

WIOA State Plan for the State of North Dakota

Overview

Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the Governor of each State must submit a Unified or Combined State Plan to the U.S. Secretary of Labor that outlines a four-year workforce development strategy for the State's workforce development system. The publicly-funded workforce 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 jobseekers 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 Literacy 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. 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.

When responding to Unified or Combined State Plan requirements, States must identify specific strategies for coordinating programs and services for target populations.* While discussion of and strategies for every target population is not expected, States must address as many as are applicable to their State's population and look beyond strategies for the general population.

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

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 Worker Program, Dislocated Worker Program, Youth Program, Wagner-Peyser Act Program, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program, and Vocational Rehabilitation Program 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 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. 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 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.

North Dakota has continued to experience economic growth from the recession of 2009 through 2014 with a slowdown from 2014 to 2015. From the recession of 2009 through 2014 the labor force and number of people employed in the state has continued to increase while the number of unemployed individuals and the unemployment rate have decreased. The number of employed increased by 14.5% from 2009 to 2014 while the labor force increased 12.9% over the same time period. While many states' economies were devastated by the recession, North Dakota fared better. After a slight dip in 2009, the labor force and number of employed individuals increased by at least 2.2% each year and both statistics rebounded to higher than pre-recession levels by the next year, 2010.

Similarly, the number of unemployed individuals in North Dakota decreased 24.4% from 2009 to 2014. Likewise, the unemployment rate has also fallen; from a high of 4.1% in 2009 to 2.8% in 2014. Overall, these numbers indicate a strong recovery from the recession of 2009. This has all happened while the population has increased 11.3% over the same time period.

The fact that the total population has increased while the labor force as well as the number of employed have both increased would indicate there has been an increase in the number of jobs in the state. This idea is supported by looking at the labor force participation rate. The labor force participation rate has dipped slightly from the high in 2008 of 74.4% but it has continued to fluctuate around 73% through 2014; well above the national rate which has experienced a steady decrease since 2006 when the labor force participation rate was 66.2%. The idea that there has been an increase in the total number of jobs in the state is further supported with data from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) program. QCEW indicates there has been a 27.2% increase in average annual employment from 2009 to 2014. Over the same time period, average weekly wages increased 41.3% which indicates the jobs being added are good paying jobs.

Despite the economic growth into 2014, North Dakota has more recently experienced a leveling off period. Since the recession of 2009 ended, North Dakota experienced decreasing numbers of unemployed individuals through 2014. From January 2010 through December 2014, when comparing the current month to the previous year, there was a decrease in the number of unemployed individuals 73.3% of the time; 44 of the 60 months over the 5 year timeframe. However, from January 2015 through November 2015 (the most recent data available) there has been an increase in the number of unemployed individuals when compared to the previous year for every month.

	Total	Monthly	Yearly
Month	UI Claims	Change	Change
1/2010	4,594	-29.8%	-2.1%
2/2010	2,536	-44.8%	-10.9%
3/2010	2,289	-9.7%	-48.0%
4/2010	1,847	-19.3%	-46.1%
5/2010	2,441	32.2%	-12.3%
6/2010	2,082	-14.7%	-40.3%
7/2010	2,302	10.6%	-36.2%
8/2010	1,550	-32.7%	-34.3%
9/2010	1,282	-17.3%	-17.9%
10/2010	1,843	43.8%	-26.7%
11/2010	4,335	135.2%	13.6%
12/2010	4,744	9.4%	-27.5%
1/2011	4,385	-7.6%	-4.5%

2/2011	1,980	-54.8%	-21.9%
3/2011	1,779	-10.2%	-22.3%
4/2011	1,763	-0.9%	-4.5%
5/2011	1,699	-3.6%	-30.4%
6/2011	1,932	13.7%	-7.2%
7/2011	2,191	13.4%	-4.8%
8/2011	1,668	-23.9%	7.6%
9/2011	901	-46.0%	-29.7%
10/2011	1,439	59.7%	-21.9%
11/2011	2,642	83.6%	-39.1%
12/2011	4,259	61.2%	-10.2%
1/2012	4,083	-4.1%	-6.9%
2/2012	1,639	-59.9%	-17.2%
3/2012	1,650	0.7%	-7.3%
4/2012	1,372	-16.8%	-22.2%
5/2012	1,673	21.9%	-1.5%
6/2012	1,373	-17.9%	-28.9%
7/2012	1,756	27.9%	-19.9%
8/2012	1,207	-31.3%	-27.6%
9/2012	1,419	17.6%	57.5%
10/2012	1,667	17.5%	15.8%
11/2012	3,737	124.2%	41.4%
12/2012	4,890	30.9%	14.8%
1/2013	4,507	-7.8%	10.4%
2/2013	1,869	-58.5%	14.0%
3/2013	1,827	-2.2%	10.7%
4/2013	1,829	0.1%	33.3%
5/2013	1,770	-3.2%	5.8%
6/2013	1,518	-14.2%	10.6%
7/2013	1,980	30.4%	12.8%
8/2013	1,183	-40.3%	-2.0%
9/2013	902	-23.8%	-36.4%
10/2013	1,386	53.7%	-16.9%
11/2013	2,810	102.7%	-24.8%
12/2013	5,609	99.6%	14.7%
1/2014	4,182	-25.4%	-7.2%
2/2014	1,865	-55.4%	-0.2%
3/2014	1,185	-36.5%	-35.1%
4/2014	1,340	13.1%	-26.7%
5/2014	1,194	-10.9%	-32.5%
6/2014	1,431	19.8%	-5.7%
7/2014	1,479	3.4%	-25.3%
8/2014	805	-45.6%	-32.0%
9/2014	1,011	25.6%	12.1%
10/2014	1,264	25.0%	-8.8%
11/2014	3,480	175.3%	23.8%
12/2014	4,912	41.1%	-12.4%
1/2015	4,282	-12.8%	2.4%
2/2015	2,448	-42.8%	31.3%
3/2015	2,406	-1.7%	103.0%
4/2015	2,177	-9.5%	62.5%
5/2015	2,098	-3.6%	75.7%
6/2015	2,476	18.0%	73.0%
7/2015	2,040	-17.6%	37.9%
8/2015	1,366	-33.0%	69.7%
9/2015	1,760	28.8%	74.1%
10/2015	1,795	2.0%	42.0%
11/2015	4,123	129.7%	18.5%

This trend is further illustrated when looking at Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) data for 2015. Employment decrease 4.3% from fourth quarter 2014 to first quarter 2015. Some of this decrease can be explained by seasonality factors, but the number of employers decreased by 0.5% over the same time period. The seasonality claim is supported by the fact that comparing first quarter 2014 to first quarter 2015 illustrates an increase in both employment and number of establishments, 2.7% each. However, some of that optimism is dashed by the decrease of 0.7% in employment by comparing the second quarter of 2015 to the second quarter of 2014. Of particular note was the decrease of 19% in the industry groups 'Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction' and 'Transportation and Warehousing'; two industrial groups tied to oil and gas exploration.

Industry	Industry Code	1st Quarter 2014	2nd Quarter 2014	3rd Quarter 2014	4th Quarter 2014	1st Quarter 2015	2nd Quarter 2015
Total, All Industries	10	426,333	445,742	448,961	457,596	437,934	442,513
Accommodation and Food Services	72	34,899	36,546	36,869	36,934	35,594	36,590

Administrative and Waste Services	56	13,421	14,834	15,555	14,859	13,226	14,413
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	11	3,469	4,261	4,703	5,059	3,544	4,274
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	71	7,906	9,449	10,587	8,413	8,050	9,930
Construction	23	28,602	35,709	40,361	38,875	32,080	35,933
Educational Services	61	35,852	34,949	27,275	36,262	36,215	35,715
Finance and Insurance	52	17,661	17,862	18,013	18,070	18,086	18,143
Health Care and Social Assistance	62	59,676	59,969	60,125	60,387	60,488	61,189
Information	51	7,055	7,089	7,119	6,999	6,819	6,794
Management of Companies and Enterprises	55	5,230	5,235	5,342	5,339	5,313	5,358
Manufacturing	31-33	25,478	26,241	26,579	26,460	25,586	25,805
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	21	27,940	29,351	30,616	31,595	28,676	23,773
Other Services (except Public Administration)	81	12,684	13,051	13,033	13,169	12,974	13,111
Professional and Technical Services	54	16,612	17,209	17,829	18,158	17,931	17,878
Public Administration	92	20,757	21,922	22,022	21,574	21,420	22,450
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	53	5,945	6,172	6,284	6,528	6,404	6,181
Retail Trade	44-45	49,909	50,625	50,596	52,169	50,724	50,966
Transportation and Warehousing	48-49	22,855	23,856	24,439	24,926	23,697	22,630
Utilities	22	3,861	3,982	4,110	4,043	4,026	4,105
Wholesale Trade	42	26,521	27,429	27,504	27,775	27,080	27,273

QCEW Establishments

Industry	Industry Code	1st Quarter2014	2nd Quarter2014	3rd Quarter2014	4th Quarter2014	1st Quarter2015	2nd Quarter2015
Total, All Industries	10	31,058	31,470	31,756	32,078	31,912	32,132
Accommodation and Food Services	72	2,072	2,122	2,140	2,136	2,116	2,149
Administrative and Waste Services	56	1,371	1,420	1,439	1,468	1,451	1,494
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	11	845	855	865	881	878	889
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	71	584	588	593	592	593	604
Construction	23	4,089	4,181	4,253	4,358	4,274	4,357
Educational Services	61	416	422	426	429	423	425
Finance and Insurance	52	1,867	1,870	1,872	1,892	1,875	1,887
Health Care and Social Assistance	62	2,161	2,176	2,188	2,178	2,175	2,214
Information	51	422	423	435	441	422	420
Management of Companies and Enterprises	55	167	168	168	169	168	171
Manufacturing	31-33	828	835	829	832	833	840
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	21	816	823	830	851	880	857
Other Services (except Public Administration)	81	2,053	2,069	2,091	2,121	2,103	2,105
Professional and Technical Services	54	2,725	2,795	2,852	2,937	2,931	2,963
Public Administration	92	1,067	1,073	1,074	1,071	1,068	1,066
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	53	1,029	1,028	1,049	1,067	1,077	1,088
Industry	Industry Code	1st Quarter2014	2nd Quarter2014	3rd Quarter2014	4th Quarter2014	1st Quarter2015	2nd Quarter2015
Total, All Industries	10	31,058	31,470	31,756	32,078	31,912	32,132
Accommodation and Food Services	72	2,072	2,122	2,140	2,136	2,116	2,149
Administrative and Waste Services	56	1,371	1,420	1,439	1,468	1,451	1,494
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	11	845	855	865	881	878	889
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	71	584	588	593	592	593	604
Construction	23	4,089	4,181	4,253	4,358	4,274	4,357
Educational Services	61	416	422	426	429	423	425
Finance and Insurance	52	1,867	1,870	1,872	1,892	1,875	1,887
Health Care and Social Assistance	62	2,161	2,176	2,188	2,178	2,175	2,214
Information	51	422	423	435	441	422	420
Management of Companies and Enterprises	55	167	168	168	169	168	171
Manufacturing	31-33	828	835	829	832	833	840
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	21	816	823	830	851	880	857
Other Services (except Public Administration)	81	2,053	2,069	2,091	2,121	2,103	2,105
Professional and Technical Services	54	2,725	2,795	2,852	2,937	2,931	2,963
Public Administration	92	1,067	1,073	1,074	1,071	1,068	1,066
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	53	1,029	1,028	1,049	1,067	1,077	1,088

Retail Trade44-453,0933,1443,1393,1263,1443,140

Transportation and Warehousing48-492,5562,5662,5602,5522,5522,503

Utilities22173174177182180176

Wholesale Trade422,7242,7382,7762,7952,7692,784

It is widely accepted that North Dakota was able to avoid many of the ill effects of the recession due to the fortuitous timing of experiencing an increase in oil and gas exploration activities while the rest of the nation was in the throes of a downward economic spiral. While much of the nation was experiencing a housing crisis caused

by crashing home prices and over expansion. North Dakota was experiencing housing challenges of a different kind; too few houses and increasing prices. Due to the influx of out-of-state workers coming to North Dakota for high paying jobs, there was a shortage of available housing. This forced rent to increase and caused overcrowding in apartments, hotels, and campgrounds; and eventually the creation of temporary housing units built to handle the influx of oil field workers.

Prior to 2015 oil prices had fluctuated between \$75-\$90/barrel; the most recent peak was in May 2014 when the price was nearly \$100/barrel and over the next 9 months fell to a price of less than \$40/barrel. When the price dropped so did the number of rigs drilling in North Dakota. After 3 months of declining prices, the rig count started to decline; in August 2014, the rig count was nearly 200. By March 2015, the rig count was less than 100. As of Oct 2015, the total rig count for the entire state of North Dakota was 66. The declining price of oil caused the declining number of rigs, which coincides with the increase in the number of unemployed individuals as well as the decrease in employment (specifically in the industry groups 'Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction' and 'Transportation and Warehousing') and the decreased number of employers.

N.D. Crude Oil First Purchase Price (\$) [Monthly Data]

(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 includes: (i) Existing Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations. Provide an analysis of the industries and occupations for which there is existing demand.

There is existing demand in a wide variety of occupations. The two-year average of monthly online job openings illustrates this point. There was at least one occupation from 20 of the 22 two-digit occupation groups in the top 100 of this list (excluding not classified or unidentified occupations). The largest occupation group was Office and Administrative Support with 11, followed by management (9), construction and extraction (8), and food preparation and serving related (8). Using the same list of the two year average online job openings, the top 100 occupations accounted for 11,845 openings; slightly more than 63% of the total.

2 digit SOC Code	Occupational Group Title	Appearances in top 100 2 year average	Number of Openings
11	Management	9	1,095
13	Business and Financial Operations	3	184
15	Computer and Mathematical	5	259
17	Architecture and Engineering	4	344
19	Life, Physical, and Social Science	0	0
21	Community and Social Services	1	53
23	Legal	0	0
25	Education, Training, and Library	5	303
27	Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media	1	127
29	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	6	1,081
31	Healthcare Support	2	253
33	Protective Service	1	69
35	Food Preparation and Serving Related	8	794
37	Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	3	340
39	Personal Care and Service	2	187
41	Sales and Related	8	1,515
43	Office and Administrative Support	11	1,426
45	Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	3	460
47	Construction and Extraction	8	802
49	Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	6	635
51	Production	7	534
53	Transportation and Material Moving	7	1,383

There is some continuity in terms of in-demand occupations. In comparing the average monthly online job openings numbers from 2014 to 2015 some interesting facts emerge. Of the top 100 occupations in 2015, 89 occupations were in the top 100 of 2014. Along the same vein, 99 of the top 100 occupations from 2015 were in the top 150 in 2014. Logically, 89 of the top 100 occupations in 2014 were in the top 100 of 2015. The fact that there were only 94 of the top 100 occupations from 2014 in the top 150 in 2015 indicates there may be some changes in the in-demand occupations.

SOC CODE	2014 OpeningsAvg Annual Online	2014 Rank	2015 Openings Avg Annual Online	2015 Rank
99-9999	2,297	1	2,271	1
29-1141	462	5	720	2
41-2031	557	4	560	3
43-4051	670	3	504	4
53-3032	767	2	475	5
11-0000	430	6	449	6
45-2091	284	10	312	7
41-0000	314	8	287	8
41-2011	285	9	227	9
43-5081	261	12	227	10
31-1014	208	16	225	11
47-2061	267	11	224	12
53-7062	341	7	217	13
29-2061	150	22	190	14
11-9199	186	18	189	15

41-1011	146	23	178	16
35-3031	106	35	172	17
53-0000	242	14	163	18
17-0000	151	21	154	19
35-3021	245	13	150	20
35-2014	105	36	147	21
51-9199	130	25	142	22
11-1021	130	25	142	23
37-2012	197	17	140	24
47-2031	158	19	137	25
49-3023	103	38	135	26
49-0000	209	15	130	27
49-3031	153	20	126	28
29-1069	93	44	125	29
27-1026	130	25	124	30
11-2022	130	28	111	31
53-3031	144	24	108	32
35-1012	103	37	105	33
37-2011	130	29	105	34
13-2011	107	34	100	35
39-9011	108	33	99	36
45-2093	92	45	97	37
39-9021	75	54	92	38
43-6011	110	32	89	39
41-3099	100	40	88	40
29-1123	76	53	88	41
47-2111	97	42	87	42
17-2199	70	56	86	43
29-1127	69	57	86	44
49-9071	97	41	83	45
25-0000	64	62	78	46
25-3099	80	50	77	47
45-2092	59	70	76	48
51-4121	102	39	76	49
35-3022	61	67	73	50
51-9198	119	30	72	51
33-9032	67	60	72	51
47-2073	115	31	71	53
53-3033	95	43	68	54
43-3031	75	55	68	55
43-1011	57	72	68	56
15-1151	82	49	67	57
49-9021	83	48	66	58
17-2051	58	71	64	59
43-3071	68	59	63	60
51-0000	87	47	62	61
35-2021	66	61	62	62
43-4081	87	46	62	63
35-3011	54	78	61	64
41-3021	55	76	61	65
25-9041	62	65	60	66
43-0000	59	69	60	67
37-3011	50	82	59	68
43-9061	68	58	57	69
25-2021	56	74	56	70
47-2051	63	63	55	71
21-1093	50	81	55	72
11-9111	43	91	54	73
43-4171	62	66	54	74
15-1121	55	75	53	75
29-1171	51	80	52	76
51-1011	59	68	51	77
47-2152	40	99	49	78
51-2099	39	101	49	79
15-1199	56	73	48	80
47-5071	77	52	47	81
13-1071	42	94	47	81
11-3031	39	103	43	83
41-2022	47	86	42	84

41-4011	41	97	42	85
11-9021	41	95	41	86
35-2012	38	104	41	86
31-1011	32	120	41	86
17-3029	63	63	41	89
53-7051	31	129	41	90
15-1132	35	115	40	91
47-4099	78	51	39	92
11-1011	34	116	39	92
53-3041	17	190	38	94
41-4012	30	137	38	95
25-2031	38	106	37	96
49-3042	49	84	37	97
29-1122	31	123	36	98
15-1131	49	83	35	99
11-9051	54	77	35	100
13-2052	37	108	35	101
51-3011	46	88	35	102
43-6014	53	79	35	103
47-4051	5	376	34	104
15-0000	36	111	34	105
27-2022	35	112	34	105
25-1199	30	135	34	107
13-1199	37	109	33	108
49-1011	38	104	33	109
31-9099	27	141	33	110
41-2021	32	119	32	111
29-2071	17	194	32	111
53-3022	30	132	32	113
17-2141	35	112	32	114
29-2011	21	167	32	114
35-9021	27	142	32	116
53-7199	44	90	31	117
15-1142	24	156	31	117
41-9099	33	117	30	119
17-3023	30	134	30	120
29-1071	20	174	30	121
45-2011	32	121	29	122
33-9092	20	177	29	123
29-2055	21	166	29	124
33-3051	27	146	28	125
29-2052	27	147	27	126
35-9011	31	123	27	127
35-0000	22	164	27	128
39-9032	39	101	27	129
39-5012	31	122	26	130
11-2021	20	176	26	130
51-4041	37	109	26	132
53-7061	31	126	26	133
13-2072	31	127	25	134
49-9099	41	96	25	135
53-7032	41	97	25	136
51-3021	12	244	25	136
35-9099	13	237	24	138
29-1067	15	215	24	139
51-9061	23	160	24	140
29-1062	15	210	23	141
31-2021	14	227	23	141
49-2097	29	138	23	143
25-2011	21	168	23	143
17-2071	19	184	23	145
21-1022	27	144	22	146
31-9091	15	212	22	146
35-9031	27	145	21	148
51-9111	8	300	21	148
51-8031	25	155	21	150

(ii) Emerging Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations. Provide an analysis of the industries and occupations for which demand is emerging.

Comparing the average monthly online job openings of 2014 to 2015 indicates some interesting facts. Three of the top five occupations in terms of increase from 2014 to 2015 were in the Healthcare Practitioners and Technical occupation group; specifically Registered Nurses (29-1141), Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses (29-2061), and Physicians and Surgeons, All Other (29-1069). Together, these three occupations accounted for 331 more openings in 2015 than in 2014. These increases could be a result of changes in hospital ownership, hospital expansion, new hospitals being built, or a retiring/aging workforce.

Regardless, the numbers are supported by conversations with administrators and individuals in human resources who are trying to hire for these positions. There was also an increase in the Food Preparation and Serving Related occupational group; specifically Waiters and Waitresses (35-3031) and Cooks, Restaurant (35-2014). These two occupations accounted for an increase of 109 openings from 2014 to 2015.

The flip side to emerging demand is decreasing demand. The same analysis from above indicated there are several occupations that experienced a decrease in demand from 2014 to 2015. Three of the top five occupations in terms of decrease from 2014 to 2015 were in the Transportation and Material Moving occupation group; specifically Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers (53-3032), Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand (53-7062) and Transportation and Material Moving (53-0000). Together, these three occupations accounted for a decrease of 495 average monthly online job openings from 2014 to 2015.

These decreases are most likely tied to the decrease in oil exploration activity which has been tied to the decrease in the price of oil. It should be noted that despite the large drop from 2014 to 2015, all three of the above mentioned occupations are still in the top 20 in 2015 and accounted for 855 average monthly online job openings. Part of the reason for the large drop was that the demand in 2014 was so high. In fact, of the occupations with the largest drop from 2014 to 2015, none of the top 10 were out of the top 100 in terms of number of openings in 2015 and only 1 was out of the top 50; Operating Engineers and Other Construction Equipment Operators (47-2073) and it was ranked 52 with 71 average monthly openings in 2015.

The above analysis of emerging occupations is based on the average monthly online job openings from employers for 2014 and 2015. This analysis is limited to job ads posted online, is focused on occupational data, and cannot project into the future. For a detailed analysis of projected demand for both industrial and occupational data please refer to the projection data publications which can be found at:
<https://www.ndworkforceintelligence.com/vosnet/gsipub/documentview.aspx?enc=y+kPI+EQ3scsVhx25Mtxg==>

(iii) Employers' Employment Needs. With regard to the industry sectors and occupations identified in (A)(i) and (ii), provide an assessment of the employment needs of employers, including a description of the knowledge, skills, and abilities required, including credentials and licenses.

Employers have many needs when it comes to knowledge, skills, and abilities. Anecdotal conversations with employers and individuals involved in human resources have yielded surprising results. Many of these individuals indicate the largest deficiency of employees has been "soft skills" such as showing up to work, being on-time, cleanliness, etc. These skills, they claim, would be universal for nearly every occupation. If true, this would indicate a portion of the labor force is essentially unemployable in any occupation. That being said, these skills and abilities are relatively easy to improve upon and once the undesirable behaviors are corrected, gainful employment should be possible.

Anecdotal conversations with prospective employees indicates a frustration with job offerings. Many "entry-level" jobs require 3-5 years of experience to be considered. Many prospective employees have been discouraged by this and have left North Dakota to find employment elsewhere. This, combined with an aging workforce while the economy is simultaneously adding more jobs than there are workers to fill has created another employment need; available bodies. Many open and available jobs require no prerequisite knowledge, skills, or abilities but rather just need people willing to do the job. In the current economy where there are more open and available jobs than there are individuals actively seeking employment, the "less-desirable" jobs are going unfilled. Essentially, it is a lack of desire rather than a lack of knowledge, skills, or abilities.

A third way to look at the knowledge, skills, and abilities that employers need is to look to O*Net online. O*Net lists the more applicable knowledge, skills, and abilities based on occupation. By comparing the top 10

occupations in terms of 2 year average monthly online job openings some basic knowledge, skills, and abilities appear to be most lacking. In terms of knowledge 'English Language' and 'Customer and Personal Service' were the most common each being listed for seven of the top ten occupations.

The two next most prevalent were 'Mathematics' and 'Public Safety and Security'. In terms of skills 'Active Listening' was the most prevalent being listed in 7 of the top ten occupations. The next most prevalent were 'Service Orientation' (6), 'Speaking' (5), and 'Coordination' (4). In terms of abilities, the top three abilities were each listed for six of the top ten occupations 'Near Vision', 'Oral Comprehension', and 'Oral Expression'.

In terms of the in-demand occupations, there are certain licenses and degrees that are required to gain access to employment. For example, a heavy and tractor-trailer truck driver could require a Commercial Drivers License, a specialized degree is required to be a registered nurse. There are some occupations that simply cannot (or at least through common practice, are not) learned through on-the-job training and require specialized training to even be considered for employment.

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'.

The information for this section is addressed in section II (a)

(ii) Labor Market Trends. Provide an analysis of key labor market trends, including across existing industries and occupations.

SOC Title	2014 Openings - Avg Annual Online	2014 Rank	2015 Openings - Avg Annual Online	2015 Rank	Projection Numeric Change	Projection Growth Openings	Projection Openings	Projections Rank	2014 Resumes - Avg Annual Online	2014 Rank	2015 Resumes - Avg Annual Online	2015 Rank
Management	1,295	7	1,305	6	6,078	6,088	23,379	6	635	4	722	5
Business and Financial Operations	481	13	416	15	5,387	5,387	11,797	13	207	10	220	10
Computer and Mathematical	395	16	375	16	3,059	3,060	5,391	16	129	13	128	13
Architecture and Engineering	614	11	578	11	3,575	3,575	6,510	15	96	18	126	14
Life, Physical and Social Science	103	22	113	22	1,246	1,307	3,090	21	68	21	64	21
Community and Social Service	178	20	195	21	1,381	1,390	3,966	18	104	17	121	16
Legal	37	23	34	23	587	587	1,403	22	19	23	24	22
Education, Training and Library	452	15	466	13	5,518	5,518	14,968	10	108	16	122	15
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports &	287	19	273	19	698	898	3,405	20	86	19	85	19

Media													
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	1,304	5	1,810	2	9,991	9,992	20,056	7	153	12	146	12	
Healthcare Support	371	18	426	14	4,628	4,628	9,523	14	241	9	256	9	
Protective Service	169	21	209	20	1,108	1,108	4,069	17	115	15	103	18	
Food Preparation and Serving Related	965	9	986	8	12,035	12,035	39,319	2	258	8	288	8	
Building and Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance	475	14	366	17	5,517	5,517	12,697	12	187	11	205	11	
Personal Care and Service	379	17	360	18	5,171	5,175	12,850	11	118	14	120	17	
Sales and Related	1,788	4	1,691	3	10,225	10,413	37,749	3	522	6	611	6	
Office and Administrative Support	1,993	3	1,569	4	12,468	13,397	40,207	1	1,688	1	1,858	1	
Farming, Fishing and Forestry	509	12	544	12	248	436	3,867	19	69	20	70	20	
Construction and Extraction	1,298	6	1,003	7	8,378	10,043	28,449	4	795	2	1,020	2	
Installation, Maintenance and Repair	1,188	8	869	9	5,917	5,926	16,567	8	310	7	370	7	
Production	945	10	781	10	6,564	6,738	15,820	9	605	5	733	4	
Transportation and Material Moving	2,003	2	1,364	5	8,836	8,841	25,930	5	655	3	788	3	
Military Specific Occupations	16	24	13	24	0	0	0	10	24	11	24		
INA - NOT CLASSIFIED	2,297	1	2,271	1	0	0	0	20	22	21	23		

(iii) Education and Skill Levels of the Workforce. Provide an analysis of the educational and skill levels of the workforce.

The education attainment of North Dakota is slightly higher than the nation as a whole. In North Dakota 63.9% of the population 25 years and older has some college experience compared to 58.4% of the nation. Similarly, 40.3% of the population in North Dakota has at least an associate's degree compared to 37.2% of the nation and 19.6% of North Dakotans 25 year or older have a bachelor's degree compared to 18.3% of the nation. The lone category where North Dakota falls behind the nation is in Graduate or professional degrees; 7.7% of North Dakotans 25 years or older have one compared to 11.0% of the nation. Overall, these numbers indicate a well-educated workforce in North Dakota.

Population 25 years and over	US	ND
Less than 9th grade	5.8%	4.1%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	7.8%	4.5%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	28.0%	27.4%
Some college, no degree	21.2%	23.6%
Associate's degree	7.9%	13.0%
Bachelor's degree	18.3%	19.6%
Graduate or professional degree	11.0%	7.7%

In addition to the already high levels of higher educational attainment, there has been a steady increase in the number of program completers in North Dakota institutions of higher learning. Totaling all institutions (2-year, 4-year, Tribal, and Other Institutions) there has been an increase of 29% from 2004 to 2014; or 2,822 program completers. The largest increase in terms of number of program completers was at 4-year institutions with an increase of 2,032 program completers, an increase of 29.4%. The total number of program completers in 2014 was 12,565 with the largest share coming from 4-year institutions; 8,949 program completers.

The educational attainment of North Dakota's workforce, in addition to being relatively high, is diversified. Of the 12,565 program completers in 2014, approximately 17.5% were in health, 16.8% were in business, 12.2% were in Industrial Arts and Consumer Service. The smallest groups of program completers were in Multi/Interdisciplinary Studies at approximately 0.8% or 97 completers followed by Physical Sciences with 107 program completers (0.9%), all of Physical Sciences program completers were either bachelor's degrees or advanced degrees.

Degree Category	Percent
Health	17.5%
Business	16.8%
Industrial Arts and Consumer Services	12.2%
Humanities and Liberal Arts	11.0%
Education	9.2%
Engineering	8.9%
Psychology and Social Work	4.8%
Law and Public Policy	4.0%
Agriculture and Natural Resources	3.6%
Biology and Life Science	2.9%
Computers and Mathematics	2.7%
Communications and Journalism	1.8%
Social Science	1.6%
Arts	1.4%
Physical Sciences	0.9%
Multi/Interdisciplinary Studies	0.8%

From 2004 to 2014, the number of advanced degree program completers increased by 1,025; an increase of approximately 75.2%. That increase was second only to the number of bachelor's degree completers which increased 1,175; approximately 21.6%.

10-Year Change	Num	Pct
Postsecondary Award/Cert/Diploma	391	50.3
Associate's Degree	231	10.6
Bachelor's Degree	1,175	21.6
Advanced Degree	1,025	75.2
Total, All Completions	2,822	29.0

(iv) Describe apparent 'skill gaps'.

The above discussion of the advanced and varied level of educational attainment suggests a very capable, competent, and skilled workforce. While North Dakota has a quality workforce of capable, competent, and skilled individuals, there appears to be a shortage of available workers. Most recent numbers (December 2015) indicate there are 0.8 unemployed individuals in North Dakota per online job opening. Likewise, most recent numbers also indicate there are 0.6 online resumes per online job opening in North Dakota.

Unemployed Per Job Opening

All these facts combined indicate that while there has been a leveling off period in North Dakota, there is still an abundance of jobs; more jobs than there are individuals to work them. This implies that there might not be a skill gap in the traditional sense, but rather a lack of eligible employees. In this type of economy employers might have to be more flexible in their hiring requirements in order to get employees in the door and improve their skills with on-the-job training or improve the attractiveness of their job offers with increased wages or improved benefits.

Job Service ND relies heavily on the Business Services staff in the local offices to work with employers in determining what their needs are for recruiting and retaining employees. They work closely with employers, schools, and the North Dakota University System to remain up to date on the most timely and pertinent needs and programs. This is done in an effort to develop programs designed to help job seekers and employers attain the tools and education they need to address skills needed in the workforce.

According to the 2010-2014 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates, of the 690,161 total civilian noninstitutionalized population, 10.5% (72,674) were reported to have a disability. Nationally, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 17.5% of persons with a disability were employed and the unemployment rate for persons with a disability fell in 2015. Disabilities include visual, hearing, ambulatory, cognitive, self-care and independent living.

Highlights gathered from 2010-2014 ACS North Dakota data:

- Persons with a disability are more likely to be over 64 years of age.
- Persons with a disability tend to be older than persons with no disability, as 34% of persons with a disability were age 65 and over.
- The employment rate of working-age people (ages 21-64) with disabilities was 56%.
- The percentage actively looking for work among people with disabilities who were not working was 9%.
- Among the six types of disabilities identified, the highest percentage of individuals with disabilities not working but actively seeking work was for people with a visual disability, 20%. The lowest percentage was people with a self-care disability, 0%.
- The median annual earnings of working-age people with disabilities working full-time/full-year was \$36,900.
- The percentage of working-age people with disabilities with a high school diploma or equivalent was 29%, some college or associate degree was 37% and bachelor's degree or more was 18%.
- 86% of working-age people with disabilities had health insurance.

North Dakota has been fortunate that our economy has resulted in few numbers of long term unemployed. Due to the strong economy, long-term unemployed (individuals out of work for 26+ weeks) numbers have been less than 35 individuals over the last several months. North Dakota has felt the effect of falling oil prices and anticipates the numbers of long term unemployed may increase.

2009-2013 Census data for North Dakota indicates there are 10,062 individuals who speak English less than "very well". This 10,062 includes population 5 years and over. North Dakota reports indicate 516 refugees have arrived in the state from October 2015 through August 2016. The country of origin with the highest numbers include Bhutan, Iraq and Somalia.

Requested Revision(s)

Item remains open: The State's response did not address long-term unemployed individuals or individuals with barriers to employment. Update State plan narrative or Action Plan.

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.

The North Dakota Workforce System is a relationship of agencies and functions that includes those formal and informal education and training activities. The training provides current and potential workers with new or enhanced knowledge, skills and abilities necessary for successful employment for in-demand occupations being created by North Dakota employers.

North Dakota is adapting service delivery in response to a variety of workforce needs. Western North Dakota is responding to the results of the lower oil prices and is adjusting from the influx of out-of-state job seekers to meet the previous rapid expansion of job opportunities as a result of the petroleum related activity in the Bakken Shale formation to assistance with unemployment insurance claim filing and reemployment. At the same time when North Dakota has seen the highest numbers of unemployment insurance claims filed, employment opportunities remain available. Employers continue to experience a lack of workforce for skilled positions. As a result of rapid innovation and introduction of new technologies, such as unmanned aerial systems, the workforce system and the education and training system must respond. The availability of qualitative and quantitative economic and workforce intelligence will allow the workforce system partners to rapidly respond to the talent needs of North Dakota business and industry. The Workforce Education Advisory Council and the Workforce Development Council are an important connections between workforce agencies, education and business. Opportunities to access life-long learning in basic and job specific skill training for all citizens, is a goal for the system. Education and training opportunities need to be available, accessible, affordable and flexible in order to address the needs of the North Dakota workforce.

North Dakota's Talent Initiative goals to expand, attract, and retain talent to meet the state's workforce needs is the foundation for all education and training activities. Core programs all work together to best achieve that goal for their participants. These efforts combined with additional funding support from the private sector and WIOA required partners will continue.

Focus will be placed on preparing or retraining individuals for in-demand occupations in the Governor's targeted industries (advanced manufacturing, energy, technology-based business, tourism and value-added agriculture), as well as in support industries, such as transportation and health care. Analysis of the current and future job market using labor market information, employer reports to determine skill gaps, and ensuring the necessary training to meet those gaps will be a priority in implementing WIOA Title I programs, Wagner-Peyser, Vocational Rehabilitation, Adult Education, Trade Act and SCSEP funds to serve North Dakota. The strong connection with UI claimants will provide the impetus for serving increased numbers of individuals and for rapid reemployment results.

The North Dakota Department of Commerce, Division of Workforce Development developed and continues to implement a system of performance and accountability measures for the state around workforce development, workforce training and talent attraction. Each workforce development, workforce training and talent attraction partner cooperates in providing the data necessary to implement these measures. The results and analysis of the data will be shared and utilized to develop system improvements between the core and required partners.

Low income individuals receive a variety of services to assist them in reaching self-sufficiency. A customer-focused approach including an initial assessment of skill level, skill development, career counseling/promotion and support service needs for each individual shall be available through the AJC. Job Service ND provides the SNAP E & T services and this allows for partner programs to provide additional services that lead to employment and dependency on social programs.

Job Service ND receives an award for Job Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS) to provide the following services to TANF recipients living in Cass, Ransom, Richland, Sargent, Steele, and Traill counties; case management, coaching on a variety of soft skills ranging from problem solving, working with difficult people, child care and scheduling problems, job retention guidance includes frequent, structured status checks, self-evaluation and planning for the next step on the career ladder and ongoing job coaching can help improve job performance and avoid employment disciplinary issues. All career services and referrals to training are available to TANF recipients across the state. Job Service AJC's have invited additional JOBS contractor staff to the local offices to strengthen partnerships and to promote and explain all the services available to TANF recipients. These collaborative meetings have been received well and additional co-enrollments are expected to increase in particular with WIOA Youth services.

The Parental Responsibility Initiative for the Development of Employment (PRIDE) is a program administered by Job Service ND through a contract funded with TANF funds. The program is a partnership between Job Service ND, the district courts, and the North Dakota Department of Human Services, helps noncustodial parents find employment or better paying jobs so they can meet their child support obligations. In addition to increasing child support collections, PRIDE helps increase parent visitation time with children, while reducing court time and reliance on public assistance such as Food Stamps, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and Medicaid. Participants in the PRIDE program receive Wagner Peyser career services and referrals to WIOA training. Participants with a disability receive referrals to Vocational Rehabilitation. Participants who lack a high school diploma or equivalent, are referred to Adult Education.

Because North Dakota WIOA Adult funds are so limited, only low-income or basic skills deficient individuals are enrolled into individual career services and training. Training services are approved for in-demand occupations in North Dakota. Core programs, WIOA Adult (low-income only) and WIOA Youth have collaborated with mutual customers for many years, even before the passage of WIOA. Vocational Rehabilitation and WIOA Adult funds share training costs through co-enrollment, WIOA Adult (low-income only) and WIOA Youth funds assist with the costs of GED testing for participants enrolled in Adult Education.

Core partner staff are well informed of additional referral sources when encountering homeless individuals seeking employment. Many partner staff are members on their area homeless coalitions and referral contacts. Staff also participate in veteran stand down events to reach out to homeless veterans and offer employment assistance. The SHARE network is a resource for a variety of community based services such as food pantries, homeless and domestic violence shelters and clothing. Connecting homeless individuals with the necessary immediate services will strengthen the effect of the AJC career services.

In collaboration with the North Dakota Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, JSND staff participates in a coordinated effort to assist ex-offenders find employment through the Transition from Prison to Community initiative. Services provided include resume and interview assistance explaining ex-offender status. Information is provided to promote the use of WOTC and federal bonding. There are special Second Chance job fairs arranged to connect ex-offenders with employers and employment opportunities. An informational flyer has been created to assist an individual with previous criminal convictions communicate in a job interview. See flyer.

<http://www.jobsnd.com/sites/default/files/Overcoming%20Criminal%20Convictions%20JSND6155.pdf>

Based on U.S. Census Bureau data for 2010-2014, 5.4% of North Dakota's population is identified as Language other than English spoken at home. For this targeted population group, Core Partners makes every attempt to ensure the needs of customers with limited English speaking skills are met. New Americans will receive job search assistance, have access to Rosetta Stone software and are referred to Adult Learning Centers for English literacy services. To provide interpretation services in a timely manner, JSND utilizes language identification cards, CTS LanguageLink interpreting services, free online translation software. All interpretation services are provided free of charge to the recipient. Services are provided in coordination with partners with special programs, such as, the Lutheran Social Services Refugee Program, cultural diversity centers, and the Adult Learning Centers. English as a Second Language classes are provided by Adult Learning Centers. A basic skills class, funded by PY 13 WIA Incentive dollars, was developed for New Americans and offered in the Fargo Adult Learning Center. Job Service AJC staff participate in the class and present job search information. The class covers basic work skills to include but not limited to soft skills, basic work math, reading, writing, transportation, interviewing, application process, childcare needs and computers. The class curriculum rotates every six weeks.

Job Service AJC staff provide a variety of labor exchange services UI claimants. The most common service is to assist a UI claimant with the requirement to register on the Job Service ND Virtual One-Stop (VOS). VOS is the electronic labor exchange system. Staff assist UI claimants with the online registration and provide assistance creating a resume. VOS has a virtual recruiter feature that will notify UI claimants of new job openings that meet their search criteria. Additional services to UI claimants include assistance to create resumes for each type of employment that a UI claimant is seeking and techniques for improving interviewing skills for UI claimants. Online/electronic applications are prevalent with many employers and this application process is often problematic for UI claimants that lack computer literacy. Job Service AJC staff are familiar with the local employer requirements and assist with this online application process. Social media is discussed as a means to broaden a UI claimant's job search.

UI claimants receive referrals to WIOA Dislocated Worker for upgrade training for in-demand occupations. Out of area job search and relocation support services are provided as needed. Referrals are also provided to core programs for partner services such as increased academic skill and GED or vocational rehabilitation services that support their job search activities.

Resources are available to UI claimants on various job seeking topics such as the importance of soft skills, quantifying and measuring occupational skills and accomplishments. For UI claimants with a criminal record and ex-offenders, guidance is provided on how to overcome this barrier to employment on applications and during interviews.

AJC staff identify and refer individuals with disabilities who meet the employers' qualifications. In coordination with Vocational Rehabilitation, individuals who are not job ready may receive career services, training and supportive services, including assistive technology, necessary to enhance their marketable work skills. Core program staff are involved in a variety of community and public service clubs and will continue to promote the capabilities and employment of individuals with disabilities. The PY 14 WIA Annual Report indicated that 43 percent of all enrollments were individuals with disabilities; WIA Adult enrollments were 13.62 percent, WIA Dislocated Worker enrollments were 8.62 percent and WIA Youth enrollments were 73.83 percent.

Employers frequently utilize the Job Service AJCs for onsite hiring events and job fairs. Onsite hiring events and job fairs are posted on the Job Service ND website. The information on upcoming hiring events and job fairs is available for all core partner staff to assist with employment activity with all program participants.

Low income individuals receive a variety of services to assist them in reaching self-sufficiency. A customer-focused approach including an initial assessment of skill level, skill development, career counseling/promotion and support service needs for each individual shall be available through the AJC. Job Service ND provides the SNAP E & T services and this allows for partner programs to provide additional services that lead to employment and dependency on social programs.

Job Service ND receives an award for Job Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS) to provide the following services to TANF recipients living in Cass, Ransom, Richland, Sargent, Steele, and Traill counties; case management, coaching on a variety of soft skills ranging from problem solving, working with difficult people, child care and scheduling problems, job retention guidance includes frequent, structured status checks, self-evaluation and planning for the next step on the career ladder and ongoing job coaching can help improve job performance and avoid employment disciplinary issues. All career services and referrals to training are available to TANF recipients across the state. Job Service AJC's have invited additional JOBS contractor staff to the local offices to strengthen partnerships and to promote and explain all the services available to TANF recipients. These collaborative meetings have been received well and additional co-enrollments are expected to increase in particular with WIOA Youth services.

The Parental Responsibility Initiative for the Development of Employment (PRIDE) is a program administered by Job Service ND through a contract funded with TANF funds. The program is a partnership between Job Service ND, the district courts, and the North Dakota Department of Human Services, helps noncustodial parents find employment or better paying jobs so they can meet their child support obligations. In addition to increasing child support collections, PRIDE helps increase parent visitation time with children, while reducing court time and reliance on public assistance such as Food Stamps, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and Medicaid. Participants in the PRIDE program receive Wagner Peyser career services and referrals to WIOA training. Participants with a disability receive referrals to Vocational Rehabilitation. Participants who lack a high school diploma or equivalent, are referred to Adult Education.

Because North Dakota WIOA Adult funds are so limited, only low-income or basic skills deficient individuals are enrolled into individual career services and training. Training services are approved for in-demand occupations in North Dakota. Core programs, WIOA Adult (low-income only) and WIOA Youth have collaborated with mutual customers for many years, even before the passage of WIOA. Vocational Rehabilitation and WIOA Adult funds share training costs through co-enrollment, WIOA Adult (low-income only) and WIOA Youth funds assist with the costs of GED testing for participants enrolled in Adult Education.

Core partner staff are well informed of additional referral sources when encountering homeless individuals seeking employment. Many partner staff are members on their area homeless coalitions and referral contacts. Staff also participate in veteran stand down events to reach out to homeless veterans and offer employment assistance. The SHARE network is a resource for a variety of community based services such as food pantries, homeless and domestic violence shelters and clothing. Connecting homeless individuals with the necessary immediate services will strengthen the effect of the AJC career services.

In collaboration with the North Dakota Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, JSND staff participates in a coordinated effort to assist ex-offenders find employment through the Transition from Prison to Community initiative. Services provided include resume and interview assistance explaining ex-offender status. Information is provided to promote the use of WOTC and federal bonding. There are special Second Chance job fairs arranged to connect ex-offenders with employers and employment opportunities. An informational flyer has been created to assist an individual with previous criminal convictions communicate in a job interview. See flyer.

<http://www.jobsnd.com/sites/default/files/Overcoming%20Criminal%20Convictions%20JSND6155.pdf>

Based on U.S. Census Bureau data for 2010-2014, 5.4% of North Dakota's population is identified as Language other than English spoken at home. For this targeted population group, Core Partners makes every attempt to ensure the needs of customers with limited English speaking skills are met. New Americans will receive job search assistance, have access to Rosetta Stone software and are referred to Adult Learning Centers for English literacy services. To provide interpretation services in a timely manner, JSND utilizes language identification cards, CTS LanguageLink interpreting services, free online translation software. All interpretation services are provided free of charge to the recipient. Services are provided in coordination with partners with special programs, such as, the Lutheran Social Services Refugee Program, cultural diversity centers, and the Adult Learning Centers. English as a Second Language classes are provided by Adult Learning Centers. A basic skills class, funded by PY 13 WIA Incentive dollars, was developed for New Americans and offered in the Fargo Adult Learning Center. Job Service AJC staff participate in the class and present job search information. The class covers basic work skills to include but not limited to soft skills, basic work math, reading, writing, transportation, interviewing, application process, childcare needs and computers. The class curriculum rotates every six weeks.

Job Service AJC staff provide a variety of labor exchange services UI claimants. The most common service is to assist a UI claimant with the requirement to register on the Job Service ND Virtual One-Stop (VOS). VOS is the electronic labor exchange system. Staff assist UI claimants with the online registration and provide assistance creating a resume. VOS has a virtual recruiter feature that will notify UI claimants of new job openings that meet their search criteria. Additional services to UI claimants include assistance to create resumes for each type of employment that a UI claimant is seeking and techniques for improving interviewing skills for UI claimants. Online/electronic applications are prevalent with many employers and this application process is often problematic for UI claimants that lack computer literacy. Job

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In an attempt to promote partner collaboration and meet the current workforce needs and activities across the state, the Adult Education Office supports the five targeted industries determined by the WIB and directs the local programs to provide information to unemployed students/participants about those areas first, and then to the remaining list of high demand, high need career clusters determined by Labor. Additionally, each local program advisory board discusses local workforce needs and the best methods to meet those needs.

Per the WIOA, in addition to offering academic instruction, all programs offer and enroll students/participants in career pathways classes according to their need and interest. This may include career exploration, skill development, career assessment, placement services in concert with partner agencies, integrated employment and training.

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.

One of the greatest assets of North Dakota's workforce system is a culture of strong communication and partnership between agencies and programs. The Workforce Leadership team entities, Job Service ND, Adult Education, Career & Technical Education, Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, Department of Commerce Workforce Division and Higher Education meet monthly to strengthen and continually analyze the State's workforce development activities. The Team identifies and develops strategies to address North Dakota's current and emerging workforce needs and work collaboratively to develop and implement strategic, goal-oriented action plans that strengthen the state's workforce and reduce duplication of effort within workforce programs.

