

2020 – 2024
Workforce and Innovation Opportunity Act
(WIOA)

Region 9 – Southeast Indiana Workforce Investment Board

Local Plan

January 29, 2021
Revised August 30, 2022

Attachment A – Planning Template

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**Attachment A - WIOA Local/Regional Plan
Workforce Development Board (WDB) Approval**

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I certify that the information contained herein is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and I submit this plan on behalf of the WDB listed above.			
This plan is approved for the Workforce Development Board by the Workforce Development Board Chair.			
Name:	Patricia Yount		
Title:	Board Chair		
Signature:		Date:	1/29/2021

Section 1: Workforce and Economic Analysis

Please answer the following questions in 8 pages or less. The Department of Workforce Development has regional labor market analysts assigned for each of the Regions. These experts can assist in developing responses to the questions 1.1 through 1.3 below. **Questions that require collaborative answers for regions 5 & 12 are designated with an *.**

1.1* An analysis of the economic conditions including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations; and the employment needs of employers in those industry sectors and occupations. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(A)]

The Southeast Indiana Workforce Investment Board covers 10 counties in Southeast Indiana. They are Bartholomew, Dearborn, Decatur, Franklin, Jackson, Jefferson, Jennings, Ohio, Ripley and Switzerland. As with all workforce regions governed by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the needs of employers drive labor market activity. Throughout the past 7 years, Region 9 has consistently experienced a lower unemployment rate than both the state of Indiana and the country as a whole. While this of course is a positive attribute for jobseekers in the region, the relative shallowness of the talent pool presents a challenge for regional employers, and (due to the WIOA funding mechanism), dramatically affects the Board's capacity to address the shortage of qualified workers. The Southeast Indiana Workforce Investment Board covers 10 counties in Southeast Indiana. They are Bartholomew, Dearborn, Decatur, Franklin, Jackson, Jefferson, Jennings, Ohio, Ripley and Switzerland. As with all workforce regions governed by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the needs of employers drive labor market activity. Throughout the past 9 years, at a minimum, Region 9 has consistently experienced a lower unemployment rate than both the state of Indiana, and the country as a whole. While this of course is a positive attribute for jobseekers in the region, the relative shallowness of the talent pool presents a challenge for regional employers, and (due to the WIOA funding mechanism), dramatically affects the Board's capacity to address the shortage of qualified workers.

Employment projections by industry indicate overall employment growth in Region 9 of 9,632 ~~6,462~~ jobs over a 10-year period, or nearly 6 percent of regional employment. ~~or nearly 4 percent of regional employment.~~ These growth projections by industry, obtained from Hoosiers By The Numbers, are as follows:

Industry	2020	2030	Percent Growth	Numeric Growth
	2018 Employment	2028 Employment Projection		
Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	4,473 4,543	5,170 5,358	1.5 1.7%	697 815
Home Health, Personal Care and Service Occupations	1,481 1,095	2,002 1,575	3.1 3.7%	521 480
Industrial Engineers	1,104 1,474	1,347 1,778	2.0 1.9%	243 304
Cooks, restaurant	696 1,001	1,028 1,223	4.20%	332 222
Heavy and Tractor-trailer Truck Drivers	2,867 746	3,030 2,955	0.67%	163 209
Stockers and Order Fillers	2,797 1,923	3,031 2,123	0.8 1.0%	234 00
Registered Nurses	1,235 420	1,405 587	1.3 3.4%	170 67
Mechanical Engineers				
Home Health Aides				

<i>Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers</i>	<u>2,824</u> 4,029	<u>3,122</u> 4,197	<u>1.0</u> 0.4 %	<u>298</u> 168
<i>Medical Assistants</i>	<u>990</u> 789	<u>1,159</u> 957	<u>1.69</u> %	<u>16</u> 98
<i>General and Operations Managers</i>	<u>1,993</u> 2,234	<u>2,165</u> ,385	<u>0.87</u> %	<u>172</u> 51
<i>Janitors and Cleaners (except maids and housekeeping)</i>	<u>2,132</u> 2,026	<u>2,323</u> ,169	<u>0.97</u> %	<u>191</u> 43

1.2 An analysis of the knowledge and skills required to meet the employment needs of the employers in the local area, including employment requirements for in-demand industry sectors and occupations. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(B)]

Many of Region 9’s in-demand occupations and growth industries incorporate knowledge and skill development on the job, often combining training periods with a requirement for postsecondary credentials. Computer-Controlled Machine Tool Operators, another high-growth occupation in the region, benefit from credentials recognized by the advanced manufacturing industry including Computer Numeric Control (CNC) Machining certifications.

On occasion, high-demand occupations require more significant post-secondary education. For example, in Region 9, two professions with higher projected growth, Industrial Engineers and Registered Nurses, both require a relevant Bachelor’s degree at entry level. Such high-skill occupations are an exception rather than a rule among Region 9’s areas of high demand.

As the talent shortages have deepened post-pandemic, we’ve found employers are relaxing many of their education standards, at least initially, and are utilizing various methods to “train-their-own” talent on site. The new Apprenticeship programs offered in conjunction with DWD’s Office of Work-Based Learning, and particularly the Next Level Jobs Employer training grant, have helped support this shift, and we anticipate this trend to continue indefinitely, so long as the imbalance between supply and demand for workers remains.

1.3 An analysis of the local workforce, including current labor force employment (and unemployment) data, and information on labor market trends, and the educational and skill levels of the workforce in the region, including individuals with barriers to employment and youth. WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(C)]

In September 2020, the region’s unemployment rate was 4.8%, compared to the 5.8% statewide rate and the 7.7% national rate. This general pattern, in which the Region has a lower rate than the state, and the state in turn has a lower rate than the nation, has been consistent dating back to the Great Recession. In May 2022, the region’s unemployment rate was 2.2%, compared to the 2.5% statewide rate and the 3.4% national rate. This general pattern, in which the Region has a lower rate than the state, and the state in turn has a lower rate than the nation, has been consistent dating back to the Great Recession.

The educational attainment throughout southeast Indiana remains underwhelming, creating the need for robust outreach and training efforts. Throughout its history, the Board has excelled when targeting programs towards those seeking to level-up their skill set to achieve their employment goals. Increasing regional attainment is also an explicit goal of one of the Board’s key community partners, the Eco Network. (Graph Source: Indiana Department of Education)



	% of Population	Population
Less Than 9th Grade	3.3%	7,574
9th Grade to 12th Grade	7.1%	16,419
High School Diploma	38.7%	89,522
Some College	18.8%	43,448
Associate's Degree	8.8%	20,368
Bachelor's Degree	14.8%	34,267
Graduate Degree and Higher	8.5%	19,538

Of particular note is the portion of the population struggling with addiction or corrections-involved, which over the past 4 years has shifted into focus a promising frontier for intervention. Though obtaining accurate disaggregated statistics on this population has proven difficult, the Board recognizes that they represent tens of thousands of potential workers—a pool of potential talent that our Region, and Indiana in general, can no longer afford to ignore. Employers are more motivated than ever, and as we have demonstrated with our tri-region NHE Opioid Grant, a pipeline of viable workers can be created when both parties are provided with sufficient support. In the past two years, our Region has advocated aggressively for the State to increase its time and investments with these populations.

Section 2: Strategic Vision and Goals

Please answer the following questions of Section 2 in 10 pages or less. Section 2 responses should reflect input from members of the local workforce development board and other community stakeholders.

Questions that require collaborative answers for regions 5 & 12 are designated with an *.

2.1 Provide the board’s vision and goals for its local workforce system in preparing an educated and skilled workforce in the local area, including goals for youth and individuals with barriers to employment. As to youth, describe unique goals for in-school youth and out-of-school youth. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(E)]

The Board’s mission is “to help Hoosiers in Southeast Indiana find and grow in careers that are productive and fulfilling, as well as to help employers find the qualified personnel they need to be successful.” While overseeing the WorkOne system throughout our 10-county region remains the foundation of our services, the Board recognizes that its role, as defined by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, is actually far larger. The challenges and opportunities faced by Region 9 employers and jobseekers demand a focused and dedicated interdisciplinary response, and the Board’s responsibility is to position itself in the center of this conversation. In other words, the Board views its responsibility is to create, improve, encourage, supplement and sustain any worthwhile initiative that stands to benefit job employers, job seekers or the overall economic landscape of Southeast Indiana.

In the wake of COVID, this work has taken up increased urgency, due to the effects of the Great Resignation and the deepening of the addiction crisis. It has become increasingly apparent that there is a meaningful overlap between the various social service challenges in our communities (e.g., poverty,

substance abuse, lack of education, etc.) and the acute need for workers. More so than ever, the Board has placed our operations strategically at the nexus of these two crises.

Specific Board goals are described below:

- **Strengthen and Expand Partnerships with Key Stakeholders.** The Board recognizes that the problems facing Region 9 are broad and interdisciplinary, which require a similarly robust network of partners. Furthermore, the funding provided by individual programs and initiatives is rarely sufficient to create comprehensive solutions, and thus partnerships must be leveraged and aligned towards similar goals.
- **Maintain a Strong Reputation for Governance and Programmatic Outcomes.** The Board recognizes that its ability to attract investment in the region is directly connected to its reputation with the funding community. Accordingly, the Board has gone to great lengths to demonstrate programmatic excellence and fiscal prudence. Included with this is the pledge to keep administrative costs low and ensure that as much funding as possible passes directly through to clients in need.
- **Expand the Jobs for American’s Graduates (JAG) Program and Related Efforts.** Southeast Indiana, like much of the state, is facing a profound need for qualified workers. The Board recognizes that the JAG Program and related dropout-prevention initiatives (such as iGrad) are particularly well-suited to assist with this pipeline issue, as well as the social and cultural challenges described above. As such, the Board has pledged to sustain and expand the Dropout Prevention work in the Region, in hopes of reaching every high school student in the Region. Unfortunately, funding for this essential program has waived over the past two years, and R9 has directed ample time and energy towards reversing this trend, including direct fundraising and the attraction of a large-scale, multi-year investment from a private sector sponsor.
- **Integrate Workforce Services with Regional Substance Abuse Recovery Systems.** Like much of the state (and the nation at large), Region 9 is experiencing a substance abuse epidemic. Beyond the profound humanitarian costs, this further erodes the available workforce and introduces extensive risk to both employers and jobseekers. Since 2018, the Board has endeavored to integrate WorkOne services into the Region’s existing recovery infrastructure, including the corrections system, to facilitate a pathway to substantive employment for all that can benefit from it. More recently, the Board has become an advocate for expanding these services to additional regions across the State, and we feel that this represents perhaps the most promising frontier in the ongoing search for talent.

IN-SCHOOL YOUTH

As described above, the Board highly values the JAG Program, along with similar regional initiatives such as iGrad, that provide intensive career counseling and supportive services to in-school youth. The Board directs a vast majority of its WIOA In-School Youth funding on these initiatives with the long term goal of establishing a JAG Program in every High School in the Region (per the third bullet above). In the meantime, the Board endeavors, via the work of its staff and its contracted service provider, to fully integrate its pipeline of in-school youth with the wide range of partner programs and sector strategies within our ten counties, including the efforts of key partners such as the EcO Network, local Manufacturing Education Partnerships (MEPs), Job Corps, Ivy Tech and others (per the first bullet above.)

OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH

Though the Region has placed a great deal of emphasis on assisting students before they leave school, we still provide an extensive array of options for out-of-school youth. The Region has a thriving relationship with the Adult Education Program, which is only enhanced by the selection of a Service Provider and One-Stop Operator that also serves as an Adult Education Provider. Young adults are offered robust case management services as needed, and in many cases provided with supportive services to supply transportation assistance, purchase uniforms or related equipment, etc. Additionally, as there is an ongoing worker shortage, many out-of-school youths can be linked directly into the job market via WorkOne case managers. As with our in-school youth, the Board see integration with the vast array of sector strategies and partner initiatives (e.g. the EcO Network, local Manufacturing Education Partnerships (MEPs), Job Corps, Ivy Tech and others) as an essential goal for out-of-school youth services. Additionally, the staff aims to integrate our out-of-school youth work with the new Apprenticeship and work-based learning grants.

2.2 Describe how the board’s vision aligns with and/or supports the strategic vision of Governor’s Workforce Cabinet (GWC) as set out in the WIOA State Plan.

<https://www.in.gov/gwc/files/Indiana%20Strategic%20Workforce%20Plan.pdf>

Indiana’s strategic vision is to create a talent system that affords all Hoosiers equitable opportunities for lifelong learning and increased personal economic mobility and provides employers the talent to grow and diversify their workforce.

We will endeavor to increase intergenerational social and economic mobility by:

- Ensuring quality pathways that provide opportunities for career advancement, personal prosperity, and well-being for all Hoosiers;
- Partnering with Indiana employers and education and training providers to identify and close the skills gap while meeting emerging talent needs; and
- Strengthening Indiana’s economy by aligning programs and funding to meet current and future workforce needs.

Over the past four years, the Board has fostered a close relationship with the Governor’s Office, and considers itself more aligned than at any point in the history of the Workforce Board system. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act allows and encourages regional inflections in the design and implementation of programming, and Governor Holcomb’s office continues to honor and accommodate this freedom, while offering strong and welcome statewide leadership. This continues to be the case with the latest state plan, which coordinates well with our current strategic outlook.

[More specifically, the Governor’s Office played a central role in our pursuit of our DHE Opioid Grant from the USDOL, and more recently we have been in discussion about the incoming large-scale award derived from the Big Pharma lawsuits. The Board’s goal is to see a portion of these funds be directed to the employment aspects of the opioid crisis, whether or not they will directly involve Board programming or not.](#)

2.3 Describe how the board's goals contribute to each of the five GWC goals.

https://www.in.gov/gwc/files/Indiana%20Strategic%20Workforce%20Plan_Draft_2.6.2020.pdf

The GWC's strategic plan includes a number of strategies under each goal. While Local boards are required to respond to each goal, they are not expected to address how each strategy under each goal will be implemented. It is up to the discretion of the local board to determine what strategies best fit the local needs.

Goal 1. Focus on meeting the individual needs of Hoosiers. Indiana has created a talent development system comprised of wide-ranging workforce training and education programs. Hoosiers need to be able to find and navigate this often-complex system to find the best option that meets their current and often immediate needs, fulfills their aspirations, and equips them with the skills and knowledge for socioeconomic mobility. Career pathways that help diversify the skills and talent within Indiana must be designed and delivered with the individual's economic sustainability and mobility as the focal point. These career pathways will help diversify the skills and talent within Indiana to promote economic opportunities for Hoosiers. We need to ensure that we do not focus merely on programmatic requirements and funding streams, but rather what an individual needs and aspires to in order to be successful. We must include an intergenerational approach to communicating, offering, and delivering services in order to meet an individual's ambitions and current and future economic needs. This system may not look the same for each person, and it may not provide the same resources for each person. It will be customizable to an individual's goals and aspirations in order to achieve social and economic mobility.

The Board is firmly in agreement with this goal, and this is reflected in our past and present work. While we recognize the value of large-scale initiatives and programs, it is imperative that career pathways have breadth as well, presenting numerous viable options to cater to a diverse range of skillsets and interests. This only underscores the need for comprehensive assessments, as well as thoughtful, professional case management to evaluate the needs, capacities and opportunities that Hoosier jobseekers present. Additionally, Region 9's staff includes individuals with a wealth of different backgrounds and areas of expertise, which helps ensure that these options are achieved. For example, over the past 7 years, Region 9 has established itself as an expert in providing in school youth services via our best-in-state JAG program. At the same time, the Board's Executive Director and the Director of Substance Abuse Employment Initiatives both possess an extensive knowledge and experience leading the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP), which exclusively serves individuals age 55+. We recognize the value of intergenerational strategies and agree that they will only enhance the state's workforce efforts.

Goal 2. Integrate state systems to facilitate greater access to information, resources, and services for constituents, businesses, state personnel, career coaches or navigators, and case managers.

In addition to acquiring skills, education, and jobs that put them on the path to social and economic mobility, constituents also must understand that they have continuous access to the talent development system throughout their working lives. For sustained economic success and personal growth, Hoosiers will need to continually engage with, and pursue, lifelong learning opportunities, which could exacerbate the complexities of this multifaceted system. Indiana must integrate our state and federal resources to help simplify navigation of this system for constituents. Our current program-by-program approach to serving constituents and businesses has resulted in a profusion of program-specific solutions. If the talent development system is to better serve our Hoosiers and improve their lives, we must align and simplify access to this array of resources and services.

Strategic coordination of systems and collaboration across state agencies will begin breaking down to better empower our Workforce Development Boards, outreach personnel, and local partners.

Region 9 has long supported state-level initiatives to coordinate and align services across government departments. The workforce and education systems are indeed complex, and there are many efficiencies to be found by combining, connecting and restructuring them. We are grateful, however, for the Governor's approach to doing so, which reflects an understanding of the foundational structure of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and the vital role that the Workforce Board system has to play. In truth, much of the overlap and confusion that can be generated by parallel and/or duplicative state initiatives can (and are) being resolved at the regional and local level, though not without substantial effort. Despite its size, Region 9 is often the lowest funded region, in terms of core WIOA dollars. The upshot of this is that it has, as a matter of pure necessity, fostered a professional culture of collaboration and creativity. The Region can simply not afford to overlook resources, and thus our Board and its network of partners have become experts at braiding resources, leveraging existing agencies and programs and maximizing all available investments. Therefore, while the funding and programmatic resources may originate from a confusing range of sources from the state's vantage point, by the time a WorkOne client walks in the door, they have (for the most part) been assimilated into a coherent suite of available services. Case managers, as ever, remain the lynchpin of this process, assessing the needs of the jobseeker and matching them to the opportunities presented by our training providers and ultimately our employers.

Goal 3. Align programs towards creating a healthy, engaged, and talented citizen. Often, our programs deal with the aftermath of either situational or systematic difficulties. Some government programs perform triage on crises occurring in Hoosiers' lives, rather than curbing the systemic inequities through early intervention strategies. We envision a realignment of our programs to include an emphasis on prevention and early intervention that will elevate opportunities for success. The most vital and entrenched strategy we have for early intervention is our early education and K-12 education systems. By expanding access to early education, we can begin providing advantageous programs to Hoosier children. As our students' progress through our educational system, better integration of academic and technical skills and knowledge will provide Hoosiers with more opportunities for future mobility. Our education and workforce programs for adults will focus on finding the right fit for the individual person and equipping Hoosiers with the skills needed for career advancement and longevity. By assisting multiple generations in advancement towards quality health, societal engagement, and preparation for the jobs of today and tomorrow, we can foster an environment where economic mobility is attainable for more Hoosiers.

The Board again concurs with this strategy, as evidenced by the aforementioned commitments to the Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) Program. In 2013, Region 9 had four JAG programs. Seven years later, we have expanded to 11, a substantial accomplishment given the pronounced and persistent financial headwinds that have reduced our overall funding during the same period. Along the way, the Region has pioneered new strategies for funding and delivering JAG programs, including the launch of the first bilingual program, the first program cofounded by the local school corporation, and the first successful implementation of a single program split between two smaller high schools, who would have otherwise been ineligible for their own program. In 2020, despite the disruptions of COVID-19, we were able to launch yet another new program in Batesville, funded almost entirely by a corporate sponsor. JAG exemplifies the value of prevention, and the Region remains a staunch supporter of this approach.

Goal 4. Maximize state and federal resources through impact-driven programs for Hoosiers. In Indiana, there is a great deal of overlap between the populations served through our various state and federal programs focusing on either social services and/or workforce training. An interdependence of social, medical, and other support services can help Hoosiers overcome employment obstacles. To capitalize on Indiana's investments into these programs, we must include impact data in our evaluation of successful services. In addition to considering inputs (e.g., attendance and participation rates) and outputs (e.g., program completers and graduates) of these programs, we will also examine the outcomes (e.g., wages and improvement in socioeconomic status). We need to understand the return on investment we earn from each of our programs in order to ensure it is truly impacting the lives of Hoosiers.

As referenced in Goal 2 above, Region 9 has a proven interest and capacity in maximizing resources. This includes leveraging local, state and federal resources originating from a wide variety of disciplines and agencies. At any given point in the past seven years, Region 9's operating budget will reflect investments from the public sector (local, state and federal), as well as private and philanthropic dollars. Additionally, the WorkOne system, and related projects such as JAG and our Opioid Grant, maintain extensive referral networks, ensuring that the clients and employers we serve are directed to every available resource to succeed. As referenced in Goal 2 above, Region 9 has a proven interest and capacity in maximizing resources. This includes leveraging local, state and federal resources originating from a wide variety of disciplines and agencies. At any given point in the past seven years, Region 9's operating budget will reflect investments from the public sector (local, state and federal), as well as

private and philanthropic dollars. Additionally, the WorkOne system, and related projects such as JAG and our Opioid Grant, maintain extensive referral networks, ensuring that the clients and employers we serve are directed to every available resource to succeed. This is another opportunity to note that JAG in particular is a proven model for intervention with young folks, with a ~~six-digits~~six-digit ROI for every student that manages to complete their high school degree rather than drop out. As noted elsewhere, the focus of talent development has shifted towards vulnerable populations, and thus a broader investment in JAG represents the “low-hanging fruit” of workforce development.

Goal 5. Foster impactful relationships between businesses, community partners, and government agencies. In order to create a more robust talent development system and advance our populous towards economic mobility, the private sector must be a partner to drive training. We need to deepen our current partnerships with engaged businesses and expand our outreach to involve more businesses. Simultaneously, Indiana must increasingly diversify its economy to ensure we keep up with the rapid pace of the global change. The first step is promoting coordinated communication of the state’s programs to all Indiana employers so no matter the size or type of business all are empowered to engage. This involves synchronization from state agencies to local regions to ensure our employers know and understand the multitude of state opportunities to engage with the talent development system. Successful business engagement must deliver value to employers, which will require our talent development programs to be more accessible and user-friendly for employers. We must also start to engage with businesses holistically, rather than focusing solely on their current needs. Our ultimate goal is to change the culture of how employers play a role and invest in their own workforce development as opposed to the government steering and telling employers what to do. Our engagement practices will shift employers from simply being the customers of the workforce system to active participants in the creation and implementation of workforce development and wraparound service solutions. Fostering and showcasing business investments in their people will highlight the mutual benefits of the talent development system for both employers and individuals.

