INDIANA PYS 2022-2023 (MOD)

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OVERVIEW

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

OPTIONS FOR SUBMITTING A STATE PLAN

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

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

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

- Career and technical education programs authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, as amended by the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V) (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.)
- Employment and Training programs under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (programs authorized under section 6(d)(4) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(d)(4)))
- Work programs authorized under section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(o))
- Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers programs (Activities authorized under chapter 2 of title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2271 et seq.))
- Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program (programs authorized under 38, U.S.C. 4100 et. seq.)
- Unemployment Insurance programs (programs authorized under State unemployment compensation laws in accordance with applicable Federal law)
- Senior Community Service Employment program (programs authorized under title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056 et seq.))
- Employment and training activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Community Services Block Grant (Employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.)) [1]
- Reintegration of Ex-Offenders program (programs authorized under section 212 of the Second Chance Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17532))

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

HOW STATE PLAN REQUIREMENTS ARE ORGANIZED

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

- The **Strategic Planning Elements** section includes analyses of the State's economic conditions, workforce characteristics, and workforce development activities. These analyses drive the required vision and goals for the State's workforce development system and alignment strategies for workforce development programs to support economic growth.

- The **Operational Planning Elements** section identifies the State's efforts to support the State's strategic vision and goals as identified in the Strategic Planning Elements section. This section ensures that the State has the necessary infrastructure, policies, and activities to meet its strategic goals, implement its alignment strategy, and support ongoing program development and coordination. Operational planning elements include:
    - State Strategy Implementation,
    - State Operating Systems and Policies,
    - Assurances,
    - Program-Specific Requirements for the Core Programs, and
    - Program-Specific Requirements for the Combined State Plan partner programs. (These requirements are available in a separate supplemental document, Supplement to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Unified and Combined State Plan Requirements. The Departments are not seeking comments on these particular requirements).

When responding to Unified or Combined State Plan requirements, States must identify specific strategies for coordinating programs and services for target populations.[2] States must develop strategies that look beyond strategies for the general population and develop approaches that also address the needs of target populations.

Paperwork Reduction Act: The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA) provides that an agency may not conduct, and no person is required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. Public reporting burden for this information collection is estimated to be 86 hours per state; including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Responding to this collection is required to obtain or retain the Federal grant benefit. In addition, responses to this information collection are public, and the agencies offer no assurances of confidentiality. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Workforce Investment, and reference OMB control number 1205-0522. Note: Please do not return the completed plan to this address.

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

I. WIOA STATE PLAN TYPE AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A. WIOA STATE PLAN TYPE

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

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

Combined State Plan. This plan includes the Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Wagner-Peyser Act, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, and Vocational Rehabilitation programs, as well as one or more of the optional Combined State Plan partner programs identified below.

This is a combined plan

COMBINED PLAN PARTNER PROGRAM(S)

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

Career and technical education programs authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, as amended by the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V) (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.)

Yes

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.)

Yes

Employment and Training programs under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (programs authorized under section 6(d)(4) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(d)(4)))

Yes

Work programs authorized under section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(o))

No

Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers programs (activities authorized under chapter 2 of title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2271 et seq.))

Yes

Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program (programs authorized under 38, U.S.C. 4100 et. seq.)

Yes

Unemployment Insurance programs (programs authorized under State unemployment compensation laws in accordance with applicable Federal law)

Yes

Senior Community Service Employment program (programs authorized under title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056 et seq.))

Yes

Employment and training activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development

No

Community Services Block Grant (Employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.))

No

B. PLAN INTRODUCTION OR EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Unified or Combined State Plan may include an introduction or executive summary. This element is optional.

Indiana's first submission of a **Combined Plan** allows us to take a more holistic approach to our state's talent development system as we work towards better integration across the system. For too long, Indiana's talent development system has been focused on programs – federal programs, state programs, education programs, workforce programs, and one-off initiatives with private and philanthropic partners. This strategy has given Hoosiers multiple resources and supports to access opportunities for lifelong learning and increase personal growth, but it has also inadvertently created a complex system that is inefficient and difficult to navigate. In the past, our state plan only covered the six "core" formula grant programs authorized under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), but the Combined Plan will incorporate and integrate several additional federal and state programs that impact the workforce development system.

By having the **Governor's Workforce Cabinet** (GWC) spearhead efforts on the Plan, the GWC has been able to use all 7 state agencies represented on the Cabinet to ensure greater collaboration on the State Workforce Plan than in prior submissions. Numerous state agencies, non-profit and private partners, and the general public have provided input throughout the plan development process, all committed to a shared goal of creating a more integrated and effective workforce system that works for all Hoosiers.

A statewide **Listening Tour** at the beginning of the Plan's development and the work of multiple **Subcommittees** formed by the GWC to assist with developing the Plan served as the primary tools in shaping the Plan's vision, goals, and strategies. The **Skillful Governor's Coaching Corps** also served as a valuable tool to incorporate ideas from individuals who engage daily with Hoosiers accessing services.

The Plan is centered on a strategic vision of creating 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. Underneath this vision the Plan identifies two overarching goals: having **at least 60% of Hoosiers attain a quality credential beyond a high school diploma by 2025** and increasing engagement between employers and state and local agencies to identify and address the skills gap with greater responsivity and efficiency. In addition to the strategic vision and overarching goals, 5 specific goals have been identified that provide a framework for how we plan to reach our targets. The 5 goals are:

1) Focus on meeting the individual needs of Hoosiers.

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.

3) Align programs towards creating a healthy, engaged, and talented citizen.

4) Maximize state and federal resources through impact-driven programs for Hoosiers.

5) Foster impactful relationships between businesses, community partners, and government agencies.

2022 Progress and Updates:

During the first two years of implementing the Indiana WIOA Combined Plan much was accomplished. Indiana successfully redesigned and implemented 66 programs of study with career pathways inside of the Career and Technical Education system. The Department of Workforce Development implemented a Virtual Client Engagement (VCE) tool while the local regions implemented virtual access for career engagement with the One Stop (WorkOne) Centers. The VCE creates a universal door into the One Stop system. It provides real-time access to workforce specialists who can assess customer needs and then immediately connect/refer the customer across all partners. Data sharing practices across partners also showed significant progress with the signing of the Applied Workforce system Data Project Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). This lays the foundation for additional data sharing agreements across partners. In addition, the partners developed a cross agencies staff training model and will be working to build curriculum and a rollout plan in the coming year.

Just as the Indiana WIOA Combined Plan was approved the pandemic hit the State, and with it came unprecedented numbers of people becoming unemployed, requiring financial supports from unemployment insurance, and needing quick access to supportive services. The pandemic had a fundamental impact on all areas of work in the Plan and disrupted the anticipated timelines. The pandemic also created opportunities for innovation. With the pandemic came an influx of CARES, Rapid Response, and Employment Training funding. The additional dollars combined with State funding allowed for more Hoosiers to upskill than ever before. In addition, the speedy implementation of virtual service offerings on the ground and at the State level allowed the workforce system to serve customers safely and effectively with flexible and agile approaches.

Putting People First

The Combined Plan is laid out from the individual perspective, rather than segmented by program or funding stream. This human-centered approach allows us to examine the alignment of programs from the needs of each of our selected **target populations**. We intend for this approach to focus Indiana not just on specific programmatic requirements and funding streams, but on how the entire system can provide necessary supports an individual might need to be successful in his/her career. This approach is customizable to an individual's eligibility, needs, goals, and aspirations.

The target populations are population groups identified as requiring additional supports from our workforce system. The Plan is structured around meeting the needs of our target populations through a systemic lens and determining how we can best provide resources for Hoosiers to attain greater economic mobility. Within each section, the **Core and Program Activities**, **Activities outside the Plan**, and **Individual Services** applicable to a target population are interwoven through the narrative. Sections may not include every program that could service a target population and individuals may fall into multiple target populations depending on life circumstances. This approach is focused on the overarching needs of a target population, rather than diving into each potential case.

Examples of target populations include those that need upskilling or reskilling, individuals with disabilities, ex-offenders, foster youth, and dislocated workers. Extensive sections are included in the plan for each target population identifying common barriers the population faces and strategies to serve them through a list of programs organized by likelihood to benefit that specific population. This framework will allow workforce partners to utilize the state plan as a guide when interacting with these populations to ensure individuals are being served in the most effective and comprehensive manner.

Sections of the Combined Plan focus on how our programs may address specific barriers unique to a particular target population or subgroup. Many of the Core, Partner, and state programs and services can be provided to almost all of the populations, depending on the individual's situation; it is the way in which these programs and services can be utilized to support the target population that will differ. By taking this approach, Indiana can differentiate how our programs can directly support and address the distinctive barriers each target population may have. The Plan emphasizes that braiding the variety of funding streams together will address the barriers the population faces to securing stable, sustainable employment.

While the State of Indiana is using a framework of target populations throughout this Plan as outlined above, ultimately Indiana will continue to serve customers through a policy of Priority of Service for those with barriers to employment: adult participants who are public benefits recipients, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient.

Comprehensive Strategies

Data Sharing - Indiana will leverage Governor Holcomb's work and leadership role on the White House's American Workforce Policy Advisory Board to address federal data sharing challenges and facilitate greater data sharing between our agencies. The Plan also creates a course of action for the 7 state agencies on the GWC to enter into a data charter with the state's **Management Performance Hub (MPH)** allowing MPH to begin reporting out information on who Indiana's talent development system is serving, where we are serving them, and through what programs.

2022 Progress and Updates:

- Success with Applied Workforce Data System Project and MOU lays the foundation;
- Need to continue to work toward cross agency/programs Data Charter;
- Over next two years research ROI models;
- Career and Technical Education created Equity Labs which allow for strategic analysis of disaggregated data producing insights for equity and inclusion; and
- The early childhood team at FSSA developed a new tool to provide Hoosier citizens with ability to see the number of childcare seats available throughout the state.

Co-Enrollment - This is the primary strategy laced throughout the Plan that will be vital to actualizing the Plan's vision and meeting the identified goals. Information gathered through data sharing will improve the state's ability to co-enroll individuals into multiple programs that jointly work to meet their unique needs. The Plan details how increased co-enrollment into Core, Partner, state, philanthropic, and sectoral programs will improve service to individuals, the action steps necessary for entities to begin increasing co-enrollment, and yield benefits for all partners in the talent development system. Individuals will be co-enrolled into the primary programs and services beneficial to them. An individual's unique circumstances or preference may not necessitate co-enrollment in each program

Co-enrollment can range from being a reportable individual in a specific program up to and including full activation as a participant in the program.

The specific benefits of co-enrollment to the individual are:

- Additional Resources to Provide Training and Income Support: Co-enrolling Hoosiers in more than one eligible program may provide them with additional training and income

support and wraparound resources, reducing potential out-of-pocket costs or direct expenses from seeking additional education and training for career advancement.

- Enhanced Service Delivery: Co-enrollment in WIOA and/or other programs can provide eligible Hoosiers with access to a wide array of vitally important services that both directly and indirectly impact the availability of the opportunities to develop knowledge and skills for career advancement.

One-stop providers and other program administrators will yield the following benefits from co-enrollment:

- Improved Participant Outcomes: By coupling the various funding streams for training and income support dollars, providers increase their capacity for counseling, case management, wraparound support, and follow-up services, leading to greater performance outcomes.
- Increased Services to Hoosiers: Co-enrolled workers may gain access to both greater breadth and depth of supportive services, like childcare and transportation, as well as more varied opportunities for education and training, which may not be currently covered because of funding limitations. By pooling various funding streams in a coordinated manner, providers can stretch their dollars further.

As a state, increased economic mobility and aspirational fulfillment of Hoosiers comprise our primary benefits of promoting co-enrollment. Expanding our co-enrollment efforts will also serve as an important tool to maximize the efficiency and impact of each program through responsible stewardship of these funds. By ensuring that individuals are being served through the programs most appropriate for their needs, we can lessen the duplication of services, improve outcomes, and maximize the amount of Hoosiers able to be served through each funding stream. While Hoosiers may be enrolled into more individual programs, the strategies employed through co-enrollment will allow us to achieve greater impact with our federal and state investments.

Indiana's long-term solution to operationalizing a seamless co-enrollment system will be through a common application process and case management system. The Plan outlines immediate and intermediate steps over the course of the Plan's duration that will achieve progress towards reaching this long-term solution.

2022 Progress and Updates:

- Policy released by DWD for strategic Co-Enrollment & Common Exit across partners.
- Workforce Ready Grant funding given to Regional Boards
- Vocational Rehabilitation in collaboration with the WIOA Youth program expanded dollars through MOU between VR and DWD to support students with disabilities participating in Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG).
- In partnership with Division of Mental Health and Addiction (DMHA), implemented two early adopter Individual Placement and Support sites. IPS is an evidenced-based employment model for individuals with mental health conditions.
- Focus on serving customers who meet Priority of Service as outlined in WIOA and in State DWD Policy.

- Co-enrollment can range from being a reportable individual in a specific program up to and including full activation as a participant in the program.

Co-Location - Another core strategy the Plan includes throughout is Co-location. The Plan provides programs a variety of different options to achieve increased co-location, all with a goal of improving customer service by reducing barriers for individuals accessing services. Co-location's benefit to customer service will continue to build over time through the increased ability to track a variety of important metrics including: wait times, waitlists, enrollment increases, speed of referrals, and quality of referrals and case management (e.g., scheduling appointments, co-enrollment in multiple programs, and persistence and completion rates of co-enrollment). One approach to co-location our local regions could examine is a network model, wherein the local board was responsible for overseeing staffing and management of the entire network of any and all workforce development service. Partnerships through the network model can include Partner Programs, such as SNAP and TANF, providing services to any WorkOne in the network primarily by traveling between them rather than being on-site full-time at any one location. Additional co-location strategies include:

- **Formal co-location:** Physically locating Core and Partner Programs at one office.
- **Using itinerant staff:** These are staff members who come to the WorkOne when called or requested and do not have a set schedule. Itinerant staffing models can bring services to where people are rather than concentrating programs and services in any particular center.
- **Embedding staff:** Staff habitually travel between different offices rather than being on-site full-time at any one location. These are regular work schedules that have staff working in different offices or locations and with different program staff. Staff members co-locate with various programs by moving among offices and locations recurrently.
- **Mobile/temporary locations:** Another partnership negotiated at the network level is temporarily co-locating or sharing space with the local public library system, schools, local businesses and chambers of commerce, and other locations that have community engagement throughout the local area. These are, essentially, portable WorkOnes that pop up in different centers of community activity. This initiative seeks to expand the reach of workforce resources by going to places with high community activity, rather than waiting for Hoosiers to come into the office.
- **Referral relationships:** Some of our WorkOnes have a common system, using a "warm hand-off" process, to ensure direct contact with partners or following up to ensure services had been received. Referrals between different programs must be collaborative and coordinated, as well as executed person-to-person, rather than program-to-program.

2022 Progress and Updates:

- Local regions have made progress on co-location with partner programs.
- COVID had significant impact on how we think about and implement co-location strategies.
- Virtual strategies for service delivery implemented at State & Local levels.

Cross-Training - To facilitate and maximize the impact of Co-enrollment and Co-location efforts, Cross-training will occur for staff of all partners in the workforce system, focused on

increasing staff knowledge of eligibility requirements and program allowances. SNAP, TANF, all core WIOA programs, and federal and state financial aid opportunities will be initially prioritized. The Plan details how agencies can provide this training to staff through options such as in-person workshops or online webinars.

2022 Progress and Updates:

- Model for cross training developed (in partnership with core partner agencies).
- Workforce Board Member Training was developed and will be implemented in 2022.
- Vocational Rehabilitation staff were trained and practices modified to support inclusive service delivery.
- Trained designated Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors to specialize in serving participants seeking postsecondary training.

Employer Engagement – This final comprehensive strategy is essential if we are going to see growth in the labor force participation rate across our target populations. The Plan identifies steps the state can take to improve the value for employers of engaging with the talent development system and bring awareness to the benefits companies can accrue through increased engagement with our target populations. Priorities to strengthen the partnership and services provided to employers that will enhance the lives of those working today and drive positive outcomes for future occupations include:

1. New training and technical assistance for Workforce Development Boards and staff for a better employer experience.
2. Identifying and highlighting community partnerships for employers to engage with the talent development system.
3. Expanding the reach and connection to apprenticeships and other work-based learning experiences.
4. Assisting Hoosier small businesses and entrepreneurs to thrive in our increasingly global economy.
5. Leveraging economic and employer data to address current and future needs.
6. Modifying resources and tools based on employer feedback to provide a better user experience.
7. Promoting talent diversity and non-traditional hiring practices.

The Plan also places an emphasis on raising employer awareness about the benefits of non-traditional hiring practices that can tap into some often overlooked talent pools. By highlighting business leaders who are pioneering these types of practices, we can help employers create greater talent pipelines, take advantage of federal benefits (such as the Work Opportunity Tax Credit), and become more effective, successful, *and profitable.*

2022 Progress and Updates:

- Influx of funds to support employers with Next Level Jobs; increase employers served year over year.
- Helping employers develop and implement sustainable work-based learning programs as a way to attract and retain talent will be priority over next two years.

- Partnership between the GWC, DWD and the Indiana Chamber of Commerce Institute for Workforce Excellence will result in an extensive employer outreach campaign.
- Launched new tools like 180 Skills and Hoosier Talent Network to provide support to employers in hiring, training, and retaining a skilled workforce.

The Plan envisions **data sharing, co-enrollment, co-location, cross training, and employer engagement** working in tandem over time to create a fully integrated system that vastly improves an individual's experience interacting with the talent development system, leads to improved outcomes across the system's various programs, and provides employers the talent they need to grow and diversify Indiana's workforce.

Measuring Progress

Measuring continuous improvement across the comprehensive strategies listed above will serve as a primary tool for the State to measure return on investment for each of our core, partner, and state programs. Over the next several years the State will explore models of return on investment (ROI) that other states and local areas use.

Additionally, the Plan calls for expanding the monitoring of the required performance metrics laid out in WIOA beyond the required Core Programs to include both the Partner and state programs in the State Plan. Indiana's Commission of Higher Education will also assess and report on the following data aligned to our Vision:

1. **Educational Attainment**

- Measured by progress toward at least 60% of Hoosiers having a quality credential beyond a high school diploma, assessing
    - Postsecondary-Going Rate
    - On-Time Postsecondary Completion Rate
    - 6-Year Postsecondary Completion Rate
    - Adult Learner Completion Rates

2022 Progress and Updates:

Metric 1: Education Attainment

	2019	2020	2021
Postsecondary-Going Rate	63% (2017)	61% (2018)	59% (2019)
On-Time Postsecondary Completion Rate	41%	42%	44.4%
6-Year Postsecondary Completion Rate	62% (2018)	62% (2019)	63.6% (2020)
6-Year Adult Learner Completion Rates	35%	35%	36%*

**35.7 percent of adults (25+) earned a certificate, associate or bachelor's within 6 years of starting.*

2. **Career Relevance & Preparation**

- Measured by progress toward 100% of postsecondary programs requiring an internship, work-based learning, research project, or other student engagement experience that has career relevance

2022 Progress and Updates:

Metric 2: Career Relevance and Preparation

	2019	2020	2021
Career Relevance Required	X	78%	TBD
Career Relevance Incorporate (not required)	X	90%	TBD

3. **Economic Impact**

- Measured by progress toward Indiana becoming a leading Midwest state for median household income
    - By 2025: Above Average in Peer States
    - By 2030: Top 5 in Peer States

2022 Progress and Updates:

Metric 3: Economic Impact

	2019	2020	2021
Median Household Income	**$62,078**	**$64,941**	**TBD**
Ranking in the Midwest	**10/13**	**10/13**	**TBD**

By continuously assessing our investments and if we are reaping financial and social long-term benefits, we expect to modify and amend the Plan annually.

Highlighted Activities

This section provides a sampling of how specific programs or funding streams are used in new or existing ways to benefit our target populations.

One of Governor Holcomb's signature workforce initiatives is the **Next Level Jobs** program, which contains an individualized approach with the **Workforce Ready Grant** program and an employer-led initiative with the **Employer Training Grant** program that each serve to help Hoosiers gain the necessary skills to move into high-wage, high-demand jobs. The Plan incorporates a variety of strategies towards increasing usage of these programs across out target populations, including allocating $500,000 of Employer Training Grant state funding for upskilling SNAP or TANF recipients as a way to increase access to advanced opportunities for low-income workers and ensure employers can find the talent necessary to fill middle-skill jobs.

To maximize the impact of state funded programs like the Workforce Ready Grant and Employer Training Grant, the Plan outlines several ways for Indiana to begin working with the **Family and Social Services Administration** to increase utilization of **SNAP 50/50** funds. This program allows for a 50% reimbursement grant from the federal government for any non-

federal funding spent on employment and training services for SNAP recipients. Using SNAP 50/50 for the Workforce Ready Grant and Employer Training Grant in particular will help Indiana alleviate barriers and improve the number of low-income individuals persisting and completing these programs.

We will increase the co-enrollment of WIOA participants into federal and state financial aid programs. At the state level, we will work with and encourage our WorkOnes to include filing the FAFSA as part of the application process for anyone seeking postsecondary education and training opportunities. The FAFSA will allow a low-income individual access the federal **Pell Grant** and state financial aid, such as the **Adult Student Grant**, for credit-bearing programs at our community colleges. This will ensure we maximize our current investments and extend our WIOA Adult funding to help subsidize on-the-job and work-based learning wages, as well as other wraparound supports.

The Plan seeks to increase student enrollment in **21st Century Scholars**, Indiana's early college promise program. Increased partnerships between schools and districts and workforce services and centers dedicated to low-income adults and families will begin to raise public perception and understanding of the growing need for higher learning in the changing economy. Outreach Coordinators through the Commission for Higher Education can partner with Workforce Development Boards and other services for low-income individuals, such as SNAP and TANF, to provide information to parents through different settings. Districts can work with Workforce Development Boards and other state and community partners to host informational sessions away from schools (e.g., libraries, WorkOnes, and community centers).

The Plan creates a sub-committee that will examine the population of Hoosiers between 151% and 200% of the federal poverty line and ways to help them attain self-sufficiency. The committee will particularly look at how the **benefits cliff** impacts Hoosier families' opportunities for career and wage advancement, a concern that was a consistent theme during the Listening Tour.

The Plan also encourages using federal flexibility within the **Ability to Benefit** program and **Second Chance Pell** as ways to increase individual's access to postsecondary education by reducing cost barriers. This idea is one of numerous strategies centered on increasing post-secondary attainment among our target populations. Utilizing these programs will also allow service providers to stretch other WIOA funding streams further in order to serve additional Hoosiers. Specific target populations these programs could be utilized for are outlined in the Plan.

Through the state's current **CTE Redesign** efforts under Perkins, Indiana intends to create Programs of Study that will improve postsecondary attainment across relevant target populations, providing greater opportunities for future economic mobility and personal fulfillment. The Combined Plan merges two disparate concepts established in different federal laws – career pathways under WIOA and programs of study under Perkins. We will merge these two concepts under a process of creating singularly defined pathways that provide opportunities for both youth and adults, beginning with secondary schools and running through postsecondary education and credential or degree completion. Increasing co-location between K-12 school districts, Adult Education providers, or community college campuses (in addition to school districts and community colleges co-locating with one another) will maximize our investments in equipment, facilities, supplies, and instructors.

One particular element of the CTE redesign that will particularly serve our **rural** target population is an **Entrepreneurship Capstone** in our rural schools and CTE districts. This

course will encourage and support the next generation of entrepreneurs to build individual capacity and support new business creation. Our rural CTE districts and community colleges implementing career-technical education programs will be able to better link education with future careers, especially in growing industries, such as healthcare and IT, and advanced industries (agricultural biosciences, aircraft and aerospace, automotive/mobility, and logistics).

Work-Based Learning continues to be a focus for Indiana and the Plan identifies several ways to increase adult participation in work-based learning experiences. This will build upon recent progress in the K-12 space to ensure that work-based learning is seamlessly integrated into the entire talent development system and can continue to serve as a tool for employers to make individuals aware of various opportunities. Potential options identified for adults include on-the-job training, federally-recognized apprenticeships, internships, job shadow experiences, State Earn and Learn programs through our the Office of Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeship, and incumbent worker training. We will leverage existing state funding through **EARN Indiana** and redesign the **Federal Work Study** program to help offset the cost of wages and align with Indiana's goal to have 100% of postsecondary education programs include an experience with career relevance. By rethinking the Federal Work Study program, we can expand to focus on work-based learning models for lower-income students enrolled in higher education.

The Office of Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeship has developed a scalable framework for state level **apprenticeship** programs, entitled **State Earn and Learn** (SEAL). The Plan identifies several unique uses for the SEAL program, including a new SEAL program specific to the **senior** population that will incorporate both subsidized employment, digital literacy, and on-the-job training through sector partnerships. The Plan lays out several strategies to increase participation in registered apprenticeship programs, including utilizing apprenticeships as a tool for **single mothers** to enter non-traditional careers.

Two pre-high school strategies we want to increase Indiana's focus on are **early learning** and **career awareness**. Both of these strategies will occur with younger children in our school system and greatly influence the success of our at-risk youth in the secondary and postsecondary space. High-quality early learning programs are a key strategy to help to narrow achievement gaps between children from low-income families and their more affluent peers. Early childhood education serves as an early intervention that improves children's cognitive and socioemotional functions. One development we endeavor to implement is to expand our K-12 system as the PreK-12 system. Creating more awareness of the diversity of postsecondary options for at-risk youth is critical to ensuring their longitudinal success in our talent system. Students must obtain a deeper understanding of career opportunities and the pathways to those careers early in their academic careers. As an early intervention, focusing on greater career exploration, engagement, and experiences will allow students to connect their K-12 education with postsecondary aspirations.

An innovative new approach included in the Plan aimed at assisting at-risk youth populations is the '**Summer-Bridge**' program. This program involves partnerships between local workforce Boards and schools. Versions of this program will be created focusing on two main populations, Basic Skills Deficient Youth and English Learners, as they leave the secondary space. Recent high school graduates deficient in basic skills would be linked to services aimed at easing the transition to adulthood and getting individuals on a path to self-sufficiency. English Learner students would receive supplemental language acquisition supports aimed at increasing language proficiency, allowing them to better interact with the post-secondary and workforce system.

Local Workforce Development Boards can work with schools and districts on ways to braid state and federal funds together to offer comprehensive wraparound services for at-risk youth. Specifically, supporting students as they transition to high school by expanding **Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG)** to middle and early high school grades and providing interventions to help at-risk students successfully matriculate into higher education or quality employment can ensure these students start adulthood on the right track.

The Plan encourages local partnerships throughout and highlights the recently created **Bi-State Plan** between Indiana's Region 10 Workforce Board and Kentuckiana Works as an example of how partnerships can advance a region's workforce. The Bi-State Regional Plan is the first of its kind in the country and creates an innovative picture of the region's economy and workforce environment through rural-urban, Indiana-Kentucky strategies to attain regional goals and objections.

Partnerships are also essential for regions to co-locate most effectively, and the Plan particularly identifies **schools and libraries** as potential locations for system partners to consider utilizing. Schools and libraries were consistently brought up by individuals involved in the Plan's development as places that offer the benefit of providing consistent access to youth and adults, as well as steady broadband. The Plan recognizes that school personnel in particular often end up spending significant time trying to connect families with resources due to their daily proximity to individuals. By increasing school partnerships, state agencies can do a better job supporting schools in providing information to families and allow school personnel to focus more of their time on their educational mission. Boards are encouraged to consider ways to utilize these established resources through partnerships in their regions.

Accelerating opportunities for **ex-offenders** to successfully transition into the workforce continues to be a focus in Indiana and the Plan specifically highlights the work of **The Last Mile** program through the Indiana Department of Corrections (IDOC). Indiana has received national recognition for this coding program that propels individuals into jobs in the tech sector upon release through focused training and education while the individual is incarcerated and post-release services towards transitional help. The Plan encourages the use of Last Mile as a model for additional programs targeted at the ex-offender population and identifies potential funding sources for IDOC to expand re-entry transition services. The Plan also includes strategies for increasing the usage and success of IDOC's **HIRE** program which works to secure pre-release employment for this target population. In the juvenile justice space, an increased focus on career and technical skills training aims to provide a new passion and career pathway for justice involved youth, in hopes of reducing recidivism upon re-entry. The Office of CTE is allocating Perkins funding towards juvenile offenders for the first time.

Through **Next Level Connections**, Governor Holcomb has created a **broadband** initiative to bring affordable, high-speed fiber optic broadband access to unserved and underserved areas of the state. Indiana has appropriated $100 million to this program, which offers grants for providers to bring broadband services with a minimum of 100/10 Mbps to areas of the state lacking service. During the 2021 legislative session, the appropriation was increased to $250M over the biennial budget period. As the state works with providers, communities, and other groups to design the final grant program and determine how to best optimize the investment, the Plan encourages state agencies leading this charge to consider the needs and challenges of specific target populations who may particularly benefit from this program.

Indiana continues to make servicing **Veterans** a priority and the **Next Level Veterans Program** will continue to raise awareness of various available programs as part of its effort to recruit, employ, and connect military personnel to Indiana. The Plan mentions recently passed

legislation to make military pensions tax exempt as a particular program to highlight when servicing Indiana veterans.

Conclusion

The Combined Plan is a historic opportunity to take a holistic look at our talent development system. Through meaningful collaboration across agencies, non-profit and private partners, and the general public, a robust set of specific, actionable strategies have been identified to help Indiana meet our talent development system goals. Each strategy was developed with the individual needs of Hoosiers accessing services forefront of mind through the Plan's unique human-centered approach. By putting people first and bringing together a wide variety of experts across the talent development system, the Plan lays the framework for Indiana to achieve gains across the system over the Plan's duration. We know submitting the Plan is not the final step and are committed to ongoing collaboration efforts over the next 4 years to ensure the Plan is actualized across our talent development system.

II. STRATEGIC ELEMENTS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include a Strategic Planning Elements section that analyzes the State's current economic environment and identifies the State's overall vision for its workforce development system. The required elements in this section allow the State to develop data-driven goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce and to identify successful strategies for aligning workforce development programs to support economic growth. Unless otherwise noted, all Strategic Planning Elements apply to Combined State Plan partner programs included in the plan as well as to core programs.

A. ECONOMIC, WORKFORCE, AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES ANALYSIS

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

1. ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE ANALYSIS

A. ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

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

I. EXISTING DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTORS AND OCCUPATIONS

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

II. EMERGING DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTORS AND OCCUPATIONS

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

III. EMPLOYERS' EMPLOYMENT NEEDS

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

(A) <u>Economic Analysis.</u> The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the economic conditions and trends in the State, including sub-state regions and any specific economic areas identified by the State. This includes:

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

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

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

State Economic Overview: Over the last three and a half years, Indiana has been acknowledged as a national leader in economic development. The Pacific Research Institute ranked Indiana as the number one least burdensome state in the country to start a new business.[1] CNBC found Indiana as the number two state in the country in terms of the cost of doing business.[2] Indiana currently holds an AAA Credit Rating. Additionally, Indiana broke economic development records in 2017 and 2018 with a commitment to create over 31,000 jobs and nearly $7.4B in investments in 2018 alone.

In addition to our strong economic development efforts, Indiana's state government was ranked number one in the country by U.S. News and World Report.[3] The state's budget has remained balanced for the last 15 years, and there is nearly $2B in reserve. The current environment for continued economic growth is rife with opportunity.

Indiana's economy will continue to thrive with the number of supportive initiatives and programs that provide education and training, as well as supportive services, to our target populations. The state is investing in everything from Pre-K through careers to provide Hoosiers and businesses the support they need to prosper. **On My Way Pre-K** awards grants to 4 year olds from low-income families so that they may have access to a high-quality pre-K program the year before they begin kindergarten. The state's new high school graduation requirements, **Graduation Pathways**, will assist in shifting from a one-size-fits-all examination requirement to one in which students can choose the pathways that assist in finding the right fit at the right time for each student. Governor Holcomb's **Next Level Jobs Initiative**, which includes an individualized approach with the **Workforce Ready Grant** program and an employer-led initiative with the **Employer Training Grant** program is helping Hoosiers gain the necessary skills to move into high-wage, high-demand jobs.. Each of these programs provides recent high school graduates and returning adults opportunities to access shorter term education and training programs aligned to Indiana's priority sectors. Taking advantage of these programs, or any number of other opportunities to complete a postsecondary education, will enhance one's ability to have the requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities for career advancement in the 21st Century economy.

The Indiana economy includes a rapid expansion within the tech sector and is home to the third most collegiate graduates in STEM related fields in the nation. To help continue and support this growth, Governor Holcomb supported and advocated for legislation requiring computer science be taught throughout grades K-12. Other initiatives, such as **The Last Mile**, which connects offenders with high-value credentials and access to employers for job recruitment before they ever leave campus, also help support the state's growing tech sector.

Indiana is also home to one of the country's most flourishing philanthropic communities. Indiana became the second state to be named a **Skillful State** by the Markle Foundation. This means investments by Wal-Mart, Microsoft, Lumina, and other philanthropies, non-profits, and foundations join an already vibrant philanthropic presence in Indiana. These investments, along with a more coordinated approach across other state and federal programs, provide Indiana with a unique opportunity to serve a number of target populations more effectively and efficiently, propelling more Hoosiers toward economic prosperity.

Existing Demand and Employment:

THIS SECTION OF THE ORIGINAL STATE PLAN HAS BEEN DELETED AND UPDATED IN 2022 WITH THE TEXT BELOW.

Note: Information from several segments below is further detailed in the Indiana Department of Workforce Development's (DWD) most recent Indiana Economic Analysis Report (see Economic and Workforce Analysis sections at: https://www.hoosierdata.in.gov/docs/annual_econ_analysis/ETA_INDIANA%20ECONOMIC%20ANALYSIS%20REPORT%20PY2020.pdf)

The largest private sector industry in Indiana is manufacturing. This accounts for 27.4% of the state's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Real Estate, Heath care and social assistance, wholesale and retail trade round out the top five industries in Indiana based solely on GDP. Agriculture continues to be another leading industry in Indiana, as we rank in the top ten for the number of farms and agricultural exports. Indiana ranks in the top five in the production of: ducks, popcorn, ice cream, tomatoes, pumpkins, turkeys, corn, soybeans, watermelons, and hogs.

From 2010 to 2019 total employment increased each year. In 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic employment decreased from 2019 to 2020 by 23,243 jobs (-0.8%) overall for all industries, including both public and private employment. This is measured from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, annual average employer reported data. This is the most recent full year of data at the time of this report. QCEW is the best measure of true employment levels, from which other surveys (such as the CES cited in the introduction) are benchmarked annually.

Over the most recent five-year period, four sectors showed modest growth; Health Care and Social Services increased by 23,970 jobs or 5.8% since 2015. Professional, Scientific, Technical grew by 14,532, Transportation and Warehousing gained 27,670 jobs and Construction added 16,887 jobs from 2015-2020.

- **<u>Health Care and Social Assistance</u>**

Health care and social assistance employment has grown by 5.8% in the last 5 years with an increase of 23,970 jobs. This growth was muted due to a 10,778 decrease in 2020 due to the 2020 Covid pandemic. This sector growth includes physicians' offices, hospitals, and a wide range of providers. Wages in this industry increased by 18.3% in 2020 to an average weekly wage of $1,041.

- **<u>Transportation and Warehousing</u>**

Transportation and Warehousing has grown by 27,670 from 2015-2020. This industry has also been a target for economic development for several years. This industry grew by 20.5% during this five-year period. This industry showed annual growth in the face of the pandemic. The average weekly wages for Transportation and Warehousing were at $950 for 2020.

- **Construction**

The Construction industry grew by 16,887 or 13.3% between 2015 and 2020. This sector grew slowing early in the economic recovery but has gained momentum in recent years. Construction experienced a small loss of 1,878 jobs in 2020. The average weekly wages for this industry are at $1,205 for 2020.

- **Professional and Technical Services**

Professional and Technical Services has shown healthy growth from 2015 to 2020. This is an industry that will be key to Indiana's future. Among the industries this sector contains are Legal Services, Architectural and Engineering, Research and Development and Computer Systems Design and Related Services. Many of these areas have been the focus of Indiana economic development. The sector has grown 14,532 jobs at a 13.2% gain over the past five years. This industry did gain 1,134 jobs in 2020. The average weekly wages for 2020 for this sector are above the state average at $1,445.

- **Utilities**

Utilities is one of the smaller industries in Indiana. From 2015-2020 the sector increased by 0.9% with 136 jobs. Utilities did gain 128 jobs during 2020. Utilities are also one of the higher paying industries and had a weekly wage of $1,860 in 2020.

- **Accommodation and Food Services**

The pandemic hit the Accommodation and Food service industries hard. This industry had shown consistent growth over the last decade. The pandemic forced shutdowns of hotels and restaurants throughout the state. This created a one- year decline at a rate of -14.8% and over 40,000 jobs lost. While many of these jobs are lower or middle wage jobs, this industry also includes many part time workers, and average weekly wages were just $344 during 2020.

-

Indiana manufacturers lost employment by 14,406 over this time frame. However, over the first four years Manufacturing gained over 22,000 jobs. In 2020 Manufacturing lost 36,812 jobs and had the second largest decrease in total jobs of all industries due to the pandemic. Manufacturing pays wages greater than average, with average weekly wages of $1,251 during 2020.

- **Educational Services**

This sector lost employment by 14,4358 over the five-year time frame, also representing one of the larger declines in total jobs of all industries. The pandemic played havoc on Educational Services resulting in a decline of nearly 14,000 jobs in 2020 along. Educational Services decreased by -5.7% as an industry for Indiana and had average weekly wages of $752 during 2020.

- **Retail Trade**

Retail Trade had the second largest decline in Indiana in terms of total employment. Along with the pandemic, pressures from online competitors have caused a decline in the Retail employment. From 2015-2020 employment fell by 19,368 for a decline of -6.0%. In 2020 the economic shutdowns contributed to retail losing 10,895 jobs. Retail is also one of the lower paying industries with an average weekly pay of $605.

- **Admin, Support, Waste**

Admin, Support, Waste had the third largest decline in Indiana in terms of total employment. From 2015-2020 employment fell by 17,403 for a decline of -9.3%. Again, this is entirely due to the pandemic as in 2020 there was a loss of nearly 20,000 jobs. It is also one of the lower paying industries with an average weekly pay of $717.

- **Other Services (Except Public Administration)**

This industry has declined by 4,088 over 2015-2020 at a rate of -4.8%. This loss is highly inflated as the industry lost over 8,600 jobs in 2020 alone. This industry includes Repair and Maintenance, Personal and Laundry Services, Religious, Grant Making, Civic, Professional & Similar Organizations and Private Households. Wages for these industries vary widely, and the weekly averages may include part time workers. During 2020 the average weekly wage for this industry sector was $705.

- **Mining**

Mining is the smallest industrial sector in Indiana. Over the 2015 to 2020 time frame this industry lost 1,494 jobs or a loss of -22.9% of its total. The pandemic had very little impact on Mining in 2020. Mining does have a very high average wage of $1,452.

- **Information**

The information sector lost 7,192 jobs at a rate of 19.8% decline from 2015 to 2020. In 2020 alone this sector lost almost 3,000 jobs. This sector includes publishing, telecommunications, and internet broadcasting which all saw moderate declines over these years. Average weekly wages were above the state average, at $1,149 during 2020.

INDIANA ANNUAL AVERAGE EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY				
Industry	2015	2020	Change	% Change
Total	**2,941,991**	**2,918,748**	**-23,243**	**-0.8%**
Transportation & Warehousing	135,172	162,842	27,670	20.5%
Health Care and Social Services	411,935	435,905	23,970	5.8%
Construction	127,103	143,990	16,887	13.3%
Professional, Scientific, Technical	109,841	124,373	14,532	13.2%
Public Administration	126,583	130,527	3,944	3.1%
Finance and Insurance	94,942	98,739	3,797	4.0%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	33,399	34,834	1,435	4.3%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	14,750	15,847	1,097	7.4%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	33,320	34,035	715	2.1%
Utilities	15,734	15,870	136	0.9%
Wholesale Trade	119,323	119,110	-213	-0.2%
Mining	6,520	5,026	-1,494	-22.9%
Other Services (Except Public Administration)	85,014	80,926	-4,088	-4.8%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	41,707	34,199	-7,508	-18.0%
Information	39,864	31,952	-7,912	-19.8%
Educational Services	251,390	237,032	-14,358	-5.7%
Manufacturing	518,900	504,494	-14,406	-2.8%
Admin, Support, Waste	187,259	169,856	-17,403	-9.3%
Retail Trade	324,901	305,533	-19,368	-6.0%
Accommodation and Food Services	261,757	231,597	-30,160	-11.5%

In looking at the employment changes by Industry from 2020 to 2021 outlined in the chart below, we can see that nearly every sector saw employment decline due to the pandemic.

By pairing an individual's career interests with the appropriate education and training, we will have the talent pool necessary for continued economic growth.

IN Employment Change Over the Month and Over the Year (seasonally adjusted)					
Industry	January 2020	December 2020	January 2021	Month Change	Y-to-Y Change
Private Educational & Health Services	484.1	461.3	461.5	0.2	-22.6
.....*Private Educational Services*	63.1	51.8	53.2	1.4	-9.9
.....*Health Care & Social Assistance*	421.0	409.5	408.3	-1.2	-12.7
Manufacturing	536.9	519.5	520.8	1.3	-16.1
Professional & Business Services	347.0	333.9	334.1	0.2	-12.9
Financial Activities	143.0	141.0	140.7	-0.3	-2.3
Construction	148.7	150.3	150.2	-0.1	1.5
Leisure and Hospitality	316.0	270.7	272.7	2.0	-43.3
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	598.9	605.1	606.0	0.9	7.1
.....*Trade*	438.5	433.1	435.1	2.0	-3.4
.....*Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities*	160.4	172.0	170.9	-1.1	10.5
All Other	163.2	141.3	142.6	1.3	-20.6
Total Private	2,737.8	2,623.1	2,628.6	5.5	-109.2
Government (Includes Public Schools & Hospitals)	427.9	401.7	402.7	1.0	-25.2
Total Nonfarm	3,165.7	3,024.8	3,031.3	6.5	-134.4
United States Total Private	129,445.0	121,047.0	121,169.0	122.0	-8276.0

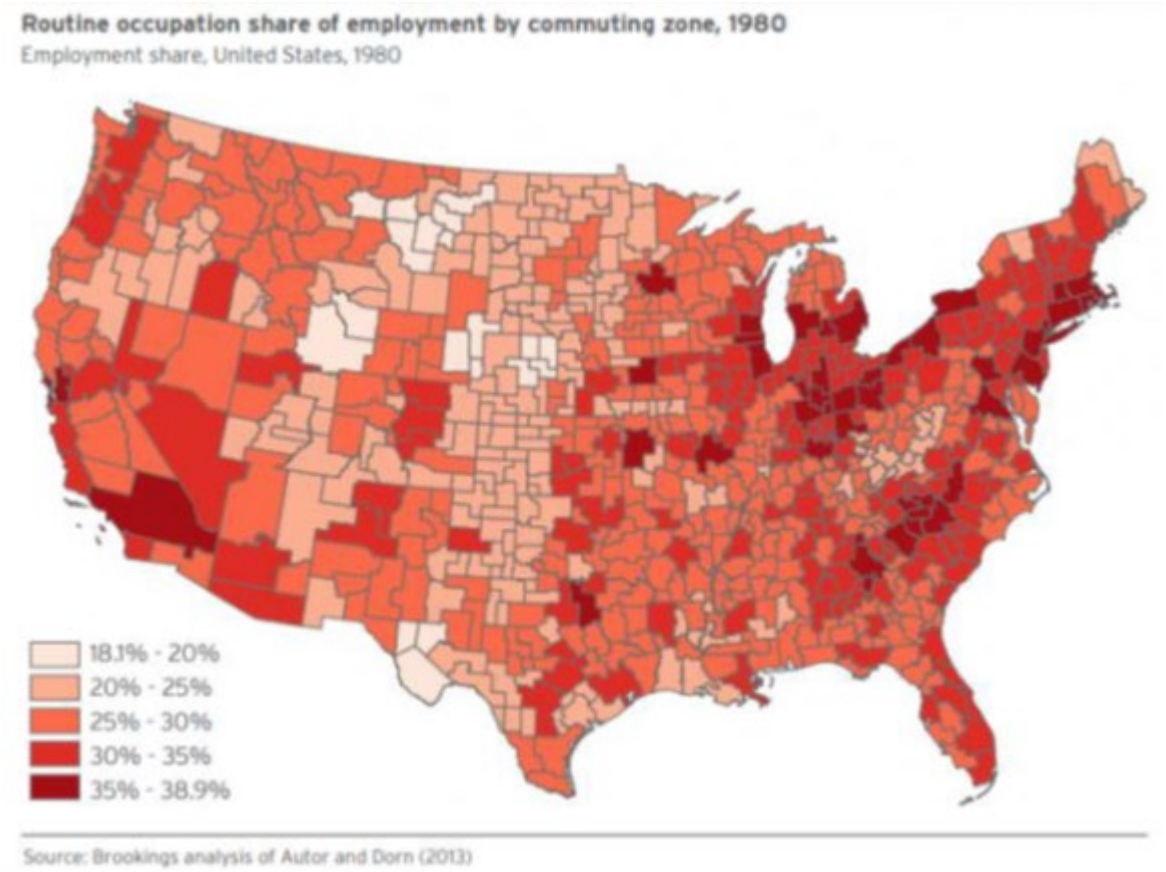
Identifying Occupational Needs: Indiana utilizes an occupational ranking methodology to rank each of its approximate 800 occupations. This ranking methodology incorporates projected short-term (2 year) openings, long-term (10 year) openings, and wages by which to sort all occupations. Job seekers, employers, educators, counselors, parents, and other workforce partners can visit the Indiana Career Ready (www.indianacareerready.com) to see which occupations are available now and which occupations are projected to grow in the future. Some of the occupations ranked the highest using this methodology are listed below.

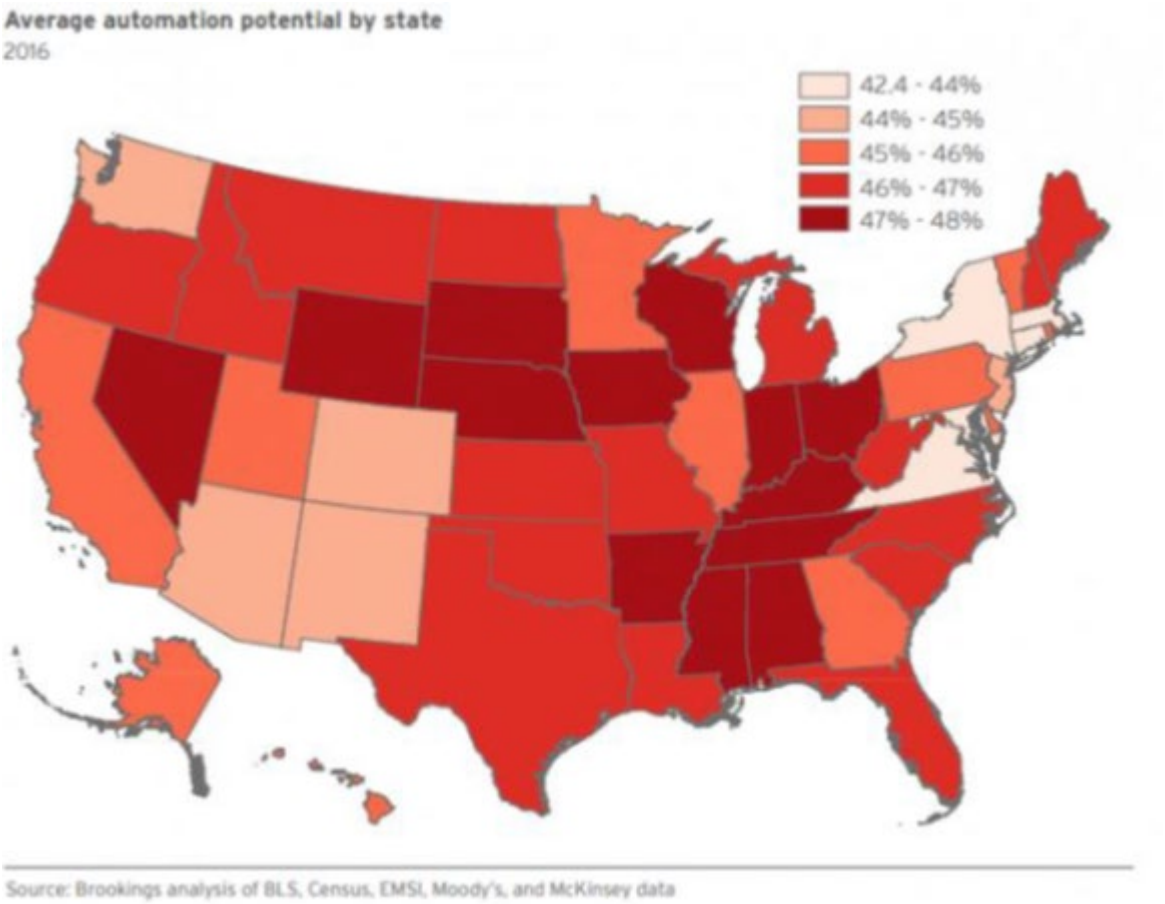
- • Accountants
- • Immunologists
- • Auditors
- • Automotive Engineers
- • Financial Managers
- • General and Operations Managers
- • Health Services Managers
- • Industrial Engineers
- • Management Analysts
- • Mechanical Engineers
- • Medical Assistants
- • Nurses
- • Nurse Practitioners

- • Physicians
- • Software Developers

The GWC is examining the current occupational ranking methodology. There are some programs, such as the Workforce Ready Grant, that receive funding based upon the occupations for which an individual may pursue after completing their chosen education and training program. Only the programs that include occupations that are ranked high enough using the occupational ranking methodology are eligible for funding. As such, the methodology is under review to determine if it makes sense to continue to fund programs in this way and to confirm that the elements within the methodology guarantee alignment to the changing state of Indiana's economy. Based on analysis of occupational projections data (including supply, demand, and wages), Indiana has identified six priority sectors for continued economic growth. Those are: advanced manufacturing, agriculture, building and construction, health and life science, information technology and business services, and transportation and logistics.

As technology and innovation continue to transform the landscape of all industries, this presents a unique opportunity for the Hoosier economy. Historically, Indiana has lagged behind the nation in terms of educational attainment. This has created an environment in which the availability of jobs has been tied closely to recessionary contractions. As demonstrated below, the density of routine jobs with predictable and repetitive physical and cognitive tasks in Indiana was quite high in 1980 and continues to be high to today.





Routine jobs transcend all industry sectors and all education levels. While we continue to see growth during this unprecedented economic expansion, now is the time for the state, employers, and individuals to invest in new skills that will endure the next economic downturn. By embracing technological changes and innovation and by leveraging programs that are easily accessible to employers and employees, we can begin to insulate Hoosiers from the cyclical vulnerabilities that might arise because of our reliance on occupations that are at risk to automation. As outlined in Automation and Artificial Intelligence: How machines are affecting people and place, Indiana is the state that is most susceptible to automation.

Automation potential, U.S. states

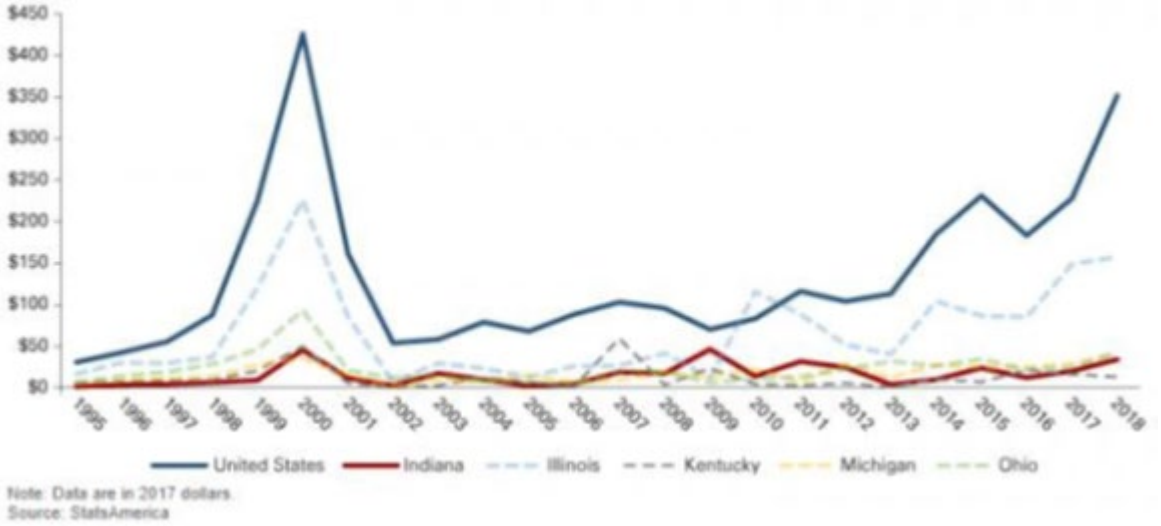
Rank	State	Average automation potential	Job share by automation risk		
			Low risk	Medium risk	High risk
1	Indiana	48.7%	35.2%	35.8%	29.0%
2	Kentucky	48.4%	35.7%	35.6%	28.7%
3	South Dakota	48.3%	35.7%	36.2%	28.1%
4	Iowa	48.0%	36.5%	35.6%	27.9%
5	Nevada	48.0%	33.8%	38.8%	27.4%
6	Arkansas	48.0%	36.4%	35.6%	28.0%
7	Alabama	47.9%	35.5%	37.2%	27.3%
8	Wyoming	47.8%	34.7%	38.8%	26.6%
9	Mississippi	47.7%	36.2%	36.7%	27.0%
10	Wisconsin	47.5%	38.1%	34.7%	27.2%

[7]

New Opportunities for Continued Economic Growth: While the number of jobs available and the wages of Indiana's workers has continued to improve over the past several years, more can be done to improve the economic outlook of our state and the personal prosperity of Indiana's citizens. In December 2018, the Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings released, Advancing Opportunity in Central Indiana. This report focused on Central Indiana, but laid the foundation for a larger statewide study and analysis that is currently underway. An analysis of the types of jobs that exist in Central Indiana identified that roughly half of all jobs were "good" and "promising." Good jobs provide middle-class wages and benefits. Promising jobs are entry-level jobs that, while they do not provide the pay or benefits of a good job, enable the workers who hold them to reach a good job within 10 years.[8] While we have seen employment growth in nearly every sector across the state, more can be done to grow the types of jobs that allow for economic mobility and career advancement.

Increasing the education attainment across the state provides an opportunity for economic growth and personal prosperity. According to the Commission for Higher Education's Return on Investment report, higher education not only improves individual outcomes, it also helps build stronger communities and strengthens the economy. Over the course of a lifetime, each class of Indiana public college graduates contributes at least $13 billion or more in additional spending and tax revenue to the economy compared to Hoosiers with only a high school diploma.[9] This has been recognized at all levels of state government by creating opportunities to meet individuals where they are along their career path to provide access to additional education and training opportunities to help advance their career.

Investment in our state's educational attainment can also be paired with capital investments to spark new innovations that cut across all industries to drive economic growth. The state's Next Level Fund has a mission to make targeted investments in Indiana venture capital funds and businesses to generate competitive investment performance as well as support increased entrepreneurship and innovation across the state. As illustrated below, Indiana compares favorably to neighboring states for the amount of per capita venture capital investments. Venture capital investments tend to be targeted at technologies that can drive economic growth and wages by way of specialized knowledge and skills and human capital.



Both characteristics—higher educational attainment and venture capital investment—illustrate opportunities for Hoosier leaders to focus. With positive change, Indiana could drive its labor force in a direction better suited to acclimate to the inevitability of cyclical unemployment turbulence. Artificial intelligence, robotics, and a host of other important areas will increasingly

become the topics of economic opportunity and the main drivers in business investment, while freeing production demands from labor pools that are unavailable.[11] The state's focus on both raising educational attainment and increasing venture capital investments bodes well for diversifying our economy and increasing opportunities for Hoosiers to have more economic mobility. By continuing to promote higher education attainment and making investments in new innovative companies that drive new types of economic growth, there will be opportunities for the emergence of new occupations and industries across the state. The Cabinet can work with employers, state agencies, sector organizations, and education institutions to align and promote the necessary skills for these opportunities.

Skills for a Changing Economy: The skills necessary for the changing economy will continue to rely on transferrable and durable skills that we continue to hear are needed by employers. Skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, communication, and collaboration will only continue to be more important as the world gets smaller due to the globalization of the economy. Indiana has focused on these employability skills through policies and legislation enacted the past several years. Demonstration of these employability skills through a project-based, service-based, or work-based learning experience is now a requirement within Indiana's Graduation Pathways and employability skill standards have been developed for grades K through 12. In addition to these skills, more advanced technical skills will be necessary as technology continues to transform the way in which work is done. According to Brad Rhorer, Chief Talent Programs Officer at Conexus Indiana, manufacturing is a leading industry that is being impacted by automation and robotics. "When I started into the industry nearly 30 years ago, we had a lot of manual welding and hands working on the different pieces of equipment. Now, we have a lot of robotics and other technologies to improve the production of our products. … You've still got workers that remember what mom and dad or grandma and grandpa's life was like in manufacturing. In some cases it was tough. It was dark. It was dirty and kind of dingy. But with innovation and technology now, it looks like a different industry in many ways. A lot of people still have the wrong perception of what manufacturing and logistics is."[12] Manufacturers today need multi-functional engineering technicians who possess traditional and technology-enhanced manufacturing and engineering skills, along with transferrable skills such as communication and collaboration. Manufacturing is not the only industry in Indiana impacted by these changes. Each industry is adjusting to the pace of change and a more highly-skilled workforce is necessary to keep Indiana globally competitive. [1] Pacific Research Institute. The 50-State Small Business Regulation Index.

[2] CNBC, 2019. Top States for Business.

[3] Indy Star, 2017. Why Indiana's government ranked No 1.

[4] Indiana Department of Workforce Development: Indiana Economic Analysis Report.

[5] IndianaCareerConnect.com. February 2020 Job Postings by Economic Growth Region and County.

[6] Data represent the January 2018 to January 2019 time period.

[7] Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings Institution, 2019. Automation and Artificial Intelligence.

[8] Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings. Advancing Opportunity in Central Indiana, 2018.

[9] Commission for Higher Education, 2018. Return on Investment Report.

[10] This illustrates the amount of venture capital dollars per capita in U.S. and neighboring states.

[11] Indiana Business Research Center. Indiana's Outlook for 2020.

[12] Weise, Michelle R., Hanson, Andrew R., and Saleh, Yustina. The New Geography of Skills: Regional Skill Shapes for the New Learning Ecosystem. Indianapolis, IN: Strada Institute for the Future of Work, 2019.

B. WORKFORCE ANALYSIS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the current workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment, as defined in section 3 of WIOA[4]. This population must include individuals with disabilities among other groups[5] in the State and across regions identified by the State. This includes—

[4] Individuals with barriers to employment include displaced homemakers; low-income individuals; Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians; individuals with disabilities, including youth who are individuals with disabilities; older individuals; ex-offenders; homeless individuals, or homeless children and youths; youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system; individuals who are English language learners, individuals who have low levels of literacy, and individuals facing substantial cultural barriers; farmworkers (as defined at section 167(i) of WIOA and Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 35-14); individuals within 2 years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program; single parents (including single pregnant women); and long-term unemployed individuals.

[5] Veterans, unemployed workers, and youth, and others that the State may identify.

I. EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT

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

II. LABOR MARKET TRENDS

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

III. EDUCATION AND SKILL LEVELS OF THE WORKFORCE

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

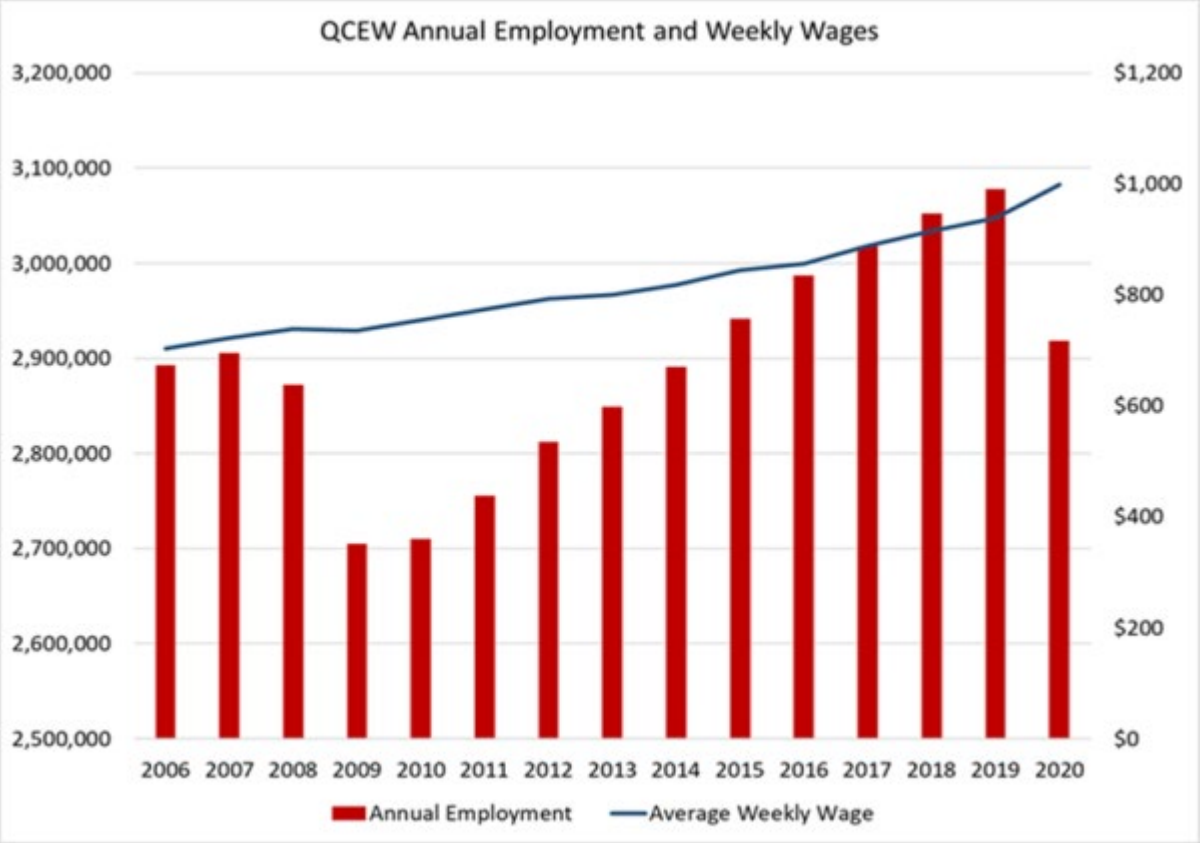
IV. SKILL GAPS

Describe apparent 'skill gaps'.

THIS SECTION OF THE ORIGINAL STATE PLAN HAS BEEN DELETED AND UPDATED IN 2022 WITH THE TEXT BELOW.

Note: Information from several segments below is further detailed in the Indiana Department of Workforce Development's (DWD) most recent Indiana Economic Analysis Report (see Economic and Workforce Analysis sections at: https://www.hoosierdata.in.gov/docs/annual_econ_analysis/ETA_INDIANA%20ECONOMIC%20ANALYSIS%20REPORT%20PY2020.pdf)

Employment and Wages: Indiana had seen steady employment recovery following the Great Recession. This trend changed in 2020. In 2020 the average annual employment level was 2,535,558 for private employment and 2,918,792 for all public and private sectors. Those numbers are a loss of 159,019 public and private sector jobs. This was due to the Covid-19 pandemic and economic downturn that followed. Average weekly wages have risen to $999 for all Industries. The following charts summarize Indiana's 2020 Employment from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) program.



Average annual/weekly wages are affected by the ratio of full-time to part-time workers, as well as the number of individuals in high-paying versus low-paying occupations. The chart presented on the following pages shows the historical annual averages from 2004-2018 with 2018 showing a 3.1% increase from 2017. Over this time, several sectors experienced a more dramatic percentage change while other sectors were modest in their increase. The highest increases were IT wages increasing by 27.6% and Healthcare and Social Services increasing 25%. Other industries with healthy wage increases included Real Estate and Rental & Leasing at 21.2% and Finance & Insurance and Accommodation & Food Services both at 18.5%, and Administrative Support and Waste Services at 18.1%. The slowest wage increases from 2013-2018 were in Manufacturing (11.1%), Construction (9.1%), and Mining (4.7%).[1] Deeper analysis of job growth and wage gains, as shown in the chart below, shows that nearly every industry sector saw employment and wage gains throughout 2018:

Employment and Wages by Sector							
NAICS Code	Establishments	Jobs	Over the YearTotal Change from 2019	Percent Change from 2019	Aaverage Annual wages	Over the YearTotal Change from 2019	Percent Change from 2019
Total	172,745	2,919,409	-157,832	-5.1%	$51,949.07	$3,148.75	6.5%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	1,993	15,851	164	1.0%	$42,871	$2,276	5.6%
Mining	311	5,026	-762	-13.2%	$75,538	-$852	-1.1%
Utilities	560	15,870	128	0.8%	$96,744	$598	0.6%
Construction	15,633	144,033	-1,878	-1.3%	$62,620	$2,602	4.3%
Manufacturing	9,265	504,340	-36,812	-6.8%	$65,138	$1,814	2.9%
Wholesale Trade	13,457	119,075	-4,354	-3.5%	$72,542	$3,228	4.7%
Retail Trade	20,666	306,189	-10,895	-3.4%	$31,422	$2,494	8.6%
Transportation & Warehousing	7,031	163,145	5,009	3.2%	$49,664	$1,700	3.5%
Information	2,801	32,059	-2,969	-8.5%	$59,688	$4,113	7.4%
Finance and Insurance	10,622	98,854	-144	-0.1%	$79,748	$4,653	6.2%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	7,036	35,910	-1,977	-5.2%	$50,893	$4,217	9.0%
Professional, Scientific, Technical	20,352	124,387	1,134	0.9%	$75,155	$4,352	6.1%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	1,238	33,749	-1,103	-3.2%	$103,868	$2,759	2.7%
Admin, Support, Waste	10,657	170,202	-19,840	-10.4%	$37,379	$3,239	9.5%
Educational Services	3,388	237,066	-13,928	-5.5%	$46,433	$3,282	7.6%
Health Care and Social Services	14,985	436,256	-10,778	-2.4%	$54,288	$3,501	6.9%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	2,369	34,156	-10,396	-23.3%	$38,505	$3,353	9.5%
Accommodation and Food Services	13,775	231,744	-40,172	-14.8%	$17,892	$722	4.2%
Other Services (Except Public Administration)	13,269	80,939	-8,613	-9.6%	$36,636	$2,866	8.5%
Public Administration	2,855	130,529	456	0.4%	$52,666	$2,266	4.5%
Unallocated	482	29	-102	-77.9%	$37,358	$12,080	47.8%

Unemployment Rates and Labor Force Participation: Indiana's unemployment rate dropped from a twenty- year peak of 10.5% in 2010, to 7.1% in 2019. The Labor Force and low unemployment rate had been stable for Indiana in 2019. That would abruptly change in the first half of 2020 due to the pandemic. The pandemic caused the highest annual unemployment rate since 2013 and the lowest Annual Labor Force since 2015. Indiana's annual unemployment rate dropped every year from 2010 to 2019. The Indiana unemployment rate was below or equal to the national rate from September 2013 to March 2020. This stopped abruptly in April 2020 due to the pandemic and economic shut down. Since April 2020 the Indiana rate has declined steadily and has been below the national unemployment rate since May 2020. Indiana's annual unemployment rate was 8.1%.

Indiana Regional Labor Force Data

INDIANA ECONOMIC GROWTH REGIONS (EGRs), LABOR FORCE AND UNEMPLOYMENT (N.S.A.) 2020				
EGR	Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
EGR 1	394,916	357,717	37,199	9.4%
EGR 2	317,625	293,461	24,164	7.6%
EGR 3	380,903	353,982	26,921	7.1%
EGR 4	246,954	229,936	17,018	6.9%
EGR 5	548,096	518,472	29,624	5.4%
EGR 6	149,862	139,275	10,587	7.1%
EGR 7	94,934	88,118	6,816	7.2%
EGR 8	149,121	140,223	8,898	6.0%
EGR 9	168,650	157,010	11,640	6.9%
EGR 10	150,904	140,420	10,484	6.9%
EGR 11	221,984	208,224	13,760	6.2%
EGR 12	495,063	456,145	38,918	7.9%

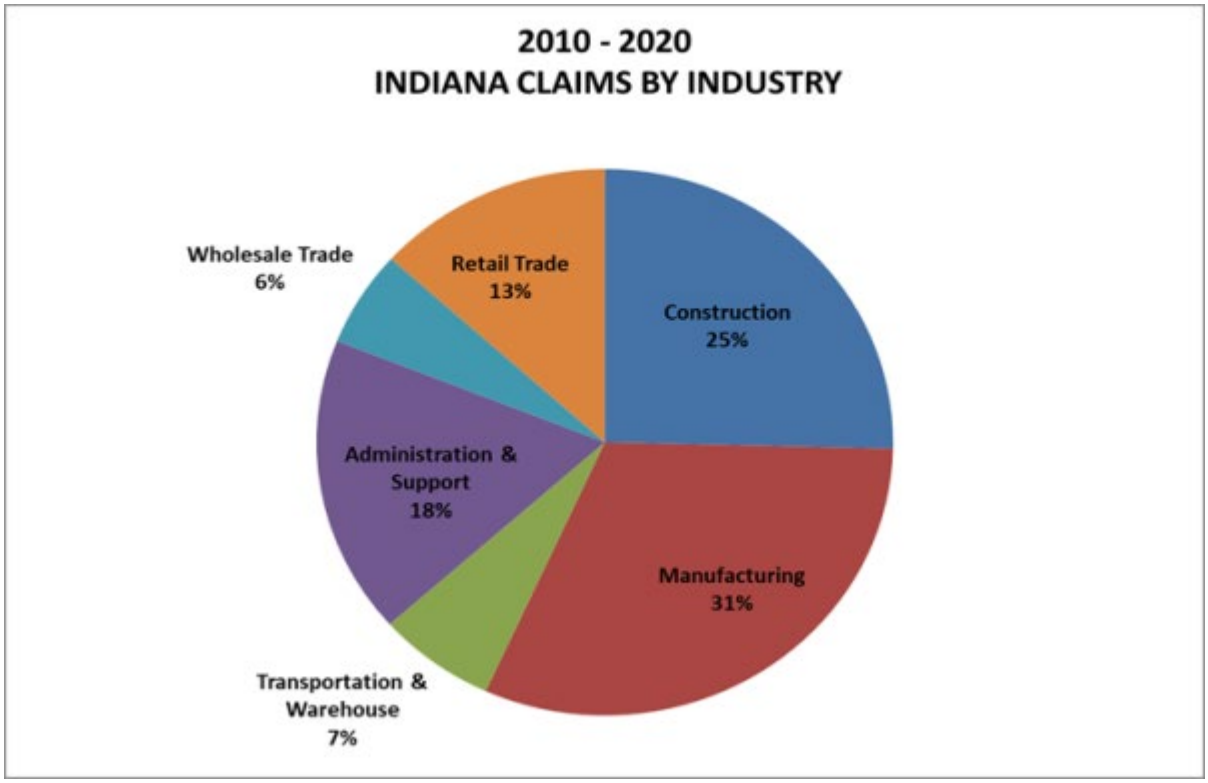
According to the latest US Census data, Indiana's total population is estimated to be 6,805,985. To disaggregate the labor force by race among the total population:

- Individuals who are Caucasian represent 84.8% (5,771,475 individuals);
- Those who are black or African-American represent 9.9% (673,793 individuals);
- Hispanic and Latino persons represent 7.32% (496,837 individuals); and
- Those who identify as two or more races represent 2.3% individuals (155,176 persons).[4] Asian persons represent 2.6% (173,553 individuals)

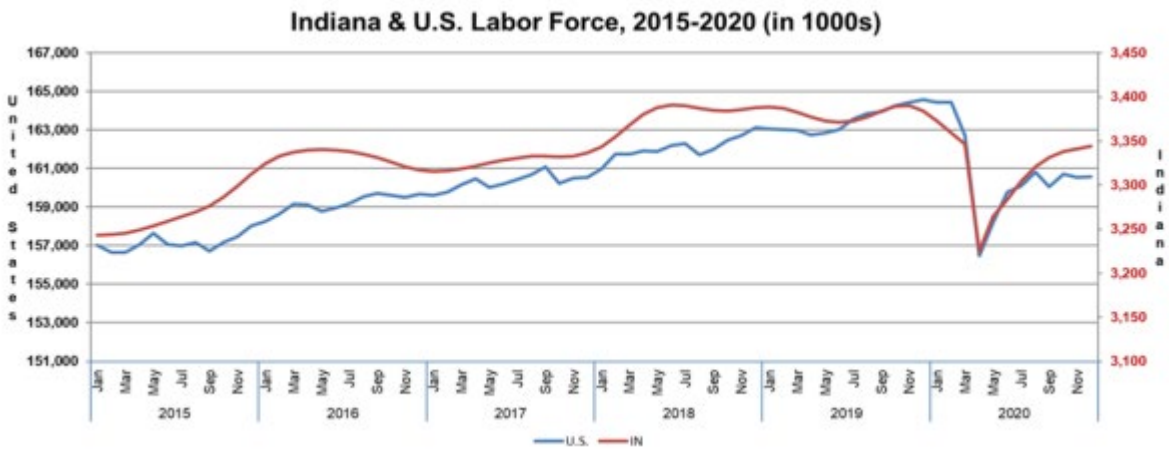
Unemployment Claims by Industry

The manufacturing and construction industries historically have been leading industries with unemployment claims. As a result of the 2020 Pandemic manufacturing accounted for over 60% of claims in 2020.

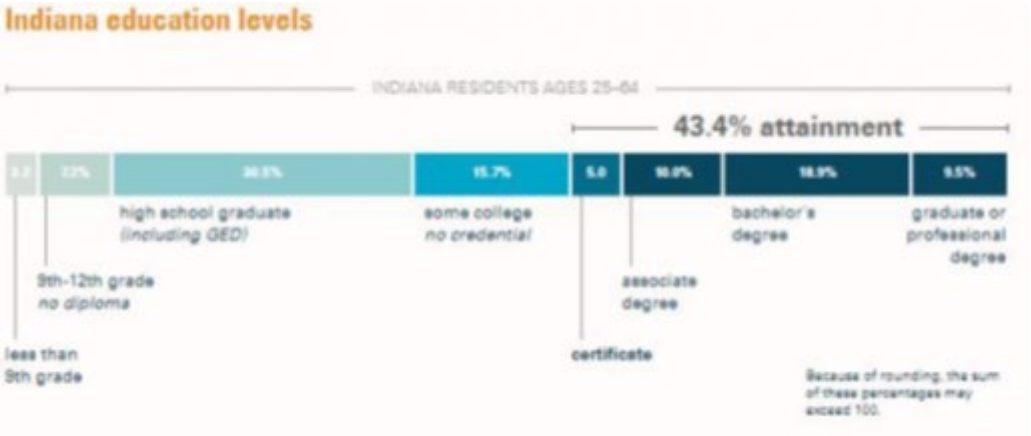
Indiana 2010-2020 Claims by Industry



As the decade continued to progress, the growing citizenship in Indiana has increased by 4.7% between 2010 and July 1, 2020. This positive growth in the population alone is not enough to fulfill the labor force needs of the state. Indiana's labor participation rate is 64.4%, which is higher than the U.S. labor force participation rate of 63%.[6] While these data points are important, Indiana must still meet the challenge of filling one millions jobs over the next 10 years. As previously reported, 700,000 workers will need to be replaced during that 10 year timeline. A majority of those within this category will be retirees. The remaining 300,000 projected job needs will stem from new job growth. We must find ways to continue to increase awareness for occupational opportunities and the education and training necessary to develop the skills needed as our economy changes. Creating awareness and access will help increase our labor force participation rate. While better than the national average, we can work with Hoosier citizens that are disconnected from the workforce to transition them to employment. Additionally, we can create more opportunities for employers to engage with alternative talent pipelines. One such example is Indiana's focus on providing education and training opportunities for the state's prison population and better serving individuals with disabilities to provide greater access to the skills necessary for employment in a 21st Century economy. Creating opportunities for these populations to be included in the talent pool, is one priority outlined throughout the state plan.



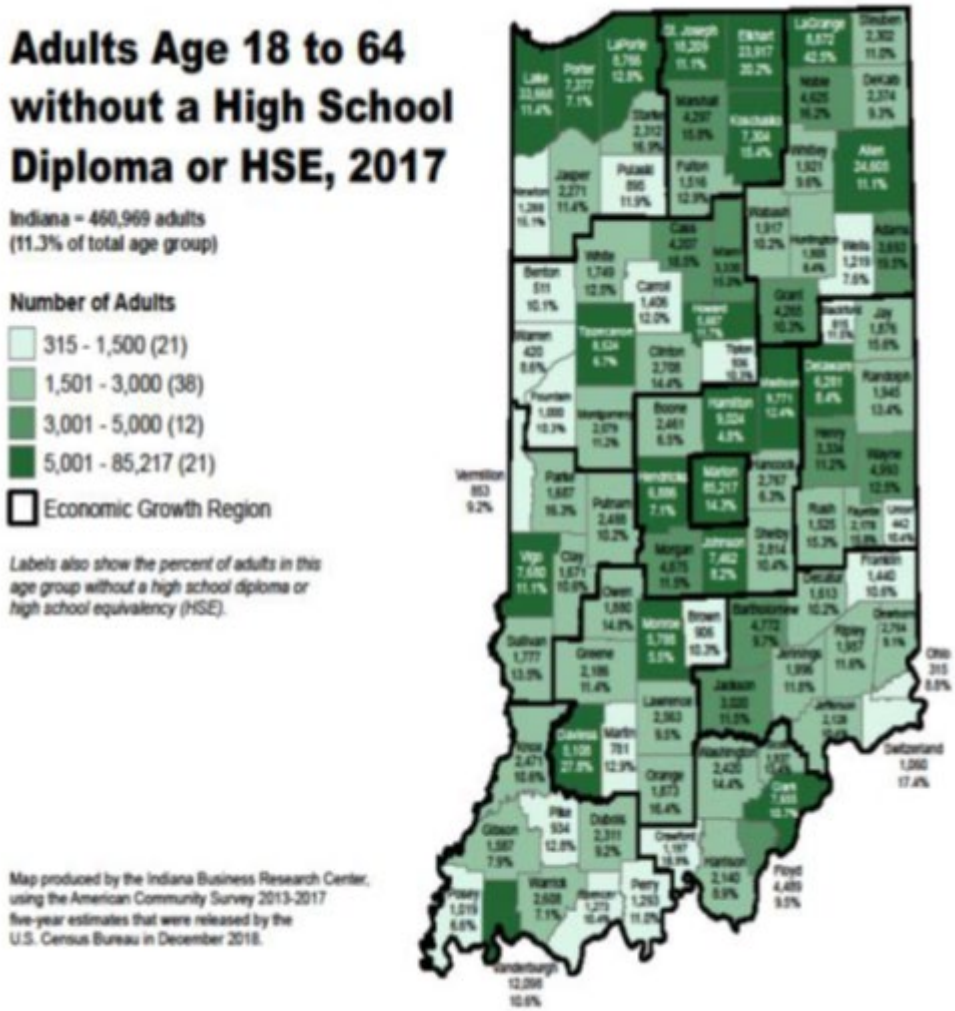
Education and Skill Level: Indiana has set a lofty goal for at least 60% of all working age Hoosiers to have a quality credential beyond high school by 2025. This goal aligns with the changing needs of Indiana's workforce and technological changes that are impacting every industry sector. According to Lumina's, A Stronger Nation, Indiana has made progress toward our postsecondary attainment goal (48.3%), but we still lag behind the nation average (51.9%). The report utilizes a combination of attainment rates as reported through the US Census Bureau American Community Survey (ACS) and an estimate for the number of high-value postsecondary certificates that may be less than an associate's degree. As illustrated below, the education attainment for Indiana's residents ages 25 through 64.[7]



In 2017, 63% of high school graduates enrolled directly in some type of postsecondary program. This number has declined slightly in recent years, and may be due to the number of job vacancies as a result of Indiana's strong economy. Regardless of the reason, Indiana will continue to provide career coaching and navigation to students and adults on the significant benefits to obtaining a quality credential beyond high school. Additionally, Indiana's new Graduation Pathways, as well as a better aligned Career and Technical Education program, will offer students more opportunities to earn quality credentials prior to high school graduation. This alignment paired with the state's strong community college and university system, ensure that regardless of where an individual is in their career and learning continuum, that there are options to advance one's education and career.

One area of focus highlighted throughout the Plan is to better serve those individuals without a high school diploma. This population represents an opportunity for individuals and employers alike to meet the talent needs of the changing economy. In Indiana, over 460,000 individuals, ages 18-64, do not have a high school diploma or high school equivalency. While the total

number of individuals without a high school diploma are located in metropolitan cities, such as Indianapolis, Gary, and Fort Wayne, it is often the case that the percentage of individuals without a high school diploma is much higher in rural communities. For instance, in Daviess County, over 25% of Hoosiers do not hold a high school diploma. The map below shows how our population without a high school diploma is distributed throughout the state. Better integration between the workforce development system, adult education, career and technical education, postsecondary education, community-based organizations, and our employer community are needed to help connect these individuals to the education and training and supports necessary for career advancement.



Additionally, the state has taken on a cross state collaboration project, aimed at ensuring there is support throughout the workforce systems for essential workers, with an increased focus on minority populations and individuals with barriers. This work is being done with five other states and will produce for Indiana a data profile to specifically assess and evaluate these populations. The result will be an increased focus on the areas that expose gaps in service or greater density of need.

Our biggest skills gap continues to be our lagging educational attainment rate. Improvement in this area will not only impact an individual's ability to access higher wage opportunities, but it will enable opportunities for economic growth and higher-skilled positions within every sector of the state's economy. One role the GWC plays in the talent development system is to better understand how the education system, economic development, workforce, and social service systems can be better aligned. Through the convening power of the GWC and the Governor's focus on finding solutions to the workforce issues of today and tomorrow, we can improve the education and skill attainment for all Hoosiers. By pulling together partner programs (SNAP, TANF, K-12, postsecondary, CTE, WIOA, AE, corrections, etc.), the GWC can help coordinate education, training, and employment service programs to ensure that all Hoosiers are accessing programs that continue to provide them with opportunities for advancement.

In addition to educational attainment, the message from businesses has become increasingly clear. While there are a variety of specific skill sets in Indiana's high demand sectors, the focus on those skills most in need remain basic technological skills not specific to any singular software or tool, but rather the ability to learn through and operate technical systems and components. Along with the need for basic technological skills, the ability to learn new skills, or more commonly referred to as soft skills remains of highest priority. In an economic environment with such susceptibility to rapid change, employees need these basic skills to be able to quickly adapt to maintain employment or gain new employment.

As we continue to assess all of the very specific skill sets required for these high demand sectors, the skill sets mentioned above rise above them all. Businesses in Indiana have a strong desire to teach all of the specific skills necessary to do their many jobs that are available. Highlighted below are a few of the industries with higher concentrations of jobs available and their more common skills sets in Indiana:

Manufacturing: Establishments in the Manufacturing sector are often described as plants, factories, or mills and characteristically use power-driven machines and materials-handling equipment and require these skills to complete this work. However, establishments that transform materials or substances into new products by hand or in the worker's home and those engaged in selling to the general public products made on the same premises from which they are sold, such as bakeries, candy stores, and custom tailors, may also be included in this sector and would subsequently require this additional unique skill set. Manufacturing establishments may process materials or may contract with other establishments to process their materials for them. Both types of establishments are included in manufacturing and have a very common set of skills required to complete these jobs and their associated tasks.

Healthcare: The Health Care and Social Assistance sector comprises establishments providing health care and social assistance for individuals. The sector includes both health care and social assistance because it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between the boundaries of these two activities and their more commonly related skill sets. The industries in this sector are arranged on a continuum starting with those establishments providing medical care exclusively, continuing with those providing health care and social assistance, and finally finishing with those providing only social assistance. The services provided by establishments in this sector are delivered by trained professionals with very specific skill sets tailored to their occupation and often have licensure that require educational attainment to obtain a job. All industries in the sector share this commonality of process, namely, labor inputs of health practitioners or social workers with the requisite expertise. Many of the industries in the sector are defined based on the educational degree held by the practitioners included in the industry.

Retail Trade: The Retail Trade sector comprises establishments engaged in retailing merchandise, generally without transformation, and rendering services incidental to the sale of merchandise. The retailing process is the final step in the distribution of merchandise; retailers are, therefore, organized to sell merchandise in small quantities to the general public. This sector comprises two main types of retailers: store and non-store retailers.

The skill sets within this industry are common across many of the occupations in this industry and especially comprise the basic technological skills and soft skills to obtain these types of jobs.

1. Store retailers operate fixed point-of-sale locations, located and designed to attract a high volume of walk-in customers-the need for these customer service skills is imperative for these particular types of occupations. In general, retail stores have extensive displays of merchandise and use mass-media advertising to attract customers. They typically sell merchandise to the general public for personal or household consumption, but some also serve business and institutional clients. In addition to retailing merchandise, some types of store retailers are also engaged in the provision of after-sales services, such as repair and installation.

2. Nonstore retailers, like store retailers, are organized to serve the general public, but their retailing methods differ. The establishments of this subsector reach customers and market merchandise with methods, such as the broadcasting of "infomercials," the broadcasting and publishing of direct-response advertising, the publishing of paper and electronic catalogs, door-to-door solicitation, in-home demonstration, selling from portable stalls (street vendors, except food), and distribution through vending machines. While these occupations also have a need for customer service skills, an additional level of skill is needed in areas such as planning and organization.

[1] Indiana Department of Workforce Development. Indiana Economic Analysis Report.

[2] Indiana Department of Workforce Development, 2019. October 2019 Employment Briefing.

[3] United States Census Bureau, 2019. Quick Facts: Indiana.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Indiana Department of Workforce Development: Indiana Economic Analysis Report.

[6] Indiana Department of Workforce Development. October 2019 Employment Briefing.

[7] Lumina Foundation, 2019. A Stronger Nation.

Populations with Barriers to Employment.

We must recognize the diverse populations and corresponding needs served by the state's workforce system, including those who are unemployed or underemployed, those seeking additional education to advance their careers, and those facing barriers to employment. Some Hoosiers will pass through the system with minimal support, while others will require multiple resources. Ensuring equitable access to the talent development system will concretize the expectation of greater economic mobility throughout Indiana.

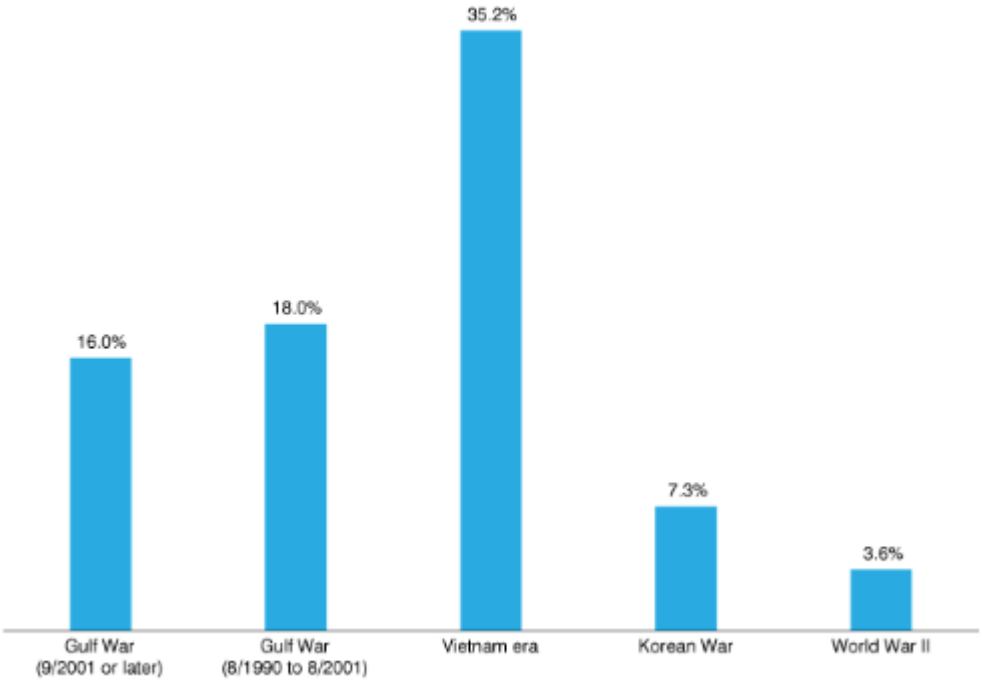
The sections below highlight some specific populations with employment barriers.

Veterans. Nationally, there are 18.5 million veterans living in the United States today. Sixty-seven percent of veterans are 55 or older, and roughly one-third of veterans served during the first Gulf War era or in military engagements since the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks. More recent veterans are more diverse in terms of gender, race and ethnicity than those who served in prior wars: nearly 18% of veterans who enlisted since 2001 are women, and recent veterans are

more likely to identify as African-American (15.9%) or Latino (13.7%) than past generations of veterans. The largest difference between veterans and nonveterans is among those between 25 to 34 years old. Male veterans in this age range have an unemployment rate of 6.1%, compared to 4.5% for their peers. Female veterans between the ages of 25 and 34 have an unemployment rate of 7.9%, compared to 4.5% for their nonveteran counterparts.[1]

The Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs estimates that 409,836 veterans lived in this state as of 2017. Marion County has the largest number of veterans at more than 51,600, though with 3,200 veterans, Miami County boasts the largest percentage of veterans (9%) relative to its total population. Approximately half of the state's veterans are 65 and older, and the majority of Hoosier veterans served during the Vietnam War with veterans with military services post-1990 as the second largest constituency.[2]

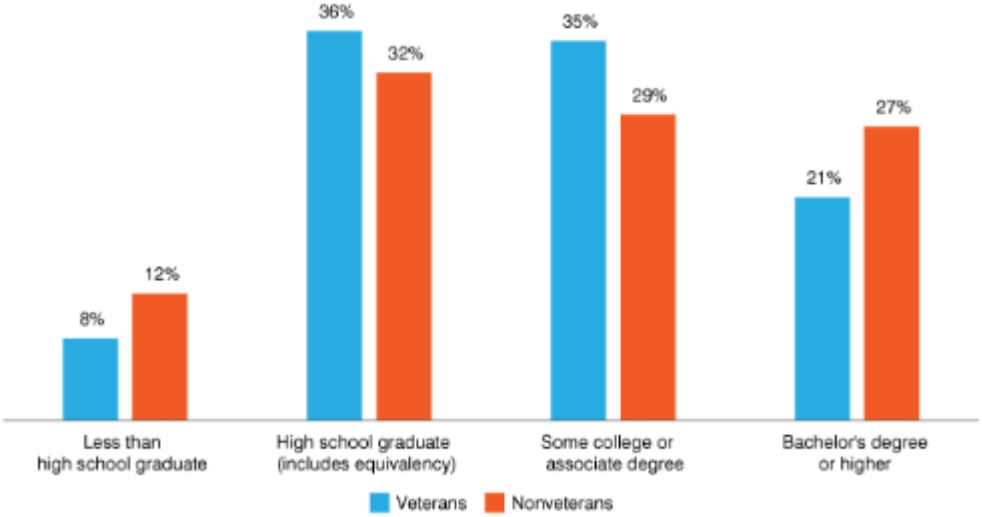
Figure 3: When Hoosier veterans served



Note: These categories are not mutually exclusive. Veterans may have served in more than one period.
Source: 2017 American Community Survey one-year estimates

Though high school diploma attainment is higher for veterans than nonveterans, postsecondary attainment rates, particularly bachelor's degrees, is lower.

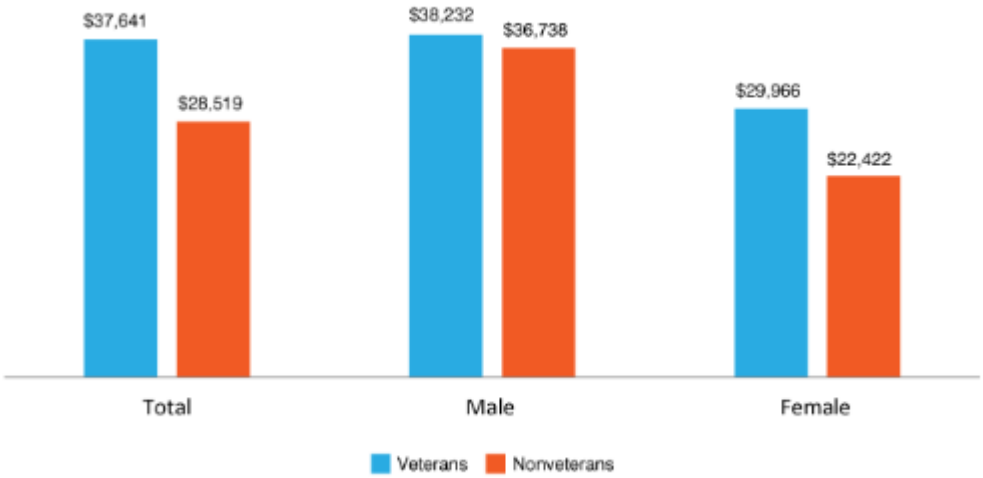
Figure 4: Educational attainment of veterans and nonveterans



Source: 2017 American Community Survey one-year estimates

Veterans, however, tend to report higher incomes with the median annual income for veterans overall exceeding $37,600, compared to about $28,500 for nonveterans. This trend continues for median incomes disaggregated by gender.[3]

Figure 5: Median income of veterans and nonveterans by gender



Note: Total population is the civilian population ages 18 and older with income.
Source: 2017 American Community Survey one-year estimates

Veterans are employed in a variety of fields throughout the US. Among male veterans, management, transportation, and sales are the most common occupations, whereas female veterans are concentrated in office and administrative support, healthcare, and management occupations.[4]

There is an estimated 478,900 spouses of active-duty military personnel in the US. Over half of all military spouses are 30 years of age or younger. Approximately 66% of military spouses are in the workforce, including 41% in the civilian labor force, 13% in the armed forces, and 12% currently unemployed and seeking work. Military spouses are educationally and occupationally diverse. Eighty-four percent have some college education or higher; 35% have a bachelor's degree or higher. Similar to our other target populations, unemployment rates are strongly

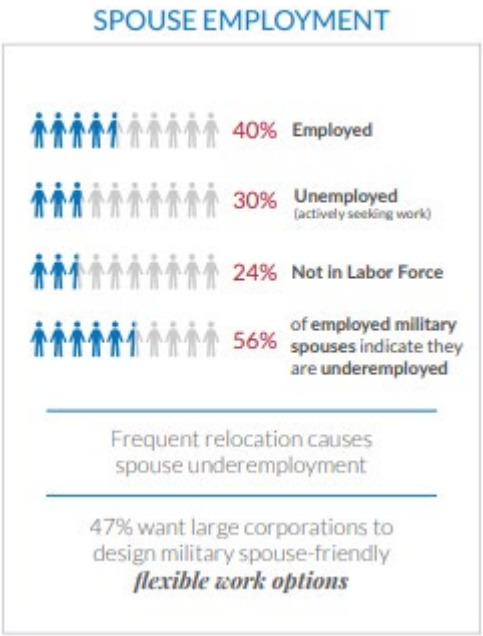
associated with levels of education obtained. Higher levels of education are generally associated with lower rates of unemployment among military spouses.

Educational Attainment	Military Spouse Employment Survey Unemployment Rate (%)
High School Diploma	40.43
Some college credit, but less than 1 year of college credit	33.33
1 or more years of college, no degree	36.36
Associate's Degree	46.53
Bachelor's Degree	29.07
Master's Degree	30.95
Professional Degree	28.57
Doctoral Degree	1.56
Total	**31.90**

***Figure** 5. Source: Military Spouse Employment Report.*

Nearly one-third of active duty military spouses, however, are underemployed or earn less than their civilian peers.

The underemployment of military spouses also correlates with postsecondary attainment – whereas higher levels of education are associated with a reduced chance of unemployment for military spouses, higher levels of education are associated with a higher likelihood of underemployment.



The economic impact of unemployment and underemployment of military spouses is estimated to be between $710 million to $1.07 billion per year, including lost income tax and unemployment and healthcare benefits paid. Employment of military spouses plays a significant role in the decision of military members to leave or remain in the service.[6]

Licensure tends to present a significant hurdle to securing employment for both veterans and active duty spouses. Because of the frequent moves and short periods to prepare for new state requirements, spouses can find it difficult to transfer their licenses across states. Their employment can be negatively impacted by the time it takes to acquire a license, uncertainty about the transferability of their licenses across state lines, and lack of temporary or provisional licensure options. For active duty military spouses, barriers to securing stable employment stem from frequent moves and parenting responsibilities, as well as obstacles with varying state occupational licensing regulations.[7] Spouses of National Guard members, however, may face different obstacles to employment unrelated to relocation. One example might be the struggle and expense of balancing work and home responsibilities.

Though many US veterans transition to civilian life successfully, some veterans face transitional challenges, particularly around securing employment. The challenge of finding a job contributes to the 70% of veterans who report significant difficulty making the transition back to civilian life. Underemployment may be a particular challenge many veterans experience when returning to civilian life, due to their training in a variety of occupations and professions while enlisted.[8] Licensing regulations can put veterans at a disadvantage when competing for work with a similarly skilled person trained in the private sector. These challenges can lead to or exacerbate mental and physical health problems. Veterans returning to civilian life may also find it difficult to translate their skills to the workforce and market themselves for job opportunities. The Veterans Opportunity to Work Act, enacted in 2011, enabled the US Department of Labor to create a crosswalk of military skills and occupations that correlate with potentially 962 civilian occupations.[9] Despite the skill overlap, veterans still face difficulties translating these experiences to civilian occupations.

The primary barriers veterans and active duty spouses face to stable employment include:

- **The costs of training or education programs**: Many veterans who received military training in an occupation may only need a few additional hours or an additional course before being eligible for a license or getting up-to-date with the civilian industry. They are often required to start over, incurring both financial and opportunity costs. Similarly, military spouses with different state licenses or degrees often must spend both time and money to comply with specific Indiana rules and regulations. Military spouses may choose to not seek licensure once they move, perpetuating unemployment and underemployment trends with this population.

- **The applicability of prior training:** Occupation-specific training completed as part of military service may not be recognized in licensing regulations or as part of degree tracks. Though many military occupations provide similar training equivalent to civilian occupational training, ensuring clear and consistent recognition of applicable skills and experiences can facilitate a veteran's transition into the civilian labor force. As occupational licensing regulations vary between states, occupational standards may also differ. Due to the frequency of their moves, military spouses are often faced with the requirement to reapply for licensure for the occupation or profession in which they already work, because their current license or work experience may not be sufficient. The Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs (IDVA) has worked with Ivy Tech Community College to identify best practices related to the transferability of skills to be used toward credit via prior learning assessments. This is something that we will continue to look to improve.

Compounding the issues of communication and process, a significant lack of data at occupational licensure boards regarding the licensing of military spouses can create additional

barriers for this target population. Improving data collection for this population could lead to identifying board members who are responsive to this group and any remaining barriers to licensure.[10]

To increase the effectiveness of our services for Hoosier veterans, Indiana has centralized the point of contact for these individuals within state government. The **Indiana Department of Veteran Affairs** (IDVA) serves as one of the primary connection point for Hoosier veterans; IDVA is generally the first point of contact for many veterans seeking services the state may offer. WorkOnes, however, also serve as first responders to veterans' needs. Both WorkOnes and IDVA guide veterans towards services available through federal funds and specialized staff members, as well as other social services through both federal and state agencies. IDVA and the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) have an established partnership agreement outlining responsibilities to streamline programmatic efficiency and reduce potential duplicative efforts. For example, the **Indiana National Guard** partners with DWD, INVets, and IDVA to help bring exiting military to Indiana to continue their service in the Indiana National Guard and attain employment at hundreds of Indiana's top businesses.

County Veteran Service Officers are trained and certified by IDVA. Through this unique partnership between DWD and IDVA, we can ensure that staff of our principal workforce development programs for veterans**, Jobs for Veterans State Grant (Partner Program)**, as well as the County Veteran Service officers, are cross-trained to be aware of all of the services that veterans may be eligible for, so they can be referred and directed appropriately. As we look to further this relationship, we can begin to better understand the quality of the referral processes and related outcomes for the services provided to veterans.

1. National Conference of State Legislatures, 2018. Barriers to Work: Veterans and Military Spouses: Improving Access to Licensed Occupations for Veterans and Military Families.
2. INContext, 2018. Veterans in Indiana.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Blue Star Families, 2018. 2018 Military Family Lifestyle Survey Results.
6. Blue Star Families, 2016. Social Cost Analysis of the Unemployment and Underemployment of Military Spouses.
7. Ibid.
8. Castro et al., 2014. The State Of The American Veteran: The Los Angeles County Veterans Study.
9. National Conference of State Legislatures, 2018. Barriers to Work: Veterans and Military Spouses: Improving Access to Licensed Occupations for Veterans and Military Families.
10. Ibid.

Individuals with disabilities. https://www.in.gov/fssa/ddrs/files/CSNA-working-draft-2021.pdf). The Needs Assessment covered economic and labor market analysis of the disability population. A few applicable sections have been pulled and highlighted below:

According to the 2020 Census, Indiana's population is 6,785,528 (Census, n.d.), and 13.7% among the noninstitutionalized population in 2015-2019 (nearly 930,000), age 18-64, reported a disability. This is a slight decrease compared to 2012-2016 (14%). The American Community

Survey, 2015-2019 five-year estimates can be found at the Census website: https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs.

The U.S. Department of Labor December 2021 disability employment statistics reports the following for individuals ages 16 and over:

Labor Force Participation

- People with disabilities: 22.3% (increase from 20.5% in 2020)
- People without disabilities: 67.2% (increase from 67.1% in 2020)

Unemployment Rate

- People with disabilities: 7.9% (decrease from 12.6% in 2020)
- People without disabilities: 3.5% (decrease from 7.9% in 2020)

7.9% of the projected disability population in Indiana, or approximately 73,000, is an estimate of the number of individuals with disabilities in Indiana with a disability who are seeking employment and may be eligible for VR services.

2021 data from the U.S. DOL shows the following labor force participation and unemployment rate for youth:

Labor Force Participation for Youth:

- Age 16-19 with Disability: 24.3%
- Age 16-19 with No Disability: 36.8%
- Age 20-24 with Disability: 46.7%
- Age 20-24 with No Disability: 72%

Unemployment Rate for Youth:

- Age 16-19 with Disability: 21.1%
- Age 16-19 with No Disability: 11.4%
- Age 20-24 with Disability: 16.5%
- Age 20-24 with No Disability: 8.7%

StateData of the Institute for Community Inclusion provides online data regarding day and employment services for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Data for 2019 (StateData, n.d.) indicates that the number of Indiana individuals in day and employment services was 13,883 with funding of $66,314,010. The total number in integrated employment in Indiana was 13% (an 3% increase from 2016), while nationwide it was 22% (also a 3% increase from 2016). Indiana's funding for integrated employment was 3.9% of the spending, while nationwide it was 11.3%.

The mean hourly wages and hours worked for 2017/2018 was also provided (StateData, n.d). Indiana had 17% of the individuals working in integrated settings compared to the nation's 19% in integrated employment of all types. Of these, 17% in Indiana were in individual jobs with 14% nationwide. The mean wage in Indiana was $8.73 for 30.1 hours worked, while nationwide was $8.94 for 27.6 hours worked.

The 2021 DESOS (Day and Employment Services Outcome Systems) Report (Grossi, 2021) reflects data from 70% (59) of entities providing day and/or employment services through the Division of Disability and Rehabilitative Services. Providers entered data for 9,775 individuals. Overall findings demonstrate:

- A decrease in sheltered employment (25% to 19%)
- Transition age youth and young adults are more likely to be in competitive integrated employment than older populations.
- Each older age group shows a decrease in competitive integrated employment and an increase in sheltered employment and nonemployment day programs.

The DESOS provides the following data:

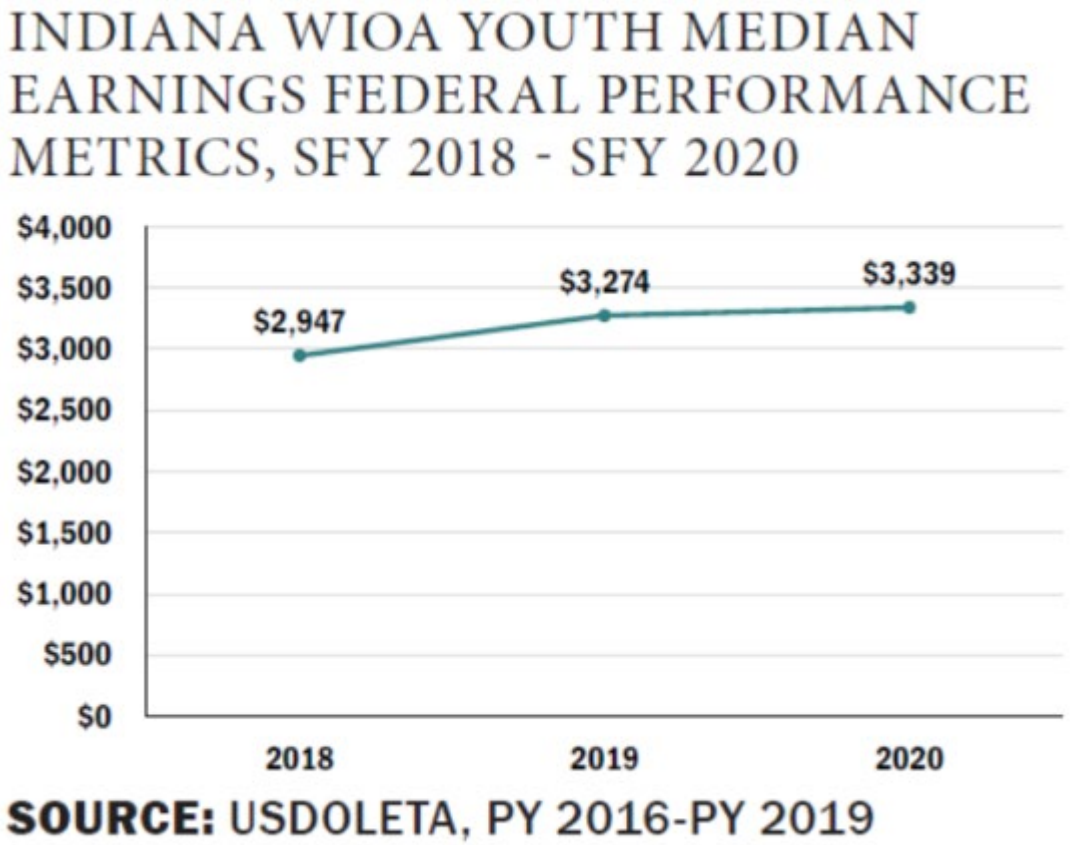
- 23% were served in competitive integrated employment.
- 19% were served in sheltered/facility-based work.
- 25% were in an alternative to work (e.g., seeking employment, volunteer work).
- 32% were in non-employment day services.
- Average wage of those employed in individual jobs was $9.80 an hour, working an average of 21.3 hours per week.
- Of individuals working in sheltered employment, 52% had a mild intellectual disability, 26% had a moderate intellectual disability, and 8% had an autism diagnosis.
- Of those in individual jobs, 63% relied on family and friends for transportation, and 33% used public transportation.
- Individuals were employed primarily in food service, grocery/retail, and custodial/housekeeping. Other kinds of jobs reported included automotive, entertainment, day care worker, customer service, and animal care.
- Individuals placed into individual jobs under supported employment may require extended services to help them maintain their job. Of those placed in individual jobs under supported employment:
- 25% did not receive any extended services.
- 28% received 1-4 hours of extended services per month.
- 37% received 5-10 hours of extended services per month.
- 2% received 11-15 hours of extended services per month.
- 6% received over 16 hours of extended services per month.

For any individual with a disability, VR can also help fill any funding gaps for wraparound supports that person may have – including childcare, transportation, or modifications of homes and vehicles. Additionally, VR business services can augment Wagner-Peyser activities to help coach employers through the unique aspects of the hiring and on-boarding process for a low- income individual with disabilities, such as understanding any accommodations that may be necessary. Specifically, VR's small business program can complement Wagner-Peyser and business service staff at WorkOnes to promote non-traditional hiring practices.

Youth.*Note: Much of the information below is derived from the 2021 Workforce Program Overview published by Indiana's Office of Fiscal and Management Analysis, Legislative Services Agency* (*http://iga.in.gov/legislative/2022/publications/workforce_program_review/).*

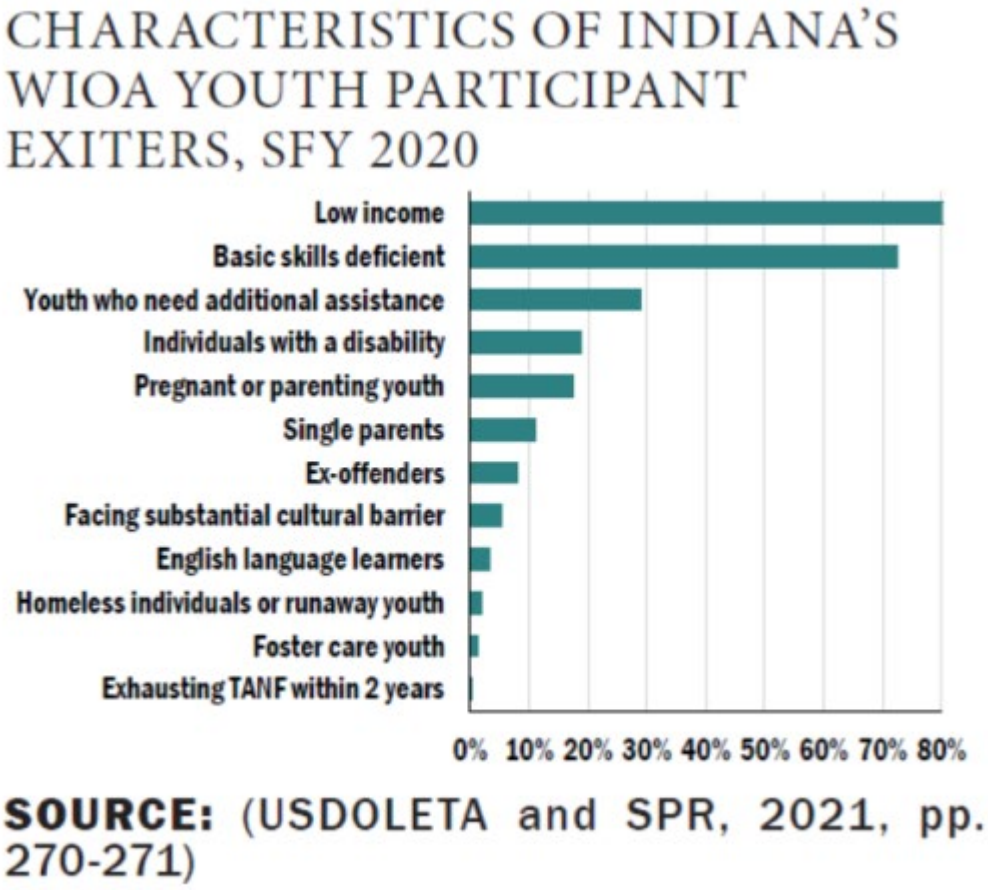
Successfully transitioning into the workforce can be challenging for young people. Youth face persistently higher unemployment rates compared to other working age groups and may have difficulty finding work due to limited education and work experience. The Social Science Research Councils' latest report on youth disconnection estimates that 10.7% of Indiana youth (90,200 individuals) aged 16 to 24 were neither working nor in school in 2019 (Lewis, 2021, p. 20). Data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics confirms that despite being higher than the state averages, unemployment rates for youth had been on the decline before the increased unemployment that occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

COVID-19 created many difficulties for young people who experienced disruptions in education or employment during the pandemic. WIOA Youth program enrollment, particularly for out-of-school youth, declined in State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2020 and 2021 despite an increased need for services. However, follow up reporting found that over 80% of WIOA Youth participants were employed six months and one year after exiting the program, exceeding Indiana's negotiated targets for SFY 2020. Indiana exceeded targets for credential rate as well. From SFY 2018 to 2020, the median earnings by participants increased from $2,947 to $3,339. In SFY 2020 Indiana's WIOA Youth participants exceeded nationwide outcomes for rate of employment or education after exiting the program.



Youth workforce and job training programs, including WIOA Youth and Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG), aim to prevent youth from becoming disconnected from work and school and to reach out to youth who have become disconnected. These programs provide services and activities to help young people successfully transition to the workforce and/or educational

opportunities. Participants in the program face a variety of barriers to education and employment. They are most likely to meet program eligibility requirements due to low income (83% of individuals exiting Indiana's WIOA Youth program during SFY 2020) and a deficiency in basic skills (73%). Others require additional assistance to achieve success in work or school, have a disability, are parenting, are ex-offenders, or have cultural or language barriers. A small percentage are homeless, runaways, foster youth, or are on public assistance (TANF) (USDOLETA and SPR, 2021, pp. 270-271).



Specifically regarding Youth homelessness, the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority (IHCDA) reports the following:

- 18,252 Indiana public school students experienced homelessness in 2018-19. (257 unsheltered, 2,268 in shelters, 1,573 in hotels/motels, 14,154 doubled up).
    - 1,110 unaccompanied homeless students*
- Youth (ages 12-17) are more at risk of homelessness than adults
- 20-40% homeless youth identify as LGBTQ+
- 75% of homeless or runaway youth have dropped out or will drop out of school

*_US Interagency Council on Homelessness_*

2. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, EDUCATION AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES ANALYSIS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the workforce development activities, including education and training in the State, to address the education and skill needs of the workforce, as identified in (a)(1)(B)(iii) above, and the employment needs of employers, as identified in (a)(1)(A)(iii) above. This must include an analysis of—

A. THE STATE'S WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Provide an analysis of the State's workforce development activities, including education and training activities of the core programs, Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan, and required [6] and optional one-stop delivery system partners.[7]

[6] Required one-stop partners: In addition to the core programs, the following partner programs are required to provide access through the one-stops: Career and Technical Education (Perkins), Community Services Block Grant, Indian and Native American programs, HUD Employment and Training programs, Job Corps, Local Veterans' Employment Representatives and Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program, National Farmworker Jobs program, Senior Community Service Employment program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) (unless the Governor determines TANF will not be a required partner), Trade Adjustment Assistance programs, Unemployment Compensation programs, and YouthBuild.

[7] Workforce development activities may include a wide variety of programs and partners, including educational institutions, faith- and community-based organizations, and human services.

B. THE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

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

C. STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY

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

(A) <u>The State's Workforce Development Activities</u>. Provide an analysis of the State's workforce development activities, including education and training activities of the core programs, Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan, and mandatory and optional one-stop delivery system partners.

Indiana's workforce system continues to operate in 12 geographically defined regions. These regions are continuing to be evaluated based on strategies determined by WIOA for most effective funding delivery. To date, there are 21 comprehensive offices known as WorkOne Career Centers (Indiana's term for American Job Centers) throughout the state. In addition to the comprehensive offices, Indiana has more than 50 city and county based offices. Some counties with lower population totals utilize mobile offices, which strategically travel across regions to best reach the individuals in need of services.

Each region has a workforce board with a chief elected official. The board in each region oversees regional programs and funding needs. The purpose of the board is to manage their allocations and programs to meet the needs of their specific region. One goal of the local Workforce Development Boards is to use the funding and services across Core and Partner Programs in the most efficient manner to best provide individuals with a quality outcome. The

local Boards also serve employers within the region by helping meet their talent needs. Development of board training and continued professional development opportunities are currently underway. This will allow for regional board members to better understand the potential of their role and the responsibilities the board holds within the workforce system.

In addition to the Core and Partner Programs provided through the various federal acts that contribute to the talent development system, there are a number of state programs provided that can be better integrated so Hoosier citizens and employers have their workforce needs met. Throughout Indiana's Combined Plan, there are a number of strategies aimed at creating this alignment so the system operates effectively and efficiently for those we are serving. In 2018, Governor Holcomb worked with the Indiana General Assembly to create the Governor's Workforce Cabinet with the goal of bringing together state agencies, employers, education and training providers, and other interested stakeholders to break down the bureaucratic silos that existed around some of these programs with the intention of providing opportunities to move all Hoosiers to the "Next Level." Indiana is uniquely positioned to transform the various systems and programs into a singularly unified system, and this Plan is just a first step toward making that a reality. Each of the state agencies responsible for implementing partner programs are included as representatives on the Governor's Workforce Cabinet. Additionally, throughout the development of the Plan, there were three primary subcommittees that provided input and influenced the development of the Plan to be approved by the Governor's Workforce Cabinet. The Strategic Planning subcommittee had representation from the partner programs, and they were each able to discuss how each of those programs could be better supported through more strategic alignment across the talent development system.

There are a number of regional and local programs that also operate within the workforce system and broader talent development system as a whole. By modeling better cross-agency collaboration and program integration at the state level, it is our goal for there to be better awareness and seamless delivery of the various activities and programs for individuals and employers at the local level.

Core Programs: A brief overview of each core program is outlined below. Additional information on each program can be found throughout the plan.

- **Title I – Adult:** Adult services funding are allocated to Indiana's 12 regional Workforce Development Boards and are provided in three categories: basic career services, individualized career services, and follow-up services. Based upon the needs of the individual, the State of Indiana uses the appropriate activities to engage and/or re-engage a person into the workforce system. The adult program is available to anyone 18 years and older, with priority service given to those with barriers to employment (e.g., low income, long-term unemployment, ex-offender, public assistance recipient, etc.).

- **Title I – Dislocated Worker:** Dislocated Workers includes workers that: have been terminated or laid off, or have received a notice of termination or layoff from employment; is eligible for or have exhausted unemployment insurance; have demonstrated an appropriate attachment to the workforce, but is not eligible for unemployment insurance and is unlikely to return to a previous industry or occupation; have been terminated or laid off or received notification of termination or layoff from employment as a result of a permanent closure or substantial layoff; is employed at a facility where the employer has made the general announcement that the facility will close within 180 days; was self-employed (including employment as a farmer, a rancher, or a fisherman) but is unemployed as a result of general economic conditions in the

community or because of a natural disaster; or is a displaced homemaker who is no longer supported by another family member.

- **Title I – In-School Youth:** In-school youth are classified as youth who are attending secondary or postsecondary schools, not younger than the age of 14 and not older than 21 (unless an individual with a disability who is attending school under state law) at time of enrollment. These youth are from low income backgrounds and may be: basic skills deficient, an English language learner, an offender, a homeless individual or runaway, an individual in foster care or who has aged out of the foster care system, or has attained 16 years of age and left foster care for kinship guardianship or adoption, a child eligible for assistance under the social security act, an individual who is pregnant or parenting, an individual with a disability or an individual who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment.

- **Title I – Out-of-School Youth:** Out-of-School youth are classified as youth who are not attending any school (as defined under state law), not younger than 16 nor older than 24 at the time of enrollment. These youth may be a school dropout, a youth who is within the age of compulsory school attendance but has not attended school for at least the most recent complete school year calendar quarter; a recipient of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent who is a low-income individual and is either basic skills deficient or an English language learner; an offender; a homeless individual, a homeless child or youth, or a runaway; an individual in foster care or who has aged out of the foster care system or who has attained 16 years of age and left foster care for kinship guardianship or adoption, a child eligible for assistance under the social security act, or in and out-of- home placement; an individual who is pregnant or parenting; an individual with a disability; or a low-income individual who requires additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment.

- **Title II – Adult Education and Family Literacy Act:** Adult education in Indiana ensure individuals have access to educational and career services. Through foundational skills development, adult education provides the remediation and advancement in academic competencies that allow Hoosiers the prospect of social and economic mobility.

- **Title III – Wagner-Peyser:** Wagner-Peyser funds provide state staff in the WorkOne Career Centers to support job seekers, to provide employer engagement and recruitment services, and to fund the labor exchange/job matching system. Employer services are also provided through an online labor exchange system or through business service staff in the WorkOnes. The goal of the Wagner-Peyser program is to bring together individuals seeking employment with employers seeking workers.

- **Title IV – Vocational Rehabilitation:** Vocational Rehabilitation services provides quality individualized services to enhance and support people with disabilities to prepare for, obtain or retain employment. Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation is a program for high school students and adults with disabilities. VR counselors can help eligible individuals with an identified disability (IEP or a 504 plan or with other physical, mental health, or learning concerns) gain skills, find a job, and start a career.

Partner Programs: A brief overview of each partner program is outlined below. Additional information on each program can be found throughout the plan.

- **Carl D. Perkins:** Career and technical education programs authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical: Carl D. Perkins is a funding pool provided to secondary and post-secondary career and technical education programs. Recipients in Indiana are CTE Districts, Vincennes University, and Ivy Tech Community College.

- **Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA):** TAA assists workers who have been dislocated due to foreign trade impacts. The goal of the TAA program is to help each worker participating in the program obtain suitable employment whenever possible and return to the employment as quickly as possible. The TAA Program provides trade-affected workers with opportunities to obtain the skills, credentials, resources, and support necessary to become reemployed in a good job. Together with its workforce development partners in the one-stop delivery system authorized under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the TAA Program helps retrain, retool, and rebuild the American workforce.

- **Jobs for Veterans State Grant Programs (JVSG):** JVSG funds are provided to states to fund two staff positions: the Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program Specialist (DVOP) and the Local Veterans' Employment Representative (LVER). These positions are fully integrated into the WorkOne offices. The DVOP's role is to provide individualized career services to veterans and other eligible persons with significant barriers to employment (SBE) through case management; the LVER's role is to facilitate employment opportunities and advocate on behalf of veterans with employers.

- **Unemployment Insurance (UI):** In the State of Indiana, an individual is eligible for Unemployment Insurance after submitting a claim through either the internet or through the nearest full service WorkOne Career Center. Information required to complete a claim is the last employer's name, mailing address, phone number, and the dates of employment. Additionally, an individual must submit their address, social security number, and a telephone number.

- **Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP):** The Senior Community Service Employment Program is a community service and work-based job training program for older Americans. Participants must be at least 55 years old, unemployed, and have a family income of no more than 125 percent of the federal poverty level. Enrollment priority is given to veterans and qualified spouses, then to individuals who are over 65 years of age, have a disability, have low literacy skills or limited English proficiency, reside in a rural area, are homeless or at risk of homelessness, have low employment prospects, or have failed to find employment after using services through the WorkOne.

- **Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program:** TANF provides financial assistance to families of need. To receive TANF benefits you must be an in need family with a dependent child (a person under the age of 18, or 18 if a full-time student in secondary school). These individuals/families must meet income requirements which vary dependent on the size of the assistance group. Individuals must meet state

residency, citizenship/immigration status, employment and child support assignment requirements.

- **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP E&T) and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF):** Indiana Manpower Placement and Comprehensive Training (IMPACT) provides services designed to help recipients of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families achieve economic self-sufficiency through education, training, job search and job placement activities. IMPACT offers much more than a job training services because it seeks to address a broad range of barriers that may inhibit individuals from seeking and maintaining employment. Over the next two years, we will evaluate potential duplicative services between IMPACT and our American Job Centers (WorkOnes) for value and outcomes.

State Programs: A brief overview of each state program is outlined below. Additional programs and information on each program can be found throughout the plan.

Next Level Jobs: The 2017 General Assembly approved funds for the Indiana **Workforce Ready Grant** program and the **Employer Training Grant** program. These workforce development programs are part of Governor Eric Holcomb's Next Level Indiana agenda to continue the positive momentum of our state. DWD, in coordination with the Commission for Higher Education (CHE), are working to take the state's workforce to the next level with a focus on high priority industries and the high-demand jobs driving Indiana's 21st century economy forward.

- The **Workforce Ready Grant** program covers tuition costs for students who enroll in a high-value certificate program from Ivy Tech Community College or Vincennes University. Eligible certificate programs are associated with high-demand, high-wage jobs within the following industries: Advanced Manufacturing, Building & Construction, Health & Life Sciences, IT & Business Services and Transportation & Logistics. The Workforce Ready Grant is a last dollar program, and participants may earn non-credit bearing or credit bearing credentials. The ultimate goal of the Workforce Ready Grant program is to allow individuals to enter the workforce along a career pathway at the best possible entry point.
- The **Employer Training Grant** program reimburses employers in high-demand business sectors up to $5,000 for each new employee that is trained, hired and retained for 6 months. There is a $50,000 reimbursement maximum for each employer. Trainee participants must be associated with high-demand, high-wage jobs that require more than a high school diploma, but less than an associate degree.

(B) The Strengths and Weaknesses of Workforce Development Activities. Provide an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the workforce development activities identified in (A), directly above.

Strength #1: The ability to align programs using the unique structure of the Governor's Workforce Cabinet allows for flexibility to adapt to the dynamic economy. In March of 2018, Governor Holcomb submitted to the U.S. Department of Labor a waiver request regarding the membership of Indiana's state workforce board. After actively engaging with state employers, legislators, state agencies, and other key stakeholders, Governor Holcomb requested

the State Workforce Innovative Council be replaced by the Governor's Workforce Cabinet (GWC). The smaller cabinet would consist of 21 members, a majority of whom would be employers, and would include agency leaders from the Department of Education, the Commission for Higher Education, the Department of Workforce Development, the Office of Career Connections and Talent, and the Economic Development Corporation. In June 2018, Governor Holcomb received notification from the U.S. Department of Labor that they would grant the waiver.

As a result of receiving the waiver, the GWC was assigned several responsibilities to continue to move Indiana's workforce system into alignment with the broader talent development system. Naturally, the GWC would oversee WIOA related efforts. However, the GWC was also tasked with evaluating the workforce and education systems, as well as recommending ways for those two systems to work in a more cohesive manner. By bringing together employers and state leaders, assigning specific workforce goals, and granting the GWC the authority to align programs for implementation that will impact Hoosiers across the talent development system, the GWC has been able to move workforce issues forward in a collaborative manner.

Because Indiana is experiencing low unemployment rates, it is important for us to take the necessary steps to ensure Hoosiers have the skills they need to secure good jobs now and into the future while our economy continues to grow. We must take advantage of the current economic conditions to provide Hoosiers with the durable and transferrable skills that will allow them the ability to adapt as technology continues to change the way in which we work.

The uniqueness of the GWC provides an opportunity for our members to be more nimble in their responses to issues facing individuals. The reduced total number of members allows for the GWC to research, discuss, and react at an accelerated rate to the ever changing economy.

Through this greater alignment between employer and state agencies, the GWC has made notable improvements in helping align Indiana's workforce development system:

- The GWC assisted in the launch of the Indiana's Skillful Governor's Coaching Corps. Indiana's Skillful Governor's Coaching Corps, a partnership between Skillful and the State of Indiana, is an intensive program that recognizes the vital role career coaches play to bridge the gap between individuals and employers. Support from career coaches is critical to the economic growth across the state because they help guide professional advancement for thousands of Hoosiers. The Skillful Governor's Coaching Corps gives career coaches the tools and training they need to better serve people in our rapidly changing labor market and to invest in their own personal and professional development. At the end of the program, the coaches recommend new practices and approaches to state policymakers for adoption. The inaugural Skillful Governor's Coaching Corps in Indiana launched on March 18, 2019. The exceptional coaches that make up the Skillful Governor's Coaching Corps hail from workforce centers, community colleges, high schools, and nonprofit organizations from across the state. These cross sector teams are just one example of how we are working to create greater alignment across the entire talent development system.

- Transitioning the Perkins authority to the GWC from a split between three agencies will help ensure that secondary, postsecondary, and employers have input on the Perkins V state plan and will create true alignment among these entities

Strength #2: Indiana currently offers extensive state-supported programs for individuals and employers with a variety of needs. Through public, private, and philanthropic initiatives, Indiana has seen tremendous growth in programs to help develop Hoosiers' skills and talent to adapt to businesses' needs. There are a number of state and federal programs operated by many different state agencies. Through better coordination of these programs, we can reduce redundant services and provide better support to Hoosiers to reach their career aspirations. Below are just a few of the state-supported programs that work in unison to support individuals that participate in the talent development system.

- **Workforce Ready Grants:** The Workforce Ready Grant pays the tuition and mandatory fees for eligible high-value certificate programs at Ivy Tech Community College, Vincennes University or other approved providers. The grant is available for two (2) years and covers up to the number of credits required by the qualifying program. The grant does not cover courses that do not directly apply to the student's certificate program. Program-specific fees and equipment are not covered.

- **Employer Training Grants:** More than one million jobs must be filled in Indiana over the next 10 years. To help Hoosier employers fill these jobs, Indiana has created the Employer Training Grant, which reimburses employers who train, hire, and retain new or incumbent workers to fill in-demand positions within recognized job fields. The Employer Training Grant is available to help fill in-demand positions within six priority sectors. The grant will reimburse employers up to $5,000 per employee who is trained, hired, and retained for six months, up to $50,000 per employer.

- **The Office of Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeships** is located within the Indiana Department of Workforce Development and part of Governor Holcomb's NextLevel Agenda. This office works with employers and education and training providers to develop and implement a framework of various work-based learning pathways for both youth and adult populations. To accomplish this, the office concentrates on three objectives: Coordinating efforts and partnering with the U.S. Department of Labor to expand registered apprenticeships; developing flexible and scalable programs that focus on the state's key economic sectors and regional high-wage, high-demand occupations; and building public-private partnerships to increase business and industry engagement with education systems.

- The **Adult Student Grant** is offered by the Indiana Commission for Higher Education. It aims to help Hoosiers with some college but no degree finish the credential or degree they have previously started. With $7.5 million in state grants plus special incentives and support programs offered by Indiana colleges and universities, You Can. Go Back. makes it easier than ever before for Hoosiers to complete their degree. Options include night, weekend and online classes, grade and debt forgiveness, tuition discounts, and $1,000 state grants available on a first-come, first-serve basis for qualifying Hoosiers.

- **The Last Mile** program prepares incarcerated individuals for successful reentry through business and technology training. The Last Mile's approach is based on the premise that re-entry transitioning individuals must begin training during incarceration, and continued support and training will continue post-release with the end result of gainful employment. Its programs are designed so that participants develop highly marketable personal and professional skills that are relevant and competitive in today's

labor market. The training takes place in two sessions, Track 1 and Track 2. Both training sessions last six months each. Participants are placed into cohorts, leading to a collective environment where peers may encourage one another.

- The **Hoosier Initiative for Re-Entry** (HIRE) program provides employment assessments, financial literacy and budgeting, computer and digital literacy, conflict resolution, resume development, mock interviewing techniques, and job application assistance for incarcerated individuals prior to their release. HIRE covers all 92 counties in Indiana with 14 offices across the State of Indiana. HIRE's year to date statistics show a 99% participant retention rate, 1,332 businesses engaged with the program, and 12,880 job placements for ex-offenders.
- The **Local Career Coaching Grants** provide an opportunity for schools (K-12 and postsecondary), employers, and community-based organizations to partner together to create a sustainable system for the delivery of: local, state, and national career information; the educational attainment levels needed for those careers; and provide students and adults with an opportunity to participate in experiential learning throughout their education and training to make well-informed decisions as to how to best move toward a path of economic prosperity. The ultimate goal of a sustained career coaching model is to increase the following: postsecondary attainment rates (e.g., industry-recognized credential, technical certificate, associates, bachelor's degrees, and beyond), number of high-wage/high-demand jobs filled, and the average annual wages of the communities that apply.
- **Jobs for American's Graduates (JAG)** is a state-based national non-profit organization devoted to averting secondary school aged students who have serious barriers to graduation and employment from dropping out. Governor Holcomb currently serves on the National Board of Directors for Jobs for America's Graduates and is a staunch advocate of the program. Governor Holcomb has called for the expansion of JAG programs across the state, serving those most at risk of not reaching their high school diploma milestone.

Strength #3: Indiana's philanthropic and sectoral partnership landscape presents extensive opportunities to partner and support Hoosier citizens and employers reach their goals. In addition to state and federal programs, the presence of local, regional, state, and national philanthropic organizations provides Indiana an opportunity to leverage public-private-philanthropic partnerships in a way few other state can. This provides Indiana the ability to better understand national best practices, innovate through pilot programs, and braid resources to scale promising practices. This allows for Hoosiers across the state, regardless if the live in rural, suburban, and urban areas, additional opportunities to receive the supports necessary to better their lives.

Indiana is also home to a thriving community of collaborative employers at both the state and local level. Through a better use of these sector partnerships, we can help identify employer needs in a more responsive manner to adjust the tools, resources, and education and training programs to reduce future skill gaps. The GWC provides these organizations with a single entry point into the talent development system. As the GWC continues to evolve, we hope to strengthen existing relationships with these organizations as well as forge new ones.

Below are just a few of the organizations that we work with to strengthen the talent development system across the state.

- **TheLumina Foundation** is an independent, private foundation in Indianapolis that is committed to making opportunities for learning beyond high school available to all. The foundation envisions a system that is easy to navigate, delivers fair results, and meets the nation's need for talent through a broad range of credentials. Working with governmental, nonprofit, and private-sector organizations to bring about change, Lumina relies on communications outreach, meetings, and events that engage and mobilize people, state and federal policy outreach, investments in proven and promising practices, and targeted efforts to measure and evaluate progress. Through extensive and abundant research and evidence, the Lumina Foundation believes that in order to increase postsecondary attainment to the levels needed by the State, a robust group of partners must work together to build an equitable postsecondary learning system.

- **Conexus Indiana** was founded by a group of industry leaders and part of the Central Indiana Corporate Partnership (CICP). Conexus maintains and grows Indiana's competitive advantage as a global advanced manufacturing powerhouse and logistics hub. Since 2007, Conexus Indiana has engaged thousands of industry, academic, public-sector and philanthropic leaders to develop skilled talent, as well as identify and create opportunities for future business growth. Conexus has developed and delivered several programs, such as high school curriculum, internship programs, and convened industry councils to move the needle forward in the manufacturing industry.

- **Credential Engine** aims to ensure the economic stability and prosperity of Indiana. Through analyzing the workforce needs of Indiana employers, as well as the skills necessary for individuals to find living-wage employment, Credential Engine provides the foundation for important tools for both employers and students to obtain the information they need to make strategic decisions about credential and career pathways. One of the most important aspects of Credential Engine has been construction of agreed-upon competencies between postsecondary institutions. This has led to a statewide general education core, where, if a student earns the required courses, those courses are accepted to any state postsecondary institution.

- **Skillful Indiana** is a partnership between Skillful and the state of Indiana. This partnership provides an intensive program that recognizes the vital role career coaches play bridging the gap between individuals and employers, supporting economic growth across the state, and guiding professional advancement for thousands of Hoosiers. The Skillful Governor's Coaching Corps gives coaches the tools and training they need to better serve people in our rapidly changing labor market and to invest in their own personal and professional development. At the end of the program, the coaches recommend new practices and approaches to state policymakers for adoption. The inaugural Skillful Governor's Coaching Corps in Indiana launched on March 18, 2019. The exceptional coaches that make up the Skillful Governor's Coaching Corps hail from workforce centers, community colleges, high schools, and nonprofit organizations from across the state.

  In addition to the services being provided to the individual, Skill Indiana also has established a robust resource for career coaches to access. Through interactive digital training webinars, to a community of best practice online communication tool, Skillful is

connecting those providing the services with the resources and supports necessary to perform their responsibilities at the highest level.

- **Central Indiana Community Foundation** has stated their mission is to mobilize people, ideas, and investments to make this a community where all individuals have equitable opportunity to reach their full potential. The foundation has existed for more than 100 years. In that time, they have created lasting and truly meaningful change in (central) Indiana. The continue to study and focus on: the growing gap between the affluent and the poor; the ability for children to move out of poverty or do better than his or her parents; and, how a person's race has a profound impact on whether he or she has access to opportunities.

  CICF administers two general grant application rounds during May and November of each year. During these open application windows, eligible 501(c)(3) organizations may submit a request for consideration. Each request submitted will be assigned to a community leadership officer, assessed and then aligned with the fund or funds deemed most appropriate for consideration. These may include community endowed funds, donor-advised funds, field-of-interest funds or major funds held at CICF. Alignment will be determined by staff and only after an application has been fully completed and submitted for consideration.

- The **Center of Excellence in Leadership of Learning** (CELL) at the University of Indianapolis is a leader in partnering with secondary and postsecondary schools to provide early college models for students. The Center of Excellence in Leadership of Learning at the University of Indianapolis provides leadership that is both cutting-edge and action-oriented. CELL currently has a network of 90 high schools across the state trained in the Early College model and in varying degrees of implementation. CELL is establishing a Rural Early College Network (RECN) through a federal Education Innovation and Research (EIR) program administered by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Elementary and Secondary Education. The RECN will help rural Indiana schools more quickly implement the Early College (EC) high school model. Early College targets underserved students and allows them to earn both high school diplomas and up to two years of credits toward bachelor's or associate degrees through rigorous dual credit classes supported by wrap-around services. The GWC is partnering with CELL to help align secondary and postsecondary CTE programs as another example of early college.

- **Goodwill of Central & Southern Indiana – The Excel Center's** mission is to change lives every day by empowering people to increase their independence and reach their potential through education, health, and employment. The Excel Center is operated by Goodwill Education Initiatives, Inc., a not-for-profit organization formed by Goodwill of Central & Southern Indiana. Recognizing that nearly a half million working-age Hoosiers lack a high school diploma, Goodwill opened The Excel Center for adults in 2010. The Excel Center is a tuition-free public high school for adults offering an Indiana Core 40 high school diploma.

  There are currently six locations in Indianapolis — W. Michigan Street, The Meadows, Shadeland, W. 34th Street, University Heights and Decatur — and one location each in Anderson, Bloomington, Clarksville, Kokomo, Lafayette, Muncie, Noblesville, Shelbyville and Richmond. Students at The Excel Center have "coaches" who help address challenges with transportation, child care, health and family situations —

circumstances that can hinder progress in school. Free child care is provided on-site for the young children of students while they are in class. The Excel Center's locations are open year-round, mornings through evenings

- **CommunityHealth Network** provides an opportunity for individuals to train for, and be hired, through their bachelor of science in nursing program. Community Health allows for some flexibility with the program, as well as opportunities for individuals to gain real-world experience within the health profession. Students who complete the program may be eligible for additional opportunities to further their education in the health care field in a variety of increased responsibility roles.

Weakness #1: Limited collaboration of programs across the workforce and social services systems.

In many cases, program staff serving individuals do not have programmatic knowledge on services outside of their office or agency. We must create a better referral system. This leads to duplication of services and inefficiencies for both the individual and the state as a whole. The Governor's Workforce Cabinet (GWC), among other responsibilities, was established to evaluate various state and federal programs, with a focus on breaking down silos, braiding funding streams to best serve the individual, and to eliminate duplicative services. Stemming from the research and analyzation of the programs, the GWC will be researching other approaches used by States and local areas for return on investment models . Through consistent and perpetual evaluation, frank discussions of programs that need to be expanded and shared as best practices and those that need to be eliminated, Indiana is working towards eliminated this weakness. Most importantly, through this exercise, Indiana will be better prepared to provide the educational, occupational, and support services Hoosiers need.

Weakness #2: Insufficient awareness of potential programs and services available for Hoosiers. There are many programs available to individuals in need of a variety of services. While access is readily available, knowledge of the programs or users' ability to engage effectively is greatly lacking. Indiana has not communicated the rapid change in the economy, and the necessity for life-long learning for employment to the extent it is needed. Purposeful engagement with employers is another weakness within this category. Employers have often relayed to the state their lack of specific skilled workforce and communication with the state to prepare the workforce for current and future needs. Indiana has responded with state programs, but has not yet been able to convey the information to all employers who may not be aware of such programing. Listening to local business and representatives within the communities and bringing those ideas to leadership will expand the ability to utilize and change systems to fit the needs expressed by individuals and by business.

Weakness #3: Concentration on the traditional talent pipeline. There are many methods Indiana could utilize to serve the needs of all Hoosiers. Methods of recruitment and training have remained consistent without thinking about the future of work and what individuals need to be prepared for a flexible, fast changing economy where life-long learning is a necessity for all.

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

Through the alignment that is proposed throughout this Plan, the state seeks to create more capacity for the state and local providers to better serve Hoosiers. By better integrating state and federal programs and funding streams, there is an opportunity to grow the capacity of the

entire talent development system to implement this plan. Through the leadership of Governor Holcomb and the Indiana General Assembly, the creation of the Governor's Workforce Cabinet provides greater opportunities for cross-agency collaboration and capacity building. The partnership that exists amongst the agencies that sit on the GWC, as well as other state agencies and community organizations, helps ensure there are ample opportunities to deliver the services outlined throughout this plan. This includes continued conversations around the alignment of SNAP Employment and Training services delivered through our Family and Social Services Administration and the workforce system. Utilizing the Guiding Principles to work toward the Mission and Vision that the GWC has set forth allows for these partnerships to strengthen as we work toward implementing the bold initiatives and goals outlined throughout this plan.

B. STATE STRATEGIC VISION AND GOALS

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

1. VISION

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

2. GOALS

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

(A) Goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including preparing youth and individuals with barriers to employment[8] and other populations.[9]

(B) Goals for meeting the skilled workforce needs of employers.

[8] Individuals with barriers to employment include displaced homemakers; low-income individuals; Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians; individuals with disabilities, including youth who are individuals with disabilities; older individuals; ex-offenders; homeless individuals, or homeless children and youths; youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system; individuals who are English language learners, individuals who have low levels of literacy, and individuals facing substantial cultural barriers; eligible migrant and seasonal farmworkers (as defined at section 167(i) of WIOA and Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 35-14); individuals within 2 years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program; single parents (including single pregnant women); and long-term unemployed individuals.

[9] Veterans, unemployed workers, and youth and any other populations identified by the State.

3. PERFORMANCE GOALS

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

4. ASSESSMENT

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

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.[1] 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.

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

(A) Goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including preparing youth and individuals with barriers to employment[8] and other populations.[9]

(B) Goals for meeting the skilled workforce needs of employers.

In order to realize our vision, we must develop and inspire a culture of lifelong learning that provides each Hoosier the opportunity to obtain quality employment, career sustainability, and upward mobility. Recognizing the various interests of Hoosiers and economic needs of our state, Indiana strives to create an adaptable talent development system that can adjust depending on a Hoosier's needs and the fluctuations of the economy.

Indiana's two overarching targets for its talent development system are:

1. By 2025, at least 60% of Hoosiers will have attained a quality credential beyond a high school diploma;[2] and
2. Engagement between employers and state and local agencies will increase to identify and address the skills gaps with greater responsivity and efficiency.

To reach those targets, Indiana sets forth the following goals for its talent development system:

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. Another important component of meeting individual needs is to recognize diversity and equity, including accessibility of services and systems. All partner programs will take tangible steps to identify gaps and strategies to improve upon inclusive service delivery of all Hoosiers, including those in racial or ethnic minority groups and individuals with disabilities.

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, including Hoosiers who experience additional barriers to employment such as those with disabilities, 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 siloes to better empower our Workforce Development Boards, outreach personnel, and local partners. Staff cross training is vital as we progress toward the goal of system integration. An example of this is DWD/VR collaboration to cross train staff, including VR case managers, co-located VR navigators within the WorkOne/AJCs, WorkOne Case Managers, and AE Career Coaches in serving individuals with disabilities.

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 and school to work transition for students, including students with disabilities, 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. For example, DWD already enters VR employers in our client relationship management (CRM) system. We plan to analyze the data already being collected on VR employers as a method to inform program alignment. 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.

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. Over the next several years the State will explore models of return on investment (ROI) that other states and local areas use.

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 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.

Target Populations [3]

To ensure all Hoosiers can attain economic mobility over the next generation, we must ensure our system has equity embedded in its processes. Equity requires that a person's life circumstances or obstacles should not dictate his/her opportunity to succeed, as well as the recognition that certain subpopulations have historically faced greater barriers and obstacles to educational achievement and economic prosperity than others. Creating a more equitable talent development system necessitates us to focus resources to counteract the systemic values that have caused lower postsecondary attainment, career sustainability, and economic mobility for certain groups of Hoosiers. We must recognize the diverse populations and corresponding needs served by the state's workforce system, including those who are unemployed or underemployed, those seeking additional education to advance their careers, and those facing barriers to employment. Some Hoosiers will pass through the system with minimal support, while others will require multiple resources. In order to reach our targets for postsecondary attainment and employer engagement, identifying specific populations, like those listed below, that require additional supports will be crucial. As well, ensuring there is equitable access to the

talent development system will concretize the expectation of greater economic mobility throughout Indiana.

Our targeted populations include:

- Low-income individuals; [4]
- Veterans and eligible spouses;
- Unemployed individuals;[5]
- Individuals needing to be upskilled and reskilled;[6]
- Ex-offenders;
- Individuals with disabilities;
- Historically underrepresented minorities;[7]
- Urban populations;
- Rural populations;
- At-risk youth;[8] and
- Adults without a high school diploma and/or with basic skills deficiency.[9]

We recognize that one individual may fall into multiple populations based upon his or her life circumstances. These are not intended to be siloed groups, for many of these populations have overlapping factors and characteristics. The intersectionality of our target populations is an important recognition in how we integrate our workforce and social services across the system.