The level of support from economic development, education, and business leaders for workforce programs has been consistently strong. There is a healthy partnership at the state-level between the core programs, with strengthening interest from our non-core partners to collaborate, leverage resources and improve outcomes across all programs. Professional staff work tirelessly to remove barriers and maximize resources to improve services to the customer, both the employer and the worker.

WIA Title I funds in North Dakota have a long history of funding training for the targeted industries that drive the state's economy. For the last six previous program years, 90% or more of WIA Title I funds have supported training in the Governor's targeted industries. This approach to funding in-demand occupations transitions perfectly to the intent of WIOA.

North Dakota strives to build partnerships for future workforce needs and opportunities. WIOA core and required programs will enhance linkages between employers, students, parents and schools for shared understanding of workforce needs and opportunities. Efforts will include identifying working situations between education entities and industry to showcase relationships in career training.

In order to assess and analyze gaps between labor supply and demand to provide programmatic offerings, partnerships with economic development leaders will be strengthened to further understand local workforce. Untapped labor pools such as Native Americans, New Americans, Individuals with Disabilities and workers pursuing a second career will be promoted. Efforts will be made to expand training and work-based learning opportunities for the mentioned populations through Vocational Rehabilitation, Adult Education Centers, Job Service ND, TrainND and the state's public, private and tribal colleges and universities. Strengthening the use and availability of registered apprenticeships with co-enrollments by all core and required partners will fill a workforce need in the state which has been underutilized.

In January 2016, the number of North Dakota AJC's was reduced from sixteen to nine, affecting rural areas. Rural communities present a number of challenges for our workforce programs. Reduced resources and staffing levels will result in less services provided to these communities and customers will rely on online services more and more. Rural communities may have higher instances of poverty and unemployment, lower education levels, and a generally higher need for services.

Because North Dakota is rural, there are limited public transportation options available. The North Dakota Department of Transportation reports that although all counties in North Dakota have transit services such transportation is for limited time periods for as low as three days per week. Urban centers with fixed route and paratransit center that operates six days per week include Minot, Bismarck, Fargo and Grand Forks. One of the top reasons riders in North Dakota use public transportation is to attend training or employment. These fixed route systems are experiencing budget shortfalls and have proposed limitations to public transportation to include limiting fixed bus routes from 7am to 7pm. Many sectors need employees to work beyond 7:00 p.m. and without public transportation are unable to attract a sufficient applicant pool for available positions. Residents of rural counties need to travel to more urban settings to receive training and support services that support their efforts to gain employment. Once training is completed these same individuals then need to secure reliable transportation for work opportunities. The lack of transportation is particularly a problem in Indian Counties with the reservations located in more isolated rural parts of the state without fix route public transportation. Many individuals living on the reservation have higher rates of poverty and the lack of public transportation severely limits their ability to seek and accept employment.

Job Service ND has experienced business services staff who are competent in engaging employers to meet their labor exchange needs. The challenge facing Job Service ND is transitioning the employer services to focus on and promote WIOA work-based learning activities. To meet the intention of WIOA, business services staff will need to take a more active role to promote the work experience activities, especially for WIOA Youth. The 20% WIOA Youth expenditure will require a collaborative effort to meet this new requirement.

Registered Apprenticeship lacks integration with core programs. The Apprenticeship Accelerator grant and Governor's Set-aside funds will make big strides with outreach to employer groups, education and workforce partners to promote Registered Apprenticeship. The funds will be used to create a bridge and liaison between the State Director of Registered Apprenticeship and the core program staff. This connection will result in coordination of WIOA funds for on-the-job training, ITA's and support services with new Registered Apprenticeship programs and new apprentices. Information will be shared and training provided to increase the knowledge and outreach to employers by core partner business service staff to promote Registered Apprenticeship.

C. State Workforce Development Capacity

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

North Dakota's capacity to provide workforce development activities is strong. The ND Workforce Leadership Team has been in existence for over four years and spent many hours assessing the state of North Dakota's education and training system to come up with a Strategic Plan. The Team includes representation from Department of Commerce, Career and Technical Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, Job Service ND, Adult Education, Higher Education and Workforce Training.

The agencies responsible for the WIOA core and required program in North Dakota include: • Job Service ND (which has responsibility for the majority of the WIOA core and required programs, such as WIOA Title I, Wagner Peyser, Local Veterans' Employment Representatives and Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program, Trade Adjustment Assistance Programs and Unemployment Compensation Programs) • The Department of Human services (which has responsibility for Vocational Rehabilitation, SCSEP, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) • The Department of Commerce (Community Services Block Grant) • The Department of Public Instruction (Adult Education), and • Motivation, Education and Training (National Farmworker Jobs Program)

Job Service ND oversees the nine American Job Centers in the state. This number is down from sixteen in January 2016 when budget constraints resulted in seven office closings. The current Job Service AJC's are staffed by 75 staff funded by WIOA Title I and Title III, JVSG, TANF E & T, TANF discretionary and SNAP E & T. AJC Management staff worked and continue to work to outreach to these mostly rural areas. Partnerships were made with libraries, economic development and city halls to offer serve as their citizens. AJC staff have provided training on workforce training programs and online labor exchange on jobsnd.com. The Job Service ND website allows for self-service job search 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, from anywhere internet access is available. Jobsnd.com links to the online labor exchange system for individual job search and employer job posting activities. Job seekers can use jobsnd.com to create résumés and conduct automated job searches. Additionally, job seekers can become aware of education and training programs available and view labor market information such as high-demand occupations, current wages and training required. Job seekers can also explore career options, find direction to veteran services, and access community resources.

Each Job Service AJC has a resource area with computers available for individual self-service. Resource area staff promote tools to assist individuals in making career choices such as the RUPReadyND.com, resume writing software, myskillsmyfuture.org, and mynextmove.org. The resource areas also offer a wide variety of printed materials. Resource area staff is available for assist those who lack computer skills to conduct their job search or to file an unemployment insurance claim. Job Service AJC staff assist customers with complex online job applications.

Job Service AJC staff provide the WIOA career services and enroll into training. Resource room staff and case managers are knowledgeable of the services available from the core program partners. Local partner program staff have been collaborating for many years under WIA and continue with stronger purpose under WIOA.

Customers can improve their computer skills by using Microsoft Digital Literacy (www.microsoft.com/digitalliteracy), offered as part of the Microsoft Digital Alliance with North Dakota. Whether customers are new to computers or seasoned users, there is a wealth of information that may be beneficial. Topics include computer basics, the internet and world wide web, productivity programs (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access), and computer security and privacy.

NDVR operates as a division housed in the state's Department of Human Service (DHS). The North Dakota Department of Human Services operates eight regional human service centers (HSC). Each serves a designated multi-county area, with programs and services to include adult services, developmental disability services, child welfare services, children's mental health services, serious mental health care coordination, acute clinical services, substance abuse services, and crisis and emergency response services. NDVR rehabilitation counselor offices are located in each of the eight HSC. Supervision and direction of the rehabilitation staff is provided by staff located in NDVR's State Office. NDVR has developed working arrangements with 18 CRPs and monitors their performance through monthly reports submitted for each individual served and through VR counselor comments and observations of CRP performance and training needs.

Vocational Rehabilitation services in North Dakota are provided through a single Combined VR agency serving individuals with disabilities including consumers that experience a significant visual impairment. NDVR serves individuals with disabilities that constitute or result in substantial barriers to employment. Individuals present with either a single or multiplicity of disabilities that include, but are not limited to alcohol dependency, mental health disorders, learning disabilities, diabetes, deafness, amputation, and traumatic brain injury. NDVR provides services such as counseling and guidance, assessment, vocational training, post-secondary education, transportation, personal assistance services, and job placement. Through customer informed choice and in partnership with their VR counselor, individuals with disabilities are able to create an individualized plan for employment, maximize their potential, and reach the goal of competitive integrated employment. Service identification is determined through a comprehensive assessment of the individual needs and interests based upon vocational goal selection. Comparable benefits are sought prior to the expenditure of program funds for nonexempt services.

The VR agency also provides more specialized services to individuals with significant targeted to their specific populations. For example, the NDVR provides a myriad of educational and training programs such as the Blindness Skills Training, Assistive Technology Training, and Low Vision Services to individuals that experience significant vision loss. Specialized technical assistance and training support is provided to provide Supported Employment to individuals with the most significant disabilities that result in competitive and integrated employment. DVR takes very seriously its responsibility to provide high quality services to all individuals with a disability. DVR has forged a strong relationship with agencies such as the North Dakota Vision Services/School for the Visually Impaired and Community Rehabilitation Programs that provide service to individuals with Intellectual Disabilities.

Forty-two full time VR counselors are employed by the division with their offices located in the eight larger communities in the state. These VR counselors work closely with staff from JSND and the Adult Education Programs located in these same communities. Staff and fiscal resources are leveraged by all three agencies to provide workforce service to the business community, individuals with disabilities, populations receiving state economic assistance to include TANF and New Americans. NDVR is currently operating in an approved Order of Selection with all categories open. Increased operating and cost to provide case service will result in the agency potential to close up to two categories during the life of the Unified Plan.

The state Adult Education unit is part of the ND Department of Public Instruction. Adult Education receives federal and state funds to provide academic and career related skills to students over the age of 16 who are not enrolled in high school and lack a high school equivalent, career skills. Additionally, the adult education system offers the same services to students who are unable to speak, read, write or comprehend the English language and have a barrier to employment, community participation and family literacy.

Through a competition process following WIA reauthorization in 1999, 16 adult learning centers and the ND Department of Corrections are provided both federal and

state funds to provide services as described. Staffing from all adult learning centers totals 75 part and full time instructors, para-professionals and other support staff and provides statewide coverage. At any time, up to 12 satellite programs are funded in rural communities who offer services. With partners, Adult Education provide the WIOA career services and refer for training enrollment when eligible, as all staff have been provided information and knowledge of the services available from core program partners. Local partner program staff have been collaborating for many years under WIA and continue with stronger purpose under WIOA. A formal competition process under WIOA for local programs will begin in December 2016 with a bidders conference - final WIB selection in February 2017.

Students/participants can improve their computer skills by using Microsoft Digital Literacy (www.microsoft.com/digitalliteracy), offered as part of the Microsoft Digital Alliance with North Dakota. Topics include computer basics, the internet and world wide web, productivity programs (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access), as well as essential digital literacy skills necessary for success in the workplace and college.

Performance is monitored through onsite monitoring of services, data through NRS and LACES and also through GEDTS.

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.

GOVERNOR'S VISION

"Ladies and gentlemen, two years ago I stood before you and reported that the state of our state was strong. Today, I am pleased to tell you that we've made great progress since then, and that North Dakota is stronger than ever."

Governor Jack Dalrymple, State of the State Address, January 2015

The Unified State Plan provides focus on integrating the Governor's vision for job creation for emerging careers in the fossil fuels and renewable energy sector, healthcare sectors, advanced manufacturing sector, value-added agriculture, transportation and information technology sector. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act will support training opportunities for public assistance clients, low income individuals, veterans, migrant and seasonal farm workers, and American Indians.

"For more than a decade, we have focused our economic development efforts on creating jobs and growing our targeted industries. Now, we must take that mission to the next level by focusing on building a workforce for the future and capitalizing on emerging industries and innovations." Governor Jack Dalrymple, Executive Budget Address, December 2014 Governor Dalrymple and his administration are committed to "Excellence in Education" as one of the pillars supporting his economic development and workforce agenda. "Education is the foundation upon which we continue to build our future." "Our colleges and universities do an outstanding job of enriching student's lives and preparing them for a lifetime of success." Governor Jack Dalrymple, State of the State Address, January 2015

Education is the bedrock on which North Dakota will build for the future. Excellence in education will enable us to achieve our greatest potential, as individuals and as a state. Schools produce the human wealth on which our progress depends. As a result of rapid innovation and introduction of new technologies, the workforce system and the education and training system must be market driven. The availability of qualitative and quantitative economic and labor market information will allow the system partners to rapidly respond to the talent needs of North Dakota business and industry. Opportunities to access life-long learning in basic and job specific skill training for all citizens is a goal for the system and will allow the workforce to stay competitive and prepared for the opportunities being created by North Dakota employers. Education and training opportunities need to be available, accessible, affordable and flexible in order to address the needs of the North Dakota workforce. This is a focus of the Dalrymple administration. GOVERNOR'S VISION FOR THE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM Governor Dalrymple has been proactive in his efforts to help drive the North Dakota economy by ensuring that North Dakota has both a favorable business climate and workforce climate that is ready and able to respond to the changing needs of the citizens and business and industry in the state. As mentioned in his 2015 State of the State address, Governor Dalrymple states:

"North Dakota's growth in personal incomes is fueled by our state's robust economy. Over the past 10 years, North Dakota's economy has averaged an annual growth rate of 10.3 percent, nearly three times that of the nation's economy. We also continue to have the nation's lowest unemployment rate at just 2.4 percent, and our growing commercial activity has created more than 106,000 new jobs in the past 10 years."

This great success is attributed to three essential strategies for continued economic growth in addition to the five targeted industries. This holistic approach is intended to create jobs across all industries and sectors. 1. Sustaining a positive business climate. 2. Investing in research and development in the private sector and the university system. 3. Building on our success in the global marketplace by linking North Dakota businesses with foreign buyers. The North Dakota Talent Initiative took a look at workforce development for economic development in 2008. It was determined that the role of the workforce development and workforce training system in North Dakota is to prepare the workforce. Workforce intelligence was identified as an essential component to the success of the Talent Initiative. Major outcomes for the effort included: • Increase the quantity and quality of North Dakota's workforce. • Transition from a workforce to a talent force through a workforce improvement focus. • Reduce Unemployment in counties and areas of the state with current unemployment above the state average.

The Governor identifies the targeted industries of advanced manufacturing, value-added agriculture, energy, technology-based business and tourism as the drivers of the North Dakota economy.

The Governor's vision of bringing together all key players is illustrated through his leadership in working with key industries in the State and effectively addressing specific workforce issues. An example is the Governor's role in The EmPower Commission which was formed and began the complex task of developing North Dakota's comprehensive energy policy for the state's diverse and growing energy industry. The 2014 future vision of the Empower Commission states North Dakota's future is one where many of the energy sectors have the potential to not only grow, but also develop new economies based on value-added opportunities related to energy resources. In order to move forward, the state needs to address several key areas crucial to the expansion of energy production and extraction. North Dakota needs to work with the industry to begin exploring ways to capture opportunities to develop raw resources into new products, including petrochemicals, plastics, nanofibers, manufactured products or materials yet to be discovered.

The EmPower North Dakota Commission has identified five critical components for continuing to grow energy production and new energy-related industries:

1. Infrastructure - Up-to-date infrastructure is the foundation for continuing existing development and expanding into new areas.

2. Workforce - As the energy industry expands, the workforce must be available to meet the demands.
3. Research and Development - Research and development serves as the bridge for industry to move from concepts to new development and commercialization.
4. Regulatory Environment - A regulatory environment, at both the federal and state levels, that encourages economic growth while ensuring environmentally-responsible development of natural resources is essential.
5. Energy Growth Incentives - New and continued incentives are needed to capitalize on development opportunities across North Dakota's energy sectors.

North Dakota continues to take steps to insure that education, workforce and economic development efforts are fully integrated and working toward the same goals by being the first State in the nation to require development of a Single Biennial State Strategic Plan for all of workforce development, workforce training and talent attraction.

This concept was further strengthened by legislation which sets the requirement that annually, the State Board of Higher Education, the Department of Career and Technical Education, the Department of Commerce, and Job Service North Dakota, submit a report to the Workforce Development Council relating to their respective current workforce initiatives and activities and their plan for future workforce initiatives and activities.

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—

- Goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including preparing youth and individuals with barriers of employment* and other populations.**
- 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.

The North Dakota Department of Commerce, Division of Workforce Development developed and implements a system of performance and accountability measures for the state around workforce development, workforce training and talent attraction. Each workforce development, workforce training and talent attraction partner cooperates in providing the data necessary to implement these measures as pursuant to NDCC 54-60-19. The Department of Commerce, Division of Workforce Development shall consider these reports in preparing the Consolidated Biennial Statewide Strategic Plan for the state's system for workforce development, workforce training and talent attraction. In addition, before November first of each even-numbered year, the Department of Career and Technical Education, Job Service North Dakota, the Department of Commerce, Department of Public Instruction, Department of Vocational Rehabilitation and the State Board of Higher Education shall present their agencies' workforce-related budget initiatives for the upcoming biennium, including alignment of their initiatives with the Consolidated Biennial Statewide Strategic Plan, to the North Dakota Workforce Development Council. The North Dakota Workforce Development Council members shall consider potential areas for collaboration.

The 2015 Consolidated Biennial Statewide Strategic Plan for Workforce Development vision and goals include:

Vision: An enterprising workforce that drives North Dakota's global competitiveness, has regional access to exemplary skill development, embraces lifelong learning and contributes to individual, community and state.

GOAL 1: Create Transparency in Workforce Image and Development Activities Strategy 1: Inventory and analyze existing workforce development services, programs and challenges.

- Compile, publish and market existing workforce programs, such as scholarships, tax incentives and other workforce initiatives.
- Analyze existing workforce development services and challenges and provide policy recommendations.
- Improve Performance Accountability reporting by utilizing the North Dakota State Longitudinal Data System to evaluate workforce program effectiveness.

GOAL 2: Prepare Our Future Workforce

Strategy 1: Engage students, parents, educators, schools, and businesses in a comprehensive career planning process.

- Expand the use of RUPrepareND.com - an online computer-based career development system - and a statewide grade 7-12 career planning curriculum.
- Seek out and review best practices studies of innovative and emerging methodology in the fields of education and training for the future workforce, pre-K through university students. Present findings to stakeholders where recommendations will be made regarding skill gaps, policy, and funding.
- Engage k-12 educators by expanding Educators in Industry Program. • Expand available Career and Technical Education program options to high schools to meet workforce demands and increase school completion rates.

Strategy 2: Increase stakeholder promotion of and employer use of work based learning.

- Expand work-based learning through a core resource for information, promotion and assistance for internships and cooperative work experience activities.

- Promote and provide resources for events and opportunities to showcase experiences that are available for stakeholders; private, public and tribal college and university students, chambers of commerce, economic development and employers.

GOAL 3: Meet State's Workforce-Needs by Connecting Employers with A Skilled Candidate Pool

Strategy1: Build partnerships for future workforce needs and opportunities.

- Enhance linkages between employers, students, parents and schools for shared understanding of workforce needs and opportunities.
- Identify working situations between education entities and industry to showcase relationships in career training.

Strategy 2: Enhance North Dakota's image in order to attract out of state job seekers.

- Develop and distribute a community and employer recruitment toolkit.
- Partner with communities to further promote local recruitment initiatives.
- Facilitate collaboration between recruitment professionals.

GOAL 4: Expand and Retain our Workforce

Strategy 1: Ensure the continuing competitiveness of North Dakota's employers by enhancing the knowledge and skills of current workers.

- Offer frequent opportunities to communicate with employers regarding existing training, training needs and the return on investment resulting from training.

Strategy 2: Assess and analyze gaps between labor supply and demand to provide programmatic offerings.

- Partner with economic development to further understand local workforce.
- Identify and promote untapped labor pools such as Native Americans, New Americans, Individuals with Disabilities and workers pursuing a second career. Further provide training opportunities for above mentioned populations through Vocational Rehabilitation, Adult Education Centers, TrainND and the state's public, private and tribal colleges and universities.
- Expand the use and availability of registered apprenticeships.
- Promote and develop workforce skills that meet the requirements of high demand, high wage careers. GOVERNOR'S VISION FOR YOUTH Governor Dalrymple envisions excellence in education as the foundation upon which we continue to build our future. North Dakota has one of the highest high school graduation rates in the country. Governor Dalrymple has supported increased funding for K-12 and higher education in the State. His 2015-2017 biennial budget included funding to provide increased merit-based and needs-based scholarships and capital projects.

North Dakota is partnering with the nonprofit National Math and Science Initiative (NMSI). NMSI's mission is to improve student performance in the critical subjects of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). NMSI's programs transform teaching, transform schools and are transforming education in the United States. Informational sessions on the programs -- College Readiness and Laying the Foundation -- will be offered to state educators and administrators. The state's partnership with the National Math and Science Initiative will give elementary, middle school and high school teachers the intensive training they need to improve math, science and English instruction and aims to boost AP courses in the state. Governor Dalrymple also recognizes the need to provide alternatives to help connect those youth who are disconnected or at risk of dropping out-of-school. The Governor supports pathways to education and training through general education diplomas. The college and career readiness standards exemplify the workforce needs of business and industry. The Bank of North Dakota is a valuable partner in the support of students' educational goals by providing financial support to out-of-school youth for the first and final GED test fees. Adult education also receives support from WIOA title 1 and title IV partner core programs. North Dakota ranks among the top in the country of high school students graduating, however, there are young people who drop out-of-school or do not continue on to higher education. Governor Dalrymple's vision is to identify and reach these out-of-school youth as early as possible to assist them with reconnecting to education and careers.

Higher education also is a key to our state's future. Out-of-school youth are encouraged to seek advanced education to become more productive, higher-earning individuals for the rest of their lives. In recent years, North Dakota has taken significant steps forward in making post-secondary education more affordable for all of our young people. In 2015 the legislative assembly appropriated \$25 million for needs-based scholarships and instituted merit scholarships totaling \$14 million for students, including students earning a GED, who achieve a 3.0 grade-point average, an ACT score of 24 or three "5's" on the WorkKeys Assessments. Increasing the skills of North Dakota's youth aligns with the Governor's vision for a highly skilled workforce to support the State's economic growth and increases per-capita income.

Incorporating a model of career information and career promotion will insure that students, parents, educators, and other career influencers are aware of the career opportunities which are being created by North Dakota business and industry and the requirements for those opportunities. Two industry awareness efforts, energy and information technology, <http://www.discoverndit.com/>, are in place to inform secondary school youth, parents and teachers of employment opportunities. Both industry awareness efforts started with Governor's state set-aside funds and due to the success, have been sustained. Career and Technical Education provides funding and enables the continuation of the provision of this career information. This effort supports the State's vision by insuring that youth and others have information on careers specific to North Dakota and their region at their disposal. This will assist them in making career choices which will lead to employment in North Dakota.

The Career Outlook is a publication of the North Dakota Department of Career and Technical Education's Career Resource Network. The publication includes a multitude of information that assists youth to research and plan for their career. Youth can complete a self-assessment, a career clusters interest inventory, research occupations, explore options to finance education, military opportunities and employment. The Career Outlook has details about Job Corps and apprenticeship, post-secondary programs and costs. Information is included on WIOA core programs and partners and is beneficial to all individuals engaged in career exploration and the workforce professionals who assist them. <https://www.nd.gov/cte/crm/docs/CareerOutlook.pdf> RUREadyND.com is a software program that the Bank of ND and Student Loans of ND provide to all North Dakota public and private middle schools and high schools. The program allows access to career exploration, education planning, and ACT test preparation tools. It features sections for students and parents. Youth can explore career and education options, complete an interest profile and a skills survey, and plan for high school and college. A portfolio is created and can be revisited as students make decisions throughout their school years. "Providing internship opportunities to youth in North Dakota addresses two important challenges", Commerce Commissioner Al Anderson said. "First, it provides businesses with another great source of employees in what is a very tight labor market. Second, it builds connections between our young people and North Dakota employers. We hope these connections will ultimately result in more young talent pursuing careers in North Dakota after college. Operation Intern is a wonderful opportunity for businesses and students to develop relationships while helping to retain young people in our state. Students will benefit through exposure and hands-on experience while businesses will benefit by demonstrating the potential of career opportunities with their company." The state funded Operation Intern program, <http://operationintern.com/v1/>, offers

private businesses up to \$30,000 every two years to fund internships in their companies. The Governor in his 2015-2017 Biennial Budget request proposed \$1,500,000 for the continuation of Operation Intern as a way to expand Internship and work experience opportunities for North Dakota Higher Education and Secondary students with North Dakota employers. The North Dakota Legislature approved \$1,500,000 in funding for this program.

In 2006, then Governor John Hoeven established an executive order establishing the North Dakota Commission on Education Improvement to recommend ways to improve the current system of delivering and financing elementary and secondary education, including the equitable distribution of state education dollars. The Commission recognized the need to increase the amount of time available to students for career planning. The relatively high ratio of students to counselors (450 to 1) was reduced to 300 to 1. To help meet that lower ratio a Career Advisor position was created to work under the direction of a school counselor and can be counted for 30% of a counseling programs time. A Career Advisor has received in-depth training in the areas of career development and incorporates career development information or skills in his/her work with students, parents, or school staff. There are 42 trained Career Advisors in schools across the state. There are another 30 trained individuals working in a variety of venues including colleges, both public and tribal, and REAs.

School districts utilized career advisors to provide sequential career development activities, current career information, and related career exploration opportunities to students in grades seven through twelve. A career advisor will use computer-assisted career guidance systems and provide career information to students, staff and parents. Other activities include facilitated classroom career exploration activities, maintained student career portfolios, coordinated job shadows, career fairs, college visits, job interviews, administration and interpretation of interest assessments and student preparation with employment-seeking skills. Student benefits from career development activities include a sense of achievement, greater ownership, a sense of direction and purpose, and development of a lifelong skill.

The 2015-2017 legislature invested \$50,000 in Education in Industries. This initiative provides funding for teacher externships. A teacher externship is a paid temporary position that provides teachers direct experience in an industry work environment. By exposing teachers to the real-life applications of what they teach, the externship enables them to develop curriculum suited for project-based learning and that reflects the world of work in the classroom. Externships take place during the summer months, typically lasting 3-6 weeks. Teachers are paired with a mentor within the organization who guides and oversees their work. This unique combination of experiences enmeshes the teacher to a depth of knowledge and understanding of career development that is then applied to students in the classroom. This educational situation enables the classroom teacher to recognize talents in students and be able to discuss and encourage the student to pursue an appropriate career pathway. Participating teachers earn a \$2000 stipend for completing an externships with \$1000 coming from the Department of Commerce and \$1000 paid by the employer. Graduate credits are earned for participation in courses through NDSU that requires the teacher to demonstrate how their experience will be incorporating into their classroom curriculum.

ADDITIONAL STATE GOALS AND STRATEGY Moving to a demand driven delivery model insures the focus on target industries' needs and other in-demand industries' needs for talent. These are the identified industries that are and will in the future drive North Dakota's economic growth. This will support the State's vision of focusing on target industries and in-demand and high-wage occupations where there are career opportunities and which will drive the future of North Dakota's economic growth. A statewide list of in-demand and emerging occupations has been created. This list will be utilized by higher education, career and technical education, the Department of Commerce, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act core program partners, the State Legislature and secondary education. In-demand and emerging occupations will provide the focus for developing sector strategies and career pathways in North Dakota. Providing timely, customized workforce training to meet business demands will insure that our investments in training capacity meet business needs and include business and industry in the planning and evaluation process. This supports the State's vision by insuring that the workforce system is responding to the needs of North Dakota business and industry and that citizens have access to the training which will lead to career employment in the State. TrainND is the State's most comprehensive and inclusive training network comprised of the largest network of training specialists in the state. Courses and training areas are as diverse as the individuals and organizations that are served from industry-specific programs to training that applies to all fields. TrainND works to provide training for virtually every industry, in every corner of North Dakota providing businesses in each region with a single point of contact for all their training needs. The Tribal College Grant program was established during the 2013 Legislative Session. The legislature continued their support in 2015 with funding to the five tribally controlled community colleges for workforce training and entrepreneurial assistance. This is done through curriculum development, equipment and technology purchase, and faculty training and student recruitment. Facility renovation to develop, expand, or redesign a program. The funded projects enhance curriculum offerings and support the programs that are included on the state's in-demand occupations list. Find the Good Life in North Dakota is a workforce recruitment campaign started by the North Dakota Economic Development Foundation. <http://findthegoodlifeinnorthdakota.com>. It is a private/public sector funded program designed to help solve the greatest challenge facing our business community: workforce development, recruitment and retention. The campaign uses a variety of traditional, digital and non-traditional marketing tactics to reach target audiences identified as: • Job seekers in states with an available workforce with the skill sets we need in North Dakota and those with high under- and unemployment. • Out-of-state people in S.T.E.M. (science, technology, engineering and math) related careers. • Veterans and current military members who will soon be transitioning out of the military. • College/trade school students. • North Dakota residents who could recruit their friends and family to move here. • Current in-state workers who may consider themselves temporary. • Access to qualitative and quantitative labor market information and using this as the basis for all decisions will insure that the workforce delivery system is both responsive to the employers of the state and to the citizens of the state. The system can make decisions on prioritizations and use of scarce resources. Business and industry will have information on their talent pipeline and workers and youth will have information on which occupations and industries are high-growth and expanding in the state. This will support the state's vision by insuring that the system partners are focusing on delivery of services that support skill development which will lead to employment.

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.)

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.

The North Dakota Department of Commerce, Division of Workforce Development developed and implements a system of performance and accountability measures for the state around workforce development, workforce training and talent attraction. Each workforce development, workforce training and talent attraction partner cooperates in providing the data necessary to implement these measures.

The Division of Workforce Development consults with partners in the state's system for workforce development, workforce training, and talent attraction, including the Department of Career and Technical education, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Job Service North Dakota, the State Board of Higher Education, the Department of Human Services, and other Divisions of the Department of Commerce.

The measures are continuously reviewed to identify and implement improvements to the State's system for workforce development, workforce training, and talent attraction. Division of Workforce Development develops linkages between partners of the State's system for workforce development, workforce training, and talent

attraction, to assure coordination and non-duplication of programs and services provided in the state.

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). "In-demand industry sector or occupation" is defined at WIOA section 3(23).

North Dakota will continue to strive for a strong comprehensive workforce system that enables individuals to move easily between employment and skill improvement to advance their careers, achieve their occupational goals, and contribute to a growing economy. The workforce system includes partners in delivery of labor exchange services funded by Wagner-Peyser, Adult Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, labor market information, workplace training, skills development and education, along with partners in business, industry and economic development.

Collaboration among partners for comprehensive delivery of services will include identification of skill needs and training gaps, and addressing training needs for in-demand occupations. The Governor's five targeted industries, as well as in-demand occupations in support industries, will be the primary focus of skill development strategies for the State. Vocational Rehabilitation, Adult education and WIOA Youth funds will be used to help targeted youth populations access jobs and occupational training opportunities that will keep them connected with their communities and North Dakota's labor market. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) provides services to youth which will assist them with identifying appropriate career goals and make the adjustment from school to employment. Pre-employment transition services are offered to high school students age 14-21. Services include job exploration, work based learning opportunities, counseling on enrollment in post-secondary education, workplace readiness and self-advocacy. Adult education enabling youth to acquire the basic skills necessary to function in today's society so that they can benefit from the completion of secondary school, enhanced family life, attaining citizenship and participating in job training programs.

The North Dakota workforce development and training system receives Federal and State funding support, and in many cases matching funds are also provided by the private sector. WIOA Title I funds are used to help leverage other Federal fund sources such as Pell Grants and student loans. In addition, WIOA funds are used to help leverage state and private sector funds available to address workforce training needs. North Dakota has a strong collaboration among state workforce partners to increase the employment of North Dakotans with disabilities. The core program partners are represented as members of the State's Workforce Leadership team. Staff from local offices of DVR, Job Service North Dakota and Adult Basic Education collaborate in joint planning and service delivery to individuals with disabilities.

Core program staff collaborate to best achieve that goal for their participants. These efforts combined with additional funding support from the private sector and WIOA required partners will continue to be coordinated to support North Dakota's Talent Initiative goals to expand, attract, and retain talent to meet the state's workforce needs.

Sector strategies Focus will be placed on preparing or retraining individuals for in-demand and emerging occupations in the Governor's targeted industries (advanced manufacturing, energy, technology-based business, tourism and value-added agriculture), as well as in support industries, such as transportation and health care. Analysis of the current and future job market using labor market information, determination of skill gaps, and ensuring the necessary training to meet those gaps will be a priority in deploying WIOA and Wagner-Peyser funds to serve North Dakota. The strong connection with UI claimants will provide the impetus for serving increased numbers of individuals and for rapid reemployment results.

Sector strategies will be expanded to continue enhancing and strengthening economic vitality through addressing employer and job-seeker talent requirements. Sector partnerships implement effective coordinated responses and integrate resources to develop the talent and workforce needs of key industries of a regional labor market.

Labor market information will be used as the basis to map and assess current sector activities to identify successes and challenges along with emerging market areas. This data will be used to understand the skills required for the current and future workforce and prioritize target industries.

Efforts will be tailored after the sector strategies that exist under the current TAACCCT grants that target energy and precision agriculture.

Through the EmPower North Dakota Commission, leaders from all major energy industries in North Dakota meet regularly with one common goal: to be critical thinkers for the development of the state's energy resources. The strategic partnerships between North Dakota's long-standing and emerging energy industries enable all sectors of the industry to work together as they meet our state's and country's energy needs. North Dakota is proactive and aggressive in addressing energy development and serves as a model for America in fostering innovative, long-term energy strategies to meet our nation's growing energy demand and need for energy security in an environmentally responsible manner.

Collaboration among higher education, Tribal leadership, Career and Technical Education, industry and the workforce system will be directed at development of training opportunities that provide core partner participants with flexible, short term training, resulting in industry recognized credentials.

North Dakota has received two Health Profession Opportunity Grants through the Administration for Children and Families. The grant recipients are both tribal colleges. These grants will support training for the healthcare industry and collaborates with employers in need of healthcare professions by providing training and industry credentials to Native American students to meet the unique employment needs on the North Dakota reservations. A Memorandum of Understanding with the Workforce Development Council addresses coordination and collaboration in the provision of services for Native Americans interested in entering the healthcare workforce.

The connection of skill development and identified employer skill needs supports Governor Dalrymple's goal for economic development, which includes workforce development. Partnerships among federal, state, and local governments will produce a highly skilled workforce that strengthens businesses and the economy of the State. Increased sector partnerships meets the demands of employers, improves the workforce system and improves North Dakota's economy.

North Dakota will utilize PY 2016 Governor's Set-aside funds and the Apprenticeship Accelerator grant to facilitate sector strategies in the following industries; energy, healthcare, information technology, and manufacturing. These industries are targets for increased registered apprenticeship expansion and career pathways resulting in earned credentials through sector strategy activities.

North Dakota will connect with business intermediaries through the

- North Dakota Department of Commerce
- Chambers of Commerce
- IT Council of ND
- Impact Dakota (MEP)
- Area Health Education Center
- North Dakota Center for Nursing
- Long Term Care Association
- National Energy Center for Excellence
- TAACCCT Grant advisory groups.

The efforts of the grant will strengthen existing sector strategies and identify options for more regional collaborations. Workforce partners, Career & Technical Education and the Job Corps will be engaged as well as Title II Adult Education to increase academic skill readiness and English Language instruction. English Language Learners are a growing workforce option across the State. Current sector strategy efforts in the State include Manufacturing Roundtables and the ND Hospital Association Education and Training focus group.

Career Pathways WIOA provides an extraordinary opportunity to improve job and career options for North Dakota workers and job seekers through an integrated, job-driven, public workforce system that links diverse talent to businesses. It supports the development of strong, vibrant regional economies where businesses thrive and people want to live and work. The workforce system includes three focus areas: the needs of business and workers drive workforce solutions; American Job Centers provide customer service to jobseekers and employers and the workforce system supports strong economies and plays an active role in community and workforce development.

Career and Technical Education, Adult education, postsecondary education, and other partners collaborate to establish career pathways systems that make it easier for all individuals to attain the skills and credentials needed for jobs in North Dakota.

Career pathway systems offer an effective approach to the development of a skilled workforce by increasing the number of workers in the North Dakota who gain industry-recognized and academic credentials necessary to work in jobs that are in-demand. Core partners will align educational offerings with business needs, career pathways systems engage business in the development of educational programs up front. Career pathways systems transform the role of employers from a customer to a partner and a co-leader and co-investor in the development of the workforce. Employers have a high stake in the development of career pathways that lead to an increase in their pipeline of qualified workers. The North Dakota career pathways system will offer a more efficient and customer-centered approach to workforce development by structuring connections among employers, adult basic education, support service providers, occupational training, and postsecondary education programs.

Career pathway programs make it easier for people to earn industry-recognized credentials through avenues that are more relevant; to provide opportunities for more flexible education and training; and to attain market identifiable skills that can transfer into work. These comprehensive education and training programs are suited to meet the needs of working learners and non-traditional students. Career pathways programs will be designed to serve a diverse group of learners to include; adults, youth, dislocated workers, veterans, individuals with a disability, public assistance recipients, new immigrants, English language learners, and justice-involved individuals.

The ND Career and Technical Education has created 16 career clusters that organize virtually all occupations around 16 broad categories. WIA PY 2013 Incentive funds were used to create a new category for energy. Occupations within each cluster require similar skills and knowledge. The categories include:

- Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources
- Architecture & Construction
- Arts, A/V Technology & Communications
- Business Management & Administration
- Education & Training
- Energy
- Finance
- Government & Public Administration
- Health Science
- Hospitality & Tourism
- Human Services
- Information Technology
- Law & Public Safety
- Manufacturing
- Marketing
- Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics
- Transportation, Distribution & Logistics

Each career cluster has a poster created on-line that lists occupations under heading of education required; High School Diploma or Equivalent, Post-Secondary non-degree award or Associate's Degree and Bachelor's Degree or Higher. Each poster included a column that lists the ND annual openings and typical annual wage. Career cluster information is available online on the ND Career and Technical Education website under Student Resources at <https://www.nd.gov/cte/services/career-clusters/index.html>. The career clusters are available to all core partner programs and are used for career exploration.

The Career Outlook is a comprehensive resource that includes self-assessment tools, occupational research, information on financing an education, employment and education and training. The Career Outlook supports thoughtful, deliberate planning to choose a career that is personally satisfying and fulfills a critical need in local communities. The workforce of tomorrow will need the knowledge, technical skill, and attitude necessary to be globally competitive. This publication guides individual through the process of planning and preparing for a lifetime of success in North Dakota. <https://www.nd.gov/cte/crn/docs/CareerOutlook.pdf>

A comprehensive publication, Careers by Education, is a collaborative partnership with Career and Technical Education and the Job Service ND Labor Market Information department. The publication groups lists of occupations/job openings/average wages/tasks performed based on the education required. This brochure is a valuable career exploration tool and useful to outline career pathways. https://www.nd.gov/cte/about/docs/Careers_by_Education.pdf

WIOA training funds support career pathways in many occupation areas such as healthcare career ladders of nurse assistant, licensed practical nurse and registered nurse. Transportation occupations offer increased wages and opportunity based on skills and endorsements held. Welding occupations require a variety of skills and

certifications to work in specific areas. The ND eligible training provider list offers many certifications to expand skills for these in demand occupations in the State.

The Workforce Development Council has established an in-demand occupations list for North Dakota in accordance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The list includes occupations determined to have a current or potential impact on the state's economy. North Dakota Labor Market Information's 2014-2016 short-term employment projections were used by applying the following factors: exceptional or high growth, replacement openings, aggregate average hourly entry wages, growth openings, and required educational levels. http://www.jobsnd.com/sites/default/files/ND_In_Demand_Occupations.pdf. The in-demand occupations list is categorized to simplify information for career pathways.

Vocational Rehabilitation allows for exited individuals to reapply for increased skills for career advancement. Career pathway training provides new opportunities for individuals whose disability has advanced and is now requiring changes in work environment and needs new or advanced skills.

The Greater North Dakota Chamber purchased a license for The Manufacturing Institute's Dream It, Do It, a sector strategy to connect with high school students to provide exposure to manufacturing jobs and dispel misperceptions about the industry. Manufacturers identify young professionals within their company who engage students to inspire them to consider a career in manufacturing. A total of 782 students were reached in 8 school districts so far in 2016. This model has been presented to the Workforce Development Council and shared with other industries in hopes to replicate the successes and provide career awareness experiences for the next generation of workers.

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).

The state of North Dakota has been proactive in development of partnerships with business and industry, education, economic development, and the workforce development system to continuously identify and address workforce challenges. The North Dakota Talent Initiative is the basis for full statewide collaboration on workforce vision, goals, and issues. The Talent Initiative and ongoing partnership development facilitates solutions through strong relationships among partners. The Workforce Development Council, community colleges, business and labor, the Office of Apprenticeship, and TrainND all work closely to identify workforce needs and address training solutions. DVR's primary mission is to assist North Dakotans with disabilities to improve their employment opportunities and to assist North Dakota businesses in finding solutions to their disability-related issues.

Through this "dual client" approach, DVR assist individuals with permanent injuries, illness, or impairments to achieve competitive employment and increased independence. DVR also assist business owners and employers through full service business consultation on a variety of business and disability-related areas. Core program partners will collaborate with Career and Technical Education to receive professional development to build a common understanding of career pathways and how they can be used across all agencies. Career and Technical Education will, with consultation of the others involved, take the lead on professional development that will be applied across all agencies.

North Dakota continues to see resettlements of New Americans. There were 590 New American arrivals in FFY 2014. The projections for FFY 2015 & FFY 2016 estimated upwards of 450. Job Service AJCs link adult education and English literacy programs. Adult Education offers programs that blend academic instruction of English literacy with occupational skills training that is specific to local economic needs. A WIA Incentive funded project has developed a class to cover basic work skills to include but not limited to soft skills, basic work math, reading, writing, transportation, interviewing, application process, childcare needs and computers. Job Service AJC staff will partner to present the curriculum and provide job search information. New Americans will gain the skills to assist in completing more advanced job skills training that will lead to better employment opportunities.

Involving interns in North Dakota businesses addresses two important challenges. Internships provide employees in a tight labor market and build connections between young people and North Dakota employers. The state funded Operation Intern program offers private businesses up to \$30,000 every two years to fund internships in their companies.

Adult Education plans to incorporate the concept of a business specialist into its existing educational staff. The purpose of this position would be to develop regional partnerships and serve as a conduit for regional employers and students to direct them to integrated employment and training, apprenticeships and other work based learning opportunities.

North Dakota has a history of collaborating between the three agencies responsible for the six core programs and other required partners. State staff from Adult Education, Vocational Rehabilitation and Job Service North Dakota have been meeting monthly since 2011 with the North Dakota Workforce Leadership Team. This team also includes Career and Technical Education, Higher Education and the Department of Commerce. The core partners recommended a Unified Plan and received approval from the Governor's office. The intention is to continue to strive to integrate the workforce system and strengthen the current integration.

Co-enrollments of participants are encouraged to maximize the total resources available for preparation of the workforce to meet employment needs. Examples of funds leveraged with WIOA include: Title II Adult Education; Carl Perkins; Trade Act; Tribal WIOA and Tribal 477 programs; Motivation, Education and Training (MET); TANF; Vocational Rehabilitation; SCSEP; state funded Workforce 20/20 and North Dakota New Jobs Training. WIOA funds are used to cover the cost of GED testing, dual enrollments with WIA Dislocated Worker funds complement Trade Act enrollments, MET and WIOA co-enrollments support training and Vocational Rehabilitation referrals receive Wagner-Peyser services. JOBS clients also receive Wagner-Peyser services routinely and receive WIOA assistance as appropriate. Building on these partnerships assist in determining what funding source is best utilized to increase job seeker skills and to increase customer service. These efforts result in meeting the needs of North Dakota employers and supporting the Governor's vision.

The Job Service AJCs staff include the Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG). All JVSG staff are Disable Veteran Outreach Program and assist the needs of disabled veterans and those veterans and eligible persons who require intensive services in order to obtain and retain employment that supports their self-sufficiency. DVOP services are available in all Job Service AJCs and are integrated into all service delivery offerings.

A recent service delivery model change for unemployment insurance (UI) and a more regional based service delivery for Job Service AJCs has increased the customer base in the Job Service AJCs. UI claims are taken only through online means. This development has increased the need for assistance from Job Service AJC staff. Job Service AJCs have adjusted as required by WIOA and have adapted service delivery to meet the growing needs of UI claimants.

Registered Apprenticeship offers great benefits to both employers and workers. North Dakota's Strategic Plan for Workforce Development goal to expand and retain our workforce includes a strategy to expand the use and availability of registered apprenticeships. Core and required partners will coordinate efforts with the State

Director of the Office of Apprenticeship to increase the number of apprenticeships in the state and WIOA program support.

III. Operational Planning Elements

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an Operational Planning Elements section that support 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 North Dakota Workforce Development Council serves as the State Board under WIOA section 101(d). North Dakota is designated by the Governor as a single state local area. The Council shall carry out the functions of a local board.

The Workforce Development Council identifies, develops and recommends workforce policy changes to programs that will improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the State's workforce development system. Targeted industry and potential labor pools are the focus of the Council meetings to provide direction for a comprehensive workforce development strategic plan. The Council identifies and develops opportunities for collaboration and partnership between education, employment and supporting workforce development policies, resources and activities in the State. The nine American Job Centers are located regionally throughout North Dakota.

The Council consists of the following members: • Representatives from business and industry, comprising the majority of the membership. There will be at least one member from each of the eight regional economic and employment planning regions in the State. These business members should represent the major business and industry interests within the State. • Representatives from organized labor comprising at least 15% of the membership. • Representatives of education comprising at least 15% of the membership. Categories include: secondary education, postsecondary education, North Dakota Tribal colleges, career and technical education, Job Corps, and local school board. • One representative from a community-based organization. • The following state officials having responsibility for administering federal workforce development programs: Commissioner of North Dakota Department of Commerce, Executive Director of Job Service North Dakota, Executive Director of the Department of Human Services, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Chancellor of the North Dakota University System, and the State Director of the Department of Career and Technical Education. • Additional members who are knowledgeable about human resources and economic development needs and the resources for meeting these needs. • The Council will have the following ex-officio non-voting members: o The Director of the North Dakota Workforce Development Council o Executive Director of the Indian Affairs Commission o Representative from Veterans Affairs

The Council represents diverse geographic areas of the state. The chairperson is selected by the Governor and represents business. A director and support staff are employees of Job Service North Dakota and assist the Council in performing its functions.

The Council as a whole shall be responsible to the Governor for: • Identifying, developing and recommending workforce policy changes to federal and state programs that will improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the State's workforce development system. • Reviewing and identifying the current and future economic development and workforce development needs of the state and recommending steps for meeting those needs. • Providing direction for a comprehensive workforce development strategic plan. • Identifying and developing recommended actions that will enhance and increase the capacity of the state's workforce development system. • Identifying and developing opportunities for collaboration and partnership between education, employment and supporting workforce development activities in the State. • Reviewing and approving a Council operating budget. • Performing the duties and functions of State Board as prescribed under WIOA.

The Workforce Development Council creates policies as required by WIOA and receives reports for all core programs, career technical education and the Department of Commerce. The members review the law and regulations and considers the benefits to the state. The Workforce Development Council considers the service delivery for the state and the single local area designation when determining service providers. The Council enters into memorandum of understandings for providers for WIOA Youth services and Adult and Dislocated Worker career services. The Council considers the unique characteristics of North Dakota and the wishes of the Governor when making provider decisions. The Council will monitor the PY 2013 Workforce Incentive Act incentive grant projects especially the projects that meet WIOA mandates of eligible training provider performance and the common intake, performance and reporting. The projects utilize the ND WDQI structure and SLDS.

