responsible for administering four other workforce programs: Unemployment Insurance; Job

Counseling, Training and Placement Services for Veterans; Trade Readjustment Assistance (TRA); and the Migrant Seasonal Farmworker Program.

The Unemployment Insurance program is designated to contribute to the state's overall economic stability by partially protecting eligible workers against loss of income during periods of unemployment. Eligible workers who become unemployed and meet all requirements set forth in the UI Act may receive benefits for the maximum number of weeks payable under the law or until the worker finds employment or becomes otherwise ineligible.

The Job Counseling, Training, and Placement Services for Veterans program ensures priority of service to Veterans over all other job applicants, actively promotes and develops employment opportunities, and provides placement and vocational guidance services, specifically for those Veterans who have significant barriers to employment. Additional information regarding priority of service for Veterans may be found at http://www.dol.gov/VETS/E8-30166.pdf.

Trade Readjustment Assistance, a benefit under the Trade Adjustment Assistance program, provides income support to persons who have exhausted unemployment insurance compensation and whose jobs were affected by foreign imports.

The Migrant Seasonal Farmworker Program provides staff assisted services, including job development, career guidance, and referrals to training and supportive services for migrant and seasonal farmworkers.

Illinois Department of Human Services Division of Rehabilitation Services

The Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) administers Title IV activities and is the state's lead agency serving individuals with disabilities. DRS works in partnership with individuals with disabilities and their families to assist them in making informed choices to achieve full community participation through employment, education and independent living opportunities. The primary focus of the vocational rehabilitation program is to assist individuals with significant disabilities in obtaining and retaining competitive integrated employment. Vocational rehabilitation services are designed to prepare an individual for employment through an individualized planning process. DRS staff also provide assistance to workforce partners in the area of program accessibility and assistive technology.

Department of Human Services' Division of Family & Community Services

The Illinois Department of Human Services' Division of Family & Community Services is also the state administrator of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. TANF is a time-limited cash assistance program for families meeting eligibility rules. DHS operates Family Community Resource Centers (FCRC) statewide serving TANF customers on the pathway to self-sufficiency. TANF customers are evaluated and assessed for suitability for employment and training programs. TANF customers are also assessed to determine barriers and barrier reduction service needs. These issues may be related to substance abuse, mental health and domestic violence. The FCRC identifies the customer's needs to create a Responsibility and Service Plan (RSP), which is a guide to services. The RSP contains employment and training needs, supportive service needs (e.g., transportation and uniforms) and child care. Most TANF customers are also eligible for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and medical assistance.

The Department of Human Services' Division of Family & Community Services has a strong presence in Comprehensive One-Stop Centers and is committed to increasing workforce

engagement with collaborative partnerships to achieve employment opportunities for all adults served by DHS. A taskforce has been created to strategically move through the process of ensuring service integration among Partners in the one-stop centers. Staff located in the Comprehensive One-Stop Centers is trained to assist customers utilizing the online TANF/SNAP/Medical application through the Application for Benefits Eligibility System (ABE), which is accessible through Illinois workNet. To streamline the referral process, DHS is actively involved in cross-training sessions at the one-stop centers to enhance awareness of services and resources provided on site.

Illinois Department on Aging

The mission of the Illinois Department on Aging (Aging) is to serve and advocate for older Illinoisans and their caregivers by administering quality and culturally appropriate programs that promote partnerships and encourage independence, dignity and quality of life. In accordance with the federal Older American's Act regulations, Aging has divided Illinois into 13 Planning and Service Areas (PSAs). The 13 PSAs in Illinois are each managed and served by an Area Agency on Aging. Aging works in partnership with these agencies: 12 not-for-profit corporations and one unit of local government, the City of Chicago. Area Agencies on Aging (Area Agencies) have the primary task of planning and coordinating services and programs for older people in their respective areas. The Area Agencies receive funding from Aging based on a formula which takes into consideration the number of older citizens and minorities in that area, as well as the number living in poverty, in rural areas and alone. Like Aging, Area Agencies are not, as a rule, direct service providers. Area Agencies contract with local agencies, which provide services to the older citizens who live in the same community.

The role of Aging under WIOA is to ensure the needs of older workers and job seekers are considered so that these individuals remain employed for as long as they wish. Age is often a barrier to finding employment, and Aging's resources can be leveraged to help older citizens find and retain employment. As a partner program, Aging has the role of administering the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) under Title V of the Older Americans Act. The SCSEP program provides on-the-job training, resources and referrals for all individuals 55+ years of age that will ultimately lead to unsubsidized employment.

Illinois Department of Corrections

The mission of the Illinois Department of Corrections (Corrections) is to serve justice in Illinois and increase public safety by promoting positive change in offender behavior, operating successful reentry programs and reducing victimization. Corrections administers the Department of Justice (Bureau of Justice Assistance) Second Chance Act Grant, which allows governments and communities to coordinate reentry efforts, enhance existing housing and support services, engage in evidence-based practices and create innovative strategies that will serve the growing needs of this population, ultimately increasing public safety and reducing recidivism.

Nationally Directed/Locally Administered Programs

There are a number of nationally directed workforce programs that are administered in some of the regions and LWIAs in Illinois. These programs, where present, will be included in the regional and local workforce plans.

National Farmworker Jobs Program

The National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) provides employment and training services that are targeted to migrant and seasonal farmworkers (MSFWs). The program partners with community organizations and state agencies to counter the chronic unemployment and underemployment experienced by farmworkers who depend primarily on jobs in agricultural labor performed across the country. NFJP partners with the state monitor advocate to provide outreach services to farmworkers and their families. NFJP provides career services and training to eligible farmworkers, and coordinates with the One-Stop Delivery System. The National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) grant awards are determined by a formula that estimates, by state, the relative demand for NFJP services.

YouthBuild

The United States Department of Labor grants funds directly to the local YouthBuild program through an annual competitive process. YouthBuild is a community-based alternative education program that provides job training and educational opportunities for at-risk youth ages 16-24. Youth learn construction skills while constructing or rehabilitating affordable housing for low-income or homeless families in their own neighborhoods. Youth split their time between the construction site and the classroom, where they earn their GED or high school diploma, learn to be community leaders and prepare for college and other post-secondary training opportunities. YouthBuild includes significant support systems, such as mentoring, follow-up education, employment and personal counseling services and participation in community service and civic engagement.

Job Corps

Job Corps is an education and vocational training program administered by the U.S. Department of Labor that helps young people ages 16 through 24 improve the quality of their lives through vocational and academic training. Job Corps' mission is to attract eligible young people, teach them the skills they need to become employable and independent and place them in meaningful jobs or further education. Job Corps centers are operated for the U.S. Department of Labor by private companies through competitive contracting processes, and by other federal agencies through interagency agreements. For more information regarding the Job Corps Program in Illinois please visit: http://www.jobcorps.gov/centers/il.aspx.

State Workforce Development Activities

Workforce development, education and training activities in Illinois have been transforming for some time. This transformation will accelerate as WIOA services continue to align and integrate across partner programs at the local, state and regional levels, and will ensure the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB), led by its business members, is the primary force behind state workforce activities. In late 2016, the IWIB began developing the framework for a strategic plan that details the Board's major objectives in leading the workforce system. The Board approved a vision and mission statement along with nine guiding principles aligned with the Unified State Plan to ensure members maintain focus on the course established. These are highlighted in more detail within the State Workforce Board section of this plan.

Illinois has strongly advocated and supported the alignment of efforts towards in-demand industries, occupations and skills. The intent is to firmly link education and training to the skills identified by businesses, ensuring that all program completers have appropriate skills when they enter the workforce. Additionally, Illinois promotes comprehensive career services that enable individuals to make informed decisions on education and training opportunities and maximize their

potential for successful and rewarding careers. The state will work to develop policies and incentives to support the strategies and activities as outlined in this plan.

The fundamental approach to workforce development in Illinois is captured in our Vision Statement, jointly adopted by all WIOA partners:

"Promote business-driven talent solutions that integrate education, workforce and economic development resources across systems to provide businesses, individuals, and communities with the opportunity to prosper and contribute to growing the state's economy."

Illinois is focused on a variety of strategies and activities including:

Coordinating Demand-Driven Strategic Planning at the State and Regional Levels

- Providing data and tools to support regional planning to align education, workforce and economic development strategies.
- Conducting outreach to regional and local economic development organizations to improve regional collaboration in economic development planning.
- Aligning and integrating business and job seeker services among the programs along with state and regional economic development partners.
- Providing Career Pathways for Economic Advancement
- Exploring ways to fully mainstream targeted populations into sector-based career pathway initiatives to achieve outcomes similar to other populations (see Section on "Targeted Populations").
- Creating new pathways for success by preparing low-skill adults to take advantage of sector-based bridge programs.
- Coordinating and Enhancing Career Services and Case Management
- Establishing case management teams to coordinate and support the delivery of enhanced case management services to participants across programs.
- Promoting continuous improvement in career services and case management through the identification of best practice models and incentivizing demonstration projects.
- Promoting expanded use of labor market information by employers and job seekers that will allow them to promote and access job openings, review changing labor market trends, and identify education and training programs.
- Supporting awareness and adoption of innovative private sector models, such as the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Talent Pipeline Management Initiative.
- Improving the Public-Private Data Infrastructure
- Working with core partners and the State of Illinois Chief Information Officer to develop a framework to integrate state intake, case management and reporting systems.
- Expanding and improving the state education and workforce longitudinal data system to support the six strategies.

WIOA Implementation & Coordination

Interagency Work Group

This group of top program administrators began meeting in May 2015 and continue to meet monthly. All meetings are supported by highly structured agendas designed to maintain clarity at the state-level regarding integration and alignment under WIOA. The major accomplishments of this group include:

- Participating in a coordinated process for review of the WIOA Notice of Proposed Rulemaking and Final Rule, a key purpose of which was to identify issues, requirements and opportunities of common interest and concern;

- Reaching an agreement on the specific career services and workforce programs and activities each required partner will make available at Comprehensive One-Stop Centers throughout Illinois, including the full configuration of workforce service delivery through one-stops in Illinois;

- Working collaboratively to coordinate the different methods that will be used to deliver these services, including delivery through technology that meets the "direct linkage" requirements of WIOA;

- Providing state-level input regarding policies to guide the local implementation of governance provisions such as the initial designation of "Local Workforce Innovation Areas" (Attachment L) (www.illinoisworknet.com/WIOA/Resources/Documents/Attachment%20L%20-%20Local%20Workforce%20Area%20Designation.pdf)

- Jointly developing a strategy for defining the number and location of Comprehensive One-Stop Centers in Illinois;

- Concurring on a general framework for cost sharing under WIOA, including a framework for sharing one-stop center infrastructure costs;

- Establishing an interagency task force to focus on operational details and mechanics associated with local and state infrastructure cost funding mechanisms under WIOA;

- Identifying initial elements to be included in the Governor's Guidelines (Attachment J) (https://www.illinoisworknet.com/WIOA/Resources/Documents/Attachment%20J%20-%20Governors%20Guidelines.pdf) which provide direction and support regarding negotiations of program partners at the state and local levels. The Governor's Guidelines have since been revised twice, with the latest revision issued in December 2016. Supplemental guidance to the Governor's Guidelines was issued to guide MOU and annual budget negotiations specific to Program Year 2017 (State Fiscal Year 2018). A third revision for Program Year 2018 (State Fiscal Year 2019) is awaiting approval, and updates will be issued going forward as needed.

- Working as part of the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB) Policy Workgroup on One-Stop Certification to provide input regarding the criteria and processes to be used for certification of Comprehensive One-Stop Centers;

- Development of a budget reconciliation handbook as a resource for local areas to understand and carry out the MOU budget reconciliation process. A webinar-based training was also held for individuals in local areas;

- In April 2017, a member of the Interagency Work Group shared the principles of the Illinois MOU development process with a national audience on a Workforce GPS WIOA Webinar.

- During the 2015-2016 regional and local planning cycle, the Interagency Work Group experimented with creating regional technical assistance teams made up of core partner field staff. The intent was to create teams of "WIOA experts" closer to the front lines that could respond very quickly to resolve implementation issues. In 2017 the Interagency Work Group conducted an evaluation and determined that these teams had varied levels of success. Therefore, the Interagency Work Group modified the process and implemented a new procedure for obtaining local input on WIOA implementation issues. Required program partner "troubleshooters" were put into place to monitor and identify the need for technical assistance statewide. The Interagency Work Group identified the characteristics of what qualified as a "local implementation issue." A form was put into place for "troubleshooters" to complete, which elevates the implementation issue to the Interagency Work Group for consideration, review and response to the local area.

Economic Information and Analysis

The Illinois Department of Employment Security provides statewide and sub-state occupational employment projections to assist local workforce areas, along with other partners, to determine in-demand occupations and plan education and training curricula. The Interagency Work Group has established an Interagency Data Team to develop comprehensive data reports that will be used in the state and regional plans. The data team will continue to work with the regional planning teams to provide additional data as needed. For the regions to be able to access labor market information that is specifically tied to the WIOA regional plans, the team will work on developing a vehicle to access this specific information on whichever platform is utilized for the state. Currently, Employment Security provides labor market information on the Employment Security website in a variety of formats including the Illinois Virtual Labor Market Information System (VLMI) that is supported by the DOL Workforce Information Grant and that is a required deliverable for all states.

Staff from the core WIOA partners also worked on a proof-of-concept pilot project to analyze outcomes for certain community college program completers. This talent flow analysis led to a successful evaluation of where graduates found employment and identified wage differentials based on industry and locale.

Workforce Education Strategic Planning

The ICCB worked with state and local partners in the development of a statewide Workforce Education Strategic Plan (WESP). Eleven regional forums were held in the 10 economic development regions in the spring of 2015. Initial employment and education data was used to identify the trends as well as the supply/demand opportunities in each region of the state. The ICCB continued the development of the WESP in the spring of 2016. The WESP was approved by the ICCB in June of 2017 and the implementation of strategies at the community college level continues. At the fall 2017 Illinois WIOA Summit, the lead agencies for both the WESP and the State Unified Plan shared with the audience how the plans align.

The information gathered through these education planning meetings was used to inform WIOA state and regional planning efforts that began in the fall of 2015. Following regional and statewide partner planning events that concluded in 2016, the ICCB, in partnership with community colleges, businesses and the core and required partners, continued collaborating to develop strategies in

four overarching content areas for recommendation to the state's community college system. These four content areas include:

- Strategic Direction 1: Increase Early Career-Related Education and Exposure
- Strategic Direction 2: Address Essential and Occupational Skill Gaps
- Strategic Direction 3: Align Education and Training Programs to Employers' Needs
- Strategic Direction 4: Strengthen Connections among Public Partners and Engagement and Alignment with Business

Technical Assistance and Professional Development

Illinois continues to coordinate technical assistance and professional development activities to support the priorities outlined in this plan. As a part of the initial WIOA implementation activities, Illinois hosted a series of regional planning kick-off meetings in December 2015. Partner program staff from each economic development region came together to learn about each other's programs, to review regional demographic and program data and to learn to use a data-driven planning approach. Using a format developed by the state, they also began to work on a planning framework specific to their region. Approximately 500 individuals attended these events and had the opportunity to ask questions and determine how their programs could contribute to the overall success of the region.

WIOA State Summit

Throughout 2017, representatives from all core partners jointly planned and, in October, executed a gathering of over 500 WIOA program leaders and staff to share best practices and lessons learned on implementation issues. Attendees heard a unifying message of collaboration from the IWIB chairman, the WIOA state agency directors and program leaders. The event also covered topics such as, integrated business engagement, working with economic development groups, overviews of sector strategies and talent pipeline management, and exploring why businesses are fond of Registered Apprenticeships. There were four plenary sessions and over a dozen unique breakout sessions under the following content strands:

- Customer-centered design
- Business engagement
- Data and accountability
- Tools and resources
- Workforce boards

WIOA Wednesday Webinars

Interactive webinars are held weekly to provide a platform for interagency partners to discuss integral WIOA implementation topics. The widely attended webinars provide a forum for questions and increase awareness of the required partner programs, activities and resources.

WIOA Portal & Newsletters

The state has developed a web portal to organize implementation documents, policies and technical assistance information. To facilitate common and ongoing communications, the Interagency Work Group initiated a joint monthly newsletter entitled "Illinois Works Together" to provide a source of common information about WIOA implementation progress for all local program partners and stakeholders. Additionally, the ICCB collaborated with the partners to release a newsletter to highlight WIOA activities providing a better understanding of partner agencies requirements to the adult education and career and technical education community.

Work-Based Learning Initiatives and Training Roundtables

Work-based learning (WBL) provides opportunities for workers to earn income while gaining critical job skills. Based on experience with interagency initiatives such as the Accelerated Training for Illinois Manufacturing Program, bridge programs and other initiatives, Illinois is making a deliberate shift to increase the use of contextualized learning and work-based training while moving away from a one-size-fits-all mentality of service delivery. Illinois is aggressively promoting the use of work-based learning as a means of closing chronic skill gaps. A strong emphasis continues to be placed on on-the-job training, pre-apprenticeship, registered apprenticeship and incumbent worker training. To prepare for the WIOA requirements, the state coordinated a number of roundtable events highlighting the importance of work-based learning, with a specific emphasis on using these training strategies to support industry sector initiatives. Additional technical assistance will provide the opportunity to institutionalize best practices and expand the impact of WBL employers, job seekers and the workforce system. Online resources, such as assessments and planning tools were made available on Illinois workNet. This information will be updated in 2018 to include best practices from the National Governor's Association Work-Based Learning Policy Academy.

Business Engagement

The State of Illinois understands that to give businesses and job seekers the workforce services they need, we need to better integrate our delivery of services to business. The core partners have built on a DOL funded environmental scan of current business engagement in Illinois. The product included a "map" of current efforts to support the first step of alignment -- understanding gaps, overlaps and opportunities for integration. In 2017, the IWIB and core agency directors approved a framework for workforce, education and economic development partners to better listen to, learn from and respond to Illinois' businesses. This framework was developed by a statewide group of business leaders and workforce partners and is meant to identify the elements and requirements of an integrated business services model for state and regional programs that will best equip them to understand and meet the ongoing workforce needs of Illinois' businesses. A working group of IWIB, agency partner and local workforce area representatives has since been charged with identifying and supporting key implementation strategies and tasks.

Support Employer-Driven Regional Sector Initiatives

The workforce system must have a better understanding of business needs to ensure that efforts are truly leading to solutions for critical skill shortages. A proven model to improve communication between businesses and workforce programs is the use of an employer-driven sector partnership. The state has and will continue to provide funding and technical assistance to promote the development of business collaborations. The Department of Commerce provided on-site technical assistance to groups of businesses and stakeholders working to establish manufacturing sector partnerships in three economic development regions. Representatives from one of these regional

partnerships shared the successes and lessons learned from their experience with their peers at the WIOA State Summit held in October 2017. Commerce staff continue to speak to business groups, most recently the Illinois Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives, to encourage business leaders to work together to jointly address their workforce needs. Staff from the Departments of Commerce and Employment Security participated in a Talent Pipeline Management Academy attended by system representatives from all regions of the state to provide foundational information on the benefits of business-driven collaborations.

Inclusion Initiatives

The Illinois Department of Human Services, Division of Rehabilitation Services is working with the core partners to integrate the national technical assistance effort funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Institute for Community Inclusion into the State's business engagement strategy. This effort is focused on engaging businesses throughout the state through job-driven vocational counseling concentrated on potential opportunities for individuals in high-growth sectors.

Career Pathways for Targeted Populations

The state has employed several approaches to promote the adoption of career pathway strategies. Each is designed to reinforce embedded pathways as a fundamental element of program design. The Illinois Pathways initiative develops the National Career Clusters® Framework and supports career pathway systems in STEM application areas. The pathways are a basis for clusters of specific occupations or careers grouped together because they share similar interests, strengths and skills. A key to a robust career pathways system is the full incorporation of portable, stackable credentials into the system, particularly at the postsecondary level. Fortunately, in Illinois, the incorporation of portable, stackable credentials has been an ongoing commitment of the postsecondary career and technical education system since the implementation of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act (Perkins IV).

The State of Illinois is dedicated to ensuring that all students have access to rigorous and relevant educational opportunities, linked to established career pathways that prepare them for success in college and careers. Illinois Career and Technical Education (CTE) provides students with the academic and technical skills necessary to succeed in the knowledge and skills-based economy. Students participating in these programs are held to specific and reliable industry-based learning standards to ensure that they are fully prepared for postsecondary education and for the high-wage, high-skill and high-demand career of their choice.

The ICCB recognized that CTE students at a community college do not always fit the model of transition implied in the Perkins IV definition. Thus, the agency moved early to adopt a more holistic career pathways approach to implementation. For example, the ICCB, CTE and Adult Education divisions partnered to develop an Integrated Career and Academic Preparation System (ICAPS). The purpose is to provide integrated CTE and Adult Education instruction, so adult students can earn at least one "stackable," credit-bearing, post-secondary education credential as well as industry recognized credentials that lead to high-wage employment in Illinois. In integrated programs, career and technical educators teach classes alongside adult education instructors, ensuring that students receive not only integrated curriculum inclusive of basic skills enhancements, but also curriculum tied to the latest in industry standards developed in partnership with employers.

In 2017, the Illinois General Assembly passed Public Act (PA) 100-0261 and PA 100-0195, allowing the ICCB to curate credit for prior learning policies from community colleges throughout the state.

PA 100-0195 is specifically attentive to military credit for prior learning. The ICCB has focused on Military Occupational Specialties, such as criminal justice, human resources, and occupations in the transportation, distribution, and logistics fields. Additionally, state regulations will be enacted by June of 2018 that require each community college to develop credit for prior learning policies that address a variety of methods for earning these credits. Community colleges, four-year colleges and universities in Illinois play a key role in helping residents pursue credentials that will help them access high-skill, high-wage jobs. Partnerships with high schools ensure graduates are college-ready, while dual credit opportunities, transfer assistance, recognition for prior learning, and other innovative approaches help learners — particularly low-income individuals — move through the P-20 pipeline.

Pathways to Results (PTR) Initiative

Pathways to Results (PTR) is aimed at improving student transitions to and through postsecondary education and into employment. It empowers organizations to use methods, templates and tools to continuously improve pathways and programs of study by addressing inequities in student outcomes. In Perkins IV, effective partnerships are viewed as essential to help all students meet college and career readiness expectations. Within the context of PTR, community colleges must fully and completely engage both internal and external stakeholders in their career pathways work. To do this, colleges are encouraged to develop partnerships based upon sound principles—setting goals and outcomes, defining the structure of governance, identifying a strategy for operation, evaluating success and considering sustainability. Stakeholders representing all sectors of industry and education should be at the table under the PTR model. PTR is an excellent model to utilize for the purpose of leveraging resources in order to provide enhanced access to workforce development programs at the states' community colleges and across post-secondary CTE programs.

Bridge Programs

The goal of bridge programs is to sequentially bridge the gap between the initial skills of individuals and the skills they need to enter and succeed in postsecondary education and career-path employment. Illinois' bridge programs prepare adults with limited academic or limited English skills to enter and succeed in post-secondary education and training leading to career-path employment in demand occupations as identified by the local labor market information. Individuals in all targeted populations could potentially benefit from a bridge program. Illinois has had a unified bridge definition between the community college system and the workforce since 2010. Bridge programs must be built on the criteria below to be an approved program in the state.

- The delivery of bridge programs does not have to be through an eligible training provider with a certified training program. They may be provided by an approved and funded Adult Education program, the credit or non-credit department(s) of a community college, Community-based organization (CBO) or other type of provider that offers non-credit workforce training.
- Training programs may be offered by a single entity (e.g., a community college or a CBO) or by a partnership (e.g., a CBO and a community college). Regardless of the provider, they may provide opportunities to earn college credit (such as through escrow credit accounts), may offer dual enrollment in credit and non-credit programs, or may offer a multi-level program that moves people from an adult education course offered by one provider to a non-credit occupational course offered by the same or another provider.

- All bridge program providers must use pre-skill assessments consistent with program requirements to place students into the appropriate courses as well as post-skill assessments to measure progress.
- All providers will use data tracking systems to collect and analyze key information about bridge program participants and graduates.

Under WIOA, the partners will update and enhance the current bridge definition policy by engaging Title I, Title II and college credit leaders and providers to learn what is working with the current policy and what could be adjusted to ensure that bridge programs are more widely implemented across Illinois. As a result, any new policy developed around the bridge definition and model will cut across all four core partner programs to ensure services are maximized for the students in the adult education programs. Furthermore, information garnered from the review of the definition, will inform new initiatives that promote sector-based pre-bridge and bridge activities, enhance and expand bridge programs offerings, and align with core partner WIOA requirements. The focus will be to expand access and success in these sector-based bridge programs across all WIOA partners, as a way to braid funding to ensure an integrated approach to service. As the leader in the development of bridge programs for Illinois, ICCB will use their lessons learned to help expand the program model across partners.

Integrated Education and Training (IET)

The ICCB Adult Education program has developed an IET initiative to provide adult education students with the opportunity to earn industry recognized credentials, college certificates and college credit while studying to obtain the high school equivalency certificate or learn the English language. Through the IET program in Illinois, Integrated Career and Academic Preparation System (ICAPS), many students will be connected to Title I to ensure they have the services necessary to gain access to resources for training and employment opportunities upon completion. Additionally, ICCB created ICAPS Model Two — a non-credit model that includes all of the elements in ICAPS Model One but does not carry a postsecondary certificate. However, it does require a strong connection with a postsecondary institution and also requires the preparation of students to earn industry-recognized credentials.

Disability Employment Initiative (DEI)

The Department of Human Services Division of Rehabilitation Services has worked effectively with Commerce around its Disability Employment Initiative projects throughout the state. In one instance, DRS provided cooperative funding to support individuals with disabilities seeking to establish their own businesses. In another, DRS provided funding to community providers as part of an overall package including DEI funds. DRS and Commerce have a strong level of communication around the needs of the individuals being served and the goals of the projects. In 2017 Commerce and DRS developed a series of online video presentations providing information on state disability programs and workforce services for people with disabilities. This includes a set of videos in American Sign Language for the benefit of deaf individuals. DRS will continue to pursue development and expansion of agreements that further service integration and promote employment of people with disabilities. This includes agreements relating to services to students and youth with disabilities and transition services generally.

Assistive Technology

People with disabilities often rely on technology to access information, services and even employment. This makes it vital to ensure that web sites and information systems are compatible with the assistive technologies — screen magnifiers, screen readers, speech recognition systems, etc. The Department of Human Services Division of Rehabilitation Services has expertise regarding assistive technologies and accessibility standards and will provide information and technical assistance to partner agencies to help ensure that all web sites and information systems within the workforce system are usable by people with disabilities.

Returning Citizens

In 2017, the Department of Commerce issued a statewide activities innovation grant to the Safer Foundation, an organization that supports the efforts of people with criminal records to become employed, law-abiding members of the community and as a result, reduce recidivism. This pilot project is targeted at citizens returning to high-risk neighborhoods where recidivism rates are high; and combines mentoring and other intensive supportive services with technical skill training, and work-based learning with an established network of business partners. Promising practices and lessons learned will be shared with partner programs, the IWIB and LWIBs following an evaluation of participant outcomes at the end of the grant in 2018.

Public Comment

The State of Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB) is responsible for overseeing the development, implementation and modification of the Unified State Plan and for convening all relevant programs, required partners and stakeholders. The state agencies responsible for the administration of the core and required programs have reviewed and commented on appropriate operational planning portion of the Unified State Plan. Illinois' modified Unified State Plan was released for public comment on March 5, 2018. The summary of the comments to the Unified State Plan can be viewed in Attachment A (https://www.illinoisworknet.com/WIOA/Resources/Documents/Attachment%20A%20-%20Public%20Comments.pdf).

B. THE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Provide an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the workforce development activities identified in (A) above.

B. The Strengths and Weaknesses of Workforce Development Activities This section provides a snapshot of Illinois' strengths and weaknesses of the workforce system. Core partners collaboratively identified the strengths and weaknesses as part of the unified planning process and as part of the ongoing efforts to better align and integrate service delivery consistent with the state's vision, principles, goals and strategies.

Illinois' Strengths

There are several developments since the passage of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act that contribute to strengthened alignment between WIOA programs. WIOA has motivated state leadership to establish systems and protocols that foster deep and ongoing interagency communication, which has led to improved trust and stronger relationships. Since 2014, these efforts have accelerated and broadened in scope, leading to multiple innovative workforce development activities.

WIOA Implementation & Coordination

• The state's workforce development board has taken a stronger role in the implementation and oversight of the WIOA provisions.

• Multiple core partners contributed to the development of the Illinois Community College Board Workforce Education Strategic Plan (WESP), which laid the foundation for the joint development of the Unified State Plan.

• Illinois has been successful in administering innovative education and training initiatives, such as Accelerating Opportunity Integrated Education, and Training and Accelerated Training for Illinois Manufacturing (ATIM).

• Through a statewide partner, a strategic plan was developed for Adult Education that includes an emphasis on best practices, college and career readiness, technology and postsecondary transitions and lifelong learning. All of these assist in the development of talent to fill the workforce needs.

• Statewide policies are being developed by the IWIB that include processes to ensure full stakeholder input and effective implementation plans.

• The state is encouraging the use of lean principles in workforce development programs.

• State partners continue to work collaboratively and explore opportunities for service alignment.

Business Engagement

• The state has provided technical assistance to local programs regarding business engagement, sector strategies, work-based learning, labor market information and best practice models to improve services to special target populations. In 2016, the core partners collaborated on an assessment of business engagement strategies used by their state and local staff. This evaluation led to the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board adopting an Integrated Business Engagement Framework in December 2017. This framework was created with input from IWIB business representatives, the four core partners, local workforce boards and economic development leaders. In 2018, the IWIB and the core partners will focus efforts on establishing the basic infrastructure to support integrated business services and providing technical assistance to LWIBs.

• Illinois is expanding the number of effective business-led regional sector partnerships that exist and that can be leveraged as models for the rest of the state.

• Illinois, through a statewide partnership, has developed an Essential Employability Skills framework designed to address employer needs.

Career Pathways for Targeted Populations

• The state has developed the Workforce Readiness through Apprenticeship and Pathways (WRAP) project. WRAP was developed to ensure that all young people in Illinois reach adulthood having completed workforce readiness programs that prepare them for college and career, while equipping them with the information they need to choose the best career pathway for themselves. WRAP has developed definitions that have been mutually agreed upon by relevant state agencies and committees that provide clarity to the broader fields of education and workforce development as programming and partnerships are developed and implemented.

• One of the most effective ways in which the post-secondary CTE system has modeled good partnerships in Illinois is through the implementation of the Pathways to Results (PTR) initiative. PTR has been utilized in over 120 post-secondary CTE programs across the state.

• Illinois has adopted a statewide definition of bridge programs, which allows for consistency in program development. The state's bridge programs prepare adults with limited academic or limited English skills to enter and succeed in post-secondary education and training leading to career-pathway employment.

• The state is pursuing innovation in providing services to individuals with disabilities. The Disability Employment Initiative creates opportunities for businesses to access skilled workers, while helping individuals with disabilities overcome barriers to employment.

Illinois provided local areas with support to assure additional and current accessibility upgrades in 2017. These efforts were partially the result of Illinois' effective participation in the Disability Employment Initiative, Rounds 4 and 5. These purchases and installation addressed both identified compliance deficiencies and reflect, in some instances, the newest technology, tools and software.

Illinois' Weaknesses

The challenges for the workforce system in Illinois are listed in the next section. Illinois is positioned to address these challenges through the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board and its committees, the Interagency Work Group and the local areas. These groups constantly adapt and evolve, focusing on opportunities for future alignment between the core and required partners.

WIOA Implementation & Coordination

- The quality of local career services lacks consistency.
- The level of regional and local cross-program collaboration varies, but has improved significantly as local partner staff follow the lead of the state interagency workgroup.
- Historically the service delivery model has been characterized by a "siloed" approach. This weakness has improved significantly since 2015 among the state agency WIOA partners, but it remains a work in progress with some required one-stop partners in some LWIAs. Illinois is challenged by geographical and local boundaries alignment. Some boundaries do not perfectly align with LWIA boundaries. For example, under Adult Education, "Area Planning Councils districts" do not align with LWIAs, but they are aligned with Community College District.

Business Engagement

- The level and quality of employer engagement varies, however local areas have embraced the importance of establishing ongoing business relationships and have demonstrated interest in the state's unified business services framework.
- The level and quality of regional and local public-private sector partnerships varies. In 2018, the state plans to invest in developing the capacity of intermediaries to promote the creation of regional sector partnerships.
- There is an emphasis on a one-size-fits-all approach, with not enough effort to leverage job seekers' existing knowledge and skills to accelerate training.

Career Pathways for Targeted Populations

- Federal laws governing some programs limit data sharing, and the information collected is often not aligned across core partners due to statutory regulations (e.g. Adult Education does not require a social security number to receive services).
- Program statutory and regulatory requirements can serve as roadblocks to alignment. For example, DRS intake by other entities is prohibited because only DRS staff are permitted or allowed to handle "non-delegable functions" by statute.

C. State Workforce Development Capacity

Illinois Workforce System

Governor Rauner's administration is focused on delivering value for taxpayers, creating a pro-jobs economic climate, ensuring world-class schools and educational options for every Illinoisan and bringing greater accountability to state government. This section of the plan includes a summary of the workforce system and the capacity of state agencies and boards that are responsible for the administration of the workforce and education programs.

Interagency Coordination and Planning

The Governor's Office and the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB) provide the major mechanisms for promoting joint planning and policy development around the vision, principles, goals and strategies outlined in Illinois' Unified State Plan. The state workforce board has become a true strength to Illinois due to the business-focused efforts of its members. Beginning in 2015, the IWIB added several new business members that have accepted a more active role under WIOA. Through the direction of the Board's Executive Committee, board training has increased, including an orientation process in 2015 and overview of board functions in 2016 that led to the creation of the IWIB Strategic Planning Task Force in late 2016. To support these efforts and the overall expanded role of the board, full-time staffing was assigned to assist in coordinating all the board's activities. Outreach to consultants further supports the board in meeting its functional requirements.

The state established an Interagency Work Group (IWG) consisting of WIOA core and required partners to identify and jointly address WIOA implementation issues at the state, regional and local levels. The intended outcome is to provide consistent, coordinated direction and technical assistance to regional and local-level partners as they establish effective One-Stop Delivery Systems.

The IWG formally meets monthly to discuss WIOA implementation and one-stop service delivery issues raised by a local workforce board, local program partner or state partner staff, whether they are based in the central office or in a local one-stop. Members maintain open lines of communication, and regularly collaborate on specific day-to-day issues. The IWG creates sub-groups to jointly handle tasks such as 1) review and approval of regional and local plans; 2) review and approval of MOUs and MOU annual budgets; and 3) provision of intensive technical assistance to LWIBs and local partners to prevent MOU impasses. The IWG helps state agency and local partner staff effectively execute WIOA within federal statutory and regulatory requirements and state policy directives.

The Interagency Work Group designated a team comprised of staff from the Illinois Community College Board, Illinois Department of Commerce, Illinois Department of Employment Security and the Illinois Department of Human Services to plan and execute a state-wide technical assistance

event for core partner staff. The WIOA Summit Planning Workgroup will continue to plan and host regional professional development events for the WIOA partner programs in 2018. These events will be followed by a second state-wide summit in 2019.

State and Regional Planning Process

In August of 2015, Governor Rauner asked the National Governors Association to facilitate a "Policy Academy" among his key staff, business leaders, state administrators, agency directors and local partners to develop the vision and guiding principles for WIOA state and regional planning. The Education, Workforce and Economic Development Leadership Team (Leadership Team) (Attachment F) (https://www.illinoisworknet.com/WIOA/Resources/Documents/Attachment%20F%20-%20Education%20Workforce%20and%20Leadership%20Team.pdf) emerged from the Policy Academy. The Leadership Team includes high level state policymakers with the authority to make commitments on behalf of their respective agencies, and other key public and private stakeholders whose involvement is critical to the development of the Unified State Plan.

The Leadership Team is responsible for establishing the vision and principles and directing the implementation of strategies included in the Unified State Plan. The Leadership Team has also worked with the Interagency Work Group to oversee and direct the development of the regional planning process in Illinois. The planning process in each of Illinois' economic development regions included the review of data, establishment of goals, development of strategies and the integration of services in developing the initial regional plans that went into effect July 2016, just as WIOA final regulations were released.

Following a joint review of plans by the core partners, the IWG issued updated regional and local planning guidance and directed that LWIBs amend their plans with a modification effective July 2017. This modification incorporated edits the IWB identified to bring plans into compliance with the Act and final regulations. The modified plans will remain in effect until June 2020.

In 2017, the State Workforce Board created a Strategic Plan in alignment with the Unified State Plan to guide its membership as they lead the way to WIOA partner collaboration and integration. The Board established an Executive Committee and standing committees such as the Apprenticeship Committee, the Evaluation and Accountability Committee, and the Information Technology Committee. These committees provide continuity for board leadership in subject matter areas deemed vital by the board.

C. STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY

Provide an analysis of the capacity of State entities to provide the workforce development activities identified in (A) above.

State Agency Capacity

The following is a list of the state agencies and boards that are responsible for the administration of the workforce, education and economic development programs outlined in WIOA.

- Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity

o Youth, Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs

o Employment and Training under the Community Services Block Grant Program (authorized under Department of Housing and Urban Development)

o Trade Act Programs

o Regional Economic Development

- Illinois Community College Board

o Adult Education and Family Literacy Act

o Career and Technical Education Programs at the postsecondary level authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006

- Illinois Department of Employment Security

o Wagner-Peyser Employment Services including Labor Market Information

o Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers Monitor Advocate System

o Veterans' Employment and Training Services

o Unemployment Insurance Services

o Trade Adjustment Assistance

- Illinois Department of Human Services

o Rehabilitation Services for Individuals with Disabilities

o Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

- Illinois Department on Aging

o Senior Community Service Employment Program

- Illinois Department of Corrections

o Section 212 of the Second Chance Act of 2007

Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (Commerce)

Commerce is the state agency that leads economic development efforts for Illinois and is responsible for the WIOA Title IB activities. Key program activities include distributing WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth formula funds, Trade Act funds and National Dislocated Worker Grants to 22 Local Workforce Innovation Areas (LWIAs), monitoring the local areas' use of WIOA funds, and providing technical assistance to local areas. Commerce is responsible for the administration of the required and allowed Governor's Statewide Workforce Activities as outlined in WIOA. Commerce issues formal guidance to the local areas through policy letters and notices designed to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery. Commerce also provides staff support to the IWIB and its committees and ad hoc task forces. In 2017 Commerce created a new position with the responsibility to provide staff support to the IWIB, particularly to its chair

and executive committee. As part of the Bureau of Community Development, Commerce also oversees the employment and training programs under the Community Services Block Grant Program. The Department has oversight of the Equal Opportunity (EO) provisions of Section 188 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act for WIOA Title I programs administered throughout Illinois' twenty-two local workforce innovation areas. In 2017, the Deputy Director of the Office of Equal Opportunity began working closely with the EO offices from the other core partner programs to ensure coordinated efforts among all EO Officers. This is an effort to minimize the potential for duplicative services at the regional and local level, while maximizing the expertise of each office and the unique challenges of their specific programs.

Illinois Community College Board (ICCB)

The ICCB has the responsibility of overseeing Title II activities under the Adult Education and Literacy Act and the Postsecondary Perkins (through the Carl D. Perkins and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006 (Perkins IV)). As such, the capacity of the Illinois Community College System to deliver services via education and training that align with workforce needs is very strong. The Illinois Community College System is the third largest in the country and is made up of 39 districts with 48 community colleges — all delivering education and training that meet the needs of employers and job seekers in their districts. More individuals start out their postsecondary education at a community college than at a four-year university, which highlights the capacity of the system.

Adult Education provides services to more than 81,000 students statewide and includes instructional and supportive services. The 81 providers in Adult Education coordinate service with the 39 Area Planning Council (APC) Districts to ensure non-duplication of services. A representative of the APC has a seat on the local workforce board to ensure Adult Education services, such as, basic literacy skills, secondary education, English language, and other innovative and contextualized training, such as, the Bridge and Integrated Education and Training initiatives (IETs) that are aligned with the sectors in the local and regional plans.

The intent of Illinois' post-secondary CTE is to provide students with the skills and knowledge necessary to excel in the global economy. Career and technical education equips students with the foundational knowledge to explore a cluster of occupations and careers. As students evolve through their educational experience, their focus is narrowed to a particular program. This process allows students to transition seamlessly while providing them with hands-on exploration, rigorous academics and the support necessary to succeed. Postsecondary Perkins/CTE provides the necessary support via linkages across the state with over 500 CTE programs, many of which are in the three major sectors identified in this plan: TDL, manufacturing and healthcare.

Illinois Department of Employment Security (Employment Security)

Employment Security is responsible for administering Title III activities for employment services under the Wagner-Peyser Act. The intent of Wagner-Peyser services is to sustain economic growth by meeting the needs of job seekers and employers, increase awareness of resource providers and expand employment opportunities. Services offered include assessments for job placement, job search assistance, and online job application processing. Employment Security is responsible for increasing community awareness about the services provided via job fairs, community collaborations, onsite recruitments, resource linkage and presentations to both job seekers and employers. Additionally, Employment Security is responsible for labor market and career information in Illinois through cooperative agreements with the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) to

provide statewide and sub-state employment, unemployment, occupation, wage information and statewide and sub-state industry and occupational employment projections. These data products serve as the cornerstone for the Career Information System, a web-based tool for students and job seekers to identify Illinois' in-demand jobs and make informed choices about future career pathways.

In addition to Wagner-Peyser, Title III activities, the Illinois Department of Employment Security is responsible for administering four other workforce programs: Unemployment Insurance; Job Counseling, Training and Placement Services for Veterans; Trade Readjustment Assistance (TRA); and Migrant Seasonal Farmworker Program.

The Unemployment Insurance program is designated to contribute to the state's overall economic stability by partially protecting eligible workers against loss of income during periods of unemployment. Eligible workers who become unemployed and meet all requirements set forth in the UI Act may receive benefits for the maximum number of weeks payable under the law or until the worker finds employment or becomes otherwise ineligible. The Job Counseling, Training, and Placement Services for Veterans program ensures priority of service to Veterans over all other job applicants, actively promotes and develops employment opportunities and provides placement and vocational guidance services, specifically for those Veterans who have significant barriers to employment. Additional information regarding priority of service for Veterans may be found at: http://www.dol.gov/VETS/E8-30166.pdf.

Trade Readjustment Assistance, a benefit under the Trade Adjustment Assistance program, provides income support to persons who have exhausted unemployment insurance compensation and whose jobs were affected by foreign imports.

The Migrant Seasonal Farmworker Program provides staff assisted services including job development, career guidance and referrals to training and supportive services for migrant and seasonal farmworkers.

Illinois Department of Human Services Division of Rehabilitation Services

The Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) administers Title IV activities and is the state's lead agency serving individuals with disabilities. DRS works in partnership with individuals with disabilities and their families to assist them in making informed choices to achieve full community participation through employment, education and independent living opportunities. The primary focus of the vocational rehabilitation program is to assist individuals with significant disabilities in obtaining and retaining competitive integrated employment. DRS services are designed to prepare an individual for employment through an individualized planning process.

Illinois Department of Human Services Division of Family & Community Services

The Illinois Department of Human Services' Division of Family & Community Services is also the state administrator of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. TANF is a time-limited cash assistance program for families meeting eligibility rules. DHS operates Family Community Resource Centers (FCRC) statewide serving TANF customers on the pathway to self-sufficiency. TANF customers are evaluated and assessed for suitability for employment and training programs. TANF customers are also assessed to determine barriers and barrier reduction service needs. These issues may be related to substance abuse, mental health and domestic violence. The FCRC identifies the customer's needs to create a Responsibility and Service Plan (RSP), which is a guide to services. The RSP contains employment and training needs, supportive service needs such

as transportation and uniforms, and child care. Most TANF customers are also eligible for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and medical assistance.

The Department of Human Services' Division of Family & Community Services has a strong presence in Comprehensive One-Stop Centers and is committed to increasing workforce engagement with collaborative partnerships to achieve employment opportunities for all adults served by DHS. A taskforce has been created to strategically move through the process of ensuring service integration among Partners in the one-stop centers. Staffers at the Comprehensive One-Stop Centers are trained to assist customers utilizing the online TANF/SNAP/Medical application through the Application for Benefits Eligibility System (ABE), which is accessible through Illinois workNet. In an effort to streamline the referral process, DHS is actively involved in cross-training sessions at the one-stop centers to enhance awareness of services and resources provided on site.

Illinois Department on Aging

The mission of the Illinois Department on Aging (Aging) is to serve and advocate for older Illinoisans and their caregivers by administering quality and culturally appropriate programs that promote partnerships and encourage independence, dignity and quality of life. In accordance with the federal Older American's Act regulations, Aging has divided Illinois into 13 Planning and Service Areas (PSAs). The 13 PSAs in Illinois are each managed and served by an Area Agency on Aging. Aging works in partnership with these agencies: 12 not-for-profit corporations and one unit of local government, the City of Chicago. Area Agencies on Aging (Area Agencies) have the primary task of planning and coordinating services and programs for older people in their respective areas. The Area Agencies receive funding from Aging based on a formula which takes into consideration the number of older citizens and minorities in that area, as well as the number living in poverty, in rural areas and alone. Like Aging, Area Agencies are not, as a rule, direct service providers. Area Agencies contract with local agencies which provide services to the older citizens who live in the same community.

The role of Aging under WIOA is to ensure the needs of older workers and job seekers are considered so that these individuals remain employed for as long as they wish. Age is often a barrier to finding employment, and Aging's resources can be leveraged to help older citizens find and retain employment. As a partner program, Aging has the role of administering the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) under Title V of the Older Americans Act. The SCSEP program provides on-the-job training, resources and referrals for all individuals 55+ years of age that will ultimately lead to unsubsidized employment.

Illinois Department of Corrections

The mission of the Illinois Department of Corrections (Corrections) is to serve justice in Illinois and increase public safety by promoting positive change in offender behavior, operating successful reentry programs and reducing victimization. Corrections administers the Department of Justice (Bureau of Justice Assistance) Second Chance Act Grant, which allows governments and communities to coordinate reentry efforts, enhance existing housing and support services, engage in evidence-based practices and create innovative strategies that will serve the growing needs of this population, ultimately increasing public safety and reducing recidivism.

Nationally Directed/Locally Administered Programs

There are a number of nationally directed workforce programs that are administered in some of the regions and LWIAs in Illinois. These programs, where present, will be included in the regional and local workforce plans.

National Farmworker Jobs Program

The National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) provides employment and training services that are targeted to migrant and seasonal farmworkers (MSFWs). The program partners with community organizations and state agencies to counter the chronic unemployment and underemployment experienced by farmworkers who depend primarily on jobs in agricultural labor performed across the country. NFJP partners with the state monitor advocate to provide outreach services to farmworkers and their families. NFJP provides career services and training to eligible farmworkers, and coordinates with the One-Stop Delivery System. The National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) grant awards are determined by a formula that estimates, by state, the relative demand for NFJP services.

YouthBuild

The United States Department of Labor grants funds directly to local YouthBuild programs through an annual competitive process. YouthBuild is a community-based alternative education program that provides job training and educational opportunities for at-risk youth ages 16-24. Youth learn construction skills while constructing or rehabilitating affordable housing for low-income or homeless families in their own neighborhoods. Youth split their time between the construction site and the classroom, where they earn their GED or high school diploma, learn to be community leaders and prepare for college and other post-secondary training opportunities. YouthBuild includes significant support systems, such as a mentoring, follow-up education, employment and personal counseling services, and participation in community service and civic engagement.

Job Corps

Job Corps is an education and vocational training program administered by the U.S. Department of Labor that helps young people ages 16 through 24 improve the quality of their lives through vocational and academic training. Job Corps' mission is to attract eligible young people, teach them the skills they need to become employable and independent and place them in meaningful jobs or further education. Job Corps centers are operated for the U.S. Department of Labor by private companies through competitive contracting processes, and by other federal agencies through interagency agreements. For more information regarding the Job Corps Program in Illinois please visit: http://www.jobcorps.gov/centers/il.aspx

Local Area Capacity

The State of Illinois consists of 10 Economic Development Regions and 22 Local Workforce Development Areas. The submission of Regional and Local Plans effective July 1, 2017, provided several examples of best practices in the local areas, which demonstrate their capacity to provide workforce development activities. Local areas are committed to many capacity initiatives, most notably under the categories of:

- Common Intake System
- Coordinated Client Tracking
- Constant Communication

• Working with Customers with Disabilities

• Board Integration

B. STATE STRATEGIC VISION AND GOALS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include the State's strategic vision and goals for developing its workforce and meeting employer needs in order to support economic growth and economic self-sufficiency. This must include—

1. VISION

Describe the State's strategic vision for its workforce development system.

Illinois is planning now for what the state will become during the rest of the 21st century. These are exciting times, marked by dramatic change, challenges and opportunities. Illinois is emboldened by a strong sense of mission and is encouraged by WIOA, which codifies into law many of the strategies that the state has worked on for years.

In June 2017, the IWIB approved its vision for the workforce system, one that the modifications within this state plan will keep firmly in view. While Illinois has many challenges ahead, it will not only strive to continuously improve, but to make decisions and implement solutions that will compel its efforts to receive national recognition. Our stated vision is, "Illinois will lead the nation by creating a cohesive, business-led system that equally supports the needs of its workforce and its businesses through regional and economic prosperity and global markets."

The IWIB Strategic Plan further outlines a Mission Statement that is similarly supported by this Unified State Plan modification. Their mission states, "The Illinois workforce system's purpose is to integrate education, workforce and economic development resources and services that support economic growth and job creation for individuals, businesses and communities in the State." The Unified State Plan vision further supports and defines the IWIB's intent. In addition, the Unified State Plan's principles directly support the Guiding Principles of the IWIB Strategic Plan.

Vision Statement

Promote employer-driven talent solutions that integrate education, workforce and economic development resources across systems to provide businesses, individuals and communities with the opportunity to prosper and contribute to growing the state's economy.

Principles:

- Demand Driven Orientation - Through a sector strategy framework, the state should support the systemic assessment of business needs for talent across local, regional and state levels, and ensure that strong partnerships with business driven decision-making across the talent pipeline.
- Strong Partnerships with Business at All Levels - Strong partnerships with business should assist employers to define in-demand skills and articulate those needs to education and training providers. Strong partnerships at the regional and local level should be recognized and inform the development of high-quality partnerships across the state.
- Career Pathways to Jobs of Today and Tomorrow - Partnerships with business should drive the development of career pathways that meet employers' skills needs today, while offering

individuals clear opportunities to build and upgrade their skills and advance their career over time. Those pathways should be integrated within the P-20 system, including adult education, to help students and young adults identify career pathway options and offer flexibility to build upon their skills to meet the evolving needs of the global economy.

- Cross-agency Collaboration and Alignment - Developing career pathways and stackable credentials will demand collaboration and alignment across agencies that contribute to Illinois' overall talent pipeline. There should be a focus on improving the strategic connections across all components and levels of the education and workforce systems to ensure no "dead ends" exist.
- Integrated Service Delivery - Enhanced collaboration and alignment across state agencies at a strategic level should lead to better service delivery integration. Multiple state agencies and partners are positioned to support the success of individuals and businesses. Technology and integrated data systems can help illustrate those interrelationships and position the system to collaborate across agencies to deliver the right services at the right time.
- Access and Opportunity for All Populations - Coordinated and comprehensive services can help targeted populations prepare for and advance along a career pathway. Connecting individuals with relevant supports, such as transportation, child care and transition services can enable the system to be responsive to the needs of individuals' workforce readiness.
- Clear Metrics for Progress and Success - The Unified State Plan should include metrics for assessing progress and success. As the talent pipeline serves two customers - businesses and individuals - those metrics should reflect the strategic priorities of the state that relate to building a globally competitive workforce. Illinois will develop metrics or examine existing framework metrics that define successful career pathway programs (i.e., Alliance for Quality Career Pathways (AQCP)).
- Focus on Continuous Improvement and Innovation - The system should establish mechanisms for continual assessment of system performance and opportunities for improvement, as well as for encouraging innovation and disseminating best practices. This includes the continued enhancement of non-traditional methods for delivering education and training. Additionally, the growing role of entrepreneurship and its contributions to employment and economic growth will be an outcome of continuous improvement and innovation.

2. GOALS

Describe the goals for achieving this vision based on the above analysis of the State's economic conditions, workforce, and workforce development activities. This must include—

A. Goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including preparing youth and individuals with barriers of employment* and other populations.**
B. Goals for meeting the skilled workforce needs of employers.

---

* Individuals with barriers to employment include 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 (as defined at section 167(i) of WIOA and Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 35-14); individuals within 2 years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program; single parents (including single pregnant women); and long-term unemployed individuals.

** Veterans, unemployed workers, and youth and any other populations identified by the State.

Goals for Preparing an Educated and Skilled Workforce

Illinois looks to expand career pathway opportunities through more accelerated and work-based training and align and integrate programs of study leading to industry-recognized credentials and improved employment and earnings. Key elements and metrics include:

- Increase the number of businesses that work with the state, regional and local workforce partners to communicate specific occupational competencies.
- Increase the number of businesses that work with the state, regional and local partners to identify industry credentials and their related competencies.
- Increase the number of workforce professionals that promote work-based learning and earning of industry credentials as part of their programs of study.
- Increase the number of businesses that offer work-based learning opportunities.

Additionally, Illinois is increasing career services and opportunities for populations facing multiple barriers in order to close the gap in educational attainment and economic advancement through career pathways and improved career services and expansion of bridge programs. Key elements and metrics include:

• Provide more youth and individuals with barriers to employment with coordinated wrap-around services, such as:

o Mentoring,

o Remedial math and reading,

o Contextualized bridge programs,

o GED testing,

o Disability accommodations, and

o Acquiring workplace skills and other training tailored to address barriers to employment for special populations prior to or along with technical skill training.

• Promote a lifelong learning approach that leverages the accelerated time to earnings and full productivity model and follows up with additional skill training to allow workers to advance up their chosen career pathway.

• Promote the ten success elements for workforce pilot programs serving “opportunity youth” (i.e., young people who are not in school and not working) that were identified by

the IWIB Youth Task Force. These elements utilize the principles and strategies of the WIOA Unified State Plan, and include:

o Partnerships with education, employers and workforce boards to plan and leverage resources.

o Business engagement in the development and management of career pathway programs.

o Credentials, certifications and/or postsecondary access that result from career pathway programs.

o Targeting of high demand industries and higher skill occupations that meet youth earnings and career goals.

o Development of work-based learning opportunities to experience the workplace first-hand.

o Individual career/employment plans for each youth participant.

o Availability of individual supports in order to meet the unique needs of each youth program participant.

o Contextualized learning and work-based skills that prepare youth for employment.

o Measuring results within the context of a continuous improvement methodology that will maintain and enhance program quality.

o Sustainability plans that connect the program to broader long-term talent strategies.

Goals for Meeting the Skilled Workforce Needs of Employers Illinois strives to foster improvement and expansion of employer-driven regional sector partnerships to increase the focus on critical in-demand occupations in key sectors that are the engine of economic growth for the state and its regions. Key elements and metrics include:

• Create an environment favorable to the formation of employer-led sector partnerships and the improvement of communications between business, economic development, workforce development and education.

• Increase the number of meaningful, public-private relationships.

• Improve the quality of the new and existing public-private partnerships.

• Promote data and demand driven workforce and education initiatives. This includes expanding the ability of employers and job seekers to access services by improving the Illinois public-private data infrastructure. Utilize this infrastructure to support the alignment and integration of economic development, workforce development and education initiatives to develop sector partnerships and career pathways. Key elements and metrics include:

• Develop and promote data analytics that identify which services provide a better return on investment for various industries, populations and locales.

• Help businesses, jobseekers and students make better-informed decisions through understanding the options available and the implications of each.

• Invest in Geographic Information Systems to provide improved spatial analysis to identify patterns in demand service deserts and economic hot spots.

3. PERFORMANCE GOALS

Using the table provided in Appendix 1, include the State's expected levels of performance relating to the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance described in section 116(b)(2)(A) of WIOA. (This Strategic Planning element only applies to core programs.)

Performance Goals

Illinois submitted proposed performance targets along with supporting documentation (including source references) associated with the PY 2018-2019 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) proposed performance targets. This has been prepared in response to the instructions provided by the United States Departments of Labor and Education.

In preparation for the submittal of performance goals, the Interagency Work Group established a performance accountability subgroup consisting of representatives from the core partners. The subgroup identified the extent to which each core partner either now captures the data elements required or has access to the data required from other sources. The subgroup then identified gaps between the data required to support performance accountability and the data each core partner now collects, stores and reports. Based on an analysis of historical and current participant outcomes, each core partner will negotiate WIOA performance measures for each indicator, as applicable. The six primary indicators of performance under WIOA for each core partner (note that primary indicator four and five do not apply to Wagner-Peyser Employment Services) are:

- Employment Rate 2nd Quarter after exit - The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program (for Title I Youth, the indicator is participants in education, or training activities or employment in the 2nd quarter after exit)
- Employment Rate 4th Quarter after exit - The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program (for Title I Youth, the indicator is participants in education, or training activities or employment in the 4th quarter after exit);
- Median Earnings 2nd Quarter after exit - The median earnings of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the 2nd quarter after exit from the program -- participants who obtain a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent must also be employed or enrolled in an education or training program leading to a recognized postsecondary credential within one year of the exit from the program.;
- Credential Attainment Rate - The percentage of program participants who attain a recognized post-secondary credential or a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, during participation in or within 1 year after exit from the program;
- Measurable Skills Gains - The percentage of participants who during a program year are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized post-secondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains, defined as

documented academic, technical, occupational or other forms of progress towards such a credential or employment;

- Effectiveness in Serving Employers (not yet defined by DOL or the United States Department of Education (ED)) - This will be based on indicators developed as required by Section 116(b)(2)(A)(iv) of WIOA.

The core partners of the Interagency Work Group will present performance data to the IWIB quarterly, to meet the requirement in WIOA that the board assess overall effectiveness of the workforce system.

Baseline indicators are indicators for which states will NOT propose an expected level of performance in the Unified State Plan submission and will not need to come to agreement with the Departments negotiated levels of performance. Indicators negotiated for PY 2018-PY 2019 are:

- Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Programs: indicators for employment 2nd quarter, employment 4th quarter, median earning 2nd quarter (excluding youth) and credential attainment rate:
- Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy program: indicator for measurable skill gains; and
- Title III Wagner-Peyser Employment Service: indicators for employment 2nd quarter, employment 4th quarter and median earnings 2nd quarter.

Note: Vocational Rehabilitation will not be negotiating levels of performance for PY 2018 and PY 2019. All indicators are deemed baseline.

The context within which Illinois developed its proposed levels of performance for Adult, Dislocated Workers, Youth and Wagner-Peyser measures encompasses past performance outcomes. Averages for prior program year outcomes were computed (using the five prior program years), as well as a Target Outcome and Predicted Outcome that was produced by DOL. Target values were established using all the above and the ninety percent threshold applied to the DOL Target Outcome. Taking all data element outcomes into account, along

with the environmental factors in Illinois, each target was set as shown in Table 10.

Table 10: PY 2018 and PY 2019 Final Levels for WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth, Adult Education and Wagner-Peyser Performance Targets for Illinois - Final Levels of Performance for Illinois

Performance Measure	PY 2018	PY2019
ADULTS		
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter	76	76
Employment Rate 4th Quarter	73	73
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter	$5,460	$5,460
Credential Attainment w/in 4 Quarters	63	63
DISLOCATED WORKERS		
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter	80.5	80.5
Employment Rate 4th Quarter	79	79
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter	$7,600	$7,700
Credential Attainment w/in 4 Quarters	66	66
YOUTH		
Employment/Placement Rate 2nd Quarter	73	73
Employment/Placement Rate 4th Quarter	62	62
Credential Attainment w/in 4 Quarters	67	67
ADULT EDUCATION		
Measurable Skill Gains[1]	44	45
WAGNER-PEYSER		
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter	61	61
Employment Rate 4th Quarter	60	60
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter	$5,400	$5,400

[1] Adult Education Measurable Skill Gains are still preliminary.

4. ASSESSMENT

Describe how the State will assess the overall effectiveness of the workforce development system in the State in relation to the strategic vision and goals stated above in sections (b)(1), (2), and (3) and how it will use the results of this assessment and other feedback to make continuous or quality improvements.

Under the previous Illinois Workforce Investment Board Act, Illinois was required to report on ten established benchmarks designed to provide a comprehensive and balanced picture

of the status and progress of workforce development services in Illinois. They were divided into three general categories:

Workforce Quality Benchmarks

The first six benchmarks measured workforce quality and are arranged in an order that tracked the life of a worker through various educational milestones. These benchmarks included three youth benchmarks.

- Educational level of working-age adults
- Percentage of the adult workforce in education or workforce training
- Adult literacy
- Percentage of high school graduates transitioning to education or workforce training
- High school dropout rate
- The number of youth transitioning from 8th grade to 9th grade

Earnings Benchmarks

The next two benchmarks focused on earnings, a primary indicator of workforce quality.

- Percentage of individuals and families at economic self-sufficiency
- Average growth in pay Competitive Business Advantage Benchmarks (The final two benchmarks are key indicators of Illinois' competitive business advantage.)
- Net job growth
- Productivity per employee

The General Assembly recognized that several of these benchmarks no longer were effective measures of the workforce system, did not have the necessary data to accurately reflect Illinois' efforts, or were not measurable against other states. Therefore, the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board Act was revised in 2017 with the requirement that the board identify additional measurements of performance. Through this Act, the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board's Evaluation and Accountability Committee (EAC) is tasked with oversight of performance within the workforce system. The EAC will compile an inventory to identify all required performance measures of the core and required programs. As necessary, the EAC will recommend those measures and report on them in the annual Benchmarking Workforce Development Report submitted to the General Assembly.

The EAC will consider refining the State's Benchmark Report to identify additional metrics (such as the Alliance for Quality Career Pathway (AQCP)) that will assess both our progress towards meeting WIOA goals and the effectiveness of the strategies to move towards those goals. There is also interest in exploring formulaic methods of evaluation that provide a measurement of return on investment (ROI). The board is interested in identifying best practices for ensuring businesses have access to the most qualified individuals for their employment needs, while the system continues to serve populations targeted within this plan.

The expanded benchmark report will clearly link overall organizational principles to program goals, strategies and outcomes. This will provide the framework for an ongoing

feedback mechanism, through which program goals and strategies can be consistently evaluated with regard to their contributions towards program outcomes and may be adjusted if those outcomes indicate a need. By maintaining this "clear line of sight" between goals, strategies and outcomes, the assessment process becomes much more comprehensible and transparent for all the WIOA partners, as well as for the IWIB in its oversight role.

The strategic intent is to accomplish a fundamental shift toward measuring the system's ability to make our workers and businesses as globally competitive as possible. While each program will maintain its mandated measures, we will work with the businesses to identify what success means in serving employers. Potential measures could include the areas of program flexibility and responsiveness; reducing the amount of time required for new hires to reach full productivity; reducing the amount of time required for new program participants to begin earning money; reducing the amount of time needed to fill vacant positions; and working toward wholesale improvement of essential workplace skills.

The Interagency Work Group will respond to the IWIB's renewed focus on performance and continuous improvement by working with partners to integrate evaluation and research projects that impact the workforce system in Illinois. The state will also consider the information developed by the interagency data team and other program-specific evaluations, research reports and pilot programs, such as the Accelerated Training for Illinois Manufacturing Program, Workforce Data Quality Initiative and the Disability Employment Initiative in the development of an integrated evaluation and research approach.

C. STATE STRATEGY

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include the State's strategies to achieve its strategic vision and goals. These strategies must take into account the State's economic, workforce, and workforce development, education and training activities and analysis provided in Section (a) above. Include discussion of specific strategies to address the needs of populations provided in Section (a).

1. DESCRIBE THE STRATEGIES THE STATE WILL IMPLEMENT, INCLUDING INDUSTRY OR SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS RELATED TO IN-DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTORS AND OCCUPATIONS AND CAREER PATHWAYS, AS REQUIRED BY WIOA SECTION 101(D)(3)(B), (D). "CAREER PATHWAY" IS DEFINED AT WIOA SECTION 3(7) AND INCLUDES REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP. "IN-DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTOR OR OCCUPATION" IS DEFINED AT WIOA SECTION 3(23).

State Strategies: Industry and Sector Partnerships, Career Pathways

Below are the state's strategies to achieve our vision and goals. They consist of six major strategies, and each directly underpins Illinois' commitment to engage and support all parts of our workforce, education and economic development systems as we move to a transparent and seamless system. These strategies complement the nine guiding principles of the IWIB Strategic Plan, including the identification of clear metrics for progress and success, for informing continuous improvement, and the identification of innovative efforts. The system contains bedrock principles of holistic career pathway management for

secondary, as well as postsecondary students and workers and demand-responsive solutions for employers. These strategies are at the foundation of addressing the needs of individuals who have barriers to employment. The activities associated with implementing this strategy will be fully described in the operational planning section.

Strategy 1: Coordinate Demand-Driven Strategic Planning at the State and Regional Levels

The state workforce board has insisted upon a demand-driven strategic planning process grounded in strong partnerships across education (secondary and postsecondary), workforce and economic development at the state, regional and local levels. This process has built on and integrated current state and regional planning initiatives and resources of the core state agency partners and other non-core partners, including the economic development arm of the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity.

Strategy 2: Support Employer-Driven Regional Sector Initiatives

Illinois has been actively engaged in sectoral work and sector strategies for over a decade. The IWIB will continue to support these efforts to ensure investment in resources and promotion of skills and career ladders in targeted industry and high demand occupations. In 2006, Illinois was one of six states invited to participate in the National Governors Association (NGA) Center for Best Practices Sector Strategies Learning Academy funded by the Mott, Ford and Joyce Foundations. The initial policy recommendations resulting from this effort remain valid today: a) Promote regionalism; b) Increase funding opportunities; c) Use data to drive decisions; d) Align resources and strategies; e) Present opportunities for unified messages; and f) Build legislative support. State and regional strategic planning activities will align all levels of education, workforce and economic development and lay the foundation for employer-driven regional sector initiatives.

Strategy 3: Provide Career Pathways for Economic Advancement

State and regional sector initiatives will provide the foundation for sector-based career pathway initiatives that expand career and educational opportunities for students and workers, including those facing multiple barriers to employment to achieve economic advancement. Cross-agency collaboration and alignment will also occur in the development and promotion of industry recognized, stackable credential models of training and education.

Strategy 4: Coordinate and Enhance Career Services and Case Management

The Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB) has approved a collaborative policy development process to ensure a broad range of stakeholder engagement that yields cost-effective and efficient guidance to the field. The Interagency Work Group will use this forum to develop and implement policies for integrated and enhanced career services and case management. In addition, these policies will help inform the curriculum developed in the Workforce Academy mentioned in Activity 4.3 under III.a.2.A.

The IWIB is developing policies that focus on customer needs through a customer-centered design service delivery model. In addition to business and job seeker customers, it has identified staffs of the one-stop centers and of partner agencies and other stakeholders of the system as vital sources for information gathering and for receipt of technical assistance and training. These efforts will produce better outcomes and higher customer satisfaction.

Strategy 5: Expand Employer and Job Seeker Access to Labor Market Information

The Interagency Data Team will design, develop and use the statewide public-private data infrastructure (Strategy 6) to provide both employers and job seekers with tools to promote and access job openings, review changing labor market trends and opportunities, identify funding opportunities and fund education, training and support services. This will require partners to ensure that privacy and security issues are addressed.

Additionally, Illinois will continue to expand its resources for labor market information to ensure it accurately reflects the ever-changing environment within Illinois' workforce. Strong consideration for expanded dashboards, readily available through current technology, will be a focus of the IWIB in 2018 to better match competencies between employer's skill demands and job seekers.

Strategy 6: Improve Public-Private Data Infrastructure

Focusing on the IWIB Vision, the board will ensure measures are implemented that will guide Illinois through sustainable, systemic change to be prompt, agile and responsive to changing economic conditions. Working with the Interagency Data Team, in cooperation with the Interagency Work Group, it will expand and improve the Illinois public-private data infrastructure to support the five strategies described above. This requires the integration of labor market information with state education and workforce longitudinal data systems, as well as program and case management systems. The infrastructure to support and integrate labor market information with workforce partners and education partners was bolstered by the award of a Workforce Data Quality Initiative Grant in 2012. Labor market information from Illinois Department of Employment Security (Employment Security) was already matched with workforce program information from Commerce and also with education information from the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB). In addition to bringing other partners into this data infrastructure, the team will also coordinate with the data analysis related projects recommended through other related projects, such as the Higher Education's Commission on the Future of the Workforce, ICCB Strategic Plan, and Community College Presidents' Council. This will also be an opportunity for the team to include the data experts at the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) as ISBE moves toward implementing policy recommendation that infuse demand driven career pathway approaches into secondary curriculum.

To assure that the IWIB can lead the efforts of Illinois in these six strategic areas, it has identified a need to strengthen the effectiveness and impact of its members and the membership of local workforce boards. Strategies will be developed to identify appropriate methods of outreach between the IWIB and local boards, as well as the technical assistance and resource needs that will allow board members to better understand their functions and responsibilities and ensure accountability in effectively conducting their business.

Strategies to address the needs of Targeted Populations

As stated in section II.c.2, the following strategies address the needs of targeted populations including but not limited to the long-term unemployed, individuals with disabilities, out-of-school youth, veterans, English language learners, low literacy adults and low-skilled adults.

Provide Career Pathways for Economic Advancement

State and regional sector initiatives will provide the foundation for sector-based career pathway projects that expand career and educational opportunities for students and workers, including those facing multiple barriers to employment to achieve economic advancement. This will include an emphasis on lifelong learning and allowing each participant to reach his or her full potential. The strategy is to help participants enter or re-enter the workforce by striking an individualized balance between rapid placement in self-sustaining employment and pursuit of a career pathway that may require additional education and training along with work experience to continue progressing up their career ladder. Put more simply, the emphasis will shift from finding a job to developing a career.

Coordinate and Enhance Career Services and Case Management

As stated in Section III.b.2, the IWIB has implemented a collaborative policy development process that the Interagency Work Group will use in developing policies for integrated and enhanced career services and case management, and include provisions to remove barriers that hinder providing services to special populations. For example, the Incarcerated Veterans Transition Program (IVTP) is a program in which eligible veterans receive employment service workshops while incarcerated in designated Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) facilities. Employment Security coordinates with IDOC to provide employment workshops for inmates that are within 18 months of their maximum release date and are eligible veterans. The IVTP workshops are facilitated by nine Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists and place emphasis on job search techniques and resources to help these veterans address the unique employment barriers and other obstacles they will face when attempting to reenter the job market after their release.

Additionally, the Illinois Department of Human Services Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) serves people with disabilities who typically have additional barriers to employment beyond the presence of a disability. DRS case management system includes the Survey of Individual Needs, which addresses a variety of support needs that frequently present barriers to employment. Many people with disabilities have low incomes, and about one-third of DRS participants receive Social Security disability benefits. Long-term unemployment is a frequent condition for many people with disabilities, as is a poor work history and a lack of basic skills, along with limited English proficiency. The DRS program seeks to mitigate these barriers through supportive services alongside provision of vocational services. Through participation in local workforce boards DRS expects to expand its awareness of supportive services available throughout the community and make these available to people with disabilities as needed.

Expand Employer and Job Seeker Access to Labor Market Information

The Interagency Data Team will design, develop and use the statewide public-private data infrastructure (Strategy 6) to provide both employers and job seekers with tools to promote and access job openings, review changing labor market trends and opportunities, identify funding opportunities and fund education, training and support services. This will require partners to ensure that privacy and security issues are addressed. The intent is to create ways, such as dashboards, to transform the overwhelming amount of data into information that is both usable and actionable by program staff, job seekers, educators, students and parents. A current example of this strategy that can be emulated is the United States Department of Education (ED) College Scorecard (www.collegescorecard.ed.gov). This

application makes it easier for students and parents to compare and evaluate colleges. We envision a similar approach to providing labor market information.

Improve Public-Private Data Infrastructure

The Interagency Data Team, in cooperation with the Interagency Work Group, will expand and improve the Illinois public-private data infrastructure to support the five strategies described above. This requires the integration of labor market information (LMI) with state education and workforce longitudinal data systems, as well as program and case management systems. Just as with LMI dashboards, there is great potential to improve the ability of job seekers and students to assess and evaluate education and training programs, know which programs are more likely to lead to career pathways employment and in the end, help assess the potential return on investment for their available options.

2. DESCRIBE THE STRATEGIES THE STATE WILL USE TO ALIGN THE CORE PROGRAMS, ANY COMBINED STATE PLAN PARTNER PROGRAMS INCLUDED IN THIS PLAN, REQUIRED AND OPTIONAL ONE-STOP PARTNER PROGRAMS, AND ANY OTHER RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO THE STATE TO ACHIEVE FULLY INTEGRATED CUSTOMER SERVICES CONSISTENT WITH THE STRATEGIC VISION AND GOALS DESCRIBED ABOVE. ALSO DESCRIBE STRATEGIES TO STRENGTHEN WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES IN REGARD TO WEAKNESSES IDENTIFIED IN SECTION II(A)(2).

Alignment of Core, Required and Optional Partner Programs

In August of 2015, Governor Rauner asked the National Governors Association to facilitate a "Policy Academy" among his key staff, business leaders, state administrators, agency directors and local partners to develop the vision and guiding principles for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) state and regional planning. The 2015-2016 Education, Workforce and Economic Development Leadership Team (Leadership Team) emerged from the Policy Academy that includes high-level state policymakers with the authority to make commitments on behalf of their respective agencies, key members of the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB) and other key public and private stakeholders whose involvement is critical to the development of the Unified State Plan. The policy academy is an example of Illinois' efforts to align the core program, required programs and other key education, workforce and economic development resources in the State of Illinois.

Table 11: 2015-16 Illinois Education, Workforce and Economic Leadership Team

Name	Title	Organization
Dr. Karen Hunter Anderson	Executive Director	Illinois Community College Board
Dr. Jim Applegate	Executive Director	Illinois Board of Higher Education

Name	Title	Organization
Mayor Tom Ashby	IWIB Member President	Coordinated Transportation Development, Inc.
Doug Baker	President	Northern Illinois University
Leah Bolander	Recruiter	Patterson Technology Center
Tony Esposito	Chief of Staff	Department of Commerce
Trey Childress	Deputy Governor	Office of the Governor
Julie Courtney	President	Illinois Workforce Partnership
Carey Cranston	President	Fox College
Elizabeth Dickson	Director of Human Resources	Engineered Glass Products, LLC
Jim Dimas	Secretary	Department of Human Services
Diane Grigsby-Jackson	Director	Family and Community Services
Alan Summers	Associate Director	Family and Community Services
Brian Durham	Deputy Director of Academic Affairs	Illinois Community College Board
Matt Eggemeyer	Vice President of Sales	Keats Manufacturing
Dr. Kenneth Ender	President	William Rainey Harper College
Jennifer Foster	Deputy Director of Adult Education and Workforce	IL Community College Board
David Friedman	Chief Executive Officer	Autonomyworks
Jonathan Furr	Executive Director	Education Systems Center at Northern Illinois University
Vickie Haugen	President and CEO	Vermilion Advantage
Sylvia Jenkins	President	Moraine Valley Community College
Andrew Duren	Executive Vice President of Administrative Services	
Gretchen Koch	Executive Director of Workforce Development Strategies	CompTIA

Name	Title	Organization
Kathy Lively	Chief Executive Officer	MAN-TRA-CON Corporation, LWIA 25
Laz Lopez	Association Superintendent for Teaching and Learning	High School District 214
Alicia Martin	President	Illinois Chapter, Associated Builders and Contractors, Inc.
Mandy Martin	Corporate Human Resources Manager	North American Lighting
Mike Massie	IWIB Member Attorney at Law	Massie and Rennick, LLC
Jeff Mays	Director	Department of Employment Security
Jim McDonough	Chief of Staff	Department of Employment Security
Dolores Simon	Executive Deputy Director of Business Services	Department of Employment Security
Terry Scrogum	Senior Policy Advisor	Department of Employment Security
Marlon McClinton	President and CEO	Utilivate Technologies, LLC
Vic Narusis	Deputy Director Office of Business Development	Department of Commerce
Jim Nelson	Vice President of External Affairs	Illinois Manufacturers' Association
Karin Norington-Reaves	Chief Executive Officer	Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership (LWIA 7)
Terri Payne	Assistant to the Secretary Treasurer	AFL-CIO
Mark Petrilli	State Director, Illinois SBDC Network	Department of Commerce
Dr. Beth Purvis	Secretary of Education	Office of the Governor
John Rico	IWIB President, President and CEO	Rico Enterprises
Julio Rodriguez	Deputy Director, Office of Employment and Training	Department of Commerce

Name	Title	Organization
Manny Rodriguez	Senior Director	Jane Addams Resource Corp
Juan Salgado	President and CEO	Instituto Del Progreso Latino
Margie Schiemann	IWIB Member Director of Infrastructure Programs and Support	Nicor Gas
Kris Smith	Director, Division of Rehabilitation Services	Department of Human Services
Doug Morton	Manager, Division of Rehabilitation Services Strategic Management Unit	Department of Human Services
Dr. Tony Smith	State Superintendent of Education	Illinois State Board of Education
Wegi Stewart	President	The Community Foundation of Macon County
Trina Taylor	Deputy Director of Service Delivery	Department of Employment Security
Carrie Thomas	Executive Director	Chicago Jobs Council
Mike Uremovich	President	Manhattan Mechanical Services
Terri Winfree	President	Prairie State College
Andria Winters	Assistant Director	Department of Commerce
David Wu	Director of Government Transformation	Office of the Governor

Governor's Guidelines

Illinois has taken a proactive approach in developing guidelines and templates to document how the core programs, required programs and other resources can achieve the goal of fully integrating customer services. The IWIB was consulted regarding the work of the Interagency Work Group on the "Governor's Guidelines to State and Local Program Partners for Negotiating Costs and Services," which fulfill the WIOA requirement that the Governor issue guidance to state and local partners for negotiating cost sharing, service access, service delivery and other matters essential to the establishment of effective local workforce development services under WIOA (§678.705). The Governor's Guidelines address the negotiation of local memoranda of understanding (MOU), the negotiation of infrastructure costs, the negotiation of local one-stop delivery system costs, the timelines for negotiation of MOUs and infrastructure costs, and the reporting of interim and final negotiation outcomes and appeals processes. The core, required and optional partner

program administrators in each local workforce area are included in the State of Illinois' MOU template, service matrix and budget worksheet.

The Governor's Guidelines to State and local WIOA program partners for negotiating cost sharing, service access and integrated service delivery was originally issued in December 2015. The Governor's Guidelines have since been revised annually to incorporate final federal regulations and subsequent guidance. The local partners, Local Workforce Innovation Boards (LWIB) and Chief Elected Officials (CEO) are expected to act in accordance with these guidelines and to otherwise comply with them. The scope of the Governor's Guidelines includes:

- Establish general guidance, direction and requirements for negotiating (MOU) that are required in each Local Workforce Innovation Area (LWIA) to support the operation of the local one-stop delivery system.
- Provide guidance related to Comprehensive One-Stop Center infrastructure costs, including guidance for budgeting, allocation, negotiation and reconciliation of these costs. Provide guidance for identifying and negotiating local one-stop delivery system costs that will be shared among required partners.
- Prescribe timelines for local negotiation of MOUs and for reporting of the outcomes of these negotiations.
- Outline requirements for the process through which required partners can appeal decisions made in the application of these guidelines if the state infrastructure cost funding mechanism is used.

Additionally, the Governor's Guidelines include service matrices for career services and other programs and activities, demonstrating how career services and other programs are available through the local Comprehensive One-Stop Centers by required partner. To provide uniformity across the local areas, an MOU template is included in the Governor's Guidelines. This template provides the structure and elements of the MOU, providing placeholders for each local area to add their respective content.

Regional and Local Planning and MOU Review

The IWIB approved a process and a timetable for the coordinated and comprehensive review of regional plans, local plans and MOUs. This approval was based on a recommendation from the Interagency Work Group.

- The State-level review was organized "vertically" by region with regional plan components being reviewed first, local plan components for all LWIAs within a region being reviewed second and MOUs for all LWIAs within a region third.

The review of regional and local plans and MOUs will assess:

- Completeness of submission according to published guidance (i.e., Planning Guide and Governor's Guidelines, Revision 2);
- Whether the content in each area is adequate (i.e., thorough, complete, specific, relevant and consistent with regional and local plans and the Unified State Plan);
- Commitment to integration;
- Potential issues of compliance with federal requirements described in the final rule;

- Program-specific issues that may need to be addressed by an individual partner or by the Interagency Work Group;
- Best or noteworthy practices; and
- Suggestions from reviewers for improvement.
- Initial regional and local plans went into effect July 2016, just as WIOA final regulations were released. Following a joint review of plans by the core partners, the Interagency Work Group issued an updated regional and local planning guide and directed Local Workforce Innovation Boards to amend their plans with a modification effective July 2017. This modification incorporated edits the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board identified as required to bring plans into compliance with WIOA and final regulations. The most recent plans will remain in effect until June 2020.

Strategies to Strengthen Workforce Development Activities in Regard to Weaknesses

The comprehensive review of the regional and local plans and the MOUs will provide a baseline for continuous improvement and the implementation of the state's WIOA strategies at the regional and local levels. The state recognizes this process is a first step in addressing the challenges of aligning the core, required and optional partners and other available resources. The regional review process will allow the state to make incremental progress in addressing challenges (weaknesses) of the workforce system in Illinois including:

- The quality of local career services
- The level of regional and local cross-program collaboration
- The willingness to pursue innovation at regional and local levels
- The level and quality of regional and local public-private sector partnerships
- The level and quality of co-located, in-person services in Comprehensive One-Stop Centers
- Breaking through a service delivery model that is characterized by a silo approach
- Lack of a cohesive system to deliver data across the workforce system

Quality of Career Services

The quality of career services may be the most vital program element that determines the eventual success of our participants and businesses. Understanding this reality has prompted the core partners to agree that service standards must be established, and training must be provided. As part of the coordinated career services approach, the core partners intend to establish policy that each of their local program staff will ensure every participant has an individual assessment of their current essential workplace skills, identify any areas for improvement and ensure the participant becomes proficient in these skills while enrolled in one or more of the WIOA programs.

Likewise, each participant will be evaluated to determine their technical skill proficiency to identify occupational skill gaps relevant to occupations in-demand in their region and the programs will coordinate services to ensure the skill gaps are addressed while the individual is enrolled. Finally, each career services manager's client outcomes will be

tracked for the purposes of identifying best practices that can be replicated across regions and programs.

Program staff must also better understand how to obtain and use the most current labor market information to assist participants in making informed career and training decisions. For example, when career services staff understands the actual occupational skills supply and demand in their region, they will be able to recommend training and education options more likely to lead to training-related employment.

Regional & Local Cross-Program Collaboration / Quality of Co-Located One-Stop Services / Dismantling the Service Delivery Silos

Illinois has created and implemented several teams that are built on both vertical and horizontal collaboration and initiatives that also encourage regional and local collaboration:

- Policy development teams are made up of state and local partners and include IWIB members and private sector employers; an example is the Service Integration Policy Workgroup
- The WIOA Interagency Work Group, which consists of core and required partner leaders, meets regularly to address implementation issues related to cross-program collaboration and co-located one-stop services.
- The WIOA Summit Planning Group is now focused on professional development at the regional level that will support information sharing while creating opportunities for cross-collaboration. Therefore, they have evolved into the Technical Assistance Planning Team to reflect their expanded activities.
- The Integrated Business Services Initiative has laid out a framework and strategy for locals to come together cohesively to address employer needs through the review of the Adult Education plans by the LWIBs.

Coordination of career services will require program staff to be better aware of the spectrum of services in all the programs. The core partners are discussing the development of systemic, cross-program procedures to ensure each participant receives every service for which they are eligible that is relevant to their securing employment.

Illinois will address the challenges of a geographically and economically diverse state where the coordination of career services and programs varies widely. The core partners concur on the need to establish rigorous service standards and provide adequate training to career services staff in all WIOA programs. This is especially important for services provided at a Comprehensive One-Stop Center. Policy will place an emphasis on individualized services, where the programs coordinate services designed to meet the individual where they are at on their career pathway and moving away from a one-size-fits all approach. Policy and procedures are under development to formally break down the silo approach by requiring cross-program integration of individualized assessment and services.

Expand Employer and Job Seeker Access to Labor Market Information

The Interagency Data Team will design, develop and use the statewide public-private data infrastructure (Strategy 6) to provide both employers and job seekers with tools to promote and access job openings, review changing labor market trends and opportunities, identify funding opportunities and fund education, training and support services. This will require

partners to ensure that privacy and security issues are addressed. The intent is to create ways, such as dashboards, to transform the overwhelming amount of data into information that is both usable and actionable by program staff, job seekers, educators, students and parents. A current example of this strategy that can be emulated is the United States Department of Education (ED) College Scorecard (www.collegescorecard.ed.gov). This application makes it easier for students and parents to compare and evaluate colleges. We envision a similar approach to providing labor market information.

Improve Public-Private Data Infrastructure

The Interagency Data Team, in cooperation with the Interagency Work Group, will expand and improve the Illinois public-private data infrastructure to support the five strategies described above. This requires the integration of labor market information (LMI) with state education and workforce longitudinal data systems, as well as program and case management systems. Just as with LMI dashboards, there is great potential to improve the ability of job seekers and students to assess and evaluate education and training programs, know which programs are more likely to lead to career pathways employment and in the end, help assess the potential return on investment for their available options.

Fostering the Development & Acceptance of Innovation

During the recent regional innovation initiatives and planning efforts it became apparent that the willingness to embrace new and improved strategies varied across the ten Economic Development Regions and also across partners. No one region was found to have equal commitment to change from all its partners; while no one partner was found to have equal commitment to change from offices across all the regions. The core partners will take steps to improve innovation by emphasizing a more inclusive approach that fosters more grass roots innovation rather than the traditional top down strategy. State set aside funds can be made available to promote regional innovation. Where innovation initiatives involve national competitive grants, efforts will be made to jointly develop applications with regions committed to the project. The overarching goal is to allow every organization involved to feel a sense of ownership in the process of innovation.

Coordinated Business Services

The ICCB Workforce and Education Strategic Planning Process and the WIOA Regional Planning Process confirmed that businesses demand coordinated services from the workforce, education and economic development system. Leveraging United States Department of Labor (DOL) technical assistance support, Illinois engaged the firm of Maher & Maher to assess current business services practices in the core programs This project led to the IWIB adopting an Integrated Business Services Framework in 2017 to identify common goals and specific activities for each partner to undertake that will strengthen our ability to provide coordinated business services. This framework was created with input from the four core partners, the local workforce boards and economic development leaders. In 2018, the IWIB and the core partners will focus efforts on establishing the basic infrastructure to support integrated business services and providing technical assistance to LWIBs.

Experience has shown that areas of the state where local staff has established coordinated communication and services to businesses are more likely to have better outcomes for their participants and their employers. Public-private partnerships that are business-led are

much more likely to be active and engaged and challenge the state and local education and workforce systems to keep up with their needs. Illinois' workforce and education partners have joined in several efforts designed to bring the interests of employers to the forefront. Regional strategic planning for ICCB and the community colleges, followed by sector strategies training and then by WIOA regional planning have all emphasized the importance of business engagement. Perhaps more importantly, these efforts highlighted the need for public sector follow through. Businesses disengage as soon as they perceive no return on their investment for participating in publicly funded initiatives.

Provide Career Pathways for Economic Advancement

State and regional sector initiatives will provide the foundation for sector-based career pathway initiatives that expand career and educational opportunities for students and workers, including those facing multiple barriers to employment to achieve economic advancement. This will include an emphasis on lifelong learning and allowing each participant to reach his or her full potential. The strategy is to help each participant to make an informed decision as to how best to enter or re-enter the workforce based on his or her personal circumstances. By striking an individualized balance between finding a self-sustaining job as quickly as possible versus pursuing a career pathway that may require additional education and training to continue progressing up their career ladder. The emphasis will shift from finding a job to finding a career regardless of the entry point on the pathway.