The Workforce Board remains a demand-driven organization. This design is an essential, if often overlooked, requirement of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, and the Board has complied with this requirement from its inception. Beyond this, the Board remains engaged with employers via its extensive work with the Business Service Team, including regular outreach, Rapid Response activities and, more recently, by promoting the Governor’s NextLevel Jobs Employer Training Grant. In addition to this, we work closely with our business partners with our Opioid Grant, which included facilitation of regional Stakeholder Meetings and two well-attended Employer Education Seminars, in conjunction with the Indiana State Chamber. The latter events were held in Lawrenceburg and Columbus, and included over 100 attendees from over 60 unique employers from around the Region. We recognize that our efforts to train and navigate jobseekers would be meaningless without a thorough and up-to-date understanding of our employers needs, at it remains a foundational aspect of our operations.

2.4* Describe how the board’s goals relate to the achievement of federal performance accountability measures. [WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (1) (E)] See WIOA Section 116 (b) (2) (A) for more information on the federal performance accountability measures.

While Region 9 pointedly does not pursue federal performance measures for their own sake, they remain a critical indicator of our ongoing success. These measures are evaluated formally every quarter, and often many times in between. The Board’s philosophy has always been to do the best work possible, as outlined by the Region’s employers, jobseeker feedback and other local, regional, state and

federal guidance. Ideally, the official performance measures should flow as a natural byproduct of this work. To date, our Region has been able to achieve these goals without having to expend any dedicated effort to the “gamesmanship” of maximizing the numerators and minimizing the denominators of these metrics, which in our assessment, reflects that these goals are generally well aligned with the needs and expectations of our stakeholders. Regardless, our regional staff is very experienced with meeting and exceeding measures of this sort, and are certainly equipped to make adjustments as needed to ensure that we remain in compliance.

2.5* Describe any additional indicators used by the local board to measure performance and effectiveness of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), contracted service providers and the one-stop delivery system in the local area. [WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (17)]

In addition to required “formal” monitoring of the contracted Service Provider and One Stop Operator, the Board and its staff regularly engages in informal review and monitoring of operations to ensure timely and effective delivery of service. One key measurement of this has been the percentage of total funding that is applied to direct client services, rather than staff, admin or facilities. Naturally, the goal is for this figure to be as large as possible, and while this factor has certainly been affected by the ongoing reductions in funds, and termination of key programs such as WorkINdiana), the Board has maintained this as a priority.

Another key metric that is simple enough to track is the total number of Jobs for America’s Graduates programs in the region. As indicated elsewhere, since 2007 our Region has expanded from four to 11 programs, and the Board still aims to incorporate a JAG program in every high school in our 10-county service area.

Section 3: Local Area Partnerships and Investment Strategies

Please answer the following questions of Section 3 in 15 pages or less. Many of the responses below, such as targeted sector strategies, should be based on strategic discussions with the local board and partners. The local board is not required to complete the questions shaded in gray at this time.

Questions that require collaborative answers for regions 5 & 12 are designated with an *.

3.1 Taking into account the analysis in Section 1, describe the local board’s strategy to work with the organizations that carry out core programs (*Core programs include: Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth Services, Title II Adult Education and Literacy, Title III Wagner-Peyser, and Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation*) to align resources in the local area, in support of the vision and goals described in Question 2.1. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(F)]

The Board maintains extensive connections to the organizations providing core programs in the Region, and views these connections as the foundational components of the Workforce System in Region 9. Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Services are contracted directly with the Board, and the Region's Direct Service Provider, River Valley Resources (RVR), has established a reputation for excellence in these realms. This contracted relationship also brings an added bonus in that RVR is also an Adult Education Provider in the Region. This has allowed for extensive and seamless integration of WorkOne and ABE services.

The three larger regional offices, located in Columbus, Lawrenceburg, and Madison, house Wagner-Peyser staff, which allows for full integration with other key programs, such as TAA, Veterans Services, RESEA, etc. Wagner-Peyser staff are functionally supervised by the Regional Operator and Service Provider staff, which ensures alignment with local and state goals. Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) also utilizes the WorkOne offices to meet with clients and distribute materials and information. This also allows for greater communication between the VR representative and WorkOne staff, so that new and available services and resources can be discussed. In addition, a VR supervisor also maintains a position on the Board. There has been recent discussion about increasing VR's presence in the WorkOne offices on a more regular basis, including the addition of a WIOA Navigator, that will assist with referrals to VR.

3.2* Identify the programs/partners that are included in the local workforce development system. Include, at a minimum, organizations that provide services for relevant secondary and post-secondary education programs, provision of transportation, Adult Education and Literacy, Wagner-Peyser, Trade Adjustment Assistance, Jobs for Veterans State Grant, Senior Community Service and Employment Program, Vocational Rehabilitation, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program, and programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006. [WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (2), (10), (11), (12) & (13)]

The Region 9 Workforce Board has long viewed partnerships and collaboration to be an essential component to Workforce Development. As one of the smallest regions in the state by population, the Board learned long ago that partnerships are a necessity to ensure that there are sufficient resources available to address the needs of local employers and jobseekers.

This approach has only amplified in recent years. In July of 2019, the Board received a National Health Emergency Dislocated Workers Grant, which prompted an expansion in regional partnerships with Employers, as well as key stakeholders. These key stakeholders include representation from the medical and recovery field, social service organizations and employers.

In addition to the vast community collaboration and partnerships, the Board maintains strong ties to other key WIOA Partners, including:

- Adult Education and Literacy
 - o Three organizations conduct this work: River Valley Resources (RVR), McDowell, and the Jennings County School Corporation. We have been able to fully integrate WorkOne and Board work with Adult Education, as RVR is the Board's contracted WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Service Provider.
- Wagner-Peyser

- o Wagner-Peyser staff are integrated seamlessly into our three larger offices (Columbus, Lawrenceburg and Madison). While technically DWD employees, these employees are functionally supervised by Board and Service Provider staff.
- Vocational Rehabilitation
 - o We have a strong partnership with Vocational Rehabilitation. A VR Representative sits on our board and their staff frequently utilizes WorkOne facilities to meet with clients.
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
 - o The WorkOne staff frequently educates and refers clients to the Division of Family Resources in their area for the TANF program.
- Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program
 - o The WorkOne frequently refers clients to the Division of Family Resources for the SNAP program.
- Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006
 - o We have healthy relationships with the Career and Technical Education providers in the Region: The Southeastern Career Center and C4. The Board’s Director sits on the Governor’s Works Council with the Executive Director of each of the sites. A Representative from The Southeastern Career Center has a seat on the Board. All in-person Board, Local Elected Officials and Stakeholder meetings are held at the Southeastern Career Center.
- Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)
 - o The Board has maintained a strong relationship with the SCSEP program in the Region. [SCSEP staff have a physical location in the Columbus WorkOne office, and the](#) region also hosts SCSEP “staff participant” case managers.

3.3* Describe efforts to work with each partner identified in 3.2 to support alignment of service provision and avoid duplication of services to contribute to the achievement of the GWC’s goals and strategies. [WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (2), (10), (11), (12) & (13)]

The Board and its partners have an open flow of communication, and provide an unprecedented amount of support and cooperation for each other throughout the Region. Through the context of formal meetings, informal meetings via remote communication and virtual communication, key staff from each agency are in continuous contact. The partner groups also host concurrent meeting schedules, when suitable, to ensure that all members, particularly employers, are able to obtain information and participate in as many regional activities as possible, while minimizing logistical burdens. These groups have also developed shared goals, and formalized these goals and support for each other. This degree of connection enables each partner to maximize its available resources, leverage outside programs and ensure that all initiatives take place within the context of a regional workforce system.

[COVID certainly had a detrimental impact on our ability to coordinate with these partners face-to-face, but operations remained functional throughout the periodic lockdowns. As of the Summer of 2022, nearly all such group meetings have been able to resume in person, or via a hybrid model allowing for remote attendance. In any case, the full effect of this shift to remote participation are still highly evident, and have undermined the Board’s ability to readily assemble regional stakeholders for face-to-](#)

face meetings in the manner we have generally been accustomed to over the years. The discussion about how to best minimize stakeholder participation, and thus regional impact, is an ongoing one.

3.4 Identify how the local board will carry out a review of local applications submitted under WIOA Title II Adult Education and Literacy, consistent with the local plan and state provided criteria. See the [Multi-Year Adult Education Competitive Grant Application \(Request for Application\)](#). [WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (13)].

The Region 9 Board staff review the local applications submitted under WIOA Title II Adult Education and Literacy when received. The review process includes the review and rating of the applications as specified in the State local plan requirements, and discussing with other reviewers the provider's response to questions in the state request for proposal. The completed score sheets are sent to a single source who compiles the scores. A meeting of the reviewers will be held if there are major differences or questions.

3.5* Describe how the local boards are partnering with economic development and promoting entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services. [WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (5)]

Economic Development Partners remain an essential component in our workforce efforts. As always, the Board maintains the required two Economic Development seats as part of its overall membership, but we view this as merely the tip of the iceberg. All Local Economic Development Organizations (LEDOs) are welcome at our meetings, and indeed often attend, whether in-person or remotely. Similarly, the Board staff are frequently asked to participate in site selection meetings and to provide timely workforce data and feedback for Economic Development Projects. Since the onset of COVID-19, the Board staff has supplied a newsletter for all of the Region's LEDOs and Local Elected Officials, including disaggregated unemployment data, policy and programmatic updates and regional news. Beyond this, Board and WorkOne staff also participate in various regional taskforces and groups alongside LEDOs, including, but not limited to, the EcO Network, local MEP (Manufacturing Employer Partnership) Meetings, Opioid Stakeholder sessions and various other ad hoc meetings.

The Southeast Indiana Workforce Board, the Board staff and WorkOne service provider staff has a very strong partnership and will become even stronger as both organizations continue to combine forces to deal with the long lasting and damaging impact the pandemic has inflicted on the economy, employers and employees. The Board will continue to directly support local economic development organizations by providing labor analysis information and other information as requested.

The Board and Board staff has worked with LEDOs in providing assistance with applications for small business loans and/or grants, assistance in developing strategic plans to boost entrepreneurship, and help create tools for navigating entrepreneurship legal issues. Also, Entrepreneurship skill training is one of 14 program elements for the WIOA youth program. It provides the basics of starting and operating a small business.

3.6 Describe how the local area is partnering with adult education and with out of school youth regarding business services.

River Valley Resources (RVR) is the Board's contracted provider of WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Services, and they have a proven reputation for excellence. One major benefit of utilizing this contractor is that they are also an Adult Education Provider in the Region. As such, they can easily connect all aspects of the WorkOne system, including our Business Services efforts, into their ABE work. Furthermore, they have developed a strong partnership with the other ABE providers in the Region (McDowell and Jennings County School Corporation), which ensures that they are informed about WorkOne operations and everyone is pulling in the same direction. River Valley Resources (RVR) is the Board's contracted provider of WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Services, and they have a proven reputation for excellence. One major benefit of utilizing this contractor is that they are also an Adult Education Provider in the Region. As such, they can easily connect all aspects of the WorkOne system, including our Business Services efforts, into their ABE work. Furthermore, they have developed a strong partnership with the other ABE providers in the Region (McDowell and Jennings County School Corporation), which ensures that they are informed about WorkOne operations and everyone is pulling in the same direction. The interconnectedness of Adult Education and WorkOne Services in R9 proved to be particularly useful during the worst periods of the pandemic, ensuring that critical workforce, education and referral services did not experience any significant disruptions.