In following WIOA's training emphasis for in-demand occupations, the Workforce Development Council will review LMI data annually and make adjustments as necessary. Biennially, the Council creates and submits a list of recommendations for workforce legislative initiatives to the Governor. These recommendations are utilized by entities in their legislative testimonies to Standing Committees.

The Executive Committee provides for the administration, continuity and good order of the Council as a whole and perform executive management tasks as may be determined by the Council membership. a. Assist in establishing the meeting agendas for the Council. b. Track all outstanding actions of the Council and recommend actions that would assure successful completion of all tasks and objectives. c. Recommend policy positions for the Council's review and approval. d. Establish task groups when needed—design purpose and role, obtain and appoint members, designate chair, and establish operating parameters and completion time subject to approval of the Council.

The Planning Committee shall be responsible for: a. Developing a Unified State Plan. b. Recommend to the Council, goals for the development and continuous improvement of the statewide workforce delivery system to include development of linkages to assure coordination and non-duplication among programs and activities. c. Provide recommendations for improvement of comprehensive State workforce delivery system, including State adjusted levels of performance as needed when the core program performance fails to meet negotiated levels. d. Recommend projects to the Council for Governor's consideration for funding and provide recommendations to the Council on the use of the Governor's Set Aside Funds when available.

The Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities is State established to further the goal of considering competitive and integrated employment as the first option when supporting individuals with disabilities who are of working age to obtain employment. This committee will serve as a Council subcommittee to advise the members on services and strategies for persons with disabilities.

The Council will consider establishing a youth committee in PY 2016.

2. Implementation of State Strategy

Describe how the lead State agency with responsibility for the administration of each core program or a Combined 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.

Current Job Service AJC service delivery accommodates integration and the focus of the ND Talent Initiative. Skill assessment and career counseling/promotion will be routinely provided to job seekers utilizing the Job Service AJC. Initial assessment will determine seekers' current workplace skills and determine whether skill development is necessary for employment goals or a referral to career services. Career guidance/promotion is based on the Governor's targeted industries of Energy, Value-Added Agriculture, Tourism, Technology-Based Business and Advanced Manufacturing as well as current labor market information.

The North Dakota workforce system gives all stakeholders including businesses, students, job seekers, researchers, and public officials access to all federally-funded workforce development programs, as well as several state-funded programs. Services provided through the Job Service AJCs include:

• WIOA Title IB—Adults, Dislocated Workers and Youth • Wagner—Peyser • Unemployment Insurance • TANF Employment and Training (JOBS) • Labor Market Information (LMI) • Jobs for Veterans State Grant • Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) • Foreign Labor Certification • SNAP Employment and Training (BEST) • North Dakota Workforce 20/20 • North Dakota New Jobs Training

Job Service AJC system core and required partners' include:

• Adult Education and Family Literacy Act • Vocational Rehabilitation • Post-secondary Vocational Education under the Post-secondary Career and Technical Education under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act • Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)

North Dakota capitalizes on the strengths each partner brings to the system while reducing or eliminating duplication of products and services. The simplicity in the structure with defined roles and responsibilities of all partners allow case managers and providers to deliver the services necessary for North Dakota's growth and competitive edge.

Job seekers have the option to search for employment, review labor market information and a variety of other employment topics through Jobsnd.com. Links to the job listing site provides fast access to a database of thousands of jobs. Jobsnd.com utilizes Job Spidering, a powerful online tool that captures job listings from other sources including corporate web sites, online newspaper listings, and other private job boards. Spidered jobs are added to Job Service's internal job listings to provide seamless access to thousands of job openings. Employers benefit from having job openings viewed by the largest applicant pool in North Dakota and the ability to view similar listings for wage and benefit comparison. Job seekers benefit by having the largest single portal in North Dakota to access job openings for all occupations. Jobsnd.com has the largest pool of job openings in the state. Job Service provides staff assisted services. Job seekers are assessed to identify current skill levels and gaps. The assessment information is used to determine skill development opportunities within the targeted industries and in-demand occupations. Labor market information is provided for job seekers to make informed occupational choices and execute their job search efficiently. Career services will be provided to the extent needed based on individual assessments. Support service needs will be assessed and referrals made to partner programs or know community resources. Informational services are provided through the SHARE Network. The SHARE Network is a unique resource that brings together workforce development partners, faith-based organizations, community organizations and businesses. The SHARE Network is a partnership developed to assist customers gain access services in order to obtain, retain and advance in employment.

Job Service AJC staff providing assessment and orientation services will be knowledgeable of services of all core and required partners and will be able to explain services available and refer job seekers for those services. North Dakota has a strong history of partner collaboration and dual enrollment of mutual clients. Partner program staff, through release of information, share assessment information and employment plans. The sharing of information provides convenience for the client and also enhances the chances of success. When all employment and training resources are considered, the likelihood of success is greatly increased. ITA costs sharing with DVR and WIOA has been occurring for over a decade. Students working with Adult Education to earn their GED have received support services to cover testing costs. TANF participants, especially out-of-school youth, are referred to and receive WIOA services.

Job-driven workforce development will prepare workers and ensure businesses have skilled workers to be competitive. Individuals can quickly learn skills where hands-on experience in a work environment is integrated with classroom learning. Job-driven training programs will be promoted with the aim to include work-based learning opportunities that best suit their participants. Work based learning activities include:

• Work experience, paid and unpaid • Job shadows • Internships • On-the-job training • Pre-apprenticeships • Registered apprenticeships

Participant outcomes of entered employment and wages improve with work based learning activities. Employers reduce their recruitment and training costs with work-based learning activities. It also helps them hire better-prepared employees who understand workplace expectations. WIOA Career Services includes activities on behalf of employers, including small employers, which describe the work based learning opportunities available. Job driven training ensures that job seekers and workers are equipped with the skills needed by employers and are matched to employers with good jobs. Staff will utilize the eligible training provider list and the ND in-demand occupation list to promote individual training accounts. Classroom training and on-the-job training will support the workforce needs of employers and where available, apprenticeships. Funds will be leveraged between core and required programs whenever possible.

Co-enrollments of participants are encouraged to maximize the total resources available for preparation of the workforce to meet employment needs. Examples of funds leveraged with WIOA Title I funds include: Title II Adult Education; Carl Perkins; Trade Act; Tribal WIOA and Tribal 477 programs; Motivation, Education and Training (MET); TANF employment and training (JOBS); SNAP Employment and Training (BEST); Vocational Rehabilitation and SCSEP. WIOA funds are used to cover the cost of GED testing, dual enrollments with WIA Dislocated Worker funds complement Trade Act enrollments, MET and WIOA co-enrollments leverage program training funds and Vocational Rehabilitation referrals receive Wagner—Peyser services. JOBS and BEST clients receive Wagner—Peyser services routinely and receive WIOA assistance as appropriate. These partnerships assist in determining what funding source is best utilized to increase job seeker skills. These efforts result in meeting the needs of North Dakota employers and supporting the Governor's vision.

To ensure the WIOA requirements are implemented with fidelity and to the 'spirit' of the law, the state core partner agencies will work together to develop a professional

development calendar. This calendar will cover such topics as labor market information (LMI), career pathways, motivational interviewing, agency roles and partnerships, and the new data interface system. Trainings will be regional or quadrant and will include all core program staff to ensure networking, common training understanding and implementation of exemplary practices. This training concept maximizes staff time, funding and participant outcomes.

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.

Core partners collaborate with community efforts and initiatives to assist North Dakotans meet their employment goals and increase earnings. Core partner staff participate in a variety of activities that promote in-demand careers, career pathways, academic achievement and employment.

Collaboration among WIOA, Wagner-Peyser, DVR, unemployment insurance, SCSEP, Trade Act, business and industry, the North Dakota University System, TrainND (state funded customized employee training), Career and Technical Education (Carl Perkins), Adult Basic Education, refugee services, foster care providers, the State Penitentiary system, and many more partners will result in: • Expanded awareness and leverage of programs/funds designated to serving targeted populations, often served by multiple entities; • Rapid development and deployment of programs and activities unique to economic and employment needs for North Dakota's workforce; • Access to increased numbers of persons in need of assistance, including low skilled, low income, individuals with disabilities, English Language Learners, disaffected youth, veterans, dislocated workers, and individuals residing in high unemployment areas, including American Indians.

The current collaboration between SCSEP and DVR is strong and greatly enhances the success of individuals. SCSEP refers participants to DVR to assist with disability evaluation and assessment and adaptation toward their recovery. DVR refers clients to SCSEP to assist with assessment of job skills and required training for employment in specific career fields.

SCSEP is progressively building partnerships with the Older Americans Act senior service providers, adult protective services, county social services, local veteran's service centers, adult education, Job Service AJCs, homeless coalitions, and tribal colleges, to facilitate referral of services through the use of Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs). These MOUs ensure co-enrollments of clients to provide maximum access to available resources.

The Center for Rural Health (CRH), University of North Dakota School of Medicine and Health Sciences and the Area Health Education Center (AHEC) utilizes state and federal funding to focus on maintaining access to quality health care for North Dakota residents. A critical component to being able to provide health care services is having adequate workforce. The CRH and AHEC, in partnership with the ND Department of Commerce, and other stakeholders across the state, support students training for a health related careers. Career pathway efforts include Rural Collaborative Opportunities for Occupational Learning Health Scrubs Academy and Scrubs Camps and Health Occupations Students of America Future Health Professionals fostering excitement about a healthcare careers.

The Workforce Leadership Team has the responsibility to enhance collaboration and implement strategies between the team members as well as Registered Apprenticeship. The Team will be instrumental in developing the One-Stop System Memorandum of Understanding. The Team will use this opportunity to more effectively connect with all the workforce partners and determine how to enhance collaboration.

Job Service ND administers the Trade Adjustment Assistance program and the Jobs for Veteran's State grant. Staff providing these services are integrated in the AJC's and work collaboratively, providing referrals to all appropriate services within the workforce system.

There is one job corps center in ND. The Burdick Job Corps Center is located in Minot, ND and partners with the Minot AJC. All new job corps students have one-stop center orientation onsite and offer career services when employment and future training is appropriate. The Burdick Job Corps Center has staff co-located for admissions and placement services in the Bismarck AJC. All AJC staff are familiar with the Burdick Job Corps and refer potential students and assist with employment and training needs to students returning to the area.

Registered Apprenticeship alignment is being strengthened within the state workforce system. Registered Apprenticeship will be incorporated into Job Service ND applicant services and business services within the WIOA core programs with the help of the Apprenticeship Accelerator grant and Governor's Set-aside funds. Communication between the Registered Apprenticeship State Director and Job Service ND Workforce Development Director is scheduled on a regular basis. Joint meetings with employers have taken place and additional opportunities will occur at every opportunity in the future. These communications consist of establishing processes to share information that will generate more utilization of Registered Apprenticeships in the state. Increasing the knowledge of all parties about how WIOA can partner with Registered Apprenticeship will strengthen the promotion. The State Director shares employers who are inquiring about Registered Apprenticeship and are in need to fill apprenticeship openings. WIOA case managers who complete on-the-job training contracts email the State Director to make contact for potential new Registered Apprenticeship locations and the Job Service Workforce Development Director follows up to determine if an ITA is needed. Job orders in the labor exchange system are flagged as Registered Apprenticeship openings. All Job Service staff, including WIOA program case managers, have the list of current Registered Apprenticeship sponsors to become familiar of the activity in the State for employer and occupation targets for program promotion. Business service staff messages with employers will include Registered Apprenticeship benefits. Youth case managers are promoting Registered Apprenticeship specifically for out-of-school youth and as a strategy to meet the WIOA Youth 20% expenditure rate for work experience activities. Registered Apprenticeship promotional materials will be made available to all Job Service ND staff, on the agency webpage and in the resource rooms.

Unemployment insurance for North Dakota is administered through Job Service ND. This allows for a strong working relationship with the Job Service AJC's. Job Service AJC staff receive annual training on the Unemployment Insurance Internet Claim Entry (UIICE) system from UI staff. UI staff work directly with Job Service AJC staff when UI claimants have specific issues and questions. Many claimants depend on Job Service AJC staff for assistance with their online claim filing and to navigate UIICE for the reemployment requirements. Job Service AJC staff provide a variety of labor exchange services UI claimants. The most common service is to assist a UI claimant with the requirement to register on the Job Service ND Virtual One-Stop (VOS). VOS is the electronic labor exchange system. Staff assist UI claimants with the online registration and provide assistance creating a resume. VOS has a virtual recruiter feature that will notify UI claimants of new job openings that meet their search criteria. Additional services to UI claimants include assistance to create resumes for each type of employment that a UI claimant is seeking and techniques for improving interviewing skills for UI claimants. Online/electronic applications are prevalent with many employers and this application process is often problematic for UI claimants that lack computer literacy. Job Service AJC staff are familiar with the local employer requirements and assist with this online application process. Social media is discussed as a means to broaden a UI claimant's job search.

UI claimants receive referrals to WIOA Dislocated Worker for upgrade training for in-demand occupations. Out of area job search and relocation support services are provided as needed. Referrals are also provided to core programs for partner services such as increased academic skill and GED or vocational rehabilitation services that support their job search activities.

Employers frequently utilize the Job Service AJCs for onsite hiring events and job fairs. UI claimants are provided information on upcoming hiring events and job fairs

and are instructed on where to find future events on the Job Service ND website. Resources are available to UI claimants on various job seeking topics such as the importance of soft skills, quantifying and measuring occupational skills and accomplishments. For UI claimants with a criminal record, guidance is provided on how to overcome this barrier to employment on applications and during interviews.

Job Service ND receives an award for Job Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS) to provide the following services to TANF recipients living in Cass, Ransom, Richland, Sargent, Steele, and Traill counties; case management, coaching on a variety of soft skills ranging from problem solving, working with difficult people, child care and scheduling problems, job retention guidance includes frequent, structured status checks, self-evaluation and planning for the next step on the career ladder and ongoing job coaching can help improve job performance and avoid employment disciplinary issues. All career services and referrals to training are available to TANF recipients across the state. Job Service AJC's have invited additional JOBS contractor staff to the local offices to strengthen partnerships and to promote and explain all the services available to TANF recipients. These collaborative meetings have been received well and additional co-enrollments are expected to increase in particular with WIOA Youth services.

Job Service AJC staff utilize Community Action Partnership as a referral source for support services. The services include budgeting and money management, child care, commodities, emergency assistance, energy assistance, food pantry, head start, housing, self-sufficiency, volunteer income tax assistance, and weatherization in most locations. Community Action has a financial literacy resource available online that is available for all customers.

Motivation, Education and Training Inc. (MET) operates the National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) in eastern North Dakota. An ongoing partnership between Job Service ND and MET has existed to provide MSFWs additional opportunities for employment and training. MET maintains offices in the Red River Valley cities of Grafton, Fargo, and Wahpeton, ND. These MET offices and the Job Service AJCs work together to provide services to MSFW's in the respective areas. Tying the various service agencies together broadens the potential of serving the MSFWs in a one-stop concept.

North Dakota receives five Indian and Native American program awards. Job Service AJC staff are familiar with the tribal colleges around the state and refer individuals who may be eligible for these grant funds. As these funds become limited, Job Service AJC staff are notified to provide assistance and services through WIOA Title I funds. The President of the United Tribes Technical College is a member of the SWIB and the Tribal WIOA coordinator contributes frequently to the SWIB meetings.

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 to individuals including those populations identified in section II(a)(1)(B). The activities described shall conform to the statutory requirements of each program.

North Dakota has an established core partner working relationship. DVR and Job Service AJC staff participate on local Adult Education advisory boards. Job Service staff are appointed members of the State Rehabilitation Council and the North Dakota Workforce Leadership Team. Core partner staff have integrated business services activities and local partner collaboration meetings to further integrate services. These meetings act as a way to educate each other on the services available under all titles which results in appropriate referrals and enhanced outcomes. State level trainings will be offered to all local core program staff. Efforts to integrate service delivery and formalize referral process will continue on the State level as well as between local programs.

Core program partners are engaged in a project with the assistance of the North Dakota Information Technology Department to create a common participant intake and through data sharing, provide a portal for collecting common participant outcomes for federal performance measures reports. The project has three phases: 1) The WIOA Study, 2) Procure WIOA Solution and 3) Implement Solution. Among the WIOA mandates for integrated reporting and performance, the solution will consider a feature that will automate partner referral.

With the increase in age eligibility and focus to spend 75 percent of WIOA youth funds on out-of-school youth, recruitment efforts are targeted toward this population. Youth Coordinators work closely with Job Service AJC Resource Room staff, Adult Education, and Vocational Rehabilitation on referral and dual enrollment of out-of-school youth. In addition, Youth Coordinators utilize local networks with social service staff and/or community-based programs targeting homeless, disabled and transitioning youth. Unemployment insurance claimants within the age eligibility are targeted for out-of-school youth recruitment. Although the focus is shifting to serving the out-of-school population, outreach continues to be provided to schools. Communication with school personnel including principals, CTE teachers and counselors is crucial to locate students who have dropped out or for those graduating and in need of assistance for occupational skills training to fill the jobs in-demand.

The strong relationship between the WIOA Youth Coordinators and DVR staff has resulted in over 70% of WIOA youth participants with disabilities in PY 2014. This can be attributed to collaboration on participant needs and the need to maximize funding due to North Dakota's minimum funding levels.

The Workforce Leadership Team together with the Workforce Development Council will monitor the progress of WIOA program coordination and alignment. Collaboration opportunities and strategies will develop and strengthen from the partner connectivity. Service delivery and integration improvements will be made through evaluations of feedback received and prospects for technical assistance will be identified.

The blend of career services and referral is provided and may vary depending on the customer needs that will be addressed. Customers may be directed to self-service only, job getting services, or skill development services based on their initial skill assessment results. Co-enrollment will be utilized as appropriate in order to provide the most appropriate funding source for those services that best meet the customer's needs in a cost effective manner. A customer-focused approach including an initial assessment of skill level, skill development, career counseling/promotion and support service needs for each individual shall be available through the Job Service AJC.

This approach will be used to determine the needs of: • Individuals with disabilities • Dislocated workers, including trade impacted • Displaced homemakers • Basic Skills deficient • Individuals with multiple challenges to employment • JOBS clients • BEST clients • Non-custodial parents • Low-income individuals including recipients of public assistance • Migrants and seasonal farm workers • Minorities • New Americans and others with limited English proficiency • Older individuals • School dropouts • Veterans • Ex-offenders • Homeless individuals

Employment into in-demand occupations will be the goal for all individuals and will include non-traditional training choices.

North Dakota continues to see an increased population of New Americans/refugees and other English Language Learners. Lutheran Social Services reports 518 new arrivals in FY 15 with an additional 458 New Americans expected in the fiscal year 2016. Job Service ND AJCs link with adult education and English literacy programs. Adult education has offerings that incorporate English literacy with occupational skills training that is closely aligned with local economies.

The state of North Dakota has been proactive in development of partnerships with business New Americans and English language learners require additional

assistance and preparation to progress in employment readiness. The Job Service AJCs and Adult Education in southeast North Dakota have utilized WIA Incentive funds to provide a weekly work skills class. The class will cover basic work skills to include but not limited to soft skills, basic work math, reading, writing, transportation, interviewing, application process, childcare needs and computers. The curriculum is presented jointly by Adult Education and Job Service AJC staff. The class curriculum will rotate every six weeks, providing space and computers for approximately 20 students every six weeks. The class began August 2015 and will be used as a model to replicate in other areas of need across the state.

In order to better serve English Language Learners, the Wagner-Peyser 10% funds will be designated to this special group of individuals.

North Dakota has had a very small number of long-term unemployed, (individuals out of work for 26+ weeks), due to the strong economy. Currently, there are 25 individuals, in state, considered long-term unemployed. North Dakota has felt the effect of falling oil prices and anticipates the numbers of long term unemployed to increase. Core program partners are prepared to face a unique combination of social, emotional, and skill deficiencies caused by the duration of their unemployment. Intensive services will be provided to address these issues and move individuals to paid work experience and reemployment.

DVR offers a Summer Youth Employment Program to connect high school students with disabilities to summer jobs. Research has shown that young people who have work experience also have a higher rate of academic attainment and are more likely to become employed after graduation. The program is a collaborative effort involving the Department of Human Services, the Department of Public Instruction, Job Service, secondary school transition teachers, community rehabilitation providers, parents, students, and employers.

The mission of the ND Community of Practice for Transition is to work towards building, supporting, and sustaining community partnerships. The system promotes and improves the scope, opportunity and quality of services for youth with disabilities to adequately prepare for life and career beyond high school.

Communities of Practice (COP) involve people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a similar passion and who interact on a regular basis to learn from each other and problem solve. North Dakota's Community of Practice will focus on working across groups and localities to share information, address issues, learn together, find shared goals and define shared work. The North Dakota structure is modeled on the national community of practice, of which North Dakota is a member.

The group will focus on developing the community by inviting relevant state agencies, and identifying groups that are involved in transition. The State and Regional Communities, as well as, other state Community of Practice groups will share information and ideas through Shared Work, a website established by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act partnership.

The ND Department of Public Instruction, Special Education Unit sponsors a Statewide Interagency Community of Practice that actively engages all stakeholders that represent the roles important to secondary transition for students with disabilities in ND. In addition, the Community of Practice extends the existing state advisory into the regions. The State Transition Community of Practice Advisory Council identifies the development of Regional Interagency Transition Committees as a strategy to improve communication, knowledge and expertise among stakeholders in the transition process for youth with disabilities. An interagency transition team brings together a variety of stakeholders who are supporting youth with disabilities so they can have the best chance for success as adults. The State Community of Practice meets quarterly and the Regional Community of Practice teams work to implement and state initiatives and best practices for the intended beneficiaries.

Recent Regional Community goals and accomplishments include: • Transition Fairs • Updated policies • Increased training opportunities • Development of timeline for services • Development of transition folders for families • Information sharing • Sharing information • Improved partnerships with the Department of Public Instruction, DVR, Developmental Disabilities, Job Service, Higher Ed, Independent Living centers, Chambers of Commerce, etc., • Development of services for students with disabilities ages 18-21 • Development of programs to balance functional and academic needs • Identification of agency responsibilities • Consistency of services throughout the region

Opportunities to locate SCSEP offices and training assets within all Job Service AJC locations are being pursued. This will increase collaboration to tie SCSEP with WIOA and Wagner-Peyser services to greatly enhance participant employment possibilities such as resume building, application writing, and job seeking. This also will provide leverage of various programs and resources to meet the employment needs of North Dakota's senior workforce.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) offers training and employment services to assist in finding and retaining full-time employment leading to self-sufficiency. TANF families receive employment and training services by participating in the Jobs Opportunity and Basic Skills (JOBS). JOBS program supportive services are available that help remove barriers to employment and training such as transportation allowance, assistance with child care costs, car repairs, tools and clothing for work, work experience, on-the-job-training, job search and job readiness, community service program, vocational educational training, providing child care services to an individual who is participating in a community service program.

TANF households with increased earnings may qualify for six (6) months of Transition Assistance. Transition Assistance promotes job retention by providing an extended period of case assistance that provides a safety net of financial support and support services to assist households in attaining self-sufficiency.

Post TANF supportive services may be provided to eligible individuals for up to six (6) months following the closure of their TANF or Transition Assistance case. Post TANF recipients continue to receive supportive services. TANF Kinship Care program provides enhanced funding and support services in order to expand the options for placement of children who are in the care, custody, and control of County Social Services, Division of Juvenile Services (DJS) or Executive Director, Department of Human Services. As an alternative to Foster Care, children may be placed with relatives. Kinship care rules follow many of the same rules as foster care.

Diversion Assistance was implemented as a means to provide short-term emergency benefits and support services to families during a 'specific crisis or episode of need'. The intent of the assistance is to address current need that may prevent the family from needed assistance under TANF. Diversion benefits and support services may be received four months in a 12 month period. Parental Responsibility Initiative for the Development of Employment (PRIDE) program is a collaborative effort with Child Support, Job Service ND and TANF Program. The program addresses non-payment of child support by the noncustodial parent. Referrals to the program are made by Child Support or by judicial order by a district court. The program assists individual find employment. Support services are offered to assist to remove barriers to employment.

Individuals with disabilities are referred to Vocational Rehabilitation to assist in finding solutions to disability-related issues to improve employment by providing: • Assessments for items such availability and use of transportation, problem-solving abilities, strengths and weaknesses with social behaviors, communication skills, grooming, dealing with conflict, motivational skills, target interventional levels, identification of barriers and support options, transferable skills and abilities, interest, self-concept

- Job Development and Placement Services to assist in attaining the job and developing essential work skills.
- Job Retention services follow along service directly engaging with the client and employer to assist in maintaining and retaining employment.
- Supported Employment for individuals who have traditionally been excluded from consideration for community employment.

TANF is the payer of first resort for TANF recipients who are eligible to receive the same supportive services from Vocational Rehabilitation.

Children and adults without a high school education are referred to Department of Public Instruction for adult education. School age children (ages 4 to 18) receiving TANF are automatically eligible for the Free or Reduced School Lunch Program through the Department of Public Instruction. Department of Public Instruction automatically enrolls the children in the School Lunch Program from a daily electronic match and exchange with the Department of Public Instruction to direct certify children for school meals.

Services offered online by Job Service ND available to all TANF recipients: • Search for employment • Receive job postings • Apply for employment • Access current labor market information • Resume services • Find career assessment tools • Assessment tools • Share Net work • O'net • RUReady • Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) • Rosetta Stone • Interdisciplinary Team Case Management

In addition, Job Service ND provides TANF recipients living in Cass, Ransom, Richland, Sargent, Steele, and Traill counties the following services: • Case management • Coaching on a variety of soft skills ranging from problem solving, working with difficult people, child care problems, scheduling problems, etc. • Job retention guidance includes frequent, structured status checks, self-evaluation and planning for the next step on the career ladder. • Ongoing job coaching can help improve job performance and avoid disciplinary issues

The Employment and Training Program is a required component of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - (SNAP) - formerly known as the food stamp program. The primary goal of the SNAP Employment and Training program is to provide SNAP participants opportunities to gain skills, training, or experience that will improve their employment prospects and reduce their reliance on SNAP benefits. Additionally, the Employment and Training program offers a way to allow SNAP recipients to meet work requirements.

IU claimants, visiting a Job Service AJC receive skill assessment, career counseling, and labor market information. Job Service AJC staff recommend on-site development tools to increase interview, soft or computer skills, short term industry training or degree programs through WIOA services and other core and community partner referrals. Job Service administers the UI, Wagner-Peyser and WIOA programs. The Senior Management collaborates closely to support claim center and the Job Service AJC assistance to claimants needing to file their claims and register for work.

Job Service AJC staff provide a variety of labor exchange services UI claimants who visit the local offices. The most common service is to assist a UI claimant with the requirement to register on the Job Service ND Virtual One-Stop (VOS). VOS is the electronic labor exchange system. Staff assist UI claimants with the online registration and provide assistance creating a resume. VOS has a virtual recruiter feature that will notify UI claimants of new job openings that meet their search criteria. Additional services to UI claimants include assistance to create resumes for each type of employment that a UI claimant is seeking and techniques for improving interviewing skills for UI claimants. Online/electronic applications are prevalent with many employers and this application process is often problematic for UI claimants that lack computer literacy. Job Service AJC staff are familiar with the local employer requirements and assist with this online application process. Social media is discussed as a means to broaden a UI claimant's job search.

UI claimants receive referrals to WIOA Dislocated Worker for upgrade training for in-demand occupations. Out of area job search and relocation support services are provided as needed. Referrals are also provided to core programs for partner services such as increased academic skill and GED or vocational rehabilitation services that support their job search activities.

Employers frequently utilize the Job Service AJCs for onsite hiring events and job fairs. UI claimants are provided information on upcoming hiring events and job fairs and are instructed on where to find future events on the Job Service ND website. Resources are available to UI claimants on various job seeking topics such as the importance of soft skills, quantifying and measuring occupational skills and accomplishments. For UI claimants with a criminal record, guidance is provided on how to overcome this barrier to employment on applications and during interviews.

The majority of job seekers reported on the 9002A Services to Participants for quarter ending March 31, 201 utilizing Wagner-Peyser services indicate they are unemployed. Unemployed individuals receive skill assessment, career counseling and planning, and labor market information in Job Service AJC's resource rooms. Job Service AJC staff recommend on-site development tools to help improve individuals' interviewing skills, soft skills, and computer skills. Unemployed individuals receive information regarding short-term industry training or degree programs through WIOA services and other partner referrals. Unemployed individuals receive job search assistance and referrals for work experience activities.

Online services are available to unemployed individuals via self-service 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, from anywhere internet access is available. Jobsnd.com links to the online labor exchange system for individual job search and employer job posting activities. Unemployed job seekers can use jobsnd.com to create résumés and conduct automated job searches. Additionally, unemployed job seekers can become aware of education and training programs available and view labor market information such as high-demand occupations, current wages and training required. Unemployed job seekers can also explore career options, find direction to veteran services, and access community resources.

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. The activities described shall conform to the statutory requirements of each program.

The Wagner-Peyser program is administered by Job Service and has historically been co-located in the Job Service AJCs alongside WIOA Title I programs, the Jobs for Veterans State Grant, TANF, SNAP, Trade Act, and PRIDE (a TANF-funded noncustodial parent employment program), facilitating collaboration and seamless service delivery between all programs when providing services to employers. North Dakota employers use jobsnd.com to post job listings, search resumes for qualified candidates, review labor market information and market trends. Employers create automated candidate searches and access links to business related resources. Job Service ND staff provides facilitated self-help to employers, who telephone into the Job Service AJC and need coaching to access online services.

Jobsnd.com uses job spidering, a powerful online tool that captures job listings from other sources including corporate websites, online newspaper listings, and other private job boards. Spidered jobs are added to Job Service's internal job listing which provides great efficiency advantages for employers. Employers who list job openings on a corporate website will automatically have their positions spidered to jobsnd.com and will not have to re-enter job order information.

Job Service's Labor Market Information (LMI) Center is the premier source of labor market information in the state. The LMI department organizes and packages labor market information for use in business and economic decision-making. Regional economic profiles, job reports, unemployment rates, wage reports, informed analyses and employment projects are a few items the Job Service AJC staff provide to help businesses make more informed workforce decisions. Skill assessment completed by Job Service ND staff enables clear direction to employer job openings or referrals to training programs. Knowing the skills job seekers have helps match them to skills desired in employer's job openings. When skill gaps are identified, job seeker training needs can be quickly addressed and paired with transferable skills of job

seekers. Job Service ND staff showcase agency services regarding on available self-service tools, provide assistance with entering effective job listings and share best practices for successful recruiting using the online system.

Job Service ND staff offer workshops for employers on a limited basis and in limited locations focusing on current, timely information needed to successfully run their businesses. Subjects include recruitment and retention strategies in a very competitive employee market, interview and screening techniques, tax laws for employers, labor market information and writing quality job listings.

Proficiency and other testing benefits employers. Job seekers can provide validation of skills and employers request testing of applicants. Job Service ND facilitates testing including, customer service, computer software, clerical office skills, legal and medical office skills and Microsoft Office. Other testing available may include flagging, and the Job Service AJC's are available for use by employers for group testing.

Job fairs for employers have proven to be a hugely successful activity. These events may be large with multiple employers or for a single business needing to fill key positions. The single employer job fairs have been providing especially successful results. An employer schedules time to spend in the Job Service AJC to connect directly with job seekers. The job fair information is shared within the Job Service AJC and on the jobsnd.com website to promote job opportunities.

Wagner-Peyser, WIOA and JSVG staff working in the same Job Service AJC allows for greater sharing of information about employers' needs and job seekers skills. When training needs are identified, Job Service works with employers to provide work based learning opportunities for in-demand occupations. Job seekers get updated skills to meet the changing needs of the workforce. WIOA funded work based learning is an excellent tool for skill building and helps employers grow their workforce. Existing skills are expanded and strengthened while new abilities are developed. Job Service staff working with employers are cognizant of occupations and opportunities to refer to registered apprenticeship. On-the-job training contracts paired with registered apprenticeship opportunities provide maximum training benefits for employers.

Job Service ND administers a state funded incumbent worker program and Job Service AJC staff promote this program to employers who are looking to increase the skills of their workforce. Workforce 20/20 provides funding assistance to businesses to offset training costs for current workers and new employees when a business is new to the state, expanding employment in the state, introducing new industry technologies or introducing new industry production methods.

Several core program staff serve on advisory boards for TrainND, the state's four regional workforce training regions. This frequently provides opportunities to collaborate when discussing training needs with employers. Job seekers and employers are referred to TrainND programs to build skills. Job Service staff may recommend future employer focused training opportunities to TrainND due to their connection and communications with employers. Job Service staff are engaged with local chambers of commerce and economic developers. LMI is frequently requested to help with decisions for prospective companies that are in locating to communities within the state.

DVR applied for and has been selected to receive technical assistance and training by the national Job Driven VR Technical Assistance Center (JD-VRTAC.) Utilizing their technical assistance, DVR will develop and begin utilizing an LMI curriculum tailored to North Dakota's needs. The LMI curriculum will be used to help clients set and accomplish career goals based on current business and employment needs within the state. In addition, the JD-VRTAC will provide technical assistance to further enhance our methods for building and maintaining employer relations. This will result in improved services to employers including employer driven training and meeting their needs utilizing customized employment.

Partner training sessions will be planned to incorporate the use of LMI data and business service activities. Adult education and Vocational Rehabilitation are implementing and expanding their services to include employer services. Job Service AJC staff will collaborate with the new partner business service staff by providing additional guidance and technical assistance on engaging employers.

Local staff have established collaborations between core partners to share workforce intelligence, partner with job fairs, and Rapid Response events. Business service staff share information on business expansion and new employers to the area. All core partner business services will participate in the State efforts to expand apprenticeships and increase credentials utilizing the Apprenticeship Accelerator and Governor Set-aside funds to meet workforce challenges and develop skills.

Training sessions to review and implement Joint WIOA Final Rule §678.435 *What are the business services provided through the one-stop delivery system, and how are they provided?* will be scheduled and will include business service staff from Job Service ND, Vocational Rehabilitation and Adult Education. The training sessions will also include strategy discussions for coordinating business service activity.

Vocational Rehabilitation provides ADA training and receives many requests for disability etiquette training for employers which helps in interacting with colleagues, customers and people met out in the community.

North Dakota Division of Vocational Rehabilitation assists ND business owners and employers in finding solutions to disability-related issues. Services are designed to maximize the productivity and potential of new hires, to help retain an existing work force and to provide research and the latest information on disability-related issues. In 2008, Division of VR launched an effort to build on this initiative through engagement with businesses to offer services that serve to support retention of workers with acquired disabilities. This is a proactive approach the VR agency has titled Rapid Retention. As the name implies, the initiative reflects need for business to retain a valuable workforce that is in need of accommodation and other disability related solutions. VR through, the work of Business Specialists and VR Counselors, meets with local businesses to inform them of the service and support available to help them maintain individuals with disabilities in their workforce. Radio, TV and digital marketing complement VR staff outreach efforts to business. VR's promise to business is to quickly assess the rehabilitation needs of their employees and efficiently complete all necessary and required documentation to provide the required rehabilitation service.

The local adult learning centers will work with both JSND and VR to consult for business services to better align services and avoid duplication with employers.

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).

The 2015 legislature directed the State Board of Higher Education shall establish a Workforce Education Advisory Council to advise the board regarding skills and qualifications needed for workforce training, vocational, and technical education programs offered at institutions under the control of the board. The council is composed of a representative of the Department of Career and Technical Education, a representative of Job Service ND, a representative of the Department of Commerce, and eight members representing business and industry in the state. The eight members representing business and industry shall be appointed by the chairman of the legislative management. The initial suggested mission key points include: • Review North Dakota's current workforce programs • Identify needed workforce skills and qualifications • Recommend revisions to existing lists of high-demand skills and qualifications and recommend ways to meet those needs. • Identify opportunities for partnerships and efficiencies Workforce Education Advisory Council

The Workforce Education Advisory Council will work in partnership with the Workforce Development Council to identify collaborative efforts to improve the connections and engagement between the workforce development system and educational institutions.

The Workforce Leadership Team will collaborate to address the goal to expand and retain workforce. The Team will implement and track progress on the strategy to identify and promote untapped labor pools such as Native Americans, New Americans, Individuals with Disabilities and workers pursuing a second career. Further provide training opportunities for above mentioned populations through DVR, Adult Education Centers, TrainND and the state's public, private and tribal colleges and universities.

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 2015 legislature directed the State Board of Higher Education shall establish a Workforce Education Advisory Council to advise the board regarding skills and qualifications needed for workforce training, vocational, and technical education programs offered at institutions under the control of the board. The council is composed of a representative of the Department of Career and Technical Education, a representative of Job Service, a representative of the Department of Commerce, and eight members representing business and industry in the state. The eight members representing business and industry shall be appointed by the chairman of the legislative management. The initial suggested mission key points include: • Review North Dakota's current workforce programs • Identify needed workforce skills and qualifications • Recommend revisions to existing lists of high-demand skills and qualifications and recommend ways to meet those needs. • Identify opportunities for partnerships and efficiencies Workforce Education Advisory Council

The Workforce Education Advisory Council will work in partnership with the Workforce Development Council to identify collaborative efforts to improve the connections and engagement between the workforce development system and educational institutions.

The Workforce Leadership Team will continue to collaborate to address the goal to expand and retain workforce. The Team will implement and track progress on the strategy to identify and promote untapped labor pools such as Native Americans, New Americans, Individuals with Disabilities and workers pursuing a second career. Further provide training opportunities for above mentioned populations through Vocational Rehabilitation, Adult Education Centers, TrainND and the state's public, private and tribal colleges and universities. The Workforce Leadership team continues to be instrumental in communicating the WIOA requirements for the eligible training provider list and developing the processes.

Job Service is responsible for establishing the eligible training provider list (ETPL) as required by WIOA. Job Service has been in contact with all providers, public and private on the existing ETPL via written correspondence, conference calls and one on one contact and has provided information and guidance to comply with new regulations included in WIOA. Job Service staff will assist training providers through the processes needed to make application for and provide the necessary data for performance for inclusion on the ETPL. Job Service staff are coordinating efforts with the State Director of the Office of Apprenticeship to include the North Dakota sponsors on the ETPL.

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).

The North Dakota workforce development and training system receives Federal and State funding support, and in many cases matching funds are also provided by the private sector. WIOA funds are used to help leverage other Federal fund sources such as Pell Grants and student loans and State funded scholarships such as the North Dakota Academic or Career and Technical Education Scholarship. North Dakota workforce partners have become accustomed to making the most out of limited funds. Collaboration between partners is strong and leveraging funds is a necessity. Co-enrollments of participants are encouraged to maximize the total resources available for preparation of the workforce to meet employment needs. Collaboration among WIOA core programs, SCSEP, Trade Act, business and industry, the North Dakota University System, TrainND (state funded customized employee training), Career and Technical Education (Carl Perkins), refugee services, foster care providers, the State Penitentiary system, and many more partners will result in: • Expanded awareness and leverage of programs/funds designated to serving targeted populations, often served by multiple entities; • Rapid development and deployment of programs and activities unique to economic and employment needs for North Dakota's workforce; • Access to increased numbers of persons in need of assistance, including low skilled, low income, individuals with disabilities, disaffected youth, veterans, dislocated workers, and individuals residing in high unemployment areas, including American Indians.

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.

The Workforce Leadership Team will establish a committee to specifically address career pathways and strategies to improve access to post-secondary credentials. The committee will consist of staff from Career and Technical Education, Higher Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, ND Office of Apprenticeship, Department of Commerce, Adult Education and Job Service North Dakota. The committee will set goals and metrics which will be tracked through the State Longitudinal Data System and the State Office of Apprenticeship.

WIOA training funds expand the access to postsecondary credential by providing training opportunities to low income, New Americans, disabled individuals and dislocated workers. Occupation areas such as healthcare career ladders of nurse assistant, licensed practical nurse and registered nurse offer career pathways and credential earning opportunities. Transportation occupations offer increased wages and opportunity based on skills and endorsements earned. Welding occupations require a variety of skills and certifications to work in specific areas. The ND eligible training provider list offers many certifications to expand skills for these in demand occupations in the State.

The ND Eligible Training provider list provides information on training program credentials and credential types. The information also includes whether the completed training further requires an industry test for credential. Core Program staff are knowledgeable and inform participants of the options and the steps to follow to pursue credential attainment.

The Workforce Development Council has established an in-demand occupations list for North Dakota in accordance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The list includes occupations determined to have a current or potential impact on the state's economy. The list includes occupations where training results in needed industry credentials. North Dakota Labor Market Information's 2014-2016 short-term employment projections were used by applying the following factors: exceptional or high growth, replacement openings, aggregate average hourly entry wages, growth openings, and required educational levels. http://www.jobsnd.com/sites/default/files/ND_In_Demand_Occupations.pdf. The in-demand occupations list is categorized to simplify information for career pathways.

North Dakota will utilize PY 2016 Governor's Set-aside funds and the Apprenticeship Accelerator grant to facilitate sector strategies in the following industries; energy, healthcare, information technology, and manufacturing. These industries are targets for increased registered apprenticeship expansion and career pathways resulting in an increase of earned credentials through sector strategy activities. Registered Apprenticeship, pre-apprenticeship, and boot camps will be expanded to develop workforce skills and increase credentials. Industry leaders as well as higher education, Economic Development, Career and Technical Education and the Registered Apprenticeship will partner to increase credentials. The objectives of the Governor's set-aside funds and Apprenticeship Accelerator grant include:

Governor's Set-aside

(1) To promote and increase competency credentials and apprenticeship through:

- Outreach and information to employers about competency credentialing and the benefits. Employer buy-in and clear understanding of apprenticeship is critical to the success of an apprenticeship and credentialing initiative;
- Establish a list of industry recognized assessments/credentials and determine requirements for an online presence;
- Establish a guide/instructions/brochure explaining the process to access and utilize existing assessments and skill badging
- Research of other state models for best practices and efforts to replicate in ND;
- Research and identification of employers, start with manufacturers, who would benefit and would be suitable to spearhead the competency assessments available to students and employers. Assist with efforts for an employer to customize an assessment to meet specific workforce skill needs. Research badging and best approach to promote this skill validation;
- Coordination with ND University Systems to incorporate credentialing;

(2) To increase utilization of apprenticeship and expand into non-traditional occupations

- Research and create pre-apprenticeship opportunities for IT, healthcare, manufacturing and energy industries
- Coordinate activities and efforts with the NDUS and Career & Technical Education to increase credentialing in the state
- State/Governor Proclamation for an Apprenticeship week

Apprenticeship Accelerator

- Promote Registered Apprenticeship to IT, healthcare and energy industryintermediaries
- Engage Higher Education with a focus on community colleges, to createintegrated programs
- Collaborate with Registered Apprenticeship State Director and identify process efficiencies
- Connect with ND community colleges and expand the NDSCS JourneyworkerTrack program. This is a flexible program providing students the opportunity to

earn an Associate in Applied Science degree by combining their previousapprenticeship training with college credit course work

- Collaborate with Career & Technical Education to establish the processes neededto implement pre-apprenticeship sponsorship within the Secondary Career &

Technical Education programs and community colleges to engage youth inRegistered Apprenticeship and supply the skilled labor pipeline

- Serve as the liaison between the State Apprenticeship Director and the Job Service ND offices for WIOA funding integration with Registered Apprenticeship

VR provides outreach to high schools to provide services to students with disabilities. As part of this effort, potentially eligible and eligible transition students are provided with vocational guidance and counseling which includes job exploration as well as opportunities for enrollment in postsecondary educational programs at institutions of higher education.

Adult learning centers will improve access to post secondary programs in the following ways:

- A partnership is being discussed with the ND University System and the Bank of ND to ensure public and private post secondary recruiters are present at all adult learning centers and that students attend to learn about programs and services including financial aid;
- Approximately half of current adult learning centers are housed in community college settings; strategies to increase post secondary access have include scholarships to GED recipients, discounts on books, supplies and fees, first semester scholarships and improved orientation methods to allow students to observe classroom activity, meet with staff and current program students; and,
- Creating partnerships with employers to offset costs for credentials and certifications.

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.

Economic development entities and Job Service have a long history of collaborating with efforts to address workforce needs in the state. North Dakota continues to experience workforce shortages statewide and in all of the Governor's targeted industries. Job Service is a valuable and willing partner for career awareness events such as regional and local career expos, job shadowing and internship promotion events.

Attracting workforce continues to be a huge need in the state and economic development partners coordinate efforts for large job fair events. Each region of the state holds multi industry job fairs that target the specific needs of local employers. These job fairs enable over 110 employers to connect with up to 1300 job seekers. Employers find these recruitment events extremely beneficial and often times hire needed employees on the spot.

North Dakota has many initiatives to recruit talent and involve economic development entities locally and statewide. Job Service's participation strengthens these efforts by providing links and data on real time job availability and opportunities. The Find the Good Life in North Dakota is a workforce recruitment campaign started by the North Dakota Economic Development Foundation. It is a private/public sector funded program designed to help solve the greatest challenge facing our business

community: workforce development, recruitment and retention. The <http://www.findthegoodlifeinnorthdakota.com/jobs/> website includes links to the Job Service labor exchange site and also includes weekly featured jobs for larger communities in the state. Job Service AJC locations are included and links to local Job Service AJC webpages and the list of job fairs. Job Service generates and provides reports on the Find the Good Life activity and these reports include the number of new registrants and resumes posted, number of phone calls from the dedicated phone line to the Job Service AJCs and current employment statistics from the current employment statistics (CES) report.

Make Your Mark is the Bismarck-Mandan approach to showcase employment opportunities in the capitol city. The website promotes the benefits of living in the Bismarck-Mandan area and right at the top of that list are the employment opportunities with a link to the jobsnd.com website and second are the area profiles generated by the Job Service Labor Market Information department. It is clear having JOB SERVICE collaboration with these initiatives adds value and increases results. <http://bmda.org/make-your-mark/> Job Service participates in many activities that support economic development around the state. Established sector groups hold manufacturing roundtables to jointly discuss industry challenges and find solutions, one challenge is recruiting workforce. Job Service staff offers the services available to assist with labor exchange, training opportunities and labor market information.

A labor market study in the Greater Fargo/Moorhead area indicated the critical need for workforce in the highest populated area in North Dakota. Job Service staff assisted in conducting the survey and continues to assist in establishing and executing initiatives on three subcommittees; Attract, Build and Innovate. The study specifically included utilizing the New American population as a workforce pool. Job Service, local economic development staff and other community stakeholders in Fargo and Grand Forks areas are working together to find ways to overcome language barriers and cultural differences to meet the needs of employers.

Local Job Service AJC staff engage and collaborate with many county Job Development Authorities in their localities and staff are members on their boards. All locations in North Dakota are experiencing workforce shortages and collaborating with these local entities assist with recruitment of workforce and offer training resources. One Job Service Employer Committee remains in North Dakota and has continued due to the benefits of collaboration for this value added agriculture and manufacturing community.

Job Service AJC and VR staff partner with local economic development corporations (EDC) in a variety of ways. Many Job Service management are members on the EDC boards. Job Service AJC staff participate in EDC strategic planning meetings, workforce study planning, provide labor market information and regional employment issues such as workforce shortages and child care. Partnerships are developed to collaborate to ensure the success of new employers who open their business. This assistance includes recruiting workforce, posting job orders and resume searches. Joint meetings are held with entrepreneurs and new employers who are looking to locate or expand their markets to the area and receive information on the workforce resources and financial incentives available. Financial incentives may include WOTC, WIOA and State funded programs for incumbent worker training and state tax incentives. County and city demographics are shared as well as supply and demand information.