Apprenticeships and work-based training programs are part of a larger strategy to help Illinois' companies develop their talent pipeline. As Illinois coordinates and aligns the strategy of apprenticeships with the P-20 education and workforce systems, we are integrating a shared vision and language around Career Pathways. Illinois has developed definitions that have been mutually agreed upon by relevant state agencies and committees to provide clarity to the broader fields of education and workforce development as programming and partnerships continue to develop and be implemented. These definitions have been developed and refined through research, stakeholder engagement and thoughtful alignment to a variety of efforts, especially the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Every Student Succeeds Act and the Illinois Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness Act. These definitions have been approved by representatives of key state entities and boards pertaining to the broader education and workforce systems in Illinois. Collectively, these definitions establish a continuum of employer engagement and work-based learning experiences within a career pathway system.

Strategies to Address the Needs of Targeted Populations

Illinois has outlined the six interrelated strategies associated with the implementation of WIOA in Section II.c.1 of this plan. The specific strategies that address the needs of the populations targeted in Section II.a. (including, but not limited to, the long-term unemployed, individuals with disabilities, out-of-school youth, veterans, English language learners, low literacy adults and low-skilled adults) are summarized below. An example of how the system is evolving (taken from a local area plan) describes the positive relationship between the Illinois Department of Human Services, Division of Rehabilitation Services and the local Title IB staff.

The State of Illinois will utilize Statewide Activity funds to support Notice of Funding Opportunities to solicit proposals from eligible organizations capable of planning and implementing innovative projects that support the vision, principles, goals and strategies articulated within this Plan. Illinois will consider projects that:

- Develop strategies to effectively serve individuals with barriers to employment and to coordinate programs and services among workforce partners. Projects may include, but are not limited to, the coordination of employment and training activities with:
- Child support services, and assistance provided by State and local agencies carrying out Part D of Title IV of the Social Security Act (42 USC 651 et seq.);
- Cooperative extension programs carried out by the Illinois Department of Agriculture;
- Programs carried out in local areas for individuals with disabilities, including programs carried out by State agencies relating to intellectual disabilities and developmental disabilities, activities carried out by Statewide Independent Living Councils established under section 705 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 USC 796d), programs funded under Part B of Chapter 1 of Title VII of such Act (29 USC 796e et seq.), and activities carried out by centers for independent living, as defined in section 702 of such Act (29 USC796a);
- Adult education and literacy activities, including those provided by public libraries;
- Activities in the corrections system that assist returning citizens as they reenter the workforce; and
- Financial literacy activities.
- Support the development of alternative, evidence-based programs and other activities that enhance the choices available to eligible youth and encourage such youth to reenter and complete secondary education, enroll in postsecondary education and advanced training, progress through a career pathway, and enter into unsubsidized employment that leads to economic self-sufficiency.

The Secondary Transition Experience Program (STEP) is part of the State's continuum of coordinated transition services for youth with disabilities. 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 Department of Rehabilitation Services (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 engages 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.

III. OPERATIONAL PLANNING ELEMENTS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an Operational Planning Elements section that supports the State's strategy and the system-wide vision described in Section II.(c) above. Unless otherwise noted, all Operational Planning Elements apply to Combined State Plan partner programs included in the plan as well as to core programs. This section must include—

A. STATE STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include—

1. STATE BOARD FUNCTIONS

Describe how the State board will implement its functions under section 101(d) of WIOA (i.e. provide a description of Board operational structures and decision making processes to ensure such functions are carried out).

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and Illinois State Statutes require that the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB) provide strategic leadership and oversight that will further the state's goals to meet the workforce needs of businesses and workers. Bylaws are in place to further guide the IWIB's work and processes. During the last year, the IWIB initiated and completed a strategic planning process that will establish the vision for the state's workforce system and provide a roadmap for board members to create a sound operational structure to ensure the expanded functions under WIOA are carried out. This planning process moves the board from a tactical, operational approach to one where the members will think strategically and serve as system leaders. The Unified State Plan for Illinois is the first tangible product resulting from the IWIB strategic planning process.

IWIB Strategic Plan

As reflected in this plan, the business members that led the IWIB Strategic Planning Task Force developed a vision, mission and nine guiding principles that were approved at its June 2017 quarterly meeting. Working in four goal teams -- focused on business engagement, customer-centered design, data & technology and board effectiveness -- a framework emerged that identified five objectives for the board. The objectives are:

- Accelerate and streamline communication with, and services to, business partners;
- Optimize the effectiveness of the one-stop system for all customers;
- Establish sustainable methods for high quality data collection and accessible reporting;
- Increase board effectiveness through quality training and resources for the state board and local boards;
- Promote board member accountability.

The goal team discussions were facilitated by high-level management staff of the core partners, and included additional IWIB members, management and staff of core and required programs, businesspeople, local program administrators and other stakeholders of

the workforce and education systems. A plan was implemented that assured inclusion of the full IWIB and local boards in discussions surrounding the strategic plan. Ultimately, the goal teams operationalized the objectives of the plan through a total of seventeen priority activities. Each activity was assigned to one of six current IWIB or system sub-groups to take the lead on implementation. As of the submission of this state plan, each assigned lead group has met to discuss the possible action steps and key strategies that will become part of a detailed work plan. Necessary resources and an appropriate timeline are also included in those discussions. Attachment E () is the IWIB Strategic Plan.

While the Strategic Plan was a major undertaking, the IWIB continues to provide focused efforts through its structure of standing committees, task forces and policy work groups further outlined in the State Board Overview section of this plan. Beginning in 2016, the IWIB expanded its meeting schedule to include an annual retreat held over a day and a half of meetings. This has allowed the board the opportunity for additional in-person discussion time to focus on important areas of WIOA implementation and further understand their roles and functions as board members. Currently, the board is considering expanding their meeting schedule even further in recognition of the need for continued consultation on strategic planning efforts, and to provide opportunities for coordinated discussions with local boards and businesses.

While the IWIB began strengthening local involvement in the policy making process, the Strategic Plan further emphasizes the board's desire to build stronger partnerships and communication between the IWIB and local workforce boards. This will occur through direct communication between the IWIB Co-Chairs and local workforce innovation board (LWIB) chairs, invitations to jointly participate in state and local board meetings, and the development of an outreach plan to ensure that local boards understand and participate in Illinois' efforts to create a quality workforce, with a focus on the unique needs of each regional and local market. Technology solutions will be examined to facilitate and encourage better interaction among IWIB and LWIB members.

Committees, Task Forces and Work Groups

The IWIB's structure of standing committees, task forces and work groups further expand collaborative efforts in Illinois by inviting business and stakeholder engagement in the operation of the state workforce system. This structure was established to ensure that board members remain engaged in furthering the identification and understanding of root causes in workforce and economic development challenges, and to provide opportunities for consultation and input from those directly connected to and actively involved with the system. Staff from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (Commerce) coordinate support to these bodies. In addition, the IWIB utilizes resources from state universities to support its work.

Committees are generally longstanding groups that conduct regularly occurring business on behalf of the IWIB and are designed to focus on long-term issues and strategies. Task forces, on the other hand, are short-term and goal-oriented bodies that are appointed to achieve articulated outcomes by a specified date and employ highly engaged membership and staff support to accomplish those outcomes.

Work Groups are utilized to develop and revise policies that direct system operations for local workforce boards, agency partners, one-stop centers & operators and service

providers. Each are approved by the IWIB through action items that detail the objectives and timeframes (if appropriate) of the group. They are comprised of members of the IWIB, local boards and chief elected officials, business, and core agency partners in addition to identified stakeholders throughout the state.

The IWIB Executive Committee is responsible for establishing the committees, task forces or work groups and designating the members of these working bodies, subject to the approval of the full IWIB. While the IWIB encourages wide participation from stakeholders, a Chair is identified for each Committee and Task Force to ensure continued effective, efficient and focused efforts on the IWIB's behalf.

IWIB members have increased their alignment with education groups within the state to build strong linkages that will expand work-based learning opportunities and open career pathways for all learners. Building these strong linkages is part of the board's role as a system leader, and supports further alignment of the education, workforce and economic development vision. IWIB representatives actively participate in the Illinois P-20 Council, the Illinois Pathways Advisory Council and the Higher Education Commission on the Future of the Workforce, as well as the technical assistance work group on New Skills for Youth and the 21st Century Workforce Advisory Fund Board. IWIB members also participate in the Workforce Readiness through Apprenticeship and Pathways (WRAP) and Integrated Business Services teams. IWIB staff provides information to the board related to other workforce, education and economic development efforts occurring throughout the state in an effort to assist them in better understanding their roles and how they can affect continuous improvement opportunities throughout the system.

2. IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE STRATEGY

Describe how the lead State agency with responsibility for the administration of each core program or a Combined State Plan partner program included in this plan will implement the State's Strategies identified in Section II(c). above. This must include a description of—

A. CORE PROGRAM ACTIVITIES TO IMPLEMENT THE STATE'S STRATEGY

Describe the activities the entities carrying out the respective core programs will fund to implement the State's strategies. Also describe how such activities will be aligned across the core programs and Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan and among the entities administering the programs, including using co-enrollment and other strategies, as appropriate.

Six policy strategies were developed to reach the goals of the Unified State Plan. Attached to each strategy are specific implementation activities that leverage the collective experience of the core and required partners and build upon experience gained through public and private sector innovation initiatives. The core partner programs under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) are fully committed to achieving improved service delivery through program alignment. Under the direction of the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB) and the Interagency Work Group, each program is taking steps to assess how services overlap and to identify opportunities for improved service alignment in support of the state strategies. For example, since the passage of WIOA, the core partners contributed funding, staff and facilities to develop state and regional labor market information, establish strategic planning frameworks for community colleges and WIOA

programs, and enhance integrated business services. This work started with the Workforce Education Strategic Plan (WESP) for community colleges, adult education, career and technical education, business and industry, and corporate training. The strategies identified under the WESP are in alignment with the Unified Plan's strategic priorities. Woven throughout these strategies will be a continued assessment of ways that funds from each program can be used to leverage other funding, especially private-sector support, toward program alignment and implementing the following strategies.

Strategy 1: Coordinate Demand-Driven Strategic Planning at the State and Regional Levels

The state is coordinating a demand-driven strategic planning process across education, workforce and economic development at the state, regional and local levels. This process is built upon current state and regional planning initiatives and utilizes resources of the core state agency partners and other partners, including the economic development arm of Commerce. This process will include the following activities that provide support for regional planning and provide the basis for implementing the remaining strategies, especially regional sector partnerships.

Activity 1.1: Develop Strategic Indicators, Benchmarks and Related Planning Data Resources

The Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB) has established an Evaluation and Accountability Committee (EAC) that will recommend tools and measures in order to (a) determine whether the Illinois WIOA Unified State Plan and other WIOA requirements are being carried out effectively, and (b) identify opportunities to improve in the effectiveness and efficiency of Illinois' workforce development system. This committee will also serve as a resource to other IWIB committees in establishing standards and metrics to assess and continuously improve system and program performance.

During its first year the committee will create a framework for its activities. For the accountability component, the committee will map the components of the Unified State Plan to the work being carried out by all of the IWIB committees. Early work on evaluation will address questions of service delivery and potential approaches to answering those questions. The EAC will identify continuous improvement opportunities following a review of the common WIOA performance measures for the core partners and make recommendations in strategies that the entire system can learn from and implement.

The state will also review the prior results from the *Benchmark Report* to identify their relevance to today's workforce system and will examine new measures that can be compared to select other states within the region and nationally. The *Benchmark Report* has been produced annually and includes education, workforce and economic development indicators and benchmarks, including an economic self-sufficiency benchmark for each region and effectiveness measures for individual projects. Revising the *Benchmark Report* will involve bringing together major stakeholders, as well as state agency partners to develop strategic indicators and benchmarks for state and regional economic development.

In subsequent years, the committee will begin looking at larger questions related to evaluation and performance. It should be noted that the focus of the EAC is not to monitor local boards and one-stop systems, but to evaluate and assess outcomes to identify indicators of successful performance outcomes and make recommendations that can be implemented statewide. The committee will review the research agendas of various

components of the system and identify opportunities to strengthen alignment and prioritization of research questions. The availability of the Illinois Longitudinal Data System and the Comprehensive Demographic Dataset, the 2017 Talent Flow Analysis pilot project and the 2017 Workforce Innovation Fund Impact Evaluation will open new evaluation and research opportunities to support system improvement.

The work of the EAC will be critical in updating resources and planning guidelines in advance of the 2020 regional and local plans. Illinois has a solid foundation of resources that were developed for the 2016 regional and local plans including regional data packets of industry and occupational demand and pathway supply/demand analyses, key indicators of business growth and location, labor force participation and unemployment rates. The partners use these projections to identify in-demand industries and occupations. The planning resources also utilized United States Census data to estimate the size and characteristics of the population and labor force, including targeted populations under this plan who are facing multiple barriers to employment. For example, WIOA Title II Adult Education programs are required to align Integrated Education and Training and Bridge programming with in-demand industries as identified through the regional and local plans.

The information provided to each region is currently available on Illinois workNet (Attachment O) (https://www.illinoisworknet.com/DownloadPrint/Attachment%20O%20-%20IL%20Regional%20Planning%20Data%20-%203%2018%202016.pdf). Tables 8a and 8b show regional employment across industry sectors and are the basis for Figures 2a and 2b. Tables 8c and 8d show regional employment within specific industries in the example sectors. Tables 8e and 8f show regional employment within occupations associated with those industries. In each case, the intention was for the regional planning groups to review and analyze this data in order to help identify sectors for which regional sector talent pipeline projects might be most appropriate. Table 12a: Northeast Region Employment by Industry/Occupational Cluster

NORTHEAST REGION

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY / OCCUPATIONAL CLUSTER

Cluster	2012 Employment	2022 Employment	Net Employment Change	Percent Employment Change	Concentration (Location Quotient)
Marketing & Sales	1,486,398	1,655,634	169,236	11.4%	1.02
Hospitality & Tourism	1,072,558	1,195,218	122,660	11.4%	0.64
Law & Public Safety	659,602	785,008	125,406	19.0%	1.17
Business Management	503,349	583,855	80,506	16.0%	1.42
Health Care	498,816	581,060	82,244	16.5%	0.81
Transportation, Distribution & Logistics	390,479	433,897	43,418	11.1%	1.25
Education & Training	379,002	398,055	19,053	5.0%	0.95
Manufacturing	376,840	374,497	- 2,343	-0.6%	1.12
Finance	258,940	269,960	11,020	4.3%	0.96
Construction	161,560	185,578	24,018	14.9%	0.71
Information Technology	64,820	86,724	21,904	33.8%	1.05
Arts & Audio Visual	60,547	64,394	3,847	6.4%	0.78
Research & Development	48,530	51,189	2,659	5.5%	0.72
Agriculture	14,033	16,210	2,177	15.5%	0.30
Energy	12,304	12,919	615	5.0%	0.46

Table 12b: Southwest Region Employment by Industry/Occupational Cluster

SOUTHWEST REGION

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY / OCCUPATIONAL CLUSTER

Cluster	2012 Employment	2022 Employment	Net Employment Change	Percent Employment Change	Concentration (Location Quotient)
Marketing & Sales	74,032	79,564	5,532	7.5%	0.92
Hospitality & Tourism	58,413	62,192	3,779	6.5%	0.92
Health Care	33,642	38,368	4,726	14.0%	0.93
Education & Training	25,437	26,932	1,495	5.9%	1.06
Law & Public Safety	20,727	23,191	2,464	11.9%	0.65
Transportation, Distribution & Logistics	20,635	22,985	2,350	11.4%	1.32
Manufacturing	21,373	21,525	152	0.7%	2.88
Business Management	14,867	16,510	1,643	11.1%	1.19
Construction	13,534	14,901	1,367	10.1%	0.96
Finance	8,889	8,885	- 4	0.0%	0.75
Agriculture	6,485	6,392	- 93	-1.4%	2.44
Arts & Audio Visual	3,806	3,611	- 195	-5.1%	0.81
Reserarch & Development	2,982	3,175	193	6.5%	0.84
Information Technology	2,294	2,984	690	30.1%	0.65
Energy	1,746	1,703	- 43	-2.5%	1.10

Figure 2a: Major Industry Clusters in the Northeast Region "

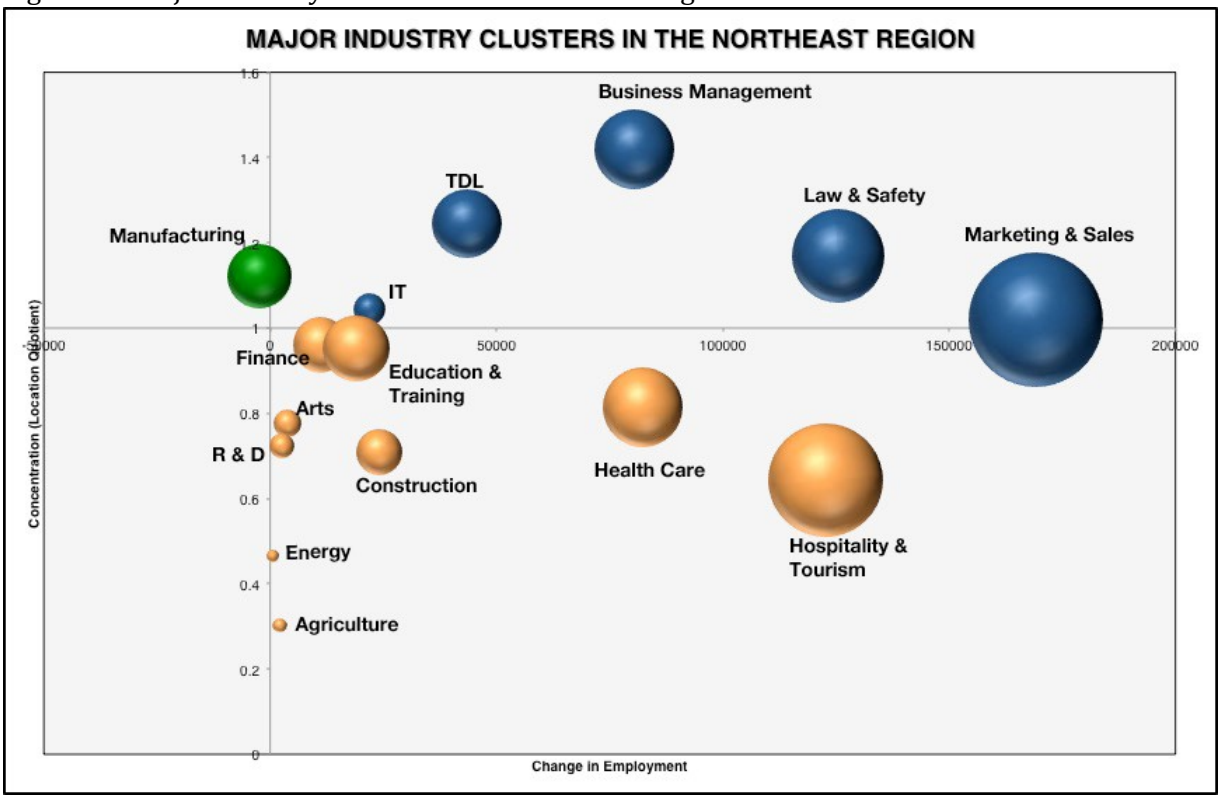


Figure 2b: Major Industry Clusters in the Southwest Region "

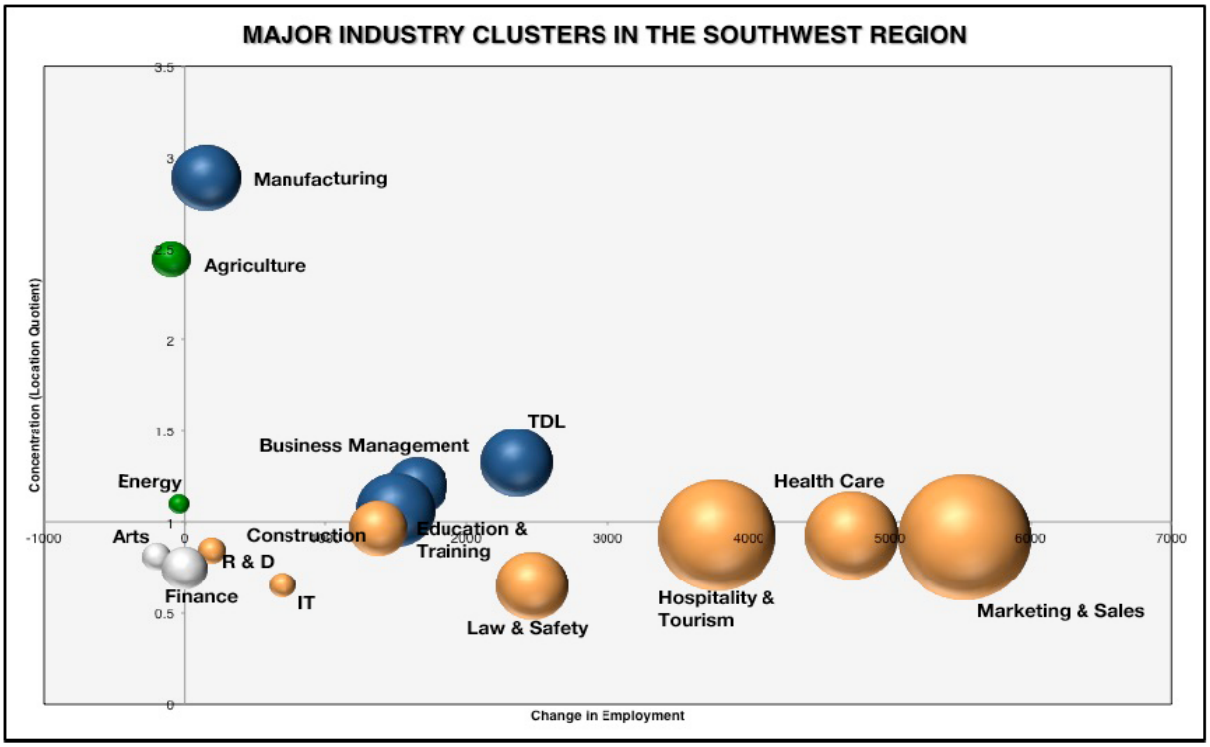


Table 12c: Leading, Emerging and Maturing Health Care Industries in the Northeast Region

Table 12d:

HEALTH CARE								
LEADING, EMERGING AND MATURING INDUSTRIES IN THE NORTHEAST REGION								
NAICS	DESCRIPTION	2015 Employment	2025 Employment	2015-25 Change Employment	% Change 2015-25	Establishments 2014	2014 LQ	Class
6214	Ambulatory Health Care Services	1,681,818	1,775,633	94,815	5.8%	18,154	0.80	Emerging
6215	Medical and Diagnostic Laboratories	1,144,205	1,224,505	80,300	7.0%	1,946	2.82	Emerging
6216	Home Health Care Services	1,112,833	1,203,066	90,233	8.1%	1,688	0.73	Emerging
6219	Other Ambulatory Health Care Services	207,671	224,165	16,494	7.9%	3,645	0.98	Emerging

MANUFACTURING

LEADING, EMERGING AND MATURING INDUSTRIES IN THE SOUTHWESTERN REGION

NAICS	DESCRIPTION	2012 Employment	2022 Employment	Employment Change 2012-22	% Change 2012-22	2014 Establishments	2014 LQ	Class
311	**Food Manufacturing**	**3,468**	**3,502**	**34**	**1.0%**	**62**	**1.20**	**Leading**
312	Beverage and Tobacco Product Manufacturing	84	74	(10)	-11.9%	12	0.22	
313	Textile Mills	-	-	-	0.0%	3	-	
314	Textile Product Mills	24	24	-	0.0%	9	0.10	
315	Apparel Manufacturing	-	-	-	0.0%	4	-	
316	Leather and Allied Product Manufacturing	-	-	-	0.0%	2	-	
321	**Wood Product Manufacturing**	**343**	**385**	**42**	**12.2%**	**23**	**0.51**	**Emerging**
322	Paper Manufacturing	475	432	(43)	-9.1%	11	0.63	
323	Printing and Related Support Activities	604	455	(149)	-24.7%	52	0.66	
324	**Petroleum and Coal Products Manufacturing**	**1,056**	**1,082**	**26**	**2.5%**	**13**	**4.78**	**Leading**
325	Chemical Manufacturing	966	938	(28)	-2.9%	31	0.62	
326	Plastics and Rubber Products Manufacturing	156	146	(10)	-6.4%	16	0.12	
327	**Nonmetallic Mineral Product Manufacturing**	**782**	**936**	**154**	**19.7%**	**27**	**1.08**	**Leading**
331	**Primary Metal Manufacturing**	**5,847**	**5,868**	**21**	**0.4%**	**16**	**7.38**	**Leading**
332	**Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing**	**3,443**	**3,577**	**134**	**3.9%**	**107**	**1.23**	**Leading**
333	Machinery Manufacturing	1,227	1,182	(45)	-3.7%	42	0.56	
334	Computer and Electronic Product Manufacturing	32	27	(5)	-15.6%	16	0.01	
335	**Electrical Equipment, Appliance, and Component Manufacturing**	**903**	**888**	**(15)**	**-1.7%**	**11**	**1.22**	**Maturing**
336	**Transportation Equipment Manufacturing**	**1,431**	**1,474**	**43**	**3.0%**	**21**	**0.48**	**Emerging**
337	**Furniture and Related Product Manufacturing**	**49**	**51**	**2**	**4.1%**	**23**	**0.07**	**Emerging**
339	**Miscellaneous Manufacturing**	**483**	**484**	**1**	**0.2%**	**55**	**0.42**	**Emerging**

Table 12e: Occupational Employment in Health Care Industries in the Northeast Region

HEALTH CARE

INDUSTRIES FOR PRINCIPAL OCCUPATIONS IN THE NORTHEASTERN REGION

NAICS	Description	2014 Establishments	2012 Employment	2022 Employment	Industry Class	Pathway	SOC Code	SOC Title	Average Annual Job Openings	Annual Occupation Openings in Industry	Median Annual	Education Entry Level	Experience Entry Level
621	Ambulatory Health Care Services	18,124	188,318	217,633	Emerging	Therapeutic Services	29-1141	Registered Nurses	3400	483	$71,914	Associate's or Bachelor's degree	None
622	Hospitals	285	168,462	171,202	Emerging					3,421			
623	Nursing and Residential Care Facilities	883	87,593	98,626	Emerging					166			
624	Social Assistance	3,942	79,520	92,619	Emerging					22			
621	Ambulatory Health Care Services	18,124	188,318	217,633	Emerging	Therapeutic Services	29-1171	Nurse Practitioners	109	68	$92,696	Master's degree	None
622	Hospitals	285	168,462	171,202	Emerging					28			
623	Nursing and Residential Care Facilities	883	87,593	98,626	Emerging					3			
624	Social Assistance	3,942	79,520	92,619	Emerging					1			
621	Ambulatory Health Care Services	18,124	188,318	217,633	Emerging	Therapeutic Services	29-2021	Dental Hygienists	269	204	$73,799	Associate's degree	None
622	Hospitals	285	168,462	171,202	Emerging					1			
621	Ambulatory Health Care Services	18,124	188,318	217,633	Emerging	Therapeutic Services	29-2043	Emergency Medical Techs & Paramedics	226	179	$32,898	Postsecondary non-degree award	None
622	Hospitals	285	168,462	171,202	Emerging					50			
621	Ambulatory Health Care Services	18,124	188,318	217,633	Emerging	Therapeutic Services	29-2052	Pharmacy Technicians	301	11	$28,139	High school diploma or equivalent	None
622	Hospitals	285	168,462	171,202	Emerging					49			
623	Nursing and Residential Care Facilities	883	87,593	98,626	Emerging					1			
621	Ambulatory Health Care Services	18,124	188,318	217,633	Emerging	Therapeutic Services	29-2061	Licensed Practical Nurses	710	205	$48,751	Postsecondary non-degree award	None
622	Hospitals	285	168,462	171,202	Emerging					116			
623	Nursing and Residential Care Facilities	883	87,593	98,626	Emerging					278			
624	Social Assistance	3,942	79,520	92,619	Emerging					10			

Table 12f: Occupational Employment in Manufacturing Industries in the Southwest Region

MANUFACTURING														
INDUSTRIES FOR PRINCIPAL OCCUPATIONS IN THE SOUTHWEST REGION														
NAICS	Description	2016 Establishments	2017 Employment	2021 Employment	Industry Class	Pathway	SOC Code	SOC Title	Average Annual Job Openings	Annual Occupation Openings in Industry	Median Annual	Education Entry Level	Experience Entry Level	Training Entry Level
334	Computer and Electronic Product Manufacturing	16	32	27		Manufacturing Production Process Development	15-1132	Software Developers, Applications**	24	1	$88,206	Bachelor's degree	None	None
334	Computer and Electronic Product Manufacturing	16	32	27		Manufacturing Production Process Development	15-1133	Software Developers, Systems Software**	14	2	$92,438	Bachelor's degree	None	None
332	Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	537	3,443	3,577	Leading	Manufacturing Production Process Development	17-2141	Mechanical Engineers**	13	1	$74,910	Bachelor's degree	None	None
333	Machinery Manufacturing	42	1,227	1,182						2				
334	Computer and Electronic Product Manufacturing	16	32	27						1				
336	Transportation Equipment Manufacturing	21	1,431	1,434	Emerging					2				
334	Computer and Electronic Product Manufacturing	16	32	27		Manufacturing Production Process Development	41-4011	Sales Reps, Wholesale/Mfg, Tech/Scientific**	15	1	$73,412	Bachelor's degree	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training
311	Food Manufacturing	42	3,488	3,502	Leading	Manufacturing Production Process Development	41-4012	Sales Reps/Wholesale/Mfg, Ex. Tech/Scientific**	61	1	$48,186	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training
332	Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	537	3,443	3,577	Leading					1				
333	Machinery Manufacturing	42	1,227	1,182						1				
311	Food Manufacturing	42	3,488	3,502	Leading	Logistics & Inventory Control	43-5071	Shipping, Receiving & Traffic Clerks**	16	1	$41,104	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term on-the-job training
325	Chemical Manufacturing	21	968	966						1				
326	Plastics and Rubber Products Manufacturing	16	554	546						1				
332	Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	537	3,443	3,577	Leading					1				
333	Machinery Manufacturing	42	1,227	1,182						1				
336	Transportation Equipment Manufacturing	21	1,431	1,434	Emerging					1				
311	Food Manufacturing	42	3,488	3,502	Leading	Maintenance, Installation & Repair	49-9041	Industrial Machinery Mechanics**	37	3	$54,918	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Long-term on-the-job training
312	Beverage and Tobacco Product Manufacturing	12	84	74						1				
321	Wood Product Manufacturing	23	543	582	Emerging					1				
322	Paper Manufacturing	11	475	452						1				
325	Chemical Manufacturing	21	968	966						2				
326	Plastics and Rubber Products Manufacturing	16	554	546						1				
327	Nonmetallic Mineral Product Manufacturing	27	782	862	Leading					1				
331	Primary Metal Manufacturing	14	9,847	9,888	Leading					1				
332	Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	537	3,443	3,577	Leading					2				
333	Machinery Manufacturing	42	1,227	1,182						2				
336	Transportation Equipment Manufacturing	21	1,431	1,434	Emerging					2				

Source: Illinois Department of Employment Security Statewide Long-Term Employment

Projections, Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity *Activity 1.2: Establish Regional Planning Areas*

The Governor has determined that Illinois' ten economic development regions will serve as the regional planning areas that are required by Section 106 of the WIOA to engage in joint planning, integrate service delivery, share administrative costs and enter into regional coordination efforts with economic development agencies operating in the same region. The ten economic development regions were established by the Governor based on an analysis of labor market information and several other data factors including statewide commuting patterns surrounding major and minor metropolitan centers. As shown below and in Attachment S (https://www.illinoisworknet.com/WIOA/Resources/Documents/Attachment%20S%20-%20Local%20Workforce%20Area%20and%20Regional%20Planning%20Area%20Map.pdf), these ten regions include the 22 LWIAs and 102 counties.

The state continues to recommend that Chief Elected Officials (CEOs) and Local Workforce Innovation Boards review the patterns in WIOA funding, participant service levels, and administrative costs and consider how these will impact service delivery and the ability to meet administrative requirements. The state has acknowledged the many efforts already undertaken to streamline operations and provide more efficient service delivery. The state continues to encourage CEO's to consider a voluntary consolidation of LWIAs as an option to provide as much funding as possible for direct client services. A small number of LWIAs have counties that extend into an adjacent economic development region. The IWIB will take steps to address this situation in 2018.

Activity 1.3: Conduct Integrated Regional Planning

The state has developed and supported an integrated regional planning process that is coordinated with local area planning in each of the ten regions. As required by WIOA, this planning process includes determinations of how Local Workforce Innovation Boards will engage in the joint development and implementation of regional sector initiatives. In the spring of 2015, ICCB and state agency partners established the foundations for regional planning throughout Illinois through the process of developing an ICCB Workforce Education Strategic Plan. The process addressed workforce and education needs across the state to adapt to changing economic and student needs within the ten planning regions and community college districts. The data from this project has been updated and used in other regional planning efforts including, the IWIB Strategic Plan and the Adult Education Strategic Plan.

The state worked with the IWIB, Leadership Team and local partners to develop regional planning workshops and a statewide summit in 2016 to support the regional planning process. Regional planning addressed the alignment and integration of education, workforce and economic development resources, the identification of opportunities for sector initiatives, and partnerships that will promote business and expand career opportunities for more people in the region. The regional plans also identified opportunities for the coordination and delivery of services. The integration of services was a focus of Illinois' 2017 WIOA summit that included more than 500 attendees.

The Interagency Work Group developed a coordinated Regional & Local Plan / Memorandum of Understanding review process that includes a formal report and technical

assistance reviews for each of the ten Economic Development Regions and twenty-two local workforce areas. It is important to note that the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Illinois Department of Employment Security, Illinois Department of Human Services Division of Rehabilitation Services and Illinois Community College Board are all actively engaged in this ongoing process. LWIBs submitted their initial regional (and local) plans to the Interagency Work Group in May of 2016. With the subsequent release of WIOA final rules, LWIBs were directed to submit modifications to bring plans into alignment with the new regulations by May of 2017. The Interagency Work Group created an online dashboard that provides the status of each plan (and MOU) and allows the public to view and download the documents. All regional and local plans may be viewed at: www.illinoisworknet.com/WIOA/RegPlanning/Pages/Plans_MOUs_Dashboard.aspx.

Strategy 2: Support Employer-Driven Regional Sector Initiatives

Illinois has been actively engaged in sectorial work and sector strategies for over a decade. In 2006, Illinois was one of six states invited to participate in the National Governors Association (NGA) Center for Best Practices Sector Strategies Learning Academy funded by the Mott, Ford and Joyce Foundations. The initial policy recommendations resulting from this effort remain valid today: a) promote regionalism; b) increase funding opportunities; c) use data to drive decisions; d) align resources and strategies; e) present opportunities for unified messages; and f) build legislative support. State and regional strategic planning activities will align education, workforce and economic development and lay the foundation for employer-driven regional sector initiatives.

The IWIB adopted a guiding principle directing their efforts towards business demand-driven orientation through a sector strategy framework, grounded in strong partnerships within and among businesses throughout the system. The premise is that business needs dictate the system responses, and the system should be developed in such a way that it addresses those business needs. Identifying the appropriate sectors in each region will ensure limited dollars are more wisely directed toward the leading and emerging occupations.

The Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) continued the implementation of the Workforce Education Strategic Plan by creating workgroups, such as one focused on "essential skills," for employers and workers in Illinois, led by Adult Education. This workgroup developed an Essential Skills Framework that is being used statewide. In addition, the ICCB has developed a Strategic Plan for adult education that aligns with the IWIB Unified State and Strategic Plans as well as the ICCB Workforce Education Strategic Plan. Each of the Plans used workgroups made up of diverse partners to build out and work around the findings of the employers' input.

Activity 2.1: Promote Employer-Driven Regional Sector Partnerships

The Interagency Work Group, with, direction from the IWIB, will work to expand the statewide policy framework that operationalizes the goals and guiding principles of employer-driven sector partnerships developed through the national Sector Strategies Technical Assistance initiative. The sector strategies framework describes how state and regional resources can be used to launch, expand and support employer-led partnerships (see Attachment G) (https://www.illinoisworknet.com/WIOA/Resources/Documents/Attachment%20G%20-

%20Illinois%20Sector%20Partnership.pdf). The core partners will implement strategies based on the framework and other leading national and state employer-driven models such as those developed with the support of the NGA Sector Strategies Learning Academy, the Workforce Innovation Fund and the United States Chamber of Commerce's Talent Pipeline Initiative.

The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (Commerce) will continue to promote employer-led sector strategies via technical assistance regarding the Illinois Next Generation Sector Strategies Framework, and sector partnerships related to Talent Pipeline Management. In 2015. Commerce promoted sector partnerships to numerous local areas and economic development offices. In 2016 and 2017, Commerce staff was invited to lead sessions on sector partnerships at state conferences of local chamber of commerce executives and rural economic development professionals. Commerce also leveraged the work of a $4 million Sector Partner National Emergency Grant to provide training and work-based learning to long-term unemployed in the healthcare, manufacturing and transportation, distribution & logistics industries, as well as to support regional planning efforts through projects ranging from asset mapping to LWIB orientation guides.

Activity 2.2: Promote Sector-Based Business Services and Employer Initiatives

As required by WIOA 101(d)(3)(iv), the IWIB will work together with the Interagency Work Group and the Integrated Business Services Workgroup to better align and integrate business services among the core programs, along with state and regional economic development partners. In December 2017, the IWIB approved the Integrated Business Services Framework developed by the Integrated Business Services Workgroup and business engagement staff with the support of DOL technical assistance funding. By January 2018, this group developed and prioritized implementation goals for the next two years. The goals range from macro-level (Define "business engagement") to micro-level (Explore business-customer tracking systems for use across partners). Some of the goals, such as "Establish a high-level interagency management team to provide, collaborative leadership to front-line staff" have already been met.

State partners will support these regional integrated business service teams through guides and tools, as well as professional development and training. This integrated business services initiative will be complemented by related initiatives to jointly leverage funding, including an emphasis on private sector investment, to support employer-driven sector initiatives, including how to leverage rapid response and layoff aversion funds for business retention. The focus is on providing practical guidance to regional stakeholders to develop integrated business services to employers in industries and occupations that are identified as in-demand through the state and regional planning process.

Strategy 3: Provide Career Pathways for Economic Advancement

The IWIB continues to strengthen alignment with education groups in an effort to advance career pathways for all individuals to prepare them for economic self-sufficiency. In Illinois, the Illinois P-20 Council (P represents preschool and 20 stands for grade 20, education after college), which has a business membership emphasis, has become the venue to develop a framework to better align the state's education systems. The IWIB Business Co-Chair plays a major role in the council and is the chair of the P-20 Council's School, College and Career Readiness Committee. This uniquely positions the IWIB to facilitate connections between

workforce, education and business and industry partners. The IWIB will also be in position to create a common set of expectations, assumptions and definitions that will enable the alignment of career pathways programs and build a stronger talent pipeline across all populations. Additionally, the IWIB Business Co-Chair and one of the required state legislative members of the IWIB were actively engaged in the Higher Education Commission on the Future of the Workforce, who sought to ensure that practices and policy recommendations to increase post-secondary education attainment and address regional workforce needs are embedded into WIOA implementation strategies. The work of the Commission was completed in August 15, 2016.

The Illinois Community College Board, through its Adult Education and Workforce Division, has developed model strategies to assist individuals with multiple barriers to employment. For example, ICCB has created and implemented Pre-bridge, Bridge, and Integrated Education and Training (IET) programs such as I-CAPS (Integrated Career and Academic Preparation System) that are designed to improve access to training for in-demand occupations for very-underserved populations. With the implementation of two strategic plans, the Workforce Education Strategic Plan and the Adult Education Strategic Plan, the ICCB will identify strategies and goals that address early interventions, transition to postsecondary education and employment and college and career readiness.

Policies and practices recommended from these efforts will be operationalized through current and future state and regional sector initiatives, such as those mentioned below in Activity 3.1. This will provide the foundation for sector-based career pathway initiatives that expand career and educational opportunities for students and workers, including those facing multiple barriers to employment.

Activity 3.1: Promote Leading Career Pathway Models and Best Practices

Illinois' current efforts to align education, workforce and economic development are also laying a solid foundation to promote leading career pathway models and best practices. Career pathway development in Illinois is being expanded to encompass every level of the education system and to meet the needs of our diverse populations, including those that face multiple barriers to achieving self-sufficiency. The IWIB and some of the core and required partner agencies adopted a statewide definition of "Career Pathways." This definition adapts the current definition under WIOA and expands to ensure a connection with current state initiatives, programs and services. Each agency incorporates this definition into guidelines to ensure a consistent message is understood throughout the state. Across the system, Illinois is piloting and/or creating solutions to implement these models and to develop policy recommendations such as:

- Defining Career Pathways for the workforce and education system, across multiple partners and through board actions across the IWIB, the Illinois Community College Board (Community Colleges), the Illinois Board of Higher Education (Public and Private Universities), and the Illinois State Board of Education (K-12).
    - Engaging in professional development activities that emphasize the integrated nature of career pathways, including topics such as curriculum integration, academic and career advising across K-12 and community colleges through a counselors training, a forthcoming Special Populations Academy and a forthcoming summit on nontraditional careers.

- Illinois is part of a College and Career Readiness Network sponsored by JP Morgan Chase and the Council of Chief State School Officers. This effort supports planning efforts to design and implement a rigorous, demand-driven education system that will increase the number of students who complete career pathways, beginning in secondary school and culminating in valuable post-secondary credentials.
- Defining High Quality Credentials that will place equal importance on industry recognized credentials and create a definition for high quality that is based on sector-demand and self-sustaining wage data.
- Determining the Criteria for Progressive Pathways to establish a threshold definition of a career pathway program that promotes a common understanding of quality pathways and systems, while aligning to existing definitions, plans and guidelines.
- Creating "60 by 25" Communities and P-20 Regional Networks, which are community and regional collaborations seeking ways to increase college and career success for students through regional action toward a state target of increasing adults in Illinois with high quality degrees and credentials to sixty percent by 2025 (60 by 25).
- Sector-based Job Training and Economic Development/Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) pilot project involving community-based organizations serving SNAP and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipients.
- ICCB initiatives, including Integrated Education and Training programs (IET). The IET program provides low-skilled adults with an opportunity to gain basic skills or work towards a high school equivalency while enrolling concurrently in a Career Technical Education program. Individuals enrolled in an IET program will receive instruction that is contextualized to a specific sector and includes employability/workforce preparation skills and a technical training program (i.e., welding). Individuals completing the IET program may earn an industry recognized credential(s), a college certificate and college credit. Under this model, individuals can earn credentials within a year, depending on the program.
- Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) pilot projects and career pathway initiatives for individuals with disabilities will be supported by core and required partners.
- Commerce will support awareness of best and promising practices for local staff and will provide technical assistance to foster their integration into the regular WIOA local workflow.
- The Service Integration Policy Work Group is modeling resource leveraging by building on the Illinois Department of Human Services Rehabilitation Services Technical Assistance Grant received from the Workforce Innovation Technical Assistance Center (WINTAC), funded by the United States Department of Education. A key focus of WINTAC Activity is service integration. Through WINTAC, the model is using the five stages and six core functions for service integration. Three sub-workgroups formed around the six core functions will be exploring policy and implementation best practices to achieve service integration.

These efforts as well as others will inform the state how to expand career pathway approaches that can be implemented through regional sector partnerships and other regional sector initiatives. Policy recommendations, professional development and technical assistance will be central in addressing how to incorporate these pathway approaches into the improvement of career services and the expansion of access to accelerated and integrated work-based and classroom training, aligned and integrated programs of study leading to industry-recognized credentials, and support services for targeted populations facing barriers to employment. Additionally, career pathway approaches will include strategies for fully mainstreaming targeted populations that provide access to self-sustaining wages and career advancement.

Activity 3.2: Expand and Improve Bridge and Integrated Education and Training Models

The state agency partners will focus on expanding access and success in sector-based bridge programs that provide opportunities for youth and adults with low skills and low literacy. The state will support new initiatives that promote sector-based pre-bridge, bridge programs and integrated education and training models that expand access and increase success for low-skilled youth and adults in career pathways. These programs are designed to introduce individuals to career pathway programs of interest. A common state definition of bridge programs was developed to ensure all core and required partners have a basic understanding of the provisions of services under these programs. The partners have begun to revisit this definition and other policies to ensure that it aligns with current employer and workforce readiness needs, with the newly developed career pathway definition, as well as with common measures described in the Alliance for Quality Career Pathways. The state recognizes the use of bridge programs as a foundation for career pathway systems and also as a foundation for employment opportunities and other training.

The strategic plan for adult education, "Expanding Career Pathway Opportunities in Adult Education," engaged multiple partners in the plan development process. The plan looks to expand opportunities for individuals, including those who lack basic literacy, English and foundational skills necessary to access in-demand employment. The ICCB will continue to engage core and required partners in the strategic planning process, as well as work closely with them to re-examine the bridge definition to ensure its connection to the statewide definition of career pathways.

Activity 3.3: Promote Innovative Career Pathway Solutions

As stated above in Activity 3.1, Illinois' adoption of a statewide definition for career pathways lays a solid foundation for career pathway models for all populations. One example in promoting innovation in career pathway solutions will be an increased emphasis on solutions for youth with barriers. Informed by the work of the IWIB Youth Standing Committee (previously the IWIB Disadvantaged Youth Task Force), state agency partners will use demonstrations and pilot projects to guide policy recommendations through activities such as:

- Exploring opportunities to expand career pathway for out-of-school youth through the blending of federal and state funding;

- Supporting education efforts to design and implement rigorous, demand-driven education systems that will increase career pathway curriculum in secondary settings;
- Developing joint projects between adult education programs, local workforce boards and others in areas such as aligning WIOA Title I services with efforts that currently address justice-involved youth. Illinois is exploring a range of career pathway models seen nationally and statewide as best practices and examining ways to braid and blend funding for maximum impact. Where possible these models will be folded into existing juvenile justice efforts for seamless service alignment to add the expertise of WIOA service providers to strengthen employment and training models.
- Creating service alignment for foster youth, including youth who are aging out of the foster care system. The Departments of Commerce and Children and Family Services are developing an initiative to expand career pathway services to older foster youth who are nearing age-out. Successful models for braiding and blending WIOA and Chafee Foster Care Funds are under consideration as a basis for Illinois' effort.

Activity 3.4: Promote the Use of All Types of Apprenticeships

With increased attention given to various forms of work-based learning, apprenticeships are expected to become more common as WIOA is implemented. The Workforce Readiness through Apprenticeships and Pathways (WRAP) Committee of The Governor's Cabinet on Children and Youth will continue to coordinate the pathways and apprenticeship activities of workforce, education and economic development agencies in Illinois.

The IWIB created an Apprenticeship Standing Committee to plan for a comprehensive and integrated apprenticeship system in Illinois, oversee its implementation and performance and recommend improvements. The IWIB is committed to using registered, non-registered and pre-apprenticeships as a key strategy to build a pipeline of skilled workers to help businesses throughout the state remain competitive. For this purpose, the IWIB created an Apprenticeship Committee in June 2016. This committee will now be the key resource for the IWIB to identify policies, resources, opportunities and roadblocks as Illinois seeks to establish a comprehensive "scaffold" of pathways around and towards Registered Apprenticeships.

Illinois will learn from the best practices from the Apprenticeship USA pilot projects, including the Illinois Manufacturers' Association Education Foundation Advanced Apprenticeship Consortium project. The expansion apprenticeships will be encouraged and supported with WIOA Statewide Activities funds through the Illinois Talent Pipeline and Youth Career Pathways Programs.

Strategy 4: Coordinate and Enhance Career Services and Case Management

As stated in Section III.b.2, the IWIB approved a collaborative policy development process to ensure a broad range of stakeholder engagement that yields cost-effective and efficient guidance to the field. The Interagency Work Group will use this process to develop policy recommendations to the IWIB for implementing integrated and enhanced career services and case management.

Activity 4.1: Provide Coordinated and Enhanced Career Services

The state is working to support the delivery of enhanced career services to participants across partner programs. Employment Security is responsible for the Illinois Career Information System, a web-based tool that incorporates Illinois-specific actionable data regarding in-demand occupations and wages, that allows students and job seekers to make informed decisions about their career pathways. These services will result in individualized plans addressing how to reach career goals based on career and skill assessments and identified barriers requiring support services. Agency partners will also include the assessment of digital literacy as a basic skill and provide services to participants in gaining these skills through career services and through additional services in career pathway bridge programs. Agency partners will also provide career services guides, tools and professional development to core program staff in providing these career services. This will be supported by the interagency labor market information team to provide improved access to career guidance information in in-demand industries and occupations and education, training and credentialing options for achieving career and education goals in participant plans (See Activity 5.2).

Activity 4.2: Provide Coordinated and Enhanced Case Management Services

The Interagency Work Group will establish a case management team, as applicable, to coordinate and support the delivery of enhanced case management services to participants across the core programs and with other partners. This case management team will include local workforce board members, frontline staff and supervisory workforce personnel to create the Workforce Academy described below in Activity 4.3 to develop training in the use of case management data from aligned and integrated case management systems used by core programs and with other partners, including related human resources and supportive service programs (also see Activity 6.3). Illinois' workforce and education partners are committed to this strategy as illustrated by the following initiatives.

- Commerce will collaborate with the IWIB Integrated Services Committee, and core partners to develop standards for integrated case management services and training for local staff to meet and exceed the established service standards. This will include improved and expanded training on best practices and linking participant outcomes data to the staff assigned to each customer.
- The Illinois Community College Board will implement strategies for Local Title II providers to offer professional development on assessment for case managers. ICCB will also continue to work on alignment of the Adult Education Area Planning Councils with the LWIAs to foster better case management and customer services for individuals with multiple barriers to employment.
- Title II Adult Education will continue to strategize with core and required partners, specifically TANF and Title I, to maximize efforts to provide coordinated services to mutual clients such as those underserved populations.

Activity 4.3: Promote Continuous Improvement and Ongoing Professional Development

State agency partners will promote continuous improvement in career services and case management services through state and regional initiatives that promote leading business practices, working with the IWIB as part of its expanded role (WIOA 101(d)(3)(vii)). The IWIB and the Interagency Work Group, will be leading an effort to create a Workforce Academy. LWIB and local input of front-line and supervisory workforce personnel will be

critical in the development of the Academy. The Academy will build a common understanding of Illinois' vision and support the move to an integrated delivery system building the capacity of staff through cross-training and other professional development opportunities. This capacity building and technical assistance plan is a key objective of the IWIB's Strategic Plan and will support the assurance that all partner agencies and front-line staff are adequately prepared to understand and develop an effective plan to address the customer's needs.

In addition, front-line staff will be afforded opportunities to participate in ongoing professional development through topic-specific policy academies, as well as national professional development and credentialing programs, such as the National Association of Workforce Development Professionals (NAWDP). Furthermore, the IWIB and the Interagency Work Group will leverage the expertise of the ICCB Adult Education and Career Technical Education programs and support available through several Illinois public community colleges and universities to provide professional development to agency partners in the appropriate administration of educational assessment of basic skill deficiencies. To the extent possible, training and information on promising practices and lessons learned will be delivered through technological solutions to maximize access and cost-effectiveness.

Continuous improvement and professional development will also expand via regional roundtables and statewide summits that provide opportunities for peer-to-peer information exchange on best practices and lessons learned, establishing and strengthening cross-program relationships, and front-line feedback to state program leaders. These events will continue to include business representatives on the state and local workforce boards to understand the perspectives from their levels of the system.

Activity 4.4: Promote the Incorporation of Required Partner Services

The core partners continue to explore opportunities to incorporate the services of the Comprehensive One-Stop Center partners into case management and career services. Illinois has made progress through the Interagency Work Group to identify the business services, career services, training services and supportive services of the state's workforce, education and economic development partners. Through the implementation of best practices from programs, such as the Disability Employment Initiative and the Bridge and Integrated Education and Training program, the state will develop policies through the IWIB policy process to ensure that there is a customer-centered coordination of services that considers the additional needs of the targeted populations as identified in this plan.

Strategy 5: Expand Employer and Job Seeker Access to Labor Market Information

The IWIB Information Technology Standing Committee and the Interagency Data Team will collectively design, develop and use the statewide public-private data infrastructure (Strategy 6) to provide both employers and job seekers with tools to promote and access job openings; review changing labor market trends and opportunities; identify funding opportunities and fund education, training and support services. This will require partners to ensure that privacy and security issues are addressed.

Activity 5.1: Improve Employer Tools for Communicating and Accessing Information

The IWIB Information Technology Standing Committee and State partners will collectively develop new tools for employers to communicate their forecasted demand for workers and review and provide input into industry and occupational projections developed through Employment Security. This will include new tools for employers working together in leading regional partnerships to continuously communicate short-term forecasts of job openings and competency and credentialing requirements for these jobs. This will build on tools and best practices from employer-led national and state initiatives, including the United States Chamber of Commerce Talent Pipeline Management Initiative and the Vermilion Advantage Talent Pipeline Initiative. Illinois will also improve employer capacity to easily communicate career opportunities and current job openings to regional partnerships and their broader labor market in Illinois. This will be accomplished through employer tools that can be easily integrated with their current human resource information systems and their own websites that provide information on careers and job openings. Commerce and other regional and local partners will work with businesses to improve public/private communication of workforce needs, including demand competencies and the location, timing, quantity of specific demands and talent flow analysis.

Activity 5.2: Improve Access to Career and Education Guidance Tools and Information

The IWIB has increased their role in aligning with education. This includes significantly increased coordination between workforce and secondary and postsecondary education to promote career awareness, career exploration and planning as well as student exposure to in-demand careers. The ICCB -- in partnership with core partner programs, representatives of Illinois businesses, local chambers of commerce; secondary, postsecondary and adult educators and professionals and other important stakeholders -- developed an Essential Skills Framework designed to address needed employability and soft-skills identified by employers. The Illinois Essential Employability Skills Framework is designed to define and clarify essential employability skills and provide a standard for the state. Essential employability skills are those general skills that are required to be successful in all sectors of the labor market and are separate from the technical skills attained in career pathways or academic skills, such as math and reading.

The Interagency Work Group will also utilize existing tools and develop new and improved tools and information to support enhanced career services provided by the core programs, other partners and also the secondary and postsecondary education partners. The team will expand the Illinois Career Information System tools to avoid duplication and to provide the ability to use a flexible and robust system (Strategy 4). The team continues to explore ongoing training and support to front-line career services and case management staff to improve access and use of these tools and resources as part of the Workforce Academy.

Activity 5.3: Improve Access and Integration of Eligible Training Provider Lists

To improve the access and use of the WIOA eligible training provider lists (ETPL) by employers and job seekers, the state continues to make Illinois workNet even more user-friendly and work with other state agencies to share similar information. This will be accomplished in collaboration with the policy process being put into place to ensure that systems are in line with and supporting the implementation of policy. Commerce will make ETPLs available on the Illinois workNet web portal, along with provider performance and return on investment information for students and jobseekers.

Activity 5.4: Improve Access and Utilization of Labor Market and Workforce System Information

Labor market and career information is currently provided on the Employment Security website through a variety of web-based tools included in the Illinois Virtual Labor Market Information (VLMI) System supported by Geographic Solutions and the Illinois Career Information System, which incorporates Illinois-specific labor market information (LMI). Through cooperation with the core partners, additional enhancements will improve the current platform, and changes will be made through any new technology platform utilized by the state. The Illinois Community College Board will work with Adult Education providers to utilize LMI in making decisions about integrated training and bridge programs.

Strategy 6: Improve Public-Private Data Infrastructure

The Interagency Data Team, in cooperation with the Interagency Work Group, will expand and improve the Illinois public-private data infrastructure to support the five strategies described above. This requires the integration of LMI with state education and workforce longitudinal data systems, as well as program and case management systems.

Activity 6.1: Enhance the State Labor Market Information System

The core partners, including the Illinois Department of Employment Security (Employment Security), continue to work to enhance the Labor Market Information (LMI) system to support the WIOA strategies. Traditional LMI produced by Employment Security is readily available on the Employment Security website, the Virtual Labor Market Information (VLMI) system, (a Geographic Solutions web tool which houses the Workforce Information Database per the requirements of the Workforce Information Grant), and limited LMI through the Illinois Career Information System (wages and projections). Traditional LMI includes occupational wage information, current economic conditions by industry and geography, as well as short term and long-term Industry and Occupational Employment Projections by local area. Also included are the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (labor force data) and Current Employment Statistics (local area jobs data by industry). Near real time LMI includes information on The Conference Board's Help Wanted Online Job Ads postings by Economic Development Region and can be customized upon request. Other real time LMI utilizes information from the state's Unemployment Insurance and Employment Service programs.

Activity 6.2: Expand and Improve the State Longitudinal Data System

Illinois will continue to expand and improve the state education and workforce longitudinal data system to support the six strategies. This will include initiatives to use state longitudinal data to support regional sector partnerships based on lessons learned from initiatives such as the Vermilion Advantage pilot project. It will also continue to build the capacity to link to state licensing, industry and professional certification data. This will build on the pilot projects and will include:

Expanding labor market information by including improved measures of workforce outcomes (job attachment and full quarter earnings) that can be used to benchmark the outcomes for education and training graduates to other Illinois workers.

- Developing longitudinal worker profiles from improved measures for workforce outcomes.
- Developing and implementing a mapping of labor entrants and worker flows across jobs and over time to understand local labor supply and employer demand dynamics.
- The Illinois Community College Board will continue its efforts with other State level core and required partners, specifically Employment Security and Commerce, to develop a system that will align and integrate labor market information with state educational and workforce longitudinal data leading to better integrated customer services for both the job-seeker and the employer.

Activity 6.3: Improve the Integration of Program and Case Management Information Systems

The Illinois data team will work with core partners and the Illinois Chief Information Officer as well as the newly formed Illinois Department of Innovation and Technology (DoIT), to improve the integration of program and case management systems as applicable to improve service delivery. This team also will work to improve the integration with state longitudinal data systems to support evaluation and continuous improvement.

B. ALIGNMENT WITH ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE THE PLAN

Describe how the activities identified in (A) will be aligned with programs and activities provided by required one-stop partners and other optional one-stop partners and activities provided under employment, training (including Registered Apprenticeships), education (including career and technical education), human services and other programs not covered by the plan, as appropriate, assuring coordination of, and avoiding duplication among these activities.

The core program activities identified in (A) will be aligned with programs and activities provided by the required partners and optional partners by engaging representatives, from all programs at both the state and local levels, to participate in ongoing work groups, working subgroups, regional meetings and weekly webinars, all in an effort to establish and maintain consistent, and clear communication among core and required partners.

As described in the response under Section III.a.1., the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB) in partnership with state agencies and stakeholders provides strategic leadership in the alignment of the workforce development system, including employment, training, education, human services and other programs, including Registered Apprenticeships and career and technical education. The Interagency Work Group provides operational leadership and alignment across these programs as well. This team has built on and has integrated current state and regional planning initiatives and resources of the state agency partners that administer the required Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) programs, including the economic development arm of the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (Commerce).

The IWIB and the Interagency Work Group will expand the strategies outlined in Section III.a.2.A as well as the key initiatives listed below to drive the coordination of program activity, improve the level of service to business and job seekers, increase efficiencies and eliminate duplication. Illinois will continue with the strategy of coordinating regional

planning meetings which included partner program staff from each Economic Development Region (EDR). The purpose of the initial regional meetings was to learn about each partner's program, review regional demographics and program data and learn to use a data-driven planning approach. These meetings served as the basis of Illinois' ten WIOA regional plans. Commerce, the Illinois Department of Employment Security (Employment Security), the Illinois Department of Human Services Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) and the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) are all actively engaged in development of guidelines and the coordinated review process of the regional / local plans, Memorandums of Understanding (MOU), and budgets outlining the local infrastructure and shared costs.

Alignment with Employment and Training

The Economic Information and Analysis (EI&A) Division of Employment Security will continue to work closely with the workforce, education and economic development partner's data team to provide labor market information to inform employment and training decisions. Illinois will implement the best practices from pilot projects such as the United States Chamber of Commerce Talent Pipeline Management with Vermilion Advantage to measure talent pipelines in local areas and determine which of the sector partnerships and career pathways are more effective in their local areas. Illinois will also measure workforce outcomes using Illinois' Longitudinal Data System (ILDS). The ILDS will also be an important mechanism for aligning plan activities with a number of partner activities outside of the plan. Using lessons learned from the WIOA planning process Illinois intends to develop an ILDS agency plan regarding occupational supply/demand data. While Illinois has often produced occupational supply and demand data in conjunction with IWIB workforce development task forces and committees, we recognize the opportunity to develop a sustainable, repeatable occupational supply and demand reporting process for all regions and public, secondary and post-secondary institutions in Illinois.

The IWIB and program partners will continue to work on establishing outcome performance measures that allow partners to see the benefits of certificate and post-secondary degree programs on job stability, as well as earnings, which can be compared to other Illinois workers by comparing the reference group to all Illinois workers by using the Longitudinal Employment Dynamics program (United States Census). Employment Security's EI&A Division is unique in the nation in having established enhanced measures of workforce outcomes that utilize career earnings from the UI Wage Records apart from secondary earnings when employees have wages coming from more than one job. This provides a more accurate reflection of the specific benefits of job training programs.

In 2017, the Illinois Task Force on Employment and Economic Opportunity for Persons with Disabilities (EEOPD) submitted a plan to Governor Rauner and the State Legislature that recommended actionable steps to address barriers to competitive employment and economic opportunity for persons with disabilities. The EEOPD was the result of Illinois becoming an "Employment First" state with the objective of ensuring that people with disabilities are given the option to engage in integrated, competitive employment at or above minimum wage.

One recommendation is to align the mandated requirements under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) with Employment First principles. Implementation of this strategy will occur by linking the EEOPD with the IWIB to embed strategies for

creating inclusiveness in the workforce system and the placement of people with disabilities into competitive employment settings across the state. This linkage not only emphasizes the priority of persons with disabilities within WIOA, but addresses an issue highlighted within the EEOPD plan by aligning plans and breaking down silos across programs. Illinois Title I and Title IV core partners are represented on the Task Force along with representatives of employers, educators, disability advocates and service provider agencies. The plan is included in Attachment AA (https://www.illinoisworknet.com/WIOA/Resources/Documents/Attachment%20AA%20--%20Employment%20and%20Economic%20Opportunity%20for%20Persons%20with%20Disabilities%20Recommedations%20Report.pdf).

The state continues to implement WIOA in conjunction with the ApprenticeshipUSA state Accelerator Grants. This initiative will help Illinois build upon existing strategies to expand and diversify Registered Apprenticeship opportunities. These strategies will include convening key industry representatives, state agency leaders and other stakeholders to form strategic partnerships and emphasize work-based learning (including apprenticeship) as a workforce solution in both traditional and non-traditional industries including IT, healthcare, advanced manufacturing, cyber-security, business services and transportation.

Alignment with Education

Fundamental into the regional planning process is the promotion of employer-driven regional sector partnerships that will reinforce and customize career pathways best practices. As a part of this strategy, Illinois will leverage the WIOA Title I (Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Programs), Trade and Statewide Activities funds to further develop work-based learning opportunities across the education and workforce system. In administering the Title IB statewide activities, Commerce is working with local boards to ensure that the new WIOA innovation initiatives are 1) data-driven by the needs of business and labor market information 2) regionally based and 3) inclusive of staff of the core, required and optional one-stop program partners. The state will make further investment in innovation and technical assistance projects based on the needs identified through this review process. An example of this is WIOA training that was funded by a Statewide Activities grant and coordinated by the Illinois Workforce Partnership. The project provided business outreach and case management training that was made available to all of the core partners.

The state's educational partners (including Title II Adult Education and Career and Technical Education) are part of the team that will coordinate these efforts at the state, regional and local levels. In addition, the Illinois State Board of Education and the Illinois Board of Higher Education are a part of the Workforce Readiness through Apprenticeships and Pathways (WRAP) Committee's Working Group that is coordinating efforts for customizing career pathway best practices. These identified practices will come from other efforts currently occurring in the state, such as those mentioned in 3.1 above, as well as the implementation of select recommendations made by relevant groups and plans that have a specific focus on career pathways (e.g. ICCB Workforce and Adult Education Strategic Plans and the Community College Presidents Council.) It is anticipated that broader state policy beyond WIOA for the workforce and education systems will be impacted by these approaches:

- The coordination of the Career Pathway Definition among education and core and required partners;
- Illinois Essential Skill framework lead by Adult Education in partnership with core and required partners;
- Strategic Plans developed by the ICCB in partnership with core and required partners;
- Statewide Workforce Summit held that included all partners;
- Transitions Summit provided by ICCB Adult Education and Career Technical Education for development of Bridge and Integrated Education and Training Programs;
- The ICCB will develop strategies for community colleges to use to strengthen their CTE Business Advisory Councils to be more proactive and employer-led, thereby ensuring that community colleges are aligning training to key industry sectors in each of the ten Economic Development Regions.

Alignment with Human Services and Other Programs

WIOA core and required partners will continue to educate and train local staff on a continuous basis on the available programs and services. Illinois has utilized technology to produce webinars (*WIOA Wednesday Webinars)* that provide a platform for all program partners to discuss WIOA topics and build a "library" of information that outlines the required and optional partner's programs. The webinars provide a forum to educate attendees about all programs, activities and resources, ask questions and offer suggestions towards improving collaboration efforts. The state is also working to develop a common definition of services among core and required program partners, which will be a key component to the alignment of programs and activities. Additionally, the Interagency Work Group, as part of the Workforce Academy, will establish a case management team to coordinate and support the delivery of enhanced case management services to participants across the core programs and with other partners. The case management team will also focus on potential coordination and co-enrollment strategies that increase communication between the partners and avoid duplication and delay.

Illinois will expand pilot programs that are successful in coordinating services with Human Services programs including the Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) and the Employment Opportunities, Personalized Services, Individualized Training, Career Planning (EPIC) pilot program.

- Illinois is coordinating resources among agency partners and providers to address the barriers to employment for people with disabilities. DEI is a multi-year project jointly funded by the United States Department of Labor's (DOL) Employment and Training Administration (ETA) and Office of Disability Employment Policy, with the goal of testing pilot strategies to improve outcomes for jobs seekers with disabilities. Illinois' Round V DEI project aligns the workforce system with secondary and post-secondary education to deliver seamless Information Technology Career Pathway services to persons with disabilities during the initial period of this WIOA plan.
- EPIC is a pilot program with the Illinois Department of Human Services and Illinois Department of Commerce. The program is designed to provide basic and technical

skill training and work experience for individuals that are Able Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD). Participants receive personal career development and team counseling to develop customized accelerated training plans that include job skills training and work-based learning opportunities with local employers that lead to credentials in high-demand fields and employment. This pilot is assisting underemployed and unemployed SNAP recipients in five regions across the State of Illinois and is part of a national study that includes an evaluation process to create strategies to implement with the existing SNAP employment and training program. The goal is to help participants get good career pathway jobs, increase earnings and reduce reliance on public assistance. EPIC is funded through the US Department of Agriculture and many individuals in the program are co-enrolled in WIOA for wrap-around services. This strategy represents purposeful service integration with braiding of funding across multiple programs each housed in separate State agencies and multiple LWIAs.

C. COORDINATION, ALIGNMENT AND PROVISION OF SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS

Describe how the entities carrying out the respective core programs, Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan, and required and optional one-stop partner programs will coordinate activities and resources to provide comprehensive, high-quality, customer-centered services, including supportive services (e.g. transportation), to individuals, including those populations identified in section II(a)(1)(B), and individuals in remote areas The activities described shall conform to the statutory requirements of each program.

A key component in coordinating activities and resources to provide comprehensive, high quality customer-centered services, is to increase the integration of services made available to all job seekers on a local and regional level. The integration of services provided by all core and required program partners will also consider the future educational and employment needs of the job seekers served throughout Illinois. Expanding collaboration efforts around methods to improve local service delivery by improving our assessment of the opportunities and needs of individuals -- along with employer engagement -- will be key in our efforts to administer high quality, customer-centered services. The IWIB's Service Integration Work Group is creating a framework that will address these critical issues.

Regional Planning Assessment and Analysis

Illinois has developed and promoted an integrated Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) strategic planning process across education, workforce and economic development, which will provide comprehensive, high quality customer-centered services. The regional planning process included an examination of target population data provided by the state data team and other relevant local studies. Regional teams examined supply-side data and considered ways to leverage partners' expertise, programs, and resources to connect available talent pools to career opportunities in targeted industries. The planning process included analysis of how the partners in each region will address the specific needs of the targeted populations and an asset mapping process to inventory the career, education, training and supportive services that are available in each region.

Governor's Guidelines

The State of Illinois will continue to use the Interagency Work Group to develop and recommend policy to the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB) regarding the operational requirements of the Comprehensive One-Stop Centers, including Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with the required and optional partners. The Governor's Guidelines require the Local Workforce Innovation Areas (LWIA) to describe the services that will be provided to individuals and how the services will be coordinated by the required and optional partners.

The Governor's Guidelines were revised upon the issuance of the WIOA Final Rules. Additionally, two rounds of supplemental guidance to the Governor's Guidelines were issued in response to other forms of federal guidance. An MOU approved by the Interagency Work Group is one of the prerequisites for obtaining one-stop certification.

One-Stop Certification

A group of 45 workforce system stakeholders from the State and local levels, including Board members, met for four months to develop a one-stop certification policy, process and application. The certification framework they recommended to the IWIB addressed 41 criteria in 19 areas addressing center effectiveness, accessibility & infrastructure and continuous improvement. The work group's recommendations were adopted by the IWIB and technical assistance was made available to those local boards seeking guidance. In early 2018, the IWIB One-Stop Certification Policy Work Group reconvened to review the results of the certification process. Several potential refinements to the policy were identified, as were improvement opportunities and notable practices for Illinois' network of one-stop centers. This policy work group will continue to meet to frame recommendations to the IWIB for strengthening this policy.

Labor Market Information & Illinois Pathways

Labor market information and demand-driven data set the foundation for the WIOA career services in Illinois. Employment Security is responsible for labor market information (LMI) and the Illinois Career Information System, a web-based tool that incorporates Illinois-specific actionable data on in-demand occupations and wages that allow students and job seekers to make informed decisions about their career pathways. These services will result in individualized plans addressing how to reach career goals based on career and skill assessments and identified barriers requiring support services. Illinois Pathways uses these data to provide individuals with research groupings of careers, LMI and the knowledge, skills, abilities and credentials that are required for each occupation. Through partnerships between the State of Illinois' education and economic development agencies, Illinois Pathways supports local programs that empower students of all ages to explore their academic and career interests. Illinois will leverage the work of statewide, public-private partnerships to better coordinate investments, resources and planning for those programs with the goal of providing more opportunities for targeted individuals.

Workforce and education partners including Adult Education, Career and Technical Education and Illinois State Board of Education will expand career development guides and technical assistance materials to promote leading career pathway models and best practices that can be implemented through regional sector partnerships and other regional sector initiatives. These technical assistance materials (along with associated professional development) will address how to improve career services and expand customer access to

accelerated and integrated work-based and classroom training, align and integrate programs of study leading to industry-recognized credentials and support services for targeted populations facing barriers to employment. They will also address how to fully mainstream targeted populations into sector-based career pathway initiatives in order to achieve outcomes similar to those of other populations.

Coordinated Case Management and Supportive Services

A key strategy outlined in Section III.a.2.A, is the development policies for integrated and enhanced career services and case management. Illinois will utilize the regional planning process and updated Governor's Guidelines to drive customer-centered workforce centers that align the available career, education, training and supportive services. Illinois is working to develop case management teams to coordinate and support the delivery of enhanced case management services to participants across the required and optional program partners. As stated in Section III.a.2.A, Activity 4.3, cross-agency training and professional development will be developed through the Workforce Academy to ensure that needs are clearly understood by all partners, both core and required. This includes leveraging the resources of partners such as ICCB Adult Education to provide professional development to agency partners in the appropriate administration of educational assessment of basic skill deficiencies. Finally, as mentioned earlier, training will be delivered through technological solutions in order to maximize access and cost-effectiveness.

In an effort to move forward with providing customer-centered services the state will expand on customer workflow studies like the Customer Centered Design Challenge. Several of the core and required program partners collaborated throughout the state and participated in the Customer Centered Design Challenge. The intent of the Customer Centered Design Challenge course is to task all WIOA program partners to rethink how services are administered, with the customer at the center as opposed to laws and regulations. The challenge taken on by the Illinois Department of Employment Security (Employment Security) team members was to identify "How might we better assist formerly incarcerated individuals obtain employment, education, develop healthy relationships and make positive decisions?" The team conducted focus groups and interviews with multiple stakeholders within the re-entry population consisting of job seekers, those currently employed, community organizations and support systems such as family members. It was determined that, while Comprehensive One-Stop Centers offer the services and resources requested, very few stakeholders were aware of the services available. To address this issue, it was concluded that methods of outreach must be improved, and resources should be made available through on-line avenues such as social media, partner web pages and informational videos in resource rooms. Identifying the needs of our customers allows all core partners to collaboratively and simultaneously address the problem of misinformation and lack of information in the re-entry community. The platform of waiting rooms, web pages, and social media will be areas of initial emphasis.

Incorporation of Required Partner Services to Targeted Populations

Illinois will highlight and encourage adoption of the best practices that are identified in statewide innovation projects that serve targeted populations throughout the state. This

includes joint projects between the agencies responsible for administering the required WIOA programs.

- Aligning and implementing the best practices of the current and future Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) Projects. Commerce, ICCB, and Department of Human Services Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) have worked with regional and local partners to increase the participation of individuals with disabilities (aged 18 and above) in integrated career pathway and academic programs through community colleges and non-profit organizations in cooperation with American Job Centers, Local Workforce Innovation Boards (LWIB), employment networks and other regional partners.
- Aligning and developing bridge programs for low-literacy and low-skilled adults to sequentially bridge the gap between the initial skills of individuals and what they need to enter and succeed in post-secondary education and career path employment. The state's bridge programs prepare adults with limited academic or limited English skills to enter and succeed in post-secondary education and training leading to career path employment in demand occupations. The state agency partners will focus on expanding access and success in sector-based bridge programs that provide opportunities for low-skilled and low-literate youth and adults. The state will support new initiatives that promote sector-based pre-bridge, bridge programs and integrated education and training models that expand access and success of low-skilled youth and adults in career pathways. These programs are designed to introduce individuals to career pathway programs of interest.

The state recognizes the use of bridge programs as a foundation for career pathway systems and also as a foundation for employment opportunities and other training. ICCB will work closely with core and required partners under WIOA to re-examine the use of bridge programs for those individuals who lack basic skills as a way of connecting with Title I and Title III for training opportunities, and with Title IV to ensure those who are basic skill deficient and have learning differences have access to tools needed to be successful.

- Aligning and coordinating WIOA Title I services with efforts that currently address justice-involved youth. Illinois is exploring a range of career pathway models for justice-involved youth seen nationally and statewide as best practices and examining ways to braid and blend funding for maximum impact. Where possible these models will be folded into existing juvenile justice efforts for seamless service alignment to add the expertise of WIOA service providers to strengthen employment and training models.
- Aligning and coordinating foster youth employment and training programs including youth who are aging out of the foster care system. Commerce and Department of Children and Family Services are developing an initiative to expand career pathway services to older foster youth who are nearing age-out. Successful models for braiding and blending WIOA and Chafee Foster Care funds are under consideration as a basis for Illinois' effort.
- Aligning and coordinating critical programs and services for Veterans. Employment Security provides veterans' employment representatives, who are fellow veterans and specialists in providing employment services. Illinois veterans will be served

through the WIOA priority of service as well as targeted initiatives administered by the workforce and education partners and the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs. As the WIOA definition of case management describes, it takes a community of resources to assist Veterans to overcome/mitigate the identified barriers to employment and get them back into the workforce.

D. COORDINATION, ALIGNMENT AND PROVISION OF SERVICES TO EMPLOYERS

Describe how the entities carrying out the respective core programs, any Combined State Plan partner program included in this plan, required and optional one-stop partner programs will coordinate activities and resources to provide comprehensive, high-quality services to employers to meet their current and projected workforce needs needs and to achieve the goals of industry or sector partners in the state. The activities described shall conform to the statutory requirements of each program.

Under the strategic direction of the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB), Illinois has embedded sector strategies into workforce development programs across Illinois supporting businesses, employees and job seekers. These approaches enable the workforce system to customize solutions for employers in the industries that are most vital to our economy. Through customized training solutions, employed, unemployed and underemployed workers are better able to obtain the skills they need and that businesses require. Illinois will maintain this sector focus in the upcoming program years through activities that continue the development of a sector-based approach in Illinois.

Integrated Business Services Framework

Illinois received formal technical assistance from the United States Department of Labor's (DOL) Chicago Regional Office in 2016 to assist with business service integration through an analysis of how business services are currently structured, designed, and delivered across the four core partners in Illinois. This information supports the agencies' understanding of each other's work and identifies opportunities to streamline activities and align resources. The project report also identified key components of effective integrated business services as well as promising practices or models related to those elements to support possible replication, in part or whole in Illinois. Those resources laid the groundwork for the development of Illinois' Integrated Business Services Framework that was approved by the IWIB in December 2017 (Attachment V) (https://www.illinoisworknet.com/WIOA/Resources/Documents/Attachment%20V%20-%20IL%20Integrated%20Business%20Services%20Scan%20Report%20Final.pdf).

The report noted that all the core partners' business services representatives -- or their local partners -- directly engage with business, but the degree of coordination for that engagement varies across the state.

- WIOA Title I business services are mainly provided through Local Workforce Innovation Area (LWIA) staff whose responsibilities vary, but typically include outreach to businesses, managing on-the-job training contracts and incumbent worker grants to companies, marketing (often via website and social media), and providing information to companies regarding the offerings available through the workforce system. These services are provided in coordination with the state and local economic development professionals. The Illinois Department of Commerce

and Economic Opportunity (Commerce) Office of Employment and Training (OET) Program and Planning staff frequently meet with businesses and associations for insight into how to improve local service delivery. The majority of OET staff, however, who engage directly with business are working with the Rapid Response program to support businesses undergoing layoffs by coordinating services to the affected workers. Their work entails building relationships and working with businesses to mitigate the impact of the layoffs and also determine if workforce training services could forestall future layoffs.

- The Illinois Department of Employment Security (Employment Security) employs state agency staff that engage in business services in most of the local areas across the state that are all co-located in a local workforce center. Employment Security Business Services Managers and Coordinators work with all companies to provide job matching services while IDES' Veterans' Employment Representatives work specifically with businesses on behalf of veterans, as well as Disabled Veterans' Employment Representatives who work on behalf of veterans with disabilities.
- The Illinois Department of Human Services Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) employs state agency staff that engage in business services in many of the local areas across the state. DRS Employment Resource Specialists (ERS) are specifically charged with engaging with businesses for the purpose of understanding their current and future needs and matching those with clients. They also work to foster an ongoing relationship with business customers to ensure consistent support and services. ERS can provide a variety of services to business to support successful employment of people with disabilities. Services span a broad spectrum, from consulting and technical assistance to businesses to enhance their disability awareness, to financial support for training and job accommodations.
- In most cases, Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) Adult Education does not provide services directly to businesses, those services are provided by local staff in community colleges and other providers. Those services are coordinated through Workforce and Career and Technical Education to ensure a connection to high demand occupations. Staff employed through community colleges' Corporate Training Centers also provide a variety of consulting and coaching, but also develop customized training for specific businesses. CTE Divisions within the community colleges include business as a part of their advisory committees.

The State Framework for Integrated Business Services was developed by a workgroup made up of private sector members of the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board, representatives from the Illinois Workforce Partnership (IWP) and representatives from Illinois' core WIOA partners (Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity, Illinois Department of Employment Security, Illinois Department of Human Services, Illinois Community College Board). The framework is intended to support talent pipeline strategies designed to assist partners in working together to address the workforce needs of business in a region. At the core of these models are industry sector partnerships led by businesses and focused on crucial industry clusters. Sector partners work collaboratively to listen to and understand the workforce needs of business and to develop customized solutions that respond to those needs. Eight foundational elements for the framework have been identified and recommended by the workgroup. The integrated provision of business services should be:

- **Sector-based** - The provision of business services should align around regionally identified industry sectors significant to the regional economy.
- **Transformational** - Engagement of businesses should provide a platform for regular and ongoing dialogue, providing a transformation of the relationships between business and workforce partners.
- **Regional** - Service delivery should be regional in nature and should align with the Governor's ten economic development regions, as well as multi-region and multi-state approaches when those are indicated by the needs of the sector partnership.
- **Coordinated** - The framework should describe coordinated approaches and strategies used by *all* partners to meet business needs.
- **United** - Building upon efforts already underway, efforts should continue to co-locate partners to ensure maximum coordination.
- **Flexible** - The framework should provide enough guidance to be helpful but should also allow flexibility for regional innovation and customization.
- **Aligned** - Existing policies/procedures should be reviewed and revised to ensure alignment and progress toward service integration.
- **Allowable** - Partners' federal mandates to provide specific, related services must still be met when developing the state framework.

The workgroup identified five components that are necessary for the integrated provision of business services in the state and its ten economic development regions:

97. **Organizational structure** - At both the State and regional level, organizational structures will be developed that enable communication between partners to develop a single, reliable, agreed upon strategy to support engagement and contact between employers and the workforce/economic development system. The form of these organizational structures will vary according to economic development region and sector. Leveraging existing relationships between and among businesses and public partners is recommended as the most reliable initial strategy for engagement with particular employers and sectors. of the ten economic development regions will develop mechanisms that will connect business to the full range of partner services - regardless of source.
98. **Management of business intelligence** - Given the need to share information across partners -- at the State level, but particularly at the regional/local level -- management of business intelligence is critical. Recognizing the challenges of creating a statewide cross-agency Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, the state's initial strategy will focus on supporting creative approaches to meeting these regional/local level responsibilities. It is important for regional partners to understand the grassroots nature of business intelligence development. Perhaps the most important data development issue will always be the creation of methods to record and access partner knowledge regarding employer needs, to share that knowledge across the partner network and then to utilize that knowledge to jointly develop and implement proactive solutions to business and sector needs.
99. **Solutions-based service offerings** - The service offerings provided to businesses must be focused on delivering timely solutions to expressed business needs. Each region should have its own standardized process for contacting employers in each targeted industry sector and have the capability of providing direct access to

appropriate services or referral to all partners who can provide those services. Solutions-based service first requires a focus on listening to what business communicates that it needs, and then requires flexible, creative and timely responses to those needs - a process that builds a portfolio of customized solutions for businesses, without merely "dumping" pre-packaged programs and processes on them.

100. **Emphasis on work-based learning and other business-focused services** -Closely tied to the solutions sought by businesses 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 - their own business.

101. **Accountability and performance measurement -** The four framework elements discussed so far will bring significant changes in the focus, intent and utilization of business services. Along with those changes comes the need to develop appropriate measures of performance. This will enable the measurement (and dissemination) of the meaningful results of those business services activities and will also serve to establish feedback loops that will facilitate data-driven course corrections to the other four framework elements. In particular, these measures should be focused on the value of these services to businesses through measures, such as, reduced turnover, reduction in the time required to fill vacancies, enhanced employee retention, additional viable candidates applying for work and enhanced productivity.

Support Employer-Driven Regional Sector Initiatives

The coordination of the core, required and optional program partners in each region and local area of the state will be required for Illinois to achieve the goal of coordinated business services. As noted in Section III.a.2.A, the support of employer-driven sector initiatives is a key WIOA strategy. Illinois will expand business engagement across the workforce system in order to align training with needed skills, and to match companies with qualified workers and workforce needs, pointing the state towards the creation of a talent pipeline that fuels economic growth and creates career pathways for all citizens of Illinois.

Illinois will continue to focus on the development of employer-based training options that work directly with businesses to identify hiring requirements, assess the skill levels of job seekers, and provide competency-based training to quickly fill skill gaps, prepare individuals to go to work, and allow employers to increase their productivity while reducing their hiring risk. Using approaches such as apprenticeships, internships, job shadowing, work experience, and on-the-job training provides employers with a quicker method to fill critical job openings while providing trainees with a quicker route to a paycheck.

The Workforce Innovation Fund Round I project (known as Accelerated Training in Manufacturing or ATIM) provided an opportunity to test strategies intended to deliver improved outcomes for participants and businesses. Goals in this plan address providing improved career services and improved business services. Based on the promising performance of this project, United States Department of Labor (DOL) Region V

recommended to the DOL National Office that Illinois be included in its Sector Strategies Technical Assistance initiative. Beginning in late 2014, the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (Commerce), Illinois Department of Employment Security (Employment Security) and Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) partnered with the support of noted sector strategies expert Lyndsey Woolsey and technical experts at Maher & Maher to create a statewide framework for fostering the development of employer-led sector partnerships. The framework was completed in May 2015 and was followed by regional training events for cross-program local staff and education and training provider partners. The end goal of this framework is to provide meaningful guidance for stakeholders to understand how to foster the development of employer-led partnerships and how to leverage their work to improve services to both businesses and job seekers.

This effort segued directly into a private-sector initiative administered by the United States Chamber of Commerce Foundation Talent Pipeline Management initiative. These same partners leveraged the experience of developing the sector strategies framework to support an application and subsequent implementation of a grant to Vermilion Advantage, a local employer-led multi-sector public-private partnership in Vermilion County. The core premise of Talent Pipeline Management is that businesses must apply supply-chain management principles to talent and must organize themselves into regional sector-based partnerships in order to nudge the public education and workforce systems into being more nimble and responsive to evolving needs of employers. The following foundational principles of Talent Pipeline Management each provide an opportunity for the core partner programs to explore methods of improving business services.

- Employers play a new leadership role as the end-customer in closing the skills gap for those jobs most critical to their competitiveness.
- Employers proactively organize and manage flexible and responsive talent pipelines in partnership with their preferred education and workforce providers.
- Employers work collaboratively with their partners to develop measures and incentives designed to reinforce and improve performance across all partners.

Likewise, the following Talent Pipeline Management strategies present an opportunity for the core partners to make great use of the new flexibility and emphasis on collaboration and alignment under WIOA.

- Development of employer collaboratives in states or regions;
- Demand planning for critical jobs in key sectors;
- Communication of competency and credentialing requirements;
- Development of employer-centric performance measures and dashboard tools;
- Back-mapping of talent flows for critical jobs in key sectors; and
- Alignment of public and private incentives in states or regions.

Working together and with Vermilion Advantage, this team is currently conducting groundbreaking work on talent flow analysis. This is commonly known as back-mapping and is used to identify from where employers are sourcing their best candidates, and the organizations and programs of study from which those candidates originated. The intent is to raise the performance of all schools and providers to the level of the best performers to

create a more robust talent pipeline. In this effort, the state partners have contributed the following in support of the project:

- Commerce provided coordination of local and state partners and leadership on implementation of sector strategies, demand planning, and communication of occupational competencies;
- Employment Security provided labor market information (LMI) data and analysis for demand planning and occupational competencies, and information about their Career Information System used by students;
- ICCB provided data on students dual enrolled in high school and community college and information on how programs of study can become more nimble.

The lessons learned from the Workforce Innovation Fund (ATIM), Unified Business Services Analysis and the Talent Pipeline Management will inform the development of the Integrated Business Services Implementation Plans.

E. PARTNER ENGAGEMENT WITH EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Describe how the State's Strategies will engage the State's community colleges and area career and technical education schools, as partners in the workforce development system to create a job-driven education and training system. WIOA section 102(b)(2)(B)(iv).