3.7 Based on the analysis described in Section 1.1-1.3, describe plans to focus efforts and resources on serving priority of service populations in the local area, including how this will be managed. Include any other priority populations the local area will focus on.

The region has a WIOA Title 1 Adult Priority of Service policy that establishes guidelines for priority of service for Title 1 Adults for both Career and Training Services. Priority applies to low-income individuals, participants of public assistance, and individuals who are basic skill deficient. Veterans and eligible spouses continue to receive priority of service for all DOL-funded training and programs.

WorkOne Southeast will give priority of service to participants that fall into one of the below priority categories.

- Recipient of public assistance.
- Other low-income individuals. The "low-income individual" is defined as an individual who:
 - Receives or is a member of a family that is receiving or has received in the past 6 months assistance through the supplement nutrition assistance program (SNAP) TANF, supplemental security income under the Social Security Act, or a state or local income based public assistance program or
 - Is in a family with total family income that does not exceed the higher end of the poverty line or 70% of the lower living level or
 - Is a homeless individual or
 - Is an individual with a disability whose own income meets the income requirements but who is a member of a family whose income does not meet the income requirements.

- Individuals who are basic skills deficient. This is defined as a youth or adult who is unable to compute or solve problems or who is unable to read, write or speak at a level necessary to function on the job.

The Region 9 Workforce Development Board has established additional priority groups that also give priority to other individuals. These shall be defined as meeting one or more of the following conditions:

- Mental health/substance misuse
- Older Individual (55 years or older)
- Justice involved (past or present)
- Poor Work History (has been terminated from 1 or more jobs within the last six months, OR has a history of sporadic employment, such as “has held 3 or more jobs within the last 12 months).
- Lacks post-secondary credential
- Lacks Transportation
- Lacks Child Care
- Without employer provided health care benefits

Compliance with Priority of Service is evaluated using ICC reports and during quarterly performance reviews by the Board Staff, in addition to annual monitoring visits by DWD and (less frequently) by USDOL. All Service Provider staff have been provided training on the Priority of Service guidelines, and this is reviewed annually (at a minimum) by WorkOne Center Managers.

As noted elsewhere in this document, the Board has placed increasing emphasis on Hoosiers affected by substance abuse of all sorts and corrections-involved individuals. Expanding services to the Hispanic population, including areas such as Jackson county Jackson County which have experienced tremendous growth, is emerging as a possible frontier as well.

3.8* Based on the analysis described Section 1, identify up to three industries where a sector partnership is currently being convened in the local area or where there will be an attempt to convene a sector partnership and the timeframe. Describe how you will be partnering to achieve defined goals.

Region 9’s sector focuses have not changed markedly from prior years—namely a heavy emphasis on Advanced Manufacturing, with Health Care as a secondary focus. Hospitality remains relevant as well, due to the Casino boats along the Ohio River, which are presently being disproportionately affected by COVID.

The Manufacturing Sector continues to have a robust sector strategy via the EcO Network, featuring input from key stakeholders across the 10-county region. This nationally-recognized project incorporates a dedicated network for Manufacturing, Health Care and Educational Attainment, and in August 2019 was identified as a 21st Century Talent Region. Prior to this, in September 2017, this unique network was also identified by the Lumina Foundation as a Talent Hub, one of only two rural communities nationwide to earn this designation. The Board was a founding member of this initiative and continues to participate in the EcO Steering Committee.

Additionally, both Bartholomew and Decatur counties convene Manufacturing Education Partnerships (MEPs), which focus on employer outreach to the community, particularly for students. The Board and WorkOne staff have been long-term members of both of these groups, which has helped elevate the work of all involved. [More recently, increases in federal Infrastructure investments has cause renewed discussions on related occupations.](#)

3.9 A-D

Responses may include the implementation of incumbent worker training programs, on-the-job training programs, work-based learning programs, apprenticeship models, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies, career pathways or utilization of effective business intermediaries and other business services and strategies that support the local board's strategy in 3.1. [WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (4) (A) & (B)]

Identify and describe the strategies and services that are and/or will be used to:

A. Facilitate engagement of employers, including small employers with in-demand industry sectors and occupations, workforce development programs, in addition to targeted sector strategies.

Employers remain the central and driving partners to our work. Beyond their direct participation on the Board, representing over 50% of membership by law, we interface regularly with Region 9 employers via the direct engagement of our Business Services Team and our participation on a range of related coalitions, including the EcO Network, the Bartholomew and Decatur County MEPs and various ad hoc convenings. The Board has made a priority of engaging a wide variety of employers, and the membership reflects this. The smallest employer represented on the Board is a one-man machine shop, but the Board also includes Honda Manufacturing, one of the largest employers in the Region. Representatives includes members from the Advanced Manufacturing, Logistics, Health Care and Energy sectors, amongst others.

Employers are engaged through participation in the WorkForce Board and the regional EcO Network. We also obtain employer input through the Mayors and County Commisioners and the ongoing work of the WorkOne Business Services Team (BST).

The BST members are in consistent contact with employers to investigate job needs and connect with jobseekers. BST members also work closely with all case managers region-wide to ensure the right candidates with the right skills are referred, as our reputation is based on our ability to bring the businesses qualified and job-ready candidates.

In promoting the Region's business services, we access a wide variety of marketing options, including mailings, email blasts, presentations, press releases and paid advertisements, in order to attract the notice of regional businesses. Our BST will continue to fully engage with the businesees within their assigined area to create partnerships, stay involved in local Chambers of Commerce and other community organizations.

This engagement ensure that the Board's work, and the related services of the WorkOne system are relevant and responsive to market demands.

B. Support a local workforce development system described in 3.2 that meets the needs of businesses.

Section 3.2 lists many of the myriads partners that we engage to ensure we are meeting the needs of businesses. Some of our key employer programs include OJT and Work Experiences with the following employers:

- OJT Employers
 - Decatur Plastics Products
 - North Vernon Utilities
 - Forefront Dermatology
 - BC Precision Tool
 - Elwood Staffing
 - PMG
 - [ASAP \(Alliance for Substance Abuse Progress\)](#)
 - [Woodmizer](#)
- Work Experience Employers
 - King's Daughters' Hospital
 - Margaret Mary Health
 - Wood Mizer
 - M&M Towing
 - Patriot Packaging
 - Habitat for Humanity
 - City of Rising Sun
 - Jennings United Way
 - Morning Breeze
 - [Potter's House](#)
 - [Blush on Main](#)
 - [Jennings County EMS](#)
 - [Rising Sun Auto Care](#)
 - [Columbus Regional Hospital](#)
 - [Snappy Tomato Pizza](#)
 - [Hoosier Christian Village](#)
 - [Education Center of Rising Sun](#)
 - [Carriage House on the River](#)
 - [Clearinghouse](#)
 - [Boy's and Girl's Club](#)
 - [River Valley Resources](#)
 - [Community Mental Health Center](#)
 - [Rising Sun Courthouse](#)
 - [Five Star Technology Solutions](#)
 - [Pavilion Churches](#)
 - [Jackson County Education Center](#)

Additionally, Region 9 partnered with the Governor's Office and the Department of Workforce Development to facilitate all four rounds of the Next Level Job's Employer Training Grant. Most recently, R9 was entrusted with over \$1.5M, which was dutifully invested with R9 employers to facilitate the training of new and incumbent workers.

Beyond our local programs, the Board often serves as a key liaison between local businesses and key state, regional and federal partners, present opportunities that would often go overlooked otherwise. The Department of Labor National Health Emergency Opioid Grant and the Governor's Next Level Jobs Employer Training Grant are two recent examples.

C. Better coordinate workforce development programs with economic development partners and programs.

See Item 3.5 above for pertinent information about our relationship with Economic Development Partners.

In addition, the Region 9 Board staff and the WorkOne regional Business Services team maintains an excellent partnership with the Economic Development Partners as their needs and issues arrive—new potential employer, major dislocation or major business expansion. Membership in the region’s Chambers of Commerce, along with the ECO Network, Columbus Education Coalition and all regional LEDOs, will continue as it has for well over a decade.

The Business Services Manager acts as the primary liaison with the Director of the Southeast Economic Development Council, and they communicate on any number of topics, ranging from business expansion to Rapid Response activities. The two agencies act in tandem to get the word out to WorkOne staff and

D. Strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs.

all regional LEDOs on any number of different projects and initiatives.

~~The Board has long been a proponent of local administration of the Unemployment Insurance system, and respectfully objected to the decision to move to a centralized and remote solution. We recognized that many of our clients simply do not have the technology or technological literacy to navigate remote and virtual systems, and anticipated the difficulties that rose as soon as claims began to spike in the Spring of 2020. Since that time, we have reached out to the Department fo Workforce Development on multiple occassions to offer assistance, including a willingness to reinstate local and regional level UI staff within our offices. As it stands, a substantial amount of our physical and remote traffic is associated with UI related issues. While we are happy to assist in whatever limited capacity we can, the truth remains that we receive no funding whatsoever for this work, which in effect, equates to a substantial allocation of resources to supplement the Department’s UI infrastructure, which we are donating on behalf of the many Hoosiers that struggle with the current implementation of these resources. Our Board remains open to any conversation about better serving these individuals.~~
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Additionally R9 has been keeping up-to-date on ongoing conversations between R12 and others to obtain access to additional UI customer data so that the Regions can conduct proactive outreach activities. As the Workforce Participation becomes an increasingly important driver of employment outcome, the need for this integration is more apparent than ever.

Underemployed or unemployed job seekers impact our business economy and increasing linkages that lead to increasing the number of skilled workforce helps to stabilize and strengthen our communities. The impact that COVID-19 has had on the economy, businesses and lives continues to bring increased awareness of the many receiving unemployment benefits.

Here is how the WorkOne and its partners are helping to strengthen linkages with UI.

- RES Programs – Many of those unemployed recipients can benefit from additional reemployment and training services. Orientation and various services can lead to increased self-sufficiency and new career opportunities. Staff screen and refer to programs.
- WIOA and other programs – Opioid, Dislocated Workers, NLJ-RR, etc. The team can identify UI customers who can benefit from these grants.
- Business services – Labor market information tells us what employers are seeking in the way of openings and skills. Effectively collaborating helps to identify what skills are needed and leads to training opportunities for in-demand occupations.

3.10 Including WIOA and non-WIOA funding, what percentage of total funds would you project will be used for training annually?

The current projection is 13.2%. While this is lower than we would like, it represents a substantial accomplishment given the dramatic reduction in funding experienced over the past 7 years. Current WIOA levels are 45% below PY13 levels, which has required dramatic reductions to staffing levels, brick and mortar and administrative costs. Additionally, the termination of the WorkINdiana program had a profoundly negative affect on this ratio. Thankfully, the Governor's NextLevel Jobs program provided a viable training opportunity for many, but not all, WorkINdiana clients. However, this investment is not reflected in our training ratio, as these funds have largely remained independent of the WorkOne system.