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

WIOA mandates six performance measures for its Core Programs. Performance measures are calculated using the following methodology:

- Second Quarter Employment after Exit – Measures the percentage of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program. For youth, the measure also includes the percentage who were in education or training activities during the second quarter after exit.
- Fourth Quarter Employment after Exit – Measures the percentage of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program. For youth, the measure also includes the percentage who were in education or training activities during the fourth quarter after exit.
- Median Earnings for Second Quarter after Exit – Measures the median earnings of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program.
- Credential Attainment Rate – Measures the percentage of participants who obtained a recognized postsecondary credential or a secondary school diploma, or its recognized equivalent, during participation in or within one year of exit from the program.

- Measurable Skill Gains – Measures the percentage of participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains, which are defined as documented academic, technical, occupational, or other forms of progress toward such a credential or employment.
- Effectiveness in Serving Employers – Measures the state workforce system's effectiveness in serving employers by evaluating the employee retention, employer penetration, and repeat business customer rates.

Indiana's expected performance levels are found in Appendix 1.

To achieve Goals 2 and 4 above, Indiana intends on applying the WIOA performance metrics beyond the Core Programs to include both the Partner and state programs in our Combined Plan. Through shared performance goals and targets, we aim to integrate all of our programs better and more accurately measure effectiveness. While the Partner Programs have statutory metrics they must meet, we intend on reporting the data from the metrics above for them, as well. Applying these metrics more broadly to encompass our Partner and state programs will not be for federal accountability, but to allow Indiana to compare the effectiveness of our programs at the state-level. State reporting will include the following programs:

- Carl D. Perkins;
- SNAP E&T;
- TANF;
- Jobs for Veterans;
- SCSEP;
- Unemployment Insurance;
- TAA; and
- Indiana's Next Level Jobs – Workforce Ready Grants and Employer Training Grants.

For Indiana to achieve Goal 4 and maximize our investments, we recognize that we must go above and beyond the WIOA data points. While these data help us understand the basic levels of performance for our programs, we will include additional data to ensure we are portraying a holistic picture. We will capture data that help our state understand the effectiveness of a program at various stages, rather than merely completion at the end. To the extent possible, we will streamline data-gathering definitions and tools for all programs through the Management Performance Hub. These data will encompass early indicators of success, performance goals upon completion, and longitudinal goals after a program. Overall, Indiana will include the following measurements to determine each of our program's effectiveness:

Outcome Timeline	Measurement
Immediate Outcomes	• Total enrollment in a program • Co-enrollment in supportive programs, as needed • Regular participation of individuals

Outcome Timeline	Measurement

	• Percentage of individuals that disengage from a program without completing or earning a credential
	• Earning short-term certifications or completing employability skills trainings
	• An individual's steps towards employment:
	  ○ Obtaining a job of 20+ hours per week
	  ○ Moving into full-time work (40 hours per week)
	  ○ Receiving employer-sponsored benefits
	Moving from a low-wage job to middle-wage job

Intermediate Outcomes	• Second Quarter Employment after Exit • Fourth Quarter Employment after Exit • Median Earnings for Second Quarter after Exit • Credential Attainment Rate • Measurable Skill Gains • Effectiveness in Serving Employers (including the number of employers taking advantage of the Work Opportunity Tax Credit)
Longitudinal Outcomes	• Job retention for individuals at years 1 and 3 post-program: Disaggregated by those who disengaged, completed, and earned a credential from a program • Upward economic mobility of individuals (e.g., decreased use of government benefits) upon exit from a program and at years 1 and 3 post-program ○ Examining how many participants reach (or maintain) the Self-Sufficiency Standard[1] • Re-enrollment rates of individuals in the same program • Growth of labor participation rates of target populations • Wage gains by target populations [1]

Outcome Timeline	Measurement
	The Self-Sufficiency Standard calculates how much income families of various sizes and compositions need to make ends meet without public or private assistance. This will vary based on family size and geographic location. (The Indiana Institute For Working Families, 2016).

For each of the data points above, Indiana will disaggregate the programs by subgroups, including race/ethnicity, gender, disability status, and socioeconomic status (e.g., those eligible for SNAP and/or TANF). Once baselines are set for each of the data points above in both the aggregate and then disaggregated by subgroups, Indiana will be able to reevaluate the effectiveness of its programs and how well it is serving Hoosiers with the greatest needs.

Some programs may have more flexibility with meeting these outcomes than others due to the differences in mission and populations served. For example, the following programs will have to adapt these measures to suit their purposes:

- Vocational Rehabilitation will adjust the metric evaluating an individual's steps towards employment given the varying needs of those they serve. This includes those who maintain employment through VR's assistive technologies or adaptive aids and devices to those who enter the workforce more broadly.
- WIOA Youth will include either part or full-time enrollment in its 2nd or 4th quarter employment after exit data.
- For English Learners, measurable skill gains can include any advancement towards proficiency in English.
- For SNAP and TANF, employer services may not be applicable. This, instead, may be captured by the data for the WIOA Core Programs.

We intend to use the data points above for program management and improvement, in addition to holding our programs accountable for the impact they provide. Through these comprehensive measures of effectiveness, we can more accurately determine causation and effectiveness of our programs. Understanding these data points will allow us to also pinpoint best practices and areas needing improvement in a more robust way. By expanding the data we examine as a state, we can perform longer term analyses of our programs.

In addition to the Performance Goals above, Indiana's Commission for Higher Education will assess and report on the following data aligned to our Vision:

1. **Educational Attainment[11]**

- Measured by progress toward at least 60% of Hoosiers having a quality credential beyond a high school diploma, assessing
    - Postsecondary-Going Rate
    - On-Time Postsecondary Completion Rate
    - 6-Year Postsecondary Completion Rate

- Adult Learner Completion Rates

Update for 2022

Metric 1: Education Attainment

	2019	2020	2021
Postsecondary-Going Rate	63% (2017)	61% (2018)	59% (2019)
On-Time Postsecondary Completion Rate	41%	42%	44.4%
6-Year Postsecondary Completion Rate	62% (2018)	62% (2019)	63.6% (2020)
6-Year Adult Learner Completion Rates	35%	35%	36%*

**35.7 percent of adults (25+) earned a certificate, associate or bachelor's within 6 years of starting.*

- 2. **Career Relevance and Preparation**
- Measured by progress toward 100% of postsecondary programs requiring an internship, work-based learning, research project, or other student engagement experience that has career relevance

Update for 2022

Metric 2: Career Relevance and Preparation

	2019	2020	2021
Career Relevance Required	X	78%	TBD
Career Relevance Incorporate (not required)	X	90%	TBD

- **3. Economic Impact**
- Measured by progress toward Indiana becoming a leading Midwest state for median household income

1. By 2025: Above Average in Peer States
2. By 2030: Top 5 in Peer States

Update for 2022

Metric 3: Economic Impact

	2019	2020	2021
Median Household Income	$62,078	$64,941	TBD
Ranking in the Midwest	10/13	10/13	TBD

One of the primary metrics Indiana will use to assess the overall effectiveness of the workforce development system is examining each program's return on investment, per Goal 4 above. While it is critical to understand the state's return on investment (ROI) financially in its programs, we must also comprehensively examine data from both the individual's and employer's vantage point. As outlined in Strategy 4.4 below, Indiana will look to models of ROI used by other State and local areas to determine ROI. One approach that may be considered is outlined below:

- Through comparing the outcomes of those who complete a program to those who disengage from a program, what is the difference in impact on the investment long-term?
    - Comparing those who disengage from a program with those who complete, what are the long-term benefits (e.g., what are the wages of those who disengage versus those who complete)?
    - From a prevention standpoint, how many at-risk youth that received benefits during K-12 and participated in our programs are no longer receiving government benefits? How does that compare to those at-risk youth who did not participate in our programs?
    - Is an individual making progress towards economic sustainability, even if they are not completely off government benefits (e.g., earning a CCDF voucher versus TANF cash assistance; moving off of traditional Medicaid; or using the proposed HIP Workforce Bridge program)?
    - Do the savings recover the costs of the program? What are the long-term savings from individuals completing this program?
    - Is the program preventing a negative economic change for an individual (e.g., VR providing assistive technologies or adaptive aids and devices)? If so, what is the cost savings from this preventative service versus if the service had not occurred?
    - Could the program provide future revenue (e.g., taxable income versus reliance on government benefits)?
    - Does this intervention cost less to administer than a remedial service (e.g., incarceration costs and government benefits)?
    - Are there social capital savings from a program (e.g., reduced recidivism, substance abuse, homelessness, chronic health conditions, etc.)?
- Has this program helped an individual to become socially and economically mobile upon exit and also 1, 3, and 5 years post-program?
    - Is the individual employed upon exit and also 1, 3, and 5 years post-program?
    - What is the sustainability of this job (e.g., automation risk, longevity, trajectory along a career pathway?)
    - Is the person no longer relying on government benefits, such as SNAP, TANF, subsidized housing, or Medicaid?
    - Is the person accessing a career in an advanced industry?

    - Is the person in a career that is sustainable and meaningful?
    - Is the individual seeing an improvement in his or her life? Does s/he feel like s/he has more opportunities to achieve his/her goals?
- Is this program scaling its efforts to the target populations?
    - Is there equitable access to this program? Is it engaging groups that have been disproportionately served by government benefits?
    - Is it reducing the gap of those currently disengaged in the labor market?
    - Is it scaling success from positive outliers and/or outcomes?
    - Are our target populations enrolling, persisting, and completing?
    - What are the opportunities within certain career pathways offered through a program?
- Is the employer experiencing positive changes and improvements from a particular program?
    - Is the talent pipeline improving and increasing?
    - Is the skills gap diminishing? Is it easier to fill open positions?
    - Is it easier to attract and retain talent?
    - Is there less reliance on temporary workers? Is there less turnover in workers?
    - Have training costs decreased? Has production increased?

In order to assess the return on investment for each of our Core, Partner, and state programs, Indiana must complete, assess, and continually improve the following steps:

1. **Data sharing.** Data sharing is the basic first step we must take to understand the correlation between our programs and improvements for Hoosiers. Amongst those agencies on the GWC, we need to institute a data charter, allowing data to be cross-referenced and analyzed by the Indiana Management Performance Hub (MPH). One critical piece of this step is MPH determining the overlap of populations between the Combined Plan programs (as well as other related programs, like child support through the Department of Child Services, subsidized housing through the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority, and Medicaid through the Family and Social Services Agency), so that we will understand who we are serving, where we are serving them, and through what programs. We will begin with correlating state-level data across our agencies, with a longer term step of including county-level data. One barrier Indiana faces in creating interagency data charters is federal restrictions around data sharing. We will leverage Governor Holcomb's work and leadership on the White House's American Workforce Policy Advisory Board to address the federal challenges and facilitate greater data sharing between our agencies.
2. **Co-enrollment.** Once we know the intersection of our populations within our programs, we can improve how individuals are co-enrolled into programs, which will serve as a proxy for braiding funds until we have a common case management system. Additionally, we can track our co-enrollment rates between core, partner, and state

programs. Individuals must meet eligibility requirements to be co-enrolled in programs and can opt out of enrolling in a program

3. **Co-location.** As Indiana works to increase the co-location of its services by physically and virtually embedding local program managers and staff into various offices and community hubs, we can begin to understand and improve the effectiveness of our customer service. We can track: wait times, waitlists, enrollment increases, speed of referrals, and quality of referrals and case management (e.g., scheduling appointments, co-enrollment in multiple programs, and persistence and completion rates of co-enrollment).

4. **Cross-training.** To facilitate co-enrollment and enhance co-location, we must increase our cross-training and professional development of state, local, and frontline staff. This strategy is central to successful integration of our programs across agencies. To begin, we will prioritize cross-training SNAP, TANF, all core WIOA programs, and federal and state financial aid opportunities, focusing on eligibility requirements and allowances. We want to start cross-training our staff from the state-level to those on the front lines in these programs first because these present the biggest opportunity to address and coordinate overlapping programs and funding. These efforts will be led by the administrative agencies. Each agency will track the availability of professional development opportunities, including in-person, successive modules, webinars, and workshops for each program. Additionally, they will track the completion of those opportunities. Completion data will then be cross-referenced through co-enrollment rates in the various programs. We will also increase cross-training and onboarding for members of local Workforce Boards regarding Core and Partner Programs for them to better understand the talent development ecosystem. Cross-trainings for Boards may also encompass community programs and partners that are critical to addressing the barriers of our target populations.

5. **Employer engagement.** In order to see the growth of labor participation by our target populations, we need to work with our Hoosier businesses to see the benefits of non-traditional hiring practices. Through both expanded work-based learning partnerships and showcasing best practices with unconventional talent development approaches from other employers, we can start to shift the mindsets of all our employers regarding how to engage with our target populations.

Assessing the data points for each step above will enable us to ascertain the returns on investment for each of our programs. It will also allow us to increase our program management and improvement effectiveness by understanding our programs more systemically. If we see gaps in referrals, inconsistencies in enrollment, varying persistence in programs, or low completion rates – in either the aggregate or by target population – we can institute root cause analyses to understand where there is a programmatic breakdown. As well, we can also find areas of success and proofs of concept that can serve as exemplars for improvements.

As we begin to analyze longitudinal data cross-referenced by programs and benefits, we can begin answering those questions geared at determining the long-term benefits and effectiveness of each program for the individual, employer, and state. Once we develop a baseline, we can change our approach in serving our constituents or in our programmatic investments based upon data. We can also more efficiently identify the best practices occurring in the field to share, scale, and expand upon, in addition to detecting those areas needing improvement. We do not want any of our programs or approaches to be static and unchanging; to the contrary, we want to continually improve how we serve Hoosiers based on annual data reports from the state on

both the performance goals and longitudinal data. By continuously assessing our investments and if we are reaping financial and social long-term benefits from them, we expect to modify and amend our Combined Plan. Indiana seeks to minimize that timespan to an annual review of our programs answering those questions above. Based on those answers regarding each program's return on investment, we hope to submit amendments, as needed, building and scaling successes annually.

[1] The Stanford Center on Poverty and Inequality defines income mobility as, "A child's chance of moving up in the income distribution relative to her parents" (Economic Mobility, 2015).

[2] The 60% attainment goal was adopted from the Lumina Foundation. Indiana's current attainment rate is at 48.3% (Indiana Commission for Higher Education, October 2019. Reaching Higher in a State of Change; Lumina Foundation, A Stronger Nation: Indiana.).

[3] Under WIOA, low-income individuals and veterans are given priority of service. Our target populations enumerate other groups that may also need prioritization to help ensure equitable access to our state, federal, and philanthropic education and training programs and associated wraparound supports.

[4] Individuals eligible for SNAP benefits and/or individuals within two years of exhausted TANF eligibility.

[5] Long-term unemployed, homeless individuals, and Migrant/Seasonal farmworkers.

[6] Underemployed individuals, seniors, single parents, dislocated workers, and displaced homemakers.

[7] This is a term adapted from US Code Title 20 that defines racial and ethnic populations that have been historically underrepresented in disproportionate percentages in higher education. This includes African-Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans.

[8] Includes in-school (ages 14 to 22) and out-of-school (ages 16 to 24) low-income youth, foster youth, homeless youth, English Learners, a youth deficient in basic skills, juvenile offender, pregnant and/or parenting youth, and youth with disabilities.

[9] Includes English Learners, immigrants, and refugees.

[10] The Self-Sufficiency Standard calculates how much income families of various sizes and compositions need to make ends meet without public or private assistance. This will vary based on family size and geographic location. (The Indiana Institute For Working Families, 2016).

[11] Indiana uses data from the Census Bureau to track its postsecondary attainment. Currently, these metrics includes only 2- and 4-year degrees earned by adults 25 to 64-years-old. The Commission for Higher Education is considering a revised method to capture the following data in our attainment: adults 18 to 24-years-old and a wider array of credential types (e.g., industry-recognized certifications, long- and short-term workforce certificates, non-credit certificates and apprenticeships).

C. STATE STRATEGY

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

above. Include discussion of specific strategies to address the needs of populations provided in Section (a).

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

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

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

(1) Describe the strategies the State will implement, including sector strategies and career pathways, as required by WIOA section 101(d)(3)(B), (D). "Career pathway" is defined at WIOA section 3(7). "In-demand industry sector or occupation" is defined at WIOA Section 3(23).

The GWC staff held a Listening Tour in each of Indiana's 12 workforce regions during the beginning stages of the development of the Plan. some of the common themes that emerged included the need to co-locate more services to reduce barriers for Hoosiers and the importance of considering common barriers, such as childcare and transportation, when trying to reach individuals with education and training services. Additionally, the importance of better external communication to ensure Hoosiers are aware of programs available to them and better internal communication across agencies to lessen duplication of services and ensure various funding streams are being used most effectively was brought up repeatedly. The Listening Tour concluded before beginning to draft the Plan, allowing for the state to identify those common themes and work to incorporate that feedback heard from local regions directly into our Goals and Strategies.

Indiana's Skillful Governor's Coaching Corps served as another valuable source of feedback in developing the Plan, as well. The Coaching Corps is an intensive program that recognizes the vital role of career coaches play in the talent development system and works to give them the tools and training they need to best serve individuals. Indiana is one of only two states to adopt this program, which selects a diverse mixture of individuals from public workforce centers, adult educational institutions, K-12 schools, and non-profits from all 12 Indiana workforce regions each year. At the end of the year-long program, coaches have the opportunity to recommend new policies and practices to state leaders. Common themes from the coach's presentations to state policymakers were the importance of additional training for career

coaches and the need to reduce "red tape" for individuals through a simplified intake system and the lessening of redundancy between organizations.

Our goals and targets are oriented towards supporting Hoosiers attain a quality credential beyond a high school diploma. Based upon our labor market information, we know that the attainment of a quality credential beyond high school is the clearest path for individuals to access more advanced career opportunities and for the state to have the talent necessary to build a more diversified workforce and economy. Additionally, we need our talent development system to strategically coordinate resources of the public, philanthropic, and private sectors to create new solutions to economic challenges. Through multiple meetings among interested partners and stakeholders, the following critical strategies were identified to implement the state's goals.

Goal 1. Focus on meeting the individual needs of Hoosiers.

Immediate Strategies implemented by 2020.

Changed from 2020 to 2021; strategy completed

Strategy 1.1: Indiana will develop career pathways that have multiple points of entry mapping towards a trajectory for career advancement and sustainability. These career pathways will be scaffolded to have a sequence of valuable, stackable credentials that signify crucial skill development. Each of our priority sectors will have career pathways that correspond with middle-skills jobs. Our career pathways will be proactive in preparing people for potential economic shifts. Ensuring our credentials are stackable and aligned to career prospects will allow these pathways to respond to immediate needs and to adjust to the longer term economic forecast.

Update/Progress: Indiana has spent the past two years redesigning the career pathways that are a part of the state's Career and Technical Education system. The state has redesigned 66 pathways that now have multiple exit points for learners to begin their career or matriculate to postsecondary education with a reduced time to complete. Throughout 2020 and the spring of 2021, 53 of the 66 pathways were redesigned and then made available for students to begin using in the 2021 – 2022 school year. The remaining 13 pathways will become available for use in the 2022 – 2023 school year. These redesigned pathways are more intentionally designed to align to degree programs at the state's two Perkins-eligible postsecondary institutions, Ivy Tech Community College and Vincennes University.

This redesign was a primary component of Indiana's Combined Plan submission in 2020 and was highlighted by AdvanceCTE as a "Promising Practice." The redesign is also aligned with one of Indiana's key state-funded workforce programs, the Next Level Jobs Workforce Ready Grant. Now that these programs are available for secondary and postsecondary students, the state intends to focus on integrating these programs more intentionally in adult education programs to ensure better alignment across the entire education and workforce continuum.

<u>Short-term strategies implemented by the end of 2022:</u>

Strategy 1.2: Indiana will develop and implement a comprehensive communications plan to raise awareness regarding the long-term career benefits and multiple options to pursuing postsecondary education and lifelong learning.

2022 Update/Progress: Shortly after the Governor's Workforce Cabinet approved the state's Combined Plan, *A Better Future for Every Hoosier*, the nation and world were impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, the Governor along with education and workforce leaders across the state launched the state's *Rapid Recovery for a Better Future* plan (Rapid Recovery Plan) in June 2020. Part of this plan included the establishment of the YourNextStepIN.org website utilizing philanthropic dollars awarded to the state to help develop and launch a communications campaign regarding the connectedness between education and careers. On the website, individuals can access a number of resources regarding education, workforce, and social service supports. At the same time, Indiana leveraged CARES Act funding through the state's Economic Relief Taskforce to promote initiatives within the Rapid Recovery Plan through numerous communication channels.

The state has embarked upon trying to better understand how to communicate the value of lifelong learning and how quality credentials beyond a high school diploma connect to careers. This has been done in part because of growing shifts in the attitude of some individuals toward the value of postsecondary education through the pandemic. As such, Indiana is revisiting strategies that were developed for a broad communication campaign prior to the pandemic and will be moving some of those strategies forward throughout 2022 and the remainder of the state plan implementation.

Strategy 1.3: We will increase the co-enrollment of those served into applicable social and talent development programs to address the associated costs of higher education and training and supportive services.

Completion Date Updated To 2023

- The first step in this strategy is to run data matches between various programs and agencies to identify a common client base and the current percentage of co-enrollment of Hoosiers. This will require interagency Memoranda of Understanding (Strategy 2.2). Using that information, we can identify priority programs to increase co-enrollment.

Update/Progress: To increase co-enrollment, DWD developed strategic communications to target unemployment insurance customers and specific types of engagement that might be helpful to assist the claimant on their pathway back to work. Resources like Adult Education, training, and job search where strategically shared to engage participants based on their needs

Regional partners at the local level continue to work to establish robust relationships with FSSA as we continue to work towards co-enrollment strategies. Regional partners have engaged in cross training of services to increase knowledge base and share in workforce development strategy development through ongoing partner meetings and collaborations.

Co-enrollment across Wagner Peyser, WIOA Adult, WIOA Dislocated Worker (DLW), and TAA is already established. Similarly, co-enrollment strategies across homeless Veterans' programming, Wagner Peyser, WIOA Adult, WIOA DLW, and JVSG are also established practices.

Title II partners at both the State and local Workforce Board levels have established relationships with the school systems in their areas to refer and deliver services to students exiting without a secondary diploma. Implementation of HB 1313 has begun. The legislation focuses on DWD doing outreach to all high school completers with alternative diplomas from 2007 forward. This population will be educated on the training and services available to them to enter or advance in the workforce.

Virtual Services and technology are paving the way for better and more seamless referrals and coordination between partners, programs and resources. These virtual services at the State and local level expand access and create a "no wrong door" for entering the One Stop system. The State's virtual solutions provide accessibility to all services. We will continue to work toward a common intake and perhaps even a common case management system across all partners.

DWD recently issued a co-enrollment policy encouraging strategic co-enrollment. This approach facilitates service delivery alignment and encourages the braiding of resources to address the training and employment needs of job seekers and business customers at the local level. Co-enrollment should be customer-centered and driven by the individual's unique barriers to employment. Strategic co-enrollment ensures the participant receives all appropriate services needed for positive outcomes.

Expanding co-enrollment efforts will serve to maximize the efficiency and impact of each program through responsible stewardship of funds. Ensuring that individuals are being served through the programs most appropriate for their needs, can lead to a reduction in the duplication of services, improved outcomes, and an increase in the number of participants served through each funding stream. The partners are keeping in mind that co-enrollment can range from being a reportable individual in a specific program up to and including full activation as a participant in the program.

The strategic co-enrollment policy was developed in addition to the existing mandatory co-enrollment guidance for TAA/WIOA DW. Both policies can be found on DWD's active policy site: https://www.in.gov/dwd/compliance-policy/policy/active/.

Strategy 1.4: As part of our efforts to scale career coaching and navigation, we will include mentorship and advising around the benefits and multiple options of higher education and lifelong learning. This process will also include working with the constituent to identify successful prior learning experiences for which they may obtain credit, such as competencies, on-the-job training or internships, military training experiences, certifications, and skills. Career coaching will also encompass ways to address short-term associated costs and the long-term economic benefits.

Completion Date Updated From 2021 to 2023

- We will leverage our partnership with Indiana Skillful Coaching Corps and the community of practice to support career coaching and philanthropic grants for counseling, such as the Eli Lilly Endowment grants for career counseling, in addition to the Wagner-Peyser, Perkins, and our state career coaching grant funds towards this effort.
- We will also mandate all Adult Education providers to have specific staff positions that are dedicated academic and career coaches as a part of the Adult Education grant.
- We also seek to better leverage current career coaching and navigation work presently occurring to further implement best practices across all programs.

Update/Progress: Indiana has recognized the value of career coaching and navigation, especially throughout the pandemic. As part of the state's Rapid Recovery Plan, an investment of $3M was made to help scale a new Career Coaching and Employer Connections model throughout the state's community college system. This $3M investment from the state also triggered a $3M investment from philanthropy geared at scaling and sustaining that model across each of Ivy Tech Community College's campuses. Additionally, with the help of InvestEd,

we were able to provide direct support to individuals that were interested in learning more about the state's Workforce Ready Grant program, its expanded eligibility during the pandemic, and how those programs connected to additional postsecondary education and/or careers. Part of the work through Ivy Tech Community College also included direct one-on-one support for individuals seeking career advice through InsideTrack. The state has continued to partner with Skillful Indiana on the Governor's Coaching Corps to cross-train career coaches that are embedded throughout state and federal programs to better understand how they can leverage their programs to help those they serve get on a path toward the careers they want.

Additionally, the state has begun to rethink how we communicate available programs and occupations to those receiving unemployment insurance benefits, through the Applied Workforce Data System project. While this project is currently focused on individuals that are unemployed, the target populations this system will serve will continue to expand throughout 2022 and 2023. By utilizing data from education and workforce agencies throughout the state, we can better understand services, programs, and occupations that are available to Hoosiers and tailor recommended services to the individual. Currently, this is being done through banner ads within an unemployment insurance claimants homepage. However, this work will continue to evolve into an online portal that may be accessed by any Hoosier trying to find programs or occupations tailored to a number of factors specific to them.

Beginning in 2020, all Adult Education grantees were required to have an Academic & Career Coach on staff and available for all students. DWD created a list of skills these staff must have and a job description of minimum duties they must perform. Target professional development for coaches has been developed along with a DWD Career Coach resource page. Students are required to complete career assessments in Indiana Career Explorer during their first 12 hours of class attendance. These tools are used to guide individuals to their next step in education and or the workforce.

Long-term strategies to be implemented by the end of 2024:

Strategy 1.5: In an effort to better align the state's workforce development and social service systems, Indiana will examine potential ways to target the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant towards two objectives for those who fall between 151% and 200% of the federal poverty line:

1. Paying for the costs of certification examinations in high wage, high demand fields, and
2. Funding wraparound supports (such as childcare and transportation) that are major barriers to people engaging with the labor market.

Update/Progress: This will continue to be addressed over the next two years.

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.

Immediate strategies implemented by the end of 2020:

Strategy 2.1: Through the development and implementation of the Combined Plan, state agencies will identify areas of eligibility and services of our state and federal programs. Additionally, wherever possible, we will reduce state administrative processes to align and simplify eligibility identification and reporting.

Completion Date: Changed from 2020 to 2023

Update/Progress: This will be addressed over the next two years.

Strategy 2.2: To facilitate the reduction of administrative processes, we will increase and enhance interagency Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) to connect social services with workforce development services. These MOUs will proactively address co-enrollment, co-location, data sharing, and cross marketing (including endorsed mailings to overlapping constituencies) efforts. Via the MOUs, we can map and align funding streams, as well as identify clear roles and responsibilities between our agencies.

Completion Date: Changed from 2020 to 2023

Update/Progress: The COVID-19 crisis and its impact on Hoosiers across the state in 2020 and 2021 led to a need for many of Indiana's state agencies to focus on the utilization of CARES Act funds to more diligently implement enhanced programs to meet immediate needs. As such, planning for many of the activities outlined in this strategy were put on hold. However, there is a multi-agency Data Share Agreement that has been put in place to help move the work of the Applied Workforce Data System project forward. Additionally, the DWD began to rethink how their portion of the state's Workforce Ready Grant program was being implemented. Prior to the pandemic, an individual was required to go through an online portal through NextLevelJobs.org to sign up for the program. This required a level of self-efficacy that some individuals that were impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic might not have had. In order to help more Hoosier citizens, eligibility for the program could be done through our local AJCs (WorkOne) with required co-enrollment in a WIOA program or other services provided by the WorkOne.

Throughout 2022 and 2023 state agencies will continue to work through other aspects within this strategy to include co-enrollment, co-location, and cross marketing/training in additional programs highlighted throughout the State Plan.

Strategy 2.3: Indiana's state agencies will create a digital catalog of each state and federal workforce program's eligibility requirements, determination process, functions, allowances, and options.

- As part of creating an easily accessible repository of all workforce programs, state agencies need to use a common vocabulary, assessments, and planning tools to help clients move fluidly across programs.

Completion Date: Changed from 2020 to 2022

Update/Progress: This strategy will be addressed during 2022.

Strategy 2.4: We will leverage Governor Holcomb's work on the American Workforce Policy Advisory Board, initiated by the White House, to create an effective data charter between the state agencies represented on the Governor's Workforce Cabinet. This will facilitate cross-agency data analysis through our state's Management Performance Hub. We can leverage sharing our data to better understand how our different policies are working together systematically to improve Hoosiers' lives. We can also disaggregate the data based upon subgroups and target populations.[1]

Completion Date: Changed from 2020 to 2022

Update/Progress: The state has begun to rethink how we communicate available programs and occupations to those receiving unemployment insurance benefits, through the Applied Workforce Data System project. There is a multi-agency Data Share Agreement that has been

put in place to help move the work of the Applied Workforce Data System project forward. While this project is currently focused on individuals that are unemployed, the target populations this system will serve will continue to expand throughout 2022 and 2023. By utilizing data from education and workforce agencies throughout the state, we can better understand services, programs, and occupations that are available to individuals and tailor recommended services to the individual. Currently, this is being done through banner ads within an unemployment insurance claimants homepage. However, this work will continue to evolve into an online portal that may be accessed by any Hoosier trying to find programs or occupations tailored to a number of factors specific to them.

Short-term strategies implemented by the end of 2022:

Strategy 2.5: Where appropriate, state institutions and entities that provide education and training programs, as well as social services, should co-locate to better pool resources and align their services. We will increase the number of co-located offices by 100% over the next 2 years. Co-location of services can be within a physical space, but this can also include entities and organizations partnering to offer mobile and virtual services, as well as embedding staff members or using itinerant staffing models, in various hubs of activity and offices.

- Many of the Core and Partner Programs have separate offices and providers for their education and training services, which can create an inconvenience for constituents in accessing those resources.
- Our local CTE Centers, which are Carl D. Perkins secondary recipients, often have similar programs and facilities as nearby community colleges, which are postsecondary Perkins recipients, and employers. To maximize our Perkins funding, community colleges and CTE Centers should examine co-locating programs in the same facilities or partner with employers for training in their facilities. Some locations are already implementing this strategy, but we need to scale these efforts.
- Additionally, in some locales, Adult Education providers operate from a CTE Center, which allows adult students to access the facilities and equipment in the Center. These providers, as well as other employment and training providers, should co-locate with either a community college or a CTE Center to increase adult students' access to equipment, potential to earn credentials, and ability for career exploration while enrolled in Adult Education.
- We also will promote public-private partnership opportunities between our WorkOnes and vendors who have experience in developing innovative models for service delivery, which may include use of technology, self-service tools, or a 24-hour service center model..

Update/Progress: Co-location at the local regional level continues to expand; however, COVID has changed the idea of co-location. We are continuing to explore ways to virtually meet with CORE partners to meet the needs of customers and develop stronger cost sharing agreements. A newly developed tool (Virtual Client Engagement) will be used to help foster greater collaboration with WIOA partners in an effort to provide more seamless service. This tool will further the idea that there is "no wrong door" to enter the One Stop system.

Indiana has also invested in new or upgraded digital tools and resources to provide greater access to services through a self-service model. These tools provide opportunities for partners to direct clients to digital resources that can benefit them. As an example, we have made significant upgrades to Indiana Career Explore to provide greater access to assessments and

career exploration for various types of participants from K-12 to Adults. The State also implemented a new job search tool, Hoosier Talent Network, that allows participants to complete a resume and then through AI, support greater job and skill matching to employers.

Strategy 2.6: State agencies will coordinate all of their outreach personnel to co-locate services. This will require outreach personnel to be mobile throughout their region in an effort to spend time in hubs of activity throughout – such as WorkOnes, schools, community centers, libraries, chambers of commerce and businesses, and city halls. These hubs will offer expanded business hours, drop-off childcare, public transit access, and social service consults, whenever possible. Embedding staff or using an itinerant staffing model would create co-location of various programs and services to reach a greater number of Hoosiers.

Completion Date: 2023

Update/Progress: This strategy will be addressed during 2022 and 2023.

Strategy 2.7: Integrating services requires system-wide professional development and cross-training on the basic functions, allowances, and requirements of the various programs for both leadership, outreach personnel, and front-line staff. Cross-training will equip front-line and outreach staff and managers, as well as the leaders of the state agencies, with foundational information needed to respond to the wide range of Hoosiers' needs. This will allow outreach and front-line personnel to offer a true one-stop option with concierge-like service.

- We will apply to use the US Department of Labor Employment and Training Agency's Technical Assistance and Training funds to facilitate our interagency collaboration on professional development materials, tools, and opportunities. As these funds are intended to promote building system capacity, we will utilize them to create a positive impact on the delivery of services to partners and present future opportunities to leverage additional federal dollars to achieve this strategy.
- We will focus initial cross-training efforts on all of the WIOA Core Programs, SNAP, TANF, and state and federal financial aid programs. We will then expand to include our other Partner Programs, state programs, and other federal programs.
- We will also increase cross-training and onboarding for members of local Workforce Boards regarding Core and Partner Programs for them to better understand the talent development ecosystem. Cross-trainings for Boards may also encompass community programs and partners that are critical to addressing the barriers of our target populations.

Completion Date: 2023

Update/Progress: Working with the USDOL partners, DWD created a roadmap for agency cross training for direct service staff and are currently seeking funding for curriculum development and implementation. We did receive a USDOL technical assistance grant that helped us to create this roadmap and efforts will expand from here. We will assure accessibility of the training by housing it on VR's LMI.

DWD developed Workforce Development Board member training that is assessable to all Workforce Board members (this training was completed at the end of 2021) and we are in the process of creating case management workforce training that will be completed by end of 2022. We have made several upgrades to the ETPL and ICE to connect jobs to training while job seekers are exploring careers and training opportunities. Equity and inclusion trainings have been done at the agency level. Local boards have been provided some professional development

on this in coordination with Core partners. Diversity and inclusion training has been done at the agency level and continues to occur at the WorkOne staff level by the WBDs. Additional work to address this strategy will continue throughout 2022.

Strategy 2.8: To increase both co-enrollment and co-location, regions or communities experiencing success will provide professional development to help partners replicate and build on successes.

- We intend to identify regions where the structure for co-location of services works well to provide best practices that can be replicated and scaled. Identify priority list of services to co-locate and/or areas where a region is already moving in that direction and prioritize efforts accordingly.
- We will also conduct focus groups in each region with key partner programs to discuss short and long term strategies for co-location.

Completion Date: Changed from 2022 to 2023

Update/Progress: This strategy will be addressed during 2022.

Strategy 2.9: Indiana will collapse all of the intake processes into one common intake across all programs. This common intake will be accessible both in-person and online. Simplifying the intake process will allow current and future Hoosiers to connect to the system quickly and efficiently and obtain the appropriate mix of services to advance them along a pathway to economic mobility.

- The first step in this strategy will be to assess the various systems and forms used across all programs to complete eligibility determinations.
- We intend on prioritizing and expediting this project for our WIOA Core Programs, SNAP, and TANF intake as a first step towards a common intake process across all state agencies and programs.
- This common intake process will include interagency sharing of constituents' documents (e.g., driver licenses) with a constituent's sign off through a safe secure cloud network protecting information and complying with regulations.
- Eventually, we aim to include access to the common intake process through an app or similar technology. This will provide more autonomy for Hoosiers to obtain assistance and services with less bureaucratic steps. In addition, it offers Hoosiers the opportunity for real-time self-advocacy and actualization.

Completion Date: 2022

Update/Progress: DWD continues to work towards the goal of creating a common intake across programs both in person physically and virtually. In PY21 and PY22, DWD developed and implemented a tool to create and conduct appointments, share and sign documents, and communicate with customers safely and securely. This tool does not serve as a case management system, but rather a single point of entry system for engagement with clients and Indiana's WorkOne/AJC system. We will work to expand this tool to WIOA Title II partners in PY22 and PY23 as our first step in coordinating a common intake process among partners. These efforts will not only allow us to support opportunities for virtual engagement, but also enhance referral tracking to partners and more seamless service to the customer.

Strategy 2.10: The Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA) will leverage the Next Level Broadband program to improve the digital infrastructure throughout the state. OCRA will work with the Indiana Department of Education on the use of E-RATE to ensure libraries and schools serve as internet hubs in every community.

Completion Date: Changed from 2022 to 2023

Update/Progress: The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the need for additional broadband infrastructure throughout the state. While additional work is needed to move this strategy forward in full, Indiana recognized the need for continued broadband expansion by increasing the state's Next Level Connections efforts from $200M over the biennium to $250M in the biennial budget that was approved during the 2021 legislative session.

Indiana will continue to work toward the integration of the state's broadband expansion efforts and those available within the federal E-RATE program through the remainder of the implementation of the State Plan

Strategy 2.11: Indiana will create a pilot for a few regions to test consumer-driven operations (e.g., shifting hours of operation to evenings or Saturdays potentially to align with the volume of traffic or creating virtual chat resources for those unable to go to the office). Through this pilot, the regions will determine the costs and benefits of staggering times, how to communicate the change in hours, and the coordination with administrative timelines and requirements.

Completion Date: 2022

Update/Progress: WorkOnes throughout the state have adopted a more consumer-driven service model. Hoosier job seekers now have more flexibility than ever when it comes to accessing services. The COVID-19 crisis provided an opportunity to further evaluate strategies for providing more options for consumers to access services and further re-evaluate models for conducting business, which was the intent of this strategy. In the early days of COVID, Indiana determined very quickly that we needed new models for service delivery that would provide services to a significantly greater population in an environment where the ability to safely deliver traditional in-person services to tens of thousands of unemployed or underemployed workers was limited. The substantial increase in eligible participants prompted an urgent need to develop models for and make a significant shift to virtual delivery to effectively meet the demand for career and training services resulting from the COVID crisis. In response to this need, in addition to incorporate some of the pilots originally proposed as a part of Strategy 2.11, DWD and regional workforce boards incorporated virtual services offerings to both connect with customers and provide expanded opportunities for self-service for those customers requiring fewer intensive supports. Additional examples are included below.

In pilot Region 1 extended hours of operation were implemented beginning in 2021. They, and all other regions, implemented virtual service options designed to leverage technology to meet customers where they are.

<u>Extended Hours of Operation Pilot – Region 1</u>

Select WorkOne Northwest Indiana offices now provide extended hours once per week and on Saturdays. Five of nine WorkOne Centers in Region 1 offer extended hours at least once per week. Extended hours are based upon needs of the local community, demand for services, and availability based on location restrictions. Saturday hours have been added at the Portage location in addition to extended hours on Tuesdays.

<u>Staff Deployed to Partner Locations</u>

Additionally, Region 1 has piloted deploying staff to partner community organizations. Career Advisors serve customers at local library branches and community centers. The role of career path facilitators embedded in adult education partner locations has been expanded using WIOA adult funds. This provides adult education students access to workforce development services and career guidance at adult learning centers, which are routinely accessible evenings and Saturdays. Adult ed teachers are also embedded in WorkOne offices during extended hours of operation. This expands partnerships and access, and also allows for broader one-stop service provision to customers with workforce and education needs.

Increased costs associated with extended hours and staffing changes are being assessed. Staffing has been accomplished through flexing schedules to avoid the need for overtime. Some additional facilities costs are anticipated (i.e., power, heating, cooling, water usage), but these costs are considered negligible compared to the community benefit.

Virtual Service Delivery Options – DWD and All Regions:

- The Department of Workforce Development rolled out a virtual solutions team, which includes a hotline and chat option to answer customer questions and help direct them to the right services to meet their needs, including referral to WorkOne offices or other partners. The virtual services team is available beyond traditional business hours to allow increased access. In 2022, DWD will continue to expand services in this area through further development of a virtual career center, including virtual assistant chatbot and smart, guided pathways for users accessing the Next Level Jobs website.

- The Department of Workforce Development implemented a Virtual Client Engagement (VCE) tool while the local regions implemented virtual access for career engagement with the One Stop (WorkOne) Centers. The VCE creates a universal door into the One Stop system. It provides real-time access to workforce specialists who can assess customer needs and then immediately connect/refer the customer across all partners.

- In pilot Region 1, youth Career Advisors provide career counseling services via Zoom, telephonic counseling, and instant messaging. A partnership with 220 Leadership provides virtual courses and learning tracks to assist youth in becoming work ready. Virtual service delivery gives youth an opportunity to gain skills needed for employment without the requirement of an onsite work experience. Skills assessments for youth are made available through a virtual SIMS platform, wherein youth can enter a virtual workplace and demonstrate skills. The experience culminates in a report to a Career Advisor indicating skills strengths and areas for improvement to assist in selecting an appropriately aligned work experience. Costs associated with 220 Leadership are absorbed by the region's youth service provider, Goodwill, as part of its contract. WorkOne Northwest Indiana acquired the SIMS platform at a cost of less than $10,000.

- Region 2 purchased Zoom licenses to support virtual delivery of programmatic work. All workshops, with the exception of computer basics, are available to customers virtually. Laptops and cell phones have been provided to all staff, increasing the capacity to serve customers without being place-bound.

- Region 3 has added virtual and telephonic options for consumers to engage with DWD and local staff. Virtual workshops are offered and the region has increased its social media communication presence, with minimal cost impact.

- Region 4 has incorporated virtual service options, virtual workshops, and virtual appointment scheduling using the Acuity platform at an annual cost of $300. The region also utilizes the Hoosier Heartland Referral System to facilitate referrals between and among partner agencies, ensuring that customers receive all services they need to be successful. Region 5 continues to evaluate chat and virtual service options, and has staff available to meet with customers, as needed, before or after regular hours of operation on an individualized basis.

- Region 6 has proactively offered telephonic and virtual career counseling /case management during regular business hours since the onset of the pandemic. The region has kiosks in several locations and is in the process of implementing new mobile kiosks/pods in three locations throughout the region as well as partnering with community organizations (i.e., libraries, government centers, or retailors) to provide access to telecoaching services. Plans are in place to pilot placement of kiosks/pods in Portland, Richmond, and Winchester. A mobile career coaching team represents the WorkOne at community events in the evenings and weekends, as needed.

- Region 7 is evaluating the use of video chat services in 2022. The region temporarily implemented Saturday hours at the WorkOne Terre Haute location but experienced little to no use by the public during these times. As a result, extended hours are not anticipated going forward.

- Region 8 offers virtual appointments. WorkOne Career Advisors routinely flex their work schedules to meet virtually with specific clients who are unable to visit the office during regular business hours. Region 9 provides virtual services as well as services by appointment during regular hours of operation. Region 10 has added virtual service options but has not made changes to operational hours. Region 11 has explored stationing staff members at local libraries during evening hours to provide services to individuals who cannot visit a WorkOne office during normal business hours, but has not implemented this practice. Virtual and telephonic assistance is available to customers. Region 12 provides both virtual and in-person services to customers

<u>Long-term strategies implemented by the end of 2024:</u>

Strategy 2.12: Indiana will develop an automated, common case management system that operates across state and federal programs.

Completion Date: Changed from 2024

Update/Progress: This strategy will be addressed during 2022 and 2023

Goal 3. Align programs towards creating a healthy, engaged, and talented citizen.

<u>Immediate strategies implemented by 2020:</u>

Strategy 3.1: In order to reorient our focus towards early intervention services, we will use our state data charter agreements to target programs towards specific Hoosiers.

- One example is to direct state Workforce Ready Grants towards workers employed at businesses that have issued WARN Notices.

Completion Date: Changed from 2020 to 2023

Update/Progress: The state has begun to rethink how we communicate available programs and occupations to those receiving unemployment insurance benefits, through the Applied

Workforce Data System project. There is a multi-agency Data Share Agreement that has been put in place to help move the work of the Applied Workforce Data System project forward. While this project is currently focused on individuals that are unemployed, the target populations this system will serve will continue to expand throughout 2022 and 2023. By utilizing data from education and workforce agencies throughout the state, we can better understand services, programs, and occupations that are available to individuals and tailor recommended services to the individual. Currently, this is being done through banner ads within an unemployment insurance claimants homepage. However, this work will continue to evolve into an online portal that may be accessed by any Hoosier trying to find programs or occupations tailored to a number of factors specific to them.

Strategy 3.2: The Commission for Higher Education will work to expand the definition of postsecondary attainment to encompass any and all quality learning after high school, including industry-recognized certifications and credentials, to embrace the right fit and the right time for each Hoosier.

- Indiana uses data from the Census Bureau to track its postsecondary attainment. Currently, these metrics include only 2- and 4-year degrees earned by adults 25 to 64-years-old. Certificates earned are currently estimated by Georgetown University.
- The Commission for Higher Education is considering a revised method, including the following data in our attainment: adults 18 to 24-years-old and a wider array of credential types (e.g., industry-recognized certifications, long- and short-term workforce certificates, non-credit certificates, and apprenticeships).

Completion Date: Changed from 2020 to 2023

Update/Progress: Work has continued to change the narrative around the state's 60% postsecondary attainment rate to include any quality credential beyond a high school diploma rather than just a degree. A focus on the immediate needs of serving Hoosiers during the COVID-19 pandemic forced the Commission for Higher Education (CHE) to postpone work to determine state specific data rather than relying on estimates from Lumina's *Stronger Nation* report. The CHE plans to partner with state agencies that include GWC, DWD, MPH, PLA, and other stakeholders to obtain industry-recognized certification data for recent graduates to include in the state's calculation of its postsecondary attainment rate.

<u>Short-term strategies implemented by 2022:</u>

Strategy 3.3: One of Governor Holcomb's policy pillars is to expand early education throughout the state. Early education is shown to improve students' long-term health and educational outcomes.[2] Access to quality early learning also helps address the need for childcare and increases parents' ability to seek work or training. On My Way Prekindergarten (State Program) is now available in every county in Indiana; however, there is still a need to grow capacity among high-quality providers.[3] TANF currently funds childcare and early education, but we need to look to other funding streams that could assist with offsetting these costs for any Hoosier earning up to 200% of the federal poverty line and maximize our Child Care and Development Fund (Federal Program) dollars.

Completion Date: Changed from 2022 to 2023

Update/Progress: Through legislation that is part of Governor Holcomb's 2022 legislative agenda, Indiana will focus efforts on strengthening early learning opportunities with a particular emphasis on better preparing students for kindergarten. The Department of

Education (DOE) will establish an Office of Kindergarten Readiness to partner with the early childhood team at the Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA) and a revised Early Learning Advisory Committee (ELAC) will be established to support kindergarten readiness.

Throughout the pandemic, with the support of federal funds, Indiana has been able to provide families that were on the waitlist for childcare support with those services. Additionally, a new tool has been developed by the early childhood team at FSSA to provide Hoosier citizens with ability to see the number of childcare seats available throughout the state.

Work will continue throughout the implementation of the State Plan to better understand and provide quality early learning opportunities across the state.

Strategy 3.4: The best way we have to prevent Hoosiers from needing any of these programs is generally through our education system. Career and technical education (CTE) has historically focused on career exploration, rather than preparation, and our CTE delivery structure has leaned more towards local flexibility. The Office of Career and Technical Education will be redesigning CTE courses and programs to have more industry relevance and alignment with postsecondary education. CTE will have greater quality, consistency, and intentionality than it has in the past, as well as better integrate academic and technical knowledge skills in CTE courses. During middle and high school, students will have the opportunity to earn the content necessary to be enrolled in a postsecondary education or training program or to be employed in a minimally middle-skill job with a career trajectory.

- Part of this redesign will be to focus the state's set aside funds on paying for certification costs and increasing the persistence and completion of non-traditional students (females, minorities, and students with disabilities) in CTE courses.
- The state will also allocate funding to juvenile justice facilities, in addition to the Department of Corrections.
- In relation to Strategy 1.4, CTE funds will also be used to help increase career navigation and counseling in secondary schools.

Completion Date: 2022

Update/Progress: Indiana has spent the past two years redesigning the career pathways that are a part of the state's Career and Technical Education system. The state has redesigned 66 pathways that now have multiple exit points for learners to begin their career or matriculate to postsecondary education with a reduced time to complete. Throughout 2020 and the spring of 2021, 53 of the 66 pathways were redesigned and then made available for students to begin using in the 2021 – 2022 school year. The remaining 13 pathways will become available for use in the 2022 – 2023 school year. These redesigned pathways are more intentionally designed to degree programs at the state's two Perkins-eligible postsecondary institutions, Ivy Tech Community College and Vincennes University.

This redesign was a primary component of Indiana's Combined Plan submission in 2020, and was highlighted by AdvanceCTE as a "Promising Practice." The redesign is also aligned with one of Indiana's key state-funded workforce programs under the Next Level Jobs umbrella, the Workforce Ready Grant. Now that these programs are available for secondary students and postsecondary students, the state intends to focus on integrating these programs more intentionally in adult education programs to ensure better alignment across the entire education and workforce continuum.

Strategy 3.5: Our in-school youth programs, such as JAG and Youth Assistance, are directed towards preventing Hoosiers from needing Adult Education or other triage services in the future. Pairing those programs closer with career counseling, CTE and academic courses, and work-based learning experiences will help at-risk students start down a career pathway prior to graduation.

Completion Date: 2022

Update/Progress: Currently, JAG operates three multi-year programs (serving high school juniors and seniors) in Career and Technical Education Centers in Fort Wayne, Indianapolis and Bloomington. These programs were created at the behest of the CTE center but have served as pilots for implementation in Indiana and with the JAG National network and its other affiliated states.

JAG programs in CTE centers have the unique opportunity to pair the technical skills learned in the respective CTE programming with the universal employability skills needed for today's workforce, learned through JAG; this pairing makes the student graduates more marketable to employer partners established through both the regional JAG programs and CTE employer partners.

In addition to the aforementioned CTE programming, JAG Indiana works with its participants who do not meet graduation requirements to ensure they either return for a 5th year OR are referred to local Adult Education programs. These referrals happen during the 12-month follow-up period by the JAG Specialist, and in PY 2020 and 2021 also occurred through coordinated communication by DWD's Adult Education and Youth Initiatives team, all in efforts to reduce the number of dropouts. For the Class of 2021 student cohort, less than 7% of JAG students did not graduate on time with their peers, with 14% of those who did NOT graduate now enrolled in Adult Education or high school (during the month of December 2021); effectively 22/156 non-graduates are connected to school.

Strategy 3.6: Rethinking transitions for our out-of-school youth and adult programs, they will serve as career bridges, merging adult education practices with technical training. These programs will use the short-term, stackable credentials of value embedded in the career pathways to help Hoosiers access employment that will lead towards a family-sustaining wage for a range of workers in our priority sectors.

Completion Date: 2022

Update/Progress: During the COVID-19 pandemic, many training programs halted enrollment and/or participation or moved to a hybrid instruction style. Additionally, many youth are currently employed, although not necessarily in family-sustaining wages, leading to diminished participation in the state's career training programs for out-of-school youth. However, some local WDB's have created unique staff positions aimed at creating the education-training-employment bridge with the position of Career Navigator. These staff members are tasked with assessing the youth's "starting place," understanding their long-term goals and then assisting them in creating a plan for short-term and long-term education and employment goals, which often results in utilization of the state's myriad training programs as steppingstones.

In addition to the more formalized engagement in the workforce system (described above), in-school and out-of-school youth (including high school graduates) were granted access to 180 Skills, which served as the state's online training portal for some stackable, industry recognized credentials, including those related to Advanced Manufacturing.

<u>Long-term strategies to be implemented by 2024:</u>

Strategy 3.7: We will use online, in-person, hybrid, and open source course materials to increase access to education and training opportunities, as well as to other support services, such as career coaching and navigation, job search and placement assistance, recruitment services for employers, and referrals and financial aid application assistance for training and educational programs.

Completion Date: 2024

Update/Progress: As a part of its Rapid Recovery efforts to respond to COVID-19 pandemic impacts, the State was able to procure two innovative tools to increase access to job search and placement assistance and training. Hoosier Talent Network, (HTN), a new job matching and career planning site powered by Artificial Intelligence allows jobseekers to quickly find the right job and uncover new opportunities that align well with an applicant's skills. Using sophisticated matching technology, HTN is able to recommend job and career opportunities based on the jobseeker's unique potential. The HTN talent exchange platform also connects employers with a greater array of talent by recommending candidates that have skills that align with employer job opportunities.

The State also procured the 180 Skills training curriculum which provides jobseekers free access to courses and provides employers with an alternative means to train and retain talent through an expansive library of virtual job skills training. The 180 skills platform includes a library of more than 700+ courses across 41 topic areas and includes an option for employers to develop their own custom career paths based on their unique business needs. Since the program launched in late 2020, more than 16,000 individuals have enrolled in the training platform. In addition, 360 employers are participating, with licenses for the platform issued to more than 31,000 employee trainees (includes both new hire and incumbent workers). Collectively, users have completed nearly 46,000 courses.

At the completion of the 2020 adult education grant competition, DWD awarded funds for a fully online English Language Learner (ELL) program through Monroe County Community Schools. This was a complement to the online ABE program launched in the previous year by Vincennes University. Providers statewide were trained to administer TABE assessments virtually and extensive professional development was offered around the differences between face to face and virtual learning. This new virtual model allows local programs to continue to engage with participants in a hybrid format offering new options for collaboration between adult education providers. In 2021 Indiana added online HiSET testing for High School Equivalency attainment. With online TABE, curriculum and HiSET testing Hoosiers in Indiana can now remediate and obtain their secondary credential never entering a brick-and-mortar facility.

Goal 4. Maximize state and federal resources through impact-driven programs for Hoosiers.

<u>Immediate strategies implemented by 2020:</u>

Strategy 4.1: Increasing co-enrollment of Hoosiers into multiple programs, when applicable, will allow us to better braid funding to meet both Goals 1 and 2. Section III – Operational Elements will delve deeper into implementation of co-enrollment programs, but below is a few examples of co-enrollment:

- Out-of-school youth and Adult Education programs;

- Wagner-Peyser for career coaching through a WorkOne and SNAP Employment & Training to pay for instruction and certifications; or
- JAG for wraparound services and a CTE program for academic and technical skills for secondary school completion, and connected to financial aid programs, like 21st Century Scholars or the federal Pell Grant, for postsecondary education access.

Completion Date: Changed from 2020 to 2023

Update/Progress: As many of Indiana's state agencies were working diligently throughout the pandemic to implement enhanced programs through CARES Act funds in 2020 and 2021, many of the state's efforts were in response to immediate needs created by the COVID-19 crisis. As such, many of the activities outlined in the strategy were put on hold.

However, the Department of Workforce Development began to rethink how their portion of the state's Workforce Ready Grant program was being implemented. Prior to the pandemic, an individual was required to go through an online portal through NextLevelJobs.org to sign up for the program. This required a level of self-efficacy that some individuals that were impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic might not have had. In order to help more Hoosier citizens, eligibility for the program could be done through our local AJCs (WorkOne) with required co-enrollment in a WIOA program or other services provided by the WorkOne.

To increase co-enrollment, DWD developed strategic communications to target unemployment insurance customers and specific types of engagement that might be helpful to assist the claimant on their pathway back to work. Resources like Adult Education, training, and job search where strategically shared to engage participants based on their needs.

Regional partners at the local level continue to work to establish robust relationships with FSSA as we continue to work towards co-enrollment strategies. Regional partners have engaged in cross training of services to increase knowledge base and share in workforce development strategy development through ongoing partner meetings and collaborations.

Co-enrollment across Wagner Peyser, WIOA Adult, WIOA Dislocated Worker (DLW),and TAA is already established. Similarly, co-enrollment strategies across homeless Veterans' programming, Wagner Peyser, WIOA Adult, WIOA DLW, and JVSG are also established practices.

Title II partners at both the State and local Workforce Board levels have established relationships with the school systems in their areas to refer and deliver services to students. HB 13-13 is in place. The legislation focuses on DWD doing outreach to all high school completers with alternative diplomas from 2007 forward.

Virtual Services and technology are paving the way for better and more seamless referrals and coordination between partners, programs and resources. These virtual services at the State and local level expand access and create a "no wrong door" for entering the One Stop system. The State's virtual solutions provide accessibility to all services. We will continue to work toward a common intake and perhaps even a common case management system across all partners.

DWD recently issued a co-enrollment policy encouraging strategic co-enrollment. This approach facilitates service delivery alignment and encourages the braiding of resources to address the training and employment needs of job seekers and business customers at the local level. Co-enrollment should be customer-centered and driven by the individual's unique barriers to employment. Strategic co-enrollment ensures the participant receives all appropriate services needed for positive outcomes. The strategic co-enrollment policy was developed in addition to

the existing mandatory co-enrollment guidance for TAA/WIOA DW. Both policies can be found on DWD's active policy site: https://www.in.gov/dwd/compliance-policy/policy/active/.

Expanding co-enrollment efforts will serve to maximize the efficiency and impact of each program through responsible stewardship of funds. Ensuring that individuals are being served through the programs most appropriate for their needs, can lead to a reduction in the duplication of services, improved outcomes, and an increase in the number of participants served through each funding stream. The partners are keeping in mind that co-enrollment can range from being a reportable individual in a specific program up to and including full activation as a participant in the program.

Throughout 2022 and 2023 state agencies will continue to work through other aspects within this strategy to include co-enrollment, co-location, and cross marketing/training in additional programs highlighted throughout the State Plan.

Strategy 4.2: Indiana needs to ensure that our state programs are seamlessly aligned to and complementary of our federal programs, particularly in our economic development activities. As we recruit individuals or businesses to Indiana through various state initiatives, we must have deliberate alignment with our talent development programs.

- One example is Jobs for Vets State Grant (Federal Program) and INvets (State Program). As INvets recruits veterans to live in Indiana, increasing coordination is key between the two programs to ensure the necessary employment, career services, and other supports are being offered to veterans.

Completion Date: Changed from 2020 to 2022

Update/Progress: Work has begun on this strategy with the development of a redesigned Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (CLNA) process that is a part of the state's implementation of the federal Perkins program. In July 2021, the Governor's Workforce Cabinet (GWC) and the Office of Career and Technical Education within the GWC announced to the state's local CTE Directors that a new CLNA process would be required throughout the fall of 2021 and spring of 2022. This new process would include a set of activities in lieu of simply answering the CLNA questions that were included in the initial State Plan submission.

Chief among these activities was a required Regional Collaboration Meeting that was facilitated by the Regional Workforce Development Boards that included economic development, employers, adult education, educators, and the secondary and postsecondary Perkins-eligible recipients within the region. This allowed the parties involved to discuss programs that were available across the talent development continuum within the region as well as how those programs were aligned to employer and economic development needs.

Additionally, the state launched a $500M grant program through the Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC) in 2021 geared toward regional collaboration efforts amongst local government, employers, educators, etc. with a focus on building more aligned talent development programs toward regional economic needs as well as quality of place efforts.

The IEDC has also recently launched Smart Manufacturing Readiness grants to help support employers transitioning to Industry 4.0 Technologies. The GWC plans to further align education and training efforts with economic development activity by instituting a similar initiative, Education Readiness grants. These grants will provide an opportunity for Indiana's secondary and postsecondary Perkins eligible recipients to purchase similar equipment to that of employers in their region using the Manufacturing Readiness grants.

Better integration of economic development into the state's talent development efforts will continue throughout the implementation of the State Plan.

Short-term strategies to be implemented by 2022:

Strategy 4.3: By 2023, our goal is to increase the number of people co-enrolled in programs as appropriate and necessary for the customer. (This strategy was re-written to depict more accurately the intention of co-enrollment).

Completion Date: Changed from 2022 to 2023

Update/Progress: As many of Indiana's state agencies were working diligently throughout the pandemic to implement enhanced programs through CARES Act funds in 2020 and 2021, many of the state's efforts were in response to immediate needs created by the COVID-19 crisis. As such, many of the activities outlined in the strategy were put on hold.

However, the Department of Workforce Development began to rethink how their portion of the state's Workforce Ready Grant program was being implemented. Prior to the pandemic, an individual was required to go through an online portal through NextLevelJobs.org to sign up for the program. This required a level of self-efficacy that some individuals that were impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic might not have had. In order to help more Hoosier citizens, eligibility for the program could be done through our local AJCs (WorkOne) with required co-enrollment in a WIOA program or other services provided by the WorkOne.

To increase co-enrollment, DWD developed strategic communications to target unemployment insurance customers and specific types of engagement that might be helpful to assist the claimant on their pathway back to work. Resources like Adult Education, training, and job search where strategically shared to engage participants based on their needs

Regional partners at the local level continue to work to establish robust relationships with FSSA as we continue to work towards co-enrollment strategies. Regional partners have engaged in cross training of services to increase knowledge base and share in workforce development strategy development through ongoing partner meetings and collaborations.

Co-enrollment across Wagner Peyser, WIOA Adult, WIOA Dislocated Worker (DLW),and TAA is already established. Similarly, co-enrollment strategies across homeless Veterans' programming, Wagner Peyser, WIOA Adult, WIOA DLW, and JVSG are also established practices.

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Virtual Services and technology are paving the way for better and more seamless referrals and coordination between partners, programs and resources. These virtual services at the State and local level expand access and create a "no wrong door" for entering the One Stop system. The State's virtual solutions provide accessibility to all services. We will continue to work toward a common intake and perhaps even a common case management system across all partners.

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needed for positive outcomes. The strategic co-enrollment policy was developed in addition to the existing mandatory co-enrollment guidance for TAA/WIOA DW. Both policies can be found on DWD's active policy site: https://www.in.gov/dwd/compliance-policy/policy/active/.

Expanding co-enrollment efforts will serve to maximize the efficiency and impact of each program through responsible stewardship of funds. Ensuring that individuals are being served through the programs most appropriate for their needs, can lead to a reduction in the duplication of services, improved outcomes, and an increase in the number of participants served through each funding stream. The partners are keeping in mind that co-enrollment can range from being a reportable individual in a specific program up to and including full activation as a participant in the program.

Throughout 2022 and 2023 state agencies will continue to work through other aspects within this strategy to include co-enrollment, co-location, and cross marketing/training in additional programs highlighted throughout the State Plan.

Strategy 4.4: As a state, we need to evaluate our programs not based on access or completion alone, but through the impact a program has on Hoosiers' lives. Skill attainment, completion rates, and conferred credentials should be assessed, but those will no longer be the only measures of successful workforce development programs. We have to balance our evaluations of the inputs and outputs from programs with outcomes. Some of the new questions our data points will assess include:

- What has happened to a constituent 6 months or 1 year after going through a program?
- Has this program helped an individual to become socially and economically mobile?
- Is an individual no longer relying on government assistance for benefits?
- Is this program scaling its efforts to the target populations?
- Is the state seeing a return on its investment in this program through long-term savings?
- Is the individual seeing an improvement in his or her life? Does s/he feel like s/he has more opportunities to achieving his/her goals?
- Is the employer experiencing positive changes and improvements from a particular program? Is the talent pipeline improving and increasing? Is the skills gap diminishing? Is it easier to attract and retain talent?

Through the data charter outlined in Strategy 2.3, the state can determine if a program has a positive return on investment for both Hoosiers and funding. Over the next several years the State will explore models of return on investment (ROI) that other states and local areas use. This also correlates with Goal 3 regarding measuring the success of prevention services.

Completion Date: Changed from 2022 to 2023

Update/Progress: For years the state has utilized wage and demand data to determine program eligibility for the state's key workforce program, Next Level Jobs. Additionally, outcome data such as completion rate, placement rate, and wage placement data has been utilized to evaluate programs on Indiana's Eligible Training Provider List. In early 2019, the GWC was working toward evaluating both the state's Next Level Jobs programs as well as having conversations on how to possibly amend the ETPL criteria.

As many of Indiana's state agencies were working diligently throughout the pandemic to implement enhanced programs through CARES Act funds in 2020 and 2021, many of the state's efforts were in response to immediate needs created by the COVID-19 crisis. As such, many of the activities outlined in the strategy were put on hold.

Throughout 2022 and 2023 state agencies will continue to work through this strategy. The multi-agency data sharing agreement can be leveraged to look at outcome data and enrollment from most of the state's education and training programs

Strategy 4.5: Indiana will look to other states to learn best practices to help improve our state and federal programs.

Completion Date: Changed from 2022 to 2023

Update/Progress: As many of Indiana's state agencies were working diligently throughout the pandemic to implement enhanced programs through CARES Act funds in 2020 and 2021, many of the state's efforts were in response to immediate needs created by the COVID-19 crisis. As such, many of the activities outlined in the strategy were put on hold.

Many of Indiana's agencies and programs were engaged in various virtual meetings throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. The GWC's Executive Director was asked to testify along with colleagues from the State of Colorado regarding WIOA reauthorization. This gave Indiana the chance to hear how another state was leveraging WIOA to support workforce efforts. Additionally, the GWC had the opportunity to present with other states at National Governors Association conferences and AdvanceCTE conferences.

As the GWC worked to revise the Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (CLNA) for Perkins eligible recipients, Indiana partnered with Ohio to learn more about their Equity Labs. Throughout 2020 and 2021, the state continued to learn more and work toward a similar strategy. Eventually Indiana developed their own Equity Lab, which was included as a part of this year's Certified Local Needs Assessment for both secondary and postsecondary Perkins eligible programs.

Throughout 2022 and 2023 state agencies will continue to work through this strategy as we continue to learn from other states.

Strategy 4.6: Once we have established what our impactful programs are, we can actively improve our required programs or sunset our low-impact, discretionary workforce programs to reinvest that funding towards high-impact programs or funding wraparound supports to ensure Hoosiers can earn a credential to access a higher wage and move along his or her career pathway.

Completion Date: Changed from 2022 to 2023

Update/Progress: As many of Indiana's state agencies were working diligently throughout the pandemic to implement enhanced programs through CARES Act funds in 2020 and 2021, many of the state's efforts were in response to immediate needs created by the COVID-19 crisis. As such, many of the activities outlined in the strategy were put on hold.

Throughout 2022 and 2023 state agencies will continue to work through this strategy simultaneously to Strategy 4.4. The multi-agency data sharing agreement can be leveraged to look at outcome data and enrollment from most of the state's education and training programs.

<u>Long-term strategies implemented by 2024:</u>

Strategy 4.7: Over the next four years, state leaders from the executive and legislative branches will evaluate in which state agencies the Core and Partner programs are housed with the goal of streamlining the talent development system. Restructuring at the state level will also help facilitate increasing co-location of services at the local level.

Completion Date: 2024

Update/Progress: As many of Indiana's state agencies were working diligently throughout the pandemic to implement enhanced programs through CARES Act funds in 2020 and 2021, many of the state's efforts were in response to immediate needs created by the COVID-19 crisis. As such, many of the activities outlined in the strategy were put on hold.

Throughout 2022 and 2023 state agencies will continue to work through this strategy to further aligning programs with agency missions.

Strategy 4.8: As Indiana's economy changes with the rapid pace of national and international markets, it will be crucial to ensure that our designated workforce regions are continuously updated and realigned, as needed. State agencies will revisit which counties currently comprise our Economic Growth Regions.

Completion Date: 2024

Update/Progress: As many of Indiana's state agencies were working diligently throughout the pandemic to implement enhanced programs through CARES Act funds in 2020 and 2021, many of the state's efforts were in response to immediate needs created by the COVID-19 crisis. As such, many of the activities outlined in the strategy were put on hold.

Throughout 2022 and 2023 state agencies will continue to work through this strategy to identify any shifts within regional economies that may have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Shifts in those economies, population, and commuting patterns could impact Indiana's Economic Growth Regions identified in the next State Plan.

Goal 5. Foster impactful relationships between businesses, community partners, and government agencies.

<u>Immediate strategies implemented by the end of 2020:</u>

Strategy 5.1: To establish sustainable economic prosperity, we must strategically and efficiently address the economic needs of workers and businesses, which will require deeper engagement and collaboration across the public and private sectors. Based on the 2019 data from the Indiana Chamber of Commerce's Annual Employer Survey of approximately 1,000 businesses, there are partnership opportunities between employers and the public sector currently not being taken advantage:

- 58% do not work with others to develop current and future talent;
- 54% fail to partner to support work-based learning programs;
- 50% do not team with K-12 schools for career awareness/exploration activities;
- 40% use none of these talent development strategies (which include student site visits, job shadowing, internships and apprenticeships);
- 38% of businesses were aware of Indiana's Next Level Jobs Program, with 28% having taken advantage of it and 48% indicating they would like to learn more.[4]

Our primary strategy is to increase the number of businesses engaging with and utilizing the talent development system as a whole by 25% each year (or approximately 100 businesses). This includes analyzing our business engagement data (including Business Awareness, Business Penetration, and Business Retention) to understand the effectiveness of current outreach strategies. Indiana must also develop a common methodology and processes for tracking these data. Our objective is to cultivate with businesses that include strategies for investments into workforce solutions and talent development, in addition to the recruitment and retention of talent.

Completion Date: Changed from 2020 to 2023

Update/Progress: COVID-19 elevated the importance of finding strategic and efficient ways to address the needs of workers and businesses requiring the workforce system to provide supports to employers to help address economic fallout and impacts resulting from the pandemic. The crisis clearly challenged, and in many cases, damaged the financial stability of workers and employers, and a comprehensive recovery effort had to include strategies for stabilizing and expanding business, while developing and providing the skilled workforce necessary to enable economic revitalization.

COVID-19 has had a significant impact on businesses ability to hire and retain a skilled workforce resulting in a need for expanded resources to support employer efforts to develop the workforce required to operate. In some industries, the demand placed on businesses to quickly expand its workforce in order to respond to the pandemic (i.e. healthcare, transportation and logistics, technology) has required employers to quickly ramp up training efforts.

As a part of a comprehensive economic recovery strategy, Indiana committed a total of $20M in CARES Act dollars to support an expanded Employer Training Grant (ETG) program in 2020 and 2021. The Employer Training Grant – Rapid Recovery (ETG-RR) program was developed utilizing the foundation of the successful state-funded ETG program implemented in 2017. The ETG-RR program provided necessary resources to allow employers to quickly train new and upskill existing employees in high demand industries.

Through a combination of the CARES Act funded ETG-RR and state funded ETG programs, Indiana was able to provide nearly $32M in employer training reimbursements to 702 employers resulting in training of more than 11,300 new and incumbent workers. Of these funds, more than $7M was provided to minority-, women- and veteran-owned businesses to support their training needs.

As it looks towards the future and refocuses its efforts on strategic employer outreach, DWD is developing a list of "Top Hoosier Businesses" to prioritize outreach efforts and development of deeper partnerships over the next two years. DWD used a variety of information to inform priority business for outreach efforts including:

- Dun & Bradstreet (D&B) Market Insight data that focuses on growing minority and women's business enterprises,
- Next Level Jobs (NLJ) Employer Training Grant (ETG) partners, and
- Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC) resources across small, medium, and large sized businesses.

Using the Top Hoosier Business List as a guide, roughly 500 Hoosier businesses will be included in invigorated outreach strategies for the next two years.

The State is also advancing another innovative strategy to engage and collaborate with employers in the public and private sectors. Through a partnership between the Serve Indiana and the DWD Employer Engagement division, the State is convening the Empathy Sector as a leader of volunteerism and service and the role those forces play in increasing empathy. Through this program, the State will assist employers in engaging employees as volunteers in communities through relationships and equity, and connect employers with tools to help develop, grow, or strengthen their employee-based volunteer program(s).

This unique partnership recognizes that employees seek meaningful connections with their community and that employees are placing increasing value on bringing more meaning to their lives through rewarding work. It further recognizes that an employer's development of and commitment to a service program can have a significant impact on workplace culture and not only provides substantial benefit to the community but can also serve as an important employee recruitment and retention strategy.

For more information about the Empathy Sector strategy visit:
https://www.in.gov/serveindiana/empathy/

Strategy 5.2: In addition to generally increasing business engagement, we must augment our expectation of positive, efficient, and solutions-oriented government partnerships with businesses. In addition to the quantitative strategy we have outlined above, this is a qualitative approach that includes:

- Collecting responses from the businesses currently engaged with state or local agencies regarding their experiences, and
- Partnering with the state Chamber of Commerce and other members of the employer community (including small, minority-owned, women-owned, and veteran-owned businesses) to conduct qualitative research into the causes inhibiting some businesses from partnering with the state.

Completion Date: Changed from 2020 to 2023

Update/Progress: Indiana has deployed a number of strategies during the first two years of the Plan to increase business engagement in the workforce system and further innovative collaboration between government entities and the business community. Increasing business engagement starts with educating businesses on the services available to them. To increase that awareness, DWD launched a virtual Business Resource Guide to help create a better understanding of Indiana's workforce services. The Resource Guide not only serves to educate employers about the services available to them, but it also serves as a lead generator for business services staff to follow up with employers.

The Next Level Jobs Employer Training Grant (ETG) continues to be a successful model for engaging businesses. As mentioned previously, with increased funding for the program made possible by the CARES Act, Indiana was able to double the number of employers receiving reimbursement through an ETG to more than 700 between July 1, 2020, and December 31, 2020. In addition to being able to support employers' workforce training efforts through ETG, the program serves as an excellent lead generator for local workforce business services staff to share information about other services.

As a part of its Rapid Recovery efforts to respond to COVID-19 pandemic impacts, the State was also able to procure two innovative tools to support employer hiring and training needs. A new talent matching platform, Hoosier Talent Network, (HTN) was developed and launched in 2021,

with over 17,000 candidates, and 3,000+ businesses in the system currently, to enhance business connectivity and engagement. Powered by advanced skills matching technology, the HTN talent exchange platform allows the State to better support matching employers and talent, by helping individuals identify job opportunities in a rapidly shifting labor market and connecting employers with talent to meet their hiring needs.

The State also procured the 180 Skills training curriculum to provide employers with an alternative means to train and retain talent through an expansive library of virtual job skills training. The training platform provides employers with an opportunity to increase the skills of workers throughout their organizations, give employees valuable skills they can use at work, increase employee retention and grow their business. The 180 skills platform includes a library of more than 700+ courses across 41 topic areas, and includes an option for employers to develop their own custom career paths based on their unique business needs. Since the program launched in late 2020, more than 360 employers are participating with licenses for the platform issued to more than 31,000 employee trainees (includes both new hire and incumbent workers).

In addition, Indiana launched a transformational public-private partnership opportunity through the Regional Economic Acceleration and Development Initiative (READI) to further economic recovery from the pandemic and advance the State's efforts to make Indiana a destination for talent and business growth. Under the leadership of Governor Holcomb and the Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC), this initiative incentivized neighboring counties, cities, and towns to partner to create a shared vision for their future, mapping out the programs, initiatives and projects that are critical for them to retain talent today and attract the workforce of tomorrow.

In December 2021, the IEDC awarded $500 million from state appropriations in grants to seventeen regions, representing all 92 Indiana counties. To be considered for funding, regions had to develop data-driven, actionable and sustainable development plans that outlined strategies focused on improving the quality of place, quality of life and quality of opportunity within their communities. READI is expected to attract at least $2 billion of local public, private and philanthropic match funding. For more information about the READI initiative visit: https://www.iedc.in.gov/program/indiana-readi/overview.

<u>Short-term strategies implemented by the end of 2022:</u>

Strategy 5.3: Indiana will seek to create strategic partnerships with the Institute of Workforce Excellence (IWE) under the state Chamber of Commerce, postsecondary institutions, and other sector organizations. These organizations have recently started scaling their efforts regarding talent attraction and skills growth throughout the state. They are currently focusing on identifying and addressing the challenges of developing, attracting, and retaining the kinds of technically and technologically skilled talent our state's leading sectors of economic opportunity will require for their continued growth.

- These organizations and institutions will assist the state with developing career pathways comprised of multiple entry points via stackable credentials. They will ensure the pathways are organized on a sectoral level that provide transferrable skills needed by a range of employers in growing industries. The career pathways will address current and emerging skill gaps; provide a means to engage directly with industry through a continuum of work-based learning experiences; and better align state and local programs and resources serving employers and workers.

- By looking to Indiana's advanced industries (agricultural biosciences, aircraft and aerospace, automotive/mobility, information technology, life sciences, and logistics), the state can prepare its future workforce for both the new jobs resulting from technological advances in those industries and the jobs that will exist as a result of these advanced industries becoming more intertwined. Creating career pathways to raise talent geared toward priority future occupations in advanced industries, Indiana's workers will be prepared to meet the opportunities and challenges of the work of today and tomorrow.

Completion Date: 2022

Update/Progress: The state has partnered with the state Chamber of Commerce and its Institute for Workforce Excellence (IWE) on a number of activities throughout 2020 and 2021. The Executive Director of the Governor's Workforce Cabinet is a member of the IWE's Governing Board, and there are several members of the Governor's Workforce Cabinet, including three state agency heads, that are a part of the IWE's Advisory Council. Through these efforts, the Talent Resource Navigator tool for employers is set to launch at some point in 2022. Through this tool, employers will be able to identify local, state, and federal resources that are available to them in the areas of talent recruitment, talent retention, and talent development. Additionally, the state and the IWE have partnered to scale the EARN Indiana work-based learning program for postsecondary students into the high school space through a pilot program that is set to launch in 2022.

Indiana and the state Chamber of Commerce will continue to partner throughout the implementation of the State Plan to better facilitate employer connections with the education and workforce system.

Strategy 5.4: Seamlessly integrating the full work-based learning continuum into the Indiana talent development system will allow for both businesses and constituents to find sustainable success. We have recently started emphasizing work-based learning experiences in the high school space, as well as vertically aligning elementary and middle school experiences with the work-based learning continuum. Students now have more opportunities to engage, explore, and experience career options.[5] As these opportunities continue to grow for our students, we must also ensure that a comparable work-based learning system for adults also increases. These experiences must include on-the-job training, federally-recognized apprenticeships, internships, job shadow experiences, State Earn and Learn programs through our the Office of Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeship, and incumbent worker training.

Completion Date: Changed from 2022 to 2023

Update/Progress: Since creation of the State Plan, Indiana's Office of Work Based Learning and Apprenticeship (OWBLA) expansion continues to be supported by a collaborative effort between OWBLA, Indiana CTE, IN Department of Education, IN Department of Workforce Development, and regional Workforce Development Boards. To further these efforts, OWBLA continues to convene key stakeholders from multiple agencies, organizations, education partners and businesses on a regular basis to discuss strategies to increase comprehensive, high quality WBL programs.

The COVID-19 pandemic presented a variety of challenges and required some shifting of resources throughout 2020 and 2021 but has also opened up opportunities for growth in Indiana. Like others, given the close work with employers and educators on WBL initiatives, partners were forced to shift and adapt to working virtually and seeing many programs developed impacted by the virtual element. Some RAPs and SEALs were forced to reduce the number of participants to maintain social distancing standards, many sessions were postponed

or cancelled completely, and some were able to be flexible and shift towards an entirely virtual or hybrid option(s). Programs through the Indiana Department of Corrections completely ceased operations, while others saw increased interest in attendees but were forced to reduce class sizes in half due to spacing limitations and safety precautions. However, Indiana also saw an increased need and interest in other key economic sectors such as healthcare and advanced manufacturing, and was able to shift resources to assist these in-demand sectors and the individuals being served. Fortunately, the pool of interested individuals and participants in our RAPS and SEALs continued to grow despite the challenges presented by the pandemic.

As of the close of the 2020-2021 program year, Indiana was reporting 18,435 total Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAP) with 42 new RAPs during the period. If including the ZA national programs, the total number of active apprentices increased to 20,522 with 6,997 new apprentices during that program year, with a total of 1,155 registered apprenticeship programs being served by Indiana's Department of Labor Office of Apprenticeship staff and OWBLA.

During the 2020-2021 program year, Indiana saw significant growth in the number of certified SEAL programs and the total number of individuals enrolled in SEAL programs. In October 2020, Indiana was pleased to celebrate the launch of the 100th SEAL in Horizontal Construction. This SEAL included collaboration amongst 16 partners – six professional organizations, five employers (union and non-union), three schools (high school and community college), and two state agencies and offers high school students seven or more industry certifications and 18 transferable college credits.

The 100th SEAL is a Horizontal Construction program, which encompasses the building of roads, bridges and other structural projects that focus on transit. Participating students earn college credits and industry-recognized credentials while working and learning on the job, in addition to gaining a pathway to advanced degrees in civil construction. This SEAL is also aligned to the proposed Next Level Program of Study through the Office of Career and Technical Education.

Garrett High School in Garrett and Hamilton Heights High School in Arcadia are the first two schools to launch Horizontal Construction SEAL programs and will have a total of 20 students participating the first year. Five more schools will follow in 2021. They are Batesville High School, Lapel High School, Madison High School, New Palestine High School and Penn High School.

In addition to comprehensive work-based learning opportunities and industry-recognized credentials, students in the Horizontal Construction SEAL will earn a Heavy Highway Specialist Certificate or a Technical Certificate in Civil Construction, both from Ivy Tech Community College. This program also allows for the direct entry, with advanced standing, into a US DOL registered apprenticeship.

By June 2021, OWBLA has successfully launched 138 SEAL programs (33 Adult and 105 Youth programs) with 2,784 participant's total for 2021 only.

The SEAL programs are represented throughout Indiana's identified six key economic high-growth sectors to include:

SEAL Programs as of June 2021	Active Programs
Advanced Manufacturing	38
Agriculture	3

SEAL Programs as of June 2021	Active Programs
IT / Business	21
Construction	19
Healthcare	35
Transportation / Logistics	20
Other	2
Total	**138**

Of the 138 active Certified SEAL Programs, 540 current partners were included, and 55 schools represented. As of June 2021, more than an additional 60 youth and adult SEAL programs were in the process of being launched.

Other key initiatives during the Plan period to date include establishing all twelve Workforce Development Boards as registered apprenticeship intermediaries, with each having entered into a sub-recipient grant relationship with DWD in order to develop and scale registered apprenticeship programs in each region across Indiana. The intermediaries are responsible for occupation selection, standards and registration, and reporting to DWD OWBLA. This structure supports State Plan goals to allow regions to drive efforts to attract and retain apprentices for high-wage, high-demand jobs that meet the economic needs of the individual region.

To support these efforts, regions utilize Business Services Representatives and Business Consultants to connect employers to the local WorkOne system, conduct business analysis of local talent needs, and assist in the development of workforce and economic partnerships with businesses. The regional teams support employers creating RAPs and SEALs, as well as provide technical assistance. WDBs also work to identify non-traditional occupations that exhibit the five apprenticeship components and are good candidates from WBL.

Strategy 5.5: From state agencies to local boards, we need common and coordinated outreach to employers. The messages must be synchronized and common across all partners, in their promotion of postsecondary attainment and economic mobility for every Hoosier. Rather than the state spearheading connecting with businesses, the majority of this outreach should occur at the local level, with state backing. The state will focus its efforts instead on helping and supporting our local workforce boards' and partners' strategies to engage with employers. This interagency coordination should help foster increased business involvement as it reduces duplication of efforts, saving valuable resources and reducing businesses' fatigue and weariness with the talent system.

Completion Date: Changed from 2022 to 2023

Update/Progress: To support local workforce board efforts to engage with employers, in 2021, DWD awarded more than $20 million in state ETG funding to regional workforce boards. This funding, historically managed at the state level, allows local boards to better prioritize and administer the funding for eligible employer training efforts that best align with the needs of their area, with the ETG program continuing to serve as a powerful lead generator to allow the region to offer other business services.

Transitioning more direct administration of the ETG program to the regions will encourage increased engagement at the local level, while allowing DWD to shift into more of a technical

assistance role working to provide the regions with the supports, tools and resources necessary to successfully increase employer engagement.

DWD continues to develop Indiana's Business Services Client Relationship Manager (CRM) to facilitate better tracking of employer partners and allow for more seamless communications among those engaging with businesses. The CRM currently contains over 17,000 current Business Accounts and over 100 business facing users.

Other tools such as the D&B Optimizer also seek to significantly reduce duplication and provide support to local business services staff through quality matching for data entry in business accounts and providing increased business intelligence with a goal to significantly reduce duplicate business partner entries statewide.

Strategy 5.6: The state will work with the Indiana Chamber of Commerce, local chambers, main street organizations, county and township trustees, business services divisions within the Workforce Development Boards, and other associations to help regularly disseminate information about state and federal programs.

Completion Date: Changed from 2022 to 2023

Update/Progress: The state continues to incorporate strategies for regular dissemination of information about state and federal programs, and other resources available to support increased business engagement. Central to this effort was development of a new virtual Business Resource Guide to help create a better understanding of Indiana's workforce services. The Resource Guide not only serves to educate employers about the services available to them, but it also serves as a lead generator for business services staff to follow up with employers. In 2022, the state will build on the Resource Guide through a redesign of the Next Level Jobs site, which will feature additional resources for businesses to support their efforts to attract, train and retain talent.

DWD hosts monthly virtual business service meetings with regional business services staff to share information, provide technical assistance and facilitate discussions around best practices. The state also communicates with local business services teams through a robust Microsoft Teams site to promote real-time collaboration, provide regular, ongoing communications, awareness, and sharing of resources.

A recent partnership between the GWC, DWD and the Indiana Chamber of Commerce Institute for Workforce Excellence will support increased awareness, participation and utilization of high-priority, state sponsored workforce development programs, resources, and services by the Indiana business community. Through the IWE's planned launch of an Online Talent Resource Navigator in Spring 2022, the Institute will be able to better connect employers to the State's priority workforce development resources. In addition to connecting employers to a clearinghouse of promising practices, programs and partners that can help businesses thrive, the Navigator will also include personalized technical assistance to employers through a concierge service managed by Chamber staff to facilitate "warm" handoffs between employers and partners. Through this partnership, the Chamber will connect interested employers with relevant program / service and workforce contacts identified by the State.

<u>Long-term strategies implemented by the end of 2024:</u>

Strategy 5.7: Through state and local business conferences, Indiana's Institute for Workforce Excellence, and the state's coordinated communications with businesses, we will showcase businesses exhibiting innovative talent development practices to serve as both leaders and

exemplars for others. We will highlight three different groundbreaking approaches from businesses:

- Through sustained and positive partnerships, state agencies and local boards can convey the mutual benefit investing in individuals will have for employers in terms of talent development, recruitment, and retention. We need all Hoosier businesses to recognize that investing in developing talent is not merely philanthropic but a positive long-term business strategy to creating a talent pipeline. There are several businesses in Indiana currently undertaking this work. Our strategy is to showcase the businesses that have created programs that invest in Hoosiers and community partners, which can provide exemplars other businesses can use to model their practices.
- To reach our goal of at least 60% of Hoosiers having a quality credential, we need businesses to train, recruit, and retain broader talent pools than what we currently have. With our association partners and through our coordinated communications strategy, state and local agencies will develop a communications campaign to help businesses understand the benefits of expanding their talent pipelines to include diverse and non-traditional hiring practices.
- We will also promote businesses diversifying the Indiana economy through innovative talent development, attraction, and recruitment policies as best practices.

Completion Date: 2024

Update/Progress: The state has always been a willing partner to participate in events hosted by the state Chamber of Commerce and will continue to do so even more now that the Chamber has created the Institute for Workforce Excellence. This past year, representation from the Governor's Workforce Cabinet and the Department of Workforce Development participated on a panel at the Chamber's annual conference. Moving forward, with the impending launch of the Talent Resource Navigator, the Chamber and state will be able to more easily identify industry leaders that are utilizing best practices in their talent development efforts to showcase those to employers across the state.

The state is also beginning to incorporate new strategies to spotlight businesses use of workforce programs and resources to support talent development. Employers leveraging the ETG to develop and upskill new and incumbent workers are featured on the Next Level Jobs website providing quotes regarding what the program has meant for their organization. The state also plans to film testimonials of employers who have successfully utilized other key resources such as the 180 Skills platform and the Hoosier Talent Network.

The partnership between the GWC, DWD and the Indiana Chamber of Commerce Institute for Workforce Excellence will also support an extensive employer outreach campaign to share information with the Chamber's significant network on key resources and services through employer convenings, digital marketing, print publications and social media. Outreach efforts will incorporate showcasing innovative business practices and the employers utilizing them to support talent development.

Throughout 2022, the state plans to heavily promote work-based learning as a strategy to recruit and skill up talent necessary to meet business needs. As a part of this effort, the state will seek employers who have developed and incorporated successful work-based learning programs as a part of their talent recruitment and development strategies to serve as success stories for other businesses.

(2) Describe the strategies the State will use to align the core programs, any Combined State Plan partner programs included in this Plan, required and optional one-stop partner programs, and any other resources available to the State to achieve fully integrated customer services consistent with the strategic vision and goals described above. Also describe strategies to strengthen workforce development activities in regard to weaknesses identified in section II(a)(2).

The Governor's Workforce Cabinet (GWC) was created by State Enrolled Act 50 during the 2018 legislative session. It replaced the State Workforce Board and allows for a more nimble and adaptive approach to systems alignment. Charged with aligning the state's prekindergarten through career placement efforts, the GWC allows the Governor to focus on the entire talent development system, as well as the rapid pace of change of Indiana's economy. As the GWC is comprised of employers, state agency leaders, and community partners, the structure provides the mechanism for various stakeholders to provide their perspectives while collectively creating a culture of lifelong learning that provides each Hoosier the opportunity to obtain quality employment, career sustainability, and upward mobility. Additionally, since seven different agencies are represented on the GWC, this new structure provides the opportunity for a comprehensive examination of Indiana's various programs through the Combined Plan. The creation of the GWC offers an historic opportunity to align Indiana's programs to strengthen its talent development system and address the current weaknesses challenging the system.

Alignment of Core, Partner, and State Programs

Indiana's strategic vision is to create a talent development 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. One primary reason Indiana chose to submit a Combined Plan was to capitalize on the opportunity to take a comprehensive examination of our workforce development system and the various programs that comprise it. Each of our five goals outlines strategies supporting the alignment of our Core, Partner, and state programs to better meet the goals and needs of Hoosiers. Some particular strategies that will help us align programs include:

- Strategy 1.5: Examine potential uses for the TANF block grant towards paying for the costs of certification examinations in high wage, high demand fields, and funding wraparound supports (such as childcare and transportation) that are major barriers to people engaging with the labor market.
- Using TANF to gradually decrease Hoosiers' reliance on government benefits for wraparounds supports, which will allow other programs, such as our WIOA programs, to focus their resources on employment and training services.
- Strategy 2.1: Examining the eligibility requirements and allowances for each program illustrates how our target populations can be co-enrolled in various programs to ensure their needs are comprehensively met. Throughout the Operational Elements sections of this Combined Plan, we identify how the funding within our Core, Partner, state, philanthropic, and/or sectoral partnerships can be prioritized towards certain services to increase local braiding of resources. As Indiana implements its Combined Plan, state agencies will strive to reduce any state administrative processes to align and simplify eligibility identification and reporting.

- Strategy 2.2: To facilitate the reduction of administrative processes, we will increase and enhance interagency Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) to connect social services with workforce development services. These MOUs will proactively address co-enrollment, co-location, data sharing, and cross marketing efforts.
- Strategy 2.5: We will increase the number of co-located offices by 100% over the next 2 years. This will include offering mobile services in various hubs of activity, such as WorkOnes, schools, community centers, libraries, and city halls.
- Strategy 3.3: Early education is a proven early intervention leading to improved educational, social, and health outcomes. Access to quality early learning also helps address the need for childcare and increases parents' ability to seek work or training. TANF currently funds childcare and early education, but we need to look to other wraparound support services that could assist with offsetting these costs for those Hoosier earning up to 200% of the federal poverty line and to maximize our Child Care and Development Fund dollars.
- Strategy 3.4: Indiana is redesigning our CTE courses and programs to have more industry relevance and alignment with postsecondary education. This will better connect secondary and postsecondary Perkins funds, as well as bring Perkins into alignment with other WIOA programs.
- Strategy 3.5: Our in-school youth programs, such as JAG and Youth Assistance, are directed towards preventing Hoosiers from needing Adult Education or other triage services in the future. Pairing those programs closer with career counseling, CTE and academic courses, and work-based learning experiences will help at-risk students start down a career pathway prior to graduation.
- Strategy 4.1: The primary strategy permeating Indiana's Combined Plan is increasing co-enrollment of Hoosiers into multiple programs. This strategy will help us meet all of our Goals and actualize our Vision. As noted above, the Operational Elements will delve deeper into how Indiana envisions the co-enrollment of Hoosiers into our Core, Partner, state, philanthropic, and sectoral programs.
- Strategy 4.2: Indiana needs to ensure that our state programs are seamlessly aligned to and complementary of our federal programs, particularly in our economic development activities. As we recruit individuals or businesses to Indiana through various state initiatives, we must have deliberate alignment with our talent development programs.
- Strategy 4.7: Over the next four years, state leaders from the executive and legislative branches will evaluate in which state agencies the Core and Partner programs need to be housed with the goal of streamlining the talent development system. Restructuring at the state level will also help facilitate increasing co-location of services at the local level.
- Strategy 5.4: We have recently started emphasizing work-based learning experiences in the high school space, as well as vertically aligning elementary and middle schools experiences with the work-based learning continuum. As these opportunities continue to grow for our students, we must also ensure that a comparable work-based learning system for adults also evolves.

[1] This will include economic status, racial and ethnic groups, gender identity, English learners, and disability status.

[2] Raj Chetty, March 2011. How Does Your Kindergarten Classroom Affect Your Earnings? Evidence From Project Star.

[3] On My Way Pre-K awards grants to 4 year olds from low-income families so that they may have access to a high-quality pre-K program the year before they begin kindergarten. Families who receive a grant may use the grant at any approved On My Way Pre-K program. It is funded by the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF), a federal program that helps low-income families obtain childcare so that they may work, attend training or continue their education. The purpose of CCDF is to increase the availability, affordability, and quality of childcare.

[4] Indiana Chamber of Commerce Annual Employer Survey. 2019 Survey Results.

[5] As adapted from the Indiana Department of Education's Work-Based Learning Manual.

III. OPERATIONAL PLANNING ELEMENTS

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

A. STATE STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include–

1. STATE BOARD FUNCTIONS

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

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

During the 2018 legislative session, Governor Holcomb designed a new approach to the State Workforce Board, which the Indiana General Assembly codified as the Governor's Workforce Cabinet (GWC) under Indiana Code § 4-3-27-3. On June 7, 2018, for Program Years 2018 through 2020, the U.S. Department of Labor granted Indiana a waiver regarding the State Workforce Development Board (SWDB) membership requirements in WIOA Sec. 101(b)(1) and (c). This waiver allowed for the GWC, as codified, to serve as the SWDB. This new approach brought state agencies in education, social services, and workforce development together with key employers and postsecondary institutions with the authority to drive focused impact on the talent development system. The GWC sits directly under the Governor's Office and reports accordingly. The Governor appoints the members of the GWC for a two-year term. Legislative representatives are chosen by the Speaker of the Indiana House of Representatives and President Pro Tempore of the Senate, respectively, and serve as non-voting members. The GWC serves as an overall policymaker and advisor to the Governor regarding workforce development and is specifically charged with creating a plan for a statewide vision to connect education,

workforce, social services, corrections, and economic development initiatives under Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and other federal acts.

The GWC fosters crucial employer-driven initiatives that are central to an ever-changing economy while analyzing and initiating important connections to the education system. Indiana continues to have one of the nation's lowest unemployment rates, as well as a labor participation rate above the national average, emphasizing the significance of serving Hoosiers who connect with the workforce system through an impactful, human-centered approach. The Governor appoints the Chairperson of the Cabinet, selecting a leader with extensive experience and insightful knowledge regarding the correlation between education and the workforce system. The Executive Director provides the GWC with workforce and education policy expertise and assistance. The Executive Director, along with staff, execute the daily operations and initiatives of the GWC. It also performs other duties directed by the Governor and legislature.

In 2019, the GWC adopted a strategic Mission, Vision, Goals, and Guiding Principles.

Mission: The mission of the Governor's Workforce Cabinet is to address current and future education and employment needs of both individuals and employers, strengthen Indiana's economy by integrating and aligning state and federal resources, and ensure a talent-driven education and workforce system.

Vision: The vision of the Governor's Workforce Cabinet is to create a talent system that provides all Hoosiers equitable opportunities for lifelong learning and increased personal economic mobility, as well as provides employers the talent to grow and diversify their workforce.

Goals: Every Hoosier will be aware of career opportunities that exist, have equal access to quality credentials and skills necessary for those opportunities, and employers will have access to the talent necessary for them to continue to grow and locate in Indiana.

- Increase the attainment of quality credentials beyond a high school diploma so that at least 60% of Hoosiers have a quality credential by 2025.
- Increase engagement between employers and the talent development system so skills gaps are being identified and addressed in a more responsive way.

Guiding Principles: The Governor's Workforce Cabinet is committed to:

- Ensuring quality pathways for all Hoosiers that provide opportunities for career advancement, personal prosperity, and well-being.
- Partnering with Indiana employers and education and training providers to close skill gaps and meet emerging talent needs.
- Strengthening Indiana's economy by aligning programs and funding to meet current and future workforce needs.

The GWC initiates policy recommendations that can improve the synchronization across the entire workforce and social services systems, while also providing an overarching, independent perspective on how Indiana is meeting its workforce goals, as well as communicates with the Department of Workforce Development and other agencies regarding operational delivery.

Under Indiana Code § 20-19-2-19, the Governor's Workforce Cabinet was granted authority to receive, distribute, and account for all funds received for career and technical education under

the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Act (20 U.S.C 2301 et seq.). This shift streamlined a program scattered across three agencies under one entity. The GWC oversees the Perkins administrative team and directs the redesign of career-technical education (CTE) to align with the state's new graduation requirements, Graduation Pathways, to prepare students for a successful transition to employment and postsecondary options. The GWC prepared recommendations on ways to improve CTE programs to the legislature in October of 2018. It is currently holding discussions with principals, CTE directors, postsecondary faculty, and other stakeholders to discuss the updates to CTE, with input from those involved daily.

The GWC was designated to serve as the state advisory body required under these federal laws:

1. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 under 29 U.S.C. 3101 et seq., including reauthorizations of WIOA.
2. The Wagner-Peyser Act under 29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.
3. The Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006 under 20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.
4. The Adult Education and Family Literacy Act under 20 U.S.C. 9201 et seq.

The GWC reviews services and use of funds and resources under applicable state and federal programs.

The GWC administers local career coaching grants created through legislation under Indiana Code § 4-3-27-16. The career coaching grant fund was established for the purpose of providing grants to an eligible entity to implement programs. The eligible entity can be a group of local employers, educators, community leaders, or an industry credentialing organization certified under IC 20-47-6 for the purpose specified in IC 20-47-6-10(a)(2). It may award grants to an eligible entity to establish or implement a career coaching model. The GWC will review the grants to learn from and share best practices around career coaching from local level partners connecting to student and adult learners on a daily basis.

The GWC also administers the Workforce Diploma Reimbursement Program (Indiana Code 22-4.1-27), which offers an opportunity for eligible program providers to deliver Hoosiers over the age of twenty-two with outcomes-driven instruction within the adult education space. Through offerings, such as employability skills, career pathways, coursework, and certifications, which lead to a workforce diploma, eligible program providers will afford life-changing opportunities to those who seek to better their lives. The services offered to Hoosiers include developing employability skills and career and technical education skills, obtaining a high school diploma, providing remedial coursework in literacy and numeracy; preparing for industry-recognized credentials, and offering career placement services. The GWC approves program providers for this new grant.

The GWC operates as the state advisory body for the programs contained in this Combined State Plan (see IC 4-3-27). On behalf of the Governor and in collaboration with the GWC, DWD operates as the designated administrative entity for WIOA Titles I, II, and III, the Unemployment Insurance system, and other federal and state programs. As such, DWD is named the sole agency to plan, coordinate, implement, monitor, and make recommendations regarding initiatives designed to prepare Indiana's workforce for effective participation in the competitive and global economy (see IC 22-4.1).

Although the Governor has primary authority in WIOA local area governance, both the GWC and DWD have approval and signatory authority on behalf of the Governor for various WIOA local

area governance activities. For local area governance activities requiring Governor-level approval:

- If activities are specifically outlined within USDOL regulation or guidance as State Board functions, the GWC is authorized to approve/sign on behalf of the Governor. (E.g., WIOA Local Plan approvals, Designation of Local Areas, etc.)
- If activities are operational or compliance-based, the DWD Commissioner is authorized to approve/sign on behalf of the Governor. DWD will issue guidance on, review and make decisions regarding these activities, consulting with the GWC as appropriate. (E.g., WIOA Single Entity/Multiple Role structures, local WDB certifications, submission of bi-annual Nondiscrimination Plan, etc.).
- For any activities that may overlap the above designations of signatory authority, the GWC and DWD collaborate and EITHER may approve/sign on behalf of the Governor. (E.g., The review process for Local Plans is conducted by DWD, with a recommendation provided to the GWC for final approval. Written approval may then be signed/issued by DWD, on behalf of the GWC, or may be issued directly from the GWC.)

During its first year, the GWC created taskforces to tackle the duties assigned by the legislature, which included reviewing workforce funding, college and career funding, and CTE and creating a model for career coaching and navigation. These taskforces presented recommendations to the GWC in October of 2018. In 2019, the GWC created new committees to advise the GWC on the development and implementation of the State Strategic Workforce Plan. These committees are approved by the GWC, which has the authority through the bylaws to create or dissolve committees in order to accomplish the state board functions as required under section 101(d) of WIOA. The current committees consist of Cabinet members and other stakeholders and are staffed by the Cabinet staff. The Policy Committee meets at least once a month to discuss ongoing needs of the Cabinet. The Industry Committee, which also deliberates the future of work, the Constituent Support Committee, and the State Strategic Plan Committee are all committees that advised the development of the Combined Plan and will continue beyond the Plan's submission to evaluate progress. The Youth Committee meets quarterly on various matters. The GWC has created stronger engagement with local government and local workforce boards than ever before. It works with the Department of Workforce Development, communicating regularly, to support and supply best practices and technical assistance to the local workforce boards to elevate the importance of their success to the whole workforce system.

These committees provide input and information to the board to inform its decision-making process on various matters that come before the board. The Policy Committee serves as the Cabinet's Executive Committee and is commonly called upon to review and approve any matters that are planned to go before the full Cabinet for official approval. The committee consists of state education and workforce agency leaders, plus several experienced and engaged employer representatives on the Cabinet.

During the development of the Combined WIOA Plan, Cabinet staff led regular meetings with the other committees mentioned above. These committees were essential to the development of a comprehensive Combined WIOA Plan and have helped inform its implementation, despite challenges brought on by the pandemic. The Cabinet is also recently under new leadership and plans are underway to form several working groups that will each have a focus area in line with the Cabinet's stated priorities and goals.

One of the Cabinet's priorities is ensuring equitable opportunities for all Hoosiers, something that guided the development of the State Plan. The Plan carefully developed strategies for multiple identified target populations, including individuals with disabilities. The state's head of Vocational Rehabilitation was a key member of the State Strategic Plan Committee and the Constituent Support Committee during the State Plan development process.

There are a variety of strategies outlined in the WIOA Plan to help Indiana better serve individuals with disabilities. Since submission of the WIOA Plan, a number of accomplishments have been achieved to better support this population, led by Indiana's Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) team. This has included launching a webpage for businesses to support hiring of job seekers with disabilities, a successful application to DOL for 2 rounds of technical assistance to support employment for individuals with mental health conditions, and releasing 1,000 eligible individuals from the waitlist for VR services, combined with reducing staff turnover to less than 10%. The Board continues to evaluate best practices from around the country for serving this population, along with other populations prioritized in WIOA. Potential additional strategies include 1) placing an additional VR representative on the GWC 2) developing an apprenticeship program specifically for individuals with disabilities 3) working to better understand employer data to help maximize effectiveness of goal around cross-training and co-location of VR, Work One, and other staff. To ensure technology is accessible to individuals with disabilities residing in remote areas, GWC may explore the existing work under the Next Level Connections Program, the purpose of which is to provide funding to specific areas in Indiana that lack broadband coverage, with less than actual speeds of 25 Mbps downstream; areas that lack quality, reliable access to fixed terrestrial broadband; and areas with compelling need.

Full Cabinet meetings occur every other month and at times every month in order to provide consistent and actionable response to necessary decisions. A majority of the GWC voting is considered a quorum. Staff of the GWC provide information and agenda items to members at regular meetings and to the Policy Committee, as appropriate. All meetings of the Cabinet abide by the Open Door Law.

2. IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE STRATEGY

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

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

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

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

Indiana's talent development programs – both state and federal – are housed in a variety of agencies. Please see below for the agencies administering Core and Partner Programs:

Agency	Program
Department of Workforce Development	WIOA Adults WIOA Dislocated Worker WIOA Youth Jobs America's Graduates Adult Education Wagner-Peyser Unemployment Insurance Jobs for Veterans State Grant Trade Adjustment Act Senior Community Services Employment Program Office of Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeship Next Level Jobs – Employer Training Grants, Eligible Training Provider List, and non-credit bearing Workforce Ready Grants
Family and Social Services Agency	SNAP E&T TANF Vocational Rehabilitation Child Care and Development Fund Head Start and Early Head Start On My Way PreK Medicaid
Governor's Workforce Cabinet	Perkins State CTE Tuition Support

Agency	Program
Commission for Higher Education	Next Level Jobs – credit-bearing Workforce Ready Grants 21st Century Scholars Frank O'Bannon Scholars Adult Student Grant EARN Indiana Pell Grant
Department of Child Services	Education and Training Vouchers Older Youth Initiatives
Department of Corrections	Hoosier Initiative for Re-Entry (HIRE) The Last Mile Bard Prison Initiative (Marion University partnership) Westville College Program - Second Chance Pell Pilot Site (Holy Cross sponsored by Notre Dame)

Through consistent engagement with the various administering agencies, the Governor's Workforce Cabinet (GWC) will coordinate activities of the listed programs to assist with

(A) <u>Core Program Activities to Implement the State's Strategy</u>. Describe the activities the entities carrying out the respective core programs will fund to implement the State's strategies. Also, describe how such activities will be aligned across the core programs and Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan and among the entities administering the programs, including using co-enrollment and other strategies, as appropriate.

Responses are captured in the answers to (III)(a)(2)(C).

B. ALIGNMENT WITH ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE THE PLAN

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

Responses are captured in the answers to (III)(a)(2)(C).

C. COORDINATION, ALIGNMENT AND PROVISION OF SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS

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

To concretize our Goals, Indiana is approaching the Program Activities, Activities outside the Plan, and Services to Individuals comprehensively from the individual perspective of the constituent, rather than segmented by program or funding stream. Rather than taking a program-specific approach in our answers to (III)(a)(2)(A), (B), and (C), we are examining the alignment of programs through the system's lens to the overarching needs of our target populations. The answers to these three questions will be woven together, rather than fragmented. This approach focuses Indiana not just on specific programmatic requirements and funding streams, but more on how the entire system can provide the supports an individual might need to be successful in his/her career. Pulling from the eligibility criteria of each program, we recommend which services may be prioritized from each programmatic funding stream. The 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 eligibility, needs, goals, and aspirations.

Indiana has a talent development system comprised of wide-ranging and broad workforce development and education programs spanning federal acts, state initiatives, and private investments. This has been beneficial for Hoosiers, as there are multiple resources and supports available to help them access opportunities for lifelong learning and increased personal economic mobility. The proliferation of programs, however, has also created an often convoluted and complex system to navigate. In some instances, we have state, federal, and private programs trying to reach the same populations facing barriers, which has created a system of inefficiencies in delivering resources to Hoosiers. Our current program-by-program approach to serving constituents and businesses has resulted in a profusion of program-specific solutions that may not deliver the full range of services that a Hoosier needs to improve his or her economic mobility. If the talent development system is to better meet our constituents' and employers' needs, address the barriers preventing access education and employment opportunities, and ensure our programs are having the intended impact on lives, we must integrate, align, and simplify access to our array of resources and services.

The following sections are structured around meeting the needs of our target populations through a systemic lens and determining how we can best provide resources for Hoosiers to attain greater economic mobility. Within each section, the **Core and Program Activities**, **Activities outside the Plan**, and **Individual Services** are interwoven through the narrative, as a way for Indiana to have a system-wide vantage point to create bridges between our administrative silos. Given that there may be overlapping and intersectionality of eligibility between our target populations, these sections may not be inclusive of every program. As well, individuals may fall into multiple target populations depending on life circumstances. Specific services may be available to an individual contingent on eligibility. This approach focuses on the overarching needs of a target population, rather than diving into each potential case.

Each section will focus on how our programs may address specific barriers unique to a particular target population or subgroup. Many of the Core, Partner, and state programs and services can be provided to almost all of the populations, depending on the individual's situation; it is the way in which these programs and services can be utilized to support the target population that will differ. By taking this approach, Indiana can differentiate how our programs can directly support and address the distinctive barriers each target population may have. For each target population, the section begins with the foundational programs that someone in that population can receive. The section then diverges into additional programs that could be added on to serve a Hoosier based on his or her individual circumstance. The programs are ranked by relevance to the target population with recommended prioritization of which funds should be directed to which services by state agencies, local workforce boards, and other local community partners.

Through this systemic approach, we seek to establish foundational administrative functions to provide Hoosiers with greater education and training, employment services, and wraparound supports for them to attain greater economic mobility. Through co-enrollment and funding prioritization of our Core, Partner, other federal, and state programs, we can start to build conduits between programs and have full integration of our programs' activities, individual services and supports, and activities outside of the Plan. Though the aim of this section is to provide a comprehensive view on the workforce and social services systems, it does not encompass all local programs and opportunities throughout Indiana. Our Workforce Development Boards will enhance the foundational level of services outlined in the Plan through local programs and implementation, as well as the utilization of best practices happening at the local level. Each of our Boards may meet the expectations set forth in this Plan differently to reflect regional programs, organizations, and an individual's needs. Through the local plans, our Workforce Development Boards will explain how they will integrate and maximize local programs, systems, and nuance to achieve an integrated delivery of workforce and social supports.

Co-enrollment is one integral strategy we want to increase usage of to benefit Hoosiers. Each section begins with those foundational programs someone falling into the target population may receive. The underlying strategy for each of those sections is co-enrollment. Co-enrollment means enrollment in more than one program at a time. While we may have Hoosiers co-enrolled in two or more WIOA Core Programs, we will scale this strategy to encompass our Partner Programs, as well as other federal and state programs. The specific benefits of co-enrollment to the individual are:

- Additional Resources to Provide Training and Income Support: Co-enrolling Hoosiers in more than one eligible program may provide them with additional training and income support and wraparound resources, reducing potential out-of-pocket costs or direct expenses from seeking additional education and training for career advancement.
- Enhanced Service Delivery: Co-enrollment in WIOA and/or other programs can provide eligible Hoosiers with access to a wide array of vitally important services that both directly and indirectly impact the availability of the opportunities to develop knowledge and skills for career advancement.

One-stop providers and other program administrators will yield the following benefits from co-enrollment:

- Improved Participant Outcomes: By coupling the various funding streams for training and income support dollars, providers increase their capacity for counseling, case

management, wraparound support, and follow-up services, leading to greater performance outcomes.

- Increased Services to Hoosiers: Co-enrolled workers may gain access to both greater breadth and depth of supportive services, like childcare and transportation, as well as more varied opportunities for education and training, which may not be currently covered because of funding limitations. By pooling various funding streams in a coordinated manner, providers can stretch their dollars further.

As a state, increased economic mobility and aspirational fulfillment of Hoosiers comprise our primary benefits from promoting co-enrollment. Expanding our co-enrollment efforts will also serve as an important tool to maximize the efficiency and impact of each program through responsible stewardship of these funds. By ensuring that individuals are being served through the programs most appropriate for their needs, we can lessen the duplication of services, improve outcomes, and maximize the amount of Hoosiers able to be served through each funding stream. While Hoosiers will be enrolled into more individualized programs, the strategies employed through co-enrollment will allow us to achieve greater impact with our federal and state investments.

Though co-enrollment will benefit both Hoosiers and service providers, there are systematic barriers to co-enrollment that Indiana's state agencies will need to surmount:

1. Co-enrollment Requires Enrolling Hoosiers into Programs Individually: Currently, Hoosiers cannot be co-enrolled into multiple programs simultaneously. If we increase co-enrollment, we will also increase administrative time and burdens without any accompanying system-level changes.

2. Different Eligibility and Assessment Systems: Partner Programs have different eligibility requirements and may have different types of assessment instruments. This may result in participants undergoing multiple rounds of assessment that do not enhance service planning.

3. Multiple Eligibility Documents and Paperwork: Because in our current system co-enrollment happens consecutively rather than concurrently, increasing this strategy requires separate eligibility documents and paperwork, which will be burdensome to constituents and staff and reinforce the notion of separate delivery systems.

4. Different Case Management Systems across Programs: Programs often have separate case management systems used at both the state and local level, which rarely communicate information with one another. This can make it difficult for staff from different programs to effectively coordinate case management efforts and expenditures. Separate case management systems for state agencies and programs may send a message that the programs are distinct, segregated, and that seamless integration is not a priority.

5. Program-specific Staff May Not be Present at the Reception Point for Determining Eligibility: Staff at local one-stop providers or affiliate offices may not have the sufficient information and training to recognize potential eligibility for various partner programs, potentially resulting in insufficient information being provided or incorrect eligibility determinations being made.

Indiana's long-term solution to operationalizing a seamless co-enrollment system will be through a common intake process and case management system. By 2024, Indiana plans to

develop an automated, common case management system that operates across state and federal programs. This will assist with both co-enrollment and the braiding of funds (*Strategy 2.12*). An intermediary step in this is the development of a common intake process across all programs. Strategy 2.9 details that by 2022, Indiana will collapse all of the intake processes into one common intake process across all programs. This common intake will be accessible both in-person and online. An alternative would be to have a common application with common data elements that meet the reporting needs of all required partners:

- The first step in this strategy will be to assess the various systems and forms used across all programs to complete eligibility determinations.
- We intend on prioritizing and expediting this project for our WIOA Core Programs, SNAP, and TANF intake as a first step towards a common intake across all state agencies and programs.
- This common intake process will include interagency sharing of constituents' documents (e.g., driver licenses) with a constituent's sign off through a safe secure cloud network protecting information and complying with regulations.

Strategies Indiana will implement prior to the common intake and case management system will begin to lay the groundwork for co-enrollment:

- Cross-training all levels of staff (from agency heads to frontline workers) on the WIOA, SNAP, TANF, and financial aid programs, as well as members of local Workforce Development Boards;
- Active referral of constituents to Core and Partner Programs that address their needs;
- Various forms of co-location to facilitate both warm referrals and knowledge regarding Core and Partner Programs;
- Evaluation and integration of assessment systems across Core and Partner Programs;
- Fully aligning performance goals across Core and Partner Programs for state reports; and
- Local agreements among Core and Program Partners that increase communication and include arrangements for cost sharing to enable utilization of other funding sources.

Another strategy the Combined Plan emphasizes is **co-location**. Though co-location is achieved through the physical sharing of spaces in a formal agreement, local Workforce Development Boards can leverage the concept of co-location to create flexible staffing and office structure. Through this flexibility, locals can increase Hoosiers' accessibility to services by increasing the offering of resources rather than remaining static in location. Additionally, co-location will increase the availability of various services by fostering partnerships among Core and Partner Programs, as well as other partners in the talent development and social services ecosystem (e.g., K-12 schools, institutions of higher education, chambers of commerce, community centers and organizations, and libraries). Formal co-location is one option to expand this strategy, but regions can also explore other options, such as using

- Creating itinerant staffing models,
- Embedding staff in various offices and locations, and
- Setting up mobile or temporary locations in hubs of community activity.

Co-location will increase the variety and flexibility in where and how we locate offices and resources. Additional approaches to co-location are further discussed throughout the sections below.

The chart below helps illustrate how local regions may approach braiding the multitude of resources across our diverse target populations. It offers a visual representation of how each of the following target population sections operationalize our Combined Plan's Goals to focus on the individual needs of Hoosiers, integrate our systems, maximize our investments, foster relationships in a cross-sector way, and align all of our programs towards creating a healthy, engaged, and talented citizen. When read vertically, the chart delineates how a variety of funding streams can be braided together to address the barriers the population faces to securing stable, sustainable employment. Horizontally, it highlights the primary and eligible target populations for which this program may be used.

A target population identified as 'primary' for a program indicates that this program provides foundational resources and services. Target populations will be primarily co-enrolled among these programs, for they are designed for and can be specifically tailored to meet the target populations' unique barriers and challenges. Exploring how these different programs can address that target population's barriers occurs in the sections below. Those target populations denoted as 'eligible' for a program designates that this program may provide additional services that can be stacked on top of the foundational programs, contingent upon an individual's eligibility and that person's long-term goals. Adding these programs to the package of services an individual receives is more customized towards the person's life situation and circumstances. Programs that identify a specific subgroup within a target population may have more narrow objectives that may fit a particular subgroup due to eligibility requirements or purpose.

		Low-Income	Veterans and spouses	Unemployed individuals	Individuals needing to be upskilled / reskilled	Ex-Offenders	Individuals with disabilities	Historically underrepresented minorities	Urban populations	Rural populations	At-risk youth	Adults without a HS diploma / with basic skills deficiency
Core Programs	Title I – Adult	Primary[36]	Primary	Primary	Eligible[37]	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	OOS youth[38]	Eligible
	Title I – Dislocated Worker		Primary		Dislocated Workers and Displaced Homemakers							Refugees
	Title I – Youth	Eligible				Eligible	Eligible				Priority (JAG)	
	Title II – Adult Education	Eligible	Eligible	Primary	Eligible	Primary	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	OOS youth	Primary
	Title III – Wagner-Peyser	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible
	Title IV – Vocational Rehabilitation		Eligible		Eligible	Eligible	Primary				Pre-ETS	
Partner Programs	SNAP E&T	Primary		Eligible							Postsecondary students	
	TANF	Primary			Single Parents						Teen parents	
	UI			Primary	Eligible							
	Jobs for Vets State Grant		Primary									
	SCSEP	Seniors		Seniors	Seniors							
	Perkins	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Primary	Primary	Primary	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Primary	Primary
	TAA				Dislocated Workers					Eligible		

		Low-Income	Veterans and spouses	Unemployed individuals	Individuals needing to be upskilled / reskilled	Ex-Offenders	Individuals with disabilities	Historically underrepresented minorities	Urban populations	Rural populations	At-risk youth	Adults without a HS diploma / with basic skills deficiency
State Programs	Next Level Jobs	Primary	Eligible	Eligible	Primary	Non-credit WRG	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	
	21st Century Scholars	Eligible					Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Primary	
	Adult Student Grant	Primary	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible		Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	
	Frank O'Bannon	Primary	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible		Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Primary	
	HIRE					Primary						
	On My Way PreK	Primary		Eligible	Single parents		Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible		Eligible
Other Federal Programs	Pell Grants	Primary									Primary	
	ETV/Chaffee										Foster youth	
	Early Head Start and Head Start	Primary			Single parents							
	CCDF	Primary			Single Parents							
	Medicaid	Primary	Eligible	Primary[20]	Eligible	Primary	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible if over 19	Primary

: Through Indiana's Goals, low-income individuals who are eligible for SNAP and/or are within two years of exhausting their TANF benefits, will be able to access their support services and education and training programs in a more direct system. Based on WIOA's outlined priority of service, low-income individuals are an important constituency for these programs. One of our biggest opportunities for systems integration is with our SNAP and TANF workforce development programs. SNAP Employment & Training, in particular, offers the opportunity for Indiana to braid its talent development system with wraparound supports to increase participants' chances of economic mobility.

Currently, Indiana Manpower Placement and Comprehensive Training (IMPACT) provides services designed to help recipients of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families achieve economic self-sufficiency through:

- Education
- Training
- Job search
- Job placement activities

We need to evaluate the overlap of employment and training services offered through IMPACT with similar services offered at our American Job Centers (WorkOnes). WorkOnes are Indiana's one-stop centers for jobseekers and employers when it comes to career and employment resources. IMPACT, however, can offer much more than job training services to low-income individuals, because it seeks to address a broad range of barriers that may inhibit individuals from seeking and maintaining employment, such as supportive services like transportation reimbursement. Through an individualized Self-Sufficiency Plan for employment, an individual outlines the steps required to become self-sufficient through job search and job readiness activities, work experiences, and appropriate education and training classes. As a way for Indiana to maximize its resources in the talent development space and reduce duplicated efforts, IMPACT will coordinate more closely, as outlined below, with WorkOnes regarding funding training and education.

For Hoosiers eligible for SNAP benefits and/or two years of exhausted TANF eligibility, we intend on co-enrolling those individuals in our employment and training programs offered through our WorkOnes. The federal agency support for the co-enrollment design through WIOA is central to the connectivity design described in this Plan. Co-enrollment between WIOA and SNAP and/or TANF E&T means that the constituent is fully enrolled in both programs and counted in both programs' performance accountability reporting data. Once an individual

qualifies for SNAP E&T, s/he can be referred to the WorkOne to learn about potential education and training programs either through the state, an employer, or a third-party training provider, as well as adult education programs for those without a high school diploma, and the training partner program offerings associated with each. Communication between partners will be ongoing to ensure the constituent's engagement after the referral is made. After this orientation, WIOA Title I can fund the constituent's completion of any intake assessment needed to determine his/her current level of educational attainment and skills, training and career goals. SNAP individuals looking for work experience or training can be referred to WorkOnes through WIOA funding, with SNAP E&T able to supplement training costs and cover supportive services. Through co-enrollment in both federal programs, SNAP and TANF resources could be used to support any goals for the participant that cannot be funded by WIOA Title I and Title II dollars. The primary benefit of closer coordination between SNAP E&T offices and Indiana's workforce system will include us maximizing our federal dollars to provide Hoosiers with the supports they need to attain economic mobility.

A key aspect to effective co-enrollment will be professional development and cross-training for all partners in the workforce system, including SNAP partners, on online technological tools and the impact of work on wages and public benefits. Each agency will lead in-person workshops and online webinars that provide the basic information regarding eligibility and program allowances. These workshops and webinars will be comprised of short modules that give a high overview leading towards a deeper dive of each program; staff members can choose the professional development opportunities based on their current levels of expertise and experience. This ongoing series of workshops will complement the online tool that will serve as a repository of information for each program. This training will be integrated in new employee onboarding as well to address consistency and sustainability even during periods of high turnover. As the State examines restructuring programs within its state agencies, there will be additional opportunities for cross-agency collaboration.

One immediate strategy the Governor's Workforce Cabinet (GWC) will undertake after the submission of the Combined Plan is to create a subcommittee to examine those with income at 151% to 200% of the federal poverty line and ways to help them attain self-sufficiency. This subcommittee will include Cabinet members, stakeholders, and subject matter experts in the decrease of public benefits. One key topic studied will be the benefits cliff (also known as the cliff effect), which describes what happens when public benefits programs phase down or out quickly and there is an abrupt reduction or loss of benefits for families. The benefits cliff occurs when household earnings increase but perhaps not enough for self-sufficiency to be reached. Often, a small increase in household earnings can trigger loss of eligibility for a benefit. Generally, eligibility for public benefits is below 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines, with benefits phasing out as earnings increase. The unintended consequences in this design is that an increase in some family's income may significantly set back their goal towards economic self-sufficiency

Concerns about the impact the benefits cliff has on Hoosiers' opportunities for career and wage advancement was a recurring theme that surfaced throughout the GWC's listening tour throughout the state. Community stakeholders throughout Indiana frequently asked about ways to address this issue with constituents. Researchers are divided on the impact of the benefits cliff. The Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta (FRB) has recently studied the conundrum with marginal tax rates, or the additional tax workers pay as their wages climb. For the lowest-wage workers, marginal tax rates are high not only because of the incremental boost in income tax but also because of the accompanying loss of public benefits. The FRB posits that the current federal safety net system does not promote long-term career development for low-income

workers, but instead primarily supports static consumption – to help families buy groceries, pay for childcare, and keep the utilities turned on. Devising policies to lessen the damage from benefits cliffs, therefore, is complex. A few potential approaches mentioned at the Atlanta FRB includes strategies to help low-wage workers plan their finances; phasing out benefits gradually rather than abruptly ending eligibility; and not immediately counting certain income against benefits eligibility.[1]

Contrary to the FRB, the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP) states that the various changes in the safety net over the past two decades have substantially increased incentives to work for people in poverty. It affirms that working is nearly always substantially better from a family's financial standpoint than not working. The financial incentive to take a job is unmistakable, counteracting any negative impact from the benefits cliff. The negation of a benefits cliff is due to the fact that it takes an atypical combination of benefits over relatively narrow earnings ranges to create any type of cliff effect; few low-income workers' circumstances result in those rates. Per CBPP, for the typical worker in poverty, the benefit loss from additional earnings is a very modest fraction of the amount. There are also policy tradeoffs to phasing out benefits gradually: reducing the marginal tax rates for those currently in the phase-out range also extends benefits farther up the income scale and increases costs considerably. The other options is to shrink benefits for people in poverty, so they have less of a benefit to phase out, and thus lose less as benefits are phased down.[2] To ensure Indiana comprehensively understands how the benefits cliff impacts Hoosiers both now and into the future, we will further explore the extent of this with Indiana-specific data and all potential strategies we can implement to negate its effects.

1. Federal constraints pose challenges to streamlining varying eligibility rules for federal low-income programs. Each of these programs is authorized by a different federal statute written by different Congressional committees enacted at different times by different executive agencies in response to differing circumstances. As a result, streamlining eligibility rules would require changing many laws and coordinating among a broad set of lawmakers and congressional committees at the federal level.[3] The federal government is examining ways to reduce these barriers, primarily through data sharing. Through Governor Holcomb's work on the **White House's American Workforce Policy Advisory Board**, Indiana will identify data barriers and potential solutions. Through a data charter encompassing all of the state agencies on the Governor's Workforce Cabinet, we will understand where and how the benefits cliff happen for Hoosiers. We will be able to correlate the interaction between wages and public benefits to understand what families need to earn to transition away from benefits altogether. Through this subcommittee, we will consider policies and strategies regarding potential cliffs and phase outs of benefits for this population.

<u>Co-Enrolled Programs:</u> Hoosiers who are eligible for SNAP and/or are within two years of exhausting their TANF will be co-enrolled into the following primary programs and services of benefit to this target population. An individual's unique circumstances or preference may not necessitate co-enrollment in each program. This section includes ***Core and Partner Program Activities***and***Individual Services***for low-income adults.

Title I – Adults (Core Program): Any individual qualifying for SNAP or TANF will immediately be counseled and referred to all levels of career services at local WorkOnes. WIOA Adult can prioritize funding towards the following services:

- Individualized assessments to determine eligibility for career interests, skill levels (including literacy, numeracy, and English language proficiency), aptitudes, abilities (including skill gaps), and supportive service needs.
- Career and training services aligned to a designated career pathway, provided concurrently or in any combination, that can include:
    - Comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skill levels, including diagnostic testing, in-depth interviewing, and evaluation to identify employment barriers and employment goals;
    - Employability skills development (learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, professional conduct) to prepare for employment or training;
    - Education and/or training services (with either TANF or SNAP E&T paying for participant credential exam fees);
    - Financial literacy services;
    - English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs (as supplemental to Adult Education); and
    - Work-based learning activities. These are activities that will allow low-income adults to gain knowledge, skills, and experience as they earn an income. WIOA Adult can help subsidize a variety of work-based learning experiences:
        - Talent tours;[4]
        - Career fairs;
        - Informational interviews with local employers;
        - Job shadow experiences;
        - Virtual exchanges with a business partner;
        - State Earn and Learn programs;[5]
        - A pre-apprenticeship or apprenticeship-readiness program;[6]
        - Paid internships;
        - Transitional jobs; and
        - On-the-job training.
- WIOA Adult can fund any follow-up services, such as individualized counseling regarding the work place, how to successfully navigate the new environment, or any other additional services customized for the constituent.

Next Level Jobs (State Program): Workforce Ready Grants, a state program through Next Level Jobs, will pay the tuition and mandatory fees for eligible high-value certificate programs at Ivy Tech Community College, Vincennes University, or other approved providers. The grant is available for two years and covers up to the number of credits required by the qualifying program. The qualifying high-value certificate programs were selected based on employer demand, wages, job placements and program completion rate. These programs are aligned with Indiana's highest demand sectors:

- Advanced Manufacturing
- Building & Construction
- Health Sciences
- IT & Business Services
- Transportation & Logistics

Depending on an individual's career aspirations, this is a state-funded resource WorkOnes can direct low-income individuals towards to help mitigate the costs of training. This state program will cover the costs of training and education, while the WorkOne can provide ongoing counseling and coaching, and SNAP or TANF assists with wraparound services. This may not be the best fit for every individual, since it is restricted to certain sectors and may not provide immediate income relief, but it could be a future opportunity within an individual's career pathway.

Since those on SNAP have difficulty persisting through longer education and training programs due to income constraints and needs, Indiana hopes to complement our state-funded Workforce Ready Grants with **SNAP 50/50**. Any non-federal funding (e.g., state dollars, community colleges, philanthropy, or community-based organizations) spent on Employment & Training services for SNAP recipients may receive a 50% reimbursement grant from the federal government.[7] This funding is commonly referred to as "SNAP 50/50" or "50/50 funds," since the federal government will reimburse 50% of the costs of such activities. SNAP 50/50 funds have more flexibility for what they can be spent on than SNAP E&T (which is the federal allocation for Employment & Training services for SNAP recipients). The graphic below outlines that E&T funding can only offset administrative and direct program expenses; 50/50 funds can reimburse the participant expenses that are related to their education and training opportunities.

SNAP E&T FUNDS CAN PAY FOR:

100 PERCENT OR 50-50 FUNDS

ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES
- State staffing and overall planning, implementation, and operations
- Partner provider administrative expenses

DIRECT PROGRAM EXPENSES (*other than* participant reimbursements)
- Tuition and fees
- Case management/career navigation
- Job development

50-50 FUNDS ONLY

PARTICIPANT EXPENSES ***reasonably necessary and directly related*** to program participation (supportive services), including:
- Transportation
- Dependent care
- Equipment and supplies related to training
- Books
- Uniforms
- Licensing fees

[8]

Our state agencies will serve as the program provider and use a reverse referral process for those on SNAP and receiving a Workforce Ready Grant to receive SNAP 50/50 tuition reimbursements. This will require a Memorandum of Understanding between our Department of Workforce Development and Family and Social Services Agency to expedite SNAP E&T enrollments. We can intentionally stack these benefits for an individual to provide the supports necessary for economic mobility:

- The Workforce Ready Grant will fund the educational program,

- SNAP can provide food assistance, and
- SNAP 50/50 will provide support services for direct expenses a person might need to persist (e.g., childcare costs, subsidized income, transportation, housing, etc.).

Medicaid, which is explained further below, can provide healthcare coverage while an individual is pursuing postsecondary education, allowing another state program to help with wraparound supports. By connecting our state Workforce Ready Grants to SNAP 50/50 we can maximize our investments in Hoosiers to help them earn credentials that will lead to higher wages and sustainable careers.

Another aspect of Next Level Jobs is **Employer Training Grants**. Under these grants, employers may qualify for reimbursement of up to $5,000 per employee trained and retained for six months. Each employer may qualify for up to $50,000 per employer. Employers must submit an application, satisfy eligibility requirements and receive and sign a formal agreement obligating grant funding. Employers must offer occupational skills training directly correlated with in-demand jobs in our six high-growth job fields (Advanced Manufacturing, Agriculture, IT & Business Services, Building & Construction, Health & Life Sciences, and Transportation & Logistics). The training must be greater than 40 hours and ideally result in a stackable certificate or credential upon completion (onboarding training and informal job shadowing does not qualify). Additionally, the employer must ensure a wage gain at the completion of training for current employees trained to new skill sets; there is no current wage requirement for new hires trained. Employer Training Grants receive $20 million in funding through the state's budget.

Employers can couple the **Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC)** with state and federal funding for increasing middle-skilled employees, thus creating a strong talent pipeline to fill positions that require robust experiences and skills. Using SNAP 50/50 for both the Workforce Ready Grants and Employer Training Grants, Indiana can alleviate barriers and improve the number of low-income individuals persisting and completing these programs.

Postsecondary Education Financial Aid (Federal and State Programs): To ensure equitable access to postsecondary education, Indiana has instituted seveal state financial aid programs that are income-based. Indiana ranks **fifth in the nation** in the need-based grant aid per undergraduate full-time equivalent enrollment, making postsecondary education more accessible and attainable for more Hoosiers. We will increase the co-enrollment of WIOA participants into these financial aid programs. At the state level, we will work with and encourage our WorkOnes to include filing the FAFSA as part of the intake process for anyone seeking postsecondary education and training opportunities. The FAFSA will allow a low-income individual access to both state and federal funding for credit-bearing programs at our community colleges. This will ensure we maximize our current investments and extend our WIOA Adult funding to help subsidize on-the-job and work-based learning wages, as well as other wraparound supports.

Our state agencies will seek to enhance coordination between Higher Education Financial Aid Officers and WIOA caseworkers through cross-training efforts. Because community colleges and vocational schools account for a substantial group of WIOA training providers, improving communication and cross-agency coordination between financial aid officers at colleges and caseworkers at our WorkOnes is one of the biggest opportunities to get more job seekers trained and back to work. As we increase the integration of our workforce systems, we will

prioritize professional development for both stakeholder groups regarding WIOA funding and state and federal financial opportunities.

Co-enrollment into the following state programs should be promoted to help support education and training opportunities:

- **Adult Student Grant**: Part of Indiana's You Can. Go Back. program. It offers a renewable $2,000 grant to assist returning adult students in starting or completing an associate degree, bachelor's degree or certificate. To qualify, students must be financially independent as determined by the FAFSA, demonstrate financial need, and be enrolled in at least six credit hours.
- **EARN Indiana** (Employment Aid Readiness Network): The state's work-study program. Students with financial need have access to resume-building, experiential, paid internships, while participating employers receive state matching funds—up to 50% of the student's hourly wage. EARN Indiana partners with Indiana INTERNnet to better match students and employers and to assist employers in finding the perfect fit for their team.
- **21st Century Scholarship**: Indiana's early college promise program. It offers income-eligible Hoosier students up to four years of paid tuition at an eligible Indiana college or university after they graduate from high school. While not dedicated towards low-income adults, it is still crucial for those with children to know about, since it is dedicated towards low-income students and can help address generational poverty. Students enroll in seventh or eighth grade, and in high school they participate in the Scholar Success Program and that connects them to programs and resources aimed at helping them prepare for college and career success. Once in college, Scholars receive support to complete their college degrees and connect to career opportunities.
- **The Frank O'Bannon Grant** (which includes the Higher Education Award and the Freedom of Choice Award): Indiana's primary need-based financial aid program for adults seeking an associate's or bachelor's degree full-time. It is designed to provide access for Hoosier students to attend eligible public, private and proprietary colleges and universities. Eligibility is based on a student's FAFSA, and the grant may be used toward tuition and regularly assessed fees.

In addition to state aid, low-income individuals can also access federal Pell Grants to help access postsecondary education. **Federal Pell Grants** usually are awarded only to undergraduate students who display exceptional financial need. The Pell Grant lifetime eligibility is limited to 12 semesters. The 2019-20 Pell Grant is up to $6,195 for an accredited credit-bearing program leading to a certificate, associate's degree, or bachelor's degree.[9] Pell Grants, can be used to cover a variety of costs, generally including tuition and fees, books, supplies, transportation, and miscellaneous personal expenses, living expenses, such as room and board, and an allowance for costs expected to be incurred for dependent care for a student with dependents. For those low-income individuals interested in pursuing an education or training program at a postsecondary institution, the Pell Grant could help fund the training costs or wraparound supports, while WIOA Adult serves a gap filler for employment services, work-based learning, or additional supports.

The **Federal Work-Study Program** could also fund work-based learning experiences for low-income individuals. This program provides part-time jobs for undergraduate and graduate

students with financial need, allowing them to earn money. It is available to either part-time or full-time students. Traditionally, this program has been merely to help individuals pay their education expenses and related costs.[10] Institutions can use the goals of EARN Indiana to expand this federal program as a work-based learning funding source for low-income adults. Redesigning the use of Work-Study directly aligns with Indiana's goal to have 100% of postsecondary education programs include an experience with career relevance, as well as increase the accessibility of earn and learn programs for our target populations. Because the program encourages community service work and work related to the student's course of study, our institutions could coordinate with local Boards to provide low-income adults an opportunity to earn and learn using Work-Study funds.

The **Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant** (FSEOG) is another possible federal financial program for low-income individuals. This is awarded to undergraduate students who have exceptional financial need with federal Pell Grant recipients receiving priority. Not all postsecondary institutions participate in this program; the funds depend on availability at the school. Currently, this award is up to $4,000 a year. Both federal and state financial aid are contingent upon an individual filling out the FAFSA form. Because these programs are existing investments into education and training for low-income individuals, we need to include the FAFSA as part of our intake process at the local level.

Potential co-enrollment of Hoosiers into state financial aid, SNAP, and WIOA Adult will also help that individual maintain his/her benefits throughout his/her education and training. A low-income student can qualify for SNAP while enrolled at least half-time in a postsecondary institution if s/he meets one of these additional criteria:

- Responsible for a dependent child under the age of 6;
- Responsible for a dependent child between the ages of 6 & 12 for whom you have trouble securing childcare;
- Single parent enrolled full-time & responsible for a dependent child age 12 or under;
- Participates in a state or federally funded work study program;
- Participates in an on-the-job training program;
- Works at least 20 hours a week in paid employment;
- In school through a state or federally approved employment and training program; or
- Inability to work for health reasons.

Braiding our federal and state funding for higher education and training with WIOA Adult will allow us to capitalize on both investments. Through co-enrollment into federal and state financial aid, we can also stretch our WIOA farther to provide more services to Hoosiers. Through co-enrollment in federal and state programs, Indiana can leverage existing funding to boost Hoosiers' postsecondary attainment and economic mobility. Allowing Hoosiers to take advantage of existing state and federal funding streams can help Indiana maximize its current investments (Goal 4) and assist Hoosiers find the opportunity that fulfills their aspirations and goals (Goal 1).

Title III – Wagner-Peyser (Core Program): For low-income adults, this program can serve as the resource to fund career counseling (either in person or virtually), labor exchange services, and assistance for job searches and placement. Local Boards could pioneer virtual chatting

through a chatbox feature with a career coach as a way to increase accessibility to WorkOnes. Other activities may include:

- Career counseling and development of individual employment plans (employment goals, achievement objectives, appropriate services, and eligible training providers), which must be mirrored in the constituent's SNAP Self Sufficiency Plan.
- Assessment of an individual's skills and then mapping that to current and future occupational opportunities.
- Workforce and labor market information (job vacancies, job skills needed, demand occupations with earnings, skill requirements, and aligned career pathways).
- Customized labor market information for specific employers, sectors, industries or clusters.
- Business services to employers, employer associations, or other such organizations on employment-related attraction and retention, specifically helping to explain the barriers and unique circumstances of this population.[11]
- Providing coordination with labor unions, businesses, associations, and the Office of Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeship to support and develop work-based learning and registered apprenticeship opportunities.

TANF (Partner Program): Key changes introduced in WIOA facilitate integration of TANF and workforce development programs by making TANF a mandatory partner with WorkOnes. Low-income parents who participate in TANF need better, more accessible job training and support services to obtain family-sustaining work. To accomplish this, it is critical to coordinate TANF's employment programs with federal workforce development services under WIOA.

TANF programs will coordinate with other Core Programs and administrative agencies to provide wraparound support services to assist participants. This could include transportation, childcare, equipment and supplies, and other supports an individual needs in order to access the labor market. The WorkOne, however, can provide the career services and job training for someone receiving TANF through WIOA Title I or Title II (as applicable). The TANF block grant can be used to help cover costs of any certification, credentialing, or examination costs, easing one barrier to Hoosiers earning postsecondary credentials.

Offering a shared job search resource room at a physical co-location of TANF and WIOA services is one way to connect these two programs to serve any overlapping population. Through our co-location strategies, we will embed staffers of different programs across offices in their regions. The mobility of staffers between offices, program locations, and community hubs will help allow for greater awareness and access to more detailed information. For some of our regions, this may include virtual co-location of program staff in various offices. This would allow access to staff of different programs through a chatbox feature, web-based meeting or interview, or another virtual connection program. Through cross-program co-location, we will start communities of practice and services that integrate our workforce and social systems. Co-location will also increase team case management, where TANF and WIOA case managers who serve the same clients have access to a shared case management system to reduce duplication of efforts.

Through our Combined Plan, we will start tracking and reporting WIOA performance measure outcomes for TANF recipients. Because WIOA performance measures account for barriers and differences in participant characteristics, WIOA programs may serve TANF recipients without

harming WIOA program performance. The system does not have punitive measures against those hardest to serve, thus requiring the WorkOnes to enter all of an individual's barriers into the system. This will both allow us to have more transparent outcomes and cater services towards all of the needs an individual might present.

TANF should blend with WIOA Adult funds to help provide the TANF recipient with the proper supports they might need and then recording how and if those opportunities align with our outcomes. Through WIOA Adult, we will provide TANF participants with the education and training that they need to fulfill their aspirations and find economic mobility. As stated in Goal 1, we must tailor the programs to the individual rather than the individual to the program.

SNAP (Partner Program): Through our Combined Plan, Indiana has the opportunity to move SNAP E&T from the periphery of our talent development system into an integrated, central component for serving low-income Hoosiers. Our WorkOnes give priority of service to individuals with barriers to employment, including SNAP participants. SNAP E&T can serve as additional or supplemental funding for tuition and fees, training costs, job development, case management, and any administrative expenses for SNAP recipients. To allow our WIOA Core Programs funds to encompass potential training or wraparound supports, SNAP E&T can supplement any administrative expenses or career coaching costs. Through a braiding of Wagner-Peyser and SNAP E&T for SNAP recipients, we can build a more robust career navigation system for this particular target population across the state.

A critical step in integrating how Indiana administers its federal workforce development programs is to merge SNAP E&T workforce development programs with the WorkOnes for SNAP recipients. Offices for the Division of Family Resources will continue to determine eligibility and refer any SNAP recipient to the WorkOne (either the physical location or the embedded staff members) for career development and training opportunities. This integration will simplify the steps jobseekers must take to access career services. At the WorkOne, an individual's current skills, education and job experience, career goals, and barriers can be evaluated and determined. Assessments funded by WIOA Adult can help determine the best employment and training services needed and also facilitate the collection of similar data points on participants of each program that can be shared, analyzed and compared. WIOA Title I can fund the administration of this assessment, thus allowing SNAP E&T funds to be maximized for other aspects of career support from the WorkOne.

To maximize our SNAP E&T funding for SNAP recipients, we plan on expanding SNAP E&T third party providers to mirror the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) developed for WIOA. For SNAP E&T providers to be eligible for WIOA funding, they will have to meet the same requirements as any other provider receiving WIOA funding. Harmonizing our SNAP E&T and ETLP providers will allow those providers, SNAP and WIOA case managers, and the state agencies to collaborate on strategies that link the WIOA and SNAP E&T programs and funding streams at the ground level so that constituents can move seamlessly between funding sources as they seek to advance their skills and careers without losing any benefits or wraparound services. SNAP E&T and WIOA funds could be braided together to fund the tuition and training costs, case management or job counseling, or administrative expenses.

Additionally, for college students are enrolled in a **Perkins** postsecondary CTE programs seeking a degree, certificate, or technical certificate, these courses and activities will count as employment and workforce training requirement for SNAP. Allowing these students to count their CTE programs towards SNAP E&T requirements will allow low-income individuals to continue to receive food assistance support as they pursue their postsecondary education.

Alignment between SNAP E&T and postsecondary Perkins will help address any barriers low-income individuals face challenging training for high wage, high demand, and high skill areas.

To maximize our state investment into education, training, and wraparound supports, Indiana will expand its use of SNAP 50/50 with SNAP E&T and WIOA programs. We currently have two **SNAP 50/50** providers, Second Helpings and Ivy Tech Community College-Fort Wayne. Indiana will expand the implementation of SNAP 50/50 to more community college campuses, non-profit providers, and WorkOnes. By matching non-federal money from either state or philanthropic resources, Indiana will be able to draw down more funding to support Hoosiers' support services as they pursue employment and training opportunities. Additionally, SNAP 50/50 will help expand the offerings of our self-sustaining programs by providing funds for expenses directly related to education and training programs. Through the utilization of SNAP 50/50 reimbursements, in addition to blending WIOA funds for training with SNAP E&T funds for supports for SNAP recipients, Indiana can break down the barriers facing low-income individuals to earning postsecondary credentials and moving towards career advancement.

A key element of the education and training programs for low-income individuals will be work-based learning opportunities, allowing these individuals to both earn an income and advance their technical knowledge. Career pathways for low-income individuals must include short-term credentials of value that will stack towards postsecondary credentials and degrees along a career pathway, options for on-the-job training, and flexible participation options (part-time, extended hours, and online modules). WIOA funds can provide a variety of work-based learning experiences with SNAP E&T filling any tuition gaps.