Job Service AJC staff participate with sector strategies with the following industry groups; Tech Connect IT Sector, the Health Tech Trade Steering Committee and Manufacturer's Roundtables.

Job fairs are planned jointly between Job Service AJC staff, chambers of commerce and community EDC's. The recruitment of employers and promotion of the events are shared responsibilities. EDC staff assist during job fair events and greet and welcome employers and job seekers.

Job Service AJC staff partner with city EDC's to connect area students to careers. Arranging job-shadow days in February is a way to introduce industry and employers to provide career exploration. This effort includes local EDC's, area high schools and community colleges to provide a 4-6 hour job shadow to area students. Job Service AJC staff and EDCs partner to promote local employment and careers through the EDC sponsored Career Counselor Week. Career counselors hear presentations about local economic development, employment opportunities and labor market information to use with their students.

EDC's depend on the involvement and resources from Job Service AJC and VR management and staff to conduct annual Career Expos. Career expos feature hands-on employer exhibits and break-out sessions on career exploration and pathways. Economic development staff consider this a collaborative workforce retention strategy and educates attendees about career opportunities and related training needed.

Many Job Service management and VR staff are members on their local chamber of commerce and subcommittees. An example is the Chamber Agriculture Committee working with businesses to promote agriculture and agricultural related businesses in Southwest North Dakota or Military Affairs to sustain partnerships with the two Air Force Bases in the State, Young Professionals groups and Business Training committees. Job Service AJC and VR staff frequently provide LMI information and participate in area Leadership courses. Core Program staff strengthen relationships with area chamber members by participating in Business after Hours events, area Human Resource committees and Downtowners Associations. Chamber of Commerce Ambassador Group membership is a strong business relationship builder through ribbon-cutting and ground-breaking ceremonies to celebrate grand openings, new locations, groundbreakings, expansions and milestone accomplishments of Chamber members.

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.).

JOB SERVICE utilizes the Geographic Solutions products as the operating system for labor exchange, case management and labor market information. The labor exchange function is linked from jobsnd.com to the job listing site that provides fast access to a database of thousands of jobs. Job Spidering, a powerful online tool that captures job listings from other sources including corporate web sites, online newspaper listings, and other private job boards is one of the features included. Spidered jobs are added to internal job listings to provide seamless access to thousands of job openings. Employers benefit from having job openings viewed by the largest applicant pool in North Dakota and the ability to view similar listings for wage and benefit comparison. Job seekers benefit by having the largest single portal in North Dakota to access job openings for all occupations. Jobsnd.com has the largest pool of job openings in the state.

The Job Service case management system is also a Geographic Solutions product and is utilized for all registrations, enrollments and data entry for the Wagner-

Peysner, WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth programs. The case management system is linked to the labor exchange system and tracks participant's activity. The Trade Act program activity is incorporated into this system. The system provides ease for dual enrollment and seamless case management. Each participant has an enrollment summary that captures the activity from the multiple programs and case managers can quickly ascertain the current status and plan for future recommendations to achieve employment goals. All case notes are centralized which provides a cohesive picture of a participant's activity over multiple programs. Case managers have a procedure manual that provides technical assistance for data entry, data validation and system use.

Geographic Solutions is the vendor for North Dakota's labor market information. Jobsnd.com includes the link to North Dakota's Workforce Intelligence Network (NDWIN). NDWIN is a next generation internet application bringing together diverse stakeholders through an expanded data collection and data mining effort. NDWIN generates, compiles, disseminates and publishes the state's leading economic data and labor market information—from wages to projections to the latest employment figures—resulting in better-informed economic decisions. NDWIN has the most extensive network of economic data resources in the state, maintained by experienced research analysts meeting high statistical standards.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AWARE (Accessible Web-Based Activity Reporting Environment) is NDVR internal, web based, fully integrated, comprehensive case management software system designed for public vocational rehabilitation agencies.

AWARE is hosted by the State of North Dakota Information Technology Department. Staff within the VR program possess the requisite skills and program knowledge to support the administration of AWARE. This group exchanges information about the system and recommends system's modifications to its vendor Alliance Enterprise.

ADULT EDUCATION The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, Adult Education office, operates a statewide student management data system known as LACES (Literacy, Adult and Community Education System) for every student served. Used since 2010, this comprehensive web-based program allows each adult learning center, as well as the ND Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, to enter standard demographic, assessment, attendance, class hours and other relevant related data into a real time structured system.

B. Data-collection and reporting processes used for all programs and activities, including those present in one-stop centers*.

Job Service receives a data file generated from Geographic Solutions from all program information. Job Service sends this file to WRIS and uses the file to match against North Dakota wage records. The results from WRIS and the state's wages are combined and sent back to Geographic Solutions. The wage results are incorporated into the data file and returned to Job Service. This file is used to generate the WIOA, Wagner-Peyser, VETS and Trade Act federal reports through the E-DRVS.

Vocational Rehabilitation AWARE can be customized to include data elements unique to NDVR's business plan and to produce specialized reports. The agency uses AWARE to track service delivery, case service funds, usage and outcomes. The agency further uses AWARE to track service provided through contracts with local school districts and providers to students age 14-21 engaged in pre-employment activities. Pre-employment activities to this group follow the required cores service funded through 15% of the agencies federal VR grant. Students' engagement in pre-employment service can be tracked and their activities achieved in the AWARE until the time they graduate secondary school, no longer participate in pre-employment service or apply for and are found eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation service.

Web-based and real time reports are available to all staff with access to AWARE, both remotely and at itinerant locations. Counselors and managers can view a variety of data and information, including budgets, production activities and "action due" reports. The RSA-113 and RSA-911 reports produced for RSA are generated directly from AWARE.

Adult Education The LACES system is self-hosted and produces annual tables required by OCTAE through an upload process to the NRS site. Training is annually required on feature use and data evaluation. This student data management system is used by 17 states as the adult education student data management system. Customized alerts allow staff to track multiple data fields, including follow up. Multiple queries are readily available, as is a dashboard feature for each program to 'self-assess' progress in six key areas. The State Office has access to all program data and conducts a quarterly data analysis of each local program for progress, accomplishments and challenges. State and local program staff use LACES to track service delivery and outcomes as an individual teacher and program performance indicators.

* 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, describe the State's process for developing guidelines for State-administered one-stop partner programs' contributions to a one-stop delivery system, including benchmarks, and its guidance to assist local boards, chief elected officials, and local one-stop partners in determining equitable and stable methods of funding infrastructure in accordance with sec. 121(h)(1)(B). Beginning with the state plan modification in 2018 and for subsequent state plans and state plan modifications, the State must also include such guidelines.

Core program partners are engaged in a project with the assistance of the North Dakota Information Technology Department to create a common participant intake and through data sharing, provide a portal for collecting common participant outcomes for federal performance measures reports. The project has three phases: 1) The WIOA Study, 2) Procure WIOA Solution and 3) Implement Solution. Each phase will complete the business analysis needed to develop policies and agreement needed for co-enrollment and business rules. New processes and policies will be provided as developed. A chart has been developed that illustrates where core programs intersect and opportunities to co-enroll and leverage resources.

The North Dakota Workforce Leadership Team will initiate the development of the guidelines for the State-administered one-stop partner programs' contributions to a one-stop delivery system. Since North Dakota is a single workforce area, the Team will develop benchmarks and guidance with State agency leadership to determine equitable and stable methods of funding infrastructure. Job Service ND currently has an administrative procedure and policy for co-location for WIOA partners. The Team will review these directives for applicability and make recommendations to the Workforce Development Council Executive Committee for input prior to submitting the recommendations to the Governor.

The Core Partner staff will establish a workgroup of frontline case managers to create a best practice that will be put into policy with regard to co-enrollment of mutual

participants. The policy will outline the process case managers will take when determining referrals and co-enrollments between partner programs. The policy will be shared with all partner program staff through interactive video conferencing and training will be provided to implement processes outlined in the policy. Management staff will monitor and reinforce the policy on an ongoing basis. During local partner meetings, the policy will be discussed and reviewed and will be modified as necessary.

Our state does have some co-enrollment policies and system structure in place, primarily for programs administered by Job Service ND Title WIOA Adult, Youth and Dislocated Worker, Wagner Peyser, Trade Act, and JVSG. For example, Job Service ND requires co-enrollment of Trade Act Recipients whenever they receive assistance or services from WIOA.

North Dakota has universal intake through the Job Service ND management information system Virtual One Stop and includes WIOA Adult, Youth, and Dislocated Worker and Wagner Peyser core programs. Other required programs included in the universal intake include Trade Act and JVSG.

North Dakota will use the first half of PY 16 to develop the State one-stop infrastructure funding mechanism. The steps that will be taken include: 1) Facilitating discussions with core partners and required one-stop partners to review the requirements of WIOA, the final regulations and the options available for infrastructure funding; 2) formalize a plan; 3) Develop guidance for the One-Stop MOU; 4) Communicate plan to the Workforce Development Council; and 5) Present the plan to the Governor. North Dakota will elect a new Governor in November of 2016. North Dakota intends to present the plan to the new State Leadership in 2017 and will implement prior to the deadline of July 1, 2017.

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.

Titles I and III of WIOA are administered by Job Service North Dakota.

Job Service's history is rooted in the Wagner-Peyser Act of 1933 and the Social Security Act of 1935 and is the WIOA one-stop operator providing employment and training services to workers, job seekers, youth and businesses. Job Service administers the unemployment insurance program, Jobs for Veterans State Grant, Trade Act, TANF employment and training and a TANF discretionary program, SNAP employment and training, and 2 state programs including incumbent worker training. Job Service houses the Labor Market Information center.

The Job Service ND organizational chart may be viewed here, http://www.jobsnd.com/sites/default/files/JSNDOrgStructure2016_0.pdf.

Title II of WIOA is administered by the Department of Public Instruction. The organization chart may be viewed here, <https://www.nd.gov/dpi/uploads/28/orgchrt.pdf>.

Title IV of WIOA is administered by the Department of Human Services. The organizational chart may be viewed here, <https://www.nd.gov/dhs/about/docs/org-chart.pdf>.

B. State Board

Provide a description of the State Board, including—

1. Membership roster

Provide a membership roster for the State Board, including members' organizational affiliations.

• Ryan Ackerman, Ackerman-Estvoid Engineering (business) • Al Anderson, ND Department of Commerce • Maggie Anderson, ND Department of Human Services • Patrick Bertagnolli, B & G Oilfield Services (business) • Karin Blanchfield, Woodland Resort (business) • Chris Blowers, BNI Coal (business) • Sonja Bommersbach, Dickey Rural Networks (business) • Dr Drake Carter, Bismarck State College • David Farnsworth, Great River Energy, (business), Chair • Valerie Fischer, Department of Public Instruction • Cheri Giesen, Job Service ND • Rosella Grant, Organized Labor • Mark Hagerott, ND University System • Waylon Hedegaard, AFL-CIO • Uma Hoffmann, Steffes Corporation (business) • Lee Ann Johnston, Devils Lake School Board • Jan Kamphuis, Sanford Health (business) • David Kemnitz, Organized Labor • Janel Klinke, Eventide (business) • Wayne Kutzer, ND Department of Career & Technical Education • Perry Lubbers, Trail King Industries (business) • Leslie Lzicar, JR Simplot (business) • Julie Magnus, Strata Corporation (business) • Dr Leander "Russ" McDonald, United Tribes Technical College • Jane Priebe, Wahpeton Economic Development • Dan Rood, Southeast Region Career & Technology Center • Ricky Thomas, Northrop Grumman Aerospace Systems (business) • Bruce Walker, Coldwell Banker/1st Minot Realty (business), Vice-Chair • Jim Walker, Organized Labor • Ofelia Wagner, Minn-Dak Farmers Cooperative (business) • Scott Davis, ND Indian Affairs Commission, ex-officio • Lonnie Wangen, Veteran Affairs of ND, ex-officio • Susan Gunsch, Council Director, ex-officio

2. Board Activities

Provide a description of the activities that will assist State Board members and staff in carrying out State Board functions effectively.

The Workforce Development Council meets quarterly and is briefed by the Director and core program staff of the requirements in WIOA. The Council discusses recommendations and provides approval on policies concerning their responsibilities. Each meeting provides the status of each core program's outcomes towards negotiated performance levels. The meetings showcase target industry's workforce needs and challenges and holds discussions on how the workforce system can assist. Progress made on initiatives, such as the in-demand occupation list or ETPL is provided and feedback gathered in implementation.

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.

North Dakota is a single workforce area.

Job Service ND staff conducts annual on-site monitoring of the WIOA programs at the Job Service AJCs. The annual visits occur every year during the months of October to December. WIOA adult, dislocated worker, and youth files will be sampled and reviewed for compliance with federal WIOA regulations, and Job Service WIOA policy and procedure directives. At the conclusion of each on-site visit, the results and recommendations of the monitoring are reviewed with the Job Service AJC managers and supervisors. A written report identifying deficiencies and recommendations for improvement is disseminated in February of each year for response and, as warranted, corrective action. This monitoring enables WIOA managers and supervisors to readily see how well the Job Service AJCs are performing in case management and where improvements are needed.

Desk reviews include quarterly monitoring of participant WIOA expenditures. The process of monitoring expenditures includes pulling a sample of payments from all the quarterly payments made on behalf of WIOA participants. Case managers forward the source documentation used to justify the payments in the sample. The results of the review are documented and compiled in a formal report and disseminated to the WIOA managers and supervisors for response and, as warranted, corrective action.

The WIOA and Wagner-Peyser data element validation reviews coincide with the annual on-site WIOA monitoring visits. WIOA data element validation verifies the accuracy of WIOA participant data used to generate the WIOA performance reports. An official report on the results of the WIOA data element validation review is issued in February of each year. The ND Department of Public Instruction and the Adult Education office have several levels of internal assessment. A developed work plan is reviewed and approved by DPI management each biennium as part of the budget process; state funds are allocated to align to the work plan goals and tasks. Quarterly reviews of the work plan and accomplishments are completed between the Director and management. The review includes fiscal, program data, local program data and general program oversight.

The adult education office is also available upon request for federal and state auditing/monitoring; the adult education office has undergone state audit process the past two biennium's with no fiscal or program findings.

The State Adult Education office monitors each of the 17 local programs every 3 years and more often if there is a new director, a previous finding or upon request. The onsite monitoring covers 17 areas of program and fiscal authority and involves multiple staff.

Federal performance indicators are also part of the Director annual review process and a determination of performance. Additionally, each local program is also assessed on its individual performance indicators.

The North Dakota Division of Vocational Rehabilitation maintains a comprehensive program evaluation system with various components: • Consumer record of services review • Grantee oversight • Evaluation of service providers • Customer satisfaction • Performance measures monitoring

Data for program evaluation is collected using various methods, including surveys (telephone), public forums, site reviews, grant reports, client record reviews, client comment forms, a statistical system and program standards and performance indicators. This information is analyzed by management; if appropriate, it is shared with staff, service providers, grantees, federal funding agencies, legislature, clients and others. The analysis is used to assess unmet consumer needs, improve services and to guide the Division in planning its future focus and direction. Additionally, the information is used to assess and forecast the training needs of the Division's staff. Performance indicators have traditionally included: Change in Employment Outcomes • Percent of Employment Outcomes • Competitive Employment Outcomes—a primary indicator • Significance of Disability—a primary indicator • Earnings Ratio—a primary indicator • Self-Support • Rehabilitation Rate

Collectively, the core partners share performance measures and annual outcomes with the Governor's Workforce Development Council.

B. Assessment of One-Stop 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.

North Dakota is a single workforce area.

Job Service, as the one-stop operator, will assess the performance of other one-stop delivery system partner programs. Programs included in this assessment are Trade Act, Jobs for Veterans State Grant, SNAP employment and training, TANF employment and training and TANF discretionary funds. Assessments are completed by matching to North Dakota UI wages for entered employment performance on SNAP employment and training. Job Service will monitor monthly work participation rate reports for TANF employment and training. The State Administrator of the Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) accompanies the DVET during the annual required audit which assesses service delivery, priority of service and performance measures. Additional JVSG assessment is a review of the Managers Quarterly Report for Service to Veterans. Annual TAA data element validation results are assessed for any areas to improve and technical assistance. The results of the TAA review are documented and compiled in a formal report and disseminated to the Job Service AJC managers and supervisors for response and, as warranted, corrective

action.

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 an assessment 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.

Job Service North Dakota analyses the performance outcomes on a quarterly basis. Even though North Dakota is a single area state, reports are created to evaluate the performance geographically. Records are divided into 4 quadrants and performance is calculated based on the geographic area. Each quadrant of the state has unique sectors and workforce needs and this assessment provides a method to evaluate areas of improvement needed and where technical assistance may be needed. North Dakota met or exceeded all the WIA negotiated performance measures for PY 2013 and PY 2014. In PY 2013, North Dakota was one of only three states awarded the last WIA Incentive grant.

A common identifier between core programs will be built into the Common MIS project to enable reports to be created based on co-enrollments. Cohorts of co-enrolled customers will be compared to cohorts of customers who were provided service by a single core program. The result of the evaluation and research will be shared with all core programs to illustrate the extent of the benefits of co-enrollment and will be used with program staff to further promote the integration of core programs.

The North Dakota Division of Vocational Rehabilitation has traditionally met and exceeded prime indicators. As an example the VR program standard for the percent of employment outcomes for a North Dakota Combined is 55.8%. North Dakota VR's percent of employment outcomes for FY 15 is 72%.

Adult Education uses two methods for assessment of the effectiveness of services: the dissection and review of performance measures and monitoring and subjective evaluation with students, local advisory boards and sponsoring agency evaluations. In addition to the local review of performance measures and program monitoring as discussed previously, customer (student) satisfaction surveys and focus groups are completed at each local program to determine their level of satisfaction with the quality of instruction, the coordination of career information, and overall improvements or suggestions. Local programs have changed hours, instructional delivery or other program features based on the surveys. Each local program has an advisory board who also provides regular feedback on service delivery, partnerships and outcomes; this information is also used to make changes at the local program level. Lastly, each sponsoring agency (i.e., school district or community college) is asked to annually assess for performance and services; this is part of the overall performance management of the local program director. The combination of these methods allows both state and local programming to be flexible in meeting the needs of their communities and students, as well as assess unmet student needs, improve services and to guide the department in planning its future focus, fiscal and programmatic needs.

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 WIOA intent of integrated services will be evaluated. The benefits of co-enrollment will be the focus of a research project. A common identifier between core programs will be built into the Common MIS project to enable reports to be created based on co-enrollments. Cohorts of co-enrolled customers will be compared to cohorts of customers who were provided service by a single core program. The result of the evaluation and research will be shared with all core programs to illustrate the extent of the benefits of co-enrollment and will be used with program staff to further promote the integration of core programs.

Core program partners will determine a cohort of individuals who were co-enrolled and a cohort who received services from only one program (excluding WIOA with Wagner-Peyser who are all co-enrolled). Data bases of each program SSN's will be compared and matches will determine the co-enrollment cohort. The evaluation will be a comparison of education and earnings results of the co-enrolled records against the single enrollment records. State Longitudinal Data Systems (SLDS) data and Workforce Data Quality Initiative (WDQI) wage data bases will be used to compare education attainment from the ND University Systems and ND Department of Public Instruction and Job Service ND wage records and potentially out of state wage records. This evaluation may be completed semi-annually to establish best practices and benefits of co-enrollment between core programs.

(SLDS and WDQI are described in section [III.b.6.B - Assessment of Participants' Post-Program Success](#))

DVR conducts case reviews to ensure that individual counselors as well as regions are complying with state and federal regulations and policies as well as to identify best practices. 10% of all counselors' cases are reviewed by a statewide review team bi-annually annually. Each Regional Administrator is also responsible for review a minimum of 10% of each counselor's cases annually. In addition, there are also focused reviews conducted quarterly on cases that are identified to have an anomaly such as an extended period of time in a status. Conducting these reviews helps to ensure that VR clients are receiving quality services. When needed, DVR will provide additional training at either the regional or state level. The reviews are can also identify if a specific counselor is not meeting the acceptable performance standards and are then place on a plan for improvement.

DVR, upon recommendation and guidance from the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), contracts with an independent marketing and research firm to conduct client satisfaction surveys. New questionnaires were developed with consultation and approval by the SRC which includes questions regarding their satisfaction with other service providers and if they found the other organization or resources helpful which does include Job Service ND. The research firm conducts quarterly surveys on a random sample of individuals who have open cases and have advanced to the next status as well as those whose cases were closed. The summary report is then reviewed and shared with the Chief of Field Services as well as the Regional Administrators. Areas that are identified to be a weakness are addressed at the appropriate level.

Job Service North Dakota's Systems Management unit is responsible for reporting of WIOA program performance data and monitoring of WIOA activities. The Systems Management unit uses a number of methods to evaluate WIOA activities including quarterly desk reviews and annual on-site visits to the One-Stop Career Centers to conduct WIOA program monitoring and WIOA data element validation.

Desk reviews include the quarterly monitoring of participant WIOA and TAA expenditures. The process of monitoring expenditures includes pulling a sample of payments from all the quarterly payments made on behalf of WIOA and TAA participants and having the case managers forward to the person conducting the desk review copies of all the source documentation used to justify the payments in the sample. This quarterly monitoring is conducted to ensure the One-Stop Career Centers are using program funds responsibly and the payment process policies and procedures are adhered to by all staff. The results of the quarterly participant WIOA expenditure reviews are documented and compiled in a formal report following the reviews and disseminated to the Job Service AJC office managers, WIOA

supervisors, and customer service staff for response and, as warranted, corrective action.

Systems Management staff conducted the annual on-site WIOA monitoring of the One-Stop Career Centers. The annual visits to the One-Stop Career Centers occur every year during the months of October to December. WIOA adult, dislocated worker, and youth files are sampled and reviewed for compliance with federal WIOA regulations, and Job Service WIOA policy and procedure directives. At the conclusion of each on-site visit, the results and recommendations of the monitoring are reviewed with the One-Stop Career Center managers and supervisors. A written report identifying deficiencies and recommendations for improvement is disseminated in February of each year to the managers, supervisors, and customer service staff for response and, as warranted, corrective action. This monitoring enables Job Service AJC office managers, WIOA supervisors, and customer service staff to readily see how well the One-Stop Career Centers are performing in case management and where improvements are needed.

The WIOA data element validation reviews coincide with the annual on-site WIOA monitoring visits. WIOA data element validation verifies the accuracy of WIOA participant data used to generate the WIOA performance reports. All One-Stop Career Center managers and supervisors are informed of the results in their area. An official report on the results of the WIOA data element validation review is issued in February of each year.

Evaluation of adult education local programs involves several methods:

- Every site is monitored according to state and federal standards every other year through an onsite visit and self-assessment model.
- Annual desk audits are completed by each local program director and staff.
- The state office initiates monthly data audits using the student data management system LACES and also NRS data tables for each site.
- As ND uses GED as its HSE, the GEDTS and PV data tools are also used to evaluate academic gains.

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—

1. Youth activities in accordance with WIOA section 128(b)(2) or (b)(3),

For Title I programs, North Dakota is a single State local area under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity act of 2015 as designated by Governor Jack Dalrymple. Job Service North Dakota is designated by the Governor as the WIOA Fiscal Agent, Grant Recipient and State Administrative Entity. The Job Service ND Executive Director is designated as the WIOA Liaison. The WIOA Youth activities are provided by Job Service North Dakota through a Memorandum of Understanding between the Workforce Development Council and Job Service North Dakota.

2. Adult and training activities in accordance with WIOA section 133(b)(2) or (b)(3),

For Title I programs, North Dakota is a single State local area under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity act of 2015 as designated by Governor Jack Dalrymple. Job Service North Dakota is designated by the Governor as the WIOA Fiscal Agent, Grant Recipient and State Administrative Entity. The Job Service ND Executive Director is designated as the WIOA Liaison. The WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Career Services and Training are provided by Job Service North Dakota through a Memorandum of Understanding between the Governor, the Workforce Development Council and Job Service North Dakota.

3. Dislocated worker employment and training activities in accordance with WIOA section 133(b)(2) and based on data and weights assigned.

For Title I programs, North Dakota is a single State local area under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity act of 2015 as designated by Governor Jack Dalrymple. Job Service North Dakota is designated by the Governor as the WIOA Fiscal Agent, Grant Recipient and State Administrative Entity. The Job Service ND Executive Director is designated as the WIOA Liaison. The WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Career Services and Training are provided by Job Service North Dakota through a Memorandum of Understanding between the Governor, the Workforce Development Council and Job Service North Dakota.

B. For Title II:

1. 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.

Title II, Adult Education, awarded local programs through a competitive basis in 1998 following the reauthorization to WIA. We have not held a formal competition since that time; the same 17 local providers remain in place. The NDDPI has agreed to hold a competition once the ND State Plan is approved and for the 2017 program year. The competition will align with all federal requirements of WIOA and will follow state procurement laws and regulations to ensure equitable access.

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, Adult Education Office, will prepare for a new competition to distribute AEFLA funds for the 2017-2018 program

year (July 1, 2017). The ND Governor's Workforce Development Council, which serves as the only state WIB, will seek statewide fund distribution by nothing less than a regional service delivery model to maximize service delivery statewide. Each regional site will determine the delivery of satellite programs within the respective region.

A (historical) formula method will be used to determine the amount of funding based upon region population, unemployment rates and other distinguished factors (past performance of core indicators, EFL gains) to be determined prior to the competition and RFP development. After year one, a performance based funding formula equal to 50% will be implemented.

The ND Department of Public Instruction (DPI) is the State's eligible agency for adult education and literacy programs and responsible for administering funds and providing program/performance oversight to local program grantees. Adult education and literacy eligible providers approved under Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA) requirements will continue to receive funding through June 30, 2017, as long as the eligible current providers adhere to State and federal grant expectations as measured through annual applications, financial reports, and program performance reports.

During grant year 2016-17, DPI will implement a new competitive application process for all federal 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 to the 13 considerations in Title II of WIOA.

TIMELINE: The following steps will be taken in conducting the AEFLA competition:

- *November 14, 2016:* Announcement of RFP process and bidders conference via multiple media venues to eligible providers as identified in WIOA and using multiple vendor listings (a variety of platforms to ensure statewide participation and may include local newspapers, DPI newsletter, press releases, social media, and contacts with other state and local agencies and workforce partners) to reach local education agencies, community-based or faith-based organizations, voluntary literacy organizations, ND University System Institutions, public or private nonprofit agencies, libraries, public housing authorities, other nonprofits that have the ability to provide literacy services, consortiums of organizations listed above, and a partnership between an employer and an entity described above.
- *December 15, 2016:* DPI hosts a bidder conference (as established by law) to any eligible provider; the priorities and RFP process will be released and reviewed.
- *December 16, 2016 - January 31, 2017:* DPI procurement officer provides technical assistance to inquiries from potential eligible providers.
- *January 31, 2017:* Due date for AEFLA grant applications
- *February 1 - February 17, 2017:* DPI procurement officer reviews for initial compliance of any submitted application; recruits GWDC members to review and score AEFLA grant applications.
- *February 20-24, 2017:* Review team meets to review and score AEFLA grant applications; DPI procurement officer and fiscal officer review scoring and proposed budgets to determine rank-ordered slate based on applicant scores.
- *February 27 - March 3, 2017:* DPI announces AEFLA grant applicants that will receive funding.
- *March 2017:* selected applicants participate in three day training.
- *July 1, 2017:* AEFLA grant providers begin grant cycle, programming, and funding.

To determine if an applicant is an organization of demonstrated effectiveness, all applicants will be required to provide data demonstrating their ability to improve skills of low-literate adults in the applicable academic areas related to the RFP. Prior recipients will use data from the Adult Education student data management system (LACES) to show how they met State-negotiated performance measures for all student levels, as well as for English language learners. New organizations will be provided forms to show demonstrated student learning gain, including low-literacy level and English language learners. All applicants, current or new, will be required to demonstrate its record of improving the knowledge and skills needed to transition successfully to postsecondary 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 be eliminated from the competition.

Funding will be made available on a three year cycle to provide adult education services. After implementation of services, providers will apply on an annual basis for continuing funding under Title II.

Requested Revision(s)

Item partially addressed. The State did not describe how it will determine that eligible providers are organizations of demonstrated effectiveness. Update State narrative or Action Plan.

2. 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.

The ND Department of Public Instruction, Adult Education office directly funds its grants and contracts and does not use or fund a sub-State entity to conduct a competition. The agency will use the same announcement, application and process for all applications as is required in ND Century Code; the required involvement of the agency procurement officer is to ensure that all applications are treated in the same manner and with consistent processes; that application processes are clear written and nonnegotiable. Direct application will be the required norm. DPI procurement processes ensures direct access to apply for grants or contracts to all eligible providers in ND. Eligible applicants under Section 231 of WIOA will submit applications to the agency.

RFPs for all programs competed will adhere to direct and equitable provisions to award funds under WIOA sections 225: corrections; 231: eligible providers; and 243: integrated English Literacy and Civics Education. All RFPs issued under AEFLA will prescribe to the competition process outlined previously. Each application will be available to all eligible providers. Section 243 funds and section 225 funds will be competed through separate RFP processes. Applications from each competition will use review teams, scoring procedures, and final determination consistent with the description provided above. These approaches meet the requirements specified in AEFLA and is satisfied that every effort is made to ensure direct and equitable access.

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.

North Dakota VR program, authorized as title IV of WIOA is designated as a "combined" agency. The Rehabilitation Act, provides that states may operate a "combined"

agency serving individuals regardless of their disabilities. The act does allow states to operate two separate VR agencies, one agency for individuals who are blind or visually impaired, and a “general” agency for individuals with all other disabilities.

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.

1. 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.

Job Service ND, Adult Education and Vocational Rehabilitation have begun the project of integrating data systems and a method for common intake. The project is collaborating with the ND Information Technology Department and the State Procurement Office. The project charter has been created and the business analysis has been completed. The business analysis will be utilized in the creation of an RFI. The RFI responses will determine the need to progress to an RFP. The planned result of the project will be to implement interfaces among the partner agencies with a common intake process which includes a self-service customer notification based on responses for recommended services. The project will also create an integrated system to create the required federal performance reports. The project includes the creation of data sharing agreements necessary for the nature of this task.

The Workforce Development Council will receive progress reports of this project.

2. 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.

Job Service ND, Adult Education and Vocational Rehabilitation have begun the project of integrating data systems and a method for common intake. The project is collaborating with the ND Information Technology Department and the State Procurement Office. The project charter has been created and the business analysis has been completed. The business analysis will be utilized in the creation of an RFI. The RFI responses will determine the need to progress to an RFP. The planned result of the project will be to implement interfaces among the partner agencies with a common intake process which includes a self-service customer notification based on responses for recommended services. The project will also create an integrated system to create the required federal performance reports. The project includes the creation of data sharing agreements necessary for the nature of this task.

The Workforce Development Council will receive progress reports of this project.

3. 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.

Job Service ND, Adult Education and Vocational Rehabilitation have begun the project of integrating data systems and a method for common intake. The project is collaborating with the ND Information Technology Department and the State Procurement Office. The project charter has been created and the business analysis has been completed. The business analysis will be utilized in the creation of an RFI. The RFI responses will determine the need to progress to an RFP. The planned result of the project will be to implement interfaces among the partner agencies with a common intake process which includes a self-service customer notification based on responses for recommended services. The project will also create an integrated system to create the required federal performance reports. The project includes the creation of data sharing agreements necessary for the nature of this task.

The Workforce Development Council will receive progress reports of this project.

4. Describe the State’s plans to develop and produce the reports required under section 116, performance accountability system. (WIOA section 116(d)(2)).

Job Service ND, Adult Education and Vocational Rehabilitation have begun the project of integrating data systems and a method for common intake. The project is collaborating with the ND Information Technology Department and the State Procurement Office. The project charter has been created and the business analysis has been completed. The business analysis will be utilized in the creation of an RFI. The RFI responses will determine the need to progress to an RFP. The planned result of the project will be to implement interfaces among the partner agencies with a common intake process which includes a self-service customer notification based on responses for recommended services. The project will also create an integrated system to create the required federal performance reports. The project includes the creation of data sharing agreements necessary for the nature of this task.

The Workforce Development Council will receive progress reports of this project.

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. Separately, the Departments of Labor and Education anticipate working with States to inform future guidance and possible information collection(s) on these accountability systems. 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.

North Dakota's lead agencies will use the WIOA Primary Indicators of Performance to assess the immediate progress of participants from core programs. North Dakota's lead agencies will comply with federally directed WIOA evaluations and will on occasion conduct evaluations of longer term outcomes for program participants. Such evaluations will include impact studies that will assess a participant's employment status, earnings or educational achievement beyond the established timelines that are incorporated into the WIOA Primary Indicators of Performance. The Workforce Leadership team will assess the best use of SLDS data and jointly establish reports to assess post-program success. The report results will be evaluated and focus on identifying successful service strategies.

North Dakota will utilize the Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS), a series of secured data warehouses comprised of historical education and workforce training data, to assess WIOA

participant post-program success. The objective of the SLDS is to provide data on the outcomes of North Dakota education and workforce training programs. Job Service ND through a partnership with ND Information Technology Department and ND Department of Public Instruction received a federal Workforce Data Quality Initiative grant in 2010 to develop a Job Service ND warehouse (workforce) separate from the K12 warehouse. ND Information Technology Department is responsible for building and managing the warehouse on behalf of Job Service ND. SLDS data will be used to illustrate how the workforce activities affect future earnings. SLDS data from Job Service ND wage tables, North Dakota University Systems, Department of Public Instruction and Department of Human Services provides the capability to track participants and to determine employment, education activity and credential attainment.

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.)

North Dakota will use a WDQI data warehouse which is populated daily to utilize UI wage data for WIOA requirements. This data base will be the source for wage data for performance accountability, evaluations, and as a source for workforce and labor market information, consistent with Federal and State law.

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.

Job Service North Dakota, Vocational Rehabilitation, through the Department of Human Services, and Adult Education, through the Department of Public Instruction have signed data sharing agreements with the State Longitudinal Data System. The project underway with these same agencies to establish a common intake process and common reporting and performance measurements has resources earmarked for legal review for new and expanded data sharing agreements. These agreements will include the necessary safeguards as required in section 444 of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g) and other applicable Federal laws.

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.

Job Service AJCs offer priority of service to all covered persons who access the workforce system. Covered persons will be identified at point of entry to allow them to take full advantage of priority of service. Customers entering a Job Service Office will be queried in the customer reception area (point of entry) to ascertain covered person status. A "quick assessment" guide will be used by staff. A customer that self-attests to being a veteran or spouse of an eligible veteran (covered person) will be offered the opportunity to step to the front of the line and receive services before a non-covered customer. At that time, the covered person will be made aware of their entitlement to priority of service, employment and training services available and eligibility requirements for available employment and training services.

Covered persons utilizing self- service will be made aware of entitlement to priority of service at the time of their registration in the Virtual One Stop (VOS). Once the customer identifies themselves as a covered person, a screen automatically displays information on entitlement to priority of service and programs and services that are available through Job Service North Dakota.

Job Service AJC staff will conduct an intake/assessment for each Veteran/Eligible Spouse at point of entry to a Job Service AJC. Throughout the intake process, Veterans who disclose or self-attest to meeting one or more of the criteria for DVOP services will be referred to a DVOP. If a DVOP is not available when a referral is necessary, the Veteran/Eligible Spouse may choose to be served on a priority basis by another staff member.

Veterans not meeting the criteria for DVOP services are to be referred to appropriate non-JVSG staff to receive core, intensive, and/or training services on a priority of service basis.

Job Service will monitor priority of service to veterans/eligible persons to ensure that all staff are in compliance with the statutory and regulatory requirements regarding all Department of Labor programs. Priority of service will be monitored through analysis of data found in the Employment and Training Administration's Federal Reports, from observations annotated in the Manager's Quarterly Report on Services to Veterans and from reports completed by Job Service Systems Management Staff. These reports are reviewed by the Job Service Workforce Development Director, the State Veterans' Program Administrator and the Director of Veterans' Employment and

Training and conclusions drawn regarding the extent of priority of service demonstrated by each Customer Service Area. Process improvement plans are recommended for those offices needing improvement.

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.

Compliance with section 188 of WIOA and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act is met through the submission of the Methods of Administration (MOA) to the US DOL Civil Rights Center.

Job Service, in determining site or location of facilities, may not make selections with the purpose or effect of excluding individuals from denying them the benefits of, or subjecting them to discrimination on a prohibited ground, or with the purpose or effect of defeating or substantially impairing the accomplishment of the objectives of the program, or the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions.

The Webmaster keeps the Job Service website in compliance with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines and Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 with the use of Compliance Sheriff Software. The Agency Webmaster utilizes Compliance Sheriff after the release of website updates and the North Dakota State Information Technology Department also runs routine compliance checks of the website using Compliance Sheriff.

Job Service's online service is a web-based self-service system that satisfies a major one-stop objective: Universal access to a broad range of employment, training and education services. Job Service North Dakota's online services ensure:

- Access to specific services is available to all customers throughout the one-stop system.
- Access 24/7 services to anyone with Internet access.
- Access to services by clients in remote and rural areas who might find it inconvenient to use a physical one-stop.
- Access to services by clients in urban areas who are unable to access a physical one-stop due to lack of transportation, disability, etc.

Job Service's online services provide users with a text only interface option. It is ideal for customers who use non-graphic browsers or extremely slow and unreliable Internet connections.

Job Service shall ensure accessibility to individuals with disabilities in employment and employment-related training; including reasonable accommodation, program, and physical accessibility. Job Service AJCs have self-service job getting rooms with individual workstations for clients with disabilities. These workstations consist of height-adjustable work surface areas that are operated either electrically or hydraulically. Modern adaptive technology is available in Job Service AJCs to eliminate barriers often experienced by hearing impaired, physically impaired, and/or visually impaired customers. In 2015, funding was provided by VR to purchase additional adapt technology for resource rooms in the Job Service AJCs. A phone amplifier, ear-covering, noise-cancelling headphones, Magic with Speech software and 24" monitors were purchased after consulting with the ND Interagency for Assistive Technology, VR and the ND School for the Blind. Training on the equipment purchased is coordinated with VR. Qualified individuals with disabilities shall: receive aid, benefits, services, or training equal to or as effective as that provided to others; not receive benefits separately unless it is needed to provide training, benefits, or services that are as effective as that provided to others; have opportunity to be on planning advisory boards for WIOA; enjoy any right, privilege, advantage, or opportunity enjoyed by others; and receive services in the most integrated setting.

9. Addressing the Accessibility of the One-Stop Delivery System for 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.

Job Service makes every attempt to ensure the needs of customers with limited English speaking skills. To provide interpretation services in a timely manner, Job Service uses CTS LanguageLink interpreter services and partner agencies interpreting services.

IV. Coordination with State Plan Programs

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.

North Dakota core partners established an electronic file with access for all plan writing team members. The team began meeting in September 2015 and met weekly to review, modify and collectively write the Unified Plan. The team of five included staff from Adult Education, Vocational Rehabilitation and Job Service ND.

- **North Dakota Department of Human Services, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation** - Russ Cusack, Director
- **North Dakota Department of Human Services, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation** Robyn Throlson, Planning and Evaluation Administrator
- **ND Department of Public Instruction, Adult Education** - Valerie Fischer, Director of Adult Education and Director of Safe & Healthy Schools
- **Job Service North Dakota, Workforce Programs** - Ruth Lacher, Manager of Workforce Programs. Ruth represented all core and partner programs administered by Job Service ND, including Title I-B, Title III, Veterans Employment, and Trade Adjustment Assistance.
- **ND Workforce Development Council** - Susan Gunsch, State Workforce Investment Board Director.

Job Service ND Labor Market Information staff provided the analysis included in the Unified Plan. Required partners were contacted and information was gathered and incorporated. The required partners included Career & Technical Education, TANF and SCSEP. The Governor's office was consulted regarding the State strategy for workforce. The Department of Commerce Workforce Division also provided information regarding the State strategy for workforce. The Planning Committee of the Workforce Development Council met to review and provide input to the Unified State Plan on February 5, 2016. The public comment period for the WIOA Unified Plan, the Agriculture Outreach Plan and the proposed performance measures was completed on March 13, 2016.

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 administering 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. General Requirements

1. Regions and Local Workforce Development Areas

A. Identify the regions and the local workforce development areas designated in the State.

North Dakota is a single workforce area under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 as designated by Governor Jack Dalrymple. The North Dakota Workforce Development Council serves as both the State and local board as outlined in WIOA.

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.

North Dakota is a single workforce area under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 as designated by Governor Jack Dalrymple. The North Dakota Workforce Development Council serves as both the State and local board as outlined in WIOA.

C. Provide the appeals process referred to in section 106(b)(5) of WIOA relating to designation of local areas.

North Dakota is a single workforce area under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 as designated by Governor Jack Dalrymple. The North Dakota Workforce Development Council serves as both the State and local board as outlined in WIOA.

D. Provide the appeals process referred to in section 121(h)(2)(E) of WIOA relating to determinations for infrastructure funding.

This process will be determined following the review of the final WIOA regulations.

The One-Stop System Delivery MOU will include the details for funding infrastructure costs. The MOU will include the following appeals process. The agencies agree to communicate openly and directly and that every effort will be made to resolve any problems or disputes in a cooperative manner. If an MOU impasse develops with a One-Stop System partner that cannot be resolved, the Workforce Development Council will review and forward a recommendation to the Governor for resolution.

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 State shall follow all applicable Federal and State regulations and guidance pertaining to the use of each individual fund source for workforce investment activities.

North Dakota intends to use the statewide funds to support an effort to gather data utilizing the North Dakota Longitudinal Data System and the North Dakota University System. This evaluation of the outcomes will be used to determine whether the system is meeting the supply and demand needs of business.

A document management module for the Job Service ND case management system is being considered as a solution to attach digital documents to client records for easy access and reference. Staff would have the ability to store and view documents associated with a user record. A document management module would reduce dependence on paper documents, improve information availability, increase information security, and business continuity. Efficiencies would be gained during data element validation with reduced travel costs and time spent by staff traveling around the state.

Interest in Registered Apprenticeship is growing in the state and plans are developing to utilize statewide funds to support the goals of the budget narrative submitted for the Apprenticeship Accelerator grant. Those goals include:

- Engage community colleges, to create integrated programs.
- Collaborate with the ND Office of Apprenticeship State Director and identify process efficiencies.
- Promote Registered Apprenticeship to IT, healthcare and energy industry intermediaries. Energy is the ND Sector of Excellence
- Connect with ND community colleges and expand the NDSCS Journeyworker Track program. This is a flexible program providing students the opportunity to earn an Associate in Applied Science degree by combining their previous apprenticeship training with college credit course work.
- Collaborate with Career & Technical Education (CTE) to establish the processes needed to implement pre-apprenticeship sponsorship within the Secondary CTE programs and community colleges to engage youth in Registered Apprenticeship and supply the skilled labor pipeline.
- Serve as the liaison between the State Apprenticeship Director and the Job Service ND offices for WIOA funding integration with Registered Apprenticeship.

North Dakota has been selected by the FAA as a national test site for the safe integration of unmanned aircraft into the National Airspace System. This emerging industry has great potential to grow and is in great need of a skilled workforce. Statewide funds provide the means to create an Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) awareness initiative within the secondary schools to expose youth and parents to the career opportunities within the industry. Educators who understand the needs of the UAS industry are better prepared to apply their instruction to prepare students for employment in UAS.

Sector strategies are a valuable collaboration to identify industry needs for workers with specific skills, education, and credentials, and then make sure that educational and training opportunities are available to help people gain those skills and meet employer needs. Statewide funds will be considered for future sector initiatives.

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

North Dakota intends to use the small amount of Governor's set aside funds to primarily meet the WIOA required activities. Any additional resources remaining would be used to conduct an evaluation of the benefits of co-enrollment and implement innovative activities in support of the Governor's workforce initiatives which may include increasing apprenticeships and sector strategies for emerging industries such as unmanned aerial systems.

The Dislocated Worker Office (DWO) of Job Service has been designated by the Governor as the entity responsible for providing Rapid Response services through the Job Service AJC Managers' direct supervision and provision of these services. WIA funding is utilized for Rapid Response services.

The local Chief Elected Official is the Governor who is informed of dislocation notifications and planned Rapid Response activities. The Governor maintains an ongoing option to become involved with larger dislocations per his/her or Job Service's request. For Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) notices, the Governor and the ND Department of Commerce are notified immediately. Depending on the level of community impact, the same communication is sent to specific state level service providers to inform them of the potential to assist in tailoring and delivering Rapid Response and in serving impacted workers.

In the case of WARN notices, the community's chief elected official also receives a notice from the company. A Job Service representative contacts that community leader as a part of planning the response effort. In the case of non-WARN dislocations, Job Service may contact that person depending on each situation's impact on the local area.

Following either a permanent closure, mass layoff or a natural/other disaster resulting in a mass job dislocation, Job Service AJC office managers have the

responsibility for initiating Rapid Response in their administrative areas as warranted. When the DWO receives a WARN notice, immediate contact is made with the Job Service AJC office manager/designee to initiate contact for Rapid Response with the employer and employee representatives if organized labor is involved. The DWO notifies and utilizes partners (Department of Public Instruction, Department of Career and Technical Education, Department of Commerce, Department of Human Services, North Dakota University System, Veterans Employment and Training Service, ND Building and Trades Council, ND AFL-CIO, etc.) as appropriate when any dislocation notification is received. The Job Service AJC office manager or designee coordinates the response effort and works with the DWO to determine the level of involvement of the chief elected official, economic development officials, and others.

In many Rapid Response scenarios, these services are delivered seamlessly by Wagner Peyser, WIOA, and UI staff members. External partners also participate and offer their perspectives and services.

The Rapid Response plan has many facets which may include the following: • Offering information on business start-up, growth and layoff aversion as a common service to all employers during regular employer visits or to anyone upon request. • Exploring the potential for a task force which involves community leaders, company management, state leaders and representatives, organized labor, etc. • Guiding a team in determining specific assistance to be provided at the dislocation site. ND is in the enviable position of experiencing a labor shortage, which sets the tone for directing the dislocated workers' attention to their transferable skills. • Sharing information (in case of layoffs resulting from foreign competition) regarding petition filing, timing, and availability of TAA, Trade Readjustment Assistance, and the Health Coverage Tax Credit. • Meeting with impacted employees to inform them of programs and available services (including scheduled activities, and special workshops which may include basic computer training) as well as answer questions and providing standardized dislocated worker information packets. Agendas cover a full range of topics reflecting a fully integrated service delivery system. • Encouraging employers and employees to begin using services immediately rather than waiting until the layoff date. • Arranging reverse job fairs onsite with employers with a scheduled closure or a large layoff.

Rapid Response is a natural fit with North Dakota's Talent Initiative to retain workers and transition them to the many job openings within the state. When a dislocation is reported to the DWO, the occupations and locations of these workers are listed in a management report to notify staff around the state of this talent pool.

Ongoing proactive efforts exist within the various areas of the state through cooperation between Job Service staff members and economic development. When a layoff is pending, opportunities to help transition those impacted workers to expanding and new North Dakota businesses are effectively coordinated in order to retain a skilled workforce. For businesses in other stages of the economic cycle, assistance from outside resources is offered as well as information on recruitment services, unemployment insurance, workforce training, SHARE Network, business tax incentives, Workforce 20/20 and North Dakota New Jobs Training program.