Illinois has an unprecedented education and workforce collaboration due to our common goal to expand career pathway opportunities through accelerated work-based training while aligning and integrating programs of study that lead to industry-recognized credentials and improved employment and earnings. The stakeholders involved include The Governor's Cabinet on Children and Youth, the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board, the Illinois Departments of Commerce (Commerce), Employment Security, Human Services (DHS), the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) Adult Education and the Perkins Career and Technical Education programs, the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE), the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), the Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC) and the Illinois P-20 Council. Additionally, workforce professionals, local level educational institutions and business/industry representatives have significantly engaged in this work.

The state's workforce system has always closely aligned with the community college system, including postsecondary career and technical education and adult education systems, in the delivery of training that supports the growing demand for trained workers. While the state recognizes the importance of ensuring career and work readiness at all levels, Illinois is moving toward strategies that integrally tie education to workforce development. This is evident in the ICCB's Workforce Education Strategic Plan. Expanding on the close alignment with postsecondary entities, Illinois is moving to align career readiness efforts beginning at the secondary school level to the university system. This alignment will truly address the P-20 pipeline by providing necessary career readiness and occupational skills necessary to succeed in the job market. A specific example is the active collaboration across education and workforce systems to collectively define language that will guide development and implementation of aligned initiatives, such as the adoption of a definitional framework for career pathways, along with supporting guidelines.

As Illinois continues the engagement of educational institutions to create a job-driven education and training system, the state will make significant and strategic system improvements that address workforce development needs through flexible, responsive and progressive programs informed by labor market information. Not only will this continue to occur through the 48 comprehensive community colleges and multi-college centers, but the state will also expand the reach to integrate meaningful career readiness programs and work-based learning models that focus on high demand occupations for students and workers at all levels.

Continued work, as well as new initiatives, will be rooted in labor market data that will inform education and workforce systems when establishing programs and training, thereby allocating resources to in-demand occupations and away from those jobs that have declining opportunities because of changing economic conditions. Additionally, employment and wage data will support measuring workforce outcomes of students to demonstrate performance and effectiveness of programs.

ICCB continues to work collaboratively across the state with other partners to address the alignment of workforce development, education and economic development. Through workforce development, career and technical education and adult education, the Illinois community college system and ICCB have moved forward in a coordinated way, focusing on the implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and the ICCB Workforce Education Five Year Strategic Plan as well as the Adult Education Strategic Plan. Additionally, sector/clusters initiatives such as manufacturing, healthcare and transportation, distribution and logistics with an emphasis on low-skilled and low-income adults through business and industry training, Professional and Continuing Education training, Programs of Study and continued Adult Education initiatives are all focused on meeting the needs of Illinois' employers and workforce. ICCB's ongoing partnerships with other agencies and entities such as the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (Commerce) Office of Employment and Training (OET) are critical to addressing Illinois' economic and workforce needs.

Coordination with Core Programs

The ICCB, in partnership with core partners, developed the Essential Employability Framework to address issues identified by employers relative to their needs. In addition, Adult Education developed a Strategic Plan in partnership with core, required and other entities to address the preparation of adult learners for in demand occupations. Below are specific examples of the core partners' engagement with educational institutions across the State.

<u>Coordination with the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity</u>

ICCB, in partnership with the Illinois Department of Commerce and the Illinois Community College Presidents' Council, engaged multiple stakeholders to develop a five-year Workforce Education Strategic Plan. This plan focuses on strengthening system-wide visibility and impact by aligning workforce, education (community colleges, career technical education, adult education) and training. The development of the Workforce Education Strategic Plan used a braided funding mechanism that utilized resources from multiple sources, including the Illinois Department of Commerce, Illinois Community College Board, Career Technical Education and Adult Education. As part of the plan, ICCB and Commerce held eleven

regional forums in the spring of 2015, one in each of the ten Economic Development Regions (EDR) with two in the Northeast region to bring education, workforce and employer partners together to discuss workforce and education issues in their regions and to hear from employers regarding their most pressing concerns. A final report with strategic recommendations was released in 2015. The data and information compiled from the regional forums was leveraged to serve as a baseline for the WIOA regional planning process. The Illinois Community College System Strategic Plan for Workforce Education builds upon recent successful efforts and engaged cross-program teams to explore creative solutions to address the challenges of a new economy and the demand for more highly-skilled workers. The plan is also used as a foundation in the development of other strategic plans, including the Adult Education Strategic Plan and the IWIB Strategic Plan.

Commerce also collaborates with universities and the K-12 system through participation on groups convened by the IWIB, the Illinois State Board of Education and Board of Higher Education, such as, the Illinois P-20 Council, the 60 X 25 Network, the Illinois Longitudinal Data System, and the Workforce Readiness through Apprenticeship and Pathways group. Commerce also makes direct investments in workforce skill training and capacity-building through grants to educational institutions that apply for WIOA Statewide Activities funds.

Coordination with the Illinois Department of Employment Security

Illinois recognizes that labor market information is at the foundation of a job-driven education and training system. As outlined in Section II.a (Economic, Workforce, and Workforce Development Activities Analysis), Illinois' Interagency Data Team includes the Economic Information and Analysis (EI&A) Division of the Illinois Department of Employment Security (Employment Security) that produces industry and occupation projections by Local Workforce Innovation Area (LWIA). These projections allow educational institutions to consider in-demand jobs when establishing educational programs and training by LWIA as well as the surrounding areas thereby allocating resources to in-demand occupations and away from those occupations that have declining interest because of changing economic conditions. EI&A also works with educational institutions to measure the workforce outcomes of their students. This allows educational institutions to measure the performance and effectiveness of their programs.

Coordination with the Illinois Department of Human Services

The Illinois Department of Human Services Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) is actively involved in supporting people with disabilities who wish to participate in community college programs in pursuit of a degree or a credential to improve their employment opportunities. In 2016 DRS served 1,750 individuals with disabilities through support for their education and vocational training programs at Illinois community colleges. Since 2011 DRS has operated the Community College Initiative, which provides financial incentives for individuals with disabilities to enroll in community college programs. Since that time enrollment at community colleges has nearly doubled from a baseline of about 900 students. DRS is working with ICCB to facilitate participation by individuals with disabilities, whether or not those individuals are enrolled in the DRS Vocational Rehabilitation program. The two agencies are working in conjunction with the Institute for Community Inclusion to identify strategies for maximizing participation by people with disabilities across the range of programs offered in community colleges.

F. PARTNER ENGAGEMENT WITH OTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROVIDERS.

Describe how the State's Strategies will engage the State's other education and training providers, including providers on the state's eligible training provider list, as partners in the workforce development system to create a job-driven education and training system.

The K-12 system, community colleges, four-year colleges, universities and other training providers in Illinois play important roles in helping residents pursue credentials that will help them access high-skill, high-wage jobs. Partnerships with high schools ensure graduates are college-ready. Dual credit opportunities, transfer assistance, recognition for prior learning and other innovative approaches help learners, particularly low-income individuals, move through the P-20 pipeline. The Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB) plays an instrumental role in working with education councils and boards, such as The Governor's Cabinet on Children and Youth, the Illinois Community College Board, State Board of Education and the Board of Higher Education to develop policies and activities that include engagement with other educational and training providers.

In addition to the WIOA Unified Plan, Illinois is using the following high-priority strategic planning initiatives to guide the engagement of education and training providers across the system. These initiatives will act as the building blocks for creating a cohesive job-driven education and training system. Furthermore, Illinois plans to bring stakeholders together to further align the education and workforce systems by cross-walking respective plans and embedding the common threads in each.

- *Every Student Succeeds Act State Plan*: A result of federal legislation and lead by ISBE, the ESSA State plan outlines ISBE's goals to implement a holistic, comprehensive, and coordinated system of support that prepares each and every student for academic excellence and postsecondary success. Most relevant to this project is the College and Career Readiness Indicator (CCRI) that is embedded in the plan's school quality framework, which the United States Department of Education highlighted as an example of a unique and progressive indicator. The CCRI will measure and incentivize Illinois high schools' efforts to ensure that students identify career areas of interest and engage in career readiness activities, such as the attainment of industry credentials and completion of internships.
- *Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness (PWR) Act*: The Illinois PWR ACT, signed into law by Governor Rauner on July 29, 2016, specifies implementation strategies to better align the transition from high school into college and careers. This act includes a framework for Postsecondary and Career Expectations (PaCE), College and Career Pathway Endorsements, Transitional Math Instruction, and pilots of Competency-based high school graduation requirements.
- *ICCB Workforce Education Strategic Plan*: Led by ICCB, the Workforce Education Strategic Plan outlines the goals and objectives for four priority areas that will achieve alignment of the community college system and the state's workforce development system with economic development directions and workforce needs, thereby creating a talent pipeline that fuels economic growth and creates career pathways for all Illinoisans.
- *ICCB Adult Education Strategic Plan*: Led by ICCB, the Adult Education Strategic Plan outlines four strategic goals and multiple objective that will be "Expanding Career

Pathway Opportunities in adult education" and aligning with the directions set forth under the state workforce system.

- *Career Outcomes for Illinois High School Seniors*: Lead by IDES in partnership with ISU, ISAC, and ISBE, the first of two phases identifies intergenerational mobility pathways for high school seniors and evaluates the impact of learning pathways on career job profiles and career job earnings for high school seniors. Additionally, this partnership includes ICCB and IBHE as they work to produce workforce outcomes, life-long learning, and intergenerational mobility metrics for high school seniors and postsecondary community college and higher education completers.
- *Common Pathway Program Information Initiative*: Utilizing the interagency career pathway definition, DCEO, ICCB, and IBHE are partnering to collect common career pathway program information across WIOA-funded programs, apprenticeships, community college certification and adult education programs, and private business and vocational schools. This project will result in consistent processes for the collection and broad dissemination of career pathway program information for potential participants, state agencies, local pathway system administrators and other stakeholders.
- *Workforce Readiness through Apprenticeships and Pathways (WRAP) Committee of The Governor's Cabinet on Children and Youth*: The WRAP Committee is a cross-agency team representing education (both secondary and postsecondary), workforce, human services, commerce and information technology among others. The focus of this Committee is to enable youth transitioning out of secondary education to be informed and prepared to make decisions about their postsecondary education and career options. This is done by enhancing access to information about opportunities, scaling promising practices statewide and ensuring alignment across initiatives. Given the number of statewide initiatives in this area, including those mentioned above, the committee's approach is to connect these initiatives through a shared career pathway framework and develop joint policy and implementation strategies that can be used across initiatives.
- *National Governors Association (NGA) Work-Based Learning Policy Academy:* In 2017, Illinois was invited to participate in the NGA's Work-Based Learning Policy Academy, which centers on scaling work-based learning opportunities across the state. Illinois is using this opportunity to build on the work of the WRAP project, to develop a "brand" for the cohesive career pathway work and to launch a public campaign to inform Illinoisans of the many valuable work-based learning opportunities across the state.
- *Illinois' Workforce Innovation Award - Job-Driven Best Practices*: The IWIB and core partners recognize work-based learning as a key strategy that provides more opportunities for workers to earn income while gaining critical job skills. Illinois' Accelerated Training for Illinois Manufacturing (ATIM) Program was a Workforce Innovation Fund project that was administered in partnership with Commerce, Illinois Department of Employment Security (Employment Security), ICCB and the Illinois Manufacturing Association to implement strategies that were designed to accelerate service delivery and results. Nearly all the strategies under ATIM involved employers working with community colleges and other private training providers to create a manufacturing-focused, job-driven education and training system in the region. The ATIM program design emphasized that, regardless of

funding source, it is critical for training programs to: 1) be demand-driven based on labor market information, employer projections and employer-identified skills; 2) lead to industry-recognized credentials or degrees; and 3) be able to accelerate time to earnings and full worker productivity through a variety of strategies.

Lessons learned from these initiatives will inform the certification of eligible training providers and the collection of their performance outcomes. An IWIB Policy Workgroup will build on these lessons to enhance the current policy, strengthen training policy definitions and inform continuous improvement related to the minimum training expenditure requirement. The IWIB along with the education and workforce partners and other stakeholder groups will also use what is learned to develop and implement best practice strategies. These will support education and training providers in using labor market information as a way to be demand-driven and encourage the use of work-based learning best practices.

G. LEVERAGING RESOURCES TO INCREASE EDUCATIONAL ACCESS

Describe how the State's strategies will enable the State to leverage other Federal, State, and local investments that have enhanced access to workforce development programs at the above institutions, described in section (E).

Illinois has developed partnerships to leverage resources in order to increase educational and training opportunities for individuals with barriers to employment. Illinois will leverage partnerships with high schools and other educational institutions to ensure that more students are provided with dual credit opportunities, transfer assistance, recognition for prior learning, and other innovative approaches to help learners, particularly low-income individuals, move through the P-20 pipeline.

Under the leadership of the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB), Illinois has expanded policies that require all adult education providers to offer bridge program instruction related to high demand occupations. Bridge programs offer students cluster level knowledge and skills while building basic literacy skills, career exploration and awareness, as well as support services that assist the student accessing post-secondary education and pathway employment. Through this policy, bridge program delivery has expanded to more than 60 programs. The remaining programs are working to partner to develop services to students. Comprehensive professional development activities have been developed to increase the knowledge of adult educators in the development of contextualized bridge career pathway programs.

ICCB administers over $30 million annually in state and federal post-secondary Career and Technical Education (CTE) grants to community colleges in support of CTE programs and students across the state. The intent is to provide students with the academic and technical skills necessary to succeed in a knowledge and skills-based economy, and to gain employment in a high-skill, high-wage and high-demand occupation. It focuses on certain themes such as increasing state and local accountability standards, integrating academic and technical education, strengthening the connections between secondary and post-secondary education, and restructuring the way stakeholders - high schools, community colleges, universities, business and parents - work together. ICCB will continue to support

community colleges in the implementation of CTE-related programs and activities including academic and career guidance services.

Illinois will continue to invest in adult education initiatives that provide the opportunity for adult education students to earn industry recognized credentials, college certificates and college credit while studying to obtain a high school equivalency certificate or learn the English language. Through the Integrated Education and Training (IET) program in Illinois, Integrated Career and Academic Preparation System (ICAPS), many students will be connected to Title I programs to ensure they are able to gain access to resources for training and employment opportunities upon completion.

Illinois Workforce Innovation Fund

Illinois will implement the best practices from the Illinois Workforce Innovation Fund initiative, Accelerated Training in Manufacturing that demonstrated the feasibility of providing accelerated training for industry credentials that incorporated lean principles and multiple modes of work-based learning. Several community colleges (Harper College, Lake Land College, Richland Community College and Danville Area Community College, among others) and private training providers such as Symbol Training Institute, have each found innovative ways to improve responsiveness to businesses and job seekers. The core partners each have access to funding that can be used to incent colleges and trainers to adopt these best practices and/or help reduce the out-of-pocket cost to job seekers in need of education and technical skill upgrades.

Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training Grant Program

In Illinois, Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) grants include regional teams made up of various partners led by community colleges. Through this strategy, specific regional sector needs have been addressed, such as advanced manufacturing. Additionally, Illinois received awards in the green economy, bio-energy and a multi-state initiative along the Mississippi River. Known as MRTL, the Mississippi River Transportation, Logistics and Distribution Consortium is committed to advancing economic development in the Mississippi River region, from the headwaters to the Gulf and are dedicated to the placement of dislocated and other workers in high wage, high skill occupations in Transportation and Distribution Logistics and related industry sectors. Illinois has been very successful with TAACCCT both in terms of the ability to address specific sector needs and in terms of generating grant dollars and in bringing diverse partners together to address economic and workforce needs in the state and in partnership across state borders.

Illinois Apprenticeship Plus

Illinois will continue to use ApprenticeshipUSA and WIOA Statewide Activities funds to support the expansion of apprenticeships and work-based learning through the Talent Pipeline and Youth Career Pathway Programs. Both funding opportunities are focused on providing opportunities to the targeted populations outlined in Illinois' Unified Plan.

H. IMPROVING ACCESS TO POSTSECONDARY CREDENTIALS

Describe how the State's strategies will improve access to activities leading to recognized postsecondary credentials, including Registered Apprenticeship certificates. This includes

credentials that are industry-recognized certificates, licenses or certifications, and that are portable and stackable.

A key to robust career pathways is that portable, stackable credentials are incorporated fully into the system, particularly at the post-secondary level. Fortunately, in Illinois, the commitment of the post-secondary CTE system to portable, stackable credentials is longstanding and is now rapidly expanding to better connect to the K-12 system through the strategic initiatives mentioned under subsection F "Partner Engagement with other Education and Training Providers" - in particular, the implementation of the PWR Act. These key accomplishments came to fruition in 2017 incentivize cross system engagement, leveraging resources and improving access to post-secondary credentials.

ESSA College and Career Readiness

The Illinois State Board of Education's work over the past year has centered on the development and implementation of Illinois' Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) State Plan. The principle of equity undergirds the entire plan: each and every child receives the supports she or he requires in order to be successful in school and life. ISBE engaged in a 16-month collaborative process to create the plan, which, among other requirements, sets forth a new accountability system for all Illinois schools. The United States Department of Education approved the plan on August 30, 2017.

The plan introduces a new statewide system of support for schools and districts, called IL-EMPOWER, to improve student outcomes by leveraging schools' strengths and building school staff capacity. ISBE believes the educators closest to students have the most valuable insight into their strengths, challenges, context and history. This belief is a pillar upon which differentiated supports are developed. ISBE launched a pilot program with several dozen districts over the 2017-18 school year to further determine the specifics of the IL-EMPOWER structure for the statewide launch in the 2018-19 school year.

The Illinois ESSA Plan identifies three areas within its school quality framework for which stakeholders will provide recommendations to ISBE: Preschool to Second Indicator, an Elementary/Middle Level Indicator and definitions for the College and Career Readiness Indicator. The working committees are composed of practicing educators, regional superintendents, individuals from other educational advocacy groups, and in the case of the College and Career Readiness group, members of the business and civic communities. All the committees are also utilizing the support of outside experts. The committees shared their recommendations with ISBE by December 31, 2017 and presented them to the State Board of Education on January 17, 2018. ISBE posted the recommendations for public comment until February 16, 2018. In addition, the Technical Advisory Council is developing recommendations for the performance levels and growth indicator in the accountability system.

Competency-Based High School Pilots & College and Career Pathway Endorsements (PWR Act)

Public Act 99-0674 (the "Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness Act") passed unanimously through both state legislative Houses and was signed into law by Governor Bruce Rauner on July 29, 2016. The Act contains four components:

- establishes a Postsecondary and Career Expectations framework (PaCE),

- develops a competency-based high school graduation requirements pilot program,
- defines high school coursework and criteria that will place students into college credit-bearing work, transitional mathematics instruction, and
- creates a framework for college and career pathway endorsements on high school diplomas.

In 2017, ISBE, ICCB, IBHE, and ISAC all adopted the same PaCE framework that outlines what students should know about college and career each year from 8th to 12th grade. The framework outlines in an integrated way career exploration and development; college exploration, preparation and selection; and financial literacy and how to access financial aid opportunities. ISAC is leading professional development for community teams across the State that are adapting the PaCE framework for their local context.

The Act established the Competency-Based High School Graduation Requirements Pilot Program as one strategy to prepare more students for meaningful college and career opportunities. This pilot enables participating districts to utilize a framework based on assessment of the skills and knowledge students have mastered rather than how much time they have spent in class as high school graduation requirements. In April 2017, ISBE announced 10 school districts as participants in the first cohort of the program. Participating districts convened in September 2017 to study national best practices, build relationships, find points of connection, and begin moving their pilots from vision to action. In November 2017, ISBE released the request for applications for the second cohort of the Competency Pilot Program. ISBE has been working with national experts to support districts in their redesign of the high school experience around what students know and where they want to go. Competency-based learning recognizes students' individual starting points and allows them to pave a personalized pathway with no ceiling. Most of the first cohort programs have a strong emphasis on career pathways and the integration of work-based learning into their competency-based models.

The third component of the PWR Act defines transitional math courses to provide a mathematical foundation that will provide high school students with the opportunity to gain mathematical knowledge and skills that reduce the need for remediation and will therefore help them to meet their individualized college and career goals and to be successful in college-level math courses. Aligned with the Illinois Learning Standards, these courses will reduce remediation rates for students who successfully complete the transitional math course approved for statewide portability and will receive guaranteed placement at any Illinois community college. A statewide panel established by ISBE, ICCB and IBHE is drafting policies and competencies intended to guide community colleges and high schools as they jointly create transitional math courses and instructional approaches. According to the Act, by no later than June 30, 2019, ISBE and ICCB must jointly establish a phased implementation plan and benchmarks that lead to full statewide implementation of transitional mathematics instruction in all school districts, with timeframes that account for State and local resources and capacity. Scaling will occur over the next 4-5 years. Currently, approximately 70% of the community college districts in Illinois are implementing a transitional math model with partner high schools or plan to launch a program during the 18-19 school year. Currently, approximately 30% of Illinois high schools are implementing transitional math or plan to launch a program during the 18-19 school year.

The fourth component of the PWR Act establishes a voluntary system for school districts to award college and career pathways endorsements on high school diplomas. This is a voluntary program for public high schools to recognize graduates who complete a career-focused instructional sequence, as well as requirements including an individualized plan, professional learning and readiness for non-remedial coursework. This endorsement validates students' completion of instruction and professional learning experiences in a selected career interest area. ISBE, ICCB, IBHE, ISAC, DCEO and IDES adopted a comprehensive interagency plan in June 2017 to support the development of the College and Career Pathway Endorsement programs, which includes a commitment to incorporate endorsements into planning and programs of study as part of Perkins reauthorization. This provides State support to match local resources for regional pathways system development, and to address articulation of endorsement programs into postsecondary degree programs. ISBE's College and Career Readiness Indicator incentivizes endorsements as a method for a student to demonstrate college and career readiness. In addition, the agencies, working with the P-20 Council and Jobs for the Future, have launched public-private sector-based committees to recommend a sequence of minimum career competencies for particular occupational pathways. These competencies can be used to inform pathways course sequencing, course content and the focus of work-based learning experiences. The committees for four areas (Finance and Business Services, Health Sciences, IT, and Manufacturing/Engineering) are finalizing competencies for state agency consideration and adoption by June 2018. Additional committees are being formed for other occupational areas.

Common Career Pathway Program Information Initiative

The Common Career Pathway Program Information Initiative will improve access to recognized postsecondary credentials by enhancing the types of information available about these programs and by establishing mechanisms for disseminating the information to a broader audience. Currently, the administrative systems for capturing information on workforce training, community college certification, and private business and vocational programs do not collect sufficient information addressing the elements of high-quality career pathway programs. This initiative will standardize the information collected across programs in categories aligned to the State's career pathway definition, such as Partnerships, Sector & Occupational Focus, Industry-Recognized Credentials, Career-Focused Instruction, Work-Based Learning, and Participant Supports. The initiative will also address how quality and more complete information about these programs is shared across multiple platforms to reach potential participants and their advisors, as well as policymakers, funders, and system administrators.

Early College Credit

Though other avenues for early college credit exist (e.g., Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate), the primary focus of the early college portion of this project has been on dual credit. Dual Credit is an instructional arrangement where an academically qualified high school student enrolls in a college-level course and, upon successful course completion, concurrently earns both college credit and high school credit. There are three major models of delivery: 1) at the high school taught by a qualified high school instructor; 2) at the high school taught by a college instructor; and 3) at the college taught by a college instructor. The most common model, and the one that most think of when considering dual credit is the

first. Dual credit courses may range from transfer courses, such as English 101 to career and technical education courses, such as Medical Terminology.

According to the most recent ICCB data (FY2016), nearly 55,000 students participated, taking over 100,000 dual credit classes. This represents a steady increase over the previous two years. To support the growing number of quality programs, the ICCB expands dual credit offerings through the Dual Credit Enhancement Grant. Funding supports dual credit expansion, innovation, and quality through various activities including, professional development, curriculum development, implementation, wraparound services, and assessment of models. To maintain quality of offerings but expand access for motivated high school students, the ICCB relaxed its student grade level rules to allow academically-qualified students participate in dual credit offerings. The ICCB is also working with the public university system to enhance teacher credentialing options that will lead to a growth in dual credit in areas where qualified faculty are often difficult to find. Dual credit impacts college readiness, leads to higher first year postsecondary GPAs, higher completion rates and a greater accumulation of college credits overall. It also decreases time to degree and lowers college costs for students.

Dual credit also maximizes state and local resources and promotes collaboration between secondary and post-secondary education institutions. As a leader in dual credit, the ICCB works collaboratively with secondary and post-secondary stakeholders to expand student access to higher education while simultaneously maintaining the high academic standards expected of the Illinois Community College System. In an effort to support and augment dual credit programs around the state, the ICCB has supported the dual credit enhancement grant. This grant encourages the creation and implementation of innovative strategies in the areas of: dual credit offerings, curriculum alignment, instructional models, faculty recruitment efforts and professional development.

Higher Education Commission on the Future of Workforce

Illinois' higher education system is an essential partner with the state's businesses and industries, government agencies, elected officials and economic development policymakers to ensure that the state has an educated workforce to meet the needs of Illinois' employers. These key stakeholders are working towards the same goal: to increase the number of Illinoisans with high-quality postsecondary credentials and degrees to meet the demands of the Illinois economy. Through a joint resolution issued in 2016, partners across the education and workforce system came together to examine current and projected workforce needs in the economic regions of the state; identify the higher education and business partners to meet regional workforce demands; and recommend effective practices and policies for key stakeholders to scale up efforts to match degree production with needs of the workforce around the state. Recommendations from the study validated the work that Illinois is doing and will continue to do to align with the IWIB's vision for creating a job-driven education system and improve access to the necessary postsecondary credentials that will support these efforts.

Credentialing Initiative

Illinois recognizes that Career and Technical Education (CTE) students at a community college do not always fit the model of transition implied in the Perkins IV definition. Thus, the state moved early to adopt a more holistic career pathways approach to

implementation. For example, the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) CTE division partnered with Adult Education to develop an Integrated Career and Academic Preparation System (ICAPS). The purpose is to provide integrated CTE and Adult Education instruction, so adult students can earn at least one "stackable," credit-bearing, post-secondary education credential, as well as industry-recognized credentials that lead to high-wage employment in Illinois. In integrated programs, career and technical educators teach classes alongside adult education instructors, ensuring that students receive not only integrated curricula inclusive of basic skills enhancements, but also curricula tied to the latest in industry standards developed in partnership with employers.

The ICCB will continue to participate in initiatives to promote career pathway programs in Adult Education, including the Jobs for the Future initiative "Accelerating Opportunity (AO)." This initiative focuses on a blending of both Adult Education and CTE instruction to provide an integrated model of instruction using a team teaching approach. Both the Adult Education and CTE Divisions of the ICCB have partnered on this project and have worked to expand the number of colleges from eight to twenty-five. The initiative allows adult learners, without a high school diploma, the opportunity to gain college level credit and certificates, including college and industry-recognized credentials around in-demand occupations while working toward learning English, high school equivalency and/or increasing basic skills.

Improving Access to Registered Apprenticeships

Illinois will leverage multiple initiatives to further integrate apprenticeship opportunities across the required and optional program partners throughout the state. The Governor has mobilized a broad cross-section of apprenticeship stakeholders to drive this important planning process. Representing a range of perspectives and resources, these individuals are serving on the Illinois Apprenticeship Committee (a standing committee of the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB)) and oversee this planning and implementation effort. Members of this Committee include representatives of the IWIB, the four WIOA core state agency partners, business representatives, training providers, Local Workforce Innovation Boards (LWIB), labor, philanthropies, community colleges, rehabilitation services and employment exchange services.

The use of apprenticeships is being encouraged through demonstration projects, policy guidance and technical assistance. With increased attention given to various forms of work-based learning, it is expected that the number of apprenticeships will expand as WIOA is implemented. Illinois will learn from best practices and expand on programs that are affective. The IWIB Apprenticeship Committee has been advancing several initiatives: (1) United States Department of Labor (US DOL) State Accelerator grant, (2) USDOL State Apprenticeship Expansion grant, and (3) The Governor's Cabinet on Children and Youth Workforce Readiness through Apprenticeship and Pathways (WRAP) Project.

The two grants from the USDOL complement each other. The State Accelerator Grants were given to states to help develop their strategic plan and build partnerships for apprenticeship expansion and diversification with state education, workforce, and economic development systems. The Apprenticeship Committee decided to take a regional approach by fostering relationships and promoting apprenticeships based on the needs of each of the ten economic development regions. Roundtables are being convened throughout the State with employers, education providers, local workforce area representatives, service

providers, community-based organizations and WIOA agencies to discuss needs and barriers to promote the expansion and creation of apprenticeship programs.

The State Apprenticeship Expansion Grants were given to states to help expand Registered Apprenticeship in existing and innovative industries, specifically targeting underserved populations such as women, persons with disabilities, communities of color, opportunity youth, individuals transitioning from incarceration and low-income people. The Apprenticeship Committee decided to build on the regional approach taken with the State Accelerator Grant by promoting apprenticeship expansion and engaging industries and businesses based on the needs of the different regions. Through discussion, the Committee decided to launch the Illinois Apprenticeship Plus Framework, a comprehensive and integrated apprenticeship system for Illinois, via a competitive grant process. The Apprenticeship Committee oversaw the development, review and release of a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). Using the funds from the Apprenticeship Expansion grant, this NOFO is now funding three pilot projects that will expand Registered Apprenticeship in construction, manufacturing and transportation, distribution and logistics (TDL).

The Apprenticeship Committee serves as an advisory body to The Governor's Cabinet on Children and Youth WRAP project. Members of the Apprenticeship Committee serve along with representatives from IBHE, ICCB, ISBE, DoIT, Employment Security, IDHS, Commerce and the Governor's Office. The focus of this project is to ensure all youth have the opportunity to learn about and the ability to obtain high-quality and stackable industry-recognized credentials or degrees utilizing work-based learning models within a career pathway that will lead to self-sufficiency. Apprenticeship programs are an authentic and proven entry point onto a career pathway and are a key component of a robust broader career pathways system. This project is focused on aligning apprenticeship with Career Pathways and other, ongoing efforts within the K-12 system, such as the Postsecondary Workforce Readiness (PWR) Act, Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), P-20 Council, the "60 by 25" Network, Talent Pipeline Management, and Pathways to Results, as well as the NGA Work-Based Learning Policy Academy Illinois.

Prior to releasing the NOFO to expand Registered Apprenticeship, the Apprenticeship Committee collaborated with industry partners and the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity to engage hundreds of businesses within the state to promote the Apprenticeship Plus Framework. These businesses, along with local workforce innovation area representatives and service providers, were invited to webinars and regional roundtables held in Southern Cook County, Springfield and Mt. Vernon. At the webinars and roundtables, participants were introduced to the Apprenticeship Plus Framework, available funding opportunities and other resources on how to start or expand apprenticeship in their organization or region and the benefits and costs of doing so. At the regional roundtables, participants were greeted with a video of Governor Rauner asking for their commitment to foster apprenticeship opportunities.

Similar to the business and industry roundtables, the Apprenticeship Committee collaborated with The Governor's Cabinet on Children and Youth to hold a series of Youth Roundtables. The Young Invincibles, a community-based organization that works out of Chicago to expand economic opportunity for young adults in Illinois, led the Youth Roundtables aimed at gathering feedback from young adults and supporting staff. They focused on youth apprenticeships and explored what makes youth apprenticeships exciting,

what could keep the program from being successful, and how Illinois should facilitate partnerships and market these opportunities. Over 125 youth and staff attended in Mt. Vernon, Peoria, and Hillside. Between 12 and 25 youth attended each roundtable, coming from community colleges, foster care, the juvenile justice system, apprenticeship worksites, workforce development programs and agencies (including Department of Employment Security, Department of Human Services, Department of Children and Family Services, and the Community College Board). The Young Invincibles produced a report from the research and findings, "Making Youth Apprenticeships Work for Illinois' Young Adults."

To create more interest in Registered Apprenticeship and to increase the talent pipeline, a NOFO to fund up to 10 youth apprenticeship pilot programs in three economic development regions (EDRs) of the state was released. With a funding total of approximately $2.3 million from statewide activity funds, nine youth apprenticeship pilot programs were launched late summer 2017. These will serve up to 304 youth, both in-school and out-of-school, focusing on one of four industries: Construction and building trades, Manufacturing, Healthcare or IT. Participants have the opportunity to earn industry-recognized credentials, such as Certified Medical Assistant, CompTIA A+ certification, Cisco Networking, NCCER Carpentry, and NIMS Manufacturing as part of these apprenticeship programs. All of these credentials are within a career pathway. These pilots have partnerships with over a dozen businesses to provide mentorship and work-based learning opportunities.

The Apprenticeship Committee used National Apprenticeship Week as another opportunity to reach businesses, associations, schools and potential apprentices to educate on how to create programs and promote existing opportunities. The Governor issued a proclamation and many events were held around the State, each of which was marketed and promoted by the Committee. The Apprenticeship Committee and the Illinois Workforce Partnership (IWP) jointly hosted an event, "Apprenticeship: A New Vision," on November 15, 2017 at Parkland College in Champaign, Illinois. Approximately 100 people attended, representing 18 different community colleges, 17 workforce development agencies, nine private sector businesses and many others, including community organizations, K-12 education and state agencies.

Finally, to further the role of apprenticeship as an effective work-based learning model into a career pathway, the Apprenticeship Committee created three subcommittees: Business Engagement, Marketing Strategy, and Services and Systems. Members of the Apprenticeship Committee are leading these teams and are beginning the process of identifying objectives, priorities, activities, and strategies for each. These three subcommittees are a direct result of feedback given by businesses, local workforce boards, educational institutions and others.

I. COORDINATING WITH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES.

Describe how the activities identified in (A) will be coordinated with economic development entities, strategies and activities in the State.

Coordination of Regional and Local Planning

The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (Commerce) is the state agency that leads economic development efforts for Illinois and is responsible for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title IB and Trade Training Program

activities. Commerce is also responsible for the administration of the required and allowed Governor's Statewide Workforce Activities as outlined in WIOA. It is recognized that supporting innovative workforce programs that connect employers to a highly skilled workforce is central to Illinois' commitment to ensure that businesses thrive in Illinois. Toward that end, the state is coordinating a data/demand-driven strategic planning process across education, workforce and economic development at the state, regional and local levels using Illinois' ten Economic Development Regions (EDR). The use of the ten EDRs illustrates Illinois' commitment to data-driven economic development in the state. Commerce's Regional Economic Development Regional Managers and supporting staff are responsible for managing business relationships, developing business plans and cultivating customer relationships and company growth in their assigned regions or territories. The goal is to provide a one-stop resource focus on providing customized services to business including:

- Intergovernmental Coordination
- Technical Assistance with Site Selection
- Regional Collaboration with Key Stakeholders
- Assistance Eliminating Governmental Red Tape
- Custom Workforce Training
- Expedited Permitting, Licensing & Other Approvals
- Connection to Civic & Business Partners
- Potential Financial Support

Commerce will also connect the core and required partners with the latest economic development initiatives in the state. For example, the State of Illinois, in partnership with Intersect Illinois and the Illinois Economic Development Association is introducing a new statewide business outreach and retention initiative called, CORE: Creating Opportunities for Retention and Expansion. The first step in this process is to conduct in-depth training sessions designed to explain this statewide alliance, instruct communities on specific steps of participation, and to coordinate specific measures aimed at meeting the growth and development needs of local/regional employers. A key goal of this initiative is to better coordinate and communicate with business. These activities are in direct alignment with the regional planning, business coordination and sector strategies outlined in this plan.

Coordination of Economic Development Activities and Business Services

The State of Illinois understands that in order to give businesses and job seekers the workforce services they need, we need to better integrate our delivery services to business. Illinois' Integrated Business Service Framework provides the foundation for workforce, education and economic development partners to better listen to, learn from and respond to Illinois' businesses. This framework was developed by a statewide group of business leaders and workforce partners and is meant to identify the elements and requirements of an integrated business services model for state and regional programs that will best equip them to understand and meet the ongoing workforce needs of Illinois' businesses.

Support for Employer-Driven Regional Sector Initiatives

Illinois has embraced the concept of employer-led sector partnerships as a vehicle to become nimbler in meeting the needs of business. Commerce, the Illinois Department of

Employment Security (Employment Security) and the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) have collaborated on sector strategies for years, including the Workforce Innovation Fund manufacturing project, creating the state sector strategy framework and the Talent Pipeline Management Initiative. Illinois is currently working to expand the successful pilot with Vermilion Advantage in the East Central Illinois region to other regions of the state. As noted above, Commerce's regional economic development staff actively engaged in the regional workshops and planning meetings and will continue to be key resources in connecting workforce and education professionals with key businesses in targeted industry sectors. Commerce's regional economic development team will take a more active role in working with local workforce and education partners to implement regional sector strategies in key industries.

Provide Career Pathways for Economic Advancement

Throughout the sections on Partner Engagement with Educational Institutions, Partner Engagement with Other Education and Training Providers and Leveraging Resources to Increase Educational Access, this plan describes partnerships to expand career pathway opportunities through accelerated programs and work-based training while aligning and integrating programs of study that lead to industry-recognized credentials. Priorities and strategies developed from this alignment will ensure career and work readiness at all levels. The engagement of educational institutions to create a job-driven education and training system will allow the state to make significant and strategic system improvements to address workforce development needs through flexible, responsive, and progressive programs informed by labor market information. Initiatives, will be rooted in labor market data that will inform education and workforce systems when establishing programs thereby allocating resources to in-demand occupations and away from those jobs that have declining opportunities due to changing economic conditions. Additionally, employment and wage data will facilitate the measurement of workforce outcomes of students to demonstrate performance and effectiveness of programs

Provide Labor Market Information for Regional Planning

Commerce, Employment Security, ICCB and the Illinois Department of Human Services' Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) Interagency Data Team will continue to provide an analysis of economic and labor market information to the state and local economic development professionals. It is vital that local economic development staff have the most current macro-level data, but also work with us to share micro-level data and the vision they have for their communities. The Interagency Data Team will play an important coordinating role to foster better intra-regional communication (such as through WIOA regional planning) so that as many communities as possible within a region have a similar vision that can be used to leverage the efforts of all. The state and local economic development professionals play an important role in working with business to validate and refine the labor market information (LMI) based on the current needs of business in the region and local areas.

Expand Employer Access to Labor Market Information

The Interagency Data Team will develop new opportunities for employers to communicate their forecasted demand for workers and review and provide input into industry and occupational projections developed through Employment Security. This will include new

tools for employers working together in leading regional partnerships to continuously communicate short-term forecasts of job openings and competency and credentialing requirements for these jobs. This will build the best practices from employer-led national and state initiatives, including the United States Chamber of Commerce Talent Pipeline Management Initiative. The team also will improve employer capacity to easily communicate career opportunities and current job openings to regional partnerships and their broader labor market in Illinois. This will be accomplished through employer tools that can be easily integrated with their current human resource information systems and their own websites that provide information on careers and job openings.

B. STATE OPERATING SYSTEMS AND POLICIES

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include a description of the State operating systems and policies that will support the implementation of the State strategy described in **Section II Strategic Elements** . This includes—

1. THE STATE OPERATING SYSTEMS THAT WILL SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STATE'S STRATEGIES. THIS MUST INCLUDE A DESCRIPTION OF–

A. STATE OPERATING SYSTEMS THAT SUPPORT COORDINATED IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE STRATEGIES (E.G., LABOR MARKET INFORMATION SYSTEMS, DATA SYSTEMS, COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS, CASE-MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS, JOB BANKS, ETC.).

Illinois' technology and operating systems are overseen by the Department of Innovation and Technology (DoIT). This agency was established by Governor Rauner's Executive Order 01-16 on January 25, 2016. It established DoIT as a new state agency with the responsibility for the information technology functions of agencies under the jurisdiction of the Governor. In Illinois, the six core WIOA programs are divided among four independent agencies, each responsible for maintaining its reporting system working with DoIt.

Illinois has taken action to bring together partner leadership and subject matter experts to examine existing systems, collaborate on potential interoperability solutions and take steps towards an integrated WIOA system in Illinois. DoIT workforce and economic strategists assembled a subject matter expert interagency team. This interagency team was comprised of data, technology, and performance specialists from the four core partner agencies: DCEO, IDES, ICCB, and DHS. The interagency team analyzed each of the core partner systems. Process maps were created for each of the major workflows. Upon conclusion of the workflow and process mapping exercises, the group concluded that:

- the systems in use were still viable and functional
- each system was extremely robust and complex
    - each system contained data and programming not only for the WIOA Title but was also linked to other related agency programs; and
    - the systems could be modified in a timely manner to meet the demands of WIOA implementation

Upon analyzing the technology and programmatic structure, the best solution for Illinois did not appear to be retirement of the existing systems but rather creating an interface that could connect the systems. It was the recommendation of the Interagency Work Group to the state WIOA Technology Steering Committee that Illinois should create a general WIOA intake system that assigned a common participant WIOA ID number, conducted a general suitability and preliminary assessment and then referred the customer -- based on a centralized WIOA centralized services and eligibility logic -- to the partner(s) that would best be able to provide them services based upon the suitability criteria. The ID and basic demographic and suitability information would travel to each respective agency's existing database via an Application Programming Interface (API). The interface would also need to have a tracking and reporting function for WIOA clients in order to achieve the common exit requirement and WIOA common reporting requirement. The recommendation was taken under consideration by DoIT leadership and they met with various steering committee members to discuss alternatives.

Additionally, the IWIB is in the process of establishing an Information Technology Standing Committee to support the IWIB's priorities including: 1) developing methodologies to assess employer needs and speed response times; 2) expanding the range and flexibility of training and other service delivery methods to address the unique needs of populations and the regions of the state; and 3) contributing to the sustainability of technology strategies to support IWIB objectives and all Illinois Workforce Development partners. Key to the implementation of this third priority will be the use of the Information Technology Standing Committee to connect the IWIB to technology-related activities going on outside of the workforce development system that could impact the activities of the IWIB. Of particular importance will be the coordination of IWIB strategies with the work of DoIT and the Interagency Data Team to ensure the alignment of technology and data systems across required partner programs in Illinois.

The following are the current Illinois WIOA systems in use. Each of these systems have been modified and updated within their respective agencies to meet the DOL / DOE WIOA mandates pertinent to its respective title. Illinois has successfully implemented and executed all WIOA requirements thus far.

WIOA Title IB - Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (Commerce)

WIOA Title IB is overseen by Commerce. The Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth programs case management system is known as the Illinois Workforce Development System (IWDS). The IWDS provides electronic storage of users, customers, applications, providers, services and grants for local workforce innovation areas (LWIAs). IWDS is designed to specifically address WIOA Title I policy, procedure and reporting requirements. It is integrated fully with the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program and Rapid Response Dislocated Worker Tracking and event assignment information. Key functional elements of IWDS are: 1) customer management and case notes; 2) application management that includes an imbedded logic to ensure WIOA policy compliance, particularly regarding assessment, eligibility and service assignment; 3) service providers, employers, training providers and training program information tied to participants and participant outcomes; 4) service tracking and outcomes; 5) performance management via selection from a reporting menu in which a viewer can print and save standard reports; 6) DOL PIRL and WIPS reporting system of record for WIOA Title I. IWDS contains shared data uploaded via secure batch file

processes to display Illinois Employment Security UI profile data, UI wage data Trade Readjustment Allowances / Alternative Adjustment Assistance **(**TRA/ATTA) payments. IWDS also has access to Wage Record Information System (WRIS) data and the Illinois Department of Human Services allows access to SNAP/TANF data to facilitate eligibility assurance.

WIOA Title II - Illinois Community College Board (ICCB)

The Adult Education and Literacy Act is administered through the ICCB. The Adult Education program uses a web-based system to collect data from more than 80 programs throughout the state. The DAISi (Data and Information System - Illinois) was developed to collect pertinent adult education data for Federal and State reporting. The system is available through a direct portal. The programs input student information, including demographics, assessment and testing, employment information, courses, funding, instructional activities & service and federal and state requirements, including information pertinent for federal National Reporting System (NRS) and WIOA reporting.

Programs must submit reports quarterly and can do this through the DAISi system. Detailed instructions for reporting are provided to all programs prior to these submissions. These instructions assist to identify and correct errors. The system is designed to exclude any student records that are not error-free and compliant with the error check mechanism within the system. Data staff know that failure to correct errors results in the loss of reporting of a student's activity and progress in the program. In addition, the system provides an error check mechanism that allows users to check for errors or system warnings on a regular basis. Programs are instructed to run this error check on a weekly basis, and the system has been designed to exclude students with errors from official reporting until the student records have been corrected. Program staff reviews student files through on-site visits, and also use the system's state-level Desktop Monitoring Tool to review program data. The data system is designed to ensure required data elements are collected as a student's record is entered. All fields that are required are highlighted in red and if one of these fields is not completed, the system does not accept the record. Instead, the user is presented with an error message outlining what is missing in order for the record to be accepted. The front-end error checks also ensure that data is entered in a specific order to avoid missing data from the system.

The data system has a comprehensive error check to ensure that local programs are entering valid and accurate assessment information. When entering assessment information, users are guided through a series of fields and selected assessment information from drop down menus. If a value is entered for a score that is outside the range of that particular assessment, the user receives an immediate prompt alerting to this error. For example, the student's NRS level, scale scores and point/level gains are calculated by the system and are not dependent upon the user indicating if a level gain has occurred. For students who receive several post-tests during the fiscal year, the system calculates final gains based only on the final assessment results in comparison with the first assessment given.

Programs are required to submit Performance and Status reports on a quarterly basis. Detailed quarterly reporting instructions are sent to the field to outline how to develop and run the report from the DAISi system and the submission process at each reporting period.

Users also complete an end of the year verification process that allows them to review final data for the year.

ICCB maintains a DAISI listserv group of users to allow communication directly with those using the system. The ICCB also posts important announcements on the system's homepage where users arrive when logging into the system. Users can post questions on a discussion forum and view the questions of others. DAISI users also have access to a technical helpdesk through our grant contractor and assistance is provided by ICCB staff to handle all policy-related questions.

The ICCB is also the administrator for the Illinois High School Equivalency (HSE) program. The ICCB maintains a database of records at both the state and local levels, including Cook County. This system houses all the pertinent records of individuals who take approved exams in state. These exams are used to certify high school equivalency attainment. Currently, the exams include the GED, HiSET and TASC. The ICCB works with each vendor to upload data through a nightly feed into the system to ensure that timely and valid records are maintained. Error checks are embedded to ensure records are cross-matched and the names and other identifiable information is accurate. The system also maintains constitution results, which is a requirement in order to issue a High School Equivalency Certificate/Diploma. The HSE not only validates that an individual meets the requirements as established by the ICCB but also produces both official and non-official transcript information on each exam taken.

WIOA Title III - Illinois Department of Employment Security

The Illinois Department of Employment Security (Employment Security) continues to work to enhance the Labor Market Information (LMI) system to support the six WIOA strategies. Traditional LMI produced by Employment Security is readily available on the Employment Security website, the Virtual Labor Market Information (VLMI) system (a Geographic Solutions web tool which houses the Workforce Information Database per the requirements of the Workforce Information Grant), and limited LMI through the IL Career Information System (wages and projections). Traditional LMI includes occupational wage information, current economic conditions by industry and geography, as well as short term and long-term Industry and Occupational Employment Projections by local area. Also included are the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (labor force data) and Current Employment Statistics (local area jobs data by industry). Near real-time LMI includes information on The Conference Board's Help Wanted Online Job Ads postings by Economic Development Region and can be customized upon request. Other real-time LMI utilizes information from the state's Unemployment Insurance and Employment Service programs.

The Illinois Benefit Information System (IBIS) is a web-based custom-developed application that administers the unemployment insurance benefit program for the State of Illinois. Claimants can file their claims and file for their weekly benefits through a variety of methods: online, through an Interactive Voice Response System, over the telephone with a call center agent or in person. The system keeps track of correspondence received from both claimants and employers utilizing an electronic case folder. Adjudicatory hearings are scheduled and conducted via telephone. Payments are issued to eligible recipients via direct deposit or a debit card. In addition to administering regular Unemployment Insurance claims, IBIS also administers Trade Readjustment Act (TRA) for impacted workers.

IllinoisJobLink.com is a robust, dynamic and comprehensive web-based workforce development system for job seekers, employers, training providers and workforce professionals with real-time data and reports, for meeting and tracking federal performance goals across all programs for core partners. To date, all known WIOA requirements have been fully implemented in IllinoisJobLink.com for: Title I (Adult, Dislocated Worker & Youth), Title II (Adult & Basic Education), Title III (Wagner-Peyser Labor Exchange) and Title IV (Vocational Rehabilitation).

The Labor Exchange functionality in IllinoisJobLink.com enables the claimant to transition - seamlessly, and in real time -- from filing an unemployment claim to starting the journey back to gainful employment. The platform provides real-time, scalable, collaborative and integrated case management across programs, which allows the staff to focus on the job seeker and reduce the administrative overhead. Since IllinoisJobLink.com implementation in December 2011, we have trained all partners in all local workforce areas, and all partners have case-management access to the system.

Illinois is a member of America's Job Link Alliance (AJLA), which is a consortium of states that use AJLA products and services. Currently, there are ten states (Alabama, Arkansas, Arizona, Delaware, Idaho, Illinois, Kansas, Maine, Oklahoma and Vermont) using the AJLA products. Additionally, there are six states (Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Nevada and New Jersey) using AJLA's Reporting product.

WIOA Title IV - Illinois Department of Human Services

WIOA Title IV is administered by the Illinois Department of Human Services, Division of Rehabilitation Services. The Web Case Management System (WebCM) is the primary case management system for the Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation program, providing electronic storage of customer case records, as well as links to other systems which display information related to case requirements. WebCM is an internet-based system that can be accessed from any location with appropriate security and was developed internally by DHS information systems staff. WebCM was developed to be in compliance with all WIOA requirements and mandated data reporting. Key elements include: customer management and case notes; case progression and record keeping for intake, assessment, eligibility determination and service plan development; secure access for vendor agencies; report generation and service tracking; and online linkage to partner systems, including the wage verification system, Social Security system and the DHS integrated eligibility system.

The Integrated Eligibility System (IES) promotes service integration and improves how eligibility is determined for health and human services, education, employment training and placement activities along with other viable services needed to improve economic stability. It offers specific features for customers to access and manage their own cases. Staff and WIOA partners are trained to assist customers in obtaining case information, as well as applying for benefits online without the hardship of physically coming into the local offices.

DHS -TANF staff has developed and maintained a relationship with several employers throughout the Chicago and Suburban areas. Employers are invited to the Family Community Resource Centers (Local DHS Offices) to do presentations as a form of job recruitment (e.g., UPS, Fed-Ex and some manufacturing companies). DHS is in the planning stages with the one-stop centers to host an upcoming career fair. This will be an on-going initiative as part of a collaborative effort to continue compliance for service integration per

WIOA guidelines. A list of over forty employment agencies is connected to DHS-TANF Program. Some employment opportunities range from temporary part-time assignment to permanent positions. Many customers have been hired as a result of this partnership.

In addition to these systems, Illinois has additional platforms that reach across agencies and state boundaries to demonstrate new and innovative options for data-sharing and technology integrations.

- The Illinois Longitudinal Database System (ILDS) and the Centralized Demographic Dataset Administrator (CDDA) mentioned in the original Unified State Plan are progressing well. The system has successfully matched demographic data among seven of Illinois' workforce and education agencies, and now has millions of Master Client Index IDs to bridge data across education, training, wages and employment. Technology, shared data agreements, research procedures and data-matching techniques can all be leveraged from ILDS practices and utilized to find solutions towards Illinois WIOA technology unification. ILDS specialists work closely with the WIOA state agencies, partners and the IWIB to assist in research and in improving availability of intelligent and reliable combined program trends and outcomes that enable the state to make data-driven decisions.
- The Illinois workNet Portal site was launched in 2005 by the IWIB and is sponsored by the Illinois Department of Commerce. It connects individuals, employers, education & workforce professionals and community partners to career training and development resources and tools. Job seekers, businesses, non-profit organizations or state or local governmental entities seeking guidance can all utilize the portal as a resource. The site is 100 percent integrated with the DCEO IWDS system for WIOA Title I via an API. Illinois workNet has been utilized on multiple special state grants and pilot programs to host intake, assessment, referral, customer engagement and real-time performance dashboards and scorecards. One example of this usage is the Employment Opportunities, Personalized Services, Individualized Training and Career Planning program (EPIC), which is overseen by the Illinois Department of Human Services and focuses on expediting SNAP and TANF clients into WIOA training and career advancement. During and throughout the implementation of WIOA, Illinois workNet has been able to host collaborative workspaces for WIOA planning and implementation efforts. It has also provided the staffing and platform to establish an online WIOA ePolicy site and host weekly WIOA Wednesday webinars to involve and inform state stakeholders. This state asset will continue to build on the collaborative capabilities of the portal and encourages the state workforce and educational institutions to engage and explore new ways to combine efforts and data to create a seamless experience for the customer.
- Commerce is in the process of developing a new layoff intake and tracking tool that will also include economic landscape dashboards and predictive analytic statistics that will facilitate business analysts and layoff specialist throughout the state to track layoffs and make more informed and proactive decisions to avert layoffs.

B. DATA-COLLECTION AND REPORTING PROCESSES USED FOR ALL PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING THOSE PRESENT IN ONE-STOP CENTERS*.

The Illinois core partners have long-standing data sharing agreements in place whereby the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (Commerce), Illinois Department of Human Services, Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) and Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) request data matching of the Unemployment Insurance Wage Record Data from the Illinois Department of Employment Security (Employment Security). WIOA has motivated the agencies to look closely at the long-term agreements and determine if changes need to be made to accommodate new and innovative methods of sharing data between the agencies. The agreements facilitate cross-program access to data about common participants while minimizing duplicative systems costs. In addition to one-on-one data access, the Illinois Longitudinal Data System continues to utilize its fully executed multiple agency data sharing agreement with all the State of Illinois educational and workforce agencies. This data sharing agreement allows for the sharing of agency data via the newly established Centralized Demographic Dataset Administrator (CDDA). The interagency agreements and the CDDA arrangement establishes a master client index number for all clients and facilitates integrated and streamlined service delivery, common reporting and measurement of interagency longitudinal performance outcomes as required under WIOA Section 116(d)(2).

Since the submittal of the Unified State Plan in 2016, the Office of the Governor established the Department of Innovation and Technology (DoIT) to "lead digital transformation within the state and increase interagency efficiency and improve delivery of services to residents and businesses." The Illinois Department of Innovation and Technology (DoIT) drafted an inter-agency eMOU to promote data-sharing among state agencies in late 2016. This agreement has been signed by 22 agencies to date, including the core partners. The eMOU agreement established an operational committee that facilitates data-sharing requests among the agency partners. The committee is comprised of the State's Chief Data Officer and Chief Information Officers from signatory agencies. The State of Illinois created and signed this agreement within only seven months due to strong support from the Office of the Governor, DoIT executive leadership and agency directors. This agreement was instrumental in Illinois' IT transformation.

The Illinois Governor's Office is actively assisting the core partners in technology interoperability solutions. Assessments of current systems have begun and additional research and analysis will be necessary. Further discovery is needed and attention made to mold the technology plan with the state WIOA plan so that policy drives the state technology. This action will ensure long-term success and sustainability of a WIOA Unified State Plan and workforce system.

Although Illinois does not currently have a fully integrated data system, it is nevertheless committed to pursuing alignment and integration of participant and performance data across core programs with the ultimate goal of providing effective and efficient services that lead to the participants' employment as quickly as possible. To help prepare for and explore options for data integration, an interagency performance subgroup of the Interagency Work Group is focused on performance accountability and data integration. Core program partner representatives identified existing gaps between the data collected historically and the data collection requirements under WIOA. Core partners have been working to address those gaps through the following actions:

Core partners have adjusted their own data systems in response to performance accountability requirements under WIOA. Partners have identified data collection methods and standards that are best practices in some core program partners and could be explored for use by other core program partners (e.g., how to account for participants who lack a Social Security number when reporting performance outcomes);

- Core partners have reviewed potential platforms for developing a common framework for use by all required partners under WIOA;
- Core partners have developed prototype dashboards for core program partners to track individual and aggregate performance data across core programs;
- Core partners have researched mechanisms for facilitating smart referrals, and allowing core program partners to share information directly with each other's systems; and
- Core partners have addressed Federal guidance on performance and reporting as it became available and did system modifications to comply with the regulations;
- Core partners have analyzed measurable skills gains for assessing participant skills and the time period over which skills gains are to be measured; and
- Core partners are establishing the methodology for effectiveness of serving employers as 1) Retention with the same employer, and 2) Employer Penetration Rate. This was approved by the IWIB on September 21, 2017.

Illinois will continue to use existing web-based interfaces that integrate data via API tools. Real-time access to workforce development resources for individuals, businesses and workforce professionals is available, and is shareable and viewable in user-friendly dashboards for better customer service. Ongoing discussions include how to further integrate the Internet-based data systems to enhance program alignment and service delivery.

* For the PY 2016 state plan, descriptions of data collection and reporting processes need only include currently known indicators.

2. THE STATE POLICIES THAT WILL SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STATE'S STRATEGIES (E.G., CO-ENROLLMENT POLICIES AND UNIVERSAL INTAKE PROCESSES WHERE APPROPRIATE). IN ADDITION, PROVIDE THE STATE'S GUIDELINES FOR STATE-ADMINISTERED ONE-STOP PARTNER PROGRAMS' CONTRIBUTIONS TO A ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM.

The Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB), along with Illinois' core agency partners who make up the Interagency Work Group, have developed and adopted several new and revised policies to assist in implementing the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). These policies provide guidance for state agency partners and service providers in such areas as:

- General transition to and implementation of WIOA
- Designation of Local Workforce Innovation Areas (LWIAs)
- Chief Elected Official (CEO) agreements and functions
- Local workforce board composition and certification
- Eligibility for youth, dislocated worker and adult populations.
- Eligible training providers and their programs

- Certification of One-Stop Centers
- Minimum Training Expenditures
- One-Stop Operator Procurement

Beginning in October 2016, the IWIB adopted a new, highly collaborative policy development process to address policies with system-wide implications, such as one-stop certification and service integration. Because of the far-reaching impact of such policies, it is important that a broad cross-section of workforce stakeholders be involved in policy development. As a result, a process has been established that involves consultation among State and local Board members, chief elected officials, WIOA partners, and other stakeholders in crafting policy that provides cost-effective and efficient guidance to the field. Gathering input from all stakeholders ensures continuity and consistency among the programs throughout the state.

One example of the effectiveness of this new policy development approach is the IWIB's One-Stop Certification Policy Work Group. As the first policy-making effort using the new process, a group of 45 workforce system stakeholders from the state and local levels, including Board members, met for four months to develop a one-stop certification policy, process and application. The certification framework they recommended to the IWIB addressed 41 criteria in 19 areas addressing center effectiveness, accessibility & infrastructure, and continuous improvement. The work group's recommendations were adopted by the IWIB and were implemented statewide in July 2017. The IWIB One-Stop Certification Policy Work Group reconvened in January 2018 to review the results of the certification process. Additionally, potential refinements to the policy were identified, as were improvement opportunities and notable practices for Illinois' network of one-stop centers. This policy work group will continue to meet to frame recommendations to the IWIB for strengthening this policy. This is an important WIOA policy that provides guidance to the local boards and program administrators regarding the requirements of the American Job Centers (Attachment U) (https://www.illinoisworknet.com/DownloadPrint/Attachment%20U%20-%20Policy%20Documents.pdf).

Another important policy work group that has been launched under this new policy development process is the IWIB Service Integration Work Group. As a foundational element of Illinois' Unified State Plan and the IWIB's 2017 Strategic Plan, service integration is a way to link and leverage scarce resources and improve customer outcomes. This policy work group is focused on using service integration to help "optimize the effectiveness of the one-stop system for all customers" -- one of the five objectives of the IWIB's Strategic Plan. The Service Integration Policy Work Group has adopted a model of service integration that moves through five stages: isolation, communication, coordination, collaboration and integration. The work group recently organized into committees to develop clear standards of what each stage of integration looks like across the core functions of one-stop centers. These functions include outreach and intake; assessment; career services; case management; follow-along services; business engagement; and marketing, branding & messaging. The work group is exploring the development of an assessment tool that will enable each one-stop center to evaluate its level of integration across all seven core functions and use those results to develop an improvement plan. The policy development process described above for one-stop certification and service integration requires a

significant investment of time and resources. The same policy creation principles were followed in the development of program specific policies.

The Service Integration Policy Work Group is modeling how to leverage resources by utilizing the Illinois Department of Human Services Rehabilitation Services Technical Assistance Grant received from the Workforce Innovation Technical Assistance Center, known as WINTAC. WINTAC is funded by the United States Department of Education. A key focus of WINTAC Activity is on service integration. Through WINTAC the model is using the five stages and six core functions for service integration. Three sub- workgroups formed around the six core functions will be exploring policy and practice best practices to put in place to achieve service integration

As part of policy development, guidance and technical assistance, Illinois created an ePolicy manual (https://apps.il-work-net.com/WIOAPolicy/Policy/Home) on the Illinois workNet portal. This ePolicy manual contains policy, procedures, related documents and resources to support the LWIB in implementation and provision of service under WIOA. The manual organizes policy into logical categories (chapters) starting at the statewide system level and narrowing into guidance directly related to WIOA Title IB. The following are policies developed and issued through the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (Commerce) Office of Employment and Training (OET) in consultation with the Interagency Work Group:

- The IWIB continues to utilize the approved new procedures for communications between the board, its Executive Committee and the Interagency Work Group - especially as they pertain to the continued implementation of WIOA and policies issued by the board, and begin to implement provisions of the IWIB Strategic Plan. Specifically, this guidance informed the Illinois workforce system how to implement WIOA statutory requirements beginning July 1, 2016. It also provides guidance and instructions regarding: 1) regional and local planning requirements, 2) Governor's Guidelines to State and Local Program Partners Negotiating Costs and Services under WIOA, and 3) Criteria and Procedures for Certifying Comprehensive One-Stop Centers under WIOA. This guidance provided a framework for program activities.
- Under a work group structure, Illinois developed new policies to address the types of training services allowed under WIOA. The first of these training options was on-the-job training (OJT), for which policy was issued in 2016. General requirements for all OJTs outline the guidance for potential new employees or eligible underemployed workers. These requirements stipulate the acquisition of new skills or knowledge essential to job performance. To ensure proper implementation, LWIBs are required to set policy for OJTs. Monitoring and evaluation guidance assures further accountability.
- Guidance was issued to provide the workforce system with an overview of the steps Commerce has taken to implement the provisions of WIOA. This ensured a seamless transition for customers during intake and the continued provision of career and training services, including the expanded training services described in WIOA. This guidance also addressed reporting requirements during and after the transition period as changes to the workforce data reporting system were being made.
- Membership and certification of LWIBs under WIOA is governed under policies that are consistent with the new provisions - including the assurance of more

streamlined boards with a majority of business members, and minimum percentage of labor and community service organizations represented. Emphasis was placed on ensuring that business representatives reflect regional industry sectors and the diversity of the population.

- Policy was implemented to address CEOs in each local area, including an understanding of their required functions as confirmed through a CEO agreement. The agreement addresses those LWIAs that have multiple CEOs. CEOs are given authority, as the local grant recipient, to designate local grant subrecipients and fiscal agents for the Title IB funds of WIOA. It also defines each CEO's liability for WIOA funds determined to have been misspent or used for unallowable purposes.
- Eligibility policies have been written to ensure that all the requirements of WIOA are clearly outlined for the LWIAs and their staff that delivers intake and registration services to customers. All customers of the system, whether served by local one-stop staff, through technology or self-served, are included in the general eligibility policy. Those seeking more than self-service assistance are determined eligible based on the funding stream under which they will be served. Detailed descriptions of the eligibility requirements and allowable documentation sources to confirm such eligibility decisions provide guidance to career planners in their decision-making. Priority of service is emphasized throughout to ensure preference to veterans is provided over non-veterans who might otherwise be determined eligible under a program.
- WIOA policy has been issued to provide guidance to all training providers including new providers, those that previously provided transitional eligibility, and the LWIBs and LWIAs, regarding the process for determining eligibility of providers and training programs. The policy covers initial and continued eligibility of all providers, with separate guidance for those Registered Apprenticeships choosing to be added to the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). This list highlights those programs that meet the state's requirements for in-demand occupations. The current procedures are under review by a work group that will address the performance collection requirements for all students, streamline the current approval process for eligibility, and make suggestions for changes to the reporting system. Discussion also centered around development of new metrics to identify high demand jobs within Illinois. This list will replace the current demand occupation training list and incorporate the most recent data available on average annual job openings and wages, along with any additional data points identified by the work group.
- Over the past two years, the IWIB has reviewed current policy on the requirement that local boards expend a minimum of forty percent (40%) of their Title IB Adult and Dislocated Worker funds on direct training costs. During this period of time, the board revised the formula to be calculated as a single expenditure rate rather than separate calculations. This was due in part because of the ability of boards to shift as much as 100% of these funds between the two programs, although Illinois has implemented a 50% maximum without prior approval. Through a policy work group, the allowable activities and direct training that can be considered calculable was revised to ensure it reflects the WIOA emphasis on registered apprenticeships and other new training opportunities. Finally, in September 2017, the board chose to increase the expenditure rate to fifty percent (50%) beginning with Program Year 2018 and institute a hold-harmless clause that would allow certain performance

incentives to be awarded if a local board could justify its failure to meet the minimum rate. The work group would continue to review current data and information and finalize the language in these areas, as well as address policy components related to incentives and sanctions. They will also review the Hold-Harmless Clause at their September 2018 board meeting.

- Policy issued in 2017 provided guidance on the process for selecting, certifying and designating one-stop operators in each of the twenty-two workforce areas through a competitive procurement process. Following further guidance by USDOL, this policy was further revised to address the information published in a Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL). Key elements related to the Federal Uniform Guidance to be followed in the process, components of a formal procurement process, essential contract elements, and conflicts of interest.

Governor's Guidelines for Negotiating Infrastructure and Other Shared Costs

The State of Illinois has established the "Governor's Guidelines to State and Local Program Partners for Negotiating Costs and Services under WIOA" to fulfill the WIOA requirement that the Governor issue guidance to state and local partners for negotiating cost sharing (including determining equitable and stable methods of funding infrastructure in accordance with WIOA Section 121(h)(1)(B)), service access, service delivery, and other matters essential to the establishment of effective local workforce development services under WIOA (§678.705). The Governor's Guidelines address negotiation of local Memorandums of Understanding (MOU), negotiation of infrastructure costs, negotiation of local one-stop delivery system costs, timelines for negotiation of MOUs and infrastructure costs, reporting of interim and final negotiation outcomes and appeals processes and reconciliation. The state expects all required and optional partners to adhere to these guidelines. LWIBs and CEOs are to act in accordance with the guidelines and to otherwise comply with them. The scope of the Governor's Guidelines include:

- General guidance, direction and requirements for negotiating local MOUs that are required in each LWIA to support the operation of the local one-stop delivery system
- Guidance related to comprehensive one-stop center infrastructure costs, including guidance for budgeting, allocation, negotiation and reconciliation of these costs using the two funding methods WIOA prescribes.
- Guidance for identifying and negotiating local one-stop delivery system costs that will be shared among required partners.
- Timelines for local negotiation of MOUs and for reporting of the outcomes of these negotiations.
- Guidance related to requirements for reconciling budgeted shared costs to actual shared costs at least semi-annually, as well as new guidance regarding circumstances that require a formal budget amendment.
- Requirements for the process through which required partners can appeal decisions made in the application of these guidelines if the state infrastructure cost funding mechanism is used.

Evaluation & Benchmarks

To determine whether the Illinois WIOA Unified State Plan and other WIOA requirements are being carried out effectively, and to identify continuous improvement opportunities in the effectiveness and efficiency of Illinois' workforce development system and related policy, the IWIB created an Evaluation and Accountability Committee. This IWIB standing committee consists of six IWIB members and is supported by the IWIB Staff with technical and logistical support from Illinois university partners. Specific responsibilities of this Committee are under discussion and will include recommending tools, measures, benchmarks and strategies. This committee will also serve as a resource to policy makers and other IWIB committees in establishing standards and metrics to assess and continuously improve system and program performance.

3. STATE PROGRAM AND STATE BOARD OVERVIEW

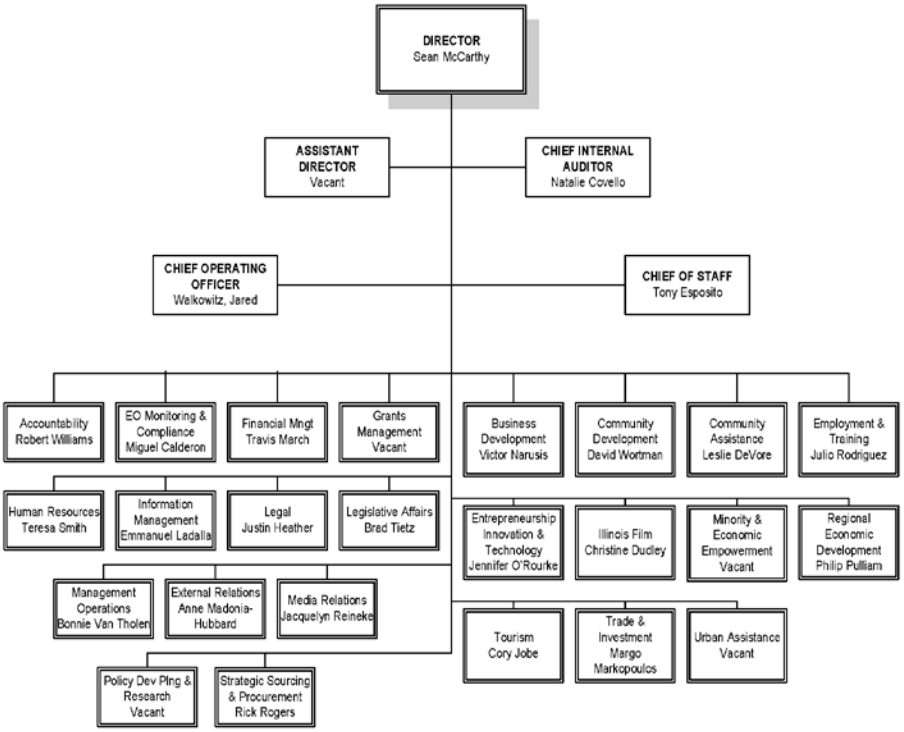
A. STATE AGENCY ORGANIZATION

Describe the organization and delivery systems at the State and local levels for the programs covered in the plan, including the organizational structure. Include an organizational chart.

STATE AGENCY ORGANIZATION Organizational charts for each of the core partners are available at: https://www.illinoisworknet.com/wioastateplan

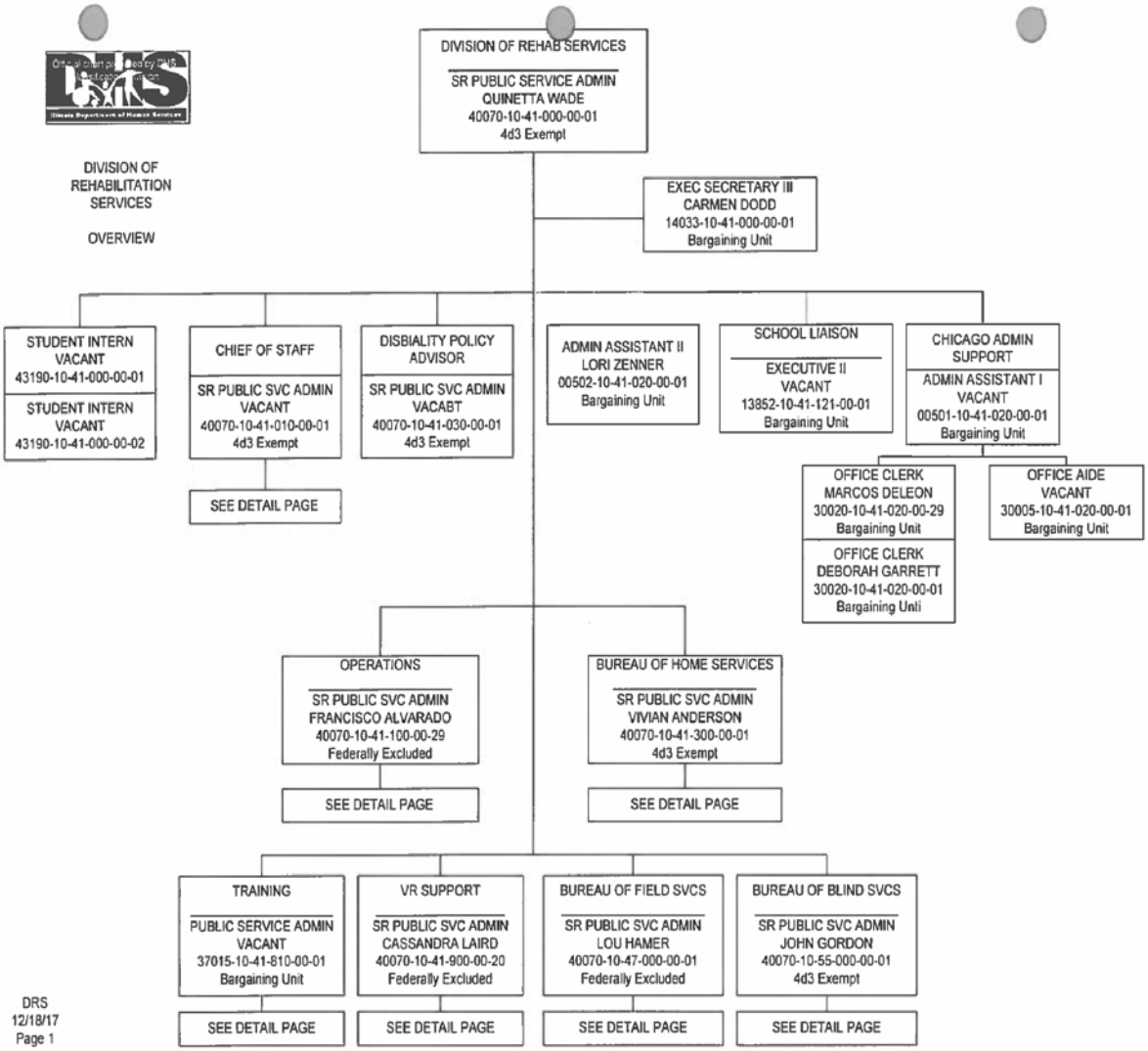
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

January 1, 2018

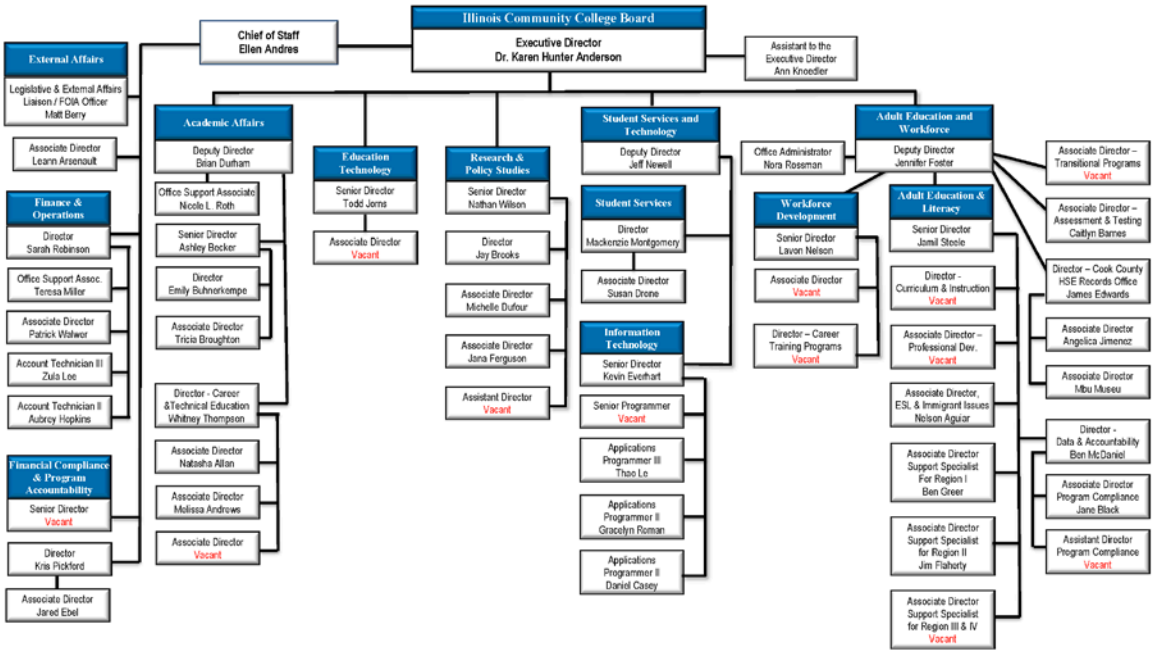


DIVISION OF REHABILITATION SERVICES

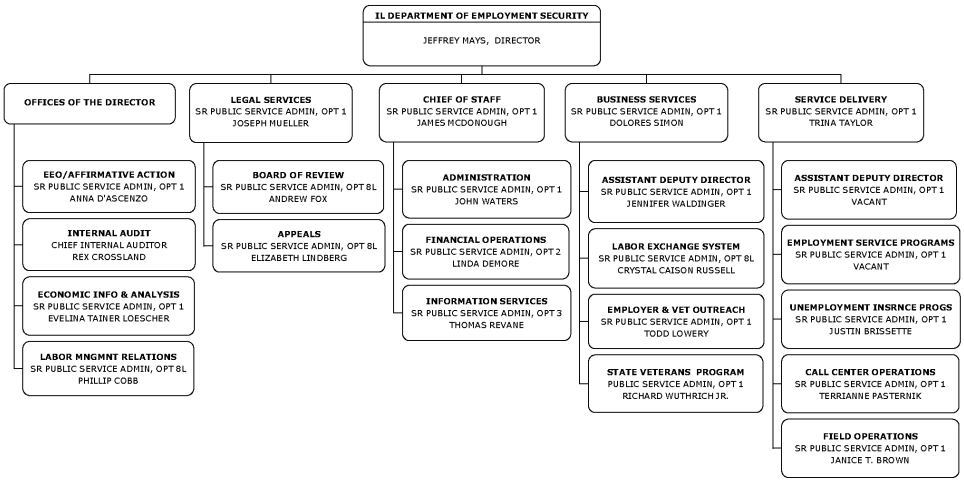
OVERVIEW



DRS
12/18/17
Page 1



ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT SECURITY



Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity

The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (Commerce) is the state agency that leads economic development efforts for Illinois. The main focus of Commerce is to retain and create jobs in Illinois by marketing to:

- Existing businesses, encouraging them to reinvest and create more jobs for Illinois citizens;
- New businesses, inviting them to relocate, invest and create new jobs;
- International companies, positioning Illinois as a global business destination for Foreign Direct Investment;
- Entrepreneurs and investors, connecting resources to support their startups and ventures; and
- Locally and globally, promoting Illinois as a world-class tourism and film destination.
- Commerce works with businesses, local governments and community organizations to advance economic development and improve the state's competitiveness in the global economy. Commerce is organized into the following offices that are focused on economic growth for the State of Illinois:
- Business Development: Administers job creation/retention grants, loans and tax credit programs;
- Employment and Training: Oversees statewide workforce training system, and promotes and coordinates initiatives to bridge skills gaps;
- Community Assistance: helps low-income households in Illinois maintain utility services and reduce energy costs through improved energy efficiency, and helps individuals and families move toward stabilization;
- Community Development: Utilizes federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funding to administer community infrastructure, housing and disaster recovery funding programs;
- Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Technology: Catalyzes local, national and global partnerships including the Small Business Development Center network and the Advantage Illinois program that strengthen Illinois' competitive advantage;
- Regional Economic Development: Integrates economic development activities and outreach across the state;
- Energy and Recycling: Promotes investment in Illinois' green economy, as well as create energy and recycling policies for state facilities;
- Film: Promotes the state's film and theatre industry through tax incentives, including the Illinois Film Tax Credit;
- Minority Economic Empowerment: promote opportunities for all minority communities across the state through targeted programs, resources and advocates. The goal is to ensure minority enterprises have an equal opportunity to contribute to the growth of the Illinois economy;
- Tourism: Markets state travel opportunities domestically and internationally, contributing to over $2 billion in state and local tax revenues annually;

- Trade and Investment: Promotes Illinois' economy through outreach events and trade missions, and provides financial and technical exporting assistance to Illinois companies;Urban Assistance: Manages the Urban Weatherization Initiative, targeting homes in disadvantaged communities and training home energy technicians, and the Employment Opportunities Grant program, which trains participants in the construction trade industry

*Office of Employment and Training*Supporting innovative workforce programs that connect employers to a highly skilled workforce is central to Illinois' commitment to ensure that businesses thrive in Illinois. The Office of Employment and Training (OET) oversees the administration of the WIOA Title IB Programs, WIOA statewide activities including rapid response and the training component of the Trade Adjustment Assistance Act Program. Key units of the OET include Planning, Policy, Performance, Monitoring, Reporting, Rapid Response and Trade and Technical Assistance. In 2017, OET expanded the technical assistance unit and designated staff to support state workforce board activities as a primary function.*Coordination with Economic Development*

Commerce is responsible for ensuring that economic development activities are integrated with the workforce strategies outlined in II.c.1. Over the last decade there has been a purposeful move to integrate economic and workforce development services at the state, regional and local levels. At the state level, Commerce's Business Development, Regional Economic Development Offices and Office of Employment and Training collaborate to respond to the needs of business and industry in Illinois. This collaboration has accelerated over the last year under the leadership of the Governor and Commerce Director. There have been multiple informational briefings between offices and a marked increase in the use of cross-cutting teams to bring additional perspective and resources to bear on efforts of business retention, layoff aversion and business expansion. Establishing, maintaining and expanding these relationships is critical to the successful implementation of workforce strategies and activities.

Coordination with Community Development

Commerce's Office of Community Assistance oversees the employment and training programs under the Community Services Block Grant Program funding. The Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) program provides federal funding to Illinois' 36 Community Action Agencies (CAAs) to carry out locally designed programs providing a range of services and activities that have measurable impacts on the causes and effects of poverty. The CSBG program assists low income populations with transportation, clothing, health services, food, shelter and programs designed to increase self-sufficiency, such as job preparedness, education and housing assistance. Small business loans are also available with CSBG funding. Commerce will use the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) state, regional and local planning process to better align and integrate this program into the workforce and education system to strengthen Illinois' communities.

Guaranteeing Accessibility

The Department's Office of Equal Opportunity (EO) Monitoring and Compliance is responsible for monitoring program and physical accessibility issues for WIOA-funded activities supported by the Office of Employment and Training, all its grantees including LWIAs, and one-stop centers across the state. In 2018, the EO offices in the Departments of

Commerce and Employment Security developed an agreement to better manage the ADA monitoring process of American Job Centers. This agreement allows for better coordination of office inspection timing and for improved cross-agency communication regarding inspection findings. In addition, both offices agreed to use the same inspection checklist to promote cross-agency integration of effort.

In facilities with both Title IB and Title III staff, Commerce conducts the ADA inspections to avoid duplication of services and better align findings and related reports. Commerce provides Employment Security with the ADA inspection report after the inspection has been completed. If Employment Security is the lease holder, Employment Security will then work with the Illinois Department Central Management Services, which oversees all leases in state agencies reporting to the Governor, and/or the landlord to correct any findings. This agreement between agencies is a tangible example of WIOA service integration that increases efficiency and effectiveness of each department's EO staff and helps ensure that all individuals have access to WIOA services.

Illinois Talent Pipeline Program

The Illinois Talent Pipeline Program develops strategies to train workers who can contribute to the growth and success of companies. Projects funded under this program are intended to develop sustainable work-based learning programs that will help Illinois companies retain and train current workers and hire new staff. The goal of a talent pipeline grant is to maintain a steady supply of hirable talent for the employer being served. Applications must address one or more of these Illinois Talent Pipeline activities to be considered for funding:

Youth Career Pathways Program

The Youth Career Pathways Program provides grants for projects that address priorities identified in the WIOA Unified State Plan and that also incorporate practices that align with the statewide adopted definition for a career pathway framework. Proposals must serve opportunity youth that face barriers to continued education and employment. Additionally, successful pilot projects will integrate workforce, education and economic development services and break down barriers to accessing job-driven training, resulting in employment opportunities. These projects will inform a framework for the development of sustainable career pathways for young people throughout the state. Additionally, they will assist in the effective and efficient implementation of WIOA regulations within Illinois' economic development regions.

Illinois Community College Board

Title II of WIOA is funded through the United States Department of Education Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education (OCTAE) and is administered by the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB). Title II of WIOA reauthorizes and enhances the Adult Education & Literacy Act (AELA). The purpose of Title II is to:

The ICCB recognizes that the core purpose of Adult Education is to prepare individuals with the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in post-secondary education and the workforce. The eligible population to be served under Title II include individuals who have attained 16 years of age; who

Illinois Department of Employment Security

- Projects that connect talent strategies with business needs;
- Layoff aversion projects that support businesses and workers that are impacted or at risk of being impacted by company closures or layoffs; or,
- Projects that expand work-based learning opportunities including apprenticeships for targeted populations.
- Assist adults to become literate and obtain the knowledge and skills necessary for employment and self-sufficiency;
- Assist adults who are parents to obtain the educational skills that are necessary to become full partners in the educational development of their children; and lead to sustainable improvements in the economic opportunities for their families;
- Assist adults in attaining a secondary school diploma and in the transition to post-secondary education and training, through career pathways; and,
- Assist immigrants and other individuals who are English language learners in improving their reading, writing, speaking and comprehension skills in English, mathematics skills, and acquiring an understanding of the American system of government, individual freedom and the responsibilities of citizenship.
- Are not enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under state law; and
- Are basic skills deficient; do not have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent and have not achieved an equivalent level of education; or are English language learners.

The Illinois Department of Employment Security (Employment Security) is responsible for administering the Wagner-Peyser Program, Title III of WIOA. The intent of the Wagner-Peyser Program is to sustain economic growth by meeting the needs of job seekers, increasing awareness of resource providers, and expanding employment opportunities. Each Employment Security location provides employment services to all populations. Employment Security collaborates with our local workforce partners, community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, local/state representatives, educational institutions and other organizations to assist job seekers in finding employment and helping employers find qualified workers. Employment Security offers job placement, individual employment assessments, an online job application process and job search and placement services. Employment Service representatives are charged with increasing community awareness about Employment Security programs via job fairs, resource events, community collaborations, onsite recruitments, resource linkage and presentations. Through outreach services, Employment Service staff are able to connect to those that do not come into our office for services. Representatives are also charged with creating relationships with local leaders to ensure they are aware of Employment Security programs and are able to collaborate with all activities to promote community awareness, use of resources and employment opportunities.

Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA)

Title III Employment Services staff, in collaboration with Unemployment Insurance (UI) staff, conduct Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessments for UI claimants identified as most likely to exhaust their benefits. Claimants required to complete this program attend a group workshop as well as one-on-one sessions with Employment

Services staff to develop an Individual Reemployment Plan (IRP). During the individual assessment process participants, together with Employment Services staff, review their Illinois Job Link (IJL) registration and resume, identify additional workshops that may be beneficial, review Labor Market Information, and discuss referrals to other workforce partner programs that may be useful in their reemployment efforts. Workforce partners are encouraged to attend RESEA workshops to explain program services which may be available to the RESEA participants.

Economic Information and Analysis Division (EI&A)

Employment Security is the preeminent source for labor market and career information in Illinois. Employment Security has cooperative agreements with the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics (USBLS) to provide statewide and sub-state employment, unemployment, occupation and wage information. In addition, Employment Security has a cooperative agreement with the United States Department of Labor's (DOL) Employment and Training Administration to produce and maintain two-year and ten-year statewide and ten-year sub-state industry and occupational employment projections. These data products serve as the cornerstone for the Career Information System, a web-based tool for students and job seekers to identify Illinois in-demand jobs and make informed choices about future career pathways.EI&A also offers consultation services and products on workforce outcomes to state agencies, training providers and universities. EI&A economists are singularly trained on workforce outcome metrics based on longstanding cooperative working relationships with the United States Census Longitudinal Employment Dynamics Division, USBLS, and DOL's Employment and Training Administration.