Through Governor Holcomb's work on the **American Workforce Policy Advisory Board**, Indiana intends on expanding upon its data share agreements amongst the Core and Partner Programs of the Combined Plan, in particular data between SNAP E&T and WIOA programs. Shared data systems will facilitate the tracking of individuals being served by multiple workforce system programs and their outcomes, as well as compare program demographics and outcomes. This will also help the state gauge the return on investment each program delivers and how these programs improve our constituents' lives.

One benefit to co-enrollment between SNAP and WIOA is the shared cost of job retention and follow-up services. WIOA can help an individual for 12 months after they are placed in a job – helping with any transitional or unforeseen issues; Indiana's current policy for SNAP is to continue funding retention services up to 90 days from the start date of employment (the individual must be on SNAP in the month of or month prior to beginning job retention services, and the individual must have secured employment after or while receiving E&T services). If SNAP job retention services (including any education and training costs or wraparound supports) could continue for 12 months after one is off benefits, WIOA can help that individual with counseling and mentoring as they transition into a full-time position. By offering both services for 12 months, we can stair step individuals off of their government benefits, provide them with training opportunities towards valuable, stackable credentials, and maintain any wraparound supports needed as one transitions to a family-sustaining job. Through this integration of services, we can actualize our vision of being a hub for equitable opportunities for lifelong learning and increased personal economic mobility for all Hoosiers.

Potential Eligibility: Additional programs and services a Hoosier may receive depending on individual circumstances. This section includes ***Core and Partner Program Activities***,***Activities outside the Plan***, and***Individual Services***for low-income adults.

Title I – Out-of-School Youth (Core Program): This category encompasses low-income youth ages 16 to 24-years-old who have not attended school for at least the most recent complete school year calendar quarter or are not attending any school. Due to the overlapping eligibility requirements, there are some low-income Hoosiers who are out of school and may be able to qualify for both WIOA Adult and WIOA Youth. Engaging the out-of-school youth population can be extremely challenging, for there may not be a common touchpoint that individual has with the system, as opposed to their in-school peers. In effect, out-of-school youth often have to be sought out. Other challenges include:

- How to motivate older young adults to engage with the workforce system.
- How to help them balance life requirements (e.g., rent, food, and bills) with educational opportunities.
- How to match their career interests and keep them engaged to achieve measureable skill attainment.
- How to market elements and resources to these young adults in diverse communities.
- How to provide informational elements on available job opportunities.
- How to connect them to meet their wraparound needs and supports (e.g., housing, healthcare, and childcare).

Recruiting out-of-school youth presents the first challenge with this target population. While many of our providers currently recruit individuals one-on-one or go to places where young adults hang out, this requires quite a bit of time investment without the return. Through our GWC data charter, we will implement interagency referrals of high school dropouts from the Department of Education to the Department of Workforce Development. DWD can then share those individuals with the local Workforce Development Boards. Additionally, we encourage local Workforce Development Boards to include partnerships between the WorkOnes and school districts to refer students who drop out for services. The WorkOnes can refer or co-enroll that student into an Adult Education program administered through Title II to assist with earning a high school equivalency and any academic remediation. This data connection will help remedy the lag between a student dropping out of high school and receiving supportive elements through a WorkOne.

Many out-of-school youth who exit to homeschooling during their high school careers tend to need Adult Education services later on life. We look forward to seeing how local regions can bridge our school districts with our WorkOnes to receive the names of students who do exit to homeschooling, specifically during their 11th and 12th grade years. For example, JAG students who do not graduate are referred to Adult Education. Leveraging local plans, this strategy can encompass to any/all student who drops out or exits to homeschooling. Similarly, students who graduate with an Alternate Diploma should be referred to Vocational Rehabilitation for assistance with secondary to postsecondary, as well as for potential employment and training services.

A large portion of out-of-school youth may not be engaged in the labor market, and, while a majority might seek out opportunities to connect to training and work, it can be difficult in to sustain that participation and increase the persistence rates of this target population. As a state, we know we will not reach our target of 60% postsecondary attainment or actualize our vision of increasing personal economic mobility and median household income without more

intensive engagement with this target population. Some strategies we intend to expand in Indiana include:

- Providing financial incentives and opportunities for paid training and work through either WIOA or philanthropic dollars. Work-based learning experiences and stipends can be an important source of support to meet the economic challenges these young people face. The quality of the work experience, however, may also matter. Low-wage work that is not connected to a career pathway or that young people perceive to have no value may not be as effective as work experience that gives them a sense of future advancement and fulfillment.
- Offering opportunities to feel connected to a community. Many out-of-school youth have experienced some level of trauma or instability in their lives. The presence of caring, committed adults who provide moral and emotional support appears to be an important feature of successful youth programs. Intensive case management, one-on-one assistance, and trauma-informed counseling and practices will help these individuals feel more trusting and connected.
- Focusing on the socio-psychological elements of resiliency and self-efficacy. In addition to standard employment and education elements through case management, out-of-school youth may need more life coaching to help these individuals become self-advocates. This may involve co-enrolling these youth into **Medicaid** so they can access mental health elements.
- Support elements that address a young person's barriers to participation. Out-of-school youth may present a diverse range of necessary wraparound supports to help them engage in the workforce – from transportation to childcare to housing. The non-academic barriers may be more challenging for an individual to overcome than the academic.

WIOA Youth funds can go towards any of the 14 elements, though local programs can determine what to offer based on the individual's needs. Since these individuals will be co-enrolled into other Core and Partner Programs, allowing for the blending of funds to meet an individual's needs, we are recommending that the following elements be prioritized:

1. Paid and unpaid work experiences, which include: summer and year round employment opportunities, pre-apprenticeship programs, internships and job shadowing, and on-the-job training;
2. Occupational skill training;
3. Leadership development opportunities;
4. Supportive services;
5. Mentoring;
6. Follow-up services;
7. Comprehensive guidance and counseling;
8. Financial literacy education; and
9. Entrepreneurial skills training.

To help sustain individuals' engagement with education and training programs, we will work with local areas and providers to prioritize work-based learning programs and stipends in this funding stream. Title I can help subsidize a work-based learning, pre-apprenticeship, or on-the-job-training experience, as well as fund life coaching, counseling, and any wraparound supports an individual might need. Many out-of-school youth may also be co-enrolled into WIOA Title II, Adult Education, to receive remedial support. Through Integrated Education and Training models funded by Title II, State Earn and Learn programs (a state program outside of the Plan), a pre-apprenticeship or apprenticeship-readiness program, a paid internship, or on-the-job training could be supported by braiding WIOA Adult, WIOA Youth, and WIOA Title II together.

Through Indiana's waiver for WIOA Youth, we currently have flexibility to allocate up to 50% of our funding towards out-of-school youth programs. Our out-of-school youth programs are designed to serve youth (ages 16-24) who have left the traditional school system and are interested in completing the requirements for a high school diploma, or its equivalent. These programs must provide an array of counseling, employability and technical skills development, professional association, job development, and job placement services. These programs also have to include a follow-up period, wherein career specialists are actively involved in intensive one-on-one employer marketing and job development activities to identify job opportunities for participants upon completion of the program. These specialists can also assist program completers in the exploration of postsecondary educational opportunities and show them how to navigate the financial aid process to pursue these opportunities.

JAG's Out-of-School (OOS) program has had success engaging with out-of-school youth in the Gary region of Indiana. Though the JAG OOS model includes adult education components, the Gary region braids current Adult Education programs into their JAG model through a blended approach. WIOA Youth dollars fund the JAG OOS model for wraparound supports and career coaching for these students, while WIOA Title II funds and provides the educational services.

For those TANF and SNAP recipients under the age of 24, they can also be co-enrolled into out-of-school youth services. These funding streams can augment the WIOA Core Program activities, particularly subsidizing a work-based learning, pre-apprenticeship, or on-the-job-training experience. SNAP E&T can assist with additional tuition and fees, training costs, or administrative expenses in providing services to the co-enrolled SNAP participants. TANF E&T funds can support any wraparound supports an individual might need. By blending these funding sources, a qualifying individual could gain postsecondary education and training preparation activities and work experience, while earning an income.

JobCorps (Federal Program): JobCorps is administered through the US Department of Labor and offers career-technical training and education program for low-income young people ages 16 through 24. Job Corps offers hands-on career-technical training in high-growth industries, as well as assists individuals in obtaining a GED or high school equivalency. As the training in Job Corps is free for individuals, WorkOnes can refer any interested Hoosier to this program as a potential opportunity for additional education.

Title II – Adult Education (Core Program): Based on the individual's skills assessment, a low-income Hoosier could be automatically referred to Adult Education for assistance earning a high school equivalency, technical training through Integrated Education and Training, or other educational services (e.g., literacy remediation and English language acquisition activities). These services should be provided in coordination with those outlined above in WIOA Adult to facilitate enrollment. Depending on the individual's needs, Adult Education could fund the bulk of education and training costs, with WIOA Adult serving as the gap filler (and SNAP E&T for SNAP recipients).

WIOA Adult and SNAP E&T (specifically for SNAP recipients) programs and funds can be blended with WIOA Title II to ensure that an individual is accessing the training and educational opportunities needed to advance in his or her career plus the academic remediation necessary to be successful. Integrated Education and Training (IET) is a three-part strategy that balances attention to adult education & literacy, workforce preparation, and workforce training. These three components must be proportionally balanced and have an integrated set of outcomes. One type of IET program is contextual or bridge programs. These programs coordinate academic and occupational instruction by providing basic educational remediation concurrently with, rather than as a prerequisite for, college-level courses. These "bridge" programs are often used in a number of community colleges and are typically one or two-semester interventions that aim to accelerate students' acquisition of basic academic skills in a supportive learning environment. Sometimes instruction is delivered in the context of an industry or occupation. Through the Combined Plan, local Boards can determine how to braid various funding sources, such as SNAP E&T and Perkins, with Adult Education to create bridge programs.

One type of IET Indiana seeks to expand is connecting Adult Education with pre-apprenticeships and Programs of Study as defined under Perkins. Pre-apprenticeship opportunities could be beneficial work-based learning experiences for this target population. If an individual is co-enrolled into a pre-apprenticeship program interwoven with Adult Education, WIOA Title II could help with funding and academic supports. According to Jobs For the Future, pre-apprenticeships are designed for populations facing significant barriers to obtaining the skills, confidence, and connections they need to be successful. By including Adult Education into a pre-apprenticeship program, the low-income individual is able to obtain with technical and academic education while earning an income. Integration of these programs could provide academic knowledge and skills training tailored to specific jobs and industries for participants, as well as work-readiness skills and a range of supports. Those supports can range from transportation and driver's license recovery assistance to referrals for childcare. Those participants that persist in the program can progress into a registered apprenticeship. Quality pre-apprenticeship programs incorporate:

- Connection to existing apprenticeship programs;
- Approved training and curriculum;
- Opportunity to earn an industry-recognized credential;
- Hands-on learning with a career focus; and
- Access to support services and career counseling.[12]

Title IV – Vocational Rehabilitation (Core Program): If a low-income individual has a physical or mental disability that constitutes or results in a substantial barrier to employment, s/he may qualify for Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services. Through a common intake process, the state will understand the multifaceted needs of an individual and where various programs can serve as scaffolding to our Employment and Training services through WIOA Adult and state programs, like Next Level Jobs. Based on the employment services need, low-income individuals with a disability and seeking employment should be enrolled into an education or training program via the WorkOne. For many low-income individuals with disabilities, the type of employment service and assistance may be best served by our WorkOne system because their barriers may not be disability specialized or focused in their nature. Contingent upon the individual's needs and barriers, the WorkOne can offer the programming and funding for that

person's employment service, with VR serving as an supplementary support. Co-enrollment into VR could provide the individual with any accommodations or auxiliary supports needed for training, rather than relying on VR to be the sole source of support and funding. These supports can include:

- Personal and vocational adjustment services,
- Assistive technologies,
- Rehabilitation technology,
- Adaptive aids and devices and any associated training, and
- Interpreter or reader services.

For those individuals requiring more intensive disability and employment services, VR should be the primary point of contact and service delivery. Those individuals who are seeking employment services irrespective of their disability should be supported predominantly by the WorkOne or co-enrollment into multiple programs. By allowing VR employment services to focus on the intensive and specialize employment and disability services aligned to an individual's needs, the WorkOne becomes more accessible for more Hoosiers. We are shifting the system to serve more individuals based on their needs and barriers, rather than a singular characteristic. This long-term systemic shift will allow us to stretch our dollars further and serve more Hoosiers. Focus on the intensity of the need and barriers will increase Hoosiers' access to a wider array of employment services to attain career sustainability and longevity. To maximize these dollars, we need to integrate this program as one workforce system resource for our individuals with disabilities and not the only resource.

For any individual with a disability, VR can also help fill any funding gaps for wraparound supports that person may have – including childcare, transportation, or modifications of homes and vehicles. Additionally, VR business services can augment Wagner-Peyser activities to help coach employers through the unique aspects of the hiring and on-boarding process for a low-income individual with disabilities, such as understanding any accommodations that may be necessary. Specifically, VR's small business program can complement Wagner-Peyser and business service staff at WorkOnes to promote non-traditional hiring practices.

Carl D. Perkins Act (Partner Program): Career and technical education (CTE) programs at Indiana's community colleges prepare students for particular industries. Postsecondary CTE includes the following industry clusters: Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources, Science, Engineering & Technologies, Manufacturing & Processing, Business, Management, and Administration, Architecture & Construction, Health Services, Information Technology, and Transportation and Logistics. Postsecondary CTE programs also work closely with businesses to offer work-based learning experiences. Currently, the majority of postsecondary Perkins funds goes towards facilities and equipment costs. As Indiana encourages more co-location of state government agencies and programs, we aim to see this occur in our education spaces, as well. This will allow us to maximize our investments in equipment, facilities, supplies, and instructors between our secondary and postsecondary institutions. It will also build greater articulation in the CTE space among secondary, adult education, and postsecondary programs. Local regions can determine how to increase co-location partnerships through varied schedules, hours, and instructors

As postsecondary and secondary CTE programs co-locate and pool their funding for equipment, facilities, and supplies, this will allow us to direct Perkins funds towards career counseling for

low-income individuals who attend a postsecondary CTE program. Through postsecondary Perkins funds, we can expand our work-based learning activities for low-income adults to include career exploration and engagement experiences at businesses and postsecondary institutions. Connecting WIOA Core Programs to Perkins allows us to make career coaching more experiential for low-income Hoosiers.

Indiana also intends to intertwine our Perkins funds with our WIOA Core Programs to help create robust career pathways that will span all CTE and technical education programs. Connecting the career pathways under WIOA and the programs of study under Perkins into one concept allows Indiana to serve both adults and high school students through coordinated, aligned, and structured pathways leading towards recognized postsecondary credentials. Additionally, similar career pathways and programs of study in the same sector could share employer partnerships and industry-recognized credentials identified as most relevant for their local economies. They would leverage each other's industry connections and other strengths, reducing duplication, maximizing funding, and building wide-reaching partnerships.

State Earn and Learns (State Program): As mentioned above, State Earn and Learns is a state-recognized apprenticeship program. This can be another option for work-based learning, where the WorkOne, with SNAP E&T funding as needed (specifically for SNAP participants), provides the funding for the educational components while an employer pays for the work-based learning portion. Additionally, we can include Adult Education as a partner in our SEALs to provide additional funding and academic supports for the program. It offers low-income individuals a different kind of IET to remediate academic skills, obtain technical knowledge, and gain a quality work experience and income throughout the process. This blends public and private dollars to get an individual the necessary skills and training for career advancement. Enrollment in this program would also be contingent upon an individual's interests, since these are also focused in Indiana's priority sectors.

Medicaid (Federal Program): Indiana offers several health coverage options to qualified low-income individuals and families, individuals with disabilities, and the elderly with limited financial resources. Each program is designed to meet the medical needs of that specific group of individuals, and each uses a different set of measures to determine if a person qualifies for that program. For low-income adults, Indiana offers coverage to those whose income is at or below 138% of poverty and for pregnant women the income cap is 250% of poverty.

To qualify, applicants must meet four main eligibility criteria:

- **Income/household size:** This applies to both earned income (e.g., wages) and unearned income (e.g., Social Security Disability payments). Income limits that are adjusted to account for the number of household members.
- **Age:** Certain programs are designed for people in specific age groups.
- **Financial resources/assets:** Different programs count different resources/assets. Resources/assets are not counted for the following groups: children, pregnant women, members with only family planning services, former foster children up to age 25, and/or Health Indiana Plan members.
- **Medical needs:** Specific medical needs may determine eligibility and which program can best serve your needs.

Indiana uses a single application for all health coverage programs, therefore applicants do not need to know the specific program(s) they are eligible for. Applications are processed through

the Family and Social Services Administration. Applicants may apply online or in-person at a DFR office. The applicant to can apply for health insurance separately or in conjunction with a SNAP/TANF application.

Scaling Promising Practices: Below we highlight promising practices that we hope to see scaled and replicated to address the unique barriers and challenges of this target population. Our local regions can implement these practices through strategic use of WIOA funds, philanthropic or community foundation dollars, or social impact bonds. Where applicable, local Boards or community organizations can coordinate with state agencies to apply for SNAP 50/50 FNS, which will serve as a 50% federal match for any state or philanthropic funding dedicated to SNAP recipients receiving Employment and Training services.[13] These practices are ***Activities outside the Plan***. While not a comprehensive list, the practices showcase innovative approaches to assisting our low-income adults in surmounting their unique circumstances.

Catapult Sectoral Partnership (Sector Program): Conexus, one of the state's primary sector partners, also offers training programs that receive outside funding, which could help alleviate some of the cost burdens to WIOA Adult. Again, these are sector-specific and would need to match an individual's aspirations and interests. Catapult Indiana, which is administered by Conexus, is an industry-led advanced manufacturing training program. The program teaches basic work skills for introductory manufacturing jobs to provide pathways to meaningful careers. Catapult Indiana seeks to prepare Hoosiers for some of the more than 85,000 jobs in Indiana that remain unfilled due to the skills gap. The program is a 160-hour course over four weeks that provides participants with hands-on, paid training opportunities that may result in manufacturing positions.

Indiana Federation for Advanced Manufacturing Education (Sector Program): The Indiana Federation for Advanced Manufacturing Education (INFAME) is a partnership between community colleges and regional manufacturers whose purpose is to implement career pathway, apprenticeship-style educational programs that will create a pipeline of highly skilled workers. Administered by the Indiana Manufacturers Association, the INFAME initiative can be customized to fit different regional programs and partnerships with local schools, trade schools, and colleges. This initiative works closely with Indiana's educational institutions to establish and endorse programs and curricula that develop the skill-sets students need for Indiana's manufacturing jobs, specifically an Advanced Manufacturing Technician (AMT). The AMT program is a standardized and structured approach to preparing an individual for a career. This five-semester technical program integrates both on-the-job training and classroom education, offering the individual the opportunity to earn wages and college credit while concurrently earning their diploma. INFAME also assists companies in creating work-based learning and training opportunities, such as registered apprenticeships, internships and on-the-job training.

Skillful Governor's Coaching Corps (State and Philanthropic Program): The Skillful Governor's Coaching Corps is a partnership between philanthropy and the State of Indiana to scale the availability of high-quality career coaches throughout the state. The Skillful Coaching Corps is a training program designed to strengthen and support exceptional career coaching professionals so they are better equipped to connect people to effective training opportunities and quality jobs. As a complement to the Corps, Skillful creates online Skillful Coaching Communities of Practice, which provide coaches with opportunities to network, share, and learn from each while they explore new resources and methods for helping clients. Skillful is advancing skills-based approaches for more effective coaching and offers resources and training to career coaching professionals. Skillful can serve as an accompaniment to Wagner-Peyser,

enhancing career coaching practices. Skillful coaches can help bridge the gap between individuals and employers, complementing WorkOne's Business Services divisions.

YES Indy: In Central Indiana, there are over 30,000 young adults, ages 16 – 24, who have disengaged from secondary education or graduated but are disconnected from the workforce. These Opportunity Youth present an opportunity to re-engage with education and training programs to find success in middle-skills job. To re-engage this population, EmployIndy (the Workforce Development Board serving all of Marion County) launched YES Indy REC in 2018. One part of Yes Indy is the Power Huddle, which connects young adults with mentors and helps them move from a fixed to a growth mindset. These activities help the Opportunity Youth develop their employability skills by working on community projects, while also receiving adult mentoring, career navigation, life coaching, job readiness training, adult education services, and trauma-informed social and emotional violence prevention counseling. After completing the Power Huddle, the young adults enroll in YES Indy, where they are connected to a career navigator, who will offer ongoing support and guidance as they enroll in education and training or transition into the workforce. Once they are part of YES Indy, other resources are available, such as transportation, financial guidance, temporary housing, re-entry services, counseling, and more.

[1] Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta, 2019. Over the Cliff's Edge? Incentives Hurting Low-Wage Workers.

[2] Center for Budget and Policy Priorities, 2016. It Pays to Work: Work Incentives and the Safety Net; Center for Budget and Policy Priorities, 2014. Policymakers Often Overstate Marginal Tax Rates for Lower-Income Workers and Gloss Over Tough Trade-Offs in Reducing Them.

[3] Government Accountability Office, 2017. Federal Low-income Programs: Eligibility and Benefits Differ for Selected Programs Due to Complex and Varied Rules.

[4] Talent tours can occur at a business or higher education campus and can provide exposure and orientation about various local career opportunities in various sectors and career paths. The tours can include presentations and information on potential industry offerings. This is adapted from Michigan Works! as a best practice.

[5] Indiana's State Earn and Learn (SEAL) programs are certified through the Office of Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeship. They are structured, but flexible, programs that include an education component and OJT component. SEALs focus on employer needs, with sustainable partnerships and embedded industry certifications. They can last from weeks to years depending on employer, education, certification, or licensing requirements.

[6] Pre-apprenticeship programs are connected to a registered apprenticeship. They can offer foundational experiences providing training, support services, and career navigation assistance to help people gain the skills and awareness they need to enter and succeed in apprenticeships and related careers.

[7] Annual federal funding for 50-50 funds is not capped.

[8] US Department of Agriculture, 2016. SNAP to Skills: Why Now is the Time for States To Build Their SNAP E&T Programs.

[9] The amount one receives is dependent upon his/her Expected Family Contribution, the cost of attendance, his/her status as a full-time or part-time student, and his/her plans to attend school for a full academic year or less.

[10] Typically, one will earn at least the current federal minimum wage. However, one may earn more depending on the type of work and skills required for the position.

[11] Strategies to help employers retain this target population are offered in the toolkit from the Cincinnati Women's Fund.

[12] Jobs For the Future, 2017. Getting Started with Pre-Apprenticeship: Partnerships.

[13] Reimbursement grants can cover supportive and wraparound services provided to SNAP recipients. Funds eligible for reimbursement can include state or local funds or non-federal funds put up by third-party providers offering E&T services (which include job search/job search training, workfare or community service, work-based learning, self-employment programs, educational programs – including postsecondary, basic skills, or English language acquisition education, vocational employment, and job retention for 90 days post-employment). State funds that serve as Maintenance of Effort will not qualify for SNAP 50/50.

Co-Enrolled Programs: Hoosier veterans and eligible persons will be co-enrolled into programs and services of benefit to this target population. An individual's unique circumstances or preference may not necessitate co-enrollment in each program. This section includes ***Core and Partner Program Activities***, ***Activities outside of the Plan***, and***Individual Services***.

WIOA partners can receive additional information from the State Veteran Coordinator in order to align initiatives for the most effective delivery to veterans.

Jobs for Veterans State Grant (Partner Program): The Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) program has positively impacted many Hoosier lives. One veteran in Region 3, Tim McQueen, entered the workforce as a Production Supervisor. Tim served in the US Army as an Aviation Mechanic from February 1993 to May 2015. He had 100% VA service-connected disability, creating a significant barrier to employment. After being discharged from the service in 2015, Tim was able to secure a stable, quality job at Fort Wayne Dana Inc working as a Production Supervisor. In June 2019, however, Tim was facing unemployment and quickly needed to find a stable job as an operations manager. After several rejections, Tim decided to receive individualized career services from DVOP and WorkOne staff assistance to better his chances in finding a full-time operations manager position. The DVOP and WorkOne staff helped him with his job search, résumé, and interviewing skills. These enhanced employment skills made him more marketable for management positions. Tim quickly picked up these skills and landed a Production Supervisor position.

Leroy Guire, an Army Veteran, was chronically homeless living in Peru, Indiana. The DVOP was contacted by WIOA case management to see if there was any assistance available to this veteran. WorkOne and DVOP collaborated to ensure Leroy qualified for the Government Cell Phone Program, as well as found him transportation to Kokomo, where there are more supportive services for homeless veterans. The DVOP arranged for Leroy to stay at a local shelter in Kokomo temporarily until a more permanent residence could be obtained. WIOA staff and DVOP worked diligently to provide Leroy with intensive services, including resume writing and supportive service referrals. Staff were able to quickly assist Leroy in finding job placement at EAC Scrap Processing in Kokomo through the recommendation of Local Veterans' Employment Representative (LVER), given Leroy's extensive welding skills and background. The DVOP also assisted Leroy in obtaining a potential apartment at the Kokomo veteran supportive housing unit. Leroy was able to get back on his feet through the integrated, coordinated efforts between our WIOA and JVSG programs.

Next Level Veterans (Public-Private Program): This is a statewide program that unites public and private organizations to recruit, employ, and connect military personnel to Indiana. **INVets(Philanthropic Program)** operates as the recruiting arm of Next Level Veterans and seeks to connect qualified candidates to good jobs and resources. Next Level Veterans connects with DWD through a partnership agreement to work with Local Veterans' Employment Representatives (LVERs) and local business services teams in the WorkOne Offices across the state. Indiana built a network to reach out to veterans to make this a leading state that can assist with the transition process for veterans and eligible spouses with a team of support.

As part of our strategies to make Indiana an attractive place for veterans and families to move to, Indiana has instituted some financial deductions that apply solely to this target population:

- **Property Tax Deductions:** Veterans may be able to deduct designated amounts from the assessed value of their property.
- **Reduced cost Hunting and Fishing licenses**: Any Hoosier resident who is service-connected disabled by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs may purchase a license to hunt and fish in Indiana for a reduced fee.
- **State Income Tax Deduction**: Beginning for the 2019 taxable year, a percentage of income as a result of military pensions was tax exempt. This percentage increases gradually, until 100% of military pension benefits over $6,250 will be tax exempt. This paired with a number of other programs will help with the recruitment and retention of military veterans to the state of Indiana.
- **Honor Our Veterans**: Up to $5,000 provided to veterans who relocate to Indiana for employment opportunities. The funds help defer the costs of relocating to Indiana. The **Indiana Housing & Community Development Authority** administers this program.

Additionally, military spouses holding a valid teaching license issued by another state may be issued an Indiana initial practitioner license or a practitioner license in the same content area or areas they are licensed in another state, provided they were required to pass a content licensure exam in order to obtain their out-of-state teaching license. Given that licensure reciprocity can be a barrier for this target population to find employment, exploring how this practice can be expanded to other licensure areas may reduce undue burden military spouses might face when trying to find employment upon relocation.

Title I – Adults (Core Program): States and local areas must apply priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses in WIOA Programs, who also are included in the groups given statutory priority for WIOA Adult formula funds.[11] Veterans and eligible spouses who are also recipients of public assistance receive first priority for services provided with WIOA Adult formula funds.

Coordination regarding any additional education and training that veterans may need to enter the type of employment they are seeking is of vital importance. Leveraging the education benefits under the GI bill can reduce any unnecessary burden on WIOA Adult training funds.

Through the DVOP and LVER Program, Indiana assists Hoosier veterans with their transition from the service to civilian life. The DVOP is specifically trained in tailored training and job placement opportunities for veterans with service-connected disabilities. LVERs coordinate services provided for veterans, including identifying training and employment opportunities. Indiana has 25 DVOPs and 20 LVERs total that are located around the state regions.

The **Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Program** assists veterans with service-connected disabilities to prepare for careers. A variety of services are provided, including educational benefits. These programs operate in coordination with the DVOP specialist. This program requires extensive follow-up, and the DVOP specialist must be allowed sufficient time to do the case management and intensive services to meet the requirements of the US Department of Veterans Affairs Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Program.[12] The DVOP specialist, in coordination with the state workforce board and AJC staff, will provide VR&E Service local labor market information that may be used to develop training programs that have the best probability for positive employment outcomes. The VR&E Service will work with the DVOP specialist to obtain specific employment opportunities from the state workforce board and AJC staff. Enhancing these relationships will also make it more likely that Veterans with disabilities are directed into short-term occupational training programs that have the potential to transition them into high-demand jobs faster. The DVOP specialist can work closely with the LVER and WorkOne Business Service Team (BST) to ensure that veterans under Chapter 31 programs who are "job ready" receive priority in their job search and job referrals, as determined by the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC) at the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Title I-Dislocated Worker (Core Program): This funding stream can help separating service members enter or reenter the civilian labor force. Generally, a notice of separation shows a separation or imminent separation from the Armed Forces, qualifying as a notice of termination or layoff to meet the required dislocated worker definition. The definition of Dislocated Workers includes military spouses who have lost employment as a direct result of a relocation to accommodate a permanent change in the service member's duty station. Military spouses also may qualify if they are a dependent spouse of a member of the Armed Forces on active duty whose family income is significantly reduced (as determined by the state or local area), because of a deployment, a call or order to active duty, a permanent change of station, or the service-connected death or disability of the service member. By including these stipulations in the cross-training efforts for staff in both workforce and social services programs, Indiana will increase the awareness of services for veterans and their spouses and enhance their experience at WorkOnes.

Title III-Wagner-Peyser (Core Program): The majority of veterans can be served by Wagner-Peyser funded activities. Due to Indiana having an established Jobs for Veterans State Grant, Wagner-Peyser eligibility is automatically established for veterans. The veteran accessing services is co-enrolled into services based upon their eligibility following any limitations of state policy. Wagner-Peyser can supplement JVSG and WIOA Adult funding in the area of career coaching (either in-person or virtually) and exploration activities. Wagner-Peyser staff or funding can also help offer information to veterans and spouses regarding current labor market trends and job availability, future employment needs in sectors and industries, and connections to employers and employer associations where opportunities may exist. They can also assist with navigating licensure requirements and regulations unique to Indiana to lessen this employment burden. All Wagner-Peyser staff can consult and work closely with LVERs to ensure information and counseling is aligned and integrated with all outward facing business services.

Both Wagner-Peyser and LVER staff will promote the **Work Opportunity Tax Credit** (WOTC) as a strategy to encourage more businesses begin to hire and retain this target population. Additional eligible populations have been added since, with the Internal Revenue Service adding veterans to WOTC in 2011. The WOTC reduces employer cost by providing federal tax credit for private, for-profit employers to encourage hiring of individuals from our target populations.

Based on the 2019 data from the Indiana Chamber of Commerce's Annual Employer Survey of approximately 1,000 businesses, many Hoosier employers may be unaware or unsure of the WOTC.[13] Increasing awareness and understanding of the benefit of this federal tax credit can help increase non-traditional hiring practices of our target populations, including veterans. The WOTC was created in 1996, as a way to incentivize hiring certain populations. The credit is 25% of qualified first year wages for those employed at least 120 hours and 40% for those employed 400 hours or more. Employers maintain all hiring decisions and there is no limit to the number of new hires who can qualify for the tax savings. Increasing awareness of opportunities for employers to take advantage of this program by hiring veterans will be included as an employer engagement outreach strategy and will be highlighted in staff cross-training activities.

Postsecondary Financial Aid (Federal and State Programs): The primary federal financial aid program for veterans is the **GI Bill**. The *GI Bill* allows for members of the military to earn education benefits for themselves and their families. These benefits will assist service members and eligible veterans with covering the costs associated with higher education or training. Updated after September 11, 2001, the new GI Bill will pay for veterans' full tuition & fees at school, provide a monthly housing allowance while they are enrolled in school, and give up to $1,000 a year to use for books and supplies. The following education and training options are approved under the Post-9/11 GI Bill:

- Correspondence training
- Cooperative training
- Entrepreneurship training
- Flight training
- Independent and distance learning
- Institutions of higher learning undergraduate and graduate degrees
- Licensing and certification reimbursement
- Vocational/technical training, non-college degree programs
- National testing reimbursement
- On-the-job training
- Tuition Assistance top-up
- Tutorial Assistance
- Vocational/technical training[14]

For approved programs, the Post-9/11 GI Bill provides up to 36 months of education benefits. For those Indiana institutions of higher learning participating in the Yellow Ribbon Program, additional institutional funds may be available for veterans' education programs without an additional charge to the GI Bill entitlement.[15] Wagner-Peyser staff and other career service and veterans recruitment specialists can help inform veterans as to how their interests connect to high wage, high demand occupations in Indiana and the necessary education and training so veterans are able to take full advantage of this benefit.

In addition to institutional financial aid and Indiana's other state programs (e.g., the **21st Century Scholars** and **Frank O'Bannon** programs), Indiana has two state financial aid programs to assist veterans and their families with the costs of higher education:

- **College Tuition for Children of Disabled Veterans:** The Tuition and Fee Exemption for Children of Disabled Veterans provides up to 100% of tuition and regularly assessed fees for up to 124 credit hours at all Indiana public colleges and universities at the undergraduate resident tuition rate. This program is delivered through the Commission for Higher Education. There are residency and other requirements for the program.
- **College Tuition for Purple Heart Recipients:** The Tuition and Fee Exemption for Purple Heart recipients provides up to 100% of tuition and regularly assessed fees for up to 124 credit hours at all Indiana public colleges and universities at the undergraduate resident tuition rate. This program is delivered through the Commission for Higher Education. There are residency and other requirements for this program as well.

Veterans Upward Bound is offered through the TRIO Programs (Federal Program) at institutions of higher education. This program is designed to motivate and assist veterans in the development of academic and other requisite skills necessary for acceptance and success in a program of postsecondary education. The program provides assessment and enhancement of basic skills through counseling, mentoring, tutoring and academic instruction in the core subject areas. The primary goal of the program is to increase the rate at which participants enroll in and complete postsecondary education programs. Local programs funded through Veterans Upward Bound are also expected to assist veterans in securing support services from other locally available resources, such as the Veterans Administration, state veterans agencies, veteran associations, and other state and local agencies that serve veterans. Other services include:

- Education or counseling services designed to improve the financial and economic literacy of participants;
- Instruction in reading, writing, study skills, and other subjects necessary for success in education beyond high school;
- Academic, financial, or personal counseling;
- Tutorial services;
- Mentoring programs;
- Information on postsecondary education opportunities;
- Assistance in completing college entrance and financial aid applications;
- Assistance in preparing for college entrance exams;
- Information on the full range of Federal Student financial aid programs and benefits;
- Guidance and assistance in alternative education programs for secondary school dropouts that lead to receipt of a regular secondary school diploma

  Vincennes University is currently the only Indiana institution offering Veterans Upward Bound. In the latest fiscal year, it received approximately $290,000 to provide services for 125 students.[16] Exploring opportunities to scale this program or combine it with existing veteran's programs on college campuses could provide additional support to

veterans enrolling in our state's postsecondary institutions.

Potential Enrollment: Additional programs and services a Hoosier may receive depending on individual circumstances. This section includes ***Activities outside the Plan***and***Individual Services***for adults in this target population.

Homeless Veteran Reintegration Program (Federal Program): To assist veterans who are homeless, DVOPs and LVERs have a joint responsibility to provide services to grantees (either in-house at not-for-profit organizations or through partners in the community) and to foster collaborative efforts with WorkOne staff to enroll all Homeless Veteran Reintegration Program (HVRP) participants into WIOA programs and workforce training programs and ensure a staff member (funded through either WIOA or DVOP) is present during the enrollment process to facilitate accurate reporting and strong working relationships.

HVRP grantees and local WorkOne staff are encouraged to share information on their services and ensure new staff members are fully trained on services and enrollment requirements. When appropriate, the DVOP specialist will be assigned to a current, local HVRP awarded grantee to facilitate this partnership and co-enrollment process. The staff member assigned to facilitate co-enrollment will also be the primary point of contact to ensure HVRP grant requirements are accurately reflected in Indiana Career Connect. Additionally, LVERs will combine employment efforts with the primary point staff member to connect co-enrolled HVRP clients to employers and employment opportunities. While employer outreach is primarily accomplished by a WorkOne's business services, the LVERs must be included as an active member of that team.

As Indiana evaluates in which agencies its workforce development programs are housed, we seek to amend our Combined Plan to include related programs under the **Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority** (which will include the Community Development Block Grant program, Continuum of Care, Family Self-Sufficiency program, Jobs Plus program, and the Community Services Block Grant employment and training activities). The amendment will reflect effective combined planning processes between the public workforce system and homeless services system to streamline employment services for this target population. Federally, the Department of Housing and Urban Development is requiring more employment services to be provided to this population, thus adding these complementary services through a future amendment will improve outcomes for the homeless response system. Potential strategies will include:

- Ensuring the identification, offering, and implementation of a robust menu of employment and support services for adult and youth homeless jobseekers;
- Helping identify and implement effective referral processes between the workforce and homeless services systems and partners;
- Coordinating the workforce programs and support service resources offered through IHCDA; and
- Determining the unmet needs of participants served and how WIOA and IHCDA services and funds could be braided together.

Registered Apprenticeships (Federal Program): The Presidential Executive Order Expanding Apprenticeships in America established in June of 2017 set forth a specific goal of expanding access to apprenticeships for members of the armed services. In 2019, the Department of Labor (DOL) awarded $183 million to support sector-based approaches to expanding apprenticeships on a national scale in key industry sectors in order to embrace the vision set forth in the Executive Order. The DOL grants will increase access to apprenticeship among all Americans, particularly veterans, military spouses, and service members re-entering the civilian workforce. Purdue University was one of the grantees with a target population including military/veterans.[17] We will look to create more partnerships between INVets and employers that provide registered apprenticeship opportunities. There are approximately 900 registered apprenticeship programs across the state, many of which are in high wage, high demand fields. Connecting the skill sets that veterans have gained during their time of service to these opportunities will provide a benefit to both veterans living in Indiana and our employer community.

Scaling Promising Practices: Below we highlight promising practices that we hope to see scaled and replicated to address the unique barriers and challenges of this target population. Our local regions can implement these practices through strategic use of WIOA funds, philanthropic or community foundation dollars, or social impact bonds. Where applicable, local Boards or community organizations can coordinate with state agencies to apply for SNAP 50/50 FNS, which will serve as a 50% federal match for any state or philanthropic funding dedicated to SNAP recipients receiving Employment and Training services. These practices are ***Activities outside the Plan***. While not a comprehensive list, the practices showcase innovative approaches to assisting our veterans and eligible spouses in surmounting their unique circumstances.

Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI) **(Institution of Higher Education Initiative):** The Office for Veterans and Military Personnel at IUPUI created a holistic review process specifically for applicants with background in the military. IUPUI streamlines their processes and assists military personnel and their families in order to get benefits processed quickly. The University is dedicated to integrating and working with veterans regarding their education benefits from the GI bill, tuition assistance, state benefits, and scholarships to IUPUI and community resources.

Indy Women in Technology (IWiT) **(Community Program):** Indy Women in Technology partners with Ivy Tech Community College – Central Indianapolis to offer tuition free classes in a career path towards a technological career. Additionally, supportive services, such as childcare and transportation, are available depending on eligibility. The state's veteran's resource hub highlights IWiT and its dedication to serving veteran women and families.

Hamilton County Court System: In 2015, Hamilton County's Veterans Court was established. The court has helped nearly 75 military veterans struggling with mental health or substance abuse issues who have faced criminal charges. When the court was founded, Hamilton County had the second-largest VA-service connected population in Indiana. The court system connects veterans to services available through the state workforce system and allows these veterans to have continued support beyond involvement with the court and continued assistance with on-going needs.

IDVA Grants for Veterans' Services (GVS) **(State Program)**: Grants for Veterans' Services originated through an act of legislation, and ultimately was designed to provide funding for organizations that serve veterans. These funds are to go toward the pursuit of leaving no veteran behind. The grant amounts are typically between $25,000 and $100,000. In 2019, IDVA

solicited bids for the GVS program focused on funding Homeless Veteran programs. Thirteen grants were awarded totaling over $900,000 for implementation in 2020-2021.

[1] National Conference of State Legislatures, 2018. Barriers to Work: Veterans and Military Spouses: Improving Access to Licensed Occupations for Veterans and Military Families.

[2] INContext, 2018. Veterans in Indiana.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Blue Star Families, 2018. 2018 Military Family Lifestyle Survey Results.

[6] Blue Star Families, 2016. Social Cost Analysis of the Unemployment and Underemployment of Military Spouses.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Castro et al., 2014. The State Of The American Veteran: The Los Angeles County Veterans Study.

[9] National Conference of State Legislatures, 2018. Barriers to Work: Veterans and Military Spouses: Improving Access to Licensed Occupations for Veterans and Military Families.

[11] US Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration, 2017. Priority of Service for WIOA Adult Funds.

[12] 38 USC Chapter 31.

[13] Indiana Chamber of Commerce Annual Employer Survey. 2019 Survey Results.

[14] US Department of Veteran Affairs. Education and Training: Post-9/11 GI Bill.

[15] US Department of Veteran Affairs. Education and Training: IN State Yellow Ribbon Program Information 2019 – 2020.

[16] Indiana TRIO. Indiana TRIO Programs.

[17] Department of Labor, 2019. Overview of the Scaling Apprenticeship through Sector-Based Strategies Grant Program and Project Summaries.

: Unemployed Hoosiers face situational struggles that differentiate them from the other target populations. Some unemployed Hoosiers who file for Unemployment Insurance may also qualify as dislocated workers and have access to Rapid Response services. DWD receives a WARN notice, which then triggers a Rapid Response team to provide information to those about to be unemployed. Others may face additional barriers to employment that have led to long bouts of unemployment. The situations leading to unemployment can vary tremendously; similarly, unemployed individuals are also diverse in terms of their existing skills, previous occupations and industries, and prior wage levels. Despite this diversity in previous experiences, unemployed individuals tend to share a common experience with social-emotional stress that often creates barriers to their next option. Reactions to unemployment can include:

- Significant psychological anxiety.

- Little information about current labor market opportunities.
- Uncertainty or inexperience in navigating public assistance and the workforce system.
- No recent experience in looking for a job.
- Substantial work experience and work maturity in one specific career or sector.
- Existing occupational skills that may be obsolete or not in demand in the local economy.
- Financial and emotional crisis due to lack of income and substantial household financial obligations.
- Inability to reskill due to lack of livelihood or the desire to simply get back to work.

To help address the psychological barriers, in addition to the financial ones, we must find ways to support our unemployed Hoosiers beyond mere compensation. This will cross the workforce and social services system to allow for better connections between our Unemployment Insurance and WIOA programs and SNAP and health insurance. Intentional co-location and active referrals among these programs will facilitate unemployed Hoosiers in receiving the help they need to get back on their feet, emotionally and financially, while state agencies work to connect our intake processes and case management systems. Referrals between different programs must be collaborative and coordinated. WorkOnes, community partners, schools, and institutions of higher education can liaise referrals for constituents as person-to-person, rather than merely program-to-program. Both follow-through and follow-up are necessary to ensure quality for the constituent. Additionally, providing information regarding various programs and benefits to unemployed Hoosiers can help people learn where there might be resources they can use. Because not all Hoosiers file for Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits in-person or even receive unemployment insurance, we must determine how we can leverage our different agencies and infrastructure to market information to Hoosiers in need.

Some Hoosiers in this category may also fall into the low-income target population above, as well as overlap with other target populations. This section specifically directs strategies and programming for those who are receiving UI benefits or do not have any current employment. Better integration between UI programs and Indiana's economic development strategies will help Hoosiers reenter the workforce quickly and efficiently. Because the UI program is often the first workforce program accessed by individuals, it serves as one of the principal entries to the workforce development system for individuals in need of services. As a key workforce development system partner, UI will continue to improve its coordination with other Core and Partner Programs to align to talent development strategies.

In pursuit of the goal of more seamless and fully-integrated career, training, and follow-up services, we intend on increasing the co-enrollment of those individuals on UI for longer periods into WIOA programs through our WorkOnes. As Indiana develops a common intake process by 2022, we will increase our co-enrollment of UI claimants into Wagner-Peyser, as well as explore other ways to increase co-enrollment in workforce and social programs based on individuals' needs. Similar to low-income individuals, the programs and funding streams can focus on meeting various needs of unemployed individuals through a coordinated approach. In addition to those on UI or who do not have any current employment, we are including the long-term unemployed, homeless individuals, and Migrant/Seasonal Farmworkers as subgroups of this target population.

<u>Co-Enrolled Programs:</u> Unemployed Hoosiers will be co-enrolled into the following primary programs and services of benefit to this target population. An individual's unique circumstances

or preference may not necessitate co-enrollment in each program. This section includes ***Core and Partner Program Activities*** for those adults.

Unemployment Insurance (Partner Program): UI helps people who have lost their jobs by temporarily replacing part of their wages while they look for work. The system is funded by taxes collected from employers on behalf of working people to provide them with income support if they lose their jobs. UI provides up to 26 weeks of benefits to unemployed workers, replacing approximately half of their previous wages. The current average for Hoosiers to receive UI benefits is 12.3 weeks. Our current rate of claimants who exhaust all 26 weeks of UI is 19.3%. The maximum weekly benefit an individual can receive is $390. Indiana's average UI benefits have ranged from $290.41 to $301.53 in 2019.

One aspect of this system is to help people get back to work through reemployment interventions. While these interventions do focus on the programmatic goal of reducing an individual's time on UI benefits, our Plan incorporates strategies to ensure UI staff are working with workforce development partners to find long-term solutions with sustainable wages for constituents.

Currently, Indiana is complying with the obligations of the UI system as a required partner in the one-stop centers. This allows Hoosiers to file a UI claim in-person at the WorkOnes, receiving technical assistance, if needed, as well as potentially obtain reemployment activities. These activities include:

- Providing access to the WorkOne's programs or activities through the one-stop delivery system, in addition to any other appropriate locations;
- Using a portion of funds available for the program and activities to help maintain the one-stop delivery system, including payment of a portion of the infrastructure costs of WorkOnes;
- Entering into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the local Workforce Development Boards, as it relates to the operation of the one-stop delivery system; and
- Participating in the operation of the one-stop delivery system consistent with the terms of the MOU, requirements of authorizing laws, the Federal cost principles, and all other applicable legal requirements.

Through the Combined Plan, we can explore additional areas of opportunity for improved integration of the UI program into the one-stop delivery system. Because reemployment is a hallmark of the UI program, integrating it more comprehensively with our WIOA programs may allow for greater resources and efficiencies to be offered to unemployed Hoosiers. Currently, Hoosiers are required to enroll in **Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (*RESEA*)** upon filing for their fourth week of unemployment in order to maintain their UI eligibility.

The federal RESEA program has four purposes:

1. Reduce UI duration through improved employment outcomes;
2. Strengthen UI program integrity;
3. Promote alignment with the vision of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act; and

4. Establish RESEA as an entry point to other workforce system partners.

   Currently, RESEA services in Indiana include:

- UI eligibility assessment, including review of work search activities and referral to adjudication if an issue or potential issue is identified;
- Provision of labor market and career information (job vacancies, job skills needed, demand occupations with earnings, skill requirements, and aligned career pathways);
- Support in the development of individual reemployment plan (employment goals, achievement objectives, appropriate services, and eligible training providers);
- Provide information and access to WorkOne services, referrals to reemployment services and training;
- Provide at least one additional career service, such as: referrals and coordination with other workforce activities; job search assistance; information about supportive services; information and assistance with financial aid resources; financial literacy services; and career readiness activities, including employability skills development and assistance with resume writing and/or interviewing techniques.

Though these activities, particularly job search assistance, have demonstrated positive reemployment outcomes, they tend to work primarily in the short-term and have varying impact on longer term employment and earnings. Lighter-touch interventions, such as profiling and changing employer contact requirements, also yield more limited benefits with this population. While these types of activities are effective at reducing receipt of UI benefits, they have limited impacts on longer term outcomes for UI recipients.[1] Reemployment assistance to UI claimants is predicated on the earliest return to meaningful, full-time employment. Indiana will continue its strategy is to build on the current co-enrollment between UI and Wagner-Peyser and assist unemployed Hoosiers with timely, accurate benefits to support career navigation, job searching, or education and training programs. Local community organizations and state programs can promote participation in a relevant and robust menu of supports and services applicable to the individual's needs.

Indiana has started to improve the connectivity between UI claimants and workforce development. Over the next four years, we will continue this strategy for linking UI with the workforce system. One step towards greater symbiosis between these two programs is to develop a system that correlates activating a Wagner-Peyser application upon filing for UI. As we move towards greater systems integration by 2024, Indiana will develop a procedure that allows for contact information and work history of UI claimants to be shared with the regional Workforce Development Board through DWD. Once the local Board has an individual's information, WorkOne staff can reach out with reemployment resources and opportunities, which may include information regarding Workforce Ready Grants, Adult Education classes, SNAP, and other potentially useful sources, earlier in that person's unemployment period. For those individuals who come to a WorkOne to electronically file a UI claim in-person, the process for offering career counseling and support at that moment for interested individuals should be standardized through local plans. Many WorkOnes currently leverage that time to provide the individual with resources that may be helpful for reemployment, but these practices should be consistent throughout the state. Building upon our current work of connecting these two systems, these strategies will help our workforce regions become aware of who is unemployed sooner than our present timeline.

Once an individual is required to be in RESEA, s/he has a group orientation followed by a one-on-one meeting with a case manager at a WorkOne. Through co-location efforts, we encourage local regions to potentially explore additional places for these meetings to occur, depending on the individual's needs and interests. Community colleges, libraries, local businesses, and other locales might provide an opportunity for the individual and case manager to discuss, visit, and consider resources and options unique to that location. It might also offer more convenience to the individual. At this meeting, the constituent must develop a Reemployment Plan customized to their needs, which could be informed by the resources or opportunities a partner location might offer. Additionally, if the individual needs other services, such as SNAP, TANF, or Medicaid, meeting at a Partner Program's office might facilitate that individual's co-enrollment into multiple programs at one time.

During the one-on-one meeting, the case manager and individual determine what types of support s/he might need, which includes receiving labor market information, attending a workshop or job fair, or another reemployment supportive activity. UI claimants are required to complete three work search activities at a minimum each week to maintain their UI benefits. At a minimum, one additional reemployment activity will be added to the reemployment plan to meet the needs of the individual RESEA claimant. The US Department of Labor's research illustrates that lighter-touch interventions may not be the best approach for this target population. As the state considers the RESEA compliance requirements, we encourage local regions to develop more robust and individualized career coaching for UI claimants. Leveraging local plans, our WorkOnes can determine ways to intensify the supports given to these individuals, perhaps by advising different or more activities. Through co-enrollment in Wagner-Peyser and RESEA funds, increasing the frequency of follow-up services may be an option suitable for WorkOnes. As well, if an individual is co-enrolled with WIOA Adult or SNAP E&T (for those receiving SNAP, specifically), additional funds could be used to support the career counseling for this individual. Some more intensive strategies case managers can recommend through RESEA that may help bridge the gap to full-time employment are:

- State Earn and Learn programs;
- A pre-apprenticeship or apprenticeship-readiness program;
- Paid internships;
- Transitional jobs; and
- On-the-job training.

Indiana is currently studying the effectiveness of RESEA services, analyzing the different regional implementation approaches and related outcomes. DWD is studying who we are serving with RESEA and what those services may be. It will examine the efficiency of partnerships, grants, interactions with case managers and businesses, and programming offerings in helping people reenter the workforce. With the completion of this study, the state will readjust, if needed, RESEA requirements to increase the effectiveness of this program's goal.

Title I – Adults (Core Program): For those UI claimants requiring additional training, employment services, or wraparound supports, they will be referred to the local WorkOne, either through direct outreach from the WorkOne or as recommended by their RESEA case manager. WIOA Adult can prioritize funding towards the following services:

- Comprehensive and specialized assessments to determine eligibility for career interests, skill levels (including literacy, numeracy, and English language proficiency), aptitudes,

abilities (including skill gaps), and evaluation to identify employment barriers and employment goals;

- Employability skills development (learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, professional conduct) to prepare for employment or training;
- English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs (as supplemental to Adult Education under Title II);
- Work-based learning activities; and
- Follow-up services, such as individualized counseling regarding the work place, how to successfully navigate the new environment, or any other additional services customized for the constituent.

Title III – Wagner-Peyser (Core Program): Currently, our WorkOnes co-enroll UI claimants in Title III of WIOA. We will continue this co-enrollment process to help offer unemployed Hoosiers the full range of employment services. Staff funded under the Wagner-Peyser Act must ensure that UI claimants receive the full range of reemployment services, including labor exchange services, which are necessary and appropriate to facilitate their earliest return to work. Local WorkOnes can braid Wagner-Peyser funds with RESEA, as needed, to help administer any career services specified in either UI or WIOA, including:

- Career counseling and navigation tied to the RESEA-funded employment plans (employment goals, achievement objectives, appropriate services, and eligible training providers).
- Provision of labor market and career information (job vacancies, job skills needed, demand occupations with earnings, skill requirements, and aligned career pathways).
- Support in the development of an individual reemployment plan (employment goals, achievement objectives, appropriate services, and eligible training providers).
- Customized labor market information for specific employers, sectors, industries or clusters.

Through Wagner-Peyser funding, we connect unemployed individuals with job openings via the WorkOne business services team. As part of the labor market information, case managers can also use this connection to identify upskilling/reskilling opportunities that can help secure someone a job. As this can be an efficient way to reemploy Hoosiers, we encourage local Boards to detail how they can enhance this current referral system to be more effective for both unemployed individuals and businesses needing talent.

Potential Enrollment: Additional programs and services a Hoosier may receive depending on individual circumstances. This section includes ***Core and Partner Program Activities***,***Activities outside the Plan***, and***Individual Services***for adults in this target population.

SNAP and TANF (Partner Programs): An unemployed individual may also co-enroll in SNAP and/or TANF for food assistance or cash assistance, respectively, depending on his/her eligibility. TANF and SNAP E&T are key programs for our low-income Hoosiers to access education and training opportunities, as well as wraparound supports. We much recognize, however, that SNAP and TANF cannot be one-size-fits-all programs; those receiving food or cash

assistance will have different needs depending on their personal histories and needs. To focus on the individual's needs and goals, we must personalize SNAP E&T and TANF by:

- Improving assessments and individualizing expectations to reflect recipients' strengths and needs;
- Allowing job-ready recipients with recent work history to engage in an independent job search;
- Coordinating SNAP E&T funding and activities better with our WorkOnes to maximize investments and resources;
- Directing SNAP E&T funding towards providing robust, comprehensive career counseling and coaching for SNAP participants;
- Valuing both core and non-core activities that align to the individual's goals and needs;
- Connecting recipients to career pathways programs that lead to employment in high-wage, high-growth industries;
- Allowing recipients who have the skills needed to attend college to do so, and providing them with the supports they need to succeed (such as federal and state financial aid);
- Allowing unemployed out-of-school youth to participate in full-time sector-based contextualized literacy training and preparation for high school equivalency exams as pathways to career-focused credentials;
- Expanding subsidized work-based learning models that have been shown effective in connecting recipients to work (such as on-the-job training and pre-apprenticeships); and
- Redesigning state policies regarding sanction processes to encourage non-participating recipients to engage in work activities and reduce the number of people who are churned from the caseload.

Title I – Youth (Core Program): Some unemployed Hoosiers will be under the age of 24 and may qualify for out-of-school youth services. This funding stream can augment those activities listed under WIOA Adult, particularly subsidizing a work-based learning, pre-apprenticeship, or on-the-job-training experience. It can also serve as a gap filler for any supportive services. These funds can blend with other housing and wraparound supports an individual might need. Prior to a common intake and case management system, referrals can assist with getting unemployed out-of-school youth into job trainings programs. If that youth is filing for UI benefits, the WorkOne can reach out with information about programs or local organizations that can help support that individual, or vice versa. Through greater interconnectivity between our programs at both the state and local levels, we seek for more Hoosiers to take advantage of the resources for which they may be eligible.

Title II – Adult Education (Core Program): Based on the individual's skills assessment, an unemployed Hoosier will be automatically referred to Adult Education for assistance earning a high school equivalency, technical training, or other educational services (e.g., literacy remediation and English language acquisition activities). These services will be provided in coordination with those outlined above in WIOA Adult to facilitate enrollment. Depending on the individual's needs, Adult Education could fund the bulk of education and training costs, with WIOA Adult serving as the gap filler. Blending WIOA Adult and Adult Education could help fund

the following specific strategies for integrating people experiencing long-term unemployment or homelessness into the workplace and promoting career advancement include:

- Supported Employment;
- Alternative Staffing;
- Contextualized Basic Adult Education;
- Career Bridge Programs; and
- Sector-Based Training.

Title IV – Vocational Rehabilitation (Core Program): If an unemployed individual has a physical or mental disability that constitutes or results in a substantial barrier to employment, s/he may qualify for Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services. Through a common intake process, the state will understand the multifaceted needs of an individual and where various programs can serve as scaffolding to our Employment and Training services through WIOA Adult and state programs, like Next Level Jobs. Based on the employment services need, low-income individuals with a disability and seeking employment should be enrolled into an education or training program via the WorkOne. For many low-income individuals with disabilities, the type of employment service and assistance may be best served by our WorkOne system because their barriers may not be disability specialized or focused in their nature. Contingent upon the individual's needs and barriers, the WorkOne can offer the programming and funding for that person's employment service, with VR serving as an supplementary support. Co-enrollment into VR could provide the individual with any accommodations or auxiliary supports needed for training, rather than relying on VR to be the sole source of support and funding. These supports can include:

- Personal and vocational adjustment services,
- Assistive technologies,
- Rehabilitation technology,
- Adaptive aids and devices and any associated training, and
- Interpreter or reader services.

For those individuals requiring more intensive disability and employment services, VR should be the primary point of contact and service delivery. Those individuals who are seeking employment services irrespective of their disability should be supported predominantly by the WorkOne or co-enrollment into multiple programs. By allowing VR employment services to focus on the intensive and specialize employment and disability services aligned to an individual's needs, the WorkOne becomes more accessible for more Hoosiers. We are shifting the system to serve more individuals based on their needs and barriers, rather than a singular characteristic. This long-term systemic shift will allow us to stretch our dollars further and serve more Hoosiers. Focus on the intensity of the need and barriers will increase Hoosiers' access to a wider array of employment services to attain career sustainability and longevity. To maximize these dollars, we need to integrate this program as one workforce system resource for our individuals with disabilities and not the only resource.

As we move towards long-term integration and coordination of our workforce

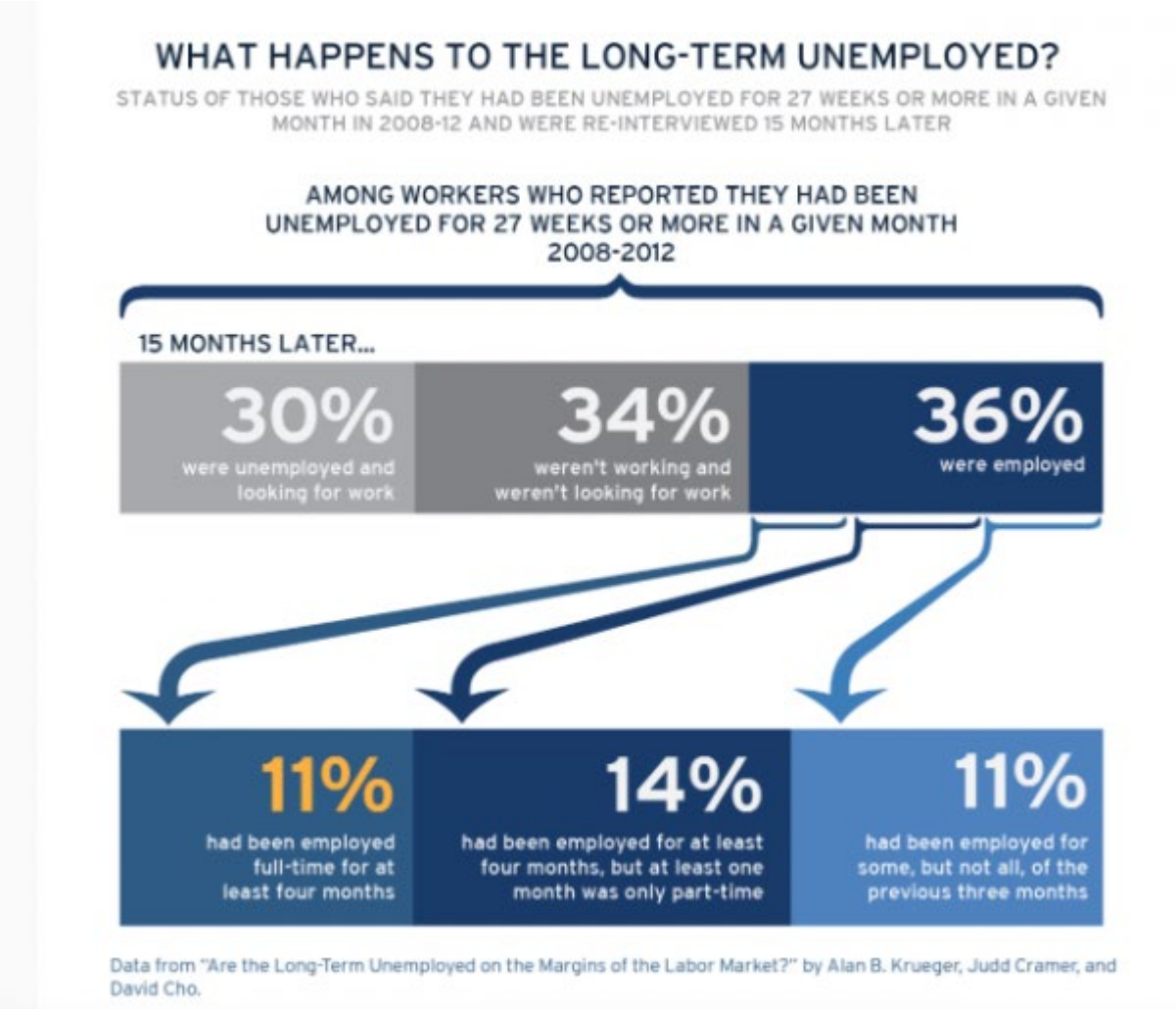
development programs, Indiana will examine ways to connect UI claims with VR for supports. For some Hoosiers, a recent disability, such as an on-the-job injury, may create a period of unemployment. Those who are unemployed due to a disability or injury can be connected to VR to receive modifications, rehabilitative technology, or other accommodations or assistance that may help them get back to work in a safe and healthy way – either in the same role with modifications or in a similar role. Through our UI system, we will develop the means to flag those who file unemployment due to either a recent or long-term disability and refer their information to VR. Local VR offices can provide follow-up resources and services for eligible individuals. Connecting UI claimants who may be unemployed due to their disability with VR earlier during their period of unemployment could expedite a person reentering the workforce.

State Earn and Learns (State Program): State Earn and Learns is a state-recognized apprenticeship program. This can be another option for work-based learning, where an Eligible Training Provider offers the educational components and an employer pays for the work-based learning portion (WIOA Adult could also subsidize this cost). Enrollment in this program would also be contingent upon an individual's interests, since these are also focused in Indiana's priority sectors. Because much of the instability for the subgroups on the Unemployed target population struggle with consistent income and opportunity, this is a state program that can address that. Similarly, pre-apprenticeships and **registered apprenticeships** could also provide that type of bridge between learning and earning.

Carl D. Perkins (Partner Program): SEALs or other options for work-based learning could complement the CTE Programs of Study offered at Ivy Tech Community College and Vincennes University. Through the Combined Plan, Indiana will merge the career pathways under WIOA and the programs of study under Perkins into one concept. These pathways will be coordinated, aligned, and structured pathways leading towards recognized postsecondary credentials. Additionally, career pathways and programs of study in the same employment sector could share employer partnerships and industry-recognized credentials identified as most relevant for their local economies. They would leverage each other's industry connections and other strengths, reducing duplication, maximizing funding, and building wide-reaching partnerships. Through postsecondary Perkins funds, we can also expand our work-based learning activities for adult students to include career exploration and engagement experiences. Our Perkins funds could offer a variety of career exploration and awareness opportunities connected to postsecondary education and employment. Through talent tours, job shadowing, worksite tours, class audits, campus visits and tours, industry speakers, and informational interviews, Perkins can help make connections for adult students to postsecondary education and jobs as they transition to more challenging work.

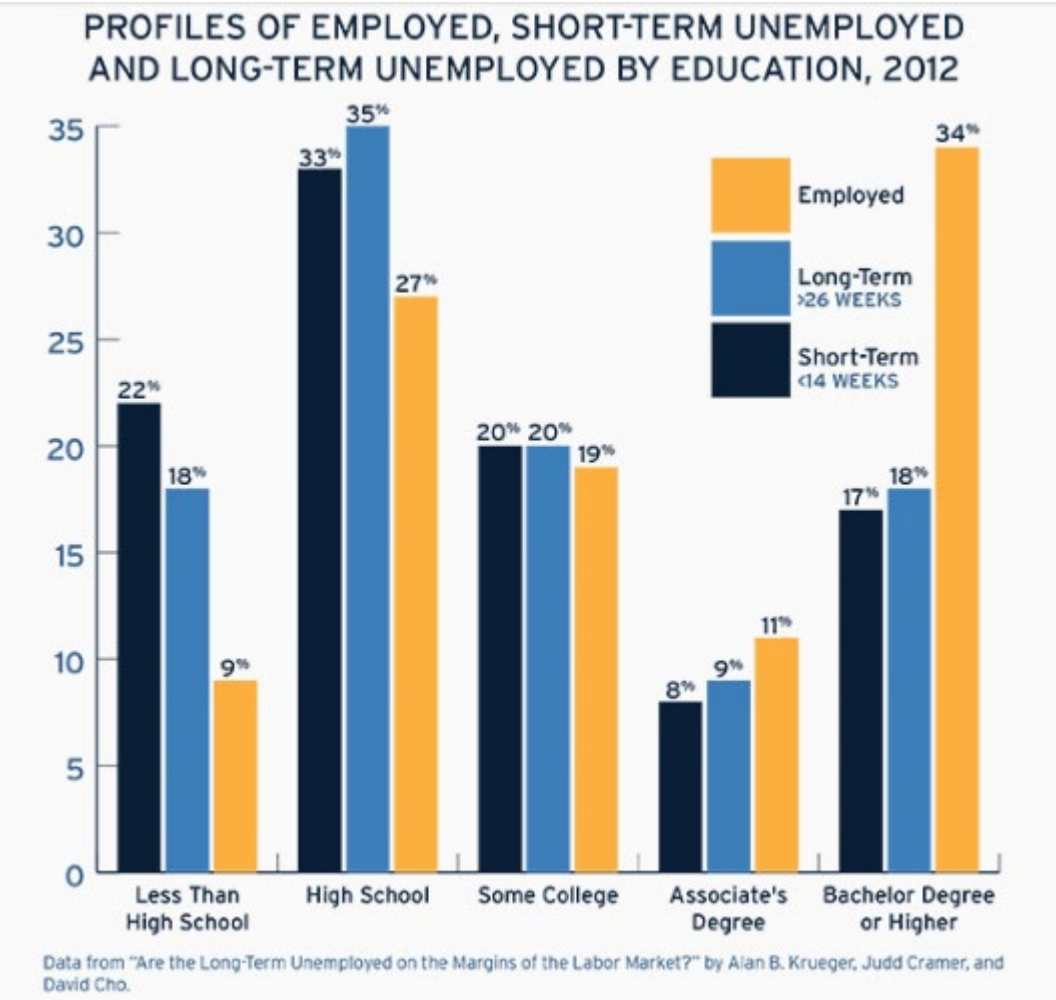
ong-term unemployed (Subgroup): A person who has been unemployed for 27 or more consecutive weeks is identified as long-term unemployed.[2] Longer durations of unemployment are associated with lower rates of re-employment. The long-term unemployed face potentially being sidelined in the labor market. The longer an individual is unemployed, the less time s/he spends searching for a job, the fewer job applications s/he submit, and the less likely s/he is to be asked for an interview for any potential jobs. The majority of the long-term unemployed were previously employed in sales and service jobs (36%) and blue collar jobs (28%).[3] When long-term unemployed workers do return to work, they typically return to the jobs in the same industries and occupations from which the workers were originally displaced. Below is a graphic

adapted from The Brookings Institution regarding the potential trajectories of long-term unemployed:



[4]

Educational attainment is a critical factor in unemployment rates. Individuals with some kind of postsecondary credential or degree are more likely to be employed than those without. Long-term unemployment is highest for those with only a high school diploma.



[5]

Hoosiers without college are more than twice as likely to file for unemployment, accounting for two-thirds of all unemployment claims in the past decade. As technologies change, and as increasing competition from online and global corporations put pressure on small, local businesses, those with the most skills or formal education are best positioned to do well financially.[6]

Economic conditions also impact conditions for long-term unemployment. In Indiana, many of our currently unemployed for more than 6 months are lower-skilled, have substandard work history, are illiterate, or have some other major barrier (e.g., a history of substance abuse, mental health issues, or a criminal history). These are often some of our hardest constituents to re-engage in the labor force, upskill, and find meaningful, sustainable jobs. When the next recession hits, however, this subgroup will look different. With the churn of the economy and rise of automation, there may be layoffs due to industry changes rather than individual circumstances. As discussed throughout the Combined Plan, Indiana's strategy is to upskill and reskill Hoosiers now before those changes affect this state. Through proactive early interventions, we seek to prevent some Hoosiers from becoming unemployed for long stretches of time. Given the barriers currently unemployed and potentially unemployed Hoosiers face, we must develop our state and local staff to differentiate services and supports based on need and work history. As we scale the human-centered design thinking approach throughout state and local staff, this system will become more customizable and individualized towards the needs of Hoosiers.

Long-term unemployed individuals are often qualified for similar jobs as those who were short-term unemployed. While some Hoosiers who have been unemployed for longer than 6 months may need to upskill or reskill in order to find quality employment, the issues facing our long-term unemployed may be intrinsic, such as motivation to find a job or eroded self-esteem during their long stretch of unemployment, in addition to potential skills erosion or lack of technical knowledge. Some employers may also be biased against individuals who have been long-term unemployed based on the expectation that there is a productivity- or skills-related reason that accounts for their unemployment. Some employers are less likely to call in workers for an interview if they have a period of joblessness on their resumes.[7]

Due to these factors, long-term unemployed Hoosiers need more extensive career counseling and navigation, in addition to the resources above. Career coaching (either funded through RESEA or Wagner-Peyser) can support these Hoosiers in making informed decisions about their career development and trajectory, as well as offer various tools that they can use to meet those goals. Career coaching can take a solutions-oriented approach, helping those who have been long-term unemployed develop concrete steps to achieving career objectives. More intensive career coaching would focus beyond a well-crafted resume or networking techniques to also include the person's mindset and understanding about their career path and opportunities. Career coaches can also work with business service teams to help recalibrate employers' mindsets about long-term unemployed Hoosiers. They can also promote use of the **Work Opportunity Tax Credit**, through which they can qualify for a federal tax exemption for hiring someone who has been unemployed for more than 27 consecutive weeks. As employers look for talent to fill current and future job openings, career coaches and business service representatives can help foster this as a potential pipeline.

The long-term unemployed can have significantly different experiences than those who are temporarily unemployed. Often, self-blame will play a large factor into the psyche of these individuals. Self-blame can undermine effective job searching, networking, and interviewing. This can also increase physical and mental health risks for individuals. Individuals experiencing long-term unemployment may need more extensive career coaching potentially paired with mental health counseling. Ensuring the person is on the appropriate **Medicaid Program (Federal Program)** to receive healthcare benefits is a critical step to ensuring this individual's physical and mental health needs are met. As we cross-train staff at all levels regarding various program opportunities, this information will trickle down to those Hoosiers that need it. As mentioned above regarding SNAP, co-location may also help increase the merging of our workforce and social systems.

Through the **Skillful Governor's Coaching Corps (State and Philanthropic Program)** partnership between philanthropy and Indiana, Skillful is working with employers to have skills-based hiring practices and embed skills-based approaches in company programs. Skills-based hiring approaches will benefit both Indiana's small-to-midsize businesses, as well as individuals who have had trouble finding employment. Skillful is currently working on customizing its Employer Toolkit for Indiana. Additionally, Skillful is advancing skills-based approaches for more effective coaching to its Coaching Corps members. If someone has been unemployed for more than 27 weeks, this person should be prioritized for inclusion with a Skillful-trained career coach to help determine potential skill strengths and gaps and connect that person to either a training program or job opening.

A homeless individual lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.[8] Those who are homeless face a number of barriers, such as not having a mailing address, reliable phone, or consistent internet access, that exacerbate the difficulties of applying for assistance programs

and renewing benefits. Therefore, homeless individuals may particularly benefit from policies and practices that simplify access to these benefit programs. Developing a common intake process could help increase this population's access to both benefits and workforce programs, as it will reduce the paperwork burden as a perpetual barrier.

One of the most effective ways to support individuals as they move out of homelessness and into permanent housing is increasing access to meaningful and sustainable career training and employment pathways. Partner Programs, in addition to WIOA Core Programs, are critical to helping homeless individuals find permanent housing. Programs like SNAP, TANF, Medicaid, childcare vouchers, and other social services can fulfill basic needs of these individuals, allowing them opportunities to pursue education and training options. Local Workforce Development Boards can leverage community partners, in addition to government assistance, to provide these physiological and safety needs – the foundation of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs pyramid.[9] Collaboration between the public workforce and homeless service systems is essential because success in employment and housing stability are closely linked, and neither system, working on its own, has the resources, capacity, or expertise to support individuals in achieving both of those outcomes. As a result, these systems must collaborate to help ensure that appropriate employment and housing services and supports exist at scale in communities and that the individuals served by these systems can access these resources.

As Indiana evaluates in which agencies its workforce development programs are housed, we seek to amend our Combined Plan to include related programs under the **Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority** (which will include the Community Development Block Grant program, Continuum of Care, Family Self-Sufficiency program, Jobs Plus program, and the Community Services Block Grant employment and training activities). The amendment will reflect effective combined planning processes between the public workforce system and homeless services system. Potential strategies will include:

- Ensuring the identification, offering, and implementation of a robust menu of employment and support services for adult and youth homeless jobseekers;
- Helping identify and implement effective referral processes between the workforce and homeless services systems and partners;
- Coordinating the workforce programs and support service resources offered through IHCDA; and
- Determining the unmet needs of participants served and how WIOA and IHCDA services and funds could be braided together.

As Indiana builds those workforce development programs administered by IHCDA into the overall talent development system, we intend on using our convening power through our various state agencies to **develop and disseminate best practices** on helping people with histories of homelessness and barriers to employment enter the workforce. As this will include strategies that take into consideration education, transportation, childcare, child support, domestic violence, criminal justice history, disabling conditions, limited work experience, and age appropriateness, we will work across agencies to identify those regions, organizations, or cities and towns with best practices. Agencies included will be the Department of Education, the Family and Social Services Agency, the Department of Child Services, the Department of Corrections, and the Department of Workforce Development.

At the local level, Indiana will further the collaboration between and co-location of workforce, social services, and housing programs. Collaborative partnerships are currently occurring

within some of our workforce regions. EmployIndy, for example, has recently joined the Indianapolis Housing Agency's Family Self Sufficiency Program Coordinating Committee. Scaling these types of promising practices throughout the state can create grassroots initiatives that will float up to state-level activity. Co-locating workforce and homeless services and providers can create a deeper level of collaboration that requires sharing space and its associated resources at the local level. Allowing homeless staff to co-locate physically in the WorkOne or portably in high trafficked locations (e.g., schools, community centers, and libraries) could decrease travel time for those who are homeless and increase their access to a greater amount of opportunities. In Indiana communities with limited public transportation options, co-locating services at a one-stop will help alleviate a primary barrier for this target population. Co-location also facilitates real-time information sharing among staff, allowing staff to better align the activities of their respective systems, leverage existing resources, and increase opportunities for collective innovation that may lead to better service delivery approaches. To help increase the co-location and integration of housing and workforce services at the local level, our local Workforce Development Boards may include those entities representing or serving jobseekers facing housing instability into their leadership bodies, or vice versa through participation in local housing committees and agencies.

Trauma also plays a role in the employability of populations experiencing homelessness or housing instability. For some individuals, traumatic experiences can lead to an episode of homelessness; others experience trauma during their homelessness. Overcoming employment barriers requires collaborations between employers, providers, and individuals experiencing homelessness to ensure that the needs of all parties are being met. To help individuals overcome their traumatic experiences and succeed in the workplace, providers should follow a trauma-informed approach. Both **IHDCA** and **WIOA** programs serving homeless individuals need to be trauma-informed because trauma impacts how people access and respond to services. This may also include substance abuse or mental health issues that may be a cause or an effect of housing instability. As we potentially co-enroll homeless Hoosiers into **UI** and WIOA programs, we must also increase the co-enrollment of these individuals into **Medicaid** to address their physical and mental health barriers to housing and employment stability.

DWD, along with its state and local partners, developed a plan to provide comprehensive services to people impacted by the opioid crisis to assist them to return to work or embark on a path to a new career in the process. The **Opioid Response Dislocated Worker Grant** aims to help communities recover from the crisis and assist employers in finding the skilled workers they need. This grant funded a pilot program aimed at helping Hoosiers with substance abuse issues return to work through three local Workforce Development Boards. The Boards coordinated with state agencies, including the Governor's Office Executive Director of Drug Treatment Prevention and Enforcement, the Division of Rehabilitation Services, and the Department of Mental Health-Adult Drug Addiction to provide treatment, prevention and referral activities. They also conducted outreach to local agencies providing addiction treatment services to coordinate cross referrals for treatment and to WorkOnes for employment and training activities, as well as provide supportive services, such as housing, treatment, and transportation. The Boards conduct specific outreach to organizations providing services to Veterans and marketing to area employers to identify job opportunities for eligible participants. Through this pilot, DWD and other state agencies can learn effective processes for co-enrollment and referrals between the mental health and workforce systems to assist Hoosiers suffering from substance abuse to access employment opportunities and supportive services. With those practices established, we can scale similar efforts throughout the state to combat the prevalence and destruction of opioids.

Many homeless and/or unemployed Hoosiers may currently or previous suffer from a substance abuse issue. Because stable employment may assist those suffering from addiction problems, we will encourage employers to implement non-traditional hiring practices that tap into these often overlooked talent pools. To help counteract any type of encumbrance those with extenuating circumstances and social needs may pose to businesses, we intend for more employers to use the **WorkINdiana (State Program)** program to provide wraparound supports. This state-funded program has an appropriation of $1 million to incentivize employers to hire Hoosiers who may need additional supports to be successful in the workplace. Governor Holcomb is working with the Indiana General Assembly to potentially redefine this funding to assist employers with providing wraparound supports to entry-level employees as a means to address barriers to upskilling and career advancement. Wraparound supports could include career counseling and coaching, and mentoring. Similar to the program Cook Medical has implemented that includes wraparound supports for their employees earning a high school equivalency, WorkINdiana can help provide those extra expenses that will help someone overcome their current circumstances of homelessness, substance abuse, or similar situations, to become a productive, effective employee.

For those employees who may be on SNAP, the business may also utilize the **Work Opportunity Tax Credit**, as well as receive a federal match of funding through reverse referrals for **SNAP 50/50** since these are state appropriated dollars going to this program. These federal funds could augment the wraparound supports provided through WorkINdiana to include other direct expenses, as well as benefit the employer's financial interests. Through this blend of state and federal funds, Indiana can engage employers in developing innovative and sustainable ways to developing talent and providing the social services needed to attain upward economic mobility.

Migrant/Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFWs) may share similar attributes of the two subgroups above – they may experience housing instability, language barriers, and long periods of unemployment due to the nature of their work. Additionally, this subgroup may intersect with other target populations while they have consistent, seasonal employment. This section specifically discusses barriers and strategies during their off-season when they do not work and may experience periods of unemployment. Like the other Unemployed subgroups, MSFWs need assistance with transitioning to stable employment opportunities that pay a sustainable wage, in either agricultural or non-agricultural occupations, based on the individual's career interests. Not all MSFWs, though, deal with bouts of long-term unemployment between seasonal work; some find temporary jobs in between seasons. Immigrants and refugees primarily comprise this subgroup. Providing supports unique to those experiences are addressed in the Adults without a High School Diploma section.

Leveraging local plans of the Workforce Development Boards, regions' direct outreach to the agriculture industry can expand and continue assessing workforce needs. At the state-level, we have several Departments connected with the MSFW Coalition. For those regions who see an influx of MSFWs, finding ways to participate and engage with this Council may be beneficial. As our local boards are comprised of various stakeholders, they can convene community organizations, employers, and state agency partners to facilitate workforce development services for this target population. Increasing local awareness of the unique needs of this population and collaboration for services could include providing more relevant and digestible labor market information, facilitating direct referrals to support organizations, and providing targeted workforce training programs.

Indiana has two types of MSFWs:

1. Migrant farmworkers are seasonal farmworkers who travels to the job site and the farmworker is not reasonably able to return to his/her permanent residence within the same day.
2. Seasonal farmworkers are individuals who are employed, or was employed in the past 12 months, in farm work of a seasonal or other temporary nature and is not required to be absent overnight from their permanent place of residence.

Funded through Wagner-Peyser, local and state workforce development staff often have to physically go to the farms and sites where MSFWs work, as they have may not have the time, language skills, or knowledge to seek out these resources. Recruitment and outreach are the two most important aspects of working with this subgroup. Indiana engages in outreach to the MSFW's at their locations, in order to provide information regarding farmworker rights, awareness of the complaint system, and WorkOne access for MSFWs. Because access to healthcare and education are critical components for the well-being and professional development for MSFWs, Indiana is pioneering mobile services that encompass all three aspects – health, education, and workforce development – to serve this population in a more targeted way. To scale these resources throughout the regions with heavy MSFW representation, as well as in the multiple locales these individuals work, we need to increase our outreach capacity. DWD is exploring contracting with AmeriCorps volunteers to help expand outreach efforts and to increase the multilingualism within the outreach. Additionally, DWD is examining ways to create DOL-recognized areas of significance that can have embedded outreach staff for MSFWs.

Migrant and seasonal farmwork is often generational work. Whole families may work in this sector together, as well as a history of employment in this field. Without diminishing the agriculture work these individuals contribute, our outreach staff will work to let MSFWs know that if they want to stay in Indiana permanently, we can assist them. Indiana has training and education options, if that individual wants to move to a different field or potentially advance in his/her seasonal farm work. We can help connect MSFWs to the resources they need to be successful in their current or future endeavors.

One key part of our outreach is to have receptive growers as partners in this work. The Indiana State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) has fostered strong partnership with employers and associations. We will use this state agency to promote awareness of workforce, health, and education options for their workers. ISDA can help facilitate trainings and opportunities for employers to learn more about ways to upskill workers in agbioscience and other useful skills. Using ISDA as a conduit to employers and agriculture associations, we can also promote agricultural-based recruitment and promotion events. Allowing our employers to see the state's outreach and services as complimentary to their industry needs will facilitate DWD's work in recruiting more MSFWs to partake in the resources it and other agencies offer.

WIOA Adult, **Dislocated Worker**, or **Wagner-Peyser(Core Programs)** funds can directly fund services that will benefit MSFWs, specifically the services identified above. Additional supports through WIOA Title I could include assistance with transportation, childcare and dependent care, housing, educational testing, uniforms or other appropriate work attire and work-related tools, books, fees, and school supplies, and payments and fees for employment and training-related applications, tests, and certifications. If there is a language barrier a MSFW is facing, s/he can co-enroll in **WIOA Title II** for literacy and English language acquisition help.

Similar to our Partner Programs, Indiana must examine how to integrate the full spectrum of MSFW service providers into the WorkOne system, as well as develop linkages and collaborative efforts with other non-traditional service providers. Regions across our state assist with

executing this strategy through strong partnerships with organizations such as Proteus, an organization that meets farmworkers where they are and connects them to the resources they need. Through co-location within many of our WorkOne Centers, staff partner to conduct outreach and make referrals to ensure that services are provided to all those eligible. Additionally, state agencies could examine current use or potentially pursue additional federal funding from programs through the Office of English Learning and Migrant Education (State Program) at the Indiana Department of Education and Adult Education and the National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) (Federal Program). Currently, the US Department of Labor directs Indiana's NFJP funds to a third-party vendor that assists those who have done seasonal and migrant farm work within the last 2 years. This provider offers similar services as our WorkOnes but only for MSFWs. Through NFJP, MSFWs can receive financial assistance for tuition, books, tools, and a weekly stipend for time spent in the classroom upskilling. Individuals who have done seasonal and migrant farm work in the last 2 years and those planning on obtaining a two-year degree or certification are eligible to receive these funds. State agencies may consider if having that funding come straight to the executive branch and then disseminated formulaically to our regions may have a long-term efficacy of this program for MSFWs. Additionally, we may find areas of overlapping services between this program and our WIOA Core Programs at our WorkOnes. Indiana will examine if there are ways to braid this funding with our other WIOA programs to stretch the effectiveness of our funding for this target population.

Title I, Part C: Education of Migratory Children of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), includes funding that oversees six Migrant Regional Centers (MRCs) that operate local and regional migrant education programs. Migrant children ages 0-21 receive supplementary educational, supportive, and referral services through the Indiana Migrant Education Program (IMEP), which receives these federal funds. The IMEP helps ensure that migratory children overcome educational disruption and other barriers they may face due to the migratory lifestyle. In FY 2020, Indiana will receive approximately $2.4 million in funding through this Title.[10] The priority focus for this funding is on identification and recruitment of students, as the IMEP aims to identify and serve 100% of Indiana's migrant students each year. MRCs employ full-time, year-round recruiters throughout Indiana to strive to meet this. MRCs can also use a similar process to recruit, identify, and support the parents of migrant students, which are adult MSFWs. Local Boards can detail how they may consult with their regional MRCs to provide resources – such as Adult Education or employment services – to adult MSFWs, as well as receive active referrals of migrant students who graduate in Indiana. The Department of Education has a Memorandum of Understanding with Indiana's NFJP provider, Proteus, to give it data on migrant families identified through ESEA Title I, Part C to help recruit parents.

The IMEP participates in the Interstate Migrant Education Council (IMEC) quarterly meetings, the National Association of State Directors of Migrant Education (NASDME), the annual ESCORT Identification and Recruitment (ID&R) Forum, Pre-K Consortium Incentive Grant, and participates in the Office of Migrant Education annual director's meeting in Washington, D.C. Each of these opportunities allows IMEP staff to collaborate and network with fellow state migrant staff while coordinating efforts to best serve the needs of migrant students and their parents shared between our states. In addition, the IMEP collaborates with the Texas Migrant Interstate Program (TMIP,) as Texas is the sending state for the majority of our M/SFWs. MRCs and recruiters frequently work in collaboration with bordering states to ensure that students who may move between Indiana, Michigan, Kentucky, Illinois, and Ohio do not experience an interruption due to a move. Workforce Development Boards that serve Indiana counties bordering other states can leverage these interstate MRC partnerships to support M/SFWs that travel across state lines. The regional model of the IMEP allows for a high level of intrastate

collaboration with community partners in Indiana and local workforce Boards. We intend for our Boards take advantage of the Combined Plan to further their partnerships with local school districts and MRCs, in addition to the Migrant/Seasonal Farm Worker Coalition, MSFW Head Starts (serve preschool migratory children, as well as offer parents temporary work), Proteus, Inc. (the NFJP contractor), institutions of higher education, and various local and regional community organizations.[11]

Two higher education programs that are MSFW specific are the **High School Equivalency Program** (HEP) and the **College Assistance Migrant Program** (CAMP), authorized under the Higher Education Act. HEP helps students who have dropped out of high school get their High School Equivalency Credential; CAMP assists students in their first year of college with academic, personal, and financial support. Both are federal grants that can advance the educational attainment of MSFWs. For those regions with heavy MSFW populations, we encourage them to reach out the Indiana Department of Education to determine if these programs may be beneficial to expand in their areas. Receiving these federal grants may help increase the resources specific to MSFWs.

One additional barrier MSFWs may face is access to consistent broadband. This issue is discussed at length in the Rural target population section, but it may be an overlapping barrier for this group, as well. Through **Next Level Connections (State Program)**, Governor Holcomb has created a broadband initiative. Indiana has appropriated $100 million to bring affordable, high-speed fiber optic broadband access to unserved and underserved areas of the state. The state will offer grants for providers to bring broadband services with a minimum of 100/10 Mbps to areas of the state lacking service. As the state works with providers, communities, and other groups to design the final grant program and determine how to best optimize the investment, our state agencies leading this charge can consider the needs and challenges of this particular target population.

[1] US Department of Labor, 2018. Research Synthesis: What do we know about the effectiveness of reemployment initiatives?

[2] Some programs, such as Jobs for Vets State Grant, may not require consecutive weeks of unemployment, but rather the aggregate time spent unemployed.

[3] Krueger et al., 2014. Are the Long-Term Unemployed on the Margins of the Labor Market?

[4] Brookings Institution, 2014. Who Are the Long-Term Unemployed and What Happens to Them?

[5] Ibid.

[6] Indiana Commission for Higher Education, 2018. College Return on Investment Report 2018.

[7] Ibid.

[8] WIOA, Sec. 3(24)(G)).

[9] McLeod, 2018. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs.

[10] US Department of Education. Funds for State Formula-Allocated and Selected Student Aid Programs: Indiana.

[11] Indiana Department of Education, 2019. Amendment to Indiana's Consolidated State Plan under the Every Student Succeeds Act.

As many of the current jobs in Indiana's economy are more task-oriented, we anticipate feeling the effects of increasing automation and artificial intelligence throughout our key sectors.[1] To prevent increasing reliance on government benefits, like SNAP and TANF, we need to focus on upskilling and reskilling our current workers to help make them 'future-proof,' including a greater focus on digital literacy. Upskilling is defined as 'the process of learning new skills or of teaching workers new skills;' reskilling is 'the process of learning new skills so you can do a different job, or of training people to do a different job.'[2] Both upskilling and reskilling will help address the growing 'skills gap' – the gulf between the skills job seekers currently have and the skills employers need to fill their open positions – and help Hoosiers future-proof their skills as our economy changes.

Because low-skill jobs will feel the effects of automation and artificial intelligence first and potentially the greatest, Indiana knows that upskilling and reskilling those in these jobs is of utmost importance. Upskilling and reskilling individuals before they rely on government benefits is one of our primary prevention strategies. Based upon the demographics of Indiana's workforce, most of our target populations may need to be upskilled and reskilled generally. This target population is more focused on specific groups that may not be captured in our other target populations: underemployed individuals, seniors, single parents, dislocated workers, and displaced homemakers. If an individual is neither low-income nor unemployed, but rather needs to be upskilled or reskilled, we intend on using specific funding streams to help get that person the skills training necessary for new and/or continued employment in our changing economy.

This target population should potentially be co-enrolled into the programs listed below, though our subgroups may qualify for or require more specialized focus and prioritization from certain other programs. This initial list is a general approach to how our programs could serve this target population, with more specific strategies geared towards each subgroup explained further in this section.

Co-Enrolled Programs: Hoosiers needing to be either upskilled or reskilled will be co-enrolled into the following primary programs and services of benefit to this target population. An individual's unique circumstances or preference may not necessitate co-enrollment in each program. This section includes ***Core and Partner Program Activities*** for those adults.

Title III – Wagner-Peyser (Core Program): For this target population, we can prioritize our Wagner-Peyser funds to increasing transparency about what qualifications and skills employees need to advance into middle-skill jobs. Identifying what specific programs, skills, or credentials are aligned with employer needs can be difficult for the average employee. Through our business services, we can work with our employers to understand the specific skillset, knowledge, and/or credential they are looking for, rather than a job title or description. These funds can be used to provide Hoosiers with information about what credentials and skills each position in a company requires and where those credentials can be obtained, greatly increasing their chances of upskilling.

Credential Engine (State and Philanthropic Program): Credential Engine's Credential Registry is a database that captures, connects, and makes searchable critical information about all kinds of credentials: from degrees to certificates, badges to micromasters, apprenticeships to employer training programs, and certifications to licenses. The organization obtains this information under agreements with colleges, certification bodies, industry associations, and other credentialing and quality assurance organizations. The Credential Finder is a search app that accompanies the Registry. It enables employers, students, career counselors and others to

find credentials of interest and compare them along many dimensions. When considering the hundreds of thousands of credentialing options facing an individual, having a constituent or case manager use this tool will help individuals determine valuable options. Currently, the Indiana Department of Workforce Development's (DWD) career exploration toolset is linked to the Registry. This allows anybody in Indiana to see what credentials are aligned to the job market. As this tool is rolled out statewide, we will need to prioritize having our Wagner-Peyser staff trained on its use. Through either WIOA Adult or Wagner-Peyser funds, WorkOnes can steer individuals towards this tool to better understand their options.

Postsecondary Education Financial Aid (Federal and State Programs): Through greater coordiantion between our WorkOnes and higher education financial aid offices, we can provide additional access to credit-bearing postsecondary education opportunities to those seeking to be upskilled or reskilled. Greater integration of the state and federal financial aid systems into our workforce development system will give options to those who are ineligible for Core or Partner programs, remove some of the funding burdens from WIOA Core programs, and promote various forms of postsecondary attainment that lead to higher wages. Because community colleges and vocational schools account for a substantial group of WIOA training providers, improving communication and cross-agency coordination between financial aid officers at colleges and our WorkOnes is one of the biggest opportunities to get more job seekers trained and back to work. To better integrate postsecondary financial aid with WIOA training dollars, our WorkOnes can encourage those interested in a postsecondary program to file the FAFSA. The FAFSA is required to access the following: **Pell Grants** and federal loans (income-based Federal Programs), **Frank O'Bannon Grant** (need-based State Program), and **Next Level Jobs: Workforce Ready Grants** (non-income-based State Program).

Potential Eligibility: Additional programs and services a Hoosier may receive depending on individual circumstances. This section includes ***Core and Partner Program Activities***,***Activities outside the Plan***, and***Individual Services***for adults in this target population.

Title I – Adult (Core Program): For these eligible individuals, our WorkOne caseworkers should prioritize training services from the start if it is clear participants need more than core services (such as guidance or coaching). One primary training option for this target population is work-based learning. Work-based learning opportunities are critical to the advancement of each our target populations. Because life expenses can outweigh education and training opportunities for an individual, work-based learning options addresses the competition between income and education through a hybrid approach. One difference in work-based learning for this target population is that they often will be incumbent workers or may have foundational skills that can be easily augmented. Rather than only focusing on traditional work-based learning experiences, the opportunities for this target population can be more flexible. In addition to on-the-job training, internships, and the more conventional approaches, employers can also offer the following:

- Mentoring and shadowing: Experts within a company can formally or informally help new hires or incumbent workers master important skills.
- Virtual or online learning: These learning opportunities allow employees to train from home, rather than forcing everyone to gather on-site for training sessions.
- Microlearning and microinternships: This form of learning involves boosting employees' understanding of a particular program or topic through modules or compact experiences.

- Lunch-and-learn sessions: During these sessions, you can provide lunch for your employees and invite an expert from outside the company to share expertise on a particular subject.

There should be as few barriers as possible for employees looking to upskill. WIOA caseworkers can advocate for the following strategies to help incumbent workers upskill or reskill:

- Providing flexible shifts to ensure that employees can balance their job with their upskilling efforts. Employers and case managers must work with employees to help them balance their time, ensuring that they can complete their upskilling while fulfilling their job obligations. Managers should be made aware when their employees are pursuing additional education or training while working and should empower these employees by providing flexible shifts to ensure that they complete their upskilling.

- Developing incentives for employees to gain new skills while working. Offering monetary or promotion incentives for employees who learn new skills while working can both motivate employees and teach the value of continued self-improvement.

- Partnering with Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) providers to deliver specialized and flexible learning content online. MOOCs are usually free and are not tied to credit. Most are self-paced and can theoretically serve any number of people at a time. For businesses, MOOCs represent a way to develop and distribute accessible and convenient online courses that teach business-specific skills to both job seekers and current employees. These programs can be made available to both current and future employees to simultaneously attract and train new employees and upskill current ones.

: WIOA regulations defines underemployed as "an individual who is working part-time but desires full-time employment, or who is working in employment not commensurate with the individual's demonstrated level of educational and/or skill achievement."[3] Some of the Hoosiers in this category may also fall into the low-income target population or overlap with others (e.g., underemployed veterans or individuals with disabilities). Overlapping individuals are eligible for the available programs and can and will be co-enrolled, as needed. For this section, we are focusing primarily on the 'underemployed' descriptor of an individual, rather than on their other potential eligibility. The following programs can provide foundational services to those Hoosiers who may be underemployed in Indiana.

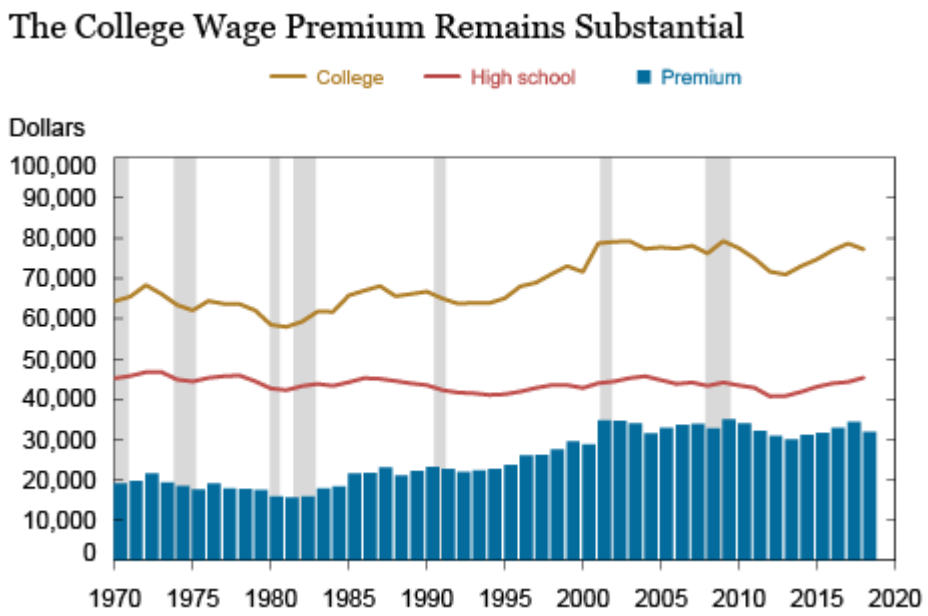
The distinguishing factor of underemployment versus other target populations is the nature of the work most people within this subgroup find themselves doing. This work is low-skill, low-wage jobs that are part-time or seasonal. Wages, however, are not the only measure of job quality; access to employment benefits, employer-provided health insurance, and employer-sponsored retirement plans, are also important, though often lacking in the jobs underemployed Hoosiers fill.[4] These jobs also do not necessarily allow for career advancement or development. They may have a high turnover rate, creating instability for both the individual and the employer. This job instability and the accompanying low wages precludes pockets of our state from attaining self-sufficiency. Because of erratic shifts, underemployed Hoosiers' schedules may not be conducive to upskilling/reskilling opportunities. These jobs also have a higher likelihood of feeling the effects of automation and artificial intelligence most significantly. If we do not allow for these Hoosiers to access upskilling/reskilling options, there is a high probability that they will backslide into lower income levels and onto government benefits. Focusing on this particular subgroup helps prevent Hoosiers from potentially needing SNAP and TANF in the future.

Both **Wagner-Peyser funds (Core Program)** and the **Credential Engine (State and Private Program)** tool can be very useful to providing employment services to underemployed Hoosiers. If an underemployed Hoosier (without any other eligibility) seeks out services from a WorkOne, employment service staff funded through Wagner-Peyser can play an important role in guiding this target population toward educational opportunities around career pathways through a range of one-on-one assistance and group services. Counseling and career planning, job search assistance, labor market information dissemination, training provider information, and recruitment, job matching, and placement are all activities WorkOnes can offer underemployed Hoosiers through this Core Program. For those Hoosiers who may have some postsecondary attainment but are struggling finding work that is on par with their education level, Credential Engine can help that individual see to which opportunities their degree or credential align.

Indiana's Commission for Higher Education releases several annual reports and analyses to facilitate the state's policies and goals by providing actionable and meaningful statistics on postsecondary education outcomes. Among these reports include analysis on topics such as college readiness and completion, equity in higher education, and financial aid and budget information. One of CHE's reports that may be useful for both career counselors and individuals seeking to upskill/reskill is the Return on Investment reports. These reports provide a clearer picture of the returns postsecondary education yields after graduation, emphasizing that higher education offers benefits that extend far beyond a financial paycheck. These dividends include greater job satisfaction and security, enhanced social mobility, increased civic involvement, improved health and wellness, and higher quality of life. Additionally, the College Value Index brings these quantitative and qualitative data, such as college completion rates, labor market returns, and alumni satisfaction, together to help Hoosiers answer some of the most fundamental questions in higher education today.

For Hoosiers to access middle-skill jobs with higher wages, which can lead to upward economic mobility, education and training beyond high school is a necessity.[5] Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce has found that since the Great Recession, almost all middle- and high-skill jobs have gone to college graduates. For those with a high school diploma or less, low-wage jobs (those making less than $32,000) are typically the only jobs available.[6] These workers continually lose access to jobs in high- and middle-skill occupations. Indiana's economy, like the rest of the country, is shifting towards needing a more-educated workforce. A high school diploma is no longer the finish line in one's educational path; some type of higher education is becoming increasingly necessary to ensure economic mobility.

As Indiana works to expand its definition of postsecondary attainment to include all forms of higher education (including quality, stackable credentials and certifications), we aim for more Hoosiers will understand the variety of postsecondary opportunities our state hosts. Those with advanced degrees will often have a high likelihood of amassing wealth throughout their lives than those with lesser educational attainment.[7] Even after accounting for increases in costs, most credentials pay for themselves within only a few years. College graduates tend to earn a substantial wage premium in the labor market, especially when compared to those with only a high school diploma. The Federal Reserve Bank of New York estimates that the average college graduate with just a bachelor's degree earned about $78,000, compared to $45,000 for the average worker with only a high school diploma. This means a typical college graduate earns a premium of well over $30,000 (nearly 75%). While the labor market has boosted the wages of those with a high school diploma in recent years, the wages of college graduates have gone up by as much or more, keeping the college wage premium near an all-time high. As well, the economic benefits of a college degree last over an entire career.



[8]

Hoosiers' with bachelor's degrees lifetime earnings often outweigh those with only a high school diploma by $1 million or more. Compared to those Hoosiers with a high school diploma, those with an associate's degree will earn at least $400,000 more over the course of their lives, and those with some college will earn at least $150,000 more.[9] The traditional four-year pathway to this level of education may not be the best fit for each individual. Some Hoosiers may choose non-traditional routes to higher education opportunities, such as shorter term credentials that can stack into longer term degrees. Regardless of how someone pursues higher education, we need more Hoosiers to recognize that good jobs with middle-wages and employment benefits require some form of postsecondary education; educational attainment must be a core value for all Hoosiers.[10]

Upskilling Indiana's underemployed through postsecondary education will require the state to communicate two key concepts:

1. Postsecondary education is necessary for career advancement, and
2. Postsecondary education can take many forms (e.g., registered apprenticeships, SEALs, licenses, certifications, associate's degrees, and bachelor's degrees).

Indiana intends to implement a **communications strategy** with the goal of becoming a people and state that value education as essential to a prosperous and stable quality of life and to Indiana's economic growth. This strategy will involve private and public sector partners, including the Richard M. Fairbanks Foundation, the Indiana Commission for Higher Education, and the Governor's Workforce Cabinet Staff. This will offer Indiana the opportunity to coordinate a unified direct outreach effort across agencies. Hoosiers will receive one message that supports the Vision and Goals set forth in this Plan. This aligned direct outreach can include endorsed marketing efforts cross-agency so Hoosiers already receiving government benefits also receive information how to upskill/reskill. This strategy aims at building an awareness and behavior change campaign that makes more Hoosiers aware of their educational options and convinces them to take advantage of those resources.

The goal of this communications strategy is to meet every Hoosier where they are with the education and training they need to secure a high-demand job and improve their lives. Within our underemployed subgroup, we seek to target this message to recent high school graduates that are aimless post-graduation and Hoosiers with some college but no degree. Each year, Indiana has roughly 25,000 high school graduates who have no plan beyond graduation other than to "get a job." These young adults often end up filling low-wage, low-skill jobs. If they do not pursue postsecondary education in some form in their futures, they may not advance beyond this type of work and may one day need government assistance when they have family members. Career counseling, awareness, and navigation throughout the K-12 system is essential to prevent this trend from continuing and to better prepare Indiana's students for all types of postsecondary opportunities.

Through Indiana's new graduation requirements, termed **Graduation Pathways (State Program)**, every Hoosier student will receive the guidance and instruction needed to succeed in any form of quality postsecondary education and training. To accomplish this objective for all of our students, these new graduation requirements endeavor to give each student a broad awareness of and engagement with individual career interests and associated career options, a strong foundation of academic and technical skills, and demonstrable employability skills that lead directly to meaningful opportunities for postsecondary education, training, and gainful employment. Graduation Pathways allows every student to choose from multiple routes to graduation that align to their strengths and interests. A key component of Graduation Pathways will occur in grades K-8 – students will need more activities to explore, engage, and experience a variety of careers to understand their postsecondary options. Because students select the option that best aligns with their postsecondary goals, their high school experience will be more relevant to them personally. For those students who may want a short-term degree immediately after high school, the **Workforce Ready Grants (State Program)** present Hoosier students with the opportunity to upskill by earning tuition-free certificates in high demand sectors.

Our adults with some college but no degree face a similar career limbo as those high school graduates described above. Indiana has about 700,000 Hoosiers that have some college credits but lack a degree. While some of these adults may have been able to find middle-wage jobs, they may also face a skill gap or qualification barrier to advancing their career. Additionally, these individuals may have incurred debt without any product from it. Indiana has two programs we intend to leverage to help upskill this particular subset of our target population. The **Adult Student Grant (State Program)** programs are specifically designed for working adults. Indiana recognizes that adult learners have different needs and usually are already working, so we offer financial resources to make sure they can succeed. Part of the Adult Student Grant program is reaching out to Hoosiers directly and connecting them with Indiana colleges that are committed to eliminating barriers for returning adults. Many colleges are offering special programs and incentives—including flexible class schedules and online courses, college credit for work and military experience, grade- and debt-forgiveness programs— as well as scholarships, and tuition discounts for qualifying students. The Indiana Commission for Higher Education offers the Adult Student Grant to assist starting or completing an associate's degree, bachelor's degree, or certificates by providing a $2,000 grant every year ($1,000 per semester). It is specifically designed to meet the unique needs of working adults.

Another option to upskill current entry-level employees includes employer or sector partnerships with community colleges, developing an internal talent pipeline to combat skills gaps. While many Hoosier employers offer tuition reimbursement for their employees, the reimbursement model often places a burden on the individual to front payment that s/he may not have. The **Community Health Network (Employer Program)** flipped the tuition

reimbursement structure to provide their employees with tuition support at enrollment, which removed this barrier from their low-skill workers.

A similar program Ivy Tech Community College has instituted is ***Achieve Your Degree* (Institution of Higher Education Program)**. Through partnerships with local employers, this program works with companies that have tuition reimbursement benefits to assist students with the college and financial aid application process. Ivy Tech defers billing until the end of the semester, allowing some financial breathing room for students. Company tuition plans then cover the balance per company policy. This program helps address financial barriers for students wishing to further their education through the tuition deferral and financial aid process. It is comprised of uniquely designed Career Certificates, which are embedded within Technical Certificates and associate's degrees, as well as our Transfer as a Junior programs (officially known as Transfer Single Articulation Pathway (TSAP) degrees), to provide professional and career pathways within companies at a reduced cost to the employer. Opportunities for students to transfer to four-year institutions via Transfer as a Junior programs can also be a more cost effective use of limited company tuition benefit dollars and can replace internal professional development training.

Cook Medical (Employer Program) allows its employees to earn a certificate in seven programs, including biotechnology, business administration, hospitality, and various computing and informatics tracks through the Achieve Your Degree program with Ivy Tech Bloomington. Employees can also continue their education by earning an Associate degree in these curricula developed for Cook. Cook has redesigned these educational opportunities for their employees into talent development strategies, rather than a corporate social good. Helping their current or future employees' access education and training programs can exponentially grow their talent for both middle-skills and advanced positions, easing talent attraction and retention tension. Through local plans, we aim for more businesses to take advantage of this opportunity to upskill their employees as a way to increase their talent attraction, retention, and development practices and culture. Our local business service representatives can develop their awareness of these types of employer programs into which they can enroll Hoosiers seeking to upskill/reskill. They can engage with employers to create similar programs in-house and to create customized talent pipelines.

Indiana employers can also use the **Employer Training Grant** program through **Next Level Jobs (State Program)** for incumbent workers, in particular providing training and education for underemployed workers. Employers may qualify for reimbursement of up to $5,000 per employee trained and retained for six months up to $50,000 per employer. As discussed in the Low-Income Adults section, Employer Training Grants receive $20 million in funding through the state's budget. While this Grant has been useful in advancing those in middle-skill jobs to more advanced positions, we would like to see similar traction for those in low-skill jobs into middle-skill. Through coordinated communications via our local businesses services teams, as well as sector partners (such as the state and local Chambers of Commerce, trade organizations, and unions), we will advance the use of this Grant towards those needing to be either upskilled or reskilled.

For underemployed adults requiring new or additional degrees, certifications, or credentials, exam costs can be prohibitive. To help offset the strain of assessment costs, Indiana is going to examine how to use our **TANF (Partner Program)** block grant to help cover costs of any certification, credentialing, or examination costs.[11]

For some Hoosiers, underemployment may be a product of lacking appropriate accommodations or services to assist with a disability. For those who may qualify for

Vocational Rehabilitation (Core Program) services, this program can assist with providing any assistive technologies, accommodations, or auxiliary supports the individual may need for job placement or advancement. Determining the main barrier the individual faces to accessing more advanced careers – whether it is a skill or educational gap, missing accommodation, gaining more experience in a sector, or perhaps another supportive service – is a critical first step in getting that Hoosier the assistance necessary. Because of the range of barriers any one individual may have when they enter a WorkOne, co-location and cross-training play significant roles in helping our Hoosiers. Co-locating our various programs through physical space, increasing staff mobility to various community hubs and program offices, or through virtual warm handoffs will help ensure that the range of services are provided to a Hoosier through a truly convenient one-stop approach. Currently, our VR offices and WorkOnes have co-location embedded throughout many offices throughout Indiana, but we need to expand this approach to include social services, as well. Similarly, cross-training our staff at all managerial levels – from frontline staffers to senior staff in agencies – and members of local Workforce Development Boards in what different programs offer can ensure that Hoosiers receive the services they need.

: The US workforce is aging, and it will continue to age. Many low-income, older workers face unique barriers to employment and require specialized services to prepare them for entry or reentry into the labor market. These barriers include age discrimination by employers, difficulties with hearing or vision, outdated skills and knowledge, and age-related physical limitations. Although some barriers to employment are not age-specific (e.g., difficulty with transportation), the challenges facing low-income, older workers and their related solutions may be unique. These individuals often require more personalized assistance than their younger counterparts. As some older workers do not see workforce development programs as intended for them, we need to continue increasing awareness of and accessibility to these programs for this target population.

Older workers can also have more difficulty finding new jobs when they become unemployed than younger workers. Even if older individuals are willing and able to work, obtaining and retaining a job depends on employers' willingness to give them a job. Older workers also face stereotypes, such as they are less efficient, resist change, learn more slowly, or are less able to learn than younger workers, which can create additional barriers to employment. There is little support, however, for the claim that job performance declines with age.[12] Because older workers are remaining in the workforce – either by choice or need, we will need to find ways to further engage this subgroup in our talent development system. We look forward to our local workforce boards incorporating regional strategies to recruit and develop this particular population.

Demand for workforce programs serving older workers is increasing, thus demand for the **Senior Community Service Employment Program** *(SCSEP*) **(Partner Program)** is increasing. To qualify for SCSEP, an individual must be 55 or older and have a family income of no more than 125% of the federal poverty level. Often those eligible for SCSEP are also unemployed or have low employment prospects. These participants may be unable to find employment through the WOIA Core Programs. They might be homeless or at risk of homelessness, veterans and qualified spouses, have Limited English proficiency or low literacy skills, or have a disability.

SCSEP serves these older workers when other programs do not, and it can help supplement other training programs to better serve older workers. Indiana must coordinate SCSEP with the talent development system at-large to maximize resources, prevent duplication of services, and increase access for older Hoosiers. This program must be fully integrated into WorkOne offices

through physical, virtual, or mobile co-location. Local regions can also explore embedding or using itinerant staffing models. Embedded staff travel between different offices rather than being on-site full-time at any one location, regularly working in different places and with different program staff. Itinerant staff members who come to the WorkOne (or another office) when called or requested and do not have a set schedule. These staffing models can bring services to where people are rather than concentrating programs and services in any particular center. Co-location will help increase communication and referrals between the WorkOnes and this program. Additionally, the common Performance Goals for all programs included in the Combined Plan will synchronize the different needs and aims of WorkOne staff, SCSEP staff, and SCSEP participants. The 'Immediate Outcomes' can help shift our sole focus on finding full-time employment opportunities to finding the opportunity that works best for the individual, which may be part-time employment for older workers.

SCSEP funds can be spent on providing participants with:

- Wages and benefits (must account for at least 75% of funds),
- Training,
- Job placement assistance, including job development and job search assistance,
- Supportive services (e.g., health and medical costs, transportation, work-related equipment, childcare, etc.), and
- Outreach, recruitment and selection, intake, orientation, and assessments.

Through braided funding, our SCSEP staff can work with Wagner-Peyser staff or funds to connect a senior's employment history, personal background, and non-work activities and skills (e.g., hobbies, household activities, faith-related activities, etc.) with the current labor market needs to expedite the training and placement process for the participant. Wagner-Peyser could also help fund business outreach, recruitment, and selection and job search and placement for the SCSEP participant. Additionally, if a senior qualifies for another WIOA Core Program, those funds could help provide training and assessments. SCSCEP funds should prioritizes wages and benefits and supportive services, such as transportation or medical costs, when possible.

Indiana's SCSEP subgrantee, National Able, and other SCSEP partners will develop training that emphasizes digital literacy and computer skills training, life coaching, and financial management skills for its participants. This will require finding innovative curricula and preparation activities that ensure the optimal learning environment and reinforce workplace "realities" regarding the work-a-day schedule, dress, and turnaround on assignments. Our SCSEP training and services must also be tailored to assist individual circumstances, such as older women entering the labor force for the first time, reentry after retirement, the loss of a spouse, or a lack of basic computer and internet skills. For those seniors who qualify, WIOA Adult can help fill any funding gaps or provide training opportunities, specifically in financial and digital literacy.

SCSEP participants are often placed in community service assignments to gather on-the-job training and to help prepare them to transition to unsubsidized employment. These jobs are usually part-time (an average of 20 hours a week), temporary, paid positions that permit someone to obtain work experience or job skills and training. Placements should generally be in a community nearby the individual's place of residence. This kind of training gives the participant training and skills specific to a position and can lead to unsubsidized employment with the employer. Indiana's local Workforce Development Boards need to set placement

expectations with the host agency supervisor and the participant that SCSEP is a gateway to employment. The objective of the placement is to transition off the project to unsubsidized employment. If a permanent position at that host agency is unlikely for a particular employee, then SCSEP personnel make it clear that active assistance in the search for permanent employment elsewhere is the alternative expectation. Some of Indiana's WorkOnes employ SCSEP participants to help administer other workforce programs. This allows the individual to gain experience, increases local capacity, and maximizes our federal investments. We intend to scale this practice to other WorkOnes throughout the state. Indiana can also use our Hoosier seniors with diverse backgrounds to work in roles that require various language and/or cultural competencies.[13] We plan to create a **State Earn and Learn (State Program)** for our seniors in our SCSCEP training programs through partnering with our Office of Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeship. This will incorporate both subsidized employment, digital literacy, and on-the-job training through sector partnerships.

As we endeavor to better integrate our siloed programs to reverse our current trend of one program providing all resources for an individual, we must see where SCSEP can be incorporated into other training opportunities. The Green Thumb Project in Oregon is a SCSEP provider with a broad-based network of local and state organizations to improve the skills and well-being of seniors. Indiana can emulate Green Thumb's network by coordinating the following programs towards meeting the needs of our seniors:

- The SCSEP provider can serve as a liaison, case manager, and advocate for the individual's needs, as well as provide the funding for the other programs' services;
- The WorkOne can offer pre-placement training to boost certain skills, such as digital literacy; and
- Our community colleges can give participants more advanced or specialized training and the opportunity to earn or complete certifications and degrees.

Green Thumb in Oregon focuses primarily on developing IT skills, but, given the variety of job openings in Indiana, we could adapt this program to fit any of our sectors. Through this type of joint action, we hope our communities have a growing number of trained older workers who can now capitalize on employers' needs for already trained workers.

In Southern Indiana, the **Goodwill Industries (Philanthropic Program)** of Evansville provides SCSEP services to Hoosiers. One way this organization is broadening its network is by leveraging its proximity to Indiana's border. This program also serves residents and works with businesses in Illinois and Kentucky. Goodwill helps older job seekers learn new job skills while training at public and nonprofit organizations in their communities. Its employment specialists provide needs assessments, create individual employment plans, administer basic skills classes, and assist in job placement, training, and eventual transition to unsubsidized employment.

While the overall strategy of **Wagner-Peyser** for addressing this target population's impediments – focusing on transparency about what qualifications and skills employees need to advance and on labor market information – applies to this subgroup, we could potentially further tailor these funds towards identifying those jobs and skills that suit this specific population. For example, since many seniors are interested in part-time work, these funds could be geared towards making those connections. It could also supplement the career coaching and counseling offered through SCSEP with labor market information and job searches assistance and placement. This can also fund career exploration activities, such as talent tours, informational interviews, and mentorship. Like other target populations, business services

funded through Wagner-Peyser should help provide insight and perspective into both the unique benefits and characteristics of this population

Nationally, 20% of SCSEP participants had low literacy skills, and 10 percent had limited English proficiency.[14] Given the potential overlapping needs of those in SCSEP and those in **Adult Education**, any senior needing academic services should be co-enrolled into Adult Education. In particular, WIOA Title II can fund digital literacy instruction for seniors. These services should be provided in coordination with those outlined above in SCSEP to facilitate enrollment, as well supplement a senior-specific State Earn and Learn. Depending on the individual's needs, Adult Education could fund the bulk of education and training costs, with SCSEP or WIOA Adult serving as the gap filler.

Similarly, 15% of SCSEP participants had a disability.[15] If an older individual has a disability, s/he may qualify for **Vocational Rehabilitation** (VR) services. Unless an individual has a significant disability, which would require intensive and specialized career coaching and ongoing support, this person will be co-enrolled into VR and SCSEP through the WorkOne. VR will help provide any assistive technologies, accommodations, or auxiliary supports the individual may need for training or job placement.

For single parents needing to be upskilled or reskilled, children are both the motivation and barrier to completing education and training programs. For this subgroup, there are three key policies that need to be coordinated – WIOA, TANF, and the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF). As the primary caretaker of their children, single parents face tremendous struggles balancing childcare and making ends meet. The average annual cost of infant care in Indiana is $12,612; and childcare for a 4-year-old costs about $9,557.[16] On average, infant care in Indiana costs more than in-state tuition at a four-year college. Accessing and affording childcare is out of reach for low-wage workers because of the scarcity of childcare options and its expense. Families with more than one child face an even steeper financial climb. Single parents do not have the option to stay home to take care of their children nor can they sacrifice income for an education or training program. The added element of an educational or training program is often untenable for these individuals. Without that training opportunity, though, that parent might be unable to advance to a family-sustaining wage. In order to effectively provide upskilling or reskilling options to this subgroup, we need to integrate these three crucial policies.

The Combined Plan offers Indiana a singular opportunity to examine and integrate these policies systemically. Single parents often experience time poverty, where they do not have enough time for educational opportunities after taking into account the time spent working and being a parent. Like other target populations, single parents face the struggle of education versus working – if a single parent is in class, then they are often not making money to provide for his/her family. Single parents also intersect with other target populations emphasized in the Combined Plan, such as Low-income Adults and Urban Populations.

Childcare is often the major barrier to this subgroup's enrollment, persistence, and completion of education and training programs. Food and housing insecurity can also preclude single parents from seeking upskilling opportunities. Education and training, however, can be critical to the economic security and mobility for single parents and their families. Quality childcare and early education are not just essential for parents seeking education and training to attain economic security and mobility, but it is also critical to children's healthy development and educational success. Better blending of our workforce development and childcare policies will provide Indiana with a key two-generation strategy.

One specific challenge facing single female parents is our occupational segregation. For every seven men who work in occupations that are most threatened by technological change (have a 90% or higher likelihood of being eliminated by technology), there are 10 women in such jobs. Though women comprised 47% of the workforce, they represent 58% of those at the highest risk of losing their jobs due to technology. Latina women, in particular, face the highest risk of job automation with 1 in 3 working in high-risk occupations.[17] Women will be some of the first Hoosiers to feel the effects of automation and artificial intelligence. Bridging the skills gap through upskilling and reskilling programs is essential to facilitate greater economic mobility. If moms are only receiving preparation and training that will lead to low-wage work, even if childcare is provided, the training will only reinforce patterns of gender wage disparity and occupational segregation. We need to prioritize these women in our middle-skill training opportunities. In the realm of middle-skill occupations, higher paying work for women means nontraditional work in which women are drastically underrepresented, but better paid. Working with our WorkOnes, employers, and philanthropic partners, Indiana should be advocating for women to gain skills and careers in nontraditional sectors, which will mean also including nontraditional training options to allow them to balance the pressures of being a single parent.

WIOA Adult (Core Program) can focus mostly on training and education with the childcare programs below providing that supportive service. These education and training opportunities must add value to the individual's skill development and aspirations. Because single parents are time poor, if a program is not a value-add, participants will disengage to avoid wasting time that could be spent with family or earning money. Education and training programs must also build flexibility into their courses. Leveraging technology and various platforms to provide on-line courses or synchronous learning (offering a class in-person and via technology simultaneously) will assist this population with persisting and completing programs, since there is greater flexibility to learn on one's personal timetable.

Specifically, for single mothers, training needs to emphasize nontraditional careers. This training should prepare women to enter the high growth, higher-paying advanced manufacturing industry, with a focus on the construction skill craft and building trades, through providing career and technical training in careers such as welding, pipefitting, ship-fitting and electrical. This will both promote higher wages and address occupational segregation. Additionally, our postsecondary **Carl D. Perkins (Partner Program)** funds can help single mothers access career exploration and engagement activities through our community college campuses. This will allow these Hoosiers to learn about nontraditional fields and opportunities. Perkins funds can also help fund the equipment, facilities, and gaps for career pathways in these various sectors at secondary or postsecondary schools.[18]

IvyWorks (Sector and Institution of Higher Education Initiative) is a program Ivy Tech Community College designed in partnership with Indy Women in Tech to give female students the support they need to earn industry-backed credentials and build a career in Indiana's fastest-growing fields. IvyWorks provides strategic professional development, business networking and wraparound support, so participants can earn their degree and excel in their career. Ivy Tech offers a variety of programs in high demand fields, which were designed with input from industry leaders. By partnering with high demand programs in business, supply chain management/logistics and technology, IvyWorks increases access to workforce credentials and associate degree programs. IvyWorks has several benefits that set it apart from other programs:

- **Flexibility**: This program works with students and employers to provide flexible class scheduling and advising. Class offerings include both in-class and online options.
- **Professional Development**: IvyWorks provides specialized soft-skill workshops and offers one-to-one career advising.
- **Career Networking**: Students in IvyWorks are able to connect with the labor market and expand career pathways through site visits, employer panels, and hiring events.
- **Innovative Courses**: IvyWorks' curriculum was designed in collaboration with industry leaders, allowing students to learn the exact skills they will need to thrive in the workplace after graduation.
- **Wraparound Support**: IvyWorks staff work to identify and connect students to resources that support their success and independence.

Greater access to **registered apprenticeships** in the skilled trades can help single mothers achieve economic security and fill predicted skills shortages in these sectors. From pre-apprenticeships to registered apprenticeships, opportunities to earn and learn in these trades provide good careers with family-sustaining earnings and long-term employment prospects. While apprenticeships in the trades offer good jobs with benefits, only a small minority of apprentices in the trades are women. Pre-apprenticeship programs can provide women with the foundational skills, supports, networks, and knowledge needed for entering and succeeding in an apprenticeship. Similarly, **State Earn and Learns** (SEALs) **(State Program)** through the Indiana Office of Work Based Learning and Apprenticeship can offer non-traditional apprenticeships in health, IT, and agricultural biosciences. SEALs can offer single mothers opportunities to gain college credits and on-the-job training for middle-skill roles in Indiana's advanced industries. As our WorkOnes help promote these opportunities to single mothers, our business services need to simultaneously work with our businesses to make them inclusive and welcoming for women. As we promote non-traditional hiring practices through our business services representative, employers start to tap into this viable talent pipeline to fill jobs at various entry levels. Indiana can adapt resources and strategies identified by the National for Women's Equity in Apprenticeship and Employment.[19]

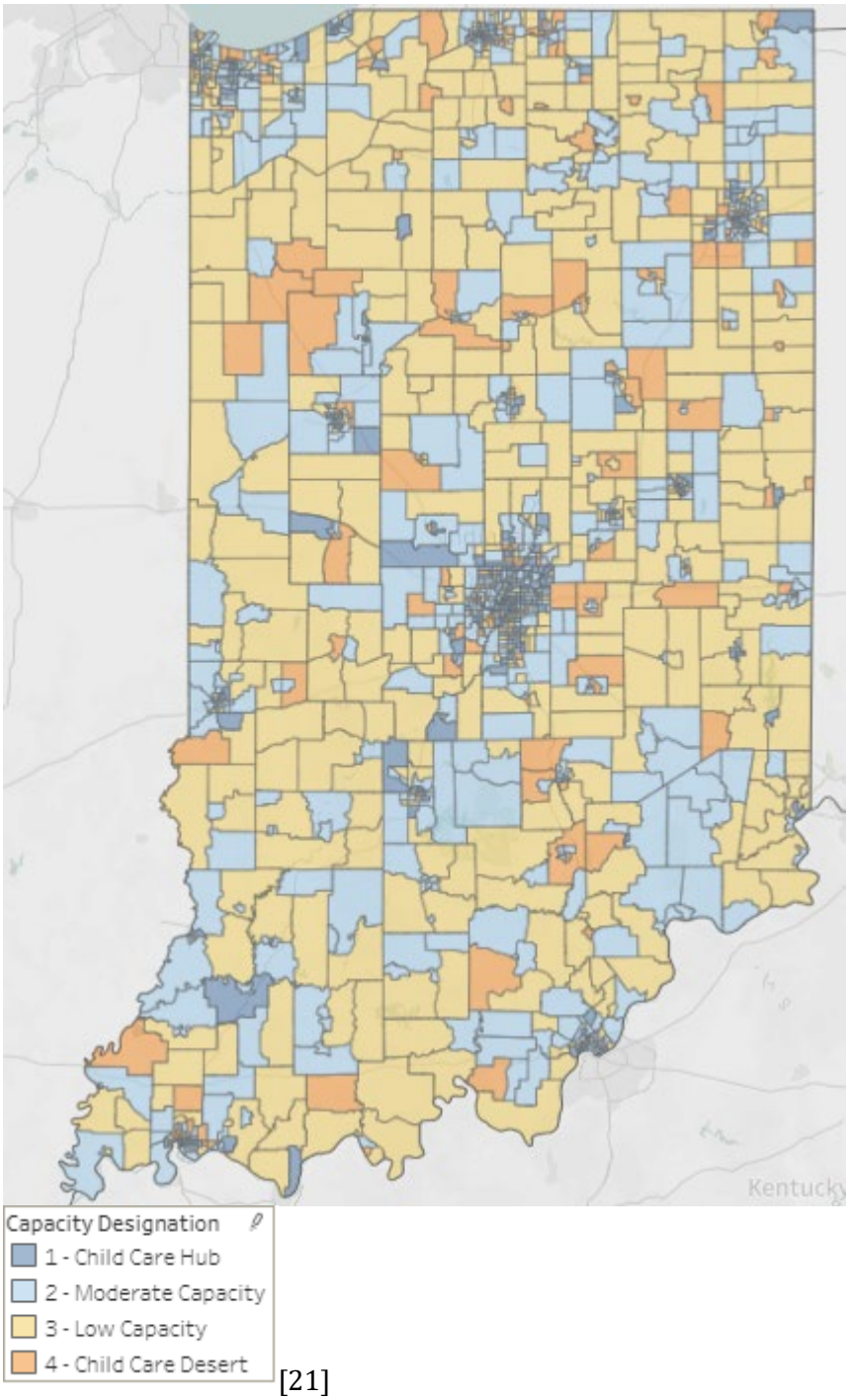
Another subset of single parents are those who are either custodial or non-custodial parents through Indiana's Child Support Program, which is a partnership between the Indiana Child Support Bureau (CSB), a division of the Department of Child Services (DCS), and the 92 county prosecutors, clerks, and courts. Securing a quality job allows non-custodial parents to pay child support, though this can be a difficult obstacle for many non-custodial Hoosiers to surmount. If parents do not provide child support, it can further the cyclical nature of poverty in many of our communities and further splinter communities with potential incarceration. Connecting both custodial and non-custodial parents with opportunities to upskill/reskill as a means of earning higher wages through stable employment helps with current economic needs and also prevention of future economic instability in Hoosier families. Providing Hoosiers with the skills to access wages to pay child support is an intergenerational strategy to improve economic mobility.

Child support is implemented by the local county child support program offices

throughout the state. As a tool for these programs to get Hoosiers the support needed to make child support payments and avoid enforcement actions, these programs can compel non-custodial parents to make appointments at WorkOnes for career and employment services. To fulfill this requirement, WorkOnes can enroll non-custodial parents into **Wagner-Peyser** services, at a minimum, to assist with career counseling and creating employment plans. This is just a first step in providing awareness and information into the various training programs and opportunities Hoosiers can access at little to no cost. WorkOnes can then co-enroll custodial or non-custodial parents into **WIOA Adult** or **Title II** for additional services, such as upskilling/reskilling education and training, obtaining a high school equivalency, or other employment services. As well, WorkOnes can also connect custodial and non-custodial parents to pre-apprenticeship programs to help them get their foot in the door to more stable employment in the trades. Through an interagency Memorandum of Understanding, DCS can access Indiana Career Connect through DWD to verify the non-custodial parent's enrollment into a WIOA Core Program.

Both custodial and non-custodial parents face the same barriers as the larger subgroup of single parents, such as childcare and skills gap. Enrollment in WIOA Core Programs, as well as SNAP and/or TANF E&T, can help provide the tuition and fees for education and training and related wraparound supports. One obstacle that some custodial and non-custodial parents face is current or former incarceration. For those that intersect with the Ex-Offender target population, specific solutions to those barriers are presented in that section.

Single parents face a range of challenges navigating workforce and childcare policies: the complexity of arranging childcare with education and training activities, as well as around working and earning an income; limited information or awareness about childcare options; financial constraints and limited access to childcare subsidies or low-cost/free care options; and limited supply of good quality care overall, specifically in certain regions of the state. Many areas in Indiana are 'childcare deserts.' Most Indiana census tracts (an area of approximately 2,500 to 3,000 households within a county) have a ratio of 0.33 to 1.49 childcare spots to children under 5. 281 tracts were categorized as childcare hubs, while 149 tracts were identified as childcare deserts. Both hubs and deserts have reasonably high numbers of jobs and children, while hubs have sufficient childcare availability and deserts do not.[20]



[21]

Though the workforce development and childcare systems often have overlapping goals and target populations, there are also policies and incentives that create barriers to access; they are complex to navigate due to multiple sectors, actors, and agencies; and they often operate separately. It is an economic imperative for Indiana to increase access to early childhood education. The lack of access to childcare in Indiana is costing the state severely:

- $1.8 billion in direct cost to employers;
- $1.1 billion in lost economic activity every year; and
- $118.8 million in lost tax revenue.[22]

Often, a single parent's ability to hold a job depends on whether there are available childcare or early learning facilities near their home or workplace. For example, there are few options for childcare needs that extend beyond the typical 6:00 am – 6:00 pm, Monday through Friday schedule. The lack of childcare during nontraditional times can prohibit a single parent from enrolling into an education or training program in the evenings or on weekends. This can also be an issue for Hoosiers looking to have a second or third shift at work to balance on-the-job training or an education program. Additionally, lack of childcare or flexibility for sick children can prohibit single parents from attending class or job.

To increase the access of our workforce development programs to single parents, we need to design education and training services that also facilitate access to childcare. Case managers should help parents find childcare options and potential subsidies. Assessing participants' childcare needs as part of the intake and planning processes, as well as including follow-up and on-going support, is another critical step for this subgroup. Ensuring access to childcare is coupled with access to education and training will be addressed through how we can braid our federal and state programs (such as WIOA, CCDF, TANF, SNAP E&T, and On My Way Pre-K) will be examined further below.

Because of the variability of childcare options and quality, we look forward to our local workforce boards assessing childcare access and costs in their local regions to determine gaps in availability. Our Workforce Development Boards can determine if partnerships with local chambers, employers, or community foundations could help ease this potential barrier. Potential partnerships with secondary or postsecondary Child Development programs, in which students are engaged in their 400 hour practicum to earn their Child Development Associate license, may provide some local boards with an opportunity to have childcare during nontraditional hours. These programs could be built up using Perkins funding or receive a premium rate during these off-hours of care. Our local boards can determine other types of incentives and solutions for this critical issue based on local needs and inflection.

At the state level, we need to increase communication and program development between our Department of Workforce Development and Family and Social Service Administration. With both agency heads members of the Governor's Workforce Cabinet, we intend to leverage the state workforce board as a convener to bridge our childcare and workforce development services. At the local level, childcare staff should work closely with education and training experts to help ensure programs reflect both the realities facing parents engaged in education and training and the kinds of workforce development programs and services available to families. As our education and training providers develop programs, they should include childcare and other social services in the planning and development phases to remove any potential logistical barriers a participant may have.

One example of this is presently occurring at the **Excel Centers (State and Philanthropic Program)**, which is operated by Goodwill Industries. This is a state and philanthropically funded program that provides high school education to adults. Childcare is offered on the premises of the Excel Centers, meeting single parents' educational and family needs. Similarly, in our workforce **Region 8**, childcare is offered onsite for Hoosiers participating in employment and training services. We seek to scale this type of co-locating services not only to our WorkOnes and providers, but also to our community college campuses to remove this potential barrier to participating in or completing a workforce training.

Access to childcare would help single parents overcome a significant barrier to engaging in education and training opportunities. This may entail co-enrollment into both WIOA Core Programs and into the **Child Care and Development Fund (Federal Program)**. Though WIOA

dollars can help support childcare costs, by coordinating co-enrollment of single parents into both programs, we can ensure the continuity of care to prevent breaks in service, stretch our workforce investments, and continue to build the supply of quality care to support the needs of parents in education and training. This will require simplifying administrative processes of enrolling in both programs.

Indiana has made good strides towards prioritizing low-income parents for CCDF vouchers. Currently, parents/foster parents who are working, going to school, or have a referral from Department of Child Services (DCS) or a referral from TANF or SNAP receive priority access to CCDF funding. Individuals must earn less than 127% of the federal poverty line to obtain a voucher; to maintain that voucher, parents can earn up to 85% of the state median salary (around $43,000). As we further coordinate our SNAP/TANF E&T and IMPACT programs with our WorkOnes, we can advance referrals and enrollment to CCDF for childcare assistance, provided the individual meets the income eligibility. In the future, we will couple our federal childcare funding with our state program, On My Way Pre-K, and with our TANF block grant. By allowing CCDF to fund a portion of our single parents' childcare, this lessens the strain on using our WIOA dollars for this wraparound support and allows for those to focus on employment and training services.

While we currently use our TANF block grant to augment our CCDF vouchers, Hoosiers still face a steep benefits cliff once their income starts to improve. Because childcare can cost around $9,000 in Indiana, loss of a childcare voucher due to income ineligibility can be a disincentive for Hoosiers to move into higher paid positions. We want to examine how we use all of the funding in our TANF block grant to continue to subsidize Hoosier's childcare vouchers as their wages increase, rather than the current sharp drop-off of benefits. By continuing childcare subsidies for those slowly moving into higher paid positions, we can negate the deterrents the benefits cliff has on economic mobility.

If a single parent is unable to receive a childcare voucher through CCDF, we can co-enroll that individual into **On My Way Pre-K (State Program)**. Indiana established the eligibility for On My Way Pre-K to mirror that of CCDF. The primary difference in these two programs is that On My Way Pre-K focuses on provider quality. Parents can only use their state voucher at a childcare facility that is rated a 3 or 4 on the Paths to Quality. A level 3 childcare facility has planned curriculum guides for child development and school readiness. A level 4 has national accreditation.

As of May 2019, families living in any county in Indiana may be eligible for On My Way Pre-K. In order to qualify, parents/guardians in the household must have a service need, such as working, going to school, attending job training, which makes this program ripe for co-enrollment with our WIOA services. All On My Way Pre-K **vouchers are full time**, allowing children to receive the time they need to prepare for kindergarten, even if the parent works or goes to school part-time. Families must earn less than 127% of federal poverty level to qualify for a voucher. Similar to CCDF, these vouchers have a steep income eligibility cliff for recipients that can be a disincentive to higher wages. We endeavor to apply the same stair step process of gradually decreasing the subsidies for childcare for CCDF to our state program, as well.

Early Head Start and Head Start (Federal Programs) promote the school readiness of young children birth to five in local communities by providing a comprehensive approach that focuses on education, health, parent involvement, and social services. These social services could include job training and housing assistance for parents. To help low-income parents access training opportunities, we must promote our WorkOne employment services and the bevy of upskilling/reskilling programs our state offers. Locally and at the state-level, we will leverage

our Head Starts to provide endorsed marketing materials about education and training programs to parents. Our co-enrollment and co-location strategies are not solely focused on our WorkOnes, but how can we imbue any and all touchpoints with our target populations with these principles. Additionally, integration of our programs does not stop at just our workforce development system. Indiana's annual Head Start assessment states that providers would like more support on how to blend and braid funding with CCDF vouchers, On My Way Pre-K, and Elementary and Secondary Education Act-Title I funding. Across all of our programs and agencies, we need to apply our Combined Plan Goals to integrate our program, maximize our investments, and focus on the individual's needs.[23]

Early Head Start serves pregnant women, infants, and toddlers to age 3, and Head Start serves children ages 3 to 5. Federal eligibility guidelines state that (most) children and pregnant women must also fall into one of the following categories:

- Children from families with incomes below 100% of the federal poverty line;
- Children from homeless families;
- Children from families receiving public assistance (such as TANF); and
- Foster children are eligible (regardless of foster family's income).

Overall, we need to work to increase the availability of Early Head Start in Indiana. There is a high unmet need, which is undoubtedly negatively impacting Indiana's human capital. We must also promote partnerships between childcare and early learning providers and our K-12 schools, community colleges, and WorkOnes. This strategy could encourage more new or existing grantees to apply.

Some single parents may qualify for **TANF** cash assistance; these individuals would be an intersection of the low-income and upskill/reskill target populations. As explained in the Low-Income Adult section, we will increase the co-enrollment of participants in TANF in our WIOA Core Programs. This will allow for joint service delivery and sharing resources. As we increase the co-location of our programs, we will explore the possibility of all TANF case management related to connections to employment and training services is conducted at the local WorkOne. TANF can also be used to help with wraparound supports in addition to childcare, such as transportation and living expenses. Like TANF, **SNAP (Partner Program)** could be another funding source to help with supportive services. If a single parent is receiving SNAP benefits, s/he could use SNAP E&T as a gap filler for expenses related to tuition and fees for trainings or administrative expenses. Blending SNAP E&T with WIOA and a childcare voucher (either state or federally funded) would allow for additional wraparound supports to be offered in addition to workforce training and childcare.

Early education is not merely an important workforce strategy for parents, it provides the foundation for children's long-term health and educational outcomes. Quality early learning *comprehensively develops a child's social, emotional, cognitive, and physical needs in order to build a solid and broad basis for lifelong learning and well-being. It is a critical early intervention strategy for children who may be born into communities with higher risks.* Early education from birth to age 5 can have substantial implications for healthcare, education, and prevention policy. Children who received high-quality early care and education from birth until age 5 enjoy better physical health in their mid-30s than peers who did not attend the childcare-based program.[24] Early childhood education serves as an early intervention that improves both children's cognitive and socioemotional functions. Additionally, the achievement gap between at-risk children and their affluent peers begins at birth, persists throughout K-12, and has

lifelong negative consequences, unless it is addressed early in a child's life. Quality early learning helps address these early gaps for at-risk children and ensures they are ready to start school at the same level as their peers.

Over the next two years, Indiana will examine the structure of its programs and agencies. One development we endeavor to implement is to characterize our K-12 system as the PreK-12 system. Throughout Indiana, school districts and local communities have recognized the connection and importance of early learning and Pre-K with kindergarten and school readiness. Over 20,000 Hoosier students are enrolled in Pre-K through their school districts, illustrating that many of our districts have already made the transition from K-12 to PreK-12. One of our roles over the next two years is to further support and replicate those local communities' early learning practices. Prekindergarten programs offer the most promise for increasing children's school readiness and ensuring students begin their academic career on the right track.[25] To prevent Hoosiers from needing some of the interventions aimed at assisting at-risk youth students described throughout the Plan, this redesigned system, accompanied with additional coordinated investments, can help ensure those predisposed to be an at-risk youth never fulfill that label.

Dislocated workers are individuals who have lost their jobs due to a layoff. They can vary tremendously in terms of their existing skills, previous occupations and industries, and prior wage levels. Despite this diversity in previous experiences, dislocated workers also tend to share specific characteristics due to being dislocated. These characteristics often include:

- Significant psychological stress in response to being laid off.
- Little information about current labor market opportunities.
- No recent experience in looking for a job.
- Substantial work experience and work maturity in one specific career or sector.
- Existing occupational skills that may be obsolete or not in demand in the local economy.
- Financial crisis due to lack of income and substantial household financial obligations.

Like the other subgroups of this target population, these Hoosiers need comprehensive employment and training services to help them access upskilling/reskilling opportunities and any transitional social services. One service dislocated workers may need is crisis adjustment services or other types of mental health assistance to help them cope with being laid off. The challenge with dislocated workers is that these individuals may go from economic stability to insecurity quickly. We want to avoid dislocated worker status sliding into long-term unemployment or low-income. Indiana's WorkOne's have a strong track record with Rapid Response teams to help these workers. Building off of our current successes in this area, we intend deploying our Rapid Response resources to anticipated layoffs and offshoring, coupled with Trade Adjustment Assistance benefits, as an early intervention strategy. Through earlier intervention and resources, we can prevent dislocated Hoosiers from needing government benefits for a lengthy period of time.

The first unique challenge facing dislocated workers is learning about the layoffs and plant closings in their area. Although the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act (WARN) undoubtedly has greatly increased the knowledge of large-scale layoffs, this notice may not make all employees aware of large-scale layoffs in their community. Notification is the first step in assisting this target population. Once employees start to learn of potential dislocation, our

Rapid Response teams, funded through **WIOA Title I – Dislocated Worker (Core Program)**, quickly link dislocated workers to employment and training services. Dislocated workers need immediate assistance in coping with being laid off and developing reemployment plans so that they can make full use of their limited financial resources to support themselves during job search or retraining. Building off of our current Rapid Response success, we will connect dislocated workers to needed services before their layoff, in addition to our response efforts.

In coordination with WARN notices, we want to directly market upskilling and reskilling opportunities, such as **Workforce Ready Grants**, on-the-job trainings, and stackable credentials, to these employees. Using geolocation, we can promote both federal and state programs for training opportunities prior to the business shuttering its doors. Based upon skills assessment and prior experiences, Rapid Response and business services teams can connect individuals directly with local employers or occupations that align with an individual's strengths, allowing for a continuous level of employment. Additionally, more Rapid Response teams can start working with potential dislocated workers prior to the business closing, allowing individuals to access services while they are currently employed rather than waiting until they are unemployed.

These early intervention services should be provided before layoff or as soon as possible after layoff. One strategy is providing key information about the skills of the affected workers and the likely transferability of those skills to other industries or occupations. Comprehensive pre-layoff services should address the immediate crisis needs of the affected workers along with the development of individual reemployment plans. Reemployment plans can include assessments of dislocated workers' vocational aptitudes and interests, the transferability of their existing technical skills to other occupations, and potential barriers to reemployment. All employment and training services should be sensitive to the distinct needs of dislocated workers, particularly their work maturity and need for reemployment at relatively high wages.

Because of the tremendous diversity in dislocated workers' previous experience, a broad range of retraining options should be offered. Basic skills and occupational upskilling/reskilling can be offered pre-layoff to help create a more seamless transition for dislocated workers. These services can also include: education and training to assist workers with limited basic skills in conjunction with Adult Education, training in occupational skills for new careers that build on existing skills, and on-the-job training in positions that match dislocated workers' aptitudes and interests and that provide training in skills needed for stable employment at wages as high as possible.