Job Service's Management Information System includes a list of all Rapid Response sessions linking individuals applying for WIOA and TAA. All WIOA and TAA participants can be properly reported as having attended Rapid Response session(s) associated with the impacted employer.

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.

In the event of a natural disaster, Rapid Response would be provided following an activation from the Workforce Coordination Center. North Dakota follows Workforce Coordination Center Standard Operating Procedures which is a joint emergency effort among Job Service ND, Human Resource Management Services, North Dakota Workforce Safety & Insurance and the North Dakota Department of Labor. The Workforce Coordination Center is part of The North Dakota State Emergency Operations Plan of the North Dakota Department of Emergency Services, Division of Homeland Security.

State agencies will be required to focus their attention on both the continuation of essential services and emergency response/recovery operations for the well-being of citizens; hence, non-essential services will likely be placed on hold until the severity of conditions requiring activation of the WCC subsides. Current economic systems require limited inventories and minimal excess capacity. As such, relatively small surges in demand may overwhelm supply chain operations causing shortages of consumer goods and supplies, which may be critical to sustaining essential services to populations impacted by disasters. The Workforce Coordination Center plan outlines protocols for redirecting the workforce to support delivery of essential services and emergency response/recovery operations. Coordination and re-assignment of state, local and private workforce resources will be accomplished in conjunction with ND Job Service, Human Resource Management Services (HMRS) N.D. Department of Labor (NDDoL) and Workforce Safety & Insurance staffing assignments.

Specified Tasks:

- Make decisions regarding state response and use of state resources supporting delivery of essential services
- Ensure WCC representation in the State Unified Command
- Document and adhere to decision points and triggers for activation of the WCC
- Make WCC staffing assignments
- Develop assessment procedures and prioritize essential services
- Ensure coordination with the Governor's Office to review and implement necessary human resource staffing procedures and/or policy changes
- Identify, train, prepare, deploy, and account for agency personnel essential to continuity of operations (COOP) (e.g. staffing of essential service positions, sustaining emergency operations, staffing WCC, providing SEOC liaisons, equipment operators, support personnel, etc.)
- Identify, prepare, preposition as required, deploy, account for, and maintain readiness of equipment necessary for the continuation of essential services
- Establish and maintain relationships with private industry

Implied Tasks:

- Maintain listing of WCC staffing needs
- Maintain listing of available work force
- Provide guidance to state agencies for emergency or disaster related re-assignment and policy concerns
- Coordinate efforts to ensure Continuity of Government (COG) and operations pursuant to the state agencies' Continuity of Operation Plans (COOP)
- Conduct a needs assessment
- Maintain Situational Awareness and conduct Intelligence/Information management (gathering, analysis and interpretation of info/intel) of the spread of infectious disease and resulting impacts
- Support key statewide, local, and tribal essential services, as well as public awareness campaigns to encourage volunteers
- Communicate needs to voluntary agencies
- Coordinate volunteers
- Provide command and control of, and ensure interoperable communications with, state resources
- Conduct deliberate planning individually as agencies, and as a collective state team, to ensure thorough readiness for emergency operations, to include

- provisions for prioritizing and sustaining essential service operations
- Rehabilitate and repair resources such as equipment and personnel to ensure readiness to sustain essential service operations
- Identify and compile after action review (AAR) data
- Monitor and provide periodic updates to the SEOC via WebEOC
- Provide liaison with private industry to coordinate and address appropriate responses during catastrophic events where severe disruptions occur in the availability and distribution of critical resources
- Develop media strategies and informational material with subject matter experts.
- Ensure coordination of message development and information with other agencies

In the event of a disaster, local Rapid Response staff will meet with key affected employers and community leaders to learn the scope of the impact in terms of approximate numbers, duration of work cessation, and needs of the workers and businesses at various stages of the event. Following this analysis, Rapid Response staff members will contact partner agencies to update and request involvement in the Rapid Response process. Examples of partners who address immediate basic needs such as heat, shelter, food and clothing are the Red Cross, Salvation Army, Department of Health and Department of Human Services, National Guard, FEMA and Unemployment Insurance. Rapid Response will be tailored and conducted as a team effort by the working partners to address the short, medium and long term needs. Temporary co-location of working partners will occur to simplify and expedite service delivery. When affected workers are eligible for Disaster Unemployment Insurance the Rapid Response team will provide assistance to file these claims. Job Service ND can temporarily assign staff from other locations to meet the influx of unemployed individuals.

Following either a permanent closure, mass layoff or a natural/other disaster resulting in a mass job dislocation, Job Service AJC office managers have the responsibility for initiating Rapid Response in their administrative areas as warranted. When the DWO receives a WARN notice, immediate contact is made with the Job Service AJC office manager/designee to initiate contact for Rapid Response with the employer and employee representatives if organized labor is involved. The DWO notifies and utilizes partners (Department of Public Instruction, Department of Career and Technical Education, Department of Commerce, Department of Human Services, North Dakota University System, Veterans Employment and Training Service, ND Building and Trades Council, ND AFL-CIO, etc.) as appropriate when any dislocation notification is received. The Job Service AJC office manager or designee coordinates the response effort and works with the DWO to determine the level of involvement of the chief elected official, economic development officials, and others.

In many Rapid Response scenarios, these services are delivered seamlessly by Wagner Peyser, WIOA, and UI staff members. External partners also participate and offer their perspectives and services. The Rapid Response plan has many facets which may include the following:

- Offering information on business start-up, growth and layoff aversion as a common service to all employers during regular employer visits or to anyone upon request.
- Exploring the potential for a task force which involves community leaders, company management, state leaders and representatives, organized labor, etc.
- Guiding a team in determining specific assistance to be provided at the dislocation site. ND is in the enviable position of experiencing a labor shortage, which sets the tone for directing the dislocated workers' attention to their transferable skills.
- Sharing information (in case of layoffs resulting from foreign competition) regarding petition filing, timing, and availability of TAA, Trade Readjustment Assistance, and the Health Coverage Tax Credit.
- Meeting with impacted employees to inform them of programs and available services (including scheduled activities, and special workshops which may include basic computer training) as well as answer questions and providing standardized dislocated worker information packets. Agendas cover a full range of topics reflecting a fully integrated service delivery system.
- Encouraging employers and employees to begin using services immediately rather than waiting until the layoff date.

Arranging reverse job fairs onsite with employers with a scheduled closure or a large layoff.

The Rapid Response team will remain in place to assess ongoing needs in the community. Job Service ND will assess each situation to determine if a Disaster National Dislocated Worker Grant is necessary.

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.

Rapid Response in North Dakota operates in essentially the same manner regardless of whether a TAA petition or certification is involved. See Section 2 (B) above for the description of Rapid Response activities.

Rapid Response services are provided to all worker groups covered by a TAA petition similarly to any worker group that has been or will be permanently laid off. In most cases, the State and its local Rapid Response team are already aware of a dislocation event and Rapid Response activities are underway before a TAA petition is filed. If a TAA petition is the first notice of a dislocation event, the State will notify the Job Service AJC staff, who will contact the employer to plan and schedule the Rapid Response.

When Rapid Response is extended to potentially TAA-eligible worker groups, basic TAA Program information must be shared, including the Program enrollment process should certification occur. If the State does not have access to the worker group prior to layoff, the State will use UI claimant information to identify potentially affected workers. In this situation, the local Rapid Response team will be required to extend outreach to the laid off workers using contact information obtained from UI. At minimum, the outreach materials must include information about the WIOA Dislocated Worker Program and basic information explaining the TAA Program.

b. Adult and Dislocated Workers Program Requirements

1. 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.

On-the-Job Training (OJT) remains a training strategy for applicants who lack experience but have education or training related to the job, or whose limited experience does not qualify them for the jobs. North Dakota plans to review the current processes and requirements with the intent to find efficiencies and streamline the process to make OJT more attractive for employers. A simplified process will make it easier for Job Service AJC staff to promote the program. The outcome of this re-engineered process will result in increasing collaboration with Registered Apprenticeship and the numbers of co-enrollment between WIOA and Registered Apprenticeship.

The employers benefit from OJT through cost savings for the expense of training a new employee. OJT gives employers the control to design a training plan that meets the needs of their business. Supervisors can assess progress over a period of time making it easier to identify and resolve a problem quickly.

Trainees benefit from OJT by receiving an income while learning in jobs that are matched to their aptitude, abilities, and desired occupational goals. Trainees obtain training for new job skills and re-enter the workforce. Trainees may develop mentoring relationships leading to greater success in their new employment.

2. Describe how the State will incorporate Registered Apprenticeship into its strategy and services.

The state is collaborating to develop a strategy for the implementation of registered apprenticeships throughout the state. The state will be working with the US DOL Office of Apprenticeship in North Dakota to coordinate information, expansion and eligibility of apprenticeships in North Dakota. Entities will share outreach information that enhances collaboration to result in increased WIOA and Registered Apprenticeship enrollments. Core program staff will receive training from the State Director and the new EPTL will provide important information on utilization of Registered Apprenticeship.

The Workforce Leadership Team will establish a committee to specifically address career pathways and strategies to improve access to post-secondary credentials. The committee will consist of staff from Career and Technical Education, Higher Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, ND Office of Apprenticeship, Department of Commerce, Adult Education and Job Service ND. The committee will set goals and metrics which will be tracked through the State Longitudinal Data System and the State Office of Apprenticeship. This team will strengthen the partnership between the State Director and other WIOA partners.

Registered Apprenticeship will be incorporated into Job Service ND applicant services and business services within the WIOA core programs. Communication between the Registered Apprenticeship State Director and Job Service ND Workforce Development Director is scheduled on a regular basis. Joint meetings with employers have taken place and additional opportunities will occur at every opportunity in the future. These communications consist of establishing processes to share information that will generate more utilization of Registered Apprenticeships in the state. Increasing the knowledge of all parties about how WIOA can partner with Registered Apprenticeship will strengthen the promotion. The State Director will share employers who are inquiring about Registered Apprenticeship and are in need to fill apprenticeship openings. WIOA case managers who complete on-the-job training contracts email the State Director to make contact for potential new Registered Apprenticeship locations and the Job Service Workforce Development Director follows up to determine if an ITA is needed. Job orders in the labor exchange system are flagged as Registered Apprenticeship openings. All Job Service staff, including WIOA program case managers, have the list of current Registered Apprenticeship sponsors to become familiar of the activity in the State for employer and occupation targets for program promotion. Business service staff messages with employers will include Registered Apprenticeship benefits. Youth case managers are promoting Registered Apprenticeship specifically for out-of-school youth and as a strategy to meet the WIOA Youth 20% expenditure rate for work experience activities. Registered Apprenticeship promotional materials will be made available to all Job Service ND staff, on the agency webpage and in the resource rooms.

3. Provide the procedure, eligibility criteria, and information requirements for determining training provider initial and continued eligibility, including Registered Apprenticeship programs (WIOA Section 122).

ELIGIBLE TRAINING PROVIDERS POLICY 2-06-01 (2) PURPOSE:

A. Training Providers Subject to ETP List Requirements The following types of training providers are subject to the ETP list requirements in order to receive WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker funds to provide training services to eligible adult and dislocated worker individuals through Individual Training Accounts (ITA). ITA's may also be used for WIOA Title I Youth funds to provide training to older, out-of-school youth (ages 18-24). 1. Institutions of higher education that provide a program of training that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential; 2. Public or private training providers, including joint labor-management organizations, and occupational/technical training; and 3. Providers of adult education and literacy activities provided in combination with occupational skills training.

Postsecondary institutions located in Minnesota, Montana, and South Dakota are eligible to receive North Dakota ITA's based on reciprocal agreements. Post-secondary institutions outside of North Dakota that offer online training/distance education may be authorized to receive ITA's as long as the training program is listed on the home state's ETP list.

B. Initial Eligibility and Application Process Beginning in October 2015, training providers that were not eligible providers under WIA may submit an application for initial eligibility, which can be granted for up to one full calendar year (January 1 - December 31). 1. All applications for the ETP list will be completed using a link available on jobsnd.com. The following information is required: 2. Training provider applications must include verification documentation that the training provider is licensed, certified, or authorized by the North Dakota Department of Higher Education, or the relevant state agency with oversight, to operate training programs in North Dakota. If a program is not in compliance with the oversight agency as required by state law, the provider will not be able to apply for inclusion on the ETP list until they meet the necessary requirements. If a provider is in compliance with the oversight agency, the provider can proceed to 2 in the application process.

3. Training providers applying for initial program eligibility must provide the following with the application: a) A description of each program of training services to be offered; b) Information on cost of attendance, including costs of tuition and fees; c) Whether the training program leads to an industry-recognized certificate or credential, including recognized post-secondary credentials; d) Whether the provider has developed the training in partnership with a business (and the name of the business); e) The in-demand industry sectors and occupations that best fit with the training program; f) The type of credential attained by all students in the program; g) Social security numbers (SSNs) for all students in the programs listed on the application, regardless of the funding source.

NOTE - SSNs will be used to generate the required annual WIOA wage and employment performance reports. Job Service ND will access SLDS data to generate

these reports for institutions in the North Dakota University System.

Social security numbers must be provided for all students by program listed in the application for the previous two calendar years (January 1 - December 31) regardless of the funding source. Training providers that have not been on the ETP list for at least two years will be required to provide student data for the time period available.

Once the application is submitted and the state has determined that the required information is available, the state will approve, deny, or request further information on the program within 30 days of the receipt of a complete application. The state will notify the provider of the determination. Registered apprenticeship programs are not subject to the eligibility criteria or application requirements. While registered apprenticeship programs are automatically eligible, not all registered apprenticeship sponsors may wish to be included on the list. Registered apprenticeship programs will automatically be included on the State list unless they indicate they do not wish to be included or until they lose their registration.

C. Continued Eligibility After the initial eligibility period of one full calendar year, training providers must submit applications for continued program eligibility every two years. Applications for continued eligibility must be submitted by October 1st for the year in which eligibility expires. The continued eligibility application is required for any program that has previously been on the list.

The SLDS will be used to generate performance information for institutions in the North Dakota University System. For training institutions not participating in SLDS, the following information must be submitted to Job Service.

TrainND, Private training providers, and Tribal colleges must include the following: a) The total number of participants enrolled in the program; b) The total number of participants completing the program; c) The total number of participants exiting the program; d) Information on recognized post-secondary credentials received by program participants; e) Information on the program completion rate for such participants; f) Social security numbers for all participants by program listed on the application for the two previous years, regardless of funding source, which will be used to calculate the performance measures listed in Attachment 1.

NOTE - SSNs will be used to generate the required annual WIOA wage and employment performance reports. Job Service ND will access SLDS data to generate these reports for institutions in the North Dakota University System. All training/education providers must include the following: g) Applications for continued eligibility must include verification documentation from the appropriate oversight agency to operate in North Dakota. h) Description of how the provider will ensure access to training services throughout the State, including rural areas and through the use of technology; i) Description of how the providers provide training services to individuals who are employed and/or individuals with barriers to employment; j) Information reported to State agencies on Federal and State training programs other than programs within WIOA title I-B; and

D. Transition of Eligible Training Providers under WIA To ensure a smooth transition to WIOA, eligible training providers under WIA may continue to be eligible until June 30, 2016 and the current ETP list will remain in place until that date.

Beginning In October 2015, current eligible training providers may begin applying for continued eligibility in the new system. All eligible training providers under WIA must re-apply in the new system to remain eligible after June 30, 2016, under the continued eligibility procedures in Section C. Current eligible providers are strongly advised to review the new requirements for continued eligibility, particularly the requirement that programs be authorized to operate in North Dakota by their state oversight agency, so they can prepare immediately for the transition to WIOA.

We anticipate the new WIOA-compliant ETP list and online platform will launch with the newly entered data from training providers by July 1, 2016, assuming no delays in the new system development.

During 2016, minimum performance targets will not be set as eligibility criteria for training programs to remain on the ETPL. Performance information for each program will be posted on the ETPL to help consumers make an informed decision. Once the transition from WIA to WIOA is completed, this policy will be revised to establish minimum performance targets for programs for 2017 to remain on the ETPL.

E. Performance Requirements The performance information required is outlined in Attachment 1. Social security numbers must be provided for all students in programs included on the application in North Dakota for the previous two calendar years (January 1 - December 31) regardless of the funding source. The electronic system will provide a secure means to transmit the data file. Training providers that have not been on the ETP list for at least two years will be required to provide student data for the time period available. Social security numbers for all North Dakota students will continue to be required annually and will be used to calculate the performance measures. Performance information will be published online for each training provider on the ETP list. Programs with less than 10 students enrolled will not be included in performance data.

F. Conditions for Removal The state may remove a program or programs from the list for failing to meet the established criteria or performance levels in this policy, or for not providing all required performance information for subsequent eligibility. Removal is also appropriate if the program has failed to attain or lost the accreditation required for professional licensure. A training provider that is removed from the list for the reasons stated above may re-apply for continued eligibility when they can demonstrate that they meet all the requirements.

The state must remove from the eligibility list for a period of not less than 2 years any providers that willfully supply false performance information, misrepresent costs or services, or that substantially violate requirements of WIOA law or regulations. Providers are liable to repay all adult and dislocated worker funds received during the period of non-compliance.

No training provider debarred by the Federal Government may be permitted to be placed or remain on the ETP list.

In the case of a training provider or a program of training services that is removed from the list while WIOA participants are enrolled, the participants may complete the program unless the provider or program has lost state licensing, certification, or authorization to operate by the appropriate state oversight agency.

G. Appeal Process Training providers can choose to appeal the rejection of their program for inclusion in the ETP list or its subsequent termination of eligibility. For any appeal by a training provider, an appeal must be submitted in writing via email within 14 days after notification of the decision. The appeal must include the justification for the appeal in their request. The training provider also has the right to request a hearing to discuss their appeal.

An ETP list appeals board will be assembled. The appeals board will schedule a hearing if requested and make a decision within 60 days of appeal. This will be a final decision and the program will be unable to reapply through the ETP list eligibility process for one year from the date of final notification by the ETP list appeals board.

Attachment 1

REQUIRED PERFORMANCE DATA

The following information is required for all applications for continued eligibility. Outcomes will be determined based on the student Social Security Numbers provided

for each program. The SSNs will be matched to North Dakota wages and WRIS II data to generate reports for each program with the following information:

1. The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program
2. The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program
3. The median earnings of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program
4. The percentage of program participants who obtain 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

Additionally, to include as many Registered Apprenticeship sponsors as possible, Job Service ND staff and the ND Office of Apprenticeship State Director joint letter to all Registered Apprenticeship sponsors in ND. Several Registered Apprenticeship sponsors responded positively to the ETPL request. Personal contacts were made to every Registered Apprenticeship sponsor by Job Service ND staff and by the State Director to explain the process to verify information and explain the exception to report performance information for Registered Apprenticeship sponsors. The sponsors who agreed to be included on the list were contacted by Job Service ND staff to verify information and explain the WIOA emphasis on Registered Apprenticeship and the benefits of inclusion on the ETPL. Some sponsors opted out of the ETPL and were provided guidance on the process should these sponsors decide to be included on the ETPL in the future. Currently, North Dakota has 48 Registered Apprenticeship sponsors included on the ETPL. On the RAPIDS report from February 2016, North Dakota had 84 sponsors with active, inactive and no apprentices. This represents 57% of the Registered Apprenticeship sponsors included on the North Dakota. Phase 1 of the North Dakota ETPL site launched April 12, 2016 and can be viewed at this URL <https://www.jobsnd.com/individuals/training/providers>.

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 funding by the Adult Formula program.

The North Dakota Workforce Development Council has established a policy due to limited funding to only serve individuals that meet the WIOA Adult priority.

POLICY 2-05-01 (0) POLICY An individual shall be eligible to participate in the WIOA Adult Program if he or she is: i) Age 18 or older; ii) Eligible to work in the United States including a citizen of the United States, a United States national, permanent resident alien, lawfully admitted refugee, parolee, or other individual authorized to work in the United States; iii) In compliance with Selective Service System registration (males only); and iv) Meets priority of service.

Priority of Service: The Workforce Development Council supports the WIOA priority of service while under limited funding for eligibility. These categories are:

- low income adults (WIOA Sec 3(36))
- adults who are receiving public assistance
- basic skills deficient (WIOA Sec 3(5))

The Workforce Development Council also encourages enrollment of North Dakota residents as a priority.

Veterans and eligible spouses of veterans - covered persons - will receive priority of service. 20 CFR Part 1010.110 adopts the term "covered person" to define those veterans and spouses of eligible veterans who are eligible for priority of service. The Jobs for Veterans Act does not change the requirement that individuals, to include veterans and military spouses, must first qualify as eligible under the WIOA Adult Program before participation.

North Dakota will exclusively enroll applicants that meet the WIOA Adult priority of service. Individuals who are not low income or are not receiving public assistance or are not determined to be basic skills deficient will not be enrolled into WIOA activities.

5. Describe the State's criteria regarding local area transfer of funds between the adult and dislocated worker programs.

Job Service ND, as the fiscal agent and grant sub-recipient, with the Governor's approval, may transfer up to 50% of a program year's allocation between the adult and dislocated worker programs.

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 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.*

* Sec. 102(b)(2)(D)(i)(V)

North Dakota is a single workforce area state. The WIOA Youth activities are provided by Job Service ND through a Memorandum of Understanding between the Workforce Development Council and Job Service ND.

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, and Combined State Plan partner programs included in this Plan, required and optional one-stop partner programs, and any other resources available.

With the increase in age eligibility and focus to spend 75 percent of youth funds on out-of-school youth, recruitment efforts are targeted toward this population. Youth Coordinators are working closely with AJC Resource Room staff, Adult Education, and Vocational Rehabilitation on referral and dual enrollment of out-of-school youth. In addition, Youth Coordinators are utilizing local networks with TANF and SNAP staff and/or community-based programs targeting homeless, disabled and transitioning youth. Unemployment insurance claimants within the age eligibility are targeted for out-of-school youth recruitment. Although the focus is shifting to serving the out-of-school population, service presentations including LMI, labor exchange education and youth program outreach continues to be provided to schools. Communication with school personnel including principals, vocational teachers and counselors is crucial to locate students who have dropped out or for those graduating and in need of assistance for occupational skills training to fill the jobs in-demand.

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.*

* Sec. 102(b)(2)(D)(i)(I)

The WIOA Youth program incorporates all the requirements outlined in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, specifically, objective assessments, employment planning (individual service strategies) and referral processes.

All youth services will be accessible through the Job Service AJCs and services will be designed based on labor market information. All youth, including youth with disabilities, entering the service delivery process will receive an objective assessment. Assessment will follow the guidelines in WIOA, section 129, including a review of academic and occupational skills, interests and supportive service needs. Assessments will provide the needed information and data to complete employment plans that link employment, educational and career pathway goals with the service strategies necessary to reach the goals.

Youth will receive integrated services through the Job Service AJC. The assessment process will identify those with the interests necessary to pursue post-secondary educational opportunities, including non-traditional training opportunities. Youth program participants have all career services available as part of their employment strategies.

Based on the assessment, youth will be referred to appropriate services, including career counseling and promotion, specialized counseling, guidance and skill assessment. Information will be shared with other partners involved in the assessment to help unify and enhance the guidance and counseling process. Supportive services will be provided to youth to assist them in completing their individualized employment plans. The service strategy is coordinated around the 14 Youth Program Elements, which must be made available to every participant. The 14 youth program elements are:

1. Tutoring, study skills training and dropout prevention strategies: Participants may receive tutoring services and study skills training in order to complete secondary school. The North Dakota universities, community colleges, tribal colleges and other higher education partners will assist youth making the transition into postsecondary opportunities.
2. Alternative secondary school services, or dropout recovery services, as appropriate: Providing alternative secondary school services will be vital to re-engage youth who have not responded to traditional school settings. This service will be provided through coordination with local school districts.
3. Paid and unpaid work experiences including summer employment and other opportunities throughout the year, pre-apprenticeship programs, internships and job shadowing, on-the-job training opportunities: Participants will have the opportunity to participate in paid and/or unpaid work experience activities, including internships and job shadowing. This will not only help provide skills and experience, but it will help youth understand what is associated with "real work" and what employers require of employees.

Work-based learning opportunities, including summer employment opportunities, paid and unpaid work experience, internships, job shadowing and on-the-job training will be directed at preparing youth for success in employment. Summer employment opportunities will be directly linked to academic and occupational learning. In most rural areas in North Dakota, many youth are first introduced to jobs through summer employment opportunities. Activities for youth with significant barriers to employment will continue to focus on pre-employment and work maturity skills. On-the-job training is an excellent tool for occupational skill building for out-of-school youth who are ready for skill development and employment. The individual plan of each youth will be focused on the needs identified through the individualized assessment process.

Job Service and the state apprenticeship office will collaborate to determine how to establish and expand out-of-school youth work experience opportunities to registered apprenticeships offered by employers.

Additionally, youth will have access to services provided at the Job Service AJCs, including assistance with work search, resume writing, interviewing, and career exploration. They will also have access to jobsnd.com to connect them with unsubsidized employment opportunities.

4. Comprehensive guidance and counseling: Through the comprehensive assessment process, a Youth Coordinator may identify that guidance and counseling services would be of benefit to a youth as the individual proceeds through the program. If so, referral to various providers would occur. Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling services may include, but are not limited to the following: 1.) Referrals to drug and alcohol counseling; 2.) Referrals to mental health counseling; 3.) Career counseling including information on career pathways and review of the RUPReady.nd resource; 4.) Educational counseling; and 5.) Case management performed by a professional Social Worker or Vocational Rehabilitation counselor. Each of these services must be provided by an appropriately trained staff member, educational instructor, licensed counselor or social worker.

5. Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to post-secondary education and training: Services will be available for youth in need of such services to prepare for and transition to post-secondary education and training. These services may include assistance with post-secondary financial aid documents, assistance to attend college tours, assistance with college entrance or program exams.

6. Occupational skills training: Occupational skills training is provided through Individual Training Accounts to youth whose employment plan includes post-secondary school through short term skill training or a degree program through a community college or tribal college. Focus will be placed on preparing or retraining individuals for the in-demand occupations in the state. Priority consideration is given to training programs that lead to recognized post-secondary credentials that align with the in-demand sectors and occupations in the local area.

7. Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities: Services will be available for youth in need of education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities.

8. Leadership development opportunities, including community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social and civic

behaviors: Youth will be provided leadership development opportunities that may include community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social and civic behaviors, decision making and team work.

9. Adult mentoring: Mentoring opportunities with caring adults will be sought to provide consistent guidance and support. Activities and projects that provide citizenship skills, life skills training, community improvement skills, and increase positive social skills, will be used to develop overall leadership qualities.

10. Financial literacy education: Youth in need of financial literacy education services will have access to activities designed to educate or assist youth with the following: making informed financial decisions including budgeting and accessing checking and savings accounts; learning to effectively manage spending, credit and debt; learning the significance of credit report and credit scores. Case managers have knowledge of financial literacy resources in their local area and will make an effort to identify youth who need financial literacy assistance.

11. Entrepreneurial skills training: Resources are available for youth interested in developing their entrepreneurial skills. Resources include: • The UND Center for Innovation, a comprehensive, hands-on assistance is available to technology entrepreneurs, innovators and manufacturers interested in starting up new ventures, commercializing new products and licensing new technologies.

• Entrepreneur Centers of North Dakota provide access to over 20 financing programs and a network of organizations who provide counseling, training and assistance to start-up and existing entrepreneurs. • Innovate ND is a comprehensive program of entrepreneur education and follow-up assistance with a goal to launch up to 20 new businesses in North Dakota annually. The program is open to all North Dakotans, former North Dakotans or other entrepreneurs, including students, who have an innovative idea, product or business service and want to grow their venture in North Dakota. • Marketplace for Entrepreneurs is a yearly event for where economic development organizations meet at Marketplace to provide training and technical assistance to North Dakota's entrepreneurs. A comprehensive directory for ideas, contacts, and other economic development information is found on the Marketplace Web site. • Strom Center for Entrepreneurship & Innovation focuses on revitalizing the state's economy by encouraging and supporting entrepreneurs and fostering an entrepreneurial spirit. The center actively promotes regional partnership development and offers entrepreneurs a network of professionals who can provide support and assistance in the areas of applied research, business consulting, technology and marketing resources.

12. Labor market information: Labor Market Information is provided to all youth receiving WIOA services. Information is mainly centered on career awareness, career pathways, career counseling or career exploration resources and occupational training available for targeted and in-demand industries and occupations. This information along with other services is available for youth as they transition and prepare for postsecondary education and training.

13. Support Services: Support services may be provided to WIOA youth participants when they are necessary to enable individuals to participate in authorized WIOA activities. Support services include, but are not limited to the following: • Linkages to community services. • Assistance with transportation. • Assistance with housing. • Referrals to medical services. • Assistance with uniforms or other appropriate work and safety-related attire, work-related tools, eyeglasses which include protective eye wear.

14. Follow-up services for not less than 12 months after the completion of participation: All youth will be provided follow-up services for at least 12 months after participation ends. The intensity and duration of follow-up services will be based on individual need.

Given the appropriate release of information, assessment information and employment strategies will be shared with core and required partners to encourage consistent and accurate information that will foster a continuum of services. Information and referral processes will be implemented to introduce youth to the wide array of applicable services available through the workforce system.

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).

IN-SCHOOL YOUTH ELIGIBILITY

POLICY 2-02-01 (0)

PURPOSE:

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Section 129(a)(1)(B)(iii)(VIII) and Section 129(a)(1)(C)(iv)(VII) includes the Youth eligibility category of “requires additional assistance to complete an educational program, or to secure and hold employment”. Section 681.300 advises State Boards to define this criterion.

POLICY:

Individual who “requires additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure and hold employment” is defined as:

1. Having limited employment opportunities as defined as being unable to obtain employment after a four week employment search, or
2. Residing in a community with limited youth-related employment opportunities defined as a community with 60 or less worksites based on LMI Area Profile data on July 1st of each year, or
3. Having one or more parents incarcerated, or
4. Having a record of being unable to hold employment demonstrated by being terminated from two or more jobs in the past six months, or
5. Being identified as at risk of dropping out-of-school as documented by school professionals.

OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH ELIGIBILITY

POLICY 2-03-01 (0)

PURPOSE:

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Section 129(a)(1)(B)(iii)(VIII) and Section 129(a)(1)(C)(iv)(VII) includes the Youth eligibility category of “requires additional assistance to complete an educational program, or to secure and hold employment”. Section 681.300 advises State Boards to define this criterion.

POLICY:

Individual who “requires additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure and hold employment” is defined as:

1. Having limited employment opportunities as defined as being unable to obtain employment after a four week employment search, or
2. Residing in a community with limited youth-related employment opportunities defined as a community with 60 or less worksites based on LMI Area Profile data on July 1st of each year, or
3. Having one or more parents incarcerated, or
4. Having a record of being unable to hold employment demonstrated by being terminated from two or more jobs in the past six months

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.

North Dakota Century Code CHAPTER 15.1–20 SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

15.1–20–01. Compulsory attendance. 1. Any person having responsibility for a child between the ages of seven and sixteen years shall ensure that the child is in attendance at a public school for the duration of each school year.

2. If a person enrolls a child of age six in a public school, the person shall ensure that the child is in attendance at the public school for the duration of each school year. The person may withdraw a child of age six from the public school. However, once the child is withdrawn, the person may not reenroll the child until the following school year. This subsection does not apply if the reason for the withdrawal is the child’s relocation to another school district.

3. This section does not apply if a child is exempted under the provisions of section

15.1–20–02. Compulsory attendance – Exceptions. 1. The provisions of section 15.1–20–01 do not apply if the person having responsibility for the child demonstrates to the satisfaction of the school board that: a. The child is in attendance for the same length of time at an approved nonpublic school; b. The child has completed high school; c. The child is necessary to the support of the child’s family; d. A multidisciplinary team that includes the child’s school district superintendent, the director of the child’s special education unit, the child’s classroom teacher, the child’s physician, and the child’s parent has determined that the child has a disability that renders attendance or participation in a regular or special education program inexpedient or impracticable; or e. The child is receiving home education.

2. A decision by the board of a school district under subsection 1 is appealable to the district court.

15.1–20–02.1. Attendance – Determination – Policies. 1. To be deemed in attendance for purposes of this chapter, a student may not be absent from school without excuse for more than: a. Three consecutive school days during either the first half or the second half of a school or school district’s calendar; b. Six half days during either the first half or the second half of a school or school district’s calendar; or c. Twenty–one class periods.

2. The board of each school district and governing body of each nonpublic school shall adopt a policy that: a. Defines an excused absence as any absence from school, if that absence is supported by either a verbal or written excuse supplied by the student’s parent, teacher, or school administrator; and b. Articulates the type of documentation that may be requested to verify a student’s absence.

3. This chapter does not preclude a school district or nonpublic school from withholding credit, removing a student from a course, or taking other punitive measures against a student who does not arrive in a timely fashion or who exceeds a specific number of absences, as determined by the school district or nonpublic school.

6. If not using the basic skills deficient definition contained in WIOA Section 3(5)(B), include the specific State definition.

North Dakota is using the basic skills deficient definition contained WIOA Section 3(5)(B).

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 also 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 disbursement of grant funds, as determined by the governor, if different from that for the State. (WIOA section 108(b)(15).)**
- 3. The type and availability of WIOA Title I Youth Activities, including an identification of successful providers of such activities. (WIOA section 108(b)(9).)**

Job Service is the provider of WIOA title I Youth activities. Job Service provides all fourteen WIOA Youth elements and provides these activities statewide through the nine Job Service AJCs. Job Service has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the North Dakota Workforce Development Council.

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:**
 - A. supporting employer engagement;**
 - B. connecting education and training strategies;**
 - C. supporting work-based learning;**
 - D. improving job and career results, and**
 - E. 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 process used to:**
 - A. Monitor the progress in implementing the waiver;**
 - B. Provide notice to any local board affected by the waiver;**
 - C. Provide any local board affected by the waiver an opportunity to comment on the request;**
 - D. Ensure meaningful public comment, including comment by business and organized labor, on the waiver.**
 - E. 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;

This section does not apply as North Dakota is not requesting a waiver.

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. **Yes**

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.

North Dakota continues to see an increased population of New Americans/refugees and other English Language learners. Lutheran Social Services reports 518 new arrivals in FY 15 with an additional 458 New Americans expected in the fiscal year 2016. Job Service ND AJCs link with adult education and English literacy programs. Adult education has offerings that incorporate English literacy with occupational skills training that is closely aligned with local economies.

The state of North Dakota has been proactive in development of partnerships with business New Americans and English language learners require additional assistance and preparation to progress in employment readiness. The Job Service AJCs and Adult Education in southeast North Dakota have utilized WIA Incentive funds to provide a weekly work skills class. The class will cover basic work skills to include but not limited to soft skills, basic work math, reading, writing, transportation, interviewing, application process, childcare needs and computers. The curriculum is presented jointly by Adult Education and Job Service AJC staff. The class curriculum will rotate every six weeks, providing space and computers for approximately 20 students every six weeks. The class began August 2015 and will be used as a model to replicate in other areas of need across the state.

In order to better serve English Language Learners, the Wagner-Peyser 10% funds will be designated to this special group of individuals.

Professional development is conducted in a variety of ways. The Job Service Labor Market Information Center presents an LMI workshop to Job Service AJC staff annually. An annual Business Services Teleconference Training schedule is established with monthly training events on a variety of business service topics such as OFCCP, Registered Apprenticeship, assimilating New Americans, etc. This includes a review of LMI publications and resources available online. The Career and Technical Education, Career Resource Network invites employment service staff to the variety of workshops scheduled each year. Workshops include Improved Career Decision Making, Career Planning, RUPeND Training, and other career educational topics. Labor Exchange system training is held to ensure staff working with job seekers and employers are always informed of any changes to the online services. Workforce3one and other online webinars are available for viewing as well. Job Service AJC staff receive annual training from UI staff on the UI Internet Claims Entry System (UI ICE) each fall of the year prior to the UI claims peak period.

2. Describe strategies developed to support training and awareness across core programs and the Unemployment Insurance program, and the training provided for Employment Services and WIOA staff on identification of UI eligibility issues and referral to UI staff for adjudication.

Job Service administers the UI, Wagner-Peyser and WIOA programs. The Senior Management collaborates closely to support claim center and the Job Service AJC assistance to claimants needing to file their claims and register for work. During heavy peak seasonal increases in UI claims filing, UI and Job Service AJC managers and staff increase their cooperation to expedite the claims taking process. Job Service AJC staff receive annual training on UI ICE. This ensures staff efficiently assist claimants with their UI claim filing. Job Service AJC staff connect with UI staff to resolve certain adjudication issues as identified in the established roles and responsibilities.

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.

North Dakota Job Service AJC staff are knowledgeable in assisting individuals with UI claims filing and some Job Service AJC staff are experienced in actual claims taking while working in the UI department. Job Service AJC staff have a long history of providing assistance to UI claimants. North Dakota has seasonal increase in UI activity and when telephone claim wait times increased, it was beneficial to encourage UI claimants to utilize online filing in resource rooms. Job Service AJCs provide assistance following roles and responsibilities guidance provided by State UI management. Effective November 2015, the UI claims call center discontinued the UI claims call center and moved to online claims taking only. Job Service AJC staff are well prepared to provide meaningful UI claims filing assistance and manage large influxes of individuals during peak claims taking periods.

Staff provide assistance to claimants in navigating the UI ICE system in the Job Service AJC resource rooms on the available computers. Job Service AJC staff assist in setting up a State of North Dakota Login and ID, this includes creating an email address if needed. UI ICE Reference Guides and additional UI information are made available for claimants in resource rooms.

C. Describe the state's strategy for providing reemployment assistance to Unemployment Insurance claimants and other unemployed individuals.

North Dakota UI claimants are required to have a resume on file with jobsnd.com. When a UI claimant files a claim online, information is interfaced to jobsnd.com and creates a partial registration. Jobsnd.com uses the partial registration data to automatically perform a job search and informs the UI claimant of suitable job openings available for application. Employment Service staff assist with reemployment opportunities.

Job seekers, including UI claimants, visiting an Job Service AJC receive skill assessment, career counseling, and labor market information. Job Service AJC staff recommend on-site development tools to increase interview, soft or computer skills, short term industry training or degree programs through WIOA services and other core and community partner referrals.

Career services including skill assessments, career guidance utilizing labor market information, job search assistance and access to WIOA assistance are available to all job seekers. Skill assessment completed by Job Service AJC staff enables clear direction to job openings or referrals to training programs. Knowing the skills job seekers have helps match them to skills desired in employer's job openings. When skill gaps are identified, job seeker training needs can be quickly addressed.

Job Service has invested in jobsnd.com to allow for self-service that is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, from anywhere Internet access is available. Jobsnd.com links to the online labor exchange system for individual job search activity and employers to post job listings. Job seekers can use jobsnd.com to create quality resumes and conduct automated job searches. Additionally, job seekers can access education and training programs available and view labor market information such as in demand occupations, current wages and training required. Job seekers can also explore career options, find direction to veteran services, and access community resources.

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;

UI claimants, visiting a Job Service AJC receive skill assessment, career counseling, and labor market information. Job Service AJC staff recommend on-site development tools to increase interview, soft or computer skills, short term industry training or degree programs through WIOA services and other core and community partner referrals. Job Service administers the UI, Wagner-Peyser and WIOA programs. The Senior Management collaborates closely to support claim center and the Job Service AJC assistance to claimants needing to file their claims and register for work.

Non-job attached claimants from the profiling pool with a score that places them in the top 50 percent of those most likely to exhaust benefits are required to participate in reemployment services. Automated services include orientation to UI, reemployment information job search assistance and interviewing skills. Reemployment activities are monitored through the JSND UI automated system, UI ICE. Failure to complete the activities timely will result in a stop to UI payment until issues are resolved.

Job Service AJC staff provide a variety of labor exchange services UI claimants. The most common service is to assist a UI claimant with the requirement to register on the Job Service ND Virtual One-Stop (VOS). VOS is the electronic labor exchange system. Staff assist UI claimants with the online registration and provide assistance creating a resume. VOS has a virtual recruiter feature that will notify UI claimants of new job openings that meet their search criteria. Additional services to UI claimants include assistance to create resumes for each type of employment that a UI claimant is seeking and techniques for improving interviewing skills for UI claimants. Online/electronic applications are prevalent with many employers and this application process is often problematic for UI claimants that lack computer literacy. Job Service AJC staff are familiar with the local employer requirements and assist with this online application process. Social media is discussed as a means to broaden a UI claimant's job search.

UI claimants receive referrals to WIOA Dislocated Worker for upgrade training for in-demand occupations. Out of area job search and relocation support services are provided as needed. Referrals are also provided to core programs for partner services such as increased academic skill and GED or vocational rehabilitation services that support their job search activities.

Employers frequently utilize the Job Service AJCs for onsite hiring events and job fairs. UI claimants are provided information on upcoming hiring events and job fairs and are instructed on where to find future events on the Job Service ND website. Resources are available to UI claimants on various job seeking topics such as the importance of soft skills, quantifying and measuring occupational skills and accomplishments. For UI claimants with a criminal record, guidance is provided on how to overcome this barrier to employment on applications and during interviews.

2. Registration of UI claimants with the State's employment service if required by State law;

North Dakota UI claimants are required to have a resume on file with jobsnd.com. When a UI claimant files a claim online, information is interfaced to jobsnd.com and creates a partial registration. Jobsnd.com uses the partial registration data to automatically perform a job search and informs the UI claimant of suitable job openings available for application. Employment Service staff assist with reemployment opportunities.

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

North Dakota UI claimants complete their reemployment activities online on UI ICE. One feature of the UI ICE system is a provided a list of five job openings that matches the UI claimants' last work occupation through an interface with the state job bank. A job list is provided each time a UI claimant logs into the UI ICE system to complete their reemployment activities. The reemployment activities includes information on effective job search strategies, creating cover letters and resumes, an interviewing skills video and information on coping with job loss. Job Service AJC staff provide career services as outlined in WIOA to UI claimants and compliment the reemployment activities provided online.

4. Provision of referrals to and application assistance for training and education programs and resources.

UI claimants receive skill assessments, career guidance utilizing labor market information, job search assistance and access to WIOA assistance. Skill assessment completed by Job Service AJC staff enables clear direction to job openings or referrals to training programs. Knowing the skills job seekers have helps match them to skills desired in employer's job openings. When skill gaps are identified, job seeker training needs can be quickly addressed. WIOA case managers will provide information to training and education programs via the ETPL which includes Registered Apprenticeship sponsors. Job Service AJC staff will provide assistance to UI claimants requesting or requiring guidance to complete financial aid applications.

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.

See sections a. and b. below.

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.

Based on the most current information available from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), North Dakota had \$10.1 billion in combined crop and livestock production sales in 2012. Eighty-eight percent (\$8.89 billion) of North Dakota's total agricultural sales are attributed to crop production. North Dakota's \$10.1 billion in total agricultural sales in 2012 ranked North Dakota at number 11 out of 13 states with total agricultural sales in excess of \$10 billion.

According to the United States Department Agriculture, North Dakota's 2014 and 2015 crop acreage numbers ranked in the top ten states for many grain crops, 2 in sugar beets, and 3 in potatoes. In 2015, North Dakota planted 7.65 million acres of wheat (2), 710,000 acres of sunflowers (1), 224,000 acres of sugar beets (2), 82,000 acres of potatoes (3), and produced 42,000,000 pounds of honey (2014/1). Based on USDA data, North Dakota consistently ranks 16 or 17 in annual cattle and calf livestock inventory. Other than sugar beets and potatoes, North Dakota does not rank in processed vegetable, fruit, nut, or melon production among the 50 states and Puerto Rico.

Crop and cattle production is spread pretty evenly across North Dakota. However, sugar beets and potatoes are primarily grown in North Dakota's far eastern Red River Valley. Based on past and projected agricultural activity in North Dakota, we do not anticipate the above acreage or cattle inventories to change significantly in the next 4 years.

Based on agricultural employer activity with Job Service ND for calendar years 2014 and 2015, agricultural employers placed an average of 543 seasonal job orders per year requesting an average of 1,873 seasonal agricultural workers per year (1,378 H2A openings and 495 non-H2A openings on average per year). In general, the number of H2A job openings can be an inflated number and not all H2A positions requested will be filled. This is because agents and farmers will request more visas than are needed in case the foreign workers who are hired do not work out.

The top five labor-intensive crops in North Dakota include wheat, corn, soybeans, barley and sunflowers.

In order of need, the majority of the job orders were recruiting for farm equipment operators (1), animal ranch workers (2), general farm labor workers (3), beekeepers (4), and truck drivers (5). As a major agriculture state, North Dakota, places great emphasis on the provision of employment services for agricultural employers and migrant and seasonal farm workers (MSFWs).

The high proportion of H2A openings reflects the shortage of agricultural labor in North Dakota due to the increased demand for workers in North Dakota's oil patch and the higher wages paid by the energy companies. During 2015, oil prices dropped from record highs and oil field workers have been laid off. However, it is unknown

how many of the laid off workers will stay in North Dakota. This is because many of the oil field workers have come to North Dakota from out-of-state to work specifically in the oil fields. Despite the diminished labor pool available for agricultural openings, Job Service ND remains dedicated to working with agricultural employers to locate qualified farm laborers and equipment operators to assist with the spring to fall farming season.

Based on the best information available, an estimated 700 migrant and seasonal farm workers may be in North Dakota at any time during planting, growing, and harvest seasons for PY 2016 - 2019. The planting season generally starts in April and the final harvests generally occur no later than October. These same workers may also work on the Minnesota side of the Red River Valley. In addition, Job Service ND works to move MSFW's into permanent nonagricultural openings whenever possible.

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.

The number of migrant farm workers traveling to North Dakota each year, primarily to work in the Red River Valley, continues to decrease. The decrease in migrant farm workers can be attributed to farmers' use of new equipment that improves spacing between row crops, the increased use of Roundup Ready sugar beets, and the use of modern farming practices has almost eliminated the need for manual workers in the sugar beet and potato fields.

The transient nature of seasonal farm workers and their established working relationships with agricultural employers in North Dakota makes it difficult to develop accurate demographic data and consistent estimates of MSFW's in North Dakota. During calendar years 2014 and 2015, agricultural employers requested an average of 1,873 seasonal agricultural workers (1,372 H2A workers and 495 non-H2A workers). However, with Job Service ND receiving less than 60 new MSFW registrations per year over the last few years, many of the positions appear they will go to returning workers not registered with Job Service ND or will go to foreign workers under the H2A program.

However, based on information available to Job Service ND and from the WIOA Section 167 grantee (Motivation, Education and Training Inc. (MET), Hispanic groups and families from the southern states and North Dakota Hispanic families who have made North Dakota their permanent home make up the majority of non-H2A MSFW's workers.

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.

MSFW Outreach Workers primarily schedule meetings with migrants or receive walk-in customers in the Job Service AJCs. When necessary, contacts can also be made in the field or at the workers' home. In addition, through Migrant Services Network Meetings attended by outreach workers, outreach workers maintain contact with social service agencies, Migrant Health Services, Migrant Legal Services, Motivation, Education and Training Inc. (MET), Tri-Valley Opportunity Council (Migrant Head Start), and Minnesota Job Service. At these networking meetings, these agencies provide information on how they are locating and providing services to MSFW's.