3.11 If the local board is currently leveraging funding outside of WIOA Title I funding and state general funds to support the local workforce development system, briefly describe the funding and how it will impact the local system. Break down the description by adult, dislocated worker and youth. If the local board does not currently have oversight of additional funding, describe any plans to pursue it.

At present, we have leveraged over \$139K of outside funds to foster JAG expansions in several communities. These are primarily sponsorship dollars from employers, but also Community Foundations, Economic Development Organizations and the school systems themselves. Due to ongoing budget shortfalls, and the anticipating impact of COVID-19, the Board is aiming to further diversify its JAG funding in PY20 and beyond.At present, we have leveraged over \$139K of outside funds to foster

JAG expansions in several communities. These are primarily sponsorship dollars from employers, but also Community Foundations, Economic Development Organizations and the school systems themselves. Due to ongoing budget shortfalls, and anticipating the impact of COVID-19, the Board is aiming to further diversify its JAG funding in PY20 and beyond. The most notable development on this front is that the Board has begun asking School district (and/or their community partners) for a \$10k-per-program good-faith investment in JAG. Over the past 2 program years, this has brought in over \$100k in much-needed support funding. Additionally, the Region was able to successfully attract a 3-year regional JAG investment from a private sector sponsor, totalling \$180k, with hopes of an extension in the future.

The Board reviews and oversees the programs funding in this manner to the same standard as its government-funded operations.

3.12 Optional: Describe any collaboration with organizations or groups outside of your local area, interstate or intrastate, and what outcomes you plan to achieve as a result of the collaboration.

In prior years, Region 9 was heavily engaged with a tri-state organization known as Employer’s First, which was comprised of the neighboring Workforce Boards in Northern Kentucky, Cincinnati and its surrounding suburbs. Early on in WIOA implementation, this group coordinated an extensive multi-state Regional Plan, in accordance with the new flexibilities that WIOA provided. Once complete, however, the Plan was set aside, as our respective state workforce agencies were not prepared to entertain such a concept, and each Board was subsequently required to submit individual plans as they had in the past.

Sadly, the Employer’s First group has been largely inactive since the Regional Planning effort was completed, but cross-state plans have become increasingly common practice as well. Region 9 remains optimistic that this relationship can be re-established, to fulfill the full potential of our individual boards and take full advantage of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act as it was originally conceived.

Section 4: Program Design and Evaluation

Please answer the following questions of Section 4 in 15 pages or less. Many of the responses below, such as career pathways and individual training accounts, should be based on strategic discussions with the local board and partners. **Questions that require collaborative answers for regions 5 & 12 are designated with an *.**

Groups, MEPs, EcO Network and members of the Board coordinate with the grants that are focused on serving those in need, such as the Opioid, Workforce Ready Grant, Young Adult Services and local business services. These local partners allow the region to increase co-enrollments into various programs to maximize services that lead to successful outcomes and retention in the workplace. Numerous community partners and agencies come together to identify the needs of our Region,

4.1 Describe how the local board, working with the entities carrying out core programs (*Core programs include: Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth Services, Title II Adult Education and Literacy, Title III Wagner-Peyser, and Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation*), will expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment and out of school youth. Include referral processes with one stop partners. [WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (3)]

establish common goals and develop solutions that includes serving individuals with barriers to employment.

As part of the WorkOne One-Stop Certification requirements, the Region has developed a list of all our partners and contact information to increase referrals for appropriate services. Offices have their own “Community Resource Guide,” listing the community partners’ contact information and this is readily available to each and every customer.

4.2 Describe how the local board will facilitate and develop career pathways and utilize co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs, and improve access to activities leading to a recognized post-secondary credential, including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate. <https://www.in.gov/gwc/2445.htm> [WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (3)]

The local board and contractors will utilize co-enrollment, as appropriate, to maximize efficiencies and use of resources. Co-enrollment for participants enrolled in the targeted DWD programs, those attending Adult Basic Education and individuals enrolled in corresponding WIOA programs will be a strategy. This co-enrollment strategy provides more supportive services and resources, as well as allows for a more comprehensive client-centric approach. Co-enrollment into the WIOA programs will be pursued when in the best interest of the individual, so as to provide the selection of services most beneficial to that individual.

4.3 A-E Describe the one-stop delivery system in the local area as required by WIOA Sec. 121(e). See below subparts for specific areas that must be addressed. [WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (6) (A-D)] (4.3 D is a collaborative answer for Regions 5 & 12).

A description of the local one-stop delivery system is provided in the subparts below.

A. Describe the local board’s efforts to ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services, including contracted services providers and ensure that such providers meet the employment needs of local employers, and workers and jobseekers. [WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (6) (A)]

The Southeast Indiana Workforce Investment Board meets bi-monthly, and during these meetings performance and financial data is reviewed. The Board compares the planned performance and actual data and discusses any areas for improvement or modification. Board staff also present their input from the review for quality improvement. Clients and employers who have participated in the process also are asked to complete a satisfaction survey and information is shared.

The Board also reviews the DWD monitoring team report and the fiscal auditor’s report. The different reviews and reports provide the Board with knowledge to provide effective guidance to direct staff and the service provider.

B. Describe how the local board will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system in remote areas, through the use of technology, and through other means. [WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (6) (B)]

With the majority of the geographical area in Region 9 being remote or rural locations, staff flexibility has been key in providing WIOA services. Historically, pre-COVID-19, Access Points were located in remote areas of Region 9, primarily Rising Sun and Batesville. These Access Points bridged large geographic gaps between our full-service and express office locations. Where there is no dedicated physical office, staff can still provide access to services such as application assistance, job search activities, counseling and one-on-one services in selected locations accessible by the public, or in space lent from a partner agency. These access points are to be continued in the future, as the safety of our clients and staff are of utmost importance.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Region 9 has accelerated the remote services offered to our WorkOne clients. Staff continue to educate clients about Indiana Career Connect (ICC), DWD’s online data system, which allows individuals to learn more about WorkOne services and gain information about WIOA. This virtual one-stop system greatly enhances services to customers in remote areas. Enhancements have also been made by adding an e-signature application and Adobe signature via phone. These enhancements allow a client to complete an application process without having to physically be in a WorkOne office. Region 9 staff operations have also become more virtual, utilizing GoToMeetings, social media and working remotely from home.

C. Describe how entities within the one-stop delivery system, including one-stop operators and the one-stop partners, will comply with WIOA section 188, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities, including providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities. [See WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (6) (C), 29 CFR 38 and DWD Policy 2016-09]

All entities, including the WorkOne offices and WorkOne partners, will comply with WIOA Section 188 and the applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act to ensure inclusion and universal access to programs, facilities, services, technology and materials. WorkOne staff utilize an array of marketing materials provided to the offices by DWD, which include the appropriate language and images to promote universal access and equal opportunity for all individuals with disabilities. WorkOne offices also display and distribute a variety of brochures to explain and promote the services offered through WIOA programs, each containing the type of information and images that will promote universal access.

All WorkOne physical facilities are surveyed using an Americans with Disabilities Act checklist to determine compliance and accessibility, as required by DWD. The latest surveys were completed in November of 2017. All offices are fully compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act and with other equal opportunity laws. Modifications for accessibility will and have been made if the Board or DWD determines through the checklist that a more efficient or accessible arrangement would best serve those with disabilities. Modifications such as adding electronic doors to the main entrance, making the WorkOne office building more accessible, have been completed.

As part of the application process, clients are asked if they have a disability. WorkOne staff inform clients that all disclosure is voluntary and that any disclosure is kept strictly confidential. Clients are also informed that disclosing a disability may help to better provide fully accessible services and opportunities. If needed, a referral is made to Vocational Rehabilitation services or other community partners. With VR Counselors frequently utilizing the WorkOne offices, clients participating in both programs have easy access to the VR Counselor at the WorkOne offices.

Training for staff regarding how to best serve those with disabilities, including how to utilize the fully accessible equipment and the types of services we can contract and make referrals to, is an ongoing process. This training process benefits greatly from assistance and guidance from DWD. The Board seeks opportunities to provide staff with the latest and most relevant training related to providing quality services to people with disabilities.

D.* Describe the roles and resource contributions of the one-stop partners agreed to per DWD Policy 2018-04 Memoranda of Understanding and Infrastructure/Additional Costs Funding Guidance. [WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (6) (D)]

The Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) between the Southeast Workforce Development Board and Southeast Workforce Partners was discussed and signed by partners in June of 2019 and is effective through June 30, 2022. The partners are the following:

- Local Workforce Development Board Chair – Patricia Yount
- Regional Chief Elected Official – ~~Rick Flohr~~ Kelly Mollaun
- Title I: Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth – Southeast Indiana Workforce Investment Board
- Title II: Adult Education and Literacy – River Valley Resources, McDowell Education Center and Jennings County Education Center
- Title III: Employment under Wagner-Peyser – Department of Workforce Development
- Title IV: Vocational Rehabilitation Services – FSSA-Disability and Rehab Services
- Perkins/Post-secondary Career and Tech Education – Ivy Tech Community College
- Unemployment Insurance – Department of Workforce Development
- Job Counseling, Training and Placement Services for Veterans – Department of Workforce Development
- Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) – Department of Workforce Development
- Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers – Department of Workforce Development
- Senior Community Services Employment Program (SCSEP) – Goodwill of Central and Southern Indiana and National Able Network
- TANF – FSSA
- National Farmworkers Jobs Program – Proteus
- JobCorps Management Training Corporation

The collective mission of the Partners is to prepare individuals through career planning, education and training to obtain economically sustaining employment and to maintain and advance in employment during their working life. Further, the collective mission of the Partners is to provide employers with the properly educated and skilled workforce they need to sustain the competitiveness in the 21st century economy.

A copy of the agreed cost-sharing terms is provided as an attachment to this submission.

E. Describe how one-stop centers are implementing and transitioning to an integrated technology enabled intake and case management information system for core programs and programs carried out by one-stop partners. [WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (21)]

Historically, Region 9 has always operated utilizing a hybrid model of in-person and remote services. With COVID-19 changing the way that many organizations conduct business, the WorkOne system in Region 9 adjusted to completing all services remotely for a short period of time. This has only expanded the many means in which our staff can assist a client remotely. Through the use of technology, such as e-signature software, Adobe signature via cell phone and a centralized answering system, we are able to assist clients in the most remote areas of our region, without the client having to physically come into an office.

In addition, Indiana Career Connect (ICC), DWD’s online data system, allows clients to learn more about WorkOne services, gain information about WIOA and has uploading capabilities that allows documents to be uploaded to the system. Region 9 awaits a new virtual case management system from DWD, which will provide the optimal way to serve our clients remotely. Region 9 is pleased to be selected as one of the Regions to pilot this new technology system, once available.