As with our other Core and Partner Programs, Indiana needs closer coordination with student financial aid Offices. There are existing funding streams to help offset the cost of pursuing upskilling or reskilling trainings – such as the **Pell Grant**, **Next Level Jobs**, and the **Adult Student Grant**. Because our community colleges offer both non-credit and credit-bearing credentials that stack towards higher degrees, there are opportunities for dislocated workers to either earn shorter term certificates or pursue longer degrees. Indiana's community colleges do need to have more flexible financial support and scheduling to help support the needs of dislocated workers facing financial stress due to unemployment. To facilitate access to upskilling and reskilling opportunities, we will increase the co-location of WorkOnes and our community colleges. Through satellite offices, mobile locations, embedded or itinerant staff, or virtual office hours via a chatbox feature, we need to expand how our WorkOnes collaborate with our community colleges. Having a satellite WorkOne on campus or vice versa provides visibility for the offerings of the community college. Another way to increase access to

retraining opportunities is to include endorsed marketing from community colleges directly to dislocated workers through Rapid Response.

Additionally, community colleges can include **Adult Education** providers through contextual and bridge programs for those who need remediation. These programs coordinate academic and occupational instruction by providing basic educational remediation concurrently with, rather than as a prerequisite for, college-level courses. These "bridge" programs are often used in a number of community colleges and are typically one or two-semester interventions that aim to accelerate students' acquisition of basic academic skills in a supportive learning environment. As we expand more unconventional co-location partnerships, including Adult Education in an accredited community college's bridge program could allow federal financial aid and training support to supplement our WIOA Title II programs. This is also expedites retraining and reemployment efforts for Hoosiers. Dislocated Workers can use WIOA funds to help cover costs of prior learning assessments, which would allow them to place out of certain courses by showing mastery of content on an assessment. Our community college system could also examine ways to provide credit for work experiences or certifications to account for existing knowledge and skill mastery and to expedite the completion of an advanced degree.

THIS SECTION OF THE ORIGINAL STATE PLAN HAS BEEN DELETED AND UPDATED IN 2022 WITH THE TEXT BELOW.

The **Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) (Partner Program)** program is a critical partner for the WIOA Dislocated Worker program and funding to support trade-impacted workers. TAA provides training assistance, income support, job search allowances, relocations allowances, and wage subsidies for workers aged 50 and older. Effective July 1, 2021, the TAA Program as amended by the Trade Adjustment Assistance Reauthorization Act of 2015 (TAARA, 2015 Program, or 2015 Amendments) reverted to a previous version of the program, referred to as Reversion 2021. As of January 2022, the TAA program is up for reauthorization and a current proposed law is currently at Congress within the Build Back Better Act. Reversion 2021 will continue until the TAA program is reauthorized under a new law or until June 30, 2022 at which time the program will enter into Sunset provisions. Reversion 2021 does not impact any participant who was certified under a previous law benefit, regardless of certification date.

Under Reversion 2021, states will not receive FY22 allocations but will still operate with FY20 and FY21 funding allocations. Reversion 2021impacts overall TAA eligibility with limited group eligibility requirements. Petition investigation criteria apply to all TAA petitions that are filed on or after July 1, 2021, including, (1) workers whose impacted work is in the service sector will no longer be eligible; (2) Adversely Affected Incumbent Workers (AAIW) are not eligible for services; (3) reduced certification criteria for increased imports and direct shift in production; and (4) companies previously covered under an International Trade Commission (ITC) ruling are not automatically eligible for TAA.

Participant benefits of the TAA program are largely not impacted, however some have reduced eligibility including, (1) training benefits are not available to workers pre-separation; (2) Trade Readjustment Allowance (TRA) income support benefits require a more restrictive enrollment in training deadline; (3) Reemployment Trade Adjustment Assistance (RTAA) wage subsidy has revered to Alternative Trade Adjustment Assistance (ATAA) which still allows for the wage subsidy to workers aged 50 and over but includes a regulatory 26-week reemployment deadline.

Additionally, workers covered under a petition filed and certified on or after July 1, 2021 are not eligible for employment and case management services under Reversion 2021. The reduction

in employment and case management services to the workers covered under Reversion 2021 makes co-enrollment with partner programs essential to a well-rounded service delivery.

Co-enrollment of workers covered by TAA in partnership with the WIOA Dislocated Worker program allows for the timely provision of individualized career services and can improve the overall effectiveness of both programs. TAA can fund occupational training, provide income support to workers, and WIOA DW can assist with employment and case management services as well as post-employment follow-up services. Additionally, TAA participants can utilize WIOA Dislocated Worker services to provide supportive services relating to childcare, transportation, dependent care, and housing assistance.

TAA allows for various methods of training, including on-the-job training costs, with up to 50% covering the workers' wages while being trained. If a TAA participant is co-enrolled with WIOA, our local Workforce Development Boards can use WIOA dollars to reimburse an additional 25% of training costs, totaling 75% of wages. Co-enrollment will help maximize our investments and help transition our workers dislocated due to foreign trade. Through this braided approach, we can also take part of the financial burden off of the employer to help reskill our dislocated workers, thus providing greater incentive to engage with this target population.

TAA training funds cover 100% of the worker's training costs including tuition, books, fees and required supplies. TAA also supports work-based learning models such as apprenticeship and customized training by supporting the costs of any related instructional and on-the-job training. TAA eligible workers may receive Trade Readjustment Allowance (TRA) income support while a trade-impacted dislocated worker pursues education and training opportunities if a dislocated worker enrolls into a training program full-time. Income support may be available for up to 130 weeks in the form of weekly cash payments, if enrolled within the specified deadlines.

Because of the circumstances under which dislocated workers find themselves seeking government assistance, dedicated counseling regarding transferrable skills, potential occupations, and necessary retraining will support the re-employment efforts of these individuals. Through our community colleges, Indiana can focus our postsecondary **Carl D. Perkins** funding on structured career exploration experiences, interest assessments, and one-on-one career counseling sessions. A key component will be upfront, in-depth advising, which enables advisers and dislocated workers to work together to "troubleshoot" barriers early. Dislocated Workers can then continue to meet one-on-one with a career specialist. These career counseling sessions will help dislocated workers make appropriate choices, which in turn can help them get reemployed quicker.

Rapid Response teams must provide information regarding the assortment of workforce and social services available, how to contact the program, and how to enroll in the program. This can include credit counseling, community services, community college, employment services, and, specifically, **Unemployment Insurance (Partner Program)**. Through more coordinated efforts among UI, WIOA Dislocated Worker, and TAA, however, more Hoosiers can learn about potential employment and training services when they experience a layoff.

In light of the recent changes to the Wagner-Peyser regulations that permits states to have increased staffing flexibility, Indiana will evaluate potential changes to staffing models and the state merit requirement over the next fiscal year.

Per WIOA, a displaced homemaker is an individual who has been providing unpaid services to family members in the home. This person may have been depending on the income of another family member but is no longer supported by that income due to death, divorce, or separation. This term can also include a dependent spouse of a

member of the Armed Forces on active duty and whose family income is significantly reduced because of a deployment. For this target population, a displaced homemaker also experiences difficulty in obtaining or upgrading employment.

Displaced homemakers face similar challenges as the other subgroups of this section. These challenges may include single parenting on a reduced income, competing in a technologically advanced job market at an older age, and lack of experience. Those who also held part-time jobs may have fewer challenges with résumé gaps and workplace experiences. Displaced homemakers may have some work experience, as well as the tasks mastered in their at-home career, such as tracking schedules, budgeting, and childcare. Similar to our senior Hoosiers, we need to holistically evaluate the skills and experiences a displaced homemaker has. Our employment service teams can encourage these individuals to go into a career that relies on skills they learned as a family caregiver (childcare, elder care, organization, purchasing) or use the opportunity to go into a field for which they have interest.

Additional strategies WorkOnes and training providers can adopt to assist displaced homemakers include:

- Job counseling and employment assistance by professionals and peers who recently entered the job market after a number of years as a homemaker. This could also include informational interviews.
- Financial Management/Development through the provision of information and assistance with respect to financial matters including, but not limited to, life, health, home, and automobile insurance, taxes, estate and probate problems, mortgages, loans and other related financial matters.
- Educational services through **WIOA Title II**, including assistance earning a high school equivalency, technical training through Integrated Education and Training, literacy remediation, digital literacy instruction, English language acquisition activities, or other academic remediation.
- Outreach and Information Services with respect to federal and State government employment, education, health, and unemployment assistance programs that are determined to be of interest to and that benefit displaced homemakers.
- Crisis intervention and counseling services through **Medicaid**.
- Referral to community organizations to help with career exploration and informal training.

Displaced homemakers are also eligible to receive services under **WIOA Dislocated Worker**. Employment services can include basic, individual, and follow-up career services. Services for this subgroup can include occupational skills training, on-the-job training, entrepreneurial training, career advising, education planning, job readiness training, and customized training. Specific services displaced homemakers might require include:

- Computer literacy training,
- Financial management,
- Assistance in preparing resumes and cover letters,
- Referrals to community agencies,

- Interview coaching, and
- Possible assistance with day care during interviews or workshops, clothing, or transportation costs.

Similar to our other target populations, access to earn-and-learn and on-job-training opportunities are critical to upskilling this population. WIOA Dislocated Worker can help cover the cost of training, books, fees, and other educational expenses. Pre-apprenticeships and registered apprenticeships are good options to setting a displaced homemaker on a stable career pathway. As well, leveraging federal and state financial aid opportunities through the **FAFSA** could help offset the cost of training programs. The state **Adult Student Grant** and the federal **Pell Grant** could be two options for homemakers looking to upskill.

[1] Brookings Institution, January 2019. Automation and Artificial Intelligence: How Machines are Affecting People and Places.

[2] As defined in the Cambridge dictionary.

[3] 20 CFR § 684.130.

[4] Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, 2015. Good Jobs Are Back: College Graduates Are First in Line.

[5] Georgetown University defines middle-wage jobs as those that "pay $32,000 to $53,000 per year for a full-time, full-year worker" (Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, 2015).

[6] Ibid.

[7] Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, 2011. The College Payoff: Education, Occupations, Lifetime Earnings.

[8] Federal Reserve Bank of New York, 2019. Despite Rising Costs, College is Still a Good Investment.

[9] Indiana Commission for Higher Education, 2018. College Return on Investment Report 2018.

[10] Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, 2016. America's Divided Recovery: College Haves and Have-Nots.

[11] This is contingent upon the individual earning less than 200% of the federal poverty level to meet TANF Purpose #2: "End the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage."

[12] Posthuma and Companion, 2009. Age Stereotypes in the Workplace: Common Stereotypes, Moderators, and Future Research Directions.

[13] This is a practice adapted from the National Asian-Pacific Center on Aging (NAPCA) project, which works with host agencies to tailor on-the-job training for participants of different languages and cultures. *(Strategy 4.5)*

[14] U.S. Department of Labor, September 2012. Evaluation of the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP).

[13] Ibid.

[16] Economic Policy Institute. The Cost of Childcare in Indiana.

[17] Institute for Women's Policy Research, 2019. Women, Automation, and the Future of Work.

[18] Through our Combined Plan, we can align our programs of study under Perkins and our career pathways under WIOA. Connecting our career pathways with programs of study into one concept allows Indiana to serve both adults and high school students through coordinated, aligned, and structured pathways leading towards recognized postsecondary credentials.

[19] The National Center for Women's Equity in Apprenticeship and Employment at Chicago Women in Trades (CWIT) provides strategies and practical applications to increase the number of women entering and being retained in registered apprenticeship through our online resources, technical assistance, and training.

[20] INcontext, January-February 2019. Child care desserts.

[21] Early Learning Indiana, 2019. Deserts & Hubs: Child Care Access across Indiana – An ELI Story Map.

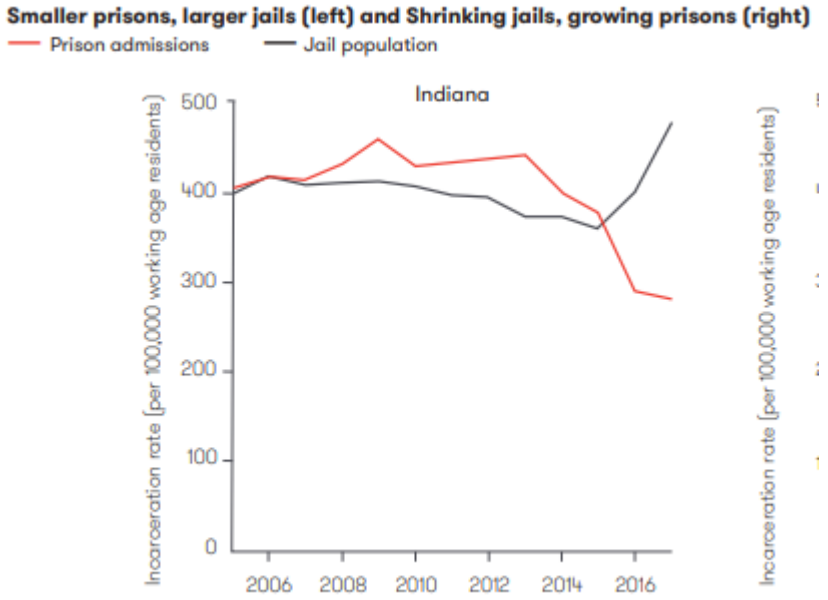
[22] Indiana University Public Policy Institute, 2018. Lost Opportunities: The Impact of Inadequate Child Care on Indiana's Workforce & Economy.

[23]2019 Indiana Head Start and Early Head Start Needs Assessment Report.

[24] Campbell et al., 2014. Early Childhood Investments Substantially Boost Adult Health.

[25] Brookings Institutions, 2012. Starting School at a Disadvantage: School Readiness of Poor Children.

The Indiana Department of Correction currently houses over 25,000 adults and 450 juveniles amongst state correctional facilities.[1] Since 2016, Indiana's jail population has increased by 32%.



[2]

In 2018, an estimated 16,000 Hoosiers were house in local jails, with another 107,000 on probation. The IDOC had 25,269 adult offenders dispersed among 18 facilities in 2018,

with an estimated additional 8,000 under parole supervision."[3]Of offenders released in 2015, 33.78% were recommitted to the IDOC within three years of their release date, for either a new conviction or a violation of post-release supervision. Though this is a lower recidivism rate than that of the past, it still poses a great strain on the criminal justice system and Indiana's economy. The social effects of recidivism can perpetuate the cycle of intergenerational poverty by fragmenting neighborhoods and fracturing families. The cost per offender per day was $54.28, totaling $1,371,601.32 per day to house the IDOC population.[4] Due to legislative changes in 2015 to the criminal code, more offenders are being housed in communities at local jails.

Hoosier offenders who participated in a work release program were 34.9% less likely to return to prison when compared to offenders who did not partake in a work release program.[5] IDOC data show that as an offender's level of education increases, so does the likelihood of employment. With this increase in employment, the likelihood of recidivating decreases. The goal is to help this population of Hoosiers avoid recidivism by providing them with skills and opportunities that will allow them to engage with the workforce and create a sustainable lifestyle for theirs and their families' future. Improving the livelihood of this population benefits our workforce by adding to our human capital and create more efficiencies in our workforce and social services system to maximize our investments in these state and federal programs.

One vital key to successful re-entry for many Hoosiers being released from the correctional system is employment. In order for ex-offenders to become rehabilitated and integrated into society, they require a stable, legal means to provide for themselves and their families. Failure to find this at a rapid pace can often cause people to turn to inappropriate means of financial sustainability, which often leads to returning to into the criminal justice system.

Co-Enrolled Programs: Hoosiers who are current or ex-offenders will be co-enrolled into the following primary programs and services of benefit to this target population. An individual's unique circumstances or preference may not necessitate co-enrollment in each program. This section includes ***Core and Partner Program Activities***, ***Activities outside of the Plan***, and***Individual Services***for this target population.

Hoosier Initiative for Re-Entry (State Program): The Hoosier Initiative for Re-Entry (HIRE) program was created in 2012 under the umbrella of the Indiana Department of Workforce Development to help people with past involvement with the legal system reintegrate into society and to create career paths to give them the opportunities to improve their lives in a sustainable way through work. In 2018, the recommendation was made to realign the HIRE program under the Indiana Department of Correction to better serve Indiana's incarcerated Hoosiers. Since the transition to IDOC in early 2019, HIRE staff have begun working to secure pre-release employment for clients, rather than waiting until an offender's release. HIRE has also introduced the opportunity to connect employers with potential candidates through successful virtual job fairs, as well as hosted Employer Days, where businesses can tour Indiana Correctional Industries (ICIs) shops (pallet shops, commissary shops, etc.).

HIRE works with clients both pre/post release to secure employment. Offenders who display a positive track record during their incarceration, participated in programming opportunities during incarceration, and show drive and determination may qualify for the HIRE program. The HIRE program also established a presence in IDOC juvenile facilities to help reduce juvenile recidivism. HIRE Coordinators deliver all or applicable portions of the HIRE Academy for participants that targets soft skills, workplace aptitude, and motivation. The HIRE Academy is required for all adult offenders who enroll in a vocational training programs within IDOC. If a HIRE client is not placed pre-release, the HIRE Coordinator will follow them through the parole

process to make sure every employment opportunity is given to each candidate that is willing to put forth the effort and has the skills that matches each employer's needs.

HIRE focuses on connecting released or soon-to-be released Hoosiers with full time, benefitted positions, earning livable wages. In addition, HIRE creates a pipeline of skilled workers to help Indiana businesses fill their employment needs. The HIRE program works with employers to understand their business needs and to determine the knowledge, skills, abilities, and aptitude that will make an employee successful in their organization. HIRE participants are placed in several different types of industries based on their skills and interests. The top industries for placement are production, manufacturing, restaurant, warehouse and construction. Employers that participate in the HIRE program may be eligible for Federal Bonding, which is a theft insurance program, and the **Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC)** of up to $9,600 per eligible employee. If needed, the HIRE Coordinator can help walk employers through the paperwork process.

Indiana hopes to increase the reach of this program both pre-release and through parole in order to provide more Hoosiers with pathways to employment. We can utilize Wagner-Peyser (or SNAP E&T for SNAP recipients) to supplement and expand HIRE's programming with additional career coaching, labor market research, and aide in the job search both in and out of facilities, for both incarcerated individuals and ex-offenders. Whether Wagner-Peyser is supporting HIRE through staffing or funding will depend on regional needs and plans. Additionally, WorkOnes can partner with local jails, probation and parole officers, drug courts, or non-IDOC criminal justice referral sources to recruit ex-offenders into programs, such as WIOA Adult and Adult Education. Through local plans, Workforce Development Boards can intentionally strategize how to connect resources and services for ex-offenders with local sheriffs and county jails to expand their reach beyond IDOC. Ex-offenders may intersect with other target populations, especially the more time lapses from their release. As has been emphasized in other sections of the Plan, case managers must understand a Hoosier's needs holistically in order to present the best package of services.

Carl D. Perkins (Partner Program): Currently, Indiana grants $150,000 of Perkins funding to the IDOC to utilize for equipment and machinery for Career-Technical Education programs. This funding specifically supports training and upskilling offenders while they are incarcerated. Continuing to dedicate Perkins funds to providing quality environments for CTE operations while offenders are incarcerated will allow us to maximize other funding streams for those offenders to focus more on wraparound supports and job placement during their re-entry. Through an Integrated Education and Training model, which can be partially funded through WIOA Adult Education, we can help meet the academic and technical needs of this target population. The IDOC specifically focuses Perkins towards specific occupations that are most attainable for ex-offenders, coordinated with Indiana's Promoted Certifications list:

- Culinary Arts Food Service Management Occupations: The promoted certifications for hospitality and culinary arts are the American Hotel and Lodging Educational Institute (AHLEI) industry certification and the National Restaurant Association's ServSafe Food Manager. The IDOC and its primary education services provider Oakland City University have a long history with AHLEI in providing S.T.A.R.T. certifications and NRA ServSafe Food Manager certifications.

- Building Trades Technology: During the past two years, Perkins funding has supported IDOC in providing the National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER) certification status for seven adult sites. The Promoted Certifications include NCCER Carpentry Level 1.

- Welding Technology with AWS Certification Added: Perkins funds have helped establish two NCCER certified welding programs during the last two plan years. IDOC offers American Welding Society (AWS) final performance assessments for NCCER sponsored students. IDOC students also take the NCCER CORE, NCCER: Construction Site Safety, and OSHA 10 Certifications.
- Certified Logistics Associate (CLA) and Certified Logistics Technician (CLT): IDOC with prior support through Perkins has established four operational CLA/CLT programs. The Promoted Certifications inmates can earn is the Manufacturing Skill Standards Council (MSSC) CLT with the passing of two final assessments, CLA and CLT.
- Indiana Accredited Horticulturist Certification (INLA): Perkins helps support thirty individual students receive the INLA certification per year.
- Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS): Currently, IDOC offers MOS textbooks and practice exams at ten sites.
- Master Student to Master Employee – National Career Readiness Certification (NCRC): Though the NCRC is not on Indiana's Promoted Certifications list, the NCRC does meet Indiana Code for mandatory skill sets required prior to release from IDOC custody. IDOC will continue the program at ten facilities with Perkins funding. The NCRC is a portable credential that demonstrate an ex-offender's workplace employability skills in Applied Math, Locating Information, and Reading for Information.

IDOC prioritizes education and often pairs vocational training for certifications with Indiana's High School Equivalency to provide offenders with a nationally-certified CTE certification and a comprehensive portfolio to help them secure jobs at sustainable wages once they leave the facility.

Title II – Adult Education (Core Program): Many inmates enter correctional facilities with limited reading and numeracy skills and academic deficiencies. The time and place to complete the HSE is during a current incarceration period. Almost 6,500 of the incarcerated adult population does not have a high school diploma or a high school equivalency diploma. Of the 6,500 non-diploma holders, 46% have academic functioning levels below the sixth-grade with the majority of the group having significant academic deficits in at least one skill. The IDOC shifted several academic instructors to Career Technical programs during 2018 leaving 42 academic instructors in fifteen facilities to meet the literacy/HSE needs of the target population.

When individuals are admitted into an IDOC facility, they are given opportunities to attain their high School Equivalency (HSE), as well as other educational opportunities. As well, every local adult education provider has funding set aside for services in county jails. Because of the need for academic and remedial support, it is increasingly necessary to offer Adult Education within our incarceration facilities, as well as co-enroll ex-offenders into Adult Education upon release. Increasing the amount of HSEs received while in correction facilities will allow ex-offenders to leave this system better equipped to display their skills and abilities. Earned the HSE illustrates that that individual can is prepared to enter the workforce and obtain postsecondary credentials. Currently, we spend about $1 million from WIOA Title II each year to serve 4,000 incarcerated individuals, located in both IDOC and local jail programming. The IDOC produces 19% of the State's HSE completers with a pass-rate of 83%.

As Adult Education focuses on the academic needs both incarcerated individuals and ex-offenders, Perkins funding can supplement Integrated Education and Training (IET) programs to provide them with technical skills. Program reviews reveal that Indiana has maximized the

capacity of current instructors and potential measurable skill gains for students. To increase access to and successful completion of Indiana's HSE will require more trained staff. Braiding WIOA Title II and Perkins funds would allow for CTE instructors to receive professional development for academic integration, increasing the capacity of current programs and potentially growing more IET opportunities.

One example of this type of blended programming is in Region 9. The Adult Education provider, River Valley Resources (RVR), has partnered with the IDOC and Ivy Tech to offer MSSC-CPT certification as an IET program at the Madison Women's Corrections Facility. This class is co-taught between Ivy Tech and RVR teachers. These classes use braided funding of Adult Education IET dollars and non-credit bearing Workforce Ready Grant dollars, depending on the program year and student eligibility. Additionally, RVR enrolls and funds Madison Correctional Facility students in traditional AE programming at the prison to remediate basic skills and teach workforce readiness and employability to women for AWS Welding and NIMS CNC training at Ivy Tech. While IDOC funds the training portion of these programs, we hope to expand our use of **Second Chance Pell Grants** to increase training opportunities for current and former offenders. Several Indiana institutions for higher education are in the process of leveraging the flexibility to use Second Chance Pell to fund both technical training certifications and two and four-year degree programs through the US Department of Education. Perkins could be used to help fill in funding gaps for technical training or equipment. This maximizes the time Hoosiers have during their sentences to focus on rehabilitation and upskilling, thus allowing them to have a smoother re-entry into the workforce.

Title I – Adults (Core Program): Probation and parole officers can provide referrals for former inmates upon release so that they can immediately receive access to WorkOne services. IDOC can have soon-to-be-released offenders begin to engage with WorkOnes virtually regarding re-entry requirements and resources during their final weeks in prison. WIOA Adult funds and resources can assist ex-offenders with education, employment, and training post-release. Once an individual becomes an ex-offender, services through a WorkOne can include individualized assessments to determine eligibility for career interests, skill levels (including literacy, numeracy, and English language proficiency), aptitudes, and abilities (including skill gaps). Through increased co-locating, cross-training, and embedding staff from both workforce development and social services, the WorkOnes can help with identifying social supports (e.g., housing and transportation) an individual may need when they re-enter.

For those ex-offenders needing employment and training services, the WorkOnes can prioritize the following needs:

- Career and training services aligned to a designated career pathway, provided concurrently or in any combination, that can include:
    - Comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skill levels, including diagnostic testing, in-depth interviewing, and evaluation to identify employment barriers and employment goals;
    - Employability skills development (learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, professional conduct) to prepare for employment or training;
    - Education and/or training services;
    - Financial literacy services;

    - English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs (if the individual is not eligible for Adult Basic Education under Title II); and
    - Work-based learning.
- WIOA Adult can fund any follow-up services, such as individualized counseling regarding the work place, how to successfully navigate the new environment, or any other additional services customized for the constituent. WorkOnes can also connect ex-offenders with local non-profits that provide comprehensive supportive services. One local example is **CareSource**, which assists ex-offenders navigate the release process and find customized resource options CareSource comes into the facilities to present during Pre-Release. Prior to release, offenders are assigned a Life Coach to assist with a multitude of resources during their reentry process. **PACE** in Marion County partners with the Workforce Development Boards in the Central Indiana region to provide ex-offenders with financial, employment, and mental health coaching, as well as other forms of wraparound supports and resources. Through local plans, our Workforce Development Boards can identify and leverage these types of philanthropic partnerships that can help Hoosier ex-offenders find economic stability after release to reduce their chances for recidivism. This will be increasing important for this population due to the drastic shift from correction institutions to the freedom and structure of the outside world and the workplace.

Title III – Wagner-Peyser (Core Program): For ex-offenders, this program can help fund career counseling (either in person or virtually), labor exchange services, and assistance for job searches and placement. Local Boards could partner with the Department of Corrections to allow incarcerated individuals to virtually through a chatbox feature with a career coach as a way to increase accessibility to WorkOnes prior to release. Because the prior convictions of ex-offenders can often be a significant barrier to obtaining quality employment, these funds should focus on career counseling and connections to specific employers or sectors that are welcoming towards ex-offenders. Those activities can focus specifically on:

- Career counseling and development of individual employment plans;
- Customized workforce and labor market information;
- Business services to employers, employer associations, or other such organizations on employment-related attraction and retention, specifically helping to explain the barriers and unique circumstances of the formerly justice involved; and
- Recognition and promotion of businesses that do hire and retain ex-offenders.
    - To help more businesses begin to hire and retain this target population, our business services team can help increase Hoosier employers using the **WOTC**. The WOTC reduces employer cost by providing federal tax credit for private, for-profit employers to encourage hiring of individuals from our target populations. The credit is 25% of qualified first year wages for those employed at least 120 hours and 40% for those employed 400 hours or more. Employers maintain all hiring decisions and there is no limit to the number of new hires who can qualify for the tax savings.
    - **Federal Bonding Program** coverage is also available for individuals based on their history to assist in easing the concern of an employer by covering the potential or estimated risk to the employer for financial loss.

As a strategy to promote more non-traditional hiring practices, we will recognize Hoosier businesses that actively recruit, hire, and retain those in our target populations at both the state and local levels. Hiring this particular target population is often stigmatized and done quietly. Because Indiana has strong re-entry programs aimed at getting ex-offenders stable, quality work, we want those businesses that hire these Hoosiers to feel recognized and proud. Recently, a business represented on the Governor's Workforce Cabinet, Custom Concrete, promoted hiring of an ex-offender. Similarly, those businesses partnering with The Last Mile celebrate hiring Hoosiers in this target population. Because this is often an overlooked or unseen talent pipeline that can help boost our economy, both the state and locals must make or concerted effort featuring opportunities to engage with these Hoosiers and commending those employers that take advantage of this untapped talent pool.

Postsecondary Financial Aid (Federal and State Programs): The Second Chance Pell Program allows for ex-offenders to access federal grant money for postsecondary education. Institutions provide Pell Grants to qualified students who are incarcerated and likely to be released within five years of enrolling in coursework. Currently, Indiana has one institution that was selected as a **Second Chance Pell Pilot Program**, the Westville Educational Initiative (WEI). This is a partnership between IDOC's Westville Correctional Facility and Holy Cross College, sponsored by Holy Cross. Classes are taught by Holy Cross faculty and carry Holy Cross college credit. In the summer of 2019, program recruitment occurred at four correctional facilities, and Holy Cross hopes to enroll almost 70 students at Westville by 2020.[6] With the flexibility to use Pell for vocational formats in addition to associate's and bachelor's degree programs, Indiana hopes to expand the use of Second Chance Pell to offer more options of postsecondary education in its state facilities.

Because Indiana hopes to expand the Second Chance Pell program to other postsecondary institutions throughout the state, we also are closely monitoring the pending reauthorization of the federal Higher Education Act that will allow for additional flexibility around Second Change Pell. This will drastically increase the amount of participants who will have access to postsecondary education while incarcerated. Additionally, we want to pair Second Chance Pell with the **Ability to Benefit** flexibility, potentially addressing two barriers ex-offenders face preventing educational attainment. AtB allows students who are concurrently enrolled in connected AE and eligible postsecondary programs, but do not have a high school diploma or equivalent, could be Pell eligible. WIOA Title II can fund academic remediation towards a high school equivalency for ex-offenders concurrently with enrollment in postsecondary courses with Pell Grants allowed through both federal flexibility offerings.

Though offenders are currently not eligible for our state financial aid for credit-bearing programs, they can access **Workforce Ready Grants** under Indiana's Next Level Jobs programs for a non-credit bearing certificate. The IDOC and WorkOnes can promote non-credit bearing certifications to provide technical training to both offenders and ex-offenders. For those currently incarcerated, this state funding could complement the training through Perkins or Adult Education funding. As some inmates already having certifications and licenses, this program can offer the next step in a career path and a focused goal to discuss with a career counselor. For ex-offenders, pairing the Workforce Ready Grant non-credit bearing tuition funding with WIOA Adult could allow that individual an opportunity to access the training and supportive services necessary for a second chance upon release.

Another option for postsecondary education that can help offenders develop skills that will lead to employment is a **registered apprenticeship**. The occupations currently offered within the IDOC's Apprenticeship programs tend to be in industries where second chance employment is

supported. Through both HIRE and WorkOnes, ex-offenders can be actively connected to these opportunities, if they align with their interests. Because they combine on-the-job training with classroom instruction, an ex-offender could learn academic and technical skills and earn a stable wage, with the option for regular pay increases during and after the program.

Medicaid (Federal Program): When an offender has active coverage and enters an IDOC facility, IDOC sends a request to have his/her Medicaid coverage suspended. At 45 days or less from release, if the offender does not have active health coverage, an application is completed on his/her behalf by the Medicaid Processing Unit. IDOC requests activation the day of offender's release. This helps provides a supportive service to the ex-offender immediately, reducing any lags or gaps in healthcare coverage.

Potential Enrollment: Additional services or co-enrollment a low-income Hoosier may receive depending on individual circumstances. This section includes ***Core and Partner Program Activities***,***Activities outside the Plan***, and***Individual Services***for this target population.

Title IV – Vocational Rehabilitation (Core Program): If an ex-offender has a physical or mental disability that constitutes or results in a substantial barrier to employment, s/he may qualify for Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services. Through a common intake process, the state will understand the multifaceted needs of an individual and where various programs can serve as scaffolding to our Employment and Training services through WIOA Adult and state programs, like Next Level Jobs. Based on the employment services need, low-income individuals with a disability and seeking employment should be enrolled into an education or training program via the WorkOne. For many low-income individuals with disabilities, the type of employment service and assistance may be best served by our WorkOne system because their barriers may not be disability specialized or focused in their nature. Contingent upon the individual's needs and barriers, the WorkOne can offer the programming and funding for that person's employment service, with VR serving as an supplementary support. Co-enrollment into VR could provide the individual with any accommodations or auxiliary supports needed for training, rather than relying on VR to be the sole source of support and funding. These supports can include:

- Personal and vocational adjustment services,
- Assistive technologies,
- Rehabilitation technology,
- Adaptive aids and devices and any associated training, and
- Interpreter or reader services.

As Indiana seeks to improve the integration of programs, we will explore potential strategies to embed VR services into facilities, either through Perkins or Adult Education programs, to help support offenders. As unaccommodated disabilities can perpetuate learning and skills gaps, examining ways to potentially incorporate assistive or rehabilitation technologies into facilities to support learning may help expedite the attainment of offenders during their incarceration.

TANF (Partner Program): More than 70% of released offenders are parents, increasing the odds that some may be eligible for TANF support. TANF E&T can assist with funding employment and training services in conjunction with the WorkOne. This funding source can also serve as a gap filler for wraparound or transitional supports. Many TANF recipients are

deemed mandatory for IMPACT (Indiana's employment and training program). Those mandated to participate in IMPACT are required to attend an Applicant Job Search Orientation and complete 20 days of Applicant Job search activities. IDOC and parole officers can inform IMPACT case managers and WorkOne staff of the eligibility of soon-to-be-released inmates, so that those potential courses mandated by the conditions of parole, job search at a WorkOne, or a transitional work program to count as time spent to meet the 20 days of Applicant Job search requirements. TANF E&T programs will coordinate with other Core Programs and administrative agencies to provide wraparound support services to assist participants. This could include transportation, childcare, equipment and supplies, and other supports an individual needs in order to access the labor market. The WorkOne, however, can provide the career services and job training for an ex-offender receiving TANF.[7]

SNAP (Partner Program): Social services play a key role in supporting an ex-offender's successful transition. These supports can help individuals while they work to attain self-sufficiency and avoid re-arrest and re-incarceration. SNAP can be a critical part of the re-entry support infrastructure through food assistance, but it can also serve as a resource for robust and targeted workforce development through SNAP E&T.[8] Ex-offenders are particularly vulnerable for recidivism right after release. Streamlining of access to social services for those leaving incarceration through IDOC can help them be better prepared for life outside of bars. Federal SNAP rules require that applications be processed within 30 days of filing. Similar to the Medicaid process, we can help expedite this process for ex-offenders by allowing them to apply for SNAP prior to release so that they can have access to benefits immediately after release. This can help alleviate some fear and allow ex-offenders to put all effort towards finding employment and meeting parole requirements. Executing this strategy may require a formal partnership via a Memorandum of Understanding between the IDOC and the Family and Social Services Agency.

We can also utilize SNAP E&T to help provide training programs for ex-offenders, as well as allow for some of the mandated parole activities (e.g., required classes) to qualify as E&T activities that contribute to job readiness. Career pathways for ex-offenders must include short-term credentials of value that will stack towards a career trajectory, options for on-the-job training, and flexible participation options (part-time, extended hours, and online modules). WIOA funds can fund a variety of work-based learning experiences with SNAP E&T filling any subsidy gaps.

The Last Mile (Philanthropic Program): The Last Mile (TLM) was created in California in 2014 to equip offenders with relevant job skills to propel them into tech careers when they are released. Indiana was the first state outside of California to adopt this successful coding program. The core curriculum includes HTML/CSS and JavaScript, WordPress, Node, AngularJS, React, and D3.js. Beyond these technical coding skills, they are also learn about how businesses function, working as a team, giving and accepting constructive criticism, building confidence, and how to pivot when they are heading in the wrong direction. Participants can also work on client-funded projects including website development and application, giving participants a chance to demonstrate the skills they've learned and create a referenceable portfolio of work. It develops highly marketable personal and professional skills that are relevant and competitive. TLM currently operates in 5 facilities in Indiana (2 adult female, 2 adult male, and 1 juvenile male).

This re-entry program accelerates opportunities for the formerly incarcerated by embedding training into the prison time. It also eases the transition by having established partnerships with businesses for job placement. The Last Mile presents a model for Indiana to mimic in its other training programs – focusing the training and education programs while the individual is

incarcerated and orienting post-release services towards transitional help. Driving more Perkins funding towards IDOC can help create similar programs to Last Mile in different sectors that offer high-wage, high-demand opportunities upon release.

The Last Mile is recognized nationally and was a central focus of the American Workforce Policy Advisory Board Meeting held at the Women's Prison in December 2019. It sets the model that that re-entry transitioning must begin during incarceration and continue post-release with the end result of gainful employment.

Scaling Promising Practices: Below we highlight promising practices that we hope to see scaled and replicated to address the unique barriers and challenges of this target population. Our local regions can implement these practices through strategic use of WIOA funds, philanthropic or community foundation dollars, or social impact bonds. Where applicable, local Boards or community organizations can coordinate with state agencies to apply for SNAP 50/50 FNS, which will serve as a 50% federal match for any state or philanthropic funding dedicated to SNAP recipients receiving Employment and Training services. These practices are ***Activities outside the Plan***. While not a comprehensive list, the practices showcase innovative approaches to assisting our Ex-Offenders in surmounting their unique circumstances.

Goodwill Industries: New Beginnings (Philanthropic Program): Goodwill's New Beginnings program has two locations currently, in Indianapolis and Bloomington. It has seen success with this program due to strong employer partners in the regions. The New Beginnings program a 6 months in lengths focusing on the development of soft and technical skills through a paid internship at the Goodwill Commercial Services warehouse and production facility with a coach to assist in transition elements for the employees. When a participant has built the skills necessary for steady employment, they are hired full-time at Goodwill or are referred to community-based employment services. Participants work a total of 40 hours a week on a varied schedule between 7am and 6pm. They also attend Career Days one day a week (Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday) to assist with the search of permanent employment.

They are provided with case management services throughout the duration of the program and are also assigned an Employee Resource and Development Specialist (ERDS) who provides support and assists with both vocational and wraparound needs. ERDS are responsible for ensuring that each participant completes goals in four of the following areas of importance:

- Housing
- Medical/Dental Care
- Financial Skills
- Support System
- Professional/Life Skills
- Full-Time Employment

We want to further the reach of this program and other communities specifically through **SNAP 50/50**. For those individuals who are on SNAP and in this type of employment and training program, we seek to use SNAP 50/50 to match the philanthropic funding going towards developing this individual. Similar to how we intend to use SNAP 50/50 for Employer Training Grants, this funding can assist with supportive services to ensure these Hoosiers have the wraparound supports needed to successfully complete this program. As our local Workforce

Development Boards create their plans, they can identify similar programs that may be augmented through reverse referrals and obtaining a SNAP 50/50 match.

For this type of model to be successfully scaled, though, we need to foster strong employer partnerships. Because work is a key component of this model, employer partners are a critical asset for ensuring program participants' success. While we have some businesses willing to partner with Goodwill and similar philanthropies to tap into this potential talent pipeline, we need to help more of our employers understand the financial and social benefits of including more non-traditional hiring practices. This is not merely a way for businesses to be civically engaged in communities, but it is also a way to shape and develop sustainable talent pipelines.

Similar to The Last Mile, this program can serve as a model for other training programs geared toward the individuals in this target population. As we look to scale best practices, our WorkOnes can partner with similar organizations to which they can refer ex-offenders. Additionally, IDOC staff can refer offenders to Goodwill either prior or immediately upon release. Connecting ex-offenders immediately with this and similar philanthropic programs will allow for a speedy re-entry into the workforce that will help prevent recidivism for those dedicated to the programs' completion.

[1]Department of Corrections for the State of Indiana.

[2] Vera Institute of Justice, 2018. The New Dynamics of Mass Incarceration.

[3] Prison Policy Initiative, 2018. Indiana profile.

[4] Nally et al. The Impact of Education and Employment on Recidivism.

[5] Indiana Department of Correction, 2018. 2018 Adult Recidivism Rates.

[6] Holy Cross Selected by Second Chance Pell Grant Program.

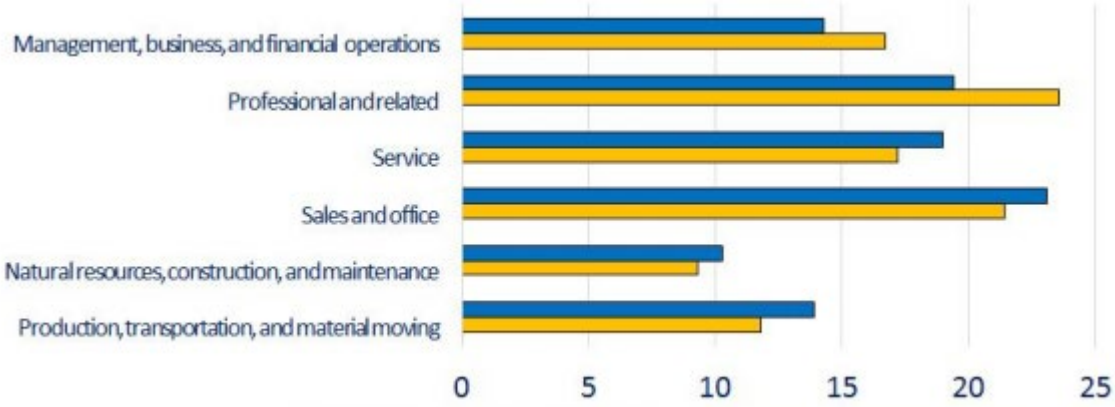
[7] Individuals who have been convicted for a felony are ineligible for receiving TANF.

[8]Section 4008 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (2014 Farm Bill) prohibits anyone convicted of federal aggravated sexual abuse, murder, sexual exploitation and abuse of children, sexual assault, or similar state laws, and who are also not in compliance with the terms of their sentence or parole, or are a fleeing felon, from receiving SNAP benefits. In HEA 1317-2018, Indiana lifted the ban on those with felony drug convictions from receiving SNAP benefits beginning in 2020.

Of the more than 20 million working age (18-64) people with disabilities, only 7.6 million have jobs. In 2018, 37.6% of U.S. civilians with disabilities ages 18-64 had a job, compared to 77.2% for people without disabilities, creating a 40-point gap in employment outcomes between people with and without disabilities. Though this is partly a reflection that older individuals comprised a large portion of the disability population, across all age groups, however, individuals with a disability were more likely to be out of the labor force than those with no disability. US Bureau of Labor Statistics data indicate that, as of December 2019, 20.5% of people with disabilities participated in the labor force nationally, compared to a labor force participation rate of 68.7% of those without disabilities. The unemployment rate of individuals with disabilities i-s 7.0% nationally, compared to 3.2% unemployment rate of those without a disability. The Bureau of Labor Statistics considers unemployed individuals are those who did not have a job, were available for work, and were actively looking for a job in the 4 weeks

preceding the survey, as compared to those who are simply not interested in employment.[1] State data show that in Indiana, of our approximately 3.1 million labor force participants, 178,000 individuals with disabilities are employed, which makes up about 5% of the workforce. Indiana's unemployment rate for individuals with a disability is about 10.0%, a difference of over six percentage points with the general population. Individuals with disabilities have one of the lowest labor participation rates and, conversely, one of the highest unemployment rates amongst our target populations.

Individuals with disabilities are underrepresented in the nation's fastest-growing fields, though are overrepresented in those that are declining. Occupations with the greatest amount of job growth for people with disabilities tend to have low-wages.[2] In 2018, nationally, individuals with a disability were more concentrated in service occupations (19%) than those with no disability (17.2%). Workers with a disability were also more likely than those with no disability to work in production and transportation-related occupations (13.9% compared with 11.8%, respectively). Persons with a disability were less likely to work in management, professional, and related occupations (33.7%) than those without a disability (40.3%). Data further indicate that 31% of individuals who are employed are only employed part-time.[3]

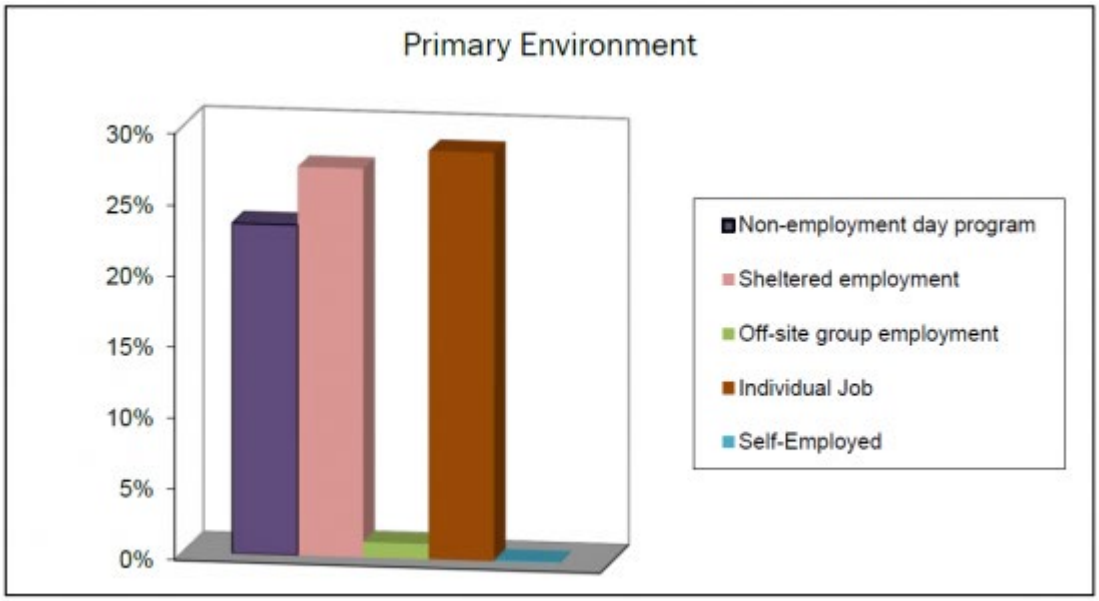


	Production, transportation, and material moving	Natural resources, construction, and maintenance	Sales and office	Service	Professional and related	Management, business, and financial operations
With a disability	13.9	10.3	23.1	19.0	19.4	14.3
With no disability	11.8	9.3	21.4	17.2	23.6	16.7

[4]

The Indiana Day and Employment Services Report provides some additional information as to where Hoosiers with disabilities are employed.[5] This report is a snapshot in time to illuminate where Hoosiers with disabilities spend the majority of their day and to assess any progress made for Hoosiers with disabilities toward competitive, integrated employment. The report

indicates that for the individuals represented, employment status, the hours of weekly pay, and hours worked stagnated between 2013 and 2017. 2017 data of 13,317 Hoosiers finds that 29% are in individually competitive jobs, 27% are served through a sheltered facility work, 23% in non-employment day programming, and 19% are in alternatives to employment.



[6]

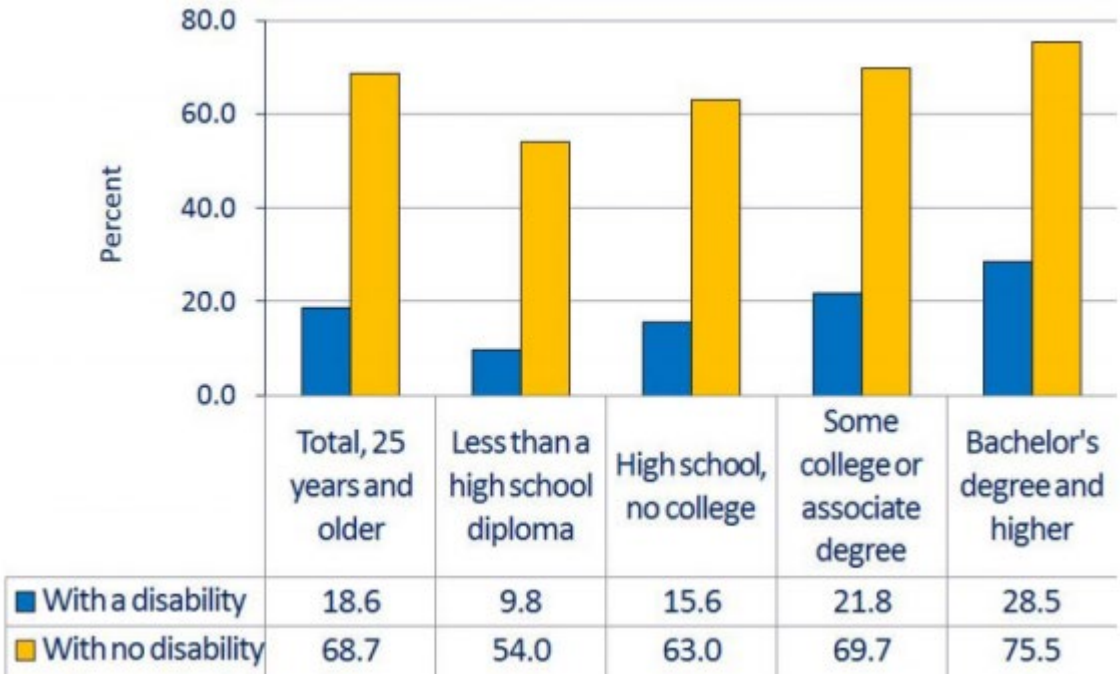
Wages for this population are particularly low, with individuals in sheltered facility work only making on average $2.85 per hour and individuals in competitive employment $7.96 per hour. The table below shows the type of work and the primary employment environment among 6,940 individuals in the Employment Report. Food service, grocery/retail, and custodial and housekeeping/laundry were the positions that most individuals in competitive jobs obtained, while assembly/manufacturing were the highest job categories for individuals in off-site group and sheltered facility work.

Table 4. Type of Work and the Primary Employment Environment

Type of Work	Individual Job	Off-site Group Employment	Sheltered Employment
Agriculture	0.2%	0	0
Assembly/Manufacturing	6%	41%	80%
Clerical/Office	4%	2%	0.2%
Custodian/Housekeeping/Laundry	13%	17%	2%
Food Service	27%	11%	0.7%
Grocery/Retail	24%	5%	0.3%
Groundskeeping	0.8%	2%	0.06%
Health/Human Service	3%	0.8%	0
Sorting/Recycling	0.8%	0	3%
Stocking/Warehouse	5%	8%	0.3%
Other	8%	4%	6%
NA	8%	9%	7%

[7]

Individuals with a disability are less likely to have completed any form of higher education than those with no disability. Overall, this target population's educational attainment rate falls far below their peers without a disability.



[8]

Among both those with and without a disability, individuals who had attained higher levels of education were more likely to be employed than those who had attained less education. Across all levels of education in 2018, however, individuals with a disability were much less likely to be employed than were their counterparts with no disability.[9]

Co-Enrolled Programs: Hoosiers with disabilities will be co-enrolled into the following primary programs and services of benefit to this target population. An individual's unique circumstances or preference may not necessitate co-enrollment in each program. This section includes ***Core and Partner Program Activities***, ***Activities outside of the Plan***, and***Individual Services***for adults with disabilities.

Title IV – Vocational Rehabilitation (Core Program): An individual with a physical or mental disability that constitutes or results in a substantial barrier to employment may qualify for Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services. When a counselor has determined an individual eligible for VR, the individual receives services and supports, which may include postsecondary training, to achieve his/her individual employment goals. For this target population, in particular, it is important that we acknowledge the unique circumstances of each individual without letting that person's disability become a pretext for community disengagement or limited expectations. Vocational goals should be dictated by someone's strengths, skills, and potential and not his/her disability and perceived barriers. For some, independent living and part-time work could be the ultimate goals; and for others it could be postsecondary education and middle- to high-wage careers. Though individualized vocational goals will differ for eligible individuals, every individual should be supported to reach his or her fullest potential.

Occasionally, when a Hoosier comes into a WorkOne and states that s/he has a disability, that person is automatically referred to the VR office, even if s/he is not eligible for services. VR services may not be the best fit for that individual either. The presence of a disability cannot be the sole determinant for workforce programming. Though this is one characteristic of this individual and it may contribute to employment related barriers, the fact that this person is seeking employment assistance is the most important factor at hand. Indiana needs to reorient our intake process to refocus on the employment needs of the individual, rather than his or her identifiers. Co-enrollment into VR could provide the individual with any accommodations or auxiliary supports needed for training, rather than relying on VR to be the sole source of support and funding. These supports can include:

- Personal and vocational adjustment services,
- Assistive technologies,
- Rehabilitation technology,
- Adaptive aids and devices and any associated training, and
- Interpreter or reader services.

VR should be a resource for assistance and accommodations or a funding gap filler for wraparound supports for most Hoosiers with disabilities, rather than the default for each individual with a disability. VR can provide more intensive, specialized, or unique assistance for those requiring this program, e.g., supported employment or ongoing, on-site career coaching. For these individuals requiring more intensive disability and employment services, VR should be the primary point of contact and service delivery. For those individuals who are seeking employment services irrespective of their disability should be supported predominantly by the

WorkOne or co-enrollment into multiple programs. By allowing VR employment services to provide the intensive and specialize employment and disability services aligned to an individual's needs, the WorkOne becomes more accessible for more Hoosiers. We are shifting the system to serve more individuals based on their needs and barriers, rather than a singular characteristic. This long-term systemic shift will allow us to stretch our dollars further and serve more Hoosiers. Focus on the intensity of the need and barriers will increase Hoosiers' access to a wider array of employment services to attain career sustainability and longevity. To maximize these dollars, we need to integrate this program as one workforce system resource for our individuals with disabilities and not the only resource.

Similar to how we intend to maximize our other WIOA dollars, Indiana seeks greater integration of federal and state financial aid into VR over the next two years. Through cross-training, VR staff will learn about the benefits of postsecondary education for all Hoosiers, as well as the variety of options and funding sources that individuals can pursue. Utilizing financial aid for interested VR participants meets two goals – 1) increases the diversity of talent seeking and attaining postsecondary credentials, and 2) allows for VR-specific funding to be stretched further. Information on the **FAFSA**, **Adult Student Grant**, **Workforce Ready Grant**, and other financial aid should be provided at VR offices and with VR staff at transition fairs. Additionally, VR counselors and case coordinators should assist interested VR participants in completing these financial aid applications to alleviate any burden to completing these lengthy forms may cause.

To help promote the co-enrollment of individuals with disabilities in multiple WIOA Core Programs, Indiana will pilot the use of **Integrated Resource Teams** (IRTs) in different regions. IRTs is one of the key strategic service delivery components of the Disability Employment Initiative (DEI), a project of the US Department of Labor. The IRT approach involves diversified service systems coordinating programs and leveraging various funding in order to meet the needs of an individual jobseeker with a disability. IRT begins with an individual who is determined eligible for services in multiple systems (two or more) and has established an employment goal that requires resources from all of these systems. Braiding funds through VR and WIOA Adult could help support this type of approach. It would also allow us to better prioritize WIOA Adult and VR funds when supporting the education and training of a Hoosier with a disability.

A Disability Resource Coordinator or other service provider supports the constituent by coordinating the various services to ensure the individual has the best chance at successfully fulfilling his/her goals. In the IRT model, the individual works with each provider to ensure a release of information is in place, so that all partners can create a plan with three key parameters: common employment goal(s), lines of communication, and sequence of services. Participating in an IRT can be instrumental for the individual, as it provides the opportunity to address multiple challenges to employment simultaneously and build a richly resourced plan. An IRT operationalizes the human-centered approach to our workforce and social service systems and can lead to the attainment of Hoosiers' goals.[10] Through an initial pilot, we can determine promising practices in data sharing, a common intake and case management system, and ways to facilitate co-enrollment that increases an individual's access to multiple sources of support.

Promoting the co-location of more services across the workforce and social service systems is one of our overarching strategies to create a deeper level of collaboration for this target population at the local level. Co-location of staff at WorkOnes or itinerant staffing models in high-trafficked locations (e.g., schools, community centers, and libraries) could decrease the

burden of travel for individuals with disabilities, multiple intake processes, and paperwork requirements, therefore increasing access to a greater amount of opportunities. Currently, VR offices are physically co-located in the same building as the WorkOne in four locations in the state. Additionally, we have VR staff in 19 WorkOne centers at least one day per week, with some that are there multiple days per week. As VR is a Core Program under WIOA, increasing the co-location efforts, which could include physical, embedded or itinerant staffing, or mobile co-location, could be one of the first steps in expanding this strategy throughout Indiana.

After examining contracts, lease agreements, and site location, physical co-location may be a viable option for Core and Partner Programs. In those regions where it is not, other strategies to co-locate should be considered:

- **Embedding staff:** Staff travel between different offices rather than being on-site full-time at any one location, regularly working in different places and with different program staff.
- **Using itinerant staff:** These are staff members who come to the WorkOne (or another office) when called or requested and do not have a set schedule. These staffing models can bring services to where people are rather than concentrating programs and services in any particular center.
- **Mobile (or temporary) locations:** This is an initiative that is sharing space with the local public library system, schools, local businesses and chambers of commerce, and other locations that have community engagement throughout the local area for a short period of time. This initiative seeks to expand the reach of workforce resources by going to places with high community activity, rather than waiting for Hoosiers to come into the office. This approach demonstrates how rural areas can adopt the regionalism emphasized in WIOA to the benefit of job seekers.

Co-location will facilitate real-time information sharing and referrals among staff, allowing staff to better align the activities of their respective case management systems, leverage existing resources, and increase opportunities for collective innovation that may lead to better service delivery approaches. The co-location of staff from our Core WIOA Programs in one location, especially, will foster the integration of service delivery, potentially generating creative approaches from our local Boards about how to better align and use limited resources. Inviting additional community partners to have a service presence at a one-stop center can also enhance the customer's experience and chances for success, as well as ingrain that center into the community. Part of increasing co-location efforts will include advising local regions on strategies to ensure that jobseekers' information is confidential in any/all co-located environments.

Adapting proven practices from other states, Georgia has developed a strategic partnership between their American Job Centers and VR offices. Some of Georgia's VR counselors have entire case management clientele comprised of WIOA co-enrolled individuals, demonstrating how these two programs can work complimentary through strategic allocation of funding. Approximately 65% of all job seekers working with Georgia's Disability Employment Initiative are also co-enrolled with their vocational rehabilitation program.[11] By replicating these efforts here in Indiana, we can increase workforce participation rates for Hoosiers with disabilities by making access to assistance and counseling more easily accessible, leading to more successful outcomes.

VR not only covers the cost of employment and training for those with significant disabilities, but it can also aide in the purchase of assistive technologies, accommodations, and wraparound

supports once an individual secures employment. Title IV has extended length times of supported employment from 18 to 24 months providing more time for VR to support participants with the most significant disabilities after job placement to ensure independence and stabilization prior to case closure. It can be instrumental in ensuring that person maintains his/her employment beyond the 12 months of follow-up services under WIOA Youth; extended services for youth with the most significant disabilities are available through VR may be the better fit to ensure long-term employment.

Employers often want to provide accommodations so they can retain or promote valued and qualified employees; they may struggle in providing the best option, with the cost of the accommodation, or with the provision of training to the staff on how to access accommodations such as low vision software or other assistive technology or devices. VR can assist in these situations in a variety of ways. First, business service teams can help bring awareness to the misconception that reasonable accommodations are cost prohibitive. The majority of accommodations cost absolutely nothing to make, while the rest typically cost $500 or less.[12] Second, VR can serve as a convener in determining what accommodations or assistive technology best suits the individual's needs to maintain his/her employment. Finally, for instance, an employer may purchase an assistive technology device or software (e.g. low vision software, CCTV screen, etc.) and provide VR training to the employee to ensure they can utilize the device or software effectively.

Title III – Wagner-Peyser (Core Program): Our goal of increasing employer engagement and non-traditional hiring practices particularly targets this population. Individuals with disabilities are unable to find work, are underemployed, or are relegated to specific occupations that do not have a positive career trajectory. The principal barriers to employing workers with disabilities include a lack of awareness of disability and accommodation issues, concern over costs, and fear of legal liability. Employers often are inclined to discount the potential of job seekers with physical, cognitive, intellectual, and or developmental disabilities early in the hiring process because they may not interview well, despite possessing strong qualifications for the job.[13] Through our business services teams, we must work with employers to increase hiring and retention of individuals with disabilities through both state and local initiatives. Our efforts to improve outcomes for this population will include a significant emphasis on business services to help employers understand the benefits of integrating individuals with disabilities into their teams and break down any perceived or real barriers an employer may have.

Wagner-Peyser staff can help employers see the benefit of making their hiring practices more inclusive of individuals with disabilities. As discussed in the Historically Underrepresented Minorities section, diversity is good for the bottom line. Inclusion of individuals with disabilities often has additional benefits for employers:

- Individuals with disabilities stay on the job longer than participants without disabilities.
- Across all sectors, individuals with disabilities have fewer scheduled or unscheduled absences than those without disabilities.
- Regardless of sector, individuals with and without disabilities had nearly identical job performance ratings.[14]

The cost of providing an accommodation is often noted by employers as a potential barrier to hiring and retaining an employee with a disability. In a study performed by US DOL's Jobs Accommodation Network, 389 out of 673 surveyed employers (58%) said the accommodations needed by employees cost absolutely nothing. Another 251 (37%) experienced a one-time cost. Only 24 (4%) said the accommodation resulted in an ongoing, annual cost to the company. Of

those accommodations that did have a cost, the typical one-time expenditure by employers was $500. When asked how much they paid for an accommodation beyond what they would have paid for an employee without a disability who was in the same position, employers typically answered around $400. The cost of accommodations is often a misconception among employers. Our Wagner-Peyser staff can help dispel this misunderstanding by sharing information and raising awareness with employers and by connecting the employer with the VR Office, which can provide information regarding the accommodation or pay the cost for eligible VR individuals.[15]

Providing accommodations for employees with disabilities also creates multiple direct and indirect benefits for employers. These can include:

1. Retention and/or promotion of a valued employee;
2. Increased employee productivity;
3. Elimination of costs for training new employees;
4. Hiring a qualified person for a job;
5. Improved morale;
6. Improved customer service and increased customer base; and
7. Increased overall productivity.[16]

Bosma Enterprises is a non-profit organization that offers education, training, and job opportunities for individuals who are blind and visually impaired in central Indiana. One Hoosier, Sam Yeager, came to Bosma Enterprises' Employment Services after earning his Certificate of Completion from Indiana School for the Blind and Visually Impaired. At Bosma, he gained job ready skills while participating in the Student Training and Employment Program (STEP). Part of his learning during STEP took place on the Production Line at Bosma Enterprises. He really liked to work with his hands. Sam was fortunate to have Renee Jewell as his Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, who was always supportive of his goals and believed that he was capable of anything he wanted to do. She worked as part of a team with Vincennes University Logistics Training and Education Center (VULTEC) and VR to set up a pilot training program.

Though Sam was hesitant at first, VR provided the supports necessary for him to be successful in this program; it arranged transportation and accommodations to be ready for his first day. Sam paid attention, participated, and stayed focused in the classroom. He excelled when he got out to the warehouse and was able to get hands on experience. He quickly learned how to stack pallets, use the hand scanner, and was able to help others in the class learn, as well. VR's Business & Community Engagement team was able to connect Sam with the Human Resources Manager at Finish Line. He was hired by Finish Line within six weeks of completing the VULTEC program. Not only does Sam love his job, he is extremely successful. He is always pushing to do better. He works full-time, earning more money than he thought possible, and has employer-sponsored benefits. He can save towards a car while working towards becoming a bioptic driver, as well as working towards moving out of his parents' house and living on his own if he chooses.[17] Sam's story illustrates the potential for this target population to meaningfully participate in the labor market through the right kinds of supports, coaching, and opportunities.

Business service teams are a critical component to assisting this population obtains meaningfully employment. Under the **Americans with Disabilities Act** (ADA) **(Federal**

Program), employers are required to make a reasonable accommodation to the known disability of a qualified applicant or employee if it would not impose an "undue hardship" on the operation of the employer's business. Reasonable accommodations are adjustments or modifications provided by an employer to enable people with disabilities to enjoy equal employment opportunities. These accommodations should be tailored to each employee's with disabilities unique needs. Reasonable accommodations can include:

- Making existing facilities used by employees readily accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities;
- Job restructuring, modifying work schedules, reassignment to a vacant position;
- And acquiring or modifying equipment or devices, adjusting or modifying examinations, training materials, or policies, and providing qualified readers or interpreters.

Some employers may interpret ADA compliance as a legally fraught issue that can open them up to liability. For any VR staff member, it is critical that s/he understand the ADA and how it assists both employers and employees. Through cross-training efforts, we can also extend a basic understanding of the ADA to our Wagner-Peyser staff and business teams, so they can help employers understand the definition and costs of accommodations. Employer organizations recognize the importance of disability inclusion and are actively promoting strategies to members. The US Chamber of Commerce, as one example, provides tools to employers on ways to better include individuals with disabilities into businesses – from recruitment and marketing to retention and technology access.[18] These strategies are ADA compliant, but they benefit for the employer and employee. As we work to shift employers' mindsets regarding this target population, we can use best practices developed by national organizations.

Business service teams must also promote the federal tax credits to employers as an additional benefit to hiring individuals with disabilities. The Indiana Chamber of Commerce has found that few employers take advantage of the **Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC)**, **Architectural Barrier Removal Tax Credit**, or the **Disabled Tax Credit**, which may be due a lack of awareness or understanding. These tax credits can encourage employers to hire individuals from this target group, as well as help offset any employer costs for accommodations. The WOTC reduces employers' federal income tax liability by as much as $9,600, depending on the target group. For example, an employer may receive a tax credit of $2,400 for hiring a short-term Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipient or a tax credit of $9,600 for hiring a veteran entitled to compensation for a service-connected disability who has been unemployed for at least 6 months. The Disabled Access Credit provides a non-refundable credit of up to $5,000 for small businesses that incur expenditures for the purpose of providing access to persons with disabilities. The Architectural Barrier Removal Tax Deduction encourages businesses of any size to remove architectural and transportation barriers to the mobility of persons with disabilities and the elderly. Businesses may claim a deduction of up to $15,000 a year for qualified expenses for items that normally must be capitalized. Businesses may use the Disabled Tax Credit and the architectural/transportation tax deduction together in the same tax year, if the expenses meet the requirements of both sections.[19] In addition to the intangible benefits of hiring with individuals with disabilities, promoting these tax credits may alleviate some consternation employers may have regarding costs. In addition to creating greater awareness and understanding of accommodation costs, our business teams can help employers take advantage of federal tax credits which will help assuage any uncertainty.

In addition to tax credits, Wagner-Peyser and VR business services can inform employers and employees with disabilities about **Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) accounts**. ABLE

Accounts are tax-advantaged 529-A savings accounts for individuals with disabilities and their families. Contributions to the account, which can be made by either the individual or an employer, can be used to fund education and training, as well as wraparound supports (e.g., accessible housing and transportation, personal assistance services, assistive technology, and healthcare not covered by insurance). Similar to a College 529 account, ABLE accounts allow for individuals with disabilities to save for additional education, supportive services, and retirement.

One way to combat misconceptions of Hoosiers with disabilities in various occupations or sectors is through work-based learning experiences. Promoting this target population for these opportunities offers the individual to learn more about the job and allows the employer to see the person perform the duties, learn about the needed accommodations, and get to know the individual better. There are different kinds of work-based learning experiences we can promote for individuals with disabilities that will meet this two-fold goal. These include:

- Talent tours (which occur at a business or higher education campus. These can provide exposure and orientation in various sectors and career paths. The tours can include presentations and information on potential industry offerings);
- Informational interviews with local employers;
- Job shadow experiences;
- Working interviews, in which they perform specific tasks that better reflect actual job duties;
- State Earn and Learn programs;
- A pre-apprenticeship or apprenticeship-readiness program;
- Paid or unpaid internships; and
- On-the-job training.

Wagner-Peyser and VR can also help facilitate genuine mentorships between businesspeople with disabilities and interested jobseekers with disabilities. These mentorships would be sustained over a period of time to help jobseekers learn about a career, discuss requisite knowledge and skills, make industry connections, and seek advice and counsel when the need arises. The most powerful aspect of a mentorship is for the jobseeker to see someone with similar barriers succeeding in a career interest, therefore knowing success is an attainable goal.

Wagner-Peyser staff can also promote employment of people with disabilities through the following strategies:

- Hiring individuals with disabilities as employees in WorkOnes;
- Partnering with self-advocacy and independent living organizations to provide auxiliary support to employers;
- Ensuring that promoted job listings, job fairs, apprenticeships, and internships do not contain language or requirements that unfairly screen out people with physical, social, and developmental disabilities; and
- Expanding customized employment, in which an employer and employee work together to customize a particular job to match both party's needs, for specific businesses.[20]

By utilizing Wagner-Peyser staff to better expand these opportunities with local businesses, we hope to eradicate some misunderstandings and stigma that employers may hold against individuals with disabilities, creating more opportunities for all Hoosiers to be able to successfully engage in the workforce.

Title I – Adult or Youth (Core Programs): Many individuals with disabilities will be eligible to be co-enrolled into WIOA Adult or Youth to provide the employment and training services that person needs to find career success. VR should reserve its employment services for those with significant disabilities or who need intensive, specialized career assistance. In many instances, individuals with disabilities will co-enroll in WIOA Adult or Youth to receive many of their career services. WIOA Adult or Youth can fund individualized assessments to determine eligibility for career interests, skill levels (including literacy, numeracy, and English language proficiency, which could prompt a referral to **Adult Education** services), aptitudes, and abilities (including skill gaps). This funding stream can help fund connections for VR clients to career fairs and employment opportunities across the state with VR filling in gaps as needed. WIOA Adult or Youth can also provide career and training services aligned to a designated career pathway, provided concurrently or in any combination, that can include:

- Comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skill levels;
- Employability skills development (learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, professional conduct) to prepare for employment or training;
- Education and/or training services;
- Financial literacy services;
- English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs (as supplemental to Adult Education); and
- Work-based learning activities (such as subsidizing wages or offset employers' costs).

WIOA Adult or Youth can fund any follow-up services for 12 months once an individual leaves a program. As discussed above, VR follow-up services can occur up to 24 months for individuals with the most significant disabilities. To maximize our investments, case managers should work with co-enrolled individuals to determine what follow-up service is needed for success in that career, such as individualized counseling regarding the work place, how to successfully navigate the new environment, or assistance with any accommodations. Funding and information can be braided between the two funding streams to provide that service and support.

WIOA Adult or Youth can also be braided with VR to provide supportive services individuals with disabilities may need to be successful in their education and training programs. Transportation, in particular, is often one of the most significant barriers for people with disabilities. People with disabilities are three times more likely to depend on public transportation to get to work than those without a disability.[21] Local Boards can use Title I funds in conjunction with VR to provide Hoosiers with transportation vouchers to cover the cost of gas, vehicle maintenance, mileage reimbursement, or passes for public transportation. Additionally, the state will explore creating virtual chatting via a chatbox in various regions as a way to provide services to people who are unable to travel to the office or want to contact someone outside of normal business hours. In addition to providing transportation, creating more virtual and online accessibility to our WorkOnes and staff will alleviate this barrier.

Pre-apprenticeship and pre-employment programs can be especially valuable for individuals with disabilities who have been historically underrepresented in certain industries and apprenticeships. These programs can be paired with Adult Education through an Integrated Education and Training program or a work-based learning experience. Pre-apprenticeship programs expose workers to job sites and work environments and provides income support for workers to address barriers to employment. As discussed above, it also exposes the employer to the individual's capabilities with less risk than hiring that person on full-time. It allows both parties to learn more about the other. These programs also create formal access points to employers. WIOA Adult or Youth can help fund these types of opportunities for Hoosiers with disabilities, weaving VR support in for accommodations and assistive technology, and help compensate any direct expenses, such as childcare and transportation.

Potential Eligibility: Additional programs and services a Hoosier may receive depending on individual circumstances. This section includes ***Core and Partner Program Activities,Activities outside the Plan***, and***Individual Services***for low-income adults.

Title II – Adult Education (Core Program): Based on an individual's skill assessment, along with transcript evaluations to determine if a high school diploma or equivalency was earned, an individual with disabilities could be referred to Adult Education for academic services in math, reading, and/or written skills. Adult Education can also assist with digital literacy and English language acquisition services. Within the Adult Education strategies that are further outlined in that section, our efforts at expanding our **Workforce Education Initiative** (WEI) will be of benefit to this specific population. Individuals with disabilities who do not possess a diploma/are deficient in basic skills can enroll in basic skill classes at employer sites. By allowing individuals to be employed and earning an income while improving his/her academic skills, individuals with disabilities will be able to meet their current needs while on a path to increased self-sufficiency. Additionally, locating this program at a place of business will help with exposure and awareness from both the employer and potential employee. This initiative combines education, provided through Adult Education, and employment at a site convenient for the individual. It will be critical for Adult Education providers to work with VR offices to ensure all accommodations and assistive supports are provided to the individual to support his/her learning objectives. This will require close collaboration between these two programs to ensure the individual receives all necessary supports. Local Workforce Development Boards could serve as the convener for these programs, as well as others co-enrolled programs, to promote increased integration and coordination in our delivery of services.

Next Level Jobs (State Program): Depending on an individual's career interests and ambitions, this is a state-funded resource Vocational Rehabilitation providers and WorkOnes can direct individuals with disabilities towards to help mitigate the costs of training. **Workforce Ready Grants**, for example, can cover the tuition and fees of training and education, while VR can provide accommodations and assistive technologies. VR and WIOA Adult or Youth could braid together to offer ongoing counseling and coaching and assist with wraparound supports. This may not be the best fit for every individual, since it is restricted to certain sectors and may not provide immediate income relief, but it could be an opportunity within an individual's career pathway to earn a credential that leads to advancement. Through a blending of our programs for support, we want more individuals with disabilities to take advantage of this state program, which can boost their postsecondary attainment and fulfill their career goals.

Another aspect of Next Level Jobs is Employer Training Grants. Under these grants, employers may qualify for reimbursement of up to $5,000 per employee trained and retained for six months. Through our business service teams, we can encourage employers to leverage this

funding to help upskill their employees with disabilities. This funding can cover the training and potentially accommodations costs for that employee. Employer Training Grants can serve as a key tool to help businesses recognize the viability of hiring and then retaining individuals with disabilities as employees.

Next Level Jobs has struggled in attracting individuals with disabilities to participate in this program. As Indiana launches its **communications strategy** in 2020 aimed at encouraging more Hoosiers to pursue higher education and training, we will ensure stories of individuals with disabilities are included as part of marketing materials. We will also continue to work with our community college system to confirm that training and classes are offered in a variety of ways to suit different learning styles. Wagner-Peyser and VR staff will also work to educate employers on how the Employer Training Grant could offset costs of training associated with this population.

Carl D. Perkins (Partner Program): Using Perkins Leadership funds, Indiana will create a Special Populations Recruitment Initiative, which will promote recruitment and retention efforts of this target population in both secondary and postsecondary career-technical education programs. This grant opportunity will support professional development to increase the effectiveness of teachers, faculty, specialized support personnel, and paraprofessionals in relation to the recruitment and instruction of special populations. Indiana intends to explore further opportunities to use Perkins to support educational institutions that serve individuals with disabilities, as we understand that this target population has the same capabilities to achieve in the CTE realm if provided the proper supports.

Ticket to Work (Federal Program): The Social Security Administration has established the Ticket to Work program for people with disabilities who work or desire to work. These programs encourage and support employees who are receiving benefits sot that they can continue to work without the worry of losing health care, supplemental income or housing benefits. Indiana workers with disabilities obtain information from VR or WorkOnes to inform them of a variety of federal and state work incentive programs, and to guide them through the eligibility and application process. VR also provides funding to the Center on Community Living and Careers (CCLC), run through Indiana University, to assist Indiana employment providers and Ticket to Work Employment Networks with training, technical assistance and information about Social Security's Ticket to Work program and other available work incentives. There is a robust statewide network of approximately 150 benefits specialists certified through the VR funded Benefits Information Network (BIN) coordinated through CCLC. These BIN specialists provide benefits and work incentives counseling to VR participants who receive public assistance.

The Ticket to Work and Self Sufficiency program provides Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and/or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients the choices, opportunities and support they need to enter the workforce and maintain employment with the goal of eventually becoming economically self-sustaining.

Under Ticket to Work, eligible recipients with disabilities who receive monthly cash benefit payments are permitted to participate by signing up with an approved service provider of their choice. This can be an Employment Network (EN) or a state Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agency. If the agency accepts the ticket assignment, it will coordinate and provide appropriate services to help the beneficiary find and maintain employment. While participating in the Ticket program, beneficiaries can obtain help they need to safely explore work options and find the job that is right for them without immediately losing their benefits. Beneficiaries can use a combination of Social Security work incentives to maximize their income until they begin to

earn enough to support themselves. This means, an individual using a Ticket can: go to work without automatically losing benefits, return to benefits if he or she has to stop working, continue to receive health care benefits, and be protected from receiving a medical Continuing Disability Review (CDR) while making expected progress with work or educational goals. This program essentially works as a safety net, allowing recipients a chance to become independent and engaged with the workforce without the fear of losing the benefits they need to continue to sustain a lifestyle while they work towards self-sufficiency.

Title II (Disability Insurance) covers workers who have established eligibility through prior work and **Title XVI (Supplemental Security Income) of the Social Security Act** has a needs-based income and resource eligibility requirement. The purpose of these programs is to identify people who have disabilities that preclude the ability to work, or for children, impede the ability to fully participate in learning activities. These programs have two desired outcomes: to correctly identify disabled adults and children, and to have adults with potential referred to public or private Vocational Rehabilitation Services, through the Social Security Administration's "Ticket to Work" program.

Scaling Promising Practices: Below we highlight promising practices that we hope to see scaled and replicated to address the unique barriers and challenges of this target population. Our local regions can implement these practices through strategic use of WIOA funds, philanthropic or community foundation dollars, or social impact bonds. Where applicable, local Boards or community organizations can coordinate with state agencies to apply for SNAP 50/50 FNS, which will serve as a 50% federal match for any state or philanthropic funding dedicated to SNAP recipients receiving Employment and Training services. These practices are ***Activities outside the Plan***. While not a comprehensive list, the practices showcase innovative approaches to assisting our individuals with disabilities in surmounting their unique circumstances.

Indiana Institute on Disability and Community at IU Bloomington (Institution of Higher Education Program): The Indiana Institute on Disability and Community (IIDC), Indiana's University Center for Excellence in Disabilities, aims to work with communities to welcome, value, and support the meaningful participation of people of all ages and abilities through research, education, and service. The IIDC achieves this goal through the following activities:

- Advocacy,
- Coalition development,
- Family engagement (supporting families through partnerships among educators and human service providers to strengthen learning, independence, and community connections),
- Information dissemination,
- Pre-service education and preparation (supporting the training of professionals to become leaders and prepare future practitioners to implement best practices in the field),
- Research, education, and policy analysis, and
- Training and technical assistance (building capacity to support community members and professionals in applying specific skills and best practices).

The IIDC could be a resource for local regions to partner with to help obtain information and research to dispel many of the misconceptions about individuals with disabilities. Regions could also engage with this organization to learn best practices in supporting individuals and families.

The Arc (Philanthropic Program): The Arc of Indiana is an organization founded by parents of children with intellectual and developmental disabilities focused on building a better and more accepting world for children with disabilities. Its main goals are to:

- Empower families with information and resources to assist them in their journey of raising a child with a disability to lead a full and meaningful life.
- Empower people with intellectual and other developmental disabilities to be self-sufficient and independent to the greatest extent possible.
- Inspire positive change in public policy and public attitudes.
- Prevent disabilities through education about the dangers of drugs and alcohol while pregnant and advocating for all women to have quality prenatal care.
- Serve as a spokesperson and advocate for families and their loved ones.

The Arc of Indiana focuses on some very specific programs and services that serve to positively impact Hoosiers with disabilities across the state:

- The Arc Advocacy Network: This network provides information, referral, and advocacy to guide and assist individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families through a wide variety of issues including:
    - Applying for and navigating government programs;
    - Developing relationships within the community and using resources and supports that may already exist;
    - Helping families and people with disabilities identify their vision of a good life and identify strengths, resources, and supports to achieve that vision, learning about guardianship and alternatives to guardianship, including supported decision-making;
    - Assisting families in navigating their healthcare coverage, increasing knowledge of basic healthcare coverage issues (including coverage of nursing facilities and group homes) and;
    - Becoming a self-advocate.
- Career Counseling Information & Referral Services: WIOA requires individuals receiving a sub-minimum wage to have the opportunity to prepare for, obtain, maintain, advance in, or regain competitive integrated employment, including supported or customized employment. The reforms also require that individuals be informed of these opportunities. Local Vocational Rehabilitation services personnel and staff from The Arc of Indiana, Self-Advocates of Indiana (SAI) work together with providers who offer sub-minimum wage employment to provide Career Counseling & Information and Referral Services to employed individuals.
- Erskine Green Training Institute (EGTI): EGTI provides training in hospitality, food services, healthcare, and inventory distribution. The program provides personalized training for students over the course of 10-13 week training sessions where students

attend class, master key job skills, and gain valuable work experience through internships, while also providing soft skills for appropriate workplace etiquette, teamwork, taking directions, and effective communication skills. EGTI's programming is designed for individuals whose academic, social, communication, and adaptive skills are affected due to a disability.

[1] US Department of Labor. Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP).

[2] US Department of Labor, 2014. Economic Picture of the Disability Community Project; Key points on Disability and Occupational Projections Tables.

[3] US Department of Labor, 2018. Persons with A Disability: Labor Force Characteristics—2018.

[4] US Department of Labor, 2019. Persons with a Disability, 2018: Current Population Survey (CPS).

[5] This report only captures information about a specific subset of Hoosiers with disabilities and does not reflect comprehensive information about all of those with disabilities.

[6] Indiana University, 2017. Indiana Day and Employment Services Outcome Systems Report.

[7] Ibid.

[8] US Department of Labor, 2019. Persons with a Disability, 2018: Current Population Survey (CPS).

[9] US Department of Labor, 2018. Persons with A Disability: Labor Force Characteristics—2018.

[10] Disability Employment Initiative, February 2016. Shared Customers, Shared Resources, Shared Outcomes: The Integrated Resource Team Model

[11] Disability Employment Initiative, 2018. Georgia – Vocational Rehabilitation Partnership.

[12] US Department of Labor, 2015. Workplace Accommodations: Low Cost, High Impact.

[13] Kaye et al, 2011. Why Don't Employers Hire and Retain Workers With Disabilities?

[14] DePaul University, 2007. Exploring the Bottom Line: A Study of the Costs and Benefits of Workers with Disabilities.

[15] US Department of Labor, 2015. Workplace Accommodations: Low Cost, High Impact.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Indiana's Commission on Rehabilitation Services, 2019. Annual Report: FFY 2019.

[18] US Chamber of Commerce. Leading Practice on Disability Inclusion.

[19] US Internal Revenue Service. Tax Benefits for Businesses Who Have Employees with Disabilities.

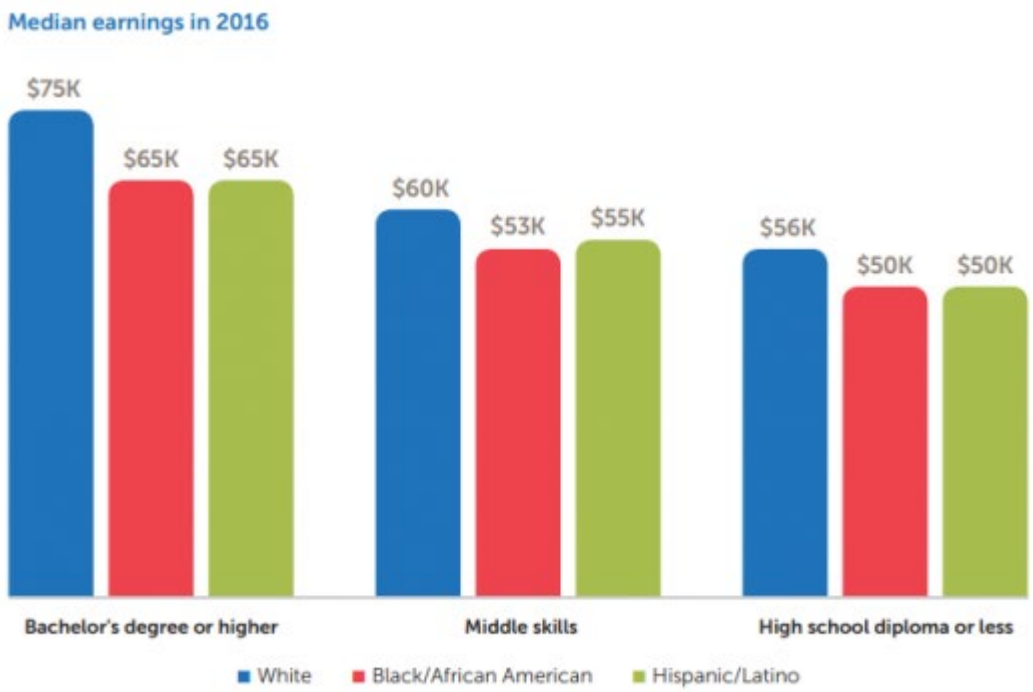
[20] Lead Center, 2018. Building an Accessible Workforce Development System: Recommendations to American Job Centers on Supporting Autistic People and Others with Disabilities to Promote Successful Employment.

[21] National Conference of State Legislators, 2019. Employing People with Disabilities.

This term, adapted from US Code Title 20 defines racial and ethnic populations that have been historically underrepresented with disproportionately low representation among postsecondary credential holders and in certain well-paying occupations and industries. This includes African-Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans. White workers attain postsecondary credentials, Bachelor's, and graduate degrees in higher numbers, which then leads to increased access to good jobs.[1] Between 1991 and 2016, White workers with higher education credentials gained 10.6 million good jobs. Overall, White workers gained a total of 12.9 million jobs during this time period. Though Black and Latino workers attained higher levels of education, their economic gains have been incongruent with those of White Americans. Black workers gained 1.9 million good jobs for workers with at least a bachelor's degree, while their overall employment increased by 4 million jobs. Good jobs held by Black workers are increasingly on the four-year, college track, though college-educated white Americans have benefited the most from the increased demand for college-educated workers. Latino workers gained 2.2 million good jobs for workers with at least a bachelor's degree, even as their employment increased substantially by 13.1 million jobs overall. Black Americans have almost twice the unemployment rate of White Americans, and Latinos have about 1.5 times the unemployment rate.[2] A breakdown of the percentage of good jobs and all jobs held by White, Black, and Latino workers in 2016:

White workers	Black workers	Latino workers
77% of good jobs	10% of good jobs	13% of good jobs
69% of all jobs	13% of all jobs	18% of all jobs

The racial equity gap is more apparent when examining wages between the different subgroups. Among workers with good jobs, White workers are consistently paid more than Black and Latino workers at every education level. Even though Black and Latino workers have increased their postsecondary education and their share of good jobs, their earnings gap remains.[3]



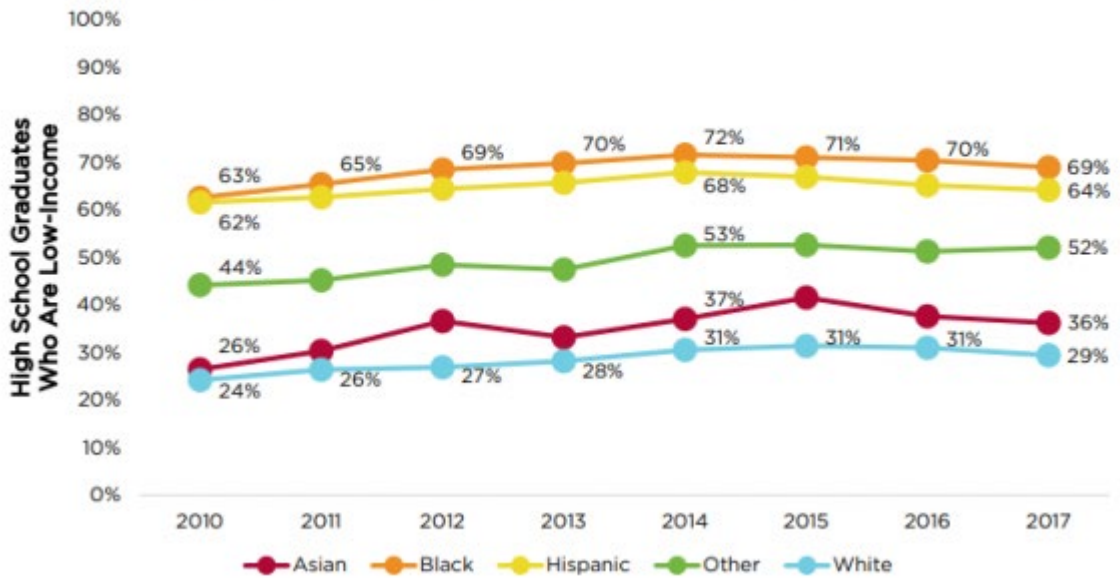
Source: Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce analysis of data from the US Census Bureau and Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey, 2017.

Over 591,000 Hoosiers report Black as their only race. While every Indiana county includes some black residents, 62% of Indiana's Black population resides in just two counties, Marion and Lake. Within these two counties, Black Hoosiers make up more than ¼ of the total population.[4] Approximately 390,000 Hoosiers reported their ethnicity as Hispanic or Latino in the 2010 Census. Since 2000, Indiana's Latino population has grown by nearly 82%, an increase of 175,171 people. At least 28 counties saw their Latino population increase by more than 100% in the last ten years.[5] 18,462 Hoosiers reported as Native American (denoted as American Indian and Alaska Native alone on government forms) in 2010. An additional 31,276 Hoosiers report having some Native American ancestry in combination with another race. While the Native American alone population makes up just 0.3% of Indiana's total population, those who specified their race as American Indian and Alaska Native alone or in combination with another race account for 0.8% of the total population.[6] 102,474 Hoosiers reported Asian as their only race in the 2010 Census. Though Marion and Hamilton counties had the largest numbers of Asians, only Monroe and Tippecanoe counties, which are home to Indiana University and Purdue University, respectively, had more than 5% of the total population as Asian.[7] Due to their median household income and educational attainment being higher than Indiana's state averages, Asian Hoosiers were not included in our definition of underrepresented minorities for this section of the Plan.

In 2013, Black household's median income $28,485, nearly $18,000 less than the state's median ($46,438). The median household income for Indiana's Native American households was $34,558, nearly $12,000 less than Indiana's median income. The median household income for Indiana's Latino households was $35,122, about $11,000 less than the state's median. As indicated above, among Indiana's racial and ethnic minorities, only Asian Hoosiers have a higher median household income at $50,648 than the median income for all households in the state.[8]

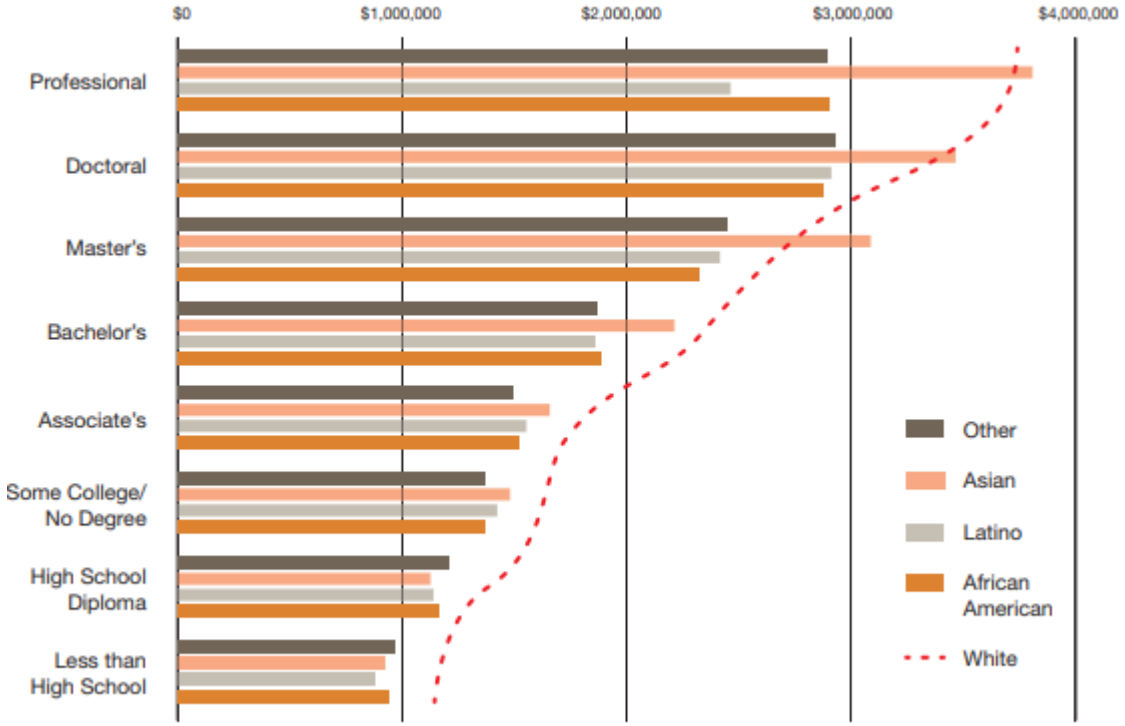
Of Indiana's high school graduates in 2019, at least 29% of graduates from all racial/ethnic groups were from low-income households in 2017. Black and Latino students were also the most likely to come from low-income households.[9]

Figure 3. Share of low-income students by race/ethnicity and high school graduation year



State data show that White Hoosiers have an overall unemployment rate of 3.7%; it is slightly higher in urban areas at 3.8% than rural areas at 3.4%. Black Hoosiers are more likely to be unemployed, as this population has the highest unemployment rate among all subgroups. The overall unemployment rate for Black Hoosiers is at 10.8%. Latino Hoosiers' unemployment rate is at 4.0%. Unlike White Hoosiers, Latinos have a higher unemployment rate in rural areas at 6.0% than in urban areas at 3.8%. Asian Hoosiers' unemployment rate is the same as White Hoosiers at 3.7%. Hoosiers who are two or more races have an unemployment rate of 6.9%. Data were unavailable for Native Americans.

Since the Great Recession, the likelihood of having a good job has favored workers with a postsecondary degree or higher. Among all subgroups, those workers with more education have fared better economically than those with less education. Simultaneously, the racial and ethnic gaps in obtaining good jobs persists at every level of education. Among bachelor's and graduate degree holders, 75% of all jobs held by White Americans are good jobs, compared to 68% of jobs held by Black Americans and 65% of those held by Latinos. For workers with no more than a high school diploma, 39% of jobs held by White Americans are good jobs, compared to 22% of those held by Black Americans and 25% of those held by Latinos.[10] Asian-American workers as a broad group have a higher median hourly wage than White workers at the Bachelor's degree level and above. There are also very wide differences in attainment among different ethnicities categorized as Asian, which encompasses people with varying ethnic backgrounds from 48 different countries. While this is a positive development for this broad ethnic group, further disaggregation of data is needed to understand the nuances within this subgroup.[11]

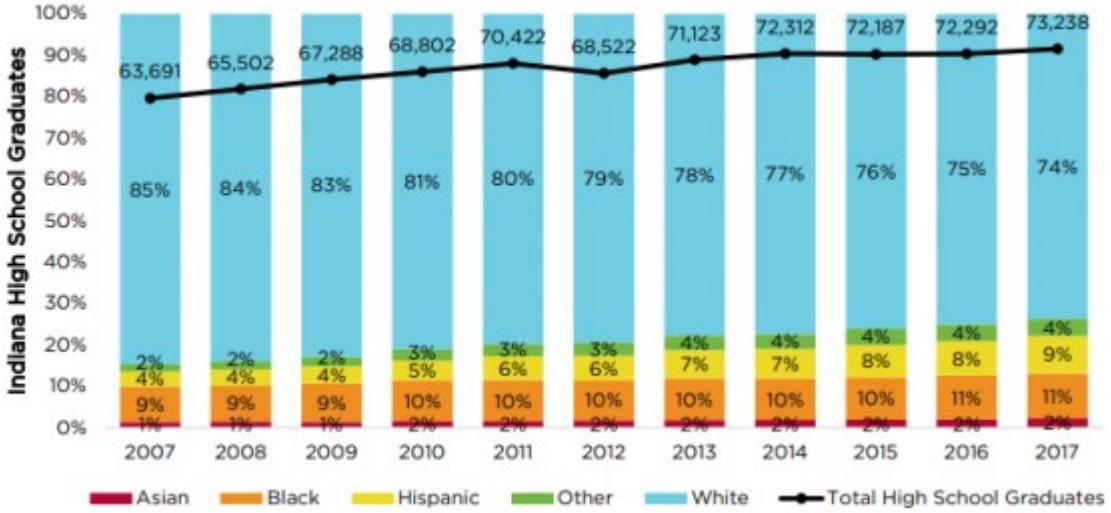


[12]

Latinos have made sizeable gains in postsecondary certification completion between 1992 and 2016. Comparatively, Black Americans have higher high school completion rates, lower certificate completion rates, and similar Associate's degree and Bachelor's degree completion rates, though with a higher overall educational attainment. Latinos, however, tend to earn more than Black workers once they have attained at least some postsecondary education, and Black Americans tend to represent a higher percentage of youth between the ages of 16 and 24 who are neither working nor in school.[13]

These disparities, particularly in educational attainment and earnings, represent a critical workforce challenge that has wide implications for Indiana's talent development system. The challenge is increasingly important as diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds continue to be a growing segment of Indiana's workforce. Between 2007 and 2017, the share of Black, Latino, and Asian high school graduates grew by about 1 percentage point each year. Latino students were the fastest growing demographic, growing 5 percentage points in ten years. The percentage of students identifying as Black grew from 9 percent to 11 percent. Indiana produced nearly 10,000 more high school graduates in 2017 than in 2007; virtually all of that growth was among minority students. We must continue to find ways to increase educational and skills attainment of underrepresented minority populations in order to create a more skilled workforce ready to fill in demand jobs with family sustaining wages.

Figure 1. Indiana high school graduate trends by race/ethnicity

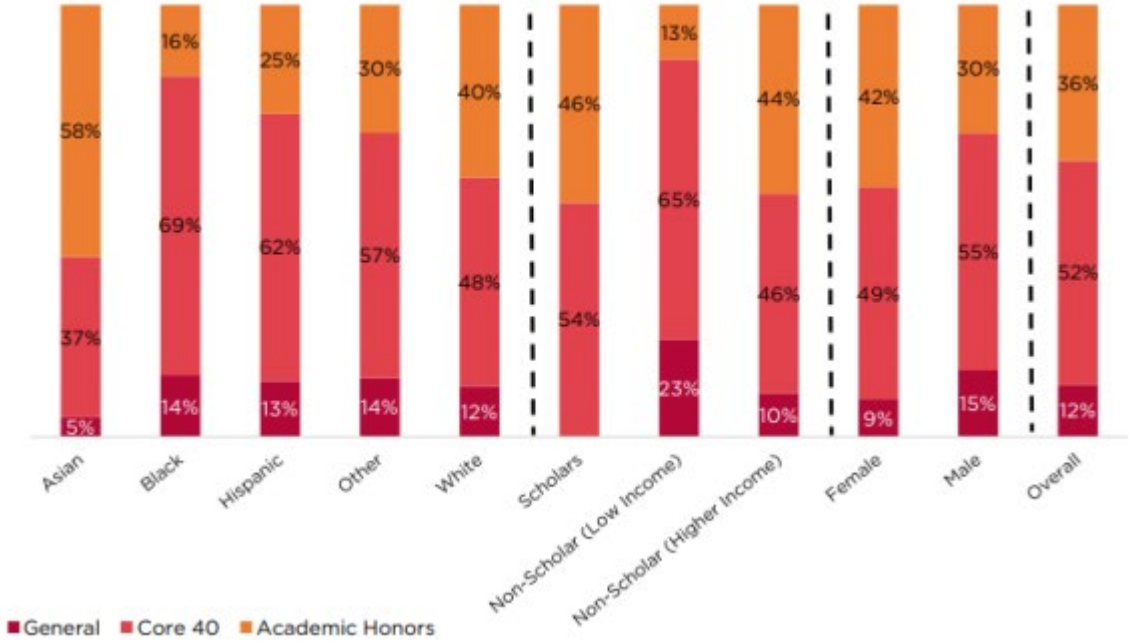


Broadening both postsecondary educational opportunities and increasing skills-focused training programs will be key pieces to addressing the wage and employment disparities and improving Indiana's economy. College- and career-counseling, including career awareness and exploration activities, for our historically underrepresented minorities will help close some of the persistent gaps. In order to set our Hoosier students with diverse backgrounds up for success after high school, we must take a two-generational approach by lifting families and communities out of cyclical poverty. An individual's future achievement is directly related to the length of time s/he lives in poverty. Persistently poor children (persistently poor children are poor at least half the years from birth through age 17) are 13% less likely to complete high school and 43% less likely to complete college than their peers.[14] Persistently poor children are also less likely to be consistently employed as young adults than their counterparts. Lower educational achievement correlates to higher unemployment rates have historically been higher among lower-educated groups.[15] This will require intentionality in career counseling and wraparound supports to help these Hoosiers access and complete any type of higher education opportunity.

Potential Enrollment: Additional programs and services an underrepresented minority Hoosier may receive depending on individual circumstances. This section includes ***Core and Partner Program Activities***,***Activities outside the Plan***, and***Individual Services***for adults in this target population.

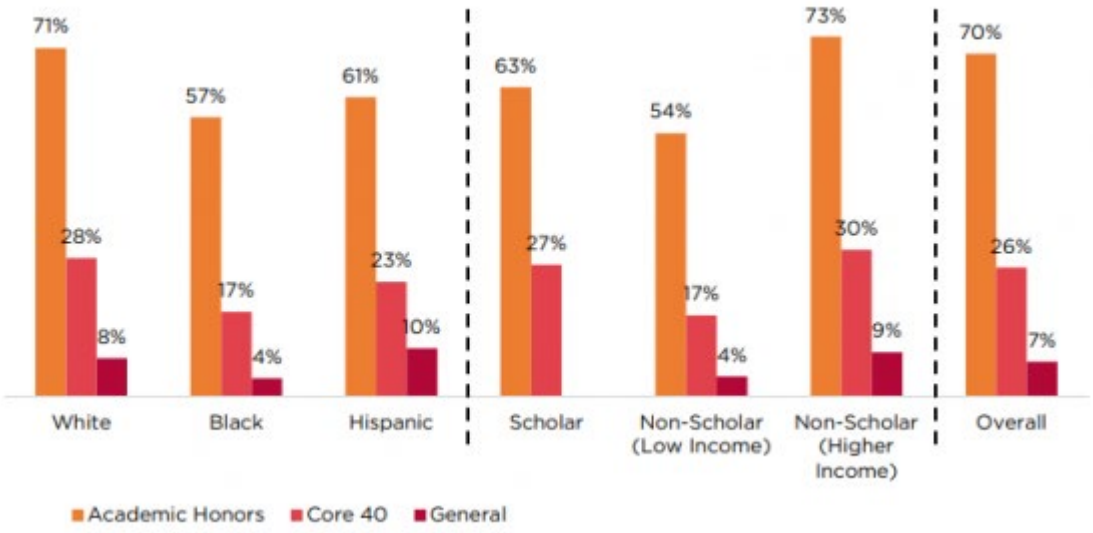
Secondary Education Attainment (State Program): As the data above illustrate, postsecondary education attainment has a direct effect on the wages minority workers earn. As one strategy for combatting discrepancies in both wages and unemployment rates, focusing on postsecondary education attainment is of vital importance for this target population. The gaps in wages and wealth we see for minority adults is echoed in our schools. Only 16% of Black students and 25% of Latino students earn the state's most rigorous diploma, the Academic Honors Diploma, while 40% of White students earn the diploma.

Figure 6. High School Diploma Type by Select Demographics (2017 High School Cohort)



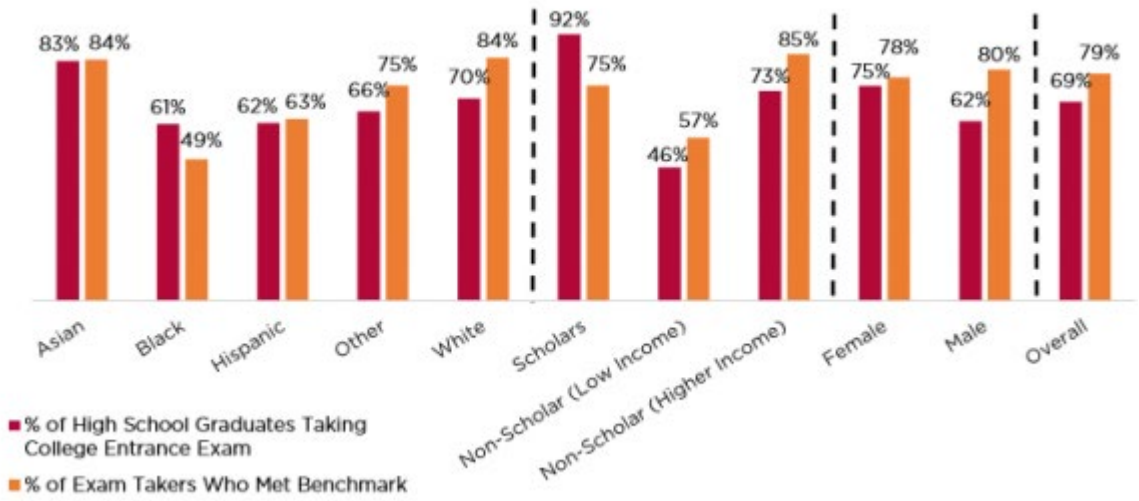
A student's high school diploma can point to how well that student will fare in their postsecondary pursuits, specifically education. Among General Diploma earners who go straight to college, only 7% experience early success in college, including enrollment in non-remedial courses, overall course completion, and persistence. Achievement gaps based on diploma type widen when disaggregating data for racial and ethnic diversity. When comparing students who earned the same high school diploma, White students have higher rates of early success in college than Black or Latino students, though the relative size of these gaps often is smaller among Academic Honors Diploma earners than among Core 40 or General Diploma earners.[16]

Figure 7. Early Success in College by Diploma Type (2016 High School Cohort)

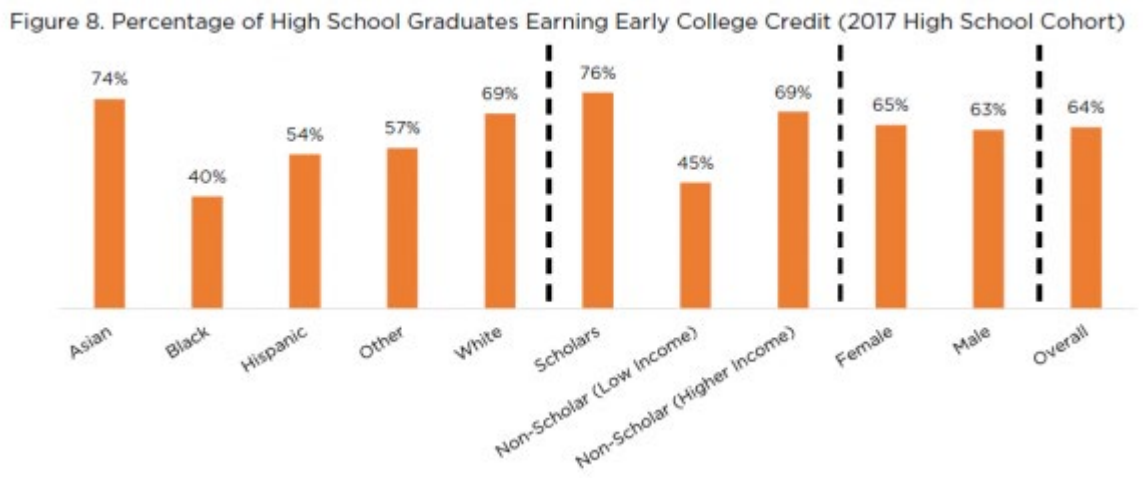


We see similar racial and ethnic disparities in Indiana's standardized test scores, with Black and Latino students scoring below their White peers. This disproportionality in achievement for Black and Latino students also occurs within the same school. In one school district, third- through eighth-graders achieved an overall pass rate in the district at 66.6%, though Black and Latino students, who comprise the majority of the student population, had pass rates of 18.4% and 18.6%, respectively.[17] Recognizing that these racial and ethnic achievement gaps translate into postsecondary attainment and wages for these students indicates that we must start increasing our expectations for these students' achievement potential. In Indiana's Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Plan, which is the 2015 reauthorized Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the long-term academic goals for grades 3 thru 8 and 10, as well as graduation rates, for Black and Latino students, in particular, are set below their Asian and White peers.[18] Though this was based on the historical performance of these subgroups, we must recognize that the difference in expectations for our subgroups will only perpetuate the inequities we see in our workforce. To set all of our students up for success, we need to ensure the level of rigor and achievement is comparable across all student subgroups, especially if we want to see gains in postsecondary education enrollment and completion.

Many colleges require a college entrance exam like the SAT or ACT. The companies that administer the SAT/ACT publish benchmark scores to indicate students' college and career readiness. Sixty-nine percent of Hoosiers take a college entrance exam. Of those who take the SAT/ACT, about 79% earn a score that indicates they are college and career ready. Similar to grades 3 thru 8, we see achievement gaps breakdown along racial lines.[19] Because these metrics correlate with postsecondary-readiness, ensuring students have strong academic foundations is essential to addressing gaps in attainment and wages.



In addition to closing gaps in proficiency on standardized tests, we can also increase enrollment and success in advanced coursework, such as Advanced Placement tests, the International Baccalaureate program, and dual credit/enrollment courses.



[20]

Though prior preparation and opportunity to enroll explains part of the gaps in achievement for these courses between historically underrepresented minorities and White students, the differences in course offerings and whether students who demonstrate readiness for advanced coursework are actually enrolled in the courses are two other critical factors in increasing diversity in these courses. Though inequities in prior achievement can be present a barrier to students, districts can use both state and federal funding to address these inequities earlier on. This correlates with the achievement gaps above. A solid educational foundation to launch students into postsecondary success offers communities an opportunity to generate economic mobility. While WIOA specifically addresses youth starting at age 14, our Workforce Development Boards can also offer a multitude of ways to partner with elementary and middle schools to help provide that foundation.

The state's new graduation requirements, **Graduation Pathways (State Program)** will allow students to better align their high school careers with postsecondary opportunities. These Pathways aim at raising rigor across the state for high school students by aligning high school with postsecondary relevancy. As the state implements this new policy, we encourage Workforce Development Boards to partner with schools and districts to facilitate the administration, especially for the project-, service-, or work-based learning requirement. As well, to set students up for success these experiences, Boards can work with schools and districts to expand career awareness and exploration into grades K-8. Creating more opportunities for students to engage, explore, and experience different careers will allow for a deeper understanding of the multitude of postsecondary options. Additionally, both regionally and at the state level, we will monitor outcomes through Graduation Pathways to ensure an equitable representation of students across the Pathways. By reshaping our expectations and instructional practices for our historically underrepresented minority students throughout the K-12 experience, we can set students within this target population up for postsecondary success.

Federal K-12 funds could supplement college- and career-counseling for Black and Latino students, providing mentoring, campus visits, talent tours, and job shadowing experiences. Through partnerships with local Workforce Development Boards, school districts could leverage staff and expertise to assist with career counseling. **Wagner-Peyser** staff, in particular, could offer workshops or professional development opportunities to help teachers and counselors learns about various postsecondary options. They can also be embedded in schools to share the counseling load or provide labor exchange information. Both Vincennes University

and Ivy Tech Community College have college coaches that co-locate in schools, CTE Centers, or districts to help coordinate early college experiences. Both ESSA and Perkins funds could be used by secondary or postsecondary schools to scale these practices. Encouraging more career exploration and awareness through grade-appropriate work-based learning opportunities beginning in elementary school will help raise awareness of careers. The DOE recently released a work-based learning manual that lays out a continuum of experiences for all grades to help increase career exploration, engagement, and experience. It also recommends every high school have a work-based learning coordinator. In local plans, our Workforce Boards can describe how they will partner with schools and districts to increase these opportunities and facilitate engagement with businesses, in particular for students within our target populations. Both schools and local Boards need to ensure that there is an equitable distribution of students throughout the variety of opportunities and experiences.

How we teach and prepare our minority students is critical to ensuring their postsecondary success. **Title II: Preparing, Training, and Recruiting High-Quality Teachers, Principals, or Other School Leaders** of ESEA provides funding for both state and local professional development activities for teachers and administrators. We encourage both our state agency and local school districts to focus a portion of this funding on professional development regarding diversity and inclusion practices in the classroom, as well as instruction that is culturally responsive. As well, these funds can be used to boost diversity among teachers and administrators through intentional recruitment and retention efforts. By reshaping our expectations and instructional practices for our historically underrepresented minority students throughout the K-12 experience, we can set students within this target population up for postsecondary success.

Carl D. Perkins (Partner Program): Over the next two years, Indiana will redesign and implement new programs of study throughout the state. Our redesigned programs of study will include stackable dual credit courses and credentials that directly align with postsecondary programs. Through our Combined Plan, we will merge WIOA's career pathways with Perkins' programs of study. Through this alignment between secondary and postsecondary (as well as WIOA and Perkins), we will improve all students' access to high-quality content throughout the state. Because postsecondary education and credentials are embedded in these programs of study, we will also increase students' access to postsecondary education while in high school. Similar to an early college model, these programs will offer students the opportunity to earn postsecondary credentials as they earn their high school diploma. By standardizing the content within our programs of study, we can improve our equity and access.

As we will describe further in our Perkins Program Requirements section, we want to ensure there is equitable access and representation of minority students in all career clusters. Fewer racially and ethnically diverse students are represented in STEM pathways, specifically healthcare and IT. Ensuring secondary and postsecondary students access those CTE programs in high-wage occupations, such as those in our advanced industries, is critical to addressing the wage gap. We need to actively recruit and retain students into programs that can give them the technical skills needed for success in well-paid occupations. Often grade requirements may preclude certain subgroups from qualifying for entrance into these programs, which reinforces the need to establish and maintain high expectations for academic achievement in grades 3 through 8. Through Comprehensive Local Needs Assessments, we want our CTE districts and Workforce Boards to examine policies that may be inhibiting equity and identify ways to increase minority students' access to programs leading to middle- and high-wage jobs.

Our CTE districts can use Perkins and their state CTE tuition support to partner with either schools or community colleges to build co-requisite models for academics and technical classes. Often used in higher education, the co-requisite model melts remediation with introductory courses and provides students with the opportunity to earn credit towards their degree concurrently with remedial support, rather than completing a remedial course prior to enrolling in the credit-bearing course. Leveraging Perkins as a funding source, Workforce Development Boards can help CTE districts build similar models in the secondary CTE space, integrating academic remediation concurrent with the technical course.

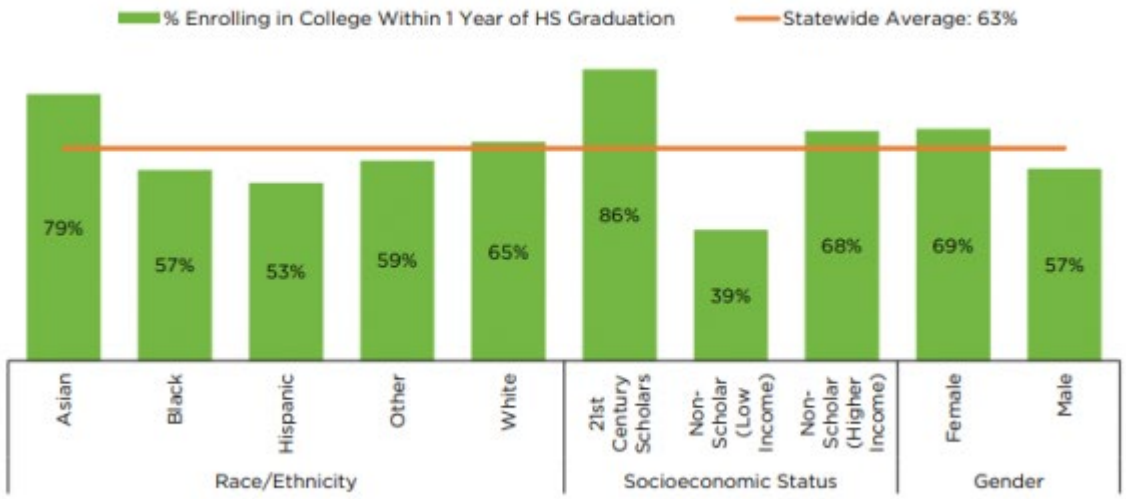
Access alone, though, is not sufficient to close the achievement and wage gaps for this target population. We need students to earn credentials, complete programs of study, and enroll in postsecondary education programs. A portion of our Perkins Leadership dollars will go towards supporting recruiting special populations into a wide-range of CTE courses. Additionally, we will also focus our funding towards similar professional development for CTE instructors and administrators as above – with diversity and inclusion practices and culturally responsive instruction – to support our special populations in CTE at both the secondary and postsecondary levels. Part of Perkins includes Civil Rights monitoring. The Office of CTE will provide technical assistance to help our CTE districts proactively comply with all Civil Rights regulations, rather than waiting for a monitoring visit.

In the postsecondary space with adult learners, similar strategies – professional development and examining equity in access – can also be replicated through Indiana's Perkins Leadership dollars. Perkins can also be used to further other equitable strategies for historically underrepresented minorities. Through our Perkins Reserve funds, we plan to administer grants to community colleges that create and implement local strategies to close performance gaps. Because Ivy Tech Community College has pioneered the use of the co-requisite model in math, our community college system could build a similar model with CTE courses.[21] Contingent upon programmatic academic needs, postsecondary Perkins could integrate academics further into technical courses by concurrently offering any remedial support with technical classes. This could help remove a barrier some of our historically underrepresented minorities who seek postsecondary education face.

As well, we will require our postsecondary Perkins recipients to focus on more academic integration, including science, into our CTE programs of study, which meets the goal of Perkins V and provides students with higher levels of academic proficiency, which is becoming increasingly critical in today's evolving economy. Perkins can also fund a continuum of work-based learning opportunities for minority students in the postsecondary space, from job shadowing to internships. We will also focus Perkins funding towards greater career awareness and guidance. This type of guidance should be targeted towards pursuing lifelong learning for our historically underrepresented minorities, encouraging them to leverage stackable credentials towards higher degrees. Though higher education is not an equalizer when it comes to wages for minorities, it does boost economic opportunities and mobility prospects. This type of counseling could include financial aid opportunities to help offset costs, including both federal and state programs.

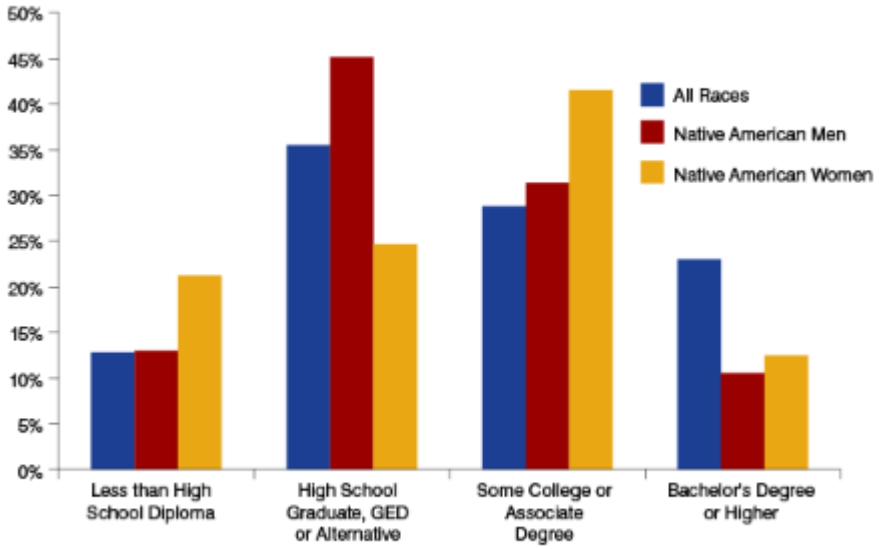
Postsecondary Education Attainment: Trends in college going rates among student demographic groups show that while some gaps are closing in Indiana, others have widened over the past five years. Over the past year, the gap in college going rates between Black and White students stayed the same, but both groups went down 1 percentage point. The gap in college going rates between Hispanic and White students did shrink. Over the last five years, only Asian students and Latino students experienced increases in college-going rates.[22]

Figure 10. **College-going** rates by student demographics (2017 High School Cohort)



Eighty-seven percent of Hoosier Native American men have a high school diploma or higher, compared to 79% of Native American women.[23]

Figure 4: Indiana's Adult Educational Attainment, 2011



Note: Educational attainment statistics are calculated for those age 25 and older.
Source: IBRC, using American Community Survey data

Because cost is often a prohibitive factor to college enrollment and attendance, schools and Boards must encourage all students to file the **FAFSA** in their senior year. Federal financial aid is applicable at any accredited institution of higher education and can help ease some of the financial burdens students and families face. Coupled with federal financial aid, Indiana offers several state programs:

- **21st Century Scholars** program provides up to four years of undergraduate tuition to income-eligible students at participating colleges or universities in Indiana, as well as

step-by-step guidance and support to make sure they succeed in college and receive support to finish their degree. As the program requires student enrollment in middle school, it is vital to provide college- and career-coaching to our underrepresented minorities earlier in their academic careers. Schools can partner with institutions, Workforce Boards, and community organizations, in addition to leveraging **Title IV** ESSA funds to provide additional counseling in middle school.

- **Frank O'Bannon** is designed to provide access for Hoosier students to attend eligible public, private, and proprietary postsecondary institutions. Eligibility for the grant is based on financial need as determined by the FAFSA. The grant may be used toward tuition and regularly assessed fees. Students in their first award year will receive the one-time award amount based on both the institution type and expected family contribution. Students receive additional aid for hitting key success markers, such as earning an Academic Honors Degree or an Associate's Degree. In addition to college- and career-counseling, we must also increase the diversity of students earning our Honors Diploma.
- **Adult Student Grant** offers assistance to individuals starting or completing an Associate's degree, Bachelor's degree, or certificates by providing a $1,000 grant per semester. It is specifically designed to meet the unique needs of working adults. This financial aid can complement WIOA Core Programs to help boost postsecondary attainment with this target population.
- **Workforce Ready Grant** removes financial barriers that may prevent Hoosiers from getting the training they need for a job in one of Indiana's five high-demand fields. The grant pays for all tuition and regularly assessed fees for qualifying high-value certificates. The grant is available for up to two years. As minorities often have lower postsecondary attainment and wages, increasing marketing to, enrollment in, and persistence towards completion of this target population could help provide access to Indiana's higher-wage careers. As individuals are referred to this program, our community colleges and training providers must doggedly follow-up with them to ensure enrollment. Once enrolled, either WIOA Core Programs or community college services can assist with some of the wraparound supports, such as transportation, childcare, and career counseling.
- **Earline S. Rogers Student Teaching Stipend for Minorities** is available for minority students (defined as black and Latino individuals) who will participate in student teaching or a school administration internship as a part of their degree requirements during the semester in which they receive it. Students must agree in writing to apply for teaching positions in Indiana and, if hired, teach in Indiana for at least three years.
- **William A. Crawford Minority Teacher Scholarship**is available to minority students (defined as black and Latino individuals) who intend to pursue, or are currently pursuing, a course of study that would enable them to teach in an accredited school in Indiana. Students must agree in writing to apply for teaching positions in Indiana and, if hired, teach in Indiana for at least three years.

While the latter two scholarships provide assistance to historically underrepresented minorities to access higher education, they are also significant to increasing Indiana's teacher pipeline. Research suggests that student outcomes, such as test scores, attendance, and suspension, rates are positively affected by a demographic match between teachers and students. This could be due to the ability of same-race role models to inspire minority students to achieve, as well as its

effect on teacher expectations.[24] Through these two scholarships, we can increase our current minority college attendance and completion, as well as positively impact future minority college attendance and completion. Greater minority representation in the teaching force helps with both current and future economic mobility of this target population.

The Indiana Commission for Higher Education recently launched a pilot program, **Padres Estrellas (State Program)**, focused on empowering Hoosier Hispanic and Latino communities to provide college and career support to students and families across the state. Funded by Indiana's Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP), five parents work with schools, neighborhoods and community partners on helping students and families enroll in the 21st Century Scholars program and in the Next Level Jobs Workforce Ready Grant. The goal is on increasing Latino student access to and attainment of higher education credentials. The purpose of Padres Estrellas is to build upon the Commission for Higher Education's (CHE) recent successes in outreach to Latino families by exploring and engaging parents as partners. CHE will harness the resources of Latino-serving community organizations in five regions across the state to recruit, train, and retain five Padres Estrellas who will be instrumental in developing and sustaining relationships with Latino families in their respective communities to boost educational success and equity across the state. In addition to partnering with community organizations, CHE will also encourage their Padres Estrellas to connect with regional Workforce Development Boards to serve as a supplemental resource or co-located partner for Latino Hoosiers.

Community partners throughout Indiana, such as the **Indiana Black Expo**, **100 Black Men**, **Indiana Latino Institute**, **La Plaza**, and **the Sociedad Amigos de Colombia De Indiana (Community Programs)**, also offer financial aid, mentoring, and college and career counseling to historically underrepresented minorities hoping to pursue higher education. Institutions may also offer financial aid specifically to minority students, such as **Butler University's Black Alumni Association Endowed Scholarship (Institution of Higher Education Program)**. As we scale our career counseling to youth and adults comprising this target population, our regional Workforce Development Boards can help schools and districts curate any and all opportunities – local, state, or even national – for financial aid assistance through **Wagner-Peyser** funds.

Title I – Adult, Dislocated Worker, or Youth (Core Program): For those individuals that meet the income, age, and/or employment eligibility requirements for our WIOA Core Programs, these programs can provide employment and career services at local WorkOnes. These funds can braid with other forms of financial support as a supplement to help with any education and training costs, work-based learning, transportation, financial support, and other needed services. In addition to providing wraparound supports, WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker can also fund individualized assessments to determine eligibility for career interests, skill levels (including literacy, numeracy, and English language proficiency), aptitudes, and abilities (including skills gaps). WorkOne staff may assist with employability skills development (learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, and professional conduct) to prepare for employment or training. Through the state's data management system, we can also track program access and outcomes-focused data by race and ethnicity, disaggregated by major subgroup. For those historically underrepresented minorities looking to upskill, our WorkOnes can help them navigate the postsecondary education system – including filing the FAFSA and applying for state financial aid.

Pre-apprenticeship and pre-employment programs can be especially valuable for people of color who have been historically underrepresented in certain industries and apprenticeships.

These programs can be paired with Adult Education to help workers acquire a basic level of academic- and industry-relevant skills. Effective pre-apprenticeship programs expose workers to job sites and work environments, as well as provide income support for workers to address barriers to employment. Pre-employment and pre-apprenticeship programs also create formal access points to employers. Either apprenticeship program or WIOA Adult and Dislocated can help with direct expenses from this program, such as childcare and transportation.

WIOA Youth, like WIOA Adult, can help with wraparound supports, as well as serve as a gap filler for educational training costs. Some services that can be prioritized for a co-enrolled individual include:

1. Paid and unpaid work experiences;
2. Leadership development opportunities;
3. Supportive services;
4. Mentoring;
5. Follow-up services; and
6. Comprehensive guidance and counseling.

Title II – Adult Education (Core Program): Based on the individual's skills assessment or attainment of a high school diploma, a minority Hoosier could be automatically referred to Adult Education for assistance earning a high school equivalency, technical training through Integrated Education and Training, or other educational services (e.g., literacy and academic remediation and English language acquisition activities). These services should be provided in coordination with those outlined above in WIOA Adult or Youth to facilitate enrollment. They could also be offered concurrently with higher education programs at our community colleges, expediting the time investment an individual would need to make. Counseling regarding the use of **Ability to Benefit**, which allows individuals without a secondary diploma to access federal financial aid, could help reduce postsecondary education costs for AE students that are also historically underrepresented minorities. AtB allows students who are concurrently enrolled in connected AE and eligible postsecondary programs, but do not have a high school diploma or equivalent, to be Pell eligible.

Title III – Wagner-Peyser (Core Program): For minority Hoosiers, this program can serve as the resource to fund career counseling (either in person or virtually), labor exchange services, and assistance for job searches and placement. Local Boards could pioneer virtual chatting through a chatbox feature with a career coach as a way to increase accessibility to WorkOnes. Career counseling and development of individual employment plans (employment goals, achievement objectives, appropriate services, and eligible training providers) can be prioritized to assist these individuals in determining their career aspiration. Wagner-Peyser staff can also assist with business services to employers, employer associations, or other such organizations on diverse employment-related attraction and retention practices in the area. Additionally, as these individuals are state merit staff, Indiana will prioritize professional development in cultural competency and responsivity to assist with design-thinking practices. For an individual receiving **SNAP E&T or TANF**, those funds can help supplement the career navigation services under Wagner-Peyser, in addition to tuition and fees.

Title IV – Vocational Rehabilitation (Core Program): If an individual has a physical or mental disability that constitutes or results in a substantial barrier to employment, s/he may qualify for Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services. Through a common intake process, the state will

understand the multifaceted needs of an individual and where various programs can serve as scaffolding to our Employment and Training services through WIOA Adult and state programs, like Next Level Jobs. Contingent upon the individual's needs and barriers, the WorkOne can offer the programming and funding for that person's employment service, with VR serving as an supplementary support. Co-enrollment into VR could provide the individual with any accommodations or auxiliary supports needed for training, rather than relying on VR to be the sole source of support and funding. These supports can include:

- Personal and vocational adjustment services,
- Assistive technologies,
- Rehabilitation technology,
- Adaptive aids and devices and any associated training, and
- Interpreter or reader services.

Diverse Hiring Practices (Employer Initiatives): Indiana's employers are seeking diversity in their organizations and companies. Diversity provides employers with access to a greater range of talent and insight into the needs and motivations of a larger swath of their client or customer base, rather than just a small part of it. It also makes companies more effective, successful, *and profitable.*[25] To strengthen their own workforces and talent pipelines, employers can and should be critical partners in addressing racial and ethnic disparities. One strategy employers could use to increase diversity is to redefine job criteria to more accurately match the skills and requirements needed for the job. This could alleviate historically underrepresented candidates from being eliminated because they do not have the requisite degree. Employers can also invest in incumbent worker programs to help offset skill gaps among underrepresented minorities through upskilling/reskilling opportunities.[26] At the state level, we will work to recognize and promote employers' and industry's efforts to increase diversity in their workforce. Through the Governor's Workforce Cabinet, we can facilitate partnerships between employers and community organizations that advocate or provide services for Hoosier minorities, especially in those fields where they have been historically underrepresented.

Scaling Promising Practices: Below we highlight promising practices that we hope to see scaled and replicated to address the unique barriers and challenges of this target population. Our local regions can implement these practices through strategic use of WIOA funds, philanthropic or community foundation dollars, or social impact bonds. Where applicable, local Boards or community organizations can coordinate with state agencies to apply for SNAP 50/50 FNS, which will serve as a 50% federal match for any state or philanthropic funding dedicated to SNAP recipients receiving Employment and Training services. These practices are ***Activities outside the Plan***. While not a comprehensive list, the practices showcase innovative approaches to assisting our historically underrepresented minorities in surmounting their unique circumstances.

Indiana Black Expo (Community Program): Indiana Black Expo (IBE) hosts an annual business conference, focused on providing minority businesses with the tools needed to build capacity and on providing corporate executives and professionals with development opportunities beneficial for climbing the corporate ladder. Workshops and networking opportunities are offered in this multi-day activity. Attendees have the opportunity to hear directly from experts on sustaining and expanding their businesses and networking with key decision makers at the Mayor's Breakfast and Governor's Reception. In addition, IBE's Employment Opportunity Fair is an assembly of nearly one hundred businesses in a diverse

range of industries in search of qualified employees. The event attracts thousands of attendees from around Indiana who are unemployed, under-employed, or simply looking for a change in the workplace. Many of the participating employers offer on-the-spot connects between the job market and those trying to navigate it. Spanning over three decades, it is now one of the largest job fairs in Indiana.

Salesforce (Employer Initiative): Salesforce, including its network in Indiana, stands on its mission to build a workplace that reflects society. Equality is a listed core value at Salesforce. It recognizes that empowering equality builds deeper connections with their customers and drives better company results. It strives to create a workplace that reflects the diverse communities it serves and to create an environment where everyone feels empowered to bring their full, authentic selves to work. 43.9% of the Salesforce U.S workforce is currently made up of Underrepresented Groups (e.g., Women, Black, Latino, Indigenous, Multiracial, LGBTQ, People with Disabilities, and Veterans), with an established goal to bring that to 50% by 2023.

Indiana Minority Health Coalition, Inc. (Community Program): The Indiana Minority Health Coalition (MHC) works through education, advocacy, and quality healthcare services to help racial and ethnic minorities. It conducts research and training, develops policy, and create and maintains a broad-based network of affiliate agencies. Through the IMHC, numerous programs and projects have been launched and maintained to address specific health issues in throughout the state. The IMHC collaborates with academic institutions and partners to conduct research to inform health practitioners, policy makers, and other community leaders. It also provides skills development services to help organizations provide high-quality, cultural and linguistically appropriate services. The IMHC provides high school and college students with internships that expose them to a variety of health careers, hoping to improve the number of minority students entering health professions.

[1] Georgetown University defines middle-wage jobs as those that "pay $32,000 to $53,000 per year for a full-time, full-year worker" (Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, 2015).

[2] Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, 2019. The Unequal Race for Good Jobs: How Whites Made Outsized Gains in Education and Good Jobs Compared to Blacks and Latinos.

[3] Ibid.

[4] INContext, 2013. Exploring Hoosier Minority Groups: Indiana's Black Population.

[5] INContext, 2013. Exploring Hoosier Minority Groups: Indiana's Hispanic Population.

[6] INContext, 2013. Exploring Hoosier Minority Groups: Indiana's Native American Population.

[7] INContext, 2013. Exploring Hoosier Minority Groups: Indiana's Asian Population.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Indiana Commission for Higher Education, 2019. College Equity Report 2019.

[10] Ibid.

[11] National Skills Coalition, 2019. The Roadmap for Racial Equity: An imperative for workforce development advocates.

[12] Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, 2011. The College Payoff: Education, Occupations, Lifetime Earnings.

[13] Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, 2017. Latino Education and Economic Progress: Running Faster but Still Behind.

[14] Urban Institute, 2015. Child Poverty and Adult Success.

[15] National Center for Education Statistics, 2019. Employment and Unemployment Rates by Educational Attainment.

[16] Ibid.

[17]Indiana Department of Education Compass.

[18] Indiana Department of Education, 2019. Amendment to Indiana's Consolidated State Plan under the Every Student Succeeds Act.

[19] Ibid.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Ivy Tech Community College modeled this program after the Accelerated Learning Program, which originated at the Community College of Baltimore County, and has shown consistent student success with nearly double the pass rates.

[22] Ibid.

[23] INContext, 2013. Exploring Hoosier Minority Groups: Indiana's Native American Population.

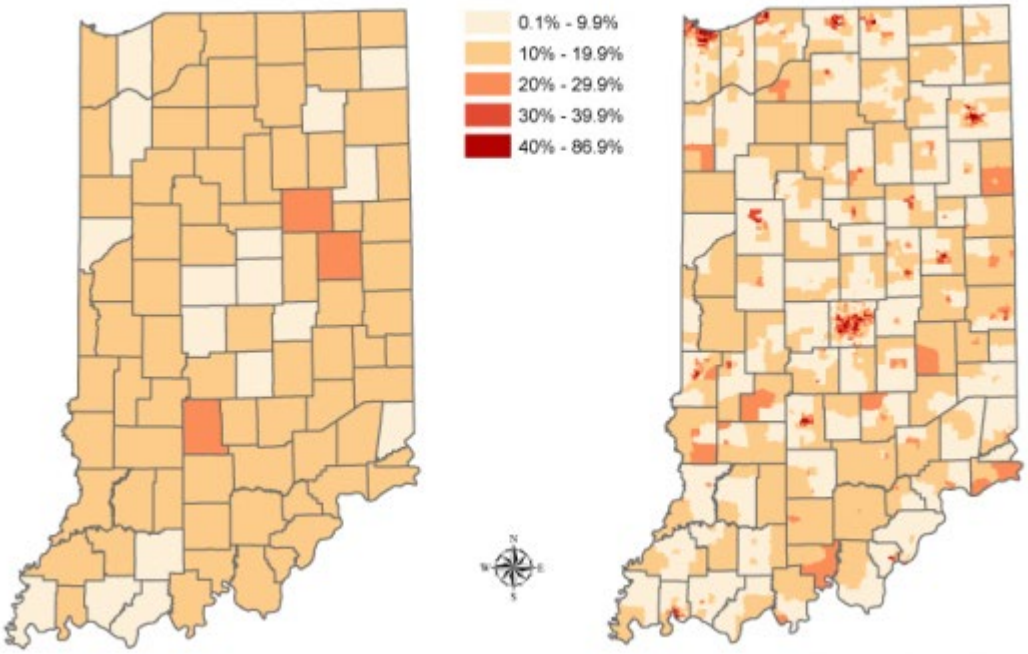
[24] The Brookings Institution, 2017. The Importance of a Diverse Teaching Force.

[25] McKinsey & Company, 2015. Why Diversity Matters.

[26] McKinsey & Company, 2019. The Future of Work in Black America.

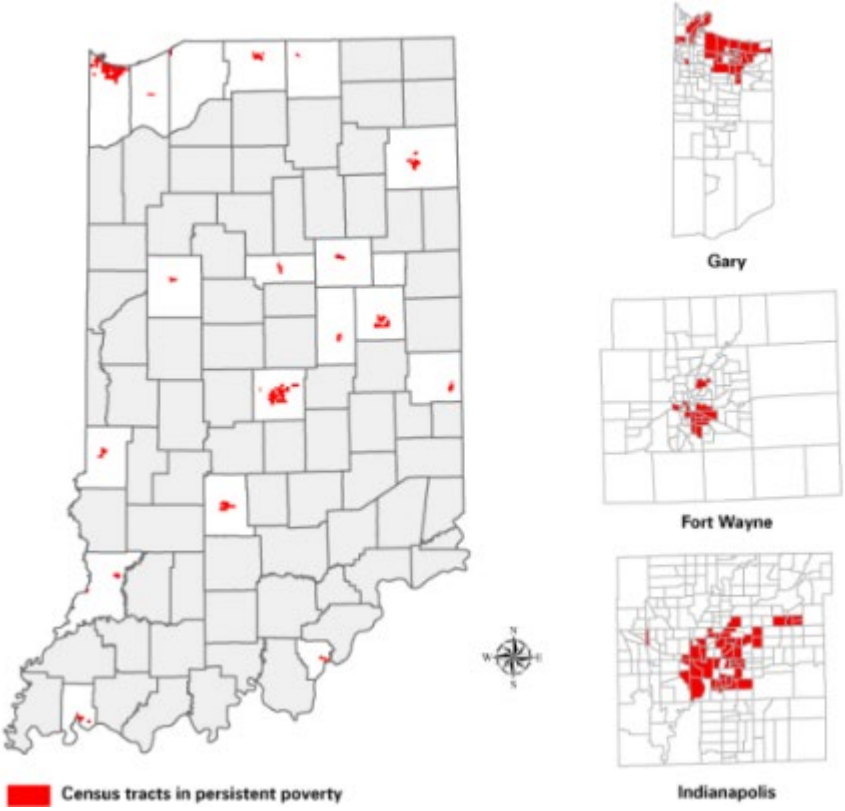
Indiana's cities are the hubs of regional economies, impacting the surrounding suburban and rural people and communities. They offer a wide range of economic, educational, and social opportunities, but their primary resource is human capital. Urban areas have dense populations, creating a swell of available talent for businesses and economic development.[1] Two of Indiana's three high-poverty counties, Delaware and Monroe, are considered urban, while the third, Grant County, contains a mix of urban and rural land. The highest rates of poverty in the state occur within Indiana's cities. The poverty rate in the 10 highest-poverty census tracts exceeds 66% of the population.[2] There is a larger proportion of high-poverty tracts in Indiana's metropolitan areas, especially in the inner cities, but there are many high-poverty tracts in nonmetropolitan locations as well.[3]

Figure 3: County and census tract individual poverty rates in Indiana, 2016



A tract has persistently high poverty when at least 20% of the population has lived in poverty over approximately three decades. Indiana's persistently poor census tracts are primarily located in or near cities, although not all cities in Indiana have persistently poor neighborhoods. In 1990, 21 of Indiana's census tracts had been highly poor since 1970, but by 2016, the number of persistently highly poor census tracts had increased to 170.[4]

Figure 4: Census tracts with persistently high individual poverty rates in Indiana, 2016

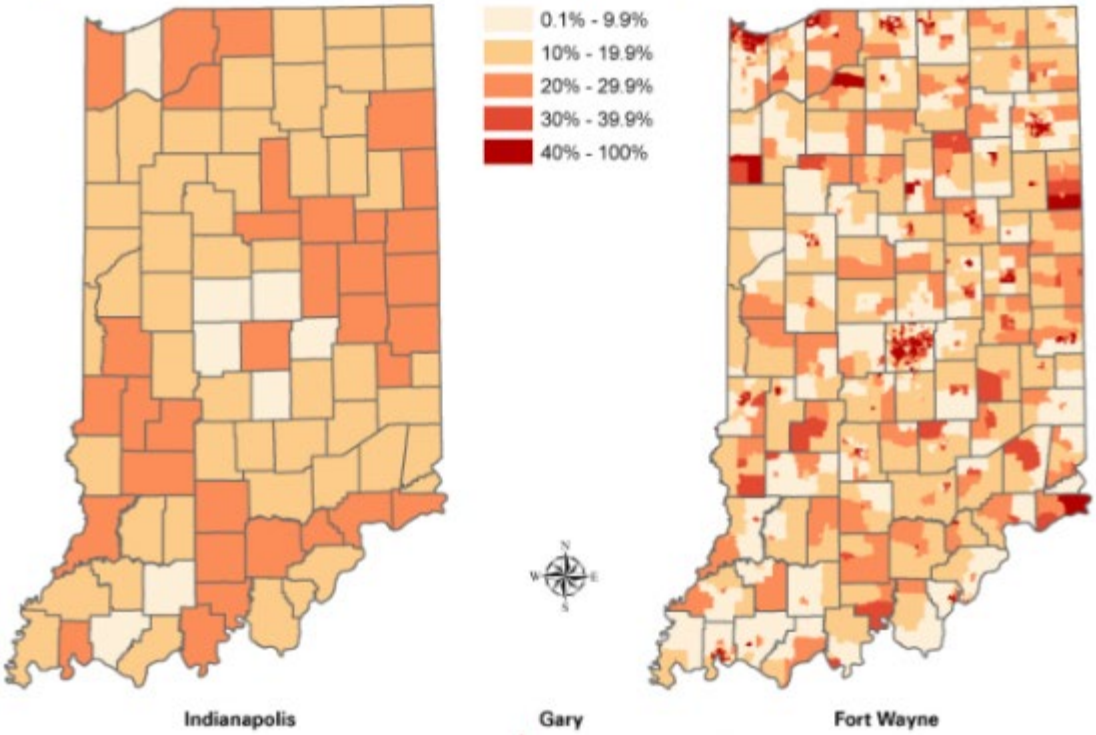


There are numerous investments in both the human capital and physical capacity of urban communities from federal funding to philanthropic dollars. Both public and private initiatives tend to focus on public housing, transportation, and education in cities, improving community resources and job opportunities for local residents. A pervasive issue within our urban centers is that a number of Hoosiers are stuck in neighborhoods that are largely isolated from the economic and social benefits that cities create.[5] Communities with low socioeconomic demographic or predominately minority populations often fail to benefit from urban resources. Low-literacy rates and educational attainment have created pockets of intergenerational poverty in Indiana's cities. Additionally, in these neighborhoods, jobs tend to focus on low-skills needed and provide low-wages. The symbiosis of educational attainment and job opportunity perpetuates the cycles of poverty in which some communities can become trapped.

In Indiana's cities, public and private investments to create a robust talent development system are starting to find the intersection between workforce and community development. Addressing concentrated poverty (an area where the poverty rate is 30% or higher) requires this type of two-prong approach due to the entanglement of social services with economic stability and opportunities. When looking at high child poverty in Indiana, three areas of the state have the greatest density:

- Along the shore of Lake Michigan
- Northeast Indianapolis
- Along a line southwest of Indianapolis

Figure 5: County and census tract child poverty rates in Indiana, 2016



While it may be easier to target poor urban areas from a funding perspective and expect greater levels of programmatic impact due to the dense population, concentrated poverty exacerbates the obstacles of being poor, such as higher crime rates, underperforming schools, poor health outcomes, and substandard housing options. These effects are particularly hard on children, who face increased levels of stress that can lead to emotional and behavioral problems.[6] Increasing the coordination between community and workforce development efforts, as well as the various funding steams, will start to break the cycles of poverty by integrating education and training more intentionally with social services.