Recently, one promising practice has been to visit public summer school programs in rural communities where MSFW's are known to live and work.

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.

To support the Job Service AJCs and the MSFW Outreach Workers, the State Monitor Advocate provides the MSFW Outreach Workers with a variety of resources and assistance throughout the year. The following technical assistance and resources are provided to the MSFW Outreach Workers throughout the year: 1.) Once every month, Wagner-Peyser registration reports are distributed to outreach worker staff in all offices for review to determine if newly registered MSFW's, by virtue of the information they have supplied and their work history, are eligible for MSFW outreach and additional assistance; 2.) The State Monitor Advocate visits each Job Service AJC annually and meets with the MSFW Outreach Workers to discuss local trends and to determine if the MSFW Outreach Worker has the necessary tools and resources to carry out their duties; 3.) The MSFW Outreach Workers are given the opportunity to offer input to, and review, the Job Service Complaint System Manual each time the manual is updated; 4.) To ensure all equity indicators continue to be met, the State Monitor Advocate reviews monthly and quarterly MSFW activity reports and based on these reports provides guidance as necessary to the Job Service AJCs and other strategic partners; 4.) The State Monitor Advocate attends the annual State Monitor Advocate National Training conferences. After each conference, the State Monitor Advocate provides copies of all materials and PowerPoint presentations provided at the training conferences to the state's MSFW Outreach Workers; 5.) When directives or MSFW information is disseminated by National Office, the State Monitor Advocate forwards this information to the MSFW Outreach Workers; and 6.) Minutes taken by MSFW Outreach Workers at Migrant Services Networking Meetings are shared with the other MSFW Outreach Workers in the state.

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.

MSFW Outreach Workers do not perform the MFSW program duties full-time. In addition to the MSFW Outreach Worker duties, The MSFW workers at Job Service ND also provide Wagner Peyser services and in some cases, WIOA case management services. Because our MSFW Outreach Workers also perform Wagner Peyser duties, the staff assigned as outreach workers are very knowledgeable of the core programs and the unemployment insurance program. Wagner Peyser staff receive training through in-person and Interactive Video Network (IVN) training sessions.

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.

MSFW Outreach Workers do not perform the MFSW program duties full-time. In addition to the MSFW Outreach Worker duties, The MSFW workers at Job Service ND also provide Wagner Peyser services and in some cases, WIOA case management services. Because our MSFW Outreach Workers also perform Wagner Peyser duties, the staff assigned as outreach workers receive training and professional development in the provision of high quality services to jobseekers and employers through in-person and IVN Wagner Peyser training sessions.

In addition, the State Monitor Advocate attends the annual State Monitor Advocate National Training conferences. After each conference, the State Monitor Advocate provides copies of all materials, Webinars, and PowerPoint presentations provided at the training conferences to the state's MSFW Outreach Workers. The MFSW Outreach Workers are assigned to review the materials and to provide feedback and/or questions to the State Monitor Advocate.

E. Coordinating outreach efforts with NFJP grantees as well as with public and private community service agencies and MSFW groups.

Motivation, Education and Training Inc. (MET) operates the National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) in eastern North Dakota. An ongoing partnership between Job Service ND and MET has existed to provide MSFWs additional opportunities for employment and training. MET maintains offices in the Red River Valley cities of Grafton, Fargo, and Wahpeton, ND. These MET offices and the Job Service AJCs work together to provide services to MSFW's in the respective areas. Tying the various service agencies together broadens the potential of serving the MSFWs in a one-stop concept.

In the Red River Valley where most of the state's MSFW's are located, MSFW Outreach Workers from the Red River Valley offices attend networking meetings sponsored by farm worker advocacy groups. Farm worker advocacy groups at the networking meetings include, but is not limited to the following: 1.) Motivation, Education and Training Inc. (MET); 2.) Migrant Legal Services; 3.) County Social Service agencies; 4.) Migrant Health Services; 5.) Migrant and Seasonal Head Start agencies; 6.) Emergency food pantries; and 7.) Salvation Army organizations. At these networking meetings, participating members provide information about the services they offer to MSFW's and their families and the efforts they make in locating MSFW's in order to promote their services.

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:

- i. How career and training services required under WIOA Title I will be provided to MSFWs through the one-stop centers;**
- ii. How the State serves agricultural employers and how it intends to improve such services.**

North Dakota is not designated as a "Significant State" and does not have "Significant Bilingual" offices. However, all nine Job Service AJC locations in the state have a designated Business Services representative, MSFW Outreach Worker, and a Complaint Service Representative.

The Job Service AJCs, in coordination with other strategic partners, provides MSFW's and Limited English Proficient individuals with the full range of employment and training services including, but not limited to the following:

- Assistance with the Wagner-Peyser registration process in order to receive the full array of services;
- Provide assistance with posting resumes and how to do online job searches;
- Assistance with accessing other self-services via electronic technologies;
- Provide assistance with posting resumes and how to do online job searches;
- Provision of information on services available in the Job Service AJCs and contact information for partner agencies;
- Provision of basic information on labor rights, protections and responsibilities with respect to terms and conditions of employment;
- Assistance in reviewing job orders effectively;
- Assessment and referral to agriculture and non-agricultural jobs, training, and support services;
- Provision of skill assessments, counseling, and other job development services;
- Assistance with preparation of complaints related to employment and non-employment services;
- Acceptance and referral of labor-related complaints and apparent violations to appropriate state and Federal agencies;
- Referrals to local community service organizations;
- Assistance to Limited English Proficient individuals encountering language barriers;
- Assistance with career guidance and other job development contact strategies; and
- Provide follow-up services as necessary and appropriate.

Special emphasis is placed on the identification of MSFW customers. Once every month, Wagner-Peyser registration reports are distributed to outreach worker staff in all offices for review to determine if newly registered MSFW's, by virtue of the information they have supplied and their work history, are eligible for MSFW outreach and additional assistance.

Job Service ND recognizes the importance of the agricultural industry to North Dakota and the large economic contribution made to the state's economy. Therefore, Job Service ND and the Job Service AJCs ensure agricultural employers receive all the services provided to non-agricultural employers (see WIOA/WP Plan for

services to employers). Job Service ND and the Job Service AJCs provide agricultural employers the full range of employer services and some specialized services including, but not limited to the following:

- Assistance with the online employer registration process in order to access the full array of employer services provided by Job Service ND;
- Assistance with the placement of job orders;
- Access to online labor market information;
- Access to online searches for qualified candidates registered with Job Service ND;
- Assistance with assessing labor needs;
- Opportunities to participate in job and career fairs;
- Recruitment activities to find and refer qualified MSFW's and other domestic candidates to fill job order positions;
- Assistance with the H2A temporary labor certification program for agricultural employers experiencing a shortage of workers;
- Provision of housing inspections;
- Maintain active and inactive files on employers who have utilized the H2A program;
- Provision of information for compliance with labor laws and regulations;
- Assistance with information on employment and training programs, tax incentives (WOTC), and bonding services;
- Provide contact with individual agricultural employers to explain our services when requested or a need for personal contact has been determined by a business services representative.

In addition, Job Service ND staff identifies employers who employ MSFW's and promote the recruitment and hiring of U.S workers when they are available. When U.S. workers are not available, agricultural employers may utilize the H2A Labor Certification Program administered by Job Service ND. The H2A program is a resource for agricultural employers to use when an employer anticipates sufficient qualified workers will not be found in the local labor market. Using the job requirements provided by the employers, Job Service ND staff identify individuals who may be interested in working for an agricultural employer and refer those individuals to the agricultural employer. When employers are unable to locate domestic workers, they may seek workers from outside the U.S. by using the H2A program. Designated Job Service ND staff review H2A job orders for accuracy and compliance with the H2A federal regulations before employers forward a request for foreign workers to the U.S. Department of Labor. The job orders are also entered into the Interstate Clearance System with Montana, South Dakota, Texas, and Puerto Rico. Job Service ND's priority for all agricultural job orders is the recruitment and hiring of qualified and available U.S. workers.

As a major agricultural state, our Job Service AJCs are dedicated to the provision, and continual improvement of the services provided to MSFW's and employers.

(B) Marketing the employment service complaint system to farmworkers and other farmworker advocacy groups.

Job Service ND has nine local AJC locations in the state. Each office has a Complaint System Representative and MSFW Outreach Worker. In some offices the Complaint System Representative and MSFW Outreach Worker are the same person. The Complaint System Representatives will assist MSFW's to file complaints (both JS and non-JS related), file apparent violations when necessary, and coordinate with 167 grantees and other MSFW services providers.

The MSFW Outreach Workers will market the employment service complaint system to farmworkers and other farmworker advocacy groups. Marketing of the employment service complaint system to the farmworker community is done when MSFW Outreach Workers meet with MSFW's in person and by informing attendees at Migrant Services Networking meetings sponsored by farm worker advocacy groups of the employment complaint system service. Farm worker advocacy groups at the networking meetings include, but is not limited to the following: 1.) Motivation, Education and Training Inc. (MET); 2.) Migrant Legal Services; 3.) County Social Service agencies; 4.) Migrant Health Services; 5.) Migrant and Seasonal Head Start agencies; 6.) Emergency food pantries; and 7.) Salvation Army organizations.

(C) Marketing the Agricultural Recruitment System to agricultural employers and how it intends to improve such publicity.

The purpose of the ARS is to meet the labor needs of agricultural employers, provide job opportunities to farm workers and protect the domestic agricultural workforce. The ARS ensures proper disclosure of the terms and conditions of employment to seasonal workers who are recruited from outside the local commuting area.

Job Service ND, Wagner Peyser staff, and MSFW Outreach Workers will continue efforts to strengthen its working relationships with MSFWs and employers so that each better understands how the Wagner Peyser Labor Exchange System and outreach services can be of assistance.

Efforts will continue to include promoting the use of the Agricultural Recruitment System (ARS) to employers and the full range of Wagner Public Labor Exchange services delivered by Job Service AJCs. We will promote Agricultural Recruitment System services available to employers by participating in employer conferences, workshops and seminars that respond to the needs of the agricultural community in a general, and to agricultural employers participating in job fairs sponsored or attended by Job Service ND.

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).

Motivation, Education and Training Inc. (MET) operates the National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) in eastern North Dakota. An ongoing partnership between Job Service ND and MET has existed to provide MSFWs additional opportunities for employment and training. Job Service ND and MET collaborate to meld services that provide the most benefit to MSFW's. MET maintains offices in the Red River Valley cities of Grafton, Fargo, and Wahpeton, ND. These MET offices and the Job Service AJCs in Fargo and Wahpeton work together to provide services to MSFW's in the respective areas. Tying the various service agencies together broadens the potential of serving the MSFWs in a one-stop concept.

Over the next few months leading up to the beginning Program Year 2016 on July 1, 2016, Job Service ND and MET Inc. will cooperate in entering into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to formalize the current cooperative relationship that has existed between Job Service ND and MET Inc. for many years. MET Inc. has already reached out to Job Service ND and we are ready to fully cooperate in getting the MOU into place. Job Service ND will also seek to further the relationship by examining the possibility of co-locating the Fargo and Wahpeton MET offices within the local Job Service AJCs.

(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 following MSFW related organizations and agencies, were given the opportunity to provide information and comment on the PY 2016 to PY 2019 Combined State Plan and Agricultural Outreach Plan:

Motivation, Education, and Training, Inc. (MET)

927 12th Street West

Grafton, ND 58237

(WIA Section 167 Grantee)

Motivation, Education, and Training, Inc. (MET)

1122 1st Avenue North

Fargo, ND 58102

(WIA Section 167 Grantee)

Motivation, Education, and Training, Inc. (MET)

108 7th Street South

Wahpeton, ND 58075

(WIA Section 167 Grantee)

Tri-Valley Opportunity Council, Inc.

102 N Broadway

P.O. Box 607

Crookston, MN 56716

Migrant Health Services, Inc.

810 Forth Avenue South. Suite 101

Moorhead, MN 56560

Migrant Legal Services

1015 7th Avenue North

Moorhead, MN 56560

No comments were received

(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.

During the previous four years Job Service ND received 376,045 Wagner-Peyser registrations, with 392 identified as MSFW's. Less than one-tenth of one-percent of all registrants were identified as MSFW's in the previous four year. However, when the Equity Ratio Indicators were reported to the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) on the quarterly ETA 5148 - Services to Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers Reports, the quarterly reports for the previous four years shows North Dakota was successful at providing services to MSFWs at higher rates than to non-MSFWs in all 5 Equity Ratio Indicator categories for all sixteen quarters of the previous four years.

Job Service ND and the State Monitor Advocate will continue to place special emphasis on the identification of MSFW customers and to ensure all Equity Ratio Indicators continue to be or exceeded. This will be done by continued monitoring of monthly and quarterly MSFW activity and providing guidance as necessary to the Job Service AJC outreach workers and other strategic partners.

(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.

The previous Agricultural Outreach Plan for PY 2014 and extended through PY 2015, established an outreach goal of 200 MSFW contacts and continued efforts to meet or exceed the Equity Ratio Indicators for provision of services to MSFW's. Job Service ND met these goals during PY 2014 and is on pace to meet the goal again for PY 2015.

The Agricultural Outreach Plans for PY 2011 and PY 2012 established outreach goals of 250 MSFW contacts and the PY 2013 and PY 2014 established outreach goals of 200 MSFW contacts. The outreach contact goals were met or exceeded in three of previous Program Years. In PY 2011 when the goal was for 250 MSFW outreach contacts, Job Service ND came up short with only 247 MSFW outreach contacts. This was still a 98.8% success rate for PY 2011. As mentioned earlier, Job Service ND met or exceeded the Equity Ratio Indicators for provision of services to MSFW's in all sixteen quarters of the previous four years.

(E) State Monitor Advocate

The plan must contain a statement confirming the State Monitor Advocate has reviewed and approved the AOP.

North Dakota is not designated as a significant state, but Job Service ND has a full-time, year round employee designated as the State Monitor Advocate who administers the duties on a part-time and as needed basis. The State Monitor Advocate participated extensively in the preparation of the Agricultural Outreach Plan and had the opportunity to approve and comment on the plan.

F. 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 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 North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) adopted the ESEA common core state standards for adult education (refer to Appendices – memo from DPI management) in May 2015. Professional development to all adult education staff has been implemented over the past two years using the 2014 GED as a model.

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 the adult education and literacy activities, including programs that provide such activities concurrently. The Unified or Combined State Plan must include at a minimum the scope, content, and organization of 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—
 1. 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
 2. Is for the purpose of educational and career advancement.

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) serves as the administrative/fiscal agent for Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA). As administrative/fiscal agent, NDDPI ensures that local service providers (adult learning centers) provide services to eligible individuals who: 1. are beyond the age of compulsory school attendance (16 years of age); 2. do not have the basic literacy skills necessary to function effectively in society; 4. have not reached a level of education equivalent to that required for a certificate of graduation to be issued; 5. are unable to speak, read, or write English to obtain or retain employment commensurate with their ability.

All activities funded under WIOA are authorized, approved and overseen by the NDDPI. Adult basic education and English Language service are the responsibility of the local seventeen (17) adult learning centers located across the state. The following organizations are eligible to apply, per AEFLA, to the NDDPI for federal funds through a competition process to provide the identified services: Local education agencies Community-based or faith-based organizations Voluntary literacy organizations North Dakota University System Institutions Public or private nonprofit agencies Libraries Public housing authorities Other nonprofits that have the ability to provide literacy services Consortia of organizations listed above

The following would constitute ineligible applicants: Applicants that are not in compliance with the Civil Rights Act of 1964 or those applicants that discriminate on the basis of nationality, origin, race, gender, religion or handicap Applicants lacking assurance that religious restrictions will not be violated Applicants lacking evidence of capability for stable fiscal control Applicants lacking qualified staff, facilities, and equipment.

The NDDPI will conduct a competition using a Request for Proposal (RFP) process under WIOA upon receiving guidance from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education. Criteria will be standard with the considerations required by federal legislation. Grants will be awarded on a three year basis. Future efforts will be made to assess what support eligible providers might need in order to implement this Plan and broaden discussion of how these needs can be met.

The NDDPI will use the following process to distribute funds to awarded applicants: not less than 82.5 percent of this grant funds to award grants and contracts under Section 231 and to carry out Section 225. Programs for Corrections, of which not more than 20 percent of such amount shall be available to carry out Section 225.

Local grants will be distributed based on the ability to meet the requirements of AEFLA Purposes outlined in WIOA: 1. assist adults to become literate and obtain the knowledge and skill necessary for employment and economic self-sufficiency; 2. assist adults who are parents for family members become a full partner in the education development of their children; 3. promote transition from adult education to post-secondary education and training through career pathways; 4. assist immigrants and English language learners improve reading, writing, math, speaking and comprehension of the English language and acquire understanding of American government, individual freedom, and responsibilities of citizenship.

This will include providing adult education and literacy services to the negotiated performance levels (not less than the State) which demonstrates academia, college and career effectiveness, and focused on research-based methods of instruction. This will also include alignment with local workforce and other partnerships which create a collaborative seamless process and system for eligible students. The determination of priority services will follow the federal guidance. All activities will have sufficient intensity and duration, as so aligned with the common core standards, resulting in strong college and career readiness. North Dakota partners have a strong history of meeting performance, receiving four WIA Incentive grants in the past ten years.

Under the WIOA (Section 203), adult education and literacy activities are defined as, "programs, activities, and services that include 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." A wide variety of program strategies will continue or begin to be implemented to be responsive to the needs of adult learners, with a strong foundational emphasis on quality, intensity and duration of services which will result in real learning and related life changes, over placing emphasis on serving large numbers of students. These areas include the following: Reading, writing and numeracy for grades 0 – 12.9 English language – NRS levels 0 – 6 Civics education – includes individual education plan, career research, and employability skills Instruction to assist students in acquiring high school equivalency credentials and transition into post-secondary (career pathway focus) Integrated ABE and ELL with occupational instruction (Career Pathway Bridges) Digital literacy – computer literacy to meet workplace competency demands and transition to post-secondary education and training Financial literacy – courses and individualized work helping students understand issues including budgeting, debt, impact of student loans, unfair lending practices, etc. Workforce readiness training – individualized advising as part of individual education plan to include career research, employability skills, etc.

The plan scope, or the 'how' for adult education involves implementation of a developed comprehensive professional development plan to all local adult education providers, of the WIOA required features to meet its stakeholders requirements, and best practice strategies for both instructional and social readiness for college and career.

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, Adult Education Office, will prepare for a new competition to distribute AEFLA funds for the 2017-2018 program year (July 1, 2017). The ND Governor's Workforce Development Council, which serves as the only state WIB, will seek statewide fund distribution by nothing less than a regional service delivery model (map included in narrative did not transfer to entry site – if needed, please contact state) to maximize service delivery statewide. Each regional site will determine the delivery of satellite programs within the respective region.

A (historical) formula method will be used to determine the amount of funding based upon region population, unemployment rates and other distinguished factors (past performance of core indicators, EFL gains) to be determined prior to the competition and RFP development. After year one, a performance based funding formula equal to 50% will be implemented.

The ND Department of Public Instruction (DPI) is the State's eligible agency for adult education and literacy programs and responsible for administering funds and providing program/performance oversight to local program grantees. Adult education and literacy eligible providers approved under Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA) requirements will continue to receive funding through June 30, 2017, as long as the eligible current providers adhere to State and federal grant expectations as measured through annual applications, financial reports, and program performance reports.

During grant year 2016-17, DPI will implement a new competitive application process for all federal 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 to the 13 considerations in Title II of WIOA.

TIMELINE: The following steps will be taken in conducting the AEFLA competition:

- November 14, 2016: Announcement of RFP process and bidders conference via multiple media venues to eligible providers as identified in WIOA and using multiple vendor listings (a variety of platforms to ensure statewide participation and may include local newspapers, DPI newsletter, press releases, social media, and contacts

with other state and local agencies and workforce partners) to reach local education agencies, community-based or faith-based organizations, voluntary literacy organizations, ND University System Institutions, public or private nonprofit agencies, libraries, public housing authorities, other nonprofits that have the ability to provide literacy services, consortiums of organizations listed above.

- December 15, 2016: DPI hosts a bidder conference (as established by law) to any eligible provider; the priorities and RFP process will be released and reviewed.
- December 16, 2016 – January 31, 2017: DPI procurement officer provides technical assistance to inquiries from potential eligible providers.
- January 31, 2017: Due date for AEFLA grant applications
- February 1 – February 17, 2017: DPI procurement officer reviews for initial compliance of any submitted application; recruits GWDC members to review and score AEFLA grant applications.
- February 20-24, 2017: Review team meets to review and score AEFLA grant applications; DPI procurement officer and fiscal officer review scoring and proposed budgets to determine rank-ordered slate based on applicant scores.
- February 27 – March 3, 2017: DPI announces AEFLA grant applicants that will receive funding.
- March 2017: selected applicants participate in three day training.
- July 1, 2017: AEFLA grant providers begin grant cycle, programming, and funding.

Funding will be made available on a three year cycle to provide adult education services. After implementation of services, providers will apply on an annual basis for continuing funding under Title II.

The ND Department of Public Instruction, Adult Education office directly funds its grants and contracts and does not use or fund a sub-State entity to conduct a competition. The agency will use the same announcement, application and process for all applications as is required in ND Century Code; the required involvement of the agency procurement officer is to ensure that all applications are treated in the same manner and with consistent processes; that application processes are clear written and nonnegotiable. Direct application will be the required norm. DPI procurement processes ensures direct access to apply for grants or contracts to all eligible providers in ND. Eligible applicants under Section 231 of WIOA will submit applications to the agency.

RFPs for all programs competed will adhere to direct and equitable provisions to award funds under WIOA sections 225: corrections; 231: eligible providers; and 243: integrated English Literacy and Civics Education. All RFPs issued under AEFLA will prescribe to the competition process outlined previously. Each application will be available to all eligible providers. Section 243 funds and section 225 funds will be competed through separate RFP processes. Applications from each competition will use review teams, scoring procedures, and final determination consistent with the description provided above. These approaches meet the requirements specified in AEFLA and is satisfied that every effort is made to ensure direct and equitable access.

The ND DPI will use the considerations specified in WIOA section 231(e) of WIOA to fund eligible providers by incorporating each of the considerations into the narrative section of the application with related rubric scoring points, of which will be a requirement for acceptable applications and the highest of rubric scoring points. To determine if an applicant is an organization of demonstrated effectiveness, all applicants will be required to provide data demonstrating their ability to improve skills of low-literate adults in the applicable academic areas related to the RFP. Prior recipients will use data from the Adult Education student data management system (LACES) to show how they met State-negotiated performance measures for all student levels, as well as for English language learners. New organizations will be provided forms to show demonstrated student learning gain, including low-literacy level and English language learners. An applicant also will be required to demonstrate its record of improving the knowledge and skills needed to transition successfully to postsecondary 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 be eliminated from the competition.

WIOA (Section 231) defines adult education and literacy activities as “programs, activities, and services that include 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.” A wide variety of program strategies will continue or begin to be implemented to be responsive to the needs of adult learners, with a strong foundational emphasis on quality, intensity and duration of services which will result in real learning and related life changes, over placing emphasis on serving large numbers of students. These areas include the following:

- Reading, writing and numeracy for grades 0 – 12.9
- English language – NRS levels 0 – 6
- Civics education – includes individual education plan, career research, and employability skills Instruction to assist students in acquiring high school equivalency credentials and transition into post-secondary (career pathway focus). In addition, NDCC 15.1-21-27 requires all students seeking adult education to take and pass the Civics exam.
- Integrated ABE and ELL with occupational instruction (Career Pathway Bridges)
- Digital literacy – computer literacy to meet workplace competency demands and transition to post-secondary education and training
- Workforce preparation and readiness training – individualized advising as part of individual education plan to include career research, employability skills, etc.

The competitive application process will require applicants to document their qualifications per each of the thirteen considerations set forth in Section 231(e). Information will be collected via a state-issued Request for Proposal (RFP) process. Required information from each applicant may include, but is not limited to:

- Documentation of eligibility per Section 203(5)
- Type of Adult Education Program(s) and/or Activities to be funded, limited to those activities allowed in Title II of WIOA and set forth in this plan
- Alignment with ND Combined State Plan including state strategies and goals, career pathways, and local one-stop alignment.
- Administrative capacity such as: organizational structure, funding streams, financial oversight, data collection and reporting, and assurances
- Operational capacity such as: description of qualified staff and hiring processes, available locations and classroom space, community partnerships, and number of

Title II-eligible students served per year.

- Quality of Services such as: proposed class schedules, description of curriculum and alignment with state-adopted standards, and professional development/training activities.
- Demonstrated Effectiveness such as: past targets and actual performance for previous Title II recipients under WIA. For applicants who have not previously received funding under Title II, the Eligible Agency will define and provide examples of other qualifying data that can be provided to demonstrate the applicant's effectiveness in serving basic-skills deficient individuals, including success in achieving the outcomes required under Section 116 of WIOA.

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:

- 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 NDDPI currently allocates federal and state funds to the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DOCR) to provide adult education and literacy services at five state correctional facilities: State Penitentiary, Missouri River Correctional Center, James Valley Correctional Center, Dakota Women's Rehabilitation and Correctional Center and the Youth Correctional Center. Current DOCR educational staff teach a comprehensive program which includes special education services, secondary high school diploma or GED, integrated education and training, career pathways, peer tutoring and re-entry transition.

Funds shall be competed to support education programs for the five facilities in these areas: Adult education and literacy services, Special education as determined by the eligible agency, Secondary school credit, and Integrated education and training; Career pathways; Concurrent enrollment; Peer tutoring; and Transition to re-entry initiatives/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.

Any awarded eligible provider shall give priority to serving individuals who will be released within a period of five years. Almost all adult offenders work towards their GED while about 25% of the incarcerated youth do as well, with the remainder working towards a diploma. Also available for both adults and juveniles is the research/evidence based Read Right program and also industry specific programs (i.e., welding, construction, FACS, Agriculture, Technology education, Commercial Arts, Vehicle Maintenance and Repair). Inmate tutoring is offered as paid employment following completion of a training program. Classes in career readiness and reentry planning are available and required by inmates within a year of parole/release.

The NDDPI currently allocates federal and state funds to the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DOCR) to provide adult education and literacy services at five state correctional facilities: State Penitentiary, Missouri River Correctional Center, James Valley Correctional Center, Dakota Women's Rehabilitation and Correctional Center and the Youth Correctional Center. This agency is the sole provider of corrections education statewide. DOCR educational staff teach a comprehensive program which includes special education services, secondary high school diploma or GED, EL services, integrated education and training, career pathways, peer tutoring and re-entry transition. Allocated funds for multi-year grants will be used to support education programs for these areas:

Adult education and literacy services,

Special education as determined by the eligible agency,

Secondary school credit, and

Integrated education and training;

Career pathways;

Concurrent enrollment;

Peer tutoring; and

Transition to re-entry initiatives/post-release services with the goal of reducing recidivism.

Corrections, although under one state agency, will participate in the competition requirements and be scored according to criteria listed above. Funding will not be provided for county or city jail inmates as the transition of services as most inmates do not stay beyond a 60 day incarceration timeframe; previous data has shown minimal measurable skill gain in that environment and thus, the decision was made that it is not financially appropriate to serve at the county or city jails at this time.

Any funded eligible provider shall give priority to serving individuals who will be released within a period of five years. DOCR staff include highly qualified strategist/special education teacher for both adult and juvenile populations. Data shows that almost all adult offenders work towards their GED while about 25% of the incarcerated youth do as well, with the remainder working towards a diploma. Also available for both adults and juveniles is the research/evidence based Read Right program and also industry specific programs (i.e., welding, construction, FACS, Agriculture, Technology education, Commercial Arts, Vehicle Maintenance and Repair). Inmate tutoring is offered as paid employment following completion of a training program. Classes in career readiness and reentry planning are available and required by inmates within a year of parole/release. Grants and contracts awarded with section 225 funds will be competed and will comply with the requirements of Subpart C and its requirements for competition, direct and equitable access, and use of the required 13 considerations. See previous timetable above for competition timeline; as stated, a competition will be required for ABE, EL and corrections, using the same calendar timeline. Competition criteria will also focus on instruction in adult education and literacy activities, secondary school credential, special education if needed, 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.

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 Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education programs will engage students in purposeful use of the language. It will offer the opportunity to develop and implement integrated English Literacy and civics education services to immigrants and other limited English proficient populations.

Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) programs will engage students in purposeful use of the language. It will offer the opportunity to develop and implement integrated English Literacy and civics education services to immigrants and other limited English proficient populations. Under WIA, ND had a very small population who received English literacy and civics education. Upon completion of the 2015-16 program year, ND's EL population was approximately 47% of the adult education population served; this increase over the past three years has been driven by a strong economic labor market and community partnership programs to bring EL families to ND. Five years ago, primarily all EL services were from four metro adult learning center programs; this past year, each of the 16 adult learning centers served EL students.

Through the competition process, ND will grant IELCE funds to eligible programs who describe their plan to provide English language acquisition and civics education concurrently and contextually; the four highest scores in the new competition application process will receive WIOA funds, assuring any proposed activities and budget will meet all statutory requirements. While WIOA funds will be given to four local programs using the rubric scoring process, all adult learning center providers will provide civics education concurrently and contextually as required by State law (NDCC 15.1-21-27).

DPI will require all eligible providers (sections 225, 231, and/or 243) to apply via the standard application process to ensure all applications are evaluated using the same rubric and scoring criteria. The agency ensures that all eligible providers have direct and equitable access to apply for grants or contracts. It also ensures that the same grant or contract announcement, application, and proposal process is used for all eligible providers through the grant management system. During the initial period of the grant submission process, any eligible agency that contacts the agency with an interest in participating will be provided the information needed. DPI believes these approaches meet the AELFA requirements to ensure direct and equitable access. The agency uses the considerations specified in section 231(e) of WIOA to fund eligible providers by incorporating each of the considerations into the narrative portion of the application. The agency attaches a point-based scoring rubric weighting each of the considerations. Applicants must provide narrative detail to demonstrate how they will meet each consideration.

North Dakota will award Section 243 funds to eligible providers through the competitive application process outlined above. Funds will be used to support the operational expenses of local IELCE programs, including teacher salaries and benefits, classroom supplies, textbooks, and other items necessary to carry out instruction in English language acquisition, workforce preparation activities, and civics education. While the State plans to issue guidance and technical assistance to eligible providers on how to co-enroll participants in occupational training, as appropriate, some section 243 funds may be used to offset occupational training costs as part of an integrated education and training program.

2. Describe how the State will fund, in accordance with the requirements of title II, subtitle C, Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education services and how the funds will be used for those services.

Funds will be distributed on a competitive basis through the RFP process mentioned earlier. Funds will be used to provide ELL and Civics instruction. The funds will pay for instructors and purchase materials on listening and reading comprehension along with writing and speaking. Staff from the adult learning centers have formed a subcommittee to solicit, review and recommend use of curriculum or modules that best support the expanded requirements of the legislation and the student goals and needs in the most experiential method possible. The English Literacy and Civics Program is designed to improve the productivity and obtaining of gainful employment through the improvement of skills of non-native English learners. Working with local providers, AJC's and local community employers, the adult learning centers and students will determine in-demand industries and occupations that can lead to economic self-sufficiency.

Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) programs will engage students in purposeful use of the language. It will offer the opportunity to develop and implement integrated English Literacy and civics education services to immigrants and other limited English proficient populations. Under WIA, ND had a very small population who received English literacy and civics education. Upon completion of the 2015-16 program year, ND's EL population was approximately 47% of the adult education population served; this increase over the past three years has been driven by a strong economic labor market and community partnership programs to bring EL families to ND. Five years ago, primarily all EL services were from four metro adult learning center programs; this past year, each of the 16 adult learning centers served EL students.

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will meet all statutory requirements. While WIOA funds will be given to four local programs using the rubric scoring process, all adult learning center providers will provide civics education concurrently and contextually as required by State law (NDCC 15.1-21-27).

DPI will require all eligible providers (sections 225, 231, and/or 243) to apply via the standard application process to ensure all applications are evaluated using the same rubric and scoring criteria. The agency ensures that all eligible providers have direct and equitable access to apply for grants or contracts. It also ensures that the same grant or contract announcement, application, and proposal process is used for all eligible providers through the grant management system. During the initial period of the grant submission process, any eligible agency that contacts the agency with an interest in participating will be provided the information needed. DPI believes these approaches meet the AELFA requirements to ensure direct and equitable access. The agency uses the considerations specified in section 231(e) of WIOA to fund eligible providers by incorporating each of the considerations into the narrative portion of the application. The agency attaches a point-based scoring rubric weighting each of the considerations. Applicants must provide narrative detail to demonstrate how they will meet each consideration.

North Dakota will award Section 243 funds to eligible providers through the competitive application process outlined above. Funds will be used to support the operational expenses of local IELCE programs, including teacher salaries and benefits, classroom supplies, textbooks, and other items necessary to carry out instruction in English language acquisition, workforce preparation activities, and civics education. While the State plans to issue guidance and technical assistance to eligible providers on how to co-enroll participants in occupational training, as appropriate, some section 243 funds may be used to offset occupational training costs as part of an integrated education and training program.

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.

The most critical element of continued leadership activities also focuses on monitoring and evaluation of local programs. All local programs are on a two–three year cycle for onsite monitoring.

NDDPI has a good foundation of working with education and workforce partners on a statewide career pathway system and sector strategy initiative. Additionally, the NDDPI is on the Governor's Workforce Development Council and the Leadership Team. This position promotes the collaboration and vision of workforce partners to ensure a seamless system is developed, implemented and evaluated for effectiveness. The development of Career Pathways and Integrated Employment and Training will be a key initiative for all partners.

North Dakota DPI will use funds made available under section 222(a)(2) to enhance the quality of programming in the adult education system. Not more than 12.5 percent of the grant funds made available will be used to carry out State Leadership activities under section 223. Activities to be supported with federal leadership funds and extended using State funding include:

- WIOA core partner programs will align and coordinate services for program participants. Leadership funds will be used to build the capacity of grantees to coordinate and align services by cross-training staff on intake/orientation, eligibility screening, and referral between partners, and other joint mechanisms developed through agency partnerships. In addition, the development of all components of career pathways will continue to be a priority with a focus on bridge programming and integrated education and training.
- Adult Education supports a statewide PD advisory committee of eight (8) to identify annual PD needs, determine delivery and evaluate results to ensure best practice approaches which result in both collaborative partnerships, academic and career focused rigors as measured in student ELF and core measure gains and teacher/program quality. These funds will be used on topics to include content standards implementation, instructional strategies and methodologies, integrated education and training, bridge programming, transition to postsecondary education, use of technology, distance education, and services to students with disabilities.

Technical assistance will continue to be a strong component of leadership activities and funds as the State Office continues to support local programs with research/evidence based programs, activities and curriculums to meet the individual needs of students. Technical assistance will focus on data and the student data management system (LACES), assessment and instruction; additionally, the aforementioned areas of career readiness, integrated employment and training and career pathways, and core partner services will be key for local programs. The 2016-2017 PD calendar has been designed with these focused topics in mind.

Using technology to improve program effectiveness through training and technical assistance focused on preparing instructors and program administrators to identify and utilize technology to enhance instruction, programming, and distance education. The State contracts to provide PD in the area of technology through activities such as face-to-face and online training in a variety of areas, including educational technology, digital literacy instruction, and distance learning. In addition, other training and technical assistance focuses on effective use of the statewide data system to maintain accurate student data and continuously improve programming.

The State office supports multiple methods to ensure promising practices and models are shared with all providers to include local program TA and monitoring visits, monthly conference calls, electronically shared association newsletters monthly about training opportunities, high-quality resources, and promising practices for instruction and programming; an annual conference and other PD activities.

The State will provide grantee oversight to include monthly data monitoring, annual site visits, and a program improvement monitoring process for low-performing grantees.

North Dakota will seek to develop and implement the use of technology applications and distance education, including professional development to support the use of instructional technology through distance learning program to prepare students to pass the HSE and assessing and addressing the need for professional development surrounding the utilization of technology in delivering instruction and teacher training. Developing content and models for integrated education and training and career pathways is also a priority. In establishing career pathways, the State is dedicated to:

- Evaluating the use of Literacy Information and Communication System (LINCS) for English language learners to develop teaching strategies for integrating education and training using contextualization concepts in teaching; and
- Identifying and disseminating a model of best practices for career pathways design and implementation through the Adult Education and Career Pathways Work Group.

The State is also planning for integrating literacy and English language instruction with occupational skill training, including promoting linkages with employers. This can be accomplished through providing funding for basic skills and HSE preparation and partnering with local workforce programs. To identify curriculum frameworks and align rigorous content standards that specify what adult learners should know and be able to do in the areas of reading and language arts, mathematics, and English

language acquisition, the technical assistance provided will take into consideration the following:

- State-adopted academic standards;
- Current adult skills and literacy assessments used in the State;
- Primary indicators of performance described in section 116;
- Support for standards and academic requirements for enrollment in non-remedial, for-credit courses in postsecondary educational institutions or institutions of higher education; and
- Where appropriate, content of occupational and industry skill standards widely used by business and industry in the State.

The State intends to accomplish this provision of WIOA by restructuring English Language Acquisition Content Standards to include integration of language acquisition and with workforce preparedness training. Further, professional development on integration of the College and Career Readiness Standards for adults with instruction for all students will be utilized. Through participation of the State interagency planning initiatives with the WIOA partners, the State's adult education providers will collaborate where possible and avoid duplicating efforts in order to maximize the impact of the activities described above.

2. Describe how the State will use the funds to carry out permissible State Leadership Activities under section 223 of WIOA, if applicable.

The provision of high quality professional development has been strong the past two years as North Dakota prepared for the 2014 GED. Professional development continues in this arena and will expand to career pathways, bridge programs and effective career planning to meet the state's continual employment needs. Integrated Employment and Training (IET) and digital literacy will be advanced and designed for work with ELL students as our priority.

As always, technical assistance will continue to be a strong component of leadership activities and funds as the State Office continues to support local programs with research/evidence based programs, activities and curriculums to meet the individual needs of students. Technical assistance will focus on data and our associated student data management system (LACES), assessment and instruction; additionally, the aforementioned areas of career readiness, integrated employment and training and career pathways will be key for local programs.

North Dakota DPI will use funds made available under section 222(a)(2) to enhance the quality of programming in the adult education system. Not more than 12.5 percent of the grant funds made available will be used to carry out State Leadership activities under section 223. Activities to be supported with federal leadership funds and extended using State funding include:

- WIOA core partner programs will align and coordinate services for program participants. Leadership funds will be used to build the capacity of grantees to coordinate and align services by cross-training staff on intake/orientation, eligibility screening, and referral between partners, and other joint mechanisms developed through agency partnerships. In addition, the development of all components of career pathways will continue to be a priority with a focus on bridge programming and integrated education and training.
- Adult Education supports a statewide PD advisory committee of eight (8) to identify annual PD needs, determine delivery and evaluate results to ensure best practice approaches which result in both collaborative partnerships, academic and career focused rigors as measured in student ELF and core measure gains and teacher/program quality. These funds will be used on topics to include content standards implementation, instructional strategies and methodologies, integrated education and training, bridge programming, transition to postsecondary education, use of technology, distance education, and services to students with disabilities.

Technical assistance will continue to be a strong component of leadership activities and funds as the State Office continues to support local programs with research/evidence based programs, activities and curriculums to meet the individual needs of students. Technical assistance will focus on data and the student data management system (LACES), assessment and instruction; additionally, the aforementioned areas of career readiness, integrated employment and training and career pathways, and core partner services will be key for local programs. The 2016-2017 PD calendar has been designed with these focused topics in mind.

Using technology to improve program effectiveness through training and technical assistance focused on preparing instructors and program administrators to identify and utilize technology to enhance instruction, programming, and distance education. The State contracts to provide PD in the area of technology through activities such as face-to-face and online training in a variety of areas, including educational technology, digital literacy instruction, and distance learning. In addition, other training and technical assistance focuses on effective use of the statewide data system to maintain accurate student data and continuously improve programming.

The State office supports multiple methods to ensure promising practices and models are shared with all providers to include local program TA and monitoring visits, monthly conference calls, electronically shared association newsletters monthly about training opportunities, high-quality resources, and promising practices for instruction and programming; an annual conference and other PD activities.

The State will provide grantee oversight to include monthly data monitoring, annual site visits, and a program improvement monitoring process for low-performing grantees.

North Dakota will seek to develop and implement the use of technology applications and distance education, including professional development to support the use of instructional technology through distance learning program to prepare students to pass the HSE and assessing and addressing the need for professional development surrounding the utilization of technology in delivering instruction and teacher training. Developing content and models for integrated education and training and career pathways is also a priority. In establishing career pathways, the State is dedicated to:

- Evaluating the use of Literacy Information and Communication System (LINCS) for English language learners to develop teaching strategies for integrating education and training using contextualization concepts in teaching; and
- Identifying and disseminating a model of best practices for career pathways design and implementation through the Adult Education and Career Pathways Work Group.

The State is also planning for integrating literacy and English language instruction with occupational skill training, including promoting linkages with employers. This can be accomplished through providing funding for basic skills and HSE preparation and partnering with local workforce programs. To identify curriculum frameworks and align rigorous content standards that specify what adult learners should know and be able to do in the areas of reading and language arts, mathematics, and English language acquisition, the technical assistance provided will take into consideration the following:

- State-adopted academic standards;
- Current adult skills and literacy assessments used in the State;
- Primary indicators of performance described in section 116;
- Support for standards and academic requirements for enrollment in non-remedial, for-credit courses in postsecondary educational institutions or institutions of higher education; and
- Where appropriate, content of occupational and industry skill standards widely used by business and industry in the State.

The State intends to accomplish this provision of WIOA by restructuring English Language Acquisition Content Standards to include integration of language acquisition and with workforce preparedness training. Further, professional development on integration of the College and Career Readiness Standards for adults with instruction for all students will be utilized. Through participation of the State interagency planning initiatives with the WIOA partners, the State's adult education providers will collaborate where possible and avoid duplicating efforts in order to maximize the impact of the activities described above.

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 adult learning centers are responsible to the State Office for meeting standards of quality for administration and instruction. Effectiveness of programs, services and activities of local recipients of funds will be assessed through systematic evaluation of programs.

All activity related to ABE/ESL students is entered at least monthly into the student data management system. The State Office conducts random, but at least quarterly, audits of all program data for multiple indicators of quality.

Secondly, the state uses both data match and personal contact to identify performance indicators. Each local program is expected to meet the state negotiated performance measures in the new WIOA reauthorization — percent of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit of the program; percent of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit of the program; median earnings of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program; percent of program 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 toward such a credential or employment; and effectiveness in serving employers.

Lastly, as mentioned above, accountability lies in the results on onsite monitoring by the State Office as well as local program monitoring to assess their own standards and performance.

The State Adult Education Office evaluates programs quarterly through a monthly desk audit process in which measures such as average attendance hours, educational functioning level gains, number of students post-tested, etc., are reviewed using the student data management system. The desk audits also allow programs to review operational aspects of the program such as the percentage of funds expended, completion of required professional development, and completed personnel activity reports.

In addition, the State Office also performs a site monitoring visit for each adult education and literacy program on a two year cycle to ensure that state and federal laws and policies are followed, review program performance, and connect with sponsoring administrators. Monitoring includes the following categories: program management and reporting; financial review; advisory committee; professional development; student intake and orientation; program policies; instruction; teaching/classroom observation; technology; recruitment/retention, partner and community collaboration; and equal access. Each program review is accompanied by a full financial review by the State finance department.

After monitoring, the local program is required to submit a corrective action plan to address any report findings, recommendations, and commendations within an agreed upon timeline and follow up to the satisfaction of the State Office.

In addition to the technical assistance provided through the monitoring processes, the State Office provides varied professional development as described above. An online repository is being created for statewide staff to have access to instructional and career related resources. This will allow local program activities to increase student outcomes.

All related PD activities include an evaluation component to provide the state office with demographic data of participants, and also to determine how the PD activity is being utilized in the classroom and what related success is occurring as a result. Secondly, evaluations help the state office determine the quality of training, relevance and applicability of the topic. Respectively, each adult learning center director is responsible to ensure that the PD activity or event is implemented into the classroom or instructor methods and that by classroom observations, student educational gains, or teacher interview, the effectiveness of the PD is tracked. Guskey's model for the Five Critical Levels of Professional Development Evaluation will be used to support teacher reactions, learning, organization support and change, use of new knowledge or skills, and student learning outcomes.

The State uses various means of assessment in its annual and ongoing evaluation process, including site monitoring visits, desk monitoring, program improvement processes, and performance and financial audits; results determine program improvement actions.

Professional Development Quality Assessment

Participants are surveyed after all workshops, conference presentations, and webinars to evaluate and provide feedback on the activity or event. In regional workshops, changes are made to future workshops based on participant feedback. Programs review student data to determine if the training impacted student outcomes and also to determine areas where additional training may be needed. The annual training plan includes State priorities, input from surveys about training needs, and advice from the statewide professional development committee. Additionally, data from HSE test results are reviewed to determine areas in which students may need additional instruction.

Monitoring

The State ensures student performance improvement, financial accountability, program quality, and regulatory compliance of local providers in accordance with federal

laws and regulations, State statutes and rules, and the provisions of an approved grant award. The monitoring component of the Quality Assurance System is a risk assessment process used to evaluate variables associated with workforce education grants and assign a rating for the level of risk to the federal Department of Education and the agency. In order to complete risk assessments, certain risk factors have been identified which may affect the level of risk for each agency. A risk matrix is completed for each provider. The annual risk assessment is conducted to determine the monitoring strategy appropriate for each provider. A range of monitoring strategies includes conference calls, improvement plans, desktop self-assessment, grant reviews, etc., with a more comprehensive strategy such as an onsite visit designated for providers deemed to be at higher risk.

Actions Taken to Improve Quality

If noncompliance finding(s) are identified, a corrective action plan will be implemented. The corrective action plan must identify the findings and specific strategies the provider will implement to ensure that finding(s) have been resolved.

Program Improvement Plan. The State conducts performance evaluations. The evaluations process is a data-driven accountability system for adult education programs. In a competition year, all awarded agencies will be expected to meet at least 90 percent of the State Performance Target or demonstrate improvement for ABE and EL functioning levels. In continuing years, an Adult Education Program Improvement Plan (AEPIP) will be required if the State determines that an eligible recipient failed to meet at least 90 percent of the State performance target or demonstrate improvement for each functioning level from the agency's previous year completion rates.

An AEPIP will be required for each educational functioning level that fails to meet the required standards and will be implemented starting in the second year of funding. In addition to program improvement plans and other actions taken to improve quality, the following activities are available:

- New Director Training. Provides new directors with information such as federal and State guidelines, data collection and National Reporting System (NRS) reporting, and resources needed to administer their programs.
- Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE) Training. Through ongoing training, a network of trained professionals ensures the uniform administration and reporting of assessments used for determining federal-level gains.
- Data Reporting and Program Improvement Training. Provides training on the fundamentals of the NRS. Topics include monitoring, data analysis and collection, types of data and measures, assessments, data quality, and related information.
- Technical Assistance. Adult education bimonthly calls inform adult educators of program changes and reporting announcements, and provide opportunities to ask questions of State staff. In addition, technical assistance papers are posted on the federal Department of Education website.
- Teacher Training. Provides information and resources to support instruction in the areas of HSE preparation, college and career readiness, career awareness and planning, career pathways, reading, and math instructional strategies.