Reentry Employment Service Program

To better serve the employment needs of returning citizens and in response to the sharply increasing number of returning citizen job seekers in Illinois, Employment Security facilitates a statewide Reentry Employment Service Program (RESP). This program is for adults or juveniles who are or have been subject to any stage of the criminal justice process and who require assistance in overcoming barriers to employment resulting from a record of arrest or conviction. The RESP provides one-on-one job readiness assessments through its state labor exchange program, conducts workshops, makes appropriate referrals for supportive services, matches qualified job seekers with employer needs and encourages job retention.

Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers Program

The Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers Program is a statewide program that assists migrant farmworkers, food processors and seasonal workers with workforce development services, career guidance, referral to training, advocates for appropriate working conditions and referrals to supportive services.

DIVISION OF BUSINESS SERVICES

THE EMPLOYMENT SECURITY BUSINESS SERVICES DIVISION DELIVERS PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT, WITH A FOCUS ON SERVICING OUR VETERAN COMMUNITY. THIS TEAM IS COMPRISED OF BUSINESS SERVICE MANAGERS, BUSINESS SERVICE COORDINATORS, VETERAN PROGRAM REPRESENTATIVES AND SPECIAL PROGRAM ADVOCATES. EACH SERVES COLLECTIVELY TO DELIVER SERVICES AND PROGRAMS TO THE BUSINESS AND JOB SEEKER COMMUNITY. EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT THROUGHOUT ILLINOIS IS ACCOMPLISHED THROUGH

PERSONAL BUSINESS RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE, INDUSTRY ASSOCIATIONS, ECONOMIC GROUPS AND COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS. EMPLOYER WORKSHOPS ARE HELD, HIGHLIGHTING TOPICS SUCH AS THE WORK OPPORTUNITY TAX CREDITS (WOTC)/STATE TAX CREDITS, FEDERAL FIDELITY BONDING PROGRAM AND APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS. IN ADDITION TO DAILY EMPLOYER INTERACTIONS, EMPLOYMENT SECURITY PROVIDES TRAINING ON ILLINOIS JOB LINK (IJL), WHICH IS THE DATA PLATFORM THAT ASSISTS EMPLOYERS IN MEETING THEIR JOB CANDIDATE NEEDS.

EMPLOYMENT SECURITY BUSINESS OUTREACH STAFF PARTICIPATES IN LOCAL AND REGIONAL WORKFORCE INTEGRATED BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT PLANNING MEETINGS THROUGHOUT THE STATE. EMPLOYMENT SECURITY BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT STAFF, BOTH AT THE REGIONAL AND LOCAL LEVELS, PARTICIPATE IN PARTNER MAPPING OF SERVICE PROCESSES, CROSS-AGENCY TRAINING OF PROGRAMS AND SERVICES, DEFINING AND UTILIZING PROCESSES APPLICABLE TO SECTOR STRATEGY APPROACHES, DETERMINING POINTS OF CONTACT, RESPONSIBLE PARTIES AND ACTIONABLE ITEM DELIVERABLES THAT RESULT FROM BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT, USE OF AVAILABLE DATA COLLECTION TOOLS TO PREPARE BUSINESS CENTRIC ANALYTICAL PRESENTATIONS, AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF PROTOCOLS FOR FOLLOW-UP, TRACKING AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN REGARD TO WIOA DOL PERFORMANCE METRICS.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT

WAGNER-PEYSER EMPLOYMENT SERVICES STAFF CONDUCT WORKSHOPS WHICH TARGET THE NEEDS OF CUSTOMERS THAT MAY HAVE A DIFFICULT TIME FINDING EMPLOYMENT. TOPICS FOR THE WORKSHOPS INCLUDE HOW TO PERFORM AN EFFECTIVE JOB SEARCH, RESUME WRITING AND COVER LETTERS, INTERVIEWING SKILLS, LABOR MARKET AND CAREER CHOICE TOOLS, AND TIPS ON HOW TO USE ILLINOISJOBLINK.COM (IJL), AS WELL AS THE CAREER INFORMATION SYSTEM (CIS). SPECIALIZED WORKSHOPS ARE HELD FOR VETERANS, YOUTH, AND EX-OFFENDERS. EMPLOYMENT SECURITY PROMOTES EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES AND ENCOURAGES EMPLOYERS TO HIRE THESE INDIVIDUALS FOR JOB OPENINGS. EMPLOYMENT SECURITY HOSTS AND PARTICIPATES IN HIRING EVENTS AND WORKSHOPS ACROSS THE STATE FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES IN COORDINATION WITH CENTRAL MANAGEMENT SERVICES (STATE AGENCY) AND THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES DIVISION OF REHABILITATION SERVICES (DRS), PRESENTING INFORMATION ABOUT EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN STATE GOVERNMENT AND THE SUCCESSFUL DISABILITY OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAM.

HIRE THE FUTURE PROGRAM

- THE HIRE THE FUTURE (HTF) PROGRAM ENCOURAGES YOUTH AGE 16-24 YEARS OLD TO ASPIRE TO CAREERS IN PROFESSIONAL AND GROWTH-ORIENTED OCCUPATIONS. IT PROVIDES EMPLOYMENT SERVICES TO YOUTH AND INTRODUCES THEM TO CAREER OPPORTUNITIES.

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES, DIVISION OF REHABILITATION SERVICES

THE ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES, DIVISION OF REHABILITATION SERVICES (DRS) IS THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY FOR ADMINISTRATION OF THE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (VR) PROGRAM IN ILLINOIS. THE MAIN FOCUS OF THE DEPARTMENT IS TO ASSIST INDIVIDUALS WITH SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES TO OBTAIN AND RETAIN COMPETITIVE INTEGRATED EMPLOYMENT. VR SERVICES ARE DESIGNED TO PREPARE AN INDIVIDUAL FOR EMPLOYMENT THROUGH AN INDIVIDUALIZED PLANNING PROCESS. KEY VR SERVICES INCLUDE:

- JOB PLACEMENT - DRS VR COUNSELORS WORK WITH CUSTOMERS TO IDENTIFY JOB OPPORTUNITIES IN THE COMMUNITY, DEVELOP A RESUME AND PREPARE FOR INTERVIEWS. OTHER CUSTOMERS RECEIVE MORE INTENSIVE JOB PLACEMENT AND PREPARATION SERVICES THROUGH COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAM AGENCIES UNDER CONTRACT TO DRS.
    - On-the-Job Training and Evaluations - Many VR customers receive on-the-job training and evaluation services arranged by DRS counselors in conjunction with local employers. These services provide an opportunity to demonstrate job skills and learn the requirements of a specific job.
    - College and University Training - DRS assists many customers in pursuing a degree at a community college or at a university, based on the needs and abilities of the individual. Each year DRS assists about 3,000 individuals in attending college training.
    - Treatment and Restoration Services - VR funds may be used to purchase medical, surgical, or psychological services, as well as other therapeutic services, to help customers achieve greater functioning and reduce barriers to employment.
    - Supported Employment - Individuals with most significant disabilities often require a high level of support, both in preparation and on-the-job assistance, in order to achieve and maintain employment. Supported employment provides a variety of supports, such as job coaching, to assist customers in meeting employment goals.
    - Assistive Technology - Many people with disabilities utilize a variety of technological devices to function in the world of work and increase their employment potential. The DRS VR program can assist customers with evaluation services and purchase of technology equipment that will meet their individual needs.
    - Transition Services - Students with disabilities benefit from work-based learning experiences and other pre-employment services designed to prepare them for post-school employment or additional training.

DRS counselors establish program eligibility based on an evaluation of functional limitations, then work with customers to develop an individualized plan for employment. Many services are provided through a network of community partners with the capacity to assist customers in obtaining employment consistent with their needs. These include:

- Around 150 school districts which provide pre-employment transition services, including work-based learning experiences, to over 10,000 students with disabilities;
- About 135 community rehabilitation providers who provide job development, job placement and supported employment services to around 3,500 individuals; and,
- Community colleges and universities that provide training services to about 3,500 individuals pursuing degrees or credentials to enhance employment skills.

DRS works in partnership with other elements of the workforce system to provide people with disabilities access to a wide range of services and employment opportunities. DRS staff are members of local workforce boards and serve as a key linkage to information on disability awareness, work accommodations and accessibility requirements.

Employment First Initiative

An important resource for meeting the employment needs of Illinoisans with disabilities is the Employment First initiative. Illinois became an Employment First state in July 2013 with the passage of the Employment First Act (Public Act 98-91). Employment First is a national movement to promote competitive integrated employment for people with disabilities, particularly individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. WIOA defines "competitive integrated employment" as the key objective for people with disabilities, creating inherent synergy between the two laws.

Before the passage of WIOA, Illinois' Employment First Act created the Illinois Task Force on the Employment and Economic Development for Persons with Disabilities (EEOPD) to work towards the goal of increasing competitive integrated employment for citizens with disabilities. Members of the task force are appointed by the Governor and include people with disabilities, business representatives and officials from state agencies.

The guiding principles of the WIOA Unified State Plan align directly with Employment First. The focus on integrated service delivery, robust engagement with business, competitiveness and accessibility, cross-agency collaboration and alignment of results-driven practices are shared by both the Unified State Plan and the Employment First movement and are in line with the findings and goals of the EEOPD. In addition, EEOPD is linked to the IWIB to ensure coordination and alignment of policy and practice rather than the IWIB creating a duplicative structure.

B. STATE BOARD

Provide a description of the State Board, including—

Overseeing the entire workforce system on behalf of the Governor and General Assembly is the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB). The IWIB provides oversight and strategic leadership to the workforce development system to further the state's goals of meeting the workforce needs of businesses and workers. Appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Illinois Senate, IWIB members are charged with the task of reviewing the progress of the state's workforce development efforts. To meet this directive the IWIB, in accordance with federal legislation, includes leaders from business, state agencies, industry, labor, education and community-based organizations. The Governor also appoints the two co-chairs for the IWIB. Currently, John Rico, President and CEO of Rico Enterprises, serves as the private sector co-chair with Sean McCarthy, Director of the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity.

Members of the IWIB represent organizations, agencies or other entities and require optimum policymaking authority within those organizations. They must also represent

diverse regions of the state, including urban, rural and suburban areas. Over 50% of the IWIB must be made up of business representatives. Other membership categories include: Governor and General Assembly appointments; state agencies; chief elected officials from cities and counties; labor organizations; youth activities representatives; workforce training representatives and education, including adult education; vocational rehabilitation; employment security; and other institutional representatives.

The Governor has made it a priority to recruit business leaders whose companies are also users of the workforce system. Requiring engaged business leaders provides the IWIB with better insight for setting policy that ensures workforce development activities are aligned and integrated with education and economic development in a way that serves the needs of employers, incumbent workers, and job seekers. Business members of the board expressed their concerns during the strategic planning process that the publicly available general data does not always reflect the current conditions in their regions and local areas. Ensuring the active engagement of business allows for real-time information and data that might otherwise not be available in instances where system generated information might have a data lag. The composition of the IWIB membership is under review to reflect the desire of all of its members to be more active and engaged in the functions and activities of the board. While ensuring its membership is in compliance with the requirements under WIOA, they will ensure accountability and authenticity of each appointed member. Members will be recognized for their efforts and support will be provided to those members that may need assistance in finding a suitable and effective means for participation.

To support and strengthen collaboration with the pre-school to post-secondary education system and local workforce boards and areas, the Governor has ensured members from the Illinois State Board of Education, Illinois Board of Higher Education, Department of Human Services, the Illinois Community College Board, Career & Technical Education under the Carl D. Perkins Act, and the sitting president of the Illinois Workforce Partnership (IWP) have a central role on the state board as Ex-Officio, Non-Voting representatives.

The IWP is comprised of workforce professionals from across the state who are dedicated to the enhancement of the Illinois workforce system. Through effective partnerships with business, economic development, education and training partners, the IWP collaborates to achieve its vision for Illinois as a "high quality, employer driven, innovative, proactive workforce development system that supports economic development." The IWIB recognizes the importance of having a local program administration voice in their discussions and invites representatives of the IWP to participate on their committees, task forces and work groups. Many of these same individuals represent their local workforce boards as staff. IWIB staff has been assigned as a liaison to the IWP in an effort to ensure ongoing two-way communication, including participation in each of their monthly meetings. In addition to the IWP representative, Illinois law requires two additional members of the state legislature be appointed representing each chamber and party affiliation.

I. MEMBERSHIP ROSTER

Provide a membership roster for the State Board, including members' organizational affiliations.

Table 13 outlines the membership roster for the State Board, including members' organizational affiliations.

Last Name	First Name	Entity	Representing
Rauner	Governor Bruce	Governor of Illinois	State of Illinois Elected Officials
Bush	Melina	Illinois Senate, 31st District	State of Illinois Elected Officials
Hammond	Norine	Illinois House of Representatives, 94th District	State of Illinois Elected Officials
Weaver	Chuck	Illinois Senate, 37th District	State of Illinois Elected Officials
Battaglia	Kevin	Battaglia Industries	Appointed Business Member
Beards	Henry	United Parcel Service	Appointed Business Member
Conley	Mike	Trenton Sun	Appointed Business Member
Davidsmeyer	Christopher "C.D."	Illinois Road Contractors, Inc.; Illinois House of Representatives, 100th District	Appointed Business Member
Day	Debra	Aetna Better Health-IL	Appointed Business Member
Fabijanski	Pat	Hyatt-McCormick Place	Appointed Business Member
Ferrari	Daniele	ITC, Inc.	Appointed Business Member
Forbes	Joe	Versatech	Appointed Business Member
Friedman	David	AutonomyWorks	Appointed Business Member
Gadberry	Kirk	North American Lighting	Appointed Business Member
Hacker	Thomas	C&L Supreme	Appointed Business Member
Jones	Grailing	Schneider National, Inc.	Appointed Business Member
Mason	Angela	Chicago Botanic Garden	Appointed Business Member
Massie	Michael	Massie & Quick, LLC	Appointed Business Member
McClinton	Marlon	Utilivate Technologies, LLC	Appointed Business Member
Nain	Sandeep	Sntial Technologies, Inc.	Appointed Business Member
Rico	John	Rico Enterprises	Appointed Business Member
Schiemann	Margi	Nicor Gas	Appointed Business Member
Tennant	Aaron	Total Solutions, Inc.	Appointed Business Member
Warrington	Andrew	United Conveyer	Appointed Business Member

Last Name	First Name	Entity	Representing
Webb	Grover	Tanglefoot Ranch	Appointed Business Member
Aranda-Suh	Elba	National Latino Education Institute	Appointed Workforce & Labor Members
Dickson	Victor	Safer Foundation	Appointed Workforce & Labor Members
Oilschlager	Barbara	Lake County Vocational System	Appointed Workforce & Labor Members
Payne	Teri	AFL-CIO	Appointed Workforce & Labor Members
Perry	Michael	AFSCME Council 31	Appointed Workforce & Labor Members
Salazar	Eloy	Illinois Migrant Council	Appointed Workforce & Labor Members
Wendorf	Thomas	DuPage Impact	Appointed Workforce & Labor Members
Wilkerson	Terry	Rend Lake College	Appointed Workforce & Labor Members
Ashby	Tom	Mayor of Centralia; Coordinated Transportation Development, Inc.	Appointed Representatives of Government
Foster	Jennifer	Illinois Community College Board	Appointed Representatives of Government
Mays	Jeffrey	Illinois Department of Employment Security	Appointed Representatives of Government
McCarthy	Sean	Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity	Appointed Representatives of Government
Wade	Quinetta	Illinois Department of Human Services, Division of Rehabilitation Services	Appointed Representatives of Government
Walsh	Larry	Will County Executive	Appointed Representatives of Government
Wetzel	Sylvia	Kane County	Other Appointed Representatives of Government
Bowman	Dr. Al	Illinois Board of Higher Education	Ex-Officio, Non-voting Member
Dimas	James	Illinois Department of Human Services	Ex-Officio, Non-voting Member

Last Name	First Name	Entity	Representing
Durham	Dr. Brian	Illinois Community College Board	Ex-Officio, Non-voting Member
Furlan	Pam	Illinois Workforce Partnership	Ex-Officio, Non-voting Member
Hunter-Anderson	Dr. Karen	Illinois Community College Board	Ex-Officio, Non-voting Member
Smith	Tony	Illinois State Board of Education	Ex-Officio, Non-voting Member

II. BOARD ACTIVITIES

Provide a description of the activities that will assist State Board members and staff in carrying out State Board functions effectively.

The State Board is scheduled to meet four times per year - typically in the Chicago area twice a year, Springfield once per year and the central/southern region once per year. Special meetings may be convened as deemed appropriate by the co-chairs to address special issues. The co-chairs are responsible for presiding over all IWIB meetings, establishing committees and their structures, as well as serving as custodians of IWIB records. All meetings of the IWIB, including committees, are subject to the Open Meetings Act. The IWIB operates and addresses its required functions and responsibilities through a structure consisting of standing committees, task forces and work groups. Additionally, the IWIB collaborates with the Governor's Office, the core and required partners, other state agencies and other stakeholders of the system. Their organizational chart is visualized in Attachment I (https://www.illinoisworknet.com/WIOA/Resources/Documents/Attachment%20I%20-%20Interagency%20Team%20Members.pdf).

The Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB) has state staff from the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity designated to coordinate the functions of the board, act as a liaison and provide overall operational support. In addition, the Executive Committee is responsible for the day-to-day board functions. Assisting the state staff in support of the IWIB's functions and ensuring efficient and effective operations are state university partners that provide research and facilitation to the board and its operational structure through the convening of standing committees, task forces and work groups.

Standing Committee Structure

The IWIB utilizes standing committees to assist with carrying out its responsibilities and functions and to coordinate discussions around larger-scale initiatives, targeted populations, or key sectors. The committees are structured in one of two ways. Those that address the board's responsibilities and functions are comprised of only IWIB members. For those focused on strategic planning topics, the rosters include local representatives of boards the chief elected officials or partner agencies, businesses and stakeholders with

expertise on the subject matter, training and service providers, and other interested parties. Standing committees are facilitated by staff to the board and other supporting entities.

- *Executive Committee*: To ensure that adequate business representation and alignment of workforce, economic development and education occurs throughout the system, the IWIB created an Executive Committee that must have a majority of business members and include representation from the education system. The Executive Committee has the authority to take action on functional requirements on behalf of the IWIB when time does not allow for an issue to be addressed at a regularly scheduled board meeting. A majority vote of the Executive Committee is required for all such actions, which must be reviewed by the full board at the next regularly scheduled meeting. In addition to the review and issuance of policy and processes related to the mandated board functions, the Executive Committee also is responsible to the full board with regard to:

o Leading the IWIB's strategic planning efforts;

o Making recommendations to the Legislature regarding state workforce law, as appropriate;

o Periodically reviewing the IWIB by-laws and making recommendations for amendments as appropriate;

o Outreach and recruitment of businesses members;

o Education and outreach to congressional members and state legislators;

o Ensuring state education initiatives are aligned and connected to the state workforce system;

o Development and coordination of all regularly scheduled meetings of the full board.

Any interim or new policies for WIOA that are developed and presented to the Executive Committee go through a policy advisory process that will involve its members, WIOA partners and stakeholders. The intention is to make WIOA policy development in Illinois more collaborative and to ensure that it yields cost-effective and efficient guidance to the field. Occurring parallel to policy development is an implementation plan involving WIOA partners and stakeholders to discuss and develop reporting requirements, ensure performance, identify and implement systems changes and develop a monitoring plan.

Evaluation and Accountability Committee (EAC): The EAC has been assigned to identify the needs of the board with regard to oversight of current policies and strategic initiatives, and to make recommendations on appropriate assessments and evaluation measures. These recommendations must ensure that the board, its members and the system are meeting all of their statutorily required functions and commitments regarding policy guidance, as well as the performance measures outlined under WIOA. If additional measures of performance are identified, the EAC will also provide oversight of those. The efforts of the EAC are not to conduct monitoring of the regional and local workforce systems, rather the intent of the EAC is to identify best practices and recommend continuous improvement opportunities. This committee is led by a business member and includes only board members representing businesses and the education system. They are supported by a team that conduct all

necessary research, assist with research of available data and information, facilitate all meetings of the committee, and prepare documents for the full board that outline their recommendations for continuous improvement.

The development of continuous improvement systems will be led by the EAC, the Interagency Work Group (including specialized assistance from the Illinois Department of Innovation and Technology (DoIT) Interagency Data Team that includes experts in labor market information and performance data), and the Integrated Business Services Workgroup. The IWIB will also continue to work with the Interagency Work Group to identify and disseminate best practice information. A key continuous improvement activity is the Wednesday Webinars that are open to all IWIB members, core partners, required partners and local areas that cover best practice and coordination opportunities.

· *Career Pathways for Targeted Populations*: The At-Risk Youth/Adults Standing Committee (Youth Committee) was reconstituted as a Career Pathways for Targeted Populations Committee. This committee will now focus on the targeted populations identified within the Unified State Plan to develop strategies and initiatives that provide career pathways for Illinois' most vulnerable individuals. Working with businesses, the education system, local workforce agencies and other interested stakeholders, business-driven talent solutions will be developed that build off previous years of success, such as Illinois Pathways and the Illinois 60 by 25 Network, which served to pursue scaling of career pathways.

An example, of the work of the reconstituted committee is occurring in Kewanee, Illinois where the Department of Corrections is partnering with multiple entities to develop a training program for current residents of the Illinois Correctional system. The focus of the training is life learning and will include life skills provided by the community college system to prepare the individuals as they return to the general public, and focused job skills training provided within the walls of the Kewanee Life Skills Re-Entry Center or at nearby participating businesses. Preparing the individuals for careers and reducing the high level of recidivism are key objectives of the program. The committee will build on these efforts by expanding this model to other areas of the state.

- *Apprenticeship Committee*: The IWIB has identified the design of a comprehensive system of apprenticeships (traditional and non-traditional) as a major strategy for providing career pathways for economic advancement. To support this implementation, a standing Apprenticeship Committee was created which includes leaders representing all key state apprenticeship stakeholders: business and industry, training providers, Local Workforce Innovation Boards, labor, philanthropies, community colleges, vocational rehabilitation services and employment exchange services. The Apprenticeship Committee has created a plan for the IWIB that establishes a comprehensive and integrated apprenticeship system in Illinois, oversees its implementation and performance and recommends improvements. Initial strategies developed by the Apprenticeship Committee include:
- Aligning apprenticeship supply and demand;
- Organizing and engaging employers and industry partners;
- Fostering apprenticeship program innovation and expansion;
- Expanding access to under-represented populations, including women, minorities, and people with disabilities; and,

- Promotion and branding

The committee developed a framework known as Apprenticeship Plus in Illinois. While recognizing the global understanding of registered apprenticeships, the Apprenticeship Plus model expands this very successful model to address the youth population through Youth Apprenticeships, prepares all populations through Pre-Apprenticeships, and widens the scope to consider all work-based learning models as a means to prepare individuals with the new skills they need to succeed in the workforce through a career and not just a job. These "learn and earn" models are widely accepted by businesses as efficient and effective means to meet their talent needs. Working closely with The Governor's Cabinet on Children and Youth, this committee assists in development of best practice models in registered apprenticeships, youth apprenticeship, pre-apprenticeships and work-based learning models of providing training and education across the state.

- *Information Technology Standing Committee* - WIOA requires that the state workforce boards develop strategies for technological improvements to facilitate access to, and improve the quality of, services and activities provided through the one-stop delivery system. The IWIB established an Information Technology Standing Committee to support this function and the implementation of the identified strategies within the IWIB Strategic Plan. These priorities include: 1) the development of methodologies to assess employer needs and speed response times (Priority Activity 1.1); 2) expand the range and flexibility of training and other service delivery methods to address the unique needs of populations and the regions of the state (Priority Activity 2.2); and 3) contribute to the sustainability of technology strategies to support objectives across all IWIB goal areas and all Illinois Workforce Development partners (Priority Activity 3.1).

Furthermore, technology needs will be supported by the Evaluation and Accountability Committee, DoIT and the Interagency Data Team that will create a framework of the data elements and requirements that are key inputs for the alignment of technology and data systems across required partner programs in Illinois. This is a critical activity that is required for the IWIB to effectively evaluate and identify continuous improvement opportunities in the effectiveness and efficiency of Illinois' workforce development system. It is an assurance that technology is accessible to individuals with disabilities and those residing in remote areas.

Task Force Structure

The IWIB uses a Task Force structure to convene businesses and other interested partners to discuss topic-specific issues based on the established priorities of the IWIB. These groups are responsible for developing recommendations to present to the full IWIB for consideration. The IWIB had two Task Forces operating in the past two years, Transportation, Distribution and Logistics (TDL) and Strategic Planning. Examples of previous task forces include those focused on disadvantaged youth, healthcare, information technology, manufacturing, and individuals with disabilities.

- *Strategic Planning* - Suffused throughout the modifications to Illinois' Unified State Plan are elements of the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board's Strategic Plan.

Convened for the initial time in December 2016, the Task Force set out to create a vision for the board that signified the intent to structurally change the way the IWIB conducts business. While ambitious, the IWIB's intent is to continuously improve in every way possible the impact they have on businesses and the workforce throughout Illinois. Ensuring stronger business engagement in all consultation, data & reporting, and performance metrics will ensure the needs of businesses are captured and responded to appropriately.

- *Transportation, Distribution and Logistics (TDL)* - This Task Force met from 2016 into 2017 to hold discussions to identify conditions that have led Illinois and the nation to experience a considerable shortage of truck drivers, including a high turnover rate among this profession. The ultimate goal of the Task Force's work will be to increase the number of CDLs in Illinois to support industry cluster growth and drive overall economic growth. Its directive was to develop action models and best practices designed to be employer-led (with the support and collaboration of industry influencers) and to increase the number of commercial truck drivers in the state. In September 2017, the Task Force submitted a final report that outlined nine task force recommendations. These were presented as much to the trucking industry for their consideration as they were for the IWIB members. The recommendations request certain actions be taken by business leaders in the industry and included strategies for better driver retention, outreach activities to recruit new applicants, expansion of new training models within the industry (and of available slots within those training programs), and the collection of additional data and metrics to better capture truck driving trends. The board approved the report and recognized the magnitude of the problems within this segment of the industry. As the work of the Task Force was completed, several of its members have agreed to continue to meet regularly to research and review the steps the industry takes as a result of their recommendations.

Work Groups

The development of policies that are critical to the implementation of WIOA provisions occur through organized work groups under the direction of the IWIB Executive Committee. These work groups are led by business members of the board and follow a policy process that ensures the full collaboration and consultation of local boards, chief elected officials, core partner agencies, and other stakeholders. Policies may be based on identified needs for WIOA guidance, or on recommendations of the board to ensure minimum levels of compliance in such areas as governance, planning, performance accountability & reporting, and service delivery.

- *Unified State Plan and Annual Workforce Report Development* - The IWIB is supported by the Executive Committee, Interagency Work Group and board staff with the development and review of the technical requirements of the Unified State Plan. The vision, goal and strategic elements are developed in partnership with the IWIB, Governor and Interagency Work Group. The annual report is developed using the same approach and activities. The IWIB will be supported by the agencies responsible for administering the core and required program to implement the Unified State Plan.

- *Service Integration* -The development and review of statewide policies affecting the coordinated provision of services through the state's one-stop delivery system will be supported by the work of the Executive Committee, the Evaluation and Accountability Committee, and the Interagency Work Group. The cross-agency policy development process outlined above is an example of how policies will be researched, developed, drafted and reviewed by the IWIB.
- *Certification of One*-Stop Centers -- The IWIB issued policy in early 2017 that required all comprehensive one-stop centers be certified by the local workforce board by June 30, 2017. This policy describes the requirements and procedures for evaluating and certifying one-stop centers in Illinois under WIOA. Illinois' one-stop certification policy requires an evidence-based system of effective service delivery, physical and programmatic accessibility, and pursuit of continuous improvement opportunities.
- The certification process ensures that local workforce innovation boards (LWIBs) oversee the delivery of employment and training programs in their communities and support high levels of effectiveness and sustainability. This process also requires assurance that implementation of the non-discrimination and Equal Opportunity provisions of WIOA Section 188 has been met through compliance with the Methods of Administration (MoA) and completion of an Accessibility Report at least once every three years. In early 2018, the policy work group will convene again to review the past certification process and identify best practices that local boards utilized, as well as expand the policy to require that all affiliate and specialized centers be certified.
- In order to ensure all necessary one-stop centers in Illinois achieve the required level of certification descried in WIOA, Illinois has convened a work group to define affiliate and specialized centers. The importance of knowing which locations providing WIOA services are considered "affiliates" or "specialized" centers is critical in ensuring several required state and local board functions are met. In addition to the certification of one-stop centers, infrastructure funding decisions, the need to enter into necessary memorandums of understanding (MOU), and affective provision of services to customers entering the local system whether at a physical location or via technology may be dependent on the identification of centers appropriately.
- Finally, the board continues to revise its policy requiring a minimum level of Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker funds are expended on direct training activities. In addition to increasing the minimum level from forty to fifty percent (50%), the board further defined what it would consider as direct training and combined the formula beginning in Program year 2017 to be a combined calculation of these funding streams rather than independent. In 2018, the board will continue to review data and information to finalize the formula and consider the inclusion of other funding sources in the calculation. Primary considerations are that there should not be a disincentive for local boards to seek and apply for additional funding sources that otherwise might affect their ability to meet the minimum expenditure rate. The work group is focused on identifying final revisions to the policy to be implemented for the Program Year 2018 funding and planning decisions.

4. ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION OF PROGRAMS AND ONE-STOP PROGRAM PARTNERS

A. ASSESSMENT OF CORE PROGRAMS

Describe how the core programs will be assessed each year based on State performance accountability measures described in section 116(b) of WIOA. This State assessment must include the quality, effectiveness, and improvement of programs broken down by local area or provider. Such state assessments should take into account local and regional planning goals.

The Governor, General Assembly, Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB) and state agency partners continuously assesses the performance outcomes of the workforce system in annual performance and benchmark reports. The state agencies responsible for each of the core programs outlined in program specific areas constantly assesses performance accountability measures at the state, regional and local levels as required by each core program. To ensure that program partners are well positioned to meet the performance accountability requirements of WIOA, a working group on performance accountability focused on coordinating core partners to ensure that systems have the capacity to collect and report required new and updated data elements under WIOA, as well as the capacity to track aggregate data for performance indicators applicable to all four core partners. The subgroup has transitioned to the IWIB Evaluation and Accountability Committee, focusing on ensuring that WIOA performance accountability measures, as well as other statutorily required evaluation and accountability activities, are properly implemented and reported.

The core programs will continue to work with the IWIB to establish updated procedures to negotiate performance benchmarks as applicable. The state will develop strategies for aligning technology and data systems across core programs, and to evaluate common performance outcomes (including the quality, effectiveness, and improvement of programs by local areas). One potential tool to support that assessment is a dashboard to aggregate data for all core programs. A performance working group is exploring such a dashboard that, if practical, will provide a high-level view of each core program's performance by quarter and help identify the need for technical assistance or adjustments. Meanwhile, the state is working to identify common definitions, standards, and procedures to prepare core program partners to meet performance accountability requirements of WIOA. The intent is to ensure that data collected by each core program partner fully conforms to WIOA and accurately reflects the outcomes for each core program on a local level and in aggregate.

Under the provisions of WIOA Title II - Adult Education and Literacy - each of the 22 Local Workforce Innovation Boards (LWIB) is required to review, not approve, the Adult Education competitive applications for Adult Education and Literacy federal and state funding through the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB). The LWIBs reviewed approximately 90 applications submitted through the competitive process. The review process determines if there is alignment between the submitted Adult Education application and the local plan in each local workforce innovation area. The information gathered from the review will be used to evaluate alignment and develop ways to improve alignment between Adult Education and other core and required partners.

Review procedures and processes were created by ICCB Adult Education staff and sent to the LWIBs. Each LWIB appointed an individual (designee) to oversee and conduct the review process based on the criteria established by ICCB. The completed review instrument was then submitted to ICCB. ICCB staff identified areas that needed guidance in each LWIA and is working with LWIBs to address the issues.

The Illinois Department of Employment Security will provide reporting for three employment-related performance indicators (employment rate in the second and fourth quarters after exit and median earnings in the second quarter after exit), status in unsubsidized employment and quarterly earnings through direct Unemployment Insurance (UI) wage match. Under "Effectiveness in Serving Employers" the State has selected the measures of "Retention with the same employer" and "Employer Penetration Rate." A standardized indicator is to be established and implemented no later than the beginning of Program Year 2019. Employment Security will report performance data for Retention by providing (UI) wage match, understanding that this is a shared outcome across all six core programs within the State and will be a combined reporting measure. Wage records will identify a participant's employment using an establishment identifier - FEIN for example. The Employer Penetration Rate will be determined by each core provider tracking of the number of establishments served within a program year. The State will collect that data and compare it to the aggregate number of employers in a given State and/or county.

Illinois has also established an interagency workgroup - including representatives from all of the WIOA core partners - to review the regional & local plans, memoranda of understanding, and cost sharing agreements to ensure that local areas submit documents that are complete, compliant and committed to the integration of required programs under WIOA. Illinois is a leader in the development of regional and local planning documents that were established for WIOA Program Year 2016 and updated in Program Year 2017. This provided each of the core partner agencies an opportunity to assess each of the 10 regions and 22 workforce areas in Illinois. The core partners will work with the IWIB Committees and workgroups to update the planning guidelines that will require information to assess the quality, effectiveness, and improvement of the partner programs.

As discussed within the policy section, the IWIB, in cooperation with the Interagency Work Group, established objective criteria and procedures for use by local boards in assessing and certifying Comprehensive One-Stop Centers, per Section 121(g)(1) of WIOA. The state standard certification criteria will help ensure a minimum level of quality and consistency of services in Comprehensive One-Stop Centers throughout Illinois, regardless of location. As local boards review and update the criteria and processes for certifying Comprehensive One-Stop Centers biannually, insights will be gained on establishing standards and assessing effectiveness, physical accessibility, programmatic accessibility and continuous improvement. These review processes will help identify best practices in assessing and improving local one-stop partner programs, both core and required programs, to promote the efficiency and effectiveness of the workforce development system. Outcomes from assessments of core program partners and other required partners will be reported annually and made public.

Illinois will continue to track and analyze each LWIAs training expenditure rate, fund obligation rate and planned vs. actual data on program enrollment. As a way to measure the WIOA Title IB direct training expenditures, the IWIB increased the current 40% minimum

training expenditure rate to 50% in 2017. A workgroup is analyzing what is included in the direct training expenditure rate and recommending revisions to the policy accordingly. The State will use the performance data, expanded benchmark report, plan/MOU submission and certification process to assess the quality effectiveness and improvement of programs in each local area.

The IWIB Evaluation and Accountability Committee (EAC) has indicated they will be reviewing this information, as part of an overall review and analysis of all assessments conducted of the one-stop system to identify those best practices that all local workforce boards and one-stop operators could benefit from. Recommendations will be made to ensure the continuous improvement of all local workforce areas and one stop centers are providing the most effective and efficient services to its customers.

B. ASSESSMENT OF ONE-STOP PROGRAM PARTNER PROGRAMS

Describe how other one-stop delivery system partner program services and Combined State Plan partner programs included in the plan will be assessed each year. Such state assessments should take into account local and regional planning goals.

The Governor, the General Assembly, the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB) and state agency partners continuously assesses the performance outcomes of the workforce system in annual performance and benchmark reports. The state agency responsible for each of the core programs outlined in program specific areas regularly assesses performance accountability measures at the state, regional and local levels as required by each core program. To ensure that one-stop program partners are well positioned to meet the performance accountability requirements of WIOA, a working group on performance accountability focused on coordinating core partners to ensure systems have the capacity to collect and report required new and updated data elements under WIOA, as well as capacity to track aggregate data for performance indicators applicable to all four core partners was established. The subgroup has transitioned to the IWIB Evaluation and Accountability Committee, focusing on ensuring WIOA performance accountability measures, as well as other statutorily required evaluation and accountability activities are properly implemented and reported.

The core programs will continue to work with the IWIB working groups to establish updated procedures to negotiate performance benchmarks as applicable. The state will develop strategies for aligning technology and data systems across one-stop program partners and to evaluate common performance outcomes, including the quality, effectiveness, and improvement of programs by local areas. One potential tool to support that assessment is a dashboard to aggregate data for all core programs. A performance working group is exploring such a dashboard that, if practicable, will provide a high-level view of each one-stop program partners performance by quarter, and help identify the need for technical assistance or adjustments. Meanwhile, the state is working to identify common definitions, standards and procedures to prepare core program partners to meet performance accountability requirements of WIOA. The intent is to ensure the data collected by each one-stop program partner fully conforms to WIOA and accurately reflects the outcomes for each one-stop program partner on a local level and in aggregate. The state will apply the same measures and methodologies to other one-stop partner programs that it

does to core programs, in addition to any program-specific measures that are required by federal or state regulations.

Illinois has also established an interagency workgroup including representatives from all of the WIOA core partners to review the regional & local plans, memoranda of understanding, and cost sharing agreements to ensure that local areas submit documents that are complete, compliant and committed to the integration of required programs under WIOA. Illinois is a leader in the development of regional and local planning documents that were established for WIOA Program Year 2016 and updated in Program Year 2017. This provided each of the core partner agencies an opportunity to assess each of the 10 regions and 22 workforce areas in Illinois. The core partners will work with the IWIB Committees and workgroups to update the planning guidelines that will require information to assess the quality, effectiveness, and improvement of the one-stop program partners. This primarily will be a function of the EAC and will assist them in identifying best practices and recommendations for continuous improvement. They will also be considering opportunities to highlight Illinois' workforce programs and outcomes by identifying additional benchmark performance measures that can be compared to other States in USDOL Region 5 and throughout the nation.

As discussed within the policy section, the IWIB, in cooperation with the Interagency Work Group, established objective criteria and procedures for use by local boards in assessing and certifying Comprehensive One-Stop Centers, per Section 121(g)(1) of WIOA. The state standard certification criteria will help ensure a minimum level of quality and consistency of services in Comprehensive One-Stop Centers throughout Illinois, regardless of location. As local boards review and update the criteria and processes for certifying Comprehensive One-Stop Centers biannually, insights will be gained on assessing and establishing standards on effectiveness, physical accessibility, programmatic accessibility and continuous improvement. These review processes will help identify best practices in assessing and improving local one-stop partner programs, both core and required programs, to promote efficiency and effectiveness of the workforce development system. Outcomes of the assessments of one-stop program partners will be reported annually and made public. The State will use the performance data, expanded benchmark report, plan/MOU submission and certification process to assess the quality effectiveness and improvement of programs in each local area.

DHS-TANF staff has increased their visibility and orientation participation at the one-stop centers to ensure TANF customers are identified for program assessment and engagement. A streamlined referral process has been implemented and continues to be revised based on observation and demonstration of how the referrals are being used and monitored. DHS-TANF staff actively participates in the monthly partners meetings and cross-training sessions held at the one-stop centers in order to continue to promote the definition of partner collaboration and service integration per the Governor's Guidelines. A key factor for TANF assessment measures is evaluation through surveys shared with the one-stop program partners regarding services and/or employment received from the centers. This creates a statistical model for accountability, measurement and areas of improvement.

C. PREVIOUS ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Beginning with the state plan modification in 2018 and for subsequent state plans and state plan modifications, provide the results of assessments of the effectiveness of the core programs and other one-stop partner programs and Combined State Plan partner programs included in the Unified or Combined State plan during the preceding 2-year period (i.e. the 2-year period of the plan modification cycle). Describe how the State is adapting its strategies based on these assessments.

The IWIB established the policy and procedures for the local certification of one-stop centers in 2017. The results included a report from local workforce board teams indicating whether they had achieved full certification or provisional certification. Those centers receiving only provisional certification were required to indicate to the local board a plan for corrective action. The details of these surveys will be evaluated to determine necessary revisions to the current policy.

In PY2016 and PY2017, the ICCB negotiated goals for the Illinois Adult Education system for the first performance measure: Educational Functioning Levels. Each program year, Illinois achieved the targeted performance measure established. Over the past four years, Illinois Adult Education has increased its performance by 10%. In order to achieve the target, the Adult Education system has to meet and exceed 100% of the negotiated target. The same targets established at the state level are also the levels established at the local level.

Illinois has established a state performance measure for WIOA Title IB requiring a minimum training expenditure of at least 40% of the WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker funding streams to be expended on defined directed training programs and services. Following a review of the current level of direct training expenditures in 2016, the IWIB assigned a policy work group to review the potential for continued improvement opportunities with this policy. Based on an analysis of the data, the board has approved revisions to this policy in three phases. The first, an informal process in early 2016, allowed the separate calculations for the adult and dislocated programs to be combined into a single calculation. In December 2016, revisions to the list of calculable direct training programs and services were made. Both changes were reflected in written policy changes issued in December 2016. In September 2017, the third set of changes were made. These were relative to an increase in the minimum expenditure rate to 50%, and application of a "hold-harmless" clause (which was amended to ensure this provision will be revisited by the IWIB at their September 2018 meeting) and the potential waiver of sanctions related to an approved hold-harmless request by a local board. This final set of changes will be implemented upon completion of a consultation process of the policy work group.

In 2017 the Department of Commerce analyzed the enrollment and services provided to basic skill deficient customers and identified several local areas that reported less than 25% of individuals as basic skills deficient. In response to these findings, Commerce held a corrective action webinar with LWIA leaders and emphasized the application of priority of service for Adult customers, and the impact on performance.

The IWIB will continue to review the data utilized in calculating the minimum expenditure rate as a tool to identify its effectiveness in serving customers and meeting the needs of businesses. Recognizing that the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act focuses strongly on providing businesses with skilled workers that meet their needs, Illinois wants to ensure all local workforce boards are focusing on the need to train the workforce appropriately.

Illinois received the final impact analysis of the Workforce Innovation Fund project in 2017. Our multi-regional project began in 2013 in coordination with the Departments of Commerce and Employment Security, the Illinois Community College Board, the Illinois Pathways Manufacturing Learning Exchange and several workforce areas in Illinois. The evaluation highlighted the effectiveness of several innovative (at-the-time) practices such as: 1) enhanced, cross-agency case management; 2) experiential learning through paid internships and on-the-job training; 3) training for clear career pathways through industry-recognized credentials; 4) accelerated time to earnings; 5) leveraging existing, transferable skills; and 6) the use of lean principles to minimize downtime and activities not determined as value-added. The impact analysis compared outcomes for treatment and control groups and found:

- Entering credential-based training - the treatment group was 72 percentage points higher than the control group;
- Successful completion rate - the treatment group was 52 percentage points higher than the control group;
- Industry recognized credential attainment - the treatment group was 55 percentage points higher than the control group; and,
- Annual wages 2 years after random assignment - the treatment group wages were 25 percent higher than the control group.

Some of the program design elements from our project, such as the emphasis on integrated client services and work-based learning were embedded into WIOA through subsequent guidance. The project assessment provides clear evidence these practices are more effective and lead to improved outcomes. The results of these assessment will be considered as Illinois continues to update WIOA policy, planning and one-stop certification requirements.

D. EVALUATION

Describe how the State will conduct evaluations and research projects on activities under WIOA core programs; how such projects will be coordinated with, and designed in conjunction with, State and local boards and with State agencies responsible for the administration of all respective core programs; and, further, how the projects will be coordinated with the evaluations provided for by the Secretary of Labor and the Secretary of Education under WIOA.

The Evaluation and Accountability Committee (EAC) will take the lead in determining appropriate actions and recommendations to the IWIB regarding the design and evaluation and research projects. In addition to the Benchmark Report, the EAC will review all common performance measures to identify strategies that are effective in allowing local boards to meet their performance targets. Similarly, they will look at key factors that might present challenges to those boards that prevent them from meeting their goals. From this information they will identify and make recommendations regarding strategies that all boards should consider as methods for continuous improvement. The EAC will also be reviewing all policies and processes to determine their relationship to positive outcomes, as well as to determine if outcome results conformed to the intended goals. They will develop recommendations based upon their findings.

Current policies that provide immediate opportunities to assess results are the minimum training expenditure requirement and the one-stop center certification. The IWIB recently approved an increase in the minimum training requirement that at least 50% (from 40%) of the Adult and Dislocated Worker funding streams must be expended on defined direct training activities and services. Many factors were considered during the development of this increase, including business demands that they are not provided adequately skilled individuals to meet their needs, the WIOA's emphasis on utilizing available funds to better prepare the customer for a career through training, and the knowledge that work-based training models historically have better employment outcomes for customers than those without such training. Over the next one to two years, the board will evaluate these outcomes, consult with other stakeholders, and identify effects on the workforce, and employment in particular. Additional revisions to the formula for calculating the minimum training expenditure will also be discussed to ensure there are no unintended disincentives from this policy.

The one-stop center certification policy provides key information on the one-stop system in each local area that can be analyzed and compared to other centers. This information can be utilized to identify best practices and to share them with the other one-stop center operators for implementation at their facilities. The IWIB will utilize the information to make recommendations for continuous improvement opportunities by all local boards and operators.

Other examples of how the state is or plans to conduct evaluations and research projects include:

- Upon evaluation of the Wagner-Peyser Employment Services (ES) program participation among Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants, Employment Security concluded that the number of UI claimants registering for Employment Services was not meeting expectations. As a result, the requirement for UI claimants to register for Employment Services was implemented in July 2016. This requirement mandates that UI claimants register and develop a suitable resume in Illinois Job Link. The registration requirement provides Wagner-Peyer Employment Services staff a vehicle to communicate with job seekers in an effort to transition them from unemployment to reemployment.
- In addition to the registration requirement, Employment Security Wagner-Peyser staff have commenced additional outreach efforts to both underserved populations and underserved areas of the state. Wagner-Peyser ES staff in the Southern part of the state have begun outreach efforts to job seekers in counties that have been underserved by the program. Staff collaborated with community service organizations and workforce partners in an effort to reach job seekers who may benefit from Employment Services, but who may never walk into an American Job Center. These efforts also include Wagner-Peyser staff collaborating with the Department of Corrections and other partner staff at the Kewanee Life Skills Center to provide Employment Services to inmates with an approaching release date. Employment Security plans to implement similar outreach efforts to jobseekers throughout all areas of the state.
- The Department of Commerce issued a Notice of Funding Opportunity for Workforce Innovation projects in December 2017. One of this initiative's target

activities includes research and evaluation projects designed to provide insight into the use of best practices and to determine the effectiveness of current workforce efforts. These efforts will not be limited to evaluating Title IB activities, and thus could be used to for a wide range of research topics relevant to improving the state's workforce. Potential research projects will be checked for alignment and coordination with DOL / DOE evaluations. Project concepts could originate from the IWIB, the WIOA core partners, an LWIA or group of LWIAs, or other interested organizations or partnerships, such as sector partnerships, regional and local chambers of commerce etc.

- Under the ICCB Adult Education Competitive grant process, core and some required partners were used to evaluate grant applications based on established criteria as listed in the Request for Application. Each person participated as part of a team led by ICCB staff. All reviewers were provided training, signed a confidentiality agreement, and attended meetings to reach consensus on application scoring.

5. DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS FOR CORE PROGRAMS

Describe the methods and factors the State will use in distributing funds under the core programs in accordance with the provisions authorizing such distributions.

A. FOR TITLE I PROGRAMS

For Title I programs, provide a description of the written policies that establish the State's methods and factors used to distribute funds to local areas for—

I. YOUTH ACTIVITIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH WIOA SECTION 128(B)(2) OR (B)(3),

Youth Activities

Illinois will distribute Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Youth funds according to Section 128(b)(2)(A). Illinois does not intend to distribute WIOA Youth Program funds to local areas based on the youth discretionary allocation formula contained in Section 128(b)(3)(B). Utilizing the additional factors contained in Section 128(b)(3)(B) would, in our estimation, undermine decisions by the Governor and the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board regarding the local area boundaries within which WIOA should operate locally. In many instances local areas would likely be left without the amount of funding necessary to allow them to operate viable youth programs.

II. ADULT AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH WIOA SECTION 133(B)(2) OR (B)(3),

DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS-TITLE I (ADULT)

Illinois will distribute WIOA Adult funds according to Section 133(b)(2)(A). Illinois also does not intend to distribute funds to local areas for adults based on the adult discretionary allocation formula contained in Section 133(b)(3)(B). As with the discretionary youth allocation described above, utilizing the additional factors contained in Section 133(b)(3)(B) would likely undermine the decisions by the Governor and the Illinois Workforce Board regarding the local workforce area boundaries. In many instances local areas would likely be left without the amount of funding necessary to allow them to operate viable adult programs. Attachment Q:

https://www.illinoisworknet.com/WIOA/Resources/Documents/Attachment%20Q%20-%20%20Medthods%20in%20Distributing%20Funds.pdf

III. DISLOCATED WORKER EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH WIOA SECTION 133(B)(2) AND BASED ON DATA AND WEIGHTS ASSIGNED.

Illinois intends to allocate WIOA dislocated worker funds on the basis of the formula described below, pursuant to section 133(b)(2)(B). Each of the following factors will be used to distribute 25% of the funds to be allocated:

- Insured unemployment data: Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) unemployment insurance (UI) claimant data for the most recently completed calendar year will be used. Each local workforce area's share of the state total of such claimants is determined, and the area is allocated that share of the funds apportioned by this factor.
- Unemployment concentrations: Unemployment figures for the most recently completed program year will be used. Only counties with unemployment rates above the statewide average will be included in the formula. Each workforce area's share of the state total of such unemployment is determined, and the area is allocated that share of the funds apportioned by this factor.
- Declining industries data: For each workforce area, employment by three-digit North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) code is determined for the first calendar quarter (January-March) of the two most recent years for which data is available from IDES' ES-202 UI-covered employment report. The number of jobs lost within industries showing an employment loss from one year to the next is totaled for each area. Each workforce area's share of the state total of such employment loss is determined, and the area is allocated that share of the funds apportioned by this factor.
- Long-term unemployment data: IDES data for the number of UI claimants who were unemployed for 15 or more weeks during the most recently completed calendar year will be used. Each workforce area's share of the state total of such long-term claimants is determined, and the area is allocated that share of the funds apportioned by this factor.
- The plant closing and mass layoff data and farmer-rancher economic hardship factors will be given zero weighting under the WIOA dislocated worker allocation formula, due to a lack of public use data sources with sufficient geographic detail to adequately serve the requirements of an allocation formula. Attachment Q: https://www.illinoisworknet.com/wioastateplan

  https://www.illinoisworknet.com/WIOA/Resources/Documents/Attachment%20Q%20-%20%20Medthods%20in%20Distributing%20Funds.pdf

B. FOR TITLE II:

I. MULTI-YEAR GRANTS OR CONTRACTS

Describe how the eligible agency will award multi-year grants or contracts on a competitive basis to eligible providers in the State, including how eligible agencies will establish that eligible providers are organizations of demonstrated effectiveness.

The Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) is the state's eligible agency for adult education and literacy programs. ICCB is responsible for administering funds and providing program/performance oversight to grantees.

Adult education and literacy eligible providers approved under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA) requirements will continue to receive funding through June 30, 2017, as long as they adhere to state and federal grant expectations, as measured through annual application, financial reports, and program performance reports. The ICCB will award three-year grants or contracts to all eligible applicants who meet the required criteria. The grant contract will reflect a number of variables, including availability of funding, demonstrated effectiveness from year to year, and other factors. The length of the multi-year grant or contract will be three years to correspond with the effective period of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

Illinois will use a three-year grant or contract process that will be subject to renewal or continuation annually. Applicants may apply as a single entity or as part of a consortium. The application process used to award funding for eligible adult education applicants will be the same for every applicant. All eligible applicants of demonstrated effectiveness must provide evidence of their ability to meet or exceed prescribed performance outcomes and provide evidence of their capacity to provide instructional and support services to the targeted populations identified. Continuation of a grant or contract from year to year is contingent on sufficient funding and submittal and approval of an official application that includes demonstration of adequate and effective performance in the prior year.

The competitive process for grants in Illinois is subject to the Illinois Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA), which is based on EDGAR, the Education Department General Administrative Regulations and FFATA, the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act. During the competitive grant cycle, all eligible providers will be notified of the funding opportunity through a uniform public notification and application process and will be asked to submit a competitive application and complete a thorough pre-qualification process. All providers who meet all of the eligibility requirements will be able to access and participate in the application process of a competitive grant cycle.

During 2016-17, the ICCB will implement a new competitive application process for all federal and state Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) funding that will determine the eligible providers that will be awarded funds starting July 1, 2017. The review of proposals will include rating responses of the 13 considerations as in Title II of WIOA as well as the state consideration of making certain the applicants proposed budget is consistent with the eligible provider's activities, is cost efficient within administrative guidelines and places emphasis on serving the target populations. The considerations that will be used in the competitive process are listed below.

Considerations

227. The documented need of the eligible applicant to serve individuals in the community who are most in need of literacy services and those who are in need of

career pathway services, including individuals who have literacy skills (i.e., literacy statistics, regional and local needs, etc.).

228. The program is of sufficient intensity and duration for individuals, including those with learning disabilities, to achieve substantial learning gains.
229. The past effectiveness of an eligible applicant in improving the literacy skills of adults, including those with low literacy levels; and demonstrates the ability to meet or exceed the levels of performance.
230. The demonstrated alignment to the requirements of the adult education services and activities as well as alignment to the local plans.
231. The program uses instructional practices and activities that research has proven to be effective in teaching to achieve learning gains, is of sufficient intensity and duration, is built on a strong foundation of research and effective educational practice and includes the essential components of reading.
232. The program demonstrates the effectiveness in providing instruction in reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, and English language acquisition and is based on best practices, research and state standards.
233. The program activities effectively employ advances in technology including the use of computers as a part of instruction as well as distance education, when applicable.
234. The program activities provide integrated education and training that is contextualized adult education and literacy activities while concurrently enrolled in a training program as well as bridge programs to ensure that an individual has the skills needed to compete in the workplace, transition to post-secondary education and training, advance in employment, and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.
235. The program is staffed by well-trained instructors, counselors, support staff and administrators who meet state guidelines, and have participated in high quality professional development.
236. The program activities are coordinated with other available resources in the community, such as establishing strong links with elementary schools and secondary schools, post-secondary institutions, Comprehensive One-Stop Centers, job training programs, business, and social service agencies.
237. The program offers flexible schedules and supportive services (such as child care and transportation) that are necessary to enable individuals, including individuals with disabilities or other special needs, to attend and complete programs.
238. The program maintains a high-quality information management system, as determined by the ICCB and has the capacity to report participant outcomes and to monitor program performance measures.
239. The local communities have a demonstrated need for additional English Literacy programs and civic education programs.
240. The proposed budget is consistent with the eligible provider's activities, is cost efficient within administrative guidelines and places emphasis on serving the target populations.

Timeline

The following steps will be taken in conducting the AEFLA competition:

Competition Timeline	Activities
January - February	ICCB publishes three-year federal AEFLA Request for Proposals (RFP) aligned with the priorities in the approved Unified State Plan and in compliance with state GATA and federal EDGAR and FFATA rules.
February - March	o An open bidder's conference will be held to provide an overview of the competitive RFP. o ICCB provides technical assistance to inquiries from potential eligible providers. ICCB recruits candidates to review and score AEFLA grant applications.
February - April	FAQ's are posted to the ICCB website to distribute broadly the questions asked during the bidders conference as well as during the entire process.
March - April	Due date for AEFLA grant applications.
April - May	Reviewers review and score AEFLA grant applications.
April	ICCB conducts review of budgets and other grant requirements and develops a rank-ordered slate based on applicant scores.
May - June	ICCB announces AEFLA grant applicants that will receive funding, contingent upon the release of state and federal funding.
July 1	AEFLA grant providers begin grant cycle, programming, and funding.

Continuation Plan Timeline	Activities
February - March	Publish the Adult Education and Literacy Continuation Plan aligned with the priorities and in compliance with state GATA and federal EDGAR and FFATA rules.
March - April	• Web-ex informational meeting • ICCB provides information to current providers ICCB organizes the grant reading process
April	Questions from the web-ex informational meeting will be posted to the ICCB website.
May	Due date for AEFLA grant applications.
May- June	Reviewers review and score AELA grant applications.
May	ICCB determines the needs from continuing providers to satisfy requirements
June -July	ICCB announces AELA grant applicants that will receive funding, contingent upon the release of state and federal funding.
July 1	AELA grant providers begin grant cycle, programming, and funding.

The ICCB will provide funding to eligible local entities for the provision of adult education services through a competitive Request for Proposals (RFP) process. Through this process, the ICCB will identify, assess and award three-year grants to eligible providers throughout the state. An eligible applicant may be one of the organizations listed below with a demonstrated effectiveness in providing adult education and literacy activities: a local education agency; a community-based or faith-based organization; a volunteer literacy organization; an institution of higher education; a public or private nonprofit agency; a library; a public housing authority; a nonprofit institution with the ability to provide adult education and literacy services; a consortium or coalition or agencies, organizations, institutions, libraries, or authorities described above; and a partnership between an employer and an entity described above.

To determine if an applicant is an organization of demonstrated effectiveness, all applicants will be required to provide data demonstrating their ability to improve the skills of low-literate adults in the applicable instructional areas as described in the RFP. Applicants may use existing data to demonstrate the ability to achieve state and federal performance measures for all student levels including English language learners or provide data and information to demonstrate the ability to assist learners in achieving learning gain, including low-literacy level and English language learners. An applicant will be required to demonstrate its record of improving the knowledge and skills needed to transition successfully to post-secondary education, skills training, or employment. Each application will be reviewed to determine whether it meets the standard of demonstrated effectiveness. Applications that do not provide sufficient evidence of demonstrated effectiveness will not be considered for funding.

In continuation years of a multi-year grant cycle, demonstrated effectiveness will be evaluated based on past performance in achieving state negotiated performance measures as well as achieving the prescribed requirements of the grant, including the attainment of educational functional level increases/measurable skills gains, and successful programs that transition students to post-secondary education, training and employment.

Funding Distribution

Title II Adult Education and Literacy funding will be used to provide prescribed instructional and supportive services in all of the designated Area Planning Councils (APCs) in Illinois. The APCs, designated by Illinois state statute as the geographic units for adult education funding distribution, are aligned with each of the 39 community college districts which are represented in each workforce region as well as Local Workforce Innovation Area. Funds that are awarded through competitive grant cycles will be distributed through the use of a comprehensive funding methodology that is based on the APC's index of need, as calculated on an annual basis using the most recent U.S. Census data/American Community Survey results. The variable used includes literacy needs of both the English Speaking Population and the English language population as well as poverty and unemployment needs in an area.

Within an APC, the funds are then distributed proportionately among approved eligible providers based on demonstrated performance, previous data, units of instruction, and enrollments. During continuation years in a multi-year grant cycle, the funding formula will also take into account the most recent completed and verified data of measurable skill gains as a continuous indicator of demonstrated effectiveness. Providers who are new to the

process will be awarded funding based upon their proposed enrollments as indicated in their application as related to the funding request.

II. ENSURE DIRECT AND EQUITABLE ACCESS

Describe how the eligible agency will ensure direct and equitable access to all eligible providers to apply and compete for funds and how the eligible agency will ensure that it is using the same grant or contract announcement and application procedure for all eligible providers.

All grants awarded through the State of Illinois are now subject to the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA), based on EDGAR, the Education Department General Administrative Regulations and FFATA, the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act. Under GATA, all grant applications and awards are subject to uniform processes to ensure transparency, fairness and equitable access to all eligible participants and providers. Grant notifications are performed through the posting of a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) to a public web portal, Grants.Illinois.gov, where all of the eligibility criteria, application and grant requirements, and an explanation of the application and approval process are posted. The Illinois Community College Board (ICCB), state eligible agency, will also provide notification and access to the public portal through the use of the ICCB web site and with direct electronic mail notifications to all potential applicants, including both current providers and eligible potential providers. Eligible providers must then complete a thorough pre-qualification and application process in order to be considered for a grant. The ICCB will use the same application, process, and rubric/grading process for all applicants submitting an application. Once a funding determination is made, the ICCB will publish a Notice of State Award to the GATA portal and the to ICCB website.

The ICCB will use the same announcement and application and submission procedures for all eligible applicants under WIOA Sections 225, 231, and 243. Each application will be reviewed and evaluated using the same criteria as indicated in the grant or contract application. Each applicant must address the areas that are applicable. Eligible applicants will be asked to address applicable activities listed below:

- Adult education
- Literacy
- Workplace adult education and literacy activities
- Family literacy activities
- English language acquisition activities
- Integrated English literacy and civics education
- Workforce preparation activities
- Integrated education and training

The Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) will publish and distribute broadly a Request for Proposals (RFP) in the Spring of FY 2017, which will be aligned with the Unified State Plan and other education and workforce plans. During a competitive year, to be considered for funding an eligible applicant:

253. May be one of the organizations listed below with a demonstrated effectiveness in providing adult education and literacy activities:

- Local educational agencies (LEAs)
- Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) or Faith-Based Organization (FBO)
- Volunteer Literacy Organizations
- Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs)
- Public or Private nonprofit agencies
- Libraries
- Public-housing authorities
- Non-profit institutions that are described previously and have the ability to provide adult education and literacy services to eligible individuals
- Consortium or coalition of agencies, organizations, institutions, libraries, or authorities described previously
- Partnership between an employer and an entity described above; and must

254. Respond to the Request for Proposal by the due date
255. Complete all required portions of the application
256. Meet all deadlines and other elements as specified in the Request for Proposal
257. Meet all eligibility requirements

The past effectiveness of an eligible applicant in improving the literacy skills of adults is a strong factor in the delivery of adult education instruction and supportive services. In addition, the alignment of local adult education activities with the local area plans and services as well as local regional workforce plans are essential.

In a continuation year, FY2019-FY2020, all grants awarded through the State of Illinois are now subject to the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA), based on EDGAR, the Education Department General Administrative Regulations and FFATA, the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act. Notification of continuation plan application availability will be via listserv. Eligible providers must then complete a thorough pre-qualification and application process through the public web portal, Grants.Illinois.gov. Eligible providers may then apply for continuation of the grant. The continuation of an applicant is contingent upon the availability of federal and state funding; a sufficient appropriation of funding as well as the applicant's demonstrated of effectiveness in serving the target population, achieving the state negotiated performance targets, and the ability to meet all grant eligibility requirements.

C. TITLE IV VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

In the case of a State that, under section 101(a)(2)(A)(i)of the Rehabilitation Act designates a State agency to administer the part of the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan under which VR services are provided for individuals who are blind, describe the process and the factors used by the State to determine the distribution of funds among the two VR agencies in the State.

This is not applicable to the State of Illinois.

6. PROGRAM DATA

A. DATA ALIGNMENT AND INTEGRATION

Describe the plans of the lead State agencies with responsibility for the administration of the core programs, along with the State Board, to align and integrate available workforce and education data systems for the core programs, unemployment insurance programs, and education through postsecondary education, and to the extent possible, the Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan. The description of the State's plan for integrating data systems should include the State's goals for achieving integration and any progress to date.

I. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S PLANS TO MAKE THE MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS FOR THE CORE PROGRAMS INTEROPERABLE TO MAXIMIZE THE EFFICIENT EXCHANGE OF COMMON DATA ELEMENTS TO SUPPORT ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION.

The Illinois core partners have long-standing data sharing agreements in place whereby the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (Commerce), Illinois Department of Human Services Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) and Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) request data matching of the Unemployment Insurance Wage Record Data from the Illinois Department of Employment Security (Employment Security). The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) has motivated the agencies to look closely at the long-term agreements and determine if changes need to be made to accommodate the new and innovative sharing of data between the agencies.

The agreements facilitate cross-program access to data about common participants while minimizing duplicative systems costs. In addition to one-on-one data access the Illinois Longitudinal Data System (ILDS) and the Workforce Data Quality Initiative (WDQI) fully executed a multiple agency data sharing agreement with all the State of Illinois educational and workforce agencies. This data sharing agreement allows for the sharing of agency data via the new established Centralized Demographic Dataset Administrator (CDDA). The interagency agreements and the CDDA arrangement establishes a master client index number for all clients and facilitates integrated and streamlined service delivery, common reporting and measurement of interagency longitudinal performance outcomes as required under WIOA Section 116(d)(2).

Illinois will continue to use existing web-based interfaces that integrate data via Application Program Interface (API) tools. Real-time access to workforce development resources for individuals, businesses and workforce professionals is available, shareable and viewable in user-friendly dashboards for better customer service. Ongoing discussions include how to further integrate the Internet-based data systems to enhance program alignment and service delivery.

- Currently the Illinois workNet portal connects individuals and businesses to workforce services and data. The new Beta version of the portal serves as a hub for WIOA implementation resources and guidance for all required programs. The open source and widget technology available in the new version allows for maximum agility in on-demand program development and implementation needs.
- Employment Security administers the IllinoisJobLink (IJL) system to collect data on job seeker and employer customers. IllinoisJobLink.com is an internet-based system with a centralized job search engine and resume service that integrates workforce customer information to facilitate coordination of services across partner programs.

- The Illinois Community College Board—Adult Education administers the Illinois Data and Information System (DAIS-i), which is a web-based system that collects relevant student level record data on education, attendance, courses and employment data needed for reporting to WIOA.
- The Illinois Department of Human Services, Division of Rehabilitation Services. The Web Case Management System (WebCM) is the primary case management system for the Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation program, providing electronic storage of customer case records, as well as links to other systems which display information related to case requirements. WebCM is an internet-based system that can be accessed from any location with appropriate security and was developed internally by DHS information systems staff.

The IWIB and the Interagency Work Group will work to align the state's evaluation and reporting strategies to ensure that they will be supported by the improved data systems. The state will align the work of the ILDS and the CDDA project with WIOA implementation. The ILDS will enable state agencies to link workforce, education and early childhood data to help understand how to best meet Illinois' workforce and education needs. The focus of the ILDS is on developing a reporting system for areas that are important to Illinois parents, students, teachers, program administrators and policymakers. The CDDA addresses the challenge of linking records across state agencies that use different identifiers for the same individual. This initiative provides a technical record matching and identity resolution procedure and software to securely and confidentially match records across seven different agencies that includes the four core partners:

- Illinois Department of Commerce
- Illinois Community College Board
- Illinois Board of Higher Education
- Illinois State Board of Education
- Illinois Department of Employment Security
- Illinois Student Assistance Commission
- Illinois Department of Human Services

Six agencies have completed data-sharing agreements and have begun to submit to the CDDA so that unique individual identifiers may be assigned across agencies. The data-sharing agreement for the seventh agency is near completion. To date, 69.7 million records have been processed and 14.2 million unique individuals identified. This opportunity to use longitudinal data to assess education and employment outcomes over time will be included in the scope of the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board's (IWIB) accountability and evaluation strategies.

II. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S PLANS TO INTEGRATE DATA SYSTEMS TO FACILITATE STREAMLINED INTAKE AND SERVICE DELIVERY TO TRACK PARTICIPATION ACROSS ALL PROGRAMS INCLUDED IN THIS PLAN.

Illinois is working to align and integrate participant and performance data across WIOA programs with the ultimate goal of providing effective and efficient services that lead to the participants' employment as quickly as possible. Since the submittal of the Unified State Plan in 2016, the Department of Innovation and Technology (DoIT) conducted two phases

of an independent *WIOA Technical Assessment* of the core partners' applications supporting the WIOA programs. The goal of the *WIOA Technical Assessment* is to identify technical solutions to better integrate the WIOA system in Illinois. The state Chief Information Officer contracted with technical experts to lead the assessment team that included technical leads from each of the WIOA core partners. The team identified that the WIOA data integration strategy should include:

- Functional and technical assessment of external and internal systems that can act as the common intake solution;
- Generation of unique customer identification;
- An automated initial assessment based on intake questions;
- Automated referral to partner agencies;
- Common dashboard for participant information;
- Identification and execution of the appropriate procurement plan;
- Execution of an inter-governmental agreement among partner agencies to fund and use a common intake system;
- Upgrading of agency solutions where needed to integrate to common intake solution; and
- Definition of detail plans by working with HHi2 program and state data practice for data warehouse and Master Data Management solutions.

The scope of the WIOA technical assessment included a review of business, information and system architecture and current applications supporting WIOA programs for the core partner businesses. This assessment is a key step in developing the capacity for common intake and improving service delivery. The WIOA technical assessment team's approach was to view the WIOA core partners collectively as an enterprise or program that is responsible for providing job seekers with a technology offering *Single Sign-On* (SSO) access, *Integrated Workforce Registration* (IWR), real-time triage and coordinated service provisioning for the portfolio of WIOA programs. The WIOA technical assessment team approached the assessment of each of the core partner's systems from a customer-centric, job seeker user experience. The WIOA technical assessment team's approach aligned with the employment Training Administration's national vision for states to provide "a system that is driven by a single Workforce System Registration as the entry point to the nation's *reemployment system* and offers a coordinated customer-centric focus with full partner access." DoIT and the agency partners have developed the following strategic recommendations as a result of the assessments:

- Create a configurable, web-based intake solution capable of conducting initial assessment and referral to appropriate partner systems;
- Allow partners to maintain and enhance their existing solutions to effectively manage eligibility, enrollment and cases;
- Develop a WIOA hub system capable of integrating with any number of existing and new agency systems to coordinate and update data needed for processing;
- Leverage the state's Health and Human Services Innovation Incubator (HHi2) Master Data Management solution to generate unique participant identification numbers based on attributes collectively defined by the state; and

- Migrate data to the state's proposed data warehouse environment for business intelligence and analytics.

In order to Coordinate and consult with DoIT regarding ongoing strategies for developing technology solutions across state government, to monitor the progress of DoIT in its efforts to create a single view of the customer, and to ensure the development of an integrated intake system across all WIOA partners (among other objectives) the IWIB will be establishing Information Technology Standing Committee in early 2018. This group will advise on the establishment of sustainable methods for high quality data collection & reporting and contribute to the sustainability of technology strategies to support objectives across all Illinois Workforce Development partners. These strategies are in direct alignment with Strategy 6 laid out earlier in the plan, which aims to improve the public-private data infrastructure.

As part of its 2017 Strategic Planning process, the IWIB identified its Service Integration Policy Workgroup as the lead party for implementing the strategies towards its priority activity to provide a uniformly positive customer experience for job-seekers at all Illinois one-stop centers. These strategies include making the system easy to navigate and promoting a "no wrong door" approach that will adopt, adapt, or create one or more models of streamlined intake and referral that one-stop centers throughout the state can utilize to improve service delivery.

III. EXPLAIN HOW THE STATE BOARD WILL ASSIST THE GOVERNOR IN ALIGNING TECHNOLOGY AND DATA SYSTEMS ACROSS REQUIRED ONE-STOP PARTNER PROGRAMS (INCLUDING DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMON INTAKE, DATA COLLECTION, ETC.) AND HOW SUCH ALIGNMENT WILL IMPROVE SERVICE DELIVERY TO INDIVIDUALS, INCLUDING UNEMPLOYED INDIVIDUALS.

The Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB) has established an Evaluation and Accountability Committee that will create a framework of the data elements and requirements that will be key inputs for the alignment of technology and data systems across required one-stop partner programs in Illinois. This is a critically necessary activity for the IWIB to effectively evaluate and identify continuous improvement opportunities to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of Illinois' workforce development system. During the first year the committee will create a framework by which to work. For the accountability component, the committee will map the components of the Unified State Plan to the work being carried out by all of the IWIB committees. Early work on evaluation will address questions of service delivery and potential approaches to answering those questions. In subsequent years, the committee will begin looking at larger questions related to evaluation and performance. The committee will review the research agendas of various components of the system and identify opportunities to strengthen alignment and prioritization of research questions. The availability of the Illinois Longitudinal Data System and the Comprehensive Demographic Dataset Administrator will open new evaluation and research opportunities that could lead to improvements in the system.

In addition, the IWIB intends to establish, in early 2018, an Information Technology Standing Committee that will assist in researching and making decisions regarding issues of data interoperability (including common intake), methodology development that will help to assess employer needs and speed response times, and the use of technologies to expand

the range and flexibility of training and other service delivery methods to address the unique needs of populations and the regions of the state. The need for a committee such as this was confirmed through the IWIB Strategic Planning process, as the need for assistance with these types of issues were identified across all of the process goal mapping teams.

Through the work of the IWIB Evaluation and Accountability Committee and the IWIB Information Technology Standing Committee, the Interagency Work Group will build on the findings to: (1) develop a state and regional cross-agency benchmark report for stakeholders and the general public, and (2) provide additional regional planning data and tools to further support regional planning to align education, workforce and economic development. Furthermore, the Interagency Work Group will build upon existing agency initiatives to develop and use strategic indicators and benchmarks as part of comprehensive data resources for state and regional planning.

IV. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S PLANS TO DEVELOP AND PRODUCE THE REPORTS REQUIRED UNDER SECTION 116, PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM. (WIOA SECTION 116(D)(2)).

One significant challenge in Illinois is that no mechanism currently exists to allow all core program partners to track participant exits across all programs. Partners established a common vision and built the Illinois Longitudinal Data System (ILDS) with data sharing agreements with universities and others to ensure consistently high levels of quality, reliability and security in matching and managing participant-level data across agency and university partners. The LDS Agencies and the Governing Board have made substantial progress on activities that relate to the LDS Functions in 2014-15. ICCB is in the process of amending the ILDS agreement to include Adult Education microdata. ICCB and the ILDS Centralized Demographic Dataset Administrator (NIU Center for Governmental Studies) have identified the next cycle of identity resolution for inclusion of Adult Education microdata.

Planning Note: States should be aware that Section 116(i)(1) requires the core programs, local boards, and chief elected officials to establish and operate a fiscal and management accountability information system based on guidelines established by the Secretaries of Labor and Education. States should begin laying the groundwork for these fiscal and management accountability requirements, recognizing that adjustments to meet the elements above may provide opportunity or have impact on such a fiscal and management accountability system.

B. ASSESSMENT OF PARTICIPANTS' POST-PROGRAM SUCCESS

Describe how lead State agencies will use the workforce development system to assess the progress of participants who are exiting from core programs in entering, persisting in, and completing postsecondary education, or entering or remaining in employment. States may choose to set additional indicators of performance.

Performance experts from the WIOA core and required partners will continue to work with the Illinois Department of Information Technology to connect data systems that will allow the state to assess the progress of participants that exit the program and continue on with education programs and enter employment. This interagency workgroup is exploring the development of a common information system using the existing Illinois Framework for Healthcare and Human Services. Ongoing discussions include the possibility of adapting

that framework for WIOA purposes, including tracking participant exits from all programs. Two additional initiatives that will support this effort are the *Longitudinal Data System* and the *Work Readiness Through Apprenticeship and Pathways.*

- Partners established a common vision and built the Illinois Longitudinal Data System (ILDS) with data sharing agreements with universities and others to ensure consistently high levels of quality, reliability and security in matching and managing participant-level data across agency and university partners. The ILDS Agencies and the Governing Board have made substantial progress on activities that relate to the ILDS Functions. As detailed in this Section, this progress includes:

o Development and adoption of the Initial Annual Report and Plan;

o A number of intra-agency enhancements that support the broader LDS effort;

o The selection and establishment of the Centralized Demographic Dataset Administrator; and

o Significant work and accomplishments in the end-user service priorities established by the Governing Board.

- Illinois Workforce Data Quality Initiative (WDQI), improved the linkages between education, workforce development and human services data systems that build from current education state longitudinal data system initiatives through a common identifier system and data quality and security framework and shared applications.

The IWIB's Evaluation and Accountability Committee began meeting in early 2018. As they implement certain provisions of the IWIB's Strategic Plan related to evaluations, assessments, performance, and accountability, they will be looking at opportunities for continuous improvement throughout the workforce and education systems. One measure they may consider after further discussion is the long-term employment of participants exiting the program. While current common performance measures track customers up to four quarters after exit, the IWIB may want to utilize available and new data to determine employment outcomes beyond one year. These might include employment within the same company, within the field of study or the wages of the customer for as many as five years after employment.

C. USE OF UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE (UI) WAGE RECORD DATA

Explain how the State will meet the requirements to utilize quarterly UI wage records for performance accountability, evaluations, and as a source for workforce and labor market information, consistent with Federal and State law. (This Operational Planning element applies to core programs.)

The Illinois Department of Employment Security will provide reporting for three employment-related performance indicators (employment rate in the second and fourth quarters after exit and median earnings in the second quarter after exit), status in unsubsidized employment and quarterly earnings through direct Unemployment Insurance (UI) wage match. Under "Effectiveness in Serving Employers" the State has selected the

measures of "Retention with the same employer" and "Employer Penetration Rate." A standardized indicator is to be established and implemented no later than the beginning of Program Year 2019. Employment Security will report performance data for Retention by providing (UI) wage match keeping in mind that this is a shared outcome across all six core programs within the State and will be a combined reporting measure. Wage records will identify a participant's employment using an establishment identifier - FEIN for example. The Employer Penetration Rate will be determined by each core provider tracking of the number of establishments served within a program year, and the State will collect that data and compare it to the aggregate number of employers in a given State and/or county.

D. PRIVACY SAFEGUARDS

Describe the privacy safeguards incorporated in the State's workforce development system, including safeguards required by section 444 of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g) and other applicable Federal laws.

Privacy Safeguards Incorporated into the Workforce Development System, including Complying with Section 444 of the General Education Provisions Act and other Federal Laws Continuing to comply with federal and state laws governing protection of personally identifiable information is a priority during WIOA implementation. Existing privacy safeguards in administering the core programs in Illinois pose opportunities for additional collaboration and interoperability, while efforts also exist to ensure security systems and procedures do not inhibit service integration.

For instance, the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) maintains student data related to high school equivalency exams. Any entities outside of the community college board system submit forms to ICCB staff focused on data accountability to ensure compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 USC § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99), which protects the privacy of student education records. Future considerations include how data integration between required programs can facilitate a smooth transition from high school to the workforce or to post-secondary education while preserving the privacy of their records throughout the workforce system.

The Department of Employment Security's (Employment Security) existing system could also serve as a model for cross-agency collaboration. The Labor Exchange Program is a password-protected program backed by a user agreement, including an explanation of how individual data will be used throughout service delivery. Internal communications through the program use a unique participant identification number rather than a Social Security number. The unique identification number could be used across required programs to help preserve privacy and facilitate tracking of that participant by core program partners.

7. PRIORITY OF SERVICE FOR VETERANS

Describe how the State will implement and monitor the priority of service provisions for veterans in accordance with the requirements of the Jobs for Veterans Act, codified at section 4215 of 38 U.S.C., which applies to all employment and training programs funded in whole or in part by the Department of Labor. States should also describe the referral process for veterans determined to have a significant barrier to employment to receive services from the Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG) program's Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist.

Illinois places a priority in serving veterans located throughout the state. Veterans and covered persons will receive priority of service in accordance with the requirements of the Jobs for Veterans Act codified at Section 4215 of 38 USC. The Comprehensive One-Stop Centers are committed to helping veterans find a job. Illinois veterans have been served over the years through targeted programs administered through the Department of Employment Security (Employment Security) and the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs in cooperation with other education and workforce agencies.

In Illinois, Employment Security serves as the lead agency for veteran's employment and employer services. The Illinois Department of Employment Security's Job for Veterans State Grant Plan incorporates and aligns with the Illinois Unified State Plan. All veterans, regardless of their characterization of discharge, are provided employment services by Wagner-Peyser staff, using the Veterans triage process. All Veterans coming into the American Job Centers must receive an Initial Assessment from either an Employment Specialist or WIA staff. If during this Initial Assessment, a Veteran self-identifies as having a Significant Barrier to Employment, then they are referred to the Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist for possible Intensive Services and Case Management. While in Case Management or as part of the Intensive Services process, a Veteran may continue to receive Basic Career Services from both the Employment Services Specialist and WIOA staff. Once the Veteran's significant barriers to employment have been mitigated and they are job ready, the DVOP specialist will work in partnership with the Local Veterans Employment Representative to develop job opportunities with the Veterans' chosen career field. As a member of the agency's Business Services Team, the Local Veterans Employment Representative advocates for all Veterans with Businesses and Business Groups within the American Job Center's operational area. The Local Veterans Employment Representative can assist any American Job Center staff member working with a Veteran to develop job opportunities.

Table 14: Employment Status of Illinois' Civilian Non-institutional Population 18 years and Over by Veteran Status For example, the current practice for serving veterans who are ineligible for Veterans Administration Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment services may include a DVOP specialist providing a referral to Vocational Rehabilitation to assess and assist the veteran with mitigating his or her disability in order to meet their employment goal. DVOP's also work closely with other core and required partners as well as community supportive service organizations to help veterans receive various supportive assistance, training and certification credentials. Some of the highlighted programs serving veterans in Illinois include:

- IllinoisJobLink.com - Illinois Labor Exchange is an online tool used by veterans searching for jobs in Illinois.

8. ADDRESSING THE ACCESSIBILITY OF THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

Describe how the one-stop delivery system (including one-stop center operators and the one-stop delivery system partners), will comply with section 188 of WIOA (if applicable) and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) with regard to the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs, services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities. This also must include a

description of compliance through providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities. Describe the State's one-stop center certification policy, particularly the accessibility criteria.

Illinois is committed to ensuring both programmatic and physical accessibility to the one-stop delivery system by maintaining compliance with WIOA Section 188, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and all other applicable statutory and regulatory requirements. Compliance monitoring is conducted at the state and local level to make certain that all comprehensive one-stop facilities, programs, services, technology and materials are accessible and available (Attachment P) (https://www.illinoisworknet.com/WIOA/Resources/Documents/Attachment%20P%20-%20One-stop%20Center%20Accessibilty%20Compliance%20Checklist.pdf). These services must be provided "on-demand" and in "near real time" in the physical Comprehensive one-stop center location or via technology consistent with the "direct linkage" requirement defined in WIOA.

Illinois is a designated "Employment First" state, demonstrating its commitment to ensuring employment in the general workforce is the first and preferred option for people with disabilities. Physical and Programmatic accessibility in the one-stop delivery system is essential to achieving this vision. To that end, Illinois places a high priority on creating strategies that provide seamless access to employment and training services within a universal environment.

In 2017 the Illinois Task Force on Employment and Economic Opportunity for Persons with Disabilities **(**EEOPD) completed its final recommendations in the areas of workforce development, employment, transition services to youth and provider transformation. In February 2018 the task force co-chairs provided testimony to a joint House-Senate committee charged with reviewing the recommendations in consideration of possible future legislation. Additional meetings with elected officials have been scheduled to further explore the recommendations.

Illinois has also developed an Employment First Interagency Council coordinated by the Department of Human Services and which includes representatives of state agencies serving people with disabilities. A key focus is coordinating joint efforts and promoting training and development for staff of state agencies as well as community providers.

Beginning on January 3, 2019, each recipient must also record the limited English proficiency (LEP) and the preferred language of each applicant, registrant, participant and terminee (29 CFR 38.41-38.45). To that end, the Department of Commerce Office of Equal Opportunity Monitoring and Compliance (EOMC) continues to clarify which documents are "vital" and thus require translation into languages spoken by a significant number or portion of the population eligible to be served or likely to be encountered. The rule requires recipients to record the limited English proficiency and preferred language of applicants who seek to participate in the workforce development system to help ensure they have the necessary information to serve individuals with LEP effectively. Each recipient must also maintain, and submit to USDOL CRC upon request, a log of complaints filed with the recipient that allege discrimination. Factors for discrimination are on the basis(es) of race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions, transgender status, and gender identity), national origin (including limited English proficiency), age, disability, political affiliation or belief, citizenship, and/or participation in

a WIOA Title I-financially assisted program or activity. To achieve this objective, EOMC continues to educate LWIA's during continuous training seminars on promising practices to help recipients comply with their legal obligations and includes the components of a plan to facilitate meaningful access for individuals with limited English proficiency.

With increased provisions to provide universal access throughout the workforce system, annual monitoring of all recipients has been enacted to give assurances that recipients are complying with all nondiscriminatory requirements of the law. Nondiscrimination Plans must now include copies of monitoring reviews for submission to USDOL CRC during their review schedule. These reports will consist of findings as well as corrective actions are taken to ensure recipients of WIOA funding adhere to the assurance clauses of their contracts. Due to this yearly mandate, EOMC has recently hired a new, Spanish speaking employee to work out of the James R. Thompson Center in Chicago, Illinois. This new position will help to monitor the largest recipient in Illinois and to provide a more visible structure to EOMC's monitoring role.

Another significant role in ensuring the physical and programmatic accessibility is the IWIB's One-Stop Center Certification policy discussed in the State Operating Systems and Policies portion of the Unified Plan. The certification criteria specified by the IWIB to evaluate the Comprehensive One-Stop Center's programmatic accessibility ensures equal access to all required programs, services, and activities to eligible participants and employers regardless of their range of abilities, mobility, age, language, learning style, intelligence or education level. Services must be made available without unlawful discrimination. Primary criteria include equal access to career services, equal access to program services, direct linkage and reasonable accommodations. The indoor space is evaluated to make sure there is "equal and meaningful" access to programs for individuals with disabilities. Examples include computer accessibility, ergonomic set-up, screen-reading software programs (JAWS and DRAGON) and access to interpreters.

In addition to the role of the EOMC, the state has participated in or funded initiatives through the one-stop system that expand access to services for individuals with disabilities and that focus on developing relationships by leveraging resources and enhancing employment opportunities for people with disabilities. One example is our Disability Employment Initiative Round V grant that focuses on career pathways for youth. Opportunity Youth are participating in sector-based training such as Information Technology through a connection between the school district and the one-stop system to make their existing "career pathways" systems fully inclusive of and accessible to individuals with disabilities. A significant improvement in this pilot is the development of an Individualized Career Development Plan (ICDP). The ICDP provides an overview of planned experiences for students participating in secondary school beginning at age 14½, or upon entry to high school. It also aligns with the Illinois Individualized Education Program (IEP) Transition Plan and Summary of Performance components to alleviate duplication of document development for students with disabilities and to provide comprehensive information about goals and avenues for meeting post-high school goals. It is important to note that the ICDP is a result of discussions between the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), and DCEO. Furthermore, ISBE adopted the ICDP for use by special education programs.

Finally, staff training is integral to making sure all services are programmatically and physically accessible. The state has hosted a series of webinar events that include updated provisions on WIOA 188, technical assistance provided by Diversity Partners project on leveraging business relations to benefit job seekers with disabilities, and the requirements of Comprehensive One-Stop Center certification. Additionally, the state has and will continue to conduct summits that provide best practices for serving individuals with disabilities.

The Departments of Commerce and Employment Security developed an agreement to better align the ADA monitoring process of American Job Centers. This agreement will allow for better alignment of office inspection timing and for improved cross-agency communication regarding inspection findings. In facilities where both Title III and Title IB staff are located, DCEO will conduct the ADA inspections in order to avoid duplication of services and better align findings and related reports. DCEO will provide IDES with the ADA inspection report after the inspection has been completed. If IDES is the lease holder, IDES will then work with Central Management Services and/or the landlord to correct any findings.

9. ADDRESSING THE ACCESSIBILITY OF THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS.

Describe how the one-stop delivery system (including one-stop center operators and the one-stop delivery system partners) will ensure that each one-stop center is able to meet the needs of English language learners, such as through established procedures, staff training, resources, and other materials.

In Illinois, there is a great need for interpreters due to limited English proficiency in many portions of the state. Staff members are trained to ensure that an interpreter is provided in these situations "in real time" to meet the needs of English language learners. The State of Illinois has a master contract with an interpreting service provider to offer these services to assist English Language Learners.

Adult Education and Literacy is the key education program in the state that provides English language instruction. These services will be coordinated within the one-stop delivery system. ICCB English language programs provide instruction to approximately 40,000 students annually. This instruction includes services to adults 16 years and over to achieve competence in reading, writing, speaking, and comprehension of the English language.

Adult Education programs provide instruction designed to assist immigrants and other individuals who are English language learners to acquire an understanding of the American System of Government, individual freedom, and the responsibility of citizenship. In addition, Adult Education English language programs provide instruction in civics education, workforce readiness, bridge programs, and Integrated Education and Training to English language learners at varying educational functioning levels.