Collaboration between the workforce development and public housing systems is essential because success in employment and housing stability are closely linked and often dependent on one another. Neither system, working on its own, has the resources, capacity, or expertise to support individuals in achieving both of those outcomes. As a result, these systems must collaborate to help ensure that appropriate employment and housing services and supports exist at scale in communities and that the individuals served by these systems can access the appropriate resources. Over the next four years, we hope to amend our Combined Plan to include related programs under the **Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority** (which include the Community Development Block Grant program, Continuum of Care, Family Self-Sufficiency program, Jobs Plus program, and the Community Services Block Grant employment and training activities). The amendment will reflect effective combined planning processes between the public workforce system and homeless services system.

As we explore ways to integrate workforce development programs under the IHCDA, potential strategies we will consider are:

- Ensuring the identification, offering, and implementation of a robust menu of employment and support services for adult and youth jobseekers living in public housing;

- Helping identify and implement effective referral processes between the workforce and public housing services systems and partners;
- Coordinating the workforce programs and support service resources offered through IHCDA with our WorkOnes; and
- Determining the unmet needs of participants served and how WIOA and IHCDA services and funds could be braided together.

One program we will examine leveraging in our urban areas is the **Family Self-Sufficiency Program**. Indiana received a total of $1.2 million in 2018 from the U.S. Housing and Urban Development for public housing authorities to continue helping residents participating in the Housing Choice Voucher Program and/or reside in public housing to increase their earned income and reduce their dependency on public assistance and rental subsidies.[7] The FSS program encourages strategies that link housing assistance with a broad spectrum of services that will enable participating families to find jobs, increase earned income, reduce or eliminate the need for rental and/or welfare assistance, and make progress toward achieving economic independence and housing self-sufficiency.[8] As the Governor's Workforce Cabinet explores strategies to combine those workforce development programs administered by IHCDA into the overall talent development system, we intend on using our convening power through our various state agencies to **develop and disseminate best practices** on helping urban Hoosiers with barriers to employment enter the workforce. As this will include strategies that take into consideration education, transportation, childcare, child support, domestic violence, criminal justice history, and other factors, we will work across agencies to identify those regions or cities with best practices that can be scaled.

At the local level, Indiana will further the co-location of workforce, social services, and housing programs. Co-locating workforce and homeless services and providers can create a deeper level of collaboration that requires sharing space and its associated resources at the local level. Allowing homeless staff to co-locate physically in the WorkOne or portably in high trafficked locations (e.g., schools, community centers, and libraries) could decrease travel time for those who are homeless and increase their access to a greater amount of opportunities. In Indiana communities with limited public transportation options, co-locating services at a one-stop service center will help alleviate a primary barrier for this target population. Co-location also facilitates real-time information sharing among staff, allowing staff to better align the activities of their respective systems, leverage existing resources, and increase opportunities for collective innovation that may lead to better service delivery approaches. To help increase the co-location and integration of housing and workforce services at the local level, our local Workforce Development Boards may include those entities representing or serving jobseekers facing housing instability into their leadership bodies.

Though many of our low-income Hoosiers may reside in these communities, this section is addressing the main needs of urban populations: transportation, housing, and employment. These barriers arise from persisting challenges related to affordable housing, inadequate infrastructure, income inequality, and cyclical poverty. Being raised in high poverty communities undercuts children's long-term outcome, with living conditions creating poor health, low educational outcomes, and limited employment opportunities. Upward mobility is especially low in Indiana's cities, such as Indianapolis. In a ranking of intergenerational mobility, child income ranked against parent income rank, of the 50 Largest Commuting Zones in the US, Indianapolis ranked 47, indicating that children born in this urban area have low chances of progressing economically.[9] By integrating wraparound services that impact

employment opportunities in our urban communities, we can create career opportunities that can increase Hoosiers' educational attainment and economic mobility.

Though many other target populations may overlap with this particular one, this section is focused on the way in which our Core, Partner, and state programs and services can be differentiated to directly support and address distinctive challenges within urban communities. Additional services identified in other sections may be available to urban individuals contingent on eligibility, but the barriers unique to neighborhoods with concentrated poverty. Through this systemic approach, we want to establish basic supports to provide urban Hoosiers' with greater education and training, employment services, and wraparound supports. Though the aim of this section is to provide a comprehensive view of the workforce and social services system in urban Indiana, it does not encompass all local programs. Our urban regions have the advantage of multiple partners and programs providing services to Hoosiers to help with economic and social mobility. The multitude of partners in urban areas also create complex ecosystems that require diligence to ensure coordination of services. Our Workforce Development Boards can enhance the foundational level of services outlined in the Plan through local programs and implementation. The local Boards will explain how they can include local programs and workforce development ecosystems to achieve an integrated delivery of workforce and social supports and maximize federal, state, and local investments in our talent development system

Co-Enrolled Programs: Hoosiers who live in urban areas will be co-enrolled into the following primary programs and services of benefit to this target population. An individual's unique circumstances or preference may not necessitate co-enrollment in each program. This section includes ***Core and Partner Program Activities***, ***Activities outside the Plan***, and***Individual Services***for those individuals.

Title I-Adult (Core Program): Our urban communities can use WIOA Adult to refresh the technical and employability skills of Hoosiers to future-proof current jobs. Title I can help shift Hoosier's skillsets to align more directly with the middle-wage jobs in the area. All trainings should be aligned to Indiana's career pathways, comprised of multiple entry points and stackable credentials leading to career advancement and economic mobility. Pairing WIOA Adult with federal and state financial aid opportunities accessed through the **FAFSA**, local Workforce Development Boards can simultaneously increase the educational attainment and decrease the skills gap for urban communities. Braiding this funding with other forms of financial aid can help increase postsecondary educational attainment for our urban Hoosiers. Because educational attainment and economic outcomes are so closely linked, access to educational opportunities can be the catalyst for economic mobility for many residents of urban communities, providing access to employment that will lead to economic mobility for themselves and future generations. In addition to the career and employment services that can be offered through WIOA Adult, this funding stream can help scale work-based learning opportunities for urban Hoosiers, so they can earn and learn as they upskill or reskill. Title I can help subsidize on-the-job training expenses or wages.

Additionally, WIOA Adult could also assist urban Hoosiers looking for economic mobility with

1. Education and training that stacks towards a postsecondary credential or certification;
2. Skills that directly tie to employers or industries that provide well-paying jobs in key sectors; and
3. A range of additional supports and services to help workers deal with problems that arise, either during the training period or beyond.

In some cases, there may be transportation or geographic barriers between urban neighborhoods and our WorkOnes, training providers, and institutions of higher education, creating a physical barrier preventing Hoosiers from accessing these resources. WorkOnes can address some of these barriers by locating offices, mobile services, and training programs within target communities, as well as offering office hours and partnering with training programs that provide opportunities outside of the regular 9-to-5 work hours and having information in languages other than English. Through co-location efforts, WorkOnes can partner with schools, community organizations, or community centers to offer mobile or temporary services within specific neighborhoods and bring those services to individuals, rather than waiting on individuals to come into an office. Urban communities could leverage this funding stream to increase trainings within businesses through work-based learning or an eligible provider, as opposed to an offsite location. Embedding training within local community centers or employers could help address the obstacle of transportation in these isolated communities.

Similar to rural areas, local Boards can use Title I to provide Hoosiers with transportation vouchers to cover the cost of gas or vehicle maintenance. Subsidizing transportation costs through supportive service payments could also cover mileage reimbursement. WorkOnes can use WIOA Adult to help provide transportation access in the form of public transportation vouchers or assistance. It can fund providing transportation to and from education or training programs. For those looking to access the WorkOne outside of business hours or without needing transportation, urban WorkOnes could pilot the use of a chatbox feature that connects individuals to resources and career coaches virtually. In addition to providing transportation, creating more virtual and online accessibility to our WorkOnes and staff will alleviate this barrier.

To help reduce the amount of travel needed to navigate our workforce development and social services systems, various partners could co-locate in create a true one-stop for Hoosiers. Co-location could include:

- **Formal co-location** – physically locating Core and Partner Programs at one office.
- **Using itinerant staff** – embedding staff from various programs in different offices (e.g., SNAP staffer is embedded at the WorkOne and vice versa).
- **Mobile locations –** Core and Partner Program staff offer services in various hubs of community activity, such as libraries, schools, partnering non-profits, college campuses, and community centers.
- **Referral relationships –** using a "warm hand-off" process, to ensure direct contact with partners or following up to ensure services had been received. Referrals between different programs must be collaborative and coordinated. WorkOnes, community partners, schools, and institutions of higher education should liaise referrals for constituents person-to-person, rather than merely program-to-program. Both follow-through and follow-up are necessary to ensure quality for the constituent.

In some urban areas, the public transportation system is trailblazing innovative approaches to meeting the needs of the community. The **Gary Public Transportation Corp**, for example, has public buses routed to schools and has created a partnership with nearby Ivy Tech Community College and Vincennes University for bus routes. Though these are positive developments for the Gary community, transportation challenges continue to create a barrier for residents. Timing, street lighting, and safety all remain concerns. Some employers, like **Methodist Hospital**, have invested in paving roads and street lighting because of the economic implications for attracting and retaining both its workforce and clientele. Local Boards can lead

partnerships between employers, community foundations and organizations, local chambers of commerce, and WorkOnes to help improve transportation in urban areas to provide for greater accessibility. Though WIOA dollars help address the short-term transportation needs of individuals, longer-term solutions can be spearheaded and coordinated through our local Boards.

For many urban residents, access to consistent childcare services can be a barrier that hampers employment opportunities. The **Child Care and Development Fund (Federal Program)** and **On My Way Pre-K (State Program)** can provide vouchers to help offset these costs. Title I could also offer stipends to cover childcare costs, while Hoosiers participate in workforce trainings or education programs. The difficulty with childcare in urban areas is converse to that in rural areas – there are many options for childcare and PreK services, though with greater variance in quality. All three funding streams should go towards those providers at a level 3 or 4 on the Paths to Quality by either helping to fund an increase in capacity or in quality. Local Boards can also determine strategies to include premium payments for evening and weekend childcare or scaling childcare options at WorkOnes, community colleges, libraries, and employers to help parents with multiple shifts or doing training after work hours.

Title III-Wagner-Peyser (Core Program): Business services in WorkOnes and Local Economic Development Organizations are essential to the long-term success of urban populations. Increasing the communication and partnerships between local businesses to better understand current business' needs can assist with identifying job openings, emerging industries and companies, and any skills gaps that need to be addressed in secondary, postsecondary, or adult education programs. Though either WIOA Adult or Wagner-Peyser, business service teams could bring together the workers, employers, training providers, and sources of supports needed to make this process work. Business service staff might help overcome employer resistance to hiring workers by providing more information on positive worker skills and attributes and by carefully screening the applicants whom they refer to these employers.

Additionally, given the number and variety of employers in dense urban areas, Workforce Development Boards might preference delving into deep relationships with those offering middle-wage positions, on-the-job training options, or additional wraparound supports. Urban areas could err on the side of fewer, but deeper, relationships with employers, rather than more superficial relationships with a greater breadth of businesses. We should prioritize the quality of the relationship and services provided to the businesses before pursuing quantity. Because urban areas have the latter in abundance, ensuring the former is met will be a critical aspect of their business services. Moreover, local Boards could use Wagner-Peyser to help inform Hoosiers about new and emerging opportunities in certain sectors, mindful of the negative histories and perspectives some neighborhoods might have towards various industries. In some of our urban neighborhoods, there may be some acrimony towards industries that once had a presence in the community but no longer do. Through career coaching, WorkOne staff can help discuss current and potential opportunities in these sectors that might offer strong long-term careers and wages. Similar to our other target populations, these programs can serve as the resource to fund career counseling (either in person or virtually), labor exchange services, and assistance for job searches and placement.

Carl D. Perkins (Partner Program): Through the CTE Redesign efforts under Perkins, we intend to improve the postsecondary attainment of urban students while they are in high school, providing them with greater opportunities for future economic mobility and personal fulfillment. Our K-12 and postsecondary institutions are designing structured academic and career pathways for students that explicitly lead and/or transfer to careers providing family-

supporting wages. To do this we must ensure that schools in the most economically disadvantaged communities across the state have access to the same quality equipment and course offerings as those of their peers. By ensuring equity in the academic space for all, we seek to give all Hoosier students, regardless of neighborhood, a chance to achieve in the CTE setting, leading to careers in some of the most in demand careers in the state. Perkins can supplement state tuition support for CTE to help provide state-of-the-art equipment and facilities, as well as instructional strategies that support various learning styles and needs. The redesigned programs of study (or career pathways under WIOA) will facilitate the extension of postsecondary pathways into high schools through intensive collaboration between community colleges with K–12 systems. Boo

Perkins can support advising (including both academic and career planning) in high schools and colleges should provide prospective and current students with information regarding various opportunities for employment in specific fields, projected earnings (at entry level and beyond), and the levels of educational attainment associated with high employment and high wages. Perkins can help support this activity and professional growth in both secondary and postsecondary, using local **Wagner-Peyser** staff to help fill any gaps. Perkins can also supplement the expansion of the work-based learning continuum to include greater career awareness and exploration, career guidance, and employability development in middle and high schools and at the postsecondary level. For adults or at-risk youth, these programs can also braid in funds through WIOA Title I to assist with wages or other funding supports. Indiana's **Local Career Coaching Grants** may be utilized in tandem with Perkins and other funding sources (such as **Title IV under the Every Student Succeeds Act**) as a means to expand this type of advising to more students.

Potential Eligibility: Additional services or co-enrollment rural Hoosiers may receive depending on individual circumstances. This section includes ***Core and Partner Program Activities***and***Individual Services***.

Apprenticeships (State and Federal Programs): Apprenticeships, both traditional registered apprenticeships through the US Department of Labor and non-traditional developed through Indiana's Office of Work Based Learning and Apprenticeship, can provide consistent wages, debt-free education and higher wages to urban Hoosiers. Workers who complete an apprenticeship earn an average starting salary of $50,000 and earn about $300,000 more than comparable workers over their lifetimes. Employers also benefit from having the ability to build a pipeline of skilled workers.[10] Scaling access to state and federal apprenticeship programs will provide a way for urban students to earn postsecondary credentials and an income simultaneously. Pre- and/or youth- apprenticeship programs can aim to define clear career paths, help students (either in K-12 or adults) choose the best track for them, and prepare them to secure and succeed in full-time employment.

Title IV – Vocational Rehabilitation (Core Program): If an individual living in an urban locale has a physical or mental disability that constitutes or results in a substantial barrier to employment, s/he may qualify for Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services. Through a common intake process, the state will understand the multifaceted needs of an individual and where various programs can serve as scaffolding to our Employment and Training services through WIOA Adult and state programs, like Next Level Jobs. Contingent upon the individual's needs and barriers, the WorkOne can offer the programming and funding for that person's employment service, with VR serving as an supplementary support. Co-enrollment into VR could provide the individual with any accommodations or auxiliary supports needed for

training, rather than relying on VR to be the sole source of support and funding. These supports can include:

- Personal and vocational adjustment services,
- Assistive technologies,
- Rehabilitation technology,
- Adaptive aids and devices and any associated training, and
- Interpreter or reader services.

City Profiles: Indiana has 12 different metropolitan areas located across the state. Each of these metropolitan areas has a unique history and a distinctive set of needs for their economic future. Despite their differences, Hoosier cities do share some commonalities. Below we examine the profiles of four urban areas in various parts of the state, each serving as the economic engine in their region of Indiana, to highlight how Hoosier cities share similarities and differences in their infrastructure, populations, and strategies. The problem many of our cities face is coordinating the workforce, housing, education, and social services ecosystem to ensure that programs are effectively and efficiently impacting residents. For our local Workforce Development Boards, there is the added layer of how they can add value to this ecosystem and partner with various organizations – including city government – to successfully deliver these services to Hoosiers.

Evansville: In many ways, Evansville is a city on the precipice of upward economic mobility. With an increase in population, a chance for increased investment from industry due to infrastructure changes to I-69, and a steady amount of job openings in the city, Evansville looks to be a thriving economic hub in southwestern Indiana. The I-69 project will have a major impact on future planning for Vanderburgh County and the city of Evansville. Its influence on land use and city planning around these improvements will allow this area of the state to maximize this access point and its ability to drive activity for the community. From 1990 to 2010, the population of Vanderburgh County, including Evansville, has increased by over 14,000 people. This trend is projected to continue through at least 2035. With this growth comes a need for an increase in housing opportunities. The county projects a gain of almost 11,000 housing units to combat this potential increase in residents.

The city plans on both demolishing blighted homes and redeveloping neighborhoods to meet the needs of the future, since about a third of homes were built before 1935. In 2010, 22.7% of owner-occupied units and 53.1% of renter occupied units were burdened in Evansville. Burdened residents incur housing rates that take more than 30% of their overall income. This resulted in an estimated 17,612 city households burdened in the city. This burden can lead to threats of mortgage default, eviction and homelessness, and stress. The Evansville Housing Authorities, in collaboration with Advantix Development Corporation, has recently converted 888 units of public housing to project-based voucher funding. This will allow for greater housing security for residents. By indemnifying funding and investing in building repair, Evansville is taking the steps necessary to maintain affordable, up-to-date housing for its residents. As the city continues to expand these collaborative efforts, more families will benefit, potentially lessening the amount of households burdened in the city and providing Evansville residents with the quality of life they need to thrive.

Similar to other Indiana cities, Evansville's household income rates are below that of both the state and the country. The median household income for the county is $42,369 with the city of

Evansville at on $35,469. Approximately 15%, or 28,000, residents live below the poverty line in Vanderburgh County. Increasing wages will be critical to talent development and retention in Evansville. As both youth and adults attain a greater amount of postsecondary credentials, business attraction will also improve, which may have a positive impact on wages.[11]

Fort Wayne: Indiana's second largest city is Fort Wayne; it is the 75th largest city in America with a population over 250,000. Fort Wayne is located in Allen County and serves as the economic and cultural center of northeastern Indiana. This city and the surrounding region has continued to achieve steady population growth in recent decades. As Allen County moves into the 21st Century, its economy is in the midst of a fundamental and gradual transition moving from a long-standing dependence on industry to a knowledge-based economy. This ongoing transition continues to carry significant implications for the community, its workers, and its residents. The relationship between comprehensive planning and economic development is certainly affected by this shift. Past city plans had centered around equating economic development with industrial development, concentrating on planning for future industrial sites. But in adopting its latest comprehensive plan in 2007, the city made an emphasis to begin thinking about its economic growth and overall prosperity through a broader mindset.[12

As was common throughout Rust Belt cities, the 1970s and 1980s were times of economic depression in Fort Wayne, when much of the city's manufacturing foundation eroded and the blue-collar workforce shrank. The 1990's started a period of positive change for the city as it diversified its economy, reduced crime, and invested in downtown redevelopment. Manufacturing now employs only 16.9% of Allen County's workforce, with distribution, transportation, and logistics (23.1%), healthcare (17.9%), professional and business services (12.1%), leisure and hospitality (11.1%), and financial services (6.3%) serving as other significant sectors of employment.[13]

Despite economic diversification, the city was significantly impacted by the Great Recession. The Pew Research Center found that the city lost nearly a quarter of its manufacturing jobs and 11% of its economic status between 2000 and 2014.[14] This impact was particularly felt by Fort Wayne's less affluent areas, with an Economic Innovation Group's 2016 Distressed Communities Index Report ranking Fort Wayne among the most unequal large cities in the U.S. in terms of linking economic opportunities to its distressed zip codes.[15]

A significant challenge Allen County has been facing is the opioid epidemic, with an overall estimate of 60,000 individuals misusing opioids. As a result, the criminal justice system is burdened with first-time and repeat drug offenders, many unable to break the cycle of addiction. Subsequently, sufficient residential treatment and sober living in the community cannot meet the demand. Along with the state's overall focus on this topic, the city has been making continuous investments towards addressing this concern, including utilizing surplus funds from this past fiscal year to support the local police department and social service partners in their efforts to combat the epidemic.

Housing diversification is also a significant need for the city's future success. As the type of families living in Fort Wayne has diversified, the availability of housing has not kept up. From 1970 to 2000, the number of non-family (no spouse or dependent children living with householder) households in the county increased by 26,206 and represented 33% of all households, compared to 19% in 1970. As the city moves forward, a continual focus on balanced economic growth across existing and new industries and businesses will be essential to weather any future downturns in specific sectors. Diversifying housing options and continuing to invest in various quality of life initiatives will also be important towards the continuing flourishing of Fort Wayne.

This city stands out among Indiana's urban centers through it efforts spearheading regional leadership. The Northeast Regional Partnership is a regional collaborative organization focused on increasing business investment, improving quality of life, and growing the population in the Northeast region of Indiana. The Partnership is comprised of the 11 counties surrounding Fort Wayne. The mission of this organization is not restricted to the urban areas of Fort Wayne, but encompass all of the Northeastern area of Indiana foster business investments and economic growth. The strategies this area has employed to increase economic development include:

- Certified sites: By meeting a stringent set of criteria to minimize potential roadblocks and ensure fast-track construction, the certified sites program makes it easier to relocate or expand business.
- Industry Cluster Initiative: The Partnership identifies and targets specific industries that are high-growth and high-potential sectors.
- Vision 2030: This is a regional initiative designed to transform Northeast Indiana into a top global competitor by focusing on a common mission to develop, attract, and retain talent. From business climate and infrastructure to education and entrepreneurship, the goal of Vision 2030 is three-fold: 1) Increase the Per Capita Personal Income to 90% against the national average; 2) increase the population of Northeast Indiana to 1 million residents; and 3) increase postsecondary education and credential attainment to more than 60%.

The Partnership integrates stakeholders from various aspects of the workforce development system, including the Local Economic Development Organization (LEDO) Council, the Regional Opportunities Council, regional Workforce Development Board, and the Mayors and Commissioners Caucus provides our government leaders from all 11 counties with a unified voice to advance economic development policies at the state level.

Fort Wayne has consistently seen a low unemployment rate and a strong labor force participation rate in recent years. Latest data put the overall unemployment rate at just over 3% amongst the workforce of over 219,000 individuals. Additionally, both state and local investments are targeting quality of life and investments in neighborhoods throughout the city. Fort Wayne was also named an Ability City by Ability Indiana, as a recognition of the community's commitment to supporting the employment of individuals with disabilities. Fort Wayne and Allen County partnered in the creation of the City-County Disability Advisory Council to assist in providing equal access for people with disabilities with employment, services, programs, and activities. Recent investments into partnerships through agencies such as Easterseals Arc of Northeast Indiana, which provides support for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, are being used to ensure individuals with disabilities have access to vocational assessment and skills training and accessible employment opportunities.

Gary: Urban blight, the deterioration of a city due to aging, neglect, and financial support, has created serious concerns for the City of Gary. The historic city, created originally for employing and housing the workers and families of US Steel Gary Works, has experienced drastic changes since the loss of this industry. Neighborhoods were built for a completely different time, and, since the loss of a large chunk of the steel industry, Gary has experienced an exodus of its population. The city is approximately 50 square miles in size but, 40% of city's land is vacant. One in five homes are vacant and two in five homes are blighted. Since 2015 over 1,300 homes have been demolished, and the estimated cost to completely demolish vacant buildings in Gary is around $100 million. Poor land use decisions have resulted in conflicting land use patterns across the city. With the decrease in residents and businesses comes a decrease in taxes and

funding. This budget deficit has greatly impacted the city and its ability to maintain its community and support its residents. Gary is in significant need of revitalization that will require strategic plans to attract new businesses, industries, and new opportunities for its people.

Gary's economic activity has been stagnant for decades. Dining, retail, and commerce are limited to only small nodes, a few strip malls and a few city blocks. Even when a commercial building is occupied, it is often surrounded by vacant and abandoned properties. A third of the land in Gary is industrial land. In many areas, industrial land borders residential neighborhoods, creating negative impacts on traffic, noise, and pollution. Even Gary's natural assets, such as wetlands, dunes, swale ecosystems, and biodiverse habitats, are located adjacent to industrial land, threatening the ecological health of these natural resources.

Gary's schools were planned for a much larger population than what exists currently, leading to 29 of the 60 school sites in the city being inactive. The Gary Community Schools Corporation was taken over by the Distressed Unit Appeal Board (*DUAB*) in 2017, making the school district a Distressed Political Subdivision. The takeover was triggered by the district's $22 million deficit, which made operations difficult for the struggling schools. The Gary Community School Corporation only serves students at 9 sites with the remainder of students being served by charter schools. A number of charter schools in Gary are housed in repurposed buildings that were not intended for schools. This leads to a lack of pedestrian infrastructure, making sidewalks and crosswalks an added infrastructure need across the city.

Despite the struggles the city faces, Gary still possesses numerous assets that provide both current and future opportunities to its citizens. Gary's extensive natural assets are both valued by residents and provide potential as Gary works to modernize its infrastructure. Vacant buildings can provide for redevelopment opportunities for the community. Community anchors, such as Indiana University Northwest, Downtown, Lake Street, the Gary-Chicago International Airport, and along Broadway in Glen Park, serve as reminders that Gary still has much to offer historically and culturally to Indiana and the nation. The highest vacant areas have the best access to amenities, transit, and transportation infrastructure, creating an opportunity to redevelop Gary's central core.

There are 29,656 jobs available in Gary. The labor force participation rate is 51% with a median household income of $28,895. In comparison, Lake County writ large has a median household income of $50,905. Gary has more jobs than employed residents, which reflects the city's demographic challenges rather than its strength as a job center. From 2005-2015, Gary experienced job loss of more than 3,800 jobs. These losses have occurred in both industries that serve local residents and external markets. Though a turnaround in Gary will take time, there is potential to reinvigorate its industrial sector and work towards increasing its presence in other economic sectors. Gary is a central location for both American and Canadian markets, has land available for industrial use, and has significant transportation and infrastructure assets that can help to revive its economy. Because of the job openings, Gary can also start to draw in talent from surrounding areas, as well as upskill current residents, to foster economic growth.

Current signs of opportunity are present in Gary, with the city seeing an uptick in entrepreneurship, especially amongst women and minorities, in recent years. This type of progress from local residents can be a driving force in building stability in the community. Business development programs have been created to help the community actualize its dreams. By building networks amongst these organizations and better advertising these opportunities across Lake County and the northwestern region of Indiana into the Chicago suburbs, we can

help more future entrepreneurs obtain the resources needed to create economic mobility for this community.[16]

Indianapolis: The City of Indianapolis is the most populous city in the state of Indiana and the 17th most populous city in the U.S. 2018 Census estimates place the population at approximately 876,862 residents as the city nears its bicentennial in 2020.[17] The Indianapolis metropolitan area has long served as the growth engine for the state and continues to account for a significant percentage of Indiana's recent economic growth. Past decades saw growth in more suburban areas of Indianapolis, but recent trends show individuals increasingly moving back into the urban core. In 2002, Marion County accounted for just 2.7% of Central Indiana's population growth; but by 2012, Marion County accounted for 41% of the region's population growth.[18] With U.S. trends increasingly showing that greater percentages of the overall population will locate in urban centers, it can be expected that the Indianapolis region will continue to be the location of an ever-increasing share of Indiana's workforce.

Indianapolis benefits from a diverse economy, with significant employment in finance and insurance, manufacturing, professional and business services, education and healthcare, and government. As with other cities, Indianapolis has experienced recent decreases in the manufacturing sector that have resulted in the loss of a common pathway to the middle class that did not require formal postsecondary education. Between 2000 and 2010, the Indianapolis region lost more than 19,000 manufacturing jobs, with 92% of this loss occurring in Marion County. Many of these jobs paid above median wages and have been a significant factor in Indianapolis' post-recession job gains not resulting in an overall median wage increase.

In terms of sheer numbers, Indianapolis' workforce is stable. Jobs in some sectors may have left, but the overall workforce has remained steady. Marion County's workforce challenge lies primarily in its ability to: 1) improve the availability of reliable and affordable transportation options so that people can get to work, and 2) better match skilled workers with the jobs that become available. Regarding the second item, the continual focus at the national and state levels behind workforce development initiatives that equip adults who are already in the workforce with the skills to fill in-demand middle-skill jobs, defined as jobs requiring a high school education but not a four-year college degree, will be key to achieving success with this population.

The U.S. Census Bureau's 2007–2011 American Community Survey indicated the median household income for the city of Indianapolis was $42,704, and the median family income was $53,161. Median income for males working full-time, year-round, was $42,101, compared to $34,788 for females. Per capita income for the city was $24,430. Approximately 14% of families and 18.9% of the city's total population were living below the poverty line (28.3% were under the age of 18 and 9.2% were age 65 or older).[19] As mentioned above, Indianapolis ranked 47 for intergenerational mobility among the 50 Largest Commuting Zones in the US, Indianapolis ranked 47, indicating that children born in this urban area have low chances of economic mobility compared to their peers in other urban areas.[20]

Finding avenues to guide the 90,900 working-age adults in Marion County that lack a high school diploma or equivalent and the 171,059 working-age adults that have attained only a high school diploma or equivalent towards meaningful, self-sustaining work is one of the city's significant Bicentennial challenges. Additionally, one-third of children (more than 74,000) in Marion County live in poverty.

Compared to other large cities, housing in Indianapolis is relatively affordable and plentiful. In 2013, Indianapolis ranked fifth out of 100 metro areas in the nation for affordability, with 83

percent of homes for sale in the region affordable to middle-class families. Marion County has more than 418,000 homes that are very diverse in terms of age, size, and value. Housing challenges that persist include the ability to offer fair housing, quality housing units, and a need for more subsidized housing units for very low-income residents.[21]

Indianapolis has a long history of leading the way on public-private partnerships and has a robust philanthropic community. Past efforts have involved large-scale projects, like a community zoo, the world's largest children's museum, an NFL stadium, an elite public hospital, and investment in the city's nationally renowned convention center. These efforts have been vital towards attracting talent and investment to the region and similar efforts will continue to be instrumental to the city's future success.

The Central Indiana Corporate Partnership (CICP) was formed to bring together the chief executives of Central Indiana's prominent corporations, foundations, and universities in a strategic and collaborative effort dedicated to the region's continued prosperity and growth. CICP has launched several talent and industry sector initiatives, focused on generating awareness, investment, collaboration, and identifiable progress for their industry sectors. Another key effort has been the dual focus on both talent attraction and skills growth through workforce development. Several of CICP's initiatives have launched efforts to help identify and address the challenges of developing, attracting, and retaining the kinds of technically and technologically skilled talent the leading sectors of economic opportunity will require for continued growth. CICP is critical to developing the strategy and collaboration of the Indianapolis region. CICP has played an integral role community development projects, including early childhood education, mass transit, and helping Indianapolis secure and plan the 2012 Super Bowl. In 2015, CICP was instrumental in developing and securing infrastructure funding from the City of Indianapolis for the 16 Tech innovation community near downtown Indianapolis that will serve as a place to live, work, play and learn for the entire region.

The city's recent Bicentennial Comprehensive Plan takes a focus on turning the energy displayed by philanthropic, public, and private partners on these large projects towards less noticeable efforts focused on improving the daily lives of citizens. Initiatives, such as developing strategies to increase the graduation rate, investing in re-training or dropout programs, improving transportation options, and revitalizing the city's infrastructure, will be key to improving daily life, particularly for many of the city's disenfranchised populations. The Governor's Workforce Cabinet continues to engage a wide spectrum of these partners in the Indianapolis region on a variety of efforts focused on meeting the state's workforce challenges through regional advancements in the Indianapolis region.

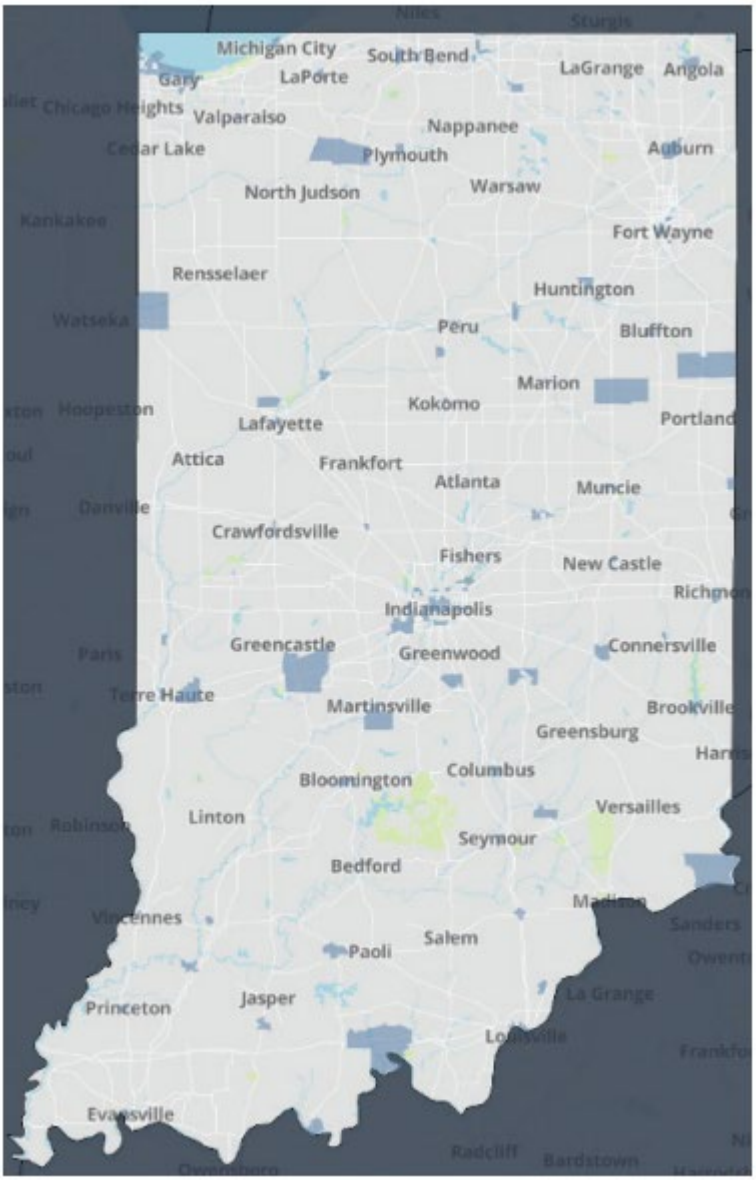
The Common Need: A common trend seen amongst these cities and throughout the state is the need for urban revitalization. Communities suffer when there is a lack of opportunity. Lack of jobs, urban blight, low-wage and low-skill attainment, these things all weigh heavy on a city and its ability to thrive. All of these urban areas house tracts that have earned the **Opportunity Zone** designation. With this designation, the areas that are struggling most can start to attract businesses with tax incentives. Ten year designations help to guarantee a longer presence of these new companies within the community. By attracting businesses, we can increase investments in these communities, which benefit all parties involved – businesses enter into communities with residents who are ready to work, workers gain skills to help them be successful while earning a wage that can help them sustain a lifestyle, and tax collection increases and more money is created to be put back into the community.

The other clear need of all these communities is upskilling. The median household income for all of the profiled cities is below that of the national average. Because postsecondary attainment

leads to both skills attainment and salary increase, it is necessary that we increase postsecondary credentialing of urban Hoosiers. Programs, such as **21st Century Scholars**, **Adult Student Grant**, **Next Level Jobs**, **Frank O'Bannon** scholarship, and others can be the catalyst for change in these Hoosier communities. For Hoosiers who need to earn their high school equivalency or need assistance with basic skills, Adult Education can give them the extra boost needed to fully participate in the workforce. WorkOnes across the state can help with career counseling to help Hoosiers as they plan next steps. Education is one of our biggest strategies in helping serve the needs of our urban families and their communities.

Scaling Promising Practices: Below we highlight promising practices that we hope to see scaled and replicated to address the unique barriers and challenges of this target population. Our local regions can implement these practices through strategic use of WIOA funds, philanthropic or community foundation dollars, or social impact bonds. Where applicable, local Boards or community organizations can coordinate with state agencies to apply for SNAP 50/50 FNS, which will serve as a 50% federal match for any state or philanthropic funding dedicated to SNAP recipients receiving Employment and Training services. These practices are ***Activities outside the Plan***. While not a comprehensive list, the practices showcase innovative approaches to assisting our urban populations in surmounting their unique circumstances.

Opportunity Zones (Federal Program): The Opportunity Zones incentive is a community investment tool established by Congress to encourage long-term investments in low-income urban and rural communities nationwide.[22] Up to 25% of a state's low-income census tracts are eligible for designation, which permitted Indiana to nominate up to 156 census tracts as Opportunity Zones. Opportunity Zones provide federal capital gains tax advantages for investments made in these areas. This designation is intended to attract capital investment into areas that are economically distressed. The goal is to spur long-term private sector investments in low-income communities.



[23]

Opportunity Zones offer investors the following tax incentives for putting their capital to work in low-income communities:

- A **temporary tax deferral** for capital gains reinvested in an Opportunity Fund. The deferred gain must be recognized on the earlier of the date on which the opportunity zone investment is sold or December 31, 2026.
- A **step-up in basis** for capital gains reinvested in an Opportunity Fund. The basis of the original investment is increased by 10% if the investment in the qualified opportunity zone fund is held by the taxpayer for at least 5 years, and by an additional 5% if held for at least 7 years, excluding up to 15% of the original gain from taxation.
- A **permanent exclusion from taxable income of capital gains** from the sale or exchange of an investment in a qualified opportunity zone fund, if the investment is held for at least 10 years. (Note: this exclusion applies to the gains accrued from an investment in an Opportunity Fund, not the original gains).[24]

These benefits make investing in these particular communities more alluring for businesses. Our Workforce Development Boards can work with Local Economic Development Offices to increase awareness of Opportunity Zones amongst businesses. Through multiple avenues, locals can increase investments into communities that need it most, allowing for massive improvements for Zones across the state.

Indy East Promise Zone(Federal Program): In April 2015, the Near Eastside of Indianapolis was one of eight communities designated as a federal "Promise Zone." This status gives high-poverty areas an advantage when competing for federal grants as part of their redevelopment efforts. Since receiving this designation, the Indy East Promise Zone (IEPZ) has worked together with the city of Indianapolis and local implementation partners to move the Near Eastside forward. They have worked to build capacity for implementation, refine implementation plans, and collect baseline data. This groundwork has positioned Indianapolis to take advantage of federal partnerships and has resulted in the award of 29 grants from 12 federal agencies totaling over $123 million and the provision of technical assistance from the U.S. Departments of Housing and Urban Development, Education, Justice, and Agriculture. With this support, the IEPZ implementation partners have made notable progress on the five goal areas that shape their work: Live (affordable housing), Learn (education), Work (employment), Buy (economic development), and Safe (public safety):

- **Live INDYEAST** - The IEPZ, Near East Area Renewal, Renew Indianapolis, the Department of Metropolitan Development, and the Indianapolis Neighborhood Housing Partnership have partnered to reduce resident turnover, demolish or renovate condemned and abandoned properties, eliminate lead hazards, offer repair subsidies for low-income homeowners, and develop affordable housing.

- **Learn INDYEAST** - The IEPZ, the John Boner Neighborhood Centers, United Way of Central Indiana, and Indianapolis Public Schools have partnered to improve health outcomes and school readiness for infants and toddlers, family economic stability, parent engagement in their children's learning, and cultural competency and racial equity in schools districtwide.

- **Work INDYEAST** - The IEPZ, the City of Indianapolis, the Department of Metropolitan Development, and the Department of Public Works have partnered to remediate contamination and revive commerce on abandoned former industrial sites, improve the infrastructure that connects homes and jobs, encourage local entrepreneurship, and provide incentives to attract employers to the Near Eastside.

- **Buy INDYEAST** - The IEPZ, the City of Indianapolis, the Department of Public Works, the Department of Metropolitan Development, Local Initiatives Support Corporation, and Englewood Community Development Corporation have partnered to lay the groundwork for new commercial districts with an emphasis on arts-based community development. In addition to reviving the P.R. Mallory Building and Circle City Industrial Complex, they have employed artists to enhance aesthetic appeal, connectivity, and sense of place through initiatives such as the Pogue's Run Trail and farmer's market promotion funding.

- **Safe INDYEAST**- The IEPZ, the City of Indianapolis, the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department, RecycleForce, and the John Boner Neighborhood Centers have partnered to expand access to workforce and entrepreneurship opportunities and have collaborated on several pilot projects focused on improving public safety through strategies centered on art and Crime Prevention through Environmental Design. Additionally, pilot

programs focused on mental health and addictions aid in developing strategies that can be replicated in other communities.[25]

We encourage other neighborhoods replicate efforts similar to the IEPZ to create a better future for their communities. By utilizing community partners across the state with similar resources and supports, communities can create their own visions for a better tomorrow and work to implement changes that will have a massive impact on the quality of life of all residents both now and in the future.

[1] US Census Bureau defines as Urbanized Areas (UAs) of 50,000 or more people and Urban Clusters (UCs) of at least 2,500 and less than 50,000 people (Urban and Rural).

[2] A census tract is a statistical subdivision of a county (akin to a neighborhood). Census tracts average about 4,000 inhabitants (US Census Bureau).

[3] Dobis et al., 2019. Dimensions of Indiana Poverty.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Poverty to Prosperity Program and the CAP Economic Policy Team, March 2015. Expanding Opportunities in America's Urban Areas.

[6] Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2012. Data Snapshot on High-Poverty Communities.

[7] U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, February 2019. 2018 FSS Updated Chart.

[8] U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, February 2019. HUD Awards $74 Million To Help Families Reach Self-Sufficiency.

[9] Chetty et al., 2014. Where is the Land of Opportunity? The Geography of Intergenerational Mobility in the United States.

[10]US DOL Apprenticeship Toolkit.

[11] Evansville-Vanderburgh County Area Plan Commission, June 2016. Evansville-Vanderburgh County Comprehensive Plan 2015-2035.

[12] Ft. Wayne-Allen County Comprehensive Plan Commission, 2007. Plan-It Allen!

[13] Greater Fort Wayne, Inc. 2014. Annual Labor Force.

[14] Pew Research Center, 2016. "America's Shrinking Middle Class: A Close Look at Changes within Metropolitan Areas."

[15] Economic Innovation Group, 2016. "2016 Distressed Communities Index Report."

[16] Reinvest in Gary, 2019. City of Gary 2019 Comprehensive Plan

[17] United States Census Bureau. "Annual Estimates of the Resident Population for Incorporated Places of 50,000 or More"

[18] Indianapolis City-County Comprehensive Plan "Plan 2020 Bicentennial Agenda".

[19] U.S. Census Bureau. "Selected Economic Characteristics: 2007-2011 American Community Survey"

[20] Chetty et al., 2014. Where is the Land of Opportunity? The Geography of Intergenerational Mobility in the United States.

[21] Indianapolis City-County Comprehensive Plan "Plan 2020 Bicentennial Agenda."

[22] The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 (P.L. 115-97) allowed governors to nominate certain census tracts as Opportunity Zones, subject to approval from the U.S. Department of Treasury.

[23]Indiana's Opportunity Zones.

[24] Economic Innovation Group, 2020. History of Opportunity Zones.

[25] Indiana University Public Policy Institute, December 2018. INDYEAST Promise Zone: Baseline & Progress Report.

Rural poverty became a prominent policy issue beginning in 1966, when President Lyndon Johnson created the National Advisory Commission on Rural Poverty. The Commission recognized that the very technology changes driving increases in agricultural efficiency and production were also exacerbating rural poverty. It also found much of America's rural poverty to be structural, the result of policies and laws that systematically put rural places at a disadvantage. The Commission's 158 recommendations ranged from increasing access to education to improving health care, ideas that remain present in our current policy strategies to uplift our rural communities.

Though policymakers currently focus on more strategic use of direct service programs, such as Medicaid, SNAP, and TANF, via better coordination, implementation, and/or service expansion (e.g., investments in rural infrastructure), we need to enhance our policy approaches to vault rural communities towards diversified, durable, and inclusive economies that improve social and economic outcomes for all. This may require a renewed approach to rural economic and community development that focuses more on postsecondary educational access, persistence, and attainment.

In understanding the rural policy landscape, it is important to note that the Census Bureau does not actually define "rural." The term "rural" encompasses all population, housing, and territory not included within an urban area; whatever is not urban is considered rural. The Census identifies two types of areas:

- Urbanized Areas (UAs) of 50,000 or more people;
- Urban Clusters (UCs) of at least 2,500 and less than 50,000 people.[1]

In recent years, rural and urban communities experienced economic development in the US economy differently. The Great Recession in 2008 hit harder and lasted longer in rural communities, and economic recovery in many rural communities has not matched that in urban areas. The economic lag and persistent poverty in rural Indiana has influenced social, health, and educational outcomes. As rural job growth lagged behind urban areas, rural residents looked increasingly outside their communities to find new work and opportunities. Declining population, limited employment opportunities, and lack of public investment pose significant challenges to the economic vitality of rural communities. The education gap between urban and rural America has also widened substantially over the past fifteen years, creating a talent gap that can hamper economic development and growth. Rural communities face a variety of structural challenges constraining growth. Rural economies are more likely than urban ones to heavily rely on a single industry or employer, which leaves them vulnerable should the employer leave town. Insufficient rural infrastructure, such as roads, water systems, and access

to broadband, can limit economic growth and opportunities. Addressing the workforce challenges facing rural communities requires a comprehensive strategy that examines the unique assets and needs in rural Indiana.

Due to low population density, Indiana's rural Workforce Development Boards cover many counties and large geographic regions. Our rural WorkOnes often cover more counties than their non-rural counterparts and have larger service areas in terms of square miles. Given the slow recovery of rural regions from the Recession, out-migration of younger and well-educated workers, and increases in the share of customers who are English learners or have criminal records, our WorkOnes often serve this high-need population with fewer staff and less funding over a larger area than non-rural WorkOnes. One potential advantage of having fewer staff is that many of our rural WorkOnes cross-train their staff to help provide a variety of programs, though this can also be a challenge, given additional program-specific responsibilities.

Other barriers Indiana's rural workforce faces includes:

- Access to childcare, specifically for non-traditional shifts, is limited;
- Lack of public transportation and sole reliance on private sources;
- Trainings to develop needed workforce skills are often held during times when the resident is not able to attend, such as during the work day, which would require them to take off of work to attend;
- Programs are held at inopportune locations, exacerbating the transportation issue;
- Lack of broadband access and telecommunications infrastructure;
- Limited understanding of the area's employer's needs;
- Trainings are sometimes based on a snapshot of needs at one point in time and do translate into long-term career advancement or sustainability;
- Access to up-to-date facilities and equipment can be limited;
- Services are not readily available to widely dispersed customers;
- Insufficient number of available service providers to offer all youth program elements; and
- Fewer WorkOne partners than in urban areas.

Though individuals within this target population may also fall under other groups and subgroups, this section is structured around overcoming the specific barriers that can derail Hoosiers living in the rural areas of the state. Additional services identified in other sections may be available to rural individuals contingent on eligibility, but the geographic barrier rurality creates is the primary issue addressed below. It is the way in which our Core, Partner, and state programs and services can be differentiated to directly support and address distinctive challenges of this target population. Through this systemic approach, we aim to establish foundational administrative functions to provide rural Hoosiers' with greater education and training, employment services, and wraparound supports. Though the aim of this section is to provide a comprehensive view on the workforce and social services system in rural Indiana, it does not encompass all local programs and opportunities throughout our workforce regions. Our Workforce Development Boards will enhance the foundational level of services outlined in the Plan through local programs and implementation. The local Boards will explain

how they can include local programs, systems, and nuance to achieve an integrated delivery of workforce and social supports and maximize federal, state, and local investments in our talent development system.

Job recruitment and retention has shifted to people recruitment and retention in our rural counties. This type of economic development incorporates strategies (such as housing programs, visitor engagement, current resident engagement, and investments in natural amenities and quality of life) focus on people instead of only jobs. Through this Combined Plan focusing on integrating the disparate services within the workforce and social systems, our Workforce Development Boards can find ways to braid various federal funding streams in an effort to maximize the investments in these areas. Though many of our local Boards endeavor to achieve this currently, we hope this Plan allows them to push their regions further in how to best utilize funds to serve overlapping populations. One strategy that may help our rural Boards achieve this goal is co-location. While some locations have executed co-location of services to meet Hoosiers' needs, we would like to see this strategy scaled through a variety of innovative approaches.

One approach to co-location our local regions could examine is a network model, wherein the local board was responsible for overseeing staffing and management of the entire network of any and all workforce development service. Partnerships through the network model can include Partner Programs, such as SNAP and TANF, providing services to any WorkOne in the network primarily by traveling between them rather than being on-site full-time at any one location. Additional co-location strategies include:

- **Formal co-location.** Rural WorkOnes generally tend to co-locate Wagner-Peyser and the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs, because of small center facilities, distance from main office locations, and limited staff capacity. Formal location can often help transportation barriers if someone needs multiple services in rural areas.
- **Using itinerant staff.** These are staff members who come to the WorkOne when called or requested and do not have a set schedule. This is most commonly used currently with Vocational Rehabilitation partners, but it could expand to include our Partner Programs, as well. Itinerant staffing models can bring services to where people are rather than concentrating programs and services in any particular center.
- **Embedding staff.** Staff habitually travel between different offices rather than being on-site full-time at any one location. These are regular work schedules that have staff working in different offices or locations and with different program staff. Staff members co-locate with various programs by moving among offices and locations recurrently.
- **Mobile locations.** Another partnership negotiated at the network level is temporarily co-locating or sharing space with the local public library system, schools, local businesses and chambers of commerce, and other locations that have community engagement throughout the local area. These are, essentially, portable WorkOnes that pop up in different centers of community activity. This initiative seeks to expand the reach of workforce resources by going to places with high community activity, rather than waiting for Hoosiers to come into the office. This approach demonstrates how rural areas can adopt the regionalism emphasized in WIOA to the benefit of job seekers.
- **Referral relationships.** Some of our WorkOnes have a common system, using a "warm hand-off" process, to ensure direct contact with partners or following up to ensure services had been received. Referrals between different programs must be collaborative

and coordinated. WorkOnes, community partners, schools, and institutions of higher education should liaise referrals for constituents person-to-person, rather than merely program-to-program. Both follow-through and follow-up are necessary to ensure quality for the constituent. For those WorkOnes with a referral process, referrals could be a feasible option for facilitating access to Partner Programs in a rural context. Some WorkOnes also have closer proximity to partners, which facilitates the formal referral processes. For those WorkOnes that can adopt the strategies above for co-location, the network model allows for the Workforce Development Board to develop and maintain relationships with Core and Partner Programs.[2]

After examining contracts, lease agreements, and site location, physical co-location may be a viable option for Core and Partner Programs. In those regions where it is not, itinerant/embedded staff, mobile sites, common referral and case management systems, or other innovative partnership strategies should be considered.

Options to implement co-location in rural Indiana include:

Access Points	**Co-located Partners/Services**
Comprehensive WorkOne	• WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker staff on-site • Wagner-Peyser staff on-site • At least one other Core Program partner (e.g., Adult Education or Vocational Rehabilitation) on-site • At least one Partner Program (e.g., SNAP, TANF, Perkins) on-site • Community college representative(s) on-site • Community organization representative(s) on-site
Affiliate WorkOne	• Either WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker or Wagner-Peyser staff on-site • At least one other Core or Partner Program on-site • Community college or organization representative(s) on-site
Satellite WorkOne	• One full-time employee under WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker or Wagner-Peyser staff on-site • One full-time employee from a Core or Partner Program or community college, organization, or employer

Access Points	Co-located Partners/Services
Mobile WorkOne	• Services via phone or electronic access • Core and Partner Program staff travel to meet with customers near their homes, in their workplaces, in schools, at partner offices, and even in local restaurants or cafes • Core and Partner Program staff offer services in various hubs of community activity – libraries, schools, chambers of commerce, Local Economic Development Organizations offices, community college campuses, and community centers • Community colleges or training providers offer distance learning arrangements via online courses or in various hubs of community activity
Temporary WorkOne	• Access points established primarily in response to major layoffs, but could be setup for any reason; these sites are located on-site or very close to the affected worksite with the aim of making services more accessible to workers

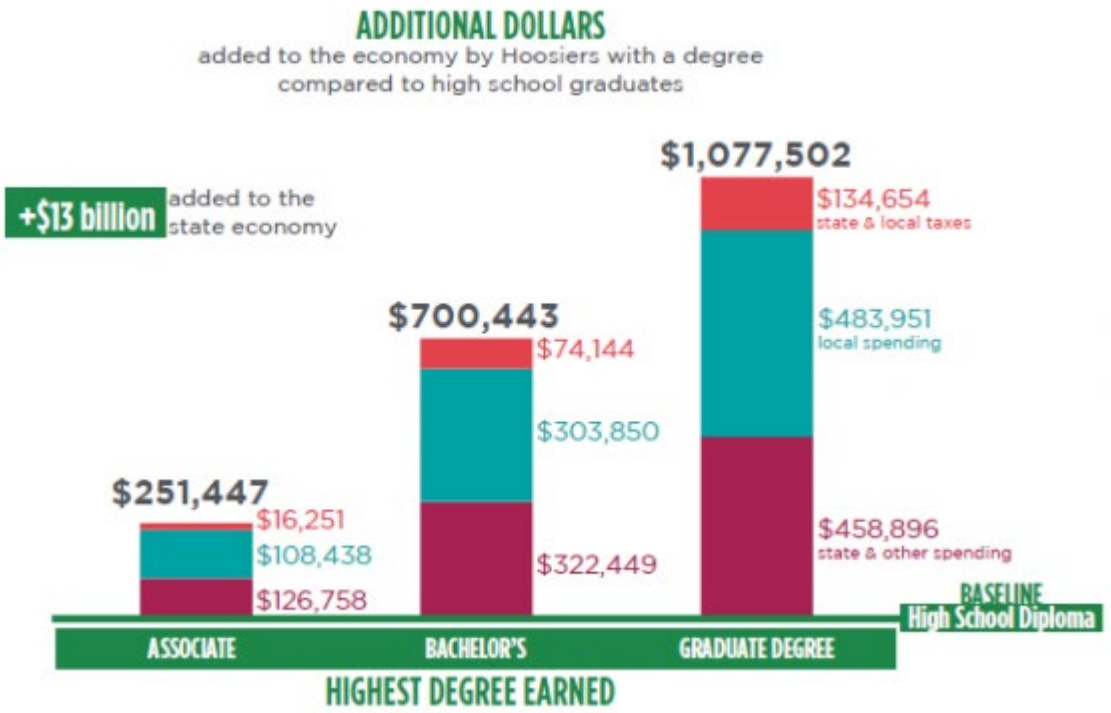
Through our Combined Plan, we must recognize interdependency between our rural and urban regions through our system of workforce and social services. Our rural-urban symbiosis can span common geographic conditions, supply chains that fuel industry sectors with services, goods and talent, transportation and affordability-driven employee commuting patterns, media markets, and the goal to secure essential goods and services locally. In some areas of Indiana, rural places and cities serve as important markets for each other. Our regional plans need to include intentional action about how to capitalize upon this economic and social interdependence. This may include some of our urban initiatives analyzing rural-urban connections and strategies regarding transportation, land-use, agriculture, and water management.

Indiana's Region 10 Workforce Board created the Bi-State Plan with Kentuckiana Works to advance the regional workforce. This Plan is the first of its kind to merge interstate regions into one designated workforce hub. This significant collaboration exists between local areas Indiana Region 10 and Kentuckiana Works in order to develop the regional plan around the Louisville metropolitan area, which includes urban and rural sprawl in southern Indiana. The Bi-State Regional Plan creates an innovative picture of the region's economy and workforce environment through rural-urban, Indiana-Kentucky strategies to attain regional goals and objections.

Co-Enrolled Programs: Hoosiers who live in rural areas will be co-enrolled into the following primary programs and services of benefit to this target population. An individual's unique circumstances or preference may not necessitate co-enrollment in each program. This section includes ***Core and Partner Program Activities***and***Individual Services***for rural adults.

Title I-Adult (Core Program): Our rural communities can use Title I to promote postsecondary education of all types to upskill Hoosiers and to attract new jobs and future-proof the jobs that are already there. Schools, community organizations, and higher education institutions help anchor employers through investments in assets like education. Access to skilled workers can be a major factor in business site selection for large employers and entrepreneurs alike. Because relevancy of training programs and skills has been an issue for our rural regions, these communities could leverage this funding stream to increase trainings within the business through work-based learning or an eligible provider, as opposed to an offsite location. Title I could help subsidize on-the-job training expenses or wages. Embedding training with an employer could help address the obstacle of transportation to multiple places that could be spread across a wide geographic expanse. It also allow rural Hoosiers to earn and learn simultaneously.

By integrating our disparate strands of the workforce and social services systems, this funding can help increase postsecondary educational attainment for our rural Hoosiers, because educational attainment and economic outcomes are also closely linked. The increased earnings of a degree more than exceed the total costs of college, including debt, for most students within only a few years after graduation. Wages may not differ as much just one year after graduation, but differences in earnings five to ten years out can be substantial. The earlier someone gets postsecondary education or training in their lifetimes, the likelihood for upward mobility increases. Nationally, about 99% of jobs created since the Great Recession went to workers with at least some college. Higher education not only improves individual outcomes, it also helps build stronger communities and strengthens the economy. Over the course of a lifetime, each cohort of Indiana public college graduates contributes at least $13 billion or more in additional spending and tax revenue to the economy compared to Hoosiers with only a high school diploma. Conversely, Hoosiers without college are more than twice as likely to file for unemployment, accounting for two-thirds of all unemployment claims in the past decade. As technologies change, and as increasing competition from online and multinational giants put pressure on small, local businesses, those with the most skills or formal education are best positioned to do well financially.[3]

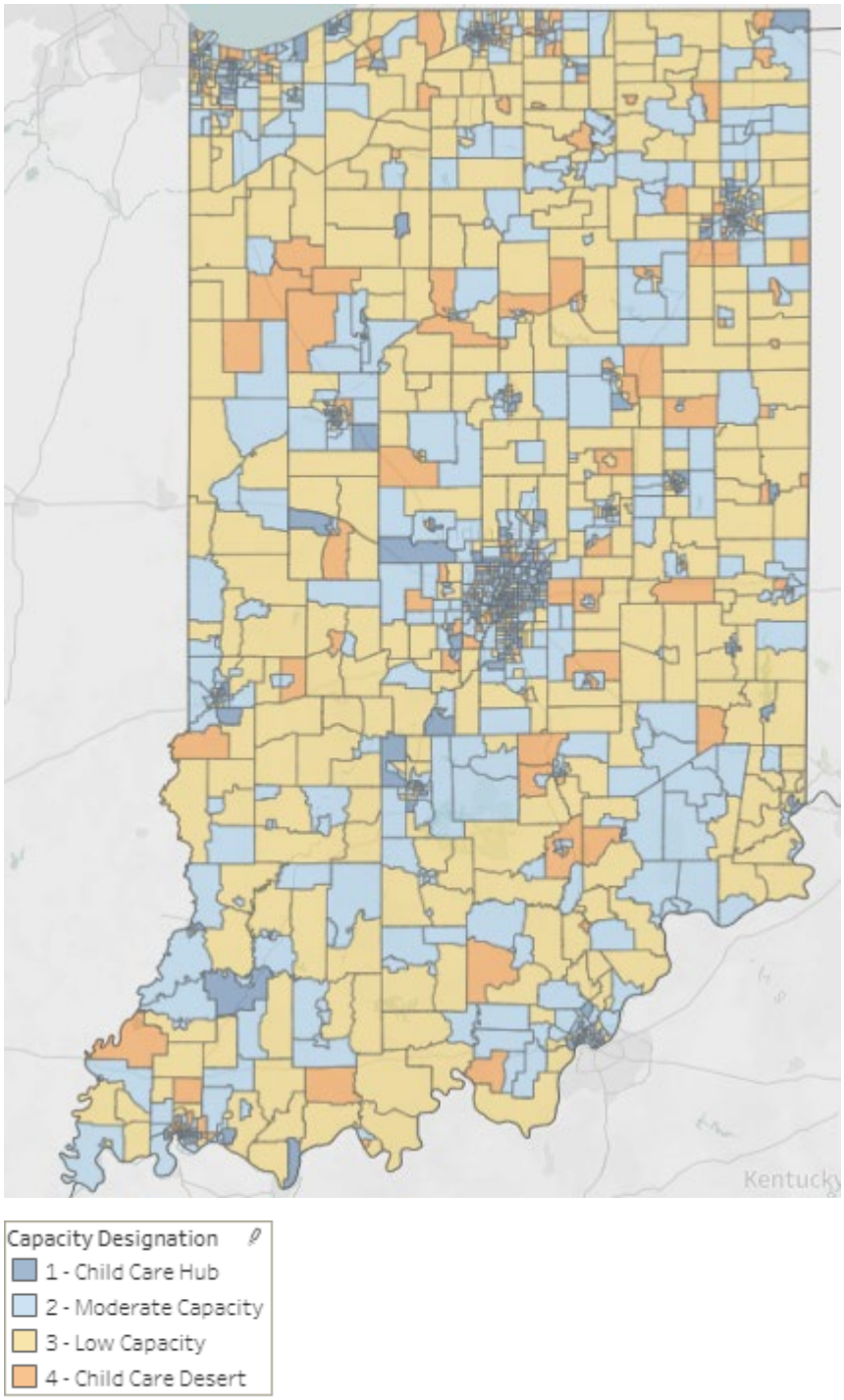


In addition to WIOA Adult funding, rural WorkOnes can leverage both state and federal financial aid opportunities under the **FAFSA**. One focal point for rural Hoosiers' training is to ensure the long-term transferability of the skills and knowledge gained through education and training programs. Guaranteeing the longevity of skills rather than just the immediacy of skills can be achieved through stackable, transferrable credentials. These type of portable credit-bearing certifications will comprise both our career pathways under WIOA and programs of study under Perkins. To assist rural Hoosiers with access to these pathways, our local regions can work with our postsecondary institutions, career centers, employers, and other training providers to offer programs virtually via a chatbox feature or in different locales throughout the region. The options for selecting training providers in our rural regions can be limited, and available providers are sometimes located too far from individuals' homes. Given the low demand for some programs, providers may charge higher tuitions than training providers in more populated areas. Increasing the variability and quality of education and training options will ensure that rural Hoosiers can access effective programming similar to their urban neighbors. It will also help address costs for Title I.

Employers could develop and deliver programs in partnership with educational institutions, technical schools, and local governments. Trainings could be hosted by employers or at businesses, in conjunction with educational institutions or providers (or independently if the employer is on the Eligible Training Provider List). This could help with keeping skills and programs relevant and up-to-date with industry, as well as assist with transportation issues, since businesses may be more conveniently located than some institutions. As Indiana implements **Credential Engine** more broadly, Title I can be used toward funding cross-industry skills credentialing. Credential Engine provides tools and services to find, understand, and compare information about credentials in a user-friendly format. Hoosiers can receive reliable credentialing information to help decide what credential or career pathway works best for their needs. As a rural Hoosier earns these types of credentials, they are able to demonstrate their skills for in-demand jobs and the applicability of those skills to future work.

A common barrier rural Hoosiers face is transportation. Due to the sprawling nature of rural Indiana, accessing employment, education opportunities, and other types of services often require private transportation. For low-income Hoosiers living in rural areas, any type of transportation derailment could have a rippling effect on their economic and social options. A common use of Title I by rural local areas, therefore, is to provide Hoosiers with transportation vouchers to cover the cost of gas or vehicle maintenance. Subsidizing transportation costs through supportive service payments could also cover mileage reimbursement. Title I could help alleviate the strain of transportation rural Hoosiers often feel in additional ways. It can fund providing transportation to and from education or training programs. In addition to vouchers, Title I can fund the formation of carpools or transporting Hoosiers in shuttle vans to various types of locations, such as regional community college campuses, trainings, talent tours, and interviews. Providing direct transportation to customers is not always a reliable option for activities beyond one-time visits, so local discretion is needed. Title I can help combat the challenge posed by the lack of public transportation in more remote parts of a service area.

Childcare is another barrier that may be exacerbated by rural sprawl. As described in the Upskill/Reskill section, single parents face a range of challenges navigating workforce and childcare policies: the complexity of arranging childcare with education and training activities, as well as work and earning an income; limited information or awareness about childcare options; financial constraints and limited access to childcare subsidies or low-cost/free care options; and limited supply of good quality care overall, specifically in certain regions on the state. The sparsity of childcare options in rural Indiana intensifies these issues already facing single parents. Indiana's rural counties are often considered 'childcare deserts,' preventing many rural Hoosiers from accessing economic opportunities. Most Indiana census tracts (an area of approximately 2,500 to 3,000 households within a county) have a ratio of 0.33 to 1.49 childcare spots to children under 5. 281 tracts were categorized as childcare hubs, while 149 tracts were identified as childcare deserts. Both hubs and deserts have reasonably high numbers of jobs and children, while hubs have sufficient childcare availability and deserts do not.[4]



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Both secondary and postsecondary institutions could use **Carl D. Perkins (Partner Program)** funds to expand the Child Development Associate programs, increasing the talent pipeline for future providers. This will help build capacity and availability of quality childcare providers throughout rural Indiana. Additionally, because these programs require students to do a practicum, they could offer childcare options at a lower rate. Other types of innovative funding through the **Child Care and Development Fund (Federal Program)** and **On My Way Pre-K (State Program)**, such as premium payments for evening and weekend childcare or scaling childcare options at WorkOnes, community colleges, libraries, and employers, could offer our

workforce regions options to examine in their local plans. Title I could also offer stipends to cover childcare costs, while Hoosiers participate in workforce trainings or education programs.

Title III-Wagner-Peyser (Core Program): Business services in WorkOnes and Local Economic Development Organizations are essential to the long-term success of these regions. Increasing the communication and partnerships between the Local Economic Development Official and current businesses to better understand current business' needs can assist with identifying job openings, emerging industries and companies, and any skills gaps that need to be addressed in secondary, postsecondary, or adult education programs. Developing our rural talent is critical to boosting our economy in these swaths of the state. Increasing educational attainment is key with the following strategies complementing these efforts:

1. Tapping "hidden talent" pools in rural areas, including older workers, non-native English speakers, and those with criminal records.
2. Increasing immigration and in-migration to rural areas includes efforts to recruit urban dwellers interested in living in a rural area and marketing their regions as great places to live. In addition, more engagement is occurring with immigrant populations to help community relations and entice more immigration into those regions.
3. More rural businesses, school districts, and workforce development organizations are partnering to engage high school students in new ways that showcase the opportunities available to them in their regions, and in some cases, implementing trainings into curricula and providing jobs right after graduation.

   Similar to our other target populations, this program can serve as the resource to fund career counseling (either in person or virtually), labor exchange services, and assistance for job searches and placement. This can also offer business services to employers, employer associations, or other such organizations on employment-related attraction and retention, especially related to quality of life and earning potential in rural areas. Wagner-Peyser staff can also assist with coordinating labor unions, businesses, associations, and the Office of Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeship to support and develop work-based learning and registered apprenticeship opportunities.

   Carl D. Perkins (Partner Program): Through our CTE Redesign efforts under Perkins, we intend to improve the postsecondary attainment of rural students while they are in high school, providing them with greater opportunities for future economic mobility and personal fulfillment. Our K-12 and postsecondary institutions should be supported in working to design clear, structured academic and career pathways for students—pathways that explicitly lead and/or transfer to careers providing family-supporting wages.

   One development we plan to implement widely in our rural schools and CTE districts is an Entrepreneurship Capstone course. This will encourage and support the next generation of entrepreneurs to build individual capacity and support new business creation. Our rural CTE districts and community colleges implementing career-technical education programs must link education with future careers, especially in growing industries, such as healthcare and IT, and advanced industries (agricultural biosciences, aircraft and aerospace, automotive/mobility, and logistics).

   In rural regions, specifically, our K-12 schools and community colleges campuses must

focus dual enrollment and credit opportunities and other efforts on the student populations that are less likely to be college-bound, which greatly overlap with our At-Risk and other target populations. This will create a more equitable system that does not let a person's life circumstances or obstacles dictate his/her opportunity to succeed, as well as taps into these students' potential to earn a postsecondary credential as a key economic development strategy for our rural counties. Increasing postsecondary access for all rural students will help both attract and retain talent in these areas. This may require a mindset shift among rural Hoosiers around the growing necessity of higher learning to find personal and economic success. Through Indiana's **communications strategy**, we seek to target high school students, in particular, with information regarding the long-term benefits of all types of higher education. As our CTE programs of study are redesigned to embed consistently aligned dual credit or enrollment courses in secondary CTE ones, we hope this begins to increase the postsecondary attainment in rural areas. This will require intentionality and counseling from our community stakeholders, though, to ensure the success and sustainability of these efforts.

The redesigned programs of study (or career pathways under WIOA) will facilitate the extension of postsecondary pathways into high schools through intensive collaboration between community colleges with K–12 systems. In addition to expanding access to postsecondary, this may also reduce the need for remediation as rural students enter various postsecondary programs. Reducing remediation conversely increases students' completion rates. Concurrently, there must be clearly articulated and consistently implemented university transfer pathways that students can navigate without loss of credits. For those rural students that earn their associate degree, their program credits will be applicable to the transfer major at a university.

Advising (including both academic and career planning) in high schools and colleges should provide prospective and current students with data-informed scenarios about career pathways, opportunities for employment in specific fields, projected earnings (at entry level and beyond), and the levels of educational attainment associated with high employment and high wages. Perkins can help fund this activity and professional growth in both secondary and postsecondary, using local Workforce Development Board staff to help fill any gaps. In middle and high schools, expansion of the work-based learning continuum to include career engagement, exploration, and experiences, career guidance, and employability development will help prioritize these issues in the K-12 environment. Indiana's **Local Career Coaching Grants** may be utilized in tandem with Perkins and other federal funding sources (such as **Title IV under the Every Student Succeeds Act** and **WIOA Title III**) as a means to expand this type of advising to more students.

Some Indiana districts have strong partnerships with either Ivy Tech Community College or Vincennes University to provide career or colleges success coaches on-site in high schools. Vincennes University receives $3 million in state funding for expansion of its early college model. This model innovatively puts students, particularly those facing barriers, on the track to enroll in some form of postsecondary education. As we endeavor to increase co-location, we want to see these types of partnerships between our K-12 districts and postsecondary institutions also increase. Perkins funds could assist with establishing secondary-postsecondary partnerships, as our educational institutions seek to pool their Perkins resources together. Through co-location, secondary and postsecondary programs can combined funds to update facilities and

equipment regularly. Perkins can help expand access to postsecondary success coaches. Parke Heritage High School, a rural school in Rockville, Indiana, is an example of this type of partnership with an Ivy Tech representative embedded in its guidance department. This has assisted students, teachers, and guidance counselors in completing aligned sequences of dual credit courses and raising postsecondary attainment and completion while a student earns a high school diploma. While this is one type of co-location option, similar to the various types of co-location described above, Workforce Development Boards can assist schools and postsecondary partners in determining which approach may work best for the local context, using Perkins as a resource to help execute this strategy.

Apprenticeships (State and Federal Programs): Scaling access to state and federal apprenticeship programs will provide a way for rural students to earn postsecondary credentials as they earn an income. Pre- and youth apprenticeship programs can aim to define clear career paths, help students choose the best track for them, and prepare them to secure and succeed in full-time employment. A recent report by the USDA Task Force on Agriculture and Rural Prosperity cited a particular need for such apprenticeship programs in healthcare and skilled trades.[6] WIOA funding can subsidize a share of apprentices' wages or promote apprenticeship to employers and potential apprentices. Focusing Core Programs on driving rural apprenticeship providers can skill up the local workforce and be used to increase vital services in the community. Non-traditional apprenticeships in healthcare, financial services, early childhood care and education, insurance, or IT can turn into **State Earn and Learns** (SEALs), which can also use WIOA funding to subsidize wages. Rural apprenticeships in the IT space can create platform support for large companies, allowing Hoosiers to remain in their communities and earn middle- to high-wages.

Through these apprenticeships, we can increase access to services that improve rural Hoosiers' quality of life, such as healthcare and childcare. Local government and employers could partner to drive efforts in building out both state and federal apprenticeship opportunities to develop credentialing and training programs through "grow your own" pipelines to promote job growth and economic development.

Rural communities need not rely entirely on existing employers to build up apprenticeship opportunities. Virtual apprenticeships may be an option for rural areas. Some jobs that offer family-sustaining wages can be learned and done remotely. Health information management fields, for example, incorporate related technical instruction that can be done through online classes. Employers who need to fill positions with the possibility of remote work should think about tapping the talent pool in rural areas by training Hoosiers through virtual apprenticeships. Growing this sort of distance apprenticeship program could allow rural Hoosiers who want to earn more for themselves and their families the opportunity to do so, while staying rooted in their home community.

Potential Eligibility: Additional services or co-enrollment rural Hoosiers may receive depending on individual circumstances. This section includes ***Core and Partner Program Activities***and***Individual Services***.

Co-enrollment of rural Hoosiers covered by TAA in partnership with the WIOA Dislocated Worker or Adult program can both expand and improve the overall effectiveness of these programs in some of our hardest to serve counties: TAA can assist with income support and other employment services, with WIOA Dislocated serving as a gap filler for any training or

wraparound support costs. In addition to funding training, TAA participants can utilize WIOA Dislocated Worker to also provide supportive services relating to childcare, transportation, dependent care, and housing assistance. TAA can also provide assistance in the form of access to case management and employment services, income support, job search allowances, relocation allowances, wage supplements, and a health coverage tax credit. Additionally, TAA can help reimburse employers for on-the-job training costs, with up to 50% covering wages.

TAA efforts **in rural areas, specifically, should be more comprehensive.** Designation of eligibility for help could be applied more broadly to include whole regions feeling effects of trade displacement or automation. Region-focused initiatives may offer a model for delivering multidimensional packages of services that engage a Core, Partner, other federal, state, and philanthropic programs for a comprehensive approach. Through TAA, we can make our **efforts more proactive, rather than reactive. While we have effective Rapid Response programs through WIOA Dislocated Worker, we can continue to push our p**rograms to be more anticipatory and offer support when disruption is forecasted for both TAA certified companies and others about to displace workers. Proactive efforts could maximize the opportunities for worker retraining and job search prior to a crisis. Expansion of TAA to include automation in tandem with co-enrollment will help Indiana maximize our investments and transition our dislocated workers. Through this braided approach, we can also take part of the financial burden off of the employer and our WorkOnes to help reskill our dislocated workers, thus providing greater incentive to engage with this target population.

In light of the recent changes to the Wagner-Peyser regulations that permits states to have increased staffing flexibility, Indiana will evaluate potential changes to staffing models and the state merit requirement over the next fiscal year. The Governor's Workforce Cabinet, in conjunction with DWD, will monitor the potential for new TAA regulations and will conduct similar a similar evaluation of staff models with accordance with any finalized new stipulations or flexibility.

Title I-Youth (Core Program): These funds can support either in-school or out-of-school eligible youth in rural areas. Funding through either WIOA Adult or Dislocated Worker or the Elementary and Secondary Education Act can assist with instructional supports for these Hoosiers, including resources for academic and technical education. Learners from rural communities are less likely to go to college. In 2017, 22% of Indiana's high school graduates came from high schools located in rural counties, and over half (59%) of rural high school graduates enrolled in college within one year of graduating high school. This is lower than the statewide average (63%) and the percentage of non-rural high school graduates (64%). The gap in college going rates among rural and non-rural student populations has remained consistent over the last five years.[9]

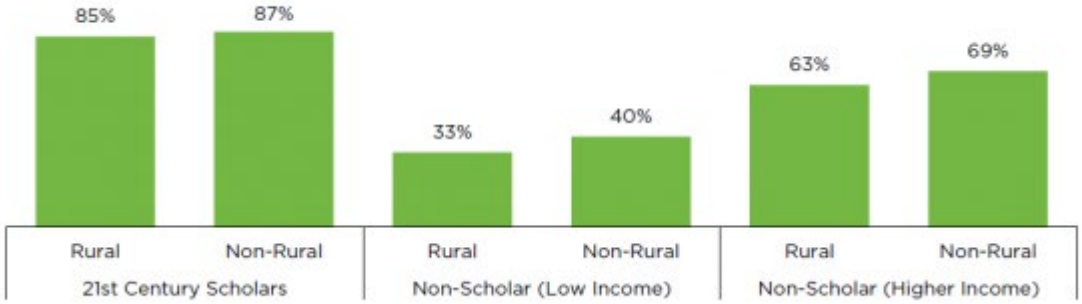
Figure 16. College-going rates of high school graduates from rural and non-rural counties

This lag in educational attainment between rural students and their non-rural peers will have long-term economic ripples in both the individuals' and communities' earning potential and power. WIOA Youth, though, can be utilized to buttress dual enrollment or credit programs for students. The activities can include dual enrollment orientation, tutoring and academic assistance, completion of college and financial aid applications, early assessment of academic readiness for postsecondary education, appropriate skill-building classes (or intensive workshops), academic and career planning, college visits or talent tours with employers, and enrollment in courses for the first semester at the college.

These funds could supplement Perkins in building out CTE programs of study that specifically recruit and retain at-risk youth. This can support at-risk students in rural communities earn postsecondary credentials – including dual credits and certifications – before they graduate high school, helping them start their lives after high school with higher learning and credentials already in their portfolios. As well, through programs like **JAG**, WIOA Youth could assist students navigating the various and flexible options for postsecondary education – from federal and state financial aid (**Pell Grants**, **Frank O'Bannon**, and **21st Century Scholars**) that focus on two- and four-year degree programs to financial aid that focuses on technical certifications (**Workforce Ready Grants**).

Encouraging rural students to file the FAFSA and pursue federal and state financial aid could assist in postsecondary enrollment rates. Rural 21st Century Scholars were more than twice as likely to go to college as rural low-income non-Scholars. The Scholars Program may be a helpful tool in closing gaps between rural and non-rural higher education attainment.

Figure 17. College going rates by rural/non-rural locale and socioeconomic status (2017 High School Cohort)



[10]

For out-of-school youth lacking a high school diploma, WIOA Youth could help supplement **WIOA Title II** funds to have students enrolled in Adult Education concurrently with postsecondary programs, paid for by Pell Grants through **Ability to Benefit**. AtB allows students who are concurrently enrolled in connected AE and eligible postsecondary programs, but do not have a high school diploma or equivalent, could be Pell eligible.

WIOA Youth can also prioritize the following wraparound supports to help students complete both secondary and postsecondary education (contingent upon local context):

1. Paid and unpaid work experiences, which include: summer and year round employment opportunities, pre-apprenticeship programs, internships and job shadowing, and on-the-job training;
2. Occupational skill training;
3. Leadership development opportunities;

4. Mentoring;
5. Follow-up services;
6. Comprehensive guidance and counseling; and
7. Financial literacy education.

Title IV – Vocational Rehabilitation (Core Program): For rural individuals with a physical or mental disability that constitutes or results in a substantial barrier to employment, s/he may qualify for Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services. Similar to other target populations, depending on the need of a rural Hoosier, the WorkOne can supply the programming and funding for this individual's education and training, with VR serving as the source for any accommodations or auxiliary supports for training, as well as helping with any funding gaps for other additional wraparound supports. In particular for rural populations, VR can help support funding transportation to trainings, as well as lodging if the training requires overnight travel. VR can also help with childcare costs, if that is a prohibitive barrier. As each Hoosier's package of services can be tailored to his/her needs, VR can plug any holes of service that may be needed.

Scaling Promising Practices: Below we highlight promising practices that we hope to see scaled and replicated to address the unique barriers and challenges of this target population. Our local regions can implement these practices through strategic use of WIOA funds, philanthropic or community foundation dollars, or social impact bonds. Where applicable, local Boards or community organizations can coordinate with state agencies to apply for SNAP 50/50 FNS, which will serve as a 50% federal match for any state or philanthropic funding dedicated to SNAP recipients receiving Employment and Training services. These practices are ***Activities outside the Plan***. While not a comprehensive list, the practices showcase innovative approaches to assisting our rural population in surmounting their unique circumstances.

Next Level Connections (State Program): This is part of Governor Holcomb's broader infrastructure program to improve connections for all Hoosiers regardless of where they live, work and play. There are several components of this initiative that apply directly to our rural areas:

- Broadband: This program increases the availability of core internet services to allow more rural customers to access from home, thus lessening the need for smaller access points. A Purdue University study found that Indiana would receive about $12 billion in net benefits if the broadband investment were made statewide over 20 years with full deployment of broadband into rural areas.[11] Expanding broad to our rural communities will yield economic benefits and improve quality of life. This initiative includes $100 million investment to bring affordable high-speed fiber optic broadband access to unserved and underserved areas of the state and grants for providers to bring broadband services with a minimum of a minimum of 10Mbps for downloads and 1Mbps for uploads to areas of the state lacking service.

Indiana also encourages broadband development in rural areas by certifying communities as broadband ready. The **Broadband Ready Community (State Program)** certification sends a signal to the telecommunication industry that a community has taken steps to reduce barriers to broadband infrastructure investment. While investment in broadband infrastructure is not guaranteed to follow once a community obtains the certification, reducing the regulatory hurdles that deter investment is a key step towards creating an environment ripe for broadband investment.

While this initiative focuses primarily on investing in broadband infrastructure, there are two additional pieces Indiana can expand upon in this program:

1. Encouraging rural SNAP recipients to apply for the **Lifeline Program (Federal Program)** through the Federal Communications Commission for broadband discounts (both Comcast and AT&T offer discounts for SNAP recipients, though this can support desktops rather than hand-held devices). Both WorkOnes and Division of Family Resources can raise awareness for this program for eligible Hoosiers;

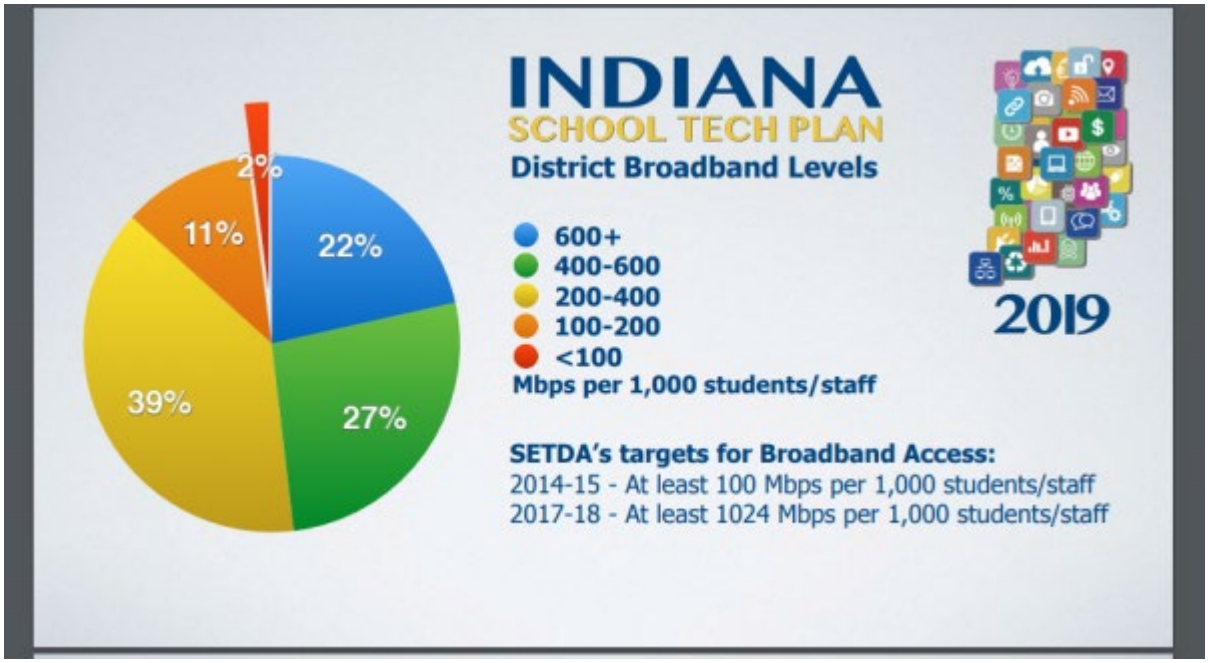
2. Partnering with Adult Education providers to develop and upskill technicians, as well as rural schools and CTE centers with computer networking programs. These programs can foster a workforce to fill jobs related to broadband infrastructure and management. These efforts can also complement coordinated efforts between towns and schools to boost community broadband;

3. Leveraging WIOA Titles I and II to create greater digital literacy for our rural Hoosiers – both individuals and businesses. The value of broadband is not realized unless an individual can use the infrastructure. As we expand broadband into our rural areas, these efforts must be accompanied with strategies to grow digital literacy in our rural populations so they can take advantage of this technology to grow their skills and economic opportunities.

- Trails: As part of Indiana's goal to improve Hoosiers' quality of life, thus facilitating the attraction and retention of talent, we are investing $90 million to connect more Hoosiers to hiking, biking, and riding trails. The majority of funding will be used to create a grant program for local and regional trails, with emphasis on connections between cities, towns, and counties and connections between existing trails, shovel-ready projects, and those that are part of a regional plan or quality of place initiative. One benefit of this initiative is the installation of fiber optics, utilities, or sewers. Indiana currently has about 3,600 total miles of trails, including local, state, federal, and nonprofit trails that are open to the public. The state's goal is to provide a trail within five miles of every Hoosier by 2020.

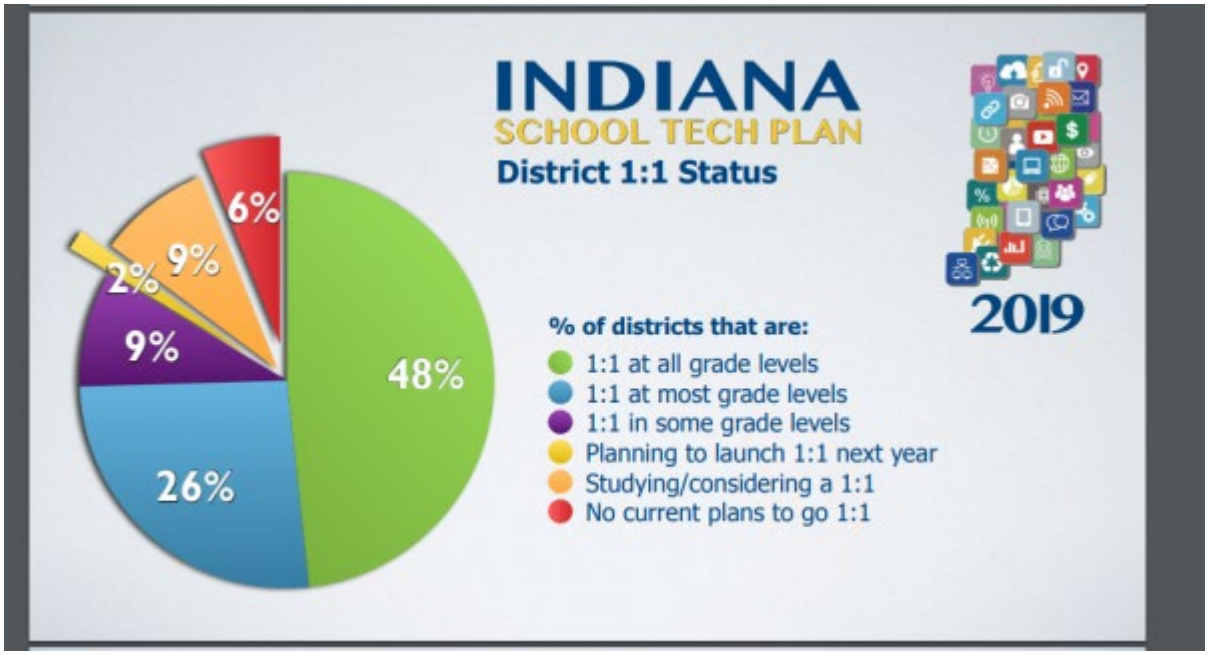
- Road construction: Because roads are a vital part of the rural-urban connection and access, this initiative will have both economic and quality of life benefits. Indiana has invested $600 million to accelerate the completion of I-69 Section 6, and $190 million for improvements to U.S. 20 and 30 and new interchanges on U.S. 31. This also includes road resurfacing, bridge improvements, and new interchanges.

E-RATE (Federal Program): Through the federal E-RATE program, nearly every school in Indiana has broadband.[12] K-12 schools throughout the state have high levels of internet connectivity.



[13]

In addition to those funds provided through E-RATE, Indiana appropriates $5 million in the state budget to backfill expenses for both libraries and schools. As well, many schools, in particular high schools, have a one-to-one ratio for devices and students.

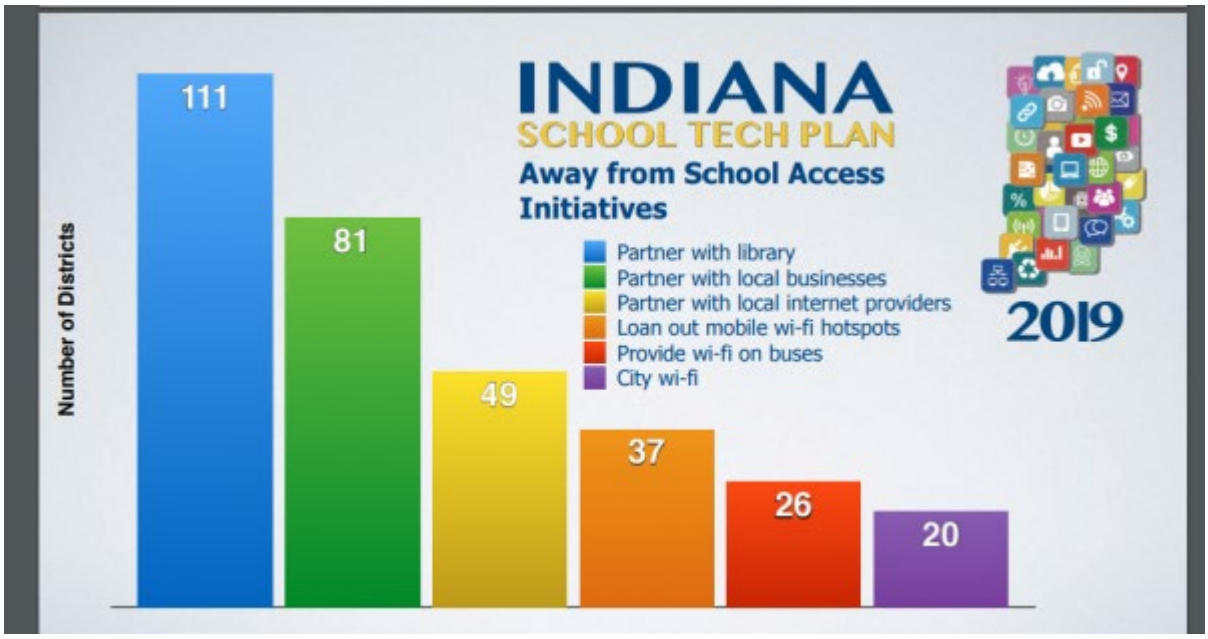


[14]

Hoosier students are able to access technology and broadband while at school or a public library, but there is less connectivity while at home. This can create instructional barriers for homework, research projects, or other academic needs when away from school.

Local Workforce Development Boards could work with schools and libraries to leverage E-RATE by increasing co-location efforts with these two hubs of activities. Libraries have already started

to morph into rural community centers, as many people rely on this resource to file Unemployment Insurance claims, conduct job searches, and participate in telemedicine.



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As Indiana finds creative ways to embed staff, create mobile or temporary WorkOnes, or even formal physical co-location, schools and libraries offer the benefit of providing access to both youth and adults, as well as consistent broadband. Through regional partnerships, our Boards could find ways to increase these types of partnerships and find ways to leverage the existing resource they offer to rural Hoosiers.

Elementary and Secondary Education Act – Title V (Federal Program): Title V: Rural and Low-income Schools Program (RLIS) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), which was reauthorized as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), provides rural districts with additional financial assistance for initiatives aimed at improving student achievement. Indiana receives approximately $1.58 million through this RLIS program, as well as $469,000 through the Small, Rural School Achievement Program.[16] The grant is administered formulaically through the Indiana Department of Education. As outlined in Indiana's ESSA Plan, these funds are currently used in the following ways:

-
    - Teacher recruitment and retention;
    - Professional development for educators, including training on the effective use of technology;
    - Support for educational technology and technology designed to improve instruction for students with disabilities;
    - Parent involvement activities;
    - Title I-approved activities to improve instruction for students in poverty; and
    - Improving instruction for English learners.[17]

Because schools play central social, institutional, and economic roles in rural communities, this funding could be leveraged to boost the educational attainment of both children and adults through Core and Partner Programs under the Combined Plan. Through increased partnerships and co-location, schools could serve as a fulcrum for access to talent development programs in rural areas. This funding could help expand educational services and opportunities through new learning platforms that go across systems (e.g., dual enrollment and credit, shared learning management systems, and skill-based credentialing systems). It could supplement other funding sources, such as Perkins or WIOA Title II, to expand Integrated Education and Technical programs for children and adults. Through co-location, these funds could support career pathways to reconnect rural schools to their local communities and regional economic development offices. It can also promote active, participatory, and cooperative learning around real-world problems in rural schools.

Individual services for rural youth can also be supported through this funding. Some students come to school with significant nonacademic challenges that may interfere with their ability to learn. Such problems can include health and dental issues, social or emotional problems, low levels of parent education or involvement, or lack of before-and after-school opportunities. ESEA Title V could offer wraparound services, including physical and mental health care, adult literacy classes for parents, and out-of-school time programming, that address students' nonacademic needs and connect their services to classroom activities so that student achievement in our rural schools improves. Similar to other ESSA programs, local Workforce Development Boards can collaborate with school districts to determine how this funding could serve as an early intervention so students and families in rural Indiana are placed on the paths to personal and economic success.

Rural Early College Network (Philanthropic Program): The Center of Excellence in Leadership of Learning (CELL) at the University of Indianapolis is establishing a Rural Early College Network (RECN) through a federal Education Innovation and Research (EIR) program administered by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Elementary and Secondary Education. The RECN will help rural Indiana schools more quickly implement the Early College high school model. Early College high schools target underserved students and allow them to earn both high school diplomas and up to two years of credits toward bachelor's or associate degrees through rigorous dual credit classes supported by wrap-around services. The project will offer rural students, many of whom are first-generation college students, opportunities to take rigorous college-level classes while in high school in supportive environments that help ensure their success. Another anticipated outcome is the establishment of model rural Early College high school sites and a template for fostering additional high-quality Early College programs serving even more students throughout Indiana. Partnerships with local businesses will help update curricula, develop work-based learning experiences, and incorporate Work Ethics Certificate requirements. The Center of Excellence in Leadership of Learning at the University of Indianapolis provides leadership that is both cutting-edge and action-oriented. CELL currently has a network of 90 high schools across the state trained in the Early College model and in varying degrees of implementation.

Main Street Revitalization Program (State Program): The Indiana Main Street program is focused on helping communities revitalize their economy, appearance, and overall quality of life in their downtown commercial districts using the National Main Street Center's Four-Point Approach. This approach incorporates strategies that revolve around the four points of Design, Organization, Promotion, and Economic Vitality. It utilizes a comprehensive, incremental approach to revitalization built around a community's unique heritage and attributes. Leveraging these assets helps communities develop a stronger quality of life and sense of place

attachment that contributes to attracting and retaining population, which ultimately influences workforce and job creation in the area. The program provides access to information, guidance to individuals and organizations interested in downtown revitalization, and incentives to stimulate long-term economic growth and pride in the heart of communities. Supporting programs include:

- **Main Street Revitalization Program:** The Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA) created this grant to assist Indiana's rural residents in their endeavors to create successful, sustainable communities and improve local quality of life. The goal of this grant is to encourage communities to focus on long-term community development efforts. This can take the form of business creation, increased tourism, historic preservation, and other economic revitalization efforts. A maximum grant award of $600,000 is in effect for all Main Street Revitalization Projects (MSRPs). General types of activities that are eligible for MSRP funding include updating streetscapes, façade renovations, and downtown infrastructure rehabilitation.

- **Downtown Development Week:** During the first week of October, OCRA invites all Indiana towns and cities to celebrate their downtowns. During this week, OCRA challenges partners to celebrate their downtowns by sponsoring events, activities, festivals, parades, business promotions, restaurant deals, or a combination of a few activities to highlight the best of their downtowns. To help with DDW, OCRA awards five promotion grants to communities to support DDW-related activities.

- **IMPACT:** In November of 2018, OCRA was awarded a $100,000 grant from USDA Rural Development to create the IMPACT Main Street Program. The Program's goal is to strengthen and protect existing businesses, contribute to expansions and create job opportunities. The Indiana Communities Institute provided the following to each of the nine Main Street organizations:

- Compile and analyze community data on market strengths and weaknesses to help identify new businesses;

- Provide technical assistance on emerging trends and best practices around implementation of local business attraction and support activities; and

- Aid in the design, marketing and launch of a business investment strategy to foster new business activity.

Transformational Strategies: With support from OCRA, the National Main Street Center worked with seven communities between 2018 and 2019. It will pursue eight new communities between 2020 and 2021 to assist in identifying transformational strategies and assess the current work plan and its alignment with the transformational strategies. It will offer recommendations for new projects and activities based on these strategies that align with selected strategies.

[1] US Census Bureau, 2018. Defining Rural at the U.S. Census Bureau.

[2] Social Policy Research Associates, 2018. An Institutional Analysis of American Job Centers: AJC Service Delivery in Rural Areas.

[3] Indiana Commission for Higher Education, 2018. College Return on Investment Report 2018.

[4] INcontext, January-February 2019. Child care deserts.

[5] Early Learning Indiana, 2019. Deserts & Hubs: Child Care Access across Indiana – An ELI Story Map.

[6] US Department of Agriculture, 2017. Report to the President of the United States from the Task Force on Agriculture and Rural Prosperity.

[7] Parilla and Muro, 2016. Where global trade has the biggest impact on workers.

[8] Autor, et al., 2014. Trade Adjustment: Worker-Level Evidence.

[9] Indiana Commission for Higher Education, 2019. College Equity Report 2019.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Grant, et al., 2018. Research & Policy INsights: Estimation of the Net Benefits of Indiana Statewide Adoption of Rural Broadband.

[12] Education Super Highway, 2019. State Progress: Indiana.

[13] Indiana Department of Education, 2019. 2019 Tech Plan Data.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Ibid.

[16] US Department of Education. Funds for State Formula-Allocated and Selected Student Aid Programs: Indiana.

[17] Indiana Department of Education, 2019. Amendment to Indiana's Consolidated State Plan under the Every Student Succeeds Act.

There is no universal definition of the terms "vulnerable" or "at-risk" youth. Both terms have been used to denote youth who experience emotional and adjustment problems, are at risk of dropping out, or lack the skills to succeed after graduation. They have also been used to suggest that the individual grew up in unstable family or community environments. Additionally, there is no singular overarching policy or program to assist at-risk youth. Federal programs for this target population are piecemealed together across multiple acts and laws, oftentimes operating in isolation from others (e.g., vocational, educational, social services, juvenile justice and delinquency prevention, and health). Because many different federal programs address the barriers of at-risk youth, integrating these programs becomes exponentially harder at the state and local levels. If we can denote strategies to braid distinct funding streams together for at-risk youth in Indiana, we could develop a comprehensive system of early interventions that could prevent more future Hoosiers from relying on government assistance.

A simplified definition proposed by the federal government to understand this population is "vulnerable youth have characteristics and experiences that put them at risk of developing problem behaviors and outcomes that have the potential to hurt their community, themselves, or both." At-risk does not necessarily mean a youth has already experienced negative outcomes but suggests that negative outcomes are more likely in his/her futures.[1] At-risk youth may experience adverse economic and social outcomes as they enter adulthood. For Indiana's Combined Plan, we have delineated the following subgroups within our at-risk in-school (ages 14 to 22) and out-of-school (ages 16 to 24) youth populations:

- Low-income youth,
- Current or former foster youth,
- Homeless youth,
- English Learners,
- Youth deficient in basic skills,
- Juvenile offenders,
- Pregnant and parenting youth, and
- Youth with disabilities.

Though not all at-risk youth experience negative outcomes, there are specific factors that can lead to a child becoming an at-risk youth as they transition into adulthood, increasing the probability of negative future outcomes. These factors include:

- Poverty: Poverty is linked to a number of potential future problems among youth, including chronic health conditions, low educational attainment, and engagement in delinquent behaviors.
- Family Instability and Dysfunction: Children who grow up in two-parent families tend to have better health outcomes and more positive behaviors. Additionally, two types of family dysfunction are particularly detrimental to the future well-being of children: witnessing violence against their mothers, substance abuse in families and communities, and criminal activity among their family members.
- Child Maltreatment: Abuse and neglect by their parents or other caretakers puts children at risk for many negative outcomes, including poor physical and mental health, lower cognitive functioning and educational attainment, and poor social development and behavior.
- Exposure to Violence in the Community: Witnessing violence in a community is linked to several negative outcomes such as depression, aggressive behavior, anxiety, posttraumatic stress, psychological trauma, and antisocial behavior.
- School Resources and Community Environment: Schools with fewer resources are associated with poor academic outcomes, and schools can create environments with problematic social issues such as bullying and behavioral problems. Children who live in neighborhoods with high concentrations of poverty experience exacerbated obstacles of being poor, such as higher crime rates, underperforming schools, poor health outcomes, and substandard housing options.
- Residential Mobility: Children who move frequently may experience negative outcomes, such as lower academic performance, high rates of school dropout, and emotional and behavioral problems.
- Minority Status: Children who are historically underrepresented minorities, specifically Black and Latino, are more likely to live in high-poverty neighborhoods and to attend lower-performing schools, compared to White youth. Youth with parents who have immigration issues are also considered to be at-risk. Further, racial bias can hinder job

opportunities for youth (the Historically Underrepresented Minorities section discusses this further).[2]

Among the eight groups listed above, some lack financial assistance and emotional support from their families. Other at-risk youth have difficulty securing postsecondary education or employment opportunities or may have depended on public systems of support and may lose needed assistance at age 18. Regardless of their specific risk factor(s), groups of vulnerable youth share many of the same barriers to successfully transitioning into adulthood, earning a postsecondary credential or degree, and securing family-sustaining wages. Within these groups, however, the subgroups are highly diverse; youth in these groups represent diverse socioeconomic and racial backgrounds and may be members of multiple at-risk populations.

The National Survey of High School Strategies Designed to Help At-Risk Student Graduate highlighted 13 high school strategies designed to improve graduation rates among those students at risk of dropping out. These 13 strategies will be interweaved throughout the sections for each subgroup:

1. Academic support classes,
2. Academic tutoring,
3. Career-themed curriculum,
4. Case management services,
5. College-level coursework,
6. Competency-based advancement,
7. Credit recovery,
8. Early warning systems,
9. High school transition activities,
10. Mentoring,
11. Personalized learning plans,
12. Social services, and
13. Student support teams.[3]

Two pre-high school strategies we want to increase Indiana's focus on are **early learning** and **career awareness**. Both of these strategies will occur with younger children in our school system and greatly influence the success of those strategies above for our at-risk youth in the secondary and postsecondary space. These strategies are not directly funded by WIOA, but coordination between schools, local Workforce Development Boards, employers, and government agencies will increase the proliferation of both strategies throughout Indiana. Because of the achievement gaps that exist for our low-income students, students with disabilities, and students of color, we advocate that these strategies target these student subgroups most profoundly. As described throughout the At-Risk Youth sections, the various actors in the talent development system can braid the various federal, state, and philanthropic funds to implement these strategies prior to secondary school.

High-quality early learning programs are a key strategy to help to narrow achievement gaps between children from low-income families and their more affluent peers. While all children

benefit by participating in high-quality early learning programs, the achievement gains are largest for children from low-income families.[4] Early childhood education serves as an early intervention that improves children's cognitive and socioemotional functions. Additionally, the achievement gap between at-risk children and their affluent peers begins at birth, persists throughout K-12, and has lifelong negative consequences, unless it is addressed early in a child's life. Quality early learning helps address these early gaps for at-risk children and ensures they are ready to start school at the same level as their peers. A National Center for Education Statistics longitudinal study shows that children who attended preschool programs entered kindergarten with higher scores and greater readiness in math, reading, cognitive flexibility, and for approaches to learning (e.g., attentiveness, persistence, and eagerness to learn) than their peers who did not participate in an early learning program.[5]

Over the next two years, Indiana will examine the structure of its programs and agencies. One development we endeavor to implement is to expand our K-12 system as the PreK-12 system. Throughout Indiana, school districts and local communities have recognized the connection and importance of early learning and Pre-K with kindergarten and school readiness. Over 20,000 Hoosier students are enrolled in Pre-K through their school districts, illustrating that many of our districts have already made the transition from K-12 to PreK-12. One of our roles over the next two years is to further support and replicate those local communities' early learning practices. Prekindergarten programs offer the most promise for increasing children's school readiness and ensuring students begin their academic career on the right track.[6] To prevent Hoosiers from needing some of the interventions aimed at assisting at-risk youth students described throughout the Plan, this redesigned system, accompanied with additional coordinated investments, can help ensure those predisposed to be an at-risk youth never fulfill that label.

Similar to the talent development system, early learning in Indiana has multiple funding streams that must be coordinated and braided together in order to scale high-quality programs. In addition to federal funds (e.g., **Child Care and Development Block Grant**, **Early Head Start**, and **Head Start**) and state funds (e.g., **On My Way Pre-K**), local school districts can also use **ESEA Title I** to provide preschool programs to improve educational outcomes for low-income children. Children who fall under the At-Risk Youth subcategories are often eligible for these programs, as they are often at risk of failing to meet a state's challenging academic standards when they enter elementary school. These specific funds are available to support the early learners who are homeless, in foster care, from migrant families, and English Learners. Indiana can braid the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act to fund prekindergarten programs serving children with disabilities. These populations of students often need the support that high-quality early learning programs may provide to level the playing field and address opportunity gaps between them and their peers.[7] By integrating the various funding streams as postulated in *Goal 2* of the Plan, Indiana can create both horizontal and vertical alignment across our PreK-12 system. Horizontally, this will create the consistency and professional standards across programs and settings that serve a particular age or grade. Vertically, this integration addresses the progressive development of standards from birth through third grade and beyond that provide a continuum for children's knowledge and skills.

As discussed for our other target populations, creating more awareness of the diversity of postsecondary options for at-risk youth. Career awareness is critical to ensuring their longitudinal success in our talent system. Students must obtain a deeper understanding of career opportunities and the pathways to those careers early in their academic careers. Research has shown that students are overwhelmed with the vast number of options available to them. As an early intervention, focusing on greater career exploration, engagement, and

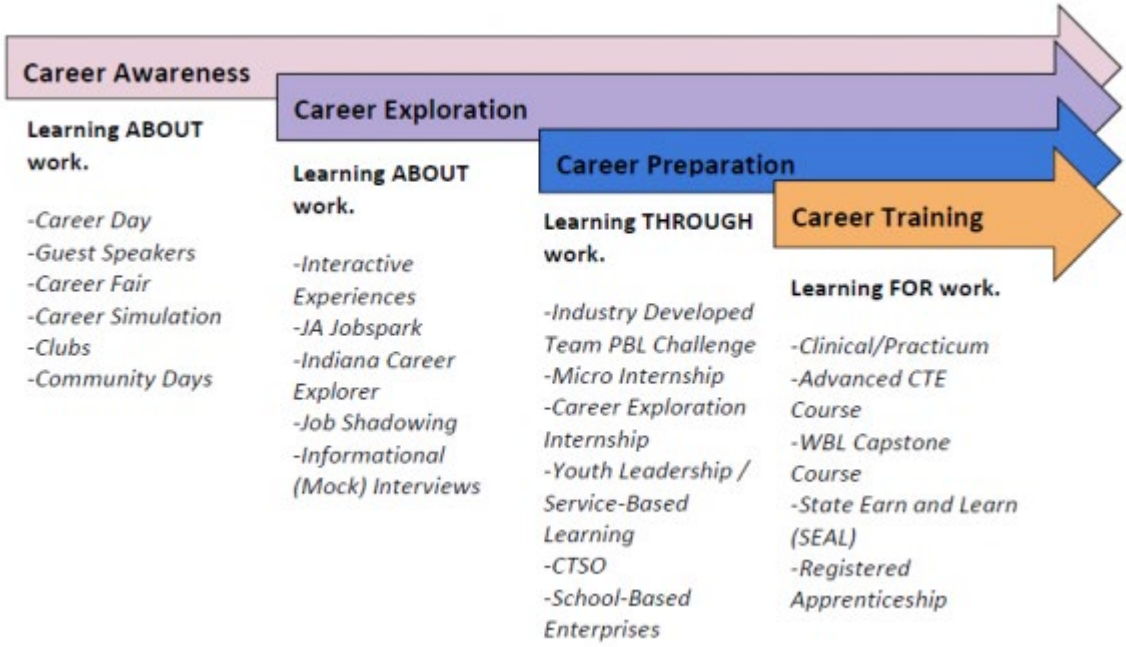
experiences will allow students to connect their K-12 education with postsecondary aspirations. To help Hoosier students understand the myriad of graduation pathway options that best fit their postsecondary goals, we encourage schools and local Workforce Development Boards to expand the work-based learning continuum throughout K-12. This will require coordinated efforts to have students:

- Engage in career awareness activities in grades K-5 to connect their learning with careers;
- Explore a future that fits their skills and interests in grades 6-8 to prevent disengagement in education; and
- Experience postsecondary options through real-world application of knowledge and skills in grades 9-12.

The Work-Based Learning Continuum is the set of primary through postsecondary work-based learning experiences that progress in specificity and employer involvement including: Career Awareness, Career Exploration, Career Preparation, and Career Training. Schools and Boards can use this continuum and chart to better understand how to structure student experiences and to communicate clearly defined experiences to prospective employer partners. Additionally, **ESEA Titles I or IV** could be directed toward these experiences for at-risk students throughout K-12, with WIOA funds supplementing activities in high school. The Work-Based Learning Continuum encompasses:

Career Awareness	Learning **ABOUT** work.	Build awareness of the variety of careers available and the role of postsecondary education; broaden student options.
Career Exploration	Learning **ABOUT** work.	Explore career options and postsecondary for the purpose of motivating students and to inform their decision-making in high school and postsecondary education.
Career Preparation	Learning **THROUGH** work.	Apply learning through practical experience that develops knowledge and skills necessary for success in careers and postsecondary education.
Career Training	Learning **FOR** work.	Train for employment and/or postsecondary education in a specific range of occupations.

In the Department of Education Work-Based Learning Manual, activities aligned to the Work-Based Learning Continuum for every grade are outlined. These activities must contain actual experiences and connections at businesses or hearing form the business community. They allow students to explore various options and see how their education and interests align with different careers. Some of these activities include:



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For In-School At-Risk Youth, there are three primary funding streams through which supports and resource at provided: Title I of WIOA and Titles I and IV of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. **Title I of WIOA** includes funding streams for adults, dislocated workers, and youth. WIOA Youth funding is specifically intended to provide comprehensive interventions that "support the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, entry into postsecondary education, and career readiness for participants."[9] This is the main source of youth funding within the workforce development policies. These funds serve at-risk youth who face barriers to continued education and employment both in and out-of-school. As WIOA Title I- Out-Of-School Youth is covered deeply in the Low-Income section, as well as referenced as a potential co-enrollment option for those in other target populations and meet the eligibility requirements, the subgroup sections below are specifically regarding in-school youth. This is individuals aged 14-21 who are enrolled in either secondary or postsecondary education and require additional assistance to earn a credential or degree and secure employment. Services provided depend on the specific service strategy customized to each youth's needs. Local areas are required to make available specified youth program elements, including dropout prevention and recovery, connections between academic and occupational learning, paid and unpaid work experience with academic and occupational education components, technical training for a specific career pathway, career counseling, and preparation for postsecondary education and training. All of the subgroups in the sections below may qualify for these program elements; intentionality and differentiation regarding specific services will be delineated to address the particular subgroup's potential barriers.

Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) (reauthorized as the Every Student Succeeds Act) **(Federal Program)** provides most of the funding for programs that serve disadvantaged youth in school. Title I, Part A: Local Educational Agency Grants is the largest federal elementary and secondary education program that supplements educational services to students attending pre-kindergarten through grade 12 schools with relatively high concentrations of students from low-income families. Title I, Part D: Neglected, Delinquent, or At Risk Children and Youth gives funding to states and districts to meet the special educational

needs of youth in institutions and correctional facilities for neglected and delinquent youth, as well as youth at risk of dropping out. Title I, Part A will receive $255 million for FY 2020; Title I, Part D, on the other hand, will receive only $673,000. Because Title I, Part A has the majority of federal K-12 funding and has wide application, locals could explore ways to braid these funds into activities for dropout prevention, academic supports, and wraparound services. To help implement the above strategies for at-risk students writ large, local Workforce Development Boards can partner with school districts in their regions regarding ways Title I, Part A could serve as supplementary funds.

ESEA Title IV, Part A: Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants and **Part B: 21st Century Community Learning Centers** provides funding to districts for academic and other supportive programs. The purpose of these programs is to provide opportunities for academic enrichment, offer students a broad array of additional services, and offer families opportunities for active and meaningful engagement with their children's education. At the local level, schools may use this funding stream in tandem with other funds through ESEA, like Titles I and IV, to support specific interventions, activities, or services.

Additionally, Title I, Part A of the ESEA may be used to promote supportive school climates to reduce the use of exclusionary discipline practices in a Title I schoolwide program. Because at-risk students may need assistance with accessing mental health services, ESEA Title IV can supplement instructional support for schoolwide social-emotional learning programs and school counselors. Social-emotional learning programs can improve the social skills and academic achievement of at-risk students and can improve school climate by reducing violence, bullying, and other conduct problems. Title IV can also support mental health counseling and academic guidance roles, either separated or combined into one position. Additional activities locals can support with these funds include:

Table 1. Overview of Examples of Allowable SSAE Uses of Funds*

Overview of Allowable SSAE Program Activities		
Well-Rounded Educational Opportunities (ESEA *section 4107*)	Safe and Healthy Students (ESEA *section 4108*)	Effective Use of Technology (ESEA *section 4109*)
• Improving access to foreign language instruction, arts, and music education • Supporting college and career counseling, including providing information on opportunities for financial aid through the early FAFSA • Providing programming to improve instruction and student engagement in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), including computer science, and increasing access to these subjects for underrepresented groups • Promoting access to accelerated learning opportunities including Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) programs, dual or concurrent[5] enrollment programs and early college high schools[6] • Strengthening instruction in American history, civics, economics, geography, government education, and environmental education	• Promoting community and parent involvement in schools • Providing school-based mental health services and counseling • Promoting supportive school climates to reduce the use of exclusionary discipline and promoting supportive school discipline • Establishing or improving dropout prevention • Supporting re-entry programs and transition services for justice-involved youth • Implementing programs that support a healthy, active lifestyle (nutritional and physical education) • Implementing systems and practices to prevent bullying and harassment • Developing relationship building skills to help improve safety through the recognition and prevention of coercion, violence, or abuse • Establishing community partnerships	• Supporting high-quality professional development for educators, school leaders, and administrators to personalize learning and improve academic achievement • Building technological capacity and infrastructure • Carrying out innovative blended learning projects • Providing students in rural, remote, and underserved areas with the resources to benefit from high-quality digital learning opportunities • Delivering specialized or rigorous academic courses and curricula using technology, including digital learning technologies and assistive technology

[10]

As many of the above strategies overlap with ways to support at-risk students, this funding stream offers another opportunity for local Boards and districts to partner to find ways for programs to work jointly.

[1] Congressional Research Service, 2018. Vulnerable Youth: Background and Policies.

[2] Mathematica Public Research et al., 2011. Synthesis of Research and Resources to Support at- Risk Youth.

[3] US Department of Education, 2017. National Survey on High School Strategies Designed to Help At-Risk Students Graduate.

[4] Hirokazu et al., 2013. Investing in our Future: The Evidence Base for Preschool Education.

[5] Rathbun et al., 2016. Primary Early Care and Education Arrangements and Achievement at Kindergarten Entry.

[6] Brookings Institutions, 2012. Starting School at a Disadvantage: School Readiness of Poor Children.

[7] US Department of Education, 2016. Non-Regulatory Guidance Early Learning in the Every Student Succeeds Act: Expanding Opportunities to Support our Youngest Learners.

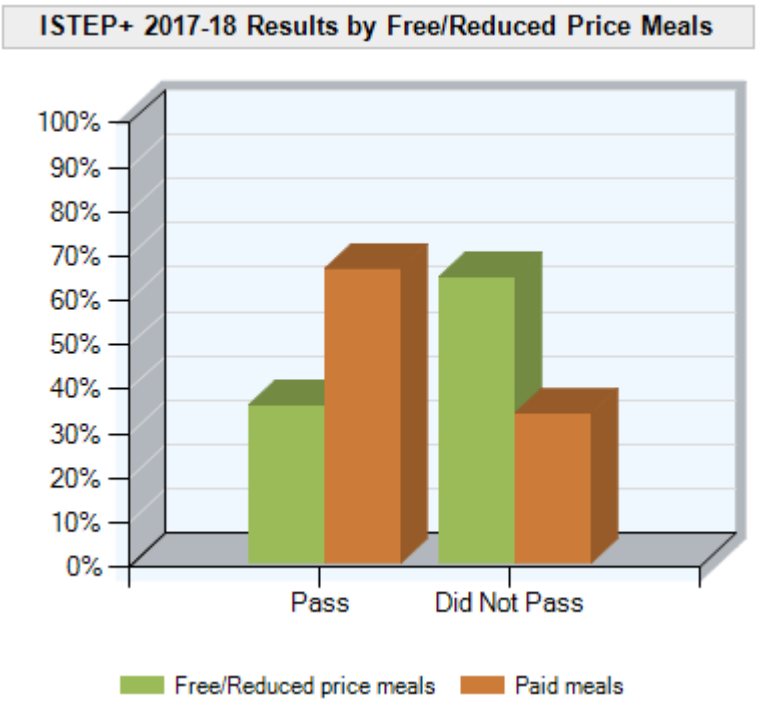
[8] Indiana Department of Education. Indiana K-12 Work-Based Learning Manual.

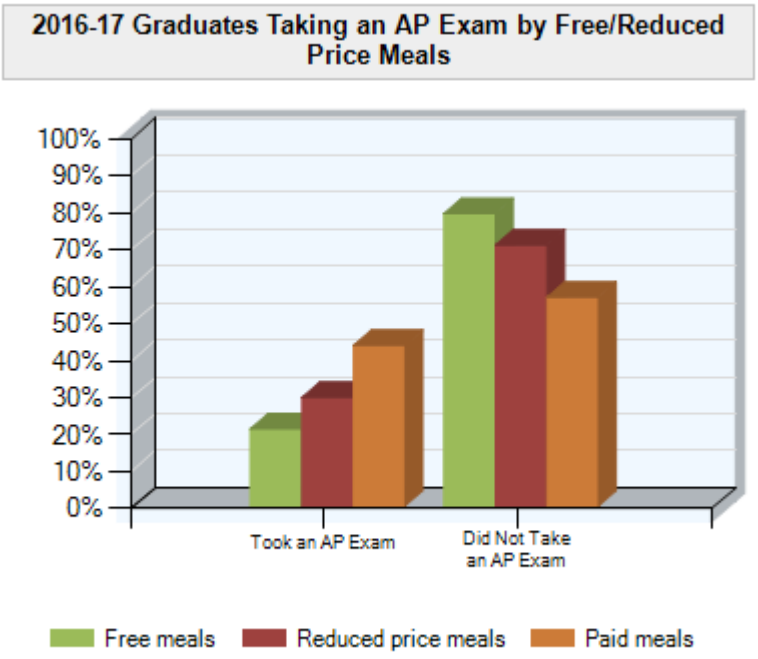
[9] WIOA, Sec. 129(c)(2).

[10] U.S. Department of Education, 2016. Non-Regulatory Guidance: Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants.

In K-12 education, student status of free and reduced-price lunch (FRPL) status has been a proxy measure for student poverty and the basis for allocating resources to schools based on income. Students' families at 185% of the federal poverty guidelines receive reduced-price meals; students at 130% of the federal poverty guidelines receive free meals. Both denotations aggregate students under the low-income subgroup.[1]

Low-income students traditionally fall under this subgroup because students from lower specific socioeconomic backgrounds have had historical gaps in academic proficiency and are five times more likely to drop out of school than students from higher income families.[2] In Indiana, students with free and reduced-price lunch have lower pass rates on the statewide standardized assessment and lower pass rates on Advanced Placement tests than their peers, as illustrated by the graphs below.


ISTEP+ 2017-18 Results by Free/Reduced Price Meals
100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
Pass
Did Not Pass
Free/Reduced price meals
Paid meals


2016-17 Graduates Taking an AP Exam by Free/Reduced Price Meals
100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
Took an AP Exam
Did Not Take an AP Exam
Free meals
Reduced price meals
Paid meals

[3]

Low-income students are susceptible to a variety of obstacles at school and home that limit their chances for educational success. Students living in poverty face serious challenges at home and in their communities that often interfere with their learning:

- **Instability and distress:** Instability, abuse, food and housing insecurity, language difficulties, addiction, domestic violence, and neglect occur with more frequency in low-income homes and all have negative effects on a child's cognitive, behavioral, and emotional development. Not enough food on the table or erratic housing can cause children to lose focus, to increase anxiety, and can damage mental health. Other common challenges for these students include more school absences and less parental support.
- **Poor nutrition and health:** Poor diet, less access to healthcare, and little exercise can affect a child's behavior at school. Additionally, these factors influence cognition and reasoning.
- **Brain development and cognition:** A disruptive home environment, poor health, and instability can lead to distraction, attention deficits, weak vocabulary, and poor processing skills. These basic cognitive skills are critical, particularly in early childhood development.

Strong early education in elementary and middle school are critical to low-income students' long-term success. It is in these early educational phases that a strong academic foundation is laid and the development of social-emotional learning and soft skills occurs. Early academic proficiency has long-term implications; it sets students up to avoid remediation in postsecondary education, earn credentials and degrees with less debt and in less time, and secure quality employment. Improving learning outcomes for low-income students is essential for Indiana to address its skills gaps and augment our talent pipeline for economic success.

Co-Enrolled Programs: At-risk youth will be co-enrolled into the following primary programs and services of benefit to this target population. An individual's unique circumstances or preference may not necessitate co-enrollment in each program. This section includes ***Core Program Activities***, ***Activities Outside of the Plan***, and ***Individual Services.***

Title I – In-School Youth (Core Program): The WIOA Youth Program provides local workforce areas resources to deliver a comprehensive array of services that focus on assisting in-school youth with one or more barriers. Local Boards can partner with schools and districts to support low-income youth attain a high school diploma, enroll in postsecondary education, and enter the job market career-ready. Because low-income students have lower academic attainment rates than their higher income peers, it is vital to provide these students with the opportunities for advanced coursework and the supports to be successful in those classes. Title I can supplement state funds or other federal funds to offer those resources to low-income students. Specifically, assisting with tutoring and study skills supports can directly improve the academic proficiency levels of low-income youth. Additionally, Title I can blend with Perkins to support academic integration education into career-technical education. This ensures that the CTE content is aligned to rigorous and challenging academic content and complements challenging academic content standards.

Title I involves a combination of the following approaches to increase low-income students' attainment rates:

1. Focusing on education and training (ranging from certifications to bachelor's degrees) that give students a quality postsecondary credential;
2. Connecting students with employers or industries that provide well-paying jobs in key sectors to augment their network; and
3. Providing a range of additional supports and services to help students deal with problems related to poverty (e.g., securing a student a paid internship to help with income support, addressing food insecurity through supportive services; or providing comprehensive guidance and counseling, including drug and alcohol abuse services and counseling.

Schools and local Boards can also funnel WIOA Title I toward funding work-based learning experiences for low-income youth. In particular, these funds can help subsidize wages for these students to ensure the balance between learning and earning. Rather than merely working a part-time job, funding a work-based learning experience for low-income students help create sustained interactions with industry or community professionals in real workplace settings. These experiences provide the following for these students:

[4]

Indiana's primary WIOA In-School Youth program is **Jobs for America's Graduates** (JAG). There are ten common elements of the JAG Model that are embedded in the six models. These elements are adapted to best suit the needs of the students served in each program:

1. **Student Selection.** JAG serves students with the greatest barriers to graduation, employment, and/or pursuit of a postsecondary education. Priority is given to students that "need, want, and can benefit" from the services delivered by JAG Model programs.
2. **Classroom Instruction.** A trained JAG Specialist provides competency-based instruction aligned to the JAG National Curriculum. JAG Specialists administer a pre- and post-test that provides a gain score to assess the attainment of the JAG competencies.
3. **Adult Mentoring**. The JAG Specialist provides individual attention to students focusing on reducing the number of barriers preventing him or her from receiving a high school diploma, securing employment, or pursuing postsecondary education and/or training that leads to a career. Additional adult mentors are recruited to assist with barrier reduction or removal.

4. **Leadership Development**. All JAG students participate in a motivational student-led organization – the JAG Career Association – to build on the skills gained in the classroom and to develop leadership and teaming skills to improve employability and advancement. Annual Leadership Development Conferences (LDC) and State Career Development Conferences (CDC) provide students the opportunity to demonstrate their employability and leadership skills and be recognized for their achievements.

5. **Guidance and Counseling**. JAG Specialists provide informal guidance to students on career and life decisions and, based on the individual needs of students, connect them to school-based or professional counseling services to address more serious barriers.

6. **Job and Postsecondary Education Placement Services.** Specialists are engaged in intensive, one-on-one employer marketing and job development activities to identify quality job placement opportunities for each graduate. Grades are assisted in the exploration of postsecondary education opportunities and navigation of the financial aid and application processes to pursue the most appropriate opportunities.

7. **Linkages to School- and Community-Based Services.** JAG programs are a school-based "one-stop center" for youth with barriers to success to ensure that they receive appropriate academic and social services from available resources in the school, program, and community.

8. **12-Month Follow-up Services.** JAG provides 12 months of post-graduation follow-up and support services on the job, military, and/or enrollment in a postsecondary institution. For those students who do not graduate high school, JAG continues to provide follow-up services to help them connect with stable employment and opportunities to upskill. Through greater program integration, JAG can actively refer these students to Adult Education providers to help with academic remediation and earning a high school equivalency.

9. **Accountability System.** Computerized tracking of participants served, services delivered, and performance results (graduation rate, positive outcomes, rates, aggregate employment rate, full-time jobs rate, full-time placement rate, further education rate, wages, and return to school rate) is a critical component of every JAG program. JAG data collection is used to produce research reports to assess the effectiveness of JAG State Organizations and local program affiliates in fully implementing programs, delivering services, and achieving high performance outcomes.

10. **Technical Assistance and Professional Development**. JAG staff and consultants provide new and established state organizations and local program affiliates with an array of technical assistance and professional development opportunities.

JAG provides at-risk students with the wraparound supports, mentoring, and assistance to prevent dropout and propel high school and postsecondary achievement. As this has a state appropriation ($8M annually) to augment our federal funds, we will intentionally replicate and scale this and similar models to institutions that have a majority of at-risk students (e.g., alternative schools and juvenile detention centers), in addition to growing JAG in non-traditional locations (e.g., CTE centers). JAG and similar models through WIOA Youth can expand mentoring, counseling, tutoring, and other supportive services to low-income youth, which they may not receive in their homes or schools, to ensure they successfully complete high school and have a strong start to postsecondary enrollment or employment.

In addition to expanding JAG models to Out-Of-School Youth, as discussed in the Low-Income Adults section, local regions are pioneering the JAG College Success Program. Currently offered at three campuses, Ivy Tech Community College in Indianapolis and Fort Wayne and Vincennes University, the primary mission of this model of JAG is to support at-risk students (who often participated in JAG in high school) as they transition into postsecondary enrollment. This program helps ensure students persist to achieve of their credential or degree by offering similar wraparound supports to at-risk students in the postsecondary space.

Elementary and Secondary Education Act – Title I, Part A (Federal Program): Title I, Part A: Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) provides financial assistance to districts and schools with high numbers or percentages of children from low-income families. These funds help ensure that all children meet the state's academic standards. The overall purpose of Title I is "to provide all children significant opportunity to receive a fair, equitable, and high-quality education, and to close educational achievement gaps." Schools and districts can use these funds to strengthen academic programs, increase the amount and quality of learning time, and help provide an enriched and accelerated curriculum, which may include programs, activities, and courses necessary to provide a well-rounded education.

Activities that may be supplemented under Title I, Part A include many that could assist at-risk students' needs. In particular, Title I, Part A grants could fill in funding gaps for:

- Counseling,
- School-based mental health programs,
- Specialized instructional support services,
- Mentoring services,
- Other strategies to improve students' skills outside the academic subject areas,
- Preparation for and awareness of opportunities for postsecondary education and the workforce,
- Career and technical education programs,
- Broadening secondary school students' access to coursework to earn postsecondary credit while still in high schools (e.g., AP, IB, dual or concurrent enrollment, or early college high schools),
- Implementation of a schoolwide tiered behavior model ,
- Early intervening services coordinated with similar activities and services under IDEA,
- Professional development and other activities for school staff,
- Recruitment and retention of effective teachers,
- Particularly in high-needs subjects,
- Strategies for assisting preschool children in the transition to elementary school, and
- Specific programs to be consolidated (if funds will be consolidated).[5]

Local Workforce Development Boards can work with schools and districts on ways to braid WIOA Title I and ESEA Titles I or IV funds together to offer career exploration activities and

comprehensive wraparound services for at-risk youth. At-risk youth often face of gap in supports in grades 9 and 10. At-risk students fail 9th grade more than any other grade in high school, and a disproportionate number of students who are held back in 9th grade subsequently drop out. Supporting students as they transition to high school can help combat these issues.[6] As many of the above activities can complement models like JAG, as well as other federal and state funding streams, leveraging these dollars to provide the interventions that will help at-risk students successfully matriculate into higher education or quality employment. Schools and districts can braid ESEA Titles I or IV and WIOA Title I funds to provide HSTAs for students who exhibit basic skills deficiencies. Additionally, funding through ESEA Titles I or IV can supplement state funds for JAG to expand this program into middle schools and grades 9 and 10, whereas WIOA Title I can focus more on grades 11 and 12. By braiding these different funding streams together, locals Boards, schools, and districts can offer comprehensive wraparound services that intervene in students' lives early to ensure they get on the right track.

Indiana's State Budget (State Program): In Indiana's state budget, additional funding is allocated to districts based on their percentage of students who are low-income. There are several funding streams to districts to help expand resources and supports for these students to close academic achievement gaps. While these funds can be used to provide a wide range of supports for students, we would like to see greater coordination among these funds and federal funds. State funds, in particular, can be used to expand programming and resources regarding career exploration, engagement, and experiences.

- **Complexity Component of Student Tuition Support:** The FY 2020 complexity component in the Basic Grant for the state's student tuition support uses the October 1, 2018 SNAP, TANF, and Foster Care data, as well as pupil enrollment, to arrive at a percentage of students who were recipients of SNAP, TANF, and Foster Care assistance. The calculation then looks at the prior year complexity index minus .025 to arrive at a factor. The previous year adjusted factor is compared to the current year factor to determine which is greater. The result is the FY 2020 complexity factor. That amount is multiplied by $3,650 to determine the amount of funding per student. This per student amount is multiplied by the applicable membership count (September or February) and divided by two to arrive at a funding amount. The same formula is used for FY 2021 and uses a complexity multiplier of $3,675.[7]

- **Honors Diploma Grant:** As another means to both incentivize greater achievement for low-income students and support the additional resources it requires provide quality education, Indiana provides additional grant funding for those students who receive more rigorous diplomas. This funding is specifically an incentive the state provides to schools to promote higher achievement for students. For FY 2019 and FY 2020, the funding for the Core 40 diploma with Academic or Technical Honors is $1,500 for a student who qualified for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), or who received foster care services in the previous school year. The amount is $1,100 for a student graduating with a Core 40 diploma with Academic or Technical Honors and did not qualify for SNAP, TANF or foster Care assistance. Honors Grant funding is part of the monthly state tuition support distribution. School districts determine locally how to use this grant funding. Many schools reinvest this money into their AP or dual credit programs; other schools use the funding to give students or teachers merit awards. We encourage regions to leverage this funding to increase low-income youth's access and completion of more rigorous coursework – which could include a variety of strategies – as a means to close achievement gaps and establish solid academic foundations for this particular subgroup.

- **Dual Credit Course Fee Waiver:** Priority and technical dual credit courses meet the general education or free elective requirements of undergraduate degree programs across the state and are offered at no cost to qualified lower-income students. Per Indiana Code 21-14-8-1, dual credit tuition is waived for students eligible for free and reduced-price lunch.
- **Advanced Placement Program:** The state also subsidizes the cost of AP exams in math, science, and English for all 11th and 12th graders, with additional AP subject exams available to qualified lower-income students at no cost. Under the state's Advanced Placement Program, Indiana allocates $5.2 million per year for AP exams. Per Indiana Code 20-36-3-8, the state funds all exam fees for English, Mathematics, and Science AP exams taken by 9th thru 12th grade Hoosier students enrolled in the corresponding. Priority for funding is given specifically to students receiving free and reduced-price lunch participating in any AP exam outside of English, Mathematics, and Science (e.g., AP Art History and Music Theory, all AP language courses, and AP courses in the social sciences).

State Financial Aid: Indiana has two primary need-based financial aid programs for low-income students interested in pursuing higher education: **21st Century Scholars** and **Frank O'Bannon**. The 21st Century Scholars program is open to all Hoosiers who come from households with incomes that qualify for free and reduced-price lunch in seventh or eighth grade.[8] To become a Scholar, students must enroll during seventh or eighth grade (students actively in foster care may apply any time after the 8th grade). To enroll in the scholarship, the student's family must meet income eligibility guidelines below. To receive the scholarship in college, students must remain income eligible, which is roughly double the enrollment income requirement. S*tudents must meet income eligibility guidelines at time of enrollment and each year of college; a* student in foster care or in a legal guardianship does not need to meet this requirement.

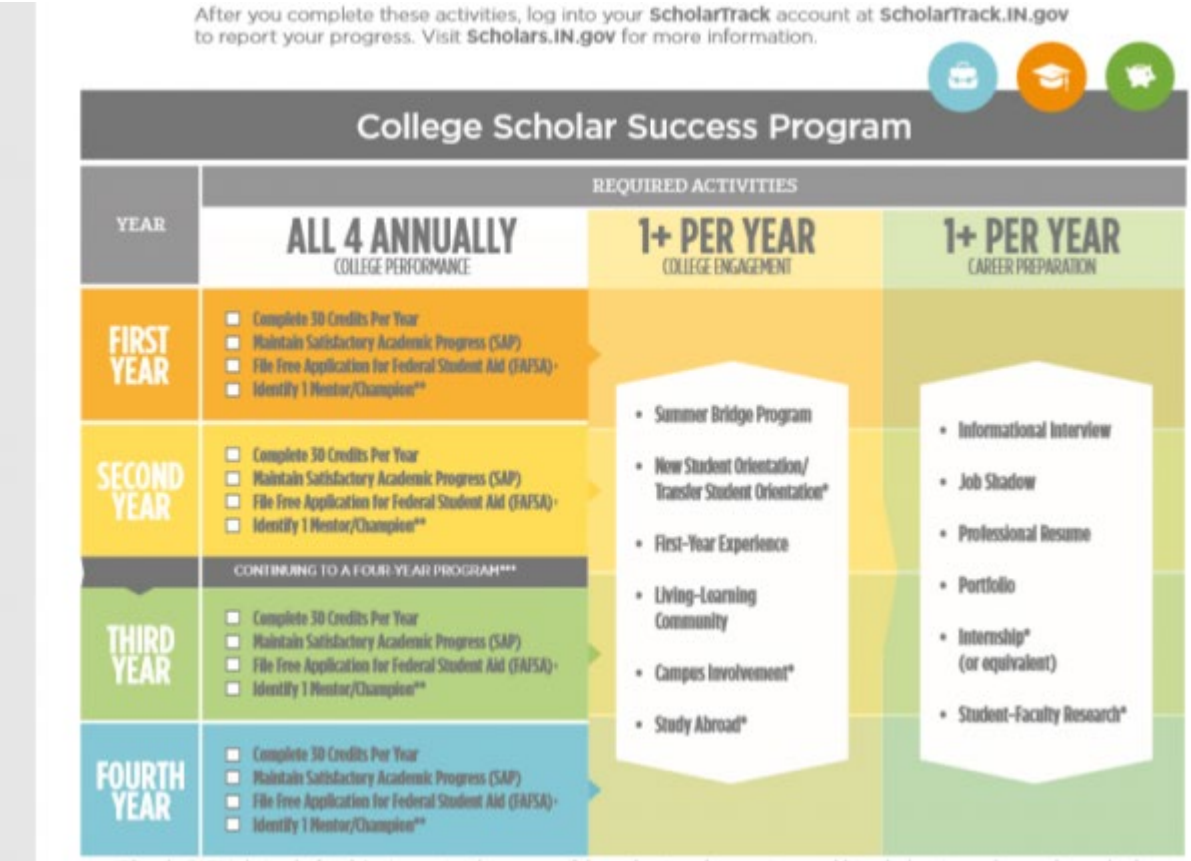
HOUSEHOLD SIZE	MAXIMUM ANNUAL INCOME
2	$31,284
3	$39,461
4	$47,638
5	$55,815
6	$63,992
7 or more	For each additional person, add $8,177

While in high school, Scholars must complete the Scholars Success Program (SSP) to help prepare them for college. Activities in the SSP include:

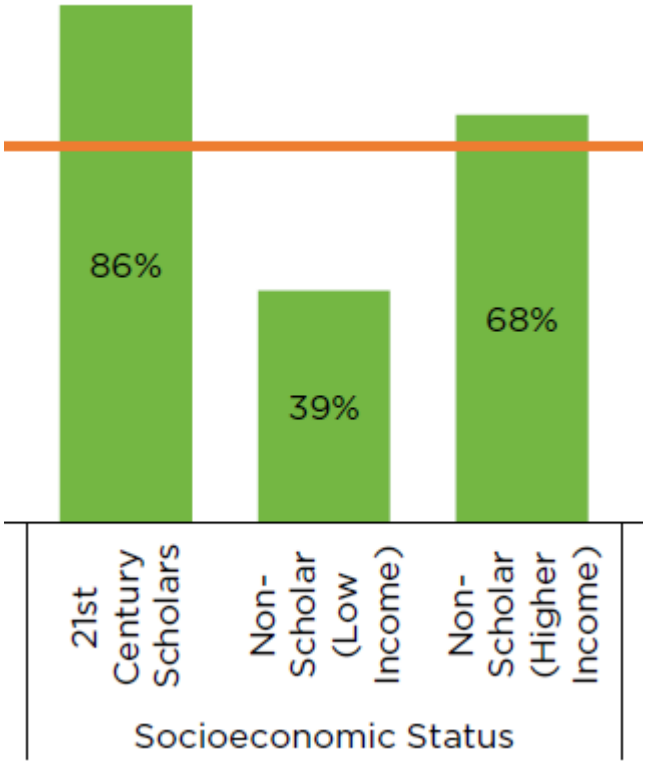
GRADE	REQUIRED ACTIVITIES		
09	Create a Graduation Plan[1]	Participate in an Extracurricular or Service Activity	Watch "Paying for College 101"
10	Take a Career Interests Assessment	Get Workplace Experience[2]	Estimate the Costs of College
11	Visit a College Campus	Take a College Entrance Exam (ACT/SAT)	Search for Scholarships[3]
12	Submit Your College Application	Watch "College Success 101"	File Your FAFSA

[9]

21st Century Scholars launched activities Scholars must complete once enrolled in a higher education program to help boost persistence and completion. The College Scholar Success Program is designed to help low-income youth succeed in college and your future career. Each year of college, in order to maintain the scholarship, students must complete four annual College Performance requirements and must choose one activity from both the College Engagement and Career Preparation categories.



21st Century Scholars has been operating in Indiana for the past 30 years with high returns on this investment. 21st Century Scholars had the highest college-going rate among all demographic groups at 86%, which is higher than the state's average enrollment rate of 63%. This is more than double the rate of their low-income, non-Scholar peers and is 18 percentage points higher than their peers who, as high school seniors, had family incomes above the free and reduced-price lunch threshold.[10]



Among high school graduates going straight to college, 21st Century Scholars were more likely to enroll in Indiana public institutions than either their low-income and higher-income peers. Among all the groups listed below, Scholars were the most likely to attend an Indiana public institution, the most likely to attend an Indiana private non-profit institution, tied for the most likely to attend an Indiana four-year public institution, and the least likely to go out-of-state for college. This indicates that the 21st Century Scholars program may be an important tool in Indiana retaining its talented high school graduates. Public two-year institutions remained the top choice among low-income students not enrolled in the 21st Century Scholars program.[11]

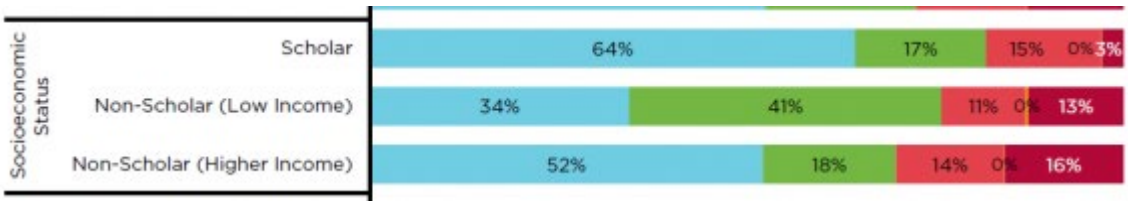
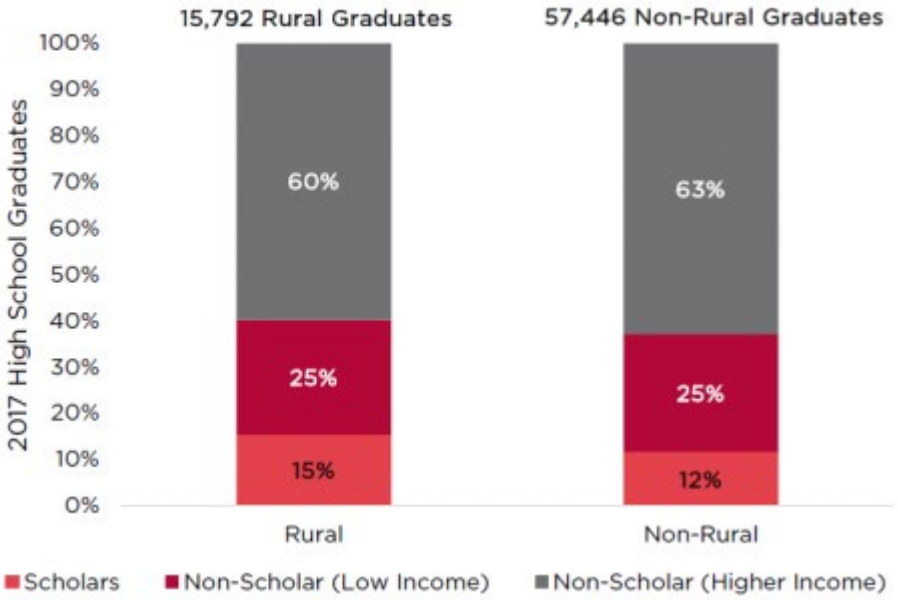


Figure 14. Institution type among students enrolling in college within one year of high school graduation (2017 High School Cohort)

Four-Year Indiana Public | Two-Year Indiana Public | Indiana Private | Indiana Proprietary | Out of State

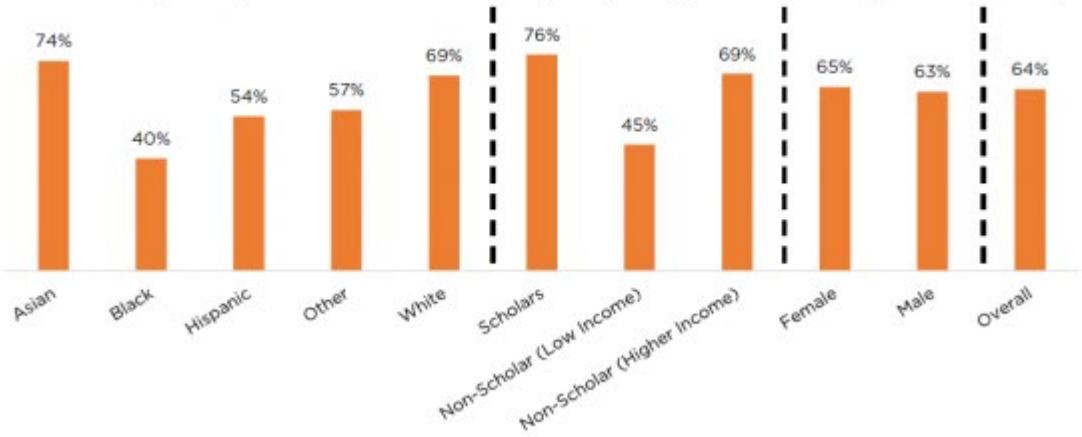
21st Century Scholars located in rural areas were only 2 percentage points less likely than their non-rural peers to immediately enroll in college. Rural 21st Century Scholars were more than twice as likely to go to college as rural low-income non-Scholars, indicating that the Scholars Program may be a valuable tool in closing gaps in postsecondary attainment between rural and non-rural students.

Figure 4. Indiana high school graduates by rural/non-rural status and low-income status



Nearly two-thirds of Hoosiers earn college credit before even graduating high school. This is primarily through dual credit and Advanced Placement exams. Earning early college credit can help high school students get accustomed to college-level courses and ultimately help them graduate college on-time or even early. Because of this, achievement gaps in early college credit can be a warning signal. Because scholars tend to earn more early college credits their non-scholar peers, they can enroll into a postsecondary program partway to completion of a degree, speeding up their enrollment time and saving additional costs.