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 **North Dakota Department of Public Instruction**

Full Name of Authorized Representative: **Kirsten Baesler**

Title of Authorized Representative: **State Superintendent**

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**

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;

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation continues to regularly seek the advice of the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) on a number of issues including the state plan contents, consumer satisfaction, program goals and evaluation, policies, order of selection, public education and building relationships with the business community.

The results of the client satisfaction survey for FFY 2015 showed 96% satisfaction with vocational rehabilitation services. The SRC's Planning and Evaluation Committee receives quarterly reports on the client satisfaction rates. They review the information, which is then discussed at the quarterly SRC meetings. They have not identified any trends or anomalies. The SRC made no policy recommendations during this fiscal year, nor did their Annual Report include any specific recommendations based on the survey results.

As had been identified in the Strategic Plan, DVR has been reviewing and making changes to agency policies. All revisions have been reviewed with and approved by the SRC.

Three recommendations were made by the SRC throughout the year and after reviewing public comment from the state plan input meetings held in December 2015.

RECOMMENDATION 1: DVR should maintain the Order of Selection structure within the state plan.

RECOMMENDATION 2: DVR should develop a Request for Proposal (RFP) for an outside company to perform the client satisfaction surveys by telephone or electronically.

RECOMMENDATION 3: DVR should support the ND Provisional Hiring Program to enhance the state of North Dakota as a model employer for individuals with disabilities.

2. the Designated State unit's response to the Council's input and recommendations; and

Response 1: DVR concurs and will continue to do so. Attachment (m) addresses this recommendation.

Response 2: DVR concurs and has done so. Attachment (o) addresses this recommendation.

Response 3: DVR concurs and is doing so.

3. the designated State unit's explanations for rejecting any of the Council's input or recommendations.

NA

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;

ND does not request a Waiver of Statewideness.

2. the designated State unit will approve each proposed service before it is put into effect; and

NA

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.

NA

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;

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation continues to work with multiple agencies and entities throughout the state. A number of these are related to cooperative ventures with the Department of Human Services' Behavioral Health Division in development of a sustained system of benefit planning and other vocational supports that facilitate employment of persons with the most significant disabilities. Listed below are the primary businesses, agencies and groups with whom we are currently working. The only group in this attachment, with whom we have a formal written agreement, is with the Department of Veterans' Affairs Vocational Rehabilitation Program.

Department of Veterans' Affairs Vocational Rehabilitation Program – Cooperative agreement with VA/VR is to 'ensure seamless, coordinated, and effective VR services to North Dakota's veterans with disabilities and their dependents with disabilities; to improve cooperation and collaboration between the two agencies; to avoid duplication of services; to improve interagency communication; and to establish staff cross-training opportunities.' While we do not have formal written agreements with the following entities, state and regional DVR staff work cooperatively with them based on the individual consumer needs.

Business Information Centers (BIC) – Located in Bismarck and Grand Forks, the BICs provide consultation and resources for DVR consumers on various aspects of

establishing and maintaining a business.

Small Business Administration (SBA) – Ongoing coordination of shared training and education programs between SBA staff and DVR staff.

Department of Commerce and local economic development groups – Offers resources for funding and business development for DVR consumers.

Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE) – Provides mentoring and consultation to DVR consumers who are developing business plans.

Lewis and Clark Development Corporation – Process revolving loan fund applications for DVR consumers pursuing self-employment.

Developmental Disabilities Council – Periodically provides monies for the revolving loan fund. They also provided an overview of transition data in ND as it relates to ND DVR and employment outcomes.

North Dakota Association for the Disabled (NDAD) – Occasionally provides monies to DVR consumers for non-employment related expenses.

North Dakota Chamber of Commerce – Cooperative training and information exchange. Regional DVR staff are also members of their local chambers and participate on various chamber committees. This enables DVR to develop relationships with the business community.

Rocky Mountain ADA Center – Provides technical assistance, resources, education and training on disability issues including the ADA.

Center of Technology and Business – Provides technical assistance to DVR consumers in developing Business and Marketing plans.

North Dakota Center for People with Disabilities (NDCPD) at Minot State University – NDCPD also administers the Medicaid Infrastructure Grant (MIG) in North Dakota. DVR staff also serve as members of various MIG committees.

2. State programs carried out under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998;

Interagency Program for Assistive Technology (IPAT) – IPAT is North Dakota's Tech Act Program. IPAT serves as North Dakota's federally funded assistive technology project through a sub-contract with the North Dakota's Department of Human Services' Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. IPAT offers free services to North Dakotans with disabilities to help them get the assistive technology (AT) services they need. IPAT is a statewide program designed to increase access to, and acquisition of, assistive technology. The DVR Director is a voting member on their advisory council and participates in a collaborative partnership with IPAT and others on an AT Re-use Program established in 2010.

3. Programs carried out by the Under Secretary for Rural Development of the United States Department of Agriculture;

North Dakota DVR works cooperatively with Rural Business Development Programs, and other programs to deliver specialized programs and services to assist in enhancing the workforce of North Dakota. The strength of North Dakota's economy is the farmers and ranchers who lead the nation in the production of crops. This high level of production creates economic development and opportunities for expanded employment in rural communities across North Dakota. The division assigns liaison staff working in rural communities as liaisons to the USDA activities that serve to benefit individuals with disabilities. The Division also maintains a permanent seat on the North Dakota Workforce Leadership Counsel. DVR's role is to advocate and provide technical assistance that enhances opportunities for employment in rural North Dakota. North Dakota VR has a cooperative agreement with the North Dakota Department of Agriculture's, North Dakota Mediation Service to determine the financial viability of farmers and ranchers with disabilities applying for and receiving VR services. Both agencies collaborate to support the farmer and rancher to determine the financial viability of their agricultural business. With a determination that the farm or ranch business is financially viable, VR will provide disability related solutions to the farmer or ranchers continued employment while the staff from Mediation Service provides assistance with any continued credit and financial matters.

4. Noneducational agencies serving out-of-school youth; and

For eligible youth, DVR collaborates with the following agencies to provide comprehensive services to assist the youth with achieving competitive integrated employment:

- Police Youth Bureau – Is intended to divert youth from the juvenile justice system, prevent delinquency and intervene in crisis situations.
- Division of Juvenile Services – The administrative agency directed to take custody of delinquent and at risk youth.
- ND Youth Correctional Center – This is the state youth correctional center that provides therapeutic treatment to juvenile offenders.
- Behavioral Health Division – Provides leadership for the planning, development, and oversight of a system of care for children, adults, and families with severe emotional disorders, mental illness, and/or substance abuse issues.
- Independent Living Centers – Eliminate barriers and provide assistance to individuals with disabilities so they can live and work more independently in their homes and communities.
- Social Services – Provide Food Stamps, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Medicaid, children's health services, child care assistance, home and community-based services and supports disabled individuals, personal care assistance, child welfare (foster care, child protection services, and related services), and referrals to other local resources and programs.
- Children's Special Health Services – Provides services to children with special health care needs and their families and promote family centered, community based, coordinated services and systems of health care.
- School for the Blind – Offers services to ND residents who are blind or have a visual impairment
- School for the Deaf - Offers services to ND residents who are deaf or have a hearing impairment

- Pathfinder – Statewide, Federally Funded (Office of Special Education Programs), non-profit organization that offers parents of children through age 26, training and
- Family Voices – Is a national, nonprofit, family-led organization which aims to achieve family-centered care for all children and youth through age 26 with special health care needs and/or disabilities.
- ND State Council on Developmental Disabilities – One of the council's goals is to support community based integrated competitive employment for people with developmental disabilities.
- Anne Carlsen Center – Offers community based care for those of all ages with autism and a wide variety of other intellectual and developmental disabilities through assistance learning social skills and vocational skills training.
- Federation of Families – Provides leadership in the field of children's mental health; address the unique needs of children and youth, to ensure rights, support access to community-based services and to provide information and engage in advocacy.
- Brain Injury Network – The ND Brain Injury Network helps people with brain injury, their families, and providers find answers to questions, receive ongoing support, and gain access to services.
- ASPIRE – A six state consortium implementing the Department of Education's PROMIS Initiative advancing the self-sufficiency of youth receiving SSI and their families.
- Youth Works – A private, nonprofit agency whose focus is in working teens, parents and young adults. They have programs for runaway, homeless and street youth; juvenile offenders; youth failing in school; youth suspended or expelled from school; young parents and pregnant moms (under 22); youth arrested and unable to immediately return home; youth needing emergency care; youth needing peer support or cross-age mentoring; and youth with anger issues. They provide family counseling and activity programs.

5. State use contracting programs.

DVR does not have any.

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 North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (DPI) is responsible to provide a free and appropriate public education. The mission of DPI's Special Education Division is to be a recognized and respected leader in providing a system of supports to schools to ensure that students with disabilities have the opportunity to achieve their maximum potential and become life-long learners. The North Dakota Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is the agency responsible to provide vocational rehabilitation service to students with disabilities. VR and DPI collaborate to provide transition planning for students with disabilities age 14 to 21 years of age. DPI provides guidance and direction to local school districts in the administration of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act to provide accommodations for students with disabilities that are not served by the special education program. There currently is a formal memorandum of understanding between DPI and VR to facilitate and coordinate services on behalf of transition of students with disabilities.

North Dakota Century Code 15.1-32-08 directs the 235 independent local school districts to cooperate with the state director of special education in the provision of special education service to students with disabilities. State law recognizes the independence of local school districts to administer a program of public education to all students and defines the role of the state to provide technical assistance and guidance in the administration of local special education. A majority of the school districts are located in rural communities that have a population of fewer than 1000 residents. The independence of and geographical location of local school districts require VR staff to provide significant outreach to each school district.

The Governor of the State of North Dakota has designated the VR offices be located in each of the eight regions. Each region serves a designated multi-county area, to provide vocational rehabilitation services. Each VR regional office has staff assigned to designated counties and local school districts to partner with the school in providing transition services.

VR has policies and procedures that support coordination with public education to facilitate transition of students with disabilities. VR practice includes development of student IPE's within 90 days from the date of the determination of eligibility. This coordination includes identification and solicitation of referrals to VR from the local school districts Section 504 Coordinators. Potentially eligible students in need of pre-employment transition services may receive these services as young as age fourteen.

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;

Outreach and identification efforts are directed to special education, career and technical education, behavioral health, developmental disabilities division and school personnel that have knowledge of students with disabilities in the public and private school systems that are in need of vocational rehabilitation service. VR works

collaboratively with the state Parent and Training organization in outreach and training to parents of students with disabilities to facilitate referral to the VR program.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for Transition Services was revised and renewed July 1, 2011, and is in effect until such time as IDEA is reauthorized. However, due to WIOA, DVR has begun the process to re-write the MOU. Parties to the agreement are the Department of Public Instruction, Office of Special Education, Job Service North Dakota, the Department of Career and Technical Education, and the Department of Health's Children's Special Health Services Unit, Developmental Disabilities Division, Behavioral Health Division, and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. The MOU addresses many areas including: consultation and technical assistance, transition planning, and roles and responsibilities including financial responsibilities of the agencies and outreach.

The agreement identifies each agency's role and responsibility in consultation and technical assistance in the planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities that include vocational rehabilitation service. VR's role is to provide consultation and technical assistance within the MOU:

- The Department of Public Instruction, Office of Special Education and VR are responsible to lead the State Community of Practice on Transition. VR provides consultation and technical assistance to local school districts to prepare students with disabilities to move successfully from school to the appropriate post-school environment and to assist the student to connect with the necessary community agencies that provide support services. VR provides consultation to school districts in planning and implementing programs that provide students with disabilities an opportunity to do actual work in a supported environment. VR provides leadership in school districts development of policy and practice and has created a job coaching curriculum for districts to improve consistency in training.
- The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) provides counseling and training services leading to employment for individuals with disabilities. It is the responsibility of Vocational Rehabilitation to develop Individualized Plans for Employment (IPE) for eligible students within 90 days of eligibility determination, and begin activities leading to employment. Appropriate services include counseling and guidance, career planning, assessment to determine rehabilitation needs, identification of employment outcomes, information and referral to agencies that provide services to students transitioning to adult life, labor market information, benefits planning, when and how to disclose a disability, when and how to request job accommodations, guidance on the proper AT to transition from school to work, and provision of vocational services as appropriate to the individual needs of the consumer. VR is a part of the IEP teams partnering to provide career planning and technical assistance on employment as well as information and referral to agencies that provide services to students transitioning from high school to adult life.
- The Developmental Disabilities (DD) Division administers the statewide community-based delivery system for people of all ages who have intellectual disabilities or other developmental disabilities. It is the responsibility of the Division to provide support and training to individuals with disabilities and their families in order to maximize community inclusion, independence, and self-sufficiency; to prevent institutionalization; and to enable individuals who are institutionalized to return to the community. Potential services can include day habilitation, employment supports, residential living supports, and family supports.
- The Behavioral Health Division (BHD) provides technical assistance, training, and program oversight at the regional human service centers who provide case management services to eligible transition aged youth
- The North Dakota Department of Health, Division of Children's Special Health Services (CSHS) provides services for children with special health needs and their families and promotes family-centered, community based, coordinated services and systems of health care.
- Job Service North Dakota provides customer-focused services to meet the current and emerging workforce development needs of the state. It is the responsibility of Job Service to provide students with disabilities appropriate referral to employment opportunities, provide career counseling within the realm of existing services, and provide information on training programs and referral to core partners including Vocational Rehabilitation.
- The Department of Career & Technical Education works to provide all North Dakota citizens with the technical skills, knowledge, and aptitudes necessary for successful performance in a globally competitive workplace. It is the responsibility of Career and Technical Education, to the extent possible; to provide access to career and technical programs for high school and post-secondary students with disabilities across the state, as well as provide career awareness, work readiness skills, occupational preparation and training of workers throughout the state. VR provides guidance to local school districts in making accommodations to their curriculum and training process to engage students with disabilities in programs such as welding and in demand occupations in the health care industry.
- ASPIRE – The North Dakota vocational rehabilitation agencies are participating in a regional consortium with five other states in a grant initiative called the Promise Grant. Utah Vocational Rehabilitation has taken the lead role in this consortium with the other states, South Dakota, Montana, Colorado, South Dakota and Arizona. The Aspire project is a 5 year initiative which is conducting a study of 100 youth with disabilities in North Dakota receiving Social Security Insurance between the ages of 13 and 16. Services include pre-employment transition and transition services.

ND was selected to receive the National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NTACT) grant which began in August, 2015 and will continue through December, 2019. Partners involved in the grant include DPI, local school districts, Special Education directors, students with disabilities, VR state and local staff, job coaches, Behavioral Health Division, parents, parent advocates and employers.

We are anticipating the following general outcomes as a result of this intensive TA:

- Improved capacity to provide educators and VR service providers with knowledge of, and skills to deliver, evidence-based and promising practices (EBPPs);
- Improved participation of students with disabilities in academically rigorous and career relevant curricula that prepare them for postsecondary education and employment;
- Improved collaboration between SEA and VR agencies to enhance services for students with disabilities.
- Improved capacity to analyze and use relevant data to identify systemic concerns and guide and evaluate the effectiveness of EBPPs.
- Increased knowledge and implementation of EBPPs to reduce dropout rates and improve graduation rates for students with disabilities.

B. transition planning by personnel of the designated State agency and educational agency that facilitates the development and implementation of their individualized education programs;

DVR and the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) are involved with a Community of Practice (CoP) for Transition. The mission of the group is to work towards building, supporting, and sustaining community partnerships and systems that promote and improve the scope, opportunity and quality of transition for youth with disabilities to adequately prepare for life and career beyond high school.

North Dakota's CoP focuses on working across groups and localities to share information, address issues, learn together, find shared goals, define shared work, and

improve practice. Representatives from DVR and DPI attend the National Capacity Building Institute, bringing back transition information from other states, which is then presented as a team at the state level with state level partners going back to their local regions and sharing the information.

North Dakota's CoP has representation from most regions and continues to be very active, holding quarterly meetings. Four subcommittees address specific areas of need: Youth Leadership, Healthy Transitions, Guardianship and Employment. A DVR Administrator serves as the chair on the employment subcommittee. A couple of projects these committees are currently working on are listed below:

The subcommittee on Youth Leadership provides an annual leadership conference for youth with disabilities and their families. DVR representatives are working with the students at the conference on various businesses/careers that may be experiencing growth, interviewing skills, soft skills, etc.

The subcommittee on employment has created a job coaching curriculum for teachers, paraprofessionals in the school, new VR counselors, new provider staff, and others.

The subcommittee on Healthy Transitions has created a booklet for students to help navigate the health care system and be aware of their health care needs.

The subcommittee on Guardianship is working on identifying guardianship needs in ND.

Since the actual service delivery takes place in the eight regions of the state, most regions have developed a regional transition Community of Practice committee. Each regional committee is to develop committee goals which are in various phases of implementation. The committees use a specific document for their planning process entitled: "Essential Tools, Interagency Transition Team Development and Facilitation" published by the National Center on Secondary Education and Training and the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP.) The use of this document is helping to better coordinate efforts. The state director for DPI's Special Education and the State Transition Coordinator for DVR provide technical assistance on how to continually improve their regional CoP.

For specific information included in the MOU regarding transition, refer to d(2)(B).

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 schools have taken primary responsibility for academics, developing the IEP, transportation, and purchasing AT needed while in school. VR's primary responsibility to the schools had been technical assistance and consultation only, and we have typically not paid for any services until close to the end of the senior year. VR has now begun to provide pre-employment transition services in addition to TA and consultation, to students ages 14 to 21. VR has many Pre-Employment Transition Purchase of Service agreements across the state to expand on the pre-employment services formerly provided solely by the local schools and DPI is kept up to date on those activities.

With WIOA, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation has committed approximately \$1.5 million per year statewide to fund pre-employment transition services. Required activities include job exploration counseling, work based learning experiences, training on self-advocacy, counseling on post-secondary opportunities, and work place readiness training. In addition to services purchased based on approved IPEs for students, DVR staff are providing services which includes tracking time spent for travel to rural areas. Under IDEA, the local school districts are required to provide transition services, however DVR has entered into purchase of service agreements with local school districts and private providers to enhance or expand services.

- DPI and DVR teamed with Centers for Independent Living and private providers to host a Transition Conference. The event brought transition stakeholders together to collaborate and learn about best practices for transition students. Due to the success of this event, the intent is to offer it every other year.
- Teachers and DVR counselors are collaborating to provide students with a foundation with activities such as career exploration, self-advocacy, interest testing, and work place readiness training using a common curriculum.
- DVR is partnering with schools and community rehabilitation providers to offer competitive, integrated work experience.
- DVR is partnering with the Interagency Program for Assistive Technology (IPAT) and schools to provide assistive technology training as part of the career planning process.
- DVR is partnering with Pathfinders, which is the Federally Funded (Office of Special Education Programs – OSEP) Parent Training and Information Center. The purpose is to support parents and assist students with increasing independent living, self-determination and self-advocacy skills.
- DVR and DPI continue to collaborate at a local level with colleges, work force offices, community rehabilitation providers, independent living centers, and employers to provide transition fairs. These fairs provide transition students with hands on opportunities to explore and experience various careers.
- DVR and North Dakota Vision Services/School for the Blind have sponsored a weekend retreat with the purpose of providing intensive pre-employment career services to youth with visual impairments. Due to the success of this retreat, plans are to continue sponsoring this event.

For specific information included in the MOU regarding transition, refer to d(2)(B).

D. procedures for outreach to and identification of students with disabilities who need transition services.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is working with the Department of Public Instruction and local school districts to identify students with disabilities on an IEP. Transitioning students who are identified through the education unit's Section 504 coordinator are also referred to the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, and contacts are made with the guidance counselors to assure students with special needs are aware of services through DVR. Referrals are also received from independent living centers, human service centers, and community rehabilitation providers working with transition age students.

DVR makes contact with potentially eligible students as early as age 14, thus when students do become VR eligible, relationships and trust have already been established. We also provide consultation and guidance which will help the potentially eligible students and their team with designing a roadmap for what should happen prior to VR eligibility so all team members are collaborating early on, and facilitating a smooth transition.

Our DVR counselors outreach to schools on a regular basis. At the start of every school year counselors make contact with each of their respective schools to see who may benefit from VR services. That contact may be with special education teachers, school counselors, school social workers, through presentations to groups of students, individual students, parents etc. Many of our regions have "transition fairs" where outreach to students and parents happen. We also have "teen night out" where vendors and service providers are brought together so students and parents can visit with partners in the transition process. The state DPI and state VR not only highly support and promote these activities but also provide fiscal support.

Additional Collaborative Efforts:

DPI, the Developmental Disabilities Division (DD), and DVR partner to offer the Adult Education Transition Service (AETS) to eligible transition students. The program is designed to fill in the service gaps for students who have completed their high school requirements, have not yet exited high school, are ready for adult services, but are not old enough to qualify for adult funding through DD.

The Department of Public Instruction (DPI), Protection and Advocacy (P&A), North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities (NDCPD), the State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD), and DVR partnered as a consortium to create the Launch My Life portal. It is a resource where youth, parents, counselors, teachers, and others can explore information about transition. The website will continue to be updated by the consortium. It may be accessed at: www.launchmylifend.com

DVR is part of the advisory committee and provides some financial assistance for the Adult Student Transition Education Program (A-STEP). The program offers students with intellectual disabilities the opportunity to attend college.

DVR coordinated with the Behavioral Health Division to develop the administrative code and policies for the Transition to Independence Program (TIPS). A Strategic Plan was then completed and used to give direction to the project. DVR serves on the TIPS Advisory Committee.

For specific information included in the MOU regarding transition, refer to d(2)(B).

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.

The utilization of community rehabilitation programs varies considerably throughout the state in that needs and resources are unique to each region. The regional offices at the local level work closely with their local providers to identify needs and to determine, with the provider, whether or not they are able to meet that need. In addition, the triennial assessment of rehabilitation needs completed in FY 2012 included survey questions specific to community rehabilitation programs, their ability to meet individual's employment related needs and barriers encountered in meeting needs. Survey results are discussed in Attachment (j).

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation also continues to utilize information gathered from public hearings as well as input received from the providers themselves and organizations such as the North Dakota Association of Community Providers and the North Dakota Statewide Independent Living Council to work more closely together. The agency will continue to make every effort to improve services to individuals when a problem is identified in a particular region.

To insure ongoing dialogue, the North Dakota Association of Community Providers and the North Dakota Statewide Independent Living Council are represented on the State Rehabilitation Council where issues are discussed whenever appropriate.

As a major player on the North Dakota Workforce Development Council, DVR continues to be an active partner as opportunities arise.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation continues to survey providers for input regarding their training needs. Current training available to Community Rehabilitation Providers includes: video conference training on various topics, DVR 101, and online employment modules through the Association of People Supporting EmploymentFirst (APSE.)

DVR continues to be involved in quarterly statewide TBI advisory and systems committees.

Outcome based job placement rates and guidelines were implemented October 1, 2012. Two work groups were established from the semi-annual provider meeting to review and update SEP guidelines and job development and placement services. A standardized fee for service was implemented with an annual 3% inflationary increase. During the 2016 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment Survey, providers indicated insufficient funds for the level of intervention they were providing. Based on the results, guidelines and rates will be reviewed and updated.

In addition, standards will be established for facilities and providers of services used by the agency. Rehabilitation facilities must be certified either by CARF, The Council (The Council of Quality and Leadership for People with Disabilities or CQL) or have an approved plan in place for acquiring accreditation. Medical service providers must be approved by the State Licensing Board through its agreement with the Department of Human Services. All educational and vocational technical programs must be recognized by the State Board of Higher Education.

In 2011, the department established CRP agreements. The department has, as part of the provider agreements, there language that addresses accessibility of facilities, affirmative action plans, special communication needs, and fraud, waste, and abuse. Within the agreements, the providers identify the scope of service they will provide to clients.

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.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is purchasing services from 21 providers, for the provision of supported employment services and extended services. Outcome based SEP rates and guidelines were implemented October 1, 2012. Two work groups were established from the semi-annual provider meeting to review and update SEP guidelines. A standardized fee for service was implemented with an annual 3% inflationary increase. During the 2016 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment Survey, providers indicated insufficient funds for the level of intervention they were providing. Based on the results, supported employment guidelines and rates will be reviewed and updated. All units that purchase extended services fall under the administrative control of the North Dakota Department of Human Services

and have developed a Memorandum of Understanding. During this past year, the units were focused on securing a contract to provide extended services. The contract was granted to Rocky Mountain Rehab PC and is being managed by the Behavioral Health Division. In cooperation with the Behavioral Health Division, DVR participated in a supported employment pilot project in one of the regional offices. The project uses an evidence-based supported employment model for consumers with the dual diagnosis of mental illness and substance abuse. The project began March 2009. Due to the positive outcomes, the project has been expanded into two additional regions. The DVR state office program administrator responsible for supported employment is involved with the project. Regional VR staff are involved with the fidelity review teams.

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

The North Dakota Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) is committed to building strong, long-term relationships with business. The agency has a dual customer approach with business being a key consumer of VR service. Services provide to business include consultation, technical assistance and information that serves to build awareness of business to an available source of qualified employees. Long term engagement with business will result in incorporating the workforce needs of business when assisting consumers of DVR, which includes transition students and youth, to develop goals that are consistent with in-demand occupations.

DVR has developed a team of Business Service Specialists (BSSs) within the state. This team was developed through re-classification and assignment of VR Counseling staff. Full time BSSs are employed in the division's larger office to include Fargo, Minot and Bismarck. Staff from the Institute for Community Inclusion's Job Driven VR Technical Assistance Center is providing support to the division in development of goals and strategies to capitalize on the resource of business service staff to assist the agency in developing goals, strategies and objectives.

Goal 1: Increase business engagement to assist business retain, or hire employees that have incurred an injury, illness or health impairment.

Objective: Increase the number of contacts between business and staff from the VR agency.

Strategies: 1. Develop best practice guidelines that will be used to train staff to increase staff skill in assessing business needs. 2. Develop standards for the number and extent of presentations and outreach to business by staff to include Business Service Specialist and Rehabilitation Counselors. 3. Develop a statewide senior Business Service staff member responsible for leading a team that includes the Business Service Staff and VR Administrators responsible for business service in regions in the state without a dedicated Business Service Specialist. 4. Develop marketing and branding tools to promote engagement with business. 5. Participate as a member organization in business-led organizations, such as Chambers of Commerce, Rotary, etc. 6. Attend Workforce Development Board and disseminate information to the statewide VR staff on the business needs as expressed during Board meetings. 7. Participate in the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation's National Employment Team (NET) and the NET-Southeast regional team to share referrals and best practices. Goal 2: Become a top resource for employers in need of qualified employees.

Objective: Increase the use of Labor Market Information to align consumer goals with workforce needs. Strategies: 1. Train consumers to access state specific labor market information to make decisions related to vocational goals. 2. Train VR staff to use labor market information in all interactions with consumers to reinforce the need for training that is in demand in the local labor market. 3. Collaborate with State Workforce Partners to access labor market information. 4. Provide training to community rehabilitation providers to support understand local labor market trends that reflect local and statewide workforce needs. 5. Use labor market information in all aspects of work with consumers to create a pool of qualified job candidates.

2. transition services, including pre-employment transition services, for students and youth with disabilities.

In addition, VR staff, teachers, and CRPs are working with employers to place transition students in work experiences which will lead to competitive integrated employment. During the student's school year, the VR staff, CRP's, and teachers to identify what summer work experience would be beneficial to the student. The team outreaches to potential employers in order to provide opportunities for placement. During the student's school year, the VR staff, CRP's, and teachers to identify what summer work experience would be beneficial to the student. The team outreaches to potential employers in order to provide opportunities for placement. When an employer sees the success of a student in summer work experience, they often offer them permanent positions. Another result of the employer having that great experience with our team is their willingness to give other students an opportunity to do work experience during the school year. Our state provides year round work experience through our pre-employment transition service purchase of service contracts. The team, consisting of the contract staff, teachers and VR counselors, share their business contacts and outreach to potential employers in order to provide opportunities for placement.

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;

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is organized within State Government with the Department of Human Services (DHS) as the Designated State Agency. Medicaid, the Developmental Disabilities Division and the Behavioral Health Division are all part of DHS. The placement of the VR program within DHS provides significant opportunities to develop informal and formal working relationships.

DVR has historically collaborated with the State Medicaid agency. Examples of historical and more recent collaborative efforts between DHS Medical Services and VR Division include:

- Working together to inform consumers with disabilities of Medicaid's Workers with Disabilities Coverage that allows individuals with disabilities in the work force to

maintain their Medicaid coverage.

- Partnering with staff from Medicaid's Autism Unit to identify youth with disabilities that have the potential to benefit from the State Autism Waiver Service. Staff from the Autism Unit have provided technical assistance to VR staff that is related specifically to the effective service and supports to assist individuals with symptoms associated with Autism Spectrum Disorder.
- Data Sharing Memorandum of Understanding between Medicaid and VR related to the implementation of the Promoting the Readiness of Minors in Supplementary Social Security Income (PROMISE) grant. Included in the MOU is an agreement to share data across the programs and report this information on program participants to the Social Security Administration.
- Utilizing Medicaid to fund Extended Services for consumers who have successfully secured employment through the provision of VR Supported Employment Program.
- VR is an active stakeholder to the Medical Services Division's Money Follow the Person Program.

2. the State agency responsible for providing services for individuals with developmental disabilities; and

VR has an MOU and high level of collaboration with DHS DD Division in the delivery of Supported Employment to consumers who experience ID/DD. VR policies and procedures instruct counselors to open a case for ID/DD consumers who may require long-term services. The partnership between DVR and DD utilizes DVR funding to provide the initial training and job stabilization with DD using Medicaid Waiver funding to provide long term support.

3. the State agency responsible for providing mental health services.

VR has a high level of collaboration with DHS Behavioral Health Division in the delivery of employment services to consumers who experience behavioral health issues. VR provides employment services including SEP for individuals with mental illness with extended services provided through the Behavioral Health Divisions' funding. DVR is also involved as a team member for individuals involved in the Integrated Dual Disorder Treatment (IDDT) program which then allows for a smooth transition into VR SEP once those individuals have stabilized and are ready to pursue competitive integrated employment.

VR will request Technical Assistance from the Rehabilitation Services Administration in development of an MOU that is consistent with the requirements of regulations for the VR program.

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;

DVR's system to collect personnel information provides annual data concerning the numbers and categories of personnel that are employed by the state agency as well as the projected retirements within five years. The numbers of personnel are then compared to the clients served to determine the projected number of staff needed, including the ratio of counselors to clients. Information on personnel development is described in Section 4 of this attachment.

There are currently 90 individuals employed by North Dakota Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. During FFY 2015, 3088 individuals were served by vocational rehabilitation. This results in an annual client to counselor ratio of 77.2 to 1. DVR attempts to hire counseling staff as necessary, based on projected caseload numbers. Current staffing is sufficient to provide vocational rehabilitation services. Hiring additional counseling staff will be dependent upon the need to maintain a reasonable counselor to client ratio and the availability of funding. DVR currently has 4 counselor vacancies. In addition, there is 1 support staff vacancy.

In 2015 North Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation's annual turnover rate for counselors was 21%, with an overall agency turnover rate of 13.79%. We do not anticipate the turnover rate to increase in 2016.

During the next five years we estimate 22 staff members will be leaving the agency due to retirement alone. Additional vacancy positions are estimated at 25 counselors in the next five years. Traditionally, there is very little turnover in the non-counselor positions.

DSU Director – 1

State Office Administrators and Support Staff – 11

Regional Vocational Rehabilitation Administrators – 8

Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors – 41.25
Vision Rehabilitation Specialists – 7
Business/Career Assessment Specialists – 4.75
Human Service Specialists/Aides and Rehabilitation Technician – 6
Supported Employment Coordinator – 1
Regional Support Staff – 10

ii. the number of personnel currently needed by the State agency to provide VR services, broken down by personnel category; and

Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors – 4
Regional Support Staff – 1

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.

DSU Director – 1
State Office Administrators and Support Staff – 7
Regional Vocational Rehabilitation Administrators – 5 Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors – 825
Vision Rehabilitation Specialists – 2
Human Service Specialists/Aides and Rehabilitation Technician – 4
Supported Employment Coordinator – 1
Regional Support Staff – 3

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;

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation has 27 Counselors and Regional Administrators who meet the Qualified Rehabilitation Professional (QRP), Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) standards. This represents 54% of the staff who are required to meet QRP standards. We anticipate two additional staff will be eligible to sit for the CRC exam during the fall of 2016. Six Central Office administrators hold CRC certification. All CRC staff must maintain CRC status by participating in the required training. The state DVR office is an approved continuing education provider through CRCC, and the training officer coordinates and notifies staff of various training opportunities throughout the year, including training available at the annual conference. Counselors update their CRC status with their administrator at their annual performance review.

Below is a list of the out-of-state institutions that are providing training to North Dakota Division of Vocational Rehabilitation staff who are required to meet Qualified Rehabilitation Professional standards: Regional VR Administrators and VR Counselors. There aren't any institutions available in the state.

ii. the number of students enrolled at each of those institutions, broken down by type of program; and

North Dakota does not have any institutions that prepare rehabilitation professionals. Therefore any staff who need further education are required to attend institutions in other states. These schools are listed below. The out-of-state institutions that are providing training to North Dakota Division of Vocational Rehabilitation staff that are required to meet Qualified Rehabilitation Professional standards: Regional VR Administrators and VR Counselors are listed below. Also listed are training sites used by North Dakota Vision Rehabilitation Specialists. Current counseling staff are taking post graduate classes to enable them to sit for the CRC Exam. The numbers shown include staff currently enrolled and graduated in FFY 2015.

Utah State University – 2
West Virginia University – 0
Mississippi State University – 1

South Dakota State University – 4

San Diego State University – 1

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.

Utah State University – 0

West Virginia University – 1

Mississippi State University – 1

South Dakota State University – 0

San Diego State University – 0

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.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation lists all counselor job openings with Job Service North Dakota, specifying a preference for individuals with a Master's Degree in rehabilitation counseling with credentials to qualify for certification. We will also consider the possibility of paid internships as an incentive to attract Master's level interns with the intention of retaining them for counselor openings. We recently on hired an intern as a permanent counselor. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation recruits minorities and individuals from graduate programs in rehabilitation counseling, however, universities in our state do not offer a Master's Degree in rehabilitation counseling. Therefore, we are forced to recruit graduate level counselors from out-of-state. We are often unsuccessful in this effort because in most instances, our salaries are not competitive at the graduate level. If we are successful in recruiting graduate level counselors, we often find it difficult to retain them for the same reason. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation recruits individuals with disabilities and provides reasonable accommodations needed to perform essential job functions. Reasonable accommodations include adaptive equipment for current staff with disabilities. In addition, reasonable accommodations are addressed when requested.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation had requested reclassification of the professional rehabilitation counselor series, to move the counselor positions up a pay grade. This request was submitted to the state's Human Resource Management Services and was reviewed by the committee in June 2013. The reclassification request was denied. Counseling staff did receive equity adjustments in 2015.

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

DVR recognizes that we will be losing valuable experience and managerial knowledge with the high level of retirees who are currently administrators in the regional and central offices. Our Success in Leadership initiative (launched in 2007) was a major aspect of our succession planning efforts. Due to entering Order of Selection, Success in Leadership has not met. Applications are currently on hold. The purpose of Success in Leadership is to challenge individuals to become positive forces of change in the field of Vocational Rehabilitation by adopting and implementing exemplary leadership practices. All staff, regardless of their position, are able to apply to become part of Success in Leadership. We believe it is important for all staff to be able to expand their knowledge, skills, and abilities by participating in quality training on their path to leadership. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation has established a policy to ensure that professionals providing Vocational Rehabilitation services are appropriately and adequately trained to meet "Qualified Rehabilitation Professional Standards." The standard established is that they are nationally Certified Rehabilitation Counselors.

A. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation will hire rehabilitation counselors who hold a Master's Degree in rehabilitation counseling or closely related field from a Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE) accredited program and who hold CRC certification or could obtain such certification within 5 years of the date of hire. If unable to recruit individuals who meet these qualifications, DVR will hire the most appropriate and qualified applicant with the expectation that the individual hired will participate in educational programs to meet "Qualified Rehabilitation Professional" standards within 5 years of the date of hire.

B. If unable to find qualified candidates, will consider underfilling as a VR Counselor. Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Counselor requires a Bachelor's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling, Counseling, Social Work, Psychology, Rehabilitation Administration/Services, Psychometrics, Behavioral Health, Behavioral Science, Disability Studies, Human Relations, Human Services, Marriage and Family Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Special Education or Vocational Assessment/Evaluation AND one of the following:

- Two years experience working with persons with disabilities in a direct service capacity; or
- One year of work experience as a vocational rehabilitation counselor; or

- A master's degree in one of the above disciplines.

Individuals who do not meet personnel standards will develop a training plan that will identify how they will meet the personnel standards. The plan will also include time lines for meeting the personnel standard which must be approved by their regional administrator and the Central Office Training Coordinator.

C. At the present time, individuals requiring retraining to meet the personnel standards enroll in Utah State University's Distance Education Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling program, South Dakota State University and San Diego State University to complete the educational requirement for qualified rehabilitation personnel standards.

We are waiting to hear which universities will be receiving the RSA Long-Term Training/CSPD Scholarships along with the changes there will be in the funding support available. Costs not covered by the scholarships are covered by Vocational Rehabilitation's 110 funds.

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.

In 1999, North Dakota DVR's QRP standards were implemented. The goal established at implementation was that 50% of staff on board October 1, 1999, would meet the QRP standards by October 2004 and 100% by October 2009. All staff hired after that date are required to meet QRP standards within 5 years of hire. Currently, 100% of the original staff meet the QRP standards. Staff hired after that date have either met the standard or are in the process of doing so as required.

4. Staff Development.

Describe the State agency's policies, procedures, and activities to ensure that, consistent with section 101(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 Division of Vocational Rehabilitation conducts an assessment of the training needs of the current staff at all levels – administrative, counselor, and support staff. The needs assessment focuses on two levels of training (1) statewide training topics that are consistent with the State Plan and RSA priorities, and (2) regional training that addresses issues identified through case reviews, performance appraisals and other training that will assist staff in progressing toward their career goals.

In-service training provides for attendance at workshops, webinars, conferences, formal course work training in rehabilitation counseling, medical assessment, ethics, job placement, rehabilitation technology, ADA, reauthorization, and other rehabilitation related training. All employees have access to these training opportunities. The agency's continuing education program also allows reimbursement for the cost of tuition and books for classes that are related to job duties and will increase the employee's skills in specific areas.

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.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation receives and distributes information such as rehabilitation journals, Rehabilitation Briefs, National Clearinghouse of Rehabilitation Research Materials, topics researched by the Institute on Rehabilitation Issues, as well as videos and printed materials on related rehabilitation issues. Information is disseminated through the state email system and hard copies, CDs, DVDs are sent through the mail.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation supports participation in professional organizations by encouraging attendance and providing registration and travel expenses for professional organization meetings and conferences. A number of vocational rehabilitation personnel are active members and hold leadership positions in professional organizations.

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.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation provides interpreter services to individuals who have limited English speaking ability. In several regions where minority populations are more predominant, DVR staff have attended training on the customs and culture of minority groups. These materials are available to all DVR staff.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation provides personnel or obtains services to accommodate clients in need of appropriate modes of communication. Agency staff members who have an interest are encouraged to take sign language classes. In regions that do not have personnel trained in alternate modes of communication, this service is purchased.

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.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation coordinates CSPD efforts with the CSPD requirements under IDEA. The Department of Public Instruction (DPI) is represented on the State Rehabilitation Council where information on training conferences is shared and invitations extended to attend each other's conferences and other training activities. DVR is also a member of the statewide Community of Practice that has broad-based representation of agencies involved in various aspects of Transition. Members of the Community of Practice, including DVR staff, were also part of multi-agency team that participated in the Annual Capacity Building Institute to identify ways to improve transition services in the state. In addition, ND DVR had one staff on the planning committee for the North Dakota DPI Secondary Transition Interagency Conference. DVR staff attended the conference and two staff presented at the conference in November 2015.

DVR launched the Teacher Internship Program. The DVR Teacher Internship Program is designed to provide teachers with an opportunity to work closely with their local DVR office and transition counselors. The teachers participate in a three-week internship, beginning with an in-depth orientation to the VR process. The project provides teachers with information regarding the VR program and process, adult agencies, employers' needs, labor market information, disability legislation, and has enhanced relationships between teachers and DVR staff. Due to the success, DVR plans to continue to offer this program.

DVR has and will continue to provide information to our staff and partners on our implementation of the Pre-Employment Transition services through our Cyber Chats, provider meetings and written communication (email). We will be developing trainings for our staff and partners once the WIOA regulations are out to ensure everyone is well informed of the changes.

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;

North Dakota Division of Vocational Rehabilitation conducts a comprehensive assessment of rehabilitation needs every three years. Together with the State Rehabilitation Council's Evaluation Committee and research analysts from the designated state agency's research team, DVR began planning for the FFY 2016-2018 assessment in 2014 and conducted the activities in 2015. The state will conduct the next activities in 2017 for the 2018-2020 Statewide Assessment. The results of the CSNA will be used to develop goals, priorities, strategies and actions for both DVR's State and Strategic Plans.

The rehabilitation needs identified, cut across all types and "categories". No needs were unique to any one of the groups for whom this assessment was conducted. Rather, the unique needs are identified with each individual during the vocational rehabilitation process.

For individuals with the most significant disabilities, the most commonly reported need identified by 48.6% of the respondents was transportation followed by SEP at 28.6%. Other highlighted needs reported by 22.9% of the respondents were assistance with finding and/or keeping a job and workplace relationship training.

B. who are minorities;

The largest minority group in ND is American Indian. There are four reservations in ND, all of which have Tribal 121 Projects. DVR collaborates with and frequently has dual cases with those programs. For all minority groups, the most commonly identified unmet need was transportation. This was followed by: assistance with finding and/or keeping a job, one-on-one job training, benefit planning, and workplace relationship training.

C. who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program;

Of the individuals who have been considered unserved or underserved by DVR, respondents did not have strongly ranked employment needs; none of the employment needs were above twenty percent; instead the employment needs that were unmet were spread throughout the choices. The most commonly identified employment need not being met was workplace relationship training (15.5%). Other highlighted needs were assistance with finding and/or keeping a job (13.4%) and on-going support/support on the job (13.1%).

D. who have been served through other components of the statewide workforce development system; and

DVR has a good relationship with and collaborates when possible with our Workforce partners. For individuals with disabilities who also receive services through the statewide workforce development system, the most commonly identified unmet needs were: workplace relationship training, followed by assistance with finding and/or keeping a job and finally physical and mental restoration services. Tied for third were: assistive technology, transportation, one-on-one job training and on-going training.

E. who are youth with disabilities and students with disabilities, including, as appropriate, their need for pre-employment transition

services or other transition services.

Youth and students with disabilities did not have strongly ranked employment needs. Workplace relationship training (11.6%) and assistance with finding and/or keeping a job (9.9%) along with vocational guidance and career options (8.3%) were listed in their top three employment needs. Transition-age respondents had a lower average number of employment service needs not being met than respondents 25 years of age and older (0.9 compared to 1.5). Overall, a lower percentage of transition-age respondents (9.1%) say their employment needs are never met than respondents 25 years of age and older (17.4%).

In addition, DVR conducted a Pre-Employment Transition Survey which specifically addressed gaps for pre-employment programming.

- When asked what is important in assisting students with disabilities to prepare for work, work-based learning experiences was ranked the highest (88.99% extremely important) followed by workplace readiness training to develop social skills (83.70% extremely important).
- When asked at what educational level should pre-employment transition services begin responses were 43.61% as Freshman, 31.28% as Sophomores, 23.35% as Juniors, and 1.76% as Seniors.
- When asked how important different types of work experience are in preparing students with disabilities for work, summer work experience was ranked the highest (70.04% extremely important) followed by work experience during the school year (52.86% extremely important).
- When asked about self-advocacy activities for students with disabilities, peer mentoring was ranked the highest (59.91% extremely important) followed by courses taught by IL centers or others (52.42% extremely important).
- When asked about activities for students with disabilities, soft skills were ranked the highest (87.67% extremely important) followed by independent living (84.14% extremely important).

2. Identify the need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs within the State; and

As part of the 2016 – 2018 Comprehensive Statewide Assessment of Rehabilitation Needs, a link to the online survey was sent to individuals and directors of institutions and agencies chosen because of their likelihood to have a connection with or interest in individuals with disabilities. This included community rehabilitation programs, supported employment providers, psychosocial rehabilitation centers, Disability Support Services in the North Dakota University System, occupational therapy departments, and directors of special education. A total of 67 CRP provider surveys were returned. In addition a link to the online survey was sent to advocates. These individuals were chosen based on their role with certain agencies or as a member of boards, advisory councils and committees who are connected to, and advocate for, individuals with disabilities. This included advocacy groups, disability organizations, Client Assistance Program, SRC and Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) members, Centers for Independent Living, various state agencies, 121 projects, and VR staff. A total of 348 Advocate surveys were returned. An online version of the survey was provided with the option for alternative formats to give respondents flexibility in completing the survey. Responses were received from every region in the state with higher populated regions taking a greater share. Descriptive statistics and qualitative methods were applied for data analysis.

The surveys were designed to enable a comparison between Community Rehabilitation Programs' responses and non-CRP responses to the same set of questions. Questions included met and unmet employment-related needs, barriers encountered by CRPs and allowed for suggestions for improving services and removing barriers.

Unmet Needs: CRPs identified transportation as being at the top of the list of unmet needs, followed by support on the job, and assistance with finding and/or keeping a job. Advocates indicated transportation was the most significant unmet need.

Transportation continues to be in the top of the list of unmet needs. DVR is an active member of the ND Transit State Management Plan Committee. We will continue to advocate for increased services. We will also provide referrals and counseling and guidance to our clients on how to access the available transportation.

There are concerns with the need for assistance with finding and/ or keeping a job as well as support on the job.

About 58% of the CRPs stated they provide job placement and follow up. In addition, an additional 53% provide SEP.

DVR is working with providers to try to expand the services that they are able to provide. A pilot project has been launched to explore expanded SEP which will provide additional intensive training for providers and will result in policy amendments. There will also be continued education and awareness activities for the business community, lawmakers, service providers, educators, family members, and the general public. DVR will also continue to work with Extended Services Funding sources to ensure individuals are able to utilize SEP and access supports once the DVR case is closed. Attachment (q)

Barriers: CRPs felt that funding for agency operations and services was the most significant barrier to their ability to provide employment related services followed by funding for staff and funding for extended services. Advocate respondents felt that there are insufficient community resources followed by funding for extended services and funding for agency operations and services.

Comments were made about the need for increased funding for SEP/Extended services and job coaching.

Outcome based job placement rates and guidelines were implemented October 1, 2012. Two work groups were established from the semi-annual provider meeting to review and update SEP guidelines and job development and placement services. A standardized fee for service was implemented with an annual 3% inflationary increase. During the 2016 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment Survey, providers indicated insufficient funds for the level of intervention they were providing. Based on the results, guidelines and rates will be reviewed and updated. Attachment (e)

Additional discussion relative to community rehabilitation programs is found in Attachment (e) – Cooperative Agreements with Private Non-profit Vocational Rehabilitation Service Providers.