4.4 An analysis and description of adult and dislocated worker workforce development activities, including type and availability of education, training and employment activities. Include analysis of the strengths and opportunities of such services, as well as the capacity to provide such services, in order to address the needs identified in 1.2. [WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (1) (D) & 108 (b) (7)]

Adult and dislocated worker development activities include assessment, counseling, education and employment plans, job search assistance, trainings or supportive services. Program eligibility and services provided by each program can differ or may have varying levels.

WIOA Adult offers hard-to-serve populations the opportunity for equality in advancing and meeting their educational and employment needs. Ensuring we're serving adults with priorities is required. As our WIOA funding is reduced, limits to staffing and availability of funds for direct client dollars is occurring. Co-enrollment in other programs is necessary for successful outcomes.

WIOA Dislocated Workers is directed to unemployed workers who are no longer employed, through no fault of their own. DW programs provide additional services and funding for participants where co-enrollment has advantages to maximize and provide resources to achieve their goals. Programs such as NDWG, CARES Act or the pandemic funding can assist with additional funding for training.

Region 9 possesses several strengths that support our delivery of these services. The Board has taken great care to maintain a broad physical footprint, with six WorkOne locations spread throughout the Region. This reduces the risk that clients with limited transportation will be left behind. Additionally, all offices are co-located with key system partners, allowing a strong collaborative atmosphere and tighter referral channels—which are particularly useful in tight-knit rural communities. Another unique benefit is that the contracted Service Provider (River Valley Resources) is also an Adult Basic Education Provider, which allows for great integration of services.

Capacity remains a constant concern to the chronic reduction of WIOA funds (down nearly 50% since PY12). This has necessitated a renegotiation of lease rates and dramatic reduction of physical office *space* (but thankfully not *locations*). The staff has subsequently been reduced as well, with fewer individuals now required to cover broader swathes of territory. The Board has been very grateful for the opportunity to apply for Discretionary Dollars, and more recently, NextLevelJobs funds to offset these losses and continue serving these vulnerable populations.

4.5 Describe how the local board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities, as described in section 134 (a) (2) (A). [WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (8)].

The Business Services Manager has the primary responsibilities of conducting Rapid Response within the Region. They will conduct the initial outreach to the impacted company to organize and coordinate Rapid Response activities to take place either in-person, virtually or electronically.

During these Rapid Response activities, the RR team will provide an orientation to impacted employees on WorkOne programs and services, including the location for the closest WorkOne. The dislocated workers will complete surveys in order for the Region to gain an in-depth view of the needs of individuals and the group needs, as a whole. Partners are also invited to some of the activities, if needed, such as Adult Education, Veteran Services, TAA and WIOA.

There are several examples of how WorkOne services were coordinated with Rapid Response, such as the ~~Job Fairs, workshops, both on and off site, and other resources that were provided to the company and the dislocated employees.~~ individual Rapid Response/TAA Orientations On-Site, with additional RR/TAA Orientations as needed. Job Fairs conducted at local organizations with local employers, as well as job search workshops were also completed.

4.6 An analysis and description of the type and availability of youth workforce activities for in school youth, including youth with disabilities. If the same services are offered to out-of-school youth, describe how the programs are modified to fit the unique needs of in-school youth. For each program, include the following: length of program and availability/schedule (i.e. 2 weeks in July); % of youth budget allocation; WIOA program elements addressed by the program, with specific focus on how the 5 new elements have been incorporated; desired outputs and outcomes; and details on how the program is evaluated. Include analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of such services, and the capacity to provide such services, in order to address the needs identified in 1.2. [WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (9)]

Region 9 has two program models for in-school youth programming: a WIOA In-School Youth (ISY) program, and the Jobs for Americas Graduates (JAG) program. The WIOA ISY program is individualized based on the needs and interests of each client. Region 9 WorkOne offices offer this program for youth ages 14-21, low income, with one or more WIOA barriers, who are attending high schools that do not offer the JAG program, but who could benefit from intensive case management to ensure they meet their academic and employment goals.

The more common model used in Region 9 for in-school youth programming is the JAG program. Currently, there are eleven programs operating in ten local high schools: Madison, Seymour has two programs, one of which is bilingual, Lawrenceburg, Jennings County, South Dearborn, Brownstown, Batesville, Milan and Franklin County. South Ripley and Jac-Cen-Del share one program between the two schools.

The classroom curriculum for JAG is based on prioritizing high school graduation. There is also a great focus on preparation and enrollment for post-secondary education, work readiness or enlistment if the student is military bound. Eighty-one general competencies are identified and grouped into six functional areas: Career Development, Job Attainment, Job Survival, Basic Skills, Leadership and Self Development and Personal Skills.

Core elements for WIOA ISY and JAG programming are as follows:

Tutoring, study skills training and dropout prevention

- The JAG program is a combined drop-out prevention and career readiness program. The curriculum, which promotes positive study skills, goal development, individual tutoring and the exposure to employment, education and military opportunities, all focus on high school graduation and preparation for adult life after high school.
- When the need for additional support is identified, WIOA ISY may include intensive tutoring, mentoring, individual case management or completion incentives.

Alternative secondary school services

- Students who are participating in alternative schools through the local districts may participate in the JAG program, if appropriate. Also, if a JAG student does drop out of school during their

period of participation in JAG, they will continue to receive services from the JAG Specialist outside of the normal classroom. The Specialist encourages and supports the student in efforts to begin ABE classes, or return to high school if possible.

- WIOA ISY serves youth in alternative schools with an identified need. The youth would participate in their local high school program, or ABE center if preferred, but continue to work with a case manager to set goals for completion or return to traditional school.

Work Experience

- Both Youth Case Managers and JAG Specialists work with students to assess and determine interests related to work. Many students seek out and find work on their own, while others benefit from staff assistance to gain first-time employment. The Specialists and Youth Case Managers seek out those employment opportunities that begin to fill a gap for many students, whether in developing soft skills, or in gaining exposure to an employment area of interest for the student through an On-the-Job training, work experience or job shadowing. Relating the importance of academic success with career success is a component that Specialists and Case Managers are able to assist with.
- All WIOA ISY students participating in work experience opportunities complete a 6-module workshop called Skills to Pay the Bills, geared towards teaching the youth the soft skills that promote employment. Modules are: Communication, Enthusiasm and Attitude, Teamwork, Networking, Problem Solving and Professionalism.

Preparation for post-secondary education and Occupational Skills Training

- Preparation for post-secondary education is one of the goals of the JAG program. All JAG students are required to complete two college applications, visit college campuses and participate in a college fair. JAG Specialists work with students on financial aid applications and help prepare them in all aspects for occupational skills training at the post-secondary level. JAG funds have been used for college application fees, short term trainings and other related costs for students that do not have the financial aid needed.
- WIOA ISY students pursuing a career pathway involving industry-recognized certifications are provided assistance with occupational skills training. Short term certification programs are often used, such as CNA, CDL or welding, but longer-term associate degrees are also funded if the career pathway requires it.

Education offered concurrently and in the same context as workforce preparation

- When needed, financial assistance is offered to students who are working on post-secondary training or credits while still in JAG. For example, students interested in nursing, or a related medical field, may complete a Certified Nursing Assistant program during the summer, either their junior year in high school, or immediately after graduation, with plans to enter college in the fall.
- WIOA ISY students may participate in a shorter work experience opportunity designed to help them gain work experience for their resumes, as well as attain soft skills. Some youth clients pursuing a specific career pathway may participate in a longer 6-week work experience or OJT, allowing them to practice skills they have acquired and gain the experience and confidence needed to continue on that specific career pathway.

Leadership development opportunities

- JAG students have opportunities to develop their leadership skills through activities such as JAG sponsored community service, group and individual competitions and participation in the JAG Career Association, which is the club aspect of JAG.

- WIOA ISY students are given the opportunity to participate in a variety of individualized activities to develop their leadership skills. Some examples would include life skills training, financial literacy training, community service participation or discussion and exploration of post-secondary education and training opportunities.

Supportive services

- All students, JAG and WIOA ISY, have supportive services available to them. The supportive service funds are utilized to ensure that students who want to participate and take advantage of available services and curriculum have the means to do so. These funds are limited, so specialists and case managers collaborate and utilize local partners and organizations to help provide supportive services.

Adult Mentoring

- The JAG Specialist and Youth Case Manager look to identify other adults in the community who may serve as mentors for youth participants, and assist in guiding the student to accept the mentor. Students in both programs need and receive individualized attention from their Specialists, as well as from these individuals outside of the classroom to support the positive progress the students make while in these programs. While focusing on the students' needs and goals, the Specialists and Youth Case Managers utilize many avenues when identifying a mentor. Family members, supporters or boosters of school activities and parents of students' peers have been identified to be mentors in the past. Another approach is to provide an outside referral, such as Big Brothers Big Sisters. Supervisors in a work environment could also be mentors. This approach allows for those with an employment goal to receive extensive job shadowing and acquire knowledge needed in a specific career. Mentors may come from a variety of circles within the students' lives, representing positive adult role models in numerous capacities.

Follow-up services

- All JAG and WIOA ISY students receive 12 months of follow-up services. This is achieved through multiple avenues of communication including phone calls, texts, visits back to the classroom, outreach over social media and others. Students are not simply notified these services are available; follow-up and ongoing communication are established as an expectation and requirement from the first time they become involved in either program. Additionally, the JAG program independently has a heavy emphasis on the importance of follow-up services extending for 12 months.

Comprehensive guidance & counseling

- The JAG Specialists and Youth Case Managers are not professional counselors, but do know when and how to make referrals for students who need counseling services. Each community served has access to professional guidance and counseling, and if needed and available, supportive service funding may be used to pay for them.

Financial literacy education.

- The JAG curriculum encompasses financial literacy elements such as developing and demonstrating key fundamentals of financial literacy, including budgeting, opening checking and/or savings accounts and other foundational steps.
- Financial Literacy education elements are offered to WIOA ISY students. Participants' levels of financial literacy are gauged through the intake process, and staff connect them to the necessary curriculum on an individual basis. Additionally, all youth participating in a work experience complete six financial literacy workshops covering: budgeting, borrowing, earnings, investing, services and insurance.

Entrepreneurship education.

- Both WIOA ISY and JAG students are provided resources for entrepreneurship education. As this is no longer a requirement for either WIOA ISY and JAG, Specialists and Youth Case Managers are innovative with their approaches. JAG students have entrepreneurship as an added element in the JAG conference, where they can get connected with guest speakers and local community business owners to mentor them as they are developing their business plan. Both WIOA ISY and JAG students receive information about online resources that can assist with entrepreneurship education. The US Small Business Administration also offers many online resources and webinars that the youth can examine with their Specialist or Youth Case Manager to determine if business ownership is right for them.

Labor market and employment information/in-demand industry sectors.

- All of the information on the DWD website and other resources, such as the Hoosier hot 50 jobs list, ICE and ICC, are incorporated into the JAG curriculum. WIOA ISY shares this information individually. These resources give the students updated labor market information regarding in-demand industry sectors.