Figure 8. Percentage of High School Graduates Earning Early College Credit (2017 High School Cohort)



[12]

The Frank O'Bannon Grant is designed to provide access for Hoosier students to attend eligible public, private, and proprietary postsecondary institutions. Eligibility for the grant is based on financial need as determined by the FAFSA. The grant may be used toward tuition and regularly assessed fees. The base award available to students is based on Expected Family Contribution:

BASE AWARD

		EXPECTED FAMILY CONTRIBUTION (EFC)																			
INSTITUTION TYPE		$0	$1 to $500	$501 to $1,000	$1,001 to $1,500	$1,501 to $2,000	$2,001 to $2,500	$2,501 to $3,000	$3,001 to $3,500	$3,501 to $4,000	$4,001 to $4,500	$4,501 to $5,000	$5,001 to $5,500	$5,501 to $6,000	$6,001 to $6,500	$6,501 to $7,000	$7,001 to $7,500	$7,501 to $8,000	$8,001 to $8,500	$8,501 to $9,000
Private	On-Time	$9,000	$8,750	$8,250	$7,750	$7,250	$6,750	$6,250	$5,750	$5,250	$4,750	$4,250	$3,750	$3,250	$2,750	$2,250	$0	$0	$0	$0
	Full-Time	$7,400	$7,150	$6,650	$6,150	$5,650	$5,150	$4,650	$4,150	$3,650	$3,150	$2,650	$2,150	$1,650	$1,150	$650	$0	$0	$0	$0
Public	On-Time	$4,500	$4,250	$3,750	$3,250	$2,750	$2,250	$1,750	$0	$0	$0	Not Eligible for Frank O'Bannon Grant								
	Full-Time	$3,700	$3,450	$2,950	$2,450	$1,950	$1,450	$950	$0	$0	$0	Not Eligible for Frank O'Bannon Grant								
Proprietary or Ivy Tech	On-Time	$3,400	$3,150	$2,650	$2,150	$1,650	$1,150	$0	$0	Not Eligible for Frank O'Bannon Grant										
	Full-Time	$2,900	$2,650	$2,150	$1,650	$1,150	$650	$0	$0	Not Eligible for Frank O'Bannon Grant										

This grant program also includes student performance incentives as part of the total amount of aid available to students:

- Honors Diploma (First Award Year Only): High school graduates with Academic or Technical Honors diploma earn an additional $800 to their base award.
- GPA (Second, Third, and Fourth Award Years): Students with at least a 3.0 cumulative GPA through end of previous award year earn an additional $800 annually.
- Associate Degree (First, Second, Third, or Fourth Award Years): Students who earn an associate degree before enrolling in bachelor's degree program receive an additional $800.
- Accelerated Schedule (Second and Third Award Years): Students who complete at least 39 credit hours during the last award year earn an additional $1300.
- Fast Track (First, Second, and Third Award Years): Students who complete 30 credits in current award year and then attempt at least 6 more credits can earn up to 100% more aid for the current award year.

Additionally, students with financial need may earn student performance incentives even if his or her base award is $0.[13]

These programs, coupled with federal financial aid opportunities, can have lasting economic effects for low-income youth in Indiana. Grant recipients of 21st Century Scholars and Frank O'Bannon tend to have wages that mirror the average wages of other college graduates, providing evidence of state aid programs' potential to raise the socioeconomic status of financial aid recipients. Grant recipients' completion rates continue to improve, resulting in increased return on investment to students and to the state.

While state financial aid programs allow for greater student access, they also translate into financial returns on investment for the state. About one-third of Indiana public graduates who entered the workforce benefited from a state financial aid program, and state aid recipients

contribute approximately $3.5 billion additional dollars to the state economy compared to high school graduates over the course of a lifetime.[14]

Because of the positive impact our state financial aid programs have for both students and the state, we would like to see all eligible low-income youth receive this funding to encourage postsecondary enrollment and help offset its cost. There are specific barriers, however, we will need to address to facilitate greater enrollment in both of these programs (as well as other financial aid opportunities). The barriers and potential solutions we need to examine:

Barriers	**Potential Solutions**
Perception of these programs: • Because these programs start enrollment in middle school, low-income families may not recognize the opportunity at the moment. • Additionally, low-income parents may be more concerned with needs of the present, rather than those of the future. • Some families may be intimidated by the requirements for enrolling into these programs. Understanding the usefulness of these programs: • Some low-income parents may not understand the importance of higher education or financial aid, as they themselves did not pursue higher education. They may not be familiar with the steps necessary apply and enroll in institutions. • Some families may not see higher education as the best fit for their student.	Addressing perception: • Through an intergenerational approach, we can help low-income parents understand how these programs work and the various components. • Principals, counselors, and teachers need to develop strategies to have more students sign up for these programs (e.g., offering options to help enroll students with parents at night or outside of work hours). • Some schools are requiring every student complete the 21st Century Scholar form in 7th or 8th grade and related activities. This has a two-fold purpose: 1) the activities will benefit any student seeking higher education regardless of income level, and 2) family circumstances may change over four to five years to require the need for financial aid. Addressing understanding: • We can also explain the multitude of postsecondary options and opportunities for which a student may

Barriers	Potential Solutions
Communication of these programs: • Some families may not have a strong relationship with the school and, therefore, may ignore information from it. • The purpose of these programs may not be effectively communicated to parents and families early enough in a student's academic career.	use these grants. • While this program covers tuition and fees, most state institutions provide additional incentives for 21st Century Scholars, such as free room and board. We must communicate to both parents and students the long-term benefits of these programs. Addressing communication: • Indiana's communication strategy will begin to raise public perception and understanding of the growing need for higher learning in the changing economy. • Outreach Coordinators through the Commission for Higher Education can partner with Workforce Development Boards and other services for low-income individuals, such as SNAP and TANF, to provide information to parents through different settings. • Schools cannot be the sole provider of this information to low-income families. Through our workforce development and social services programs, we need to be letting parents know about opportunities for their children. • Districts and can work with Workforce Development Boards and other state and community partners to host informational sessions away from schools (e.g., libraries, WorkOnes, community centers, etc.).

The **Employer Aid Readiness Network (EARN) Indiana** is an experiential learning internship program administered by the Indiana Commission for Higher Education (CHE) in partnership with Indiana INTERNnet (IIN), which is administered by the Indiana Chamber of Commerce. It is designed to provide financial assistance to employers who provide paid internships for qualified Hoosier students currently enrolled full- or part-time in a postsecondary education

program.[15] A qualified internship position must provide an experiential learning, which includes the opportunity to complete work tasks that provide career awareness, exploration and preparation. Interns funded through EARN must assist with primary work tasks, such as:

- Contributing to project design or development,
- Developing and carrying out a marketing plan, business strategy, or promotional strategies,
- Providing general customer service,
- Participating in networking opportunities,
- Writing reports, handbooks, manuals, or newsletters, and
- Other similar tasks.[16]

The internship must be paid and must be at least 8 weeks long. Employers must offer interns an hourly rate, and then CHE will match the hourly rate up to 50%. With a stipend there is no hourly rate to match. Internships through EARN Indiana must include 12 to 20 hours a week during the academic year or 12 to 40 hours during the summer. This program is specifically intended for any low-income youth. As career coaches and navigators through WIOA Youth funds assist in-school youth with higher education plans, this program could serve as an excellent complement to 21st Century Scholars to provide a low-income youth with the opportunity to earn an income and gain experience.

Next Level Jobs: Workforce Ready Grants are designed to remove financial barriers that may prevent Hoosiers from getting the training they need for a job in one of Indiana's five high-demand fields. The grant pays for all tuition and regularly assessed fees for qualifying high-value certificates. It can be used at any eligible training provider and covers all courses required to satisfy the qualifying program. The grant is available for up to two years. This funding program is not need-based, but it is a last dollar program that incorporates any federal financial aid. It is available to any high school graduate with less than an associate's degree. For students who may not want to pursue the traditional college track, this grant program can provide another route to postsecondary attainment and potential economic mobility.

Employer Training Grants are also available to help fund work-based learning programs for high school students. If a student earns an industry-recognized credential, the employer is eligible for $1000 reimbursement to offset any costs, including wages. As schools increase their work-based learning programs, Workforce Development Boards can facilitate partnerships with employers to use this grant to cover any expenses from providing these experiences to at-risk youth, in particular.

Federal Financial Aid: The primary source of federal financial aid for low-income students is the **Pell Grant**. After a student completes and submits the FAFSA, the US government will determine the student's Expected Family Contribution and the amount of financial aid for which the student is eligible. Expected Family Contribution is the sum of: (1) a percentage of net income (remaining income after subtracting allowances for basic living expenses and taxes) and (2) a percentage of net assets (assets remaining after subtracting an asset protection allowance). The cost of attendance (as determined by the institution), the student's enrollment status (full-time or part-time), and whether the student attends for a full academic year or less are also determining factors in amount of aid the student may receive. Unlike a loan, a federal Pell Grant does not have to be repaid.

The Pell Grant lifetime eligibility is limited to 12 semesters. The 2019-20 Pell Grant provides up to $6,195 for an accredited credit-bearing program leading to a certificate, associate's degree, or bachelor's degree. Pell Grants, can be used to cover a variety of costs, generally including tuition and fees, books, supplies, transportation, and miscellaneous personal expenses, living expenses, such as room and board, and an allowance for costs expected to be incurred for dependent care for a student with dependents.

The **Federal Work-Study Program** provides an opportunity for low-income students to earn an income while they are enrolled in a higher education program. Workforce Development Boards could work with nearby institutions for higher education to restructure this program into a funding steam for work-based learning experiences for low-income individuals. Traditionally, this program has been merely to help individuals pay their education expenses and related costs. Institutions could redesign this program to mimic the goals of EARN Indiana and provide meaningful work-based learning opportunities for low-income students, allowing low-income youth greater accessibility to critical earn and learn programs. Additionally, a refocus of Federal Work-Study to work-based learning opportunities directly aligns with Indiana's goal for 100% of postsecondary education programs to include an experience with career relevance.

The **Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant** (FSEOG) is another possible federal financial program for low-income individuals. This is awarded to undergraduate students who have exceptional financial need with federal Pell Grant recipients receiving priority. Not all postsecondary institutions participate in this program; the funds depend on availability at the school. Currently, this award is up to $4,000 a year. Both federal and state financial aid are contingent upon an individual filling out the FAFSA form. Because these programs are existing investments into education and training for low-income individuals, we need to include the FAFSA as part of our intake process at the local level.

Though not direct financial aid to low-income students, the **Federal TRIO Programs** (TRIO) are outreach and student services programs funded through the US government that are designed to identify and provide services for individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds. TRIO includes eight programs targeted to serve and assist low-income individuals, first-generation college students, and individuals with disabilities to progress through the academic pipeline from middle school to postbaccalaureate programs. In Indiana, TRIO provides funding for institution-specific programs to support low-income youth. Several institutions in Indiana, including Vincennes University and the University of Notre Dame, utilize Upward Bound to connect with nearby high school students. Upward Bound students are often 21st Century Scholars and this program supports the programming and activity requirements within the SSP. Through local plans, our Boards can explore partnerships with nearby institutions' TRIO programs to facilitate the coordination and braiding of these funds with other workforce, education, and social service programs to support at-risk youth.

The federal **Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs** grant **(GEAR UP)** is a discretionary grant that is designed to increase the number of low-income students gaining access to, entering, and completing postsecondary education. These six- or seven-year grants are given to both state and local organizations to promote this mission. There are currently two active GEAR UP grants within Indiana—Purdue University and Fort Wayne Community Schools. The grant held by Purdue University is a state-wide grant, which partners with the Indiana Commission for Higher Education as a subgrantee. The program is located in ten school corporations with high populations of free- and reduced-lunch recipients and utilizes

many of the resources, such as the high school 21st Century Scholar Success Program, to prepare students for college. Two staff members at CHE are partially funded through this grant.

Potential Eligibility: Additional services or co-enrollment low-income youth may receive depending on individual circumstances. This section includes ***Core and Partner Program Activities***and***Individual Services***.

Carl D. Perkins (Partner Program): Low-income students can gain both academic and technical skills through Perkins-funded programs. The reauthorized Perkins builds off the previous versions of this federal law to eliminate the two-track approach and raise expectations for students who take Career-Technical Education (CTE) courses. Indiana must ensure that CTE students are taught to the same academic standards and expectations as other students by integrating rigorous and challenging academic content into our CTE programs. To adequately prepare our K-12 students for middle-skill jobs, must erase the notion that CTE can hold students to lower academic expectations than non-CTE students or a "non college-bound" track. Economic mobility in Indiana requires pursuit of any type of postsecondary education during the course of one's life. We must prepare our CTE students to meet those same expectations as our "college-bound" students.

To achieve this goal of raising CTE quality, consistency, and intentionality across the state, the Office of CTE is embarking upon a CTE redesign, with new Programs of Study set to implement in the 2021-2022 academic year. Through the CTE redesign, Indiana will expand the opportunities for dual credit and early college for all students. This will be instrumental for low-income students because of the subsidized cost for these programs. Each redesigned Program of Study will provide students the opportunity to complete at least 30 postsecondary credits (or one year) of postsecondary education. When available, all CTE Programs of Study will be intentionally aligned to a postsecondary credential, specifically certificates and technical certificates offered through Ivy Tech Community College and Vincennes University.

Increasing this type of postsecondary access and intentional credit accumulation will benefit low-income youth in these programs. Through similar models that offer students who are traditionally underrepresented in postsecondary education the opportunity to pursue a high school diploma while simultaneously earning college credits, like the Early College High School Initiative, the CTE redesign emphasizes rigor, relevance, and relationships in courses. Rigorous instruction builds students' content knowledge and learning habits; relevance engages students in understanding why they are learning a topic and in making real-world connections; and relationships supports student engagement and achievement. Incorporating these features into our CTE programs can improve high school students' access to and success in college, as a similar principles did in the Early College model.[17]

In high school, these redesigned Programs of Study will be structured into four courses. Each program of study will begin with a principles course, which will provide key foundational knowledge for the pathway. The principles course will be followed by two advanced, non-duplicative, occupational-specific courses. The fourth course will be a pathway capstone course. Directly aligning the program of study courses to postsecondary courses will give students who continue through concentrator status and beyond the opportunity to complete the technical courses required for a technical certificate or certificate of graduation through dual credit or dual enrollment. See below for a sample Program of Study:

Sample Program of Study:

Cluster: Pathway					TC – Ivy Tech Community College Program CG – Vincennes University Program			
Exploratory and Academic Courses	Related Courses (Non-Required) • Preparing for College and Careers • Introduction to *****				Academic Courses (Required for TC/CG) ITCC – VU –			
Secondary Technical Core Courses	Principles 2 credits required • Topic I • Topic II		Concentrator A 2 credits required • Topic I • Topic II		Concentrator B 2 credits required • Topic I • Topic II		Pathway Capstone 2-6 credits • DC/DE to complete postsec credentials w/ embedded WBL	
Dual Credits	ITCC MTTC XXX MTTC XXX	VU PMTD XXX PMTD XXXL	ITCC MTTC XXX MTTC XXX	VU PMTD XXX PMTD XXXL	ITCC MTTC XXX MTTC XXX	VU PMTD XXX PMTD XXXL	ITCC MTTC XXX MTTC XXX	VU PMTD XXX PMTD XXXL
Postsecondary Credentials	Industry Recognized Certifications that may not count toward Grad Pathways.		Industry Recognized Certification		Industry Recognized Cert ITCC – Cert when possible VU – CPC		ITCC – Certificate/ TC VU – CPC/CG	

The goal of the CTE redesign is to ensure that all CTE programs are providing the necessary knowledge and skills for postsecondary success to all students. By standardizing program quality across the state, we can ensure low-income youth have consistency and quality in their CTE access, regardless of where they live.

Indiana has used Perkins funds to create an Assessment Grant to provide funding to eligible secondary recipients to support state-approved, industry-recognized licensing and certification examinations or assessments leading to a recognized postsecondary credential. This grant opportunity helps recipients bridge the cost-gap for all CTE students, including low-income students. CTE centers are incentivized through the assessment grant to have low-income students, as well as other special populations, earn certifications. Special population students were weighted to count for 1.25 in the calculation to determine the amount of funds for each recipient.

Apprenticeships (Federal and State Programs): Expanding apprenticeship programs with support from both state and local stakeholders offers another pathway to both postsecondary attainment and economic mobility for low-income youth.[18] Apprenticeships combine on-the-job training and related classroom instruction with a paycheck. For youth who may have trouble entering and staying in the labor force, apprenticeships provide an incentive to learning skills that lead to careers that pay well. Low-income youth receive proven benefits from completing an apprenticeship, from greater lifetime earnings for participants to an increased return on investment for businesses. Those who participate in an apprenticeship had substantially higher earnings than did nonparticipants. Over the course of a career, estimated career earnings averaged $240,037 more than similar nonparticipants. Participation in an apprenticeship equated to an average gain in annual earnings of $6,595 in by the sixth year of enrollment and $5,839 by the ninth year when compared to the earnings of nonparticipants.[19] While this program can offer benefits for employees (in terms of career longevity and middle-wages) and for employers (as a way to create sustainable talent pipelines), taxpayers also see a return on investment from this workforce development program. By the time former apprentices reach age 65, each dollar invested yields a remarkable return of $23 in benefits.[20]

The largest apprenticeship program in the United States is the **Registered Apprenticeship (Federal Program)** system. These programs last one to six years and are sponsored by employers, labor management organizations, or other intermediaries. In addition to the program elements common across all quality apprenticeships, these programs meet several requirements, including providing approximately 2,000 hours of on-the-job learning, 144 hours of related instruction, and progressively increasing wages. All local Workforce Development Boards are now Registered Apprenticeship intermediaries, facilitating the expansion of these

opportunities throughout regions. As well, local Boards can also ensure that Registered Apprenticeships are not occurring in a silo accessed only by a few Hoosiers, but rather that these opportunities are fully integrated into the range of programs and services available. Businesses are fundamental partners in any apprenticeship program, as they provide the majority of an apprentice's training, develop skill standards, and pay for apprentice's salaries. The first step toward expanding our youth apprenticeship system is to partner with businesses to offer them. This may be expanding the breadth of local partnerships or deepening partnerships to enhance current opportunities. Local regions can determine the approach that fits their context and how to leverage these partnerships to increase the prevalence of Registered Apprenticeships in Indiana.

Apprenticeships can lack equity and diversity in their workforce, limiting access and opportunities to many of Indiana's target populations that could foster this talent pipeline. Indiana could employ pre-apprenticeship and bridge programs to increase access and improve the odds of success for candidates who need job-readiness supports, such as at-risk youth. Pre-apprenticeship programs can introduce people to the workplace culture and expectations, developing employability skills as part of the education and training. Younger apprenticeship candidates may not be job-ready upon their graduation from high school, and they may not want to take the traditional four-year higher education route. Merging pre-apprenticeships with the redesigned CTE programs of study could offer another option for high school students to earn a postsecondary credential and an income as they begin their career. If we connect pre-apprenticeships to high school CTE courses, wraparound supports critical to at-risk students' success (e.g., career counseling, mentoring, and accommodations) can assist students succeed in this opportunity.[21]

Expanding **State Earn and Learns** (SEALS) **(State Program)**, which is a state apprenticeship program, will be an important strategy to increasing the prevalence of this opportunity for low-income youth. SEALs are developed by the Office of Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeship (OWBLA), which is a state-run division that creates and implements various work-based learning pathways for both youth and adult populations. To accomplish this, OWBLA concentrates on three objectives:

1. Coordinating efforts and partnership with the U.S. Department of Labor to expand registered apprenticeships;
2. Developing flexible and scalable programs that focus on the state's key economic sectors and regional high-wage, high-demand occupations; and
3. Building public-private partnerships to increase business and industry engagement with education systems.

SEALs are structured, but flexible, programs that include an education and on-the-job component. SEALs focus on employer needs, with postsecondary education credits and industry certifications embedded into the program. They can last from weeks to years depending on employer, education, certification, or licensing requirements. SEALs can occur in both non-traditional fields for apprenticeship, such as healthcare, IT, and agriculture, or more traditional fields, such as manufacturing and construction. The employers' talent needs can guide the apprenticeship program. A sample SEAL is below:

USDOL Employment and Training Administration (Federal Program): The federal government funds four major job training and workforce development programs for youth: JobCorps, Youth Activities, YouthBuild, and Youth Conservation Corps. These programs (except for the Youth Conservation Corps) are administered by the US Department of Labor's (DOL) Employment and Training administration and target low-income youth ages 14 (or 16) to 24 who require additional assistance in meeting their occupational goals. The goals of these four programs have a common purpose: to provide vulnerable youth with educational and employment opportunities and access to leadership development and community service activities. The Job Corps program, in particular, provides career and technical training in some of Indiana's major cities, such as Indianapolis, Gary, and Evansville. For students who may find these programs to be the fest fit for their interests and career aspirations, schools and districts can partner with local Boards to foster connections with the federal programs.

SNAP and TANF (Partner Programs): Given the risk factors these students have toward low academic achievement and dropping out of high school, vulnerable youth require wraparound supports that address their nonacademic needs. Social services, such as SNAP and TANF, can assist with tackling these issues that can negatively affect their participation and outcomes in school through partnerships with schools. SNAP and TANF staff can deliver these social services on school campuses or provide information and assistance to school personnel regarding the multitude of social services students and families can seek. In turn, schools can provide this information and referrals to families regarding how to receive assistance through co-location. Our state agencies need to support schools in providing this information to families, rather than simply relying on them to be the sole resource of information for families. Two social series low-income families may qualify for are SNAP and TANF; Medicaid could also be prioritized as a social service through high schools depending on local need. Some high schools may also offer wraparound services, a comprehensive network of social services that are available for students and families based on an assessment of their needs and an individualized plan of care.

Nationwide, 20% of high school students received at least one social service during the 2014-15 school year. Among high schools that offered at least one social service, 78% of schools offered students at least one social service on campus. The most common type of social service on campus was mental health services (49%), followed by parent/family services to engage them

in their child's needs (47%) and assistance to address material needs (42%). Eighty-seven percent of schools referred students to a social service outside the school, again the most common referral was for mental health services (94%), followed by health services (68%), and assistance to address material needs (63%). High schools referred students to different types agencies outside the school depending on the service needed. The most common type of organization was a social services agency (79%), followed by a community mental health agency (77%) and a public health agency (64%).[22]

If Indiana is to actualize its Vision and meet its second Goal of integrating the various systems serving our target populations, we cannot depend on schools and districts to offer social services to students and families unaided by state agencies and community partners. Given the academic challenges our at-risk youth face, we need teachers and principals focusing on instructional strategies. Guidance counselors cannot solely provide both mental health, career coaching, and wraparound supports. They need additional information and help to ensure students and families do not fall through the cracks. Because schools have an unparalleled access to students and families, local regions can leverage these partners as a site for providing mobile services to these constituents. This must extend to workforce, housing, and social service programs.

While local Workforce Development Boards can facilitate greater access to resources through school and district partnerships, state agencies and staff can shoulder the responsibility of sending information about various social service programs to educators and administrators. This can include endorsed marketing materials, information memoranda and communications, and professional development opportunities for teachers, principals, and counselors to learn more about various programs, in addition to embedding staffers at schools to provide assistance and resources. State agencies can coordinate outreach to schools regarding programmatic information and partnerships through Indiana's Department of Education, associations, and statewide educational conferences.

Scaling Promising Practices: Below we highlight promising practices that we hope to see scaled and replicated to address the unique barriers and challenges of this target population. Our local regions can implement or supplement these practices through strategic use of ESEA and WIOA funds, philanthropic or community foundation dollars, or social impact bonds.[23] These practices are ***Activities outside the Plan***. While not a comprehensive list, the practices showcase innovative approaches to assisting our low-income youth in surmounting their unique circumstances.

St. Joseph's College at Marian University – Indianapolis (Institution of Higher Education Initiative): St. Joseph's is a two-year college with flexible class schedules to allow students to work, if they choose, while earning their associate's degree. St. Joseph's has partnerships with central Indiana employers who hire students while they are in school and after graduation. Students are placed in positions relevant to their two-year program, so they make connections between what they learn in the classroom and real-world work experience. After graduation, students choose either to go directly into a career or continue to get their bachelor's degree from Marian University or another accredited institution.

St. Joseph's model allows students to balance work and college after graduating from high school. During your first two semesters, students learn workforce skills and prepare for the earn and learn opportunity, which begins in the third semester. Three days each week, there are no classes, allowing students to participate in an internship or have a job. Classes are held two days a week, during which students connect with faculty on campus.

Ivy Tech Community College Accelerated Programs (Institution of Higher Education Initiatives): Indiana's community college system offers two types of programs that are offered at an accelerated pace that can help expedite student's completion of postsecondary education.

Ivy Tech Community College's **Associate Accelerated Program (ASAP)** helps high school graduates earn an associate degree in just 11 months and prepares them to transfer to a four-year college to earn their bachelor's degree. Coursework is spread over five eight-week terms. It is a rigorous and rewarding program that will essentially become a student's full-time occupation until graduation. Classes are held in small, closely-knit groups known as "cohorts." Classmates will remain with their cohort throughout the program, encouraging, assisting, and depending on each other every step of the way. A dedicated ASAP coordinator helps students identify academic goals, then maps out a clear path they can follow to success, while faculty teams of four teachers per term offer individual attention. Graduates leave with not just an associate degree, but with the skills they need to succeed in further studies and the workforce.

Ivy Tech Community College also offers short-term, eight-week classes, which encompasses the same material as traditional 16-week courses but are reformatted so that students can complete courses in half the time. By offering eight-week courses, students can take fewer classes at a time, while still making progress toward completing their degrees and certifications. The eight-week classes are offered both in-person and online.

[1] Indiana Department of Education, 2018. Indiana Department of Education Announces Income Eligibility Guidelines for Free and Reduced-Price School Meals and Milk Programs.

[2] National Center for Education Statistics, 2011. Trends in High School Dropout and Completion Rates in the United States: 1972–2009.

[3]IDOE Compass.

[4] Indiana Department of Education. Indiana K-12 Work-Based Learning Manual.

[5] Indiana Department of Education. Title I Five Facts.

[6] US Department of Education, 2017. Issue Brief: High School Transition Activities.

[7] Indiana Department of Education, 2019. Public School Digest.

[8]A non-citizen with one of the following designations may enroll in 21st Century Scholars: refugee, asylum granted, indefinite parole and/or humanitarian parole, or Cuban-Haitian Entrant, Status Pending.

[9] Indiana Commission for Higher Education. Learnmoreindiana.org.

[10] Indiana Commission for Higher Education, 2019. College Equity Report 2019.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Indiana Commission for Higher Education, 2019. 2019-2020 Frank O'Bannon Grants.

[14] Indiana Commission for Higher Education, 2018. College Return on Investment Report 2018.

[15] EARN Indiana was established in 2013 under Indiana Code 21-16-2.

[16] Indiana Commission for Higher Education. EARN Indiana: What is Experiential Learning?

[17] Berger et al., 2013. Early College, Early Success: Early College High School Initiative Impact Study.

[18] The eligible starting age can be no less than 16 years of age; however, most programs require individuals to be at least 18 years of age (US Department of Labor, Apprenticeship Toolkit FAQs).

[19] Reed et al, 2012. An Effectiveness Assessment and Cost-Benefit Analysis of Registered Apprenticeship in 10 States.

[20] Lerman, 2015. Apprenticeships: Helping Youth Develop the Skills Needed by Today's Employers.

[21] Jobs For the Future, 2019. Growing Equity and Diversity through Apprenticeship: Business Perspectives.

[22] US Department of Education, 2017. Issue Brief: Social Services.

[23] ESEA Title I contains a provision known as "supplement, not supplant," which requires that federal funding to support low-income students must be used in addition to, not in place of, state and local funds. Federal funding must supplement, rather than supplant, state and local funds used to support the services and activities.

Update/Progress: Since creation of the State Plan, Indiana's Office of Work Based Learning and Apprenticeship (OWBLA) expansion continues to be supported by a collaborative effort between OWBLA, Indiana CTE, IN Department of Education, IN Department of Workforce Development, and regional Workforce Development Boards. To further these efforts, OWBLA continues to convene key stakeholders from multiple agencies, organizations, education partners and businesses on a regular basis to discuss strategies to increase comprehensive, high quality WBL programs.

The COVID-19 pandemic presented a variety of challenges and required some shifting of resources throughout 2020 and 2021 but has also opened up opportunities for growth in Indiana. Like others, given the close work with employers and educators on WBL initiatives, partners were forced to shift and adapt to working virtually and seeing many programs developed impacted by the virtual element. Some RAPs and SEALs were forced to reduce the number of participants to maintain social distancing standards, many sessions were postponed or cancelled completely, and some were able to be flexible and shift towards an entirely virtual or hybrid option(s). Programs through the Indiana Department of Corrections completely ceased operations, while others saw increased interest in attendees but were forced to reduce class sizes in half due to spacing limitations and safety precautions. However, Indiana also saw an increased need and interest in other key economic sectors such as healthcare and advanced manufacturing, and was able to shift resources to assist these in-demand sectors and the individuals being served. Fortunately, the pool of interested individuals and participants in our RAPS and SEALs continued to grow despite the challenges presented by the pandemic.

As of the close of the 2020-2021 program year, Indiana was reporting 18,435 total Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAP) with 42 new RAPs during the period. If including the ZA national programs, the total number of active apprentices increased to 20,522 with 6,997 new apprentices during that program year, with a total of 1,155

registered apprenticeship programs being served by Indiana's Department of Labor Office of Apprenticeship staff and OWBLA.

During the 2020-2021 program year, Indiana saw significant growth in the number of certified SEAL programs and the total number of individuals enrolled in SEAL programs. In October 2020, Indiana was pleased to celebrate the launch of the 100th SEAL in Horizontal Construction. This SEAL included collaboration amongst 16 partners – six professional organizations, five employers (union and non-union), three schools (high school and community college), and two state agencies and offers high school students seven or more industry certifications and 18 transferable college credits.

The 100th SEAL is a Horizontal Construction program, which encompasses the building of roads, bridges and other structural projects that focus on transit. Participating students earn college credits and industry-recognized credentials while working and learning on the job, in addition to gaining a pathway to advanced degrees in civil construction. This SEAL is also aligned to the proposed Next Level Program of Study through the Office of Career and Technical Education.

Garrett High School in Garrett and Hamilton Heights High School in Arcadia are the first two schools to launch Horizontal Construction SEAL programs and will have a total of 20 students participating the first year. Five more schools will follow in 2021. They are Batesville High School, Lapel High School, Madison High School, New Palestine High School and Penn High School.

In addition to comprehensive work-based learning opportunities and industry-recognized credentials, students in the Horizontal Construction SEAL will earn a Heavy Highway Specialist Certificate or a Technical Certificate in Civil Construction, both from Ivy Tech Community College. This program also allows for the direct entry, with advanced standing, into a US DOL registered apprenticeship.

By June 2021, OWBLA has successfully launched 138 SEAL programs (33 Adult and 105 Youth programs) with 2,784 participant's total for 2021 only.

The SEAL programs are represented throughout Indiana's identified six key economic high-growth sectors to include:

4BSEAL Programs as of June 2021	5BActive Programs
6BAdvanced Manufacturing	**7B38**
8BAgriculture	**9B3**
10BIT / Business	**11B21**
12BConstruction	**13B19**
14BHealthcare	**15B35**
16BTransportation / Logistics	**17B20**
18BOther	**19B2**
20BTotal	**21B138**

Of the 138 active Certified SEAL Programs, 540 current partners were included, and 55 schools represented. As of June 2021, more than an additional 60 youth and adult SEAL programs were in the process of being launched.

Other key initiatives during the Plan period to date include establishing all twelve Workforce Development Boards as registered apprenticeship intermediaries, with each having entered into a sub-recipient grant relationship with DWD in order to develop and scale registered apprenticeship programs in each region across Indiana. The intermediaries are responsible for occupation selection, standards and registration, and reporting to DWD OWBLA. This structure supports State Plan goals to allow regions to drive efforts to attract and retain apprentices for high-wage, high-demand jobs that meet the economic needs of the individual region.

To support these efforts, regions utilize Business Services Representatives and Business Consultants to connect employers to the local WorkOne system, conduct business analysis of local talent needs, and assist in the development of workforce and economic partnerships with businesses. The regional teams support employers creating RAPs and SEALs, as well as provide technical assistance. WDBs also work to identify non-traditional occupations that exhibit the five apprenticeship components and are good candidates from WBL.

Foster Care is intended to provide temporary care and housing for children and youth until they can be reunited with their family or relatives, adopted, or emancipated. Unfortunately, youth in the foster care system often fail to find permanent housing and are bounced around from one placement to another. This population often lacks stability and support and falls behind their peers academically. Foster Care youth across the United States achieve at a lower rate academically and are at a higher risk for dropping out of high school. According to The Legal Center for Foster Care & Education, nationally foster youth face unique challenges that negatively influence their academic success:[1]

- 34.2% of 17-18 year olds have experienced five or more school changes.
- Foster youth are approximately three times more likely to be expelled than other youth populations.
- Foster youth are approximately two times more likely to have out of school suspension than other youth populations.
- High school dropout rates are 3 times higher for foster youth than other low-income children.
- The average reading level of 17-18 year old foster youth is at the 7th grade level.
- Between 35.6% and 47.3%of foster youth are receiving special education services.
- Only 63% of foster care youth in the Midwest complete high school by age 18 (via HSE or diploma).
- Nationally, 437,465 youth were reported to be in foster care as of September 30, 2016, with 65% of these youth experiencing more than one home placement while in care.
- Only 3% of individuals who age out of foster care complete postsecondary credential by the time they are 25 years old (compared to 24% of the general population).

These issues have a profound impact on the adult lives of individuals who experienced foster care. Former foster youth face increased rates of unemployment, homelessness, incarceration, and other adverse situations. Foster youth often lack the skills, supports, and resources needed to find and maintain employment. They are less likely to graduate from high school or college and are subjected to diminished opportunities for earning a family sustaining wage because of this.

Children and adolescents in foster care can have complicated and severe medical, mental, oral, and psychosocial health issues. They often suffer from psychological and emotional trauma that stems from negative early childhood experiences that can have a serious impact on that youth's later development throughout adolescence to adulthood. To make matters worse, many of these medical and mental health problems can build and grow to further impact youth due to a lack of adequate access to health services.

Data regarding the outcomes for Hoosiers in our foster care system reflect the national trends of foster youth. According to the Annual Report on Foster Care Youth Educational Outcomes, of the 378 potential foster care youth graduates, only 244 (64.6%) graduated in 2018. This is a significantly lower rate than the percentage of all students in this cohort at 88.1%. The frequency at which foster students move and change schools can be seen as a contributing factor to this achievement gap. High mobility, as well as other challenges unique to this population of students, leads to disproportionately low rates of high school graduation when compared to other economically disadvantaged students. An example of this can be found when comparing foster youth graduation rates to that of homeless youth whose graduation percentage in 2018 was 82.3%.

When looking into data across the Prekindergarten-12 continuum, we continue to see disparities across Indiana:

- Foster care students have a higher rate of students utilizing graduation waivers than all students at 20.9% compared to 8.3% of all students.
- Twice as many foster care students are retained in pre-kindergarten through grade 11 at 3.9% compared to 1.8%. A greater majority of retained students are held back in earlier grades, though some may repeat a year of high school due to credit deficiencies.
- Foster care youth are suspended at 21% compared to 8.9% of all students. The same patterns can be seen in discipline rates, which indicate potential behavioral differences likely due to trauma that each subgroup may experience.
- ISTEP scores for foster care students (43.3% and 38.3% in English and math, respectively) are also substantially lower than their peers (64.1% and 58.3%), again reiterating a significant gap in students' academic achievement and success.
- Proficiency rates in English slowly decrease from grade 3 to grade 8.[2]

  Indiana recognizes that youth involved in foster care experience these drastic gaps in high school completion, postsecondary credential attainment, and engagement in the workforce. In an effort to change these statistics, we can further focus on providing wraparound services and supports that will allow foster youth to thrive in their communities, gain independence, and earn a livable wage. For this group we will focus on two specific populations, those being, in-school youth and out-of-school youth.

  <u>Co-Enrolled Programs:</u> Hoosier youth ages 14 to 22 years old who are pursuing either

secondary or postsecondary education and are currently or formerly in the foster care system through the Indiana Department of Child Services will be co-enrolled into the following primary programs and services of benefit to this target population. An individual's unique circumstances or preference may not necessitate co-enrollment in each program. This section includes ***Core and Partner Program Activities***and***Individual Services***for foster youth.

Title I –Youth (Core Program): The WIOA Youth Program provides local workforce areas resources to deliver a comprehensive array of youth services that focuses on assisting in-school youth with one or more barriers to employment prepare for postsecondary education and employment opportunities, attain educational and/or skills training credentials, and secure employment with career/promotional opportunities. Indiana is seeking to renew its waiver for WIOA Youth funding to allow us to designate up to 50% of our Youth funds towards in-school youth. These federal funds are braided with our state appropriation for dropout prevention ($8m in both FY 2019-20 and FY 2020-21).

Youth in foster care or who have left foster care are eligible for the WIOA youth program whether in school or out of school. WIOA Youth funds can go towards any of the 14 services, though local programs can determine what to offer based on the individual's needs. The state's primary program for supporting in-school youth is **Jobs for America's Graduates** (JAG). JAG is a workforce preparation program that targets high school juniors and seniors who have barriers to success. Indiana's JAG model provides adult mentoring, employability skills, linkages to work experience, adult mentoring, tutoring assistance, and robust follow-up services. Participants also receive individualized attention and identification of specific barriers to success, which may include academic problems, life skills, personal skills, and social or economic barriers. Students receive one year of follow-up service after graduation or program completion. For a youth pursuing postsecondary education, JAG has a College Success Program pilot that is customized to serve Indiana students in their postsecondary educational careers. This program can be found on two Ivy Tech Community College campuses, Fort Wayne and Indianapolis, and in partnership with Vincennes University. JAG programs throughout the state are trying to grow the enrollments of foster youth into the program and increase the intentionality with which they offer services to this subgroup. Locally, schools and districts can partner with Workforce Development Boards to identify foster youth, but greater data partnerships at the state-level will allow local Boards and programs to have more targeted recruitment practices.

21st Century Scholars (State Program): Indiana's 21st Century Scholars program provides up to four years of undergraduate tuition to income-eligible students at participating colleges or universities in Indiana, as well as step-by-step guidance and support to make sure scholars succeed in college and receive support to finish their degree. The 21st Century Scholars program focuses on providing the tools scholars need to prepare for college, graduate on time, and begin a successful career. For students in the foster system, income requirements and signing up by the 8th grade are waived; students in foster care can enroll in 21st Century Scholars at any time during their high school career. The other program requirements, such as GPA requirements, remain in effect, which can limit the use of this financial aid for foster youth. Through WIOA Youth, as well as funding through the federal **Elementary and Secondary Education Act** (reauthorized as Every Student Succeeds Act), we can increase both the academic and

social-emotional supports for our foster youth, raising their levels of achievement. Indiana's Commission for Higher Education recently entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Child Services to automate the enrollment of high school students in the foster care system into 21st Century Scholars. This provides students with better timeframes to increase enrollment in 21st Century Scholars program in addition to access to postsecondary financial assistance leading to a degree. Because many students who experienced foster care are also low-income, they may qualify for the federal **Pell Grant**, which would go towards tuition, housing, fees, and or other related expenses.

Additionally, financial aid programs can help augment the grants and funding foster youth receive. Opportunities, such as **EARN Indiana**, **Federal Work-Study**, and **SEALs**, can directly assist with subsidizing wages through a work-based learning program. 21st Century Scholars and Pell Grants can help support the education and tuition costs a foster youth may incur while pursuing higher education. Through additional federal and state financial aid programs, students who experienced foster care may also receive funding to help with wraparound supports. Through coordination of each of these funding streams, Indiana can provide a better support structure to ensure we have more foster youth persisting to and completing their higher education credential or degree.

Workforce Ready Grants (State Program): There are many options to help Hoosiers earn a quality credential, access middle-wage jobs, and attain upward economic mobility. Through more intensive academic and career counseling, we can help our foster youth exit the care of DCS knowing the best option and fit for their goals. This can include short-term credentials and degrees through our Workforce Ready Grant program. Through this program, Indiana pays the tuition and mandatory fees for eligible high-value certificate programs at Ivy Tech Community College, Vincennes University, or other approved providers. The grant is available for two years and covers up to the number of credits required by the qualifying program. The qualifying high-value certificate programs were selected based on employer demand, wages, job placements, and program completion rates. Depending on an individual's career aspirations, this may serve as a stepping stone for an individual to adjust to independence and obtain entry into middle-skill careers after leaving the foster care system.

Chafee Grant and Education and Training Voucher (Federal Program): The Education and Training Voucher (ETV) program is a federally-funded, state-administered program designed to provide financial and academic support to students who have aged out of the foster care system and who are enrolled in an accredited college, university, or career training program. The Education and Training Voucher program is available for all Children in Need of Services (CHINs) and Probation youth who:

- Are adopted or placed in a kinship guardianship from foster care on or after 16th birthday.
- Have been in foster care or foster care will end on the youth's 18th birthday.
- Have a high school diploma or High School Equivalency.
- Are accepted into or enrolled in an accredited college or vocational/technical training program.
- Be a U.S. citizen or qualified non-citizen.

To continue to receive ETV funds, students must maintain good academic standing and meet their institution's Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) measure. Students may receive up to $5,000 per academic year based on cost of attendance and contingent upon available funding. Qualified students can receive support for up to 5 years and/or until their 26th birthday, whichever they reach first.

Students may use ETV funds for the following:

- Tuition/Fees
- On- or off-campus campus housing and board
- Tutoring services and fees
- Extracurricular costs
- Books and supplies
- Transportation
- Childcare
- Medical costs
- Other direct expenses from enrollment in higher education

These federal funds can blend with our state scholarship programs for postsecondary education tuition. ETV can be used at any accredited higher education program, which includes our credit-bearing Workforce Ready Grants at Ivy Tech Community College and Vincennes University. Because ETV is not included in a Student Aid Report, it can be stacked on top of a Pell Grant, 21st Century Scholarship, or a Workforce Ready Grant. We recommend prioritizing this funding stream for the associated costs for pursuing higher education or to serve as a gap filler for any tuition and related costs. Students can use this money to help with the incidentals of school and life that often derail students from college completion.

Indiana receives approximately $1.6 million in ETV funds each year from the federal government, a portion of which may be used for administrative costs for services. Currently, our administrative use of ETV focuses on recruitment of students into the program and supports the persistence and completion of their postsecondary education programs. Through three ETV specialists across the state, administrative funds help youth navigate campuses and work with college bursars and registrars to properly apply the funding towards tuition and fees. While this is an important aspect to ensure students are not unduly charged for tuition, we can expand the role of the ETV specialists to increase their focus on academic and career counseling. Currently, one of the many responsibilities of Older Youth Services case workers is to assist older foster youth with academic and career counseling. Rather than requiring case workers to do it all and to alleviate this workload, we can fund separate academic and career ETV coaches that can provide foster youth with more in-depth information about the variety of education and employment available opportunities after high school. By merging the recruitment function of the ETV liaison with academic and career counseling, we will allow for deeper and more specialized academic and career navigation to help a foster youth identify the best education and/or job training for their career goals and aspirations prior to enrollment. This will increase the persistence and attainment rates of our foster youth. Additionally, while Indiana has extended foster care services to age 23, the federal government has allowed ETV funds to be used until a student's 26th birthday. For students who do not opt to utilize extended foster care

services or participate in Chafee Voluntary Services up to age 23, they will not have a case worker to support them in their academic and career pathways.

As Indiana moves away from program-specific approaches, we will no longer rely solely on case managers through our Department of Child Services to provide comprehensive career guidance. Because foster youth may not have access to a steady source of career guidance and coaching due to the tumult they experience with schools and families, it is critical that we provide these Hoosiers with greater access to career navigation. Our foster students must understand that there are multiple options to postsecondary success that include a wide array of educational opportunities – certifications and credentials, registered apprenticeships, Associate's degrees, and Bachelor's degrees. The postsecondary path cannot and should not look the same for each foster youth in Indiana.

Foster Success (Philanthropic Organization): Established on behalf of Indiana's transitioning foster youth, Foster Success works to improve access to education and workforce training, provide financial stability, and empower young people to find their voice through a combination of programs, partnerships, and policy. Foster Success administers the state's Education and Training Voucher (ETV) program, which provides foster youth with up to $5000 per year and personal support through a staff member to help navigate the complexities of college and other job training programs. Additionally, ETV team members have built a 6-week, residential summer bridge program for students between their high school graduation and first semester of college.

As the administrator of the ETV funds in Indiana, Foster Success will focus on supporting students through their academic and career pathways utilizing the administrative funds from **ETV**. These funds can complement other **WIOA Youth** funding to provide academic and career coaching for in-school foster youth. **Wagner-Peyser (Core Program)** also could help fill any funding gaps for career navigation. This would allow Older Youth Services case managers to focus solely on the wellbeing of our foster youth and career counselors to focus on postsecondary opportunities and success to ensure our foster youth receive more targeted employment services. Additionally, by honing our ETV administrative funding on providing more academic and career navigation for foster youth, we want to see a greater percentage of these youth complete and earn a quality postsecondary credential by the age of 25.

Foster Success's Financial Literacy Programs include a number of programs ranging from online, self-regulated modules to the multi-day Opportunity Passport Program, as well as a year-long credit building program to support foster youth between the ages of 14 - 25 gain financial literacy skills. These programs could be incorporated into WIOA Core Programs as an additional service for wraparound supports and to help alleviate some of the financial pull on WIOA Adult funds. Participants receive participation and completion stipends and the opportunity to access a personal savings account to enable and encourage savings. Opportunity Passport provides foster youth access to mainstream banking products through a $100 seed contribution and a savings match of up to $3,500 (maximum) to purchase approved assets, including cars and housing. Foster Success can provide the financial education and experience to out-of-school foster youth, allowing WIOA funds to focus on career coaching, education and training, and additional wraparound supports.

Social Security Act: Title IV-E: Chafee Grant and Older Youth Initiatives (Federal and State Programs): Indiana administers two programs through the Chafee program under Indiana's Older Youth Initiatives, established under the Foster Care Independence Act in 1999: Older Youth Services (OYS) and the Chafee Program Voluntary Older Services (VS). The Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act in 2008 allowed for Title IV-E funding

under the Social Security Act to create Collaborative Care, Indiana's extension of foster care. Older Youth Services and Collaborative Care are available until a youth turns 21; Voluntary Older Youth Services are available until a youth turns 23. OYS and Collaborative Care are services and supports primarily focused on helping those youth who have or are expected to turn 18 in foster care in successfully achieving their goals for adulthood, specifically in the areas of housing, employment, education, physical and mental health, and financial education.

The primary purposes of OYS include:

- Identifying youth who are expected to remain in foster care until their 18th birthday or after and assist in their transition to self-sufficiency.
- Helping identified youth receive necessary education, training, and services to overcome potential barriers to employment.
- Helping youth prepare for and enter postsecondary education and/or training institutions.
- Providing personal and emotional support for youth aging out of foster care.
- Assisting youth in locating and identifying community resources that will be available to the youth after DCS involvement has ended.
- Encouraging positive personal growth in older youth through "teachable moments."

A foster student's case manager can serve as a resource to help direct him/her towards WIOA Core Programs that can offer education, training, and wraparound services. Case managers can proactively connect foster youth with WIOA Programs to provide early interventions and help for career services before the individual is in need of further government assistance. For example, a case manager can help enroll a high school foster student in JAG or assist an out-of-school youth formerly in the foster care system towards local WIOA Out-of-School Youth programs. For those foster students graduating without a concrete next step, case managers could help set up a meeting with a WorkOne (either in-person or virtually) for career and employment services and assistance.

Collaborative Care is a voluntary program that allows foster and probation youth between 18- and 21-years-old to remain under the care and placement of DCS in order to continue receiving services. To be eligible for Collaborative Care, the youth must meet at least one of the following criteria:

- Enrolled in an educational program (high school, adult education, postsecondary education program, or trade school);
- Participating in an independent living program meant to promote employment or remove barriers to employment;
- Employed and working at least 80 hours per month; or
- Not able to meet any of the above requirements due to a documented medical condition.

The program can assist with housing, services, networking, case management, and limited supervision to help foster youth transition to adulthood. If enrolled in Collaborative Care, the individual will receive continued support while completing their education or starting a career. These supports include:

- Rent and utilities

- Clothing allowance
- Assistance building a support network
- Continued services (including therapy, psychiatric care, etc.)
- Continued case management
- Continued health insurance

For qualifying in-school foster youth, this program complements the ETV program to help with associated costs. As 21st Century Scholars funds tuition and fees, ETV can focus on books and other educational-related costs with Collaborative Care helping with living expenses. By blending these three programs together, we provide both the educational opportunity and wraparound supports to help foster youth attain economic mobility.

As youth age out of Chafee Older Youth Services or Collaborative Care between ages 18 and 21, they may continue to receive voluntary services up to age 23. Voluntary services provide additional supports in education, employment, and financial assistance to former foster youth through case management, Emancipation of Goods and Services, and Room & Board. Voluntary services can be an additional safety net for youth in pursuit of postsecondary opportunities.

Potential Eligibility: Additional programs and services Hoosier youth ages 14 to 22 years old who are pursuing either secondary or postsecondary education and currently or formerly in the foster care system through the Indiana Department of Child Services may receive. This section includes ***Core and Partner Program Activities*** and***Individual Services***for foster youth.

Title IV – Vocational Rehabilitation (Core Program): If a foster youth has a disability in high school, accommodations and assistance is provided for by the school through the federal IDEA funding. If a foster youth with a disability is pursuing postsecondary education and training, s/he may be eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services. Unless an individual has a significant disability, which would require intensive and specialized career coaching and ongoing support, foster youth with a disability will be co-enrolled into VR for any accommodations or auxiliary supports for training.

Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) is a program for students with disabilities who are eligible or potentially eligible for VR services. It provides meaningful career planning for a seamless movement from high school to employment or postsecondary training. Students are eligible for this program if they are in a secondary, postsecondary, or other recognized education programs. In-school foster youth with a disability can be co-enrolled in Pre-ETS, since this program covers students ages 14 to 22 years old and eligible for or receiving special education or related services (e.g., IEP, 504 plan).

SNAP (Partner Program): Postsecondary students attending classes at least halftime must also work an average of 20 hours per week to qualify for SNAP. Some students who work less than 20 hours per week may be eligible if they can prove they meet certain conditions, such as:

- Receiving federal work study,
- Caring for a child younger than age 12,
- Inability to work due to health reasons, or

- Enrolled in a government sponsored education and training program, including SNAP Employment and Training programs and programs authorized by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

Title III – Wagner-Peyser (Core Program): Since foster youth may require more extensive case management and career counseling, we suggest pairing WIOA Youth funding with Wagner-Peyser support to help prioritize that. JAG, for example, could be supplemented with labor exchange services from Wagner-Peyser, serving as the gap filler for these services. Any additional Wagner-Peyser activities should prioritize for business services related to recruitment and retention of this target population and the unique challenges they face.

Scaling Promising Practices: Below we highlight promising practices that we hope to see scaled and replicated to address the unique barriers and challenges of this target population. Our local regions can implement or supplement these practices through strategic use of ESEA and WIOA funds, philanthropic or community foundation dollars, or social impact bonds. These practices are ***Activities outside the Plan***. While not a comprehensive list, the practices showcase innovative approaches to assisting our Hoosiers currently or formerly in foster care in surmounting their unique circumstances.

Indianapolis Metropolitan High School (Philanthropic Program): Indianapolis Metropolitan High School (Indy MET) is a public school administered by Goodwill Services. It provides high school education to students in grades 9-12. It is a school specifically designed to serve students who are experiencing circumstances that may become barriers to education such as: involvement in foster care, homelessness, teen pregnancy and/or parenting, identified for special education, and involvement with criminal justice. Students are provided with academic coaches who help student's problem solve around barriers, access to wraparound services, and create sustainable plans for success in school and beyond. They also provide students with access to childcare during school hours, employ tutors for academic help, and provide students with transportation to allow them to not only get to and from school but also help them access jobs, internships, and volunteer opportunities. If a foster youth is also receiving SNAP or TANF, Indy Met can receive SNAP or TANF E&T funding for that individual.

Indiana Youth Advisory Board (State Initiative): The Indiana Youth Advisory Board (IYAB) is a program of the Indiana Department of Child Services, administered and facilitated by Foster Success. IYAB consists of six regional boards made up of current and former foster youth between the ages of 14 – 21 (and up to age 23 if the youth is receiving ETV funding). IYAB is designed to provide leadership and self-advocacy skills for foster youth, giving these youth an opportunity to find their voice and provide feedback to DCS and other stakeholders. The purpose of the IYAB is to empower Indiana's foster youth to advocate for themselves and communicate their needs and concerns effectively through increased awareness of their rights and responsibilities and increased access to resources they need to make successful transitions. IYAB members participate in quarterly meetings, trainings, conferences, and other activities throughout the year.

Ball State University (Institution of Higher Education Initiative): The Ball State University Guardian Scholars Program is designed for Ball State students who are current or former foster youth. The Guardian Scholars Program provides financial aid, wraparound, and other referral supports and services to help students succeed in completing their degree. Resources available to Guardian Scholars include additional scholarship opportunities, leadership development opportunities, assistance with navigating campus offices and systems, and referrals to community agencies and resources.

Indiana University – Purdue University – Indianapolis (IUPUI) and Ivy Tech Community College – Central Indiana (Institutions of Higher Education Initiatives): With support from the Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust, IUPUI and Ivy Tech – Central Indiana have built three unique programs to support current and former foster youth in the Indianapolis area:

- **Nina Mason Pulliam Legacy Scholars** program provides a scholarship and support services to students who may have challenges accessing or achieving success in higher education, including current and former foster youth, on both the Ivy Tech and IUPUI campuses. Support beyond financial assistance includes proactive, academic mentoring and meetings; career and personal growth focused curriculum and workshops; and community service and university engagement opportunities.
- **THRIVE Program:** IUPUI offers the THRIVE program and scholarship funds for first-year, independent students. This includes students who have experienced foster care, housing insecurity, homelessness, emancipation, legal guardianship determined by a court, or a lack of family support. THRIVE students participate in a residence-based learning community, sharing classes and in and out of class experiences. Additionally, they receive individual guidance and support from certified success coaches, are connected to on-campus employment opportunities, and have opportunities to be engaged in the community.
- **IGNITE Program:** Ivy Tech Community College – Central Indiana will be launching IGNITE in fall 2020 modeled after the THRIVE program at IUPUI for independent students on their campus.

Indiana University – Bloomington (IU) (Institution of Higher Education Initiative): The IU Groups Scholars Programs was created in 1968 to increase college access and attainment among first-generation, under-represented populations on its campus. The program provides academic, financial, and social support to students, including current and former foster youth. Scholars participate in a Summer Bridge program prior to their first year and take many classes together especially in their first year for additional support.

[1] Foster Ed, 2018. Fostering Success in Education: National Factsheet on the Educational Outcomes of Children in Foster Care.

[2] Indiana State Board of Education, 2019. Annual Report on Foster Care Youth Educational Outcomes.

Under the McKinney-Vento Act, homeless students are those who lack a fixed, regular, or adequate nighttime residence. This subgroup includes students who share housing due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or campgrounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; or are abandoned in hospitals.[1]Unaccompanied homeless youth are young people who lack safe, stable housing and who are not in the care of a parent or guardian. They may have run away from home or been forced to leave by their parents. These youth live in a variety of temporary situations, including shelters, the homes of friends or relatives, cars, campgrounds, public parks, abandoned buildings, motels, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings.[2] Indiana's public schools identified nearly 19,789 homeless students in the 2017-2018 school year, which includes 1,164 unaccompanied youth.

Of the 1,088 potential homeless youth graduates, 895 (82.3%) graduated in 2018. This was only slightly less than the graduation rate of all students at 88.1%.[3] The challenges of homelessness and mobility lead to lower rates of high school graduation among homeless students. Nationally, data show that students who experience homelessness even one time while in high school have higher dropout rates than other economically disadvantaged students. Youth experiencing homelessness can find it difficult to access stable income, education, and employment.

Homeless youth may experience any, or often several, of the following complications that can inhibit their physical, emotional, social, and academic development:

- Many youth enter homelessness with little or no work experience.
- Youth are in the process of transitioning toward adulthood and may not have acquired personal, social, and life skills that make independent living possible.
- Youth often avoid the homeless-serving system out of fear of authorities.
- For youth under age of 18, the situation is complicated by the obligation of families and/or the government to care for them and provide for their basic needs.
- Many youth are forced to abandon their education because of homelessness.
- Youth who experience homelessness are especially vulnerable to criminal victimization, sexual exploitation, labor and sex trafficking, or traumatic stress.

The absence of a stable living arrangement has a devastating impact on educational outcomes for youth. For many students who are homeless, not having the proper school records often leads to incorrect classroom placement. Medical records, immunization records, previous school transcripts, proof of residency, and for unaccompanied youth, parental permission slips, are some of the "paper" barriers to students being placed efficiently and appropriately within school districts. Homeless youth also have higher levels of physical trauma and social isolation when compared to their housed peers, which can have significant impact on children's education and health outcomes:

- Because of their high mobility, homeless youth often have lower levels of academic achievement and limited employment opportunities. In 2017, only 25.8% of homeless or housing unstable students passed both English/Language Arts and Math ISTEP+, compared to the state percentage of 51.4%.
- Homeless youth are more likely to have experienced traumatic events, abuse, and neglect. These experiences have a lasting impact on behavior, emotional health, and physical health.
- The prevalence of psychiatric disorders (depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder) for homeless youth are higher than their peers. Chronic health conditions are also higher in the homeless population, due to lack of permanent housing and barriers to healthcare services. [4]

The lack of education is the top risk factor for youth homelessness. The only way to keep unaccompanied homeless youth safe is to ensure they can access services, such as shelter and housing, health care, and education. Yet, a recent survey in Indiana revealed significant barriers for youth accessing these services in addition to the "paper" barriers impeding their educational success. Youth under 18 in particular face logistical hurdles, including:

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    - Being unable to consent for shelter and housing services;
    - Avoiding services due to fear of child welfare involvement; and
    - Being unable to obtain their own birth certificate and state-issued identification card.

    The Coalition for Homeless Intervention and Prevention's (CHIP), which collects data on from Indianapolis, deeper research of homeless youth and young adults found that certain groups are disproportionately represented in homeless statistics:

- Youth aged 12-17,
- LGBTQ populations,
- Youth with special needs or disabilities,
- Pregnant or parenting young adults,
- Youth of color,
- Youth formerly in foster care,
- Victims of sex trafficking or domestic violence, and
- Youth formerly engaged with the juvenile justice system.[5]

In the metropolitan region of Indianapolis:

- 47% of youth ages 13-17 who experience homelessness do so without a parent, guardian or other adult.
- 59% of youth and 86% of young adults have a mental health disorder.
- 1 in 3 youth experiencing homelessness have a substance abuse disorder.
- 69% of young adults experiencing homelessness are African-American.
- 25% of youth ages 13-17 and 1 in 3 young adults experiencing homelessness identify as LGBTQ.[6]

Homelessness can compound other factors that create vulnerabilities and inequities for youth. It can increase a young adult's difficulty of graduating high school, let alone enrolling in and completing postsecondary education, finding stable employment, and earning family-sustaining wages. There is also a likelihood that homeless youth will continue to battle bouts of homelessness throughout their adult lives. Providing interventions and wraparound supports for these students, specifically while in high school, will help them persist in their academic studies and establish the foundation necessary for these students to be successful in postsecondary college and career. Focusing on the homeless youth population (and including their parents or families, when possible) will help prevent creating an intergenerational cycle of homelessness.

<u>Co-Enrolled Programs:</u> Homeless youth will be co-enrolled into the following primary programs and services of benefit to this target population. An individual's unique circumstances or

preference may not necessitate co-enrollment in each program. This section includes ***Core Program Activities*** and ***Activities Outside of the Plan*** for these youth.

Elementary and Secondary Education Act – Title VII (Federal Program): Title VII, Part B: The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), which was reauthorized as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), is a federal law that protects the educational rights of students experiencing homelessness. It ensures protections and provides funding for services for students experiencing homelessness. For FY 2020, Indiana will be awarded $1.49 million for these efforts. The federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act encompasses the following provisions:

1. Students who are experiencing homelessness can remain in one school (including a preschool), even if their temporary living situation is located in another school district or attendance area, if that is in their best interest. Schools must provide transportation.
2. Students who are experiencing homelessness can enroll in school and begin attending immediately, even if they cannot produce normally required documents, such as birth certificates, proof of guardianship, immunization records, or proof of residency, or even if they have missed application or enrollment deadlines.
3. Students who are experiencing homelessness must be able to participate fully in school activities and access all programs and services for which they are eligible, including extracurricular activities, credit recovery, special education services, school nutrition programs, language assistance for English learners, career and technical education, gifted and talented programs, magnet schools, charter schools, summer learning, online learning, and before- and after-school care.
4. Every local educational agency, including charter schools that are local educational agencies, must designate a homeless liaison. Homeless liaisons responsibilities include: identification, enrollment, ensuring access to early childhood education and other programs, and collaboration with community agencies.[7]

The Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) through the Indiana Education for Homeless Children and Youth program (INEHCY), currently employs several strategies to identify and assess the needs of homeless children and youth. These strategies include training, outreach, technical assistance and guidance, and monitoring of McKinney-Vento funding to districts, and state law. Indiana's McKinney-Vento funds support trainings offered to a broad audience which includes homeless liaisons, district staff, district administrators, several state agencies, and community service providers to help identify potentially homeless students. Training opportunities address how homelessness is defined and what it portrays across Indiana, the educational rights of homeless children and youth, the roles of the homeless liaison and state coordinator, and best practices in addressing the needs of homeless children and youth. The INEHCY also offers a comprehensive program for school personnel, including liaisons, principals and other school leaders, attendance officers, teachers, enrollment personnel, and specialized instructional support personnel, to heighten the awareness of school personnel of the specific needs of homeless children and youth, including such children and youths who are runaway and homeless youth. [8]

Schools should assess the needs of homeless youth through a collaborative effort of assessments administered by various school personnel (e.g., special education, speech pathology, English for Speakers of Other Languages, school nurses). Districts are also encouraged to provide supplemental opportunities, including access to online courses, summer school, mentoring programs, after-school programming, and tutoring through both McKinney-Vento and Title I of

ESSA funding as ways to provide the enhanced services for positive youth development, increased focus on academic success, and credit recovery. In addition to providing professional development opportunities, McKinney-Vento can be used locally to provide both academic and wraparound supports for homeless students. Homeless youth are more likely to be chronically absent, missing 20 or more school days in one year.[9]This negatively impacts student performance, with chronically absent students having lower standardized test scores, grade point averages, and higher rates of grade retention and dropping out.[10] By providing both academic and supportive services, schools can lessen the impact of those missed days and can help to get students back on track academically, preventing the aforementioned negative outcomes. Additionally, the IDOE should provide training and technical assistance on using real-time attendance data and selecting strategies that deal with root causes rather than implement exclusionary discipline. **Title III of ESEA**, the Migrant Education Program, could be coordinated with McKinney-Vento funds at the local level to provide enhanced services to these students, as many of our migrant students may also qualify for this program.

School districts can partner with Workforce Development Boards and other community organizations to determine how to use McKinney-Vento funds in relationship to Core and Partner Programs for prevention services. Though not all incidents of youth homelessness can be prevented, with appropriate, targeted services, some families and youth at-risk can avoid this crisis. These funds could be used by local districts to increase community partnerships and co-location of services for students and families to avoid homelessness. Community programs can partner with schools to reach youth teetering on the brink of homelessness, offering individual and family case management to prevent runaway behavior or to provide emergency rental assistance to families facing eviction to prevent family homelessness. Through schools, youth can be connected to drop-in centers and street outreach organizations to facilitate access to services. Some youth need immediate housing arrangements, like subsidized apartment living or an emergency bed; some require specific drug and mental health treatments; other youth would benefit more from programs in schools or community-based settings aimed at developing positive connections with adults and communities. A youth's circumstances may require comprehensive service strategies, including different combinations and sequences of housing, treatment, school and community programming, and/or family supports, that need not be placed solely on the shoulders of our schools. Districts and schools can leverage co-location to share in helping support our hardest to serve students.

Case management through McKinney-Vento might also include connection to educational resources, addressing legal needs, and budgeting and financial management assistance for the youth's family. With the proper support, teachers and staff can help identify students who are facing crises and connect them to the right community supports, such as housing, counseling, and/or legal assistance. Co-location efforts, such as embedding staff members in schools or providing workshops to teachers and counselors regarding program opportunities, can complement the professional development outlined through IDOE's ESSA Plan.

Title I – Youth (Core Program): Under the WIOA Youth Program, youth experiencing homelessness are eligible to receive services, whether in-school or out of school. WIOA Youth services can complement supplemental opportunities funded through McKinney-Vento, such as tutoring, dropout prevention, postsecondary education preparation and transition activities, mentoring, and after-school and summer programming. Currently, our **JAG** Program targets at-risk students, including homeless youth, through these types of wraparound supports as a dropout prevention strategy. Often, JAG is deeply embedded in schools as an intervention. By braiding McKinney-Vento, WIOA Youth, and other ESSA funds (such as Titles I, III, or IV),

Workforce Development Boards can scale JAG to additional schools within a region, targeting specific subgroups.

Helping homeless youth transition successfully to life after high school, in particular postsecondary education and quality employment, should be a direct focus of our WIOA Youth programs. Homeless youth need access to education if they are to avoid homelessness as adults. Postsecondary educational institutions can provide students with meals, counseling, adult and peer mentorship, leadership opportunities, extracurricular activities, social work services, and other services beyond education. These services are enhanced when educational institutions and local homeless organizations coordinate efforts to provide services and supports to these youth. In addition to educational services, WIOA Youth can assist with the development of employability and technical skills to ensure long-term economic stability. It can also provide follow-up services for homeless youth, as they often need additional supports as they acclimate to adulthood. Through programs like JAG, workforce development services for homeless youth can include all types of postsecondary-readiness and career development services. Through WIOA Youth and McKinney-Vento, we can provide youth educational attainment, employment and job services, and housing support can have significant social return on investment.

Potential Enrollment: Additional programs and services a Hoosier may receive depending on individual circumstances. This section includes ***Core and Partner Program Activities,Activities outside the Plan***, and***Individual Services***for adults in this target population.

Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education (Partner Program): Under the Perkins Act, youth experiencing homelessness according to McKinney-Vento's definition are included in the definition of special populations. The special population designation is given to groups who may experience unique barriers to accessing and succeeding in CTE programs. As a result, homeless youth are entitled to receive a variety of supplemental supports in both secondary and postsecondary institutions to ensure that they have equal access to and opportunity to succeed in CTE programs. Local CTE plans must now include a comprehensive needs assessment and set of strategies for special population youth to overcome barriers to access and success in CTE. The needs assessments must involve representatives of agencies serving homeless children and youth in the respective CTE district. State tuition support dollars may be used to reduce or eliminate out-of-pocket expenses for homeless youth, including any costs related to dual enrollment programs, certification examinations, or early college high school programs. Because Indiana dedicates a portion of its Perkins leadership dollars towards district grants for certification costs, we encourage our CTE districts to leverage this funding for this particular subgroup to alleviate a financial burden. Additionally, Indiana will include the actual levels of performance for special populations, disaggregated data on designated special populations and data showing any disparities or gaps in performance of special populations, in all CTE reports.

Title II – Adult Education (Core Program): Students experiencing homelessness face numerous challenges in completing high school. They frequently go hungry, suffer chronic and acute illnesses, and are subjected to constant stress. Homeless youth also move frequently due to limits on the length of their stay in a shelter or temporary accommodations or to escape abusive family members. Too often, these moves lead to school changes. Youth affected by homelessness are 87% more likely to drop out of high school and, as a result, are more likely to become homeless as adults.[11] We can capture these eligible youth by referring them to Adult Education (AE) providers through our WorkOnes either when they drop out or if they need additional educational support upon graduation. These can be warm referrals made by school districts to local Workforce Development Boards. As soon as they are identified as disengaged with the traditional secondary system, we can provide the tutoring and education needed to

ensure these eligible youth earn their high school equivalency. Capturing these eligible students within AE while they are still young will lessen the likelihood of this population needing interventions further on in adulthood.

SNAP (Partner Program): Federal SNAP regulations specify that unaccompanied homeless youth are eligible to apply for SNAP. Applying for SNAP services does not require photo identification, proof of a permanent address, approval by a parent or guardian, nor does it, in the case of youth living independently, place age restrictions on applicants.[12] Despite this being the case, lack of awareness that this population is eligible for SNAP has created a barrier for unaccompanied homeless youth to receive critical benefits. To be successful in school, children and youth require adequate nutrition each day, or they will struggle with their focus and awareness, exacerbating their existing educational gaps due to chronic absenteeism, stress, and other issues. School Homeless Liaisons, JAG Program Directors, WorkOne counselors, case managers, and other community workers can refer any unaccompanied homeless youth to SNAP and assist them with filing this paperwork to ease food insecurity issues. By leveraging the opportunity this Combined Plan offers Indiana, we can ensure our most vulnerable Hoosiers make the most of the interdependencies of these systems. Through strategies like co-location and cross-training, we can start to breakdown programmatic silos, so those serving Hoosiers at the frontline can help them access every program that could be beneficial.

Scaling Promising Practices: Below we highlight promising practices that we hope to see scaled and replicated to address the unique barriers and challenges of this target population. Our local regions can implement or supplement these practices through strategic use of ESEA and WIOA funds, philanthropic or community foundation dollars, or social impact bonds. These practices are ***Activities outside the Plan***. While not a comprehensive list, the practices showcase innovative approaches to assisting our homeless youth in surmounting their unique circumstances.

Outreach Indiana (Community Program): The main goal of this community organization is to empower homeless youth to achieve stability. This program works with youth by helping them transform their self-images and create self-efficacy. Outreach provides an extensive amount of services including:

- Basic Needs Drop-In: Youth can take showers, do laundry, eat, use computers, as well as receive food bags, clothing, and hygiene items.
- Administrative Drop-In: Community partners come to Outreach to provide assistance obtaining identification, signing up for SNAP/TANF, health insurance, housing, mental health, employment, legal assistance, or education referrals. Youth can also sign up to receive their mail at Outreach's program center.
- Case Management: Outreach assists with both career and supportive services, such as transportation, social skills, medical appointments, and job interviews. They also focus on obtaining housing, finding employment, working through educational issues and dealing with legal issues.
- Fun Days: Recreational therapy allows opportunities to experience Indianapolis and take a moment to break from the pressures of life.

Outreach Indiana also runs the ARCH (Advocacy, Relationship, Case Management in High Schools) Program in central Indiana during and after school hours. This program assists homeless high school students with a wide range of services including: obtaining birth certificates, social security cards, Medicaid coverage, TANF/SNAP, and bus passes, along with

educational assistance by helping with financial aid forms, taking students on college visits, and helping them apply for scholarships. Additionally, ARCH Life Skills Program through Outreach provides a 12 week Life Skills class that focuses on identity, goal setting, financial literacy, respect, career and education, volunteerism, handling conflict, cultural competency, values and principles.

As there are many similar local organizations that offer these types of services, both our school districts and Workforce Development Boards can find ways to create or further public-private partnerships to help provide students with resources. Through these types of resources, no single entity must provide the entirety of comprehensive services. Through our local plans, we can identify those areas where embedding staff members or increasing awareness of programs can better address the holistic needs of students.

Crisis Center, Inc. (Community Program): The Crisis Center is a community organization located in Gary, Indiana, administering programs for youth, adults and families. These services include: Emergency Youth Residential Shelter, Open Residential/Long-Term Care, Runaway and Homeless Youth outreach, Juvenile delinquency prevention, crisis and suicide prevention hotline, and professional counseling services. The Alternative House, an emergency youth residential shelter, provides supports for youth, aged 10-18, who are runaways, homeless, abused, or neglected and need help to resolve problems and successfully return home or to an alternative, safe living situation. The Crisis Center also runs a Safe Place/Safely Home programs, which partners with businesses and local law enforcement to help youth in crisis. For Safe Place, businesses display Safe Place signs indicating their willingness to assist youth, and Crisis Center staff retrieve youth from sites, transporting them to safety at Alternative House. Safely Home offers an alternative for youth who are discovered by law enforcement on the street who have been pushed out, asked out, voluntarily left or have been forced to leave home. These youth are transported to Alternative House to provide immediate safety, shelter, food, clothing and counseling. The services provided by the Crisis Center can make a crucial impact on at-risk youth, providing them the supportive services needed to find safety and help put them on the right track for the future.

Stopover Inc. (Community Program): Stopover provides crisis intervention for adolescent youth and their families in central Indiana. Programs they run include: a 24 hour crisis line, individual and family centered home based counseling, emergency shelter, and a transitional living program. Stopover's transitional living program services youth ages 16-22, who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. Youth live in a residential environment, attend school, are employed, and develop life skills, along with receiving case management services. This program focuses on unaccompanied youth who are unable to stay with their families while transitioning to independent living.

Schools on Wheels (Community Program): School on Wheels has both school-and shelter-based programming that focuses on different types of homeless youth. School-based programming focuses on homeless who have become stably housed, as well as "hidden homeless" youth, which are youth that have doubled up with other families, in motels, cars, or other spaces not meant for habitation. School on Wheels works with schools to provide critical academic supports that benefits students impacted by the trauma of homelessness. By focusing on these two specific types of homeless populations, School on Wheels is able to lessen the negative impact that homelessness has on educational achievement. It provides interventions that help students catch up academically and equips parents to advocate for their youth. As local districts and Boards find similar partners with which to foster a partnership, we can increase postsecondary credential attainment and the economic mobility of this population.

[1] Indiana Department of Education, September 2018. Who is Homeless Memo.

[2] Indiana Education for Homeless Children & Youth – INEHCY, 2017. College Access and Success for Students

Experiencing Homelessness.

[3] Indiana State Board of Education, 2019. Annual Report on Homeless Youth Educational Outcomes.

[4] Indiana Youth Institute, October 2018. Youth Homelessness In Indiana Data Brief October 2018.

[5] Indiana University Public Policy Institute, 2019. Homeless in Indianapolis: 2019 Marion County Point-in-Time Count.

[6] Indianapolis Continuum of Care & the Coalition for Homelessness Intervention & Prevention, August 2018. YYA Coordinated Community Plan.

[7]42 USC Chapter 119, Subchapter VI, Part B: Education for Homeless Children and Youths.

[8] Indiana Department of Education, 2019. Amendment to Indiana's Consolidated State Plan under the Every Student Succeeds Act.

[9] Institution for Children, Poverty and Homelessness, August 2017. Why Do Homeless Students Miss School?

[10] National Center for Homeless Education, September 2017. In School Every Day: Addressing Chronic Absenteeism Among Students Experiencing Homelessness

[11] America's Promise Alliance, 2016. Hidden In Plain Sight: Homeless Students in America's Public Schools.

[12] US Department of Agriculture, 2013. SNAP - Clarification of Policies Barriers Facing Homeless Youth.

: More than 112,000 Hoosier students speak a language other than English at home, representing more than 275 different languages. Of these students, over 50,000 students have been formally identified as English learners due to limited proficiency in speaking, listening, reading, and writing. English Learners make up over 5% (over 65,000) of Indiana's total student population. Spanish speakers represent 71.2% of the language minority student population of Indiana, Burmese and Chin represent 6%, German and Pennsylvania Dutch represent 2.6%, Arabic 2.5%, Mandarin and Sichuanese 2%, and Punjabi and Vietnamese each at 1.2%. Over 70% of Indiana ELs are at an intermediate or advanced level of English proficiency. These students may communicate very effectively in English in social contexts, but need direct English language instruction to acquire the academic language essential for postsecondary success.[1]

In the last 15 years, Indiana's EL population has grown over 500%, necessitating our state agencies, local Workforce Development Boards, and employers to consider how to integrate this population into our talent pipeline.[2] Indiana has ELs in every county across the state. Some specific counties, however, do have a larger population of EL students: Marion, Elkhart, Allen, St. Joseph, and Tippecanoe. Our most commonly spoken native languages include: Spanish, Arabic, Mandarin, Burmese, and Vietnamese.[3] Providing early interventions to these students through

English Language programs integrated with other academic and technical disciplines will help Hoosier ELs gain the knowledge and skills necessary for career and economic advancement and self-actualization. If we can capitalize on the state and federal investments prioritizing this subgroup, we can assist our Hoosier ELs in becoming fully engaged citizens in our communities. Providing the necessary supports allow our ELs to leave the high school on the right track for postsecondary success, as well as prevent potential future dependence on government benefits. As we matriculate more students through these early academic interventions that yield long-term talent development, we may also see pockets within our English Learner, immigrant, and refugee communities improve.

Any student enrolling in an Indiana school for the first time, including preschool, foreign exchange students, and immigrants, is given a Home Language Survey upon entrance. Students enrolling in grades K-12 with a native language other than English included on the survey are screened for English proficiency using the World-class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) screener or the Kindergarten W-APT, unless they are transferring from another WIDA state. Students who do not demonstrate proficiency on the screener are identified as an English Learner. Once identified as an English Learner, an Individual Language Plan (ILP) is created that documents the student's accommodations and strategies necessary in the classroom and on state assessment. ELs receive federally-required English language development instruction and are annually assessed for proficiency from third grade through high school.[4]

English Learners may struggle academically in both K-12 and postsecondary education due to the language barrier. Significant barriers to success exist for this growing and evolving population. A student's level of English acquisition impacts his/her success in the classroom and eventually in postsecondary education and employment. While this has no forbearance on intelligence, the process of learning to fluently read, write, and comprehend in English may present a significant academic obstacle. Conversely, a student may appear proficient because s/he can participate in conversations, though lack academic proficiency can obstruct interacting meaningfully with classes and curricula. Students developing strong English language skills that can apply in both social and professional settings are critical to postsecondary opportunities in both education and employment.

As the need for multilingual employees grows amongst Indiana's businesses, these students possess a linguistic fluency, as well as cultural competency, that will be an asset to them after high school. While it is important for these students to become proficient in English, the dichotomy is that fluency in other languages will be equally beneficial to these students in the long-term. These students, as well as potentially their families, present a talent pipeline to fill a growing economic need.

Co-Enrolled Programs: Hoosier English Learners will be co-enrolled into the following primary programs and services of benefit to this target population. An individual's unique circumstances or preference may not necessitate co-enrollment in each program. This section includes ***Core and Partner Program Activities***, ***Activities outside the Plan***, and***Individual Services***for EL youth.

Elementary and Secondary Education Act – Title III (Federal Program): Title III: Language Instruction for English learners and Immigrant Students of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), which was reauthorized as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), ensures that children with limited English proficiency attain English language skills, develop high levels of academic attainment in English, and meet the same challenging state academic content and achievement standards as any other student. With the reauthorization of this federal law as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) in 2015, states are able to

comprehensively track ELs' academic progress towards English proficiency.[5] ESSA requires schools to provide English Learners with high-quality English language instruction, as well as high-quality professional development to classroom teachers, principals, and administrators, to promote engagement for English learners and their families. Though this funding is distributed from kindergarten to grade 12, overlap with WIOA's Core and Partner Programs may still occur, especially in the high school space. ELs are often considered 'at-risk' and may access WIOA Title I – Youth programs. As the Combined Plan focuses the receipt of services and resources necessary for long-term success through a systemic lens, we encourage our local Workforce Development Boards to integrate WIOA Title I – Youth and ESEA Title III to increase the academic growth of this student population. As is the case with other at-risk youth groups, though these funding streams have different administrative purposes, the objective of them both is the same – provide equitable early interventions to those students who require additional supports to succeed. Our Workforce Development Boards can work with district superintendents and principals to determine how they can leverage these various funding sources to achieve the same goal.

Indiana's state-designed long-term goal is for 70% of English learners to attain English language proficiency within six years. The Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) will support local districts in achieving the state-designed goal by annually identifying schools with fewer than 70% of English Learners attaining proficiency within six years. The IDOE will provide professional development opportunities and targeted individualized technical assistance for those schools with an average timeline of growth to proficiency exceeding six years through its administrative ESEA funds. The IDOE provides a variety of resources and training opportunities to support families, teachers, building and district leaders, local school boards, and communities as they strive to meet the unique academic and social emotional needs of English Learners and their families. The IDOE has created an Indiana EL Guidebook to address key issues which EL students, families, and schools face and provide guidance regarding state and federal policy. The IDOE also facilitates professional development opportunities regarding WIDA implementation, differentiated instruction for English Learners, working with EL newcomers, and other locally-identified areas of concern for schools and districts across Indiana. The IDOE emphasizes the importance of ongoing, high-quality cultural responsiveness training for all staff to maximize the effectiveness of English learner programming, to mediate cultural differences between schools and families, and to engage families of English learners as partners in the education process. Through intensive professional development at the state and/or local levels and partnerships with institutions of higher education, the IDOE aims to improve qualified English learner staff by leveraging comprehensive or targeted support and improvement plans to address English Learner needs.[6]

Though some of these students are recent immigrants and refugees, the vast majority of ELs were born in the United States.[7] A large number of ELs come from families who are non-native English speakers or only speak their native tongues at home. These learners are, therefore, not exposed to English until they enter the education system. Indiana's Plan for the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) established a goal of 70% of our English Learners meet their individual growth targets in achieving English language proficiency as measured by WIDA ACCESS by 2022-23.[8] Recognizing the success of this goal will impact the professional and economic futures of our ELs, we seek to leverage the talent development system and resources to ensure these at-risk students find economic stability and mobility.

Based upon the 2018-2019 school year, $118 was allocated per pupil for a total of 65,847 public and nonpublic EL students, or approximately $8.5 million, through ESEA Title III.[9] According to Indiana's current ESSA Plan, we focus these funds on ensuring EL and Title III directors

receive professional development to assist with teaching this population with cultural understanding and awareness, as well as district-developed plans for core English language development. Shifting the Title III funding from focusing primarily on administrative needs to support English Learner needs to also include all teachers, counselors and other staff and personnel that interact with this population of students can serve as further sources of mentorship and support. Content teachers across disciplines may lack the training on cultural awareness and understanding to best instruct EL students. Title III can help all teachers in all subjects develop the requisite knowledge of the language acquisition process to assist students' language development throughout the school day. This type of distributed leadership and counseling approach to providing wraparound supports can develop customized interventions to ensure students' needs are being addressed academically, socially, and emotionally. It is this personalized approach that can encourage students to pursue achieve their goals.

The other goal of ESEA Title III is to promote parental, family, and community participation in language instruction educational programs for the parents, families, and communities of English learners. Family engagement through ESEA Title III can benefit the student's academic performance, as well as positively influence student attitude and behavior. Additionally, through further systems integration, family engagement in schools allows for families to learn about language acquisition programs for them. Through collaboration between our schools and WorkOnes, local regions can leverage programs supported through ESEA Title III to recruit, identify, and support the EL parents. Through family engagement strategies at our K-12 schools, we can implement an intergenerational approach to language acquisition – students in schools through ESEA Title III and their parents through Adult Education programs of WIOA Title II. Related to this type of systems integration, the Department of Education has a Memorandum of Understanding with Indiana's **National Farmworker Jobs Program** (NFJP) **(Federal Program)** provider, Proteus, to give it data on migrant students and families identified through **ESEA Title I, Part C** to help recruit parents into employment services.

Expanding the use of Title III to professional development for adapting best practices and academic differentiation may facilitate a rapid acquisition of language proficiency and apply to other interventions that improve all at-risk students' educational experience. ESEA Title III funds could supplement state and local tuition support for programs and initiatives focused on the following:

1. Interdisciplinary Curricula: Through inter- or multidisciplinary approaches that contain applied English in all classrooms (similar to the Integrated Education and Training model used in Adult Education). English language learners should not be learning the fundamentals of English in isolation; they should apply their developing language skills to academic content in all subjects. This will require all content instructors to understand their role as language teachers regardless of subject.

2. Differentiated Instruction: Students learn better when they can engage with material in multiple ways. Lessons that involve writing, speaking, drawing, and listening give students multiple pathways to deepen their understanding of content. For ELs, this type of engagement allows them to work through their language barriers.[10]

3. Culturally Responsive Teaching: This involves creating a supportive environment by cultivating an appreciation of diversity, visible both in the curricula and the classroom environment that honors and reflect the lives of the students.

4. Enculturation: When teachers understand cultural norms and have deeper cultural responsivity, they can empower students to have self-efficacy. This fuses teaching

academic skills and social/cultural skills, while being sensitive to a student's native culture and life stories.

By integrating these strategies into classrooms, we can help all at-risk students needing additional supports to gain a deeper understanding and comprehension of academic knowledge. The above strategies will permeate beyond just ELs' achievement, thus allowing us to maximize this federal investment for the betterment of all students. Another potential use of ESEA Title III funding includes supplementing support personnel, such as paraprofessionals, to assist ELs. Finding personnel that speaks the students native language is at top priority to maximize the learning experience for students, as well as provide mentorship and guidance. These varying uses of ESEA Title III complement IDOE's ESSA Plan to help decrease the amount of students who become stuck in the "silent" stage of language learning, eventually becoming long-term English Learners and never master the language skills necessary to acclimate to American society. By providing professional development in these skills and other more age appropriate EL teaching practices, we can help to upskill instructors to benefit all students and allow us to reach our 70% access goal swiftly.

Non-English Speaking Program (State Program): The Non-English Speaking Program (NESP) provides supplemental state funding to eligible school corporations who serve English Learners. NESP funding provides English language instruction to K-12 ELs in order to increase their language proficiency and academic achievement. By executing this intervention as early as possible in the students' education, we allow time for students to gain English language proficiency before they reach adulthood. Indiana allocates $22.5 million in state funds to this program (with a base of $300 per student) annually. All Indiana school corporations and charter schools are eligible to apply for this funding. The NESP has three specific goals:

1. Student Performance: English Learners will demonstrate growth in English language acquisition and in academic achievement.
2. Professional Development: School corporations and charter schools will provide increased opportunities for EL-related professional development to instructional staff.
3. Family Engagement: School corporations and charter schools will provide additional support to parents of English Learners.

Recipient schools and districts must identify and meet performance indicators related to these specific goals.[11] These state funds complement the federal Title III funding to provide additional resources to help this subgroup increase its English proficiency and academic achievement.. Through coordination with school districts, this funding can augment early intervention strategies for ELs during their K-12 careers. By braiding the federal and state support dollars, Workforce Development Boards can assist local districts with aligning teacher professional development, assistive technologies, and instructional aids/paraprofessionals to support ELs obtain the academic knowledge and skills required for postsecondary success. The federal funds through **ESEA Titles III and IV** (Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants) can supplement state-funded programs, which may increase the impact of these programs to also include their families. This may include partnering with **WIOA Title II** providers for adult English learner classes or community organizations to assist with school and government documentation and public fora to discuss community needs. Community partners may include the Indiana Latino Institute, La Plaza, the Immigrant Welcome Center, migrant parent advisory councils, the Burmese American Community Institute, and other similar stakeholders. By braiding ESEA Title III, the state funds under NESP, and WIOA Title II, school

districts and local Workforce Development Boards can increase the co-location of programs that span both children and adults creating a one-stop shop for entire EL families.

Title I –Youth (Core Program): The WIOA Youth Program provides local workforce areas resources to deliver a comprehensive array of youth services that focus on assisting in-school youth with one or more barriers. For ELs, specifically, the lack of English proficiency will impact that student's ability to attain educational and/or skills training credentials and secure employment with career/promotional opportunities. Once they become proficient in English, these students innately have the asset of being bilingual and often a drive to persist and succeed, given the dual nature of their academics. Because Title III can assist with instructional supports for students, this funding can prioritize the following supports for ELs:

1. Paid and unpaid work experiences, which include: summer and year round employment opportunities, pre-apprenticeship programs, internships and job shadowing, and on-the-job training;
2. Occupational skill training;
3. Leadership development opportunities;
4. Mentoring (especially by professionals with similar backgrounds);
5. Follow-up services;
6. Comprehensive guidance and counseling;
7. Financial literacy education; and
8. Entrepreneurial skills training.

English Learners often come from families who have little understanding of the English language or the complex system of applying for postsecondary education or being gainfully employed. ELs face a severe language barrier when trying to apply for FASFA, fill out college applications, earn an apprenticeship, and secure a career. By providing the tools to increase access to college and career opportunities for ELs while they are still in high school, with the additional resources funded through ESSA and the NESP, this next generation of Hoosiers will find it simpler to successfully participate in the workforce and earn family-sustaining wages to benefit themselves, their families, and their communities.

Title II – Adult Education (Core Program): Because ELs may need additional transitional support to either maintain or further their language proficiency, schools should connect their non-native English speaking graduates with local Workforce Development Boards post-graduation. Through WIOA Youth (either in- or out-of-school funds) and Adult Education, local boards can partner with schools to create a 'summer-bridge' program to combat any potential melt and to ease the transition from the supportive K-12 environment to that of adulthood. A summer bridge program targeting ELs will prevent a regression in language skills and will keep students on-track to reaching their postsecondary goal (or potentially helping them navigate what opportunities they can tap into after high school). Adult Education will also be helpful for eligible students who have completed their high school diploma but have not yet reached English language proficiency. These English Learners can utilize Adult Education services for English language acquisition services to help provide additional assistance in acquiring English proficiency. We recommend that schools refer high school seniors and high school dropouts who have yet to demonstrate proficiency on the WIDA proficiency scale to Workforce

Development Boards to access Adult Education upon leaving the secondary school system to better assist them in attaining language proficiency.

As discussed above, local Boards can work with schools and districts to connect ESEA Title III with WIOA Title II. Through family engagement activities ESEA Title III must support at K-12 schools, adults needing assistance with English language acquisition could be connected and referred to local Adult Education programs, leveraging one federal program to increase enrollment in another. This also furthers Indiana's strategy to infuse intergenerational connections throughout our programs.

Potential Eligibility: Additional programs and services a Hoosier EL may receive depending on individual circumstances. This section includes ***Core and Partner Program Activities***,***Activities outside the Plan***, and***Individual Services***for EL youth.

The Refugee School Impact Grant Program (Federal Program): This grant, provided by the federal Office of Refugee Resettlement, helps offset some of the costs of educating refugee children incurred by local school districts with high refugee populations. Indiana's Division of Disability & Rehabilitation under the Family and Social Services Agencies receive approximately $289,000 annually.[12] School districts can use these funds for activities that will lead to effective integration and education of refugee youth. These funds are eligible for school age refugees between the ages of 5 and 18 who are seeking refuge from the following countries: Somalia, Liberia, Congo, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Afghanistan, Thailand, Laos, and Myanmar (Burma).[13]

There are several components of programming within Refugee School Impact Grant funds, which can complement activities funded through ESEA Title III, WIOA Youth, and NESP. These activities can include:

- Home/School Liaisons: Programs use "home/school liaisons," or "cultural brokers," to facilitate communication between students, their parents, and school personnel. Often times, programs hire former refugees for these positions so they can bridge the cultural and linguistic gaps between the home and school.
- Parent Workshops: Funding can go towards holding workshops, orientation sessions, or focus groups for parents to learn about their children's school.
- Newcomer Programs: School districts with large numbers of refugee students who have experienced an interrupted formal education can use these funds to support any type of newcomer orientation, support, evaluation, or counseling.
- Academic Enrichment: Programs provide academic support through tutoring during and outside school hours, such as after-school classes, weekend tutorials, and online assistance, as well as providing students with culturally and linguistically appropriate materials, such as special programs or activities, translation services, and interpreter services.
- Summer Programs: Schools can host summer programs for refugee children for academic enrichment and recreational activities.
- Psychosocial/Mental Health Services: Programs provide individual and group counseling and mental health support to help refugee students adjust to their new home and school.

- Professional Development for Teachers and School Personnel: Funding can provide workshops and training for teachers and school personnel on incoming refugee groups, the impact of the refugee experience on refugee students' behavior, cultural responsivity, and other strategies.[14]

  Schools and districts finding success in with these activities may want to partner with their local workforce boards to use ESEA Titles I, III, or IV, WIOA Youth, or other state funds to replicate these types of programs for other EL or at-risk students. Since there is overlap between the services for these student subgroups, finding ways to braid funding to replicate and scale successful programs, rather than churn through new and different ones, may positively shift these at-risk students once they graduate high school. These funds, in particular, would be extremely useful in scaling trauma-informed instruction and wraparound supports that will tend to the unique social-emotional needs of this population.

  According to the Immigration and Nationality Act, a refugee is defined as "a person who is unable or unwilling to return to his or her home country because of a 'well-founded fear of persecution.'"[15] It is reasonable, by this definition, to assume that our refugee students have experienced some form of trauma that may negatively impact their ability to learn and function in a classroom setting. Refugee children are commonly consumed by the fear of experiencing a flashback or the need to numb themselves from stressors. They may find it difficult to regulate their behavior or process new information because of their past trauma. To improve refugee students' mental health in the most accessible and effective way, Indiana must support school-based methods to combat the unparalleled type of trauma these students experienced by integrating incongruent programs to maximize the investments. To help overcome these barriers, it is important to make mental health services available. These funds can help embed mental health services into schools to support refugee students and their families, since schools have the inimitable ability to serve as a point of contact with students and families. If schools can provide services in a setting that families are already connected with, it may be easier for students and families to access and utilize these options.[16] This will allow students to better cope with their past trauma and will help them to integrate into this new culture. Once students are able to feel safe in their new environment, they will be able to accomplish far more academically.

  Elementary and Secondary Education Act – Title I, Part C (Federal Program): Title I, Part C: Education of Migratory Children of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), includes funding that oversees three Migrant Regional Centers (MRCs) that operate local and regional migrant education programs. Migrant children can be both migrant workers themselves and/or children of Migrant/Seasonal Farmworkers. Over 1,800 migrant children ages 0-21 received supplementary educational, supportive, and referral services through the Indiana Migrant Education Program (IMEP). A migrant student is any child ages 0-21 who moves across school district lines, either by themselves or with a guardian who is a qualifying migrant worker, often for the purpose of seeking qualifying seasonal or temporary agricultural work. Many migrant students in Indiana are also English Learners. As such, the IDOE, through the Office of English Learning and Migrant Education, combining other services migrant students may need, such as English language development, to ensure the unique language needs of EL migrant students and associated federal requirements are being met. The limited English proficient status of a migrant child is tracked within Indiana's migrant database

to inform educators about the child's eligibility for other programming and to ensure that the migrant programming meets the needs of the student. The IMEP helps ensure that migratory children overcome educational disruption and other barriers they may face due to the migratory lifestyle. In FY 2020, Indiana will receive approximately $2.4 million in funding through this Title.[17]

The first priority when implementing any programs through ESEA Title I, Part C is the recruitment of students. If students are not recruited through this funding, they likely do not enroll in school. Ensuring migrant children are enrolled is critical component of this program. The IMEP ensures that all migrant students have access to free meals and textbooks. Similarly, migrant students are automatically eligible to access to the core curriculum and other Title I programming, ensuring that Title I, Part C funds are supplemental. The IMEP also offers afterschool and summer programs to migrant students.

As discussed earlier in this section, the Department of Education works with Proteus to identify and recruit migrant families into its employment services programs. One service DOE works with Proteus to offer is mobile language classes offered on buses in the farms. Proteus also provides healthcare and workforce development services to migrant families through these mobile sites. For older youth who are Migrant/Seasonal Farmworkers, they may left school at an early age in order to work with their families in the agriculture sector. These youth often have low literacy and language proficiency skills in their native language, let alone English. Adult Education may not be the right fit for these youth due to these classes being too advanced. The Indiana Department of Education may partner with Proteus to offer lessons focused on life skills and workplace safety, in addition to the mobile language classes. These youth face a different barrier altogether, thus emphasizing the knowledge needed to stay safe, healthy, and secure is the first priority for this subpopulation.

The priority focus for this funding is on identification and recruitment of students, as the IMEP aims to identify and serve 100% of Indiana's migrant students each year. MRCs employ fulltime, year-round recruiters throughout Indiana to strive to meet this. The MRC recruiters operate on a regional basis to recruit within and across the school districts by utilizing referrals or the work survey. This process supports the identification of enrolled K-12 eligible migratory children. Recruiters frequently visit area businesses, support or service agencies, and local farms while utilizing other resources, such as the National Migrant Hotline, to improve identification of all migrant children, including those who are birth through age two, ages 3-5, K-12, and out of school youth. The recruiters also use Department of Labor statistics to identify farms requesting temporary seasonal workers. Local Workforce Development Boards should be establish strong partnerships with the MRCs to help identify students and migrant adults that may require workforce and/or social services.

Indiana is a receiving state for migrant students, thus the vast majority of Indiana's migrant students are only present during the summer. For students that remain in the state during the regular school year, MRCs work with school districts to monitor students' academic progress and to determine the most appropriate supplemental services and support to provide each student. Secondary students' records are assessed to determine progress on graduation, and students are offered supplemental support and opportunities to take courses they are lacking or wish to take in advance of required

timelines. Secondary and Out-of-School Youth students also receive an additional "Individual Migrant Plan," which evaluates their needs, sets attainable goals for their time in Indiana, and lays out a plan for services to address these individual needs and goals. These individual plans are tailored for students who have dropped out of, or never had access to, the 122 school system; with goals that may include attaining a high school diploma or equivalency, gaining technical skills and training, and increasing English language proficiency. Because many of these students may need Core or Partner Programs as they transition into adulthood, our local boards can receive warm referrals from local school districts of students who may need assistance. Additionally, by co-locating Core and Partner Program staff in schools, students can learn about various benefits they can tap into as they transition out of school.

As a condition of receiving their subgrant, MRCs are required to consult with all districts in their region. Because these students may need additional supports after high school, our local Boards can detail how they may consult with their regional MRCs, as well, discussing the potential services from which migrant students may benefit.

Scaling Promising Practices: Below we highlight promising practices that we hope to see scaled and replicated to address the unique barriers and challenges of this target population. Our local regions can implement or supplement these practices through strategic use of ESEA and WIOA funds, philanthropic or community foundation dollars, or social impact bonds. These practices are ***Activities outside the Plan***. While not a comprehensive list, the practices showcase innovative approaches to assisting our EL Hoosiers in surmounting their unique circumstances.

The Newcomer Program (Community Program): The New Program, part of the Indianapolis Public School district, is the first school in Indiana to specialize in the needs of newcomers to the United States. The Newcomer Program provides students with access to grade-level content standards while developing their English language skills. Students take traditional content area classes with teachers who receive specialized, on-going training in sheltered instruction and best practices for EL students. To ensure academic success and emotional well-being, the program's staff members who are bi/multilingual, literacy coaches, and social workers. This unique program allows students new to the country to safely integrate into the American education system, keeping in mind that many of these students may be far removed from traditional education or may not have attended any sort of schooling in their country of origin.[18] By taking this model and replicating it in more schools across Marion County, along with schools in Elkhart, Allen, St. Joseph, and Tippecanoe, we hope to serve a larger amount of Hoosier EL students and help them integrate into the educational system and achieve proficiency at a swifter rate.

[1] Indiana Department of Education, 2019. Amendment to Indiana's Consolidated State Plan under the Every Student Succeeds Act.

[2] Indiana Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, December 2016. English Language Learner (ELL) Preparation for Indiana School Educators: A White Paper.

[3] Indiana Public Media, February 2016. Indiana Is Educating More English Language Learners.

[4] Indiana Department of Education, August 2019. English Learner Guidebook.

[5] American Institute of Research, 2016. What Will ESSA Mean for English Learners?

[6] Ibid.

[7] US Department of Education, November 2019. State Template for the Consolidated State Plan Under the Every Student Succeeds Act.

[8] Indiana Association of Public School Superintendents, November 2018. ESSA, English Learners' Success, IDOE Priorities and Educator Preparation.

[9] Indiana Department of Education, 2019. 2019-2020 Title III Allocations by LEA.

[10] Kaplan, 2019. 6 Essential Strategies for Teaching English Language Learners.

[11] Indiana Department of Education, August 2019. English Learner Guidebook.

[12] Administration for Children & Families, 2015. School Impact Grants.

[13] Indiana Department of Education, 2017. Refugee School Impact Program (RSI).

[14] Bridging Refuge Children and Youth Service, 2018. The Refugee School Impact Grant: Facilitating the Integration of Refugee Children into American Schools.

[15]8 USC 1101: Definitions.

[16] MinneTESOL Journal, Fall 2016. Classroom-Based Supports for Refugee Children Who Have Experienced Trauma.

[17] US Department of Education. Funds for State Formula-Allocated and Selected Student Aid Programs: Indiana.

[18]Enroll Indy, 2019. Newcomer Program Profile.

Per WIOA, an individual who is "basic skills deficient" is defined as a youth who has English reading, writing or computing skills at or below the 8th grade level on a generally accepted standardized test.[1] This could also be a youth who is unable to compute or solve problems or read, write or speak English at a level necessary to function on a job, in the individual's family, or in society.[2] Though a student may lack proper grade level attainment, s/he will still be promoted to high school. Unfortunately, the skills deficits these students have often negatively impact their academic attainment at the high school level. When these struggles result in poor grade point averages and failed classes, these students may become disengaged with the education system, which could lead to a variety of behavioral issues, including doing the bare minimum in class, arriving late, disrupting the flow of classes, or having poor attendance.

As they get older and fall farther behind, they become a high risk for dropping out of school – more on services for these youth are outlined in both the Adults without a High School Diploma and Low-Income sections.[3] Among those between the ages of 18 and 24, high school dropouts were more than twice as likely as college graduates to live in poverty. Dropouts experienced a poverty rate of 30.8%, while those with at least a bachelor's degree had a poverty rate of 13.5%.[4] Further dropout statistics show that:

- Dropouts earn less and contribute fewer tax dollars to the economy. Lifetime income differences between high school graduates and dropouts are estimated at $260,000. From a social perspective, high school graduates provide society with additional tax revenue and reduced public health, crime and justice, and welfare payment costs.

- Dropouts have increased health costs. Compared to high school graduates, dropouts are more likely to suffer from illness or disability and to die prematurely from cardiovascular disease, cancer, infection, injury, and diabetes.
- Dropouts ratchet up criminal justice costs. About 41% of inmates in state and federal prisons have less than a high school education. This is evidenced in Indiana by the integration of Adult Education services in our state facilities and county jails.
- Dropouts are less likely to vote or engage in civic activities. College graduates are nearly three times more likely to vote than Americans without a high school degree. Those without a high school diploma are also least likely be engaged in community involvement, volunteering, or charitable work.[5]
- Dropouts draw heavily on welfare and public assistance. A dropout will end up costing taxpayers an average of $292,000 over a lifetime due to the price tag associated with public assistance, incarceration, and other factors such as how much less they pay in taxes.[6]

Early intervention for students is key to combat these statistics and ensure every Hoosier finds economic and personal success after high school. It, therefore, becomes necessary to provide interventions to students as soon as possible to keep them on the right track academically and help them to persist to no less than high school graduation attainment.

Students fail 9th grade more than any other grade in high school, and a disproportionate number of students who are held back in 9th grade subsequently drop out. Supporting students as they transition to high school can help combat these issues. High School Transition Activities (HSTAs) can be used to provide support to selected students who are identified as academically behind and needing assistance as they enter high school. Some districts throughout the state have implemented this strategy for all first-year high schoolers, often as a 9th grade academy. These activities may include new student orientation, specific transition interventions to support the academic needs of first-year students, assistance from a student support team, and mentors assigned to help new students.[7] Schools and districts can braid ESEA Titles I or IV and WIOA Title I funds to provide HSTAs for students who exhibit basic skills deficiencies.

Co-Enrolled Programs: Youth who are basic skills deficient will be co-enrolled into the following primary programs and services of benefit to this target population. An individual's unique circumstances or preference may not necessitate co-enrollment in each program. This section includes ***Core Program Activities*** and***Activities Outside of the Plan*** for those youth.

Title I-Youth (Core Program): This Core Program through WIOA can be used for in-school youth ages 14 to 21 to provide both academic services and wraparound supports to help these students successfully transition from middle to high school. Schools and districts can partner with Workforce Development Board to assist students who are lacking in some of the basic foundational skills as an early intervention. These partnerships could leverage WIOA Youth funds to develop summer bridge programs from middle to high school that focus on academic remediation, individual tutoring, and study skills that may help basic skill deficient students complete the required 40 secondary credits to earn a diploma. This funding can also augment programs supplemented through **ESEA Titles I or IV** supporting activities such as:

- Creating individual high school graduation plans, in which school staff helps students develop concrete steps toward graduation, including selection of courses;

- Developing a 9th grade support team that monitors first-year students' progress and provided interventions to address any academic or social problems presented by the student; and
- Providing a yearlong advisory class that provides information and support to succeed in school such as study skills and time management.

After-school or summer programs focused on academics and remediation can provide supplemental education that will increase students' knowledge and skills and help them reach the appropriate grade level. These programs are another reason co-location in communities is so necessary to reach all Hoosiers. Co-requisite credit recovery classes allow at-risk students to re-take a previously failed course required for high school graduation and earn credit if the student successfully completes the course requirements at the same time a student takes a related course. This strategy is designed to provide a pathway for high school students who have a history of course failure and help them avoid falling further behind in school. High schools most frequently offer credit recovery to specific students on the basis of their academic performance, followed by attendance issues and staff referrals. High schools can provide credit recovery courses in different settings to accommodate student transportation needs. Credit recovery courses may be available online or in alternative settings and can be scheduled at different times to suit the needs of the student.[8] Local Boards could explore enrolling skills and/or credit deficient students into Adult Education programs or using Adult Education instructional models or instructors to provide supplemental support for high school students.

Indiana's primary WIOA Youth program for in-school youth is JAG. This program does assist basic skill deficient youth and presents another strategy for local Boards and districts partnerships. For these youth, in particular, JAG focuses efforts on academic remediation and/or tutoring, since graduation and academic improvements are a top priority while the students are still in school. For this specific subgroup, JAG emphasizes these 3 youth elements: tutoring, alternative school, and concurrent education.

Many high schools in Indiana may have similar programs already in place for these students. We encourage our local Boards to find ways to support these types of local programs and activities through WIOA Youth funding. Supporting these early interventions for struggling students may have a long-term return on investment for our local Boards by saving future dollars on providing supports and programs for them.

Title II – Adult Education (Core Program): For eligible students who complete a high school diploma but are still deficient in basic skills, Adult Education services post-high school may be needed to ensure that student has the foundational knowledge and skillset necessary for career success. Any student who either does not graduate from high school or graduates with skill deficiencies should be referred directly to Adult Education services upon exiting high school. Adult Education can braid postsecondary **Perkins or ESEA** funds to create a bridge program for students who earn a high school diploma or equivalency but may still struggle academically in Ivy Tech Community College. The academic skills provided through Adult Education applied to career exploration, work-based learning, or auditing technical courses during this bridge setting can serve to sharpen skills and bring students up to speed before they join the college's student body. This may cancel the need for remedial courses, saving students time and money and allowing them to achieve a postsecondary credential. Additional information about the remediation and supports Adult Education can provide these youth is described in the Adults without a High School Diploma section of the Plan.

Potential Enrollment: Additional programs and services a Hoosier may receive depending on individual circumstances. This section includes ***Core and Partner Program Activities,Activities outside the Plan***, and***Individual Services*** for youth in this target population.

Carl D. Perkins (Partner Program): To assist youth who are basic skills deficient increase their academic capabilities, schools and districts can use secondary Perkins funds to support academic integration education into career-technical education. In CTE, academic integration means combining technical skill development based on industry standards with content knowledge from related academic subjects (English Language Arts, math, science, or social studies). By integrating CTE and core academics, students who may not have the academic skills for achievement in more theoretical academic environment will have the opportunity to through hands-on, cross-disciplinary projects that tackle real-world problems. This applied approach to academics will help these youth understand the breadth and depth of career opportunities and the associated academic skills (e.g., reading, writing, and math skills). Students would learn academics in a classroom environment that marries academic knowledge and skills with occupational interests. CTE can make education relevant and rigorous. By using our Perkins funding to support our CTE redesign, Indiana will bring together strong academics, career-based learning, and real-world workplace experience into our Programs of Study. As a society, we must recognize that whatever a student's postsecondary and career aspirations happen to be, that student – regardless of his or her current skill level – will benefit from a Program of Study that incorporates academic knowledge, mastery of technical skill, and opportunities to connect and apply the two.

Title IV – Vocational Rehabilitation (Core Program): For students with an IEP or 504 plan that is not well accommodated, supported, or assisted throughout their early educational experiences, they may end up falling into this category once they are in high school. If a student with a disability does not receive the necessary supports and accommodations to achieve, s/he may not gain the foundational knowledge and skills in elementary and middle school and, therefore, will enter high school behind. There may be an intersection between this subgroup and the youth with disabilities subgroup. Through WIOA, Vocational Rehabilitation can serve high school youth with disabilities through Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS). Vocational Rehabilitation case services work in conjunction with a school's transition services based on individual need. Pre-ETS are open to all students with disabilities ages 14-22 who are in high school without enrolling in Vocational Rehabilitation. Pre-ETS can serve as a supplemental support for these students to explore postsecondary options and opportunities. The experiences and counseling Pre-ETS can offer may help make connections between academia and a student's occupational interests. Pre-ETS can help provide the following supports for students who are basic skill deficient and have a disability:

- Job exploration allows students to explore the world of work, explore interests, work with a job mentor, shadow a job or career, investigate careers, etc.
- Work-based learning experiences provides students with valuable work experience through paid or unpaid work, volunteer, or pre-apprenticeship.
- Counseling regarding opportunities for enrollment in postsecondary education (associate's or bachelor's degree, apprenticeship and trade education, or professional certification) offers students seeking further education after high school to learn more about career paths, obtain college resources, and go on talent tours or campus visits.

- Work Place Readiness services help students get ready for the challenges of work. This may include training in soft skills, customer service, work place communication, independent living skills, and accessing transportation.
- Instruction in Self-Advocacy helps instruct students in self-awareness, disability disclosure, requesting accommodations, understanding rights and responsibilities, self-determination, and mentoring including peer mentoring.

As discussed further in the Youth with Disabilities section, Pre-ETS can fund mentorships between businesspeople with disabilities and students with disabilities. These mentorships would help students learn about different careers, discuss requisite postsecondary education, knowledge, and skills, make industry connections and foster a network, and seek advice and counsel when the need arises. Peer mentors can also assist with instruction in self-advocacy, in addition to offering perspectives on postsecondary opportunities and job explorations. Specifically, through these mentorships, students with disabilities could learn self-advocacy skills and insight from the lived experiences of adults, acumen that would benefit them as they traverse the transition to adulthood.

Scaling Promising Practices: Below we highlight promising practices that we hope to see scaled and replicated to address the unique barriers and challenges of this target population. Our local regions can implement or supplement these practices through strategic use of ESEA and WIOA funds, philanthropic or community foundation dollars, or social impact bonds. These practices are ***Activities outside the Plan***. While not a comprehensive list, the practices showcase innovative approaches to assisting our youth with basic skill deficiencies in surmounting their unique circumstances.

Project Second Start (Community Program): The City of East Chicago, through research by the Center for Evaluation and Education Policy at Indiana University, found that chronically absent public school students performed lower on state assessments and were more likely to drop out of high school before receiving their diploma. This dropout correlation leads to potentially life long struggle to find a good job with a life sustaining wage. East Chicago created Project Second Start, a truancy intervention and prevention program for the students of East Chicago. Community leaders and educators developed this program as a way to address the causes of absenteeism and provides wraparound services for at-risk families. Through Project Second Start, East Chicago educators partner with community organizations to provide specialized services schools could not typically provide on their own. Administrators in East Chicago launched a public messaging campaign to spread the word among students and their families to explain the importance of daily attendance and what to expect if their student falls behind.

Project Rebuild Foundation (Community Program): This truancy intervention and prevention program located in Northwest Indiana works with the Department of Child Services and juvenile courts to reduce truancy by focusing on rehabilitation instead of punishment. This 90-day program that works with both children and families regarding the root causes of truancy. The program has three phases: Rebuild Trust, Family, and Community. Project Rebuild Foundation corrects student' attendance and behavioral issues in school. It also helps rehabilitate non-dangerous juvenile offenders and restores families. The program maintains a recidivism rate of just 1%, which is vastly lower than the rate of students whose families simply pay the truancy fine without rehabilitation. This program leverages the court process to mandate to get families and communities the help they need to address and eventually circumvent their students' attendance issues.

[1] WIOA 3(5) (A)(B).

[2]Basic Skills Deficient WIOA POLICY 4.8.

[3] Ganim & Evely. Unmotivated and disengaged.

[4] PBS, 2012. By the Numbers: Dropping Out of High School.

[5] National Education Association. Preventing Future High School Dropouts.

[6] Ibid.

[7] US Department of Education, 2017. Issue Brief: High School Transition Activities.

[8] US Department of Education, 2018. Issue Brief: Credit Recovery.

About 300,000 young people are admitted to detention facilities nationwide on an annual basis, with approximately 20,000 held in detention on any given night.[1] Indiana's Division of Youth Services reported 808 students serviced and a current enrollment of 337 students; 447 were returned to their communities. Of the students receiving services in 2019:

- 104 students earned their TASC (Test Assessing Secondary Completion) credential for the purposes of high school equivalency.
- 8 completed their high school diplomas.
- 600 students earned high school course credits that are transferable to the school to which they return.
- Approximately 50% of students reenroll in school (about 221 students).
- 51 students enrolled in a postsecondary education program.
- 18% of the students who returned home reported they were employed.

Young adults who have been incarcerated or involved in the justice system have significantly higher educational deficiencies than their non-justice involved counterparts. Fifty-three percent of those in the age group of 18-24 years old did not have a high school diploma (or high school equivalent) prior to release, compared to about one-third (32.8%) in the age group of 25 years old or older. The overall recidivism rate among young adults (age 24 or younger) was over half, though recidivists who did not have a high school diploma or equivalent were consistently re-incarcerated earlier than those who had a high school diploma or equivalent. Post-release employment was the most influential factor to recidivism.[2]

The economic impact of youth recidivism and/or reduced educational and employment opportunities is substantial. Poor outcomes related to reintegration and recidivism of these youth are estimated to cost society $1.5 million for each person who begins criminal activity as a youth and continues throughout life.[3] Nationally, there is a total estimated loss of $78 to $87 billion to the economy every year as a result of people with criminal records being unemployed or underemployed.[4]

Research illustrates that for this at-risk youth subgroup to find success in adulthood and avoid recidivism, they must receive a high-quality education that prepares them well for all postsecondary options.[5] Providing foundational academic, technical, and employability skills

has important implications for a youth's long-term life experiences and well-being, including employment, income, and health. Unfortunately, youth involved in the juvenile justice system experience numerous challenges to receiving a quality education. Juvenile offenders often do not have access to the same educational opportunities as their non-delinquent counterparts.

Addressing the educational barriers for juvenile offenders is a crucial need to assist in a successful post-release trajectory. This includes access to age and developmentally appropriate coursework, resources, such as textbooks and technology, and highly-qualified instructors that understand the specific needs of high-risk youth. Among incarcerated juveniles, the most significant obstacles are related to deficiencies in education and lack of adequate job skills. Education and employment greatly reduce a youth's likelihood of post-release recidivism.[6]

A prominent systematic barrier for juvenile offenders is insufficient coordination both federal and state across agencies with policies pertaining to this subgroup. Approximately two-thirds of youth do not return to school after their release from secure custody. Failure to re-enroll can be caused by delays in transfer of education records and incompatible record or credit transfer policies across juvenile justice agencies and school districts. The inefficiencies in information sharing can also lead to a youth's delayed access to services while in a facility or during his/her re-entry period. This is often most pronouncedly felt by the intersecting population between juvenile offenders and youth with disabilities.[7] The Indiana Department of Correction estimates that about 50% of Hoosier juvenile offenders have a disability, an emotional disturbance or a learning disability. Any delays in accommodations or supports can significantly impact a student's educational outcomes and re-enrollment prospects.

Re-enrollment in school is one of the most important transitional services for youth at the time of release from a juvenile correctional facility. The transition from incarceration back to the community is often stressful for youth. This stress is compounded by other potential barriers, such as returning to the same high-risk environment that contributed to the youth's initial delinquency, struggling to catch up academically, being stigmatized and marginalized due to system involvement, lacking social support and financial resources, and having difficulty navigating the complex re-entry system. Effective interventions to prevent recidivism are those that help build youth's academic, behavioral, social, and technical skills.[8]

There are a number of juvenile treatment interventions available to Hoosier youth while incarcerated, but the need for continued focus on obtaining degrees and certificates while incarcerated, as well as building connections to post-incarceration employment, are necessary steps to ensure the long-term success of this subgroup. Indiana strives to connect programs and data available to organize and align the success of services. Transitions from school to work and school to postsecondary education can be difficult for anyone, let alone a justice-involved youth. One such way this is done is through local delinquent programs. The local delinquent programs collaborate with local school systems so that the lower-level offenders have a better connection to the school system and hopefully re-integrate or assimilate back into the traditional education system. We will continue to explore ways to enhance transitional services to ensure that the most appropriate services are available to help youth connect to their goals.

Co-Enrolled Programs: Juvenile offenders will be co-enrolled into the following primary programs and services of benefit to this target population. An individual's unique circumstances or preference may not necessitate co-enrollment in each program. This section includes ***Core and Partner Program Activities*** and ***Activities outside of the Plan*** for those youth.

Elementary and Secondary Education Act – Title I, Part D (Federal Program): Youth who are juvenile offenders are particularly vulnerable to academic challenges and failure,

subsequent involvement in the justice or other social service systems, and sustained poverty. Local facilities primarily use ESEA Title I, Part D: Prevention and Intervention Programs for Children and Youth Who Are Neglected, Delinquent or At Risk funds for personnel costs for instructional and supplemental teachers and counselors. The Indiana Department of Education has three goals in the administration of the Title I, Part D program:

1. Improve educational services in local or state institutions for neglected and delinquent children and youth in order to provide equal access and opportunity to meet the challenging Indiana Academic Standards;
2. Improve youth transition from institutionalization to further school or employment; and
3. Prevent at-risk youth from dropping out, and provide youth returning from correctional facilities or institutions for neglected and delinquent children and youth with a reentry support system to ensure their continued education and involvement of their families and communities.[9]

In the design of a Title I, Part D program, the recipient of these supplemental funds must describe transitional activities, including high school equivalency testing, counseling, placement programs for postsecondary institutions, assistance with financial aid, and job placement. Even with these funds, many coordinators report that facilities do not have enough qualified instructional and support staff, including teachers, within credentialed content area to effectively support students' needs. Nationally, 91% of juvenile justice coordinators, and 79% of child welfare coordinators report that decisions about how to use ESEA Title I, Part D funds were often based on whether the budget aligned with activities identified under the state's federal plan for ESEA.[10]

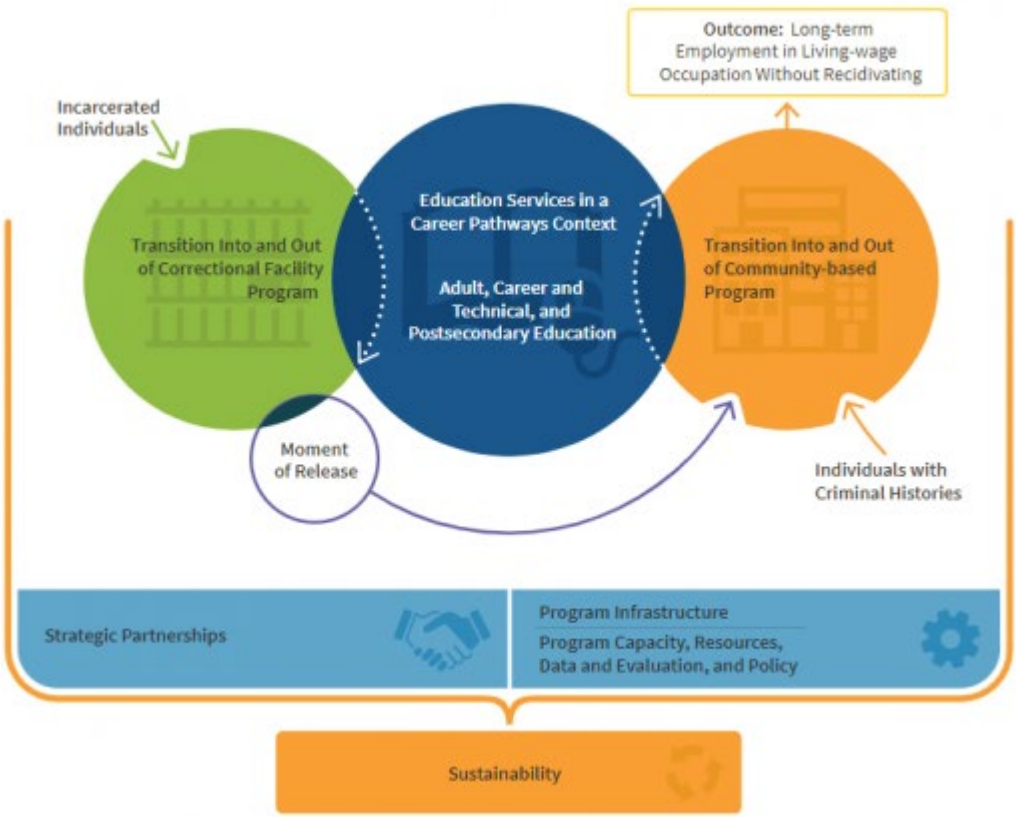
Both state and local use of ESEA Title I, Part D must include a strategic and focused effort on delivering high-quality educational opportunities and credentials for students to complete the appropriate grade-level coursework while involved with the juvenile justice system, which includes special education accommodations and resources, as needed. In addition, there is a lack of tracking and reporting data, which track student success both within the facilities and through re-entry programs. Over the next two years, a more robust transition and tracking plan must be developed to ensure justice-involved youth receive the education necessary to transition to additional postsecondary education and training or employment upon exit. Title I, Part D funds paired with other programs below can enhance the opportunities available for justice-involved youth. Additionally, neglected or delinquent children are categorically eligible for participation in the **ESEA Title I, Part A** program and these funds are available to coordinate such services under the Title I, Part D program. The Indiana Department of Education requires LEAs to set-aside part of the their Title I, Part A funding for neglected children based upon the number of neglected children served by the LEA. This funding can be paired with Title I, Part D to better serve this population.

Carl D. Perkins (Partner Program): Currently, Indiana grants $150,000 of Perkins funding to the Indiana Department of Corrections (IDOC) to utilize for equipment and machinery for Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs. Next fiscal year, the Office of CTE will extend an additional $100,000 in Perkins funding to IDOC specifically for youth services. Currently, youth have access to limited vocational programming with little variety of opportunities. This additional funding can provide an opportunity for technical skills training to be integrated with core academic programs to better engage youth in career exploration activities, the ability to connect classroom work and hands-on experiences, and drive more justice-involved youth to completing their high school diplomas by providing them with an opportunity to see more

relevance in their academic programming. Additionally, it can support increasing access to quality instructors and growing Integrated Education and Training programs that merge core academics with technical skills. Investing a portion of Perkins Leadership funds into our juvenile offenders is an immediate strategy Indiana will implement as a prevention too against youth's future recidivism by promoting greater educational and economic opportunities.

Title I-Youth (Core Program): Through WIOA Youth, local Workforce Development Boards have the ability to develop innovative strategies to improve labor market and skills outcomes for WIOA priority groups, which includes juvenile offenders. These funds can accelerate skill development, education, and employment assistance in promoting local best practices to access talent. While youth are in detention facilities, hey can serve as a complement to the funding streams above – ESEA Title I, Part D and Perkins can help supplement academic and technical skill development, with WIOA Youth providing employability skill support, mentoring, career exploration, and other wraparound supports. Local Boards could utilize either WIOA In-School or Out-of-School Youth to help fund or create programs, adapting models like JAG or Youth Assistance, which can operate in detention facilities or specifically target juvenile offenders as they re-enter their communities and schools.

Local Boards can convene local stakeholders, including schools, employers, community organizations, and state agencies, to create a system that braids various federal and state programs and funding streams together to intervene with juvenile offenders and prevent future criminal activity and recidivism. The US Department of Education created the model below for adult offenders. Our local Boards can lead the development of similar, locally-grown and nuanced strategies for this particular subgroup:



[11]

The agencies that comprise the Governor's Workforce Cabinet will also work with local Boards to explore ways that WIOA Youth and other federal and state funds can leveraged to provide assistance to youth in transitioning from a juvenile facility to other Core, Partner, or state programs post-release. The ability to connect to the workforce system and to explore opportunities for employment will be a key to help with recidivism.

Title II-Adult Education (Core Program): States may use up to 20% of Title II funds to provide adult education programs for incarcerated individuals. Currently, IDOC dedicates $750,000 received from WIOA Title II towards programming for educational services for adult offenders. We will explore ways to potentially extend this funding and services into the juvenile justice space to support students towards earning a high school equivalency. For those youth that exit a juvenile detention center without their high school diploma, connecting to an adult education provider to earn their high school equivalency is a crucial need if they are not returning to a K-12 school system. The state can look for ways to strengthen the relationship between WIOA Title II funding and transitional supports that are provided to youth as they exit juvenile facilities.

WIOA statute uses slightly different definitions to describe the criteria for in-school youth (ISY) and out-of-school youth (OSY) who are eligible, because they have been subject to any stage of the criminal justice process. The intent of the OSY eligibility criteria is not to treat youth who were subject to the juvenile or adult system differently, but rather to call attention to the fact that both juvenile and adult justice systems may include OSY.[12] Individuals who meet the respective program eligibility requirements may participate in WIOA Adult and Youth programs concurrently. Attendance at an education institution may determine the right programmatic fit based on what the local WorkOne case manager determines. Braiding funds allows a WIOA youth program to provide inclusive services and maximum resources available to help youth.

WIOA Youth and Title II Adult Education program can provide complementary services to juvenile offenders and can be used together to serve eligible youth ages 16-24 where each programs age eligibility overlaps. The connected use of these programs can help youth meet their education goals under Title II Adult Education with supportive services for employment provided by Title I Youth.

As discussed further in the Ex-Offender section, either WIOA Adult/Youth or Adult Education can connect juvenile offenders with two federal education programs – the **Second Chance Pell Program** and **Ability to Benefit** (AtB) **(Federal Programs)**. Second Chance Pell allows for ex-offenders to access federal grant money for postsecondary education. Institutions provide Pell Grants to qualified students who are incarcerated and likely to be released within five years of enrolling in coursework. Currently, Indiana has one institution that was selected as a **Second Chance Pell Pilot Program**, the Westville Educational Initiative (WEI). With the flexibility to use Pell for vocational formats in addition to associate's and bachelor's degree programs, Indiana intends to expand the use of Second Chance Pell to offer more options of postsecondary education in its state facilities and through more postsecondary institutions throughout the state. Second Chance Pell can be paired with the AtB flexibility, which allows individuals without a secondary diploma to access federal financial aid, potentially addressing two barriers ex-offenders face preventing educational attainment. AtB allows WIOA Title II can fund academic remediation towards a high school equivalency for ex-offenders concurrently with enrollment in postsecondary courses with Pell Grants allowed through both federal flexibility offerings.

Wagner-Peyser (Core Program): Wagner-Peyser can offer juvenile offenders assistance for job search and placement activities, as well as career coaching (either in-person or virtually).

Local Boards could pioneer virtual chatting through a chatbox feature with a career coach as a way to increase accessibility to WorkOnes. Funds can focus on career counseling, connection to educational opportunities, and work–based learning environments to offer a more gradual entrance into the workforce. Working with these youth to establish education's connection to self-sustainability and confidence while offering a path to employment will be the focus of Wagner-Peyser staff and their connection to juvenile offenders and employers providing work-based learning opportunities.

Potential Eligibility: Additional programs and services a Hoosier may receive depending on individual circumstances. This section includes ***Core and Partner Program Activities***,***Activities outside the Plan***, and***Individual Services***for adults in this target population.

Title IV-Vocational Rehabilitation (Core Program): Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agencies are required to set aside federal funds for the provision of Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) to assist students with disabilities between the ages of 14 and 22 who are eligible or potentially eligible for VR services. Pre-ETS ensures students have access to meaningful career planning in order to help create a seamless transition from high school to employment or postsecondary training. As many of our Hoosier juvenile offenders may have a disability, and therefore a related Individual Education Plan or 504 Plan, the Indiana Department of Education (DOE), IDOC, and Family and Social Services of Indiana (FSSA) will work together to align and develop an agreement that will allow for the evaluation of incarcerated students and for IDOC to utilize Pre-ETS funding toward assisting youth eligible for services.

Leveraging the success of **Hoosier Initiative for Re-Entry** (HIRE) **(State Program)**, we plan to utilize the convening power of the GWC to explore a cross-agency collaborative effort to utilize the core tenets of the Pre-ETS program (job exploration counseling, work-based learning experiences, counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational programs, workplace readiness training to develop social skills and independent living; and instruction in self-advocacy) paired with WIOA Youth funding to provide juvenile offenders that may have a disability with more robust transitional services and mentoring opportunities than they may currently receive pre-release. This will provide an opportunity for these youth to have a clearer plan for the post-release education and training or employment prospects.

IDOC Education and Supportive Services: Indiana juvenile facilities have access to programs like the ones listed below in order to assist with education and post-release employment. Some of those programs are as follows:

- **Juvenile Classification and the Comprehensive Case Management System (State Program):** This begins with the process of estimating students' likelihood to continue criminal behavior by identifying their level of risk to reoffend within the community. Classification decisions are then made based upon risk assessment and security levels necessary to ensure public safety. In addition, a needs assessment, along with a variety of additional individualized assessments, is used to identify criminogenic needs, level of responsivity, and individual problem areas which require intervention. Individual Growth Plans are developed matching a student's needs. Student's progress through their treatment programs by increasing their pro-social skills and abilities. A majority of programming occurs during the student's time at a facility, treatment gains must be maintained when the student returns home.

- **Moral Reconation Therapy (State Program):** MRT seeks to decrease recidivism among juveniles by increasing moral reasoning. MRT targets youth who are high risk to re-offend and/or are high risk in pro-criminal sentiments, criminal thinking, criminal lifestyle, and anti-social attitudes/values. MRT also address addiction recovery issues. MRT focuses on seven basic treatment issues: confrontation of beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors; assessment of current relationships; reinforcement of positive behavior and habits; positive identity formation; enhancement of self-concept; decrease in hedonism and development of frustration tolerance; and development of higher stages of moral reasoning.

- **The Why Try Learning Strategies Program (State Program):** Why Try is division of youth service's core treatment education program. Why Try is brief, solutions-focused treatment with a strengths-based approach to helping youth overcome their challenges, achieve positive goals, practice life skills, and develop plans and support for re-entering their community.

- **The Last Mile (Philanthropic Program):** The Last Mile (TLM) was created in California in 2014 to equip offenders with relevant job skills to propel them into tech careers when they are released. Indiana was the first state outside of California to adopt this successful coding program. The core curriculum includes HTML/CSS and JavaScript, WordPress, Node, AngularJS, React, and D3.js. Beyond these technical coding skills, they are also learn about how businesses function, working as a team, giving and accepting constructive criticism, building confidence, and how to pivot when they are heading in the wrong direction. Participants can also work on client-funded projects including website development and application, giving participants a chance to demonstrate the skills they've learned and create a referenceable portfolio of work. It develops highly marketable personal and professional skills that are relevant and competitive.

  Indiana currently has TLM operating in one of its male juvenile detention facilities. In August of that year, U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos visited the facility to see a successful Last Mile classroom.[13] The program at the facility was funded by a $2 million grant from Google. Since 2015, 33% of Indiana juveniles who were released were incarcerated again, according to the state's Department of Corrections 2018 report. Of the program's graduates none have reoffended.

  The Last Mile is recognized nationally and was a central focus of the American Workforce Policy Advisory Board Meeting held at the Women's Prison in December 2019. It sets the model that that re-entry transitioning must begin during incarceration and continue post-release with the end result of gainful employment.

- **Voices (State Program):** Voices is a female specific program of self-discovery and empowerment. It encourages girls to seek and celebrate their "true selves" by giving them a safe space, encouragement, structure, and support to embrace their important journey of self-discovery. The focus is on issues that are important in the lives of adolescent girls from modules about self and connection with others to exploring health living and the journey ahead. The curriculum uses a variety of therapeutic approaches, including psycho-educational, cognitive-behavioral, expressive arts, and relational theory. It is based upon the Interactive Journaling system from Change Companies.

- Youth students attend fully accredited school daily and may earn credits, or are referred to the TASC track if they qualify, including taking the TASC in detention.
- Youth receive career counseling and transition back-to-school/to-work consultations.
- Youth are each assigned a correctional counselor/case manager who manages their case plan (Individual Growth Plan) and Individual Aftercare Plan (IAP), including designing, implementing, and reviewing progress in individual and group (programming) interventions.

Scaling Promising Practices: Below we highlight promising practices that we hope to see scaled and replicated to address the unique barriers and challenges of this target population. Our local regions can implement or supplement these practices through strategic use of ESEA and WIOA funds, philanthropic or community foundation dollars, or social impact bonds. These practices are ***Activities outside the Plan*** occurring in pockets throughout Indiana. While not a comprehensive list, these practices showcase innovative approaches to assisting our juvenile offenders in surmounting their unique circumstances.

Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (Philanthropic Program): Indiana joined the Annie E. Casey Foundation's Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) in 2006. JDAI is a bipartisan effort with public, private, and community partnership for juvenile justice system improvement. The initiative focuses on the reallocation of public resources from mass incarceration toward investment in youth, families, and communities. JDAI focuses on data-driven policies for positive reform which data Indiana continues to evaluate for best alignment of services. Since 2006, JDAI has expanded to twenty-nine counties. Marion County joined the JDAI in 2006, becoming the first JDAI site in Indiana. By the end of 2016, the County had reduced admissions to detention by 66.4% and the average daily population in detention had fallen by 40.8%. During this same period of time, IDOC commitments were decreased by 52.5% and the number of felony petitions filed has also been reduced by 59.6%. Marion County has saved millions of taxpayer dollars previously used for incarceration, through the use of less expensive and more effective community-based alternative supervision programs for youth. At the end of 2016, Indiana JDAI Counties overall experienced a 53% reduction in admissions to secure detention, a 41% reduction in the average daily population in secure detention, a 47% decline in felony petitions filed, and IDOC commitments were down from 634 during the counties' baseline years to 367 a 42% reduction.

Youth Assistance (State Program): The Hamilton County Youth Assistance Program was developed in the fall of 2009 in Westfield, Indiana. In a desire to be proactive in assisting the healthy development of Hamilton County youth and their families, Youth Assistance offers the following services to participants:

- Referral to services for mental health counseling, medication management and parenting support classes for youth and families
- Coordination with mentoring programs
- Family/youth case management
- Food, clothing and financial assistance
- Camp and recreation opportunities

- Tutoring assistance
- Attendance and truancy support

Youth Assistance expanded to Noblesville, Fishers, Hamilton Heights, Carmel, and Sheridan. Early Intervention Advocates in each community work under the appointment of Hamilton County Judges. The Program was modeled after the successful Oakland County, Michigan Youth Assistance Program, which began in 1953.[14] Funding is a private-public partnership involving Youth Assistance Board Members, Hamilton County, and the cities of Westfield, Noblesville, Fishers, and Carmel, as well as the Hamilton Heights and Sheridan communities. Additionally, the program boasts a close partnership with the school corporations of Westfield-Washington, Noblesville, Hamilton Southeastern, Carmel Clay, Sheridan, and Hamilton Heights. The Central Indiana Community Foundation Legacy Fund was instrumental in the development and expansion of the Youth Assistance Program.

The Youth Assistance Program was highlighted in Senate Bill 596 in 2019 and codified under Indiana Code § 31-32-3-12 for additional pilots, however, neither funding nor appropriation was attached. The Indiana Department of Education has worked with ICJI to expand this program to more additional locations. **WIOA Youth** funding could provide an avenue for integrating this promising program into the workforce system. Due to the program's engagement with youth to encourage positive social behaviors and that help connecting youth and their families to useful resources aimed at education, training, employment, and wrap around supports, local workforce development boards will be made aware of the program and expansion opportunities.

Youth Build (Federal Program): More than 40 states utilize WIOA to fund Youth Build, a community-based alternative education program that helps at-risk youth obtain GEDs and industry-recognized employment credentials. Indiana has Youth Build programs in Indianapolis, Evansville, and Gary. We encourage local boards to find ways to partner and scale youth build programs to assist at-risk youth in connecting to educational opportunities. As at-risk youth transition in and out of programs, it is important to have cross-trained staff that are aware of Youth Build and other supports that are in place to help this population find success based upon their individual goals. If this program make sense in lieu of other workforce programs, proper referrals need to be made.

Indiana Choices - Marion County (Community Program): This program serves children with behavioral disorders and serious emotional disturbances who have been referred by the child welfare or juvenile court systems. Coordinators, case managers, probation officers, and teachers work together to provide community-centered support in many ways, including accessing resources outside of the state approved service standards and expanding access to flexible funding for basic needs. Indiana Choices strives to prevent juveniles from further contact with the juvenile system. Leveraging the collaboration across the state agencies on the GWC, there are opportunities to provide more integrated transitional services for this population to the workforce system. As this is a local program, better connectivity to this and similar programs is something we can encourage our regional workforce boards to pursue.

Indianapolis Metropolitan High School (MetIndy) / Jobs for American Graduates (JAG) Pilot Program (Public-Private Program): The Department of Workforce Development (DWD), which administers JAG, will work with MetIndy to utilize combined efforts to assist youth at the high school level. There are many challenges facing young adults that can make completion of high school or securing a job difficult, including prior contact with the juvenile justice system. For many, it is hard to see what the role of education is and how it relates to the

jobs they will need to support themselves. Young adults also often lack the employability skills they need to secure and/or maintain employment. Students that have been involved with the juvenile justice system will be selected to participate in an after-school JAG program designed to bring additional resources for skills and access to employment for students, as well as education support services for youth families. JAG will meet with the youth prior to separation from the justice system.

Collaborative Care (State Program): Indiana offers extended foster care services, Collaborative Care (CC), to young adults leaving the juvenile system. In order for juvenile detention youth to be eligible for CC they must have a court order for out of home placement and be placed in a federally recognized "foster care" setting by their 18th birthday. Juvenile detention youth must be 18 years of age with a closed juvenile case to participate in CC, as well as meet the CC eligibility requirements. Once it is determined the former juvenile offender meets the requirements, s/he can enter into a CC agreement with the Department of Child Services (DCS) by signing the Voluntary Collaborative Care Agreement. The agreement will be filed with the court. During the hearing the court will officially order the youth into CC. While participating in CC youth will receive services in the following areas: employment, education, housing, financial & asset management, activities of daily living, and authentic youth engagement. The young adults can participate in CC until the day before his/her 21st birthday. While this service is not available for juvenile detention youth while they have an open case, the state can explore a more collaborative relationship between IDOC and IDCS to facilitate more referrals into the program.

DOC and DWD Collaboration Pilot (State Program): IDOC and DWD already have a Memorandum of Understanding to establish general conditions and joint processes for ex-offenders. Indiana will expand this relationship at the local level to ensure juvenile offenders supervised by DYS have information about the state's workforce system. We will encourage our Workforce Developments Boards to pilot a project that expands workforce services to juvenile offenders before re-entry into the community. This will include follow-up services after re-entry to better assist with educational goals and employment opportunities.

[1] Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2017. Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative.

[2] Klinker et al, 2017. Exploring the Importance of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (2014) to Correctional Education Programs for Incarcerated Young Adults.

[3] National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability, 2010. Improving Transition Outcomes for Youth

Involved in the Juvenile Justice System: Practical Considerations.

[4] Bucknor et al., 2016. The Price We Pay: Economic Costs of Barriers to Employment for Former Prisoners and People Convicted of Felonies.

[5] Center for Juvenile Justice Reform, Education and Interagency Collaboration: A Lifeline for Justice-Involved Youth.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Indiana Department of Education, 2019. Amendment to Indiana's Consolidated State Plan under the Every Student Succeeds Act.

[10] U.S. Department of Education, 2019. Promoting Education and Transition Success for Neglected and Delinquent Youth: An Evaluation of the Title I, Part D Program.

[11] US Department of Education. Reentry Education Toolkit.

[12] Department of Labor, 2016. TEGL 21-16: Title I Youth Program Formula Guidance.

[13] Indianapolis Star, 2019. Education Secretary Betsy DeVos touts 'Second Chances' for young Indiana inmates learning to code.

[14] Hamilton County Youth Assistance Program.

Parenthood is one of the leading causes for dropping out of high school among female youth. A teen birth can disrupt an individual's educational and career goals, significantly impacting her earning potential and future family finances. Only 50% of teen mothers earn a high school diploma by age 22, compared to 90% of women without a teen birth.[1] Additionally, teen parents are more likely to rely on public assistance and be low-income as adults. They are also more likely to have children who have poorer educational, behavioral, and health outcomes over the course of their lives than do children born to older parents.[2]

Additional statistics for teen parents include:

- More than two out of three young single mothers are ages 18 to 24 are poor and almost half of their children are poor.
- Young women who give birth while attending a community college are 65% less likely to complete their degree than women who do not have children during that time.
- Only 2% of young teen mothers (aged 17 and younger) and 3% of older teen mothers (aged 18 to 19) earn a four-year college degree by the age of 30, compared with 9% of women who had their first child at age 20-21.
- About 25% of teen moms have a 2nd child within 24 months of their first baby.
- More than half of all mothers on welfare had their first child as a teenager. Two-thirds of families begun by a young, unmarried mother are poor.[3]
- Teen fathers have a 25 to 30% lower probability of graduating from high school than teenage boys who are not fathers.
- Young fathers are more likely to have economic and employment challenges and are more often economically disadvantaged than adult fathers.[4]

The low educational attainment of parenting/pregnant teens is also tied to barriers to employment. About 60% of all young parents report at least one jobless period during 2013. Additionally, the wages of young parents are typically low. The average hourly wage of young parents was $10.19 per hour with an annual income of $16,200. Lower access to education and employment also led to young parents being more reliant on public support, especially SNAP and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC).[5]

Parenting and/or pregnant teens impacts the mothers' and fathers' education, but it also has an intergenerational impact. Research shows that children of teen mothers often not only start school at a disadvantage, but they also fare worse than those born to older parents throughout

their education. Children of teen mothers are 50% more likely to repeat a grade and are more likely than children born to older mothers to drop out of high school.[6] Only about two-thirds of children born to teen mothers earn a high school diploma, compared to 81% of their peers with older parents.[7] Other risks children born to teen parents include:

- Babies have a higher risk for low birth weight and infant mortality.
- Babies have lower levels of emotional support and cognitive stimulation.
- These children are more likely to have behavioral problems and chronic medical conditions.
- These children and families are more likely to rely on publicly funded health care.
- These children have higher rates of foster care placement.
- Offspring's are more likely to be incarcerated at some time during adolescence.
- Lastly, children of teen pregnancy are more likely to repeat the cycle of teen pregnancy.[8]

Teen pregnancy costs U.S. taxpayers about $11 billion per year due to increased healthcare, foster care, and incarceration rates among children of teen parents, as well as lost tax revenue due to lower educational and income attainment amongst teen mothers. In Indiana, each publicly funded birth costs taxpayers $10,460 for maternity care and infant care through the first year. Teen childbearing in Indiana costs taxpayers at least $227 million in 2010.[9]

To boost the economic stability of teen parents and reduce the economic impact on taxpayers, we need more Hoosier parenting and/or pregnant teens to complete their secondary education and enroll in postsecondary training and education. Supporting teen parents to complete high school and prepare for college requires multiple academic supports and opportunities. These goals should be woven into all aspects of the academic curricula and supports provided to pregnant and parenting teens.

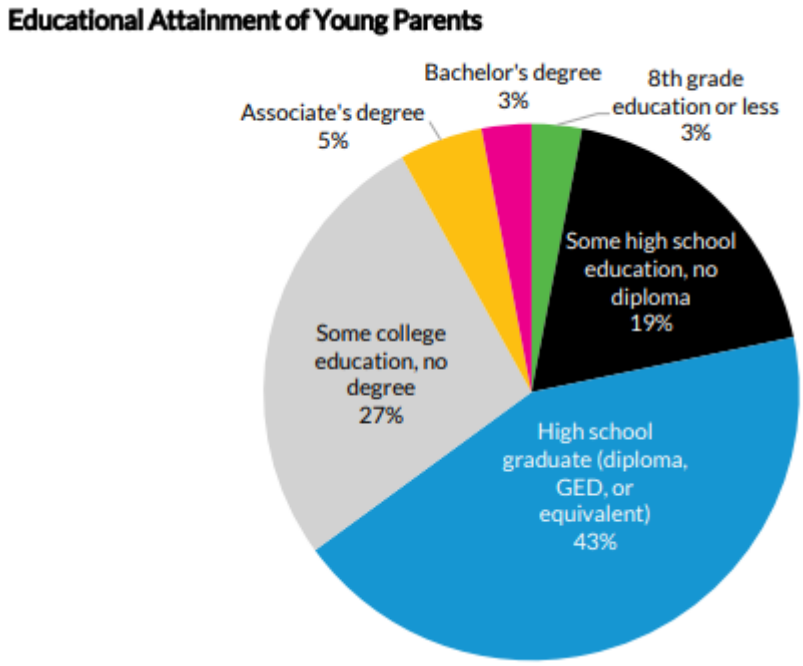
Integral to increasing educational attainment of this subgroup is the inclusion of specific resources and wraparound supports, including:

- Providing quality, affordable childcare;
- Offering trained counselors (or connecting teen parents to counselors) to support and guide them in navigating the complex challenges encountered in school, relationships, and parenting;
- Informing young parents about childcare resources and programs that may be available for student parents who are enrolled in college, including campus childcare where it is available; and
- Linking teen parents to wraparound services, such as housing, transportation, income support programs, and health care for themselves and their children.