One of EOMC's most essential ongoing goals is to ensure access to all. By working with the LWIAs, EOMC has outlined strategies to prevent discrimination based on national origin by failing to provide language services to someone with limited English proficiency. As such, under the new rules, recipients must take reasonable steps to ensure that individuals with LEP have meaningful access to aid, benefits, services, and training. Together with Central Management Services (CMS), EOMC has secured language transcription and translation

services that are utilized Statewide with the assistance from contracts executed by the Governor's Office. Since 2014, Multilingual Connections holds the Translation and Interpretation Services Master Contract (CMS4819290). Under this contract, Multilingual Connections provides the written translation, audio transcription and in-person interpretation services in dozens of languages. Together, with Propio Language Services, another CMS master contract that provides translation services, EOMC can include oral interpretation and written translation of both hard-copy and electronic materials in non-English languages. This service ensures that individuals with LEP are informed about or able to participate in covered programs or activities.

Expanding access to information on employment opportunities and workforce development services is pivotal. The Illinois workNet portal consolidates resources for job seekers and businesses into one online forum that provides career, education, and work support information. Illinois workNet is designed to ensure that all individuals, regardless of their level of English proficiency, can access workforce services through the portal. Toward this effort, workNet has incorporated Spanish language content. Specifically, local and state content published in Spanish with a language switcher link is available to toggle between Spanish and English pages. The Spanish site provides the model to allow information in additional languages with minimal effort.

Describe the methods used for joint planning and coordination among the core programs, and with the required one-stop partner programs and other programs and activities included in the Unified or Combined State Plan.

The plan development process has also evolved. When the original WIOA Unified State Plan was submitted few of the currently existing cross-program groups existed. The plan was jointly drafted by representatives from each core partner and sent to the IWIB for approval. In 2018, Illinois has the advantage of using now well-established cross-program groups created by the IWIB to provide and review plan content and serve as sounding boards to ensure that the IWIB's vision is faithfully rendered in the plan. For the 2018 modification, the IWIB established an ad hoc team of over twenty individuals that includes the IWIB business co-chair, members of the IWIB Executive Committee, IWIB staff, and staff from the core partners and representatives from other related agencies, such as the State Board of Education, and the Community College President's Council. Also new for 2018, the team is using technology to allow online collaborative editing from each of the partners. This method of plan development allows for more robust and coordinated drafting and editing of new content while also being much more efficient.

With regard to cross-agency planning for program implementation, Illinois is poised to take another leap forward. With the February 2018 release of the IWIB Strategic Plan, the board established multiple working groups comprised of IWIB members and program partner staff. These subject matter expert groups were formed to provide board-level leadership on WIOA implementation issues such as: 1) system evaluation; 2) training provider eligibility; 3) one-stop certification; and 4) cross-agency service integration. Going forward these groups will provide system leadership coordinated through the IWIB.

In addition, the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) in partnership with the Department of Commerce, completed the development of the Workforce Education Strategic Plan. This work included a collaboration of state partners, stakeholders, and businesses. This partnership continues in the implementation phase, and the plan aligns with the IWIB Strategic Plan and the Unified Plan respectively. The plan addresses early career related education and exposure, essential and occupational skills gaps, alignment of education and training programs that meet employer needs, and strengthening connections and alignment among public partners and engagement with business.

Also, on January 31, 2018 the ICCB submitted an Adult Education Strategic Plan to the Governor and General Assembly. The ICCB engaged state agencies, including core and required partners, legislative, adult education, community colleges, philanthropic, community-based organization, LEAs and other stakeholders in the development of this Strategic Plan. The plan, titled "Expanding Career Pathway Opportunities in Adult Education," aligns with goals set forth in key state-driven workforce and career pathway plans. The plan addresses several guiding principles, goals and objectives. The goals of the plan include: scaling effective models and strategies, postsecondary transition and credential attainment, college and career readiness and developing lifelong career pathway systems and integrating enabling technologies.

WIOA Implementation & Coordination

Under WIOA, the Illinois Workforce System began an evolutionary process that has already begun to accelerate. This evolution is grounded in a new emphasis on inter-agency collaboration, data-driven strategies and continuous improvement through rigorous, ongoing analysis and evaluation. One of the state's immediate activities after the launch of WIOA was to foster improved communication and collaboration between core partners and other key stakeholders to establish a solid foundation for service integration. The following are representative examples of workforce development activities undertaken or planned.

Interagency Work Group (IWG)

This group of top program administrators began meeting in May 2015 and continue to meet monthly. All meetings are supported by highly structured agendas designed to maintain clarity at the state-level regarding integration and alignment under WIOA. The major accomplishments of this group include:

- Participating in a coordinated process for review of the WIOA Notice of Proposed Rulemaking and Final Rule, a key purpose of which was to identify issues, requirements and opportunities of common interest and concern;
- Reaching an agreement on the specific career services and workforce programs and activities each required partner will make available at Comprehensive One-Stop Centers throughout Illinois, including the full configuration of workforce service delivery through one-stops in Illinois;
- Working collaboratively to coordinate the different methods that will be used to deliver these services, including delivery through technology that meets the "direct linkage" requirements of WIOA;
- Providing state-level input into policies guiding the local implementation of governance provisions, such as the initial designation of "Local Workforce Innovation Areas" (Attachment L) (https://www.illinoisworknet.com/WIOA/Resources/Documents/Attachment%20L%20-%20Local%20Workforce%20Area%20Designation.pdf);
- Jointly participating in strategy development for defining the number and location of Comprehensive One-Stop Centers in Illinois;
- Concurring on a general framework for cost sharing under WIOA, including a framework for sharing one-stop center infrastructure costs;
- Establishing an interagency task force to focus on operational details and mechanisms associated with local and state infrastructure cost funding under WIOA;
- Identifying initial elements to be included in the Governor's Guidelines (Attachment J)

(https://www.illinoisworknet.com/WIOA/Resources/Documents/Attachment%20J%20-%20Governors%20Guidelines.pdf) providing direction and support regarding negotiations of program partners at the state and local levels. The Governor's Guidelines have since been revised twice, with the latest revision issued in December 2016. Supplemental guidance to the Governor's Guidelines was subsequently issued to guide MOU and annual budget negotiations specific to Program Year 2017 (State Fiscal Year 2018). A third revision for Program Year 2018 (State Fiscal Year 2019) is pending approval, and updates will be issued going forward as needed;

- Working as part of the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB) Policy Workgroup on One-Stop Certification to provide input regarding the criteria and process to be used for certification of Comprehensive One-Stop Centers;
- Development of a budget reconciliation handbook for use as a resource for local areas to understand and carry out the MOU budget reconciliation process. Webinar trainings were also held for individuals in local areas;
- In April 2017, a member of the Interagency Work Group shared the principles of the Illinois MOU development process with a national audience on a WorkforceGPS WIOA Webinar.

During the 2015-2016 regional and local planning cycle, the Interagency Work Group experimented with creating regional technical assistance teams made up of core partner field staff. The intent was to create teams of "WIOA experts" closer to the front lines that could respond very quickly to resolve implementation issues. In 2017 the IWG conducted an evaluation and determined that these teams had varied levels of success. Therefore, the Interagency Work Group modified the process and implemented a new procedure for obtaining local input on WIOA implementation issues. Required program partner "troubleshooters" were put into place to monitor and identify the need for technical assistance statewide. The IWG created characteristics of what qualified as a "local implementation issue." A form was put into place for "troubleshooters" to complete, which elevates the implementation issue to the Interagency Work Group for consideration, review and response to the local area.

The State Interagency Work Group is also adapting its structure to align with progress made on WIOA implementation since 2015. At its monthly meeting in February 2018, the IWG took under consideration a proposal to morph into two cross-program entities: 1) a program executive group (meeting quarterly), and 2) a program management group (meeting monthly). The executive group will provide the opportunity for direct interaction between partner senior leadership to ensure that their programs continue improving outcomes for clients and businesses. The management group will continue providing technical assistance to local staff for troubleshooting, identification of promising practices, and proposing policy changes for consideration.

Economic Information and Analysis

The Department of Employment Security provides statewide and sub-state occupational employment projections, so the local workforce areas, along with other partners, can determine in-demand occupations and education partners can plan education and training curricula. The Interagency Work Group has established an Interagency Data Team to develop comprehensive data reports that will be used in the state and regional plans. The data team will continue to work with the regional planning teams to provide additional data as needed. For the regions to be able to access labor market information that is specifically tied to the WIOA regional plans, the team will work on developing a vehicle to access this specific information on whichever platform is utilized for the state. Currently, Employment Security provides labor market information on the Employment Security website in a variety of formats including the Illinois Virtual Labor Market Information System (VLMI) that is supported by the DOL Workforce Information Grant and that is a required deliverable for all states.

Staff from the core WIOA partners also worked on a proof-of-concept pilot project to analyze outcomes for certain community college program completers. This attempt at talent flow analysis led to a successful evaluation of where graduates found employment and identified wage differentials based on industry and locale.

Workforce Education Strategic Planning

The ICCB worked with state and local partners in the development of a statewide Workforce Education Strategic Plan (WESP). Eleven regional forums were held in the 10 economic development regions in the spring of 2015. Initial employment and education data was used to identify the trends as well as the supply/demand opportunities in each region of the state (www.illinoisworknet.com/wioastateplan). The ICCB continued the development of the WESP in the spring of 2016. The WESP was approved by the ICCB in June of 2017 and work continues to implement the strategies at the community college level. At the fall 2017 Illinois WIOA Summit, the lead agencies for both the WESP and the State Unified Plan shared with the audience how the plans align.

The information gathered through these education planning meetings was used to inform WIOA state and regional planning efforts that began in the fall of 2015. Following regional and statewide partner planning events that concluded in 2016 the ICCB - in partnership with community colleges, businesses and the core and required partners - continued collaborating to develop strategies in four overarching content areas for recommendation to the state's community college system. These four content areas include:

- Strategic Direction 1: Increase Early Career-Related Education and Exposure
- Strategic Direction 2: Address Essential and Occupational Skill Gaps
- Strategic Direction 3: Align Education and Training Programs to Employers' Needs
- Strategic Direction 4: Strengthen Connections among Public Partners and Engagement and Alignment with Business

Future of AJCs Cohort Challenge

In February 2018, The UNITED STATES Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration announced that Illinois was selected to participate in the "Future of AJCs Cohort Challenge". The Illinois AJC Workforce Consortium is one of only eight teams representing states, local areas, and regions selected from among 28 that applied. Illinois' team members represent the IWIB, core WIOA agency staff, and mandated partners at the state and local levels. The AJCs Cohort Challenge provides an opportunity for Illinois to engage in system design with workforce peers, partner, and experts. This learning will be infused with business principles from industry representatives who have led similar design processes in an effort to rethink service delivery models and methods to ensure all customers can readily access services in a user-friendly manner and benefit from technology. The Illinois team will use the learning from this process to inform policy under development or planned. A specific example is the IWIB's Service Integration Policy Work Group, which is realigning its work plan with that of the AJCs Cohort Challenge so that discoveries from the cohort process may be integrated, as appropriate, into service integration policy. Also, peer innovations in technology and service strategies and private sector models implemented by industry leaders that surface through this cohort process will be disseminated throughout the workforce system by Illinois' team members.

V. COMMON ASSURANCES (FOR ALL CORE PROGRAMS)

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include assurances that—

1. The State has established a policy identifying circumstances that may present a conflict of interest for a State Board or local board member, or the entity or class of officials that the member represents, and procedures to resolve such conflicts; Yes

2. The State has established a policy to provide to the public (including individuals with disabilities) access to meetings of State Boards and local boards, and information regarding activities of State boards and local boards, such as data on board membership and minutes; Yes

3. The lead State agencies with optimal policy-making authority and responsibility for the administration of core programs reviewed and commented on the appropriate operational planning elements of the Unified or Combined State Plan, and approved the elements as serving the needs of the populations served by such programs; Yes

4. (a) The State obtained input into the development of the Unified or Combined State Plan and provided an opportunity for comment on the plan by representatives of local boards and chief elected officials, businesses, labor organizations, institutions of higher education, the entities responsible for planning or administrating the core programs, required one-stop partners and the other Combined Plan programs (if included in the State Plan), other primary stakeholders, including other organizations that provide services to individuals with barriers to employment, and the general public, and that the Unified or Combined State Plan is available and accessible to the general public; (b) The State provided an opportunity for review and comment on the plan by the State Board, including State agency official(s) for the Unemployment Insurance Agency if such official(s) is a member of the State Board; Yes

5. The State has established, in accordance with WIOA section 116(i), fiscal control and fund accounting procedures that may be necessary to ensure the proper disbursement of, and accounting for, funds paid to the State through allotments made for the core programs to carry out workforce development activities; Yes

6. The State has taken appropriate action to secure compliance with uniform administrative requirements in this Act, including that the State will annually monitor local areas to ensure compliance and otherwise take appropriate action to secure compliance with the uniform administrative requirements under WIOA section 184(a)(3); Yes

7. The State has taken the appropriate action to be in compliance with WIOA section 188, Nondiscrimination, as applicable; Yes

8. The Federal funds received to carry out a core program will not be expended for any purpose other than for activities authorized with respect to such funds under that core program; Yes

9. The State will pay an appropriate share (as defined by the State board) of the costs of carrying out section 116, from funds made available through each of the core programs; Yes

10. The State has a One-Stop certification policy that ensures the physical and programmatic accessibility of all One-Stop centers with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA); Yes

11. Service providers have a referral process in place for directing Veterans with Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE) to DVOP services, when appropriate; and Yes

12. Priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses is provided in accordance with 38 USC 4215 in all workforce preparation, development or delivery of programs or services funded directly, in whole or in part, by the Department of Labor. Yes

VI. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR CORE PROGRAMS

The State must address all program-specific requirements in this section for the WIOA core programs regardless of whether the State submits either a Unified or Combined State Plan.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR ADULT, DISLOCATED WORKER, AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES UNDER TITLE I-B

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include the following with respect to activities carried out under subtitle B--

A. ADULT, DISLOCATED WORKER, AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

1. REGIONS AND LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREAS

A. IDENTIFY THE REGIONS AND THE LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREAS DESIGNATED IN THE STATE.

For purposes of WIOA, the 102 counties in Illinois are grouped into ten Economic Development Regions (EDR) and twenty-two (22) Local Workforce Innovation Areas (LWIA). The regions range from a relatively compact four counties in the Northern Stateline region to the much larger nineteen (19) county Southern region.

The 22 LWIAs range from six (6) single-county LWIAs to an area with 14 counties. All but one of the single-county LWIAs are located in the Northeastern Economic Development Region that covers the greater Chicagoland area. There are a small number of instances where the EDRs cross LWIA boundaries. The Governor designated ten EDRs that are also used for the purposes of alignment with workforce development. Here is a list of counties in each region:

- Region 1 (Central (12 counties)) - Cass, Christian, Greene, Logan, Macon, Macoupin, Menard, Montgomery, Morgan, Sangamon, Scott, Shelby Counties.
- Region 2 (East Central (6 counties)) - Champaign, Douglas, Ford, Iroquois, Piatt, Vermilion Counties.
- Region 3 (North Central (10 counties)) - De Witt, Fulton, Livingston, Mc Lean, Marshall, Mason, Peoria, Stark, Tazewell, Woodford Counties.
- Region 4 (Northeast (10 counties)) - Cook, De Kalb, Du Page, Grundy, Kane, Kankakee, Kendall, Lake, Mc Henry, Will Counties.
- Region 5 (Northern Stateline (4 counties)) - Boone, Ogle, Stephenson, Winnebago Counties.
- Region 6 (Northwest (10 counties)) - Bureau, Carroll, Henry, Jo Daviess, La Salle, Lee, Mercer, Putnam, Rock Island, Whiteside Counties.
- Region 7 (Southeastern (13 counties)) - Clark, Clay, Coles, Crawford, Cumberland, Edgar, Effingham, Fayette, Jasper, Lawrence, Marion, Moultrie, Richland Counties.
- Region 8 (Southern (19 counties)) - Alexander, Edwards, Franklin, Gallatin, Hamilton, Hardin, Jackson, Jefferson, Johnson, Massac, Perry, Pope, Pulaski, Saline, Union, Wabash, Wayne, White, Williamson Counties.

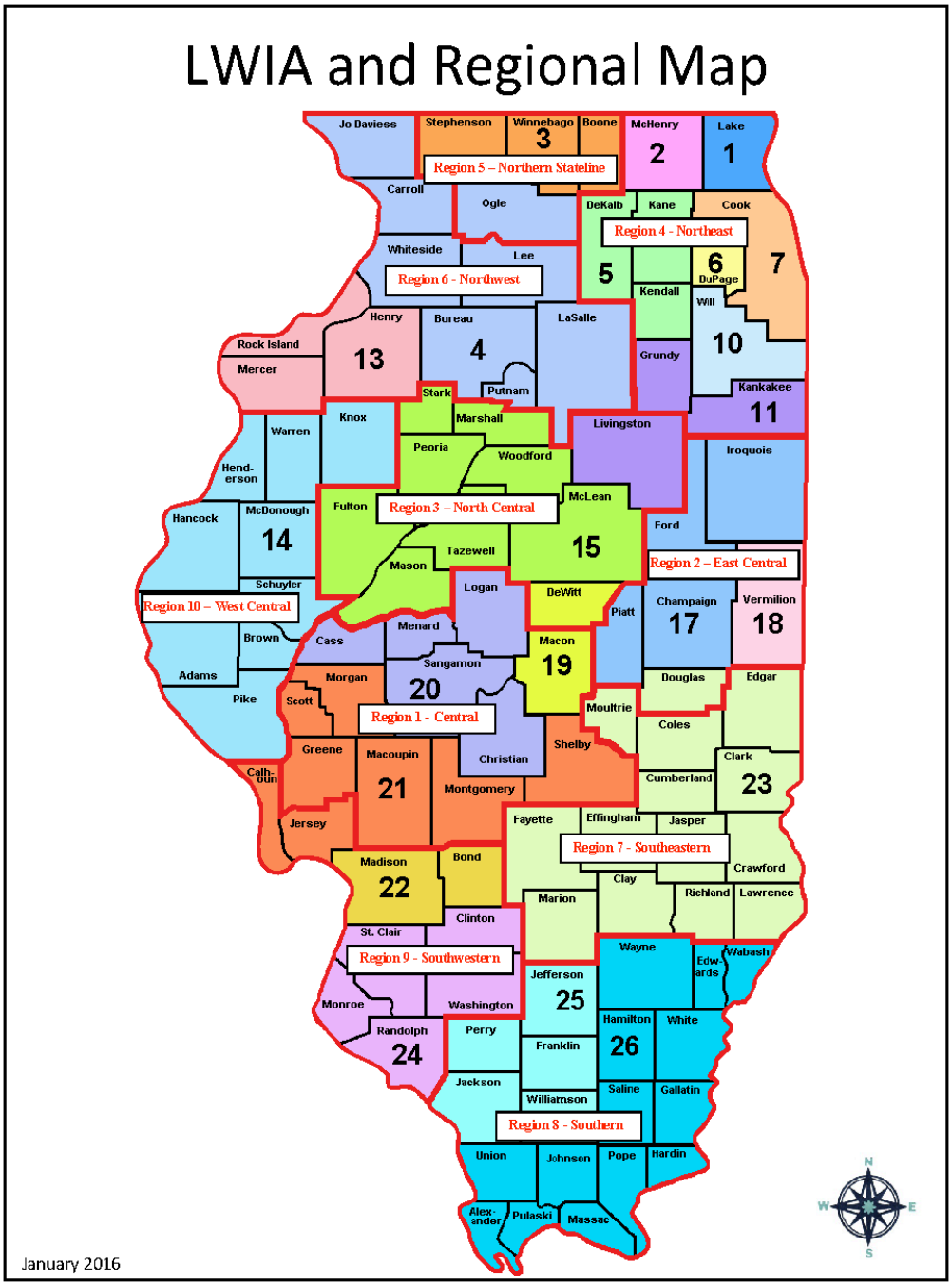
- Region 9 (Southwestern (9 counties)) - Bond, Calhoun, Clinton, Jersey, Madison, Monroe, Randolph, St. Clair, Washington Counties.
- Region 10 (West Central (9 counties)) - Adams, Brown, Hancock, Henderson, Knox, McDonough, Pike, Schuyler, Warren Counties.

In looking at the map of Illinois' EDRs and LWIAs one will notice the 22 local areas are numbered up to "26". This is due to local area consolidations that have taken place in recent years. To reduce confusion among state and local stakeholders, it was decided to use the lowest number of the consolidating areas. One will notice local areas 8, 9, 12 and 16 no longer appear on the map. The map is also provided as Attachment S at https://www.illinoisworknet.com/WIOA/Resources/Documents/Attachment%20J%20-%20Governors%20Guidelines.pdf.

The current LWIA boundaries trace their origins back to the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act program of the 1970s. Through the transitions to the Job Training Partnership Act, Workforce Investment Act and now WIOA, the LWIA boundaries remained largely unchanged, save for the consolidations mentioned previously.

The Governor established ten Economic Development Regions (EDR) in 2003 based on contemporary economic data. These regional boundaries were reexamined in 2015 and 2017 based on the latest economic data and were found to still be valid. While the EDR boundaries largely follow the pre-existing LWIA structure, the overlay is not 100 percent and there are a handful of outlier counties which cause their LWIA to cross into another EDR. These counties are: Calhoun, DeWitt, Douglas, Ogle, Jersey and Livingston.

The State is requesting a waiver, described further later in this section, to extend the deadline for bringing LWIA boundaries into full alignment with the EDRs. Meaningful planning efforts require a tremendous amount of partner resources. The realignment consultation process will effectively initiate a rigorous planning process for 2020 state, regional and local plans.



B. DESCRIBE THE PROCESS USED FOR DESIGNATING LOCAL AREAS, INCLUDING PROCEDURES FOR DETERMINING WHETHER THE LOCAL AREA MET THE CRITERIA FOR "PERFORMED SUCCESSFULLY" AND "SUSTAINED FISCAL INTEGRITY" IN ACCORDANCE WITH 106(B)(2) AND (3) OF WIOA. DESCRIBE THE PROCESS USED FOR IDENTIFYING REGIONS AND PLANNING REGIONS UNDER SECTION 106(A) OF WIOA. THIS MUST INCLUDE A DESCRIPTION OF HOW THE STATE CONSULTED

WITH THE LOCAL BOARDS AND CHIEF ELECTED OFFICIALS IN IDENTIFYING THE REGIONS.

Procedures for Determining if Local Areas Met the Criteria for "Performed Successfully"

Illinois issued the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Transition Policy 1 to address the initial designation of local areas as required by WIOA and Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) Number 27-14 that was issued by the United States Department of Labor (DOL). The process for designating Local Workforce Innovation Areas (LWIA) under WIOA was established by WIOA Transition Policy 1, issued on April 23, 2015 (see Attachment L at https://www.illinoisworknet.com/WIOA/Resources/Documents/Attachment%20L%20-%20Local%20Workforce%20Area%20Designation.pdf). This policy letter describes conditions necessary for the Governor to approve a request to designate an area, defines "performed successfully" and "sustained fiscal integrity" as required by the Act. "The term "performed successfully" used with respect to a local area, means the local area met or exceeded the adjusted levels of performance for core indicators of performance described in Section 136(b)(2)(A) of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, as in effect the day before the date of enactment of WIOA for each of the last two (2) consecutive years for which data are available preceding the determination of performance under this paragraph;" "The term "sustained fiscal integrity", used with respect to a local area, means that the Secretary of Labor has not made a formal determination, during within of the last two (2) consecutive years preceding the determination regarding such integrity, that either the grant recipient or the administrative entity of the area misappropriated funds provided under Title I of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (as in effect prior to the effective date of WIOA subtitle B) due to willful disregard of the requirements of the provision involved, gross negligence, or failure to comply with accepted standards of administration." The conditions necessary for the governor to designate a local area as described in the policy letter are:

- The local area was designated under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 on or before July 1, 2012.
- The local area successfully met or exceeded adjusted performance requirements for core indicators under Section 136(b)(2)(A) of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 for each of the most recent two consecutive years for which data are available.
- The local area did not receive a declaration of having failed to sustain fiscal integrity for the two prior program years by the Secretary of Labor.
- All county Chief Elected Officials (CEO) within a current LWIA, following a review of all current operations of the local area and by signature on the request, agree to all matters with regard to the request for designation by the state of the current local area. The majority (20 of 22) of the local workforce areas in Illinois met the criteria outlined in Section 1.A of TEGL 27-14. All of the Chief Elected Officials that met these criteria, in consultation with the local workforce boards, submitted a request to be designated as a local area under WIOA.

Procedures for Determining if Local Areas Sustained Fiscal Integrity

In determining whether the grant recipient/administrative entity in the local area sustained fiscal integrity, the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity reviewed the following for the two-year period immediately preceding Program Year 2015: 1) Formal

determinations of disallowed costs and non-compliance as documented by reports of the results of the state's WIA/WIOA monitoring, single audits and DOL monitoring (if applicable); 2) Results of investigations of incident reports alleging gross negligence, fraud, abuse or other misconduct; and 3) Formal communication of high-risk status and/or suspension of cash payments resulting from continued violations of administrative requirements and grant terms and conditions and the subsequent corrective actions implemented by the local area to correct the violations. The implementation of the Illinois Grant Accountability and Transparency Act will also establish standard pre-award, establishment and grant administration procedures across all state agencies. This will add another set of tools that will be used to ensure that the grant recipient sustains fiscal integrity.

Process Used to Determine Regions and Planning Regions

Regional Planning Areas were designated to align with the state's ten Economic Development Regions (EDR). These ten regions address the WIOA Section 106 requirement that the Governor identify and organize local workforce boards and core program partners into regional planning areas to engage in joint planning, coordinate service delivery, share administrative costs and enter regional coordination efforts with economic development agencies operating in the same region. The ten regions were first established in 2003 by the Governor based on the analysis of statewide commuting patterns surrounding major and minor metropolitan centers and other economic factors.

The state completed a new analysis in 2015 and 2017 and the data confirmed this regional alignment is still appropriate. In early 2015, the Department collaborated with the Illinois Community College Board on creating a strategic plan for workforce and education. The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (Commerce) and the Department of Employment Security (Employment Security) and the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) made the local areas and community college districts aware the data indicated the EDRs were still valid. Furthermore, we jointly announced our intent to strengthen the linkages of all our efforts to economic development by using these regions as the base for community college and WIOA planning regardless of community college district and LWIA alignments. As part of the ICCB planning, data packets for each region were prepared that included a map showing how the community college districts and LWIAs overlapped with the planning regions (See Attachment M at www.illinoisworknet.com/wioastateplan). To promote continuity from the ICCB planning, these data packets are also being used by WIOA regional planning teams.

C. PROVIDE THE APPEALS PROCESS REFERRED TO IN SECTION 106(B)(5) OF WIOA RELATING TO DESIGNATION OF LOCAL AREAS.

Illinois WIOA Transition Policy 1 provides that the Governor's decision regarding local area requests for initial designation may be appealed in accordance with Sections 679.290 of the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking. The policy also describes conditions under which the governor may approve a request for initial designation as a local workforce development area under WIOA from any area that was designated as a local area under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998, but failed to meet all the aforementioned requirements; and conditions under which the governor may also designate a local workforce development area upon the request of the State Workforce Development Board. Furthermore, the policy describes the appeals process that may be used should a local area disagree with governor's

determination and provides an application form to be filed by local area CEOs. Local areas may appeal to the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board, which has 60 days to render a decision. If a decision has not been made by that time or if the appeal does not result in a designation, the entity may appeal to the Secretary of Labor. There were no local workforce areas that appealed the Governor's decision regarding initial designation.

D. PROVIDE THE APPEALS PROCESS REFERRED TO IN SECTION 121(H)(2)(E) OF WIOA RELATING TO DETERMINATIONS FOR INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING.

The appeals process relating to the determinations for infrastructure funding is outlined in the Governor's guidelines, included as Attachment J (https://www.illinoisworknet.com/WIOA/Resources/Documents/Attachment%20J%20-%20Governors%20Guidelines.pdf). The appeals process is mentioned in Section 6 and Item 12 in the Glossary.

Local areas may appeal the governor's determination on the sharing of one-stop infrastructure costs on the basis the determination is inconsistent with federal proportionate share requirements or the federal cost contribution caps. The appeal must be made within 21 days of the governor's determination. Any appeal under this section is to be filed with the Interagency Work Group, which has thirty days to rule on the appeal. Should the plaintiff wish, the local area CEO(s) may request the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board to hear its appeal. The Board has thirty days to either hear the appeal and render a decision or inform the plaintiff of its decision to not hear the appeal. In instances where the Board refuses to hear the appeal the determination of the Interagency Work Group stands.

2. STATEWIDE ACTIVITIES

A. PROVIDE STATE POLICIES OR GUIDANCE FOR THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM AND FOR USE OF STATE FUNDS FOR WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES.

The Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (Commerce) oversees the administration of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title IB and Trade Adjustment Assistance Training programs. As administrator, Commerce issues policy guidance through its series of policy letters and notices that are posted on the Illinois workNet portal (https://apps.il-work-net.com/WIOAPolicy/Policy/Home). Commerce has issued guidance on the implementation and administration of WIOA for the following activities:

- Data Management and Reporting
- Fiscal Reporting and Accountability
- General Administration
- Governance
- Performance Management
- Planning
- Program Eligibility
- Training

More specifically, the following policies have been developed and issued through Commerce's Office of Employment and Training (OET):

- Guidance was issued to provide the Local Workforce Innovation Boards (LWIB), Local Workforce Innovation Areas (LWIA), core partner programs, service and training providers, sub-grantees and other interested parties with an overview of the implementation steps Commerce, primarily through OET, has taken to implement the provisions of WIOA. This insured a seamless transition for the customers during intake and the continued provision of career and training services, including the expanded training services described in WIOA. This guidance also addressed reporting requirements during and after the transition period as changes to the workforce data reporting system, Illinois Workforce Development System (IWDS), is being updated
- Membership and certification of LWIBs under WIOA is governed under new policies that are consistent with the new provisions including the assurance of more streamlined boards, but with a majority of business members and minimum percentage of labor and community service organizations represented. Emphasis was placed on ensuring the business representatives reflect the regional industry sectors, labor market information (LMI) and the diversity among populations. This policy provided new forms for completion for nominated applicants to the board, as well as reiterated the process for appointees with fixed and staggered terms. Certification (and recertification) of the boards is conducted by OET only after a review of the requisite information on each local board member to ensure appropriate composition is maintained. This process further includes reviews of LWIB bylaws, and compliance with the Sunshine Provision and parliamentary procedures.
- Policy was implemented to address chief elected officials (CEO) in each LWIA to include an understanding of their required functions, which is confirmed through a CEO agreement signed by each CEO in the LWIA. The agreement further addresses those LWIAs that have multiple CEOs when there is more than one unit of general local government residing within the boundaries of the area. CEOs are given the authority as the local grant recipient, including the authority to designate local grant subrecipients and fiscal agents for the Title IB funds of WIOA. It also defines each CEO's liability for WIOA funds determined to be misspent or used for unallowable purposes.
- Eligibility policies have been written to ensure all the requirements of WIOA are clearly outlined for the local areas and their staff providing the intake and registration of customers. ALL customers of the system, whether served by local one-stop staff, through technology, or self-served, are included in the general eligibility policy. Those seeking more than self-service assistance are then determined eligible based on the funding stream they will be served under including the youth, adult and dislocated worker populations. Detailed descriptions of the eligibility requirements and documentation sources allowed confirming such eligibility decisions provide guidance to the career planner in their decision making. The documentation is further outlined to determine low-income status, veteran or qualified spouse of a veteran status, and identity and employment eligibility. Priority of service is emphasized throughout to ensure veterans preference is provided over non-veterans who might otherwise be determined eligibility under a particular program.

- WIOA policy was issued to provide guidance to all training providers (including new providers and those previously provided transitional eligibility) and the LWIB and LWIA on the process for determining eligibility of providers and training programs. Illinois has required LWIAs develop and implement local policies as necessary. The policy includes initial and continued eligibility of all providers, with separate guidance for those Registered Apprenticeships choosing to be added to the eligible training provider list (ETPL). In limited instances, there are exceptions for when a training provider is not required to apply for eligibility determination by the local boards. In addition to the IWDS system which is the main intake point for applications of eligibility by training providers and for their training programs, the state's online workforce system, Illinois workNet, will maintain information on all eligible training providers and their programs, as well as performance information as it becomes available. This list highlights those programs that meet the state's requirements for in-demand occupations. The current procedures are currently under review by a work group to address the performance collection requirements for all students, streamline the current approval process for eligibility, and make suggestions for changes to the reporting system.
- The IWIB approved new procedures for communications between the board, its executive committee, and the interagency work group especially as they pertain to the continued implementation of WIOA. The State developed guidance and instructions regarding 1) Regional and Local Planning Requirements, 2) Governor's Guidelines to State and Local Program Partners Negotiating Costs and Services under WIOA, and 3) Criteria and Procedures for Certifying Comprehensive One-Stop Centers under WIOA. The State issued policy and procedures for the procurement of the One Stop Operator (OSO) as required by *Training and Employment Guidance Letter* 15-16 (*TEGL* 15-16). The policy emphasizes the requirements of TEGL 15-16 and the contractual provisions in 2 CFR 200.318 through 200.326. Part of this requirement is for the LWIB and the selected *One-Stop Operator* to enter into a legally binding agreement which may take the form of a written contract or another type of agreement, such as a *Memorandum of Understanding* (*MOU*) which is explained in the Competition Requirements section below. Following Illinois WIOA assessment, the State updated the OSO policy and procedures and conducted a monitoring review of all OSO Agreements.
- Under a work group structure, Illinois has begun development of new policy to address all the types of training services allowed under WIOA. The first of these training options was on-the-job training (OJT) for which recent policy was issued. General requirements for all OJTs outline the guidance for potential new employees or eligible underemployed workers that provide an opportunity for acquisition of new skills or knowledge essential to job performance. Eligibility of participants and employers, including apprenticeships, addresses the types of customers (job seeker, incumbent worker and business) allowed through OJT contracts. To ensure proper implementation, local workforce boards are required to set policy for OJTs. The employer reimbursement scale is detailed to both attract businesses and ensure they have a level of accountability to the training program and customer's success. Monitoring and evaluation guidance assures further accountability. A comprehensive list of all WIOA policies and guidance issued is provided in

Attachment U at www.illinoisworknet.com/DownloadPrint/Attachment%20U%20-%20Policy%20Documents.pdf.

- Title IB Policy 15-WIOA-3.1 titled *Annual Allocation and Modification Requirement of WIOA Formula Grant Funds* provides guidelines by which the Title IB Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) formula grants shall be established and modified. The State will provide additional guidance through an annual funding notice that includes information regarding on the formula allocations and any additional guidance that is applicable to the program year funds.
- Title IB Policy 10-PL-62 titled *Incentives and Sanctions for Performance* a required statewide activity policy related to the Title IB incentive bonus awards and sanctions associated with exceeding and failing negotiated performance standards. In addition, it provides the bonus incentive measures related to completion of training in a demand occupation and subsequent employment in that occupation.
- Title IB Policy 11-PL-01, Change 1 titled *Dislocated Worker Emergency Assistance Application* outlines a statewide Rapid Response policy to provide additional assistance to local areas that experience disasters, mass layoffs, or plant closings, or other events that precipitate substantial increases in the number of unemployed individuals, carried out in local areas by the State, working in conjunction with the local boards and the chief elected officials for the local areas.

B. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE INTENDS TO USE GOVERNOR'S SET ASIDE FUNDING. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL UTILIZE RAPID RESPONSE FUNDS TO RESPOND TO LAYOFFS AND PLANT CLOSINGS AND COORDINATE SERVICES TO QUICKLY AID COMPANIES AND THEIR AFFECTED WORKERS. STATES ALSO SHOULD DESCRIBE ANY LAYOFF AVERSION STRATEGIES THEY HAVE IMPLEMENTED TO ADDRESS AT RISK COMPANIES AND WORKERS

Commerce works with the IWIB and core partners to implement the strategies and activities outlined in the Unified Plan. Governor's set aside funding will be used as appropriate and available to support statewide initiatives that support the vision, principles, goals and strategies articulated within the WIOA Unified State Plan. Projects must also align with the priorities outlined in the Regional and Local Workforce Plans. There are four general categories of activity that Illinois will support with these funds.

Sector Partnership Projects

- Implement new or expanded local and regional sector-based partnerships that increase the workforce investment system's capacity to provide critical training that aligns with the needs of businesses and industries. Activities include regional planning and sector strategies that will align resources to address skills and other needs of in-demand industries. Regional planning and sector strategies support participants by assessing the regional economic landscape to identify new or growing employment opportunities in the region. They also help ensure that partnerships and regional assets from the workforce investment system, industry, community colleges, labor unions, nonprofits, and other stakeholders are aligned and integrated under strategies that can be used to respond to economic shocks, such as plant closings, natural disasters, and long-term unemployment within the regional workforce.

Innovative Workforce Pilot and Research Projects

- Implementing innovative programs and strategies designed to meet the needs of business, which may include incumbent worker training programs, customized training, sectoral and industry cluster strategies and implementation of industry or sector partnerships, career pathway programs, microenterprise and entrepreneurial training and support programs, utilization of effective business intermediaries, layoff aversion strategies, activities to improve linkages between workforce partners, and other business services and strategies that better engage employers in workforce investment activities and make the workforce development system more relevant to the needs of State and local businesses.
- Developing or identifying education and training programs that respond to real-time labor market analysis; that utilize direct assessment and prior learning assessment to measure and provide credit for prior knowledge, skills, competencies, and experiences; that evaluate such skills and competencies for adaptability; that ensure credits are portable and stackable for more skilled employment and that accelerate course or credential completion.

Priority Population Projects

- Developing strategies for effectively serving individuals with barriers to employment and for coordinating programs and services among workforce partners. Projects may include, but are not limited to, the coordination of employment and training activities with:
- Child support services, and assistance provided by State and local agencies carrying out Part D of Title IV of the Social Security Act (42 USC 651 et seq.);
- Cooperative extension programs carried out by the Illinois Department of Agriculture;
- Programs carried out in local areas for individuals with disabilities, including programs carried out by State agencies relating to intellectual disabilities and developmental disabilities, activities carried out by Statewide Independent Living Councils established under section 705 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 USC 796d), programs funded under Part B of Chapter 1 of Title VII of such Act (29 USC 796e et seq.), and activities carried out by centers for independent living, as defined in section 702 of such Act (29 USC796a);
- Adult education and literacy activities, including those provided by public libraries;
- Activities in the corrections system that assist returning citizens as they reenter the workforce;
- Financial literacy activities.
- Supporting the development of alternative, evidence-based programs and other activities that enhance the choices available to eligible youth and encourage such youth to re-enter and complete secondary education, enroll in postsecondary education and advanced training, progress through a career pathway, and enter unsubsidized employment that leads to economic self-sufficiency.

Statewide Technical Assistance and WIOA Implementation Projects

- Providing technical assistance to local boards, chief elected officials, one-stop operators, workforce partners, and eligible providers in local areas, such as: the development and training of staff, identification and development of exemplary program activities, and assistance in abandoning less effective or less efficient but well-entrenched practices.
- Providing technical assistance to improve the integration of case management, training services, supportive services, business services, and employer engagement among workforce, education and economic development partners.

RAPID RESPONSE LAYOFF AVERSION

The Illinois Talent Pipeline Program uses statewide rapid response funds to train workers who can contribute to a company's growth and success. Projects funded under this program are intended to develop sustainable work-based learning programs to help Illinois companies retain and train current workers and hire new staff. The goal of a talent pipeline grant is to maintain a pipeline of hirable talent for the employer being served. Applications must address one or more of the Illinois Talent Pipeline activities listed below to be considered for funding.

- Projects that connect talent strategies with business needs.
- Layoff aversion projects that support businesses and workers that are impacted or at risk of being impacted by company closures or layoffs.
- Projects that expand work-based learning opportunities including apprenticeships for targeted populations.
- A primary focus of the Illinois Talent Pipeline Program is to provide training services to businesses and workers impacted or at risk of being impacted by company closures or layoffs. Grantees will facilitate or provide skill upgrade training to WIOA eligible workers or incumbent workers at risk of dislocation as a layoff aversion strategy. The State of Illinois considers a layoff averted when:
- A worker's job is saved with an existing employer that is at risk of downsizing or closing; or
- A worker at risk of dislocation transitions to a different job with the same employer or a new job with a different employer and experiences no or minimal unemployment.

A successful layoff aversion program averts layoff costs and reduces the financial risks to the employer and community as well as the Unemployment Insurance benefit costs. Further, the worker continues paying payroll and other taxes which result in a win-win for all. Layoff aversion provides workers with new skills to retain their existing job or quickly transition to a new one and maintain financial stability. The value for employers is remaining competitive in the global economy and saving operational, overhead and productivity costs by training current, reliable employees rather than going through the process of replacing them. Applicants that administer layoff aversion projects are required to identify the factors that contribute to the "risk" of layoffs. Below are some of the "risk" indicators Illinois identified to determine if a business needs training assistance to maintain a competitive workforce.

- Declining Sales

- Supply Chain Issues
- Industry/Market Trends
- Changes in Management Philosophy or Ownership
- Worker Does Not Have the Necessary Skills
- Strong Possibility of a Job If a Worker Attains New Skills
- Other "At-Risk" Indicators

Illinois has long believed the best layoff aversion strategy is prevention. Layoff aversion begins as soon as a company realizes it must adjust to remain competitive in its market. Such adjustments could be streamlining operations for improved productivity or taking advantage of a market opportunity to increase profitability. Often these operational adjustments require upskilling incumbent workers and/or access to new skilled workers. The challenge lies in being able to help businesses before it's too late.

To that end, in 2017, OET staff developed and delivered a full-day workforce system training to the Department of Commerce Office of Business Development (BD). The intent of the training was to leverage BD front office and regional field staff connections and interactions with businesses to identify opportunities for early intervention of WIOA services. OET and BD staff concur that helping companies remain competitive is a high return-on-investment activity that directly impacts the ability of WIOA participants to obtain sustainable employment with options for upward mobility. To that end, our mutual goal is to help businesses access WIOA services and skilled workers so that they improve their competitive position and avoid the need for layoffs.

The specific goals met by this training were for Business Development staff to have a solid understanding of:

- workforce system core principles and key goals in the WIOA Unified State Plan
- basic WIOA program organizational structure
- career pathways
- sector strategies
- the relevance of business engagement with the workforce/education system
- WIOA core and required partner services and their relevance to businesses, especially work-based learning options
- regional data on leading, emerging and maturing industries
- gathering and using workforce intelligence
- communication strategies
- the importance of integrated, cross-program business services.

Post-training surveys indicated the Business Development staff found the training very helpful and relevant to their work. Since the training, the frequency and quality of communication between Business Development staff and OET and local workforce areas has increased.

C. IN ADDITION, DESCRIBE THE STATE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES TO PROVIDE RAPID RESPONSES IN CASES OF NATURAL DISASTERS INCLUDING COORDINATION WITH FEMA AND OTHER ENTITIES.

The Department of Commerce is the lead state agency for coordinating rapid response activity in Illinois. The Rapid Response Team includes the Department of Commerce Rapid Response Staff, IDES Staff, Local Workforce Area Staff and other partners, as appropriate. These partners coordinate efforts to make impacted workers and businesses aware of available services, eligibility requirements and the application process.

The Illinois Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) Act, requires employers to provide 60 days advance notice of pending plant closures or mass layoffs. The law applies to "business enterprises" with 75 or more employees (excluding part-time employees). A covered "mass layoff" under Illinois WARN is a reduction in force ("RIF") at a single site of employment that is not the result of a "plant closing" and results in employment losses during any 30-day period (or, in some cases, during any 90-day period) for at least 33% of the employees and at least 25 employees, or at least 250 employees regardless of the percentage. While rapid response is required for closures and mass layoffs, it is the Department of Commerce's policy that effective rapid response services are to be provided to as many workers and companies as possible. Rapid Response funds will be used to administer all of the required and allowable activities outlined in WIOA, including, but not limited to:

- Layoff aversion activities;
- Immediate and on-sit contact with the employer, representatives of the affected workers and the local community;
- The provision of information and access to unemployment compensation benefits and programs, such as short-time compensation, comprehensive one-stop system services, and employment and training activities, including information on the Trade Adjustment Assistance program, Pell Grants, the GI Bill, and other resources;
- The delivery of other necessary services and resources including workshops and classes, use of worker transition centers, and job fairs, to support reemployment efforts for affected workers;
- Partnership with the local board(s) and chief elected official(s) to ensure a coordinated response to the dislocation event and, as needed, obtain access to state or local economic development assistance. Such coordinated response may include the development of an application for a national dislocated worker grant as provided under WIOA;
- The provision of emergency assistance adapted to the particular layoff or disaster;
- Developing systems and processes for identifying and gathering information for early warning of potential layoffs or opportunities for layoff aversion, analyzing, and acting upon, data and information on dislocations and other economic activity in the state, region, or local area; and tracking outcome and performance data and information related to the activities of the rapid response program;
- Developing and maintaining partnerships with other appropriate federal, state and local agencies and officials, employer associations, technical councils, other industry business councils, labor organizations, and other public and private organizations, as applicable, in order to:
    - Conduct strategic planning activities to develop strategies for addressing dislocation events and ensuring timely access to a broad range of necessary assistance;

    - Develop mechanisms for gathering and exchanging information and data relating to potential dislocations, resources available, and the customization of layoff aversion or rapid response activities, to ensure the ability to provide rapid response services as early as possible;
- Delivery of services to worker groups for which a petition for Trade Adjustment Assistance has been filed;
- The provision of additional assistance and funding to local areas that experience disasters, layoffs, or other dislocation events when such events exceed the capacity of the local area to respond with existing resources; and
- Provision of guidance and financial assistance as appropriate, in establishing a labor management committee if voluntarily agreed to by the employee's bargaining representative and management. The committee may devise and oversee an implementation strategy that responds to the reemployment needs of the workers. Natural disasters create more significant impacts than economically-driven layoffs because multiple facets of individuals' lives are disrupted, sometimes permanently and often without warning. Natural disasters in Illinois are typically related to: tornados, flooding, ice and snow, drought, and less frequently, earthquakes. State rapid response staff mobilize upon learning that a natural disaster is underway. In instances where the Federal Emergency Management Agency declares a disaster area, DOL/ETA typically provides a National Emergency Grant. The rapid response team contributes to the Department of Commerce NEG application.

Natural disasters create more significant impacts than economically-driven layoffs because multiple facets of individuals' lives are disrupted, sometimes permanently and often without warning. Natural disasters in Illinois are typically related to: tornadoes, flooding, ice and snow, drought, and less frequently, earthquakes and fires. State rapid response staff mobilize upon learning that a natural disaster is underway to assist in the provision of allowable and appropriate services. The State reserves statewide rapid response funds that are available to quickly provide resources to the local workforce area(s) to serve eligible participants. In instances where the Federal Emergency Management Agency declares a *public assistance* disaster area the State will typically submit a National Dislocated Worker Grant.

D. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE PROVIDES EARLY INTERVENTION (E.G., RAPID RESPONSE) TO WORKER GROUPS ON WHOSE BEHALF A TRADE ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE (TAA) PETITION HAS BEEN FILED. (SECTION 134(A)(2)(A).) THIS DESCRIPTION MUST INCLUDE HOW THE STATE DISSEMINATES BENEFIT INFORMATION TO PROVIDE TRADE-AFFECTED WORKERS IN THE GROUPS IDENTIFIED IN THE TAA PETITIONS WITH AN ACCURATE UNDERSTANDING OF THE PROVISION OF TAA BENEFITS AND SERVICES IN SUCH A WAY THAT THEY ARE TRANSPARENT TO THE TRADE-AFFECTED DISLOCATED WORKER APPLYING FOR THEM (TRADE ACT SEC. 221(A)(2)(A) AND SEC. 225; GOVERNOR-SECRETARY AGREEMENT). DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE FUNDS THAT HAVE BEEN RESERVED FOR RAPID RESPONSE TO PROVIDE SERVICES FOR EVERY WORKER GROUP THAT FILES A TAA PETITION.

The state will use the information developed by the interagency data team, feedback from regional sector partnerships and intelligence from economic development officials to

expand layoff aversion efforts and respond to the needs of businesses before layoffs occur.As the Department of Commerce Office of Employment and Training receives notice of potential layoffs and petition filings, the Rapid Response team organizes and establishes logistics for informational meetings for Trade impacted and non-Trade Act impacted worker groups. The Rapid Response team includes partners from IDES and Title 1B administrators from the local workforce areas, as well as other partner programs based on worker and situational needs. The Benefits, Rights and Obligations, along with Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Trade Readjustment Assistance (TRA) and RTAA/ATAA benefits are covered at length with the affected workers. An overview of the Trade Adjustment Assistance benefits and services including the next steps if the petition is certified is presented. Since workers often times are not all scheduled for layoff on the same date, multiple workshops are held to provide the Trade specific information to the workers. Staff, including Title 1B, has access to updated Trade Program forms and information on Illinois workNet, and ongoing support and technical assistance from the Department of Commerce and the Department of Employment Security UI and Trade program staff.

Rapid Response Reserve funds are dedicated to layoff aversion strategies and to assist laid off workers. Layoff aversion strategies include the Talent Pipeline RFA opportunity through the Department of Commerce. The Talent Pipeline is designed to award grants for demonstration projects providing Rapid Response services to businesses and workers impacted or at risk of being impacted by company closures or layoffs. The goal of this program is to help businesses avoid layoffs where possible and help unemployed workers re-enter the workforce. Commerce is interested in investing in projects that specifically identify employers that serve WIOA-eligible dislocated workers from layoff events; projects for recently separated veterans; projects that connect employers and WIOA eligible dislocated workers with short-term, on-the-job and customized training programs; and registered apprenticeships before or after layoff and prior to new employment. The Department will consider incumbent worker projects to assist with training existing employees who are at-risk of being laid off without the training.

Training projects must provide workers with new skills to retain their existing job or quickly transition to a new one and maintain financial stability. The value for employers is remaining competitive in the global economy and saving operational, overhead and productivity costs by training current, reliable employees rather than going through the process of replacing them. For laid off workers, Rapid Response Reserve funds offer additional assistance for outreach and recruitment, training, supportive services and in the case of large layoffs, these funds also provide assistance for transition centers to add additional support for affected workers and accommodate serving higher volumes of individuals.

B. ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKER PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

1. WORK-BASED TRAINING MODELS

If the State is utilizing work-based training models (e.g. On-the-job training, Incumbent Worker training, Transitional Jobs, and Customized Training) as part of its training strategy and these strategies are not already discussed in other sections of the plan, describe the State's strategies for how these models ensure high quality training for both the participant and the employer.

Work-based training is one of the highest priorities for Illinois under WIOA. The underlying advantage of work-based learning is that by definition, it incorporates skill competencies needed by the business. There is no doubt the trainees are learning the specific skills needed, and furthermore they are learning to apply skills in the way the employer prefers. This practically guarantees individuals that complete training are positioned to immediately add value in the workplace and have marketable skills to provide upward mobility in a career pathway.

Commerce has promoted a resurgence of on-the-job training going back several years using National Emergency OJT Grant (NEG). Through investing in statewide rapid response set-aside we have been working to help local areas and businesses create a positive experience through OJT and work experience. Further, using a $12 million Workforce Innovation Fund (WIF) initiative, Commerce, ICCB, IDES and the Illinois Manufacturer's Association collaborated to promote combining work-based career exploration, paid work experience/internships, transitional jobs and OJT to create a continuum of services designed to allow participants to "earn and learn" and businesses to "try before buy". We also encouraged community colleges to collaborate with local workforce areas to create internship opportunities for eligible students before and upon graduation. This strategy is designed to ease participants and students into a paid position so they gain valuable real-world experience and the opportunity to demonstrate their essential skills to prospective employers.

WIOA was signed into law during the training cycle of our WIF project; and we strongly encouraged local areas to take advantage of the opportunity to build business relationships and pilot test work-based training under WIF to prepare them for WIOA. Another strategy we have found helpful is to engage an industry intermediary that can facilitate work-based placements from the workforce system into its member businesses. The industry intermediary can speak the language of both worlds and "translate" between private and public sector to reduce communication breakdowns.

Illinois recognizes that one of the best ways for local areas to help key industries remain globally competitive and establish good relationships with businesses is through incumbent worker training projects. Illinois has a long history of supporting incumbent worker training at the state, regional and local levels. With the elimination of the layoff aversion requirement for local incumbent worker projects, it is anticipated that there will be a marked increase in incumbent worker activities. The state enthusiastically supports work-based training strategies including incumbent worker training projects that will make both the business and employees more competitive

2. REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP

Describe how the State will incorporate Registered Apprenticeship into its strategy for service design and delivery (e.g., job center staff taking applications and conducting assessments).

The State is embedding Registered Apprenticeship on multiple levels and aligning it within career pathways as part of all workforce development efforts. The use of Registered Apprenticeships will be encouraged through demonstration projects, policy guidance and technical assistance. With increased attention on various forms of work-based learning, we expect all types of apprenticeship (pre-apprenticeship, non-registered and registered) to

become more common as the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) is implemented. Encouraging participants to simultaneously earn and learn higher technical skills through an apprenticeship will set them up to succeed in the workplace. The ultimate solution to incorporating Registered Apprenticeships into WIOA will depend on the final form of Title IB performance requirements, the planned duration of the training and the occupational demand.

The Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB) is moving toward a comprehensive, cross-program, public-private approach to fostering the use of Registered Apprenticeships. On June 16, 2016, the IWIB created an Apprenticeship Standing Committee to recommend a plan for establishing a comprehensive and integrated apprenticeship system in Illinois, oversee its implementation and performance and recommend improvements. This 32-member body represents employers, business associations, organized labor, education, community-based organizations, philanthropies, local workforce innovation areas and the four core state agency partners.

Through its planning and implementation responsibilities, this committee plays a lead role in integrating Registered Apprenticeships throughout Illinois' workforce development system. Five areas of activity are included in the Apprenticeship Standing Committee's charge:

380. Describe a vision of apprenticeship in Illinois, including how apprenticeships fit in the WIOA Unified State Plan and in the context of sector-based employment and training strategies;
381. Describe the state of apprenticeship in Illinois: inventory assets (supply), assess demand by sector, and identify gaps and alignment opportunities;
382. Highlight effective practices and recommend strategies for:
    - engaging employers and industry partners;
    - assessing the viability of industry sectors to target for apprenticeships;
    - expanding access to under-represented populations including women, communities of color, opportunity youth, people with disabilities; and
    - aligning apprenticeship resources and programs across all partners;
383. Identify immediate opportunities to strengthen and expand apprenticeships; and
384. Identify state apprenticeship goals and performance metrics.

The committee's planning efforts received a boost from the recent ApprenticeshipUSA State Accelerator Grant awarded to Illinois in June. The committee is advising the state on this planning grant, and has already made significant progress in designing a comprehensive state apprenticeship system that will expand and diversify Registered Apprenticeships in Illinois. Northern Illinois University's Center for Governmental Studies is staffing the Illinois Apprenticeship Committee and assisting in the delivery of the State Accelerator Grant. Their involvement will help ensure swift progress and alignment among various state apprenticeship efforts.

Other activities undertaken by the Committee since it was formed include:

- Meeting with the Regional Executive Assistant from the United States Department of Labor's (DOL) Region V Office of Apprenticeship and other Illinois Office of

Apprenticeship staff to understand the requirements and process of Registered Apprenticeship;
- Researching apprenticeship models, policies and strategies of six benchmark states: Iowa, Michigan, Wisconsin, South Carolina, North Carolina and California; and
- Adopting the five core characteristics of DOL's definition of Registered Apprenticeships (business involvement; structured on-the-job training; related instruction; rewards for skill gains; and a national occupational credential) as the basis for Illinois' apprenticeship system.

At their last meeting on July 27, 2016, the Committee agreed that Illinois should apply for implementation funding available through the ApprenticeshipUSA State Expansion Grant. They are focusing not only on the expansion of Registered Apprenticeships, but on the pipeline to Registered Apprenticeship represented by youth apprenticeships, pre-apprenticeships and some types of customized employer-based training. Committee members have begun to identify activities that need to be undertaken to build a comprehensive and integrated apprenticeship system in Illinois:

- Research specific employer engagement and support practices in other states;
- Clarify the message around Registered Apprenticeship and develop an outreach and marketing campaign to demystify apprenticeship throughout Illinois;
- Focus on data collection and building the data infrastructure to support growth and expansion in Registered Apprenticeships;
- Address misperceptions and confusion surrounding apprenticeship, particularly among youth;
- Develop an apprenticeship performance framework to measure participant and employer outcomes at the local, regional and state levels through both quantitative and qualitative data;
- Integrate apprenticeships into state workforce development and economic development policy;
- Reach out to LWIAs and businesses to inform them of Illinois' new apprenticeship system and related opportunities for assistance and support; and
- Identify other sources of support for apprenticeships to strengthen the entire apprenticeship pipeline and ensure long-term sustainability for the system.

Each of the public partners is committed to jointly integrating the policy and program recommendations into services. In addition to the efforts of the committee, Illinois has already begun incorporating policy and program enhancements to promote the use of Registered Apprenticeships. In April 2016, WIOA policy letter 15-WIOA-5.3, which pertains to the state's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) was issued. The new policy allows apprenticeship programs registered with the United States Department of Labor (DOL) to bypass certain application requirements and automatically be placed on the ETPL upon notifying a local area of its interest in providing services to Title IB participants.

The IWIB Apprenticeship Committee recognizes that apprenticeship is an effective work-based learning strategy into a career pathway. To further integrate apprenticeship and advance the use of this strategy, the Committee created three subcommittees: Business Engagement, Marketing Strategy, and Systems and Supports. These subcommittees were created to identify and implement specific activities to reach Illinois' goals of expanding and

diversifying Registered Apprenticeship throughout the State. They have formed a strategic plan that identifies priorities, activities, and strategies for the IWIB Apprenticeship Committee, to ensure it is aligned with the State's strategic plan.

Led by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Registered Apprenticeship continues to be in the forefront of activity among the State's major agencies - Illinois Board of Higher Education, Illinois Community College Board, Illinois State Board of Education, Illinois Department of Employment Security, the Illinois Department of Human Services, the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice, and the Illinois Department of Children and Family services. Under the Governor's Cabinet on Children and Youth's Workforce Readiness through Apprenticeship and Pathways (WRAP) project, these agencies have been convening, multiple times a month, to determine how to better align their efforts and funds into a shared vision of creating opportunity by expanding Registered Apprenticeship and creating a pipeline to Registered Apprenticeship through youth apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeships. Furthermore, recognizing that apprenticeships are a strategy to connect individuals to career pathways, these agencies are embedding apprenticeship into the career pathway language and definitions, which have been developed collaboratively and will be adopted by all.

The IWIB Apprenticeship Committee collaborated with the Governor's Cabinet on Children and Youth to engage hundreds of businesses within the state to promote the Apprenticeship Plus Framework. These businesses, along with Local Workforce Innovation Area representatives and service providers, were invited to webinars and to regional roundtables held in Southern Cook County, Springfield, and Mt. Vernon, Illinois. At both the webinars and roundtables, participants were introduced to the Apprenticeship Plus Framework, available funding opportunities, and other resources on how to start or expand Apprenticeship in their organization or region and the benefits and costs of doing so. At the regional roundtables, participants were greeted with a video of Governor Rauner asking for their commitment to fostering apprenticeship opportunities.

Similar to the business and industry roundtables, the IWIB Apprenticeship Committee again collaborated with the Governor's Cabinet and held a series of Youth Roundtables. Multiple businesses, workforce partners, youth, community colleges, and service providers were contacted across the State and invited to regional roundtables to discuss the inclusion of at risk youth and youth, in general, between the ages of 16-24, into Registered Apprenticeship and Pre-Apprenticeships. Focus groups were held at these roundtables with both youth and services providers. The Young Invincibles led the effort for the Youth Roundtables, aimed to gather feedback from young adults and supporting staff. They focused on youth apprenticeships and explored what makes youth apprenticeships exciting, what could keep the program from being successful, and how Illinois should facilitate partnerships and market these opportunities. Over 125 youth and staff attended in Mt. Vernon, Peoria, and Hillside. Between 12 and 25 youth attended each roundtable, coming from community colleges, foster care, the juvenile justice system, apprenticeship worksites, workforce development programs, and agencies (including Department of Employment Security, Department of Human Services, Department of Children and Family Services, and the Community College Board). The Young Invincibles produced a report from the research and findings, "Making Youth Apprenticeships Work for Illinois' Young Adults."

The State is utilizing the services of the Young Invincibles to provide technical assistance to both businesses and service providers who have apprentices between the ages of 16-24. The Young Invincibles are a non-profit, youth advocacy group and have conducted research around millennials and apprenticeship. In addition to their own research through focus groups and surveys in Illinois, the Young Invincibles have researched other states' practices around supporting youth in apprenticeships or reaching those who may enter Registered Apprenticeship. The Young Invincibles also created and delivered training on best practices in mentoring young adults from underserved backgrounds. Additionally, they created toolkits on recruiting and supporting young adults.

For National Apprenticeship Week, the IWIB Apprenticeship Committee, with the help of the IWP, hosted a three-hour event in Champaign, IL to engage employers and other stakeholders. Building on the interest and success of the Department of Labor's Office of Apprenticeship presentation to the IWIB Apprenticeship Committee, the event began with debunking myths of apprenticeship. The event emphasized the importance of partnerships among business, education, and workforce. Other presentations by a community college, a business, a youth advocacy group, DCEO, and ICCB described how to create or foster these partnerships for better outcomes.

On the Illinois workNet platform, the IWIB Apprenticeship committee has created a website that is the official apprenticeship-landing page for the State and will be a repository of resources for potential employers, sponsors, apprentices, etc. It highlights success stories of Registered Apprenticeship around the stats via profiles and videos.

Illinois was awarded a $1.3 M ApprenticeshipUSA grant in PY16. This award currently funds adult apprenticeships in transportation-distribution-logistics, construction and manufacturing. The performance period of the award was recently extended to April 2019. Experience gained through these grants will inform the mainstreaming of apprenticeships into local workforce areas.

Additional information on how the Title IB Program is encouraging Registered Apprenticeship, unregistered apprenticeship and structured internship opportunities is posted on Illinois workNet (https://www2.illinoisworknet.com/Training/Pages/Apprenticeship.aspx).

3. TRAINING PROVIDER ELIGIBILITY PROCEDURE

Provide the procedure, eligibility criteria, and information requirements for determining training provider initial and continued eligibility, including Registered Apprenticeship programs (WIOA Section 122).

On April 20, 2016, Illinois transmitted Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Policy 15-WIOA-5.3, which set procedures, criteria and information requirements for determining training provider initial and continued eligibility, including Registered Apprenticeship programs. This policy is included with this plan under Attachment U at https://www.illinoisworknet.com/DownloadPrint/Attachment%20U%20-%20Policy%20Documents.pdf. Below is a summary of the requirements of that policy.

Criteria for Initial Eligibility

Only eligible training providers and their eligible training programs will be included in the state's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). The initial eligibility requirements apply to all organizations providing training services to WIOA adults and dislocated workers. Providers of on-the-job training, customized training, incumbent worker training, internships, and paid or unpaid work experience opportunities, or transitional employment will not be subject to those requirements. To be eligible to receive funds for the provision of training services, the provider must be:

- an institution of higher education that provides a program that leads to a recognized post-secondary credential; this may include programs receiving approval or accreditation by the U.S. Department of Education, Illinois Board of Higher Education, Illinois Community College Board, or Illinois State Board of Education;
- an entity that carries out programs registered under the Act of August 16, 1937 (commonly known as the "National Apprenticeship Act"; 50 Stat. 664, chapter 663; 29 U.S.C. 50 et seq.) as recognized in Illinois by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), Office of Apprenticeship; or
- another public or private provider of a program of training services, which may include joint labor-management organizations; eligible providers of adult education and literacy activities under Title II if such activities are provided in combination with occupational skills training; or programs that have been recognized by the industry as meeting the standards necessary for approval or accreditation, when such standards exist.

All Registered Apprenticeship (RA) programs registered with DOL, Office of Apprenticeship or a recognized state apprenticeship agency are automatically eligible to be included as an eligible training provider so long as they show interest in being added to the ETPL and the following process is completed:

- Registered Apprenticeships must indicate their interest in being included on the ETPL.
- Local Workforce Innovation Areas (LWIAs) should inform the RAs in their local area via mass email, phone call or other method of these requirements.
- An RA may contact its LWIA or State of Illinois, Office of Employment and Training to indicate its interest in being included on the ETPL.
- LWIAs must notify the Illinois Department of Commerce, Office of Employment and Training in writing of all Registered Apprenticeship programs that have shown interest in being included on the ETPL.

Procedure for Initial Eligibility

Except for Registered Apprenticeships (see above), new training providers must apply for Initial Eligibility in accordance with the following guidance: Applications for Initial Eligibility of Training Providers and Training Programs. Applications for initial eligibility must be submitted according to the geographical location of the training program. A training provider is prohibited from applying for training program eligibility in LWIAs where the program site is not geographically located, unless the LWIA in which the program is located denies eligibility or fails to act on the application within 30 days of the date of

application. The LWIA should instruct the training provider as to where they should apply for each training program, as follows:

- Training programs located in a single LWIA must initially apply with the LWIA where its program is geographically located.
- Training programs offered in multiple LWIAs that are identical across each of the LWIAs must initially apply to the LWIA in which the training provider has identified as its headquarters and/or primary location.
- Training programs offered in multiple LWIAs - but the program is not substantially the same across the various LWIAs - must initially apply to each LWIA in which the training program is offered.
- Training programs located out-of-state or not offered at a physical location (e.g., distance learning) must initially apply to the LWIA from which it anticipates receiving the most students. A training provider is prohibited from applying for training program eligibility in LWIAs where the program site is not geographically located, unless the LWIA in which the program is located denies eligibility or fails to act on the application within 30 days of the date of application.

Information Requirements:

- Program Name (should match the name found in a course catalog for the training provider, if published);
- Program Description;
- 6-digit CIP code;
- O*Net code(s) that identifies the occupation of the eligible training program;
- Website link to additional program information;
- How many weeks it typically takes to complete the program;
- The total hours of instruction/classroom/lab time;
- Other than employment, the primary goal of the program (i.e., Associates Degree, Bachelor's Degree, etc.);
- If Certification, License, or Registration, the name of the certifying, licensing, or registering body;
- Identify up to three occupations for which the individual will be qualified to immediately hold after completing this program;
- The program offerings;
- The entry level requirements of the program;
- The total cost of this program;
- Types of financial aid available; and
- Year the program was established.

All job seekers and program partners will have ready access to the provider list on the Illinois workNet web portal. The information provided on the list will allow local career services staff under the LWIBs and the Illinois Departments of Employment Security and Illinois Department of Human Services Division of Rehabilitation Services to better coordinate services and allow job seekers to make better informed decisions when selecting programs of study.

Procedure for Continuing Eligibility

The continued eligibility policy requires that all training providers (other than Registered Apprenticeships) apply at least every two years for approval, as well as for all training programs, to remain on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). Eligibility is determined based on state and local performance and eligibility criteria, and any other conditions the local board considers necessary. Timelines for applying for continued eligibility as well as approval or denial are outlined within the policy.

Below are the requirements for continued eligibility and continued inclusion on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) for training providers and programs previously approved for initial eligibility and those training providers and programs that were approved for transitional eligibility (as provided under WIOA Transition Policy Letter 7).

- LWIAs must ensure all training providers have their eligible training programs determined for continued eligibility on at least a biennial (at least every two years) basis to maintain their status as an eligible training program.
    - LWIAs may want to inform each training provider of any upcoming continued eligibility dates (i.e., a notice sent to the training provider 90 days prior to the continued eligibility date).
    - Continued eligibility is based on the date entered during the initial eligibility or most recent continued eligibility determination of the training program (as outlined in Section E.4. of this policy letter).
- The LWIA must receive the training provider's intent to apply for continued eligibility of a training program or programs in sufficient time to meet the following continued eligibility timeline requirements.
    - The training provider expresses intent for continued eligibility of a training program by resubmitting the Training Program Basic Information application in IWDS.
- If a training program has had only changes in information that are not significant information (as outlined in Section F.2.a.), the training provider must make such changes in IWDS and save the Training Program Basic Information record.
- If a training program has had no changes in information, the training provider must still save the Training Program Basic Information record.
- Once the Training Program Basic Information record has been saved, the Initial Criteria Status record will change to "Pending Continued Eligibility (recertification)".
- The change to "Pending Continued Eligibility (recertification)" status will prompt the LWIA that they must send the training program to the LWIB for review and determination.
    - A report will be available for the local area to identify any training programs with a "Pending Continued Eligibility" status.
- The frequency of producing these reports will be a local decision.
- The LWIA should utilize due diligence in producing this report routinely throughout the year keeping in mind training programs may be jeopardized if they are not approved for continued eligibility promptly.
- The report is titled "Training Programs Nearing Continued Eligibility (recertification) Date" in IWDS.
- The LWIA should continue to make available and enroll customers in any training program with a "Pending" status.

- The LWIA has 90 days to submit the application(s) to the LWIB for review and approval. The submission to the LWIB should include the following items:
    - A current copy of the Training Program Basic Information record from IWDS;
    - Identification of items that have changed since the initial eligibility or most recent continued eligibility determination;
    - Performance data (as outlined in Section J of this policy letter) for the training program; and
    - Any additional information the training provider has submitted for review or the LWIB determines pertinent to the review.
- The LWIB should grant continued eligibility to a training program based on the following:
    - State and local eligibility criteria are still being met;
    - State and local performance criteria have been met;
    - One or more O*Net codes associated with the training program remain on the current Demand Occupation Training List;
    - The training provider has maintained timely updates in the Illinois Workforce Development System of information on the training program; and
    - Other conditions for which the LWIB considers necessary for continued eligibility.
- The LWIB must determine eligibility of the training program within 30 days of receiving the application from the LWIA.
    - An exception to the requirement to approve subsequent eligibility of transitionally eligible providers and programs within 30 days of application is being extended through June 30, 2016. This exception will provide up to 90 days from application date for the LWIB to determine a program eligible. This is being extended to allow local boards ample time to meet and review the applications as this policy is phased in. After June 30, 2016, this exception expires. The 90-day period shall NOT extend past June 30, 2016 as these providers and programs must receive a determination no later than June 30, 2016 or they will be removed from the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) as their transitional eligibility period expires.
- LWIBs must notify the LWIA within five (5) business days of their decision to approve continued eligibility as a training program.
    - The LWIA must update the Training Program Basic Information record in IWDS within ten (10) business days of notification by the LWIB. The update should include the following:
        - The Status must be changed from "Pending Continued Eligibility (Recertification)"to "Accept" to indicate an accepted continued eligibility application.
        - The Program Status must be listed as "Approved".
        - The Last Elig./Cert. Date must be listed as the date the LWIB approved the continued eligibility, not the date the entry is made into IWDS.
        - The Next Elig./Cert. Date should be listed as the date for which the next continued eligibility should take place (and should take into

consideration the same factors for initial eligibility as outlined in Section C.3. of this policy letter).

- Training programs that are not determined eligible by the LWIB within 30 days of receipt of the application from the LWIA will be removed from the approved program list and may reapply after one year.
- Training programs that are not determined eligible within 120 days of their continued eligibility date will be removed from the approved program list in IWDS. *(Note: The intent of this provision is to automatically clear training programs from IWDS when they have not been approved for continued eligibility in a timely fashion. Such programs will not be available for selection and thus are removed.)*
- LWIAs shall cease to enroll customers in any training program that has been moved to the capture list. Customers who have already been enrolled in training programs that are removed from the capture list shall be allowed to complete such training programs.
- A training provider may reapply for eligibility for any training program that was not determined eligible for any reason other than "for cause" reasons.

4. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL IMPLEMENT AND MONITOR THE PRIORITY FOR PUBLIC ASSISTANCE RECIPIENTS, OTHER LOW-INCOME INDIVIDUALS, AND INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE BASIC SKILLS DEFICIENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF WIOA SEC. 134(C)(3)(E), WHICH APPLIES TO INDIVIDUALIZED CAREER SERVICES AND TRAINING SERVICES FUNDED BY THE ADULT FORMULA PROGRAM.

All Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) inquirants are asked to identify if they are on public assistance, are low income, or are basic skills deficient. Inquirants are asked to provide documentation of earning diplomas, degrees and certificates and those without post-secondary credentials and degrees are tested for math and reading skills at intake to determine eligibility for the Adult program. Individuals that become participants in the Adult and Dislocated Worker streams have information on their income, basic skills and enrollment in other social service programs such as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recorded and tracked in the Illinois Workforce Development System (IWDS). IWDS is a web-based client tracking and reporting system that serves as the central repository of data on all WIOA participants. Tracking of participants with these indicators is done routinely at the local and state level to ensure that priority of service requirements is met.

On October 29, 2015, the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (Commerce) issued WIOA Policy Letter 15-WIOA-4.2 and other related policy letters (see Attachment U at https://www.illinoisworknet.com/DownloadPrint/Attachment%20U%20-%20Policy%20Documents.pdf that outline Commerce's WIOA Title IB general and funding stream eligibility and documentation requirements. Allowable supporting documentation is listed in the attachment to the policy letter and there are many items that can be used to support eligibility and identification for priority of service. We require the use of TABE and other tests to verify basic skills deficiency. Identifying public assistance registrants is supported by data from the Illinois Department of Human Services systems. Veteran status is documented using the DD214 form.

Commerce is in the process of updating its online monitoring instrument to reflect both state policy and the WIOA Final Rule. The updated monitoring instrument will provide for a review of general eligibility as well as priority of service based on the new requirements. In addition, the state's monitoring instrument will verify all local areas have established written policies and procedures to ensure priority for public assistance recipients, other low-income individuals, individuals who are basic skills deficient and veterans. Until updates to Commerce's online monitoring instrument are completed, Commerce continues to use WIOA-specific participant file review worksheets to monitor eligibility for participants served in the WIOA Adult program. Commerce conducts on-site programmatic and fiscal monitoring of all local areas at least once annually.

5. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S CRITERIA REGARDING LOCAL AREA TRANSFER OF FUNDS BETWEEN THE ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKER PROGRAMS.

The Program Year 2015 Funding Notice for the Title 1B funds provides that the local workforce areas can transfer up to fifty percent (50%) of funds between the adult and dislocated worker funding streams without approval from the state. The Department will consider requests that exceed the fifty percent (50%) transfer threshold based the local data and overall performance.

C. YOUTH PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

With respect to youth workforce investment activities authorized in section 129 of WIOA,—

1. IDENTIFY THE STATE-DEVELOPED CRITERIA TO BE USED BY LOCAL BOARDS IN AWARDING GRANTS OR CONTRACTS FOR YOUTH WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES AND DESCRIBE HOW THE LOCAL BOARDS WILL TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION THE ABILITY OF THE PROVIDERS TO MEET PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES BASED ON PRIMARY INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE FOR THE YOUTH PROGRAM AS DESCRIBED IN SECTION 116(B)(2)(A)(II) OF WIOA IN AWARDING SUCH GRANTS OR CONTRACTS.*

* Sec. 102(b)(2)(D)(i)(V)

In order to address the needs of youth in Illinois, the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board created the Disadvantaged Youth Career Pathways Task Force to create a set of recommendations for how local areas should build partnerships and engage businesses for work-based learning and other initiatives, exercising any necessary WIOA program elements in pursuit of sustainable career pathways for youth throughout the state. It is anticipated that formal policy will be developed as the state reviews the Task Force recommendations and the final WIOA regulations.

2. DESCRIBE THE STRATEGIES THE STATE WILL USE TO ACHIEVE IMPROVED OUTCOMES FOR OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH AS DESCRIBED IN 129(A)(1)(B), INCLUDING HOW IT WILL LEVERAGE AND ALIGN THE CORE PROGRAMS, ANY COMBINED STATE PLAN PARTNER PROGRAMS INCLUDED IN THIS PLAN, REQUIRED AND OPTIONAL ONE-STOP PARTNER PROGRAMS, AND ANY OTHER RESOURCES AVAILABLE.

Illinois' Unified State Plan seeks to frame recommendations for creating sustainable career pathways for youth throughout the state, with a focus on the needs of young people who are not in school and not working, a group we refer to as "Opportunity Youth." Of the estimated 1.8 million youth ages 15-24 living in Illinois in 2013, approximately 18.3% were considered to be in poverty and 19.3% were unemployed - more than twice the rate of the entire labor force. Further, of this 15-24-year-old cohort, an estimated 33.5% were not in school or working. These opportunity youth have much higher poverty (30%) and unemployment (40.2%) rates than the general population that age.

At the state level, the Core Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) partners seek to leverage existing efforts such as the Governor's Cabinet on Children and Youth, which is creating a strategic vision for education and health and human services by bringing together all state entities that interact with children into a central unit, and the New Skills for Youth Initiative, a national effort funding Illinois' secondary education agency to actualize a robust plan for career pathway curriculum integration and connections to the workforce. In addition to these examples, Illinois currently has additional legislative efforts and policy initiatives that have been and will continue to be tied into the Youth Committee of the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB), formed as a recommendation of the IWIB Disadvantaged Youth Task Force (which met from 2015-2016).

Through the IWIB Youth Committee, Illinois has leveraged the input of the business community, the Illinois P-20 Council, Illinois Learning Exchanges, state boards, agencies and other partners to create a set of criteria for career pathway programs that meet the needs of Illinois youth that have barriers to employment.

Illinois has secured a funding commitment from all core WIOA partners to blend together various funding streams to support business-led sector initiatives based on career pathways that fully mainstream this youth population, while pointing the way to a sustainable integration of services across agencies and partnerships. This funding, and relevant criteria, were developed into a Request for Application that identified a number of pilot projects. Technical Assistance related to the development of quality programs is being designed for deployment leading up to the release of the Request for Application (RFA).

The State subsequently refined the RFA to incorporate lessons learned from the first application round. The program design is focused on a platform of work-based learning, the development of foundational skills, continuous improvement through education and training, and sustainability - all with the support of public-sector and business partners. Ten success elements for workforce pilot programs serving opportunity youth were identified by the task force and have been included as the pillars of the RFA, as well as key activities identified towards the accomplishment of Illinois' goals for youth activities. These elements demonstrate the principles, strategies, and criteria in the WIOA Unified State Plan and how various funding sources may be blended for full regional ownership and sustainability.

Another project for this population is "Building Futures". Launched in 2016, "Building Futures" is a collaborative initiative between the Departments of Commerce and Children and Family Services that expands state resources to improve employment outcomes for youth transitioning from foster care. Youth and young adults in "Building Futures" have access to approved training programs and employment services through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The program promotes employment and training opportunities for youth in care of the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services

(DCFS) through an employment and training program with a sector-based career pathway approach to job readiness, career exploration, and work based learning.

3. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL ENSURE THAT ALL 14 PROGRAM ELEMENTS DESCRIBED IN WIOA SECTION 129(C)(2) ARE MADE AVAILABLE AND EFFECTIVELY IMPLEMENTED, INCLUDING QUALITY PRE-APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS UNDER THE WORK EXPERIENCE PROGRAM ELEMENT.*

* Sec. 102(b)(2)(D)(i)(I)

Illinois will maintain programmatic fidelity to WIOA youth policy through a system of robust monitoring, examination of best practices statewide and nationally, and continuous information sharing and technical assistance. Illinois' Disadvantaged Youth Career Pathways Task Force is the first step in this process. High quality pre-apprenticeship programs may be used under the auspices of Youth work experience to create a direct conduit for enrollment into Registered Apprenticeships.

4. PROVIDE THE LANGUAGE CONTAINED IN THE STATE POLICY FOR "REQUIRING ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE TO ENTER OR COMPLETE AN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM, OR TO SECURE AND HOLD EMPLOYMENT" CRITERION FOR OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH SPECIFIED IN WIOA SECTION 129(A)(1)(B)(III)(VIII) AND FOR "REQUIRING ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE TO COMPLETE AN EDUCATION PROGRAM, OR TO SECURE AND HOLD EMPLOYMENT" CRITERION FOR IN-SCHOOL YOUTH SPECIFIED IN WIOA SECTION 129(A)(1)(C)(IV)(VII). IF THE STATE DOES NOT HAVE A POLICY, DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL ENSURE THAT LOCAL AREAS WILL HAVE A POLICY FOR THESE CRITERIA.

Illinois does not yet have a statewide policy. The Illinois Workforce Investment Board (IWIB) Youth Committee is examining the issue from a statewide policy perspective. The Illinois IWIB created the Disadvantaged Youth Task Force to use the vision of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Unified State Plan to frame recommendations for creating sustainable career pathways for youth throughout the state. The task force in turn created the IWIB Youth Committee to carry on its work. The committee is currently setting an agenda to examine policy issues affecting youth services in the wake of final WIOA regulations. The "Needs Additional Assistance" clauses in both In-School and Out-of-School youth eligibility will be reexamined by the committee for possible statewide policy solutions that are able to fit both our urban and rural dynamics, while leaving the flexibility needed for local areas to design effective local programming. This item presents an opportunity for each of the core partners to help create a cross-program policy definition that will allow their local staff to have consistent definitions. This coordinated policy could be codified through a joint issuance (the preferred method), or could be adopted as policy by each of the core partners. Regardless of the mechanism for issuance, the state partners for Title IB, Title II, Title III and Title IV are committed to improving service delivery through adoption of common policies.

5. INCLUDE THE STATE DEFINITION, AS DEFINED IN LAW, FOR NOT ATTENDING SCHOOL AND ATTENDING SCHOOL AS SPECIFIED IN WIOA SECTION 129(A)(1)(B)(I) AND SECTION 129(A)(1)(C)(I). IF STATE LAW DOES NOT DEFINE

"NOT ATTENDING SCHOOL" OR "ATTENDING SCHOOL," INDICATE THAT IS THE CASE AND PROVIDE THE STATE POLICY FOR DETERMINING WHETHER A YOUTH IS ATTENDING OR NOT ATTENDING SCHOOL.

Illinois State law does not define "not attending school" or "attending school". We continue to work with education entities in the state to create a working definition. For the time being we place emphasis on the term "School", which under the Illinois School Code (105 ILCS 5) is defined as " School - "The terms "common schools", "free schools" and "public schools" are used interchangeably to apply to any school operated by authority of this Act."

The Illinois School Records Act (105 ILCS 10/2) defines as: "School" means any public preschool, day care center, kindergarten, nursery, elementary or secondary educational institution, vocational school, special educational facility or any other elementary or secondary educational agency or institution and any person, agency or institution which maintains school student records from more than one school, but does not include a private or non-public school.

The Illinois State Board of Education states that "A non-public school is "any non-profit, non-home-based, and non-public elementary or secondary school that is in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and attendance at which satisfies the requirements" of 105 ILCS 5/26-1 of the Code."

6. IF USING THE BASIC SKILLS DEFICIENT DEFINITION CONTAINED IN WIOA SECTION 3(5)(B), INCLUDE THE STATE DEFINITION WHICH MUST FURTHER DEFINE HOW TO DETERMINE IF AN INDIVIDUAL IS UNABLE TO COMPUTE OR SOLVE PROBLEMS, OR READ, WRITE, OR SPEAK ENGLISH, AT A LEVEL NECESSARY TO FUNCTION ON THE JOB, IN THE INDIVIDUAL'S FAMILY, OR IN SOCIETY. IF NOT USING THE PORTION OF THE DEFINITION CONTAINED IN WIOA SECTION 3(5)(B), INDICATE THAT IS THE CASE.

With the issuance of WIOA Policy 15-WIOA-4.4 Youth Eligibility, we reference the Basic Skills Deficient definition found in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act which is:

The term ''basic skills deficient'' means, with respect to an individual— (A) who is a youth, that the individual has English reading, writing, or computing skills at or below the 8th grade level on a generally accepted standardized test; or (B) who is a youth or adult, that the individual is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English, at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society.

D. SINGLE-AREA STATE REQUIREMENTS

In States where there is only one local workforce investment area, the governor serves as both the State and local chief elected official. In such cases, the State must submit any information required in the local plan (WIOA section 106(d)(2)). States with a single workforce area must include—

1. ANY COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD THAT REPRESENT DISAGREEMENT WITH THE PLAN. (WIOA SECTION 108(D)(3).)

2. THE ENTITY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DISBURSAL OF GRANT FUNDS, AS DETERMINED BY THE GOVERNOR, IF DIFFERENT FROM THAT FOR THE STATE. (WIOA SECTION 108(B)(15).)

3. A DESCRIPTION OF THE TYPE AND AVAILABILITY OF WIOA TITLE I YOUTH ACTIVITIES AND SUCCESSFUL MODELS, INCLUDING FOR YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES. (WIOA SECTION 108(B)(9).)

4. A DESCRIPTION OF THE ROLES AND RESOURCE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE ONE-STOP PARTNERS.

5. THE COMPETITIVE PROCESS USED TO AWARD THE SUBGRANTS AND CONTRACTS FOR TITLE I ACTIVITIES.

6. HOW TRAINING SERVICES OUTLINED IN SECTION 134 WILL BE PROVIDED THROUGH INDIVIDUAL TRAINING ACCOUNTS AND/OR THROUGH CONTRACTS, AND HOW SUCH TRAINING APPROACHES WILL BE COORDINATED. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL MEET INFORMED CUSTOMER CHOICE REQUIREMENTS REGARDLESS OF TRAINING APPROACH.

7. HOW THE STATE BOARD, IN FULFILLING LOCAL BOARD FUNCTIONS, WILL COORDINATE TITLE I ACTIVITIES WITH THOSE ACTIVITIES UNDER TITLE II. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE 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.

8. COPIES OF EXECUTED COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WHICH DEFINE HOW ALL LOCAL SERVICE PROVIDERS WILL CARRY OUT THE REQUIREMENTS FOR INTEGRATION OF AND ACCESS TO THE ENTIRE SET OF SERVICES AVAILABLE IN THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM, INCLUDING COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH ENTITIES ADMINISTERING REHABILITATION ACT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES.

E. WAIVER REQUESTS (OPTIONAL)

States wanting to request waivers as part of their title I-B Operational Plan must include a waiver plan that includes the following information for each waiver requested:

1. IDENTIFIES THE STATUTORY OR REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS FOR WHICH A WAIVER IS REQUESTED AND THE GOALS THAT THE STATE OR LOCAL AREA, AS APPROPRIATE, INTENDS TO ACHIEVE AS A RESULT OF THE WAIVER AND HOW THOSE GOALS RELATE TO THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN;

2. DESCRIBES THE ACTIONS THAT THE STATE OR LOCAL AREA, AS APPROPRIATE, HAS UNDERTAKEN TO REMOVE STATE OR LOCAL STATUTORY OR REGULATORY BARRIERS;

3. DESCRIBES THE GOALS OF THE WAIVER AND THE EXPECTED PROGRAMMATIC OUTCOMES IF THE REQUEST IS GRANTED;

4. DESCRIBES HOW THE WAIVER WILL ALIGN WITH THE DEPARTMENT'S POLICY PRIORITIES, SUCH AS:

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX. SUPPORTING EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT;
YYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYY. CONNECTING EDUCATION AND TRAINING STRATEGIES;
ZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZ. SUPPORTING WORK-BASED LEARNING;
AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA. IMPROVING JOB AND CAREER RESULTS, AND
BBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBB. OTHER GUIDANCE ISSUED BY THE DEPARTMENT.