The desired outcomes of the JAG program in Region 9 are high school graduation, followed by post-secondary education, unsubsidized employment or military enlistment, as well as skill gains during program participation. The program is evaluated based on the actual performance compared to goals for each of these indicators, as well as the program capacity to recruit the required number of students per class, typically 35-40. Additionally, the JAG program operates on a school-year calendar, but the Specialist remains in contact with students throughout the summer to maintain engagement. The JAG program has proven to be a valuable, structured model program that engages in-school youth in a positive and meaningful way. However, the program's cost limits its availability to many Region 9 schools, especially smaller schools that may struggle to reach cost-effectiveness thresholds of 35-40 students per cohort, though the region has shown success in this realm, launching a successful collaborative program with Jac-Cen-Del and South Ripley. Recently, we were also able to launch a program in Batesville, funded almost entirely by a corporate sponsor.

The length of WIOA ISY program participation is individualized, based on the identified needs and the plan to address those needs for each youth. This period of participation can be anywhere from one month to more than 2 years. The desired outcomes are an increase in skills during the participation period, attainment of a credential, placement into employment or education, retention in employment and earnings post-exit. The program is evaluated based on the actual performance compared to goals for each of these indicators and the number of individuals served.

In Region 9, the WIOA ISY programming being able to individually tailor to suit the needs of each client is a program strength. However, the program's staff-intensive nature affects service capacity, and the ongoing enrollment and exit process separates service delivery from the academic calendar, which can in some cases negatively impact client engagement and progression. Additionally, decreases in funding have placed a strain on being able to provide as many case managers in the region, but this also speaks to the strength and the staff's commitment and abilities since the program has been successful.

4.7 Identify how successful the above programs have been and any other best practices for youth workforce activities relevant to the local area. [WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (9)]

The WIOA Out-of-School (OOS) Youth program is similar to WIOA in-school programming, in that it is very individualized based on the needs and interests of each youth, rather than offered as a standard model. Region 9 is divided into 4 service areas following county borders for Youth Case Manager staff to recruit and serve. Program assessment begins at the time of enrollment and is an on-going process throughout the client's participation. Basic skills assessments, including TABE, as well as interviews with clients allow the case manager to gain valuable information about skill sets that need to be developed based on the career interests of each client. The Youth Case Managers immediately begin the referral process to ABE for any youth who has dropped out of high school. If a youth tests as basic skills deficient, but is a high school graduate, the Youth Case Manager also immediately refers that client to ABE for remediation. The Youth Case Manager works with the tools available through the DWD website as well as other sources to demonstrate to the OOS youth the positive impact the High School Equivalency diploma (HSE) and proficiency in basic skills can have on their career opportunities and their earning potential, helping to overcome any reluctance on the client's part to completing their education. The Youth Case Manager also explains that incentives are available to youth clients when goals are met. For instance, a youth who obtains an HSE is awarded \$150. Their supportive service needs are also discussed to assure clients that any needed assistance is available while they attend ABE classes. Case management staff take a comprehensive approach to the career planning process with youth, not simply providing a plan addressing only their obvious educational or training needs.

Case managers begin the planning of next steps with each youth as goals are met, and works with the individual to determine the best career path for them. The fourteen WIOA youth elements are considered for each youth in relation to their needs. For OOS youth, the WIOA elements are provided in the following ways:

Tutoring, study skills training, and dropout prevention

- For youth who have not yet received a high school diploma or HSE, this is most often provided through ABE programs. If there is an identified need for more intensive tutoring, such training can also be provided through WIOA programming.

Work Experience

- The process in which a work experience is delivered in the OOS youth program depends on the individual's needs and circumstances. Many youth clients have no work experience when they begin participation in WIOA programming. They may be placed in work experience, concurrently or after attending ABE classes, to attain skills and experience a work environment. Others may be placed in a work experience opportunity after completing a certification program, such as welding or CNA training, to give them the opportunity to practice in the workplace the skills they've acquired. Work experience is an invaluable part of programming with OOS clients because it helps to build the experience, knowledge, skills and confidence that many need to succeed long-term.
- All OOS youth participating in work experience complete a 6-module workshop called Skills to Pay the Bills geared towards teaching the youth the soft skills of employment. Modules are: Communication, Enthusiasm and Attitude, Teamwork, Networking, Problem Solving and Professionalism.

Occupational Skills Training

- Youth who are pursuing a career pathway requiring certifications are provided assistance with occupational skills training. Short term certification programs are often used for training including CNA, pharmacy technician, phlebotomy, office administration, IT certifications and others. Longer training, including Associate Degree programs, may also be funded if feasible and if the client's career path requires it.

Education offered concurrently and in the same context as workforce preparation

- Youth who are working, whether through work experience or other employment, participate in workshops or one-on-one counseling with their Youth Case Managers to help understand how to handle issues in the workplace that may arise.
- As noted above, all OOS clients participating in work experience complete a 6-module workshop called Skills to Pay the Bills, offered prior to or concurrently with the work experience opportunity.

Leadership development opportunities

- All OOS clients are given the opportunity to participate in a variety of activities to develop leadership skills. Because services and activities are individualized, these are varied based on the given characteristics of the youth, but could include: discussion and exploration of post-secondary training options, financial literacy training, classes designed to give exposure to selected occupational areas, entrepreneurship exploration and other life skills training.

Supportive services

- The supportive service needs assessment of all youth clients is an on-going process as they progress through activities and services. As an example, any youth who is participating in ABE classes who does not have the funds for gas to travel to those classes can take advantage of financial assistance to facilitate their participation. Other types of assistance may be provided for child care, books needed for training, required clothing for a job, public transportation and other supportive service needs.

Adult mentoring

- Youth Case Managers identify any youth clients in need of an adult mentor, working with those clients to identify individuals in their life who may serve in that capacity, or to get them involved in a mentoring program that may provide assistance. The adult mentor may be a family member, the parent of a friend or an employer or supervisor willing and able to mentor the youth client one-on-one. Identifying a mentor who will have a consistent presence is important to help youth clients in reaching their goals.

Follow-up services

- All youth clients are provided follow-up services for a period of 12 months. Additional supportive services can be provided during this time, if it is determined that there is a need.

Comprehensive guidance and counseling

- Youth Case Managers are not professional counselors, but are capable of identifying youth clients in need of comprehensive or professional guidance. Once identified, case managers can locate and refer the youth client to the professional resources within the community best-suited to support the youth client. If needed, financial assistance is made available to the youth for this purpose as well.

Financial literacy education

- Financial Literacy education is offered to all WIOA youth clients. Participants' levels of financial literacy are gauged through the intake process, and staff connect them to the necessary curriculum on an individual basis.
- Skills to Pay the Bills workshops also focuses on financial literacy education.

Entrepreneurship education.

- Several resources are available to youth clients in conjunction with this service element. Youth can utilize WIOA funding to participate in the ISBDC (Indiana Small Business Development Center), which offers local workshops for young entrepreneurs in Indiana. The US Small Business Administration also offers many online resources and webinars that the youth can examine with their Specialist or Youth Case Manager to determine if business ownership is right for them.

Online resources such as alison.com can be utilized by youth to obtain information about entrepreneurship. A mentorship, work experience or job shadowing opportunity with a small business owner can be established to give youth clients a first-hand look at owning their own business.

Labor market and employment information/in-demand sectors.

- A number of resources for labor market and employment information are available for youth clients through the DWD website, the Hoosier Hot 50 jobs list, Indiana Career Explorer and Indiana Career Connect. These resources are shared with youth clients individually, giving students updated labor market information regarding in-demand industry sectors, and Youth Case Managers the opportunity to reinforce the skills and training necessary to pursue their specified career interest.

Similar to WIOA ISY, the length of the OOS youth program participation is individualized, based on the identified needs and the plan to address those needs for each youth client. The period of participation can range from a month to more than 2 years. Program performance is measured through client skills gains during the participation period, attainment of a credential, placement into employment or education, retention in employment and earnings post exit. The program is evaluated based on the actual performance compared to goals for each of these indicators and the number of individuals served. Similar to WIOA ISY, the OOS youth program has federal and state performance metrics that are evaluated quarterly and annually. In Region 9, each case manager is monitored quarterly and an annual evaluation is conducted each spring.

The OOS youth programming being able to be individually tailored to suit the needs of each client is a program strength. However, the program's staff-intensive nature affects service capacity, and the ongoing enrollment and exit process separates service delivery from the academic calendar which can, in some cases, negatively impact client engagement and progression. Additionally, decreases in funding have placed a strain on being able to provide as many case managers in the region, but this highlights the staff's commitment and abilities, since the program has been successful.

4.8 Describe process utilized by the local board to ensure that training provided is linked to in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the local area, or in another area to which a participant is willing to relocate. Include a description of the process and criteria used for issuing individual training accounts. If training contracts are used, describe processes utilized by the local board to ensure customer choice in the selection of training programs, regardless of how the training services are to be provided [WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (19)]

Classroom occupational skills training is directly linked to in-demand industry sectors via the DWD provider database. Programs approved for inclusion on the database list must be in-demand occupations within the Region 9 area. Participants are informed of the in-demand occupational sectors. The IEP process requires participants to evaluate the various providers who offer credential-based training for the in-demand occupations they want to pursue. Staff counsel participants to evaluate all the various factors to identify feasible training programs including availability, schedule, quality of training outcomes and certification, overall costs and financial assistance available. The participant may then make their own decision.

Both in-school and out-of-school youth programs have been very successful, exceeding most performance standards set. Under the WIOA common performance measures for PY2149, the performance has been as follows:

Placement 2 nd quarter after exit	Goal	Placement 4 th quarter after exit	Goal	Degree or Certificate	Goal
<u>81.60</u> 86.4%	<u>80.20</u> 78.4%	<u>72.50</u> 81.3%	<u>76.20</u> 79%	<u>70.40</u> 70.4%	<u>66.20</u> 2%

Median Income	Goal	Literacy and Numeracy	Goal
<u>\$5,073</u> 4,490	<u>\$3,921</u> 3,341	<u>56.70</u> 66%	<u>49.90</u> 44.1%

Additionally, JAG in-school programming has met all and exceeded JAG National 5 of 5 metrics and earned the 5 of 5 distinction 10 times annually from 2012-2022. "5 of 5" performance indicators set by the national JAG organization for the past seven years, and the Region as a whole has been recognized for outstanding performance. Six~~Four~~ JAG Specialists have won National Outstanding Specialist Awards, as well as two specialists receiving JAG Indiana Outstanding Specialists Awards. Of three Master Specialists, two have won Outreach Coordinator of the year awards, and one specialist has advanced to National Trainer. Two Specialists have been awarded JAG National High Achievement Awards. Furthermore, the youth director is a JAG National "High Performer," as well as receiving 2018's JAG Indiana Manager of the Year.

Some best practices in the Region include RVR designing virtual work experiences with soft skills, career readiness and WorkKeys Training in response to the COVID-19 crisis. Also, RVR has developed a Young Adult Services google site that has information on services and resources. This site is used to educate program partners and organize education/resource contacts for easy access when working with youth. In addition, RVR has created a regional google form that is used for access to industry/employer tours, college visits and guest speakers. This form was created to address the absence of in-person visits or job shadowing and educate youth.

4.9 Describe how Jobs for Hoosiers and RESEA activities are coordinated and carried out in the local area and how these activities will be incorporated into WIOA programming.