Co-Enrolled Programs: Parenting and/or pregnant youth will be co-enrolled into the following primary programs and services of benefit to this target population. An individual's unique circumstances or preference may not necessitate co-enrollment in each program. This section includes ***Core and Partner Program Activities*** for those youth.

Title I –Youth (Core Program): This program can help support both secondary and postsecondary educational attainment for parenting/pregnant youth. For a youth in high school who may be pregnant or parenting, earning a high school diploma is her first step. Programs funded through WIOA Youth, like **JAG,** can help address many of the barriers above to complete their high school education. Peer workshops that build on adolescent's self-esteem along with one-on-one guidance, counseling, and advising from supportive adults can help provide supportive services and encourage students persist in completing their education. These programs can also help students find postsecondary options and education that will best benefit themselves and their children.

As displayed below, many teen parents do earn their secondary degree but do not complete a postsecondary credential.



[10]

To help pregnant/parenting teens succeed in secondary and postsecondary education, WIOA Youth can braid with **ESEA Title I** to provide intensive academic supports and opportunities in high school for this subgroup. Supporting teen parents to complete high school and prepare for college requires multiple academic supports and opportunities. This goal can be woven into the following activities:

- Develop individualized learning plans, track students' attendance and performance, and intervene with academic supports (e.g., tutors and mentors) and other supports (counselors) where needed;
- Provide guidance and support to prepare for college entrance exams including tutors, mentors, and SAT/ACT preparation classes;
- Offer dual credit or enrollment classes to introduce students to college-level courses and increase their confidence, knowledge, and skills;
- Expose students to positive college experiences; and

- Offer bridge programs between high school graduation and the start of college that introduce students to college guidance counselors, financial aid officers, faculty, and college students who are (or were) teen parents.

  WIOA Youth can assist teen parents in the transition to higher education. It can offer programs in high school to complement ongoing academic instruction with weekly classes or workshops covering the college application process, time management skills, and self-confidence. It can provide college tours for young parents to increase exposure to different opportunities. College and career coaching, as well, can help teen parents choose the option (e.g., short-term certification or credential, associate's or bachelor's degree, or a registered apprenticeship) that fits their goals, interests, needs, and family. Enrollment in higher education as a near-term goal can instill parenting/pregnant youth with a sense of accomplishment, impelling longer-term success. Incorporating an opportunity to earn an income while enrolled - through a paid internship, the **Federal Work Study** program, or a part-time job, may also increase the likelihood of teen parents persisting through their studies. If the opportunity to earn can complement learning, through work-based learning, we can remove a significant barrier for teen parents. They can balance both personal aspirations with family responsibilities.

  Other strategies to help increase postsecondary attainment among this subgroup could also include:

- Discussing federal and state financial aid opportunities s/he may be eligible for, as well as assisting with selection of majors and courses and linking them to academic and other services and supports, including childcare, housing, and transportation;
- Incorporating messages about the usefulness and importance of postsecondary education into all aspects of the program and train professional staff (e.g., case managers, teachers, and counselors) to engage teen parents on this topic;
- Providing peer workshops to build adolescents' self-esteem and reinforce the importance of postsecondary education, particularly with successful adults with similar experiences; and
- Offering one-on-one guidance, counseling, and advising from supportive adults to reinforce the message about the importance of postsecondary education and provide assistance when teens encounter difficulties in school, relationships, work, or parenting; these professionals may be case managers, teachers, guidance counselors, or life skills coaches.

Teen parents are often denoted as custodial or non-custodial parents through Indiana's Child Support Program, which is a partnership between the Indiana Child Support Bureau (CSB), a division of the Department of Child Services (DCS), and the 92 county prosecutors, clerks, and courts. If parents do not provide child support, it can further the cyclical nature of poverty in many of our communities and further splinter communities with potential incarceration. Connecting both custodial and non-custodial parents with opportunities to obtain postsecondary credentials as a means of earning higher wages through stable employment helps with current economic needs and also prevention of future economic instability in these families. As a tool to get Hoosiers the support needed to make child support payments and avoid enforcement actions, local county programs can compel non-custodial parents to make appointments at WorkOnes for career and employment services. To fulfill this requirement,

WorkOnes can enroll non-custodial parents into **Wagner-Peyser** services, at a minimum, to assist with career counseling and creating employment plans. This is just a first step in providing awareness and information into the various training programs and opportunities Hoosiers can access at little to no cost. WorkOnes can then co-enroll teenaged custodial or non-custodial parents into **WIOA Youth** or **Title II** for additional services, such as education and training opportunities, obtaining a high school equivalency, or other employment services.

Affordable, quality childcare is important to keeping teen parents on track for high school graduation and postsecondary enrollment. Counselors through WIOA Youth programs can assist or guide teen parents in securing childcare for the children of program participants. WIOA dollars, as well as other childcare grants (such as the **Child Care and Development Fund**, **Head Start**, or **On My Way Pre-K**) can help support childcare costs, as well. Given the statistics for academic achievement of children born from teen pregnancy, access to early education programing can help boost education skills, knowledge, and development for the next generation, helping establish a strong foundation for these children's education and health.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (Federal): Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) can potentially be a very beneficial source for pregnant and parenting teens, particularly those pursuing postsecondary education and training. TANF E&T funds can bolster skill building activities through either an eligible training provider or a postsecondary institution. In conjunction with WIOA Youth, this fund can help increase employer partnerships with workforce and social service agencies. By allowing recipients to pursue postsecondary education for the full TANF eligibility period, the federal funds will support the family as a teen parent gain credentials. Earning a credential will assist that youth in securing higher wages and a sustainable career path.[11] As we explore ways to coalesce our IMPACT program with our WorkOne system, we can allow for postsecondary education activities, such as class, study time and federal work study, to count towards TANF work requirements, allowing this population to continue to utilize this funding until graduation completion.

In addition to supporting education and training, TANF can be used to help with supportive services teen parents may need, such as housing, transportation, and childcare. One way we could expand our use of TANF would be to offer teen parents lessons for positive parenting and family planning approaches. Young fathers at the City University of New York Fatherhood Academy participate in parenting sessions twice a week, discussing parenting issues, as well as topics around their experiences as young men and how that influences them as parents, in addition to other academic and wraparound supports. This type of integrative strategy to academics and parenting guidance has positively impacted participants' relationships with mothers and families.[12]

Co-locating our social services programs, like SNAP, TANF, and Medicaid, in schools and districts can facilitate students and families access to these necessary supports. Rather than relying solely on a guidance counselor or social worker, embedding programmatic staff or using an itinerant staffing model between social services and schools will give at-risk students and their families additional sources for information and resources. Increasing the accessibility to information and resources through expanded partnerships and co-location could benefit this population immensely. As we aim to integrate our education, workforce, and social services, local regions can adapt different co-location strategies to Local regions could also pursue ways to cross-train school and district personnel to learn more about various social programs from which at-risk youth may benefit.

<u>Potential Enrollment:</u> Additional programs and services a Hoosier may receive depending on individual circumstances. This section includes ***Core and Partner Program Activities,Activities***

outside the Plan, and***Individual Services***for youth in this target population. This particular at-risk subgroup overlaps extensively with some of our other target populations, such as single parents, low-income youth, and foster care.[13] Teen parents may be eligible for specific programs unique to those populations, as well as those identified in this section.

Women, Infants, and Children's Program (Federal Program): The Women, Infants, and Children's Program (WIC) is a supplemental food and nutrition program for pregnant women, new moms, and children under age five. It provides financial assistance in purchasing food, counseling, and information on healthy eating, breastfeeding support, and information and referrals to healthcare and community resources. TANF recipients automatically qualify for WIC services, thus facilitating the potential for co-enrollment in both programs. Teen pregnancies carry additional health risks for both mother and child, as teens typically do not receive prenatal care early enough in their gestation, leading to later complications. Pregnant teens also have a higher risk for pregnancy-related high blood pressure, and their babies are often premature or low birth weight.[14] WIC services may be able to address these issues for teen parents, particularly those that are low-income and do not have access to consistent healthcare and guidance.[15]

Child Care Access Means Parents in School (Federal Program): The Child Care Access Means Parents in School Program (CCAMPIS) is a federal grant funded by the U.S. Department of Education to support parents in school. These funds help low-income students, who are also parents, enroll and persist in postsecondary education through campus-based childcare services. Grants may be used for before- and/or after-school services. Currently, Goshen College is the sole recipient of this grant in Indiana receiving approximately $34,680 in funding.[16]

Scaling Promising Practices: Below we highlight promising practices that we hope to see scaled and replicated to address the unique barriers and challenges of this target population. Our local regions can implement or supplement these practices through strategic use of ESEA and WIOA funds, philanthropic or community foundation dollars, or social impact bonds. This practice is an ***Activity outside the Plan***. While not a comprehensive list, this practice showcases an innovative approach to assisting our pregnant/parenting youth in surmounting their unique circumstances

Education Creates Hope and Opportunity (Community Program): Education Creates Hope and Opportunity (ECHO) is a program for teen parents ran through Lutheran Social Services of Indiana in Fort Wayne and Allen County. ECHO provides one-on-one, home-, and school-based case management services to pregnant and parenting teens to help them complete their high school education by earning either a high school diploma or a High school equivalency. ECHO participants are more likely to develop the skills needed to break the cycle of pregnancy. Case managers assist clients in setting goals and help reduce barriers such as childcare, transportation, and other life circumstances that prevent them from being successful in school and life.

Route 21 (Community Program): Route 21 is a program run through Human Services Inc. in the United Way of Bartholomew County and prepares pregnant and parenting teens up to age 21 for lives as parents. Case managers address education, health care, and parenting issues. The program stresses the importance of high school education and provides options and resources to help them on their path to graduation. For teens who have already earned their high school diploma/equivalency this program supports teen parents in preparing to enter college while still being a knowledgeable and caring parent. Route 21 provides information for technical programs and certificates available in the community, provides participants with the means to fill out financial aid forms and create resumes, and connects individuals with programs and

services that address healthcare needs before and after delivery for parents and child. By utilizing the Partners for a Healthy Baby curriculum along with teaching current best practices for parenting, Route 21 helps teach new parents how to address issues that may come along with being a parent and runs play groups, support groups and parent meetings run through Human Services, Inc.

Nurse-Family Partnership (State-Federal Program): The Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP), administered in Indiana by Goodwill of Central and Southern Indiana, Michiana Goodwill, IU Health, and Healthier Moms and Babies, pairs mothers pregnant with their first child with a registered nurse. NFP nurses provide ongoing home visits aimed at supporting mothers and families provide the best start for their children during the earliest, most developmentally critical years. Parents receive ongoing nurse support that continues through the child's second birthday. To be eligible an individual must be less than 28 weeks pregnant, have no previous live births, be at 200% of the poverty level or below, and live within one of the 39 Indiana counties currently served. The program specifically supports the Indiana State Department of Health's Labor of Love campaign to reduce infant death and provides prenatal care coordination, while also teaching parents on breastfeeding, safe sleep, and other important nursing practices. The program is recognized for increasing healthcare access and improving health outcomes for both the mothers and infants. Most of the funding for this program comes from Indiana's state budget and federal grants (e.g., MIECHV). To scale this program in more locales, we will to reverse refer all SNAP recipients and use **SNAP 50/50** to match all state and philanthropic funding.

Young Families of Indiana Network (Community Program): The Young Families of Indiana Network (YFIN) is a division of Health & Hospital Corporation of Marion County (HHC) that provides quality services for pregnant and parenting teens throughout Central Indiana. YFIN utilizes individual support, educational workshops, youth worker professional development, and advocacy to improve the lives of young parents. YFIN runs three programs for Pregnant and Parenting Teens:

- **The Future Promises Program** aims to improve the life course of pregnant and parenting teens through school-based health education and comprehensive case management servicesThis program is active in four Indianapolis public high schools: North Central, Pike, Warren Central, and Arsenal Tech and has assisted more than 2,000 pregnant/parenting teens.
- **Indy Coalition for Pregnant and Parenting Teens** is a coalition of a broad-based group of providers serving pregnant and parenting teens that has created a coordinated and strategic approach to serving the population in Marion County.
- **Education and Training:** YFIN provides training and educational opportunities to increase the capacity of Indiana professionals in using evidence-based strategies in their work with pregnant and parenting teens, including an annual statewide conference.

[1] National Conference of State Legislature, 2018. Teen Pregnancy Prevention.

[2] US Health and Human Services, 2017. Teen Pregnancy and Childbearing.

[3] DoSomething.org, 2020. 11 Facts about Teen Pregnancy.

[4] DoSomething.org. 11 Facts about Teen Dads.

[5] Urban Institute, 2018. Strategies to Meet the Needs of Young Parent Families: Highlights from Interviews with 14 Programs.

[6] Indiana State Department of Health, Maternal and Child Health Division, February 2011. Pregnant and Parenting Adolescents Support Services (PPASS) Program Needs Assessment.

[7] National Conference of State Legislature, 2013. Postcard: Teen Pregnancy Affects Graduation Rates.

[8] You.gov. Adverse Effects.

[9] Planned Parenthood of Indiana and Kentucky, May 2018. Teen pregnancy on the decline nationally, but less so in Indiana

[10] Urban Institute, 2018. Understanding Young-Parent Families A Profile of Parents Ages 18 to 24 Using the Survey of Income and Program Participation.

[11] Indiana Commission for Higher Education, 2018. College Return on Investment Report 2018.

[12] The CUNY Fatherhood Academy is a **free** program designed to promote **responsible parenting and economic stability** for unemployed and underemployed fathers ages 18-30, through education, employment, and personal development. The program provides a range of academic and personal supports, high school equivalency and college preparation classes, college and career readiness workshops, tutoring, individualized counseling, parenting seminars, MTA Metrocards, and job preparation.

[13] Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2018. What are some strategies for supporting pregnant and parenting teens in foster care?

[14] U.S. National Library of Medicine, 2020. Teen Pregnancy.

[15] American Pregnancy Association, 2020. WIC.

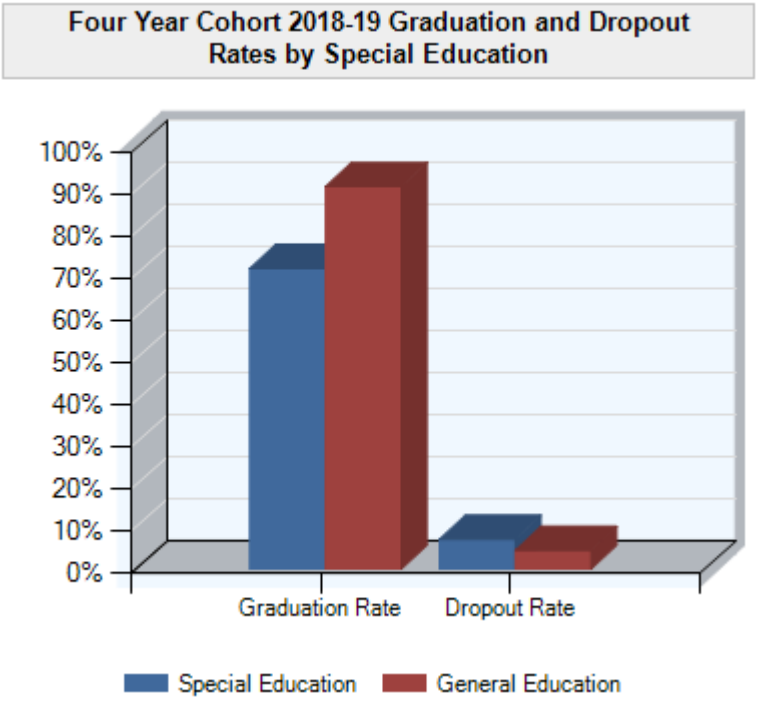
[16] US Department of Education, 2019. Child Care Access Means Parents in School (CCAMPIS) Grantees 2019.

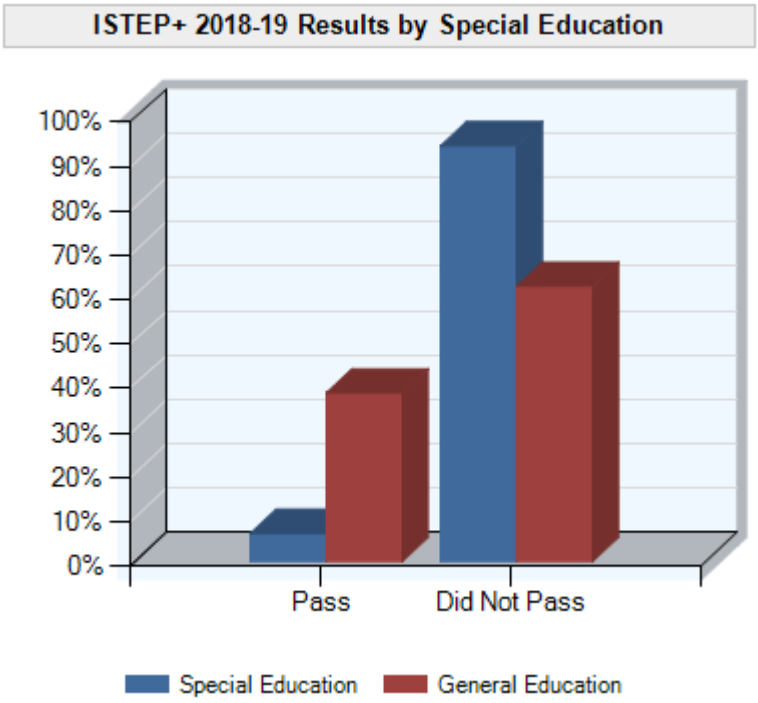
Special education is a broad umbrella term that includes many students who have various types of disabilities. These disabilities range from specific learning disabilities, (e.g., dyslexia, auditory processing disorder), to hearing, vision, and other physical impairments, emotional disabilities, and developmental disabilities (e.g., autism, intellectual disabilities). Though often thought of as a homogenous, monolithic representation of students, students with disabilities have considerable diversity in terms of aptitudes, abilities, impairments, and disabilities. With such a wide range of disabilities, students' needs and supports vary greatly amongst individuals. Students with disabilities are able to achieve academically just like their peers if provided the proper accommodations and assistance to keep them on pace in the classroom. Providing the needed personalized supports and services, however, does stress an already thinly stretched educational system. In addition, low expectations and the lack of proper accommodations and support services as well as funding have negatively impacted many students with disabilities academic trajectory.[1]

Of Indiana's 1.1 million students, approximately 173,000 (15%) receive special education services through an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan. These are components of two federal laws that protect the educational rights for students with disabilities by requiring an

individualized plan outlining the appropriate accommodations and services to be provided to the student.

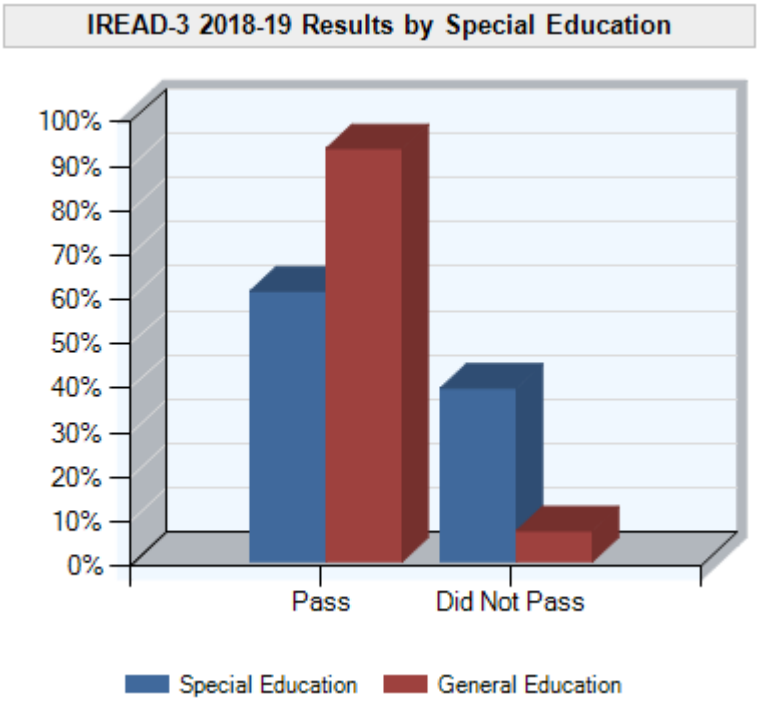
Of Hoosier students with disabilities, about 99% are capable of graduating high school with a high school diploma and fully prepared to tackle postsecondary education or employment, when given the proper accommodations throughout their academic career.[2]Only 1% of Indiana's total student population has a significant cognitive disability and is placed on an alternate diploma (formerly Certificate of Completion) track; the majority of students with disabilities should earn a regular high school diploma.[3] Every student with a disability will face the same demands of adult life as their non-disabled peers but with more challenges. In 2018-19, 71.4% of Indiana's students with disabilities graduated high school, which was lower than the General Education graduation rate of 90.9%. Inversely, the dropout rate for students with disabilities was higher at 7.1% than their peers at 4.5%. Almost all students with disabilities do not pass the standardized test in high school – 6.3% of students with disabilities passed the standardized test compared to 38% of their peers in General Education passing. Overall, students with disabilities face substantial gaps in academic proficiency and achievement when compared to their peers. This achievement gap puts all students in this subgroup at a long-term disadvantage for economic mobility and career advancement.


Four Year Cohort 2018-19 Graduation and Dropout Rates by Special Education
100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
Graduation Rate
Dropout Rate
Special Education
General Education


ISTEP+ 2018-19 Results by Special Education
100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
Pass
Did Not Pass
Special Education
General Education

[4]

Gaps in academic achievement begin early in students' academic experiences. Using Indiana's 3rd Grade Reading test results(see following table), a large difference is seen in performance between students with disabilities and their peers. These types of gaps tend to widen over the course of a student's academic career. Lack of foundational knowledge in early grades continues to manifest in gaps in achievement as students progress. Providing students with disabilities the necessary supports, services and accommodations must begin with high expectations for this subgroup's academic success. In Indiana's Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Plan, which is the 2015 reauthorized Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the long-term academic goals for grades 3 thru 8 and 10, as well as graduation rates, for special education are set below their peers.[5] Though these goals were based on the historical performance of this subgroup, we must recognize that the difference in expectations for our students with disabilities will perpetuate inequities in students' career advancement, postsecondary attainment, and median income. To set all of our students up for success, we need to ensure the level of rigor and achievement as well as access to the curriculum is comparable across all of our subgroups.



Postsecondary transitions can be difficult for youth with disabilities, who may encounter additional challenges than their typical peers in negotiating the transition to young adulthood. Nationally, almost 8 in 10 youth with disabilities have been engaged in postsecondary education, training, or paid employment. Three-fourths of postsecondary students with disabilities go to school full-time, and about 8 in 10 meet satisfactory academic progress. Two-thirds of postsecondary students with disabilities do not receive any accommodations from their higher education programs, primarily because their schools are unaware of their disabilities. About 7 in 10 youth with disabilities have worked for pay at some time since leaving high school. Only 4% of working youth with disabilities receive accommodations for their disabilities, largely because most youth have employers who are unaware of their disabilities. Among those whose employers are aware of their disabilities, 25% are receiving workplace accommodations.[6]

In Indiana, of our approximately 3.1 million labor force participants, 178,000 individuals are employed, which makes up about 5% of the workforce. The unemployment rate for individuals with a disability is about 10.0%, a difference of over six percentage points with the general population. Providing optimum supports and opportunities for our youth with disabilities while they are in secondary and postsecondary education programs serve as a preventative strategy for individuals potentially facing unemployment or needing government benefits. Through the necessary accommodations for these youth, we can help them to achieve at the same, or higher, rates than their peers, setting them up for future success

Co-Enrolled Programs: Youth with disabilities will be co-enrolled into the following primary programs and services of benefit to this target population. An individual's unique circumstances or preference may not necessitate co-enrollment in each program. This section includes ***Core Program Activities***, ***Activities Outside of the Plan***, and ***Individual Services.***

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (Federal Program): The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) is a federal law that requires a free, appropriate public education provided in the least restrictive environment for students with disabilities. It was enacted to ensure that all children with disabilities are provided with equal opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency. IDEA describes how states and schools must provide early intervention and special education-related services to eligible infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities. This law aims to curb educational problems associated with low expectations and insufficient funding for supportive services to help students meet the same level of expectation as their peers. It also focuses on alternative research, teaching methods, and tools. IDEA has six major principles that focus on students' rights and the responsibilities of public schools to children with disabilities:

1. Free Appropriate Public Education: Every child with a disability is entitled to a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). IDEA emphasizes that special education and related services should be designed to meet a child's unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living. To aide with this, schools are required to prepare an IEP which focuses on raised student expectations, appropriate progress, required accommodations and supports, and transition into postsecondary education and independent living.

2. Appropriate Evaluation: Schools are required to conduct appropriate evaluation of students suspected of having a disability. Evaluations must be geared toward planning for the child's education and future instruction and must determine and make recommendations regarding a child's eligibility for special education services in a timely manner.

3. Individualized Education Program: The IEP draws upon existing evaluation information in order to meet a student's unique educational needs. IEPs must include information regarding a student's present levels of educational performance, annual goals, and benchmarking objectives, services and supplementary aids to be received, and a detailed explanation of instances where a student is not participating in the general classroom and why. IEPs must also include specific academic, developmental, and functional needs of the child and should include students' progress, as well as their "transition" to adult life.

4. Least Restrictive Environment: IDEA places a strong emphasis on students being placed in a general education setting. This may include classroom modifications, supplemental

aids and services, alternative instructional methods, and other supports and accommodations.

5. Parent Participation: State educational agencies and local school boards must ensure that the parents of a child with a disability are members of any group that makes decisions regarding the placement of that child. Both students and parents must be invited to IEP meetings, and the IDEA explicitly establishes a role for the parent as equal participant and decision maker.
6. Procedural Safeguards: IDEA establishes procedural safeguards to help parents and students enforce their rights under federal law.[7]

Schools receive additional funding to support students with disabilities through IDEA. For FY 2020, Indiana has received approximately $261 million, which is formulaically distributed to schools to fund the supports, resources, and accommodations to help students succeed. This funding can directly support the instructional needs for youth with disabilities, including additional personnel, physical modifications, assistive technologies, or other accommodations. To help students meet the same academic rigor of their peers, IDEA funds need to be intentionally supporting the instructional needs of these students, which will help close the persistent gap in academic achievement. Indiana has been appropriated $1.2 million and $2.3 million in grants for preschool and infants and families, respectively. [8]

Part of an IEP is transition planning. This is federally required to be included in the student's IEP beginning at age 16. Due to Article 7, in Indiana the planning begins earlier by age 14 or 9th grade, whichever occurs earlier. As a student moves from middle to high school, students, families, and IEP teams start to determine what necessary steps the student will need to take during high school towards his/her postsecondary goal. The first step is assessing a youth's interests, aptitudes and abilities, and then planning specific activities and a course of study that is appropriate for the youth. To further create alignment between IDEA and Vocational Rehabilitation Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS), beginning transition planning at age 14 will allow for greater opportunities for career exploration, postsecondary counseling, and determining transition supports that can be provided through both funding streams.

Elementary and Secondary Education Act – Title I, Part A (Federal Program): Title I, Part A: Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) allows for states to offer an alternate diploma for students with significant cognitive disabilities. Up to 1% of each graduating cohort may receive an alternative diploma, which will replace Indiana's current Certificate of Completion for this subpopulation. These are students who have significant intellectual disabilities and may not be able to succeed in general education classes or on a traditional diploma track, therefore an alternate diploma provides an option aligned to alternate achievement standards. Earning a diploma can give students more opportunities for employment after graduation and would also mean that these students' academic achievements would be recognized as comparable to their peers.[9] The alternate diploma may also increase the overall high school graduation rate of students with disabilities. Though this option is available for a specific subset of students with disabilities, it is important for parents, counselors, teachers, and students with significant cognitive disabilities to evaluate all diploma options and what each means for their future before defaulting to the alternative diploma. Supports through IDEA are provided to assist students with additional barriers in attaining a Core 40 diploma or higher, which should be the goal for most students, including those with a disability.

How we teach and prepare our students with disabilities is critical to ensuring their postsecondary success. **Title II: Preparing, Training, and Recruiting High-Quality Teachers, Principals, or Other School Leaders** of ESSA provides funding for both state and local professional development activities for teachers and administrators. We encourage both our state agency and local school districts to focus a portion of this funding on professional development and reshape our expectations and instructional practices for our students with disabilities throughout their K-12 experience. By doing this, we can set students within this target population up for postsecondary success.

All at-risk students, including those with disabilities, would benefit from rethinking the approach to building systems that support teaching and leading. Increasing collaboration and expanding communication between divisions within state agencies will strengthen programs and provide an opportunity to creatively develop services that support students with disabilities. An intentional multi-agency approach to thought leadership ensures all aspects students with disabilities are considered and addressed.

As previously demonstrated, there is a significant gap between students with and without disabilities. We also know that some subgroups of students are disproportionately identified as having a disability. For both of these reasons, it is critical that all teachers and leaders have high expectations and the skills and knowledge to effectively teach all students. Efforts to support and professionally develop teachers and leaders need to be equitable across the state and within each area of certification. For example, if we want more students with disabilities to be successful in CTE courses, both special education and CTE teachers need to be properly equipped to provide a rigorous curriculum with the necessary supports and accommodations.

Title IV – Vocational Rehabilitation (Core Program): Vocational Rehabilitation can provide a key resource for students with disabilities through **Pre-Employment Transition Services** (Pre-ETS) and Transition Services. Pre-ETS can be used for career exploration, work-based learning, job readiness training, postsecondary enrollment counseling, work-based learning experiences and self-advocacy for students ages 14-22 with a disability.[10] Pre-ETS can assist students with disabilities in identifying postsecondary interests and goals to be further explored through additional VR services, including transition services. Fifteen percent of the VR federal funding allotment must be directed toward Pre-ETS, which is estimated to be $9.5 million for FY 2020. This funding supports students with disabilities in obtaining the five required Pre-ETS components:

1. Job exploration counseling;
2. Work-based learning experiences, which may include in-school or after school opportunities, experiences outside of the traditional school setting, and/or internships;[11]
3. Counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational programs;
4. Workplace readiness training to develop social skills and independent living; and/or
5. Instruction in self-advocacy.

   Pre-ETS activities are focused on early career exploration and could be braided with both **WIOA Youth** and **Perkins** to support those activities for student with disabilities. Over the next two years, Pre-ETS will serve as a gap filler for activities, such as self-advocacy training and job readiness skill building. Students with disabilities are often

afforded embedded supports and services throughout their K-12 experience as the IDEA funds are an entitlement monies. Transitioning from this type of supportive environment to adulthood, where an individual must advocate and navigate for supports, can be difficult. It can also cause students to drop out of postsecondary education, become unemployed, or disengaged from their communities. We can deploy Pre-ETS as an early intervention for these students to help them access the supports and resources necessary for success. Transition services should emphasize stair stepping these youth into navigating the complex system of adulthood. From a student's end of high school through the first few years of postsecondary life, Pre-ETS can help students traverse the shift from high school to adulthood.

Through Pre-ETS, we will increase students with disabilities enrollment in and completion of dual credit courses, AP exams, and industry-recognized certifications. Students experience both career exploration and postsecondary transition through courses that provide academic insight into various fields and allow students to earn stackable, transferrable credits towards postsecondary education. Pre-ETS can support students' enrollment in these courses and earning these credentials by assisting students with accommodations or filing financial aid so our Hoosier students with disabilities earn these credentials during their high school careers. To pay for these certifications, we can braid different funding streams for this subgroup. For this individual who are receiving VR services, VR funds could help pay for the costs of these assessments or courses. Within **Perkins**, Indiana has allocated funding to offset the expenses of certification costs, with CTE districts receiving additional dollars for students with disabilities. **WIOA Title I** or **ESEA Title I** could also be directed toward funding these courses for this particular population, in addition to our other At-Risk Youth populations. Pursuing in any of these three college- and career-readiness activities directly aligns with Pre-ETS' purpose to develop and improve strategies for students with disabilities to participate in postsecondary education experiences, thus we must strategically use Pre-ETS as a complement to our other funding sources to help students with disabilities earn these credentials.

Mentorships between businesspeople with disabilities and students with disabilities can serve a dual purpose for both exploration and transitional support. Schools and Pre-ETS providers can use this funding source to help facilitate genuine, sustained mentorships for students with disabilities with successful adults with disabilities. These mentorships would help students learn about different careers, discuss requisite postsecondary education, knowledge, and skills, make industry connections and foster a network, and seek advice and counsel when the need arises. Peer mentors can also assist with instruction in self-advocacy, in addition to offering perspectives on postsecondary opportunities and job explorations. Through these mentorships, students with disabilities could learn self-advocacy skills and insight from the lived experiences of adults, acumen that would benefit them as they traverse the transition to adulthood. The most powerful aspect of a mentorship is for the jobseeker to see someone with similar barriers succeeding in a career interest, therefore knowing success is an attainable goal.

VR will identify strategies to improve the transition of students with disabilities from school to postsecondary education or employment with remaining Pre-ETS funds:

- Increase independent living and inclusion in communities and competitive integrated workplaces;

- Develop and improve strategies for individuals with intellectual and significant disabilities to live independently, participate in postsecondary education experiences, and obtain and retain competitive integrated employment;
- Provide training to vocational rehabilitation counselors, school transition staff, providers, and others supporting students with disabilities;
- Disseminate information on innovative, effective, and efficient approaches to implement pre-employment transition services and improve the transition to postsecondary activities of those who are traditionally unserved; and
- Coordinate activities with transition services provided by local educational agencies under IDEA.

Indiana VR will also explore strategies for improving transition coordinating activities, in collaboration with transition services provided by school districts under IDEA. IDEA also includes transition services as a required component of a student's IEP. Comparing the definition of transition services under both laws illuminates an opportunity for braided funding to play key role in supporting these students:

IDEA, Part B – Transition Services	**VR – Transition Services**
• A coordinated set of activities for a student with a disability designed within a results-oriented process that is focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the student with a disability to facilitate the student's movement from school to post-school activities, including postsecondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation. • The coordinated set of activities is based on each student's needs, taking into account the student's strengths, preferences and interests, and includes instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, and, if appropriate, the acquisition of daily living skills and provision of a functional vocational evaluation.[12] • Each student's IEP must include: (i) appropriate measurable postsecondary	• A coordinated set of activities for a student or youth with a disability designed within an outcome-oriented process that promotes movement from school to post-school activities, including postsecondary education, vocational training, competitive integrated employment, supported employment, continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation. • Services are based upon the individual student's or youth's needs, taking into account the student's or youth's preferences and interests. • These services promote or facilitate the achievement of the employment outcomes identified in the student's or youth's individualized plan for employment (IPE). • Services must include outreach to and engagement of the parents or other representative of such for a student with a disability.[14] • VR agencies provide those services to students with disabilities who have

IDEA, Part B – Transition Services	VR – Transition Services
goals based upon age-appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and where appropriate, independent living skills; and (ii) the transition services (including courses of study) needed to assist the student in reaching those goals.[13]	applied and been determined eligible for the VR program.

Because of the similarities in the services provided by each program, there may be instances in which some special education and related services under the IDEA may also be provided through VR transition services. The funding and activities under the two programs can either be braided together or work in tandem with one another to provide more robust services to youth with disabilities to overcome achievement gaps in education and employment. Transition services under the Rehabilitation Act may be categorized as both VR services under the VR program and as special education or related services under IDEA. Under IDEA, transition services could include mental health services, rehabilitation counseling; orientation and mobility services, and medical services for diagnostic or evaluation purposes. Some of the special education or related services, such as rehabilitation counseling, orientation and mobility services, and work experiences, overlap with VR transition services that are available to students with disabilities – who have applied and been determined eligible for the VR program. There is some overlap with Pre-ETS. Both federal acts can support opportunities for students with disabilities to enroll in postsecondary education programs while still in high school, as well as align to financial aid available to students with disabilities enrolled in comprehensive transition and postsecondary education programs.[15]

To facilitate the coordination of these two programs, VR, the Department of Education, and schools must foster stronger, more synchronized partnerships to support these students. To help prevent students with disabilities from disappearing into the margins of our workforce and society, we need to connect them with the support needed during high school and their transition to postsecondary life to ensure a strong start to adulthood. These programs serve as early interventions to ensure students successfully move into and complete postsecondary education programs and/or secure quality employment. Through local partnerships, school districts and VR offices can determine which funding stream can provide a service.

VR Pre-ETS and transition services could serve as a supplement for IDEA transition services. Additionally, VR could provide funding directly to schools so they can offer Pre-ETS as a complement to IDEA accommodations in-house. Individual need and circumstance will be the determinant in how to braid these two funds in the most efficient manner. It may not look the same for each youth, but between both funds, students should receive a comprehensive package of supports and services to help them successfully move from high school into postsecondary education or employment. Workforce Development Boards' plans can detail how local partnerships will ensure a streamlined, efficient use of both funding streams to enhance or expand services for all youth with disabilities. Pre-ETS can supplement IDEA transitional activities, as well as bridge them with workforce development services. These funds can support VR staff to work with the local Workforce Development Boards, institutions of higher education, WorkOnes, providers, and employers to develop training and employment opportunities for students with disabilities, including internships, summer employment, and youth apprenticeships.

Work-based learning experiences can offer two layers of benefits for youth with disabilities: 1) it helps students gain work-related skills and experiences, and 2) it can dispel some beliefs/myths about individuals with disabilities that exist in business. Given the high unemployment rate of Hoosiers with disabilities, this is another untapped talent pipeline that may be overlooked by some employers due to misconceptions or misnomers regarding the abilities and contributions of this target population. Getting students into businesses through a temporary learning experience will provide exposure for both the student and the business. Pre-ETS can support WBL opportunities through CTE and other means by helping offset the stipends and costs of WBL programs. Similar to **EARN Indiana**, Pre-ETS could subsidize work-based learning opportunities and wages to increase access for students with disabilities. As well, Pre-ETS providers or counselors can ensure that the work-based learning experience is substantive and content-focused for the student.

Per recent policy interpretation from the US Department of Education, Pre-ETS can be used to cover the costs of auxiliary aids and services provided directly to students with disabilities. Using Pre-ETS to fund these accommodations is permitted if it will allow students to access or participate in Pre-ETS activities.[16] Pre-ETS can cover the following costs if promote students' access: Assessments Services, Counseling and Guidance, Referral Services, Maintenance, Transportation, Personal Assistance Services, Rehabilitation Teaching & Orientation, Mobility Services, Rehabilitation Technologies, and Family Services.[17] With this clarified guidance, Indiana will start using Pre-ETS to fund accommodations for students specifically in work-based learning experiences.[18] As a means to increase students' access to more work-based learning opportunities, schools and providers can employ Pre-ETS funding to provide auxiliary aids and services and rehabilitation technologies that will assist students participate in this critical Pre-ETS component. Additionally, for those students with disabilities requiring transportation assistance in their IEP, Pre-ETS will also cover any transportation costs related to a work-based learning experience. Schools can braid IDEA and Pre-ETS funds for accommodations together for those activities that occur within a classroom – such as job exploration or workplace readiness development within a CTE class.

Increased emphasis will be placed on opportunities for students with disabilities to receive postsecondary planning and support towards credentialing, work-readiness skills, and finding competitive integrated employment aligned to their career aspirations. Pre-ETS will refocus on increasing the quality of the transitional process to postsecondary options for students, including those with the most significant disabilities, to practice and improve their workplace skills in competitive integrated work settings before they leave high school. VR can share post-education employment and training outcomes with schools, which may in turn positively affect district level reporting outcomes for all Transition Indicators. We intend to increase opportunities for students with disabilities to explore postsecondary education and training options, which will lead to more meaningful postsecondary employment and training goals on student IEPs. Through cross-training, VR offices and providers will learn about the bevy of federal and state financial aid available to students. Additionally, information on the **FAFSA**, **21st Century Scholars** program, **Frank O'Bannon Scholarship**, **Workforce Ready Grants**, and other financial aid opportunities will be made available at VR Offices and at transition fairs. Through Pre-ETS' third component, counselors and Pre-ETS staff should escalate their efforts on assisting students with accessing and completing financial aid applications.

Through local Workforce Development Boards the Offices of Vocational Rehabilitation, including VR Youth Counselors and Pre-ETS providers, can work with the school districts to supplement IDEA transitional services by developing, expanding, or enhancing in-school, after school, or summer work experience opportunities in diverse career pathways, leading to more

meaningful postsecondary enrollment and employment. School districts can also utilize workforce partners to identify early work experience and job opportunities outside the traditional school setting in the local labor market that may complement a student's interests and goals. This will provide increased opportunities for students with disabilities to explore postsecondary opportunities, leading to more postsecondary educational attainment, skills gains, and meaningful postsecondary employment. VR can potentially provide students competitive wages or training stipends for work performed during an employment experience.

Over the course of the 2019-2020 school year, two special education cooperatives and two school districts have been participating in a pilot with their local Pre-ETS providers in order to develop effective communication and collaboration between Pre-ETS providers and districts. This pilot will enable Pre-ETS providers and districts to have a starting point when working to provide comprehensive transition activities and services to students with disabilities in the future. Both the DOE and VR can take the promising practices and lessons learned from this pilot to improve communication between Pre-ETS and school districts to ensure students with disabilities have access to the full spectrum of transition services.

Title I – Youth (Core Program): WIOA Youth funds can be utilized as an additional funding gap filler to provide services to youth with disabilities. Specifically, this funding stream can be utilized to provide tutoring, academic education offered concurrently with workforce preparation and training, leadership development, comprehensive guidance and counseling, financial literacy education, and entrepreneurial skills training. A program similar to **Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG)** could be provided as Pre-ETS for students with disabilities, ensuring they have access to the same high quality programs as their peers. Furthermore, this funding can be utilized to fill or provide any gap services that IDEA and Pre-ETS are unable to provide that would be necessary to combat these students' barriers to achievement. Youth with disabilities are eligible for the WIOA Youth program whether in- or out-of-school. We recommend these services particularly for students who are deemed ineligible for VR services or are deferred due to order of selection, but still require additional assistance, counseling, and job training to better support transition for this population.

WIOA Youth can help connect students with disabilities to Pre-ETS as needed through age 22. As some students may dip in and out of Pre-ETS as needed, transition supports should be a constant resource available for these individuals. For youth needing transition assistance, this program should be interwoven into WIOA Out-of-School Youth options. As local Boards determine ways to connect with unconnected youth, they should also explore strategies to expand Pre-ETS into adult charter high schools to engage with out-of-school youth with disabilities.

Potential Enrollment: Additional programs and services a Hoosier may receive depending on individual circumstances. This section includes ***Partner Program Activities***for youth in this target population.

Carl D. Perkins (Partner Program): As we will describe further in our Perkins Program Requirements section, we want to ensure there is equitable access and representation of students with disabilities in all career clusters. Ensuring secondary and postsecondary students access to those CTE programs in high-wage occupations, such as those in our advanced industries, is critical to fill the unemployment gap. We need to actively recruit and retain students into programs that can give them the technical skills needed for success in well-paid occupations. Using Perkins Leadership funds, Indiana will create a Special Populations Recruitment Initiative. This grant opportunity will support professional development to increase the effectiveness of teachers, faculty, specialized support personnel, and

paraprofessionals in relation to the recruitment of special populations into CTE programs. This funding will also go towards similar professional development for CTE instructors and administrators as above – with differentiated instructional practices – to support our special populations in CTE at both the secondary and postsecondary levels. Indiana intends to explore opportunities to use Perkins to support educational institutions in serving individuals with disabilities. The first step will be to allocate non-competitive grants to the School for the Deaf and the School for the Blind to build a bridge to CTE programs at nearby CTE Centers, employers, and schools for their students.

Misconceptions regarding physical or developmental abilities of these students may preclude them from participating in certain career clusters. IDEA funding should ensure that all necessary accommodations for a student's success are in place to facilitate enrollment in and completion of CTE courses. This can pair with Perkins funds to ensure those supports are in place for students with disabilities. CTE districts and schools must partner together to ensure these funding streams work in conjunction with one another to support these students. Access alone, though, is not sufficient to close the achievement and wage gaps for this target population. We need students to earn credentials, complete programs of study, and enroll in postsecondary education programs.

As we work to redesign and implement new Programs of Study over the next two years, there will be a particular focus on postsecondary transference and credentialing for special populations, such as youth with disabilities. Our aim is to make our Programs of Study stackable with dual credit courses and industry-recognized certifications that directly align with postsecondary programs. Perkins funding is a major pillar of implementing these redesigned Programs of Study, including the recruitment and retention of students with disabilities. Perkins can also fund career awareness and guidance in both the secondary and postsecondary space. This type of guidance can either complement or supplement Pre-ETS for youth with disabilities – Perkins can fund career guidance and Pre-ETS can assist with transitional supports for independent living and system navigation. Blending Perkins programs and funding with Pre-ETS could provide students with more funding to explore careers and postsecondary education options at both the secondary and postsecondary level. VR, DOE, and the Office of Career and Technical Education are currently developing a pilot program to test how the blending of these programs can benefit students academically. The goal is to better serve more individuals with disabilities by combining Vocational Rehabilitation or Pre-ETS services with career and technical education.

Apprenticeships (Federal and State Programs): Each year, Indiana has roughly 25,000 high school graduates who have no plan beyond graduation other than to "get a job." These young adults, particularly those with disabilities, often end up acquiring low-wage, low-skill jobs. Youth with disabilities are half as likely as their peers to participate in postsecondary education.[19] Effective transition services are key for youth with disabilities to make informed choices about their futures and find ways to fulfill their career aspirations and potential. One option that can create opportunities for both employment and postsecondary education for this target population is both registered and state apprenticeships. Apprenticeships are often overlooked as a viable option for youth with disabilities during transition planning. This may be due to student interest or, again, potential misconceptions regarding student capability by both the IEP team and employers. Employment counselors, along with IEP teams, can help determine what programs are available and their entry requirements to ensure alignment with student interest. Employers and trade unions, similarly, can expand their recruitment practices to target non-typical hires, such as youth with disabilities. Both VR and WorkOne business service teams can help address some misnomers regarding hiring youth with disabilities, such as potential,

ability, and expense of accommodations. Through the transition plan, IEP teams and counselors can determine what potential assistive technology a student may require for success.

Scaling Promising Practices: Below we highlight promising practices that we hope to see scaled and replicated to address the unique barriers and challenges of this target population. Our local regions can implement or supplement these practices through strategic use of ESEA and WIOA funds, philanthropic or community foundation dollars, or social impact bonds. This practice is an ***Activities outside the Plan***. While not a comprehensive list, this practice showcases an innovative approach to assisting our youth with disabilities in surmounting their unique circumstances.

IN*Source (Community Program): IN*Source provides parents, families, individuals, and service providers' information and training necessary to help assure effective educational programs and appropriate services for individuals with disabilities. The goal of this community partner is parents helping parents. It offers the following programs to youth and families of youth with disabilities:

- Collaborative Parent Involvement Project: Initiated by the Indiana Department of Education Office of Special Education along with IN*Source, the Collaborative Parent Involvement Project (CPIP) focuses on helping parents, educators, and local communities work together to address challenges facing youth with disabilities, including transition, assistive technology, and surrogate parent programs. The project also supports facilitating communication among families and groups to foster the development of regional and statewide networks.

- Indiana Parent Training Program: The Indiana Parent Training Program (IPTP) is a parent-to-parent training and information project. By circulating information and materials and conducting training workshops throughout Indiana, IPTP instructs parents about their rights and responsibilities in early intervention and special education processes under state and federal laws. IPTP provides individual assistance for parents and professionals, workshops for parents, and parent support volunteers who serve as a sources of support and information amongst parents in their local community. Through the WIOA Combined Plan, information regarding transition supports for the wide array of postsecondary options for this target population can also be provided to parents, so they can assist their child with determining their next step.

- Parents Helping Parents: Parents Helping Parents is a program that believes in the power of shared experiences and utilizes this to allow parents to help other parents navigate through the information necessary to provide for children with disabilities. The program trains parents to work directly with other parents to provide special education support and education to parents in need. Parents Helping Parents provides assistance statewide for Hoosier families.

Indiana University – Bloomington: Indiana Secondary Transition Resource Center (Community Program): This program work closely with transition educators and teams throughout the state, providing technical assistance, troubleshooting challenges, and assisting schools as they collaborate with state agencies and organizations to build seamless transitions for their students. The Center assists schools and educators by:

- Creating and providing professional development activities regarding transition services for students with disabilities;

- Developing and coordinating the statewide Cadre of Transition Leaders to more effectively support students with disabilities and their families by focusing on student-focused planning, student development, family involvement, interagency collaboration, and program structures; and
- Supporting the Indiana Department of Education's Office of Special Education as it works to improve graduation rates, drop-out rates, compliant Transition IEPs, family involvement, and postsecondary outcomes.

A project of the Center on Community Living and Careers, the Indiana Secondary Transition Resource Center is sponsored by the Indiana Department of Education. The Center on Community Living and Careers is one of six centers at the Indiana Institute on Disability and Community, Indiana University.

Project Success (Community Program): Project Success is a resource center that supports higher academic achievement for students with disabilities. It focuses on building local capacity to ensure that students with significant cognitive disabilities are able to achieve increasingly higher academic outcomes and will leave high school ready for postsecondary options. Project Success is part of the Indiana Resource Network. It strives to support teams of teachers and administrators in Indiana as they work to implement academic standards into instruction for students with disabilities. They provide current, research-based resources related to content standards, instructional design, and student outcomes and designed specifically to cater to the needs of students with disabilities

Project Search (Community Program): Project Search is a worksite-based school-to-work program providing employment and education opportunities for VR eligible students with disabilities who are transitioning from high school and young adults. It allows employers to increase workforce diversity and reduces training and recruitment cost. Project Search provides quality internships that give participants real-world skills that will help prepare them for competitive employment. This program is funded by Vocational Rehabilitation in partnership with local schools, community rehabilitation programs, and local businesses to provide services. Student interns work in clerical, materials management, customer service, healthcare services, data entry, and other areas. Two additional sites provide a similar version of this curriculum specifically for young adults who are no longer apart of the school system. Project Search is focused on full immersion into the workplace and helps students develop resumes and portfolios to aid with job search. Often, students are offered employment by the business host at the end of their internship experience, but, if that is not the case, students receive job placement services through Vocational Rehabilitation to ensure access to the workforce.

[1] Butrymowicz and Mader, 2017. Almost all students with disabilities are capable of graduating on time. Here's why they're not.

[2] University of Wisconsin-Superior, 2019. Improving Graduation Rates for Special Education Students.

[3] While there is no cap on who may receive a State-defined alternate diploma, because of the connection to the alternate assessment aligned with alternate academic achievement standards under section 1111(b)(2)(D) of the ESEA, the Department expects that, in general, no more than one percent of students graduating in a State in a given year would receive a State-defined alternate diploma (US Department of Education, Every Student Succeeds Act High School Graduation Rate Non-Regulatory Guidance).

[4] Indiana Department of Education. DOE Compass.

[5] Indiana Department of Education, 2019. Amendment to Indiana's Consolidated State Plan under the Every Student Succeeds Act.

[6] US Department of Education, 2005. After High School: A First Look At The Postschool Experiences of Youth with Disabilities.

[7] M. Saleh, 2020. Your Child's Rights: 6 Principles of IDEA.

[8] US Department of Education. Funds for State Formula-Allocated and Selected Student Aid Programs: Indiana.

[9] Chalkbeat, February 2018. Indiana moves to create an 'alternate' diploma for students with severe disabilities.

[10] Rehabilitation Services Administration. Regulations Implementing the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, As Amended By the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

[11] These opportunities should be provided in an integrated setting in the community to the maximum extent possible.

[12] 20 U.S.C. § 1401(34).

[13] 34 C.F.R. § 300.43(b).

[14] 34 C.F.R. § 361.5(c)(55).

[15] US Department of Education, 2017. Increasing Postsecondary Opportunities and Success for Students and Youth with Disabilities.

[16] Auxiliary aids are an additional service that can be provided for students potentially eligible for the VR program and, therefore, not receiving VR services.

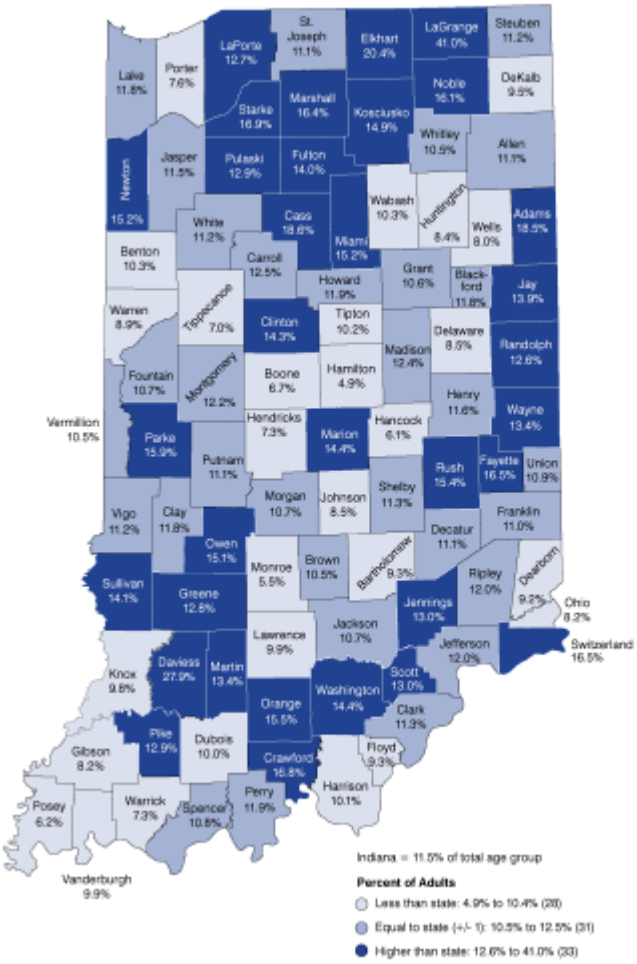
[17] These services are only available for students participating in Pre-ETS who are also VR eligible individuals receiving services under Individualized Plan for Employment.

[18] US Department of Education, 2020. 34 CFR Part 361: State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program.

[19] Office of Disability Employment Policy. Youth with Disabilities Entering the Workplace through Apprenticeship Preparing Youth and Young Adults for Apprenticeship Programs.

Indiana has approximately over 460,000 individuals without a high school diploma between the ages of 18 and 64.[1] Of Indiana's 92 counties, 21 have more than 5,000 people without a high school diploma or high school equivalency (HSE). Marion County leads the state with around 85,500 people between the ages of 18 and 64 without a diploma, followed by Lake (35,300), Allen (24,500) and Elkhart (24,200) counties. Though the total number of individuals without a high school diploma or HSE are found in the most densely populated areas, rural counties have a higher overall percentage of individuals lacking this educational attainment.

Figure 6: Percent of adults ages 18 to 64 without a high school diploma, 2016



Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey five-year estimates

[2]

During the 2018-2019 program year, the Indiana Department of Workforce Development enrolled 30,183 Hoosiers into Adult Education services. Of those enrollees, 24,740 attended at least 12 hours. Approximately 13,913 Hoosiers entered Adult Education without a high school diploma or higher credential. 5,371 Hoosiers earned their high school equivalency and 2,790 (approximately 79%) students earned an industry-recognized certification. A total of 4,854 individuals enrolled in training. Of the remaining 4,176 enrollments, 3,537 (approximately 85%) completed the training, though there may be some overlap with those who earned their HSEs.

The Indiana Department of Workforce Development estimates about 76% of the adult learners entering adult basic education programs are assessed below the 9th grade level in math and language arts:

[3]

These data indicate that many of those who enroll in Adult Education may have a high school diploma but be basic skills deficient. Of the 19,333 students in Adult Education programs, 7,776 (40%) entered at educational attainment levels at grade 4.9 or below; 7,351 (38%) entered at educational attainment levels between 5-8.9 grades. For many of these individuals, it may take longer than one program year to attain their diploma, given how much academic remediation they require to close the gap between what a student knows and what s/he is expected to know. This type of educational support often targets reading or math skills. Once someone is at the 9th grade level, it takes an average of 6 to 8 weeks to earn an HSE. These Hoosier may struggle to reengage with or advance in the workforce due to needing academic and skill remediation, thus seeking out Adult Education programs.

Individuals lacking a high school diploma constitute another large population of AE students. There are several pressures on K-12 students that can be dropout factors for youth. Adverse situations within the school environment may cause a student to dropout. These include attendance, discipline policies, and consequences of poor behavior. Students can feel pulled out when personal issues divert them from completing school. These occur when factors, such as poverty, out-of-school employment, family needs, or even family pull students away from school. A third factor, falling out of school, occurs when a student does not show significant academic progress in schoolwork and becomes apathetic or even pessimistic with schoolwork and graduation. Falling out is the process whereby the student gradually increases behaviors of academic disengagement without being forced out by the school or lured out by things they need or want. As a result, these students eventually disappear from the system.[4]

Those who are currently or formerly involved in the Corrections system may overlap with this target population. AE offers programs for these individuals in both state facilities and local jails; the Ex-Offender section addresses this subgroup of AE more directly. English Learners needing assistance with language acquisition also comprise the AE student population. This can include native-born English Learners who may struggle academically or professionally with English skills; immigrants who are foreign-born, some of which may have foreign credentials that are not accepted here; and refugees moved to Indiana through resettlement efforts.

Despite its benefits, participation in adult educational services can be sporadic. Adults often fail to complete their studies due to difficulties with work and family schedules to access educational programs. Another commonly cited barrier is students losing motivation after failing to see concrete economic gains. AE providers have sought to prevent these problems in numerous ways. Sometimes the fix can be as straightforward as offering programs on nights or weekends. Other institutions have developed more complex curricular innovations. Some of the more popular alternatives to traditional AE include bridge programs, which combine basic skills training with vocational preparation, and career pathways, which break long programs into smaller, more readily achievable pieces that provide meaningful occupational credentials along the way.

Co-Enrolled Programs: Hoosiers without a high school diploma and/or deficient in basic skills will be co-enrolled into the following primary programs and services of benefit to this target population. An individual's unique circumstances or preference may not necessitate co-enrollment in each program. This section includes ***Core and Partner Program Activities*** and***Individual Services***for those adults seeking a high school diploma or who are deficient in basic skills.

Title II – Adult Education (Core Program): Based on an individual's skills assessment, as well as a transcript evaluation determining if he or she has earned a high school diploma or HSE, an individual would then be automatically referred to Adult Education for academic services in math, reading, and written skills. Indiana uses the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) to measure skill gains in language and mathematics. In addition to academics, AE also provides digital literacy and English language acquisition services. Once enrolled in AE, students are offered the opportunity to pursue occupational trainings for an in-demand, high wage job. In many instances, these trainings come in the form of **Integrated Education and Training (IET)**. Through this triangulated approach of teaching basic academic skills leading to a high school equivalency, occupational skills training, and employability skills, IETs provide the three necessary components for future success in a single classroom. The IET trainings are offered by eligible training providers who have been approved by the Indiana Department of Workforce Development. These training providers must not only meet a level of agreed upon standards, but also provide trainings within industry sectors deemed to be high-wage and high-demand. Funding for the academic and educational services should be heavily provided by AE in an IET model, while **WIOA Adult**, **WIOA Youth** (depending on the Hoosier's age), or **Perkins** can be utilized for funding occupational training as a gap filler.

As Indiana builds career pathways with multiple entry points and with stackable credentials, we will consider how an individual can complete higher levels of education and training to advance over time in their chosen industry. Because AE is a main source of remedial academic support for Hoosiers, we need to connect IET models with our career pathways development. The ideal IET classroom will balance the three required components in an equal fashion, incorporating cross-curriculum content for optimal learning, review, and evaluation. IETs should be the core educational strategy for delivering career pathways to AE students. This instructional approach crosses all levels of service delivery in WIOA Title II and can include a wide variety of WIOA Title I career and training services and Perkins technical training, allowing for co-enrollment and braiding of funds. Title I can specifically fund the occupational training elements on an IET program if it is on the **Eligible Training Provider list (ETPL)**, blending with WIOA Title II for academic remediation and financial and digital literacy development.

In addition to IET models that meld academic education and technical training together, we also intend to more broadly scale our **Workforce Education Initiative**. Using AE funds, Hoosiers without a diploma or deficient in basic skills can enroll in basic skill and/or English Learner classes at employer sites. This allows the Hoosier to be employed and earning an income and able to improve his/her academic skills. It combines education, provided through AE, and employment at a site convenient for the individual. Often, the individual can earn a short-term certificate (e.g., NIMS Level I, Comp TIA A+, or Entry Level AWS) that can be stacked toward more advanced certification and professions. We currently have about 75 employers participating, including some larger employers, like Tyson Foods.

As Indiana's economy and talent pipelines continually evolve, we need our employers to start implementing non-traditional hiring practices. These untapped populations present great upskilling and reskilling potential to help fill Indiana's job openings. Additionally, as we scale models similar to the My Cook Pathway through our **WorkINdiana (State Program)**, we need our employers to understand that these are not merely philanthropic or corporate social responsibility activities. This program assists employers in building pathways to help their current and potential employees earn an HSE and improve their academic skills in an AE classroom while earning a career certification. Governor Holcomb is working with the Indiana General Assembly to potentially redefine this funding to assist employers with providing wraparound supports – such as career coaches, mentors, tutors, and other expenses – that

employees may need to successfully complete this program. These are ways to develop sustainable talent with industry-relevant, up-to-date skills and knowledge embedded.

In all of these programs, the importance of career counseling to help our Hoosiers determine and navigate the best path for career advancement is paramount for both the individual's and program's success. To help scale the availability of career navigation to this target population, Indiana has recently mandated that all AE providers have specific staff positions dedicated to academic and career coaching as a part of their grant. The **Skillful Governor's Coaching Corps** can enhance the effectiveness of the academic and career coaches embedded in the AE programs, as well as use supplemental funds from **Wagner-Peyser** or Indiana's **Local Career Coaching Grants** as needed. Our AE programs have made tremendous strides towards integrating academic learning into technical learning and real-world application. To complement this work, we need to include more opportunities for career coaching, as well.

By incorporating career counseling into our AE programs, we are seeking to connect more of our AE students to postsecondary credentials and/or degrees. The challenge is making sure that AE classes, which do not lead to college credits when siloed, relate to a college degree pathway in some way, and that this relationship is communicated to students and valued by AE providers. Often Hoosier AE graduates find jobs, but many do not attempt to continue their education in a postsecondary degree program. Similarly, our institutions, with a few exceptions, do not make efforts to convince AE students that they should pursue higher education. In most AE programs, there is no clear path from AE into a degree program. This means that even students who are interested in pursuing a college degree may not know how to do so.

Our community colleges can further include AE providers through offering bridge programs that coordinate academic and occupational instruction by providing basic educational remediation concurrently with, rather than as a prerequisite for, college-level courses. Including Adult Education in an accredited community college's bridge program could allow our WIOA Title II to provide funding. Another way to fund and expands these programs is through the **Ability to Benefit** (AtB) **(Federal Program)**, which allows individuals without a secondary diploma to access federal financial aid.

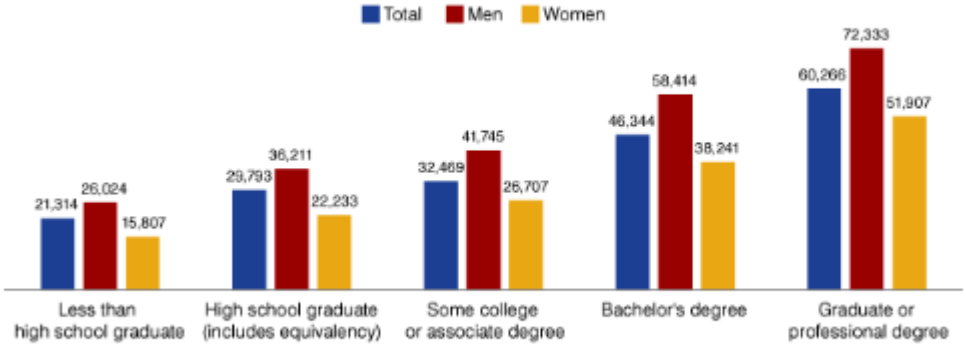
Indiana's Ivy Tech Community College-Madison Campus is one location that is piloting AtB to help AE students access federal funding. As we further integrate our systems through co-location and partnerships, more of our community college campuses will take advantage of this financial aid opportunity. Through this flexibility in federal law, students who are concurrently enrolled in connected AE and eligible postsecondary programs, but do not have a high school diploma or equivalent, could be Pell eligible. The student also has to pass an approved AtB test (e.g., Accuplacer) and complete at least 6 credit hours or 225 clock hours that are applicable toward a degree or certificate offered by the postsecondary institution. Through greater partnerships between our programs and state agencies, we aim to pair more AE programs with our community colleges to scale AtB wider throughout the state.

The AtB-eligible career pathway definition mirrors the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), aligning the career pathway development and implementation underway for WIOA with access to federal financial aid. The previous standard required students to be "concurrently" enrolled in both AE and postsecondary programs, and it did not well define what could be characterized as AE. The new definition provides that the career pathway "enables an individual to attain" a high school diploma or equivalency. This clarifies the intent of AtB to support students without a high school diploma or equivalency in both secondary and postsecondary credential attainment. AtB can serve as a bridge program for AE students to postsecondary.

A similar model to concurrent enrollment between AE and postsecondary has been scaled in math courses by Ivy Tech Community College (ITCC). In 2015, ITCC altered its remedial curriculum to a co-requisite delivery format structured for most of its Math Pathways. They modeled this on the Accelerated Learning Program, which originated at the Community College of Baltimore County and has shown consistent student success with nearly double the pass rates. The co-requisite model melds remediation with "gateway" courses to provide students with the opportunity to earn credit towards their degree rather than completing a remedial course prior to enrolling in the credit-bearing "gateway" course. Similar models throughout the nation have shown that offering co-requisite remediation can potentially double the traditional remedial student success in the "gateway" course.[5] AtB could offer a similar type of co-requisite model.

Given the gap that can exist between AE and other college programs, creating such pathways is critical for elevating skill-deficient adults into sustainable jobs and careers. To implement this approach effectively, community colleges are required to infiltrate labor markets in order to find employment for their students. This requirement forces postsecondary institutions to understand the linkages between the jobs in an industry and the hiring patterns of employers. It also forces colleges to find ways of assuring potential employers that the college's graduates are ready to work. The foundation-led efforts to create adult career pathways have clear benefits for program graduates but are hard to implement. Colleges that can work with labor markets through such pathways are in a much better position to help their graduates to access high-wage jobs. Moreover, the long-term labor market value of the high school diploma is unclear, and postsecondary credentials are increasingly important for those seeking to attain high-wage jobs. Every step an individual can take towards higher education translates into greater earning potential and a lower likelihood to be in poverty.

Figure 3: Median earnings by educational attainment in Indiana, 2016



Note: These are median earnings in the past 12 months for the population 25 and older.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey five-year estimates

[6]

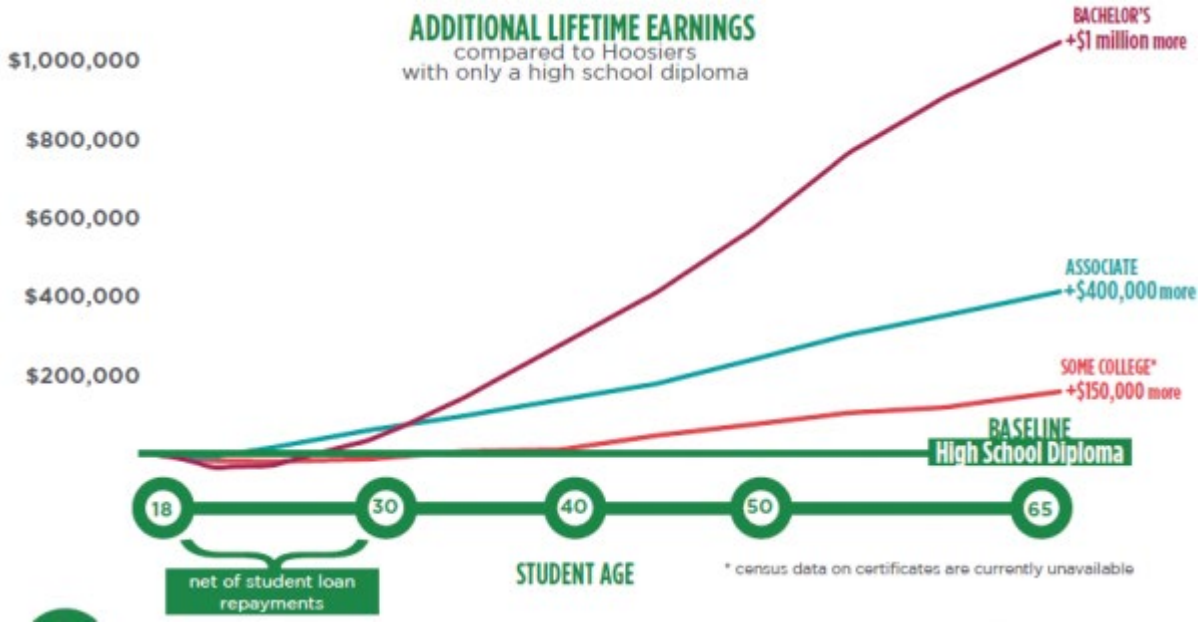
Table 2: Poverty rate by educational attainment in Indiana, 2016

Education level	Indiana		U.S.	
	Poverty rate	Margin of error	Poverty rate	Margin of error
Less than high school graduate	26.2%	+/-0.6	27.1%	+/-0.1
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	12.2%	+/-0.2	14.3%	+/-0.1
Some college or associate degree	10.3%	+/-0.2	10.4%	+/-0.1
Bachelor's degree or higher	4.1%	+/-0.1	4.5%	+/-0.1

Note: Poverty statistics are for the population 25 and older (for whom poverty status is determined).
Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey five-year estimates

[7]

Most credentials pay for themselves within only a few years, and college graduates' lifetime earnings often outweigh those of Hoosiers with only a high school diploma by $1 million or more.[8] The need to better connect all of our Adult Education Programs with postsecondary education opportunities is critical to allow for greater economic mobility for Hoosiers.



Hoosiers with higher levels of educational attainment have significantly higher levels of job security. Indiana residents with no college filed two-thirds of all unemployment claims over the past ten years. Not only does increasing an individual's educational attainment impact his/her future career options, but it is also key for Indiana's economic growth. Those with postsecondary attainment are less likely to need government assistance in the future, but more importantly they become substantial parts of Indiana's tax revenue. Over the course of a lifetime, a class of Indiana public college graduates contributes at least $13 billion in additional spending and tax revenue to the economy compared to Hoosiers with only a high school diploma.[9]

Throughout Indiana's Combined Plan, we have reiterated the need to scale access to career coaching to more of our target populations. This target population, especially, will benefit greatly from access to career coaching and the individualized service it provides as they pursue additional education and training opportunities. One way to assist with this is to allow any AE student enrolled in a program located on a community college campus to have access to the support services offered by the college, as they are usually the population most in need of such

support. This would include access to the college's tutoring or career services. Additionally, some of our community college campuses offer childcare on-campus. Allowing our AE students to partake in these services could help several of the burdens our Hoosiers face.

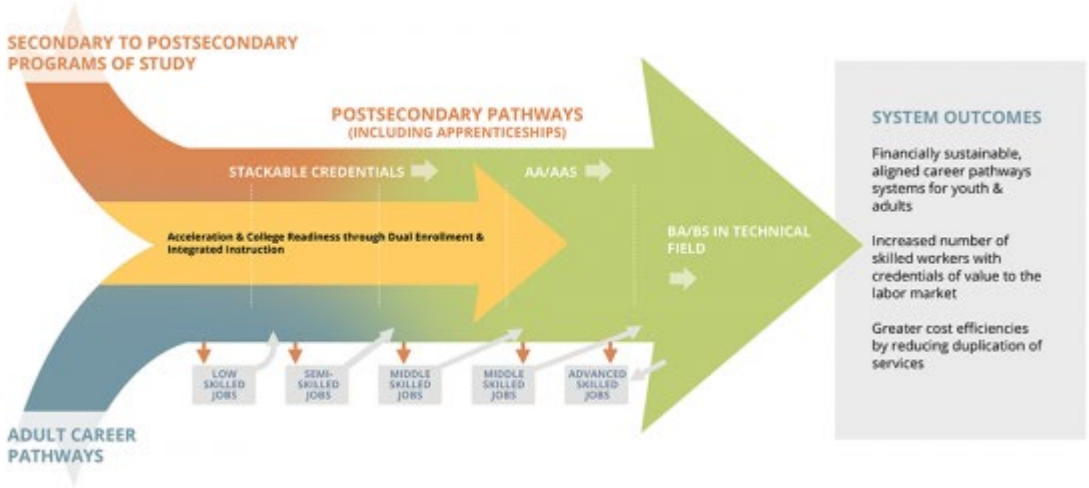
We know that currently about 282,000 SNAP/TANF/Medicaid recipients in Indiana indicated they did not have a high school diploma or equivalent. Because of data silos, we are unable to know the overlap of that population in AE programs or target those not in enrolled with information to earn their high school equivalency. Because those receiving SNAP and TANF, in particular, can utilize E&T funding to augment their training options, helping supplement any tuition, fees, or career counseling costs, it is imperative for us to know how our populations overlap so we can streamline funds and supports to effectively serve them. Until Indiana gets a common intake process in place and a data charter between those agencies on the Governor's Workforce Cabinet in place, we encourage all AE providers to ask if that individual receives those benefits, since they could be eligible for additional services. Additionally, through greater co-location efforts between our WorkOnes and Division of Family Resource offices, frontline staff can facilitate warm referrals between these programs more easily, helping ensure the individual accesses the necessary supports to assist with upward economic mobility.

Carl D. Perkins (Partner Program): This Combined Plan presents Indiana with the inimitable opportunity to develop strategies to merge siloed programs with similar missions. Increasing the connections between these federal programs will provide rigorous entry points to meaningful postsecondary education and training for both recent high school graduates and adults. Fusing career and technical education into our AE programs allows us to actualize all of our Goals and elevate Hoosiers without a high school diploma or deficient in basic skills towards greater career opportunities. Co-location between state agencies and offices has been reiterated throughout various sections of this Plan. For AE to access Perkins funds, we must have our providers co-locate with K-12 school districts or community college campuses (in addition to school districts and community colleges co-locating with one another). This will allow us to maximize our investments in equipment, facilities, supplies, and instructors. It also builds greater articulation between adult and postsecondary education, as well as secondary and postsecondary education. This is currently occurring in some areas around the state. The Hoosier Hills Career Center in Monroe County, for example, co-locates programs through Adult Education and staff from the WorkOne at the career center. Hoosier Hills has braided in philanthropic dollars from Strada Education Network to expand JAG to the career center, which provides mentoring and dropout prevention services to students at the career center. Local regions can determine how to increase co-location partnerships through varied schedules, hours, and instructors.

Through these partnerships, we can interweave our Perkins funds with our WIOA Title II to help create robust career pathways. Instructionally, AE and Perkins can blend together to craft IETs that serve populations. Adult Education providers can work with schools or community colleges to access Perkins programming to help offset technical training costs, including equipment, supplies, or instructors. Some states that are currently executing this type of braided funding target their funds thusly:

-
    - Perkins funds can cover accredited training facilities, state-of-the art equipment, and articulated training curriculum.
    - WIOA Title II funds can go towards overload pay for high school instructors, training in CTE core content, field experts, and consumables.

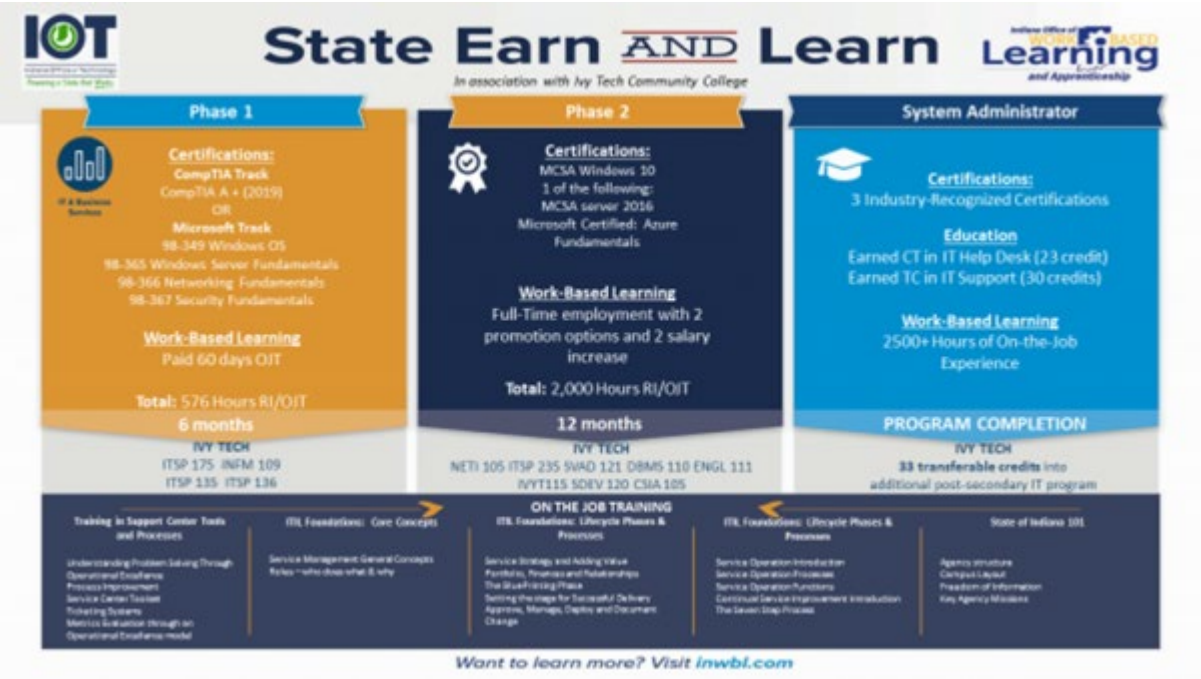
Because WIOA Title II can also fund technical training, local regions must examine how the two funding sources can be coordinated to promote career pathways for all Hoosiers. Braiding our WIOA Title II and Perkins funds can create alignment between our programs of study under Perkins and our career pathways under WIOA. For example, utilizing WIOA Title II funds to have local (high school) teachers provide AE programming vs. contracting with external vocational entities offers several benefits, including cost savings, an already-established knowledge of and relationship with the local community, and that teachers are already trained in various instructional strategies. This can help foster deeper connections between school district leadership, parents, and community members. Replicating programs in both the secondary and adult education space will allow for comparable skills and concepts to be taught to all Hoosiers.



[10]

Coalescing career pathways and programs of study into one concept allows Indiana to serve both adults and high school students through coordinated, aligned, and structured pathways leading towards recognized postsecondary credentials. Additionally, career pathways and programs of study in the same employment sector could share employer partnerships and industry-recognized credentials identified as most relevant for their local economies. They would leverage each other's industry connections and other strengths, reducing duplication, maximizing funding, and building wide-reaching partnerships. Aligning our Programs of Study to postsecondary education will also further the matriculation between our Adult Education programs and higher education. For example, AE providers could take our established model for our Programs of Study and supplement it with academic remediation, financial literacy, and digital literacy, creating a new type of IET model.

One example of adapting a Program of Study for adult students is through Indiana's State Earn and Learn model:



Through postsecondary Perkins funds, we can expand our work-based learning activities for adult students to include career exploration and engagement experiences. As adult students progress through the high school level curricula in their AE program, our Perkins funds could offer a variety of career exploration and awareness opportunities connected to postsecondary education and employment. Through talent tours, job shadowing, worksite tours, class audits, campus visits and tours, industry speakers, and informational interviews, Perkins can help make connections for adult students to postsecondary education and jobs as they transition to more challenging work. Because our Perkins dollars flow through our community colleges, AE providers would need to work with these institutions to build these experiences into programs. Connecting WIOA Title II to Perkins allows us to make career coaching more experiential for our adult students. As well, through our community colleges, our adult students can learn how they can continue their educational pursuits through financial aid opportunities, like the Pell Grant or credit-bearing Workforce Ready Grants.

Title I – Adults or Youth (Core Program): Individuals who are in need of adult basic education services can be co-enrolled under Title I – Adults to provide any additional wraparound services an individual may need. As Title II, braided with employer or federal financial support, can fund education and training costs, WIOA Adult offers funding for work-based learning, transportation, financial support, and other needed services. In addition to prioritizing wraparound supports, WIOA Adult can also fund individualized assessments to determine eligibility for career interests, skill levels (including literacy, numeracy, and English language proficiency), aptitudes, and abilities (including skill gaps). WorkOne staff may assist with employability skills development (learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, and professional conduct) to prepare for employment or training. Either WIOA Adult or Wagner-Peyser can help fund connections for AE students to career fairs and employment opportunities within the local, county, and state geography. WIOA Adult can fund any follow-up services, such as individualized counseling regarding the work place, how to successfully navigate the new environment, or any other additional services customized for the constituent.

As discussed in the Low-Income Adult section, many out-of-school youth may also be co-enrolled into Adult Education to receive remedial support. While WIOA Title II can help with academic remediation (and occupational training depending on the program) and assisting out-of-school youth earn an HSE, WIOA Youth, like WIOA Adult, can help with wraparound supports, as well as serve as a gap filler for educational training costs and wraparounds supports. Some services that can be prioritized for a co-enrolled individual include:

1. Paid and unpaid work experiences;
2. Leadership development opportunities;
3. Supportive services;
4. Mentoring;
5. Follow-up services; and
6. Comprehensive guidance and counseling.

Title III – Wagner-Peyser (Core Program): Wagner-Peyser could supplement AE and Perkins funding towards career coaching (either in-person or virtually) and exploration activities. Local Boards could pioneer virtual chatting through a chatbox feature with a career coach as a way to increase accessibility to WorkOnes. Wagner-Peyser staff or funding could also help offer information to adult students regarding current labor market trends and job availability, future employment needs in sectors and industries, and connections to employers and employer associations where opportunities may exist. Through our Wagner-Peyser funds, we can ensure our joint career pathways/programs of study are continually adapting to changes in our economy, technology, and workforce.

Potential Eligibility: Additional programs and services a Hoosier may receive depending on individual circumstances. This section includes ***Core and Partner Program Activities***,***Activities outside the Plan***, and***Individual Services***for adults in this target population.

SNAP and TANF (Partner Programs): Adults enrolled under WIOA Title II may also be recipients of SNAP or TANF; these populations might have a great deal of overlap. SNAP E&T may supplement funding for tuition and fees, career coaching, and administrative expenses for SNAP participants. TANF, however, can help provide funding for any wraparound services an individual may require. TANF can offset the costs of childcare support, transportation, and housing. As well, using **SNAP 50/50** to match any non-federal funds can also contribute funding towards participants' direct expenses. For those receiving SNAP and TANF and needing support in academic remediation, earning an HSE, or English language acquisition, E&T funding could support co-enrollment in Adult Education programs, supplementing any programmatic or career counseling costs. Because educational attainment is strongly correlated with economic mobility, streamlining funds and supports to effectively serve our SNAP and TANF recipients will expedite career and economic advancement. While Indiana establishes a common intake process, we will cross-train those administering SNAP and TANF – from the state to local level – to increase warm referrals to our WorkOnes for career services

Title IV – Vocational Rehabilitation (Core Program): Vocational Rehabilitation may serve as a funding source for those individuals with a disability and that need help with assistive technology services. Because a learning disability may have contributed to the factors causing a student to drop out of high school or have a deficiency in basic skills, there may be a significant overlap between Hoosiers seeking AE services and needing accommodations. Furthering our existing coordination between our Adult Education providers and Vocational Rehabilitation

services will help ensure our AE students receive any needed assistive technologies, personal and vocational adjustment services, rehabilitation technology, and adaptive aids and devices. Vocational Rehabilitation can also assist funding career counseling and exploration activities, serving as a gap filler to support these activities for eligible adult students.

Workforce Diploma Reimbursement Program (State Program): The Workforce Diploma Reimbursement Program offers an opportunity for eligible program providers to deliver Hoosiers over the age of twenty-two with outcomes-driven instruction within the adult education space. Through offerings, such as employability skills, career pathways, coursework, and certifications, which lead to a workforce diploma, eligible program providers will afford life-changing opportunities to those seeking to better their lives. The services offered to Hoosiers under this program include developing employability skills and career and technical education skills, obtaining a high school diploma, providing remedial coursework in literacy and numeracy; preparing for industry-recognized credentials, and offering career placement services. This is a new program in Indiana, and we, currently, have one provider – Graduation Alliance.

State Earn and Learns (State Program): State Earn and Learns is a state-recognized apprenticeship program. Adult Education can partner with our SEALs to provide additional funding and academic supports for the program. It offers individuals a different kind of IET to remediate academic skills, obtain technical knowledge, and gain a quality work experience and income throughout the process. This blends public and private dollars to get an individual the necessary basic academic skills and technical training for career advancement and earning an HSE. Enrollment in this program would also be contingent upon an individual's interests, since these are also focused in Indiana's priority sectors,

The three subgroups found within those without a high school diploma or who have basic skill deficiencies – English Learners, immigrants, and refugees – share similar challenges and requirements in order to access higher wages and middle-skill jobs. English Learners (ELs) are sometimes also known as Limited English Proficient (LEP) individuals. A majority of these individuals come from homes that do not speak or use English as their primary language. In most cases, these individuals require specialized, modified, instruction for their English language and other academic courses potentially in their native language. English language acquisition is a key part of WIOA Title II, targeting those needing assistance in their proficiency and fluency in English. ELs, immigrants, and refugees tend to face similar language barriers constraining them towards low-skill and low-wage jobs, therefore allowing Indiana to take a broader approach to these subgroups. Migrant/Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFWs) may also intersect with this target population, as they often require assistance with English language acquisition. MSFWs may differ from other ELs due to their experiences with housing instability and long periods of unemployment based on the nature of their work.

Our most commonly spoken languages beyond English include: Spanish, Arabic, Mandarin, Burmese, and Vietnamese.[11] Of those seeking out Adult Education programs, in 2019, 5,407 were English Learners. A high level of ELs are enrolled in AE had a high school diploma (3,224 or 60%) or a college degree (1,444 with a college degree 28%). Because so many of our ELs with secondary or postsecondary credential seek Adult Education, Indiana will utilize this talent pipeline to its full potential. As a step to address this issue, Indiana was recently selected for the World Education Services **Skilled Immigrant Integration Program** (SIIP) **(Private Program)**. The target population for this program are immigrants residing in the Indianapolis Metro area who have credentials from their countries, but not in the US. This program will provide

immigrants in the central Indiana region with customized training, coaching, and technical assistance to advance Indiana's skilled immigrant integration efforts. Indiana's application focus on Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education funding, which we will use to create cross-disciplinary education programs for skilled immigrants to get them working in their area of expertise. The other area of focus is on addressing the barriers to English language learning for the immigrant population of Indianapolis. Indiana will join a community of practice of states and local multisector networks to develop career pathways resources, employer engagement strategies, and data and research to better leverage this source of talent in our state.

As the need for multilingual employees grows amongst Indiana's businesses, these individuals possess a linguistic fluency, as well as cultural competency, that will be an asset to them in their careers. While it is important for these students to become proficient in English, the dichotomy is that fluency in other languages will be equally beneficial to these students in the long-term. These individuals present a talent pipeline to fill a growing economic need.

WorkOnes offer non-native English speakers access to interpreter services through a contracted language interpretation provider. The contract allows for in-person interpretation of the primary languages spoken in Indiana. We also offer phone interpretation services for additional languages not provided for by in-person interpretation. The required "Equal Opportunity is the Law" notice (the EO Notice) is available in both English and Spanish at all of our WorkOnes. Indiana's Unemployment Insurance handbook is also now available in Spanish. Additional EL services are provided at the regional level, such as bilingual staff, hand-held translators, and English as a Second Language classes (offered through Title II).

Immigrants are represented in jobs at all wage and skill levels, though they are overrepresented in industries with either low or high education requirements due to the educational levels of immigrants being concentrated at either the higher and lower ends of the education spectrum.. Nearly one-third of immigrants age 25 and older in the US lacked a high school diploma or equivalent, about 19% had some college or a two-year degree, and about 29% had a college degree or higher. This wide range of educational attainment for immigrants translates clearly into job opportunities – with those immigrants with higher levels of education obtaining the higher paid and skilled positions, and vice versa for those on the low levels. The national statistics for immigrant labor participation illustrates this growing gap within the immigrant community. Immigrants comprise 16% of our national workforce, they are almost 50% of the workers in the service of private households, and over 30% of the labor force in the accommodation or lodging sector. Immigrants are 20 to 25% of the workers in the construction, agriculture, food services, and warehousing industries. 23% of immigrant workers are in the IT and high-tech manufacturing industries.[12]

Immigrant-serving and workforce organizations, therefore, must be positioned to provide a pipeline of skills and economic opportunity for immigrants and refugees, given the diversity of backgrounds. A well-rounded package of services include education, occupational training, wraparound supports, quality employment, and empowerment. Acclimating to American society and culture involves linguistic, economic, and civic education components. Our Adult Education providers should provide these as overlapping services that reinforce one another through a contextualized educational approach, rather than as segmented subject areas. For example, a version of contextualized education that offers English language instruction while delivering vocational training would speed students' progress through both programs. Best practices for this target population combine English language practice with vocational training and basic-plus reading and numeracy skills. It is similar to the IET model used for AE students, but with more emphasis on language fluency and acquisition.

Other studies have noted that while English language instruction is important, that cannot be the sole focus of workforce development opportunities.[13] These subgroup populations also benefit from access to career training opportunities. In addition to language and technical training, occupational and safety training has emerged as an important factor for immigrants and refugees to find success in the labor market. Occupational and safety training is especially key to addressing job retention and other job-quality issues for immigrants in lower-wage and lower-skilled jobs. Any additional efforts or programming around job quality can help increase immigrants' options, because a large proportion of this population is overrepresented in industries that pay low wages and often have low job quality standards.

Bridge programs with integrated instruction of English language and technical skills offers immigrants the opportunity to improve language skills while obtaining useful career and technical skills and accessing job-readiness supports. This type of interdisciplinary approach to adult education for immigrants and English Learners currently occurs with the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) program under WIOA Title II. This program assists immigrants with preparation for citizenship and full participation in the civic life of their community. Through partnerships with community colleges and employers, we can apply this interdisciplinary instructional model to workforce development. We want to encourage more of our AE providers to offer this type of instructional approach for English Learners, immigrants, and refugees to allow these individuals to acquire English, learn our culture, and gain employable skills.

For programs serving this target population, partnerships with unions and worker centers can be instrumental in providing education and training services to immigrants. Day laborer centers, also known as worker centers, represent a potentially powerful engine for supporting immigrant skill building. Connecting our worker centers with our local community colleges for technical training, with AE providing the language acquisition support, could develop robust programs for immigrant workers that can accommodate the erratic schedules and family responsibilities of their participants, while also ensuring that local employment opportunities for the relevant occupations actually exist. Similarly, partnerships with trade organizations and unions could open immense opportunities for long-term economic stability for this population. These partnerships could help working immigrants connect to and succeed in work and training through a pre-apprenticeship or on-the-job training model that is directly tied to a **registered apprenticeship**. Furthering options for registered apprenticeships for immigrant workers offers employment during training and often a guaranteed quality job at the end.

Because of the diversity within this target population, an IET may not be the best fit for all immigrants, such as those already possessing postsecondary credentials. In some instances, the individual may be at the appropriate academic levels in the areas of math and science, but simply need assistance navigating and understanding a new language. This population, perhaps more so than others, needs their instructions and programs differentiated to them based on their ability and long-term goals. Intentionality of instruction and programming is one of the most critical factors to consider when serving immigrants. Research shows that organizations that intentionally differentiate their programs to address the needs of immigrants were more successful in helping this subgroup connect to training and jobs than those organizations that serve immigrants in the same manner as other populations.[14]

For WorkOnes to focus on intentionality, they must examine how they recruit and serve clients who are not born in the United States. Key considerations include language, networking, cultural awareness, and status issues, as well as recognizing that this subgroup is incredibly diverse in terms of culture, linguistics, educational attainment, and experiences. Intentionality

could also apply to program outreach and recruitment methods. Those programs in regions with many immigrants should consider involving immigrant groups and organizations. Partnering with immigrant organizations can help provide individuals with wraparound supports, such as childcare and transportation, which may be critical to successfully completing an AE program. One example of this type of partnership operates out the South Bend, Indiana. Students who attend the South Bend Community School Corporation's Adult Education program may access a family literacy program at **The Beacon**, a non-profit community organization serving the west side of the city. The Adult Education program includes HSE instruction, English language learning, and a trade's certification, while providing an educational daycare for children and free transportation to and from classes at The Beacon using community partners. The Beacon is a shared space community center and houses more than 15 partner organizations that offer weekly academic, recreational, or mentoring programs to the community.

In order to receive WIOA Title II services, individuals do not need to present proof of immigration status or have employment authorization. WIOA Title II is silent on the question of participants' immigration status and does not require that participants be legally work authorized. To access any WIOA Title I services, individuals must be meet certain residency requirements.[15] Refugees, in particular, are able to receive both Titles I and II services for employment and training opportunities and wraparound supports. Partnering with refugee resettlement groups can address the "brain waste" that can exist within refugee communities. "Brain waste" is defined as unemployment or underemployment in jobs significantly below the education and skill levels of immigrants and refugees.[16] Additionally, refugees can be on HIP as their health insurance plan. Medicaid offices work with local refugee organizations to ensure access to this critical supportive service. Furthering partnerships between our WorkOnes and these communities can help address both current workforce needs and provide this subgroup with more opportunities for middle-skills jobs.

One strategy we intend to employ to help refugees in Indiana access more services is to classify them as **WIOA Dislocated Worker**. Though refugees are legally able to access WIOA Title I services, they may not have the usual documentation needed to qualify. As a way to increase their opportunities to additional employment and training services, we intend on funding any service for refugees through our WIOA Dislocated Worker stream. Refugees who do not have the usual documentation (a letter signifying a layoff) for enrollment as a dislocated worker can be assigned to a career coach to provide a registrant statement documenting the date of dislocation and reasons for the lack of the usual documentation. Through this fund, these individuals can obtain greater employment and training opportunities, as well as any wraparound support they may need to find quality employment. This will also help address some of the burden on our WIOA Adult funds, fill our in-demand jobs in more skilled trades, and leverage a less traditional talent pipeline to spur Indiana's economy.

Scaling Promising Practices: Below we highlight promising practices that we hope to see scaled and replicated to address the unique barriers and challenges of this target population. Our local regions can implement these practices through strategic use of WIOA funds, philanthropic or community foundation dollars, or social impact bonds. Where applicable, local Boards or community organizations can coordinate with state agencies to apply for SNAP 50/50 FNS, which will serve as a 50% federal match for any state or philanthropic funding dedicated to SNAP recipients receiving Employment and Training services. These practices are ***Activities outside the Plan***. While not a comprehensive list, the practices showcase innovative approaches to assisting our Hoosiers without a high school diploma and/or deficient in basic skills in surmounting their unique circumstances.

Cook Medical (Employer Program): The 'My Cook Pathway' offers current or future employees at Cook who successfully complete the pre-employment screening process the opportunity to earn their Indiana High School Equivalency Diploma while working at Cook part time. Employees work 28 hours a week and take classes 12 hours a week to prepare for the Test Assessing Secondary Completion (TASC). The education component includes attending seven weeks of prep classes given by the Broadview Learning Center and located at Ivy Tech Community College. When someone passes the TASC and demonstrates success in the part-time role, s/he will be offered a full-time position at Cook Medical. The full-time positions could be in production, quality control, packaging, or warehouse. Participation in the program is free for the individual plus earning an income, thus alleviating the education and life expenses tug-of-war that prevents individuals from pursuing educational opportunities. Cook has also built in a career pathway for individuals to advance to higher levels of employment.

The Excel Center (State and Philanthropic Program): The Excel Center, operated by Goodwill Education Initiatives, Inc., allows students to learn at their own pace and complete their educational requirements throughout the year. It has grown to 15 schools in central and southern Indiana. The Excel Center offers a high school diploma, not a high school equivalency. Students are required to meet each prerequisite necessary to earn a high school diploma. It offers students an accelerated eight-week term to teach language arts, mathematics, science and social studies to students through five terms per calendar year. Classes are offered during both day and evening hours Monday through Thursday. Supportive services offered at each campus include transportation, childcare, and other life necessities. As this is both state and philanthropically funded, a WorkOne could refer an out-of-school youth or adult student to the Excel Center for education and training. **WIOA Youth** funds could go to the student to help with additional wraparound supports. If the individual is also a SNAP recipient, **SNAP E&T** funds or **SNAP 50/50** could also be used by the Excel Center to supplement or fill any gaps in services.

Christel House Adult Education (State and Philanthropic Program): Christel House DORS South is another option for those seeking adult education. Christel House DORS South provides AE classes and course work to those who understand the necessity of earning a high school distinction. Through offering high school course work, as well as occupational trainings, Christel House DORS South provides the opportunities required for individuals to take the next step along his or her educational and career journey. In addition to occupational trainings, 100% of graduating seniors leave with dual credits, making them not only employable, but also have a connection to future postsecondary education. It is a tuition free high school for adults 18 and older who wish to attain their high school diploma. Christel House college and careers coordinators support alumni students for up to five years after graduation to help support them in their transition to training programs, college, workforce or apprenticeships. They have multiple locations throughout the city of Indianapolis. Similar to the Excel Center, WIOA and/or SNAP E&T funds could be provided to this school to offer these services to out-of-school youth.

Gary Middle College Adult Education (State and Philanthropic Program): Gary Middle College is an accelerated adult education program where students can earn a CORE 40 high school diploma from the State of Indiana. Students are able to transfer previously earned credits and test scores from past high schools and will complete the remaining credit requirements at Gary Middle College prior to graduation. Similar to the Excel Center and Christel House DORS, WIOA and/or SNAP E&T funds could be provided to this school to offer these services to out-of-school youth. Each student is required to attend classes four hours a day, but, with a flexible schedule, they can choose which time they will attend. This allows students to fit in life responsibilities, such as work and home life, while working towards their betterment.

RecycleForce (Employer Program): RecycleForce is a social enterprise delivering comprehensive recycling services for e-waste while supporting workforce training, development, and job placement for ex-offenders transitioning back to society. RecycleForce helps ex-offenders break down the barriers to employment by providing transitional jobs for up to six months, as well as comprehensive services designed to get their lives back on track. The RecycleForce model offers program participants an integrated focus on jobs skills, character development, and personal counseling. In partnership with Warren Township in central Indiana, current employees are offered the opportunity to obtain employability and basic academic skills, as well as an HSE, if needed, through the Warren Adult Education program. RecycleForce compensates employees for time spent in class in pursuit of their HSE. Once the employees have met their goals, a third partner, Keys to Work, helps the clients to find permanent employment.

[1] Indiana Business Research Center, 2017. Adults Age 18 to 64 without a High School Diploma or HSE, 2017.

[2] INContext, 2018. A closer look at Hoosiers with no high school diploma.

[3] Indiana Department of Workforce Development. Adult Education Infographic.

[4] Doll et al., 2013. Understanding Why Students Drop Out of High School, According to Their Own Reports: Are They Pushed or Pulled, or Do They Fall Out? A Comparative Analysis of Seven Nationally Representative Studies.

[5] Ivy Tech Community College, 2013. Ivy Tech Community College Announces Math Pathways Project.

[6] INContext, 2018. A closer look at Hoosiers with no high school diploma.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Indiana Commission for Higher Education, 2018. College Return on Investment Report 2018.

[9] The data model assumes that high school graduates begin earning at age 18 and that college students do not work while in school. In reality, about 32% of full-time students and 72% of part-time students are employed while in college. Similarly, not all high school graduates are fully employed or self-supporting at age 18. The projections are based on the "net" cost of college after financial aid. For students who complete on time, the average cost after financial aid to attend a four-year Indiana public college is about $11,500 per year, and the net cost to attend a two-year public college is about $7,300. The model also assumes that students incur average levels of student debt, that interest does not start accruing until after graduation, and that loans are paid off at average interest rates over a ten year period. About 2/3 of Hoosiers students rely on student loans to finance their education. On average, students at four-year Indiana public colleges accumulate about $27,000 in loans (excluding interest), compared to about $17,000 for students who attend two-year public colleges.

[10] U.S. Department of Education Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education, December 2015. Advancing Career and Technical Education in State and Local Career Pathways Systems.

[11] Indiana Public Media, February 2016. Indiana is Educating More English Language Learners.

[12] The Aspen Institute, 2016. Improving Immigrant Access to Workforce Services: Partnerships, Practices & Policies.

[13] McHugh and Challinor, 2011. Improving Immigrants' Employment Prospects through Work-Focused Language Instruction; and Burt and Mathews-Aydinli, 2007. Workplace Instruction and Workforce Preparation for Adult Immigrants.

[14] The Aspen Institute, 2016. Improving Immigrant Access to Workforce Services: Partnerships, Practices & Policies.

[15] Federal policy guidance affirms that immigrants who are Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients are eligible for WIOA Title I service.

[16] Migration Policy Institute. Brain Waste & Credential Recognition.

D. COORDINATION, ALIGNMENT AND PROVISION OF SERVICES TO EMPLOYERS

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

In order to create a more robust talent development system and advance our populous towards economic mobility, Indiana must foster impactful relationships between businesses, community partners, and government agencies. We have successfully attracted and supported businesses of all sizes to our state, but we need to deepen our current partnerships with engaged businesses and expand our outreach to involve more businesses to ensure we keep up with the rapid pace of global change. Successful business engagement must deliver value to employers, which will require our talent development programs to be more accessible and user-friendly. We must also start to engage with businesses holistically, rather than focusing solely on their current needs and find ways to diversify hiring practices. 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.

The importance of building better connections to employers and addressing the changing nature of work initiated the creation of the Governor's Workforce Cabinet (GWC) Industry Committee. Committee members bring experience and perspective from across a number of sectors, including state agencies (Department of Workforce Development, Family and Social Services Administration, Commission for Higher Education, and Department of Corrections), GWC members, business representatives, education representatives, Ivy Tech Community College, Vincennes University, Purdue University, local workforce boards, and other stakeholders. The Committee developed the following priorities to strengthen the partnership and services provided to employers that will enhance the lives of those working today and drive positive outcomes for future occupations. These priorities include:

1. New training and technical assistance for Workforce Development Boards and staff for a better employer experience for employers of every size.
2. Identifying and highlighting community partnerships for employers to engage with the talent development system.

3. Expanding the reach and connection to apprenticeships and other work-based learning experiences.
4. Assisting Hoosier small businesses and entrepreneurs to thrive in our increasingly global economy.
5. Leveraging economic and employer data to address current and future needs.
6. Modifying resources and tools based on employer feedback to provide a better user experience.
7. Promoting talent diversity and non-traditional hiring practices.

1. **New training and technical assistance for workforce staff and workforce boards for a better employer experience for employers of every size.** An immediate priority is to develop new training and technical assistance for local Workforce Development Boards and workforce staff. A better understanding of all resources – whether those are provided by the WIOA core programs and are offered within our WorkOnes, state funded programs, such as NextLevel Jobs, or other services funded by Partner Programs – will allow local workforce staff to better connect resources and programs to the individuals they serve and employers in their communities based upon the particular needs of each. All staff, regardless of their role, need to be well-versed in the leading industry sectors in their region and the resources available to help employers develop the talent they need. Specific board training will be created for the workforce board members and staff to enhance knowledge, duties, and understanding of their responsibilities as it relates to how the talent development system can connect with employers.

Development of this training will be led by the Department of Workforce Development with input from the GWC, other state agencies, local boards, and employers as a priority. The training will minimally focus on raising awareness and understanding of the following:

- Workforce programs outside of WIOA:
    - **Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG).** To serve veterans effectively and efficiently, Local Veterans' Employment Representative (LVER) staff focus on employer outreach on behalf of veterans. This allows the State to develop marketing strategies and outreach activities that promote the hiring of veterans. It also properly concentrates LVER staff efforts on individualized job development services for veterans, especially veterans determined to be job ready after receipt of intensive services from a DVOP specialist. When employer outreach is primarily accomplished by a "business services team" or like entity (as it is in Indiana), LVER staff are included as an active member of that team. LVER staff work with other service providers to promote the advantages of hiring Veterans to employers and employer groups. They position job-seeking veterans as individuals who have highly marketable skills and experience.LVER staff serve as advocates for veterans with business, industry, and other community-based organizations by participating in a variety of outreach activities such as:
- Planning and participation in job and career fairs;

- Coordination with unions, apprenticeship programs, and business organizations to promote employment and training programs for veterans;
- Informing Federal Contractors of their responsibility to recruit and retrain qualified veterans; and
- Promoting credentialing and licensing opportunities for veterans.

When assigned responsibility for more than one local office or service delivery point, LVER staff conduct outreach and job development activities throughout their area of responsibility.

- **Workforce Ready Grants**, a state program through Next Level Jobs, will pay the tuition and mandatory fees for eligible high-value certificate programs at Ivy Tech Community College, Vincennes University, or other approved providers. The grant is available for two years and covers up to the number of credits required by the qualifying program. The qualifying high-value certificate programs were selected based on employer demand, wages, job placements and program completion rate. These programs are aligned with Indiana's highest demand sectors:

- Advanced Manufacturing
- Building & Construction
- Health Sciences
- IT & Business Services
- Transportation & Logistics
- **Employer Training Grants**: Under these grants, employers may qualify for reimbursement of up to $5,000 per employee trained and retained for six months. Each employer may qualify for up to $50,000 per employer. Employers must submit an application, satisfy eligibility requirements and receive and sign a formal agreement obligating grant funding. Employers must offer occupational skills training directly correlated with in-demand jobs in our six high-growth job fields (Advanced Manufacturing, Agriculture, IT & Business Services, Building & Construction, Health & Life Sciences, and Transportation & Logistics). The training must be greater than 40 hours and ideally result in a stackable certificate or credential upon completion (onboarding training and informal job shadowing does not qualify). Additionally, the employer must ensure a wage gain at the completion of training for current employees trained to new skill sets; there is no current wage requirement for new hires trained. Employer Training Grants receive $20 million in funding through the state's budget.
- Funding for work-based learning:
    - The **Employer Aid Readiness Network (EARN) Indiana** is an experiential learning internship program administered by the Indiana Commission for Higher Education (CHE) in partnership with Indiana INTERNnet (IIN), which is administered by the Indiana Chamber of Commerce. It is designed to provide financial assistance to employers who provide paid internships for qualified Hoosier students currently enrolled full- or part-time in a postsecondary education program.[1]

        - **Employer Training Grants** are also available to help fund work-based learning programs for high school students. If a student earns an industry-recognized credential, the employer is eligible for $1,000 reimbursement to offset any costs, including wages. As schools increase their work-based learning programs, Workforce Development Boards can facilitate partnerships with employers to use this grant to cover any expenses from providing these experiences to at-risk youth, in particular.
        - Under Vocational Rehabilitation, **Pre-Employment Transition Services** (Pre-ETS) funding for students with disabilities ages 14 to 22 can assist with developing, expanding, or enhancing in-school, after school, or summer work experience opportunities. These funds can potentially provide students competitive wages or training stipends for work performed during an employment experience.
        - Using AE funds, Hoosiers without a diploma or deficient in basic skills can enroll in basic skill and/or English Learner classes at employer sites through the **Workforce Education Initiative**. This allows the Hoosier to be employed and earning an income and able to improve his/her academic skills. It combines education, provided through AE, and employment at a site convenient for the individual. Often, the individual can earn a short-term certificate (e.g., NIMS Level I, Comp TIA A+, or Entry Level AWS) that can be stacked toward more advanced certification and professions. We currently have about 75 employers participating, including some larger employers, like Tyson Foods.
- Postsecondary financial aid:
    - The **Adult Student Grant** is part of Indiana's You Can. Go Back. program. It offers a renewable $2,000 grant to assist returning adult students in starting or completing an postsecondary credential. To qualify, students must be financially independent as determined by the FAFSA, demonstrate financial need, and be enrolled in at least six credit hours.
- Potential tax credits:
    - To help more businesses begin to hire and retain this target population, our business services team can help increase Hoosier employers using the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (**WOTC)**. The WOTC reduces employer cost by providing federal tax credit for private, for-profit employers to encourage hiring of individuals from our target populations. The credit is 25% of qualified first year wages for those employed at least 120 hours and 40% for those employed 400 hours or more. Employers maintain all hiring decisions and there is no limit to the number of new hires who can qualify for the tax savings. Employers can hire eligible employees from the following target groups for the WOTC:
        - A TANF or SNAP recipient,
        - A qualified veteran;
        - Ex-felon;
        - A resident of a designated community;

        - A referral from Vocational Rehabilitation;
        - Summer Youth Employee;
        - A recipient of Supplemental Security Income;
        - Long-Term Family Assistance Recipient; and
        - Qualified Long-Term Unemployment Recipient.

    - The **Federal Bonding Program** coverage is also available for individuals based on their history to assist in easing the concern of an employer by covering the potential or estimated risk to the employer for financial loss.

    - The **Architectural Barrier Removal Tax Credit** or the **Disabled Tax Credit** can encourage employers to hire individuals from this target group, as well as help offset any employer costs for accommodations. The Disabled Access Credit provides a non-refundable credit of up to $5,000 for small businesses that incur expenditures for the purpose of providing access to persons with disabilities. The Architectural Barrier Removal Tax Deduction encourages businesses of any size to remove architectural and transportation barriers to the mobility of persons with disabilities and the elderly. Businesses may claim a deduction of up to $15,000 a year for qualified expenses for items that normally must be capitalized. Businesses may use the Disabled Tax Credit and the architectural/transportation tax deduction together in the same tax year, if the expenses meet the requirements of both sections.[2] In addition to the intangible benefits of hiring with individuals with disabilities, promoting these tax credits may alleviate some consternation employers may have regarding costs. In addition to creating greater awareness and understanding of accommodation costs, our business teams can help employers take advantage of federal tax credits which will help assuage any uncertainty.

- Available tools and resources:
    - **Credential Engine**'s Credential Registry is a database that captures, connects, and makes searchable critical information about all kinds of credentials: from degrees to certificates, badges to micromasters, apprenticeships to employer training programs, and certifications to licenses. The organization obtains this information under agreements with colleges, certification bodies, industry associations, and other credentialing and quality assurance organizations. The Credential Finder is a search app that accompanies the Registry. It enables employers, students, career counselors and others to find credentials of interest and compare them along many dimensions. When considering hundreds of thousands of the credentialing options facing an individual, having a constituent or case manager use this tool will help determine valuable options.

    - Additional resources through the Indiana State Chamber of Commerce and its newly formed **Institute for Workforce Excellence** are dedicated to helping businesses attract, develop, and retain the talent that will drive a highly skilled

and productive workforce. The Institute brings together tools and resources to assist employers in building their talent pipeline. The Institute coordinates a variety of existing programs and has identified potential areas of focus to include apprenticeships, talent assessment, employer learning networks and more. The importance of the Institute is further demonstrated by the results of the Indiana Chamber Foundation's 2019 annual employer workforce survey. Almost half (49%) of survey respondents left jobs unfilled in the past year due to underqualified applicants and nearly three-quarters (73%) cite filling their workforce needs as a significant challenge. A majority (58%) have not partnered with education institutions or other workforce training providers to develop talent and only half are working with K-12 schools on career awareness efforts. Now is more important than ever to create synergy to reinforce and champion the services and opportunities provided through the local workforce system. By business advocacy organizations, state and local workforce development organizations, and other stakeholders increasing their collaboration, state and local government can help employers and Hoosiers be competitive in an economy that increasingly needs more diversified skills and digital literacy.

Our primary strategy is to increase the number of businesses engaging with and utilizing the talent development system as a whole by 25% each year (or approximately 100 businesses). Additionally, over the next fiscal year, state agencies will analyze our business engagement data (including Business Awareness, Business Penetration, and Business Retention) to understand the effectiveness of current outreach strategies. Indiana must also develop a common methodology and processes for tracking these data. Our objective is to cultivate, in partnership with businesses, strategies for investments into workforce solutions and talent development, as well as the recruitment and retention of talent. It is more important than ever to create synergy to reinforce and champion the excellent services and opportunities provided through the local workforce system. That starts with creating better awareness of the services that the system as a whole can provide employers. Having staff that is cross-trained to understand the plethora of programs offered across the talent system as a whole will help local staff connect employers to the services they need.

As Indiana's economy and talent pipelines continually evolve, we need our employers to start implementing non-traditional hiring practices. The practices include recruiting, attracting, and retaining individuals from any of our target populations that have historically faced barriers to sustainable employment. These untapped populations present great upskilling and reskilling potential to help fill Indiana's current and future job openings. In order to meet the demand for employees, Indiana's businesses must look to those populations that have traditionally overlooked. Additionally, as we scale models similar to the My Cook Pathway through **WorkINdiana**, we need our employers to understand that these are not merely philanthropic or corporate social responsibility activities. This program assists employers in building pathways to help their current and potential employees earn an HSE and improve their academic skills in an AE classroom while earning a career certification. Governor Holcomb is working with the Indiana General Assembly to potentially redefine this funding to assist employers with providing wraparound supports – such as career coaches, mentors, tutors, and other expenses – employees may need to successfully this program. These are ways to develop sustainable talent with industry-relevant, up-to-date skills and knowledge embedded.

2. Identifying and highlighting community partnerships for employers to engage with talent development system. As employers seek to make the most of automation for innovation and capacity, they will also need to manage complex transitions. The challenges will vary

depending on the nature, mix, and geographic footprint of their workforces.[3] Regions and local communities will need to prepare for positive change, focusing on job matching and mobility, skills and training, economic development and job creation, and support for workers in transition. Understanding the resources available and the talent pipeline within the workforce region and across the state will be crucial for employers as they evaluate their transitional needs as technology and globalization continues to transform the way work is performed. Local workforce boards, employer engagement teams, local economic development partners, and our education and training providers need to be aware of employers' needs so we continue to have a talent development system that is responsive and thrives in the face of these changes.

Local Workforce Development Boards will be a key partner in an ever changing economy for employers. Local Boards in Indiana are led by a staff executive and other key staff positions and governed by an appointed volunteer chair and other volunteer members consisting of business, education, labor, community, faith-based, and economic development leaders responsible for the strategic vision of workforce development and governance. The Boards operate the WorkOne and provide employer services. They drive local implementation of the workforce system, and their connection to employers is essential to set the right vision for the unique needs of the local talent development system. Local Boards must connect with multiple resources and communicate frequently with local economic development and chamber teams in order to acknowledge the specific needs for a local area.

In order to develop effective links with employers in regions to support employer utilization of the workforce development system and to support local workforce investment activities, the Boards must ensure they are collaborating with other local partners to fully comprehend all resources available to meet employer needs. The workforce system alone cannot meet the needs of a region. It is only when collaboration across the entire talent development and social services systems exist that employers and Hoosiers will be best served. Additionally, Workforce Development Boards might preference delving into deep relationships with those offering middle-wage positions, on-the-job training options, or additional wraparound supports. Urban areas, in particular, could err on the side of fewer, but deeper, relationships with employers, rather than more superficial relationships with a greater breadth of businesses. We should prioritize the quality of the relationship and services provided to the businesses before pursuing quantity. Because urban areas have the latter in abundance, ensuring the former is met will be a critical aspect of their business services.

One of the ways that Indiana can provide more opportunities for collaboration between local workforce boards and other regional initiatives is through the **21st Century Talent Regions** initiative. This partnership includes an exciting way to produce the data necessary to evaluate and acknowledge future needs for local economic growth. 21st Century Talent Regions are local collaboratives that commit to using a systems approach to attract, develop, and connect Hoosier talent. Regions are self-defined with regard to their geography and are working toward building and implementing a plan to increase educational attainment, raise household income, and grow population. For a community to become a 21st Century Talent Region, it must complete a set of required steps leading up to the designation. Each potential region must commit to working across geographic lines and across partner organizations to attract, develop, connect and retain talent. The 21st Century Talent Region must organize itself with a designated leader and regional participation including, but not limited to: local governments, businesses, K-12 education, economic development, higher education, non-profit(s), and local Workforce Development Boards. In collaboration with the state and with technical assistance provided by

CivicLab, the region must build a plan to grow its population (attract and retain talent), increase its educational attainment (develop talent), and raise household income (connect talent). After building a collaborative talent plan, a region must implement the priorities identified. Following this implementation, a region will receive a 21st Century Talent Region designation.

A 21st Century Talent Region commits to a comprehensive and systems approach to:

- Attracting Talent: Leveraging the power of place to grow the population of the region; Developing Talent: Building a home-grown learning system to cultivate talent and increase educational attainment;
- Connecting Talent: Coordinating talent with equitable economic opportunities to raise household income and earnings; and
- Systems-Building and Equity Focused: Working across the public, private and social sectors to develop a comprehensive talent approach while focusing on equitable outcomes for all.

The region develops a stakeholder engagement map and a regional dashboard to continue their work beyond their designation. Additional information on materials developed can be found here:
https://www.in.gov/cct/files/21st%20Century%20Talent%20Regions%20Briefing%20Document.pdf

Additionally, external partners can provide critical workforce supports. Navigating the myriad of workforce support structures, let alone administering various aspects of training or social supports, is often an extremely daunting task for employers, particularly small and medium-sized businesses who lack the manpower to put towards these initiatives. Throughout Indiana's communities and regions are a variety of potential partners in the non-profit, workforce development, education and training, and others that are skilled in providing social and educational services to support the talent needed by employers. Regular communication and collaboration amongst these community partners, coordinated in partnership with local workforce boards, allows employers to inform the types of training necessary as well as the necessary community services in an effective and efficient manner.

A few of these external partners include:

EcO (Southeast Indiana): The Economic Opportunities (EcO) Network is made up of education, community foundation, industry (including more than one hundred manufacturers and all seven hospitals), workforce, government, and community leaders from a 10-county region in southeast Indiana. The network works together to serve the collective good in order to accomplish their three goals:

- Move residents up at least one level in their education, training, and/or job placement,
- Coordinate and align a regional learning system, and
- Be a catalyst for regional leadership and collaboration.

Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership: Comprised of business and community leaders from across an 11-county region, the Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership builds, markets, and sells the region to increase business investment. In addition to serving as a conduit to nine higher education partners in the region, the Regional Partnership provides a variety of services to support the business community including confidential project management, customized site

tours, connections to regional political, business and community decision makers; and more, alleviating the burden on the business to navigate the myriad of partners to create collective opportunity

ROI (Southwest Central Indiana): The mission of Regional Opportunity Initiatives, Inc. (ROI) is to support economic and community prosperity in the 11 counties of Southwest Central Indiana. Through an initial $25,870,000 grant from Lilly Endowment Inc., ROI is implementing education and workforce initiatives and strategies for quality of place development.

Center of Excellence in Leadership of Learning (CELL): Created in 2001, CELL at the University of Indianapolis efforts are rooted in the principle that all students, regardless of background, should graduate from high school prepared for postsecondary education, training, and success in the 21st-century global economy. With primary funding from Lilly Endowment Inc., CELL has leveraged resources to unite schools, communities and businesses to make substantial, sustainable, statewide education change to improve academic success for Hoosier students and strengthen the quality of life and economic development in Indiana. A CELL initiative, Education Workforce Innovation Network (EWIN) strategically supports all Indiana regions to meet the state's workforce needs. EWIN facilitates the development of education, community and business partnerships, which then collaboratively design local career pathways systems. These pathways help students become college and career ready and also drive design of curricular programs grounded in the real world. EWIN helps engage businesses in K-16 learning experiences and provide the local workforce with highly skilled employees.

Indiana Manufacturing Competitiveness Center (IN-MaC): IN-MaC is housed within Purdue University. IN-MaC looks to create a stronger, more competitive manufacturing ecosystem for Indiana and the nation. This is done by mobilizing its resources, expertise and network to strengthen the relationship between workforce education, technology adoption, and manufacturing research to elevate Indiana as the manufacturing destination of choice. We will look to continue to strengthen the relationship between the Cabinet, IN-MaC, and other key organizations within the manufacturing sector such as Conexus and the Indiana Manufacturers Association. Modeling this type of collaboration at the state level, will only help further demonstrate to local communities the value in partnering to find solutions to the state's workforce needs.

Ivy Tech Community College: Ivy Tech Community College is Indiana's community college, the largest single-accredited statewide community college in the nation serving nearly 100,000 credit-bearing students, over 60,000 dual credit students, and more than 10,000 participants annually in employer-specific non-credit training at 18 campuses and more than 40 locations across Indiana. In 2016 the college implemented robust supply and demand analyses to bring focus to workforce aligned programming. Each campus aligns its programming to high-demand credentials including industry-recognized certifications and credit-bearing certificates, technical certificates, associate and transfer degrees. This work has increased the Ivy Tech's completions from approximately 20,000 in 2016 to more than 35,000 credentials awarded in 2019. This work is informed by both quantitative and qualitative sources including EMSI data and input at each campus from local employer advisory boards. The goal is to have 80% of Ivy Tech programs at relative equilibrium (supply matched to local demand on each campus) within 5 years.

In 2015, Ivy Tech and Old National Bank developed the signature **Achieve Your Degree** (AYD) program, designed to skill up frontline workers (tellers, CSR's, and non-degreed personnel). This innovative program offers many benefits to both students and employers. AYD 1) removes financial barriers through tuition deferral, 2) provides high-touch student support through a

concierge model with employer onsite assistance and intensive advising, 3) leverages employer tuition dollars through utilization of federal and state financial aid, and 4) supports completions in programs of student relevant to the employer's workforce needs. Since the program's inception in 2016, 3,490 students have enrolled in the AYD program and earning 804 degrees and other credentials. AYD credentials are concentrated in high-demand sectors, with the highest percentage (31%) awarded in business logistics and supply chain. Ivy Tech has more than 200 AYD employer partners and is co-branding with the Indiana Chamber of Commerce and others to aggressively expand AYD over the next several months.

Building on AYD expansion efforts, the Chamber and other partners including DWD are helping the College engage employers and adult students more effectively through an increased focus on talent pipeline development. A key strategy is to create and utilize a comprehensive ROI toolset aimed toward specific stakeholders including employers, employee-students, communities, and investors (government and philanthropy). These efforts are helping create a collective impact strategy to braid together, leverage, and deploy our resources to the benefit of Hoosiers. An additional strategy is around better coordination and utilization of technology platforms with a focus on integrating case management, career exploration and clarity tools, and data analytics to inform continuous improvement.

Vincennes University: Vincennes University (VU) was Indiana's first college in 1801 by William Henry Harrison. VU is state-supported with campuses in Vincennes and Jasper and additional sites such as Indianapolis, Lebanon, and Gibson County. VU is a leader in developing Early Colleges in partnership with high schools statewide. VU provides another partner and resource for employers as they consider the skills needed by their workforce. One such example of this is through the Automation and Robotics Academy in Dubois County. The Academy serves as an introduction to Advanced Manufacturing and robotics, giving students a solid base of preparation should they decide to go directly into the workforce. It also serves as a great foundation for VU's Career Advancement Partnership (CAP) program, which started in 2014. CAP is a work-based learning partnership in industrial maintenance with several Dubois County area employers that is similar to the Toyota AMT program. The ARA is hosted on the VU Jasper campus, in partnership with the four county school corporations and the Patoka Valley Career Cooperative. Students participating in this program earn dual credit and have internship opportunities with the local employers.

Connecting Indiana's community college system and universities with the local workforce system is now more important than ever. Indiana will work to partner with these institutions, so college and university team members participate and meet regularly with the designated local workforce staff to foster a greater understanding of the educational and skill development programs needed by employers. This can also reduce and align some of the local business conversations to increase participation, reduce redundant meetings, and excite local employers about the work being done with partners across the talent development system. Since the State Workforce Board is now the state federal Perkins authority, we have an opportunity to bring together secondary and postsecondary Perkins recipients and employers to better align educational outcomes with employer needs. This provides us with a unique opportunity to be more proactive in addressing future skills gaps before they become an issue. By identifying employer's future needs, we can tailor learning outcomes for both short-term, one year and less, and long-term, one to three year, career and technical education programs to align the skills of our talent pool to those that employers will need once those individuals complete their education and training programs. The GWC can address statewide skill gaps in this manner, while providing opportunities to support local boards to serve as conveners for regional education partners and employers to embed regional skill needs within the curriculum.

Local workforce boards and staff must further their efforts to have better communication with employers through sector partnerships so there is an awareness in the business community of the resources available to help boost the local economy.

3. Expanding the reach and connection to apprenticeships and additional work-based learning experiences. Significantly increasing work-based learning and apprenticeship opportunities is necessary for career exploration and providing real-world experiences. These are activities that will allow those in our target populations to gain knowledge, skills, and experience as they earn an income, thus alleviating the education and life expenses tug-of-war that prevents individuals from pursuing educational opportunities.

Seamlessly integrating the full work-based learning continuum into the Indiana talent development system will allow for both businesses and constituents to find sustainable success. We have recently started emphasizing work-based learning experiences in the high school space, as well as vertically aligning elementary and middle schools experiences with the work-based learning continuum. Students now have more opportunities to engage, explore, and experience career options.[4] As these opportunities continue to grow for our students, we must also ensure that a comparable work-based learning system for adults is also expanded.

These experiences can include:

- Talent tours;[5]
- Career fairs;
- Informational interviews with local employers;
- Job shadow experiences;
- Virtual exchanges with a business partner;
- State Earn and Learn programs;[6]
- A pre-apprenticeship or apprenticeship-readiness program;[7]
- Paid internships;
- Transitional jobs; and
- On-the-job training.

Rather than only focusing on traditional work-based learning experiences, employers can also offer the following less conventional approaches:

- Mentoring and shadowing: Experts within a company can formally or informally help new hires or incumbent workers master important skills.
- Virtual or online learning: These learning opportunities allow employees to train from home, rather than forcing everyone to gather on-site for training sessions.
- Microlearning and microinternships: This form of learning involves boosting employees' understanding of a particular program or topic through modules or compact experiences.

- Lunch-and-learn sessions: During these sessions, you can provide lunch for your employees and invite an expert from outside the company to share expertise on a particular subject.

Hoosier workforce regions have utilized work-based learning models for many years. On-the-job and customized trainings have been widely used and have been demonstrated to be very effective tools. Indiana's policies are developed to ensure that our providers continually evaluate and improve their work and learn strategies. Specifically, Indiana's workforce partners are required to review all work and learn programs with each company to ensure that the training received truly provides a high quality experience for the participant and helps them either advance at that company or pursue work at another company. Additionally, Indiana's policies require a review of the employment and advancement trends at employers that utilize the work and learn models to ensure that participants are completing the training, getting employed and then persisting in that employment.

In order to accelerate the growth the full continuum of work-based learning experiences, the Office of Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeship (OWBLA) was established by Governor Holcomb's Executive Order in March 2018. This office resides within the Indiana Department of Workforce Development, and works collaboratively across a number of state and local partners including: the Department of Education, Commission for Higher Education, Governor's Workforce Cabinet, local secondary and postsecondary institutions, local workforce boards, USDOL, and employers.

OWBLA's primary goals are to coordinate efforts and partner with the U.S. Department of Labor (U.S. DOL) to expand registered apprenticeships, develop flexible and scalable programs that focus on the state's key economic sectors and regional high-wage, high-demand occupations, and build public-private partnerships to increase business and industry engagement with education systems. The following entities have been awarded a 2019 U.S. DOL State Apprenticeship Expansion Grant:

- Hamilton Heights School Corporation/Indiana Construction Roundtable Foundation Building & Construction
- Ivy Tech Community College/Hoosier Hills Career Center: Building & Construction, IT & Business Services, Advanced Manufacturing
- Indiana Plan for Equal Employment, Inc.: Building & Construction
- Perry Central Community School Corporation: Advanced Manufacturing, Health & Life Sciences
- Region 10 Workforce Board, Inc.: Advanced Manufacturing, Health & Life Sciences, Transportation & Logistics
- Trilogy Health Services, LLC, Health & Life Sciences

The Office of Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeship has developed a scalable framework for state level apprenticeship programs, entitled **State Earn and Learn** (SEAL). The SEAL model strategically incorporates Related Instruction, On the Job Training, and Rewards for Skill Gain, all leading to an Industry Recognized Certification and developing a highly trained employee to fill the talent pipeline for Hoosier employers. These models are easily scaled across the state, and have been developed for both the youth and adult populations. The state is actively involved in continuous evaluation and updating of its full strategy for the implementation of registered apprenticeships throughout the state. Over the next year or so, OWBLA will look at

creating State Earn and Learns targeted for specific populations, like seniors, and in partnership with other workforce programs, like Adult Education and Perkins.

DWD and the Governor's Workforce Cabinet plan to continue to engage partners in the development of strategies, frameworks, and models to best implement work-and-learn experiences as a part of the state strategies, including continuing to elevate the importance of work-and-learn models. By partnering with employers and sector organizations to mitigate employer challenges and to determine best practices, the state will be able to generate employer support for broader participation statewide. This model also provides employers the opportunity to establish connections directly with potential employees by using this evidence-based approach to career readiness.

Indiana is working to increase and improve the work-and-learn models deployed throughout the state. Indiana has a high number of existing USDOL **registered apprenticeships** and with the partnership between USDOL and OWBLA continuing to grow, we will only increase the opportunities for companies to develop and implement apprenticeship models to create robust talent pipelines. The state continues to work with the USDOL Office of Apprenticeship in Indiana to coordinate information, expansion and eligibility of apprenticeships in Indiana. Further development of registered apprenticeships will play an increasingly important role with businesses across all industries by providing a pipeline of skilled workers to help them remain competitive. Many employers are increasing their use of registered apprenticeships as a "grow your own" strategy to increase and diversify their pipeline of skilled workers. This proven workforce strategy offers apprentices opportunities to earn a salary while they learn the skills employers demand in a variety of occupations.

Indiana has over 1,000 active apprenticeship programs and had nearly 17,000 active apprentices in FY 2018.[8] Indiana is one of the largest apprenticeship states in the nation based on size and number of programs available. Indiana is also one of the top states in terms of completions. Yet, like the rest of the nation, Indiana currently lacks much needed diversity in terms of ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status, and business sector roles.

DWD received both the ApprenticeshipUSA State Accelerator Grant and the ApprenticeshipUSA State Expansion Grant in order to grow and increase apprenticeships throughout the state. Through the support of these grants the DWD has worked with Indiana's USDOL Office of Apprenticeships and other key stakeholders to:

- Identify ways to integrate registered apprenticeship into state education and workforce systems (i.e. WIOA),
- Engage industry and other partners to expand apprenticeship to new sectors, such as IT, healthcare, cybersecurity and business services and to new non-traditional populations at scale, including through career and technical education programs of study design,
- Conduct outreach and work with employers to start other new, quality work-based learning programs,
- Identify ways to promote greater inclusion and diversity in apprenticeship such as sub-grants with The Indiana Plan LLC,
- Conduct research on youth apprenticeship models,
- Incorporate Registered Apprenticeship programs on to the state Education, Training and Provider List (ETPL), and

- Create a state apprenticeship model (SEALs).

In order to provide alignment with the workforce system, the regional Workforce Development Boards will serve as Registered Apprenticeship Intermediaries that assist in the expansion and facilitation of all Registered Apprenticeship programming across the state. Indiana will continue to expand Registered Apprenticeship programs as well as the number of apprentices enrolled in these programs. In further support of its state plan goals and strategies, Indiana will also continue to expand the opportunities for students to participate in programs that lead to Registered Apprenticeship while earning high school credit toward graduation. This is feasible because of a number of key policies enacted in recent years including Graduation Pathways, Indiana's new graduation requirements, and the CTE program of study realignment.

The Industry Committee was also able to explore the economic and training advantages of apprenticeships through a review of the **Local 150 Apprenticeship** model. This review demonstrated how apprenticeships prepare workers for good careers while meeting the needs of businesses who want to connect with the talent development system. Local 150 Operating Engineers operate heavy construction equipment, earth moving equipment, and road construction equipment. The key for this apprenticeship program's success is the employer-driven model.

The **Purdue Cyber Apprenticeship Program** (P-CAP), is an excellent example to the employer-driven model. P-CAP is a scalable cyber apprenticeship program aims to create a steady pipeline of skilled workers to both address workforce shortages and create a successful pathway to high-paying jobs for participants in cyber fields. P-CAP blends the traditional apprenticeship program with a college education, creating a new way to earn-and-learn for the 21st century. [9]

Apprenticeships help businesses develop highly-skilled employees, reduce turnover rates, increase productivity, and ease the burden of recruitment. According to the USDOL, 91% of apprentices that complete an apprenticeship are still employed nine months later.[10] The employer-led nature of apprenticeships ensures alignment between the education and training components of the program with industry standards and needs. Local workforce boards and other community stakeholders can help scale similar models by serving as conveners to bring together the necessary education and industry partners to ensure program alignment. There are a number of strategies being deployed across the state that will provide best practices to learn from and build upon that will allow for the creation of even more opportunities in both traditional and non-traditional apprenticeable occupations.

Indiana values the connection to real-world experiences and setting students up for success as is evident with the creation of Graduation Pathways in Indiana high schools, which now requires students to have a project-, service-, or work-based learning experience prior to high school graduation. The Commission for Higher Education (CHE) also plays a significant role in the creation of quality career-connected experiences for students. CHE's strategic plan outlines that 100% of postsecondary programs will be required to have an internship, work-based learning, research project, or other student engagement experience that has career relevance. The ever growing opportunity for the local workforce partners to collaborate and connect education with employment opportunities is going to ensure Indiana's talent development system is primed and ready for a diverse economy.

4. Assisting Hoosier small businesses and entrepreneurs to thrive in our increasingly global economy. Entrepreneurs and small businesses are the backbone of a strong economy. Local Workforce Development Boards must aware of these types of employers within their community and have the resources to help support small businesses and entrepreneurs

overcome some of the hurdles that exist as a result of having a small staff or starting a new company. Understanding the resources available for these types of employers and how these business can connect to the talent development system as well as engage with industry leaders is something in which WorkOne staff must be trained.

Local Boards and staff need to know how to connect with local economic development teams and Indiana **Small Business Development Centers** (ISBDC). ISBDCs work to support the formation, growth and sustainability of small businesses in Indiana. The ISBDC is a collaborative partnership between the Small Business Administration (SBA), the IEDC, and the 10 host institutions scattered across the state who support ISBDC's ten regional offices. In 2018 alone, the ISBDC and Indiana Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) helped launch more than 300 small businesses and create more than 1,500 new jobs. The ISBDC helps entrepreneurs looking to start or grow a business by providing resources, including expert guidance and market research.

Access to broadband is essential in our rural areas – both for individuals and businesses. While individuals can use greater connectivity for upskilling and training purposes, broadband presents entrepreneurial opportunities for small Hoosier businesses. Small businesses can use technology to grow their economic reach and business models by creating a new entry into marketing and sales. Especially in our rural communities, broadband connectivity can help small businesses grow enormously. Small businesses can also use the internet to help connect with a great variety of talent through remote work possibilities. The value of broadband, however, is not realized unless an individual or a business can use the infrastructure. As we expand broadband into our rural areas, these efforts must be accompanied with strategies to grow digital literacy in our small and rural businesses so they can take advantage of this technology to grow economic opportunities. Business service teams can connect WIOA Titles I or II to small business owners to help develop digital literacy skills and how to stand and expand their businesses in this digital world. While it is crucial that we develop a talent force that has high digital literacy skills, we must ensure that the businesses receiving these individuals are similarly digitally literate and able to capitalize on the economic opportunities broadband offers.

Skillful Indiana also assists workforce boards in reaching employers to provide technical assistance for employers of any size, but can be a key asset to smaller companies who need practical tools to connect Hoosiers to good jobs in a changing economy. Skillful Indiana was founded with support provided by Walmart, and in partnership with Lumina Foundation, Purdue University and Purdue Extension. Skillful Indiana helps people identify high-demand jobs and the skills they need to fill them, and helps employers find and keep the talent they need to grow; strengthen the skills of career advisors across the state; and collaborate with local workforce development boards to support Hoosiers and Indiana businesses. Working with employers to expand their understanding of the specific skills necessary for the occupations they have and deepening their talent pool of qualified candidates provides another leverage point for local workforce boards to connect employers to resources they might need.

In addition to cultivating multi-stakeholder collaboration through the 21st Century Talent Regions initiative, Indiana is developing a statewide, collaborative "network of networks" that includes regional and state level partner organizations focused on equity-based talent attraction, development and connection work known as the **Indiana Talent Network (ITN)**.

ITN brings together geographically self-defined networks comprised of public, private, and social sector leaders from education, business, social service, government, economic development, and workforce organizations as well as state-level government agencies and the

philanthropic community. The Network seeks to develop a comprehensive talent approach, focusing on equitable outcomes for all people, and using stakeholder engagement and systems-building tools and frameworks to ensure a common language and common approach to continuous improvement of ITN and its partners over the long-term. ITN began in 2015 as the Indiana Educational Attainment Network, consisting of four regions of the state organized to support Lumina Foundation's Goal 2025, targeting 60% of the adult population with a two-year, four-year or certificate by the year 2025. The group meets quarterly to discuss each region's work and how the group might work collectively in a few key areas including serving traditional age college students, adults with some college no degree, and adults with no college, while also impacting policy at the local and State level with data sharing and dashboards.

https://www.in.gov/cct/files/21st%20Century%20Talent%20Regions%20Briefing%20Document.pdf

5. Leveraging economic and employer data to address current and future needs and assisting Hoosiers in developing valuable skills. Research and Analysis staff at the Indiana Department of Workforce Development have developed regional dashboards for workforce and economic development partners to access. The Management Performance Hub (MPH) also helps stakeholders identify and analyze data sets that are necessary to understanding the intersection between the education, workforce development, and social service systems. Creating more awareness around these resources so local boards have all of the data and tools available to understand the unique needs within each region will be a key priority for the GWC throughout the implementation of this plan.

An analysis of our current labor market data show that Indiana is preparing to fill more than 1 million jobs in the next 10 years, with 700,000 jobs opening as baby boomers (people born between 1946 and 1964) retire and another 300,000 new jobs from growing or new business attraction. To prepare for this continued growth and secure a successful future for Hoosiers, we plan to create more opportunities for discussions and joint presentations between the Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC) and the Indiana Chamber of Commerce (Chamber). By looking at the state of the future to promote better dialogue and action regarding collaborative efforts to increase the number of good jobs, diversify the economy, and continue to growing the state's global competitiveness, state and local partners can have more targeted and coordinated talent and business development strategies moving forward. The Governor's Workforce Cabinet and DWD will participate in the discussion with representation from the local workforce boards in order to drive awareness and identify any workforce policy changes that may be necessary.

The purpose of this type of event is to share publically available data from IEDC projects and the Indiana Chamber Employer Workforce Survey in partnership with its Institute for Workforce Excellence with post-secondary and secondary education partners as well as other local partners so there is recognition of economic trends and talent needs for the state and local regions. Sharing data like the IEDC Project Occupation Estimates, highlighted in Figure 1, which used EMSI data and IEDC Accepted Project Statistics is just one example of the type of information these discussions could provide. The report computed an estimate of the types of occupations IEDC projects will require, with the following assumptions made:

Each 2019 IEDC project was assigned a 3 digit NAICS code based on project details. Using EMSI data and information, a staffing pattern was created for each 3 digit NAICS code at a 2 digit and 4 digit occupation code level. For the purpose of this study, each project is assumed to distribute

the new jobs in a similar ratio to all jobs in that industry. Please note that totals will not always add up due to rounding.

Figure 1: IEDC Project Occupation Estimates, 2019

Industry	Projects	% Projects	Jobs	% Jobs
Advanced Manufacturing	96	37%	7,194	32%
Other	56	21%	4,442	20%
Life Sciences	28	11%	2,970	13%
Logistics and Transportation	25	10%	3,129	14%
Agribusiness	25	10%	2,515	11%
Information Technology	25	10%	1,885	8%
Aerospace and Defense	4	2%	390	2%
Energy	2	1%	250	1%
Totals	261		22,775	

The Indiana State Chamber of Commerce and its newly formed Instituted for Workforce Excellence can be a key partner in better understanding employer needs and the tools necessary for them to attract, development, and retain talent. The Institute can serve a principal role in helping employers connect to available resources, as further demonstrated by the results of the Indiana Chamber Foundation's 11th annual employer workforce survey. More than half of survey respondents left jobs unfilled in the past year due to underqualified applicants. A total of 80% of employer's responding cited filling their workforce needs as one of their biggest challenges. A majority (73%) have not used the state's WorkOne employment system, and only 33% indicate they partner with postsecondary educational institutions to develop talent. Fifty-six percent expect to increase the size of their workforce in the next 12 to 24 months, therefore, creating an awareness of and connection to the talent system will be vital to providing the workforce necessary for that expansion. Using important data and outcomes from IEDC combined with information from the Chamber survey can provide partners across the talent development system the opportunity to look at trends in a way that has not been done previously. The system wide use of the data can encourage better alignment of the educational programs designed around business needs and to provide individuals with the skills necessary for employment opportunities of today and tomorrow.

Another example for leveraging data at the local level comes from the Aspen Institute. Indiana can strategically focus on analyzed data around automation and leverage it to prepare individuals for these types of changes in the workforce and encourage employers to invest in talent development.[11] Enabling talent to access skills training to recover from displacements due to automation will require a system that embraces better access to that type of training.

Indiana employers must see the value in participating in the upskilling and increasing the educational attainment of their employees in order to grow their business to meet future demands and adjust to new technologies. We will take advantage of partnerships between local workforce boards and employers to create the feedback loop necessary to ensure the

information and data provided at these types of discussions is relevant and useful to our state and local employer community.

6. Modifying resources and tools based on employer feedback to provide a better user experience. Indiana will continue to strive to better the user experience for employers and Hoosiers with the workforce tools that are available. One such tool that has continued to evolve is Indiana Career Connect. Just recently, DWD has made the Indiana Career Connect phone application widely available. Indiana Career Connect shows where 92,000 open jobs are right now across the state. We will continue to listen to users of these tools to ensure that they are beneficial and meet the needs of those using them.

One of the most successful initiatives for employers to train workers has been the creation, under Next Level Jobs, of the Employer Training Grant. The Employer Training Grant reimburses employers who train, hire, and retain new or incumbent workers to fill in-demand positions within recognized job fields. The grant will reimburse employers up to $5,000 per employee who is trained, hired, and retained for six months, up to $50,000 per employer. As Indiana endeavors to increase the number of Hoosiers with the skills to move into middle-skill jobs, we will allocate $500,000 of Employer Training Grant state funding for upskilling SNAP or TANF recipients as a way to increase access to advanced opportunities for low-income workers, which will, in turn, help increase talent for employers.

Indiana received feedback through frontline staff engaged in the Skillful Indiana Governor's Coaching Corps that there were challenges with web-based applications and how staff and employer users interact with some of the technological tools currently available. IndianaCareerReady.com (ICR) allows Hoosier jobseekers, employers, students/parents, education/training providers, and workforce partners to access career and interest assessment tools, search for education and training opportunities, and find current job openings. The ICR tool offers connectivity to IndianaCareerConnect.com, IndianaCareerExplorer.com, and a customer relationship management (CRM) tool. The CRM software has resources for employers and educators to access including real time data, information regarding services available through the state and regional, state and nationwide industry news.

While all of this information is useful it must be organized systematically in a way that employers want to engage with and is easy for customers to use, or it will not be effective. Over the next year, state agencies, along with input from employers, Workforce Boards, and other stakeholder, will review the usability of our web-based applications for employers, regional staff, and individual constituents. In order to continue to improve service to employers, Indiana will look at other system models, such as Florida's salesforce software platform, as a customer management tool that assists in business engagement to enhance and streamline business communication.

7. Promoting talent diversity and non-traditional hiring practices. The arbitrary circumstances in which someone is born, such as gender, race, ethnicity, ability, ZIP code, and/or socioeconomic status greatly influences access to an individual's opportunities in life, rather than all people having the chance to achieve to the best of their potential. These differences create a gap in opportunity for individuals and employers seeking the successes that accompany diverse creative, problem-solving teams.[12] This opportunity gap for individuals and employers alike is at risk of widening as the pace and effects of automation are felt differently across industries. A 2019 study released by the Institute for Women's Policy Research, "Women, Automation, and the Future of Work," showcased the overrepresentation of women in roles at the extreme ends of the spectrum, both highest and lowest, of jobs at risk from automation. Key findings from the study include:

- For every seven men who work in occupations that are most threatened by technological change, that is that have a 90 percent or higher likelihood of being eliminated by technology, there are 10 women in such jobs.
- Women make up less than half (47 percent) of the workforce, but they are 58 percent of the people at the highest risk of losing their jobs to technology.
- Hispanic women face the highest risk of job automation with 1 in 3 working in high-risk occupations.