5. DESCRIBES THE INDIVIDUALS AFFECTED BY THE WAIVER, INCLUDING HOW THE WAIVER WILL IMPACT SERVICES FOR DISADVANTAGED POPULATIONS OR INDIVIDUALS WITH MULTIPLE BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT; AND

6. DESCRIBES THE PROCESSES USED TO:

CCCCCCCCCCCCCCCCCC. MONITOR THE PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING THE WAIVER;
DDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDD. PROVIDE NOTICE TO ANY LOCAL BOARD AFFECTED BY THE WAIVER;
EEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE.PROVIDE ANY LOCAL BOARD AFFECTED BY THE WAIVER AN OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT ON THE REQUEST;
FFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFF. ENSURE MEANINGFUL PUBLIC COMMENT, INCLUDING COMMENT BY BUSINESS AND ORGANIZED LABOR, ON THE WAIVER.
GGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGG. COLLECT AND REPORT INFORMATION ABOUT WAIVER OUTCOMES IN THE STATE'S WIOA ANNUAL REPORT

7. THE SECRETARY MAY REQUIRE THAT STATES PROVIDE THE MOST RECENT DATA AVAILABLE ABOUT THE OUTCOMES OF THE EXISTING WAIVER IN CASES WHERE THE STATE SEEKS RENEWAL OF A PREVIOUSLY APPROVED WAIVER;

WAIVER REQUEST - EXPAND DEFINITION OF APPRENTICESHIP CREDENTIAL

Statutory and/or regulatory requirements to be waived

Indicate which part of the WIOA or the regulations the state would like to waive.

The State of Illinois is seeking a waiver from Section 116 of WIOA and 20 CFR 677.155, to expand the definition of the credential required to be issued specifically by Registered Apprenticeship programs during program participation or within one year after "exit".

Actions undertaken to remove state or local barriers

Describe the actions undertaken to remove state or local barriers.

There are currently no state or local statutory or regulatory barriers to implementing the requested waiver. State of Illinois regulations and policy align with current federal law.

Goals and expected programmatic outcomes of waiver

Describe and specify how the waiver will help the state achieve an identified strategic goal or set of goals that it has outlined in its State Plan. If possible and appropriate the type of waiver requested, provide quantifiable projections for programmatic outcomes that will result from the waiver.

Illinois is leveraging multiple initiatives to further integrate apprenticeship opportunities into the WIOA required and optional program partners throughout the state. The Governor has mobilized a broad cross-section of apprenticeship stakeholders to drive this important planning process. Representing a range of perspectives and resources, these individuals are serving on the Illinois Apprenticeship Committee (a standing committee of the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB)) and oversee this planning effort and continue into implementation. This committee is encouraging demonstration projects as well as making policy and technical assistance recommendations.

A waiver, to expand the definition of the credential required to be issued by an apprenticeship program during program participation or within one year after "exit" would greatly increase the promotion and utilization of WIOA-supported apprenticeships.

Outcomes

Given the work-based learning and academic structure of apprenticeship programs, we request allowing the credential to include one or more of the following Registered Apprenticeship components completed in one year:

- Attainment of college credits - not just a two-year credential or certificate, associates, or another measure that takes more than one year to earn.
- The USDOL recommended 144 hours of related training instruction.
- The USDOL recommended minimum of 2000 hours of OJT.

These components of an expanded credential definition related to Registered Apprenticeship maintain the key qualities of a Recognized Post-Secondary Credential found in Section 3(52) of WIOA including industry-recognized, portable, third-party validated/accredited, and stackable.

Approval of this waiver will provide additional flexibility and support an increase in the usage of WIOA supported apprenticeships and seeing WIOA funding as an appropriate funding source. This waiver could also positively impact the other WIOA performance indicators.

It is anticipated that expanding the definition will ease some of the apprehension of LWIBs in using apprenticeship training models

Department of Labor's policy priorities

Describe how the waiver will align with the Department's policy priorities, such as:

- *Supporting employer engagement;*

- *Connecting education and training strategies;*
- *Supporting work-based learning;*
- *Improving job and career results; and*
- *Other priorities as articulated in guidance.*

This waiver aligns with not only the Department of Labor's priorities, but also with those of the State of Illinois. Within the Illinois WIOA Unified Plan, are examples demonstrating the importance of apprenticeship programs at all levels, and how Illinois is moving toward strategies that expand both traditional and non-traditional type apprenticeship programs. As stated above, expanding the definition will increase the level of participation in apprenticeship and remove perceived barriers that may currently limit enrollment in them.

Individuals impacted by the waiver

Describe which populations the waiver will benefit, including how the waiver will impact services for disadvantaged populations or individuals with multiple barriers to employment.

Both the education and workforce system will realize the benefits by an expanded definition of the credential required to be issued by an apprenticeship program during program participation or within one year after "exit". This will greatly increase the promotion and utilization of WIOA supported apprenticeships.

- *Process for monitoring progress in implementation*
- *Describes the processes used to monitor the progress in implementing the waiver.*
- *Monitor the progress in implementing the waiver;*
- *Provide notice to any local board affected by the waiver;*
- *Provide any local board affected by the waiver an opportunity to comment on the request;*
- *Ensure meaningful public comment, including comment by business and organized labor, on the waiver.*
- *Collect and report information about waiver outcomes in the State's WIOA Annual Report.*

The State will use the following approach for monitoring progress in implementation:

State staff involved with the administration of apprenticeship programming will provide ongoing technical assistance and oversight as it relates to the appropriateness and the effectiveness of this waiver. This information will be submitted regularly to the IWIB Evaluation and Accountability Committee.

Annual WIOA on-site programmatic reviews will include evaluation review of the impact the waivers have on programmatic goals and outcomes.

Additionally, the IWIB Evaluation and Accountability Committee will have the responsibility of ensuring the specific goals and outcomes achieved by the waiver are realized. Furthermore, the information gathered from the waiver will inform new or changes to policy as well as provide best practices.

This strategy ensures that the goals described above, as well as those outlined in the State's Unified Plan and the IWIB Strategic Plan, are consistent with established objectives of the WIOA and federal and state regulations.

Notice to affected local boards

Address how local boards affected by the waiver were notified of the request.

Local Boards via Board members and/or Board staff as well as WIOA partners and other interested stakeholders participate in policy development. Additionally, LWIBs receive the opportunity to participate in public comment period that includes webinars.

Public Comment

Provide a description of the proactive solicitation of public comments. At a minimum, post the proposed waiver request to the state's official website for comment. Ideally, develop a targeted outreach strategy to collect input and comment from all affected stakeholders. Submit any comments or concerns collected in this manner and the outcome of the state's review of the public comments received.

In accordance with the WIOA Regulations at 20 CFR 676.135, Illinois is submitting a modification to its Unified State Plan, which is subject to the requirements outlined in the WIOA Regulations at 20 CFR 676.130(d) for public review and comment. As such, Illinois's waiver request posted on our website for comment and review by required parties and the public. USDOL will receive any comments provided.

Waiver Impact

Collect and report information about waiver outcomes in the State's WIOA Annual Report. The Secretary may require that States provide the most recent data available about the outcomes of the existing waiver in cases where the State seeks renewal of a previously approved waiver.

The IWIB Evaluation and Accountability Committee will have the responsibility of ensuring the specific goals and outcomes achieved by the waiver are realized. Furthermore, the information gathered from the waiver will inform new or changes to policy as well as provide best practices. Outcomes of the waiver will be reported in the WIOA Annual Report.

WAIVER REQUEST - ETPL REPORTING ON ALL STUDENTS

Statutory and/or regulatory requirements to be waivedIndicate which part of the WIOA or the regulations the state would like to waive.

The State of Illinois is seeking a waiver from the following Section(s):

1. Sections 116 and 122 of WIOA, and at 20 CFR 677.230 and 20 CFR 680.400 thru 680.530.

Specifically, Illinois is requesting to waive the requirements which require the collection and reporting of performance related data on all students participating in training programs listed on the state's ETPL.

Illinois' education and workforce agencies established a unified ILDS inter-agency data sharing agreement and created the Common Demographic Database Administrator (CDDA)as part of the Illinois Longitudinal Data System (ILDS) and the Workforce Data Quality Initiative (WDQI). Because of the ILDS efforts, Illinois can utilize the ILDS Master Client Index (MCI) unique identifier to leverage existing data systems and data sources to assist it with meeting the WIOA ETP performance reporting requirements. The Illinois Board of Higher Education, a member of the ILDS, is also the oversight body for private business vocational schools.

While Illinois released policy guidelines for the ETPL certification and works diligently to address streamlining reporting, the state continues to face challenges that are impeding full implementation of the ETPL requirement:

· Ensuring fairness in the process of determining training provider eligibility.

· Reducing the burden on training providers to submit performance information to the state which may not be readily accessible.

· Much of the performance information is self-reported through surveys, etc., which makes it difficult to get accurate performance data since students may not respond to surveys and, as a result, schools may just provide performance information they previously collected without resurveying students.

· Proprietary schools do not currently have a statewide system to report student data, and as such, there is no way to automatically match students with other data sources to calculate outcomes. This results in a large reporting burden on these types of training providers.

· Providing Information on eligible training programs to WIOA participants in a way that helps them make good decisions about how to use their ITAs.

Actions undertaken to remove state or local barriersDescribe the actions undertaken to remove state or local barriers.

There are currently no state or local statutory or regulatory barriers to implementing the requested waiver. State of Illinois regulations and policy align with current federal law.

Goals and expected programmatic outcomes of waiverDescribe and specify how the waiver will help the state achieve an identified strategic goal or set of

goals that it has outlined in its State Plan. If possible and appropriate the type of waiver requested, provide quantifiable projections for programmatic outcomes that will result from the waiver.

While the IWIB Evaluation and Accountability Committee may add others, at a minimum the goals and outcomes related to this waiver request include:

· Providing additional training options to enhance consumer choice and targeting training program that are in-demand

· Increasing the number of training providers to enhance competition and create economies of scale.

· Better overall performance outcomes for individuals pursuing training via ITAs.

· Stronger partnerships and relationships between training providers and the public workforce system.

Individuals impacted by the waiverDescribe which populations the waiver will benefit, including how the waiver will impact services for disadvantaged populations or individuals with multiple barriers to employment.

Individuals who access training services or provide training services in Illinois will benefit from this waiver.

Process for monitoring progress in implementationDescribes the processes used to monitor the progress in implementing the waiver.

Annual WIOA on-site programmatic reviews will include an evaluation of the impact the waivers have on programmatic goals and outcomes.

Additionally, the IWIB Evaluation and Accountability Committee will have the responsibility of ensuring the specific goals and outcomes achieved by the waiver are realized. Furthermore, the information gathered from the waiver will inform new or changes to policy as well as provide best practices.

State staff involved with the administration of the ETPL and performance reporting will periodically examine the appropriateness and the effectiveness of this waiver. This strategy ensures that the goals described above, as well as those outlined in the State's Unified Plan, are consistent with established objectives of the WIOA and federal and state regulations.

Notice to affected local boardsAddress how local boards affected by the waiver were notified of the request.

Local Boards via Board members and/or Board staff as well as WIOA partners and other interested stakeholders participate in policy development. Additionally, LWIBs receive the opportunity to participate in public comment period that includes webinars.

Public Comment

Provide a description of the proactive solicitation of public comments. At a minimum, post the proposed waiver request to the state's official website for comment. Ideally, develop a targeted outreach strategy to collect input and comment from all affected stakeholders. Submit any comments or concerns collected in this manner and the outcome of the state's review of the public comments received.

In accordance with the WIOA Regulations at 20 CFR 676.135, Illinois is submitting a modification to its Unified State Plan, which is subject to the requirements outlined in the WIOA Regulations at 20 CFR 676.130(d) for public review and comment. As such, Illinois's waiver request posted on our website for comment and review by required parties and the public.

Waiver Impact

Collect and report information about waiver outcomes in the State's WIOA Annual Report. The Secretary may require that States provide the most recent data available about the outcomes of the existing waiver in cases where the State seeks renewal of a previously approved waiver.

The IWIB Evaluation and Accountability Committee will have the responsibility of ensuring the specific goals and outcomes achieved by the waiver are realized. Furthermore, the information gathered from the waiver will inform new or changes to policy as well as provide best practices. Outcomes of the waiver will be reported in the WIOA Annual Report.

WAIVER REQUEST - OUT OF SCHOOL YOUTH EXPENDITURE RATE

Statutory and/or regulatory requirements to be waived

Indicate which part of the WIOA or the regulations the state would like to waive.

The State of Illinois is seeking a waiver from the following Section(s):

1. Section 129(a)(4)(A) and 20 CFR 681.410, which require not less than 75 percent of funds allotted to states under Section 127(b)(1)(C), reserved under Section 128(a), and available for statewide activities under subsection (b), and not less than 75 percent of funds available to local areas under subsection (c), shall be used to provide youth workforce investment activities for OSY.

Specifically, Illinois is requesting to waive the following requirements:

a. A waiver of the requirement to expend 75 percent of funding on the OSY population. Illinois is requesting that this percentage be lowered to 50 percent.

b. A waiver of the requirement that local funding must meet the 75 percent minimum expenditure requirement. It is requested to allow a state-level Out-of-School Youth target (See 1 above) instead of requiring individual areas to each meet the minimum expenditure requirement.

c. A waiver of the requirement to expend 75 percent of Statewide Activities funding on the OSY population. It is requested to eliminate this percentage to allow flexibility of funding for special projects that meet the vision and mission of the State.

d. A waiver of the limitation of only 25 percent of funding to support in-school youth.

e. A waiver to use funding over the 25 percent limitation in WIOA to provide pre-apprenticeship programs services to this population.

Illinois' current efforts for aligning education, workforce and economic development is laying a solid foundation for promoting leading career pathway models and best practices. Career pathway development in Illinois is being expanded to encompass every level of the education system as well as across the needs of our diverse populations including those that face multiple barriers to achieving self-sufficiency.

Of importance to the Governor's vision, the IWIB Strategic Plan and the Unified State Plan is the expansion of career pathway systems into the secondary system for opportunity youth.

This waiver will allow Illinois to support these visions and provide targeted strategies to the estimated 1.8 million youth ages 15-24 living in Illinois in 2013 and particularly focus on those within that number of which approximately 18.3% were in poverty and 19.3% were unemployed - more than twice the rate of the entire labor force.

Actions undertaken to remove state or local barriers

Describe the actions undertaken to remove state or local barriers.

There are currently no state or local statutory or regulatory barriers to implementing the requested waiver. State of Illinois regulations and policy align with current federal law.

Goals and expected programmatic outcomes of waiver

Describe and specify how the waiver will help the state achieve an identified strategic goal or set of goals that it has outlined in its State Plan. If possible and appropriate the type of waiver requested, provide quantifiable projections for programmatic outcomes that will result from the waiver.

In support of the expansion of career pathway systems across the education system, Illinois will use this waiver to provide youth with barriers the necessary supports to successfully equip them with the academic and technical skills necessary to improve their employability. Furthermore, Illinois anticipates that this waiver will provide greater opportunity for blending funds at the federal, state, and local levels across the partners to increase innovative strategies for improving career pathway opportunities for youth.

Potential Outcomes resulting from these goals:

465. Increase in number of youth that receive a credential (i.e. diploma or high school equivalency) and continue to receive industry recognized and/or some other post-secondary credentials.
466. Decrease in the number of youth disconnecting from the education system, particularly those transitioning out of foster care or those with a disability transitioning from high school.
467. Increase innovative strategies to address student retention, such as dual college enrollment, occupational training, or pre-apprenticeship to apprenticeship programs.

Department of Labor's policy priorities

Describe how the waiver will align with the Department's policy priorities, such as:

- *Supporting employer engagement;*
- *Connecting education and training strategies;*
- *Supporting work-based learning;*
- *Improving job and career results; and*
- *Other priorities as articulated in guidance.*

This waiver aligns with not only the Department of Labor's priorities, but also with those of the State of Illinois. Within the Illinois Unified Plan, are examples of initiatives demonstrating the importance of ensuring career and work readiness at all levels, and how

Illinois is moving toward strategies that integrally tie education to workforce development. Expanding the career pathway opportunities across the education and workforce system by allowing additional funds toward in-school youth, supports our common goal to expand career pathway opportunities through more accelerated work-based training while aligning and integrating programs of study that lead to industry-recognized credentials and improved employment and earnings. This alignment will truly address the P-20 pipeline by providing necessary career readiness and occupational skills necessary to succeed in the job market.

As Illinois continues the engagement of educational institutions to create a job-driven education and training system, the state will be making significant and strategic system improvements that address workforce development needs through flexible, responsive, and progressive programs informed by labor market information. Not only will this continue to occur through the 48 comprehensive community colleges and multi-college centers, but the state will also be expanding the reach to integrate meaningful career readiness programs and work-based learning models that focus on high demand occupations for students and workers at all levels.

Individuals impacted by the waiver

Describe which populations the waiver will benefit, including how the waiver will impact services for disadvantaged populations or individuals with multiple barriers to employment.

Both the education and workforce system will be able to provide the benefits of this waiver to our youth with barriers. This includes at-risk youth population, educational entities, American Job Centers (AJC) and subcontracted service provider staff, employers, parents, and school counselors.

Process for monitoring progress in implementation

Describes the processes used to monitor the progress in implementing the waiver.

The State will use the following approach for monitoring progress in implementation:

State staff involved with the administration of youth programming will provide ongoing technical assistance and oversight as it relates to the appropriateness and the effectiveness of this waiver. This information will be submitted regularly to the IWIB Evaluation and Accountability Committee.

Annual WIOA on-site programmatic reviews will include an evaluation of the impact the waivers have on programmatic goals and outcomes.

3. Additionally, the IWIB Evaluation and Accountability Committee will have the responsibility of ensuring the specific goals and outcomes achieved by the waiver are realized. Furthermore, the information gathered from the waiver will inform new or changes to policy as well as provide best practices.

This strategy ensures that the goals described above, as well as those outlined in the State's Unified Plan and the IWIB Strategic Plan, are consistent with established objectives of the WIOA and federal and state regulations.

Notice to affected local boards

Address how local boards affected by the waiver were notified of the request.

Local Boards via Board members and/or Board staff as well as WIOA partners and other interested stakeholders participate in policy development. Additionally, LWIBs receive the opportunity to participate in public comment period that includes webinars.

Public Comment

Provide a description of the proactive solicitation of public comments. At a minimum, post the proposed waiver request to the state's official website for comment. Ideally, develop a targeted outreach strategy to collect input and comment from all affected stakeholders. Submit any comments or concerns collected in this manner and the outcome of the state's review of the public comments received.

In accordance with the WIOA Regulations at 20 CFR 676.135, Illinois is submitting a modification to its Unified State Plan, which is subject to the requirements outlined in the WIOA Regulations at 20 CFR 676.130(d) for public review and comment. As such, Illinois's waiver request posted on our website for comment and review by required parties and the public.

Waiver Impact

Collect and report information about waiver outcomes in the State's WIOA Annual Report. The Secretary may require that States provide the most recent data available about the outcomes of the existing waiver in cases where the State seeks renewal of a previously approved waiver.

The IWIB Evaluation and Accountability Committee will have the responsibility of ensuring the specific goals and outcomes achieved by the waiver are realized. Furthermore, the information gathered from the waiver will inform new or changes to policy as well as provide best practices. Outcomes of the waiver will be reported in the WIOA Annual Report.

WAIVER REQUEST - TIMING OF LWIA REALIGNMENT

Statutory and/or regulatory requirements to be waivedIndicate which part of the WIOA or the regulations the state would like to waive.

The State of Illinois is seeking a waiver from the following Section(s):

WIOA Sec. 106(a)(2) and 20 CFR § 679.210 (preamble)

"In accordance with WIOA Section 106(a)(2), a single local area may not be split across two planning regions. Local areas must be contiguous to be a planning region and effectively align economic and workforce development activities and resources."

The state is coordinating a demand-driven strategic planning process across education, workforce and economic development at the state, regional and local levels. Illinois has been proactive in coordinating regional planning with the implementation of the WIOA requirements. These efforts led to the state identifying meaningful planning regions that resulted in the 10 Economic Development Regions (EDRs). To support this process, Illinois coordinated regional planning including guidelines, regional and statewide planning events as well as coordinated technical

assistance resources as part of the development of the initial regional plans in 2016. With the release of the final WIOA rules, planning resources were updated in 2017.

Illinois has ten planning regions that meet the requirements of WIOA Sec. 106(a)(2) and 20 CFR § 679.210. Furthermore, all twenty-two of Illinois' Local Workforce Innovation Areas (LWIA) met the requirements for initial designation based on analysis of fiscal integrity and WIOA performance. However, five of these LWIAs (4/Ogle, 11/Livingston, 19/DeWitt, 21/Calhoun, Jersey and 23/Douglas) split between different planning regions.

The WIOA Assessment report, issued by the US Department of Labor on June 28, 2017 requires the State, in conjunction with the local boards and elected officials, to identify a regional structure that does not result in any single local area being split between two or more regions. While a regional structure that complies with WIOA is in place; additional time is needed to complete the consultation and realignment process.

A waiver from this requirement will provide Illinois additional time for the state to implement the regional planning structure that is compliant with the requirements of WIOA Section 106(a) and 20 CFR Part 679 Subpart D. and will ensure that Illinois' workforce system remains aligned to the employment and training systems that are tailored specifically to regional economies.

Specifically, the state is requesting until 2020 plan submission to comply with the regional planning directive. Additionally, at that time the state will issue update regional planning guidelines.

Actions undertaken to remove state or local barriersDescribe the actions undertaken to remove state or local barriers.

The Illinois Workforce Board and WIOA Core partners established a working group to develop a plan of action to address this issue. The working group meet in the summer of 2017 to review the regional planning data, identify a compliant regional planning structure, and develop a local consultation process with the Governor's Office, WIOA state agencies, state board, state legislature, chief elected officials, local board members, and other interested stakeholders.

Illinois' regional data has been updated and based on regional economic and labor market data that includes:

· commuting patterns;

· numbers of employers and jobs supported regionally;

· projections of regional job growth; and

· targeted industry growth patterns.

As a next step, the state will be conducting focus groups to analyze the data and garner feedback from the chief elected officials, local workforce boards, and other interested stakeholder groups which will then inform a plan for realignment. The State of Illinois will follow the appeals process that is consistent

with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), WIOA final administrative rule, and the State of Illinois WIOA policies.

Goals and expected programmatic outcomes of waiverDescribe and specify how the waiver will help the state achieve an identified strategic goal or set of goals that it has outlined in its State Plan. If possible and appropriate the type of waiver requested, provide quantifiable projections for programmatic outcomes that will result from the waiver.

The strategies and activities listed below are part of six policy priorities within the Illinois WIOA Unified Plan and speak specifically to regional alignment as identified in this waiver request and provide the support for planning and sector partnerships.

Strategy 1: Coordinate Demand-Driven Strategic Planning at the State and Regional Levels.

Activity 1.1: Develop Strategic Indicators, Benchmarks and Related Planning Data Resources

Activity 1.2: Establish Regional Planning Areas

Activity 1.3: Conduct Integrated Regional Planning

Strategy 2: Support Employer-Driven Regional Sector Initiatives

Activity 2.1: Promote Employer-Driven Regional Sector Partnerships

Activity 2.2: Promote Sector-Based Business Services and Employer Initiatives

Providing additional time to realign the five counties will allow the state, regional and local partners the time that is needed to consult with local elected officials and complete the programmatic and administrative realignment of the impacted LWIAs in an orderly fashion that will ultimately benefit the WIOA customers and strengthen Illinois' regional planning structure.

Department of Labor's policy priorities

Describe how the waiver will align with the Department's policy priorities, such as:

· ***Supporting employer engagement;***

· ***Connecting education and training strategies;***

· ***Supporting work-based learning;***

· ***Improving job and career results; and***

· ***Other priorities as articulated in guidance.***

Illinois' current regional and local structure align with the four identified purposes of Title I of WIOA priorities involving activities at the regional level which include:

· enhancing the strategic role for states and elected officials, and Local Workforce Innovation Boards in the public workforce system by increasing flexibility to tailor services to meet employer and worker needs at State, regional, and local levels;

· supporting the alignment of the workforce investment, education, and economic development systems in support of a comprehensive, accessible, and high-quality workforce development system at the Federal, state, and local and regional levels;

· improving the quality and labor market relevance of workforce investment, education, and economic development efforts by promoting the use of industry and sector partnerships, career pathways, and regional service delivery strategies

· increasing the prosperity and economic growth of workers, employers, communities, regions, and States.

Individuals impacted by the waiverDescribe which populations the waiver will benefit, including how the waiver will impact services for disadvantaged populations or individuals with multiple barriers to employment.

This waiver benefits the entire state workforce system, reduces unnecessary administrative expenses causes by realignment, and keeps consistent with current Economic Development Region and Local Workforce Innovation Area structures. Those specifically impacted include:

1. employers;

2. job seekers, including WIOA priority population groups;

3. local area one-stop partners and delivery systems;

4. Local Workforce Development Boards;

5. economic development entities; and

6. the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board.

Process for monitoring progress in implementationDescribes the processes used to monitor the progress in implementing the waiver.

The State will use the following approach for monitoring progress in implementation:

1. State staff involved with the administration governance provisions will provide ongoing technical assistance and oversite as it relates to the appropriateness and the effectiveness of this waiver. This information will be submitted regularly to the IWIB Evaluation and Accountability Committee.

2. Annual WIOA on-site programmatic reviews will include evaluation review of the impact the waivers have on programmatic goals and outcomes.

3. Additionally, the IWIB Evaluation and Accountability Committee will have the responsibility of ensuring the specific goals and outcomes achieved by the waiver are realized. Furthermore, the information gathered from the waiver will inform new or changes to policy as well as provide best practices.

This strategy ensures that the goals described above, as well as those outlined in the State's Unified Plan and the IWIB Strategic Plan, are consistent with established objectives of the WIOA and federal and state regulations.

Notice to affected local boardsAddress how local boards affected by the waiver were notified of the request.

Local Boards via Board members and/or Board staff as well as WIOA partners and other interested stakeholders participate in policy development. Additionally, LWIBs receive the opportunity to participate in public comment period that includes webinars.

Public CommentProvide a description of the proactive solicitation of public comments. At a minimum, post the proposed waiver request to the state's official website for comment. Ideally, develop a targeted outreach strategy to collect input and comment from all affected stakeholders. Submit any comments or concerns collected in this manner and the outcome of the state's review of the public comments received.

In accordance with the WIOA Regulations at 20 CFR 676.135, Illinois is submitting a modification to its Unified State Plan, which is subject to the requirements outlined in the WIOA Regulations at 20 CFR 676.130(d) for public review and comment. As such, Illinois's waiver request posted on our website for comment and review by required parties and the public. USDOL will receive any comments provided.

Waiver ImpactCollect and report information about waiver outcomes in the State's WIOA Annual Report. The Secretary may require that States provide the most recent data available about the outcomes of the existing waiver in cases where the State seeks renewal of a previously approved waiver.

The IWIB Evaluation and Accountability Committee will have the responsibility of ensuring the specific goals and outcomes achieved by the waiver are realized. Furthermore, the information gathered from the waiver will inform new or changes to policy as well as provide best practices. Outcomes of the waiver will be reported in the WIOA Annual Report.

TITLE I-B ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include assurances that:

1. The State has implemented a policy to ensure Adult program funds provide a priority in the delivery of training services and individualized career services to individuals who are low income, public assistance recipients and basic skills deficient; Yes

2. The State has implemented a policy to ensure local areas have a process in place for referring veterans with significant barriers to employment to career services provided by the JVSG program's Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist; Yes

3. The state established a written policy and procedure that set forth criteria to be used by chief elected officials for the appointment of local workforce investment board members. Yes

4. The State established written policy and procedures to ensure local workforce investment boards are certified by the governor every two years in accordance with WIOA section 107(c)(2). Yes

5. Where an alternative entity takes the place of a State Board, the State has written policy and procedures to ensure the alternative entity meets the definition under WIOA section 101(e) and the legal requirements for membership. No

6. The State established a written policy and procedure for how the individuals and entities represented on the State Workforce Development Board help to determine the methods and factors of distribution, and how the State consults with chief elected officials in local areas throughout the State in determining the distributions. Yes

7. The State will not use funds received under WIOA Title I to assist, promote, or deter union organizing in accordance with WIOA section 181(b)(7). Yes

8. The State distributes adult and youth funds received under WIOA equitably throughout the State, and no local area suffers significant shifts in funding from year-to-year during the period covered by this plan. Yes

9. If a State Workforce Development Board, department, or agency administers State laws for vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, that board, department, or agency cooperates with the agency that administers Wagner-Peyser services, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and Youth Programs under Title I. Yes

10. The State agrees to report on the impact and outcomes of its approved waivers in its WIOA Annual Report. Yes

11. The State has taken appropriate action to secure compliance with the Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 2900, including that the State will annually monitor local areas to ensure compliance and otherwise take appropriate action to secure compliance with the Uniform Guidance under section WIOA 184(a)(3); Yes

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR WAGNER-PEYSER PROGRAM (EMPLOYMENT SERVICES)

All program-specific requirements provided for the WIOA core programs in this section must be addressed for either a Unified or Combined State Plan.

A. EMPLOYMENT SERVICE PROFESSIONAL STAFF DEVELOPMENT.

1. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL UTILIZE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES FOR EMPLOYMENT SERVICE STAFF TO ENSURE STAFF IS ABLE TO PROVIDE HIGH QUALITY SERVICES TO BOTH JOBSEEKERS AND EMPLOYERS.

In an effort to provide high quality services to both job seekers and employers, professional development training sessions will be provided to Employment Service staff as it relates to workshop presentations, public speaking, resume writing and critiquing, interview skills, networking, career exploration and use of related assessment instruments, and the use of social media for job seeking and outreach purposes. To maintain these skills, periodic refresher training sessions will be required of and provided to staff performing employment services. Future internal certification based on industry standards and Agency policies and procedures is currently under discussion and development. In addition, state-sponsored professional development opportunities via the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES), the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity

(Commerce) and Department of Human Services (DHS) are also made available to Employment Service staff.

2. DESCRIBE STRATEGIES DEVELOPED TO SUPPORT TRAINING AND AWARENESS ACROSS CORE PROGRAMS AND THE UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE (UI) PROGRAM, AND THE TRAINING PROVIDED FOR EMPLOYMENT SERVICES AND WIOA STAFF ON IDENTIFICATION OF UI ELIGIBILITY ISSUES AND REFERRAL TO UI STAFF FOR ADJUDICATION.

The strategies that will be developed to support training and awareness across core program partners will be a collaborative effort. This collaboration among the core and required partners will include the provision of training and general knowledge of each core and required program by the appropriate partner, related to their respective services, as offered in the comprehensive one-stop centers or at other locations. Effective methods of communication will be established to provide all staff with updates to programs and services offered by the core and required partners. Employment Service staff are currently trained to identify UI eligibility issues and refer those issues to UI staff for adjudication when required. Training the Employment Services staff on identifying UI issues and the referral process has been provided in person, and the training modules are maintained and accessible on the agency's internal website. Refresher training sessions will be provided to staff performing employment services, and updates to the UI program will be shared as they occur. Similar methods of training will be provided for other required partners under WIOA, through live and pre-recorded webinars, job aids, and in-person training sessions as needed.

B. EXPLAIN HOW THE STATE WILL PROVIDE INFORMATION AND MEANINGFUL ASSISTANCE TO INDIVIDUALS REQUESTING ASSISTANCE IN FILING A CLAIM FOR UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION THROUGH ONE-STOP CENTERS, AS REQUIRED BY WIOA AS A CAREER SERVICE.

Meaningful assistance to individuals requesting guidance in filing a claim for unemployment compensation through the comprehensive one-stop center will be provided by the Employment Service staff located in the one-stop center. These staff members have existing knowledge of the UI program and claim-filing process. Direct linkage consisting of on-demand, real time access to additional agency staff will also be available, in those one-stop centers lacking full time UI staff, to assist with claim-specific inquiries. Information about the UI program will be provided by the staff individually and during group informational workshops and supplemented via brochures (or other forms of written communication,) in addition to messaging on a common system that will be utilized by all core program partners.

C. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S STRATEGY FOR PROVIDING REEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE TO UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE CLAIMANTS AND OTHER UNEMPLOYED INDIVIDUALS.

Strategies that are utilized to provide reemployment assistance include requiring UI claimants to register with the Labor Exchange (LE) system as an eligibility requirement for benefits; referring individuals to meet with an Employment Service staff member to register with the LE system immediately after filing a UI claim in-person; making available a reemployment self-assessment tool that will allow job seekers to respond to specific

questions to assess the level of assistance required to obtain employment; conducting reemployment workshops for profiled individuals and other targeted populations in collaboration with local partners; providing one-on-one assistance to develop individual reemployment plans; increasing and improving messaging/communications related to employment services opportunities when individuals file claims via the website or call center; matching qualified job seekers with employers' recruiting needs; utilizing electronic notification of available job openings; and making referrals for training or retraining on in-demand skills.

D. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE W-P FUNDS TO SUPPORT UI CLAIMANTS, AND THE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN W-P AND UI, AS APPROPRIATE, INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING:

1. COORDINATION OF AND PROVISION OF LABOR EXCHANGE SERVICES FOR UI CLAIMANTS AS REQUIRED BY THE WAGNER-PEYSER ACT;

Coordination between Wagner-Peyser and Unemployment Insurance programs begins with the requirement that all UI claimants register with the employment services system to fulfill the UI eligibility requirement. As a result of the UI claimants being registered in the employment services system, the employment services staff will be able to target this population and provide labor exchange services by requesting the claimant to report in-person to conduct reemployment assessments for job placement and training needs. Contacts to claimants will be made via phone notification systems, e-mail blasts and/or individual and mass mailings.

2. REGISTRATION OF UI CLAIMANTS WITH THE STATE'S EMPLOYMENT SERVICE IF REQUIRED BY STATE LAW;

Section 500A of the Illinois Unemployment Insurance Act states: An unemployed individual shall be eligible to receive benefits with respect to any week only if the Director finds that: He [or she] has registered for work at and thereafter has continued to report at an employment office in accordance with such regulations as the Director may prescribe, except that the Director may, by regulation, waive or alter either or both of the requirements of this subsection as to individuals attached to regular jobs, and as to such other types of cases or situations with respect to which he [or she] finds that compliance with such requirements would be oppressive or inconsistent with the purposes of this Act, provided that no such regulation shall conflict with Section 400 of this Act. A process is established in which an eligibility issue will automatically be created after a designated amount of time for those individuals who fail to fully register with employment services after filing an initial claim for benefits.

3. ADMINISTRATION OF THE WORK TEST FOR THE STATE UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION SYSTEM, INCLUDING MAKING ELIGIBILITY ASSESSMENTS (FOR REFERRAL TO UI ADJUDICATION, IF NEEDED), AND PROVIDING JOB FINDING AND PLACEMENT SERVICES FOR UI CLAIMANTS; AND

UI claimants who are determined eligible for benefits will be referred to employment services upon completion of filing an unemployment claim. The population of UI claimants that is identified through the profiling program will be required to participate in the

reemployment workshop. Failure to report to the workshop and participate as required will be documented in the employment service system, which will trigger the posting of an adjudication issue in the UI benefits system. If an eligibility issue arises while providing employment services, the case will be referred to the UI staff for immediate resolution, resolved by the employment service staff member, or posted and scheduled for resolution on a different date and time.

4. PROVISION OF REFERRALS TO AND APPLICATION ASSISTANCE FOR TRAINING AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES.

Wagner-Peyser staff at the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) are charged with increasing community awareness about education, workforce and economic development programs through in-person and outreach services such as job fairs, community events, onsite recruitments, resource linkage and presentations.

Individuals that may require additional assistance with his/her reemployment efforts may be identified through various means including the UI profiling program; in-person contact at a comprehensive one-stop location; contact by phone; or through an automated self-assessment process for UI claimants. The self-assessment process will allow individuals to complete a series of questions related to his/her efforts to obtain employment. The response to each question will be associated with a specific score. Upon completing the assessment, a total score will be provided, which will prompt the system to recommend various employment service options including referrals to training or literacy programs; presenting for a reemployment workshop; or participating in one of the online employment related tutorials.

It is through these methods that the targeted individuals will participate in the development of an Individual Reemployment Plan, with assistance from the Wagner-Peyser staff. The development of an Individual Reemployment Plan will assist in identifying the existence of any barriers to obtaining and maintaining meaningful employment. The barriers identified in the plan will be the basis in which the individual is referred to additional services that will assist with reemployment efforts including, but not limited to, workshops that focus on specific employment needs, job training, adult education or literacy programs, trade assistance, veteran outreach services, youth services, career pathways or vocational rehabilitation services.

E. AGRICULTURAL OUTREACH PLAN (AOP). EACH STATE AGENCY MUST DEVELOP AN AOP EVERY FOUR YEARS AS PART OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN REQUIRED UNDER SECTIONS 102 OR 103 OF WIOA. THE AOP MUST INCLUDE--

1. ASSESSMENT OF NEED

Provide an assessment of the unique needs of farmworkers in the area based on past and projected agricultural and farmworker activity in the State. Such needs may include but are not limited to: employment, training, and housing.

IDES' four year AOP will run from 2016 through 2019 as required by 20 CFR Subpart B. 653.107. In PY 16, IDES will provide Wagner-Peyser services to migrant workers and employers of migrant seasonal farm workers (MSFW). Illinois will ensure the full range of employment, training and educational services are available and equivalent services

provided to non-MSFW's in compliance with WIOA sections 102 as a lead agency with unified partners in implementation for the vision and goals agreed upon with workforce development activities. The MSFW program will continue efforts to strengthen its working relationships with MSFWs and employers so that each better understands how IllinoisJobLink, Illinois' internet-based Labor Exchange System, can be of assistance to both by delivering the full range of Labor Exchange services via an outreach program designed to locate, contact and inform migrant and seasonal farmworkers about the rights and services available to them. The agency will ensure that MSFWs are offered the same range of employment services, benefits and protections that are provided to non-MSFWs including information on jobs, registration assistance, referral to a qualified job, vocational counseling, testing and job training referral services. To ensure statewide compliance, the agency will make every effort to meet the Equity Indicators of Compliance as well as the Minimum Service Level Indicators.

Agricultural Activity and Projections

A 2015 study of agriculture in Illinois showed agriculture is a critical component of Illinois' overall economic well-being, contributing about $120.9 billion of total economic output - more than several other Illinois industries, including the financial, transportation and construction industries

The study, commissioned by the Illinois Livestock Development Group (ILDG) with cooperation from Illinois Corn Marketing Board (ICMB), Illinois Farm Bureau (IFB), and Illinois Soybean Association (ISA), was conducted by Decision Innovation Solutions (DIS) of Urbandale, Iowa. The analysis is based on a combination of datasets from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) 2012 Census of Agriculture and the IMPLAN modeling system. http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/

The report showed farming provides the base for a variety of agriculture industries, including food processing and the manufacture of farm machinery, chemicals and fertilizer. Taking those jobs into account means that in 2012, production agriculture and ag-related industries accounted for 432,831 jobs, or about 1 in every 17 jobs in Illinois. Crop farming is a significant part of agriculture's economic contribution. Statewide output attributed to crop production and further processing is more than $56.7 billion and is responsible for 197,353 jobs.

- 24 of Illinois' counties derive at least one third of their total output from agriculture and agriculture-related industries.
- 12 of Illinois' counties derive at least one fifth of their total jobs from agriculture and agriculture-related industries.

Illinois Agriculture According to the USDA/NASS State Overview, Illinois is currently ranked the 2nd state in the nation for:

- Corn for grain
- Soybeans for beans
- Value of Sales by Commodity Group ($1000): grains, oilseeds, dry beans, dry peas

Illinois is also ranked in the top five states for:

- Market Value of Agriculture Products Sold: Crops, including nursery and greenhouse
- Hogs and Pigs Sold
- Hogs and Pigs Inventory

These rankings demonstrate the importance of Illinois agriculture to help feed, clothe, and fuel those beyond Illinois and U.S. borders.

According to the 2012 Census of Agriculture, there were 75,087 farms in Illinois. This was a decrease from 76,860 farms in 2007. The average size of an Illinois farm in 2012 was 359 acres, which was 11 acres more than an average Illinois farm in 2007.

Advancements in technology at both the farm and agribusiness levels have led to a steady decline in the share of employment devoted to the production and conversion of commodities grown in the State of Illinois. However, while the share of employment directly related to agriculture has decreased over time, the value of agriculture continues to increase, illustrating a long-standing continuous change in the structure of Illinois agriculture. http://www.decision-innovation.com/economic-impact/case-study--illinois-agricultural-economic-contribution/

Corn and soybeans dominate Illinois production of primary agricultural commodities. Because of Illinois' large share of the nation's totals in these categories, what happens in Illinois regarding production and yield from year to year can have implications for the nation as a whole.

Major Crop Activity

Seed and Grain companies; hog farms; Pumpkin and horseradish farms are the primary industries for employment needs. Other industries with smaller workforce remain in fruit and vegetable farms. While Illinois is considered a seasonal state, crop activity begins in April and ends in early December.

The University of Illinois Extension Service; Summary of Illinois Specialty Growers Association reports the following schedule of crops and seasons for Illinois: http://web.extension.illinois.edu/state/agriculture/index.php

Asparagus (April to June) Strawberries (Late May to Early June) Apricots and Cherries (June to July) Blueberries (June to August) Beans, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cauliflower and Peas (June to October) Fresh Herbs (June to October) Raspberries (June to November) Summer Apples, Blackberries, Peaches, Nectarines (July to August) Beets, Corn, Cucumbers, Pickles & Plums (July to September) Peppers and Tomatoes (July to October) Thorn-less Blackberries (August) Grapes, Muskmelons and Watermelons (August and September) Eggplants and Greens (August and November) Turnips (September to November) Fall Winter Apples (September to November) Pumpkins, Squash and Gourds (November to December)

A. AN ASSESSMENT OF THE AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITY IN THE STATE MEANS: 1) IDENTIFYING THE TOP FIVE LABOR-INTENSIVE CROPS, THE MONTHS OF HEAVY ACTIVITY, AND THE GEOGRAPHIC AREA OF PRIME ACTIVITY; 2) SUMMARIZE THE AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS' NEEDS IN THE STATE (I.E. ARE THEY PREDOMINANTLY HIRING LOCAL OR FOREIGN WORKERS, ARE THEY EXPRESSING THAT THERE IS A SCARCITY IN THE AGRICULTURAL WORKFORCE); AND 3) IDENTIFYING ANY ECONOMIC, NATURAL, OR OTHER FACTORS THAT ARE

AFFECTING AGRICULTURE IN THE STATE OR ANY PROJECTED FACTORS THAT WILL AFFECT AGRICULTURE IN THE STATE.

According to USDA NASS apples, peaches, pumpkins, sweet corn and green beans are Illinois' top five labor-intensive crops. http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Full_Report/Volume_1,_Chapter_1_State_Level/Illinois/st17_1_038_038.pdf

2) Summarize the agricultural employers' needs in the State (i.e. are they predominantly hiring local or foreign workers, are they expressing that there is a scarcity in the agricultural workforce); and

The following is from FARM Illinois's2015 Report: A Food and Agricultural Roadmap for Illinois found here: http://farmillinois.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/FARM-IL-Report-2015_FULL_vF3.pdf

Overcoming entrenched challenges, a rising global population, evolving diets, increasing incidence of diet-related diseases, and climate change which threatens to disrupt the global and local food supply chains will continue to add stress on Illinois' natural resources and its food and agriculture system. The state's mature infrastructure has been hampered by underinvestment and poor coordination, which threatens to restrict the flow of Illinois' food and agriculture products to market. And the low visibility of Illinois' food and agriculture sector is a major obstacle to expansion in existing and new markets, both at home and abroad.

Illinois to succeed in the years ahead, several barriers must be recognized and removed. A lack of coordination in the food and agriculture system, particularly between Chicago and statewide food and agriculture interests, impedes the state's ability to unlock the full potential of its assets. The state's current business climate and an absence of policies to promote qualified individuals with companies looking to hire. Several workforce development assets exist, but coordination is key. The state should raise awareness of employment opportunities in the food and agriculture system and increase the availability of education and training programs. Illinois Pathways, for instance, includes information on courses and careers in food, agriculture, and natural resources.

The state should also make a more concerted effort to support programs that engage nontraditional farmers - including women, refugees, veterans, the formerly incarcerated, and early- to mid-career professionals seeking occupation changes - in food and agriculture professional development and training activities. Community colleges across the state, including in Lake and McHenry counties, administer programs that have proved effective in helping these groups find meaningful work in a sector that sorely needs them. Independent organizations such as Growing Home, located in the Englewood neighborhood of Chicago, also offer a model for helping individuals with employment barriers develop the skills they need to pursue careers across the food and agriculture system, from urban growing facilities to wholesalers to restaurants.

While much of the agriculture workforce resides in the United States, the demand for labor exceeds supply, and immigrants are important contributors to this workforce. Food and agriculture jobs in Illinois offer immigrants significant economic opportunities, yet the current H-2A visa system is inadequate and unreliable, hindering crop and livestock farmers in their efforts to find, retain, and maintain an adequate, legal, and cost. competitive

labor supply. Immigration reform that streamlines the visa application system and workers' ability to secure multiyear visas would help farmers secure adequate labor during harvest and throughout the season while providing greater security to immigrant workers. To prevent exploitation of migrant and other farm workers, it is essential that federal and state authorities commit to strong enforcement of wage, safety, and health regulations.

Farm Labor Contractors (FLC) who recruit and employ farmworkers are targeted for employer services along with compliance of state and federal regulations. There are 38 FLC's in Illinois known to have recruited and employed farm labor. Approximately 900 migrants were employed by FLC'S in 2015, in addition to approximately 300 direct hires by Ag employers

IDES anticipates that the number of migrants hired by FLC's will remain consistent with prior years in areas where staff provided outreach. Outreach staff will be assigned to areas with the collaboration of the IMC NFJP who assisted 6,000+ migrants in their PY14 year.

Local offices that have MSFW activity in their service areas are required to operate an Outreach Program to contact agricultural and food processing employers and offer labor recruitment assistance via Illinois Job Link (IJL) or the Agricultural Recruiting System (ARS).

B. AN ASSESSMENT OF THE UNIQUE NEEDS OF FARMWORKERS MEANS SUMMARIZING MIGRANT AND SEASONAL FARM WORKER (MSFW) CHARACTERISTICS (INCLUDING IF THEY ARE PREDOMINANTLY FROM CERTAIN COUNTRIES, WHAT LANGUAGE(S) THEY SPEAK, THE APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF MSFWS IN THE STATE DURING PEAK SEASON AND DURING LOW SEASON, AND WHETHER THEY TEND TO BE MIGRANT, SEASONAL, OR YEAR-ROUND FARMWORKERS). THIS INFORMATION MUST TAKE INTO ACCOUNT DATA SUPPLIED BY WIOA SECTION 167 NATIONAL FARMWORKER JOBS PROGRAM (NFJP) GRANTEES, OTHER MSFW ORGANIZATIONS, EMPLOYER ORGANIZATIONS, AND STATE AND/OR FEDERAL AGENCY DATA SOURCES SUCH AS THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR (DOL) EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ADMINISTRATION.

IMC NFJP field staff projected that there will be 20,800 migrant and seasonal farmworkers in the next program year. It is expected that the numbers of migrant farmworkers will be declining in the next few years; more H2A workers are being used by Illinois growers. Generally, the age distribution is projected to be: 15% under 21, 59% including ages 22—44, 20% including ages 45 - 54, and 6% over 55. Male is 71% and female 29%. More than 75% have not finished high school. The majority of Illinois farmworkers speak Spanish and have Hispanic/Latino roots primarily from Florida, Texas, California and Mexico. Growing are seasonal farmworkers from other racial and ethnic groups. Non U.S. Countries and Languages Central American countries (including Guatemala) with various languages, e.g. Spanish, Indian dialect (quiché, mam) Guatemala - Spanish (see above) Haiti - Creole, Spanish, English Mexico - Spanish West African countries with several languages High Season - approximate statewide % /varies by regional area 60% Migrant 40% Seasonal Low Season - approximate statewide %/varies by regional area 20% Migrant 80% Seasonal To IMC's knowledge "year round farmworkers" would be farmhands so we do not have information about them. 3) Identifying any economic, natural, or other factors that are

affecting agriculture in the State or any projected factors that will affect agriculture in the State.

Adding to the complex, fluid environment, climate change threatens to disrupt the global and local food supply chains. All of these factors will contribute to a dramatic and sustained increase of agricultural exports of all kinds - including commodities and processed foods - to global markets. http://farmillinois.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/FARM-IL-Report-2015_FULL_vF3.pdf Executive Summary

2. OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

The local offices outreach activities must be designed to meet the needs of MSFWs in the State and to locate and contact MSFWs who are not being reached through normal intake activities. Describe the State agency's proposed strategies for:

A. CONTACTING FARMWORKERS WHO ARE NOT BEING REACHED BY THE NORMAL INTAKE ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED BY THE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE OFFICES.

The Illinois Department of Employment Security (Employment Security) will conduct outreach services to farmworkers through designated agency outreach staff stationed in four high volume offices. To assist with outreach efforts, Employment Security is currently hiring up to six bi-lingual individuals in these high volume offices to assist Spanish-speaking consumers. Other public and private community service agencies and migrant and seasonal farm worker groups will also provide outreach services in cooperation with Employment Security. Employment Security will continue to identify pertinent groups, organizations and associations involved with the agricultural community to establish new alliances, such as the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) 167 National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) grantee, the Illinois Migrant Council (IMC NFJP), Illinois Farm Bureau, Legal Aid Foundation, Illinois Department of Human Services (DHS), Community Health Partnership and faith-based organizations. We will discuss ways to reach Agriculture employers and inform them of Employment Security employer services, the Agricultural Recruitment Service (ARS) and the Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers (MSFW) employment service complaint system through Employment Security's Business Services Team. These event presentations, workshops and other communication means supported by updated technical advancements, will be utilized whenever and wherever possible.

Other activities to assist with contacting farmworkers who are not being reached by normal intake activities conducted by employment service offices include:

- The development of increased literature and media outreach targeted to the agricultural community through an MSFW informational packet for workers and employers summarizing available resources. The IllinoisJobLink.com database systems allows for a variety of language options.
- Strengthening of relationships with Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), U.S. Department of Justice, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Center for Disease Control (CDC) and Health & Human Services, as they relate to MSFWs and other agricultural workers.
- Establishment of networks and structured communication with these groups, organizations and associations to help to identify ongoing needs and services.

Additionally, meetings to realize a joint effort with others to locate and assist MSFWs will be attended within the limits of available resources.

- The establishment of a more visible MSFW State Monitor Advocate internet presence, through the development of a new website titled Agricultural Employers, Outreach, Migrant Seasonal Farm Worker Program, Foreign Labor: H-2A & H-2B. In addition to the basic role, items such as agricultural related materials for the worker and employer, links and location of centers and agency/community resources, complaint process, safety and other informational items are now displayed in one convenient location.
- Providing more extensive training to Employment Security and partner staffs in One-Stops to better identify MSFWs, their needs and service requirements, and providing informational material to those MSFWs, employers and organizations in their counties served.
- Target community based business and events in MSFW communities (i.e. shopping center, Wal-Marts, laundromats, churches, restaurants, etc.) to reach MSFWs with informational materials.

B. PROVIDING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO OUTREACH WORKERS. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE MUST INCLUDE TRAININGS, CONFERENCES, ADDITIONAL RESOURCES, AND INCREASED COLLABORATION WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS ON TOPICS SUCH AS ONE-STOP CENTER SERVICES (I.E. AVAILABILITY OF REFERRALS TO TRAINING, SUPPORTIVE SERVICES, AND CAREER SERVICES, AS WELL AS SPECIFIC EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES), THE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE COMPLAINT SYSTEM, INFORMATION ON THE OTHER ORGANIZATIONS SERVING MSFWS IN THE AREA, AND A BASIC SUMMARY OF FARMWORKER RIGHTS, INCLUDING THEIR RIGHTS WITH RESPECT TO THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT.

The WIOA coalescing of many state and federal agencies into one location will allow for all migrant organizations including agricultural employers the opportunity to train those governmental agencies of all which is provided for farmworkers; referrals to training, farmworker rights, employment contracts, career services, health care, and the employment service complaint system to name a few. This opportunity will simultaneously allow all migrant organizations the opportunity to be trained on all the governmental services offered at one-stops; Unemployment Insurance and UI eligibility issues, TANF, SNAP and Career Pathways to name a few. The scheduling of these training opportunities will exist and be planned for pre and post season.

IDES will continue to build relationships with organizations that provide services for migrant and seasonal farmworkers such as the WIOA 167 NFJP grantee the Illinois Migrant Council (IMC NFJP), Illinois Farm Bureau, Legal Aid Foundation, Illinois Department of Human Services (DHS), Community Health Partnership and faith—based organizations to name a few. We will discuss ways to reach Ag employers and inform them of IDES employer services, the Agricultural Recruitment Service (ARS) and the MSFW employment service complaint system. through IDES' Business Services Team. The Business Services Team will be describing the positive results the Agricultural Recruitment System has brought Ag employers in an effort to increase its publicity. These event presentations, workshops and

other communication means supported by updated technical advancements as they occur will be utilized when possible.

C. INCREASING OUTREACH WORKER TRAINING AND AWARENESS ACROSS CORE PROGRAMS INCLUDING THE UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE (UI) PROGRAM AND THE TRAINING ON IDENTIFICATION OF UI ELIGIBILITY ISSUES.

The WIOA coalescing of many state and federal agencies into one location will allow for all migrant organizations including agricultural employers the opportunity to train those governmental agencies of all which is provided for farmworkers; referrals to training, farmworker rights, employment contracts, career services, health care, and the employment service complaint system to name a few. This opportunity will simultaneously allow all migrant organizations the opportunity to be trained on all the governmental services offered at one-stops; Unemployment Insurance and UI eligibility issues, TANF, SNAP and Career Pathways to name a few. The scheduling of these training opportunities will exist and be planned for pre and post season.

D. PROVIDING STATE MERIT STAFF OUTREACH WORKERS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES TO ENSURE THEY ARE ABLE TO PROVIDE HIGH QUALITY SERVICES TO BOTH JOBSEEKERS AND EMPLOYERS.

To be prepared annually by representatives of the Monitor Advocate MSFW Program and the IMC NFJP is a schedule for quarterly meetings, which may be in person, by telephone or webinar, except for one meeting which will be a joint program coordination session to be held during Illinois' agricultural season. Meeting logistics will be determined and facilitated by the IDES MSFW Program and coordinated with IMC NFJP. The annual joint program coordination session agenda will cover updated staff contacts for both programs; updated procedures for mutual referrals of farmworkers for IDES and IMC services; programmatic clarifications including DOL farmworker eligibility guidance; collaboration with IDES offices for MSFW services; the local comprehensive one-stop system and the IDES Illinois Job Link system; cross training when appropriate; and relevant information referenced in the ETA/DOL Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 8-17.

E. COORDINATING OUTREACH EFFORTS WITH NFJP GRANTEES AS WELL AS WITH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE COMMUNITY SERVICE AGENCIES AND MSFW GROUPS.

IDES will continue to build relationships with organizations that provide services for migrant and seasonal farmworkers such as the WIOA 167 NFJP grantee the Illinois Migrant Council (IMC NFJP), Illinois Farm Bureau, Legal Aid Foundation, Illinois Department of Human Services (DHS), Community Health Partnership and faith-based organizations to name a few. We will discuss ways to reach Ag employers and inform them of IDES employer services, the Agricultural Recruitment Service (ARS) and the MSFW employment service complaint system through IDES' Business Services Team. The Business Services Team will be describing the positive results the Agricultural Recruitment System has brought Ag employers in an effort to increase its publicity. These event presentations, workshops and other communication means supported by updated technical advancements as they occur will be utilized when possible.

Illinois Association of Agencies and Community Organizations for Migrant Advocacy (IAACOMA): IDES and IAACOMA met to discuss the upcoming growing season, to inform the AOP and address any concerns held by either organization. IDES agreed to offer

participation in IAACOMA's upcoming conference in May 2016. IDES seeks to have staff and invite community members, employers, service providers and farmworkers to join us at the conference. These individuals will be those who normally would not attend or know of the IAACOMA goals to create change by educating community members on MSFW issues. Agenda's typically include Migrant Housing; Health Issues; Education needs; Safety in the Fields/Chemical exposure; and policy reform. Participating organizations include: IL Dept. of Public Health, OSHA Wage and Hour, Community Health Partners, Legal Assistance Foundation, Housing Action of Illinois, schools and employer staff are present. IDES staff has presented at IAACOMA's workshops and currently has one IAACOMA board member.

3. SERVICES PROVIDED TO FARMWORKERS AND AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS THROUGH THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM.

Describe the State agency's proposed strategies for:

A. PROVIDING THE FULL RANGE OF EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING SERVICES TO THE AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITY, BOTH FARMWORKERS AND AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS, THROUGH THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM. THIS INCLUDES:

CDLXXXVII. HOW CAREER AND TRAINING SERVICES REQUIRED UNDER WIOA TITLE I WILL BE PROVIDED TO MSFWS THROUGH THE ONE-STOP CENTERS;

CDLXXXVIII. HOW THE STATE SERVES AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS AND HOW IT INTENDS TO IMPROVE SUCH SERVICES.

The WIOA coalescing of many state and federal agencies into one location will allow for all migrant organizations including agricultural employers the opportunity to train those governmental agencies of all which is provided for farmworkers; referrals to training, farmworker rights, employment contracts, career services, health care, and the employment service complaint system to name a few. This opportunity will simultaneously allow all migrant organizations the opportunity to be trained on all the governmental services offered at One-Stops; Unemployment Insurance and UI eligibility issues, TANF, SNAP and Career Pathways to name a few. The scheduling of these training opportunities will exist and be planned for pre and post season.

IDES will ensure that MSFWs are offered the same range of employment services, benefits and protections as those provided to non-MSFWs at all One-Stops. Staff assisted services for job referral include:

- Assisting job seekers in completing full, quality registrations and resumes in IllinoisJobLink.com
- Provide technical assistance through IDES Outreach staff, including trainings, conferences, comprehensive Q&A workshops, supportive services and career services as well as specific employment opportunities.
- Collaboration with other organizations and the services each one of them provides
- Provide training on our labor exchange service, IllinoisJobLink.com (IJL), and improve job matches by identifying job preferences and complete work history.
- Provide a basic summary of Farmworkers Rights.

- Provide Spanish and English speaking personnel to assist in awareness across core programs including Unemployment Insurance (UI) and identification of UI eligibility issues as well as assistance in filing a claim for unemployment compensation.
- Providing employer outreach workers and local office job seeker staff with professional development training to ensure they are able to provide high quality services to both employers and job seekers.
- Coordinating outreach efforts with the workforce development and health departments of the NFJP grantee, IMC as well as with public and private community service agencies and MSFW groups.

IDES will coordinate its annual outreach strategies with IMC's Workforce Development for WIOA employment and training, related assistance and supportive services to MSFW families. As described earlier, shared information to improve outreach strategies will include updated staff contacts for both programs; updated procedures for mutual referrals of farmworkers for IDES and IMC services; programmatic clarifications including DOL farmworker eligibility guidance; collaboration with IDES offices for MSFW services, the local comprehensive one-stop system, and the IDES Illinois Job Link system; and cross training when appropriate.

Currently, Champaign and Peoria local offices are designated by USDOL as Illinois' MSFW significant offices. A comprehensive level of MSFW services will be provided at all comprehensive one-stops including but not limited to, access to information about workplace safety and rights, career guidance and referrals to training opportunities.

Referrals to Supportive Services

Outreach staff will make mutual referrals to service providers year-round as this is not a seasonal activity. IMC is the NFJP grantee for the State of Illinois with a significant focus on workforce development services for MSFW. IDES outreach staff will coordinate with the IMC workforce development staff for NFJP services for MSFW. As a supportive service to workforce development for MSFW, IDES outreach staff may coordinate with the IMC Health Department about health education of MSFW for workplace protection, heat stress prevention, and pesticide safety when resources are available.

Monitor Advocate Services

A full-time State Monitor Advocate (SMA) (temporarily vacant) provides "qualitatively equivalent and quantitatively proportionate" to the services provided to other Illinois jobseekers. Essentially MSFWs should receive all workforce development services, benefits and protections on an equitable and non-discriminatory basis, including guidance, testing, job development, training and referral. The SMA:

- Ensures equitable services for farmworkers
- Manages the Employment Service and Employment-related Law Complaint System
- Implements and sustains farmworker outreach
- Provides farmworkers notification of available employment services and workers' rights
- Facilitates the Agricultural Job Order Clearance Process Sustaining the Monitor Advocate System, ensuring services provided are in accordance with WIOA Required State Core Partners for Wagner-Peyser, including the MSFW Program

- Under WIOA, aligns MSFW eligibility criteria and services with the NFJP
- Consults with various divisions of the agency to ensure accurate reporting of MSFW data.
- Prepares and implements operating instructions including Policy and Procedures relating to MSFWs
- Prepares for and participates in Federal reviews
- Prepares and updates AOP annually as required
- Identifies statewide opportunities for recruitment of MSFW
- Monitors and reports on the Employment Complaint System, processes MSFW complaints as needed
- Participates at membership organizations, which serve the Ag community
- Maintains communication with Outreach staff and management and addresses issues as they arise
- Serves as Advocate to improve services for MSFWs within the employment service system
- Manages the timeliness of field checks, housing inspections, employer visits and complaint processes
- Meets with farmworker groups and employers to promote the use of Employment Service.
- Conducts field visits to working and living locations of MSFWs.
- Coordinates with WIOA NFJP staff and participates in outreach and recruitment events.

Wagner-Peyser Act Services Provided to MSFWs

- Employment information on IllinoisJobLink.com
- IJL Multilingual options
- Referral to Job Openings
- Job Seeker Skills and Resume Preparation
- Filing any and all complaints
- Job Development
- Assessment Interview
- Referrals to Supportive Services and Staff Assisted Services
- Information on Employment and Training Opportunities
- Labor Market Information
- WOTC Tax Credit Program information and certification of eligible applicants.
- Bi-lingual Spanish Speaking staff and Limited English Proficiency Service
- Information on the Employment Service Complaint System
- Trained Complaint Specialists
- Re Employment Service Program (RESP, ex-offender services)
- Career Guidance
- Job Fairs

ii. How the State serves agricultural employers and how it intends to improve such services.

Outreach staff will continue to monitor FLC's licensing coordinating with the Illinois Department of Labor for their expertise and support on FLC registration with the state. We

anticipate agricultural employer registrations will increase in PY 16 with the added support of Business Services Team. The Business Services Team works directly with employers and employer organizations such as local chambers of commerce to inform employers of IDES employer services. The Business Services Team will assist with registering agricultural employers and entering their staff assisted or self-serve job orders.

Wagner-Peyser Act Services Provided to Agricultural Employers

- Agricultural Recruitment System (Local, Intrastate, Interstate)
- Housing Inspections
- Information and assistance on the Foreign Labor Certification process
- Farm Labor Contractor applications and information
- IllinoisJobLink.com self-serve or staff assisted job orders and recruitment
- Information and Referral to agencies offering programs or services benefiting the business community
- WOTC Tax Credit Program information and certification of applicants
- Informational Meetings Unemployment Insurance, Wage/Hour, Migrant Law, Worker's Compensation, OSHA and Migrant Camp licensing, etc.
- Labor Market Information
- Job Fairs
- Local offices offer Conference room for recruitment purposes
- Field Checks and Visits
- Participate at New Employee Orientation meetings

B. MARKETING THE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE COMPLAINT SYSTEM TO FARMWORKERS AND OTHER FARMWORKER ADVOCACY GROUPS.

IDES will continue to build relationships with organizations that provide services for migrant and seasonal farmworkers such as the WIOA 167 NFJP grantee the Illinois Migrant Council (IMC NFJP), Illinois Farm Bureau, Legal Aid Foundation, Illinois Department of Human Services (DHS), Community Health Partnership and faith-based organizations to name a few. We will discuss ways to reach agricultural employers and inform them of IDES employer services, the Agricultural Recruitment Service (ARS) and the MSFW employment service complaint system through IDES' Business Services Team. The Business Services Team will be describing the positive results the Agricultural Recruitment System has brought agricultural employers in an effort to increase its publicity. These event presentations, workshops and other communication means supported by updated technical advancements as they occur will be utilized when possible.

C. MARKETING THE AGRICULTURAL RECRUITMENT SYSTEM TO AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS AND HOW IT INTENDS TO IMPROVE SUCH PUBLICITY.

A goal for PY 16 is for IDES to strengthen employer relationships by increasing employer outreach targeting top agricultural employers based on the number of hired employees. Outreach staff will train and encourage the use of the Agricultural Recruitment System and IllinoisJobLink.com to recruit and post job openings. In addition, employers will be advised on staff assisted services offered such as on-site hiring and recruiting events that include local training providers and workforce partners.

An increase in self-service registrations is highly feasible through the use of IllinoisJobLink.com. IllinoisJobLink.com employs a translator for multiple languages including Spanish. While Spanish Self-Service User Guides are available the most common method of completing registrations and enrollments is through staff assisted services. We seek to dramatically increase registrations in the field using our laptops and air-cards to cut down on paperwork and data entry.

A completed IllinoisJobLink.com account offers clients a personalized home page where MSFWs are able to manage a job search, create or upload a résumé, and maintain his/her job seeker profile. Key words are used to search jobs and the job orders allow for self-referrals. Outreach staff assists in job referrals, follow-up and job readiness.

Monitoring staff activity is also an easier task through IllinoisJobLink.com as we are able to review MIC, 9002A, and many other data reports daily, weekly, monthly and quarterly. Data is available by user, local office, regionally and statewide.

4. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

A. COLLABORATION

Describe any collaborative agreements the state workforce agency (SWA) has with other MSFW service providers including NFJP grantees and other service providers. Describe how the SWA intends to build upon/increase collaboration with existing partners and in establishing new partners over the next four years (including any approximate timelines for establishing agreements or building upon existing agreements).

In addition to the quarterly meetings with NFJP representatives, the IDES Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker (MSFW) Program will coordinate at the local level with IMC NFJP staff for outreach and recruitment activities. The intention is for IDES MSFW staff and IMC NFJP field staff to meet informally to prepare for the arrival and locations of migrant farmworkers, update locations of seasonal farmworkers, prepare outreach activities for the duration of the migration and agricultural season, review anticipated employment and training related assistance and supportive services needs of migrant and seasonal farmworkers, and identify available resources to meet their needs. Staff may schedule tentative dates to coordinate outreach activities, and communicate with local entities for referrals to meet farmworker needs.

To be prepared annually by representatives of the Monitor Advocate MSFW Program and the IMC NFJP is a schedule for quarterly meetings, which may be in person, by telephone or webinar, except for one meeting which will be a joint program coordination session to be held during Illinois' agricultural season. Meeting logistics will be determined and facilitated by the IDES MSFW Program and coordinated with IMC NFJP. The annual joint program coordination session agenda will cover updated staff contacts for both programs; updated procedures for mutual referrals of farmworkers for IDES and IMC services; programmatic clarifications including DOL farmworker eligibility guidance; collaboration with IDES offices for MSFW services; the local comprhensive one-stop system and the IDES Illinois Job Link system; cross training when appropriate; and relevant information referenced in the ETA/DOL Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 8-17.

IDES and IMC representatives from the Workforce Development Department plan to conduct discussions about alignment of the WIOA Title III MSFW Program and the WIOA

Title 1-D NFJP activities and coordination between the two programs and quarterly meetings, on of which will include the joint program coordination session which has not taken place under WIOA. They also collaborated on a presentation about the two programs given at the State Regional Planning Summit held February 23—24, 2016 which was prepared for a wide range of Illinois Local Workforce Innovation Area representatives, partners and stakeholders.

IMC will be glad to offer comments when a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is updated from the most recent draft prepared by IDES in PY 16, and shared with IMC NFJP for comments at that time.

PY 15 outreach activities were conducted to contact potential MSFW job seekers through participation in other MSFW service provider events, as well as throughout the travels for H2A housing inspections.

IDES will continue to build relationships with organizations that provide services for migrant and seasonal farmworkers such as the WIOA NFJP grantee the Illinois Migrant Council (IMC NFJP), Illinois Farm Bureau, Legal Aid Foundation, Illinois Department of Human Services (DHS), Community Health Partnership and faith-based organizations to name a few. We will discuss ways to reach agriculture employers and inform them of IDES employer services, the Agricultural Recruitment Service (ARS) and the MSFW employment service complaint system through IDES' Business Services Team. The Business Services Team will be describing the positive results the Agricultural Recruitment System has brought Ag employers in an effort to increase its publicity. These event presentations, workshops and other communication means supported by updated technical advancements as they occur will be utilized when possible.

B. REVIEW AND PUBLIC COMMENT.

In developing the AOP, the SWA must solicit information and suggestions from NFJP grantees, other appropriate MSFW groups, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations, and other interested organizations. In addition, at least 45 calendar days before submitting its final AOP, the SWA must provide a proposed plan to NFJP grantees, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations, and other organizations expressing an interest and allow at least 30 days for review and comment. The SWA must: 1) Consider any comments received in formulating its final proposed AOP; 2) Inform all commenting parties in writing whether their comments have been incorporated and, if not, the reasons therefore; and 3) Transmit the comments and recommendations received and its responses with the submission of the AOP. The AOP must include a statement confirming NFJP grantees, other appropriate MSFW groups, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations and other interested employer organizations have been given an opportunity to comment on the AOP. Include the list of organizations from which information and suggestions were solicited, any comments received, and responses to those comments.

The Agricultural Outreach Plan (AOP) went out for public comment (as a component of the Unified State Plan) for the period of January 25, 2016-February 24, 2016. The plan also was presented to the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB) via a webinar on February 10, 2016 and at the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB) meeting on February 25, 2016. The IWIB includes NFJP grantees, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations and other organizations. The content of the agricultural outreach plan was discussed at the

February 25, 2016 IWIB meeting and recommendations were made. The AOP was modified and changes including comments and editing are incorporated into this draft with the assistance of the Illinois Migrant Council, the NFJP grantee.

C. DATA ASSESSMENT.

Review the previous four years Wagner-Peyser data reports on performance. Note whether the State has been meeting its goals to provide MSFWs quantitatively proportionate services as compared to non-MSFWs. If it has not met these goals, explain why the State believes such goals were not met and how the State intends to improve its provision of services in order to meet such goals.

The data for the previous four years is available at Attachment Y at www.illinoisworknet.com/wioastateplan.

D. ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

The plan must include an explanation of what was achieved based on the previous AOP, what was not achieved and an explanation as to why the State believes the goals were not achieved, and how the State intends to remedy the gaps of achievement in the coming year.

Goals for the last AOP (2014 - 2018) were achieved until the summer of 2015. In PY 2015 total MSFW applications were 990. Of these, 44 were referred to employment; 960 received staff assisted services; 591 were referred to supportive services and 583 received career guidance. Due to the mid-season resignations of outreach personnel (for full-time positions in the migrant assistance community), the hasty mid-season retirement of the State Monitor Advocate (for family reasons) and bad weather, we met 4 out of 5 Equity Ratio Indicators, 3 out 5 Migrant Indicators of Compliance in Part Three with zero in Part Four and one out of seven Minimum Service Level indicators at 4QPY16.

Since June 2017, IDES has hired two additional staff who have been trained to work with the Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers (MSFW) program. The State Monitor Advocate (SMA) and outreach staff will train staff in American Job Centers, via webinar and office visits, regarding how to detect a Migrant Seasonal Farm Worker. IDES will post Notice/Aviso posters for MSFWs on bulletin boards in the comprehensive one-stops. The outreach staff and SMA will conduct outreach in communities and will deliver services to migrant workers. To ensure that IDES counts as many MSFWs in Illinois as possible, Farm Labor Contractors and other community organizations that serve the migrant population will be contacted. The SMA and outreach staff will deliver services, and will attend MSFW events, health fairs, and community meetings as they pertain to MSFWs in Illinois.

E. STATE MONITOR ADVOCATE

The plan must contain a statement confirming the State Monitor Advocate has reviewed and approved the AOP.

The acting State Monitor Advocate, Patrick Durkin, has reviewed and approves the plan.

WAGNER-PEYSER ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include assurances that:

1. The Wagner-Peyser Employment Service is co-located with one-stop centers or a plan and timeline has been developed to comply with this requirement within a reasonable amount of time. (sec 121(e)(3)); Yes

2. The State agency is complying with the requirements under 20 CFR 653.111 (State agency staffing requirements) if the State has significant MSFW one-stop centers; Yes

3. If a State Workforce Development Board, department, or agency administers State laws for vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, that board, department, or agency cooperates with the agency that administers Wagner-Peyser services, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and Youth Programs under Title I; and Yes

4. State agency merit-based public employees provide Wagner-Peyser Act-funded labor exchange activities in accordance with Department of Labor regulations. Yes

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAMS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include a description of the following as it pertains to Adult Education and Literacy programs under title II, the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA).

A. ALIGNING OF CONTENT STANDARDS

Describe how the eligible agency will, by July 1, 2016, align its content standards for adult education with State-adopted challenging academic content standards, as adopted under section 1111(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (20 U.S.C. 6311(b)(1)).

The Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) is the eligible agency in the State with the responsibility of administering the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 - Title II Adult Education and Literacy Act.

In 2014, the ICCB integrated the Illinois Adult Education ABE/ASE Content Standards with the College and Career Readiness (CCR) Standards released by the Illinois State Board of Education as well as the Office of Career Technical and Adult Education (OCTAE). In addition to the above two referenced documents, the Standards Document also incorporated the Common Core, States' Career Clusters Initiative Essential Knowledge and Skill Statements, and the International Society for Technology in Education's National Educational Technology Standards for Students. This cross referenced Standards Document, along with a companion Curriculum Guide provides the foundation for curriculum development. All current programs have participated in statewide curriculum institutes to develop new curriculum as necessary or to align current curriculum to provide effective as

well as rigorous content based instruction. An online repository is being developed that will house statewide approved curriculum and lesson plans to be used for adult education instruction. Instructors will be able to access, upload and provide recommendation for curriculum and lesson plans.

In Fiscal Year 2017, the Content Standards for English Language Learners (ELL) were updated to align with the Office of Career Technical and Adult Education (OCTAE) English Language Proficiency (ELP) and Illinois Adult education standards (which are aligned to the state's K-12 Learning Standards). The ELP standards ensure that all adult ELL's can obtain the knowledge and skills necessary for employment and self-sufficiency through integrated workplace preparation activities, mathematics, and digital literacy.

A statewide advisory committee consisting of adult education instructors, local program directors, state staff, and subject matter experts continues to evaluate the effectiveness of curriculum and instruction and ensuring curricula alignment to CCR standards.

To ensure the sustainability of standards based instruction throughout the State, ICCB has created a five year implementation and sustainability plan. This plan institutes a train-the-trainer model. Cohorts of instructors who successfully complete and provide applicable evidence of standards-based instruction will be used to train the next cohort of instructors. It is the goal of ICCB to create a system of CCR content specialist/master teachers in Language Arts, Math, Reading, and English as Second Language that will provide regional training, technical assistance, and guidance to instructors in their region, thus ensuring statewide rigorous standards based instruction in all programs.

The first year completers of the Standards Based Instruction training have also completed training to be certified as CCR content specialist. The Content Specialist training continues to fulfil the mission of the CCRS sustainability plan by utilizing the expertise of the specialists in the delivery of technical assistance and coaching to the instructional teams of the local adult education program. This is an effort to improve curriculum and instruction.

B. LOCAL ACTIVITIES

Describe how the State will, using the considerations specified in section 231(e) of WIOA, fund each eligible provider to establish or operate programs that provide any of the following adult education and literacy activities identified in section 203 of WIOA, including programs that provide such activities concurrently. The Unified or Combined State Plan must include at a minimum the scope, content, and organization of these local activities.

ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY ACTIVITIES (SECTION 203 OF WIOA)

- Adult education;
- Literacy;
- Workplace adult education and literacy activities;
- Family literacy activities;
- English language acquisition activities;
- Integrated English literacy and civics education;
- Workforce preparation activities; or
- Integrated education and training that—

0. Provides adult education and literacy activities, concurrently and contextually with both, workforce preparation activities, and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster, and
1. Is for the purpose of educational and career advancement.

Adult Education and Literacy Activities (Section 203 of WIOA) • Adult education; • Literacy; • Workplace adult education and literacy activities; • Family literacy activities; • English language acquisition activities; • Integrated English literacy and civics education; • Workforce preparation activities; or • Integrated education and training that— 1. Provides adult education and literacy activities that are, concurrently and contextually with both, workforce preparation activities, and must include workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster, and 2. Is for the purpose of educational and career advancement.

In 2017, the ICCB convened an adult education taskforce to create an Adult Education Strategic Plan. The 25 member taskforce represent critical stakeholders including, legislators; state commerce and economic opportunity agencies; employment security and human services agencies; Adult Education system leaders and practitioners; president of higher education institutions, representatives of workforce development and philanthropy; K-12 educators' and community based organizations. The vision for the strategic plan is as follows: In partnership with other stakeholders, we will create learning opportunities that align with statewide education, training, and employment strategies to ensure all adult learners have access to and success across services that are cohesive, coordinated, and innovative to promote better economic opportunities, greater equity, and sustainable career pathways. The Adult Education Strategic Plan accomplishes this by achieving the following four goals: STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

Goal 1: Improve Outcomes by Scaling Effective Models and Strategies across the System

• Building, expanding and scaling comprehensive career pathways systems, and create the conditions across every Adult Education program to find breakthrough ways of expanding these proven models.

Goal 2: Increase Postsecondary Transitions and Credential Attainment

• Recognizing that access to postsecondary education is not enough, but also ensures students are accessing postsecondary education and earning credentials that are in demand.

Goal 3: Strengthen College and Career Readiness

• College and career readiness for underprepared adult students is critical to overall success. Increasingly, students entering the workforce are discovering that they need critical knowledge and skills that are used in the workplace.

Goal 4: Develop Life-long Career Pathway Systems & Enabling Technologies

• Strategizing for career and life options while meeting the diverse and context-specific learning needs of various age groups, including the acquisition of basic literacy, and technical skills through both formal education and effective alternative pathways to learning. In April 2017, the ICCB published a competitive Request for Proposals (RFP)

soliciting statewide eligible providers to apply for funding to provide Title II Adult Education and Literacy services as aligned with the Unified State Plan and other education and workforce plans. Eighty one providers were approved to provide adult education and literacy services for Fiscal Year 18, with the opportunity to apply for continuation funding each following grant year until 2020. Each provider will be granted continue funding base upon meeting measure of demonstrated effectiveness. A new competitive RFP will be published in 2020. During a competitive year, an applicant has to adhere to the following guidelines: 1. May be an Eligible Applicant of one of these types of entities as listed below provided they meet demonstrated effectiveness, as listed below: • Local educational agencies (LEA) • Community—Based Organizations (CBO) or Faith-Based Organizations (FBO) • Volunteer Literacy Organizations • Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) • Public or Private nonprofit agencies • Libraries • Public-housing authorities • Nonprofit institutions that are described previously and have the ability to provide adult education and literacy services to eligible individuals • Consortium or coalition of agencies, organizations, institutions, libraries or authorities described previously • Partnership between an employer and an entity described above 2. Must respond to the RFP by the due date. 3. Must complete all required portions of the application. 4. Must meet all deadlines and other elements as specified in the RFP. 5. Must meet all eligibility requirements. The past effectiveness of an eligible applicant in improving the literacy skills of adults is a strong factor in the delivery of adult education instruction and supportive services and was used in the evaluation of the grant applications. In addition, grant proposals were reviewed by local area workforce boards to confirm the alignment of local adult education activities with the local and regional plans and services. The ICCB recognizes the following activities are allowable under Adult Education and Literacy under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). • Adult education; • Literacy; • Workplace adult education and literacy activities; • Family literacy activities; • English language acquisition activities; • Integrated English literacy and civics education; • Workforce preparation activities; or • Integrated education and training. The ICCB considered the success of a funded provider in meeting or exceeding such performance measures as identified by the federal National Reporting System (NRS). The ICCB also recognizes the need to build a career pathway system for adult learners that will enhance education and employment opportunities. In order to accomplish this, the program/applicants were required to address the thirteen considerations under federal law and one state consideration. Applications were evaluated using a rubric that assigned a point value for each proposed activity as outlined in the proposal. 1. The documented need of the eligible applicant to serve individuals in the community who are most in need of adult education and literacy services and those who are in need of career pathway services, including individuals who have literacy skills or who are English language learners (i.e., literacy statistics, regional and local needs as identified under the Unified State Plan, etc.). 2. The applicant demonstrates the ability to serve eligible individuals with disabilities, including those with learning disabilities. 3. The past effectiveness of an eligible applicant in improving the literacy skills of adults, including those with low literacy levels; and demonstrates the ability to meet or exceed the levels of performance. 4. The applicants proposed adult education services and activities demonstrate an alignment with local plans and services and with local one-stop partners. 5. The applicant demonstrates the use of instructional practices and activities that research has proven to be effective in teaching to achieve learning gains, is of sufficient intensity and duration, is built on a strong foundation of research and effective educational practice, and

includes the essential components of reading. 6. The applicant demonstrates the effectiveness in providing instruction in reading, writing, speaking, mathematics and English language acquisition and is based on best practices, scientific valid research and the state standards. 7. The program activities effectively employ advances in technology including the use of computers as a part of instruction including distance education to increase the quality of learning which leads to improved performance. 8. The applicant proposes activities that provide contextualized learning including integrated education and training as well as bridge programs to ensure that an individual has the skills needed to compete in the workplace, transition to post-secondary education and training, advance in employment and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. 9. The applicant proposes activities that are delivered by well-trained instructors, counselors, support staff and administrators who meet state guidelines, have access to high quality professional development. 10. The applicant's activities coordinate with other available education, training, and social service resources in the community, such as by establishing strong links with elementary schools and secondary schools, post-secondary educational institutions, institutions of higher education, local workforce investment boards, one-stop centers, job training programs, and social service agencies, business, industry, labor organizations, community-based organizations, nonprofit organizations and intermediaries, for the development of career pathways. 11. The applicant offers flexible schedules and supportive services (such as child care and transportation) that are necessary to enable individuals, including individuals with disabilities or other special needs, to attend and complete programs. 12. The applicant maintains a high quality information management system, as determined by the ICCB and has the capacity to report participant outcomes and to monitor program performance measures. 13. The local communities have a demonstrated need for additional English literacy programs and civic education programs. 14. The proposed budget is consistent with the eligible provider's activities, is cost efficient within administrative guidelines and places emphasis on serving the target populations. • Eligible Instructional Categories: Programs applying for federal and state adult education resources must abide by the policy and procedures set forth. All programs must provide instruction that is direct, at a distance, or a blended approach, direct and at a distance. These activities are important to the success of the program and the students served. The purpose of Adult Education is to create a partnership among the Federal Government, States and localities to provide, on a voluntary basis, adult education and literacy activities, in order to: o assist adults to become literate and obtain the knowledge and skills necessary for employment and economic self-sufficiency; o assist adults who are parents or family members to obtain the education and skills that are necessary to becoming full partners in the educational development of their children; and lead to sustainable improvements in the economic opportunities for their family; o assist adults in attaining a secondary school diploma and in the transition to postsecondary education and training, including through career pathways; and o assist immigrants and other individuals who are English language learners in improving their reading, writing, speaking, and comprehension skills in English; and mathematics skills; and -acquiring an understanding of the American system of Government, individual freedom, and the responsibilities of citizenship. The Adult Education activities below are the approved instructional activities for an ICCB approved adult education program. Adult Education • Adult Basic Education (ABE) curriculum consists of approved courses designed to bring a student from grade zero through the eighth-grade competency level, as determined by standardized testing. This curriculum as

well as the instruction must increase a student's ability to read, write, speak and perform mathematics. This should also lead to the attainment of a secondary school diploma or high school equivalency; and transition to post-secondary education and training; or employment. Beginning level courses cover grade zero through the third-grade competency level. The intermediate level courses cover fourth-grade competency through the eight-grade competency. Each level of courses covers each content area and includes College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) in the curriculum. The curriculum is designed to accommodate the concept of individualized instruction and includes courses in general basic skills; reading literacy and communication skills; computational skills; technology and digital literacy skills; workforce/employability skills; life skills; career exploration/awareness skills; workplace literacy; family literacy/parenting; bridge instruction and U.S. Citizenship education. • Adult Secondary Education (ASE) curriculum consists of approve courses designed to bring a student from grade nine through the twelfth-grade competency level, as determined by standardized testing. This curriculum as well as the instruction must increase a student's ability to read, write and speak and perform mathematics. This should also lead to the attainment of a secondary school diploma or high school equivalency; and transition to post-secondary education and training; or employment. The curriculum is designed to prepare a student to achieve a High School Equivalency credential and includes College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) within each curriculum. The curriculum is also designed to accommodate the concept of individualized instruction and includes courses in basic skills; general academic and intellectual skills; reading literacy and communication skills; computational skills; technology and digital literacy skills; workforce/employability skills; life skills and career exploration/awareness skills; workplace literacy; family literacy/parenting; bridge instruction and U.S. Citizenship education. • English Language Acquisition (ELA) curriculum consists of approved courses designed to include instruction in English for those whose native language is not English. The curriculum and instruction is designed to help eligible individuals who are English Language Learners achieve competence in reading, speaking, comprehension and mathematics skills that leads to attainment of a secondary school diploma or high school equivalency; and transition to post-secondary education and training; or employment. Beginning, intermediate and advanced courses include a curriculum in listening, speaking, reading and writing using the English language. Technology and Digital Literacy skills as well as CCRS are also included in the curriculum. Other courses using the English language may include instruction in life skills, citizenship education, career exploration, employability skills (e.g., the OCTAE's Employability Skills Framework), workplace literacy, family literacy, bridge instruction and Integrated English Literacy/Civics (IEL/Civics). Student levels are based on proficiency as measured by ICCB—approved standardized tests. The curriculum is designed to accommodate the concept of individualized instruction. • Workforce Preparation Activities/Career Exploration/Awareness Skills curriculum may include instruction in workplace language, career readiness/exploration, development of career plans, career awareness job readiness, career development including, the use of career cluster essential knowledge and skills statements, job skills and career interest inventories, soft skills, preparation for college entrance exams and career planning. This also includes instruction related to employment opportunities, access to job information and self-analysis techniques. The instruction is offered at every level of instruction (ABE/ASE/ELA), but each level will only include the most appropriate information for the level of instruction. • Integrated English

Literacy/Civics (IEL/Civics) includes education to immigrants and other limited proficient populations and are designed to prepare adults who are English language learners for, and place such adults in, unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency; and integrate with the local workforce development system and its functions to carry out the activities of the program, in combination with Integrated Education and Training programming. Curriculum for this instructional category assists participants to effectively engage in the education, work and civic opportunities of the United States of America. The Illinois IEL/Civics competencies consist of seven thematic units (components) of civics development and more than 40 practical and immediately relevant activities for immigrant integration and success. The seven thematic units include: Consumer Economics (CE), Community Resources (CR), Democratic Process (DP), Employment (EM), Health Services (HE), Housing (HO) and U.S. School System (SS). Throughout a combination of classroom instruction and community connections, these competencies will enable participants to effectively engage in education, work, civics opportunities and rights and responsibilities of citizenship while continuing to build their English language and literacy skills. The competencies may be used at each level of ELA instruction; however, a program should increase the level of difficulty as the student progresses. • Bridge Programs/Career Pathways services must be incorporated into the instructional process for all adult learners and at all educational functioning levels. This includes the incorporation of career awareness, career development activities designed to assist learners in making informed decisions regarding making smooth transitions to post-secondary education. The use of bridge programs has been piloted and has shown promise in introducing adult learners to different career options while increasing basic skills. Bridge programs provide adult education learners with contextualized occupation-specific basic skills needed to successfully transition to post-secondary education and employment in high-growth industries. The ICCB and other key state agencies and stakeholders, developed a bridge definition that is used to ensure consistency in use statewide. This group defined a bridge as a program that prepares adults with limited academic or limited English skills to enter and succeed in credit-bearing post-secondary education and training leading to career—path employment in high-demand, middle- and high-skilled occupations. The goal of bridge programs is to sequentially bridge the gap between the initial skills of individuals and what they need to enter and succeed in post-secondary education and career-path employment. Three core elements are required to be included as part of a bridge program: • Contextualized instruction that integrates basic reading, math and language skills and industry/occupational knowledge. • Career development that includes career exploration, career planning within a career area, and understanding the world of work (specific elements depend upon the level of the bridge program and on whether participants are already incumbent workers in the specific field). • Transition services that provide students with the information and assistance they need to successfully navigate the process of moving from adult education or remedial coursework to credit or occupational programs. Services may include (as needed and available) academic advising, study skills, coaching, referrals to individual support services, e.g., transportation and child care. • Integrated Education and Training (IET) is comprised of three components: adult education and literacy activities, workforce preparation activities and workforce training. Each of these components must be offered simultaneously, concurrently and contextually for educational and career advancement. Illinois currently has two models of integrated education and training The ICAPS (Integrated Career and Academic Preparation System) Mode1 and

Model 2. o ICAPS Model 1 utilizes partnerships between Adult Education providers and college and university workforce and career training programs that may not be funded through Perkins or the Illinois Community College Board. This model also provides concurrent enrollment and contextualized instruction in a team taught environment with comprehensive student supports resulting in skill level gains, high school equivalency certifications, college credit, and college and industry-recognized credentials. o The ICAPS Model 2 also utilizes partnerships between Adult Education providers and workforce and career training programs be tied to a specific postsecondary/training institution. Student must also be concurrently and simultaneously enrolled and instruction must be contextualized. This model allows for the participation of community-based and faith-based organizations, local school districts and educational authorities, regional offices of education, and other state-funded Adult Education providers and partnership with corporate and continuing education divisions at community colleges, Local Workforce Innovation Boards, independent and governmental workforce training agencies, as well as individual employers and industry-based training programs. This model also provides integrated instruction and comprehensive student supports resulting in skill level gains, high school equivalency certifications, and industry-recognized credentials as well as the option for employer-specific training programs. • Vocational Skills Training (VOC) consists of an ICCB AEFL—approved course that is short-term in nature. VOC training leads to an industry recognized certificate or credential related to a specific career pathway. The training must provide entry—level workforce skills which lead to employment and prepare adults with limited academic or limited English skills to enter and succeed in credit-bearing post-secondary education and training leading to career-path employment in high—demand, middle- and high-skilled occupations. A program may choose to offer Vocational Skills Training in addition to the required instructional categories listed above. The recommended method to offer VOC training is as a part of either a bridge program or through an Integrated Education and Training (IET)/ and/or Integrated Literacy and Civics Education (IL/CE) programs. • Family literacy is an integrated, intensive service for at-risk families that must include, but is not limited to, the four components—adult education, parenting education, parent/child activities and child education—of family literacy. Each component is defined as: • Adult education as defined above. • Parenting education includes information and support for parents on issues such as childbirth, development and nurturing of children, child rearing, family management, support for children learning, effective advocacy strategies for the rights of all children, and parent involvement in their child's education. • Parent/child activities include regularly scheduled, interactive literacy—based learning activities for parents and children. • Child education includes age-appropriate education to prepare children for success in school and life experiences (includes early childhood programs, school programs and/or childcare). Only three components—adult education, parenting education, and parent/child activities—can be funded by ICCB Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) funds. The fourth component—child education—must be funded by an appropriate child education partner. • Literacy coordination may include coordination, tutor training, tutor scheduling and other support activities that promote student learning gains, and may include volunteer literacy. Literacy services must be in conjunction with Adult Education and Literacy instructional programming provided by trained volunteers to target population students. Literacy services support classroom instruction and increasing student learning gains. Trained volunteers may work with students during classroom instruction under the supervision and

coordination of a paid instructor in an AEL funded class. Instructional hours may not be claimed for services provided by volunteer tutors. • Workplace Adult Education and Literacy may include coordination of workplace education projects that are designed to meet the unique needs of participating workers and employers. Workplace Adult Education and Literacy refers to an individual's ability to read, write, speak, compute and otherwise solve problems with enough proficiency to meet every day needs on the job and to pursue professional goals. This includes a knowledge of phonics, word identification and comprehension, which enables the employee to read technical information and complex manuals. Workplace Adult Education and Literacy also refers to the ability of an individual to function in job situations involving higher order thinking and the capacity to evaluate work situations and processes. An employee who is workplace literate has increased job success, experiences fewer frustrations in the workplace, has higher self-esteem and has less need for retraining as the job and technology change. Workplace literacy can be funded with Adult Education and Literacy funds. All other rules of the AEL grant apply as well. The ICCB will continue to work to align new terminology with the requirements of the federal law (e.g., Workplace Literacy to Workforce Education). Allowable Support Services Activities: A. Student transportation services are for students enrolled in Adult Education and Literacy eligible activities. Every effort should be made to coordinate these services with other entities within the community. B. Childcare is the care of children during the time an adult education student is engaged in eligible adult education and literacy instructional activities. The student must be the primary care giver of the child. Every effort should be made to coordinate these services with other entities within the community. C. Guidance and counseling are activities with students which may include: (1) Learning styles inventories, (2) Evaluating the abilities of students, (3) Assisting students to make their own educational and career pathway choices, including career awareness and development activities, etc. (4) Assisting students in personal and social development, (5) Assisting staff members in planning and conducting guidance programs and (6) Providing transition services that will lead to post-secondary education and training, bridge programs, integrated education and training programs, employment and other activities of statewide significance. Social work activities include: (1) Improvement of students' attendance, (2) Interventions to assist students dealing with the problems involving home, school, and community, (3) Provision of referral assistance and (4) Retention strategies. D. Assistive and adaptive equipment or special printed materials are for adult education and literacy students with special learning needs. E. Assessment and testing are activities to measure skill gains of individual students enrolled in eligible adult education and literacy activities through the use of the approved assessments for Illinois Adult Education and Literacy. However, other diagnostic assessments designed to place students in appropriate and eligible adult education and literacy instruction are allowable.