For RESEA and Jobs for Hoosiers, everyone receives orientation that outlines the RESEA program, along with information about the WorkOne services and other services and special programs such as TAA, MSFW, etc. The development of the Individual Reemployment Plan (IRP) will include services or referrals that will assist in reemployment. Participants may become co-enrolled into WIOA, JVSG or Wagner-Peyser, where additional services will be provided like case management, upgrading the educational and skill levels of those individuals through occupational training or work based learning.

4.10 Describe strategies to engage workers and employers impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and how services will be provided.

Along with increased unemployment rates, the COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way many organizations complete business. Employers have jobs available and individuals need jobs, and Region 9 has been able to connect them through innovative strategies. The WorkOne has partnered with Ivy Tech Community College to hold a number of virtual job fairs, in addition to in person job fairs, which have linked job seeking individuals with employers who are currently hiring. This has also allowed the WorkOne to engage with employers and learn what their needs are so better referrals can be made. The WorkOne has made it more convenient and easier for employers to post positions, by adapting the system to link to the employers already posted position.

Engaging workers has been difficult during the pandemic, but Region 9 is adapting to the needs of the clients as they arise. We are meeting people where they are at, by utilizing technology and in-person appointments. Clients are able to complete documents remotely using e-signature and Adobe signature via telephone. The WorkOne has also increased the number of telephones the staff has, so clients are able to contact WorkOne staff when needed during office hours.

Section 5: Compliance

Please answer the following questions of Section 5 in 12 pages or less. Most of the response should be staff driven responses as each are focused on the organization's compliance with federal or state requirements. **Questions that require collaborative answers for regions 5 & 12 are designated with an *.**

5.1 Describe any competitive process planned to be used to award the sub-grants and contracts in the local area for activities carried out under WIOA Title I. State the names of current contracted organizations and the duration of each contract for adult, dislocated worker and youth services. Attach contracts as Exhibit 1. [WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (16)]

SEIWIB procured bids for the Service Provider in the summer of 2020. River Valley Resources was selected to remain as the Service Provider and Regional Operator of Region 9. This contract is valid until June 30, 2022, with a possible one-year extension. The current WIOA contracts, adult, dislocated worker and youth services, are contracted out for the length of the grant, ending June 30, 2021. The contracts are attached as Exhibit 1.

As an update, RVR's contract was extended by 1 year, exercising an option outlined in the original RFP. Their contract is now set to expire on June 30th, 2023.

5.2 Provide an organization chart as Exhibit 2 that depicts a clear separation of duties between the board and service provision.

Attached as Exhibit 2 is the organization chart, showing separation of duties between the Board and Service Provider.

5.3 Describe any standing committees or taskforces of your Local Board, including the role and scope of work of your youth committee (or youth representatives on the WDB if you do not have a committee).

SEIWIB currently maintains only one standing committee, the Executive Committee. The Executive committee meets once a month and provides directions to staff on issues and challenges in the Region. The Executive committee will also recommend actions for the full board and monitor fiscal operations. The Board sunset its Youth Committee in 2015, as it was determined to be redundant, given the high level of regional activity already being conducted across the region, most notably via the EcO Network's Attainment Committee. At the time, the Youth Committee members, most of whom were already highly engaged with EcO and related youth efforts region wide, say this as an opportunity to focus their efforts without sacrificing the connection to the Board, WorkOne, JAG and its related work.

5.4 Provide the name, organization, and contact information of the designated equal opportunity officer for WIOA within the local area.

Amanda Getzendanner
Southeast Indiana Workforce Investment Board
Program & Administrative Manager
500 Industrial Dr., Suite 1305
Lawrenceburg, IN 47025
amandag@workonesoutheast.org
513-602-4495

5.5 Identify the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds as described in WIOA Sec. 107 (d) (12) (B) (i) (III). [WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (15)]

A contract with Crowe LLP covers the disbursements of grant funds from the Board.
Crowe LLP
3815 River Crossing Parkway, Suite 300
Indianapolis, IN 46240

5.6 Indicate the negotiated local levels of performance for the federal measures. [WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (17)]

Listed below are the Indiana PY20 WIOA State Negotiated Levels of Performance for the Region.

PY2020-21 State Negotiated Levels of Performance				
Performance Indicator	Adult	Dislocated Worker	Youth	Wagner-Peyser
Employment 2Q	89.455.7%	779.6%	80.902%	741.5%
Employment 4Q	83.25%	83.075.95%	74.356.2%	73.4069.1%
Credential	75.566.3%	69.255.2%	68.306.2%	N/A
Median Income	\$6,586741.50	\$7,893.50,181	\$4,4973,921	\$5,9328,198.50
MSG	6173.1%	616.2%	49.965.00%	N/A

The above measures are proposed, and have not been negotiated. Negotiations are to be scheduled in the month of September 2022. The Service Provider has been contracted to meet or exceed these measures, with an additional goal of maintaining performance in the Top Third of the Indiana’s 12 Regions. This is a particularly aspirational goal, given Region 9’s status as one of (if not explicitly) the lowest funded Region in the State, in terms of WIOA.

5.7 Provide a description of the replicated cooperative agreements, as defined by WIOA 107(d)(11), in place between the local board and the Department of Human Services’ Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities and to other individuals, such as cross training of staff, technical assistance, use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers, and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration, and coordination. See Local Plan References and Resources. [WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (14)]

WorkOne has an ongoing, productive working relationship with the local Vocational Rehab staff, although COVID-19 has stopped in-person meetings temporarily. The conversations are beginning to take place in several locations. Services provided and offered include job search assistance, resume writing, use of the computers in the information resource area and possible training opportunities. The WorkOne offices also offer hearing-impaired, interpretive and assistive technology services.

A Vocational Rehab staff member serves on the Southeast Indiana Workforce Board and assists with questions and services needed.

5.8 Describe the process for getting input into the development of the local plan in compliance with WIOA section 108(d) and providing public comment opportunity prior to submission. Be sure to address how members of the public, including representatives of business, labor organizations, and education were given an opportunity to provide comments on the local plans. If any comments received that represent disagreement with the plan were received, please include those comments in Exhibit 3 attached to this Local Plan. [WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (20)]

The local plan will be distributed to the Board and its extensive network of partners via direct email, and a link will be provided via social media as well. This distribution list naturally includes all of the required stakeholders, as well as many others we seek to engage. Historically, we have not received a great deal of comments on our local plans, but this does not in any way minimize our obligation or desire to solicit feedback. Per the requirement, any comments and concerns will be attached to this document as Exhibit 3 before final submission.

[This same process will be followed for the current modifications.](#)

5.9 Describe the board's process, frequency and schedule for monitoring adult, dislocated worker and youth services, including who conducts monitoring visits for your agency, training these staff receive on monitoring or site evaluation, and a listing of all upcoming planned or scheduled monitoring visits, all forms used during the review process and in Exhibit 4 attached to this Local Plan. [WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (22)]

On-site monitoring of the service provider is conducted once per year, typically in the Spring. The monitoring is conducted by the Board Staff. The Operations Manager conducts a monthly review of the program performance and operational needs. The Operations Manager has been a part of the Workforce system for years and gone through many reviews conducted by DWD, and provides training to additional staff used to assist with the monitoring process. This year, due to COVID-19, the monitoring did not take place until June 2020, with the report released in July 2020. Forms used in the monitoring review, as well as the PY19 report are attached as Exhibit 4.

[Fiscal monitoring of the Board is conducted annually by a 3rd party, while financial monitoring of the Regional Operator/Service Provider is conducted by Crowe LLC, the contracted fiscal agent.](#)

[Due to the growing importance of our Apprenticeship program, and understanding that numerous partners regions have encountered unforeseen challenges during their respective monitorings, the Board is planning to conduct a proactive mid-program-year review of the ASE Grant in the Fall of 2022.](#)

5.10 Describe your professional development plan for all youth staff, including the frequency, type (in-person, self-guided, web-based, etc.), and topics addressed.

The Service Provider has taken the following actions for youth staff development:

JAG Team:

- JAG National conference (when funds are available)
- JAG STS DWD conference
- JAG staff must participate in 1 professional development course from JAG Genius a month
 - Each summer JAG staff must complete an additional 2 professional development courses based on the results of their annual evaluations
- Certain staff attend the Post-Secondary Institute
- Certain staff attend the Latino Institute in Indianapolis
- Attends IYI lunch-and-learns throughout the year
- Historically, Regional trainings have been held each summer for 3 days that included outside institutions. This year, virtual committees were held due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

WIOA Youth Staff:

- Attends IYI lunch-and-learns throughout the year
- Annual DWD WIOA Youth Summit
- WIOA youth staff must participate in one professional development course each month
- IYI Youth Institute, all staff attend when funds allow
 - IYI youth institute training on topics relating to serving youth in the nonprofit and education sectors
- OSY Summit in Indianapolis, held annually
- Local trainings with local resource partners on topics like financial literacy, mental health and community resources. Held randomly throughout the year.
- Quarterly DWD webinars – all staff participate

5.11 Provide a list of all local policies. Copies of documents are not required at this time but may be requested later.

Accessibility and Reasonable Accommodations Policy
 Assessment Policy
 Customer Complaint Policy
 Customer Flow Orientation & Informational Workshops Policy
 On-the-Job Training Policy
 OJT Employer Reimbursement Rate – Regional
 EO Policy
 WIOA Adult Priority of Service
 WIOA Case Management Policy
 WIOA Incumbent Worker Policy
 WIOA Post Exit Follow-Up
 WIOA Youth Policy
 WIOA Individual Training Account Policy
 WIOA Supportive Service Policy
 Youth Program Incentive Policy

Revisions Approved 3/25/21

Patricia M. Yount
Patricia Yount, R9 Board Chair

DWD Memo 2020-05
Attachment B - Program Participants for PY210

	Program Participants	Program Funding (WIOA)	Additional Funding (State)	Additional Funding (Federal)	Total Budget	Budget per Participant	Explanation (Optional)
WIOA Adult	186 <u>289</u>	\$305,691 <u>\$466,060</u>			\$305,691 <u>\$466,060</u>	\$1,435 <u>\$1,612</u>	Projection/goal is to serve 213 or more Adults <u>Exceeded goal</u>
Dislocated Worker	183 <u>203</u>	\$374,892 <u>\$492,718</u>			\$374,892 <u>\$492,718</u>	\$1,644 <u>\$2,427</u>	Projection/goal is to serve 228 or more Dislocated Workers <u>Exceeded goal</u>
Youth (In School)	421 (5 - ISY, 416 - JAG) <u>714</u>	\$0	\$518,246 <u>\$381,672</u>	\$108,713 <u>\$169,662</u>	\$629,959 <u>\$551,334</u>	\$1,496	Projection/goal is to serve 130 or more Youth (both ISY and OSY) and 440 JAG <u>Exceeded goal</u>
Youth (Out of School)	69 <u>111</u>	\$316,310 <u>\$493,671</u>			\$316,310 <u>\$493,671</u>	\$2,433	
ABE	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
WorkIndiana Workforce Ready Grant	N/A	N/A	N/A <u>\$171,091</u>	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Wagner-Peyser	3,848 <u>878</u>						
Veterans (Overall)	123 <u>114</u>						

Each program should reflect all participants enrolled, regardless if they are co-enrolled in another program. Explanations of projections are encouraged.