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 .

DVR also conducted a Pre–Employment Transition Survey in 2015. Due to the emphasis on transition services, the results were incorporated into this assessment. Transition–age respondents did not have strongly ranked employment needs. Workplace relationship training (11.6%) and assistance with finding and/or keeping a job (9.9%) along with vocational guidance and career options (8.3%) were listed in their top three employment needs. Transition–age respondents had a lower average number of employment service needs not being met than respondents 25 years of age and older (0.9 compared to 1.5). Overall, a lower percentage of transition–age respondents (9.1%) say their employment needs are never met than respondents 25 years of age and older (17.4%).

Based on information from the Department of Public Instruction in 2015, there are approximately 4,245 students who are between the ages of 14–21. These individuals could potentially receive Pre–employment Transition Services, Title 1 and/or supported employment services during the next one to seven years. Some of the major disability categories of these students include the following:

Primary Disability (PD), Total by Disability Ages 14–21 (TD) , Each Age.

PD: Autism, TD: 332, Age 14/15: 130, Age 16: 73, Age 17: 61, Age 18: 29, Age 19: 22, Age 20: 13, Age 21: 4.

PD: Emotional Disturbance, TD: 437, Age 14/15: 195, Age 16: 112, Age 17: 90, Age 18: 29, Age 19: 6, Age 20: 4, Age 21: 1.

PD: Hearing Impairment, TD: 42, Age 14/15: 17, Age 16: 6, Age 17: 8, Age 18: 6, Age 19: 5, Age 20: 0, Age 21: 0.

PD: Intellectual Disability, TD: 443, Age 14/15: 136, Age 16: 82, Age 17: 84, Age 18: 53, Age 19: 40, Age 20: 36, Age 21: 12.

PD: Other Health Impairment, TD: 809, Age 14/15: 361, Age 16: 176, Age 17: 154, Age 18: 89, Age 19: 20, Age 20: 8, Age 21: 1.

PD: Orthopedic Impairment, TD: 26, Age 14/15: 9, Age 16: 5, Age 17: 1, Age 18: 4, Age 19: 6, Age 20: 0, Age 21: 1.

PD: Speech Language Impairment, TD: 224, Age 14/15: 124, Age 16: 55, Age 17: 37, Age 18: 25, Age 19: 3, Age 20: 0, Age 21: 0.

PD: Speech Learning Disability, TD: 1875, Age 14/15: 911, Age 16: 403, Age 17: 351, Age 18: 187, Age 19: 22, Age 20: 1, Age 21: 0.

PD: Traumatic Brain Injury, TD:25, Age 14/15: 8, Age 16: 2, Age 17: 8, Age 18: 4, Age 19: 2, Age 20: 1, Age 21: 0.

PD: Visual Impairment, TD: 12, Age 14/15: 5, Age 16: 3, Age 17: 3, Age 18: 1, Age 19: 0, Age 20: 0, Age 21: 0.

Total By Age: Total of All Disabilities: 4245, Age 14/15: 1896, Age 16: 917, Age 17: 797, Age 18: 427, Age 19: 126, Age 20: 63, Age 21: 19.

In order to provide these transition students with pre–employment, in addition to the services provided by DVR staff, DVR has entered into purchase of service agreements with local school districts and private providers to enhance or expand services.

k. Annual Estimates

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.11(b)). Describe:

1. The number of individuals in the State who are eligible for services;

Based on data from the U.S. Bureau of the Census, North Dakota has over 37,400 residents between the ages of 16 & 64 who report a disability and consequently could be eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation services.

2. The number of eligible individuals who will receive services under:

A. The VR Program;

It is estimated that during the federal fiscal year 2017, a total of 3,327 individuals will receive Vocational Rehabilitation services. The estimated breakdown is 3,158 individuals will receive services through Title I.

B. The Supported Employment Program; and

It is estimated that during the federal fiscal year 2017 309 individuals will receive services through Title VI, Part B.

C. each priority category, if under an order of selection;

It is estimated that during FFY 2017 the following number of eligible individuals will receive services through Title I:

Priority Category 1 – 1497

Priority Category 2 – 1531

Priority Category 3 – 299

Total – 3327

3. The number of individuals who are eligible for VR services, but are not receiving such services due to an order of selection; and

NDVR is currently under an order of selection. Beginning December 17, 2012, DVR began serving individuals in Priority Category 1 on the Order of Selection wait list. As of February 2, 2014, DVR has opened all categories and no longer has a wait list.

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.

Priority Category 1 – \$1,327,500

Priority Category 2 – \$1,357,000

Priority Category 3 – \$265,500

Total –\$2,950,000

In addition, we are estimating that there will be 169 individuals eligible for Title VI, Part B funds for a total of \$300,000.

I. 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.

NDVR and the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) with representation from Tribal 121 Programs, the Client Assistance program and the State Independent Living Council, have jointly developed the goals and priorities for the State VR program. The SRC meets quarterly to provide input to the VR agency on emerging need and this input is significant in shaping the goals and priorities of the VR agency. VR and the SRC held public forums this past year and invited consumers, parents, employers and other stakeholders to provide input on the goals and priorities of the VR program. DVR and the SRC, during the Council's quarterly meeting held on January 8, 2016 jointly developed the goals and priorities for the VR program.

The goals and priorities are in alignment with WIOA and the Vision, Goals and Strategies in the Unified State Plan.

2. Identify the goals and priorities in carrying out the VR and Supported Employment programs.

Goal 1: DVR will increase the number of individuals employed by 10%.

Priority 1: To comply with State and Federal regulations. Priority 2: Utilize training to its maximum capacity for effective staff performance.

Goal 2: By incorporating 21st Century Labor Market Information, DVR will develop IPE's within 90 days from eligibility.

Priority 1: To recognize the workforce needs of the business community for individuals with disabilities. Priority 2: To provide information for use by consumers and VR staff to understand and effective use LMI throughout the rehabilitation process.

Goal 3: DVR will assign counselors to provide pre-employment transition services within each region of the state.

Priority 1: Provide students with summer work opportunities. Priority 2: Provide students with disabilities employment opportunities throughout the academic school year.

Goal 4: *Individuals currently receiving subminimum wage employment will have access to services that result in obtaining competitive, integrated employment.

Priority 1: Develop the expertise of community rehabilitation providers to offer high quality supported employment services that lead to competitive, integrated employment. Priority 2: Strengthen supported employment services to eligible DVR clients who also receive service and support from the North Dakota Department of Human Service's Division of Developmental Disabilities (DD).

3. Ensure that the goals and priorities are based on an analysis of the following areas:

The goals and priorities are based on the results of the 2016–2018 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) which is described in Attachment (j), public input gathered in December 2015, and VR's managing for results strategic planning.

A. The most recent comprehensive statewide assessment, including any updates;

In addition to conducting the CSNA, DVR completed a specific needs assessment surveying students, parents and special educators in March 2015. This additional assessment of transition needs is in alignment with WIOA.

B. the State's performance under the performance accountability measures of section 116 of WIOA; and

The goals and priorities of the combined state plan are directly informed by section 116 performance accountability standards. DVR's performance standards will need to be brought into alignment with the new performance accountability standards. During the first two years of the four year Unified State Plan, DVR will report performance measures to RSA which will establish a baseline used to determine future performance accountability.

C. other available information on the operation and effectiveness of the VR program, including any reports received from the State Rehabilitation Council and finding and recommendations from monitoring activities conducted under section 107.

NDVR's last monitoring report was conducted in 2009. The issues identified in this report were addressed and have no relationship to the current goals and priorities other than the continuing to expand enhancements and improvements to the state VR program.

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.

Services are offered to individuals based on their service status at the time categories are closed, their priority category and their date of application. At this time, we are continuing to provide services to all individuals.

B. The justification for the order.

The division projects total program expenditures for FFY 2017 of \$14,465,837. The total projected revenue from the federal grant required state match and program income for FFY 2017 is \$12,900,000. Thus the difference between program revenue and expenditures for FFY 2017 is a shortfall of \$ 1,565,837. The division will use estimated FFY 2016 carry over dollars to fund the difference between revenue and expenditures.

The division's projected expenditures include pre-employment transition service as well as activities related to providing competitive integrated employment to individuals currently receiving employment service in sheltered settings or for below the federal minimum wage. The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction provided the division with information about the number of students with disabilities that will exit secondary special education programming.

Primary Disability (PD), Total by Disability Ages 16-21 (TD) , Each Age:

PD: Autism, TD: 202, Age 16: 73, Age 17: 61, Age 18: 29, Age 19: 22, Age 20: 13, Age 21: 4.

PD: Emotional Disturbance, TD: 242, Age 16: 112, Age 17: 90, Age 18: 29, Age 19: 6, Age 20: 4, Age 21: 1.

PD: Hearing Impairment, TD: 25, Age 16: 6, Age 17: 8, Age 18: 6, Age 19: 5, Age 20: 0, Age 21: 0.

PD: Intellectual Disability, TD: 307, Age 16: 82, Age 17: 84, Age 18: 53, Age 19: 40, Age 20: 36, Age 21: 12.

PD: Other Health Impairment, TD: 448, Age 16: 176, Age 17: 154, Age 18: 89, Age 19: 20, Age 20: 8, Age 21: 1.

PD: Orthopedic Impairment, TD: 17, Age 16: 5, Age 17: 1, Age 18: 4, Age 19: 6, Age 20: 0, Age 21: 1.

PD: Speech Language Impairment, TD: 120, Age 16: 55, Age 17: 37, Age 18: 25, Age 19: 3, Age 20: 0, Age 21: 0.

PD: Speech Learning Disability, TD: 964, Age 16: 403, Age 17: 351, Age 18: 187, Age 19: 22, Age 20: 1, Age 21: 0.

PD: Traumatic Brain Injury, TD:17, Age 16: 2, Age 17: 8, Age 18: 4, Age 19: 2, Age 20: 1, Age 21: 0.

PD: Visual Impairment, TD: 7, Age 16: 3, Age 17: 3, Age 18: 1, Age 19: 0, Age 20: 0, Age 21: 0.

Total By Age: Total of All Disabilities: 2349, Age 16: 917, Age 17: 797, Age 18: 427, Age 19: 126, Age 20: 63, Age 21: 19.

There is an increase in the increase in the number of students with disabilities that will exit secondary education and have the potential to apply for VR service. This fact along with the requirement to allocate 15% of the division's budget for pre-employment transition service together pose a significant decrease in the amount of funding

available to serve all adults with disabilities.

With input from the State Rehabilitation Council, the division will continue to implement and Order of Selection.

North Dakota VR entered order of selection in March of 2012 as a result of increased program expenditures, particularly for case services, that exceeded the federal VR grant award and state required match in excess of 3.2 million dollars. Carry over of federal funds from prior years was depleted due to expenditures exceeding program revenue. The division has developed management tools that include the forecast of future revenue and expenditures. The pattern of expenditures exceeding program revenue will continue and result in a likelihood of wait list for service.

Additional factors that influence the decision to implement an Order of Selection are:

1. The health of the State economy is factored in the determination to continue to implementation of Order of Selection. Historically, in times of recession, individuals with disabilities struggle to maintain their existing employment and gain access to alternative employment. A report by Moody's Analytics written in December 2015 provides the opinion that North Dakota could be headed for a recession. The factors included in Moody's report include falling oil prices and an increase in the number of individuals filing to receive Unemployment Insurance Benefits.
2. The Board of Higher Education announced that tuition at the 11 post-secondary institutes will increase 7% for community colleges and 4% for the four larger institutions. Fifty three percent of NDVR's case service expenditures were for training in FFY 2015. This percentage is expected to remain consistent.

C. The service and outcome goals.

All categories are currently open. This chart includes individuals who are currently open and an estimate of new applicants during FFY 2017. We are estimating that 3,327 individuals will receive services and that 566 individuals will exit services with employment after receiving services. We are also anticipating an estimated 233 individuals to exit services without achieving their employment goal.

PRIORITY CATEGORY – 1

Estimated number to be served–1497

Estimated Number Rehabilitated– 255

Estimated number to exit not rehabilitated after receiving services – 105

Cost of services – \$1,327,500

PRIORITY CATEGORY – 2

Estimated number to be served–1531

Estimated number rehabilitated – 260

Estimated number to exit not rehabilitated after receiving services – 107

Cost of services – \$1,357,000

PRIORITY CATEGORY – 3

Estimated number to be served– 299

Estimated number rehabilitated – 51

Estimated number to exit not rehabilitated after receiving services – 21

Cost of services – \$265,500

D. The time within which these goals may be achieved for individuals in each priority category within the order.

The estimated time to achieve goals is 29 months for all priority categories.

E. How individuals with the most significant disabilities are selected for services before all other individuals with disabilities; and

All eligible individuals with disabilities will be assigned a priority category, notified of their assigned category, and notified of their right to appeal that assignment. All necessary and reasonable services shall be available to individuals receiving services under an Order of Selection.

Description of Priority categories:

Priority Category 1 – Individuals determined to have a most significant disability

(1) those who meet the criteria for significant disability, Priority Category 2, but are seriously limited in two or more functional capacities (such as mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction, interpersonal skills, work tolerance, or work skills) in terms of an employment outcome; and

(2) require multiple core services over an extended period of time (six months or more).

Priority Category 2 – Individuals with significant disabilities

(1) individuals who are receiving Social Security Disability Insurance or Supplemental Security Income; or

(2) those who have significant physical or mental impairments which seriously limit one functional capacity (such as mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction, interpersonal skills, work tolerance, or work skills) in terms of an employment outcome; and

(3) whose vocational rehabilitation can be expected to require multiple vocational rehabilitation services over an extended period of time (over six months); and

(4) who have one or more physical or mental disabilities resulting from: amputation, arthritis, autism, blindness, burn injury, cancer, cerebral palsy, cystic fibrosis, deafness, head injury, heart disease, hemiplegia, hemophilia, respiratory or pulmonary dysfunction, mental retardation, mental illness, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, musculoskeletal disorders, neurological disorders (including stroke and epilepsy), paraplegia, quadriplegia and other spinal cord conditions, sickle cell anemia, specific learning disability, end-stage renal disease, or another disability or combination of disabilities determined on the basis of an assessment for determining eligibility and vocational rehabilitation needs to cause comparable substantial functional limitations.

Priority Category 3 - Other eligible individuals with disabilities

(1) those who have a significant physical or mental impairment which creates a significant barrier to employment; but

(2) the impairment does not create a seriously limit one or more functional capacities (such as mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction, interpersonal skills, work tolerance, or work skills); or

(3) are not expected to require multiple vocational rehabilitation services over an extend period of time (over six months)

All applicants, including those in trial work programs, shall receive services necessary to determine eligibility for Vocational Rehabilitation services and Order of Selection priority classification without regard to the availability of funds or the implementation of the Order of Selection. Such services shall be provided on a timely basis in accordance with the provisions of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

VR is considering whether or not to provide discretionary services to eligible individuals, regardless of order of selection, who require specific services or equipment to maintain employment. This is a new option created by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. This has been discussed with the State Rehabilitation Council, but public input has not been received and a final decision has not yet been made. If VR elects to provide these services, the plan will be amended accordingly.

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.

ND DVR has not elected to serve eligible individuals other than by the previously mentioned description at this time.

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.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation's primary goal for the utilization of Title VI-B funds is to provide training and stabilization for an estimated 169 individuals with the most severe disabilities per year. It's projected that during FFY 2017, 169 individuals will be designated as eligible for supported employment and 49 will become employed. During FFY 2015, 157 individuals were designated as eligible for supported employment and 46 became employed. The breakdown by disability of those employed is expected to be similar to that of FFY 2015: cognitive impairments – 61%; psychosocial impairments – 37%; and physical impairments – 2%.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation will continue agreements whenever and wherever appropriate with the 21 community rehabilitation agencies to provide training and stabilization throughout the state. Extended Services will also be provided by the community rehabilitation agencies with state general funds, Title XIX waived funds, or other funds from sources other than state/federal Vocational Rehabilitation funds.

DVR will ensure a minimum of 50% will be spent on youth and that those funds are met with a 10% match. Based on previous patterns, DVR is confident that achieving this set aside will not be a concern. The latest data indicates that 51.43% of the SEP funds were spent on youth. DVR will continue to monitor SEP expenditures to ensure that this requirement is met.

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

Extended Services will be provided with state general funds, Title XIX waived funds, or other funds from sources other than state/federal Vocational Rehabilitation funds.

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.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation will continue to work with the Behavioral Health Division, Developmental Disabilities Division, Division of Aging Services, County TBI Waiver Services and service providers to coordinate funding and services.

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.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, working with the SRC, is involved in ongoing data analysis, soliciting input from the public, to include VR consumers and partner stakeholders, in determining the strategic direction of the agency that are inclusive of the goals and priorities in Attachment (I) . The data sources used in identification and evaluation of the agency strategies include the Triennial Needs Assessment and information extracted that reports on the progress toward attaining the standards and indicators. DVR has contracted with an independent research company to conduct our client satisfaction surveys. The scope of the survey has been expanded and will now be done with clients who are currently open as well as those who are closed. The expanded survey will provide DVR with current data that can be used to identify trends and patterns and can be used to improve services for individuals. The annual case review process is used to further evaluate the effectiveness of rehabilitation counseling and guidance services provided across the agency. The Designated State Agency conducts biannual stakeholder surveys that provide important information to the agency with regard to emerging needs. DVR continues to expand services to businesses which will result in an increased number of individuals employed and those able to maintain their employment.

Goals 1 and 2 in Section (8) of this attachment is specific to expanding LMI and out reach to businesses.

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.

DVR continues to support assistive technology as an integral part of each stage of the VR process. An assistive technology screening tool is used during the intake process with all applicants. When assistive technology needs are identified, further assessment and/or referrals are provided as necessary to include referrals to IPAT, the State Tech Act Program. DVR is a member of the IPAT Advisory Council and the AT Re-use Work Group. Staff at IPAT meet the highest standard of their profession, providing assistive technology assessment and training, and are certified by the Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America. IPAT maintains a blog with updates posted three times a week on their website. The topics of the blog posts rotate between the categories of AT equipment, AT funding, AT anecdotes, and staying at home through the use of AT. IPAT maintains an active presence through social media to include Facebook. In addition to the two demonstration labs, IPAT has expanded their Fargo presence to include a Home First Show Room that is a complete home environment that provides a homelike atmosphere for demonstration of AT. IPAT, the North Dakota Vision Services/School for the Blind, and DVR have developed a joint strategic plan to increase the availability and use of AT by those with blindness/low vision.

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.

In North Dakota, 9.4% of the population is comprised of minorities. Native Americans are the largest of these minority groups at 5.5%. During FFY 2015 of all the individuals who became employed through VR services, 13.2% were minorities.

The breakdown of minorities employed during FFY 2015 is as follows: 5.5% Native Americans, 1.5% Hispanic, 4.7% Black and 1.5% Asian/Pacific Islander. These figures are about the same as last year and are expected to be similar during this next year.

North Dakota VR has struggled over the past decade to meet performance standards related to the number of minorities served. Historically the agency's strategy to improve performance was outreach to the four Native American Reservations. The largest minority populations in North Dakota are individuals that are identified as American Indians, thus enhanced outreach to the reservations was a significant strategy to improve service to minority populations. There are four reservations in North Dakota and all four of the Tribal Governments currently receive funding from the Rehabilitation Service Administrator for Tribal VR programs. DVR has collaborated with the Tribal VR programs in providing technical assistance, training on specific disability related issues to include assistive technology and service to individuals that experience significant vision and/or hearing loss. Many of the VR counseling staff at the local regions share dual consumers with the tribal programs. The agency has intended to increase the percentage of shared cases through identifying measures for the number of shared consumers in recently executed memorandum of understandings. In addition, the VR agency has operated a satellite office on one of the reservations. Many of these reservations are located in remote corners of the state and a significant barrier to engaging consumers in VR service is the lack of public or private transportation. To address this issue VR counseling staff regularly travel to the reservation to provide state VR service. The VR Director provides outreach to the reservations on an annual basis to assess the relationship between the state and tribal VR programs and seek opportunities to increase referrals to the VR program. As part of this effort, the state VR program is offering to provide training and technical assistance to Tribal VR in the provision of Pre-Employment Transition Service (PETS). The strategy for state VR to provide PETS service on the reservation is a method to engage students with disabilities in the state VR program thinking that these students will apply and develop IPES with state VR at the conclusion of reviewing PETS.

Two percent of the state's population is made up of New Americans who are recent immigrants to the United State. A majority of the New Americans come to the state from Bosnia and Herzegovina, followed closely by Canada and Africa. Further analysis of census data indicates that of these New Americans, 11 percent live below the poverty level.

New Americans often arrive in North Dakota with the support of Lutheran Social Services, and agency that resettles refugees and helps new immigrants get established in the state. The resettlement effort includes partnerships with components of the workforce development system to address the unmet need of this

population in securing employment. Partnering with components of the state workforce system, particularly the Adult Basic Education (ABE) agency, the division assures New Americans that experience disabilities are referred to VR to address their disability related barriers to employment. The ABE agency focus is to improve or service. Staff in each geographical area communicate on a regular basis and participate in joint training and other networking opportunities that result in referrals of between programs.

The agency also collaborates with the North Dakota Department of Human Service (DHS), the designated state agency for the VR program to identify potential VR consumers and coordinate service to New Americans. This coordination occurs between VR staff that is working in DHS's eight regional Human Service Centers (HSC). DHS staff at the HSC represents programs and service that include behavioral health, developmental disability, aging, and children and family services. In addition, regional VR staff outreach to staff of County Social Service that administer DHS's economic assistance programs that include Medicaid, Supplemental Nutrition Program and the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families.

Goal 4, Strategy 4.2 in Section (8) of this attachment is specific to supported employment services.

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).

DVR is committed to provide pre-employment transition services to students. Activities will include job exploration counseling, work based learning experiences, training on self-advocacy, counseling on post-secondary opportunities, and work place readiness training and other services based on individual needs. DVR has entered into purchase of service agreements with local school districts and private providers to enhance or expand services. The activities will include the following:

- Teachers and DVR counselors are collaborating to provide students with a foundation with activities such as career exploration, self-advocacy, interest testing, and work place readiness training using a common curriculum.
- DVR is partnering with schools and community rehabilitation providers to offer competitive, integrated work experience.
- DVR is partnering with the Interagency Program for Assistive Technology (IPAT) and schools to provide assistive technology training as part of the career planning process.
- DVR is partnering with Pathfinders, which is the federally funded (Office of Special Education Programs – OSEP) Parent Training and Information Center. The purpose is to support parents and assist students with increasing independent living, self-determination and self-advocacy skills.
- DVR and DPI continue to collaborate at a local level with colleges, work force offices, community rehabilitation providers, independent living centers, and employers to provide transition fairs. These fairs provide transition students with hands on opportunities to explore and experience various careers.
- DVR and North Dakota Vision Services/School for the Blind have sponsored a weekend retreat with the purpose of providing intensive pre-employment career services to youth with visual impairments. Due to the success of this retreat, plans are to continue sponsoring this event.

ND DVR has become involved with Promoting Readiness of Minors in Supplemental Security Income (PROMISE). PROMISE is a federal initiative through the Department of Education, in collaboration with the Social Security Administration, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, and the Department of Labor.

PROMISE is targeted for transition youth, who are ages 14 – 16 at the time of enrollment and are beneficiaries of SSI. Due to the number of youth required to receive the grant, ND has joined a multi-state consortium including: South Dakota, Montana, Colorado, Utah, and Arizona. The ND agency partners include: the Governor's Office, Behavioral Health Division, Developmental Disabilities Division, Medicaid, Parent Training Programs, DPI, Job Service, the ND Center for Persons with Disabilities, Benefits Planners and DVR.

PROMISE is intended to improve the education and employment outcomes of child SSI recipients and their families, and eventually lead to increased economic self-sufficiency and a reduction in their dependence on SSI payments. For the program participants who are assigned to the Model Demonstration Project (MDP), or treatment group, an array of services and supports would be available to the students and their families. This would include case management, benefits counseling, career and work-based learning experiences, and parent training and information, as well as other services which may help the student's education and employment outcomes.

Goal 3 in Section (8) of this attachment identifies additional activities related to services to youth.

5. If applicable, plans for establishing, developing, or improving community rehabilitation programs within the State.

The results of the Provider Survey conducted with the 2016–2018 Triennial Needs Assessment is discussed in Attachment (j).

DVR continues to schedule statewide provider meetings and has one staff assigned part-time to support the collaborative effort of DVR and providers to assist VR consumers to gain competitive, integrated employment. DVR worked with providers in 2012 to establish policy and practice in the establishment of an outcome/results based payment approach to the provision of service related to Job Development and successful Job Placement. Within the contracts with providers are milestones for the completion of assessment service, development of a job placement plan that includes strategies to include AT, Job Coaching, an annual inflationary increase of 3% and other methods to achieve successful case closures by DVR. There will continue to be work to analyze and update policy and guidelines as well as payment rates.

In addition, DVR has implemented a Provider Service Agreement. The purpose of the certification is to enhance provider training in order for them to better meet individual needs.

DVR continues to work with the ND Center for Persons with Disabilities, the Department of Public Instruction, and providers in the development of an advanced job coaching module for providers to access additional training for their staff.

6. Strategies to improve the performance of the State with respect to the performance accountability measures under section 116 of WIOA.

Plans to meet and report on the performance accountability measures found in Section 116 of WIOA include:

- Expanding existing data sharing agreements with Job Service North Dakota's Unemployment Insurance unit, to capture quarterly earnings and employment data.
- VR has, through a onetime data sharing agreement with the Job Service North Dakota Unemployment Unit, completed an assessment of VR consumers in unsubsidized employment for the second and fourth quarters of those years. The results of this study demonstrated the VR program performance was comparable to Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs funded through Title I.
- VR is working with the core partner programs to receive and report employment data for individuals exiting the VR program in the future that become employed in states other than North Dakota.
- Farm income and income from self-employment will be reported using information from individual's federal income tax filings. VR will assign a staff member from the agency State Office to develop formats and guidance in analyzing consumer tax records to report earnings.
- The VR agency is actively working to align and integrate WIOA performance reporting requirements. The scope of this plan is included in the unified section of the state's workforce plan.
- VR will be closely monitoring program data on a quarterly basis. The data will be provided on a quarterly basis to RSA that will use the data to develop benchmarks of the VR programs performance.

7. Strategies for assisting other components of the statewide workforce development system in assisting individuals with disabilities.

The North Dakota Workforce Leadership team has been engaged in developing and evaluating the success of strategic workforce planning. The Workforce Strategic Plan is developed by the members of the Leadership Team which includes Job Service North Dakota, Department of Career and Technical Education, Adult Learning programs, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, the ND University System and the Workforce Division within the Department of Commerce. The strategic initiatives are presented to the larger Workforce Development Council. The Council recognizes the alignment of the activities listed below and North Dakota's Strategic Plan for Workforce Development. Subsequently, the Council supports the following strategies which complement existing initiatives or programs and supports expansion of successful employment based strategies:

- Engage students, parents, educators, schools, and businesses in a comprehensive career planning process.
- Increase stakeholder promotion of and employer use of work based learning.
- Build partnerships for future workforce needs and opportunities.
- Assess and analyze gaps between labor supply and demand to provide programmatic offerings.

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 and strategies below are based on the results of the 2016–2018 Triennial Assessment of Rehabilitation Needs conducted in 2015, public input, federal standards and indicators, recommendations from the State Rehabilitation Council and DVR's Managing for Results Strategic Planning. They are designed to support achievement of DVR's goals and priorities identified in Attachment (I).

Notations are made by the goals and/or strategies that include innovation, expansion and improvement of services and/or outreach activities.

Some strategies support achievement of more than one of DVR's goals.

Goal 1 DVR will increase the number of individuals employed by 10%.

Strategy 1.1 All VR staff will be trained on best practices related to business services.

Innovation/enhancement/improvement

Strategy 1.2 Reintroduce Rapid Response related to engagement with employers to meet the need of business to retain qualified staff that experience disabilities.

Innovation/enhancement/improvement

Strategy 1.3 Develop outreach approach to meet these employer needs

Innovation/enhancement/improvement

Strategy 1.4 ND VR develop a curriculum to train VR clients in effective Job Getting strategies.

Innovation/enhancement/improvement

Goal 2 By incorporating 21st Century Labor Market Information, DVR will develop IPE's within 90 days from eligibility.

Strategy 2.1 Train VR staff on the use of labor market information.

Innovation/enhancement/improvement

Strategy 2.2 DVR will identify, develop, and distribute to VR staff a list of high growth occupations.

Innovation/enhancement/improvement

Strategy 2.3 Train VR consumers to use LMI which will assist them with making an informed choice regarding their vocational goal.

Innovation/enhancement/improvement

Goal 3 DVR will assign counselors to provide pre-employment transition services within each region of the state.

Strategy 3.1 Partner with local school districts and CRPs to provide pre-employment transition services to eligible or potentially eligible students.

Innovation/enhancement/improvement

Strategy 3.2 DVR will ensure local school districts have access to fund and/or provide Pre-Employment Transition Services.

Innovation/enhancement/improvement

Goal 4 *Individuals currently receiving subminimum wage employment will have access to services that result in obtaining competitive, integrated employment.

Strategy 4.1 DVR will take the lead on implementing the Governor's Employment First Initiative.

Innovation/enhancement/improvement

Strategy 4.2 DVR will provide training and technical assistance to four community providers serving individuals with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities to expand competitive integrated employment.

Innovation/enhancement/improvement

Strategy 4.3 DVR will identify all individuals who are currently working for sub-minimum wage.

Innovation/enhancement/improvement

B. support innovation and expansion activities; and

All of DVR's strategies focus on methods to enhance and improve programs and services.

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.

Goal 4 *Provide leadership that promotes competitive, integrated employment as the first choice for individuals who are of working age.

Strategy 4.1 Facilitate the Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities in managing the State's Employment First Initiative.

Innovation/enhancement/improvement

Strategy 4.2 Partner with four community providers and WISE and to pilot the Expanded SEP program. Innovation/enhancement/improvement

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.

Goal 1: Target for DVR will meet Federal Standard 1 – Increase Employment Outcomes from 2013. DVR will meet or exceed, at a minimum, four of the six indicators, and at least two of the three primary indicators by 9/30/2014. In both 2014 and 2015, DVR achieved this goal.

The total number of successful rehabilitations for federal program year 2014 was 394 and represents a decrease of 37 successful closures over the preceding year. The goal for successful closures for FFY 14 was ambitious and is indicative of the impact of the agency entering OOS in March of 2012. Analysis of OOS suggested that referrals to the agency had decreased as had the number of new rehabilitation plans. The division estimated a time frame of three years to return to the high levels of program performance prior to OOS. In FFY15 the number of successful rehabilitation outcomes increased by 35% over the preceding year. The agency met or exceeded the performance level of two of the three primary indicators for federal program year 14 and 15. Activities to achieve the agency performance related to increased outcomes included:

• The agency conducted statewide media campaigns to promote VR as a resource for business in recruitment and retention of employees. • Provided presentations and information at the Statewide Governor's Workforce Conference and Statewide Association for Human Resource Managers. Reached an audience of 400 business attendees each of the program years to market the VR program. • Outreach to federal employers resulted in five individuals obtaining employment with the federal government during program years 14 and 15. • DVR implements performance outcome-based-fee schedule for job development, job placement and supported employment that provides payment to providers based on the consumer's finding and retaining competitive employment. • Training of staff in motivational counseling techniques that serve to engage consumers as active participants in seeking employment. • An additional Business Specialist was employed in federal program year 2015. With this addition, the division has three staff dedicated to providing business service and connecting VR counseling staff with local business to promote employment of persons with disabilities. • The division is a member of the State and Local Chamber of Commerce and participates in activities that serve to build relationships with business and facilitate referral of consumers for employment with these business entities. • VR staff provides personal assistance to consumers in completion of resumes, teaching interview skills and guiding consumers in completion of on-line applications. • The AWARE case management system provides DVR counseling staff and program administrators with real time performance information. The agency AWARE system administrator has developed a menu of performance reports that are easy accessible. The results of using these reports is consumers are moving into eligible and service status within the federally mandated time frames WIOA in to determine program eligibility. The agency is using these reports to also identify consumers that case need to be moved into Plan status within the required 90 day time frame specified in WIOA. • DVR continues a leadership role in the State's Workforce Leadership team responsible for the development and evaluation of the State's Workforce Strategic Plan. Administrators in the division's State Office continue to provide staff information and training related to proposed changes to the State Workforce System due to WIOA. DVR staff working in the agency regional office has developed effective regional teams with representatives of the required partner agencies as prescribed in WIOA. These teams are effective in planning joint workforce activities that include career fairs, and discussion on collaboration to provide service to business. • VR serves to represent the North Dakota Department of Human Service and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation as a member of the State Workforce Board.

Goal 2: DVR will enhance service delivery to youth by 9/30/2014.

Thirty five percent of all applicants for VR service in North Dakota have during program year 2014 and 2015 are under age 21. This number demonstrates the agency commitment to outreach to serve students with disabilities.

Activities that support the continued enhancement of service to youth include: • VR counseling staff throughout the state spends 19% of their time working with youth with disabilities. This time includes attending IPE meetings, teaching work readiness skills, providing career counseling and addressing youths' independent living needs. • DVR has partnered with local employers on a statewide basis to offer summer employment opportunities to both potentially eligible and eligible consumers of DVR service. • VR educated administrators and staff of local school districts to plan and implement pre-employment transition service. Agency efforts resulted in pre-employment transition service provided by local school districts in urban as well as small rural school districts. • Local school districts were at first skeptical with regard to VR interest to fund pre-employment transition services. VR addressed this doubt on the part of school districts and successfully negotiated Purchase of Service Agreements with school districts throughout North Dakota. • The agency is on track to expend the full FY 15% set aside for Pre-Employment Transition Service. • VR provided summer work experience to students enrolled in the Pre-Employment Transition projects and eligible youth. Employers, parents and students/youth involved in summer work have expressed through media outlets, which include both TV and articles in local newspapers, their satisfaction with providing summer employment to youth. • Special Educators are continually educated on the service and support offered by the division to students and youth. VR counseling staffs are active members of the State and Regional Communities of Transition Practice. • Steve Wooderson, CEO for the Council of State Administrators for VR, along with Administrative staff from VR provided information related to vocational rehabilitation service to students and youth at the Statewide Special Education Conference in fall of 2015. • DVR continues to work with partner agencies to include ND Protection and Advocacy, Minot State University, and ND Department of Public Instruction to support the web site Launch My Life. This web site contains information for students, special educators, VR staff, providers, parents, employers and the general public related to effective transition practice.

Goal 3: Ensure VR services are available to meet the job readiness needs for individual who are blind or experience significant visual loss by 9/30/14.

DVR partners with the North Dakota Vision Service/School for the Blind on center based service for individuals who need intense, immediate services to North Dakota Vision Services/School for the Blind.

Activities to support this goal include:

• NDVS/SB provide five separate, one-week training sessions during the course of the year. • DVR's seven Vision Rehabilitation Specialists and NDVS/SB's two Vision Rehabilitation Specialists coordinate their follow up to provide independent living services and to address immediate services needed with referral as appropriate to future one-week training sessions. • VR counseling staff receive on-going training and support to from the division's seven Vision Rehabilitation Specialist that are assigned to work in the agencies eight regional VR offices. The Vision Rehabilitation staff become an integral member of the consumer's rehabilitation team that include the VR counselor, Vision Specialist, consumer and any additional team member the consumer deems appropriate. • Training on specific medical aspects of vision loss and assistive technology was provided during the past two program years. The State VR Training Conference in October of 2014 and 2015 included topics related to disease of the eye. The division contracted with the State's Assistive Technology Project to provide training to VR staff located in the eight regional VR offices from January to March of 2015. • The Vision Rehabilitation Specialist staff meets on a quarterly basis to receive training and technical assistance. Staff from NDVS/SBs joins these meetings. • VR administrative staff, in 2014 led the effort to survey the needs of transition age students with significant vision loss to understand their future employment needs. As a result of this survey, a Summer Camp in was held in 2015. At this summer event NDVS/SB provided training to students and youth with the focus of adjustment to disability, use of AT and service available to assist in their transition from school to a career. • All staff newly hired into the role of VR counselor attends a one week session at the NDVS/SB to revive training in the job readiness needs of consumers with a significant visual loss.

Goal 4: Provide leadership that promotes competitive integrated employment as the first choice for individuals who are of working age by 9/30/2013.

Activities that began during the 2014 and 2015 program years are:

• DVR continues to provide administrative support and leadership to the State Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities. The Committee's responsibility is included in State statute and includes the study of policies and practices of state agencies which create barriers to competitive, integrated employment. • In FFY 15, DVR commissioned staff from Minot State University to complete an analysis of the number of individuals with intellectual disabilities that are employed in non-integrated employment settings for less than minimum wage. This study is expected to be completed the summer of 2016 and will provide baseline data from which the Committee can develop targets to increase competitive, integrated employment for individuals that experience intellectual disabilities. No such data source previously existed. • DVR is an active member of the Employment Learning Committee (ELC). The ELC membership includes staff from State VR, DD, community rehabilitation providers and staff from Minot State University. • VR has been an active member of a department-wide leadership group to include the DSA's Deputy Executive Director, I/DD Director and VR Director to assess and make recommendations to the DSA's Executive Director related to policy and funding decisions. • VR has taken the lead throughout the 2015 program year to develop material to educate providers, school districts and staffs of the I/DD and VR agency regarding provisions in Section 511 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. This information is placed on the agency web site for access by parents, consumers and any other interested parties. • VR has facilitated the discussion between VR and I/DD agencies in other state's with mature VR policy and I/DD waivers in planning for changes that promote integrated competitive employment.

B. Describe the factors that impeded the achievement of the goals and priorities.

DVR has not been successful in implementation of the strategy related to establishment of a Project Search site. The agency collaborated with the State Council on Developmental Disabilities (Council) in the Council issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a local company to develop a plan to implement Project Search. The RFP was successful in securing the service of a talented marketing firm, with staff expertise in development of programing for students with disabilities. Administrators of local Hospitals, Community Rehabilitation Providers and School Districts in Bismarck and Fargo were engaged in planning a visit to North Dakota from representatives from Cincinnati Children's Hospital. The representatives of Cincinnati Children's Hospital were to provide technical assistance to the project and eventually be a vendor of the State of North Dakota to license the Project Search sites. Cincinnati Children's Hospital declined to meet the North Dakota requirement of all vendors with the State that they register their company with the North Dakota Secretary of State. Thus the planning team determined that without the expertise of staff from Project Search not to move forward with implementation.

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 division's goal related to supported employment has been to continue the same level of supported employment and performance.

An analysis of consumers receiving supported employment service was completed. The result is that historically 55% of consumers of supported employment service are under the age of 24.

B. Describe the factors that impeded the achievement of the goals and priorities.

The primary Supported Employment goals identified in Attachment (n) were to provide training and stabilization to an estimated 188 individuals and employ 50 individuals. In 2014, we were able to provide training and stabilization to 137 individuals and 39 individuals became successfully employed. In 2015, we were able to provide training and stabilization to 157 individuals and 46 individuals became successfully employed.

Supported employment is provided to eligible consumers with the most significant disabilities. DVR's Title VI, Part B funds are used to provide intensive skills and behavioral training for consumers in competitive, integrated employment. The challenge for VR is the current wait list for extended service for individuals that experience a disability other than an intellectual disability or who experience a significant behavioral health issue for which they receive on-going case management through behavioral health case managers located in the Department of Human Service eight regional offices.

3. The VR program's performance on the performance accountability indicators under section 116 of WIOA.

In 2014, DVR exceeded 5 of the 6 indicators, including the 3 primary indicators, in Standard 1. DVR missed the number of employment outcomes by 37 and missed Standard 2 by 2.9%. However, the rehab rate was 62.94%, exceeded the percent with earnings at or above minimum wage by 26.89%, exceeded the percent with earnings at or above minimum wage with significant disabilities by 30.97%, exceeded the earnings as a ratio to the state's average annual pay by 2.3% and exceeded the difference between percentage of self-support at closure and application by 11.29%.

In 2015, DVR exceeded 5 of the 6 indicators, including 2 of the primary indicators, in Standard 1. We are estimating that DVR missed the earnings as a ratio to the State's average pay by 0.8% and missed Standard 2 by 8.3%. However, DVR had 137 more employment outcomes, the rehab rate was 71.37%, exceeded the percent with earnings at or above minimum wage by 26.847%, exceeded the percent with earnings at or above minimum wage with significant disabilities by 28.51%, and exceeded the difference between percentage of self-support at closure and application by 5.52%.

4. How the funds reserved for innovation and expansion (I&E) activities were utilized.

During FFY 2014 and 2015, innovation and expansion funds were spent on ADA, Business Services, Transition Services, Assistive Technology, and State Rehabilitation Council expenses.

ADA: DVR continues to participate with on-going education. The regional offices have staff who are trained to support referrals and provide resources to employers and businesses in the community.

Business Services: I & E funds were used to pay for civic and service organization membership, including Chamber of Commerce, for regional and state DVR staff. Funds were also used for booth registration at high-profile regional and state conferences and events. Both allow for higher visibility of DVR within the business community and by our individuals. They enable us to develop long-term partnerships with business owners and employers based on common goals, which should enhance recruitment and retention practices benefiting individuals with disabilities. We re-classified a position and assigned a Business Service Specialist (BSS) in Fargo and also reassigned counselor duties for a BSS in Bismarck.

Transition: NDVR had transition contracts with providers and special education units where students were able to receive various work experience, including job shadows, as well as developing resumes and practicing interviewing skills.

Rehab Services Council: Funds were used to advertise the SRC meetings and to provide travel and per diem to SRC members.

Assistive Technology: The Department of Human Services' Division of Vocational Rehabilitation controls and administers the funds made available through the federal Tech Act Grant and awards these federal grant funds to the Interagency Program for Assistive Technology. The Vocational Rehabilitation Director is a member of the

Consumer Advisory Council (CAC) for the Tech Act Grant. IPAT advocated for and received an additional \$160,000 for the biennium of additional state funds to expand services in western North Dakota, replicating successful programs in Eastern North Dakota to include the Home First Show Room and expanding the service of Certified AT Specialists. IPAT has a certification process for newly hired staff. Certified AT Specialists employed at IPAT are, in addition to their primary work duties, spending time to develop the knowledge and skill set of newly hired AT Specialist staff. The process of training can take up to 18 months. This process was developed due to a lack of educational opportunities in the state of North Dakota to produce trained AT Specialists.

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.

Supported employment services are available to individuals with the most severe disabilities in all disability categories including developmental disabilities, severe mental illness, traumatic brain injury, and physical disabilities. Services are provided by 21 providers. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation projects to serve 309 individuals with the most severe disabilities, using primarily individual placement in competitive employment. Individuals with the most severe disabilities will be served and outcomes achieved through the implementation of the following activities:

Continued education and awareness activities for the business community, lawmakers, service providers, educators, family members, and the general public.

Targeting supported employment as an outcome for students with the most severe disabilities transitioning from school-to-work through regional transition services.

Coordination of the departments, agencies, divisions, organizations and programs whose activities have a direct impact on Supported Employment Services.

Identification of training and technical assistance needs based on provider outcome data.

Continue to require licensing for all supported employment providers which will include accreditation by a national accrediting body.

Continue to have semi-annual meeting with providers to provide technical assistance and training.

Continue to work with Extended Services Funding sources to ensure individuals are able to utilize SEP and access supports once the DVR case is closed.

2. The timing of transition to extended services.

Supported employment training is provided up to 24 months, unless more time is necessary for the client. In order to ensure continuity and a smooth transition, documentation must demonstrate that the individual meets the criteria for transitioning to extended services.

Certifications

Name of designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate **Division of Vocational Rehabilitation**

Name of designated State agency **North Dakota Department of Human Services**

Full Name of Authorized Representative: **Russell Cusack**

Title of Authorized Representative: **Director, ND Division of Vocational Rehabilitation**

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 1 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 **Division of Vocational Rehabilitation**

Full Name of Authorized Representative: **Russell Cusack**

Title of Authorized Representative: **Director, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation**

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 **Division of Vocational Rehabilitation**

Full Name of Authorized Representative: **Russell Cusack**

Title of Authorized Representative: **Director, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation**

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. **No**

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,

i. has developed and will implement,

A. strategies to address the needs identified in the assessments; and

B. 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

ii. 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:

- i. 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
- ii. 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

Include the State's expected levels of performance relating to the performance accountability indicators based on primary indicators of performance described in section 116(b)(2)(A) of WIOA.

Instructions: 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 first 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 first two years of the plan.

Table 1. Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)

Program	PY 2016 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2016 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level	PY 2017 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2017 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level

Adults	77.00	76.50	77.00	76.50
Dislocated Workers	80.00	80.00	81.00	80.00
Youth	70.00	70.00	71.00	70.00
Adult Education	46.00	46.00	47.00	47.00
Wagner-Peyser	77.00	47.00	77.00	47.00
Vocational Rehabilitation</	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

User remarks on Table 1

Requested Revision(s)

Item remains open: Negotiated Levels have not been entered Update table

Table 2. Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)

Program	PY 2016 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2016 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level	PY 2017 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2017 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level
Adults	77.00	77.00	78.00	77.00
Dislocated Workers	83.00	83.00	84.00	83.00
Youth	70.00	75.00	71.00	75.00
Adult Education	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Wagner-Peyser	76.00	63.00	77.00	63.00
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

User remarks on Table 2

Requested Revision(s)

Item remains open: Negotiated Levels have not been entered Update table

Table 3. Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

Program	PY 2016 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2016 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level	PY 2017 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2017 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level
Adults	4,800.00	4,800.00	4,850.00	4,800.00
Dislocated Workers	8,000.00	8,000.00	8,050.00	8,000.00
Youth	3,000.00	0.00	3,050.00	0.00
Adult Education	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Wagner-Peyser	6,500.00	3,100.00	6,550.00	3,100.00
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

User remarks on Table 3

Median Earnings was not a negotiated measure for Youth

Requested Revision(s)

Item remains open: Negotiated Levels have not been entered Update table

Table 4. Credential Attainment Rate

Program	PY 2016 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2016 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level	PY 2017 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2017 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level
Adults	65.00	65.00	66.00	65.00
Dislocated Workers	70.00	70.00	71.00	70.00
Youth	75.00	75.00	76.00	75.00
Adult Education	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Wagner-Peyser	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

User remarks on Table 4

Requested Revision(s)

Item remains open: Negotiated Levels have not been entered Update table

Table 5. Measureable Skill Gains

Program	PY 2016 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2016 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level	PY 2017 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2017 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level
Adults	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Dislocated Workers	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Youth	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Adult Education	46.00	46.00	47.00	47.00
Wagner-Peyser	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

User remarks on Table 5

Requested Revision(s)

Item remains open: negotiated levels have not been entered for PY 2016 and PY 2017

Table 6. Effectiveness in Serving Employers

Program	PY 2016 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2016 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level	PY 2017 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2017 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level
Adults	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Dislocated Workers	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Youth	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Adult Education	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Wagner-Peyser	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

User remarks on Table 6

Table 7. Combined Federal Partner Measures

Measure	PY 2016 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2016 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level	PY 2017 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2017 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level

User remarks on Table 7

Appendix 2. Other State Attachments (Optional)