SPECIAL RULE

Each eligible agency awarding a grant or contract under this section shall not use any funds made available under this title for adult education and literacy activities for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are under the age of 16 and are enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under State law, except that such agency may use such funds for such purpose if such programs, services, or activities are related to family literacy activities. In providing family literacy activities under this title, an eligible provider shall attempt to coordinate with programs and services that

are not assisted under this title prior to using funds for adult education and literacy activities under this title for activities other than activities for eligible individuals.

C. CORRECTIONS EDUCATION AND OTHER EDUCATION OF INSTITUTIONALIZED INDIVIDUALS

Describe how the State will establish and operate programs under section 225 of WIOA for corrections education and education of other institutionalized individuals, including how it will fund, in accordance with the requirements of title II, subtitle C, any of the following academic programs for:

- Adult education and literacy activities;
- Special education, as determined by the eligible agency;
- Secondary school credit;
- Integrated education and training;
- Career pathways;
- Concurrent enrollment;
- Peer tutoring; and
- Transition to re-entry initiatives and other post release services with the goal of reducing recidivism.

Each eligible agency using funds provided under Programs for Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Individuals to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution must give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within 5 years of participation in the program.

Describe how the State will establish and operate programs under section 225 of WIOA for corrections education and education of other institutionalized individuals, including how it will fund, in accordance with the requirements of Title II, subtitle C, any of the following academic programs for: a. Adult education and literacy activities; b. Special education, as determined by the eligible agency; c. Secondary school credit; d. Integrated education and training; e. Career pathways; f. Concurrent enrollment; g. Peer tutoring; and h. Transition to re-entry initiatives and other post release services with the goal of reducing recidivism. Each eligible agency using funds provided under Programs for Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Individuals to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution must give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within 5 years of participation in the program. The state agency allocates funds to eligible correctional institutions using the same grant or contract process as the other eligible providers under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and carries the same provisions for direct and equitable access. The same criterion used to determine an applicant's eligibility under Section 231 also applies to all applicants of demonstrated effectiveness listed under Section 203.5, including Correctional Education Institutions. Each applicant will be evaluated using the same rubric and scoring process. Priority will be given to applicants who provide services to incarcerated individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of enrolling in the instructional program. Eligible instructional activities and services are provided in correctional institutions throughout the state. The services provided include an assessment of an individual's educational functioning levels to determine mandated adult education and

literacy instructional programming needed in reading, writing, math and speaking to earn a High School Equivalency (HSE) Certificate or High school credit as well as the acquisition of the English language. The ICCB funds adult education in correctional institutions and are designed to provide offenders with basic skill instruction as well as career pathway preparation. Given the low skill levels of many offenders, the ICCB adult/correctional education model understands that most participants' re-entry preparation will begin with adult education. Adult education is designed to help individuals strengthen their basic skills, earn their high school credential and transition to further education and training such as career and technical education or other post-secondary education programs. Illinois' adult education programs within a correction framework may provide the following core services that are consistent with the requirements for all statewide adult education programs: Adult Basic Education (ABE), Adult Secondary Education (ASE) and English Language Acquisition (ELA). These services are based on the needs of the institution. Other services that may be offered include: (1) adult education and literacy activities; (2) special needs assessment, as determined by the eligible agency; (3) integrated education and training or bridge programs; (4) career pathways; (5) concurrent enrollment; and (6) peer tutoring. The ICCB will work with the Second Chance program through the Correctional programs to establish a process for individuals to transition to re-entry initiatives and other post-release services with the goal of reducing recidivism. The ICCB will, in conjunction with the Correctional programs, develop a process of referral to adult education programs in the area of release and to the local community college. Special Note: Secondary School Credit programming is not currently provided through correctional education with AEFL funds, however this provision may be considered in the future. Through partnerships, adult education programing will align its educational services with the labor market needs to determine jobs without criminal history restrictions. For example, the Illinois Department of Corrections developed a bridge program in Culinary Arts to provide instruction to those with low basic skills. The use of contextualized instruction and the incorporation of career awareness and workforce preparation activities will be incorporated into instruction to provide the offenders with knowledge and skills necessary for their success. The ICCB will work with core and required partners under WIOA to provide extensive wrap-around services to ensure successful recruitment, retention, re-entry, transition into post-secondary education, career training and workforce preparation to incarcerated individuals to reduce recidivism.

D. INTEGRATED ENGLISH LITERACY AND CIVICS EDUCATION PROGRAM

1. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL ESTABLISH AND OPERATE INTEGRATED ENGLISH LITERACY AND CIVICS EDUCATION PROGRAMS UNDER SECTION 243 OF WIOA, FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS WHO ARE ADULTS, INCLUDING PROFESSIONALS WITH DEGREES AND CREDENTIALS IN THEIR NATIVE COUNTRIES.

The State will use Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education(IEL/CE) funds in combination with integrated education and training activities to address how to prepare adults including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries, who are English language learners for, and place such adults in, unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency; and integrate with the local workforce development system and its functions to carry out the activities of

the program. The ICCB held an IELCE 243 competition for eligible providers in April 2017 under WIOA for FY18 provision of IELCE activities. 36 applicants applied for IELCE 243 funding and 26 of the submitted applications qualified and were approved for 243 funding based on their proposed IELCE activities and past demonstrated effectiveness. The grant period for the approved 26 IELCE providers will be from July 1, 2018 until June 30, 2020. For continued funding, successful applicants will be required to submit a non-competitive continuation application annually. Continued funding will be contingent upon the availability and a sufficient appropriation of both federal and state resources, the applicant's demonstrated effectiveness in serving the target population and achieving the required performance and programmatic outcomes; and the ability to meet all grant requirements. A. The state will evaluate the applications under Section 243 based upon the ability to deliver blended English Language Acquisition (ELA)/Civics as a part of instruction as well as each applicant must address the required competencies as listed below in item B, and concurrent enrollment in an Integrated Education and Training (including Workforce Preparation Skills) instruction. Programs may offer instruction in partnership with other entities in order to achieve the requirements of the law. For example: A program (community based organization (CBO)) may decide to deliver contextualized instruction in their literacy program and another program (CBO or community college) may provide the related training activities or workforce preparation activities. Applications will also be evaluated on how well instruction is connected to in-demand industries. B. As part of this requirement, Illinois Adult Education requires those enrolled in Integrated English Literacy Civics (IEL/Civics) to demonstrate competency in achieving outcomes. The state will update the competencies such as the Democratic Process, Community Resources, U.S. School System, Housing, Employment and Consumer Economics. The goal of IEL/Civics is to provide integrated programs of service that incorporate English literacy and civics education to help immigrants and other Limited English Proficiency (LEP) populations to effectively participate in education, work and civic opportunities in this country as well as the rights and responsibilities of citizens. C. Other activities of statewide significance will be added to ensure compliance with achievement of Section 243. Special Note: Programs who provide civics education only in conjunction with English Literacy instruction must do so with under Section 231.

2. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL FUND, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF TITLE II, SUBTITLE C, AN INTEGRATED ENGLISH LITERACY AND CIVICS EDUCATION PROGRAM AND HOW THE FUNDS WILL BE USED FOR THE PROGRAM.

A. Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education activities will be funded in combination with integrated education and training activities and will be awarded to providers that address how their programs will: • prepare adults including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries, who are English language learners for, and place such adults in, unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that leads to economic self-sufficiency; • integrate with the local workforce development systems to carry out the activities of the program; • address the civic competencies outlined below; • have a demonstrated population need in the area; and • Integrated education training and workforce preparation skills with curriculum. The same criterion used to determine an applicant's eligibility under Section 231 also applies to all applicants of demonstrated effectiveness listed under Section 203.5. Each applicant will be evaluated using a rubric and

scoring process that is in accordance with the activities established under Section 243 and will also include the thirteen considerations under law as well as one consideration under state guidelines. B. As a part of this requirement, Illinois Adult Education requires those enrolled in Integrated English Literacy Civics (IEL/Civics) to demonstrate competency in achieving outcomes. As part of the application process, Adult Education Providers must address Illinois' specific IEL/Civics Competencies in their proposals. Each applicant must address competencies such as the Democratic Process, Community Resources, U.S. School System, Housing, Employment and Consumer Economics. The goal of IEL/Civics is to provide integrated program of services that incorporates English literacy and civics education to help immigrants and other Limited English Proficiency (LEP) populations to effectively participate in education, work and civic opportunities in this country. Each applicant must address the required competencies as listed above and will integrate Integrated Education and Training and Workforce Preparation Skills. Priority will be given to those programs that provide Integrated Education programs and Workforce Preparation Skills as a part of instructional programming as well as partnering with other entities in the delivery of services. Special Note: Programs who provide civics education only in conjunction with English Literacy instruction must do so under Section 231.

E. STATE LEADERSHIP

1. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE THE FUNDS TO CARRY OUT THE REQUIRED STATE LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES UNDER SECTION 223 OF WIOA.

A. The Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) will provide services that have been identified previously under this plan. The ICCB will assist programs in the coordination and delivery of key services within the one-stop delivery system. These services may include instructional, assessment, support and referral services. The ICCB will develop and provide relevant training to assist locals in the development of partnerships within the one stop system. The ICCB will also provide technical assistance to all core partners in understanding the adult education system and more specifically, training in appropriate administration of educational assessments to students. The ICCB will continue to assist local programs in the development of career pathway programs and will identify tools and develop curriculum needed to support students entering career pathway programs. B. The ICCB will develop and continue to enhance high quality professional development to support instruction provided to local adult education programs. Professional development will be or will continue in the following areas: Leadership Excellence Academy (LEA) for administrators in the overall evaluation of program instruction and services provided; Evidence Based Reading Instruction (STAR) (i.e., enhanced toolkit); Content Standard Development and Implementation (i.e., enhance ABE/ASE standards; develop English Language Acquisition (ELA) standard alignment with CCR Standards); Curriculum and Lesson Planning Development; ELA; Civic Education; Integrated Literacy and Civics; Competency Development and Implementation; Transitions and Workplace Education; development of Instructional Leaders and Instructor Academies; Increase Technology based professional development; Integrated Education and Training; Bridge Programs; Career Awareness; Math, Reading, Writing, Speaking, and Listening; host conferences, workshops, advisory committees, training and meetings that promote career pathways education, transitions, adult literacy; develop tools and conduct relevant research that show the connection of professional development to instruction; and other activities that support the ongoing

enhancement of adult education instruction. C. The ICCB will also assist programs with incorporating technology into instruction; research and develop distance education tools that may be used to enhance instruction; identify and implement the most recent research in reading, writing, math ELA, and transitions; and develop standards for implementation into instruction. The ICCB will also provide training to local adult education programs in the development of partnerships within the one-stop system. The agency will work with state workforce board and one-stop system to determine appropriate training needed across partner organizations. The ICCB will host a variety of regional planning summits/forums/workshops for all partners to enhance and align partnerships in the delivery of services. In addition to the research activities identified, the ICCB will continue to participate in studies and research projects that are designed to provide a better understanding of how to enhance Illinois adult education. Also, the ICCB will conduct studies that will allow innovation to occur at the state and local levels. Lastly, the ICCB will encourage partnership research across partner agencies to determine how to best serve the student/client. D. The ICCB utilizes a statewide data collection system (DAISI, Data and Information System Illinois) to monitor the performance of all Title II-funded adult education and literacy providers. The data collected in DAISI is then analyzed and used to evaluate the quality and improvement of adult education and literacy activities by assessing the performance of providers through their educational functioning level increases or measurable skills gains. Each provider must complete fiscal/administrative and programmatic risk assessments, which determine whether a program should have increased requirements for reporting and monitoring, as a part of the grant application process. Additional monitoring takes place in the form of desktop monitoring and through regional support visits by ICCB Staff to program sites to determine programmatic and fiscal compliance, and to provide technical assistance. Detailed internal reports are maintained for each funded provider and reviewed quarterly to ensure quality and compliance. Information about models and proven or promising practices are disseminated to providers throughout the state through the use of electronic mailing lists and also at bi-annual Administrators' Meetings held by the ICCB for this purpose as well as to engage providers in statewide efforts. A variety of monitoring activities will be used in order to ensure programs ability to achieve outcomes as well as the use of corrective action plans for those programs who are low performing.

2. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE THE FUNDS TO CARRY OUT PERMISSIBLE STATE LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES UNDER SECTION 223 OF WIOA, IF APPLICABLE.

The Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) will carry out the following permissible state Leadership Activities: • The support of a statewide Professional Development. Utilizing federally allocated State Leadership Funds, Illinois adult education will maintain a Professional Development and Training Center (PDTC) to provide professional development. The ICCB will continue to work with the PDTC to identify professional development needs of the state based upon regional assessments and local program data. While the PDTC addresses a host of professional development needs, each also has its own unique priority to address the goals in the state. These goals include: ongoing professional development at the state, local and regional level to improve the quality of adult education instruction; participation in reading research projects; enhancement to the statewide instructional content standards; and the development of bridge programs which includes the design, curriculum and instruction. In the spring or summer of 2018, the ICCB will set a

new course of action for professional development and training that will better align with WIOA and the Adult Education Strategic Plan activities. • The development and implementation of technology applications, translation technology, or distance education, including professional development to support the use of instructional technology. ICCB will continue to examine technology use at all levels in order to expand the reach of instruction. This includes technology use by administrators, instructors, students as well as maximized use in the classroom. The ICCB will expand its offering of online professional development. Lastly, the ICCB will expand its use of digital literacy at all levels, but more specifically the English Language Acquisition (ELA) levels of instruction through participation in the Literacy Information and Communication System (LINCS) English as a Second Language (ESL) Pro Project and Ed Tech IDEAL Consortium for Distance Education. • Develop content and models for integrated education and training and career pathways. The ICCB will explore models that link or connect student interests to instruction. This may include but is not limited to a framework that will assist programs in helping students identify career needs and opportunities, development of a process that will place students on a pathway, career awareness and instruction map designed to illustrate a student's movement from basic instruction through career pathway programs and portfolio development. The ICCB will continue to add additional Integrated Education and Training (IET), Integrated English Literacy and Civics (IELC), Workforce Preparation, and bridge programs through ongoing technical assistance via the Transitions Academy. The academy is a year-long process to assist programs in the development of their career pathway programs. • The development and implementation of a system to assist in the transition from adult education to post-secondary education, including linkages with post-secondary educational institutions or institutions of higher education. The ICCB will work through its' Area Planning Council process and the Local Workforce Innovation Boards (LWIB) to develop a streamlined approach to link students to post-secondary education, transitions between and among programs, partnering on bridge programs and integrated programs, employment and other services and activities. • Activities to promote workplace adult education and literacy activities. The ICCB has partnered with businesses, Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs, post-secondary education throughout the state in the development of a Health Care, Manufacturing and Transportation, Distribution and Logistic (TDL) curricula. The ICCB will research workplace programs that will connect students to employment and will work closely with the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB) to identify statewide curricula in other career pathway areas to be developed. • Developing and piloting of strategies for improving teacher quality and retention. The ICCB will conduct research on the professional development requirements in an effort to enhance the quality of instruction as well as professionalize the field of adult education. Currently, the ICCB requires twelve professional development hours annually for instructors. The ICCB will also conduct research on full—time vs. part—time instructors in programs and the impact on performance outcomes. The ICCB will identify and pilot strategies geared toward teacher quality and also provide curriculum and lesson planning training to increase the knowledge of instructors. The ICCB will develop instructional staff pathways to improve teacher quality and retention. This will include master teachers, transition specialists, content specialists and standard proficient instructors. • Integration of literacy and English language with occupational skill training, including promoting linkages with employers. The ICCB will conduct research on effective models and pilot the development and implementation of these models. • • Identify curriculum frameworks and aligning rigorous content standards

and identify the knowledge and skills needed of students. The ICCB will continue to revise and enhance the content standards developed in Adult Basic Education (ABE), Adult Secondary Education (ASE) and ELA; and will continue to develop a crosswalk of student knowledge and skills to other post-secondary education areas and occupational programs. The ICCB completed the alignment of ELA standards to CCRS in 2017, but will continue to make modifications as needed. The development and implementation of programs and services to meet the needs of adult learners with learning disabilities or English language learners, which may include new and promising assessment tools and strategies that are based on scientifically valid research, where appropriate and identify the needs and capture the gains of such students at the lowest achievement levels. The ICCB will continue to explore options to identify and assess the instructional needs of students. This can be accomplished by exploring other diagnostic tools that can be used with literacy students, those with learning disabilities and ELA learners. The ICCB will continue to provide Special Learning Need trainings to local programs as well as the American with Disability Coordinator Training to all adult education programs throughout the state. The ICCB will partner with the Illinois Department of Human Services Division of Rehabilitation Services in the identification of new tools and strategies that can be integrated. • Outreach to Instructors, students and employers. The ICCB will continue to identify instructors who have incorporated promising practices into instruction to help develop strategies that can be used in the classroom. Currently, the ICCB uses instructors/coordinators in the development of standards, curriculum and lesson planning activities. ICCB will continue to work with employers in the development of career pathway curriculum development and connecting students to employment. ICCB will also develop a process of getting student input on adult education related activities. • Other activities of statewide significance that promote the purpose of this title. The ICCB will continue to work with CTE, business and industry and the state workforce board to develop and connect workforce activities within the state. Also, the ICCB will continue to identify the areas of need and enhance the system of adult education to promote career pathway and literacy activities, especially for those at the lowest literacy levels. • The ICCB may also fund other permissible activities such as: • Developing and disseminating curricula, including curricula incorporating the essential components of reading instruction as such components relate to adults; • The provision of assistance to eligible providers in developing and implementing programs that achieve the objectives of Title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and in measuring the progress of those programs in achieving such objectives, including meeting the state adjusted levels of performance; or • The development and implementation of a system to assist in the transition from adult education to post-secondary education, including linkages with post-secondary educational institutions or institutions of higher education. • Pilot projects and other related projects that show integration and alignment of services by partnering with core and required partners under WIOA. • The development of activities for the strategies listed under the Unified State Plan. • The development of activities to embed technology skills and the use of a variety of distance education tools into instruction. • Using technology to disseminate best practices. • The integration of English Language Acquisition instruction with the Civics Education Competencies. • The development of strategic planning activities that align adult education to workforce and post-secondary education, training activities and WIOA related activities.

F. ASSESSING QUALITY

Describe how the eligible agency will assess the quality of providers of adult education and literacy activities under title II and take actions to improve such quality, including providing the activities described in section 223(a)(1)(B) of WIOA.

The Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) will evaluate and has evaluated programs on a continuous basis and through a variety of processes. Programs will be assessed and monitored throughout the year through program visits, the Desktop Monitoring Tool, fiscal and compliance monitoring and through the Data and Information System — Illinois (DAIS—I). In addition, a state Policy and Procedure manual is widely distributed and is posted on the ICCB website, https://www.iccb.org/iccb/wp-content/pdfs/adulted/provider_manual/FY18_AEL_Provider_Manual%202-22-18.pdf. ICCB funded Adult Education and Literacy Programs will be monitored to determine: • program improvement; • the degree to which the programs comply with ICCB, state and federal policies and guidelines; • information needed in local program planning efforts; and • the ability to achieve state and federal requirements.

During the course of the fiscal year all programs will be reviewed through a combination of program visits by ICCB staff, the state's Desktop Monitoring Tool and approved data collection system. Staff, on an ongoing basis, will review program data and inform programs where there is a need for improvement. In addition, a probation and watch status was instituted in 2014 that will be continued to ensure a program receives significant technical assistance to improve program outcomes. Fiscal and compliance monitoring will be conducted throughout the year to determine compliance with federal and state requirements. Programs will be contacted to schedule the review. Reviews may be onsite and or may be handled through online submissions. Specific information on fiscal and compliance monitoring will be provided to programs in advance of the monitoring review. The ICCB will provide data and procedures for funded providers to evaluate their own performance in comparison to statewide performance and in comparison to funded providers with comparable students, goals and/or activities. The providers will use data reports that have been developed through the data collection system. These include: • Student Error reports that indicate errors on a student record and where to locate/ correct the specific error(s). • Enrollment Reports that provide information about the number of students served and units generated in each instructional category by a specific funding source. • Master List Reports generate a list by funding source of students by student name and Social Security number. The Master List Reports also provide a breakdown of the enrollment hours generated by students in the specific funding source by instructional category. • Program Status Reports include all students eligible to be served through Adult Education and Financial Literacy (AEFL) funds. It is the most inclusive of the required ICCB reports and provides demographic and testing data that can be used to foster continuous program improvement. • National Reporting System (NRS) Performance Reports exist in two versions. The first version reflects all activity including all post-testing. The second version applies an attendance hour filter to the testing results. When the second version is generated, the results of any post-testing conducted before the minimum attendance hours were met as established by the test publishers will be excluded from the report. The second version (with AH filter) reflects what programs will be granted credit for in terms of NRS completion rates. • In addition, several Static reports are available that provide a snapshot of program performance at a more granular level. These include: • AEFL Certification of Units Report represents the total number of students the program will be granted credit for

in terms of the ICCB-AEFL funding formula. It represents the total number of students meeting the criteria for inclusion (In Open-Entry classes, have accrued at least 7.5 attendance hours in a single class section, prior to dropping. In Fixed-Entry classes, have been successfully retained through the mid—term date and have accrued at least 7.5 attendance hours in that single class section, prior to dropping) and be served through an approved funding source. • Cohort: Follow-up Measure 3—Earned High School Equivalency (HSE) or Secondary Credential report includes all learners who take all HSE tests and exit during the Fiscal Year and all learners who are enrolled in adult high school (HSCR classes) at the high Adult Secondary Education (ASE) High Level and exit during the Fiscal Year. • Cohort: Follow-up Measure 4—Entered Post-secondary report includes students from the group that was counted as a success for the Earned HSE/High School Diploma cohort or that entered the program with a Secondary Credential or was enrolled in a course specifically designed to transition them to post-secondary education and exited during the Fiscal Year. • IEL/Civics Report provides information about the number of students supported with IEL/ Civics dollars and the competencies completed by these students. • High School Equivalency (GED 2014 Series) data match report by student, or program record includes all data matched HSE results for all students that provide consent. • Generation Reports detail the total number of student enrollments, attendance hours and class/individual persistence rates by funding source, instructional category or other classification. • Instructor Individual and Summary Outcomes Reports include students that meet the criteria to be in the Program Status Report. In addition, to be claimed with a specific instructor, the student must meet the usual requirements plus have at least 7.5 attendance hours with that instructor (and have reached the midterm successfully if enrolled in fixed entry classes). • NRS Core Performance Measures reports provide a detailed breakdown of educational functioning level (EFL) gains and separates students into four distinct categories to illustrate areas where program performance meets targeted levels. • Professional Development Reports illustrate levels of compliance to minimum professional development requirements by instructors. Tracks quantity, type and cost of professional development hours accrued in a fiscal year. • Program Outcomes Report (Building) indicates student post-test percentage, percentage of students gaining levels, average attendance hours at specified building by instructional category, persistence rates for students and overall average attendance hours by students at specified building. The ICCB also assesses the quality of the professional development programs that are designed to improve instruction in all areas. The assessment process is done through evaluations of training sessions and research conducted to determine outcomes and levels of learning. The ICCB is in the process of developing a professional development portal that will, among other functions, track instructor professional development that can be linked to classroom outcomes as an additional method of evaluating the effectiveness of the professional development. Professional development is still in development for instructional staff, including both volunteer and paid personnel. Some professional development training has been developed for special learning needs and the specific needs of adult learners. This area is undergoing further development, with plans to survey students regarding the specific needs that are unique to the adult education population. The ICCB regularly meets with the professional development and training center to assess, develop and revise the training and development offerings in order to ensure that the most effective and promising practices and methods are being utilized and highlighted. For example, plans are in place to fully examine and assess the existing professional development that is available for career

pathways and transitions in efforts to determine what to keep, what needs to be developed and added and what needs to be retired. The expansion of integrated education and training and the growing focus on career pathway education and training necessitate the most up-to-date, relevant, and effective training resources and materials. The reports noted above will also be used to determine professional development needs as well as to assess outcomes as it relates to professional development. For example, in recent years research was conducted on the effectiveness of evidenced-based reading instruction. This research helped to determine the local training needs and how things are to be structured.

CERTIFICATIONS

States must provide written and signed certifications that

1. The plan is submitted by the State agency that is eligible to submit the plan. Yes

2. The State agency has authority under State law to perform the functions of the State under the program. Yes

3. The State legally may carry out each provision of the plan. Yes

4. All provisions of the plan are consistent with State law. Yes

5. A State officer, specified by title in the certification, has authority under State law to receive, hold, and disburse Federal funds made available under the plan. Yes

6. The State officer who is submitting the plan, specified by the title in the certification, has authority to submit the plan. Yes

7. The agency that is submitting the plan has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan. Yes

8. The plan is the basis for State operation and administration of the program. Yes

CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING

Certification for Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements

The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

(1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

(2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, ''Disclosure of Lobbying Activities,'' in accordance with its instructions.

(3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly. This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than $10,000 and not more than $100,000 for each such failure.

Statement for Loan Guarantees and Loan Insurance

The undersigned states, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that: If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, ''Disclosure of Lobbying Activities,'' in accordance with its instructions. Submission of this statement is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required statement shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than $10,000 and not more than $100,000 for each such failure.

Applicant's Organization **Illinois Community College Board**

Full Name of Authorized Representative: **Dr. Karen Hunter Anderson**

Title of Authorized Representative: **Executive Director**

SF LLL Form – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (only if applicable) (http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html). If applicable, please print, sign, and email to OCTAE_MAT@ed.gov

ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include assurances that:

1. The eligible agency will expend funds appropriated to carry out title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) only in a manner consistent with fiscal requirements under section 241(a) of WIOA (regarding supplement and not supplant provisions). Yes

2. The eligible agency will ensure that there is at least one eligible provider serving each local area, as defined in section 3(32) of WIOA. Yes

3. The eligible agency will not use any funds made available under title II of WIOA for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are not "eligible individuals" within the meaning of section 203(4) of WIOA, unless it is providing programs, services or activities related to family literacy activities, as defined in section 203(9) of WIOA. Yes

4. The Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be delivered in combination with integrated education and training activities; Yes

5. The Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be designed to (1) prepare adults who are English language learners for, and place such adults in, unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency and (2) integrate with the local workforce development system and its functions to carry out the activities of the program; and Yes

6. Using funds made available under title II of WIOA to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution, the eligible agency will give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program. Yes

7. The eligible agency agrees that in expending funds made available under title II of WIOA, the eligible agency will comply with sections 8301 through 8303 of the Buy American Act (41 U.S.C. 8301-8303). Yes

SECTION 427 OF THE GENERAL EDUCATION PROVISIONS ACT (GEPA)

In the text box below, describe the steps the applicant proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally-assisted program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs provide the information to meet the requirements of Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA), consistent with the instructions posted at https://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/gepa427.doc.

The Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) has several provisions under the State of Illinois Grant Agreement and requires, " the grantee, its employees and subcontractors under subcontract made pursuant to this Agreement, shall comply with all applicable provision of State and Federal laws and regulations pertaining to nondiscrimination, sexual harassment and equal employment opportunity including laws and regulations and subsequent amendments, " as well as adding to this agreement Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA). The ICCB will also require each grant recipient to maintain documentation to ensure compliance with Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA). The following information is included in the grant application for federal and state funding: • The ICCB shall require the Grantee shall certify that they prohibit and covenant that they will continue to prohibit discrimination and certify that no person, otherwise qualified, is denied employment, services, or other benefits on the basis of: (i) political or religious opinion or affiliation, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identification, race, color, creed, or national origin; (ii) sex or age, except when age or sex constitutes a bon fide occupational qualification; or (iii) the physical or mental disability of a qualified individual with a disability. • The ICCB also requires the Grantee to specifically agree to comply fully with the non-discrimination and equal opportunity provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act; the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 USC 12101 et seq); the Nontraditional Employment for Women Act of 1991; title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended; section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; the Age Discrimination Act of 1967, as amended; title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended; and with all applicable requirements. • Programs and

projects funded in total or in part through this grant will operate in compliance with State and Federal Regulations (CFR) 34, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA), the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Two examples of the GEPA provision: (1) The Illinois Community College Board will ensure that the grantee maintains documentation as to how they will make available to adults with limited English proficiency information that describes the programs and services; and how the grantee will communicate this information clearly and concisely in a manner that is understandable to an individual who is potentially enrolling in the program. (2) The Illinois Community College Board will ensure that all program applicants has an ICCB trained ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) coordinator onsite. The ICCB will further require all grantees to provide evidence of program strategies, keep and maintain written procedures and auditable records for the delivery of support services to individual with disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), and (WIOA Sec. 121(c)(2)(A)(iv). Programs are responsible for compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. The ICCB requires the following. • Each program must have a designated ADA coordinator. o The designated ADA coordinator must satisfactorily complete the annual online ICCB Adult Education and Literacy ADA Coordinator training. • Each program must provide public notice. • Each program must have an established grievance policy. • Each program must conduct a self-evaluation. • Each program must develop a transition plan regarding accessibility. • Each program must submit to the ICCB an approved annual report in a specified format.

An ADA Coordinator Manual is available to ADA Coordinators who have completed the training. General guidelines for programs serving students with learning disabilities and other special learning needs may be found at: https://www.iccb.org/iccb/wp-content/pdfs/adulted/LD%20Guidelines%20Complete.pdf. Adult Education and Literacy programs must provide "reasonable accommodations" to qualified persons with disabilities. Reasonable accommodations (sometimes called auxiliary aids and services) are accommodations that make the program accessible to individuals with a disability. Such accommodations must be afforded to a qualified individual with a disability unless the service provider can demonstrate that the accommodation would impose "undue hardship" on the program or constitute a substantial alteration in the nature of the program. Examples of accommodations that educational programs may provide for adults with learning disabilities, depending on the particular disability and need for accommodation, include, but are not limited to (Appendix F, Reasonable Accommodations): • Extended time for completing tasks. • Books on tape. • Reduced visual or auditory distractions, such as a private room for tests. • Auxiliary aids and assistive technology, such as calculators, highlighters, and computers. • Large print materials. • Alternative format for instructions, such as audiotape instructions in addition to printed instructions for taking a test. • Note takers. 3. The ICCB will monitor all grant recipients for compliance with the requirements under GEPA.

In addition, it is the policy of the Illinois Community College Board that all employees have the right to work in a positive environment. Employees may express their concerns regarding existing or potential barrier or prohibitions to equal employment opportunity due to race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, ancestry, veteran status, disability, pregnancy, marital status, and any other status or

classification protected under applicable federal, state or local law. EEO assistance is available by contacting the Human Resources EEO Counselor/Coordinator or the State EEO Coordinator.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan* must include the following descriptions and estimates, as required by section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by WIOA:

_____

* Sec. 102(b)(D)(iii) of WIOA

A. INPUT OF STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL

All agencies, except for those that are independent consumer-controlled commissions, must describe the following:

1. INPUT PROVIDED BY THE STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL, INCLUDING INPUT AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN, RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE COUNCIL'S REPORT, THE REVIEW AND ANALYSIS OF CONSUMER SATISFACTION, AND OTHER COUNCIL REPORTS THAT MAY HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED AS PART OF THE COUNCIL'S FUNCTIONS;

SRC Comment: Based on the results of the 2017 VR customer satisfaction surveys, SRC members believe that consistency of services and information given at DRS offices is still an area that needs improvement. Survey responders expressed that information given and services provided differed among DRS offices, as well as between counselors in the same office. A Quick Reference Guide was developed and piloted at three DRS offices to aid staff in providing consistent services. DRS offices that tested the Quick Reference Guide received a survey soliciting feedback, however, few have responded at this time. Participants are encouraged to complete the pilot survey. SRC and DRS need to review the survey results and determine the next steps. The SRC is requesting this Guide continue to move forward at pilot sites and then rolled out to all offices throughout the state. The SRC would like to receive a plan from DRS on how to increase consistency of information given and services provided throughout the state. The SRC is requesting benchmarks from DRS to show progress toward a goal of providing consistent services throughout the state. Specifically the SRC is requesting quarterly data in the following areas: (a) Timeliness of case movement; (b) Demographic data on individual disabilities; (c) Caseload size; (d) Information about individual program participants, such as transition youth or veterans; and (e) participation and outcomes for minorities Based on survey results, the SRC would like DRS to increase the number of VR customers that affirm they received information about the Client Assistance Program (CAP), increase the number of customers who feel that DRS provided appropriate referrals, and improve the timeliness of communication and services.

DRS Response: DRS is committed to the ongoing development and implementation of the Quick Reference Guide. The staff development unit will work with the SRC to ensure that VR counselors receive training in the use of the Guide. Also, revisions will be made to the online casework procedure manual to ensure consistency with language in the Guide. DRS will work with the SRC to develop a quarterly report to the specifications described above. DRS will also work with the SRC and with the CAP administrator to improve awareness of CAP information by VR customers.

SRC Comment: The SRC recommends regular statewide needs assessment and satisfaction surveys to DRS customers, transition students, provider agencies and employees be completed once every two years to determine areas for service improvement. Customer and transition student surveys should seek to determine customer satisfaction, quality of services, customer treatment and service accessibility. Provider surveys should seek to determine areas needing improvement such as partnering, agency interactions, and communication. Staff surveys should seek to determine level of satisfaction with their job and help to determine areas of improvement. The SRC suggests that to ensure accessibility, the availability of multiple survey completion options are necessary, and recommends supplementing online survey administration with information gathering techniques, such as in-person focus groups or telephone interviews. DRS Response: DRS agrees that a system of regular survey data collection is desirable for planning and needs assessment purposes. The surveys conducted through the SRC in the last year have provided a valuable baseline for studying trends going forward. DRS is committed to working with the SRC to develop a schedule of surveys and other information collection efforts to create an improved understanding of the environment facing people with disabilities in Illinois.

SRC Comment: SRC members believe several factors impact job placement and retention. In addition to job-related skills, including enhancements such as job coaching and on-the-job training, DRS should incorporate other skills necessary for individuals to not only obtain, but retain employment. These skills could include, but are not limited to independent living skills, interpersonal skills and self-management skills such as efficient communication, planning, coping skills, time management and good nutrition management. DRS has indicated that these services are included in the contract arrangements with community rehabilitation programs. SRC is requesting evidence confirming provisions of these services and a description of how the community rehabilitation programs provide these services.

DRS Response: DRS will work with the SRC as well as community provider representatives to identify methods of service provision that are consistent with achievement of successful employment outcomes for DRS customers.

SRC Comment: Transition services continue to be a priority for SRC. As outlined in a wildly important goal (WIG) from the 2017 SRC/DRS Strategic Planning session, the SRC would like to see an increase in the number of transition students submitting applications for the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program. The SRC would like to work with DRS to determine how to best track transition students throughout the DRS process and tracking successful and unsuccessful transitions to the DRS Counselor for their adult services. What innovative ways is DRS trying to reach out to these students? The SRC feels that the utilization of a DRS services flyer or an e-mail campaign could help in promoting DRS services to other organizations, among other options. The SRC believes that the utilization of the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) social media pages on a weekly basis would help

increase familiarity with DRS and DRS services. The SRC recommends that DRS target schools, social security administration, medical professionals and centers for independent living to increase referrals and applications and educate the public about VR.

DRS Response: DRS supports efforts to increase referrals to the VR program, particularly for transition age youth and students with disabilities. DRS will continue to work with the SRC to identify methods such as use of social media to reach out to youth who may benefit from DRS services.

SRC Comment: SRC members recommend increasing the scope of work based learning experiences for DRS customers and youth with disabilities, including internships, apprenticeships and other non-traditional experiences that increase the skills of the individual and enhance future opportunities for competitive integrated employment. The SRC is requesting DRS provide quarterly data showing the specifics of the opportunities and services provided and how they are being provided, for example, number of internships (i.e., paid and unpaid).

DRS Response: DRS agrees that work based learning experiences are an important component of the service array for students and youth with disabilities. Presently DRS only has the capacity to identify various types of work based learning experiences within the STEP program. DRS will work with the SRC to identify other reporting options that will provide enhanced information on the use of work experiences.

SRC Comment: SRC members believe that it is important to continue to increase the number of employers working with DRS and community partners. SRC has already seen the progress made through DRS's business engagement initiative. SRC is committed to helping increase the number of meaningful employer relationships. Currently, there are only Employment Specialists in Regions 1, 3 and 5. SRC understands that DRS would like to eventually have three dedicated Business Engagement/Employment Specialists per region. What is DRS's plan for accomplishing this and more immediately having at least one person for Regions 2 and 4? The SRC believes that DRS should consider widening the scope of their Business Engagement trainings to include training sessions with Community Partners. SRC believes that everyone should have a common approach and message when working with area businesses. Improving communication with Community Partners will only help to improve responses and show that everyone is working towards the same goal.

DRS Response: DRS agrees that additional resources are required to expand our capacity to engage businesses and fulfill the dual customer requirements of WIOA. DRS is in the process of modifying position descriptions with the intent of adding additional business engagement staff to serve more areas of the state. It is anticipated that new staff will be hired in the first part of the next fiscal year.

SRC Comment: The SRC believes that the joint Strategic Planning sessions have been very beneficial. SRC would like to continue to have annual Strategic Planning sessions with DRS that focus on specific measureable goals.

DRS Response: DRS agrees that the strategic planning activities to date have been beneficial and should be continued in some form. DRS will work with the SRC on identifying options for future strategic planning activities.

SRC Comment: SRC members are still concerned with the lack of jobs in rural areas of the state. What methods has DRS used to promote employment in these rural areas? What progress has DRS made in the past two years to help promote economic employment and what is the plan for the upcoming years to continue to increase employment in rural areas? The SRC is requesting quarterly updates regarding the progress of these developments. Also, the SRC is requesting quarterly data in the following areas: (a) Outcomes by each region or district in the state or territory (b) Outcomes and earnings for specific disability population

DRS Response: DRS is aware that job opportunities vary notably in different regions of the state, with rural areas facing particular challenges. DRS works in partnership with the business engagement efforts of other WIOA partners to promote economic development in all regions. DRS will work with the management information team to create a regular report containing the data specified by the SRC.

SRC Comment: The SRC understands that DRS has included short-term job coaching as part of the training modules for counselors regarding the effective use of Community Rehabilitation Program services. Previously, DRS did not have utilization data on this service. Has DRS implemented a system to track if the use of short-term job coaching has increased and if the use of it improved VR outcomes? If DRS still does not have utilization data, when does DRS plan to put something in place to track this information?

DRS Response: DRS has the capacity to track provision of short term job coaching services using the service description codes in the fiscal system. DRS will work with the management information team to create a report to meet the requirements of the SRC.

SRC Comment: Based on the 2017 Satisfaction Survey results, the SRC believes that DRS should address DRS employee concerns. The working alliance between DRS staff and customers is extremely important. Improving experiences and the environment for staff could positively influence customer experiences. The SRC is requesting that a plan to improve DRS employee morale be developed and shared with the SRC.

DRS Response: DRS agrees that important issues were identified in the staff satisfaction survey which require follow up action by DRS administration. DRS will share the details regarding those actions with the SRC as they are developed.

2. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S RESPONSE TO THE COUNCIL'S INPUT AND RECOMMENDATIONS; AND

Responses are incorporated in the previous section.

3. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S EXPLANATIONS FOR REJECTING ANY OF THE COUNCIL'S INPUT OR RECOMMENDATIONS.

Not applicable.

B. REQUEST FOR WAIVER OF STATEWIDENESS

When requesting a waiver of the statewideness requirement, the designated State unit must identify the types of services to be provided by the program on a non-statewide basis. The waiver request must also include written assurances that:

1. A LOCAL PUBLIC AGENCY WILL PROVIDE THE NON-FEDERAL SHARE OF COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE WAIVER REQUEST;

The Division of Rehabilitation Services maintains a considerable number of Third Party Agreements with other units of government, primarily school districts. These Third Party Agreements are designed to increase the availability of vocational rehabilitation services to specific populations of people with disabilities. DRS has a contract with each entity that is consistent with Federal regulations (34CFR361.26) and includes the following provisions: (a) the vocational rehabilitation services to be provided are identified; (b) the local agency assures that non—Federal funds are made available to DRS; (c) the local agency assures that DRS approval is required before services are provided; and (d) the local agency assures that all other State plan requirements, including the Order of Selection policy, are applied to persons receiving services through the agreement. The following is a list of the Third Party Agreements now in place. 1. William Rainey Harper College The purpose of this agreement is to provide post—secondary training to students in northern Cook County with hearing impairments, learning disabilities, and other disabilities who are eligible for VR program services. The college is a two—year public community college, which serves the northern part of Cook County. It is located in Palatine, Illinois. 2. The Evaluation and Development Center The purpose of this agreement with the Board of Trustees of Southern Illinois University at Carbondale is to provide a continuing program of rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities in Southern Illinois. This agreement provides evaluation and placement, independent living, residential, information and referral, and rehabilitation engineering services to customers eligible for services from the VR program. This program primarily serves the Illinois counties of Franklin, Jackson, Jefferson, Johnson, Perry, Saline, Williamson, and Union. 3. Secondary Transitional Experience Program (STEP) The purpose of this program is to provide rehabilitation services for customers who are still in secondary school. DRS has 146 contractual arrangements with school districts and cooperatives throughout the state. Of that number 130 are third—party contracts and 16 are not. These arrangements resulted in VR services being provided to 9,284 students in the most recent state fiscal year, and a total of 10,542 as of January 2018. STEP services include: job exploration counseling; workplace readiness training including social skills and independent living skills; counseling on postsecondary educational opportunities; instruction in self-advocacy; and a variety of work-based learning experiences both in the school and in the community. DRS anticipates that approximately 11,000 students will be served in the STEP program in both PY2018 and PY2019. Schools with Third—Party STEP Contracts in State Fiscal Year 2018 (July 1 2017 to June 30 2018) Board Of Education, Evanston, IL; Franklin Community Unit School, Franklin, IL; Harlem Consolidated School, Machesney Park, IL; Kankakee Area Special Ed Coop, Kankakee, IL; Seneca High School, Seneca, IL; South Macoupin Association, Stauton, IL; Sycamore CUSD 427, Sycamore, IL; Youth Connection Charter School, Chicago, IL; Aero Special Education Coop, Burbank, IL; Allendale Association, Lake Villa, IL; Alton Community Unit School Dist, Alton, IL; Anna Jonesboro Community, Anna, IL; Arlyn Day School, Wilmette, IL; Aurora West School Dist 129, Aurora, IL; Ball Chatham School Dist 5, Chatham, IL; Belleville Township High, Belleville, IL; Bethalto Unit No 8, Bethalto, IL; Black Hawk Area Special Ed, East Moline, IL; Board Of Education City Of, Peoria, IL; Bradley Bourbonnais Community, Bradley, IL; Cahokia Community School Dist 187, Cahokia, IL; Canton Union School, Canton, IL; Childrens Home Association Of, Peoria, IL; Collinsville Community Unit, Collinsville, IL;

Columbia Community Unit, Columbia, IL; Community High Schl Dist 155, Crystal Lake, IL; Community High School Dist 218, Oak Lawn, IL; Community High School Dist 99, Downers Grove, IL; Community Unit District No 203, Naperville, IL; Community Unit School, Woodstock, IL; Community Unit School Dist 200, Wheaton, IL; Community Unit School Dist 300, Algonquin, IL; Community Unit School Dist 308, Oswego, IL; Community Unit School Dist 60, Waukegan, IL; Community Unit School Dist 95, Lake Zurich, IL; Community Unit School District, Barrington, IL; Cons High Schl Dist 125, Lincolnshire, IL; Cook County High School Dist, Berwyn, IL; County Of Jackson, Murphysboro, IL; County Of Kankakee 5 Manteno, Manteno, IL; Decatur Public School Dist 61, Decatur, IL; Dixon Unit School District 170, Dixon, IL; DuPage High School District 88, Addison, IL; East Alton Wood River Community, Wood River, IL; Eastern Illinois Area Special, Charleston, IL; Edwardsville Community Unit, Edwardsville, IL; Elmhurst Community Unit School Dist 205, Elmhurst, IL; Evanston Township High School, Evanston, IL; Exceptional Children Have, South Holland, IL; Fenton Community High School, Bensenville, IL; Frankfort Community Unit, West Frankfort, IL; Freeport School District 145, Freeport, IL; Galesburg Community Unit School, Galesburg, IL; Geneseo Community Unit School, Geneseo, IL; Glenbard Township High School, Glen Ellyn, IL; Granite City CUSD 9, Granite City, IL; Grayslake Community High School, Grayslake, IL; Hancock-McDonough ROE 26, Macomb, IL; Harvard Community Unit, Harvard, IL; Highland Community School Dist, Highland, IL; Hinsdale Township High School, Hinsdale, IL; Huntley Community School, Algonquin, IL; Indian Prairie Community Unit, Aurora, IL; Jacksonville School Dist 117, Jacksonville, IL; JAMP Special Education Services, Grand Chain, IL; Jersey County CUSD 100, Jerseyville, IL; Johnsburg Community Unit School, Johnsburg, IL; Joliet Twp H S Dist 204, Joliet, IL; Kankakee School Dist 111, Kankakee, IL; Knox-Warren Special Ed Dist, Galesburg, IL; Lagrange Area Dept Of Sp Ed, Lagrange, IL; Lake Forest Community H S Dist 115, Lake Forest, IL; LaSalle-Peru Township High, LaSalle, IL; Leyden High School Dist No 212, Northlake, IL; Lincoln-Way Com High School, New Lenox, IL; Livingston County Special Serv, Pontiac, IL; Lockport Township High School, Lockport, IL; Maine Township High School, Park Ridge, IL; Marengo High School Dist 154, Marengo, IL; Mascoutah Community Unit, Mascoutah, IL; Massac County Unit School Dist 1, Metropolis, IL; Mattoon Community School, Mattoon, IL; McHenry Community High School, McHenry, IL; Mid-State Special Education, Morrisonville, IL; Mid-State Special Education, Morrisonville, IL; Mid-State Special Education, Morrisonville, IL; Mid-Valley Spec Ed Joint Agreement, St Charles, IL; Mt Vernon Township High School, Mt Vernon, IL; Niles Township District 219, Skokie, IL; Northern Suburban Spec Ed Dist, Highland Park, IL; Northwest Sp Ed District, Elizabeth, IL; Northwest Suburban Special, Mount Prospect, IL; Oak Park & River Forest High, Oak Park, IL; O'Fallon Township High School, O'Fallon, IL; Ogle County Educational Coop, Byron, IL; Ottawa Township High School, Ottawa, IL; Perandoe Special Education District, Red Bud, IL; Plainfield School Dist 202, Plainfield, IL; Plano Area Special Education, Plano, IL; Princeton Township High School, Princeton, IL; Proviso Township High School, Maywood, IL; Putnam County Community Unit, Granville, IL; Quincy Public Schools, Quincy, IL; Regional Office Of Education, Bloomington, IL; Rochester Community Unit Schl, Rochester, IL; Roxana Community Unit School, Roxana, IL; Rural Champaign County Special, Champaign, IL; Sangamon Area Sp Ed District, Springfield, IL; School Assn For Special Education, Naperville, IL; School Dist 234 Ridgewood High, Norridge, IL; School District 131, Aurora, IL; School District U-46, Elgin, IL; South Eastern Special Education, Ste Marie, IL; Southern Will County Coop 22, Joliet, IL; Southwest Cook Coop Spec Ed, Oak Forest, IL; Special Ed Dist Of Lake County, Gages Lake, IL; Special Education Association, Bartonville,

IL; Speed Special Ed Joint Agreement, Chicago Heights, IL; Springfield School Dist 186, Springfield, IL; Streator Township High School, Streator, IL; Summit School Inc, Elgin, IL; Tazewell Mason Counties Special Education Assn, Pekin, IL; The Hope School, Springfield, IL; Thornton Township H S Dist 205, South Holland, IL; Tri County Special Education, Murphysboro, IL; Triad Community Unit School Dist 2, Troy, IL; Valley View Public Schools, Romeoville, IL; Vermilion Assoc Of Sp Ed, Danville, IL; Wabash & Ohio Valley SE Dist, Norris City, IL; Warren Township High School, Gurnee, IL; West Central IL Spec Educ Coop, Macomb, IL; West Washington Community, Okawville, IL; Whiteside Of Carroll Counties, Sterling, IL; Williamson County Special, Marion, IL; Winnebago County Special, Rockton, IL; Woodford County Special Ed Assoc, Metamora, IL; Zion Benton Township High School, Zion, IL;

2. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WILL APPROVE EACH PROPOSED SERVICE BEFORE IT IS PUT INTO EFFECT; AND

DRS develops third party agreements through a contractual process that specifies the rehabilitation services to be provided in each case. No services can be provided until the contractor agrees to the terms and conditions established by DRS, including (a) DRS maintains responsibility for establishing program eligibility and development of the IPE, and (b) the contractor must provide period reports of expenditures of non—federal funds.

3. ALL STATE PLAN REQUIREMENTS WILL APPLY

requirements of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan will apply to the services approved under the waiver.

DRS third party contracts contain the provision that all services provided must be consistent with the Unified State Plan.

C. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH AGENCIES NOT CARRYING OUT ACTIVITIES UNDER THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM.

Describe interagency cooperation with and utilization of the services and facilities of agencies and programs that are not carrying out activities through the statewide workforce development system with respect to:

1. FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL AGENCIES AND PROGRAMS;

General Information on Interagency Cooperation Illinois DRS maintains cooperative agreements and working relationships with a wide variety of state, local and education entities that provide services to individuals with disabilities. DRS presently has interagency agreements in effect with several other state agencies. DRS has a long—standing agreement with the Illinois State Board of Education regarding the provision of transition services to students with disabilities age 14 and older. This agreement has been revised to comply with WIOA requirements. The revised agreement places greater emphasis on the roles of each party in preparing students for the transition to employment, education and training. Presently DRS provides VR services to around 10,000 students with disabilities each year through contracts with 146 school systems. DRS provides vocational rehabilitation services to another 1,250 high school students with disabilities outside of the contractual system. DRS also has agreements with 12 state universities and 36 community colleges in Illinois

regarding funding for services to students who are VR customers. DRS has contracts and working agreements with around 135 not—for—profit community rehabilitation programs, which serve about 3,500 VR customers each year, providing vocational evaluation, job placement and supported employment services. DRS maintains working relationships with the Statewide Independent Living Council, as well as the Illinois Network of Centers for Independent Living, and has contracts with centers for independent living to provide a variety of rehabilitation services.

2. STATE PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT UNDER SECTION 4 OF THE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 1998;

DRS has a longstanding partnership with the Illinois Assistive Technology Project (IATP), the state AT grant recipient. IATP provides a variety of services to Illinois citizens with disabilities, including many who are participants in the DRS VR program. Cooperative activities include joint staff training as well as the use of IATP staff for technology consultation on specific VR cases. DRS also works with IATP staff on general issues involving the accessibility of computer systems throughout Illinois state government. IATP also provides consultation on specific items of assistive technology and their applicability for VR program purposes. DRS has also worked with IATP on innovative approaches to purchasing assistive technology equipment for benefit of VR program customers.

3. PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT BY THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE;

DRS does not have formal interagency agreements with Rural Development Programs operated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

4. NONEDUCATIONAL AGENCIES SERVING OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH; AND

DRS does not have specific agreements with non—education agencies serving out—of—school youth with disabilities. Out—of—school youth are served through contracts that DRS has developed with community rehabilitation program agencies, although the contracts are not targeted at that specific age group. Data for the current state fiscal year through February 2018 show that 41 percent of individuals served were under age 25, thus meeting the WIOA definition of youth with disabilities.

5. STATE USE CONTRACTING PROGRAMS.

DRS does not presently have formal interagency agreements with state use programs operated within Illinois. The state use program in Illinois is coordinated by the Department of Central Management Services, which awards contracts to state use providers and coordinates purchases on behalf of state agencies.

D. COORDINATION WITH EDUCATION OFFICIALS

Describe:

1. DSU'S PLANS

The designated State unit's plans, policies, and procedures for coordination with education officials to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from school to the receipt of VR services, including pre-employment transition services, as well as procedures for the timely development and approval of individualized plans for employment for the students.

The DRS interagency agreement with the State Board of Education identifies financial roles and responsibilities for transition services. This agreement has been re—written and is under review pending signatures by department heads. The overall responsibility for funding a student's educational program lies with the local education authority, with support from the State Board of Education. DRS provides funding for vocational rehabilitation services, both through the STEP program and through general VR caseloads. DRS has contracts with 146 school districts, of which 130 involve the use of school funds as VR matching funds. DRS coordinates and provides support for operational costs of regional Transition Planning Councils. DRS establishes qualifications for personnel it employs, and the State Board establishes qualifications for personnel working for school districts. Services provided to students with disabilities through STEP or through another arrangement focus on the key elements of pre—employment transition services as defined in WIOA: job exploration counseling; work—based learning experiences, counseling on postsecondary education, workplace readiness training, and instruction in self—advocacy. While STEP places an emphasis on employer—paid work in the community, each of these aspects of transition services are available to students based on individual need. Since 2009 DRS has worked with schools that have third—party cooperative agreements to ensure that federal VR requirements are followed in the provision of transition services. This has included a contract addendum as well as specific exhibits that are now incorporated into the contract package itself. DRS believes that these measures have resulted in an environment where all parties understand and are in compliance with these requirements. DRS provides consultation and technical assistance to educational agencies in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post—school activities. This is accomplished through a number of mechanisms. DRS has assigned qualified rehabilitation counselors to act as liaison to every high school in Illinois. A fundamental part of the liaison role is to provide consultation and technical assistance to educators involved in the transition process. Transition Planning Councils in each area of the state work with school districts to identify students with disabilities needing transition services. Aggregate services needs are reported annually to the State Transition Council. Through the counselor liaison relationships, students with disabilities have ready access to the VR program. DRS counselors provide consultation regarding vocational services and provide general information on disability services available in the community. DRS also sponsors the Next Steps parent—training program to assist families in understanding their children's needs regarding transition services. Illinois has a committee dedicated to transition issues, the Interagency Coordinating Council, that develops policy and establishes roles and responsibilities. DRS participates on the Council along with the State Board of Education and other state agencies involved in serving youth with disabilities. DRS also coordinates regional Transition Planning Councils, with school and community rehabilitation programs also participating. State law requires that transition planning begin at age 14 ½. DRS assists local schools in building a vocational focus as the student progresses through the school system. The Secondary Transitional Experience Program (STEP) is funded by DRS and provides financial support for students with disabilities during the high school years. Participation in DRS services for students in transition services, either through STEP or

through another arrangement, is incorporated in the IPE during the time the student is in school. An IPE is developed no later than 90 days after the student has been certified as eligible for the VR program. Development of the IPE is coordinated with the development and of the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) and transition plan.

2. INFORMATION ON THE FORMAL INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT WITH THE STATE EDUCATIONAL AGENCY WITH RESPECT TO:

A. CONSULTATION AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO ASSIST EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES IN PLANNING FOR THE TRANSITION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES FROM SCHOOL TO POST-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING VR SERVICES;

The agreement provides that DRS will shall provide consultation and technical assistance to assist educational agencies in planning for pre-employment transition services and the transition of students from school to post—school activities and ensure that local DHS—DRS staff participate in IEP meetings where transition planning occurs. In addition, DHS—DRS shall establish and collaborate with local Transition Planning Committees to outreach to and identify students with disabilities in need of pre-employment transition services and individualized transition services as early as possible in the transition planning process. DRS and the local TPCs will also plan for the availability of community services for students with disabilities before and after exiting secondary education.

B. TRANSITION PLANNING BY PERSONNEL OF THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AND EDUCATIONAL AGENCY THAT FACILITATES THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THEIR INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS;

The agreement provides that DRS and the State Board of Education will cooperatively participate in planning, training, policy development, data collection, and resource identification and dissemination to improve transition planning for students with disabilities. Also, both parties agree to provide technical assistance to local education agency personnel regarding transition planning services for students with IEPs. Transition planning will facilitate the development and completion of IEPs and transition plans in coordination with the IPE for VR services.

C. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES, INCLUDING FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES, OF EACH AGENCY, INCLUDING PROVISIONS FOR DETERMINING STATE LEAD AGENCIES AND QUALIFIED PERSONNEL RESPONSIBLE FOR TRANSITION SERVICES;

The agreement describes the role of the State Board of Education to ensure that local education agencies engage students with disabilities and their families in transition planning when it is a mandated part of the IEP process. In addition ISBE will encourage school districts to annually submit a summary of each eligible student's IEP transition goals and transition services resulting from the IEP team meeting to the appropriate local Transition Planning Committee (TPC). The agreement describes the role of DRS to include providing consultation and technical assistance to assist educational agencies in planning for pre-employment transition services and individualized transition services facilitating the transition of students from school to post—school activities and ensure that local DRS staff participate in IEP meetings where transition planning occurs. The agreement also addresses the financial responsibilities of each party.

D. PROCEDURES FOR OUTREACH TO AND IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES WHO NEED TRANSITION SERVICES.

The agreement provides that DRS will collaborate with local Transition Planning Committees to outreach to and identify students with disabilities in need of pre-employment transition services and individualized transition services as early as possible in the transition planning process. DRS and the local TPCs will also plan for the availability of community services for students with disabilities before and after exiting secondary education.

E. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH PRIVATE NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.8(b)(3)). Describe the manner in which the designated State agency establishes cooperative agreements with private non-profit VR service providers.

DRS has contractual agreements with non—profit rehabilitation providers to provide services to VR customers. DRS works with the Facilities Advisory Council consisting of provider representatives to discuss issues and identify service needs in an ongoing manner. In 2013 DRS began the process of developing formal contracts in the place of cooperative working agreements with non—profit rehabilitation service providers. This is part of a state—level effort to establish greater consistency in human service contracting. DRS contracts specify the responsibilities of the service providing agency, the performance basis of the contract, and the rates to be paid to the provider. DRS has contracts with around 135 not—for—profit community rehabilitation programs, which serve about 3,500 VR customers each year, providing vocational evaluation, job placement and supported employment services. DRS maintains working relationships with the Statewide Independent Living Council, as well as the Illinois Network of Centers for Independent Living, and has contracts with centers for independent living to provide a variety of rehabilitation services. DRS develops community service contracts based on an assessment of need at the local level. Counselors and office supervisors work with regional administrators to identify specific areas of need and potential provider agencies qualified to provide services. To the extent possible DRS has utilized one—time funding to establish new service contracts with providers. Depending on performance, contracts are continued using VR funds and are converted to a performance—based methodology. Illinois has developed an emphasis on performance—based or outcome—based funding for human services. DRS has converted over 85 percent of its VR—funded contracts to a performance basis in the last three years. This means that providers earn payment when individuals are working in the community, with the maximum payment based on the individual achieving at least 90 days of successful employment. DRS believes this method aligns the interests of the individual, the provider and the VR program.

F. ARRANGEMENTS AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.8(b)(4)). Describe the designated State agency's efforts to identify and make arrangements, including entering into cooperative agreements, with other State agencies and other appropriate entities in order to provide supported employment services and extended employment services, as applicable, to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities.

For many years DRS has had a number of contracts and cooperative working agreements with community provider agencies to provide both supported employment and extended services to individuals with most significant disabilities. DRS has a standing committee of community rehabilitation programs known as the Facility Advisory Committee which meets regularly to discuss service arrangements, including but not limited to, supported employment and extended services. DRS believes that this group is the best mechanism for communicating with provider agencies and maintaining a grasp of the demand for these services. DRS also has an interagency cooperative team that involves the DHS Division of Mental Health to provide ongoing support services to individuals with serious mental illness. In PY2018 DRS expects to continue the following levels of funding for supported employment activities. While funding under Title VI-B is uncertain at this time, DRS anticipates providing supported employment services to approximately 125 individuals, with total funding of $0.95 million, utilizing 30 provider agencies.. Supported employment provided with Title I funds: approximately 1,450 individuals, total funding $4.2 million, approximately 55 provider agencies. Beginning in July 2017 DRS implemented a new performance-based rate structure for supported employment services, and DRS anticipates that the new rate structure will encourage providers to become involved in providing supported employment services. DRS will not be able to provide the same level of extended services as in the past, due to an elimination of state general revenue funding for this program. For PY2019, given the uncertainty of Title VI-B funding, DRS projects serving 115 individuals at a funding level of $0.95 million utilizing about 40 provider agencies. For Title I DRS expects to serve around 1,600 individuals at a funding level of $4.8 million using approximately 60 vendor agencies. In PY2018 and PY2019 no state funds will be available for extended services. DRS continues to pursue additional state funds. In addition, DRS is working to identify other sources of funding for extended services. DRS has worked with DHS Division of Developmental Disabilities to specify circumstances under which individuals can receive long—term extended supports through the DD waiver program. DRS also intends to pursue ongoing changes in its supported employment program. Illinois has seen a trend where the number of individuals participating in supported employment services has declined in recent years. DRS plans to reverse this trend by focusing on youth with disabilities who require additional support to enter and retain employment. In 2017 DRS converted its supported employment contract arrangements to a performance basis. This model is designed to ensure ongoing support to individuals while promoting the highest level of independent functioning in the workplace. For both PY2018 and PY2019 DRS will provided extended services to youth with a most significant disability for up to four years, or until such time that the youth reaches the age of 25 and no longer meets the definition of "youth with a disability" using Title I and Title VI funds.

G. COORDINATION WITH EMPLOYERS

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.8(b)(5)). Describe how the designated State unit will work with employers to identify competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities in order to facilitate the provision of:

1. VR SERVICES; AND

DRS is beginning a new era of relationships with employers. The focus of activities in this era will center on the relationships in each Local Workforce Innovation Area (LWIA), of which there are 22 in the State. DRS has an office supervisor or other manager as member

on each local board (LWIB), which presents the single greatest opportunity for interactive communication with employers as well as other workforce business representatives. Each LWIB has developed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to formally describe many of the relationships within the area. This will include mechanisms for sharing information on employment opportunities as well as career exploration and work—based learning opportunities at the local level. In addition, DRS representatives participated in the regional planning process related to WIOA implementation. This process is based on 10 economic development regions (EDRs) around the state. Within each region, extensive data analysis has been conducted to identify employment sectors that are most likely to account for job growth and expansion in the next five years. The employers in these key expansion sectors will be those targeted for the highest level of business engagement, including discussions around establishment of work—based learning experiences, including internships and apprenticeships. DRS staff will work closely with other LWIA business services teams to ensure that services are not duplicated. DRS participated in the job driven technical assistance program through the Institute for Community Inclusion. The goals of this project are to establish a business engagement strategy and to train VR staff to provide basic business engagement services, including those related to disability awareness, workplace accommodations and benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities. The target for the first year was to establish relationships with 20 employers, which was exceed with over 35 new business relationships established. While these services will be distinct from representation of specific job candidates, DRS anticipates that provision of business engagement services will result in competitive employment outcomes for its customers. DRS also worked with other WIOA partner agencies to develop a state integrated business services framework. The framework is designed to ensure that all businesses have a means of contacting a workforce business services representative, and that business services at the local and regional level are coordinated with each other and not duplicative. DRS acts as the consultant to local business teams on all disability-related matters. The activities discussed above are intended to have a positive impact on VR customers of all ages. Other activities focused specifically on transition age youth will be developed in consultation with other entities, including the Transition Advisory Councils, community rehabilitation program agencies, and service providers working with the WIOA Title I youth programs. For years DRS has relied on its Secondary Transitional Experience Program (STEP) to create work—based learning opportunities for students with disabilities. While this has been an effective practice, there is much less capacity for development of work—based learning opportunities for out—of—school youth with disabilities. DRS believes that the Title I experience in serving out—of—school youth provides a key opportunity for inclusion of youth with disabilities. As noted above, development of these opportunities will take place through a localized planning process and be focused on the growth sectors identified through regional planning.

2. TRANSITION SERVICES, INCLUDING PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES, FOR STUDENTS AND YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES.

As noted elsewhere in the plan, most efforts surrounding provision of pre—employment transition services to students with disabilities are accomplished through third—party contracts with school districts. These contracts are performance based and emphasize employer—paid community work experiences for students. The arrangements with employers are developed by the third party contractors rather than by DRS directly. DRS

monitors student work experiences through monthly reporting by the contractors, which include hours worked and earnings, if any. In the current program year DRS has developed pre-employment transition services through contracts with community rehabilitation programs in order to provide work-based learning experiences for students with disabilities. These contracts are limited in scope but to the extent they are successful DRS will consider expanding them to other geographic areas of the state. DRS has begun exploring other relationships with employers for development of work—based learning experiences. One is through cooperative relationship with the state Department of Commerce, the Title I agency in Illinois. DRS has agreed to partner in development of youth projects that will include a variety of work—based learning experiences in selected industry sectors across the state. In addition, the new business engagement process being developed by DRS is expected to result in additional opportunities for work—based learning experiences for students and youth with disabilities. This process is targeted at high—growth industry sectors and is designed to respond to needs identified by businesses. This activity will be accomplished in conjunction with the integrated business services effort developed by core workforce partners in Illinois

H. INTERAGENCY COOPERATION

Describe how the designated State unit will collaborate with the State agency responsible for administering each of the following programs to develop opportunities for competitive integrated employment, to the greatest extent practicable:

1. THE STATE MEDICAID PLAN UNDER TITLE XIX OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT;

State Medicaid Agency: Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS) In the last two years DRS has worked with HFS as part of the Illinois Employment First initiative. This is a multi—agency effort to promote competitive integrated employment for people with disabilities in both the private sector and public sector. To date there has been a special effort to facilitate hiring of people with disabilities within state government. In addition, Illinois is involved in the Vision Quest technical assistance effort sponsored by the Department of Labor Office of Disability Employment Policy. Subject matter experts have worked with Illinois state agencies to review policies and service funding rates to identify opportunities for change that will facilitate employment goals. Additional efforts have focused on policy issues relating to employment options for individuals participating in Medicaid waiver programs administered through HFS and operated by other state agencies

2. THE STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING SERVICES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES; AND

State Agency for Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities: Department of Human Services, Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) DRS and DDD participate on the State's Employment First Task Force, as well as the DHS employment first team. An initial phase of coordinated activities focused on the Balancing Incentive Program (BIP), which provided one—time funds to Illinois to promote innovative services that will benefit individuals with disabilities, including organizational transformation efforts for community agencies not traditionally offering employment services. At the end of BIP funding both divisions worked with national subject matter experts from Department of Labor Office of Disability Employment Policy to continue organizational transformation efforts and

promote competitive integrated employment for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. DRS and DDD have worked to coordinate efforts around supported employment services, in particular looking at policies and rules that may need revision in order to make an effective transition from VR supported employment to DDD supported employment for individuals requiring long—term supports. In addition DDD and DRS are cooperating to work with employers that hold Dept. of Labor subminimum wage certificates, including development of options for contacting individuals working for subminimum wages and offering counseling around options for pursuit of competitive integrated employment. Many subminimum wage employers have funding relationships with DDD and are thus open to communication from that agency more so than with VR. DRS and DDD are working in conjunction with the Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities to finalize and administrative agreement that will make ensure effective service provision to individuals involved with either or both state agencies.

3. THE STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES.

State Agency for Mental Health Services: Department of Human Services, Division of Mental Health (DMH) DRS has enjoyed an effective partnership with DMH for several years. This partnership is centered on provision of vocational services through the Individual Placement and Support (IPS) service model. DRS and DMH have worked with the Psychiatric Research Center to implement a fidelity—based service model that has been shown to be very effective in assisting individuals with serious mental illness in becoming employed. DRS and DMH have a cooperative funding model in which DMH utilized Medicaid funding to the greatest extent possible and DRS provides VR funds to support the vocational aspects of the IPS model. DRS has worked with DMH to expand IPS services to a youth population and intends to continue expansion to this group through additional pilot projects as funding becomes available. In addition both agencies intend to participate in evaluation projects that document the effectiveness of IPS as an evidence—based practice. Research suggests that implementation of IPS principles in VR service provision can be of benefit to a wider range of individuals. DRS and DMH are working with consultants from the Department of Labor Office of Disability Employment Policy to examine service relationships and coordinate funding to enable more individuals with mental illness to participate in vocational services.

I. COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT; DATA SYSTEM ON PERSONNEL AND PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.10)). Describe the designated State agency's procedures and activities to establish and maintain a comprehensive system of personnel development designed to ensure an adequate supply of qualified State rehabilitation professional and paraprofessional personnel for the designated State unit, including the following:

1. DATA SYSTEM ON PERSONNEL AND PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

A. QUALIFIED PERSONNEL NEEDS.

Describe the development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on qualified personnel needs with respect to:

i. the number of personnel who are employed by the State agency in the provision of VR services in relation to the number of individuals served, broken down by personnel category;

DRS believes it has sufficient staff on hand to staff the VR program. Each staff category has a normal number of vacant positions, and DRS works aggressively to fill vacancies as soon as possible, in conjunction with DHS personnel managers. There has been little growth in the overall VR caseload in the last several years, which means that DRS has sufficient staff available to serve people with disabilities meeting its order of selection policy, and has the capacity to fill vacant positions to continue to meet that level of need. DRS has 210 VR counselor positions with 175 on hand and 35 vacant positions, and 24 rehabilitation and mobility instructors, with 15 on hand and nine vacant positions. These staff are supported by 140 rehabilitation case coordinator positions, of which DRS has 118 on hand with 22 vacant positions. Counselor vacancies are somewhat higher than normal but DRS anticipates that it will be able to fill these positions in the near future and return to a more normal pattern of vacancies. Data as of February 2018 show a total of 23,267 active cases in the DRS VR program. This gives an average of 133 individuals per filled rehabilitation counselor position and 197 per filled case coordinator position. These averages are somewhat higher than historical trends, but will return to a more normal level when additional positions are filled. Specialty counselor positions have a slightly higher vacancy rate, but one that still allows DRS to provide services to select populations. DRS has 30 staff positions for counselors certified to communicate in sign language with six vacancies in this category, as well as 24 counselors fluent in Spanish, and seven vacancies in that category.

ii. the number of personnel currently needed by the State agency to provide VR services, broken down by personnel category; and

When fully staffed the number of positions by title will be: rehabilitation counselors 210; rehabilitation case coordinators 140 ; rehabilitation and mobility instructors 24; field office supervisors 35; field office support 55; staff administrative support 30; business enterprise program for the blind staff 13; central office staff 61; bureau chiefs 2; and assistant bureau chiefs 6.

iii. projections of the number of personnel, broken down by personnel category, who will be needed by the State agency to provide VR services in 5 years based on projections of the number of individuals to be served, including individuals with significant disabilities, the number of personnel expected to retire or leave the field, and other relevant factors.

DRS anticipates that its long—term replacement rate will remain roughly the same during the next two years. There have been no major changes to the state hiring or retirement systems and the pace of hiring and separations has been normal. In the last year the state budget process has also returned to a state of normalcy. Based on job application trends, DRS anticipates that sufficient applicants will be available to fill nearly all posted vacancies within a few months. The number of staff on hand and projected annual number of replacements by title are: rehabilitation counselors 210 (20 projected replacements); rehabilitation case coordinators 140 (15) ; rehabilitation and mobility instructors 19 (4); field office supervisors 40 (5); field office support staff administrative support 30 (4); business enterprise program for the blind staff 13 (2); central office staff 61 (6); bureau chiefs 2 (1); assistant bureau chiefs 6 (1).

B. PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

Describe the development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on personnel development with respect to:

i. a list of the institutions of higher education in the State that are preparing VR professionals, by type of program;

There are five nationally—accredited rehabilitation counselor education programs in Illinois: Adler University, Chicago; Illinois Institute of Technology, Chicago; Northeastern Illinois University, Chicago; Northern Illinois University, DeKalb; and Southern Illinois University, Carbondale.

ii. the number of students enrolled at each of those institutions, broken down by type of program; and

The most recent available data on enrollment in and graduation from the MA programs in rehabilitation counseling at the five universities is shown in the table below. A total of 123 students were enrolled and 48 graduated. The estimated replacement rate for DRS counselors is 20 per year, although the replacement rate will be higher due to the current somewhat larger number of vacancies. While many of these graduates will choose not to work for DRS, DRS believes that these programs make a significant contribution to its ability to hire new staff and replace staff who leave DRS. In Illinois graduates with an MA in rehabilitation counseling who pursue CRC certification are eligible to become licensed as a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor (LCPC) through the State of Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation

iii. the number of students who graduated during the prior year from each of those institutions with certification or licensure, or with the credentials for certification or licensure, broken down by the personnel category for which they have received, or have the credentials to receive, certification or licensure.

The most recent data for rehabilitation counseling graduates by program is: Illinois Institute of Technology, 14; Northeastern Illinois University, 10; Northern Illinois University, 13; and Southern Illinois University, 11. No data is available from Adler University at this time.

2. PLAN FOR RECRUITMENT, PREPARATION AND RETENTION OF QUALIFIED PERSONNEL

Describe the development and implementation of a plan to address the current and projected needs for qualified personnel including, the coordination and facilitation of efforts between the designated State unit and institutions of higher education and professional associations to recruit, prepare, and retain personnel who are qualified, including personnel from minority backgrounds and personnel who are individuals with disabilities.

Each year DRS estimates the number of staff needed to operate the VR program, particularly the number of rehabilitation counselors needed. In addition, DRS works with university programs to estimate the number of students graduating from the programs and to have an understanding of each university's approach to student placement post graduation. The intent is to have multiple applicants for each vacant counseling. This is generally true in

urban areas but applications are often limited in rural areas. Based on the information available from the university programs and the number of applications for posted vacancies, DRS believes that there are adequate numbers of qualified personnel available to fill all needed rehabilitation counselor positions. DRS works with the Department of Human Services personnel unit works with DRS to publicize available positions in DRS, attending numerous job fairs likely focusing on minority students and students with disabilities. The State of Illinois has recruiting policies which assist minority individuals in obtaining employment in key positions, and also encourages training and education for current employees. State policy also encourages the hiring of individuals with disabilities, which is utilized by DRS to the greatest extent possible. DRS worked with the state personnel agency to create a position dedicated to monitoring and assisting with the hiring of persons with disabilities in state jobs. In addition to recruitment, DRS works actively to promote the retention of individuals with disabilities and individuals from minority backgrounds. These efforts include those sponsored by the Department of Human Services, of which DRS is a part, as well as through other state government organizations and membership associations. The purpose of these activities is to facilitate the training and professional development of staff from these populations, to promote understanding of the need for a diverse workforce, and to encourage the participation of staff in a variety of cooperative efforts aimed at making a contribution to the organization. These efforts include: (a) the Upward Mobility program, which is designed to further the careers of state employees from minority backgrounds as well as individuals with disabilities. This program provides support for a variety of training and educational opportunities for staff during the course of their employment with the state. (b) the Interagency Committee on Employees with Disabilities, which engages state employees with disabilities in activities related to promoting the hiring and career advancement of people with disabilities. DRS administration is closely involved in the operations of the ICED. (c) The Illinois Association of Minorities in Government is a membership organization promoting state employment for individuals from minority backgrounds, which is attended by DRS staff. (d) the Illinois Association of Hispanic State Employees holds an annual conference, which focuses on state employees from Hispanic/Latino backgrounds. DRS supports staff attendance at this conference each year. DRS believes that its sponsorship of attendance at these conferences and encouragement of membership in these organizations is a positive step in promoting a diverse workforce and a means of ensuring a high rate of job retention among its employees with disabilities and employees from minority backgrounds. Internships DRS has informal agreements with the four rehabilitation counselor training programs in the state to provide internship and practicum placement options for graduate students. At present DRS is not able to offer paid internships to counseling students. We continue to provide unpaid internships whenever possible, both to support the universities and students as well as to provide a job preview to students interested in working for DRS when they complete their training. Strategies for Retaining, Recruiting and Hiring Personnel DRS uses several strategies to recruit, hire and retain rehabilitation personnel. Key elements are promotion and publicizing the VR program, locating job candidates, monitoring the state hiring process, and identifying methods to encourage retention of staff. DRS works with the DHS personnel unit to conduct outreach activities to individuals who may be interested in state employment. DHS maintains a regular schedule of job fairs, community events and recruitment initiatives that include a focus on hiring minority individuals. DRS offers unpaid internship and practicum opportunities in its field offices to graduate students from the five

rehabilitation education programs. These are arranged with the university faculty and DRS administrators as needed. DRS also makes presentations to undergraduate students to expose them to the field of vocational rehabilitation and provide them with information on graduate rehabilitation education programs. DRS has an ongoing team composed of staff and administrators that focuses on issues related to hiring and retention of qualified staff. This group attempts to identify strategies that motivate staff to continue their employment, including rewards and recognition for high—level performance.

3. PERSONNEL STANDARDS

Describe the State agency's policies and procedures for the establishment and maintenance of personnel standards consistent with section 101(a)(7)(B) and 34 CFR 361.18(c) to ensure that designated State unit professional and paraprofessional personnel are adequately trained and prepared, including:

A. STANDARDS THAT ARE CONSISTENT WITH ANY NATIONAL OR STATE-APPROVED OR -RECOGNIZED CERTIFICATION, LICENSING, REGISTRATION, OR OTHER COMPARABLE REQUIREMENTS THAT APPLY TO THE PROFESSION OR DISCIPLINE IN WHICH SUCH PERSONNEL ARE PROVIDING VR SERVICES; AND

State Degree Standard. For several years, the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) has had the requirement for all new counselors of a Master's degree in rehabilitation counseling or a closely related field. The Master's degree requirement for DRS vocational rehabilitation counselors is supported by state licensing categories as well. The applicable licensing requirement in the state is for a "Licensed Professional Counselor" license, which is issued by the Illinois Department of Professional Regulation. This license is a generic counseling license and is not specifically for vocational rehabilitation counselors. The license requires a Master's degree in counseling, rehabilitation counseling, psychology or related field. For purposes of the Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD), the requirement of a Master's degree in rehabilitation counseling or a related field will be considered the state standard.

B. THE ESTABLISHMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(7)(B)(II) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT, TO ENSURE THAT THE PERSONNEL HAVE A 21ST CENTURY UNDERSTANDING OF THE EVOLVING LABOR FORCE AND THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.

All DRS staff are expected to participate in training events annually. Annual employee performance evaluations are designed to include training needs and expectations as identified by both the employee and the supervisor. Certain training events sponsored by DRS are mandated for attendance by staff in particular titles, such as rehabilitation counselors and rehabilitation case coordinators. SDS initiates new training activities and also responds to specific requests for training from DRS administrators and field office supervisors. SDS coordinates the New Employee Orientation (NEO) training in which each new DRS staff person participates in the first months of his or her employment. This includes an overview of agency policies as well as a review of how the VR program operates in Illinois. DRS administration periodically reviews the training objectives of the division to ensure that staff have an understanding of the VR program and the field of rehabilitation that is consistent with current policies and practices, including an understanding of the

labor force and the needs of individuals with disabilities. To that end DRS has emphasized training around changes to the Rehabilitation Act brought forth by the passage of WIOA, as well as changes to the workforce system external to the VR program. DRS has cooperated with the state Title I agency to encourage staff participation in weekly webinar presentations by other core and required partner agencies, to ensure a greater understanding of other workforce programs and how they may be of benefit to people with disabilities. The most recent annual regional meetings featured presentations by WIOA partner agencies regarding program offerings and resources available to VR staff as well as job seekers with disabilities. DRS continues to explore additional training opportunities to enhance staff understanding of workforce system services. To the greatest extent possible online training methods are used to hold down costs and provide more immediate impact to DRS staff. DRS recently established a position description for a new staff position of business services consultant. The purpose of this position is to engage with businesses throughout the state and participate in the state's integrated business services framework. For many years DRS has had a small group of employment resource specialists who worked directly with VR customers and counselors to conduct job development and job placement activities. The remaining staff in these positions will be retained and their activities coordinated with those of the business services consultants. The new business service consultants will work exclusively with business customers to identify business needs and develop effective responses. DRS anticipates that individuals will be hired into these positions after July 2018.

4. STAFF DEVELOPMENT.

Describe the State agency's policies, procedures, and activities to ensure that, consistent with section101(a)(7)(C) of the Rehabilitation Act, all personnel employed by the designated State unit receive appropriate and adequate training in terms of:

A. SYSTEM OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT

a system of staff development for professionals and paraprofessionals within the designated State unit, particularly with respect to assessment, vocational counseling, job placement, and rehabilitation technology, including training implemented in coordination with entities carrying out State programs under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998; and

The DRS Staff Development Section (SDS) oversees the needs assessment, development, implementation, coordination, monitoring and evaluation of all training programs offered within DRS. SDS has three full—time trainers and a program manager in addition to two support staff. SDS is responsible for providing training to DRS VR staff as well as coordinating training from other sources and maintaining the training data base which tracks the number of training hours for each staff person. The following section lists training courses provided by the Staff Development Section in the last year, as well as statewide conferences attended by DRS staff with financial support from DRS. Training Provided by the DRS Staff Development Section Job Placement and Job Development Strategies; Case Progression and Documentation; Valuing Diversity in the Workplace; Conflict and Stress Management for Professionals; Working Effectively in Teams; Platinum Customer Service; Customer Service and Telephone Skills; Projecting a Professional Image; Sexual Harassment Prevention in the Work Place; Section 590 Subpart C: Training and Related Services (Webinar); Effective Communication & Conflict Management; Dealing with

Difficult Behavior in the Workplace; Partnering with Autonomy Works (Webinar); The NET: A Model for Successful Employment Outcomes (Webinar); Team Building and Problem Solving; Case Notes: Styles, Structures and Time Management; Training Provided by External Training Resources Job Placement Skills; Social Security Benefits Training Conferences Supported by DRS: Illinois Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired; Illinois Association of Agencies and Community Organizations for Migrant Advocacy; Illinois Association of Hispanic State Employees; Latino Mental Health Conference; Statewide Transition Conference. Ongoing Staff Development - Training Needs Assessment. DRS conducts periodic surveys of field office staff, including supervisors, counselors and case coordinators. Staff are asked about their own training needs as well as their perception of training needs for individuals working in other field positions. The top training requests for field office supervisors was in the area of stress management and dealing with difficult people, as well as disciplinary procedures. For case coordinators, the top requests were in the areas of teambuilding and customer service. For VR counselors the top requests for training were in the areas of counseling skills, caseload management and time management. DRS is developing a plan to prioritize the training requests, develop training events when possible and arrange for external training providers if needed. DRS provides ongoing training to staff in all areas of counseling, including counseling and guidance. All staff are required to take a five—day New Employee Orientation training course that focuses on the role of the counselor in the counseling relationship. A major emphasis is placed on role—playing various situations where counseling and guidance skills are used. Another major emphasis is on assessment of the individual's rehabilitation needs, beginning with the initial interview. Placement skills are emphasized in training activities including regional meetings held annually, as well as on—site training in field offices. Training focuses on job development skills, communication with employers and preparing customers for job interviews. DRS makes training available in rehabilitation technology to all staff. DRS employs rehabilitation technology specialists who provide on—site consultation to counselors and assist them in developing plans for provision of rehabilitation technology to VR customers. DRS also has contractual staff who focus on rehabilitation technology issues and provide on—site training and consultation. DRS works in conjunction with the Illinois Assistive Technology Project, the state's AT grant recipient, to promote understanding of rehabilitation technology needs and identification of technology resources. DRS makes use of the rehabilitation technology program at the University of Illinois at Chicago as both a training resource and a service provider for VR customers.

B. ACQUISITION AND DISSEMINATION OF SIGNIFICANT KNOWLEDGE

procedures for the acquisition and dissemination of significant knowledge from research and other sources to designated State unit professionals and paraprofessionals.

Dissemination of Research Materials to Staff. The staff development section operates a small library with books and video materials available on numerous topics related to disability and rehabilitation counseling. These materials are distributed to field staff upon request. In the last year the library has added new materials related to job search, job skills and career choice materials to enhance the rehabilitation counselor's access to research materials. DRS makes use of its intranet system to provide linkages to research sources and other new information relating to the field of rehabilitation. DRS supports staff participation in disability-related conferences within the state so that staff can learn about new

developments in the rehabilitation field including presentations on research from university professionals as well as rehabilitation practitioners. In addition, key categories of staff such as rehabilitation counselors for the deaf and mental health specialist counselors, participate in regional and statewide groups that share current research relevant to their fields of study. The DRS initiative on for individual placement and support services for persons with mental illness involves sharing research findings in a structured way with staff. Training Technology. As noted above, a major emphasis in DRS has been the effort to obtain up—to—date interactive technology to facilitate training events and limit time and expense associated with travelling to training events. DRS has made use of an RSA quality grant to purchase video equipment, laptop computers and microphones to establish the capability for two—way interactive video in all offices across the state. Testing of the technology has been successful and training events will be scheduled soon using the equipment. DRS has also worked with contractors to develop online training modules in key areas of VR casework. The idea is that counselors will be able to take training on key topics and improve their knowledge of important concepts directly from their office computer. DRS has also worked to implement standard webinar training events with visual presentation of materials along with spoken narration. Real time captioning is available as needed as an accommodation for webinar users. The staff being trained can interact with the presenter by responding to questions ("polling") and by texting in questions. All webinar training events are followed up with an online participant survey that provides feedback on the training. DRS has used this methodology for webinars with over 2,000 participants in the last three years. Staff response to webinar technology for training has been very positive and DRS anticipates utilizing this format more often in the future.

5. PERSONNEL TO ADDRESS INDIVIDUAL COMMUNICATION NEEDS

Describe how the designated State unit has personnel or obtains the services of other individuals who are able to communicate in appropriate modes of communication with or in the native language of applicants or eligible individuals who have limited English speaking ability.

Communication with Diverse Populations DRS maintains rehabilitation counseling staff with expertise in communicating with diverse populations. A group of Rehabilitation Counselors for the Deaf (RCDs) are employed throughout the state. These individuals are fluent in sign language and conversant with deaf culture, and provide the full range of vocational rehabilitation services to individuals who are deaf. The Bureau of Blind Services employs rehabilitation counselors and rehabilitation instructors who are professionally qualified to provide rehabilitation services to individuals who are blind or visually impaired. DRS strongly encourages the use of Braille as part of training for individuals who are blind. In addition, rehabilitation counselors and rehabilitation case coordinators are employed who are qualified to communicate with individuals whose primary language is Spanish. Staff are tested in order to qualify for bilingual positions. DRS also works with individuals whose primary language is one other than English, Spanish or sign language. While the numbers of such individuals is relatively small, it is equally important to be able to communicate effectively with them about their rehabilitation needs. The Illinois Department of Human Services maintains a computerized resource directory, which includes information on translation services for a variety of languages, including Polish, Vietnamese and Arabic among others. DRS counselors can link with these resources to

provide translation services. DRS has also piloted the use of a telephone—based translation service which can provide instant translations in over 100 languages and which requires only the use of two telephones. When professional translators are not available, DRS works with family members or volunteer translators from community or religious organizations who can assist the individual.

6. COORDINATION OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT UNDER THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT

As appropriate, describe the procedures and activities to coordinate the designated State unit's comprehensive system of personnel development with personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Coordination of the CSPD and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Relationship to IDEA: DRS staff provide services annually to thousands of young people with disabilities, most of whom receive services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Approximately 10,000 young people participate in the Secondary Transitional Experience Program (STEP), which provides work experience during the high school years. The Next Steps program provides advocacy training to parents of students with disabilities. Part of the Next Steps training program includes providing information on the importance of transition planning. DRS staff who work with high school students participate in training offered by the Illinois State Board of Education and its Transition Systems Change project. DRS maintains an administrative liaison position with the State Board to facilitate communication about transition issues, including available training options. Also, DRS has staff who serve on the Education of Students with Disabilities Advisory Committee. There is no direct connection between DRS training efforts and the personnel development plan under IDEA. DRS staff are closely involved in the statewide network of Transition Planning Councils (TPCs), which consist of rehabilitation and education professionals, as well as employers and school administrators. The purpose of the TPCs is to facilitate transition from school to work and to identify local issues that affect transition. DRS staff are involved with the schools in their communities and frequently attend training events sponsored by schools.

J. STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.11(a)).

1. PROVIDE AN ASSESSMENT OF THE REHABILITATION NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES RESIDING WITHIN THE STATE, PARTICULARLY THE VR SERVICES NEEDS OF THOSE:

A. WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING THEIR NEED FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES;

Needs Assessment Framework. In the current program year DRS has worked closely with the State Rehabilitation Council to establish a needs assessment framework that will be utilized in the coming years to regularly collect key data that will inform DRS program decisions. An online needs assessment survey with separate transition and adult services components was developed jointly by DRS and the SRC in last 2017. Data from this survey have not yet been analyzed. DRS has agreed to work with the Council on other needs

assessment activities, including focus groups and community forums as part of a coordinated effort. DRS and the SRC have worked together on other key data gathering projects in PY2017. These included: an employee engagement survey; a customer satisfaction survey; and a survey of community rehabilitation program agencies. In addition, both parties participated in a strategic planning forum in the fall of 2017 to focus on joint efforts that will benefit people with disabilities in the state. Data obtained in these surveys were generally similar to previous efforts by DRS and the Council in prior years. The overall level of customer satisfaction with DRS remained more or less unchanged at around 80 percent, with about 63 percent giving DRS services high quality ratings (excellent or very good). About 76 percent of customers said that they would recommend DRS services to a friend, a drop from figures obtained in previous surveys. VR counselors were rated as usually available by 86 percent of respondents, and 76 percent said that participation in DRS services contributed to an improvement in their quality of life. There was some uncertainty expressed about whether VR counselors consistently provided information on the Client Assistance Program to new customers. In open-ended comments, some respondents expressed concern that VR staff do not consistently respond quickly to requests for information. The community provider survey indicated a generally strong relationship between DRS and the provider community, with 46 percent indicating that their working experience was very positive or outstanding. There was some concern expressed about timely responses to provider questions as well as concerns about the degree to which policies are implemented consistently across the state. For example, only 30 percent of providers had positive ratings for the degree to which DRS staff return paperwork in a timely fashion. However 51 percent of providers gave DRS positive (very good or outstanding) ratings for accepting input and ideas from provider agencies, while 63 percent of respondents gave positive ratings for their relationship with VR counselors. Respondents were least satisfied with the quality of referrals received from DRS (31 percent positive ratings) and with responsiveness in handing referrals (30 percent). Thus while the overall relationship with providers is positive, there are specific changes that need to be addressed by DRS management. Stakeholder Representation DRS has two representative groups of stakeholders: the Facility Advisory Committee, consisting of representatives of community rehabilitation program agencies; and the STEP Advisory Committee, consisting of representatives of school districts that provider pre-employment transition services to students under third-party cooperative agreements with DRS. These groups each meet regularly with DRS senior managers to identify program concerns and express needs that have been identified in their local communities. In the Facility group considerable discussion has gone into the need to change the nature of supported employment contracts from an hourly basis to a performance basis. FAC representatives participated in development of the new program model and advised on the fiscal payment structure. The FAC serves as a primary source of information on the need for supported employment services for individuals with most significant disabilities. The STEP committee has served as an important source of input on the need for expansion of pre-employment transition services in various areas of the state. In the last two years several new STEP contracts have been developed with local school districts through input provided through this mechanism. The STEP group reports regularly on issues and concerns relating to working with employers to establish work-based learning experiences for students. Statistical Analysis The most fundamental statistic relating to service needs is the lack of population growth in Illinois. The population has dropped by 80,415 or 0.62 percent from

2014 to 2017, ranking third lowest in the nation during that time period. To some extent Illinois is experiencing population change similar to other states in that the number of residents in rural areas is declining while the population of older residents is growing. Population change varies greatly by race and ethnicity. The white, non-Hispanic population dropped by 3.4 percent between 2010 and 2016, a reduction of nearly 270,000 people. The African American population was generally unchanged in that time period, increasing by less than one percent. The Latino population increased by 7.3 percent in that time period, roughly by 150,000 people. The largest increase was for the Asian population, which grew by 20 percent or about 117,000 people. The category of individuals identifying themselves as belong to two or more racial categories declined by 16 percent or around 45,000 individuals. The impact of an aging population is seen in the relative changes for various age groupings from 2013 to 2017 (data from the Disability Statistics Compendium). The population under age five declined by 5.5 percent, and within that group the number with a reported disability decreased by 29 percent. The school age population (age 5 to 17) dropped by 4.2 percent, with a decline of 9.6 percent in the number of school age children with a reported disability. It should be noted, though, that the number of students reported as receiving special education services (the state child count) increased by one percent during that time period. The working age population (age 18 to 64) declined by 1.4 percent, with the number reporting a disability increasing slightly by 0.7 percent. However, the number of working age persons with a disability who were employed increase by 7.7 percent between 2013 and 2017. The population age 65 and older increased by 10.7 percent during that time period, and the number of older individuals reporting a disability increased by 6.9 percent. Special Education Data Overall the population covered in the state child count data for age 6 to 21 declined by 3.7 percent from the fall of 2011 to the fall of 2015, the most recent data available. There are 2,725,494 individuals in the age group, with 258,906 receiving special education services. While the overall population declined, the number receiving services rose by 2,893 or 1.1 percent in that time period. The largest category of students are listed as having a specific learning disability, with 103,534 students in that group. From 2011 to 2015 the number in the SLD category declined by 4.4 percent. The next largest category is speech and language impairment with 37,399 students, a category which declined by15.7 percent in this time period. Large percentage increases were observed for students in the other health impairment category, which grew by 24.3 percent to 33,997 students. The number of students in the autism category increased by 30.6 percent to 21,077 students. The number of students classified as having a developmental delay grew by 55.9 percent to 18,301 students. Students listed as having multiple disabilities increased by 21 percent to 2,458 individuals. In addition to the specific learning disability and speech and language impairment categories noted above, decreases were observed for students in the intellectual disability category, by 10 percent to 16,867 students and in the orthopedic impairment category by 24.3 percent to 1,123 total students. The number of students served in a regular classroom environment grew by 2.3 percent to 204,191 students or 78.9 percent of all students in special education. It is uncertain whether these changes represent a change in the distribution of disability in the school age population or a change in utilization in disability categories to more closely reflect the service needs of the students being classified. For purposes of future VR service needs, it is important to note that four categories of students likely to be classified as having a most significant disability are intellectual disability, other health impairment, autism, and multiple disabilities. Between 2011 and 2015 the number of students in these categories

increased by 10,126 or 15.8 percent to a total of 74,399 students. So while the overall number of students in special education in Illinois has remained flat in the most recent four year comparison, the number of greatest concern to VR has shown a significant increase.

B. WHO ARE MINORITIES;

Data from the Disability Compendium shows that 35.7 percent of all working age persons in Illinois with disabilities are employed. However there is considerable variability by race in terms of likelihood of employment. Among white working age persons with disabilities 38.5 percent are employed, while 34.7 percent working age Latinos with disabilities are employed and 44.3 percent of working age Asians with disabilities. However, only 24.6 percent of working age African Americans with disabilities report being employed, a clear disparity compared to other groups. As the ongoing DRS needs assessment process unfolds consideration will be given to identifying racial disparities and addressing them through program initiatives.

Survey data relating to needs of minorities with disabilities indicate that an ongoing issue remains services available in the preferred language of the individual. Language access is more available in the highly populated Chicago area, where vendor agencies utilize staff with appropriate language skills. In other areas of the state this continues to be a challenge.

C. WHO HAVE BEEN UNSERVED OR UNDERSERVED BY THE VR PROGRAM;

Needs of Individuals Who Have Been Unserved or Underserved by the VR Program DRS maintains an ongoing effort to identify and serve deaf—blind individuals. This effort is coordinated by the DRS deaf services unit with the assistance of the Bureau of Blind Services. DRS works with audiologist and vision professionals to develop referrals for VR services . In the last four years the number of deaf—blind individuals served at the Chicago training facility for the blind has grown significantly, as has the overall number of deaf—blind persons served in VR. While the overall number of deaf—blind individuals remains small, DRS believes that it will continue to increase the proportion of those individuals who receive VR services through its outreach efforts. DRS is involved in an ongoing effort to implement a system of individual placement services (IPS) programs, formerly known as evidence—based supported employment programs, for individuals with serious mental illness. The IPS model is designed to provide employment services that are tailored to the specific needs of this population, which have traditionally been underserved by VR programs nationally. To further the DRS commitment to the IPS model, DRS intends to continue gradual expansion of IPS services as funding allows. DRS is actively engaged through its transition services in working with individuals with autism and autism spectrum disorder. In the last decade the number of students in special education with these diagnoses has grown significantly, which has lead to a gradual increase of autism cases in the DRS VR program. DRS works with advocacy groups and service providing agencies to identify service options and job placement strategies that will meet the needs of this group.

Survey data most frequently mention the needs of individuals with autism or autism spectrum disorders. The number of cases served by DRS where autism is the primary disability continues to rise each year. Community providers have a good level of success in assisting individuals with autism in obtaining employment, although this is at a somewhat lower rate than for other disabilities. DRS continues to work with community agencies to

identify specific service options that will be of greatest benefit to this population. Service needs for individuals who are deaf-blind are not typically mentioned in survey data due to the low incidence of the condition. DRS will continue to work with the statewide deaf-blind committee to monitor the needs of individuals in that category.

D. WHO HAVE BEEN SERVED THROUGH OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM; AND

DRS has cooperated extensively with the state Title I agency around disability initiatives from that agency funded by the Dept. of Labor. This involves local area cooperation and in many cases joint enrollment of individuals in Title I and VR services. The extent to which this model will be expanded beyond these pilot areas is currently unknown, but to date the level of cooperation has been very helpful in serving the individuals identified. Regional and local planning efforts in the workforce system have included specific components addressing how each one stop center will serve individuals with disabilities and how their needs will be accommodated. Survey data indicate that individuals with disabilities as well as disability service providers have a low level of awareness of the workforce system in general. American Job Centers are not typically identified as a resource for employment services for people with disabilities. DRS has representatives on all local workforce boards across the state and they are working to increase awareness of workforce services and at the same time ensure that individuals with disabilities have access to job center services.

E. WHO ARE YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, INCLUDING, AS APPROPRIATE, THEIR NEED FOR PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES OR OTHER TRANSITION SERVICES.

While additional needs assessment data have yet to be analyzed, DRS believes it has an accurate picture of transition and pre-employment transition needs for students with disabilities. This is based on prior needs assessment surveys and data gathered from transition age students in the 2017 VR customer satisfaction survey. As noted above, DRS relies on ongoing relationships with STEP schools as an information source, expanding services when additional needs are identified. DRS also worked with the Illinois Network of Centers for Independent Living to respond to needs identified by their member agencies. In the current program year DRS has contracted with eight CILs to provide pre-employment transition services to students with disabilities, focusing on self-advocacy training as well as job readiness training, particularly in the area of independent living skills training. DRS also developed contracts with community rehabilitation programs to provide work-based learning experiences to students with disabilities in the Chicago area. These projects are being evaluated to determine whether additional projects should be established elsewhere in the state.

2. IDENTIFY THE NEED TO ESTABLISH, DEVELOP, OR IMPROVE COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE; AND

DRS believes that the system of community rehabilitation programs in the state is adequate to meet the needs of vocational rehabilitation program customers. Very few comments were made in the online needs assessment conducted in FY2013 regarding a need to establish or expand the CRP system. Some suggestions were made to expand non—vocational day habilitation programs, but that is not a service option appropriate for VR funding. DRS

meets regularly with a statewide committee of CRP representatives (the Facility Advisory Council) to improve services provided by CRPs in Illinois.

The provider survey conducted in 2017 did not indicate a need for expansion of specific services so much as a need to improve working relationships between DRS and CRPs. For example, improved communication around referrals was seen as a key to enabling CRPs to begin serving individuals sooner and increasing the chances for a successful employment outcome. DRS continues to work with provider representatives to address these issues.

3. INCLUDE AN ASSESSMENT OF THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES FOR TRANSITION CAREER SERVICES AND PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES, AND THE EXTENT TO WHICH SUCH SERVICES ARE COORDINATED WITH TRANSITION SERVICES PROVIDED UNDER THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT .

As noted above the results of the most recent needs assessment survey are pending. DRS believes that gradual expansion of pre-employment transition services is appropriate, particularly in areas where services are limited and in high-need areas such as the city of Chicago. The efforts described above to expand beyond the STEP program model and incorporate centers for independent living and community rehabilitation programs into the pre-employment transition services system are indicators that DRS is making serious attempts to identify and meet these service needs.

Data from the 2017 survey for transition age students indicate a need for a variety of work-based learning experiences during the high school years, as well as improved coordination of services around the time an individual leaves high school. Many respondents had positive comments about the pre-employment transition services they received while in high school, as well as individualized transition services during and after high school. However a common theme was the need for better communication about services available after high school and how those can lead to successful employment. Comments reflected less of a concern about a lack of services so much as concerns about making the various services work more effectively together.

K. ANNUAL ESTIMATES

Describe:

1. THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS IN THE STATE WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES;

To estimate the number of possibly eligible individuals in the State DRS uses disability data from the U.S. Census Bureau as compiled in the Disability Statistics Compendium. Using the most recent Census data on disability prevalence and the most recent estimate of the Illinois population, DRS estimates that there are 679,900 individuals with disabilities in the state aged 16 to 64 who are possibly eligible for the VR program. Of that number, DRS estimates that there are 530,400 who would qualify for services under the DRS order of selection policy, and 149,000 who would not be likely to meet the State's order of selection policy. In addition, DRS estimates that there are 77,200 individuals with disabilities who are possibly eligible for VR services under Title VI, Part B. Of the 530,400 likely to qualify under the policy, DRS estimates that there are 183,000 who would be in the most significant disability

category, 122,400 who would be in the very significant disability category, and 224,500 that would be in the significant disability category.

2. THE NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WHO WILL RECEIVE SERVICES UNDER:

A. THE VR PROGRAM;

In the VR program DRS estimates that 41,500 individuals will be served in FFY2018 and that 43,000 individuals will be served in FFY2019.

B. THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM; AND

In the supported employment program utilizing Title IV Part B funds, DRS estimates that 125 individuals, all in the most significant disability category will be served in FFY2018 and 120 individuals in FFY2019.

C. EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY, IF UNDER AN ORDER OF SELECTION;

In the VR program DRS estimates that 21,900 individuals in the most significant disability category will be served in FFY2018, along with 15,775 individuals in the very significant disability category and 3,825 individuals in the significant disability category. No services will be provided to individuals in the category of individual with a disability. For FFY2019, DRS estimates that 22,100 individuals in the most significant disability category will be served, along with 16,500 in the very significant disability category and 4,400 in the significant disability category for a total of 43,000 persons served. No services will be provided to individuals in the category of individual with a disability.

3. THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR VR SERVICES, BUT ARE NOT RECEIVING SUCH SERVICES DUE TO AN ORDER OF SELECTION; AND

For FFY2018 and FFY2019 DRS estimates that there are approximately 149,000 individuals who would be eligible for VR services but not be in an open category of the order of selection policy.

4. THE COST OF SERVICES FOR THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS ESTIMATED TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES. IF UNDER AN ORDER OF SELECTION, IDENTIFY THE COST OF SERVICES FOR EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY.

For FFY2018 DRS estimates that $112,000,000 federal VR funds will be available, along with $30,350,000 in non—federal funds for a total program budget of $142,350,000. With an estimated 41,500 individuals to be served this equals $3,430 in total funds per person served, with $2,699 in federal funds and $731 in non—federal funds. For the most significant disability category the average total cost is expected to be $3,760, with $2,959 in federal funds and $802 in non—federal funds. Total spending for the most significant disability category is estimated to be $82,350,000, where $64,792,980 are federal funds and $17,557,020 are non-federal funds. For the very significant disability category the average total cost is expected to be $3,106, with $2,444 in federal funds and $662 in non—federal funds. Total spending for the very significant disability category is estimated to be $49,000,000, where $38,553,200 are federal funds and $10,446,800 are non-federal funds. For the significant disability category the average total cost is expected to be $2,876, with $2,263 in federal funds and $613 in non—federal funds. Total spending for the significant

disability category is estimated to be $11,000,000, where $8,654,800 are federal funds and $2,345,200 are non-federal funds. No services will be provided to individuals in the category of individual with a disability and no funds will be expended For FFY2019 DRS estimates that $112,000,000 federal VR funds will be available, along with $30,350,000 in non—federal funds for a total program budget of $142,350,000. With an estimated 43,000 individuals to be served this equals $3,310 in total funds per person served, with $2,604 in federal funds and $706 in non—federal funds. For the most significant disability category the average total cost is expected to be $3,726, with $2,932 in federal funds and $794 in non—federal funds. Total spending for the most significant disability category is estimated to be $82,350,000, where $64,792,980 are federal funds and $17,557,020 are non-federal funds. For the very significant disability category the average total cost is expected to be $2,970, with $2,337 in federal funds and $633 in non—federal funds. Total spending for the very significant disability category is estimated to be $49,000,000, where $38,553,200 are federal funds and $10,446,800 are non-federal funds. For the significant disability category the average total cost is expected to be $2,500, with $1,967 in federal funds and $533 in non—federal funds. Total spending for the significant disability category is estimated to be $11,000,000, where $8,654,800 are federal funds and $2,345,200 are non-federal funds. No services will be provided to individuals in the category of individual with a disability and no funds will be expended DRS projects that all available funds, program income and carryover, will be expended on individuals in the open categories of the order of selection policy. DRS does not expect to have sufficient funds to serve additional individuals in the closed category of the order of selection.

L. STATE GOALS AND PRIORITIES

The designated State unit must:

1. IDENTIFY IF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES WERE JOINTLY DEVELOPED

Identify if the goals and priorities were jointly developed and agreed to by the State VR agency and the State Rehabilitation Council, if the State has a Council, and jointly agreed to any revisions.

The goals and priorities in this Plan were jointly developed and agreed to by DRS and the State Rehabilitation Council. Any revisions to the goals and priorities were jointly reviewed and agreed to by DRS and the SRC.

2. IDENTIFY THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES IN CARRYING OUT THE VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS.

Goal 1: Competitive Integrated Employment Outcomes DRS has revised the goals in this section based on current performance levels. DRS plans to increase the number of competitive integrated employment outcomes achieved each year, beginning with 5,600 in PY2017, then 5,950 in PY2018 and 6,300 in PY2019. Goal 2: Median Earnings Two Quarters After Program Exit The best estimate of current performance is median quarterly earnings of $2,343. DRS plans to increase the median earnings achieved by individuals exiting the VR program to $2,460 in PY2016, $2,595 in PY2017, $2,750 in PY2018 and $2,930 in PY2019. Goal 3: Employment Retention at Two Quarters After Program Exit The best estimate of current performance is 49.1 percent for all persons exiting the VR program. DRS plans to

increase the employment retention percentage to 52.5 in PY2016, 55.0 in PY2017, 57.5 in PY2018 and 60.0 in PY2019. Goal 4: Employment Retention at Four Quarters After Program Exit The best estimate of current performance is 45.7 percent for all persons exiting the VR program. DRS plans to increase the employment retention percentage to 48.0 in PY2016, 50.0 in PY2017, 52.5 in PY2018 and 55.0 in PY2019. Goal 5: Educational Achievement This measure includes all program participants who earn a secondary diploma, post—secondary degree or other credential while participating in the program of within one year after program exit. The best estimate of current performance is 5,050 individuals meeting this criterion, with 4,250 completing a secondary diploma, 600 earning a post—secondary degree and 200 earning some other type of credential. DRS plans to increase the number of people making educational achievements to 5,260 in PY2016, 5,470 in PY2017, 5,680 in PY2018 and 5,900 in PY2019. Goal 6: Post Secondary Training Skill Gains This measure includes all program participants who are engaged in post secondary training leading to a degree or credential and who are making measurable skills gains during the program year. The best estimate of current performance is 2,500 individuals meeting this criterion. DRS plans to increase the number of people achieving measurable skills gains in postsecondary training to 2,650 in PY2016, 2,800 in PY2017, 2,950 in PY2018 and 3,150 in PY2019. Goal 7: Students with Disabilities Exiting Into Postsecondary Training This is a measure of the number of students with disabilities who graduate from high school and enter post—secondary training programs within the first year after leaving school. The best estimate of current performance is that about 4,000 students exit DRS STEP services each year and about 700 enter post—secondary training. DRS plans to increase the number of students participating in post—secondary training to 750 in PY2016, 825 in PY2017, 900 in PY2018 and 1,000 in PY2019. Goal 8: Establish a Business Engagement Team within DRS In PY2016 DRS plans to establish a business engagement team, consisting of employment resource specialists, rehabilitation counselors and field office supervisors. The team will establish new relationships with at least 20 employers and achieve 50 employment outcomes for VR customers at those businesses. DRS will work in conjunction with the Job Driven VR Technical Assistance Center to develop a business engagement strategy and provide training to participating staff to increase the effectiveness of their engagement with employers. This goal has been extended for the next two program years, with 50 new business engagements and 100 employment outcomes anticipated in PY2018 and 65 new business engagements and 125 employment outcomes in PY2019. Goal 9: Continue Expansion of Innovative Program Options In PY2018 and PY2019 DRS plans to continue expansion of several innovative program options which have been evaluated following a set of pilot projects. These include customized employment services, individual placement and support (IPS) services for diverse populations, and Project Search sites. Evaluation of the pilot projects suggests that the majority of the projects have performed at a level sufficient to justify ongoing support through DRS VR funds. Goal 10: Expand Performance Funding DRS has converted many of its community contracts to a performance basis in the last four years. DRS plans to continue to process of converting contracts for job placement and supported employment to a performance basis, achieving a level of 90 percent performance—based contracts with community vendors in PY2018 and 95 percent in PY2019.

3. ENSURE THAT THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES ARE BASED ON AN ANALYSIS OF THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

Goals and priorities contained in this Plan are based on an analysis of DRS performance on program standards, as well as other available information on the operation and effectiveness of the VR program, including reports from the SRC and findings and recommendations from monitoring activities conducted by RSA under Section 107 of the Act. In addition, the goals and priorities reflect the most recently completed statewide needs assessment and are based on the performance accountability measures of section 116 of WIOA.

A. THE MOST RECENT COMPREHENSIVE STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT, INCLUDING ANY UPDATES;

Goals and priorities contained in this Plan are based on an analysis of DRS performance on program standards, as well as other available information on the operation and effectiveness of the VR program, including reports from the SRC and findings and recommendations from monitoring activities conducted by RSA under Section 107 of the Act. The goals and priorities are based on the most recently completed statewide needs assessment.

B. THE STATE'S PERFORMANCE UNDER THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES OF SECTION 116 OF WIOA; AND

Goals and priorities contained in this Plan are based on an analysis of DRS performance on program standards, as well as other available information on the operation and effectiveness of the VR program, including reports from the SRC and findings and recommendations from monitoring activities conducted by RSA under Section 107 of the Act. The goals and priorities are based on the performance accountability measures of section 116 of WIOA.

C. OTHER AVAILABLE INFORMATION ON THE OPERATION AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE VR PROGRAM, INCLUDING ANY REPORTS RECEIVED FROM THE STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL AND FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM MONITORING ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED UNDER SECTION 107.

Goals and priorities contained in this Plan are based on an analysis of DRS performance on program standards, as well as other available information on the operation and effectiveness of the VR program, including reports from the SRC and findings and recommendations from monitoring activities conducted by RSA under Section 107 of the Act.

M. ORDER OF SELECTION

Describe:

1. WHETHER THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WILL IMPLEMENT AND ORDER OF SELECTION. IF SO, DESCRIBE:

A. THE ORDER TO BE FOLLOWED IN SELECTING ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS TO BE PROVIDED VR SERVICES.

The priority of categories to receive VR services under the DRS order of selection policy are: 1. Individuals determined to have the most significant disabilities; 2. Individuals determined to have very significant disabilities; 3. Individuals determined to have

significant disabilities; and 4. Individuals determined to have disabilities. For PY2018 and PY2019 the categories of most significant disability, very significant disability and significant disability will be open to services, unless a determination is made by the DRS Director that circumstances require a change in the categories open to service. The priority categories established under this rule are based solely on the definition of "individual with a significant disability" defined in the Rehabilitation Act (section 7 (21) (A)) and in regulations (34CFR361.36(d)(2) and 34CFR361.5(b)(31)). Categories of Eligible Individuals a) Pursuant to the provisions of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 USC 701 et seq.), DHS—DRS has established the following Order of Selection for the priority of provision of services to eligible individuals which counselors must follow when purchasing services for customers: 1) those individuals determined to have the most significant disabilities; 2) those individuals determined to have very significant disabilities; 3) those individuals determined to have significant disabilities; and 4) individuals determined to have disabilities. b) For the purposes of administering services under the order of selection, the Director of DHS—DRS will determine at the beginning of each fiscal year, or more often as necessary, which of the categories under subsection (a) will be open for service. c) Eligible individuals in a closed category under subsection (a) may choose to be placed on a waiting list for services. Criteria for Disability, Significant Disability, Very Significant Disability and Most Significant Disability Documentation of the determination that an individual has a most significant disability, a very significant disability, a significant disability or a disability must be in the individual's VR case file, as well as documentation concerning the evaluation of his or her rehabilitation potential.

a) Prior to determining the significance of an individual's disability, it must be determined that he or she: 1) has a disability, or a combination of disabilities, that causes a substantial physical or mental impairment that is similar, but not limited to, the following list of disabilities: A) amputation, B) arthritis, C) autism, D) blindness, E) burn injury, F) cancer, G) cerebral palsy, H) cystic fibrosis, I) deafness, J) head injury, K) heart disease, L) hemiplegia, M) hemophilia, N) respiratory or pulmonary dysfunction, O) intellectual disability, P) mental illness, Q) multiple sclerosis, R) muscular dystrophy, S) musculo—skeletal disorders, T) neurological disorders (including stroke and epilepsy), U) paraplegia, V) quadriplegia (and other spinal cord conditions), W) sickle cell anemia, X) specific learning disabilities, or Y) end stage renal failure disease; 2) has a disability, or a combination of disabilities, that seriously limits his or her functional capacities, as listed in Section 553.150 of this Part; and 3) requires VR services over an extended period of time. b) If an individual meets the requirements of Section 553.140(a), then the following criteria must be met to determine the significance of his or her disability: 1) To be considered an individual with a most significant disability, he or she must be an individual who has a disability that seriously limits three or more of his or her functional capacities and who requires multiple VR services over an extended period of time. 2) To be considered an individual with a very significant disability, he or she must have a disability that seriously limits two of his or her functional capacities, and must require multiple VR services over an extended period of time. 3) To be considered an individual with a significant disability, he or she must have a disability that seriously limits one of his or her functional capacities and must require multiple VR services over an extended period of time. 4) To be considered an individual with a disability, he or she must have a disability that results in an impediment to employment but which does not seriously limit his or her functional capacities. c) An individual who has been determined eligible for disability benefits pursuant to Title II

(SSDI) or Title XVI (SSI) of the Social Security Act is considered to be presumed eligible for VR services and an individual with a significant disability, unless the analysis of his or her functional limitations and service needs, as described above, place the individual into a higher category of the order of selection. Determination of Serious Limitation to Functional Capacities a) For the purpose of determination of the degree of significance of disability, functional capacities shall include: 1. mobility — the physical ability of an individual to move from place to place and move the body into certain positions. This includes such activities as: walking, climbing, kneeling, stooping, sitting, standing, and similar activities; 2. self—care — the ability of an individual to perform activities related to his or her health and hygiene. This includes such activities as: grooming, bathing, eating, house keeping, medical management, and money management; 3. self—direction — the ability of an individual to organize, control and regulate his or her own personal, social, and work life. This includes such activities as: maintaining schedules and routines, following directions and established rules, organizing activities for oneself, and adjusting to changing circumstances; 4. work skills — the ability of an individual to demonstrate skills necessary to perform jobs that exist in the current employment market, regardless of demand for the particular occupation or the individual's prior work experience. This includes such activities as: learning and maintaining work skills, cooperating with others in a work setting, using adequate decision making and problem solving skills, and using academic skills commonly required in the workplace; 5. work tolerance — the ability of an individual to consistently and adequately perform a job based on the physical, emotional, environmental, and psychological demands of a specific work environment. This includes such activities as: maintaining performance on the job regardless of changes in environment such as cold and heat, demonstrating the strength and endurance to perform the job in question, and working the schedule typical of other employees in the same job; 6. interpersonal skills — the ability of an individual to establish and maintain appropriate relationships with other individuals in the work place. This includes such activities as: engaging in necessary work—related communications, demonstrating behavior that is appropriate and acceptable in the work environment, cooperating with others in a team setting, and showing understanding and tact in dealing with others; and 7. communication — the ability to convey and receive information efficiently and effectively. This includes such activities as: hearing and understanding ordinary spoken language; making one's self understood in ordinary conversation; writing or printing short notes and communications; and reading and correctly interpreting short notes, signs, and instructions. b) A serious limitation to a functional capacity shall exist when the rehabilitation counselor determines that the customer, because of his or her disability, has functional limitations in performing the major components of the activity or activities listed in subsections (a)(1) through (7) or needs accommodation to perform the activity. c) The rehabilitation counselor shall use the criteria of consistency and substantiality when evaluating the degree of limitation to functional capacity. Consistency means that the individual's disability always or almost always limits the individual's functioning. Substantiality means the individual's disability has a major, significant impact on functioning and that the individual cannot perform the activity or finds it very difficult to perform the activity.

B. THE JUSTIFICATION FOR THE ORDER.

Illinois DRS has operated under an order of selection since 1979. Illinois changed its order of selection policy in April 2013. The overall purpose of the policy is to reflect the priorities

of the agency and provide for an equitable distribution of resources to individuals with most significant disabilities. For both FFY2018 and FFY2019 DRS projects that all available funds, program income and carryover, will be expended on individuals in the open categories of the order of selection policy. DRS does not expect to have sufficient funds to serve additional individuals in the closed category of the order of selection.

C. THE SERVICE AND OUTCOME GOALS.

In PY2018 DRS expects to serve 41,500 individuals. It is expected that the total number will be distributed as follows: persons with a most significant disability: 21,900; persons with a very significant disability: 15,775; and persons with a significant disability: 3,825. For PY2018 DRS expects to achieve 5,950 rehabilitated closures. It is expected that the total number will be distributed as follows: persons with a most significant disability: 2,735; persons with a very significant disability: 2,620; and persons with a significant disability: 595. In PY2019 DRS expects to serve 43,000 individuals. It is expected that the total number will be distributed as follows: persons with a most significant disability: 22,100; persons with a very significant disability: 16,500; and persons with a significant disability: 4,400. For PY2019 DRS expects to achieve 6,300 rehabilitated closures. It is expected that the total number will be distributed as follows: persons with a most significant disability: 2,900; persons with a very significant disability: 2,775; and persons with a significant disability: 625.

D. THE TIME WITHIN WHICH THESE GOALS MAY BE ACHIEVED FOR INDIVIDUALS IN EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY WITHIN THE ORDER.

The time period for the goals described above includes Program Year 2018, beginning July 1, 2018 and ending June 30, 2019 and Program Year 2019, beginning July 1, 2019 and ending June 30, 2020.

For PY2018 the achievement of outcome goals is projected as follows. For persons with a most significant disability, 547 are expected to achieve an outcome within 12 months of beginning services; 684 within 18 months; 957 within 18 months; and 547 within 30 months. For persons with a very significant disability, 655 are expected to achieve an outcome within 12 months of beginning services; 917 within 18 months; 786 within 18 months; and 262 within 30 months. For persons with a significant disability, 208 are expected to achieve an outcome within 12 months of beginning services; 208 within 18 months; 119 within 18 months; and 60 within 30 months. No outcomes are projected for individuals in the person with a disability category.

For PY2019 the achievement of outcome goals is projected as follows. For persons with a most significant disability, 580 are expected to achieve an outcome within 12 months of beginning services; 725 within 18 months; 1,025 within 18 months; and 580 within 30 months. For persons with a very significant disability, 694 are expected to achieve an outcome within 12 months of beginning services; 971 within 18 months; 833 within 18 months; and 278 within 30 months. For persons with a significant disability, 219 are expected to achieve an outcome within 12 months of beginning services; 219 within 18 months; 125 within 18 months; and 63 within 30 months. No outcomes are projected for individuals in the person with a disability category

E. HOW INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES ARE SELECTED FOR SERVICES BEFORE ALL OTHER INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES; AND

The DRS order of selection policy establishes priority for individuals with a most significant disability. Presently this is one of three categories of the order of selection policy now open for service. Financial estimates allow for services to individuals in all three categories to take place through PY2018 and PY2019. Consistent with longstanding policy, if financial circumstances change, other categories of the order of selection policy will be closed to services until only the most significant category remains open, at which time all new cases will be individuals in that category. It is not anticipated that such financial circumstances will arise as no similar situation has taken place in more than a decade. However the policy in place is sufficient to ensure that individuals in the most significant disability category will have priority going forward in such an event.

2. IF THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT HAS ELECTED TO SERVE ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS, REGARDLESS OF ANY ESTABLISHED ORDER OF SELECTION, WHO REQUIRE SPECIFIC SERVICES OR EQUIPMENT TO MAINTAIN EMPLOYMENT.

DRS does not plan to implement an exemption to the order of selection process based on specific service needs in order to retain employment.

N. GOALS AND PLANS FOR DISTRIBUTION OF TITLE VI FUNDS.

1. SPECIFY THE STATE'S GOALS AND PRIORITIES FOR FUNDS RECEIVED UNDER SECTION 603 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES.

While funding related to Title VI-B is uncertain at present, DRS provides the following projections for use of those funds. For PY2018, the Supported Employment Program (SEP) has set forth the following goals using Title VI, Part B funds. 1. Serve customers recently placed into supported employment in a manner consistent with federal regulations, with an emphasis on moving as many individuals as possible into natural supports at the conclusion of ongoing support services. 2. Continue to expand the scope of those who receive services to include persons who are deaf—blind, persons with traumatic brain injuries, persons who are mentally ill, persons with significant hearing impairments and other persons with the most significant disabilities. 3. Develop new mechanisms for funding paid extended services, including cooperative agreements with other state agencies and local units of government. 4. Evaluate the most effective means of achieving employment outcomes for individuals traditionally served in supported employment services. 5. Ensure that no less than 50 percent of the Title VI Part B grant funds are used for long—term support services to youth with disabilities. For PY2018, DRS will serve and employ 125 persons in supported employment utilizing Title VI Part B funds. In the most recent state fiscal year, DRS served 114 individuals in supported employment using Title VI Part B funds and an additional 1,146 using other funds. For PY2019 DRS will serve and employ 115 individuals in supported employment utilizing Title VI Part B funds.

2. DESCRIBE THE ACTIVITIES TO BE CONDUCTED, WITH FUNDS RESERVED PURSUANT TO SECTION 603(D), FOR YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING:

A. THE PROVISION OF EXTENDED SERVICES FOR A PERIOD NOT TO EXCEED 4 YEARS; AND

DRS has developed a contract monitoring mechanism to ensure that Title VI Part B funds are available to youth with disabilities and that at least 50 percent of grant funds are available to individuals in that category. In addition a reporting system has been developed to ensure that no individual participates in services funded with Title VI part B funds for longer than 48 months. Activities to be carried out for individuals receiving extended services include provision of ongoing support services at the job site or at another location, facilitation of natural supports at the job site, and regular contact with employers and other individuals supporting the worker in order to reinforce and stabilize the job placement. Other supports will be made available as needed, including assistive technology where appropriate. Extended services will be available to youth with a most significant disability for up to 48 months or until such time that the individual reaches age 25 and no longer meets the definition of "youth with a disability".

B. HOW THE STATE WILL LEVERAGE OTHER PUBLIC AND PRIVATE FUNDS TO INCREASE RESOURCES FOR EXTENDED SERVICES AND EXPANDED SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES.

DRS has also worked with the state developmental disabilities agency and the state mental health agency to explore funding options for youth with the most significant disabilities who may exhaust support services utilizing Title VI Part B funds. It is expected that most individuals in that category will be eligible for services funded through one of the Medicaid waivers operated by those agencies. The Illinois Employment First effort is a mechanism to support additional cooperation between VR funded and Medicaid waiver funded employment programs for people with most significant disabilities. DRS and the state agency serving individuals with intellectual disabilities have agreed in principle to facilitate referrals of individuals requiring longer term paid supports. DRS is also committed to continuing expansion of customized employment services as an option for youth with the most significant disabilities. DRS hopes to be able to build on experience from recent pilot projects for customized employment for individuals with intellectual disabilities. Ongoing discussions with the state developmental disabilities agency on include exploring options for customized employment projects.

O. STATE'S STRATEGIES

Describe the required strategies and how the agency will use these strategies to achieve its goals and priorities, support innovation and expansion activities, and overcome any barriers to accessing the VR and the Supported Employment programs (See sections 101(a)(15)(D) and (18)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act and section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA)):

1. THE METHODS TO BE USED TO EXPAND AND IMPROVE SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.

DRS is pursuing several strategies to continually increase the number of employment outcomes, including: development of a business engagement strategy; establishment of stronger partnerships with local workforce boards; increasing business partnerships through the NET and other approaches; providing job placement training to all VR counselors; continuing an emphasis on establishing performance based contracts with community provider agencies; providing personal organization training to VR counselors;

establishing outreach efforts to increase referrals to the VR program; and implementation of customized employment methodologies. DRS is following three main strategies to increase median earnings. The first is to increase the number of individuals enrolled in university and community college programs. These individuals have higher earnings than those with less education. A second strategy is to identify individuals with work experience who may benefit from return—to—work services through the VR program. DRS has one community provider contract that focuses on return—to—work and it has higher than average earnings for the individuals it serves. The third strategy is expanded participation in the CSAVR Talent Acquisition Portal (TAP). Since 2016 the number of postsecondary students served by DRS has increased by 40 percent. In addition to supporting degree programs, DRS will work with local workforce partners to ensure that certificate programs relating to expanding sectors are a focus for individuals seeking post—secondary vocational training. DRS intends to conduct outreach to rehabilitation hospitals, orthopedic clinics, physical therapy clinics and other professionals who are likely to be in contact with individuals who have disabilities and a work history but who are currently not working. DRS will work with the communications office to develop materials that will effectively communicate a message about how the VR program can benefit the individuals served by these professionals. The Talent Acquisition Portal (TAP) is focused on individuals with work experience who are seeking employment with larger, corporate—style employers who have structured hiring processes and make use of online systems to identify job candidates. DRS staff have worked closely with the national TAP development team and currently have over 500 customers who have enrolled in the system. DRS is pursuing a number of activities relating to transition services. DRS is establishing contracts with community agencies to conduct outreach activities to identify minority individuals who may benefit from VR services. In addition DRS continues to develop its relationship with the Chicago Public Schools, the third largest school district in the United States. DRS anticipates that enrollment, particularly of minority youth, with be greatly increased through these efforts. A recent focus of activity has been on working with community rehabilitation agencies to identify work—based learning opportunities for CPS students. This has been an aspect of transition services in Chicago that was developing at a slow rate and it was determined that additional resources were needed. DRS intends to pursue opportunities to work with local workforce boards to increase participation of youth with disabilities in work—based learning experiences targeted at out—of—school youth. There is a substantial overlap between the DRS population of youth with disabilities and the Title I population defined as out—of—school youth. Employer engagement efforts directed at creation of work—based learning experiences for young people should benefit those in both service categories to the greatest extent possible. DRS has three approaches to expanding the number of business partnerships. The first is continuation of participation in the National Employment Team (the NET), an effort coordinated by the national CSAVR team. The employers targeted through this effort are national or multi—state employers who are looking to use VR agencies as a resource in identifying potential job candidates. The second approach is the creation of a business engagement team based on a business engagement strategy. DRS is working with the job driven VR technical assistance center in developing this strategy and training staff in its implementation. The businesses targeted in this approach will be those identified through the sector analysis conducted as part of the State's WIOA regional planning process. This will be coordinated with other workforce partner agencies through the integrated business services model adopted in Illinois. Finally DRS will increase

employer engagements through establishment of a workforce unit staffed by a team of business service consultants to be hired in PY2018. DRS intends to continue development of innovative program options, including customized employment and individual placement and support (IPS) services. One strategy is continued involvement with national technical assistance resources, including subject matter experts made available through the DOL Vision Quest program. To date this has proven to be a valuable resource in that it provides objective analysis and recommendations affecting a number of state agencies serving people with disabilities. DRS is also continuing its cooperative relationship with the Psychiatric Research Center in developing and evaluating program expansion of IPS services to individuals with intellectual disabilities as well as to youth with serious mental illness.

2. HOW A BROAD RANGE OF ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY SERVICES AND DEVICES WILL BE PROVIDED TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES AT EACH STAGE OF THE REHABILITATION PROCESS AND ON A STATEWIDE BASIS.

DRS recognizes the importance of assistive technology services in meeting the needs of individuals with disabilities. It is the intention of DRS to provide a broad range of AT services at all stages of the rehabilitation process, and to make the services available on a statewide basis. Toward this end, DRS provides training to staff on AT services, both at the initial staff training and on an ongoing basis. DRS employs technology specialists and arranges for contractual staff to be available to work with VR counselors to identify customer needs, locate AT providers, write plans and provide AT services. Staff are available to provide on—site consultation with VR counselors as well as on—site evaluation of customer needs. DRS also has a central office purchasing specialist that works one—on—one with VR counselors to arrange purchasing of AT equipment and maximize use of VR funds. DRS also works closely with the Illinois Assistive Technology Project (the state AT grant recipient) to educate people with disabilities about AT products and services as well as demonstrate products that may be of use to individuals with disabilities. DRS provided a large award of ARRA funds to enable IATP to upgrade and modernize assistive technology supporting its services. DRS initiated the loan to own program for distribution of assistive technology equipment in order to provide necessary devices to VR customers in a more timely fashion. This effort involves making larger purchases of frequently used assistive technology devices and transferring them to a customer as needed, rather than initiating a separate purchase for each individual. This has significantly reduced the amount of time required to deliver assistive technology equipment to customers, enabling them to move forward with their service plan sooner. The technology team is also working closely with rehabilitation instructors to identify AT solutions to promote competitive integrated employment for blind individuals who require extensive preparation for employment.

3. THE OUTREACH PROCEDURES THAT WILL BE USED TO IDENTIFY AND SERVE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES WHO ARE MINORITIES, INCLUDING THOSE WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, AS WELL AS THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN UNSERVED OR UNDERSERVED BY THE VR PROGRAM.

DRS recognizes that many groups do not have access to the VR program to the same degree as others. DRS has a number of strategies to address these needs and improve access. Individuals with disabilities who are minorities are served by DRS at a rate that reflects

their proportion of the state population. However it is acknowledged that minority individuals with disabilities, including those with the most significant disabilities, face additional barriers to employment and access to the labor market. DRS works with community providers that have a strong connection to particular minority communities, including the African-American, Latino and Asian communities. Providers in these communities provide services in a culturally appropriate manner and have access to employment both within minority communities as well as in the general labor market. Recent expansion of contractual services with providers representing the Asian communities in the Chicago area have been particularly successful in increasing employment for that population. DRS also makes its services available to non-English speakers, either through employment of bilingual staff or through a translation service. In PY2017 DRS established new performance-based contracts with six community agencies across the state for outreach to minority communities. DRS employs specialist staff for services to deaf—blind individuals, a low—incidence disability with a high need for vocational assistance. DRS specialists work in consultation with VR counselors to provide services to deaf—blind customers, including training and job placement. In recent years DRS has worked closely with Helen Keller National Center, the primary resource in the US for deaf—blind services. This has included staff training and presentations as well as utilizing HKNC expertise in designing training environments for deaf-blind individuals served by DRS. DRS is currently working with HKNC to develop support services for deaf-blind individuals to increase their opportunities for sustaining competitive integrate employment. An assessment of staff training needs identified a strong need for training in the medical aspects of disability for VR counselors and supervisors. DRS has developed an arrangement with on external online training entity to provide training on medical aspects as well as other topics such as low-incidence disabilities of interest to rehabilitation counselors. DRS continues in its efforts to implement a system of individual placement and support services (IPS) programs, also known as evidence—based supported employment programs, for individuals with serious mental illness. The IPS model is designed to provide employment services that are tailored to the specific needs of this population, which have traditionally been underserved by VR programs nationally. This has been a major undertaking involving extensive cooperation with the DHS Division of Mental Health, community providers, and university consultants. A number of new agencies have received placement contracts from DRS and a special evaluation process is underway. Fidelity reviews have proven to be a very strong tool for improving and shaping IPS services at the service provider level.

4. THE METHODS TO BE USED TO IMPROVE AND EXPAND VR SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, INCLUDING THE COORDINATION OF SERVICES DESIGNED TO FACILITATE THE TRANSITION OF SUCH STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL TO POSTSECONDARY LIFE (INCLUDING THE RECEIPT OF VR SERVICES, POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, AND PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES).

DRS is committed to improvement and expansion of services to students and youth with disabilities, building upon its existing strong level of support for that age group. For example, in the previous state fiscal year 58.1 percent of all persons served in the DRS VR program began receiving services prior to age 21, as were 44.9 percent of persons achieving a competitive employment outcome. Although this represents a high level of involvement,

there is still room for improvement and achievement of greater levels of effectiveness. While a variety of pre—employment transition services are being provided through existing arrangements with third party providers, DRS has begun to pursue new options for pre-employment transition services outside the framework of the longstanding STEP effort. The business engagement process now underway is expected to identify internships and other learning experiences in growth sectors that would otherwise not be available to students with disabilities. In the current program year DRS established contracts with independent living centers to provide pre-employment transition services to students with disabilities, focusing on self-advocacy and independent living skills training. DRS also believes that the ongoing expansion of its partnership with the Illinois Department of Commerce (the state Title I agency) will be beneficial for students and youth with disabilities. One component is the set of Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) projects funded by the U.S. Department of Labor. These projects involve a variety of approaches to providing work experiences to youth with disabilities. In addition, DRS and Commerce are partnering on a set of innovative youth projects that will involve joint funding of work experiences and other approaches to employment for youth with disabilities. At present the proportion of in school and out of school youth to be served is unknown, but it is anticipated that many of the individuals served with be students with disabilities. DRS has initiated an effort to provide supported employment services, including customized employment services where appropriate, to students with disabilities prior to their exiting high school. While such referrals have taken place in the past, the number of referrals was small and the level of coordination between DRS, the school and the community provider agency was limited. Data from the DRS case management system is being utilized to identify students likely to benefit from supported employment services with sufficient time prior to school exit to facilitate mutual service provision. DRS is also expanding the number of contract arrangements with centers for independent living to provide counseling on self advocacy and development of independent living skills. A limited number of such arrangements has been in place for some time, but the new requirements under WIOA for these elements of pre—employment transition services has presented this category of service as an opportunity for expansion.

5. IF APPLICABLE, PLANS FOR ESTABLISHING, DEVELOPING, OR IMPROVING COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE.

Illinois has a well—developed network of community rehabilitation programs across the state, as well as an active trade association for those organizations. DRS does not believe that new community rehabilitation programs need to be developed at this time. DRS remains in contact with these organizations through ongoing discussions with the Facility Advisory Council, which has a rotating membership of program directors, who meet regularly with DRS administrators. The program manager for contracts as well as the bureau chief for field services attends meetings. The VR Director is closely involved with discussions about CRP services, both with the trade association as well as individual CRP directors. DRS also has specific liaison relationships between VR counselors and community rehabilitation programs in their service area. In addition, DRS has project officers who monitor contracts with community rehabilitation programs and are very knowledgeable regarding the service capacity of the agencies and the needs of their customers. These organizational arrangements provide a high level of communication about service needs as they relate to community rehabilitation programs. DRS believes that community rehabilitation program agencies will continue to play an important part in the overall

system of services in Illinois. DRS anticipates that the overall percentage of outcomes associated with CRPs will remain relatively stable, and that an increase in employment outcomes overall will mean an increase in employment outcomes associated with CRPs. While DRS continues to emphasize the need for counselors to purse direct placements whenever possible, this does not mean a reduction in the number of outcomes associated with community provider agencies. Making effective use of both state and private resources is the most certain way to continue to achieve quality results for DRS customers.

6. STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE THE PERFORMANCE OF THE STATE WITH RESPECT TO THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA.

Increased median earnings. As noted elsewhere in this plan, DRS is following three main strategies to increase median earnings. The first is to increase the number of individuals enrolled in university and community college programs. These individuals have higher earnings than those with less education. A second strategy is to identify individuals with work experience who may benefit from return—to—work services through the VR program. DRS has one community provider contract that focuses on return—to—work and it has higher than average earnings for the individuals it serves. The third strategy is expanded participation in the CSAVR Talent Acquisition Portal (TAP). Each of these approaches is designed to identify individuals with higher expected earnings and gradually increase the proportion of these individuals served by DRS. Increased employment retention. Employment retention is a function of an appropriate match between the job and the individual, as well as a satisfactory level of earnings. Full time work is associated with a higher level of employment retention than is part time work. Consequently DRS counselors are encouraged to emphasize full time work to the greatest extent possible for VR customers. Also as noted above, DRS is attempting to increase enrollment in university and community college programs. Individuals with that level of education are much more likely to engage in full time employment. Increased achievement of postsecondary education credentials. DRS is engaged in an effort to expand enrollment in university and community college programs. As this effort continues we should observe increased performance on the training—related WIOA measures. To improve data quality, DRS has made modifications to its online case management system. These changes will result in improved tracking of measurable skill gains and achievement of degrees and credentials by customers pursuing postsecondary training.

7. STRATEGIES FOR ASSISTING OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM IN ASSISTING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.

DRS will use a localized strategy for assisting other components of the workforce system in working effectively with persons with disabilities. As noted elsewhere, DRS staff serve as members of local workforce boards and have the capacity to focus attention on disability—related issues. Concerns specifically related to program accessibility will be addressed at the local level with support from the DRS central office rehabilitation technology unit. In addition to local staff resources DRS will reach out to independent living centers in responding to accessibility concerns. DRS will also work with its Title I agency to provide training to both DRS and local workforce staff on disability issues through webinars and

other mechanisms. A key focus will be utilizing the Section 188 Disability Reference Guide developed by the DOL Office of Disability Employment Policy. This guide focuses on the concept of universal access and presents disability issues in the context of local workforce centers. DRS believes that training built around this resource will make a valuable contribution to program access for people with disabilities. DRS will also pursue a strategy of expanding methods of communication, including electronic and computer connections, between DRS offices and local workforce centers. DRS is working with the Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership to develop an electronic means of making referrals between DRS and workforce centers, increasing program efficiency and accountability while reducing barriers to participation for VR customers. In addition state level plans are underway to enhance data sharing capability for all core workforce partners.

8. HOW THE AGENCY'S STRATEGIES WILL BE USED TO:

A. ACHIEVE GOALS AND PRIORITIES BY THE STATE, CONSISTENT WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT;

The goals established in this plan are consistent with DRS needs assessment activities described in this plan. The goals are closely aligned to WIOA reporting requirements, focusing on employment retention and earnings, essential objectives of the VR program. The strategies described in this plan are focused on making progress toward those goals. DRS believes that the focus on employment, earnings and educational achievement are consistent with the needs of people with disabilities throughout the state.

B. SUPPORT INNOVATION AND EXPANSION ACTIVITIES; AND

DRS continues to solicit suggestions from staff and stakeholders about service needs that can be the focus of innovation and expansion activities. This process was used to develop new projects serving transition age youth, for example, as well as expansion of IPS services. To the extent possible, one—time funds were used as start—up funding for these new projects, with significantly lower performance expectations than for ongoing programs. These were considered to be pilot projects and were evaluated for effectiveness prior to conversion to standard contract formats. Projects which were consistent with agency priorities and which represented the possibility of long term benefit were selected for funding. These have focused on outreach to minority communities, services to transition age youth, and expansion of IPS programs. Efforts have been made to determine the likely course of the project after the initial start—up phase is concluded. A secondary effort has centered on effective marketing approaches in working with businesses and customers. DRS developed a short (1 minute 40 seconds) online video which is targeted at a general audience and which describes a variety of VR services and emphasizes options for making a referral to the DRS program. DRS believes this presentation is consistent with current communication patterns and presents a great opportunity for increasing referrals to the program. DRS has also expanded its presence on social media as a means of promoting the VR program to potential customers. DRS will continue to support the SRC and the SILC through innovation and expansion activities.

C. OVERCOME IDENTIFIED BARRIERS RELATING TO EQUITABLE ACCESS TO AND PARTICIPATION OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE STATE VR SERVICES PROGRAM AND THE STATE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES PROGRAM.

The major barrier to participation in the vocational rehabilitation and supported employment program for individuals with disabilities concerns access to services. Because these programs are targeted at individuals with disabilities, there is no general barrier to participation on the basis of disability status. Rather, specific barriers arise when an individual is unable to participate in a program or communicate his or her needs to program staff. DRS provides a variety of access methods to individuals with disabilities, including the use of Braille and large print, sign language, computer assisted real time captioning and other specialized assistive technology. All DRS office locations are physically accessible, as are all program locations and public meeting sites. Individuals who do not speak English are provided with translation services in order to participate in the vocational rehabilitation program. Every effort is made to eliminate these types of barriers to participation.

P. EVALUATION AND REPORTS OF PROGRESS: VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT GOALS

Describe:

1. AN EVALUATION OF THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE VR PROGRAM GOALS DESCRIBED IN THE APPROVED VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN FOR THE MOST RECENTLY COMPLETED PROGRAM YEAR WERE ACHIEVED. THE EVALUATION MUST:

A. IDENTIFY THE STRATEGIES THAT CONTRIBUTED TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS.

DRS began reporting data on the WIOA performance measures in July 2017 and consequently data is not available at this time to address performance relative to the goals established in the plan. In terms of competitive integrated employment outcomes DRS fell short of the goals established in the 2016 planning document, achieving only 4,990 outcomes rather than the 5,900 target. DRS believes this was due to staff vacancies during the program year which have since been largely filled. DRS has since adjusted the goals for program years 2017, 2018 and 2019 to reflect the previous performance drop in the baseline.

In terms of median earnings two quarters after program exit, DRS observed an increase from $2,343 in 2015 to $2,887 in 2016. While this is a considerable increase in percentage terms the dollar value is not particularly significant at $544 per quarter or $181 per month. Data from subsequent quarters will establish whether there is a positive trend for quarterly earnings for individuals exiting the VR program.

For employment retention, data for 2016 show that 54.4 percent of individuals exiting the program were working and reporting earnings after two quarters, and that 43.5 percent were working and reporting earnings after four quarters. As with the earnings data, data from subsequent quarters will be needed to determine a trend on these measures.

For educational achievement, DRS does not have complete data to determine success. In PY2016 4,722 individuals receiving transition services graduated from high school. Information on postsecondary graduation is forthcoming.

Data is not yet available on measurable skill gains for postsecondary training. . DRS exceeded its goal regarding establishment of a business engagement team. DRS provided training to approximately 50 field staff in PY2016 and established relationships with over 75 businesses. DRS will continue expansion of engagement efforts in the coming program years. DRS was able to expand individual placement and support (IPS) services for diverse populations in PY2016 and PY2017. However, the number of Project Search sites remained the same with five provider agencies under contract in PY2017. DRS continues efforts to identify provider agencies interested in provision of customized employment but there are no agencies under contract to date specifically for this service. Some agencies with supported employment contracts report providing some version of customized employment but it is uncertain whether the service model being utilized is consistent with the definition of customized employment. DRS has continued to expand performance based funding with implementation of a new model for supported employment in PY2017. There are 54 providers with performance-based supported employment contracts currently in place.

B. DESCRIBE THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES.

To some degree performance in PY2016 was limited by staff vacancies and having a cohort of relatively new staff. While DRS had five years of continuing increases in the number of competitive employment outcomes achieved, the most recent year showed a disappointing decrease. DRS believes that the drop in performance in PY2016 was not indicative of agency capacity. Performance in PY2017 to date show that competitive integrated employment outcomes are likely to exceed prior year performance by approximately seven percent.

2. AN EVALUATION OF THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM GOALS DESCRIBED IN THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SUPPLEMENT FOR THE MOST RECENT PROGRAM YEAR WERE ACHIEVED. THE EVALUATION MUST:

A. IDENTIFY THE STRATEGIES THAT CONTRIBUTED TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS.

The goal for PY2016, was to serve and employ 150 persons in supported employment utilizing Title VI Part B funds. This goal was not achieved. In PY2016 DRS served 1,260 individuals in supported employment, with 114 served using Title VI Part B funds and 1,146 served using other funds. DRS believes that addition outreach efforts will contribute to success in achieving supported employment goals in the coming program years.

B. DESCRIBE THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES.

DRS has spent the last few years studying the supported employment issue and implementing changes to the contracting and funding structure behind the program. It is clear that DRS and at least some providers had different perspectives on the purpose and intent of the supported employment program. DRS made efforts to ensure that supported employment services were targeted only to those for whom the service is appropriate resulted in a drop in total persons served from 2012 to 2014. Since 2015 the number of individuals receiving supported employment services has increased and DRS looks to build

on that increase in the coming program years. The new performance-based contracting system is designed to align the interests of DRS, the provider and the customer so that individuals begin employment and receive appropriate supports that are gradually decreased until the individual achieves optimal independence.

3. THE VR PROGRAM'S PERFORMANCE ON THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY INDICATORS UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA.

DRS began reporting data on WIOA core program measures in July 2017 and consequently many of the measures cannot be reported at this time due to insufficient data. Employment retention two quarters and four quarters after program exit. Data for individuals exiting the program (either successfully or unsuccessfully) in 2016 show that 54.4 percent were employed during the second quarter after program exit. In addition, 43.5 percent of individuals exiting the program were employed during the fourth quarter after program exit. Median earnings two quarters after program exit. Data for individuals exiting the program in 2016 showed median earnings of $2,887 two quarters after program exit. This is higher than the figure of $2,343 identified a year earlier. Educational achievement. Data is not available on this measure at this time. Measurable Skill Gains. Data is not available on this measure at this time.

4. HOW THE FUNDS RESERVED FOR INNOVATION AND EXPANSION (I&E) ACTIVITIES WERE UTILIZED.

DRS initiated a limited number of innovation and expansion projects in the last year. DRS continued its assistive technology open—ended loan program in order to make commonly—used items of assistive technology equipment available to VR program customers as quickly as possible. DRS also worked with the state protection and advocacy authority to implement a pilot project to conduct outreach to youth with disabilities who were involved with the juvenile justice system. DRS also worked with two centers for independent living to conduct outreach to the Latino population in the Chicago metro area. DRS has utilized innovation and expansion funds to support activities of the State Rehabilitation Council.

Q. QUALITY, SCOPE, AND EXTENT OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES.

Include the following:

1. THE QUALITY, SCOPE, AND EXTENT OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED TO INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES.

In the last several years DRS has seen a reduction in the total number of persons served in supported employment, although the current trend is toward increased participation. There was a decrease of 25 percent in the number of persons receiving supported employment services through DRS from 2012 to 2014. However, the number of persons served has increased by 8 percent from 2015 to 2017. During that same time period the number of employment outcomes achieved by individuals participating in supported employment rose by 12.5 percent. This positive trend is encouraging but DRS intends to engage in efforts to increase participation in supported employment in the next two program years. There is

still a need for this service and the primary task is identifying individuals who have a strong likelihood of benefitting from supported employment services. In PY2017 DRS implemented a new performance-based contracting system for supported employment. This was developed in conjunction with provider representatives, and increased the effective payment rate by 16 percent. The goal is to ensure that individuals become employed and receive necessary supports that are gradually reduced over time to achieve maximum independent functioning on the job. DRS is also working with the state developmental disabilities agency to increase referrals to the supported employment program. This includes outreach to DD system case management entities in developing referrals to DRS supported employment. DRS is also committed to dedicating substantial resources to provision of supported employment services to youth with disabilities. For many years DRS has supplemented the Title VI Part B grant funds with VR grant funds for supported employment contracts. For most providers there was no distinction between the contracts based on funding. In 2015 DRS began utilization of Title VI Part B funds for supported employment customers younger than age 25, as well as more closely tracking the total number of months of supported employment services. Current data indicates that about 30 percent of individuals participating in supported employment are younger than age 25. While the availability of Title VI Part B funds is uncertain in the coming program years, DRS continues its commitment to serve youth with most significant disabilities in supported employment going forward.

2. THE TIMING OF TRANSITION TO EXTENDED SERVICES.

For several years DRS has not had access to state general revenue funds to provide long—term extended services for individuals completing time—limited supported employment services, whether using Title VI Part B funds or VR grant funds. DRS has focused on developing natural supports in the workplace as a form of unpaid extended services for individuals completing supported employment services. Completion of the program is defined as reduction of paid on—the—job supports to the minimum possible level. DRS intends to complete agreements with the state developmental disabilities agency and the state mental health agency to provide long—term extended supports for individuals who have completed supported employment services through the VR program.

For youth with a most significant disability DRS utilizes available funds to provide extended services for a period of up to 48 months or until such time as the individual turns age 25 and no longer meets the definition of "youth with a disability".

CERTIFICATIONS

Name of designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate **Division of Rehabilitation Services**

Name of designated State agency **Illinois Department of Human Services**

Full Name of Authorized Representative: **James T. Dimas**

Title of Authorized Representative: **Secretary, Department of Human Services**

States must provide written and signed certifications that:

1. The **designated State agency or designated State unit (as appropriate) listed above** is authorized to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Rehabilitation Act), as amended by WIOA*, and its supplement under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act.** Yes

2. As a condition for the receipt of Federal funds under title I of the Rehabilitation Act for the provision of VR services, the **designated State agency listed above** agrees to operate and administer the State VR Services Program in accordance with the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan , the Rehabilitation Act, and all applicable regulations , policies, and procedures established by the Secretary of Education. Funds made available under section 111 of the Rehabilitation Act are used solely for the provision of VR services and the administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan; Yes

3. As a condition for the receipt of Federal funds under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act for supported employment services, the designated State agency agrees to operate and administer the State Supported Employment Services Program in accordance with the supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan* , the Rehabilitation Act, and all applicable regulations , policies, and procedures established by the Secretary of Education. Funds made available under title VI are used solely for the provision of supported employment services and the administration of the supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan;** Yes

4. The designated State agency and/or the designated State unit has the authority under State law to perform the functions of the State regarding the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement; Yes

5. The State legally may carry out each provision of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement. Yes

6. All provisions of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement are consistent with State law. Yes

7. The **Authorized Representative listed above** has the authority under State law to receive, hold, and disburse Federal funds made available under the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement; Yes

8. The **Authorized Representative listed above** has the authority to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and the supplement for Supported Employment services; Yes

9. The agency that submits the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan and its supplement. Yes

FOOTNOTES

_____

Certification 1 Footnotes

* Public Law 113-128.

** Unless otherwise stated, "Rehabilitation Act" means the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by WIOA, signed into law on July 22, 2014.

Certification 2 Footnotes

* All references in this plan to "designated State agency" or to "the State agency" relate to the agency identified in this paragraph.

** No funds under title 1 of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

*** Applicable regulations, in part, include the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 76,77,79,81, and 82; 2 CFR part 200 as adopted by 2 CFR part 3485; and the State VR Services Program regulations.

Certification 3 Footnotes

* No funds under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

** Applicable regulations, in part, include the citations in *** under Certification 2 footnotes

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ON THE CERTIFICATIONS FROM THE STATE

CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING — VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

Certification for Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

(1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

(2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, ''Disclosure of Lobbying Activities,'' in accordance with its instructions.

(3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and

contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly. This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than $10,000 and not more than $100,000 for each such failure.

STATEMENT FOR LOAN GUARANTEES AND LOAN INSURANCE

The undersigned states, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:
If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, ''Disclosure of Lobbying Activities,'' in accordance with its instructions. Submission of this statement is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required statement shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than $10,000 and not more than $100,000 for each such failure.

Applicant's Organization **Illinois Department of Human Services**

Full Name of Authorized Representative: **James T. Dimas**

Title of Authorized Representative: **Secretary, Department of Human Services**

SF LLL Form – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (only if applicable) (http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html). If applicable, please print, sign, and email to MAT_OCTAE@ed.gov

CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING — SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

Certification for Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

(1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

(2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, ''Disclosure of Lobbying Activities,'' in accordance with its instructions.

(3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly. This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than $10,000 and not more than $100,000 for each such failure.

STATEMENT FOR LOAN GUARANTEES AND LOAN INSURANCE

The undersigned states, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:
If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, ''Disclosure of Lobbying Activities,'' in accordance with its instructions. Submission of this statement is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required statement shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than $10,000 and not more than $100,000 for each such failure.

Applicant's Organization **Illinois Department of Human Services**

Full Name of Authorized Representative: **James T. Dimas**

Title of Authorized Representative: **Secretary, Department of Human Services**

SF LLL Form – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (only if applicable) (http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html).

ASSURANCES

The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate and identified in the State certifications included with this VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, through signature of the authorized individual, assures the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), that it will comply with all of the requirements of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, as set forth in sections 101(a) and 606 of the Rehabilitation Act. The individual authorized to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement makes the following assurances:**The State Plan must provide assurances that:**

1. PUBLIC COMMENT ON POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:

The designated State agency assures it will comply with all statutory and regulatory requirements for public participation in the VR Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, as required by section 101(a)(16)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act.

2. SUBMISSION OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT:

The designated State unit assures it will comply with all requirements pertaining to the submission and revisions of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement for the State Supported Employment Services program, as required by sections 101(a)(1), (22), (23), and 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act; section 102 of WIOA in the case of the submission of a unified plan; section 103 of WIOA in the case of a submission of a Combined State Plan; 34 CFR 76.140.

3. ADMINISTRATION OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN:

The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures it will comply with the requirements related to:

A. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AND DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, AS REQUIRED BY SECTION 101(A)(2) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

B. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF EITHER A STATE INDEPENDENT COMMISSION OR STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL, AS REQUIRED BY SECTION 101(A)(21) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

The designated State agency or designated State unit, as applicable **(B) has established a State Rehabilitation Council**

C. CONSULTATIONS REGARDING THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(16)(B) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

D. THE FINANCIAL PARTICIPATION BY THE STATE, OR IF THE STATE SO ELECTS, BY THE STATE AND LOCAL AGENCIES, TO PROVIDE THE AMOUNT OF THE NON-FEDERAL SHARE OF THE COST OF CARRYING OUT THE VR PROGRAM IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(3).

E. THE LOCAL ADMINISTRATION OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(2)(A) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

The designated State agency allows for the local administration of VR funds **No**

F. THE SHARED FUNDING AND ADMINISTRATION OF JOINT PROGRAMS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(2)(A)(II) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

The designated State agency allows for the shared funding and administration of joint programs: **No**

G. STATEWIDENESS AND WAIVERS OF STATEWIDENESS REQUIREMENTS, AS SET FORTH IN SECTION 101(A)(4) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

Is the designated State agency requesting or maintaining a waiver of statewideness for one or more services provided under the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan? See Section 2 of this VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan. **Yes**

H. THE DESCRIPTIONS FOR COOPERATION, COLLABORATION, AND COORDINATION, AS REQUIRED BY SECTIONS 101(A)(11) AND (24)(B); AND 606(B) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

I. ALL REQUIRED METHODS OF ADMINISTRATION, AS REQUIRED BY SECTION 101(A)(6) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT .

J. THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT, AS SET FORTH IN SECTION 101(A)(7) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

K. THE COMPILATION AND SUBMISSION TO THE COMMISSIONER OF STATEWIDE ASSESSMENTS, ESTIMATES, STATE GOALS AND PRIORITIES, STRATEGIES, AND PROGRESS REPORTS, AS APPROPRIATE, AND AS REQUIRED BY SECTIONS 101(A)(15), 105(C)(2), AND 606(B)(8) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

L. THE RESERVATION AND USE OF A PORTION OF THE FUNDS ALLOTTED TO THE STATE UNDER SECTION 110 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO EXPAND AND IMPROVE THE PROVISION OF VR SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES, PARTICULARLY INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES.

M. THE SUBMISSION OF REPORTS AS REQUIRED BY SECTION 101(A)(10) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

4. ADMINISTRATION OF THE PROVISION OF VR SERVICES:

The designated State agency, or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures that it will:

A. COMPLY WITH ALL REQUIREMENTS REGARDING INFORMATION AND REFERRAL SERVICES IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTIONS 101(A)(5)(D) AND (20) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

B. IMPOSE NO DURATION OF RESIDENCE REQUIREMENT AS PART OF DETERMINING AN INDIVIDUAL'S ELIGIBILITY FOR VR SERVICES OR THAT EXCLUDES FROM SERVICES UNDER THE PLAN ANY INDIVIDUAL WHO IS PRESENT IN THE STATE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(12) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT .

C. PROVIDE THE FULL RANGE OF SERVICES LISTED IN SECTION 103(A) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT AS APPROPRIATE, TO ALL ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE STATE WHO APPLY FOR SERVICES IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(5) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT?

Agency will provide the full range of services described above **No**

D. DETERMINE WHETHER COMPARABLE SERVICES AND BENEFITS ARE AVAILABLE TO THE INDIVIDUAL IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(8) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

E. COMPLY WITH THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN INDIVIDUALIZED PLAN FOR EMPLOYMENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 102(B) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

F. COMPLY WITH REQUIREMENTS REGARDING THE PROVISIONS OF INFORMED CHOICE FOR ALL APPLICANTS AND ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 102(D) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

G. PROVIDE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES TO AMERICAN INDIANS WHO ARE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES RESIDING IN THE STATE, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(13) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

H. COMPLY WITH THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE CONDUCT OF SEMIANNUAL OR ANNUAL REVIEWS, AS APPROPRIATE, FOR INDIVIDUALS EMPLOYED EITHER IN AN EXTENDED EMPLOYMENT SETTING IN A COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAM OR ANY OTHER EMPLOYMENT UNDER SECTION 14(C) OF THE FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT OF 1938, AS REQUIRED BY SECTION 101(A)(14)OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

I. MEET THE REQUIREMENTS IN SECTIONS 101(A)(17) AND 103(B)(2) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT IF THE STATE ELECTS TO CONSTRUCT, UNDER SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES, FACILITIES FOR COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS

J. WITH RESPECT TO STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, THE STATE,

DLXII. HAS DEVELOPED AND WILL IMPLEMENT,

. STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS THE NEEDS IDENTIFIED IN THE ASSESSMENTS; AND

A. STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES IDENTIFIED BY THE STATE, TO IMPROVE AND EXPAND VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ON A STATEWIDE BASIS; AND

DLXIII. HAS DEVELOPED AND WILL IMPLEMENT STRATEGIES TO PROVIDE PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES (SECTIONS 101(A)(15) AND 101(A)(25)).

5. PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION FOR THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT TITLE VI SUPPLEMENT:

A. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT ASSURES THAT IT WILL INCLUDE IN THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN ALL INFORMATION REQUIRED BY SECTION 606 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

B. THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY ASSURES THAT IT WILL SUBMIT REPORTS IN SUCH FORM AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH SUCH PROCEDURES AS THE COMMISSIONER MAY REQUIRE AND COLLECTS THE INFORMATION REQUIRED BY SECTION 101(A)(10) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT SEPARATELY FOR INDIVIDUALS RECEIVING SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES UNDER TITLE I AND INDIVIDUALS RECEIVING SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES UNDER TITLE VI OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

C. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WILL COORDINATE ACTIVITIES WITH ANY OTHER STATE AGENCY THAT IS FUNCTIONING AS AN EMPLOYMENT NETWORK UNDER THE TICKET TO WORK AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY PROGRAM UNDER SECTION 1148 OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT.

6. FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION OF THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM:

A. THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY ASSURES THAT IT WILL EXPEND NO MORE THAN 2.5 PERCENT OF THE STATE'S ALLOTMENT UNDER TITLE VI FOR ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS OF CARRYING OUT THIS PROGRAM; AND, THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY OR AGENCIES WILL PROVIDE, DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY THROUGH PUBLIC OR PRIVATE ENTITIES, NON-FEDERAL CONTRIBUTIONS IN AN AMOUNT THAT IS NOT LESS THAN 10 PERCENT OF THE COSTS OF CARRYING OUT SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES PROVIDED TO YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES WITH THE FUNDS RESERVED FOR SUCH PURPOSE UNDER SECTION 603(D) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 606(B)(7)(G) AND (H) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

B. THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY ASSURES THAT IT WILL USE FUNDS MADE AVAILABLE UNDER TITLE VI OF THE REHABILITATION ACT ONLY TO PROVIDE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING EXTENDED SERVICES TO YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, WHO ARE ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE SUCH SERVICES; AND, THAT SUCH FUNDS ARE USED ONLY TO SUPPLEMENT AND NOT SUPPLANT THE FUNDS PROVIDED UNDER TITLE I OF THE REHABILITATION ACT, WHEN PROVIDING SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES SPECIFIED IN THE INDIVIDUALIZED PLAN FOR EMPLOYMENT, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 606(B)(7)(A) AND (D), OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

7. PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES:

A. THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY ASSURES THAT IT WILL PROVIDE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES AS DEFINED IN SECTION 7(39) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

B. THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY ASSURES THAT:

DLXIV. THE COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT OF INDIVIDUALS WITH SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES CONDUCTED UNDER SECTION 102(B)(1) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT AND FUNDED UNDER TITLE I OF THE REHABILITATION ACT INCLUDES CONSIDERATION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT AS AN APPROPRIATE EMPLOYMENT OUTCOME, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF SECTION 606(B)(7)(B) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT

DLXV. AN INDIVIDUALIZED PLAN FOR EMPLOYMENT THAT MEETS THE REQUIREMENTS OF SECTION 102(B) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT , WHICH IS DEVELOPED AND UPDATED WITH TITLE I FUNDS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTIONS 102(B)(3)(F) AND 606(B)(6)(C) AND (E) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ON THE ASSURANCES FROM THE STATE

VII. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR COMBINED STATE PLAN PARTNER PROGRAMS

States choosing to submit a Combined State Plan must provide information concerning the six core programs—the Adult Program, Dislocated Worker Program, Youth Program, Wagner-Peyser Act Program, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program, and the Vocational Rehabilitation Program— and also submit relevant information for any of the eleven partner programs it includes in its Combined State Plan. When a State includes a Combined State Plan partner program in its Combined State Plan, it need not submit a separate plan or application for that particular program.* If included, Combined State Plan partner programs are subject to the "common planning elements" in Sections II and III of that document, where specified, as well as the program-specific requirements for that program (available on www.regulations.gov for public comment). The requirements that a State must address for any of the partner programs it includes in its Combined State Plan are provided in this separate supplemental document. The Departments are not seeking comments on these program-specific requirements, which exist under separate OMB control numbers and do not represent requirements under WIOA. For further details on this overall collection, access the Federal eRulemaking Portal at http://www.regulations.gov by selecting Docket ID number ETA-2015-0006.

---

* States that elect to include employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.) under a Combined State Plan would submit all other required elements of a complete CSBG State Plan directly to the Federal agency that administers the program. Similarly, States that elect to include employment and training activities carried by the Department of Housing and Urban Development and programs authorized under section 6(d)(4) and 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 that are included would submit all other required elements of a complete State Plan for those programs directly to the Federal agency that administers the program.

APPENDIX 1. PERFORMANCE GOALS FOR THE CORE PROGRAMS

Each State submitting a Unified or Combined Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the two years covered by the plan. The State is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education on state adjusted levels of performance for the indicators for each of the two years of the plan. States will only have one year of data available under the performance accountability system in Section 116 of the WIOA; therefore, the Departments will continue to use the transition authority under WIOA sec. 503(a) to designate certain primary indicators of performance as "baseline" indicators in the first plan submission. A "baseline" indicator is one for which States will not propose an expected level of performance in the plan submission and will not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance. "Baseline" indicators will not be used in the end of the year performance calculations and will not be used to determine failure to achieve adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The selection of primary indicators for the designation as a baseline indicator is made based on the likelihood of a state having adequate data on which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance and such a designation will vary across core programs.

States are expected to collect and report on all indicators, including those that that have been designated as "baseline". The actual performance data reported by States for indicators designated as "baseline" in the first two years of the Unified or Combined Plan will serve as baseline data in future years.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for each indicator, except for those indicators that are listed as "baseline" indicators below.

For this Plan, the Departments will work with States during the negotiation process to establish the negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs.

Baseline Indicators for the First Two Years of the Plan

Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Workers, and Youth):

- Measurable Skill Gains
- Effectiveness in Serving Employers

Title II programs (Adult Education):

- Employment in the 2nd quarter
- Employment in the 4th quarter
- Median Earnings
- Credential Attainment
- Effectiveness in Serving Employers

Title III programs (Wagner-Peyser):

- Effectiveness in Serving Employers

Title IV programs (Vocational Rehabilitation):

- Employment in the 2nd quarter
- Employment in the 4th quarter
- Median Earnings
- Credential Attainment
- Measurable Skill Gains
- Effectiveness in Serving Employers

States may identify additional indicators in the State plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the State indicators. Please identify any such State indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

TABLE 1. EMPLOYMENT (SECOND QUARTER AFTER EXIT)

Program	PY 2018 Expected Level	PY 2018 Negotiated Level	PY 2019 Expected Level	PY 2019 Negotiated Level
Adults	76.00	Baseline	76.00	Baseline
Dislocated Workers	80.50	Baseline	80.50	Baseline
Youth	73.00	Baseline	73.00	Baseline
Adult Education	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Wagner-Peyser	61.00	Baseline	61.00	Baseline
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

User remarks on Table 1

TABLE 2. EMPLOYMENT (FOURTH QUARTER AFTER EXIT)

Program	PY 2018 Expected Level	PY 2018 Negotiated Level	PY 2019 Expected Level	PY 2019 Negotiated Level
Adults	73.00	Baseline	73.00	Baseline
Dislocated Workers	79.00	Baseline	79.00	Baseline
Youth	62.00	Baseline	62.00	Baseline
Adult Education	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Wagner-Peyser	60.00	Baseline	60.00	Baseline
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

User remarks on Table 2

TABLE 3. MEDIAN EARNINGS (SECOND QUARTER AFTER EXIT)

Program	PY 2018 Expected Level	PY 2018 Negotiated Level	PY 2019 Expected Level	PY 2019 Negotiated Level
Adults	5,460.00	Baseline	5,460.00	Baseline
Dislocated Workers	7,600.00	Baseline	7,700.00	Baseline

Program	PY 2018 Expected Level	PY 2018 Negotiated Level	PY 2019 Expected Level	PY 2019 Negotiated Level
Youth	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Adult Education	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Wagner-Peyser	5,400.00	Baseline	5,400.00	Baseline
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

User remarks on Table 3

TABLE 4. CREDENTIAL ATTAINMENT RATE

Program	PY 2018 Expected Level	PY 2018 Negotiated Level	PY 2019 Expected Level	PY 2019 Negotiated Level
Adults	63.00	Baseline	63.00	Baseline
Dislocated Workers	66.00	Baseline	66.00	Baseline
Youth	67.00	Baseline	67.00	Baseline
Adult Education	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

Program	PY 2018 Expected Level	PY 2018 Negotiated Level	PY 2019 Expected Level	PY 2019 Negotiated Level
Wagner-Peyser	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

User remarks on Table 4

TABLE 5. MEASUREABLE SKILL GAINS

Program	PY 2018 Expected Level	PY 2018 Negotiated Level	PY 2019 Expected Level	PY 2019 Negotiated Level
Adults	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Dislocated Workers	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Youth	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Adult Education	44.00	44.00	45.00	45.00
Wagner-Peyser	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

User remarks on Table 5

TABLE 6. EFFECTIVENESS IN SERVING EMPLOYERS

Measure	PY 2018 Expected Level	PY 2018 Negotiated Level	PY 2019 Expected Level	PY 2019 Negotiated Level
Line 1 (enter the measure information in the comments below)	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Line 2	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Line 3	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Line 4	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Line 5	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Line 6	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

User remarks on Table 6

TABLE 7. ADDITIONAL INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE

Measure	PY 2018 Expected Level	PY 2018 Negotiated Level	PY 2019 Expected Level	PY 2019 Negotiated Level

User remarks on Table 7

APPENDIX 2. OTHER STATE ATTACHMENTS (OPTIONAL)

The State of Illinois has presented a comprehensive Unified State Plan, which provides responses to all of the required elements. All core and required partners worked collaboratively to create an integrated plan that models WIOA and demonstrates alignment to benefit all Illinoisans. All attachments, charts, tables and images are available for viewing and downloading at: https://www.illinoisworknet.com/WIOA/Resources/Pages/StateUnifiedPlan.aspx. Links to individual items available on that webpage follow below:

Attachment A - (PDF)

Attachment B - Employment Projections (PDF)

Attachment C - Labor Force, Employment and Unemployment (PDF)

Attachment D - Targeted Populations (PDF)

Attachment E - IWIB Strategic Plan (PDF)

Attachment F - Education, Workforce, and Economic Development Leadership Team (PDF)

Attachment G - Illinois Sector Partnership Framework (PDF)

Attachment H - State Workforce Board Members (PDF)

Attachment I - Interagency Work Group Members (PDF)

Attachment J - Governor's Guidelines (PDF) (PNG)

Attachment K - Transportation Distribution and Logistics Task Force Final Report (PDF)

Attachment L - Local Workforce Area Designation (PDF)

Attachment M - Illinois Workforce Innovation Board Process for System-Wide Policy Development (PDF)

Attachment N - Illinois Regional Planning Guides (PDF)

Attachment O - Regional Planning Data (PDF)

Attachment P - One-Stop Center Accessibility Compliance Checklist (PDF) *THE PREVIEW OF THIS DOCUMENT ONLY WORKS IN INTERNET EXPLORER

Attachment Q - Methods of Funds Distribution (PDF)

Attachment R - Local Workforce Area Map (PDF)

Attachment S - Local Workforce Area and Regional Planning Area Map (PDF)

Attachment T - Organizational Charts (PDF) (Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity PNG) (Division of Rehabilitation PNG) (Illinois Community College Board PNG) (Illinois Department of Employment Security PNG)

Attachment U - Policy Documents (PDF)

Attachment V - Illinois Integrated Business Services Environmental Scan (PDF)

Attachment W - Economic Development Region (EDR) Employment Data (PDF)

Attachment X - EDR Demand Occupations' Education and Training Requirements (PDF)

Attachment Y - Job Service Quarterly Reports (June 30, 2013 PNG) (June 30, 2014 PNG) (June 30, 2015 PNG) (June 30, 2016 PNG) (June 30, 2017 PNG)

Attachment Z - Illinois Program Year 2018 and 2019 Negotiated Levels of Performance (PDF) (Page 1 - PNG) (Page 2 - PNG)

Attachment AA - Employment and Economic Opportunity for Persons with Disabilities Recommendations Report