Similarly, a 2019 study by McKinsey and Company, "The future of work in black America," evaluated potential displacement rates across race and found the following estimates for rates of displacement by 2030 in respective populations:

- Asian population 21.7%
- White/Caucasian population 22.4%
- African American population 23.1%
- Hispanic/Latino population 25.5%

Many of Indiana's employers are seeking diversity in their organizations and companies. Diversity provides employers with access to a greater range of talent and insight into the needs and motivations of a larger swath of their client or customer base, rather than just a small part of it. It also makes companies more effective, successful, *and profitable.*[13] To strengthen their own workforces and talent pipelines, employers can and should be critical partners in addressing disability, racial, and ethnic disparities. One strategy employers could use to increase diversity is to redefine job criteria to more accurately match the skills and requirements needed for the job. This could alleviate historically underrepresented candidates from being eliminated because they do not have the requisite degree. Employers can also invest in incumbent worker programs to help offset skill gaps among underrepresented minorities through upskilling/reskilling opportunities.[14] At the state level, we will work to recognize and promote employers' and industry's efforts to increase diversity in their workforce.

The challenges are real, but there must be a focus on the opportunities that exist to strengthen local economies, align education to growing business sectors, and engage companies and resources in developing new types of training programs for those impacted by automation.

Each of these studies offer recommendations for workforce, education, business, and other policy leaders that include improving skills development, creating new opportunities in the high-tech world, improving job quality and income security; and improving economic conditions in the geographies where certain racial groups are concentrated. Additionally, the European Union (EU), UN Women, and the International Labour Organization created a joint initiative, WE EMPOWER, to promote business principles that advance gender equality and women's economic empowerment. The following seven Women's Empowerment Principles can drastically improve gender equality and reduce wealth gaps that also hinder business growth:

1. Establish high-level corporate leadership for gender equality.

2. Treat all women and men fairly at work, respect and support human rights and non-discrimination.
3. Ensure the health, safety, and well-being of all workers.
4. Promote education, training, and professional development for women.
5. Implement enterprise development, supply chain, and marketing practices that empower women.
6. Promote equality through community initiatives and advocacy.
7. Measure and publicly report on progress to achieve gender equality.

While these principles were drafted to address gender inequity, these solutions can be instituted to close opportunity gaps for all historically underrepresented and/or disadvantaged minorities in the changing landscape of work. Through the Governor's Workforce Cabinet, we can facilitate partnerships between employers and community organizations that advocate or provide services for Hoosier minorities and those with disabilities, especially in those fields where they have been historically underrepresented.

Below are few examples of employers that already are working toward this redefined talent pool goal:

- Headquartered in Indianapolis, Morales Group Inc. (MGI) demonstrates how employers in Indiana are working to promote diversity, equity and inclusivity within the state's workforce. Passionate about delivering a purposeful staffing experience, MGI has successfully placed more than 50,000 associates in temporary, temporary-to-permanent, and direct hire placements. But building a more inclusive workforce pipeline involves more than hiring from a diverse pool of skilled individuals; it requires refining and refocusing recruitment strategies, involving diversity within the workplace, and actively supporting underrepresented team members. Involving diversity in the hiring process is something MGI highlights by first thinking through which team members are involved in the hiring process. In addition to widening perspective and scope within hiring, it will help potential employees see workplace commonalities. Referral pipeline systems can also be a positive way to assist in a diverse talent pool.
- The State of Indiana Personnel Department (SPD) leads by example with several initiatives, including one focusing on, "Unity in Diversity and Inclusion: A Journey." A group of panelists from the state of Indiana and several Hoosier businesses were part of a discussion of professional executives moderated by Indiana State Personnel Department director Britni Saunders. SPD could add an additional contextual layer to these panel by including employees with diverse backgrounds are presenting.
- Eskenazi Health ensures diversity and inclusion stays top of mind for employees by embedding it in everything the hospital does. As a hospital system Eskanazi wants the staff that represent the community that they serve. Eskenazi closely monitors the diversity numbers and the retention of diverse employees. Eskenazi embraces the idea that when you improve quality of diversity you drive innovation.

As we look to provide training opportunities for local WorkOne staff and highlight best practices that exist at a local level, diversity and inclusion training will be an area of focus. The trainings

will include a focus on disability, socioeconomic, racial, and ethnic disparities in our talent development system. Employer engagement staff need to understand the unique populations that exist in each region and be knowledgeable in ways to connect and promote local employers to the diverse talent pools that exist within each of our workforce regions.

Indiana and the Future of Work: While key employer needs were determined by the Industry Subcommittee, in order to provide a comprehensive plan to address future needs across the state the subcommittee reviewed a range of strategies and offers a variety of solutions to ensure Indiana grows an adaptable, innovative, 21st Century Workforce. As Indiana works to ensure all Hoosiers have access to growing and diversifying opportunities that exist within our state's economy, it is imperative we begin to plan for how we not only serve individuals with a variety of life circumstances, but how we concurrently support our industry partners needing to connect with a rich talent pool as skill needs and workplace cultures evolve in the global economy.

No list can be exhaustive but the subcommittee submits the strategies below as a starting point. This list will only grow and develop as the Cabinet's Strategic Plan is implemented and evolves. Each strategy provides an example of a Hoosier employer currently implementing at least one of these strategies through the adoption of the "Future of Work" concepts below.

1. Providing employees opportunities to work, learn, and grow;
2. Clearly articulated career paths coupled with access to requisite training;
3. Flexible work opportunities offer access to wider talent pools; and
4. Understanding and overcoming individual barriers to sustainable employment.

Benefits demonstrated by implementing these strategies include: increased employee engagement, needed insight into prospective employees as future company leaders, access to wider talent pools, increased employee retention, and increased company profits.

1. **Providing employees opportunities to work, learn, and grow.** In The Coming Jobs War, CEO Jim Clifton, supported by substantial Gallup data, articulates how increasing profits and subsequent Gross Domestic Product (GDP), requires increasing employee engagement through workplace culture. Through a multi-year process of developing and then analyzing workplace cultural norms that influence how engaged an employee feels, Gallup developed a 12-question survey that can effectively communicate key indicators influencing a workforce. Research conducted during the development of the survey demonstrated that "employees need focus, they need to be free from stress by having the right materials to do their jobs, they want to be cared about as people, and they want to be valued, appreciated, heard, trusted and challenged." The survey, which asks participants to rate on a scale how much they agree with a statement, concludes with the final statement, "This last year, I have had opportunities at work to learn and grow." Gallup analyzed employee engagement data from 152 organizations in 44 industries and 26 countries and found that when compared with bottom-quartile business units, units that scored in the top quartile of employee engagement had 12% higher customer metrics, 18% higher productivity, and 16% higher profitability. They also had 37% lower absenteeism, 25-49% lower turnover, 27% less theft, 49% fewer safety incidents, and 60% fewer quality incidents.

The Cook Group, headquartered in Bloomington, Indiana, is an international collection of five business lines: Resort, Property Management, Service, Life Science, and Medical Device, employing over 12,500 employees across the globe. Almost half of those employees come from south central Indiana. When one of their employees inquired about a job opportunity for her son who lacked the training credentials for employment, Cook realized that in order to meet their recruiting goals of thousands more employees in the next five to ten years, they needed to create training opportunities to connect with a new type workforce. They created the "My Cook Pathway" program, a new approach to attracting and retaining needed talent. In 2018, an employee participating in "My Cook Pathway" was able to earn a high school equivalency through their master's degree for less than $2,600 out of pocket while they continued earning wages. By partnering with education providers to best leverage state and federal programs, the cost to Cook Group was less than $2,000 per employee, with over one thousand employees participating in the program. Passionate about empowering people and communities to reach their full potential, the Cook Group leadership team developed a guide for other companies to utilize so they could develop similar models.

2. Clearly articulated career paths coupled with access to requisite training. New careers with new skill requirements are difficult for potential employees to pursue without insight on the opportunities available to them. Additionally, employers are increasingly interested in whether or not their current employees have the requisite skills to be future leaders within the company. With the understanding provided by Gallup's research that employees are more engaged when they have opportunities to learn and grow, a clearly identified path to pursue the growth that new technology and evolving skills bring helps attract and retain valuable talent. Clearly outlined career growth patterns also provide needed guidance to educators striving to adapt curriculum to match skill needs as the economy continues to change.

One critical strategy we will implement by 2022 is creating career pathway alignment across the entire talent development system. Indiana's secondary CTE programs have historically been developed and operated separately from postsecondary and vice versa. Both secondary and postsecondary CTE have often been separated from the workforce development system. One of the best places we can begin in the joint planning process is to create common Indiana career pathways with multiple entry and exit points that will be used for the entire talent development system. Through our Combined Plan we can merge two disparate concepts established in different federal laws – career pathways under WIOA and programs of study under Perkins. We will merge these two concepts under a process of creating singularly defined pathways that provide opportunities for both youth and adults, beginning with secondary schools and aligned skills and running through postsecondary education and credential or degree completion.

Within the talent development system, there are several innovative strategies that expedite the instruction of requisite knowledge and training with remediation. Our community colleges can further include Adult Education providers through offering bridge programs that coordinate academic and occupational instruction by providing basic educational remediation concurrently with, rather than as a prerequisite for, college-level courses. Including Adult Education in an accredited community college's bridge program could allow our WIOA Title II to provide funding. Another way to fund and expands these programs is through the **Ability to Benefit** (AtB) **(Federal Program)**, which allows individuals without a secondary diploma to access federal financial aid. As we further integrate our systems through co-location and partnerships, we hope more of our community college campuses will take advantage of this financial aid opportunity. Through this flexibility in federal law, students who are concurrently enrolled in connected Adult Education and eligible postsecondary programs, but do not have a high school diploma or equivalent, could be Pell eligible.

A similar model to concurrent enrollment between Adult Education and postsecondary has been scaled in math courses by Ivy Tech Community College (ITCC). In 2015, ITCC altered its remedial curriculum to a co-requisite delivery format structured for most of its Math Pathways. They modeled after this on the Accelerated Learning Program, which originated at the Community College of Baltimore County and has shown consistent student success with nearly double the pass rates. The co-requisite model melts remediation with "gateway" courses to provide students with the opportunity to earn credit towards their degree rather than completing a remedial course prior to enrolling in the credit-bearing "gateway" course. Similar models throughout the nation have shown that offering co-requisite remediation can potentially double the traditional remedial student success in the "gateway" course.[15] AtB could offer a similar type of co-requisite model in other

Trilogy Health Services provides full- and part-time employees a variety of options to further their careers, one of which is the Fast Track Apprenticeship Program. This program gives employees the option to pursue certifications, the earning of which leads directly to promotions and wage increases. When the program first began in January 2018, it offered the Nurse Aide Track and Culinary Track. The program has since partnered with Ivy Tech Community College to offer two additional tracks – Hospitality and Life Enrichment. Each of these certifications includes a $0.25 per hour premium pay, equivalent to $500 per year per certification. An employee who completes all four certifications can earn up to $2,000 per year through the Fast Track Apprenticeship Program. This program is just one example of how clearly articulated career paths can help create a business culture necessary to accomplish employer growth goals and retain talent. This particular program was designed in partnership with the state's Office of Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeship and funds from the Next Level Jobs, Employer Training Grant. This is a promising example of a partnership between the State and an employer to grow career paths.

Conexus, one of the state's primary sector partners, also offers training programs that receive outside funding, which could help alleviate some of the costs burdens of WIOA Adult. Again, these are sector-specific and would need to match an individual's aspirations and interests. **Catapult Indiana**, which is administered by Conexus, is an industry-led advanced manufacturing training program. The program teaches basic work skills for introductory manufacturing jobs to provide pathways to meaningful careers. Catapult Indiana seeks to prepare Hoosiers for some of the more than 85,000 jobs in Indiana that remain unfilled due to the skills gap. The program is a 160-hour course over four weeks that provides participants with hands-on, paid training opportunities that may result in manufacturing positions.

The **Indiana Federation for Advanced Manufacturing Education** (INFAME) is a partnership between community colleges and regional manufacturers whose purpose is to implement career pathway, apprenticeship-style educational programs that will create a pipeline of highly skilled workers. Administered by the Indiana Manufacturers Association, the INFAME initiative can be customized to fit different regional programs and partnerships with local schools, trade schools, and colleges. This initiative works closely with Indiana's educational institutions to establish and endorse programs and curricula that develop the skill-sets students need for Indiana's manufacturing jobs, specifically an Advanced Manufacturing Technician (AMT). The AMT program is a standardized and structured approach to preparing an individual for a career. This five-semester technical program integrates both on-the-job training and classroom education, offering the individual the opportunity to earn wages and college credit while concurrently earning their diploma. INFAME also assists companies in creating work-based learning and training opportunities, such as registered apprenticeships, internships and on-the-job training.

There are also examples of Indiana's high schools providing clearer postsecondary pathways for students prior to graduation. One such example of this is Purdue Polytechnic High School (PPHS). PPHS prepares its graduates for work by providing opportunities to earn high-valued certificates and college credit or to continue onto college. Students are also given the opportunity to have internships with companies and to be mentored by employees of companies. The PPHS partners with various industries across the state including healthcare, manufacturing, pharmaceuticals, aviation, and non-profits for internship, mentoring, financial support, and career exploration.

The GWC can utilize its convening power to identify further examples of best practices like those illustrated above to help inform employers, local boards, and school districts about the number of advantages in partnering. The Cabinet can work with its partner agencies to disseminate best practices and support the development of these partnerships across our workforce regions.

3. Flexible work opportunities offer access to wider talent pools. Both freelance and remote work create flexibility for both the employer and employee to better balance external life factors of the employee with the skill and work product needs of the employer. Freelance or remote work can mitigate the impact of challenges created by geography, schedule, transportation, childcare, and many other life variables employees face. Key to successful freelance or remote work relationships are clear expectations between employees and supervisors regarding work product and workplace "presence" when direct interaction provided by physical presence is reduced, but there are a growing number of training supports and an emerging field of remote work certifications to eliminate challenges caused by unclear models for employers and employees to thrive in a much more fluid concept of the physical workplace.

Flexible work can allow employers to access a "dormant workforce" by mitigating the impact of challenges created by geography, schedule, transportation, childcare, and many other life variables employees face. Key to successful remote work relationships are clear expectations between employees and supervisors regarding work product and workplace "presence" when direct interaction provided by physical presence is reduced, but there are a growing number of training supports and an emerging field of remote work certifications to eliminate challenges caused by unclear models for employers and employees to thrive in a much more fluid concept of the physical workplace. Under Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act, employers must provide any and all reasonable accommodations unique to an individual's need. When applicable, employers may offer flexible work options (e.g., remote work or job sharing). Transportation, for instance, can be a barrier for individuals with disabilities to access quality jobs; providing flexible work opportunities may diminish this barrier for an individual. Flexible work options should not preclude the goal for all Hoosiers – including those with disabilities – to be fully integrated into the workforce.

Employers who need to fill positions with the possibility of remote work should think about tapping the talent pool in rural areas. Remote work would allow rural Hoosiers to access more economic opportunities, while staying rooted in their home community. It counteracts the rural flight we are experiencing in many of our communities, as well as increase the talent pools. Our regional plans need to include intentional action about how to capitalize upon the economic and social interdependence of urban and rural areas. The rural-urban symbiosis can span common geographic conditions, supply chains that fuel industry sectors with services, goods and talent, transportation and affordability-driven employee commuting patterns, media markets, and the goal to secure essential goods and services locally. In some areas of Indiana, rural places and

cities serve as important markets for each other. This may include some of our urban initiatives analyzing rural-urban connections and strategies regarding transportation, land-use, agriculture, and water management.

Indiana's Region 10 Workforce Board created the Bi-State Plan with Kentuckiana Works to advance the regional workforce. This Plan is the first of its kind to merge interstate regions into one designated workforce hub. This significant collaboration exists between local areas Indiana Region 10 and Kentuckiana Works in order to develop the regional plan around the Louisville metropolitan area, which includes urban and rural sprawl in southern Indiana. The Bi-State Regional Plan creates an innovative picture of the region's economy and workforce environment through rural-urban, Indiana-Kentucky strategies to attain regional goals and objections.

Formstack is an Indianapolis based company founded in 2006. Started as a data capture solution, now their portfolio includes a product that has evolved into a powerful workplace productivity platform that helps people in all industries transform the way they collect data and put it to work.. While founded in Indianapolis, it is now a remote-first company with employees all over the world. Remote-first means working remote is standard and Formstack works to ensure remote employees are as much a part of the team as those in the office.

4. Understanding and overcoming individual barriers to sustainable employment. Accessing resources and needed social supports is extremely challenging for many low income individuals that are employed. Their time availability outside of work to find and receive needed help is extremely limited. The lack of access to childcare in Indiana, for example, is costing the state severely:

- $1.8 billion in direct cost to employers;
- $1.1 billion in lost economic activity every year; and
- $118.8 million in lost tax revenue.[16]

Many business leaders describe difficulties with attraction, retention, and engagement in their lower-wage workforce. Open positions and rapid turnover are a vicious cycle that is disruptive and expensive to your business. On average, companies are spending more than $2,000 in turnover costs per entry-level position. Clearly, there is a competitive advantage for an organization that succeeds in retaining and motivating their lower-wage employees.[17] By helping employees access needed social supports like childcare, transportation, housing, or other resources, employers have the opportunity to access large groups of skilled and motivated employees.

Indiana will look to promoting or adapting resources to help employers understand the needs of their lower-wage workforce, as this may be the first step on a journey to retention and engagement. Even full-time workers who are in lower-wage jobs can struggle to meet their family's basic needs from week-to-week. Many workplace policies are designed to support the needs of middle- and upper-class employees and may overlook the needs of lower-wage workforce. As many lower-wage employees live paycheck to paycheck and struggle balancing transportation, childcare and/or elder care, and multiple part-time jobs, lower-wage workers have different complexities and challenges than their upper-level counterparts. Through our business service teams, Indiana's employer outreach and support services – from the state to the local level – will assist employers with implementing workplace policies to support them will have a distinct competitive advantage among their peers.[18] Using resources outside of Indiana, such as F, as well as developing Hoosier-specific resources, we can help employers

determine policies that address their talent challenges and the unique needs of our target populations. One example is encouraging employers to make contributions to their employees' **College 529 or ABLE accounts**, as well as providing tuition grants upfront for education and training programs, rather than tuition reimbursement models, and to help employees repay student loans in an effort to attract, retain, and develop talent.

A collection of four manufacturing industries, as well as the public library in La Porte, partnered with WeConnect, an Employer Resource Network (ERN), to improve workforce retention through employee support and training. This is an example of one promising practice occurring at the local level and through continued coordination of activity and programs outlined within this plan this type of activity can become a best practice across all workforce regions. The model is designed to help employees navigate needed social supports through a collaborative network of employers, community partners, government agencies, and critical community resources. The WeConnect ERN has now merged with Goodwill Industries, but in its first year of operation it provided a number of services to the five employers. These services included: childcare, financial literacy, healthcare, transportation, housing, legal assistance, food assistance, education, and more. Of those served, 95.5% remained employed with the employer. This is an example of how employers can increase employee retention by partnering with local community-based organizations to offer services aimed at addressing life circumstances experienced by employees.

[1] EARN Indiana was established in 2013 under Indiana Code 21-16-2.

[2] US Internal Revenue Service. Tax Benefits for Businesses Who Have Employees with Disabilities.

[3] McKinsey Global Institute, July 2019. The future of work in America: People and places, today and tomorrow.

[4] As adapted from the Indiana Department of Education's Work-Based Learning Manual.

[5] Talent tours can occur at a business or higher education campus and can provide exposure and orientation about various local career opportunities in various sectors and career paths. The tours can include presentations and information on potential industry offerings. This is adapted from Michigan Works! as a best practice.

[6] Indiana's State Earn and Learn (SEAL) programs are certified through the Office of Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeship. They are structured, but flexible, programs that include an education component and OJT component. SEALs focus on employer needs, with sustainable partnerships and embedded industry certifications. They can last from weeks to years depending on employer, education, certification, or licensing requirements.

[7] Pre-apprenticeship programs are connected to a registered apprenticeship. They can offer foundational experiences providing training, support services, and career navigation assistance to help people gain the skills and awareness they need to enter and succeed in apprenticeships and related careers.

[8] Department of Labor. Apprenticeship: Data and Statistics.

[9] More information on the program is available at https://polytechnic.purdue.edu/p-cap

[10] Apprenticeship Toolkit, Advancing Apprenticeship as a Workforce Strategy, U.S. Department of Labor, 2018.

[11] Automation and a Changing Economy: Policies for Shared Prosperity, Aspen Institute.

[12] Konrad, 2006. Leveraging workplace diversity in organizations; Prasad et al., 2006. Examining the contours of workplace diversity: Concepts, contexts and challenges; Chang et al, 2019. Diversity thresholds: How social norms, visibility, and scrutiny relate to group composition.

[13] McKinsey & Company, 2015. Why Diversity Matters.

[14] McKinsey & Company, 2019. The Future of Work in Black America.

[15] Ivy Tech Community College, 2013. Ivy Tech Community College Announces Math Pathways Project.

[16] Indiana University Public Policy Institute, 2018. Lost Opportunities: The Impact of Inadequate Child Care on Indiana's Workforce & Economy.

[17] Women's Fund of the Greater Cincinnati Foundation. Cost of Turnover.

[18] Women's Fund of the Greater Cincinnati Foundation. Know Your Workforce.

E. PARTNER ENGAGEMENT WITH EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

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

The talent developed by higher education institutions and training providers is critical to preparing individuals with the knowledge and skills significant to success in the economy and for fulfilling personal goals and aspirations. The result is a higher learning system where completion is comprehensive – including everything from micro-credentials and short-term certificates to associate, bachelor's and graduate degrees – allowing learners to build, expand, stack, and show what they know throughout their careers. To attain personal and economic success requires Hoosiers to embrace lifelong learning as they navigate and advance in their careers. Higher education remains a powerful force to address income disparities, close equity gaps, provide personal prosperity, drive economic growth, promote civic engagement in our society, and enhance the quality of life in our Indiana communities.

Indiana is committed to providing Hoosiers a system of higher education that empowers all people and our state to thrive amidst change—to innovate, adapt, and achieve. We continue to measure our success with an ambitious goal for at least 60% of Hoosiers to have education and training beyond a high school diploma by 2025, a goal directly aligned to our state's future workforce needs. Indiana will take an inclusive approach to measuring progress. We will consider the full range of quality credentials, from quality workforce certificates to associate's, bachelor's, and professional degrees. Likewise, we will monitor outcomes for all Hoosiers in our system of higher education, from high school students earning postsecondary credit and credentials before graduating to adults who earn degrees or certificates later in their lives to increase their earning power and potential.

In a symbiotic relationship that drives our economy, businesses come to states and communities that can fill their talent needs, and talent is attracted to states where those job opportunities reside. A top-quality, engaged, affordable higher education system is central to that relationship and to our state's economic health and vitality. This will include strong engagement from and partnership with our community colleges, technical schools, and four-year public institutions (both research and regional campuses). To produce the talent

development system Indiana needs for a strong economy, the Commission for Higher Education has identified the following areas of focus to leverage and improve:

- A more diverse student population that includes more adults, more low-income learners and more people of color;
- New learning models by our colleges and universities;
- A broader focus on credential attainment that includes everything from workforce certificates to four-year degrees and beyond; and
- New providers that offer shorter-term credentials and training aligned to employer needs.

The need to engage with all institutions of higher education – including Indiana's community college system, training providers, and four-year colleges and universities – stems from the recognition that higher education is no longer episodic for Hoosiers, but rather it is continual. In today's economy, workers must engage in continual learning to adapt to innovations in every employment sector. This new reality is challenging higher education institutions like never before, and new providers and models are stepping up to fill the gaps and meet the demand.

As critical partners in talent development, Indiana must engage with institutions of higher education to develop new models that are focused on the unique and diverse needs of individual learners and the mindset of a commitment to lifelong learning. These models call for rapid turns and increased collaboration to meet the needs of employers. One example of this type of innovation is the **Community Health Network's Nursing Academy**, which is a partnership between the Community Health Network, Ascend Indiana (an initiative which grew out of the Central Indiana Corporate Partnership), and the University of Indianapolis to start training future nurses in college. When they graduate, they go right to jobs at Community.

We must respond to the ever-changing economic tides and concerns with a bold re-conception of higher education that builds upon the gains we have made in higher education accessibility and opportunities. We need a new education compact in our state: one that aligns K-12 education, postsecondary education, and continuing education; permits smooth transitions among them; and provides more Hoosiers affordable, flexible lifelong learning options while preserving quality and advancing equitable economic opportunity.

Indiana has one accredited community college system throughout the state, Ivy Tech Community College. Co-location among our community college campuses, WorkOnes, and other social service providers (such as the Division of Family Resources) is essential to creating greater integration of the various aspects of our talent development system. Co-location among these organizations can include embedding programmatic or frontline staff physically or virtually through a chatbox feature in the same location. This also includes providers at K-12 school districts, Adult Education programs, and community college campuses co-locate to pool resources for equipment, supplies, instructors, facilities, and other expenses. Co-location – either physically in the same space, embedding staffers in different offices, and offering mobile or virtual services – will also allow us to bridge the divide between education and training opportunities and the pull of supportive services. It also builds greater articulation from secondary to postsecondary to adult and continuing education within our workforce development programs. Co-location of our various offices and services will benefit Hoosiers by increasing awareness and access to these programs and creating seamless transitions as they advance in their education and training. Local regions can determine how to increase co-location partnerships through varied schedules, hours, instructors, and approaches.

Additional strategies Indiana has identified to engage our higher education institutions with our workforce development system include:

- Encouraging two-year institutions (including community colleges) to restructure their programs so learners are enrolled in, complete, and are awarded shorter-term certificates as they continue toward their associate degree;
- Facilitating transitions into higher education through summer bridge programs, career exploration opportunities, talent tours, class audits, campus visits and tours, and informational interviews;
- Creating a model "Learner-Ready" rubric to help community college campuses and WorkOne offices assess their programs' readiness to accommodate the needs of their unique learner populations;
- Counseling populations who have exited the postsecondary pipeline or never entered it about the variety of stackable, credit-bearing and financial aid opportunities, as well as the flexibility for enrollment and persistence options for non-traditional or part-time students;
- Developing co-branded, employer-driven learning models that lead to credentials in highly-dynamic industries through WIOA career pathways and Perkins programs of study;[1]
- Increasing the number of high school students earning intentional dual credits, high-value technical certificates, or the Statewide Transfer General Education Core (STGEC) before graduating high school through expanding and ensuring quality partnerships between K-12 school districts, community colleges, and four-year institutions; and
- Requiring 100% of postsecondary programs to include an internship, work-based, research, or other student engagement experience that has career relevance and connects them to relevant career opportunities. Two programs we intend to leverage to do this include:
    - Redesigning our implementation of **Federal Work-Study** to focus on work-based learning models, and
    - Scaling **EARN Indiana**.

The redesign of our Career-Technical Education (CTE) programs of study under the Carl D. Perkins Act will directly align secondary CTE courses and standards with their postsecondary counterparts. Through purposeful and intentional realignment of our secondary and postsecondary CTE programs, students throughout Indiana will have the opportunity to earn stackable, quality credentials by high school graduation. This will include industry-recognized certification and the culmination of dual credit or enrollment courses into one year of a postsecondary program. Ensuring this alignment in CTE programs requires deep collaboration between postsecondary institutions, in particular our community colleges, and secondary schools in both the development and implementation of these new programs and standards. Additionally, postsecondary and secondary institutions must also consult with employers through both the creation and execution stages of these new programs to ensure industry relevancy and alignment.

Our community college system also provides us with the means to interweave our Perkins funds with the WIOA program to help create robust career pathways. Because WIOA programs can

occur at community colleges and they are our Perkins postsecondary recipients, local regions can leverage community colleges as the hub for implementing and funding career pathways for all Hoosiers. Our community college system can offer bridge programs that coordinate academic and occupational instruction by providing basic educational remediation concurrently with, rather than as a prerequisite for, college-level courses. Ivy Tech Community College altered its remedial curriculum to allow for a co-requisite delivery format. The co-requisite model melds remediation with "gateway" courses and provides students with the opportunity to earn credit towards their degree rather than completing a remedial course prior to enrolling in the credit-bearing "gateway" course.[2]

Similarly, our WorkOnes can embed Wagner-Peyser staff at community colleges to provide career counseling and information regarding current labor market trends and job availability, future employment needs in sectors and industries, and connections to employers and employer associations. This type of program blends career-technical education, WIOA Core Programs, and higher education into one location and enrollment, easing the administrative burden on the individual Hoosier and allowing local regions to braid funding from various sources.

Through our community college, we can meld career pathways and programs of study into one concept, allowing Indiana to serve both adults and high school students through coordinated, aligned, and structured pathways leading toward recognized postsecondary credentials. Additionally, similar career pathways and programs of study in the same sector could share employer partnerships and industry-recognized credentials identified as most relevant for their local economies. They would leverage each other's industry connections and other strengths, reducing duplication, maximizing funding, and building wide-reaching partnerships. Community colleges can also provide both high school and adult students with a variety of career exploration and awareness opportunities connected to postsecondary education and employment. Through talent tours, job shadowing, worksite tours, class audits, campus visits and tours, industry speakers, and informational interviews, these institutions can help make connections for adult students to postsecondary education and jobs as they transition to more challenging work.

[1] Indiana will convene the Institute of Workforce Excellence (IWE) under the state Chamber of Commerce, postsecondary institutions, and other sector organizations to develop these career pathways comprised of stackable credentials that lead to career advancement and degrees.

[2] Ivy Tech Community College modeled this program after the Accelerated Learning Program, which originated at the Community College of Baltimore County, and has shown consistent student success with nearly double the pass rates.

F. PARTNER ENGAGEMENT WITH OTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROVIDERS

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

While our institutions of higher education offer a wide-variety of credit-bearing opportunities, we also have non-credit options for individuals looking to upskill through a less traditional route. Indiana curates its Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) based on meeting one of three criteria: completion, job placement, and average wage. One way Indiana has merged other types of education and training programs is through partnerships between **apprenticeships** and our community colleges. Ivy Tech Community Colleges partner with registered apprenticeships to

provide comparable college credits and confer degrees; Vincennes University works with non-unionized organizations to provide college credits and degrees for their registered apprenticeship programs. Indiana supports the connections between our community colleges and registered apprenticeships through allocating funds from the Unemployment Insurance Penalty and Interest fund. Based on the ETPL, our regional Workforce Development Boards spearhead the work and partnerships with local postsecondary trainers and partners to ensure Hoosiers are gaining the skills and knowledge necessary for career advancement.

For other education and training providers, we seek to further the following strategies:

- Ensuring the transferability of learning and certifications where there are gaps among training providers, institutions of higher education, and employers, as well as in career-technical education courses in the K-12 space; and between the K-12 and higher education sectors, particularly for career technical education courses;
- Developing a digital, easily-sharable student-owned record that stores information about the skills and knowledge learners earn over the course of their education and careers and pairing that with Credential Engine's credential directory;
- Encouraging institutions of higher education to develop processes for recognizing non-credit credentials and other types of prior learning as college credit that can transfer and counts toward postsecondary programs;
- Redesigning career and employment services offered by training providers to support learners throughout their educational experience and connect them to relevant career opportunities;
- Using predictive analytics to identify student needs and tailor individualized support to ensure student success; and
- Increasing the number of employers partnering with education and training providers to develop "grow your own" programs for their employees.

G. LEVERAGING RESOURCES TO INCREASE EDUCATIONAL ACCESS

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

If we are going to meet the demands of our economy and workforce, we must create better alignment between our workforce development programs, social services, and our higher education institutions. This must first start at the state-level among agencies. Our state agencies (such as the Commission for Higher Education, the Department of Corrections, the Department of Workforce Development, and the Family and Social Service Agency) must collaborate together to leverage postsecondary accessibility for key populations, such as incarcerated adults and those on state public assistance. Through Indiana's shared vision of increasing economic mobility through our 60% attainment goal, various state agencies can work together to proactively outreach to our target populations about taking advantage of existing financial aid programs created to support them. The tactical highlights of Indiana's **communications strategy** include:

- Earned and social media, including digital advertising;
- Direct engagement;

- State communication assets and channels, including endorsed marketing across various target populations;
- "Future Finder" chatbot;
- Social referent testimonials; and
- Paid media.

Currently, our community college system and vocational schools account for a substantial group of WIOA training providers. We must improve communication and coordination between financial aid officers at colleges and caseworkers at our WorkOnes. We can increase the co-enrollment of WIOA participants into state and federal financial aid programs by encouraging our WorkOnes to include filing the **FAFSA** as part of the intake process for anyone seeking postsecondary education and training opportunities. The FAFSA will allow a low-income individual access to both state and federal funding for credit-bearing programs at our community colleges, including the **Pell Grant**, **Frank O'Bannon Student Grant**, **Adult Student Grant**, **Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant**, and **Workforce Ready Grants**. We also want to expand federal flexibility in the Pell Grant, including **Second Chance Pell** for our current and ex-offenders and **Ability to Benefit** for those without a high school diploma. This will ensure we maximize our current investments and extend our WIOA Adult funding to help subsidize on-the-job and work-based learning wages, as well as other wraparound supports. Additionally, our community colleges grant credit and degrees for **registered apprenticeships**, which is another avenue for individuals to access higher education at little-to-no-cost and to earn an income. As we increase the integration of our workforce systems, we will prioritize professional development for both financial aid officers and WorkOne caseworkers regarding WIOA funding and state and federal financial opportunities.

Other resources we can leverage to increase educational access include:

- Requiring all high school seniors to complete a FAFSA on time, with an opt-out provision included, so more students have access to federal and state financial aid dollars for postsecondary education, especially **Pell Grants** and **state financial aid programs**;
- Encouraging the use of Open Educational Resources in education and training programs (such as online access to classroom materials) to reduce the cost for learners;
- Targeting $500,000 of **Employer Training Grants** towards those eligible for SNAP and TANF;
- Increasing our use of **SNAP 50/50** for our grants that are state-funded to help with supportive services;
- Creating efficiencies among our **SNAP and TANF E&T** and **WIOA** by identifying the overlap and redundancies in the supports of the employment services for low-income individuals;
- Expanding our employer partnerships through **EARN Indiana** and the **Federal Work-Study Program** to scale paid work-based learning experiences;
- Creating **State Earn and Learns** (SEALs) for specific populations, like seniors, and in partnership with other programs, like Adult Education;

- Leveraging our local Workforce Development Boards to serve as regional conveners for government, community organizations, school districts, higher education institutions, and employers to work together for people of color, as well as rural, veteran, and low-income populations;
- Encouraging employers to make contributions to their employees' **College 529 or ABLE accounts**, as well as providing tuition grants upfront for education and training programs, rather than tuition reimbursement models, and to help employees repay student loans in an effort to attract, retain, and develop talent;
- Increasing awareness and utilization of non-academic campus or community programs designed to support diverse learners' wraparound supports (healthcare, childcare, transportation, etc.);
- Assisting Workforce Development Boards' and communities' use of data on postsecondary transitions and outcomes, as well as regional job demand and wage data, to guide efforts that support completion and regional workforce demands; and
- Improving the usability of the Commission for Higher Education's annual reports and data tools to help communities, parents, students, educators, institutions, lawmakers, and employers use them to drive decision making and postsecondary completion.

H. IMPROVING ACCESS TO POSTSECONDARY CREDENTIALS

Describe how the State's strategies will improve access to activities leading to recognized postsecondary credentials, including Registered Apprenticeship certificates. This includes credentials that are industry-recognized certificates, licenses or certifications, and that are portable and stackable.

Through those opportunities identified above that increase educational access, we will also increase access to postsecondary credentials. This is precipitated upon Indiana developing a more comprehensive view of completion to include a wider range of credential types in data collection, including quality short-term and non-credit credentials. Indiana does not want to merely focus on access to credentials, but we hope to emphasize persistence and completion. Given the changing economy of our state, it is no longer enough for us to provide access to credentials; we need to prioritize earning these credentials. Access alone will not help individuals attain greater economic mobility, but obtaining credentials can have that impact.

The increased earnings from a credential or degree more than exceed the total costs of college, including debt, for most students within only a few years after graduation. Stories about graduates with very large amounts of student debt and no jobs do not appear to reflect the typical Hoosier experience, and successful entrepreneurs without some sort of postsecondary education are increasingly rare. Nationally, about 99% of jobs created since the Great Recession went to workers with at least some college. Higher education is a key contributor to individuals' opportunities for upward economic mobility and economic development. College graduates' lifetime earnings often outweigh those of Hoosiers with only a high school diploma by $1 million or more; those with an Associate's degree earn more than $400,000 more, and those with some college earn more than $150,000 or more than Hoosiers with only a high school diploma.[1] Additionally, Hoosiers with higher levels of educational attainment have significantly higher levels of job security. Over the course of a lifetime, a cohort of Indiana public college graduates contributes at least $13 billion in additional spending and tax revenue to the economy compared to Hoosiers with only a high school diploma. Hoosiers with an associate degree contribute about $250,000 extra to the economy compared to those with only a high

school diploma. Hoosiers with a bachelor's degree contribute about $700,000 extra to the economy compared to those with only a high school diploma.[2]

To help promote both access to and earning of postsecondary credentials, Indiana's strategies include the following:

- Advocating that high school and adult students gain financial literacy skills to help them make informed choices about education and training beyond a high school diploma;
- Including program-level return on investment data (including job placement, debt, and expected wage) in annual debt letters and communications when learners apply to change their majors;
- Monitoring early college credit and career-technical education pathways in high school to routinely assess the status of opportunity and completion gaps among low-income, rural, and minority populations;
- Creating access to postsecondary opportunities in rural areas through the use of technology, broadband, and innovative delivery models;
- Using proactive outreach to increase the number of learners from target populations taking advantage of existing financial aid programs to ease tuition and fees costs;
- Integrating social services into education and workforce development programs to assist with any wraparound need or burden;
- Increasing paid work-based learning experiences to help students strike the balance between education opportunities and life expenses;
- Marketing to adults with some college and no degree, particularly those that fall into our target populations, to assist with application fee waivers, tuition discounts, scholarships, debt forgiveness and other special incentives offered by Indiana colleges to returning adults; and
- Providing funding for short-term credential programs through our **Next Level Jobs Programs**;
- Creating the **Office of Work-based Learning and Apprenticeship** to better coordinate with USDOL regarding apprenticeship opportunities and helping employers establish registered programs.
- Providing funding to Ivy Tech Community College and Vincennes University to coordinate degree conferment for completion of registered apprenticeship programs.
- Encouraging local communities to make teacher recruitment and retention a priority with campaigns and programs that uplift the profession and encourage local K-12 students to enter the profession and to stay in their communities. Indiana currently offers four unique scholarships to those interested in pursuing a career in education:
    - **Earline S. Rogers Student Teaching Stipend for Minorities** is available for minority students (defined as black and Hispanic individuals) who will participate in student teaching or a school administration internship as a part of their degree requirements during the semester in which they receive it. Students

must agree in writing to apply for teaching positions in Indiana and, if hired, teach in Indiana for at least three years.

- **Student Teaching Stipend for High-Need Fields** is available for students who plan to teach in a high-need field (defined as middle or high school level math, science or special education). Students are eligible to receive the stipend in the term they are student teaching as a part of their degree requirements. Students must agree in writing to apply for teaching positions in Indiana and, if hired, teach in Indiana for at least three years.
- **Next Generation Hoosier Educators Scholarship** provides 200 high-achieving high school and college students interested in pursuing a career in education the opportunity to earn a renewable scholarship of up to $7,500 a year for four academic years. In exchange, students agree to teach for five years at an eligible Indiana school or *repay* the corresponding, prorated amount of the scholarship.
- **William A. Crawford Minority Teacher Scholarship** is available to minority students (defined as black and Hispanic individuals) who intend to pursue, or are currently pursuing, a course of study that would enable them to teach in an accredited school in Indiana. Students must agree in writing to apply for teaching positions in Indiana and, if hired, teach in Indiana for at least three years.

[1] Indiana Commission for Higher Education, 2018. College Return on Investment Report 2018.

[2] Ibid.

I. COORDINATING WITH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

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

The Governor's Workforce Cabinet (GWC) and Department of Workforce Development (DWD) work closely with the Indiana Office of Economic Development (IEDC) and the Indiana Chamber of Commerce to ensure the alignment of efforts and strategies spanning workforce and economic development. At the local level, economic development partners are members of and/or engaged in the work with the Workforce Development Boards. Economic and workforce development have both been part of the Governor's next level agenda each legislative session since his election. The 2019 agenda, for example, included modernizing economic development tools to increase competitiveness, economic diversity, and flexibility.

Many of the initiatives discussed in **Section D. Coordination, alignment and provision of services to employers** will carry over to Economic Development Strategies as we continue to align these engagement efforts with our programmatic supports to employers. WIOA emphasizes engaging employers across the workforce system to align training with needed skills and matching employers with qualified workers. In order for this to happen, business and economic development must work together toward the common goals addressed in this Plan. Due to the challenges and opportunities associated with the changing nature of work and society, a subcommittee on the future of work will continue to evaluate and report on innovative solutions to ensure every Hoosier has access to a career and every business has access to needed talent.

B. STATE OPERATING SYSTEMS AND POLICIES

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

Response is captured in the answers to (b)(1) thru (b)(9).

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

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

DWD utilizes and/or makes available to its WorkOne constituents a variety of tools and systems to aid in service delivery to help them find or transition back into suitable employment. Some of these tools and systems include:

1. **WIN Learning:** This is an internet-based remediation software. This software provides a soft skills curriculum composed of Career Readiness and Work Habits modules within the following areas of focus: interpersonal relations communications, cooperation, tact, concern for others, self-management, adaptability, dependability, initiative, honesty, resource management, time management, and customer service. The software determines if student should begin WIN or proceed to WorkKeys Assessments. WorkOne constituents can improve their WorkKeys scores utilizing WIN's online training website. WIN allows users to practice core skills are career readiness standards utilizing real-world situations.

2. **WorkKeys:** These assessments measure foundational skills required for success in the workplace and help measure workplace skills that can affect job performance. Many local employers require Hoosiers to achieve a certain level in WorkKeys prior to job seekers being permitted to apply for employment with their companies. WorkOne constituents complete the WorkKeys as one of the career readiness assessments or for the NCRC (National Career Readiness Certificate) a credential that verifies a participant's skill levels.

3. **JOBS Program:** This is a job profiling service and internet-based assessment system measuring workplace skills and identifying skills gaps and training needs. ACT provides job profiling services, which link skills associated with a specific job with skill levels on ACT's WorkKeys tests. This also includes maintenance for Scantron optical scanners that are utilized to score WorkKeys tests.

4. **Indiana Career Connect (ICC):** Indiana's official job searching and workforce services system. Utilizing this website, constituents can register for work, create and send resumes, complete work-readiness assessments, and access resources regarding training providers and regional labor market information. ICC is also the state's case management system utilized to document eligibility, activities, and notes for WIOA participants. These activities include the required joint development of the Individual Employment Plan (IEP), recorded assessments, scanned documents, and reports and copies of any credential attainments.

5. **Geographic Solutions:** This is a case management and labor exchange system. It provides labor exchange, case management, and reporting functionality for WIOA, TAA, and various local programs. The system provides configuration reviews and connects to Indiana Career Connect, mobile applications, customer relationship management

systems, and intake assessments and eligibility determinations. As a case management system, Geogrpahic Solutions creates referrals, training/education, job placement and retention, and reporting for performance management.

6. **Career Interest & Aptitude Assessments/Indiana Career Explorer:** This is provides a career planning system and aptitude assessments for Indiana students (grade 6 and above), all postsecondary students and adult Indiana residents. Kuder's Indiana Career Explorer is a web application where Hoosiers can complete a research-based career assessment to explore their occupational goals and interests. This site links resources for education planning to help the individual visualize which industry or career, field of study, or school to pursue next in life.

7. **Hoosiers by the Numbers:** This is Indiana's primary website for Labor Market Information (LMI), which provides multiple types of data outputs, including dashboards, profiles, radius tools, and Tableau visualizations. The website allows Indiana to disseminate critical labor market information to meet federal and state objectives. The Office of Career Connections & Talent used this source to create local dashboards comprised of data for talent development, recruitment, and retention milestones. Local regions can use this dashboard to define local priorities and areas for growth. The core of Hoosiers by the Numbers is strong navigation geared to people looking for their county or region or a specific piece of data on a workforce related topic. The site is powered by more than 7 billion records in the joint databases of the Indiana Business Research Center (IBRC) and DWD and is meant to serve as a leading informational site for business developers, researchers and the public alike.

8. **Online Assessment Tests:** The TABE assessment toolkit provides both online and paper/pencil assessments. It assesses adults for placement in education, training, and employment programs, as well as readiness for a high school equivalency. TABE is a web-based assessment of basic and secondary education knowledge foundational for the workplace. Constituents and case managers utilize TABE to identify potential basic skills deficits and challenges prior to them enrolling in training to ensure that they are prepared for postsecondary education.

9. **SkillsEngine:** SkillsEngine is a repository of nationally ranked skills (by employers) identified by occupation that are needed for someone to qualify or succeed in a given occupation/industry. The skills data are built into Indiana Career Ready INDemand Jobs and Occupational Profile Pages so that job seekers can see what skills employers are requiring for a particular occupations.

10. **Credential Engine:** The Department of Workforce Development has partnered with the Commission for Higher Education in its support and utilization of Credential Engine, an international registry of available credentials that provides Hoosiers more transparency in the spectrum of credentials available in Indiana. This tool will be comprised all credentials from Indiana's postsecondary institutions, as well as those found on the Eligible Training Provider List, allowing Hoosiers to better analyze their options for potential credentials in the Indiana marketplace and select the training option that best meets their needs.

The Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD) also maintains and continues to expand the Workforce Information Database (WID) with state and local data that cover at least the most recent ten-year period, as well as any federally applicable changes mandated. The WID serves as a primary source for Indiana's Labor Market Information website

(www.hoosierdata.in.gov) and is supplemented by the STATS Indiana databases, which have been built and maintained by DWD's university partner, Indiana Business Research Center (IBRC), for more than 30 years. Today, both the WID and STATS databases power Hoosiers by the Numbers and STATS Indiana through our partnership with the IBRC. The data cover counties, metropolitan statistical areas, economic growth regions, and a balance of state areas, in addition to statewide estimates and aggregates and small area data for census tracts, zip codes, and radii. The STATS databases also include data for other states, which powers our tools for those needing bordering county/state data.

In the fiscal year 2018-2019, the website platforms supported by DWD Research and Analysis tallied nearly half a million unique users. Nearly two million web pages were viewed during that 12-month period. The primary website for LMI is Hoosiers by the Numbers website, which provides multiple types of data outputs, including dashboards, profiles, radius tools, Tableau visualizations, and more.

In October 2016, Indiana launched a new combined case management and labor exchange data system (Indiana Career Connect /ICC) via its vendor, Geographic Solutions. In 2022, the state will issue a Request for Proposals to procure a new case management and labor exchange system. The local workforce boards report their data and information to DWD through this case management system. This system aligns with the state's labor market information data, interactive website, and tools for jobs seekers and career counselors. DWD Research and Analysis houses both Indiana's labor market information division, as well as the federal reporting team responsible for producing training performance reports as dictated through the PIRL (Participant Individual Record Layout). This office also assists with data questions and analyses of outcomes against current economic and wage data.

In addition, the DWD Business Intelligence unit builds upon data made available through Research and Analysis Warehouse (RAW) and ICC/Geographic Solutions to deliver enhanced, customized performance metrics and to provide research request responses related to Title I and Title III, as well as additional state and federally funded workforce programs. Examples of this work using UI wage record data for Federal and State performance metrics can be found here: (https://www.in.gov/dwd/RPM.htm), the Workforce Programs Report (https://www.in.gov/dwd/WPR.htm). Additional programmatic evaluations are performed upon request. State business service staff work in conjunction with locals to provide and analyze labor market information. The level of collaboration between state and local staff does vary by region. Business Intelligence state staff funnels information through the local business services reps as opposed to working directly with employers. One area of opportunity Indiana will explore through this Combined Plan is to develop a more coordinated approach with other agencies and our local Workforce Development Boards to serving and sharing information with employers to avoid employer fatigue.

DWD also created IndianaCareerReady.com (ICR), a web-based application that offers connectivity to Indiana CareerConnect.com, IndianaCareerExplorer.com, and the Hoosiers by the Numbers websites. Through the ICR website, Hoosier jobseekers, employers, students/parents, education/training providers, and workforce partners can access career and interest assessment tools, search for education and training opportunities, and find current job openings.

DWD developed an occupational ranking system to determine Indiana INDemand jobs. The demand indicator is based upon a methodology that ranks all Indiana jobs based on future growth and wages. Rankings are updated quarterly using demand and wage data.

Indiana also has a comprehensive longitudinal data system that is operated by Indiana's Management Performance Hub (MPH). There are a number of core and partner programs that input there data into that system. We will continue to make improvements on the data elements that are a part of MPH so that comprehensive reporting can be done through one state agency rather than through multiple partner agencies and programs. This will ensure that the data is being reported in the same manner and independently for the state board's review.

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

Data-collection and reporting processes used for all programs and activities, including those present in one-stop centers.[10]

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

The Department of Workforce Development (DWD) remains a key agency in the development of the data transmitted to and housed in the state's longitudinal data system, previously known as the Indiana Network for Knowledge (INK). In 2017, INK was absorbed under the Indiana Management Performance Hub (MPH) and has been renamed as the Education &Workforce Data System (EWD). Partner agencies include the Indiana Department of Education (DOE), Indiana Commission for Higher Education (CHE), Department of Workforce Development (DWD), the Governor's Workforce Cabinet (GWC), and the Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA). The the state's longitudinal data system at MPH, education and workforce data elements are combined across the partner agencies at the record level, joining key education and workforce descriptors for end user exploration.

In October 2016, Indiana launched a new combined case management and labor exchange data system (Indiana Career Connect /ICC) via its vendor, Geographic Solutions. In 2022, the state will issue a Request for Proposals to procure a new case management and labor exchange system. The local workforce boards report their data and information to DWD through this case management system. This system aligns with the state's labor market information data, interactive website, and tools for jobs seekers and career counselors. DWD Research and Analysis houses both Indiana's labor market information division, as well as the federal reporting team responsible for producing training performance reports as dictated through the PIRL (Participant Individual Record Layout). This office also assists with data questions and analyses of outcomes against current economic and wage data.T

he Research and Analysis Unit housed in the DWD also has its own longitudinal data warehouse (Research and Analysis Warehouse – RAW) in which it maintains over 500 million records on claims, new hires, EQUI, wage records, case management, labor exchange system, and data from other systems housed in DWD. This combined repository of data helps to answer questions from the state's leadership, as well as data requests from external parties seeking workforce outcomes data achieved by matching wage records. The comprehensive, integrative nature of RAW plays an integral role in ensuring information regarding wage outcomes can be obtained for decision making and policy planning.

EWD (formerly INK) creates enhanced opportunities to combine workforce and education data (K-12 and higher education) to examine employment outcomes, retention of graduates, differential outcomes based on degree type and area of study, and a wide range of other research to better understand the linkages between education and the workforce, to name a few. EWD provides end users, including the Governor's Workforce Cabinet, the Governor's Office, other state agencies, and the Indiana General Assembly, with the opportunity for a more

holistic exploration of Indiana's education-to-workforce pipeline to address specific policy questions. This enhanced understanding enables decision makers to make better informed decisions to positively impact students, teachers, workers, and employers. DWD, CHE, FSSA, GWC, and DOE continue to contribute data into the database, with DWD providing unemployment claims, wage records, select case management records, and adult education data to address research efforts.

A data hub has been created by MPH for users to access public facing data sets and is currently published on MPH's website. Datasets are also available through a request process at MPH. Data from DWD are also available in dashboard format on DWD's website and include Occupational Employment Estimates (OES), Occupational Projections, Funded Eligible Training Programs, and data for the Indiana Composite Education Score , which provides the most common education attainment level needed for an occupation based on BLS, O*NET, ACS, and CPS data, and Job Postings by County. Data sets for this hub have been contributed by other agencies and partners, such as IBRC, Indiana Department of Homeland Security, CHE, the Indiana Department of Transportation, and several other agencies.

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

Several state policies have been issued or updated to ensure successful implementation of WIOA, and others will be developed to support the strategies identified in this Plan:

- **Data sharing:** Data sharing is the basic first step we must take to understand the correlation between our programs and improvements for Hoosiers. Amongst those agencies on the GWC, we will institute a data charter, allowing data to be cross-referenced and analyzed by the Indiana Management Performance Hub (MPH). One critical piece of this step is MPH determining the overlap of populations between the Combined Plan programs (as well as other related programs, like child support through the Department of Child Services, subsidized housing through the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority, and Medicaid through the Family and Social Services Agency), we will understand who we are serving, where we are serving them, and through what programs. These data will then be shared with our local Boards. We will begin with correlating state-level data across our agencies, with a longer term step of including county-level data. One barrier Indiana faces in creating interagency data charters is federal restrictions around data sharing. We hope to leverage Governor Holcomb's work and leadership on the White House's **American Workforce Policy Advisory Board** to address the federal challenges and facilitate greater data sharing between our agencies.

- **Co-enrollment.** Based upon an individual's eligibility criteria and services they qualify for, WorkOnes, through the support of state common intake and case management systems, will offer Hoosier a package of potential programs and services. Frontline staff will work with the in individual's aspirations to figure out which programs it is best to enroll them into, which may include more than one or two programs. Co-enrollment can range from being a reportable individual in a specific program up to and including full activation as a participant in the program.

- **Co-location:** As Indiana works to increase the co-location of its services by physically and virtually embedding local program managers and staff into various offices and community hubs, we can begin to understand and improve the effectiveness of our customer service. We can track: wait times, waitlists, enrollment increases, speed of referrals, and quality of referrals and case management (e.g., scheduling appointments, co-enrollment in multiple programs, and persistence and completion rates of co-enrollment). We can also correlate these data with various models of co-location: physical, embedded or itinerant staffing, and mobile or temporary sites.

- **Cross-training:** To facilitate co-enrollment and enhance co-location, we must increase our cross-training professional development of state, local, and frontline staff. This strategy is central to successful integration of our programs across agencies. To begin, we will prioritize cross-training SNAP, TANF, all core WIOA programs, and federal and state financial aid opportunities, focusing on eligibility requirements and allowances. We want to start cross-training our staff from the state-level to those on the front lines in these programs first because these present the biggest opportunity to address and coordinate overlapping programs and funding. These efforts will be led by the administrative agencies as part of the implementation of the Combined Plan. A project team comprised of cross-agency staff will development strategies, materials, timelines, and rollout for each program's cross-training module, as well as inform the instructional methods of how to connect this program with others. Each agency will track the availability of professional development opportunities, including in-person, successive modules, webinars, and workshops for each program. Additionally, they will track the completion of those opportunities. Completion data will then be cross-referenced through co-enrollment rates in the various programs. We will also increase cross-training and onboarding for members of local Workforce Boards regarding Core and Partner Programs for them to better understand the talent development ecosystem. Cross-trainings for Boards may also encompass community programs and partners that are critical to addressing the barriers of our target populations.

- **Partner Shared Costs:** DWD issued guidance and technical assistance in the development of partnership and Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) and infrastructure funding agreements (IFAs) between local workforce development areas (LWDAs) and partners of the one-stop delivery system. This guidance promotes a locally-driven, locally-negotiated process for partnering and sharing costs within each LWDA. MOUs must be completed at least every three years; budgets for IFAs must be completed on or before July 1st of each program year, unless an extension is granted for additional time to reach agreement. (See DWD Policy 2018-04 at: https://www.in.gov/dwd/compliance-policy/policy/active/).

- **Priority of Service:** DWD will continue to review its WIOA Priority of Service guidance to better align with the federal vision and the strategies outlined within this Plan. DWD expects to publish updated guidance in early 2020. DWD published guidance on WIOA Adult Priority of Service in early 2020, and updated this guidance in early 2022. (See Policy 2019-04, Change 1 at https://www.in.gov/dwd/compliance-policy/policy/active/). Additionally, local areas must have written policies that delineate how they will give priority of service and must adhere to these policies. DWD will review data and local policies to ensure priority is being carried out appropriately and will provide technical assistance as needed.

A. STATE AGENCY ORGANIZATION

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

The Governor's Workforce Cabinet (GWC) reports to the Governor's Office. The GWC sets policy and advises the Governor on workforce initiatives. It serves as an overall policymaker and advisor to the Governor on workforce issues and is specifically charged with creating a plan for a statewide vision to connect education, workforce, social services, corrections and economic development initiatives. The GWC also sets policy for workforce activities managed regionally by the local Workforce Development Boards (WDBs). The GWC and its staff have a mission to address current and future education and employment needs of both individuals and employers, strengthen Indiana's economy by integrating and aligning state and federal resources, ensure a talent-driven education and workforce system, and complete other duties as directed by the Governor or legislature. The GWC works with all agencies in the workforce ecosystem to drive policy recommendations through regular meetings or through the Combined Plan.

The Department of Workforce Development (DWD) is the state agency responsible for the administration and oversight of all of the WIOA programs under Titles I, II, and III. DWD oversees operations managed regionally by the WDBs. The Family and Social Services Administration, through its Bureau of Rehabilitative Services, is the state agency responsible for the administration and oversight of WIOA programs under Title IV.

The GWC operates as the state advisory body for the programs contained in this Combined State Plan (see IC 4-3-27). On behalf of the Governor and in collaboration with the GWC, DWD operates as the designated administrative entity for WIOA Titles I, II, and III, the Unemployment Insurance system, and other federal and state programs. As such, DWD is named the sole agency to plan, coordinate, implement, monitor, and make recommendations regarding initiatives designed to prepare Indiana's workforce for effective participation in the competitive and global economy (see IC 22-4.1).

Although the Governor has primary authority in WIOA local area governance, both the GWC and DWD have approval and signatory authority on behalf of the Governor for various WIOA local area governance activities. For local area governance activities requiring Governor-level approval:

- If activities are specifically outlined within USDOL regulation or guidance as State Board functions, the GWC is authorized to approve/sign on behalf of the Governor. (E.g., WIOA Local Plan approvals, Designation of Local Areas, etc.)
- If activities are operational or compliance-based, the DWD Commissioner is authorized to approve/sign on behalf of the Governor. DWD will issue guidance on, review and make decisions regarding these activities, consulting with the GWC as appropriate. (E.g., WIOA Single Entity/Multiple Role structures, local WDB certifications, submission of bi-annual Nondiscrimination Plan, etc.).
- For any activities that may overlap the above designations of signatory authority, the GWC and DWD collaborate and EITHER may approve/sign on behalf of the Governor. (E.g., The review process for Local Plans is conducted by DWD, with a recommendation provided to the GWC for final approval. Written approval may then be signed/issued by DWD, on behalf of the GWC, or may be issued directly from the GWC.)

Indiana has a total of twelve (12) designated local areas with a WDB in each. WDBs are responsible for the oversight of funds and activities, delivering career assessments, job search, and education and training related services through WorkOne offices (Indiana's term for our one-stop centers or American Job Centers) established by the local board. Indiana has identified regions 5 and 12 as a planning region in the state.

Indiana, along with Kentucky, created the first Bi-State Planning Region by resolution of the Cabinet and Kentucky Workforce and Innovation Board. Indiana's Region 10 Workforce Board created the Bi-State Plan with Kentuckiana Works to advance the regional workforce. This Plan is the first of its kind to merge interstate regions into one designated workforce hub. This significant collaboration exists between local areas Indiana Region 10 and Kentuckiana Works in order to develop the regional plan around the Louisville metropolitan area, which includes urban and rural sprawl in southern Indiana. The Bi-State Regional Plan creates an innovative picture of the region's economy and workforce environment through joint Indiana-Kentucky strategies to attain regional goals and objections.

Workforce, education opportunities, and other needed individual services and resources are delivered on a local level through a WorkOne established by the WDBs and managed by Executive Directors, Regional Operators, and One Stop Operators. The WorkOne operations are engaged and reviewed by both the GWC and the coordinating WDB. Local boards and Wagner-Peyser staff assist DWD with the administration of the workforce system. Other crucial partners in the workforce system include employers, our public and private institutions for higher education, school districts, CTE districts, community action centers, and local organizations providing adult education and other services. Indiana is driving a focused effort on technical assistance, training, and coordination for services leading to a comprehensive system that is better equipped to serve Hoosiers effectively.

The Governor's Workforce Cabinet team can be found at: https://www.in.gov/gwc/2332.htm.

- Governor's Workforce Cabinet Executive Director, Whitney Ertel
- Chief of Staff, Erin Sheridan
- Communications Director, Sam Rourke

The Indiana Department of Workforce Development Leadership team can be found at: https://www.in.gov/dwd/about-dwd/executive-team/. A full organizational chart for the Department of Workforce Development can be found in the UI section.

- Indiana Department of Workforce Development Commissioner, Fred Payne
- Executive Assistant, Cindy George
- Chief of Staff, Regina Ashley
- Executive Director of Applied Data Services & Legislative Affairs, Josh Richardson
- Chief Workforce Officer, Mike Barnes
- Chief Financial Officer, Deanna Oware
- Associate Chief Workforce Strategy & Design, Marilyn Pitzulo
- Associate Chief Workforce Operations Officer, Katie Rounds
- Associate Chief, Compliance & Policy, Connie Wray

- Associate Chief of Service Delivery and Field Operations, Leslie Crist
- Executive Director of Workforce Programs and Services, Allison Bertl
- Director, Human Resources, Danai Bracey
- Director, IT - Workforce Development, Jeff Tucker
- General Counsel, Beth Green
- Director, UI Review Board, Gabriel Paul
- Chief Communications Officer, To be named
- Chief Unemployment Insurance Officer, Noah Shelton
- Executive Director, Office of Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeship, Darrel Zeck
- Associate. Chief Operating Officer, Workforce Education & Training, Beth Meguschar
- Director, Adult Education, Jerry Haffner
- Director, Workforce Systems, Chad Carter
- Executive Director, Serve Indiana, Marc Mcaleavey

The Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA), through its Bureau of Rehabilitative Services, is the state agency responsible for the administration and oversight of WIOA programs under Title IV. A graphic organizational chart of FSSA leadership can be viewed at http://www.in.gov/fssa/4829.htm. The chart illustrates the following agency structure:

- Secretary of FSSA, Daniel Rusyniak, MD
- Deputy Secretary/Chief of Staff, Michael Gargano
- Executive Assistant, Cate Marshall
- Chief Advocacy Officer, Peggy Welch
- Chief Financial Officer, Paul Bowling
- Chief Information Officer, Jared Linder
- Chief Medical Officer, Maria Finnell, MD
- Chief Health Equity and ADA Officer, Breanca Merritt, Ph.D.
- Chief Science Officer, Amy Lewis Gilbert
- Director of Aging, Sarah Renner
- Director of Communications, Jim Gavin
- Director of Disability and Rehabilitative Services, Kim Opsahl
- Director of Early Childhood and Out of School Learning, Nicole Norvell
- Director of Family Resources, Adrienne Shields
- Director of 211, Tara Morse

- Director of Medicaid, Allison Taylor
- Director of Mental Health and Addiction, Jay Chaudhary
- General Counsel, Leslie Huckleberry
- Legislative/Policy Director, Gus Habig
- Human Resources Director, Casey Parent
- Disability Determination Bureau Director, Sylvia Funk

B. STATE BOARD

Provide a description of the State Board, including—

A description of the State Board, including a membership roster, can be found in section 3Bi and 3 Bii.

I. MEMBERSHIP ROSTER

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

A list of current Governor's Workforce Cabinet (GWC) members can be found at: https://www.in.gov/gwc/2310.htm

Below is a list of Governor's Workforce Cabinet (GWC) members.

- *Representative Bob Behning - Indiana House of Representatives
- Jená Bellezza - Chief Operating Officer for Indiana Parenting Institute
- Amy Brown - Vice President of Flexible Concepts, Inc.
- *Robert Carter - Indiana Department of Corrections Commissioner
- Maurice Coates Jr. - President of CK United
- Tony Denhart – Executive VP of Workforce and Talent, Indiana Economic Development Corporation
- Sue Ellspermann - Ivy Tech Community College President
- Jody French - Principal of Perry Central Jr./Sr. High School
- Megan Glover - CEO of 120WaterAudit
- Anne Hazlett - Senior Director of Government Relations/Public Affairs @ Purdue University
- Joyce Irwin - President/CEO of the Community Health Network Foundation
- Dr. Katie Jenner - Secretary of Education
- Chuck Johnson - Vincennes University President
- Mark Kara - Assistant to the Coordinator for Local 150 Operating Engineers
- Loren King – CEO and co-founder of Trinitas

- Ryan Kitchell – GWC Chairman
- Chris LaMothe – Past CEO of Elevate Ventures
- Chris Lowery – Commissioner of Higher Education
- Rebecca McCuaig – Chief Legal Counsel at Accelerate Indiana Municipalities
- Fred Payne - Indiana Department of Workforce Development Commissioner
- Paul Perkins - President of Amatrol, Inc.
- Dan Peterson – VP of Industry and Government Affairs for Cook Group Inc.
- *Senator Jeff Raatz - Indiana State Senate
- Dr. Ronald Rochon - President of the University of Southern Indiana
- Dr. Steve Rogers – Director of Walker Career Center
- Dr. Daniel Rusyniak – Secretary of Indiana Family & Social Services Administration
- Rebecca Schroeder - President of Whiteshire Hamroc
- David Shane – Past CEO of Lacy Diversified Industries
- Dr. Steve Thalheimer – Superintendent of Elkhart Community Schools
- Tony Vespa – Founder of Vespa Group

**Denotes Non-Voting Members*

****UPDATE: Since submission of Indiana's modification, US DOL ETA conditionally approved the Plan but required the addition of unique Adult Education and Vocational Rehabilitation representatives on the GWC. Announced on August 2, 2022, Governor Holcomb has appointed the following to fulfill this requirement:***

Marilyn Pitzulo, Indiana DWD, Associate Chief of Strategy/Design (Adult Education)

Theresa Koleszar, Indiana FSSA, Director of the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (VR)

Other recent appointments since the latest submission:

Dan Peterson, VP of Industry and Government Affairs, Cook Group Incorporated - (manufacturing)

Steve Schreckengast, President and co-founder of Citation Homes, Inc. (building)

Loren King, President/CEO of Trinitas (small business)

Dave Shane, retired CEO of Lacy Diversified Industries (at large business owner)

Governor's Workforce Cabinet Staff

- Governor's Workforce Cabinet Executive Director, Whitney Ertel
- Chief of Staff, Erin Sheridan
- Communications Director, Sam Rourke

II. BOARD ACTIVITIES

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

The Cabinet members are dedicated, well-prepared members that take the work of the GWC seriously. The structure and operation of the GWC are best stated through the words of the members as follows:

"The structure of the Governor's Workforce Cabinet is working. Created by legislation, the group is convened under the direction of the Governor, ensuring the urgency and importance of the Cabinet's mission and objectives. With counsel from employers, state agencies are working to align and streamline their policies and programs. The Governor has made cracking the code on workforce and talent a top priority, and that is evident in his policy agenda and through the cabinet.

"By bringing together cabinet-level leaders from Workforce Development, Higher Education, K-12 Education, Family and Social Services, Economic Development, and Corrections, along with Indiana employers and state lawmakers, this group is convening the right people to gain input and drive the strategic direction of our state as it relates to talent development.

"I'm encouraged by the work we've accomplished to date and convinced that the Cabinet's structure is providing a stronger workforce system to serve Hoosiers, employers, and the State." – Teresa Lubbers, Governor's Workforce Cabinet Chair and Commissioner for Higher Education.

"The current state board structure and functions are important and uniquely enabling, because it brings together industry leaders with the leaders of our state's entire workforce/education system, rather than a portion of the system, and the board reports directly to the Governor's personal staff. This has enabled our board to deploy statewide, systems-level thinking, helping us make better and faster decisions, and engage the multiple key stakeholders needed to make these decisions successful." – Paul Perkins, President of Amatrol, Inc.

"The current board structure is particularly powerful because of its cross-functional nature – bringing together decision makers, stakeholders, experts, and policymakers from across the workforce continuum. The collaboration this brings about between government, education, and private industry is critical in meeting the needs of Hoosiers and Indiana companies." – Tony Vespa, Founder of Vespa Group.

All newly appointed members are on-boarded using the GWC's Mission, Vision, Goals, and Guiding Principles to ground them in a common objection. They are introduced to other members of the GWC through meeting materials. Each year, at the first meeting, the GWC will discuss the implementation and execution of strategies in the Combined Plan, highlighting progress, accomplishments, performance goals, and milestones. The GWC has regular meetings every other month, as well as consistent communication among members and staff through face-to-face meetings, emails, and phone calls. The GWC also hosts committee meetings in order to complete vital analysis of specific strategies. Prior to the development of the committees, action teams were utilized for developing the Cabinet members' knowledge related to college and career funding and workforce funding. The staff also conducts all necessary responsibilities with the assigned authority over Perkins and Career and Technical Education Administration. In order to accomplish the goals set out by the GWC and the Combined Plan, staff continually review and discuss guidance and policy received from the federal level on various topics that impact the GWC. By sharing all federal updates with the GWC, Cabinet members can determine if action must be taken. Staff, led by the Executive Director, coordinates with DWD to issue any necessary guidance.

Staff is always available for questions and technical assistance through regular communication with Cabinet members, including a monthly newsletter to share coordination, alignment, and accomplished GWC and state agencies' functions.

4. ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION OF PROGRAMS AND ONE-STOP PROGRAM PARTNERS

A. ASSESSMENT OF CORE PROGRAMS

Describe how the core programs will be assessed each year based on State performance accountability measures described in section 116(b) of WIOA. This State assessment must include the quality, effectiveness, and improvement of programs broken down by local area or provider. Such state assessments should take into account local and regional planning goals.

DWD utilizes a variety of processes and reporting tools for regular monitoring of program performance to drive quality improvement and effectiveness. Some of the methods utilized are outlined below:

- **Programmatic and Fiscal Monitoring:**
-
    - DWD conducts regular monitoring of each Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) to examine compliance with statutory,
- regulatory, and policy-driven requirements, as well as identify areas in need of administrative, financial management, programmatic, and/or systemic improvement. WIOA Title I programs are monitored on an annual basis and formal reports are issued identifying compliance findings, areas of concern, and best practices.Additional information regarding the DWD monitoring process is available at: https://www.in.gov/dwd/compliance-policy/monitoring/. In 2021, DWD developed an Oversight and Monitoring Strategic Plan (OMSP) to assist in streamlining and modernizing workforce program and grant oversight activities. The OMSP communicates a consistent vision and approach for oversight and monitoring across all workforce program areas, while remaining agile as structure and priorities evolve. The OMSP highlights four priority areas:
- Priority 1: Adequate monitoring and oversight of workforce programs
- Priority 2: Culture of continuous improvement through oversight and monitoring
- Priority 3: Manage performance and grantee support
- Priority 4: Strengthen fiscal efficiency across all workforce programs
- In order to carry out the strategies and focus areas of the OMSP, DWD established a standing Quality Workgroup consisting of program leads in various workforce areas. The Quality Workgroup is tasked with ensuring continuous improvement through sharing of best practices and identification of technical assistance and training needs.
- **Federal Performance Metrics:** DWD currently follows the six primary indicators of performance described under section 116(b)(2)(A) of WIOA. For the PY20/PY21 local performance negotiation cycle, DWD issued Local Performance Negotiations Guidance (Memorandum 2020-01, available at https://www.in.gov/dwd/compliance-policy/policy/active/). DWD utilized the average of PY19 actuals and PY19 negotiated goals as the basis for conducting local area negotiations. DWD is currently developing a

local Statistical Adjustment Model (SAM) and intends to utilize this model for future negotiation and adjustment cycles. Additionally, DWD also developed and maintains a Federal Performance Measures dashboard that enables staff and workforce partners to efficiently analyze years' worth of Local Area Reports in one location. This information is available on the DWD Performance Portal at: www.in.gov/dwd/RPM.htm.

- **State Performance Metrics:** DWD established additional regional performance metrics to improve the efficacy of Indiana's workforce development system. DWD's State Performance Metrics project complements and supplements Federal reporting measures. The State Performance Measures are made available on the DWD Performance Portal at: www.in.gov/dwd/RPM.htm.The State Performance Metrics are gathered and negotiated in collaboration with Indiana's twelve (12) regional WDBs. The current State Performance Metrics and the process and timelines for negotiations are outlined in DWD Policy 2018-02, available at https://www.in.gov/dwd/compliance-policy/policy/active/. **Update for 2022:** Due to covid Indiana has decided to pause accountability on the complimentary state performance metrics. We will continue to collect the data and evaluate these state performance during PY22/23 to determine their effectiveness.

- **Adult Education Assessment Strategies:** In order to monitor and evaluate the quality of adult education activities, program management, fiscal management, data management, and performance measures are continuously assessed. Informal and formal monitoring, desk audits, data checks, and program visits are conducted by state central office staff, adult education coordinators, and the InTERS data team. Low performing programs are identified, in part, based on the accountability results described in section 116(b) of WIOA. Visits are made to low performing programs by a state team. Local programs develop professional development plans, target measurable skill gains to increase academic gains, and develop strategies to reduce student separations. Technical assistance and professional development are provided by state adult education coordinators and other members of the state team to further increase student success. Likewise, a comprehensive risk assessment is performed on all successful grantees from the Multi-Year Adult Education Competitive Grant Application (Request for Application) and the Multi-Year Integrated English Literacy & Civics Education Competitive Grant Application (Request for Application).

Based on these results, a number of adult education programs are selected for formal monitoring each year by a state monitoring team. On-site visits are made to view records and classes, and to interview personnel. Formal reports are forwarded to local providers after site visits, and programs out of compliance, are placed on corrective action plans monitored by the adult education coordinator assigned for that region. Programs are not released from corrective action plans until compliance is achieved and satisfactory progress is reached. Technical assistance is provided and professional development is customized for programs identified as low performing.

States negotiate yearly performance targets with the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education with respect to the percentage of program participants who, during a program year, are in an adult education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill

gains toward a credential or employment. Indiana requires providers of adult education to meet similar state-negotiated WIOA metrics. Additionally, the state reviews the percentage of adults who are post-tested; the percentage of adults who exit the program without measurable skill gains; the percentage of adults who achieve measurable skill gains in distance education; and the percentage of adults who attain a high school diploma or equivalency.

At a minimum, each regional adult education coordinator reviews program performance monthly and communicates to area providers efforts toward meeting local, regional, and state performance targets. The goal is continuous improvement. Performance is also monitored daily by the InTERS data team. Each provider and region see how they perform compared to the state and to the same time a year ago. To provide further transparency, the state broadcasts a monthly webinar that extensively covers these metrics and related performance standards. A coordinated series of professional development and technical assistance opportunities are offered to support these efforts. Funded programs employ professional development facilitators (lead teachers) who support and promote these targets. Lead teachers are required to monitor goals and provide quarterly reports to the professional development state team who analyze Indiana's strategies to meet these objectives.

In grant renewal years, funding is determined by past performance. A yearly performance scheduled is released at the start of each program year. The schedule outlines state priorities and performance accountability standards for future grant awards. Recent performance metrics included enrollment; measurable skill gains; high school diploma or equivalency; and certifications as core areas. Additionally, a companion schedule included Integrated Education and Training performance as a metric with focus on enrollments, completions, and certifications.

B. ASSESSMENT OF ONE-STOP PARTNER PROGRAMS

Describe how other one-stop delivery system partner program services and Combined State Plan partner programs included in the plan will be assessed each year. Such state assessments should take into account local and regional planning goals.

Pursuant to Indiana Code 22-4.1-24-2(a), DWD produces the Workforce Programs Report available at www.in.gov/dwd/WPR.htm. This annual report includes information about state- and federally-funded workforce programs administered by DWD, as well as total workforce expenditures across all state agencies performing workforce services. The Workforce Programs Report is a collaborative effort with other state agencies, including the Department of Education, the Family and Social Services Agency, and the Commission for Higher Education, among several others. It is comprised of both WIOA and non-WIOA data and allows DWD, regional partners, legislators and other administrators to measure the effectiveness of workforce partner programs in serving the needs of Hoosier workers and employers. This report will serve as the foundation for annual review to ensure that WIOA Core and Partner programs are meeting the metrics and strategies outlined within the State Plan. This Combined Plan serves as a template for an improved model of the one-stop delivery system, and the interim benchmarks outlined at the onset of this plan will be used to assess continuous improvement of the system. In additional to the federal performance indicators that we will look at, there are other indicators that we will monitor to ensure that we are better leveraging all of the programs that are a part of the combined plan. Those include:

1. Data sharing. Data sharing is the basic first step we must take to understand the correlation between our programs and improvements for Hoosiers. Amongst those agencies on the GWC, we need to institute a data charter, allowing data to be cross-referenced and analyzed by the

Indiana Management Performance Hub (MPH). One critical piece of this step is MPH determining the overlap of populations between the Combined Plan programs (as well as other related programs, like child support through the Department of Child Services, subsidized housing through the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority, and Medicaid through the Family and Social Services Agency), so that we will understand who we are serving,where we are serving them, and through what programs. We will begin with correlating state-level data across our agencies, with a longer term step of including county-level data. One barrier Indiana faces in creating interagency data charters is federal restrictions around data sharing. We will leverage Governor Holcomb's work and leadership on the White House's American Workforce Policy Advisory Board to address the federal challenges and facilitate greater data sharing between our agencies.

2. Co-enrollment. Once we know the intersection of our populations within our programs, we can improve how individuals are co-enrolled into programs, which will serve as a proxy for braiding funds until we have a common case management system. Additionally, we can track our co-enrollment rates between core, partner, and state programs. Individuals must meet eligibility requirements to be co-enrolled in programs and can opt out of enrolling in a program. Co-enrollment can range from being a reportable individual in a specific program up to and including full activation as a participant in the program.

3. Co-location. As Indiana works to increase the co-location of its services by physically and virtually embedding local program managers and staff into various offices and community hubs, we can begin to understand and improve the effectiveness of our customer service. We can track: wait times, waitlists, enrollment increases, speed of referrals, and quality of referrals and case management (e.g., scheduling appointments, co-enrollment in multiple programs, and persistence and completion rates of co-enrollment).

4. Cross-training. To facilitate co-enrollment and enhance co-location, we must increase our cross-training and professional development of state, local, and frontline staff. This strategy is central to successful integration of our programs across agencies. To begin, we will prioritize cross-training SNAP, TANF, all core WIOA programs, and federal and state financial aid opportunities, focusing on eligibility requirements and allowances. We want to start cross-training our staff from the state-level to those on the front lines in these programs first because these present the biggest opportunity to address and coordinate overlapping programs and funding. These efforts will be led by the administrative agencies. Each agency will track the availability of professional development opportunities, including in-person, successive modules, webinars, and workshops for each program. Additionally, they will track the completion of those opportunities. Completion data will then be cross-referenced through co-enrollment rates in the various programs. We will also increase crosstraining and onboarding for members of local Workforce Boards regarding Core and Partner Programs for them to better understand the talent development ecosystem. Cross-trainings for Boards may also encompass community programs and partners that are critical to addressing the barriers of our target populations.

5. Employer engagement. In order to see the growth of labor participation by our target populations, we need to work with our Hoosier businesses to see the benefits of non-traditional hiring practices. Through both expanded work-based learning partnerships and showcasing best practices with unconventional talent development approaches from other employers, we can start to shift the mindsets of all our employers regarding how to engage with our target populations.

C. PREVIOUS ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Beginning with the state plan modification in 2018 and for subsequent state plans and state plan modifications, provide the results of assessments of the effectiveness of the core programs and other one-stop partner programs and Combined State Plan partner programs included in the Unified or Combined State plan during the preceding 2-year period (i.e. the 2-year period of the plan modification cycle). Describe how the State is adapting its strategies based on these assessments.

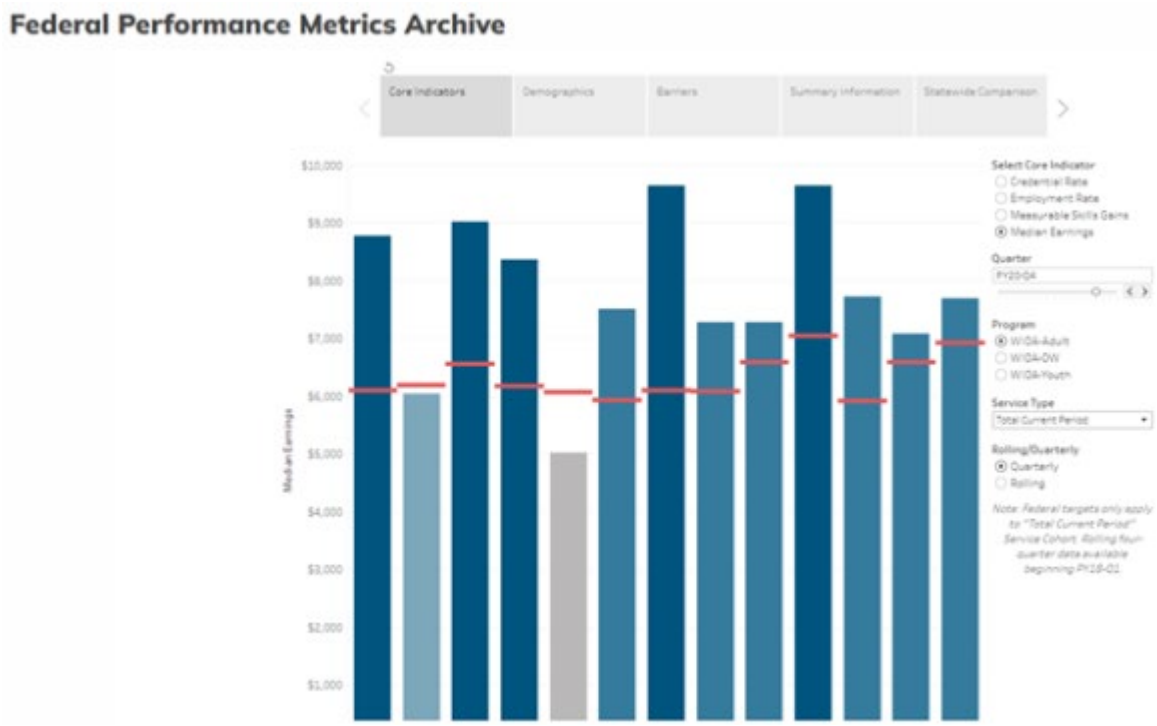
Pursuant to Indiana Code (IC) 22-4.1-24-2(a), annual reports are made that include information about state and federally-funded workforce programs administered by the Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD) as well as total workforce expenditures across all state agencies performing workforce services (Annual Workforce Programs Report). The Annual Workforce Programs Report (www.in.gov/dwd/WPR.htm) tracks expenditures, participation, and outcomes for all agency programs. The report is designed to enable legislators and administrators to analyze all of Indiana's workforce programs based on outcomes that are closely aligned to WIOA performance indicators.

The state and our local workforce boards have annual performance measures as determined through the federal/state and state/local performance negotiations process. However, the state recognized that we could improve upon the services provided to individuals by looking more comprehensively at the services we were providing to individuals, and thus a comprehensive analysis on how to better serve Hoosiers led to the development of this Combined Plan. We will continue to monitor federal and state performance along with the goals outlined in this plan to determine iterative strategies at improving services to Hoosiers.

The Federal and State Performance Measures are made available on the DWD Performance Portal at: www.in.gov/dwd/RPM.htm. The results of these performance measures drive conversations and collaboration among state and local partners to identify areas for improvement, to prioritize technical assistance, and to inform funding (e.g., funding to target specific metrics or state priority areas). While the state did not meet all of the expected measures for PY20, due in part to the volatile economic conditions created by the pandemic, improvements have been made into PY21 and are on track to continue to PY22/23. In areas where a local region does not meet the negotiated metrics, the GWC and DWD work with local boards to identify areas for improvement and why they may not be meeting those negotiated levels.

In addition to the Federal Performance Measures, the state has also put in place some other performance measures that are utilized to help drive better performance in those federal indicators. The state performance measures are also utilized to help identify performance funding that is available for local boards. While these measures began to be assessed, the effort to track these additional measures experienced a pause when the pandemic set in. During PY22 and 23, the state will be evaluating these state performance measures both in pandemic conditions and outside of pandemic conditions to understand the impact and quality of measures that they provide. As a result, we will refine these state measures and the policy set forth.

As the state moves forward with our Combined Plan, we will be looking at performance across all combined partner programs. Below is a depiction of how the state compared and evaluates performance across core programs.



In addition to evaluating these core programs, the state has also begun to assess performance across various programs. This is done by looking at a four-year snapshot that assesses participants served and services provided. The state plans to further develop these assessments, through a quarterly dashboard, to identify trends in participants and service delivery both by region and statewide. A snapshot of this dashboard can be seen below, depicting an assessment of several programs and areas. The efforts here will provide details on how services can be tailored to areas where improvement may be needed.

Region	WIOA I Adult/DW Participants				WIOA I Youth Participants				WIOA I Placements			
	PY21	PY20	PY19	PY18	PY21	PY20	PY19	PY18	PY21	PY20	PY19	PY18
1	1,688	1,861	2,083	2,223	793	813	674	944	1,423	2,494	2,014	2,094
2	584	1,006	1,291	1,291	276	345	553	649	342	768	774	853
3	512	709	821	1,104	420	386	397	483	331	690	773	736
4	585	723	1,140	1,388	268	276	225	277	286	428	1,101	1,409
5	698	764	1,162	1,442	289	368	337	405	964	1,794	2,152	1,957
6	747	918	1,025	847	90	131	228	273	512	835	942	638
7	275	251	301	432	96	102	135	234	216	591	746	849
8	463	511	398	770	62	73	75	137	299	437	650	631
9	222	171	234	263	81	81	84	102	208	375	461	371
10	270	345	568	545	64	57	87	71	221	363	521	422
11	746	985	1,080	1,330	272	284	307	337	488	842	1,012	1,216
12	229	401	495	501	124	155	180	221	77	297	279	197
STATE	6,935	8,795	10,758	13,194	2,775	3,051	3,242	4,133	5,367	10,114	11,325	11,375
% Change	-21.2%	-18.2%	-18.5%		-9.0%	-5.9%	-21.6%		-46.9%	-10.7%	-0.4%	

Region	Adult Education (WIOA II)				Employer Engagement (W		
	PY21	PY20	PY19	PY18	PY21	PY20	PY19
1	825	1,286	1,231	1,616	950	1,101	970
2	1,330	1,410	1,893	1,773	138	182	268
3	1,474	1,534	1,725	2,131	241	375	862
4	851	815	1,487	1,859	720	562	556
5	5,881	5,603	6,690	7,695	792	1,042	819
6	491	582	910	1,121	159	24	192
7	455	539	580	804	150	151	189
8	1,010	1,042	1,077	1,102	119	244	261
9	971	1,021	1,168	1,218	226	427	477
10	288	293	459	709	320	270	479
11	855	912	923	1,099	285	315	368
12	NA	NA	NA	NA	512	817	1,362
STATE	14,352	14,837	18,143	21,027	4,612	5,531	6,894
% Change	-3.2%	-18.2%	-13.7%		-16.7%	-19.8%	-6.1%

Region	Wagner Peyser Participants (WIOA III)				Wagner Peyser Placements (WIOA III)			
	PY21	PY20	PY19	PY18	PY21	PY20	PY19	PY18
1	2,977	10,108	26,773	6,612	1,041	1,796	1,539	1,912
2	1,221	14,591	24,002	4,747	76	57	180	770
3	1,974	11,322	28,404	4,364	74	182	269	333
4	2,709	9,791	21,918	6,057	106	118	280	265
5	1,649	11,490	26,931	5,187	200	335	767	499
6	1,278	4,319	10,478	4,503	18	13	14	21
7	424	2,982	4,817	1,793	124	263	182	95
8	1,063	4,657	7,173	2,380	124	322	262	245
9	678	3,963	11,883	1,655	63	70	81	114
10	441	5,289	7,422	1,187	30	47	55	37
11	994	7,024	14,429	3,336	114	300	437	445
12	2,442	19,602	31,747	6,440	58	158	96	100
STATE	16,910	104,336	215,838	48,171	1,058	1,811	4,342	4,846
% Change	-83.8%	-48.3%	-55.4%		-41.7%	-15.1%	-12.1%	

	JVSG				TAA				RESEA			
	PY21	PY20	PY19	PY18	PY21	PY20	PY19	PY18	PY21	PY20	PY19	PY18
1	58	123	89	153	97	31	7	13	2,896	11,463	5,387	4,760
2	12	24	38	87	161	184	124	103	2,106	8,326	6,323	5,758
3	103	181	120	159	145	208	259	317	3,284	14,590	7,956	5,280
4	81	115	127	118	135	172	248	212	2,412	9,179	6,882	5,121
5	71	104	93	87	125	114	103	88	3,247	7,323	4,267	3,409
6	23	66	82	107	70	83	88	21	1,188	4,079	2,157	1,978
7	8	29	37	1	88	119	141	191	770	2,833	1,368	1,430
8	24	58	81	12	41	51	48	67	1,015	3,867	2,558	1,668
9	52	71	65	71	30	41	52	36	1,075	4,257	2,560	1,694
10	8	49	38	8	16	11	19	115	877	3,046	1,577	1,150
11	87	108	100	95	292	237	88	104	1,263	5,488	2,487	2,040
12	112	216	142	142	32	97	147	209	5,160	20,956	8,908	6,861
STATE	638	1,140	1,009	1,067	1,002	1,348	1,292	1,519	24,408	97,514	49,098	41,629
% Change	-44.2%	-11.6%	-5.4%		-25.7%	-4.3%	-15.0%		-75.0%	-80.7%	-17.4%	

D. EVALUATION

Describe how the State will conduct evaluations and research projects on activities under WIOA core programs; how such projects will be coordinated with, and designed in conjunction with, State and local boards and with State agencies responsible for the administration of all respective core programs; and, further, how the projects will be coordinated with the evaluations provided for by the Secretary of Labor and the Secretary of Education under WIOA.

DWD continued its State Performance Metrics project (www.in.gov/dwd/RPM.htm) that was built to complement and supplement Federal reporting measures. The primary purpose of the state metrics is to analyze what percent of the state's unemployed population is actively

engaged with the state's workforce system. DWD now utilizes new customer check-in technology that enables the agency to track clients' progress from the moment they first step into their local one-stop center through the culmination of their workforce services. The ultimate goal of the project is to identify and recognize successful practices at the regional level. The State Performance Metrics are gathered and negotiated in collaboration with Indiana's 12 Regional WDBs.

Update for 2022: Due to covid Indiana has decided to pause accountability on the complimentary state performance metrics. We will continue to collect the data and evaluate these state performance during PY22/23 to determine their effectiveness.

DWD also developed a Federal Quarterly Performance Measures dashboard in PY18 that enables staff and workforce partners to quickly analyze years' worth of Local Area Reports in one location. This can also be viewed on the DWD Performance Portal at www.in.gov/dwd/RPM.htm.

Additionally, DWD publishes an annual Workforce Programs Report (www.in.gov/dwd/WPR.htm) that tracks expenditures, participation, and outcomes for all agency programs. The Workforce Programs Report is a collaborative effort with other state agencies, including the Department of Education and Commission for Higher Education, among several others. Beginning in 2021, we will include the Family and Social Services Agency as part of this report. It is designed to enable policy makers to analyze all of Indiana's workforce programs based on outcomes that are closely aligned to WIOA performance indicators.

The State of Indiana, through the state Legislative Services Agency (LSA), also conducts an annual review, analysis, and evaluation of Indiana's workforce-related programs to provide the general assembly with the information it needs to make informed policy choices about the efficacy of each workforce related program. Specifically, IC 2-5-42.4-3 requires the LSA to conduct a systematic and comprehensive review, analysis, and evaluation of each workforce related program that includes information about each workforce-related program that is necessary to determine if the goals of the workforce related program are being achieved. The annual review is to be conducted over a five-year cycle during which each program will be reviewed at least once on a schedule determined by the Office of Fiscal and Management Analysis, Legislative Services Agency (LSA). Additional evaluation requirements for the evaluation are outlined in IC 2-5-42.4-3(b).

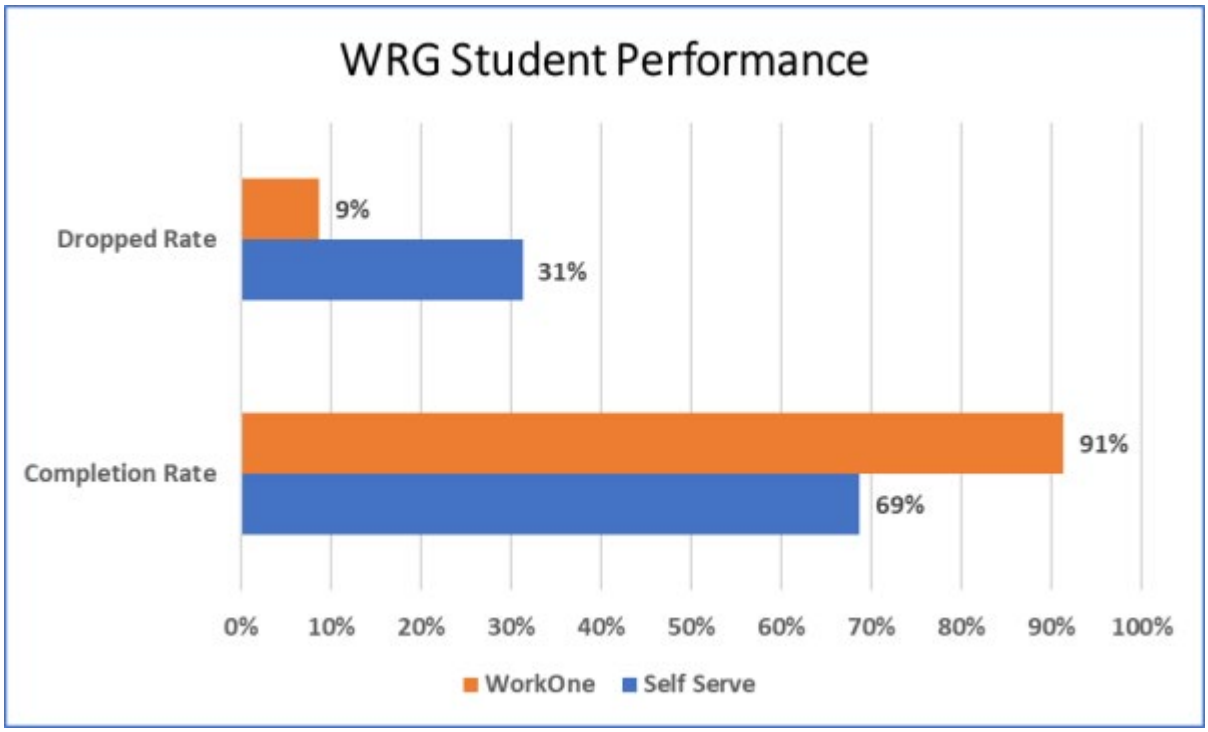
The Office of Fiscal and Management Analysis (OFMA), a division of the Legislative Services Agency, conducted this review during PY 2020 and PY2021. The PY 2020 OFMA review included numerous programs across the state, including WIOA Title I & IV programs, Career and Technical Education (CTE), Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers (TAA), Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessments, and Rapid Response. This review is available at http://iga.in.gov/legislative/2022/publications/workforce_program_review/#document-29a9eb30.

Findings in the PY20 report support the importance of goals and strategies outlined in the Combined Plan such as co-enrollment, co-location and data sharing as foundational elements for continued program success and improved client outcomes. The report highlighted that program coordination among the programs evaluated varied significantly by region and staff and that opportunities for cross-training, co-location and improved referral processes between partner agencies could lead to better outcomes. Agency initiatives to cross-train WorkOne and VR program staff on programs and implement improved referral processes between the agencies as

discussed elsewhere in this Plan are in alignment with recommendations from the PY20 evaluation.

The PY20 evaluation report also emphasizes the importance of case management and supportive services in client outcomes particularly when it comes to successful completion of training. To that end, beginning in 2021, DWD implemented some changes in how it was administering the Next Level Jobs Workforce Ready Grant training program. Historically, individuals participating in the WRG program were connected to training providers through an online application. Using this self-service model, training providers followed up directly with students and enrolled them into courses. While the program has been incredibly successful, to further drive success for program participants, in 2020/21 DWD began granting a portion of WRG funding to regional WDBs, as opposed to the traditional self-service model, to utilize in working with clients in effort to provide better access to case management and supportive services. This dual model for self-service enrollment and enrollment through the WDB WorkOne offices was made possible by the additional influx of CARES Act dollars to the state, which allowed Indiana to expand WRG program offerings.

Early outcomes of this change in program administration demonstrated increased student success for those enrolling in WRG through a WorkOne office. Outcomes for students enrolling through the WorkOne exceeded those enrolling through self-service in terms of drop rates and completion rates lending support to evaluation findings that case management and supportive services are a key element of client success. From April 2020 thru December 2021, DWD enrolled 9,351 students in WRG trainings through the self-service application and 2,603 students were enrolled through their local WorkOne office. Course drop and completion rates are included in the table below.



The PY2021 review included programs such as Wagner Peyser, WIOA Youth, Jobs for America's Graduates, Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers, Senior Community Service Employment Program, Serve Indiana, Gateway to Work, and Older Youth Services. A copy of the PY21 report is available at

http://iga.in.gov/legislative/2022/publications/workforce_program_review/#document-c6bfb9fe.

In PY22, Indiana plans to complete an evaluation of workforce business services including an analysis of the type of services provide, how services are funded, service delivery models used, service outcomes and employer satisfaction. DWD will work with the GWC and local WDBs to develop a statement of work for the evaluation consistent with the requirements in 20 CFR 682.220 and select a third-party evaluator to complete this review. The planned evaluation will include a literature review of other state models for providing business services and recommendations for innovative service delivery models or continuous improvement strategies to further enhance Indiana's employer engagement and business services program(s). DWD also plans to participate in the DOL Evaluation Peer Learning Cohort in PY22. Any future state level evaluations will keep in mind how those projects may coordinate with evaluations conducted by the Secretaries of Labor and Education under WIOA.

To achieve Goals 2 and 4 of the Combined Plan, Indiana intends on applying the WIOA performance metrics beyond the Core Programs to include both the Partner and state programs as components of state reporting and evaluation efforts. State reporting will including the following programs:

- Carl D. Perkins;
- SNAP E&T;
- TANF;
- Jobs for Veterans;
- SCSEP;
- Unemployment Insurance;
- TAA; and
- Indiana's Next Level Jobs – Workforce Ready Grants and Employer Training Grants.

For Indiana to achieve Goal 4 and maximize our investments, we recognize that we must go above and beyond the WIOA data points. While these data help us understand the basic levels of performance for our programs, we will include additional data to ensure we are portraying a holistic picture in our state reports. We will capture data that help our state understand the effectiveness of a program at various stages, rather than merely completion at the end. These data will encompass early indicators of success, performance goals upon completion, and longitudinal goals after a program. Overall, Indiana will include the following measurements to determine each of our program's effectiveness:

For state reporting purposes only, we will be applying the following metrics to all of our Core and Partner Programs:

Outcome Timeline	Measurement

Immediate Outcomes	• Total enrollment in a program
	• Co-enrollment in supportive programs, as needed
	• Regular participation of individuals (consistent/committed/satisfactory participation?)
	• Percentage of individuals that disengage from a program without completing or earning a credential
	• Earning short-term certifications or completing employability skills trainings
	• An individual's steps towards employment:
	  ○ Obtaining a job of 20+ hours per week
	  ○ Moving into full-time work (40 hours per week)
	  ○ Receiving employer-sponsored benefits
	  ○ Moving from a low-wage job to middle-wage job

Intermediate Outcomes	• Second Quarter Employment after Exit • Fourth Quarter Employment after Exit • Median Earnings for Second Quarter after Exit • Credential Attainment Rate • Measurable Skill Gains • Effectiveness in Serving Employers (including the number of employers taking advantage of the Work Opportunity Tax Credit)
Longitudinal Outcomes	• Job retention for individuals at years 1 and 3 post-program: Disaggregated by those who disengaged, completed, and earned a credential from a program • Upward economic mobility of individuals (e.g., decreased use of government benefits) upon exit from a program and at years 1 and 3 post-program ○ Examining how many participants reach (or maintain) the Self-Sufficiency Standard[1] • Re-enrollment rates of individuals in the same

Outcome Timeline	Measurement

Immediate Outcomes	• Total enrollment in a program
	• Co-enrollment in supportive programs, as needed
	• Regular participation of individuals (consistent/committed/satisfactory participation?)
	• Percentage of individuals that disengage from a program without completing or earning a credential
	• Earning short-term certifications or completing employability skills trainings
	• An individual's steps towards employment:
	  o Obtaining a job of 20+ hours per week
	  o Moving into full-time work (40 hours per week)
	  o Receiving employer-sponsored benefits
	  o Moving from a low-wage job to middle-wage job

	program • Growth of labor participation rates of target populations • Wage gains by target populations

For each of the data points above, Indiana will disaggregate the programs by subgroups, including race/ethnicity, gender, disability status, and socioeconomic status (e.g., those eligible for SNAP and/or TANF). Once baselines are set for each of the data points above in both the aggregate and then disaggregated by subgroups, Indiana will be able to reevaluate the effectiveness of its programs and how well it is serving Hoosiers with the greatest needs.

In addition to the Performance Goals above, Indiana's Commission for Higher Education will assess and report on the following data aligned to our Vision:

1. **Educational Attainment[2]**

- Measured by progress toward at least 60% of Hoosiers having a quality credential beyond a high school diploma, assessing

1. Postsecondary-Going Rate
2. On-Time Postsecondary Completion Rate
3. 6-Year Postsecondary Completion Rate
4. Adult Learner Completion Rates

2. **Career Relevance & Preparation**

- Measured by progress toward 100% of postsecondary programs requiring an internship, work-based learning, research project, or other student engagement experience that has career relevance

3. **Economic Impact**

- Measured by progress toward Indiana becoming a leading Midwest state for median household income

5. By 2025: Above Average in Peer States

6. By 2030: Top 5 in Peer States

Indiana will utilize its Management Performance Hub to facilitate cross-agency data analysis to better understand how our different policies are working together systematically to improve Hoosiers' lives.

[1] The Self-Sufficiency Standard calculates how much income families of various sizes and compositions need to make ends meet without public or private assistance. This will vary based on family size and geographic location. (The Indiana Institute For Working Families, 2016).

[2] Indiana uses data from the Census Bureau to track its postsecondary attainment. Currently, these metrics includes only 2- and 4-year degrees earned by adults 25 to 64-years-old. The Commission for Higher Education is considering a revised method to capture the following data in our attainment: adults 18 to 24-years-old and a wider array of credential types (e.g., industry-recognized certifications, long- and short-term workforce certificates, non-credit certificates and apprenticeships).

5. DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS FOR CORE PROGRAMS

Describe the methods and factors the State will use in distributing funds under the core programs in accordance with the provisions authorizing such distributions.

A. FOR TITLE I PROGRAMS

Provide a description of the written policies that establish the State's methods and factors used to distribute funds to local areas for—

I. YOUTH ACTIVITIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH WIOA SECTION 128(B)(2) OR (B)(3)

The state follows section 128(b)(2)(A)(i) and TEGL 16-18 to formula allocate funding for youth activities. The data used in computing allotments includes:

- The number of unemployed for Areas of Substantial Unemployment (ASUs) averages for 12-month period immediately preceding new program year as provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics;

- The number of excess unemployed individuals or the ASU excess (depending on which is higher), averages for the same 12-month period as used for the ASU unemployed data; and

- The number of economically disadvantaged youth (age 16-21, excluding college students in the workforce and military) from special tabulation data available from the American Community Survey (ACS).

The state applies the 90% hold harmless provision contained in WIOA, Section 128(b)(2)(A)(ii).

II. ADULT AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH WIOA SECTION 133(B)(2) OR (B)(3)

The state follows section 133(b)(2)(A)(i) and TEGL 16-18 to formula allocate funding for adult activities. The data used in computing allotments includes:

- The number of unemployed for Areas of Substantial Unemployment (ASU's) averages for the 12-month period immediately preceding new program year, as provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics;
- The number of excess unemployed individuals or the ASU excess (depending on which is higher), averages for the same 12-month period as used for the ASU unemployed data; and
- The number of economically disadvantaged adults (age 22-72, excluding college students in the workforce and military) from special tabulations of data available from the American Community Survey (ACS).

The state applies the 90% hold harmless provision contained in WIOA, section 133(b)(2)(A)(ii).

III. DISLOCATED WORKER EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH WIOA SECTION 133(B)(2) AND BASED ON DATA AND WEIGHTS ASSIGNED

The state follows section 133(b)(2)(A)(i) and TEGL 16-18 to formula allocate funding for Dislocated Worker activities. The following data is used in computing these allotments:

- Insured Unemployment Data for the preceding Calendar Year (30% weight);
- Unemployed Concentration Data for the preceding Program Year (30% weight);
- Plant Closing and Mass Layoff Data for the preceding Calendar Year (15% weight);
- Declining Industries Data for the preceding Calendar Year (10% weight);
- Farmer/Rancher Economic Hardship Data for the preceding Calendar Year (2% weight);
- Long-term Unemployment Data for the preceding Calendar Year (13% weight).

The Governor's Workforce Cabinet will examine how this weighting impacts local distribution and if adjustments are needed. The state applies the 90% hold harmless provision contained in WIOA, section 132(b)(2)(B)(iii).

B. FOR TITLE II

I. DESCRIBE HOW THE ELIGIBLE AGENCY WILL AWARD MULTI-YEAR GRANTS OR CONTRACTS ON A COMPETITIVE BASIS TO ELIGIBLE PROVIDERS IN THE STATE, INCLUDING HOW ELIGIBLE AGENCIES WILL ESTABLISH THAT ELIGIBLE PROVIDERS ARE ORGANIZATIONS OF DEMONSTRATED EFFECTIVENESS

The Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD) solicits applications and proposals from entities eligible to receive WIOA Title II funds. Applicants can apply for funding in the following areas: Adult Education and Literacy Activities – WIOA Title II (per 29 USC §3272); Adult High School Credit Program/Adult Secondary Credit (ASC); Corrections Education and Education for Institutionalized Individuals; Integrated Education and Training Activities (IETs);

Workforce Education Initiative (WEI); Professional Development Facilitator Network; and/or Indiana Online Only Distance Education.

Eligible Title II adult education and literacy activities described within the grant solicitation are programs, activities, and services that include adult education, literacy, workplace adult education and literacy activities, family literacy activities, English language acquisition activities, integrated English literacy and civics education, workforce preparation activities, or integrated education and training.

Two of the adult education programs are described below in more detail.

1. **Integrated English Language and Civics Education (IELCE)** is defined as education services provided to English Language learners who are adults, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries, that enable adults to achieve competency in the English language and acquire the basic and more advanced skills needed to function effectively as parents, workers, and citizens in the United States.

English language acquisition is a program of instruction designed to help eligible individuals who are English language learners achieve competence in reading, writing, speaking, and comprehension of the English language; and that leads to the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent; and transition to postsecondary education and training; or employment.

Additionally, integrated English literacy and civics education services include instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation and may include workforce training.

Section 243 covers eligible providers receiving funds through the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program, which must provide services that: (a) Include instruction in literacy and English language acquisition and instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation; and (b) Designed to: 1) Prepare adults who are English language learners for, and place such adults in, unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency; and 2) Integrate with the local workforce development system and its functions to carry out the activities of the program. The IET curriculum requires a single set of learning objectives for the education and literacy, workforce prep, and training.

Training services must include at least one of the following – 1) Occupational skills training, including training for nontraditional employment; 2) On-the-job training; 3) Incumbent worker training; 4) Programs that combine workplace training with related instruction, which may include cooperative education programs; 5) Training programs operated by the private sector; 6) Skill upgrading and retraining; 7) Entrepreneurial training; 8) Transitional jobs; 9) Job readiness training provided in combination with the services above; 10) Adult education and literacy activities, including activities of English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs, provided concurrently or in combination with the services above; and 11) Customized training conducted with a commitment by an employer or group of employers to employ an individual upon successful completion of the training.

Industry-recognized training credentials include, but are not limited to – 1) Locally approved certificates eligible for inclusion on the Employment Training Provider List; 2) Career Development and College Preparation (CDCP) CTE certificates with more than 48 contact hours; 3) Certificates that meet the minimum threshold for inclusion under Perkins; and 4) Certificates that meet the threshold for Title IV Federal Student Aid.

Students in an IELCE program must have the opportunity to be enrolled in both an adult education and literacy program and a workforce training program. Co-enrollment in the IELCE program may include one or more of the following options – 1) ELLs are co-enrolled in a workforce training program provided through DWD; 2) ELLs are co-enrolled in the adult education provider's workforce training program; 3) ELLs are co-enrolled in a series of workforce training courses within a career pathway offered by multiple providers designed to lead to employment; and 4) ELLs are working directly with an employer through apprenticeship, pre-apprenticeship, or on-the-job training.

2. The **Workforce Education Initiative (WEI**) is a partnership between Indiana Adult Education and Hoosier employers to help employees retain jobs, improve performance, and advance in their professions. Employers desire a better-skilled workforce in order to optimize safety, increase productivity, and improve quality in the workplace. Meanwhile, employees who possess basic skill deficiencies must have access to quality workforce programs that build their abilities, attain industry-recognized credentials, and qualify for additional training. Funding will be provided to programs that offer remediation services that support these objectives.

An eligible individual is an individual who is 16 years of age or older; who is not enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under state law; who is basic skills deficient; does not have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and has not achieved an equivalent level of education; or is an English language learner.

To be awarded WIOA Title II funds in Indiana, applicant organizations must be an eligible provider as defined by WIOA (per 29 USC §3272). An applicant must be able to demonstrate past effectiveness in providing adult education and literacy activities before the applicant can be considered an eligible applicant. Data which demonstrate the applicant's effectiveness in providing adult education and literacy services include evidence of eligible individuals' academic gains (reading, writing, mathematics, or English language acquisition), employment outcomes, family literacy, attainment of secondary credentials, transitions to postsecondary education, and workforce training.

Application materials include a separate data collection tool to ensure how past effectiveness is determined so that all eligible providers are treated fairly in grant competitions. Applicants that do not have performance data under WIOA section 116 may demonstrate previous effectiveness in servicing basic skills deficient eligible individuals, including evidence of success in achieving the outcomes listed above. In the case of applicants applying as a consortium, each member of a consortium must provide performance data to demonstrate effectiveness. Application materials clearly identify how many years of demonstrated effectiveness data an applicant must submit in the application.

Indiana conducts its review of applicant eligibility to determine if an application is from an eligible provider of demonstrated effectiveness by utilizing a "yes" or "no" determination. The state screens each application to determine if it is from an eligible provider of demonstrated effectiveness and only applications that are determined to be from eligible providers of demonstrated effectiveness are forwarded for review, scoring, and consideration for funding. Similarly, all consortium members must be determined to be an eligible provider of demonstrated effectiveness in or order for the consortium application to be forwarded for review, scoring, and consideration for funding.

Applicants that are determined to be ineligible for funding because they were not determined to be eligible providers of demonstrated effectiveness are notified.

In the state's multi-year adult education competitive grant application (request for application), all applicant organizations should complete all questions listed under each consideration (I-XIII, XIV) regardless of the type(s) of funding the applicant is seeking. All applicant organizations should address Consideration XIV [General Education Provisions Act (GEPA)]. Considerations I-XIII represent the thirteen statutory considerations DWD must consider when awarding WIOA Title II funds, while Consideration XIV is used to meet the statutory GEPA plan required for all AEFLA funded sub-recipients. Failure to provide answers for the narrative portion of the application is grounds for non-consideration.

In order to fund eligible providers, a rubric is utilized to score the narrative section for the thirteen considerations. Review teams utilize a 0-5 point Likert Scale to score the quality of each response. Reviewers provide notes or commentary to justify the score, provide brief details of what the applicant omitted or missed, and brief descriptions of anything "positive" about the application.

5 - Excellent; Applicant's response clearly demonstrates an understanding of the question, the consideration, and the challenges and expectations of an adult education provider.

4 - Good; Applicant's answer does a good job of generally providing support for its claims and demonstrates what would be expected out of a good adult education provider.

3 - Adequate; Applicant's response demonstrates some understanding, though this understanding may have to be inferred, of the question, consideration, and the challenges and expectations of an adult education provider

2 - Poor; Answer is not well supported, and does not demonstrate what would be expected out of an adult education provider

1 - Bad; Answer lacks any context or support, and in no way demonstrates what would be expected out of an adult education provider

0 - Incomplete; Applicant made no attempt to answer the question

DWD utilizes overall scores, quality of grant submissions, and responses to the thirteen considerations to fund eligible providers. Additionally, the state reviews funding requests and proposed service delivery areas to ensure that every county in the state is covered.

DWD awards multi-year adult education grants on a competitive basis, beginning with program year ("PY") 2020 (July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021), and ending PY2023 (July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024). After the initial year of this multi-year adult education grant award (PY2020), DWD requires sub-recipients apply for the renewal of funding through a non-competitive grant continuation RFA for the following program years: PY2021; PY2022; and PY2023.

Renewals will be made on a program-by-program basis and will be contingent on the sub-recipient's ability to (1) Successfully implement the terms of the grant; (2) Meet both state and federal performance expectations; and (3) Provide demonstrated value to the community the sub-recipient serves. Funding for future grant continuations will be based on program performance. DWD reserves the right to hold a new competitive grant competition

1. Funds awarded to applicants are based on three levels of data:

1. The number of WIOA Title II eligible Hoosiers who lack a secondary school diploma (HSD or HSE);

2. The number of Hoosiers utilizing state and federal programs administered by Indiana's Family and Social Services Administration ("FSSA"); and
3. The number of enrollments in WIOA Title II programs in the previous year.

We encourage increased collaboration between Adult Education grant recipients and the local Workforce Development Boards.

County level data is aggregated at the economic development regional level; this determines the total amount of funds available for the region. Applicants must apply for a region or a portion of the funds available in each region they intend to serve.

Funding for future grant continuations is based on program performance. DWD allows funding to be passed through a sub-recipient to subcontracted service provider(s). No more than 5% of the total amount awarded to grantees can be used by the grantee shall be used for administrative and non-instructional purposes. For DWD to maintain the federally-required Maintenance of Effort (MOE), Indiana requires that WIOA-funded Adult Education providers contribute a local match.

Other Requirements: The grant requires that local Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) be given an opportunity to review all applications submitted to DWD that propose to offer services within the WDB's workforce development area. Any recipient of funds awarded must provide reasonable accommodations to all qualified individuals (both employees and students) with disabilities, unless that accommodation would represent an undue burden in the exercising of the responsibilities of the sub-recipient to deliver adult education and literacy activities. Accepting an award is an acknowledgement that the grant recipient is in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Applicants are also required to acknowledge compliance with the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA).

II. DESCRIBE HOW THE ELIGIBLE AGENCY WILL ENSURE DIRECT AND EQUITABLE ACCESS TO ALL ELIGIBLE PROVIDERS TO APPLY AND COMPETE FOR FUNDS AND HOW THE ELIGIBLE AGENCY WILL ENSURE THAT IT IS USING THE SAME GRANT OR CONTRACT ANNOUNCEMENT AND APPLICATION PROCEDURE FOR ALL ELIGIBLE PROVIDERS

DWD ensures equitable access to apply for grants or contracts to all eligible providers in Indiana. The processes used for announcing the availability of federal funds under Section 231, 225, and 243, and is designed in such a way that no distinction is made in the type of eligible provider. Announcements about the grant process are posted to DWD's website and email notifications are sent to current providers and a mailing list of interested contacts, including entities requesting further information.

Announcements are made about the competitive grant RFA on monthly statewide webinars and posted on DWD's website for further review. Town hall meetings take place regionally to inform potential applicants of the grant process and timelines. The PowerPoint from town hall meetings is posted along with Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). FAQs ensure that all parties have equitable access to view questions and responses. FAQs are further highlighted in a statewide webinar and posted to DWD's website.

Within the grant application, eligible agencies must submit metrics regarding their ability to effectively serve the Title II target population. For current Title II providers, this must be WIOA metrics. For eligible providers not currently WIOA Title II providers, metrics must be submitted

that align as closely as possible to WIOA performance outcomes. Levels for demonstrated effectiveness are set by Title II staff and are set as a percentage of current performance expectations. The application process used to award funds for comprehensive adult education providers is the same for all eligible applicants.

Non-adult education staff are included in the scoring process as grants are reviewed. Other adult education staff from other states serve as evaluators as well. Workforce Development Boards (WDB) review eligible providers' application materials to determine whether the applications are consistent with local plans. Upon completing this review, the local WDB submits a recommendation to DWD to promote alignment with the local plan. Prior to awarding of contracts, DWD may require applicants to make revisions to the sub-recipient proposals, including changes that better align services provided by the sub-recipient with local WDBs.

Scores are compiled, reviewed, and funding decisions are made based on (1) The number of WIOA Title II eligible Hoosiers who lack a secondary school diploma (HSD or HSE); (2) The number of Hoosiers using state and federal programs administered by Indiana's Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA); and (3) The number of enrollments in WIOA Title II programs in the previous year. Funding for future grant continuations is based on program performance.

C. VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM

In the case of a State that, under section 101(a)(2)(A)(i) of the Rehabilitation Act designates a State agency to administer the part of the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan under which VR services are provided for individuals who are blind, describe the process and the factors used by the State to determine the distribution of funds among the two VR agencies in the State.

Indiana's Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) is a combined agency and does not have a separate designated state agency for individuals who are blind.

6. PROGRAM DATA

A. DATA ALIGNMENT AND INTEGRATION

Describe the plans of the lead State agencies with responsibility for the administration of the core programs, along with the State Board, to align and integrate available workforce and education data systems for the core programs, unemployment insurance programs, and education through postsecondary education, and to the extent possible, the Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan. The description of the State's plan for integrating data systems should include the State's goals for achieving integration and any progress to date.

I. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S PLANS TO MAKE THE MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS FOR THE CORE PROGRAMS INTEROPERABLE TO MAXIMIZE THE EFFICIENT EXCHANGE OF COMMON DATA ELEMENTS TO SUPPORT ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

Education &Workforce Data System (EWD), which is housed within the Management Performance Hub (MPH) creates enhanced opportunities to combine workforce and education data (K-12 and higher education) to examine employment outcomes, retention of graduates, differential outcomes based on degree type and area of study and a wide range of other research to better understand the linkages between education and the workforce. This longitudinal dataset is combined to answer key questions about the education and workforce pipeline. It allows stakeholders such as education professionals, employers, policymakers, students, community leaders, and the public to use data and information previously not available. DWD

(WIOA Core Programs, Title I and Title III), CHE, GWC, FSSA (Vocational Rehabilitation, SNAP, and TANF), and DOE continue to contribute data into the database, with DWD providing unemployment claims, wage records, case management records, and adult education data. With the solid foundation of Indiana's EWD system resting on the collaboration of multiple state agencies, the mandate for cross-agency data management and analysis that is part of MPH's charter, MPH's human capital and expertise, and a system that has been hardened and matured over the last few years, Indiana is in a good position to take its P-20 data system to the next level.

Governor Holcomb is Co-Chair of the Data Transparency Working Group through the White House's **American Workforce Policy Advisory Board**. This Working Group strives to address the federal challenges and facilitate greater data sharing between our agencies. Recommendations are forthcoming regarding how to make data sharing easier among state agencies, which the GWC will leverage to create a potential holistic data charter among partner agencies represented on the Cabinet.

As evidenced by its use from policy makers and researchers, the EWD has achieved a critical mass of linked data that can be usefully mined for insights regarding trends and outcomes of public policy longitudinally. More work needs to be done, though, to make the data accessible to practitioners in all segments of Indiana's P-20 ecosystem. Indiana's 2019 proposal for SLDS funding focuses on the infrastructure priority to provide expanded access to the data within the EWD, as well as updates to the amount and frequency of data being shared. Such an expansion will bring the insights available in this public asset to a wider segment of the P-20 ecosystem including and primarily focused on those who nurture, advocate, teach, lead, counsel, enroll, and employ Hoosiers. By creating closer connections within state agencies impacting the P-20 ecosystem, workforce development, and its practitioners, a more fully developed picture of the variables leading to a thriving citizen will emerge.

Additional information regarding Indiana's plans to develop and produce reports required under section 116 regarding the performance accountability system is provided in Section (III)(b)(1)(B).

II. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S PLANS TO INTEGRATE DATA SYSTEMS TO FACILITATE STREAMLINED INTAKE AND SERVICE DELIVERY TO TRACK PARTICIPATION ACROSS ALL PROGRAMS INCLUDED IN THIS PLAN

Pursuant to Indiana Code 22-4.1-24-2(a), DWD produces the Workforce Programs Report available at www.in.gov/dwd/WPR.htm. This annual report includes information about state- and federally-funded workforce programs administered by DWD, as well as total workforce expenditures across all state agencies performing workforce services. The Workforce Programs Report is a collaborative effort with other state agencies, including the Department of Education, the Family and Social Services Agency, and the Commission for Higher Education, among several others. It is comprised of both WIOA and non-WIOA data and allows DWD, regional partners, legislators and other administrators to measure the effectiveness of workforce partner programs in serving the needs of Hoosier workers and employers. This report will serve as the foundation for annual review to ensure that WIOA Core and Partner programs are meeting the metrics and strategies outlined within the State Plan. Additionally, we will leverage the state's longitudinal data system housed within the Management Performance Hub to continually analyze the data sets submitted by core and partner programs and combine that data to determine the ways in which Hoosiers are being served and where improvements can be made. This Combined Plan serves as a template for an improved model of the one-stop delivery system, and the interim benchmarks outlined at the onset of this plan will be used to

assess continuous improvement of the system.See Section (III)(b)(1)(B) for information regarding Indiana's plans to develop and produce reports required under section 116 regarding the performance accountability system.

The state plans to leverage the ways we plan to assess programs within the combined plan to identify more comprehensive strategies to integrate data systems and streamline intake and services. Those indicators include:

1. Data sharing. Data sharing is the basic first step we must take to understand the correlation between our programs and improvements for Hoosiers. Amongst those agencies on the GWC, we need to institute a data charter, allowing data to be cross-referenced and analyzed by the Indiana Management Performance Hub (MPH). One critical piece of this step is MPH determining the overlap of populations between the Combined Plan programs (as well as other related programs, like child support through the Department of Child Services, subsidized housing through the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority, and Medicaid through the Family and Social Services Agency), so that we will understand who we are serving,where we are serving them, and through what programs. We will begin with correlating state-level data across our agencies, with a longer term step of including county-level data. One barrier Indiana faces in creating interagency data charters is federal restrictions around data sharing. We will leverage Governor Holcomb's work and leadership on the White House's American Workforce Policy Advisory Board to address the federal challenges and facilitate greater data sharing between our agencies.

2. Co-enrollment. Once we know the intersection of our populations within our programs, we can improve how individuals are co-enrolled into programs, which will serve as a proxy for braiding funds until we have a common case management system. Additionally, we can track our co-enrollment rates between core, partner, and state programs. Individuals must meet eligibility requirements to be co-enrolled in programs and can opt out of enrolling in a program

3. Co-location. As Indiana works to increase the co-location of its services by physically and virtually embedding local program managers and staff into various offices and community hubs, we can begin to understand and improve the effectiveness of our customer service. We can track: wait times, waitlists, enrollment increases, speed of referrals, and quality of referrals and case management (e.g., scheduling appointments, co-enrollment in multiple programs, and persistence and completion rates of co-enrollment).

4. Cross-training. To facilitate co-enrollment and enhance co-location, we must increase our cross-training and professional development of state, local, and frontline staff. This strategy is central to successful integration of our programs across agencies. To begin, we will prioritize cross-training SNAP, TANF, all core WIOA programs, and federal and state financial aid opportunities, focusing on eligibility requirements and allowances. We want to start cross-training our staff from the state-level to those on the front lines in these programs first because these present the biggest opportunity to address and coordinate overlapping programs and funding. These efforts will be led by the administrative agencies. Each agency will track the availability of professional development opportunities, including in-person, successive modules, webinars, and workshops for each program. Additionally, they will track the completion of those opportunities. Completion data will then be cross-referenced through co-enrollment rates in the various programs. We will also increase crosstraining and onboarding for members of local Workforce Boards regarding Core and Partner Programs for them to better understand the talent development ecosystem. Cross-trainings for Boards may also encompass community programs and partners that are critical to addressing the barriers of our target populations.

5. Employer engagement. In order to see the growth of labor participation by our target populations, we need to work with our Hoosier businesses to see the benefits of non-traditional hiring practices. Through both expanded work-based learning partnerships and showcasing best practices with unconventional talent development approaches from other employers, we can start to shift the mindsets of all our employers regarding how to engage with our target populations.

By creating more data sharing and co-enrollment opportunities, we can better serve individuals that are being served across multiple programs.

III. EXPLAIN HOW THE STATE BOARD WILL ASSIST THE GOVERNOR IN ALIGNING TECHNOLOGY AND DATA SYSTEMS ACROSS REQUIRED ONE-STOP PARTNER PROGRAMS (INCLUDING DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMON INTAKE, DATA COLLECTION, ETC.) AND HOW SUCH ALIGNMENT WILL IMPROVE SERVICE DELIVERY TO INDIVIDUALS, INCLUDING UNEMPLOYED INDIVIDUALS

Indiana also has a comprehensive longitudinal data system that is operated by Indiana's Management Performance Hub (MPH). There are a number of core and partner programs that input there data into that system. We will continue to make improvements on the data elements that are a part of MPH so that comprehensive reporting can be done through one state agency rather than through multiple partner agencies and programs. This will ensure that the data is being reported in the same manner and independently for the state board's review. Additionally, as outlined throughout this plan, there is a desire to review intake processes and systems to ensure that Hoosiers are being served in the most advantageous way utilizing the strategies in the plan to ensure alignment of activity and resources. See Section (III)(b)(1)(B) for information regarding Indiana's plans to develop and produce reports required under section 116 regarding the performance accountability system.

IV. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S PLANS TO DEVELOP AND PRODUCE THE REPORTS REQUIRED UNDER SECTION 116, PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM. (WIOA SECTION 116(D)(2))

Pursuant to Indiana Code (IC) 22-4.1-24-2(a), the annual reports include information about state and federally-funded workforce programs administered by the Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD) as well as total workforce expenditures across all state agencies performing workforce services. Utilizing MPH, the state hopes to improve upon these reports to montior progress on the strategies and metrics outlined throughout this plan. See Section (III)(b)(1)(B) for information regarding Indiana's plans to develop and produce reports required under section 116 regarding the performance accountability system.

B. ASSESSMENT OF PARTICIPANTS' POST-PROGRAM SUCCESS

Describe how lead State agencies will use the workforce development system to assess the progress of participants who are exiting from core programs in entering, persisting in, and completing postsecondary education, or entering or remaining in employment. States may choose to set additional indicators of performance.

State Performance Metrics: DWD utilizes it State Performance Metrics to further support the assessment of participant progress upon exiting core programs. These State Performance Metrics complement and supplement federal reporting measures. Specifically, the State Metrics reflect participant outcomes of entering employment one quarter after exit and retaining employment four quarters after exit. In addition, Indiana state metrics allow for monitoring of

median wage change upon exit from a program. The State Performance Measures are made available on the DWD Performance Portal at: www.in.gov/dwd/RPM.htm.

Update for 2022: Due to covid Indiana has decided to pause accountability on the complimentary state performance metrics. We will continue to collect the data and evaluate these state performance during PY22/23 to determine their effectiveness.

Adult Education: The state's adult education coordinators host regional consortium meetings to discuss goals toward meeting performance accountability standards and to assess the progress of participants who are exiting from core programs in entering, persisting in, and completing postsecondary education or entering or remaining in employment.

Consortium meetings bring together partners, including Workforce Development Boards, WorkOnes, training providers, and adult educators, to establish goals, review progress, and follow-up. The state is required to report employment at the second and fourth quarter after exit for all providers, as well as postsecondary credential and/or degree attainment. In addition to local program reports, the state data match employment from wage records from DWD and postsecondary attainment from the Commission for Higher Education to determine and evaluate success.

Beginning in program year 2020, the state will require that adult education applicants employ one or more academic and career coaches who hold at least a bachelor's degree. Adults often enter programs with multiple barriers and student persistence can be erratic. Academic and career coaches will help students overcome their barriers by offering a greater chance their experience in adult education and beyond is successful. While career pathways should offer multiple on and off ramps, students have greater opportunities within this framework to improve skills in reading, mathematics, and language; attain a high school or equivalency diploma; earn an occupational certificate for employment; and prepare for college and further training.

In adult education, Integrated Education and Training provides opportunities for short-term training and certifications in in-demand industries for employment. Indiana reviews and approves each application separately to ensure its meets these priorities. Integrated Education and Training is defined as a service approach which provides adult education and literacy activities simultaneously and contextually with workforce preparation activities and workforce training for a specific occupational cluster. Additionally, Indiana will require adult education providers applying for funds to address whether and to what extent a program plans to provide access to pre-apprenticeship programs and how the program plans to connect students exiting adult education with access to apprenticeship programs.

Meanwhile, the Workforce Education Initiative targets employers with workers who possess basic skill deficiencies and desire to maintain their jobs or improve performance. Indiana and local adult education programs will continue to frame a coordinated workforce basic skills system that is worker-centered, customized, and provided at the workplace or off-site. This project continues to support employers in hiring and retaining workers who will be able to meet demands for productivity, safety, and advancement, as well as will serve as an additional assessment of participants' post-program success.

Youth Program Follow Up: All youth program participants receive follow-up services for a minimum duration of 12 months after exit, as follow-up services may continue to be provided beyond that time at the state or local Board's discretion. Follow-up allows staff to continue the relationship with the youth by offering additional services and collecting valuable information related to the participant's progress after exiting the program, including employment status,

educational progress, need for additional services, and problems and challenges occurring and assistance needed to address them.

C. USE OF UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE (UI) WAGE RECORD DATA

Explain how the State will meet the requirements to utilize quarterly UI wage records for performance accountability, evaluations, and as a source for workforce and labor market information, consistent with Federal and State law. (This Operational Planning element applies to core programs.)

Indiana's workforce warehouse and longitudinal data systems currently integrate and match UI wage records for employment outcomes and performance accountability reporting. This same system (IWIS) has been used for additional labor market information analysis and to inform the labor market information website, tools, and ad hoc research questions. DWD Performance & Business Intelligence also uses UI Wage Record Data for both the Federal and State Performance Metrics (https://www.in.gov/dwd/RPM.htm), the Workforce Programs Report (https://www.in.gov/dwd/WPR.htm), and other programmatic evaluations and analyses upon request.

Only individuals within the allowed categories are allowed to see individual confidential UI data and only aggregate UI data is shared with anyone not allowed by UI Confidentiality laws to access. This in accomplished in part by use of WRIS Agreement in allowing access and the sharing of UI data.

D. PRIVACY SAFEGUARDS

Describe the privacy safeguards incorporated in the State's workforce development system, including safeguards required by section 444 of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g) and other applicable Federal laws.

Indiana recognizes that a key element to utilizing data across agencies for either improved customer service or improved measurement and tracking of outcomes is ensuring the integrity of all data. This is accomplished with various technical safeguards and ensuring personnel handling this data are properly trained in all relevant regulations and the fundamentals of handling personal and confidential data. Technical safeguards include:

- Approved processes that limit access to the data to only those personnel who require access to carry out their daily job functions;
- Network security, monitoring, firewalls, etc. to prevent unauthorized access to data from entities outside of State government;
- Encryption technology; and
- Secure data transport mechanisms.

All State personnel undergo annual training on the proper handling of confidential data. This training is updated to reflect the most current statutes and interpretations. Those specifically involved in reporting are trained on the various de-identification and aggregation rules that apply. Only individuals within the allowed categories are allowed to see individual confidential UI data and only aggregate UI data is shared with anyone not allowed by UI Confidentiality laws to access. This in accomplished in part by use of WRIS Agreement in allowing access and the sharing of UI data.

7. PRIORITY OF SERVICE FOR VETERANS

Describe how the State will implement and monitor the priority of service provisions for veterans in accordance with the requirements of the Jobs for Veterans Act, codified at section 4215 of 38 U.S.C., which applies to all employment and training programs funded in whole or in part by the Department of Labor. States should also describe the referral process for veterans determined to have a significant barrier to employment to receive services from the Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG) program's Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist.

WorkOne offices are required to ensure that Priority of Service is observed. To further improve service to veterans, the Priority of Service to Veterans and Eligible Spouses Federal Regulations, effective January 19, 2009, provides specific guidance on how One-stop Career Center providers and Wagner-Peyser staff are to serve veterans with respect to priority of service. WorkOne offices are required to follow guidance in VPL 07-09 and its companion TEGL 10-09 to ensure that proper priority of service is granted to veterans and other eligible persons. Current policies can be found at: https://www.in.gov/dwd/compliance-policy/policy/active/. DWD Policies 2019-03, 2019-04, and 2015-08 provide additional definitions of the populations of eligible veterans to be served by the one-stop delivery system partners. For the purposes of DVOP, the definition of eligible veteran follows that outlined in United States Code Title 38, Chapter 4211, paragraph (4), subparagraph (A) (B): an individual who served on active duty for a period of more than 180 days and who received a discharge or release under conditions other than dishonorable and who was discharged or released from active duty (or a reserve component while on active duty status during wartime) because of a service-connected disability. For POS, a veteran is a person who served at least one day in the active military, naval, or air service (including reserve and National Guard components) and who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable, as specified in United States Code Title 38.

Veterans and eligible spouse customers should be identified upon entry at a WorkOne and allowed to move to the front of the waiting line. To assist with identifying veterans and eligible spouses, Priority of Service signs have been developed and are posted in all WorkOne offices where veterans are served. Signs are framed and displayed in a manner where the public and especially veteran and eligible persons customers can easily see them. In accordance with the priority of service sign, eligible veterans and eligible persons should notify staff upon entry into the facility. Typically, this will be near the entry point. Customers with visual impairments must be asked if they are a veteran or eligible person.

The welcome staff within our AJC's identify those eligible veterans or eligible persons with significant barriers to employment (SBE) and/or other additional service population criteria eligible to be served by Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program specialist (DVOPs) as found in current VPLs. The eligibility criteria for veterans and other eligible persons are further described in DWD Policy 2019-03. Welcome staff serve both as a "greeter" and to be a first point of contact for veterans and other eligible persons at WorkOne offices. Their primary role is to determine the reason for an individual's visit to the AJC. They also provide the initial determination of whether an individual meets the definition of a veteran as prescribed by law. They may conduct an assessment to determine Priority of Service and whether a veteran has significant barriers to employment (SBEs). Veterans with SBEs are referred to a Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist. If the veteran doesn't have any SBEs, an employment services interviewer (ESI) can assist them with receiving basic career services that are available at the AJC. Once the intake staff member has determined the appropriate staff person to assist the job seeker, they make a referral.

The DVOP specialists do not perform intake duties or point of entry functions for non-SBE veterans or any functions normally assigned to other AJC partner staff or other automated procedures, thereby detracting from their ability to provide services, case management, or outreach duties related to meeting the employment needs of eligible veterans and eligible persons. Additionally, under no circumstances will the LVER perform any of these functions. If a DVOP Specialist is not available, the veteran or eligible person should be referred to the appropriate Wagner-Peyser or Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) staff in addition to scheduling or referring to an available DVOP specialist by appointment. Under normal operating circumstances, all WorkOne customers are greeted by the welcome team and moved on to the appropriate staff for assistance.

It is important to note that the definition of veteran in the Jobs For Veterans Act (JVA), the Priority of Service Regulations and TEGL 10-09 differs from the definition of veteran that applies to reporting of Wagner-Peyser services and to eligibility to receive services from a DVOP specialist. The veteran definition that requires the individual to have over 180 days of active service still applies to Wagner-Peyser reporting and to eligibility for DVOP but does not apply to priority of service. It is the responsibility of the program operator to ensure that policies and procedures and staff training reflect the correct eligibility definition.

Current policies pertaining to priority of service for veterans, are available at: https://www.in.gov/dwd/compliance-policy/policy/active/). The referral process for veterans and eligible persons determined to have a significant barrier to employment to receive services from the JVSG program DVOP specialist is available in DWD Policy 2019-03, which can be found at https://www.in.gov/dwd/compliance-policy/policy/active/. These policies are being updated to reflect more inclusive definitions of other eligible persons.

8. ADDRESSING THE ACCESSIBILITY OF THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

Describe how the one-stop delivery system (including one-stop center operators and the one-stop delivery system partners), will comply with section 188 of WIOA (if applicable) and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) with regard to the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs, services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities. This also must include a description of compliance through providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities. Describe the State's one-stop center certification policy, particularly the accessibility criteria.

Indiana's WIOA state-level Equal Opportunity (EO) Officer, appointed by the Governor, works within DWD's Compliance and Policy Division with 100% time commitment to equal opportunity and nondiscrimination in workforce programs. One of the primary duties of the State EO Officer is to develop and implement the federally mandated Nondiscrimination Plan (NDP). The NDP is a statewide plan for ensuring equal opportunity and nondiscrimination in the availability, access, and service delivery of WIOA Title I funded programs and services. The NDP must be updated and resubmitted to the US DOL Civil Rights Center (CRC) every two years, with Indiana's latest submission in September 2020. Indiana's 2020-2022 NDP provides detail on physical and programmatic accessibility and can be found at: https://www.in.gov/dwd/files/State_of_Indiana_Nondiscrimination_Plan_2020.pdf.

The State EO Officer ensures Indiana's Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs), sub-recipients, and workforce system partners are aware of, and in compliance with, the NDP and all section 188 responsibilities. Similarly, each LWDA has designated a LWDA EO Officer (Local EO

Officer) to carry out these duties at the local level. All Local EO Officers also functionally report to the DWD State EO Officer on matters pertaining to Section 188.

Together, the State and Local EO Officers implement the NDP and continually review policies and practices. DWD developed DWD Policy 2016-09, *Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination Guidance Letter* (see https://www.in.gov/dwd/files/activepolicies/2016-09-P_EO_Nondiscrimination_Guidance.pdf) outlining the major provisions of section 188 and 29 CFR 38. The agency has designed several training modules for Local EO Officers and staff, which can be found at https://www.in.gov/dwd/compliance-policy/equal-opportunity/training-resources. Training modules relevant to physical and programmatic accessibility include, for example, the *EO 101* and *Compliance with Disability Nondiscrimination Requirements* modules.

Programmatic Accessibility: Cross-training sessions have also occurred between DWD and VR covering topics such as disability etiquette, Order of Selection, and service coordination. Accessibility work stations are in place in WorkOne offices throughout the state. Title II pays for one-on-one interpreters for visual and hard of hearing individuals attending adult education programming. Testing accommodations are available for both the TABE and TASC assessment as well.

The Equal Opportunity tagline is included on all external marketing and communication materials to allow people who are deaf and hard of hearing to make calls to each other, and with the assistance of the relay systems, users can communicate with people who do not have TTY systems. DWD and partner staff are knowledgeable on on more advanced systems such as Video Relay Services and Video Remote Interpreting. The following sample tagline is below, and when necessary is translated into other languages:

The WorkOne System is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate in the programs and services offered. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. The TDD/TTY number is 1-800-743-3333.

El Programa de Financiamiento asistido de acuerdo con el Titulo 1 de WIOA es un programa de Igualidad de Oportunidades de Empleo. Ayuda y servicios auxiliares están disponibles a solicitud para personas con discapacidad. El numero de TDD/TTY es 1-800-743-3333.

Additionally, DWD will continue to enhance the Job Seekers with Disabilities website (https://www.in.gov/dwd/job-seekers/job-seekers-with-disabilities/) to include resources for both job seekers and employers. DWD will work to build new partnerships and enhance existing partnerships, such as with the Governor's Council for People with Disabilities and FSSA/VR.

Within the WorkOne centers, staff have been and will be further trained to follow established procedures to ensure inclusion and compliance. Starting with intake, staff is trained to ask every constituent if s/he require accommodations. Customer and WorkOne office staff orientations include a discussion of Equal Opportunity (EO) and the right to file a complaint. Following orientation, services should be reviewed with the constituent by determining the client's eligibility and need for services in an integrated setting. Ongoing training will need to occur to educate staff on the services, funding, and the resources available to determine when it is appropriate to refer to partner agencies and co-enroll individuals in multiple programs, such as Vocational Rehabilitation, to access a greater service array to meet the individual's needs. Agency partners will seek to coordinate efforts and leverage funding between partner agencies to meet the employment and training needs of the customer.

Staff will also be trained to use multiple resources and tools to ensure accessibility to services. One such resource that staff will be encouraged to use is the Guidepost for Success, which is a

set of key educational and intervention strategies for youth, including those with disabilities. Additionally, one-stop assessments, Individual Education Program (IEPs), and Academic and Career Planning (ACPs) tools will continue to be utilized to identify career paths, barriers to employment, training or service needs, and employability skills. These assessments will also assist with identifying hidden disabilities and the potential need for accommodations.

All Comprehensive and Affiliate WorkOne offices completed the One Stop Certifications as of March of 2021, in accordance with DWD's One Stop Certification policy, which can be found on DWD's policy website at https://www.in.gov/dwd/compliance-policy/policy/active/ . Local EO Officers conduct accessibility compliance surveys of WorkOne offices checking the accessibility of various areas, such as parking, accessible routes, ramps, entrances and doors, signage, and restrooms. Accessibility compliance surveys are also conducted upon new office openings/moves and physical accessibility is a regular component of annual monitoring by DWD's Compliance staff.

Physical Accessibility: All Comprehensive and Affiliate WorkOne offices completed the One Stop Certifications as of March of 2021, in accordance with DWD's One Stop Certification policy, which can be found on DWD's policy website at https://www.in.gov/dwd/compliance-policy/policy/active/ . Local EO Officers conduct accessibility compliance surveys of WorkOne offices checking the accessibility of various areas, such as parking, accessible routes, ramps, entrances and doors, signage, and restrooms. Accessibility compliance surveys are also conducted upon new office openings/moves and physical accessibility is a regular component of annual monitoring by DWD's Compliance staff.

For further details regarding physical and programmatic accessibility, please refer to the NDP and DWD Policy referenced above.

9. ADDRESSING THE ACCESSIBILITY OF THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Describe how the one-stop delivery system (including one-stop center operators and the one-stop delivery system partners) will ensure that each one-stop center is able to meet the needs of English language learners, such as through established procedures, staff training, resources, and other materials.

In order to help all clients better understand how to receive benefits and interact with the WorkOne system, DWD and its partners work to provide meaningful access to programs and activities by continually reviewing policy and practices to support limited English proficient individuals. DWD developed DWD Policy 2016-09, *Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination Guidance Letter* (see https://www.in.gov/dwd/files/3511/2016-09-P_EO_Nondiscrimination_Guidance.pdf) outlining the major provisions of section 188 and 29 CFR 38 and has designed several training modules for Local EO Officers and staff, which can be found at https://www.in.gov/dwd/compliance-policy/equal-opportunity/training-resources/.

Training modules relevant to EL services include, for example, the *Notice and Communication* and *Affirmative Outreach* modules. The NDP also covers EL service efforts (see https://www.in.gov/dwd/files/State_of_Indiana_Nondiscrimination_Plan_2020).

WorkOne customers have access to interpreter services through an Indiana Department of Administration (IDOA) contracted language interpretation provider. The contract allows for in person interpretation of dozens of the primary languages spoken in Indiana. The contract also allows for phone interpretation services for additional languages not provided for by in-person

interpretation. In addition, Google Translate is now on the DWD website and on the Indiana Career Connect system.

The required "Equal Opportunity is the Law" notice (the EO Notice) is available in both English and Spanish, as Spanish is the most prominent non-English language throughout the state. Copies of the EO Notice in both languages are typically posted in all WorkOne offices. The EO tagline, as well as copies of the EO Notice and additional state and federal posters, such as the Unemployment Insurance and Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection, are provided in English and Spanish on DWD's website. Additionally, DWD recently made the Unemployment Insurance handbook available in Spanish. This handbook is a great resource which explains the process for applying for Unemployment Insurance and what to expect when filing.

For those with disabilities, WorkOnes have some features to increase accessibility and availability of resources. WorkOnes have accessibility workstations with ergonomics, braille keyboards, and enlarging document capabilities (Ultra Magnifier) for the visually impaired. WorkOnes also have capabilities with Microsoft Accessibility software for speech, hearing and vision on all DWD computers , including read screens with a text- to-speech or braille displays. UI handbooks are accessible via computer on the DWD website and can be accessed with Microsoft's speech recognition and Magnifier. DWD is currently examining all of the regions' websites to ensure capabilities for Browse Aloud services. Additionally, DWD EO conducts quarterly meetings with all Local EO officers providing training, technical support, and best practices.

Additional EL services are provided at the regional level. Examples include, but are not limited to, bilingual staff, hand-held translators, English as a Second Language classes (offered through Title II), Google Translate, and specialized software such as Rosetta Stone. To help EL Hoosiers better understand how to receive benefits and interact with the one-stop system, Babel notices are provided along with communication of vital documents. Section 188 requires that a Babel notice be given when a client encounters a vital document, whether hard copy or electronically. A Babel notice is a short notice included in a document or electronic medium in multiple languages informing the reader that the communication contains vital information, and explains how to access language services to have the contents of the communication provided in other languages. The Babel notice is now on the ICC system along with Google Translate.

Sample language for the Babel notice is below in English:

IMPORTANT! This document or application contains important information about your rights, responsibilities and/or benefits. It is critical that you understand the information in this document and/or application, and we will provide the information in your preferred language at no cost to you. Please contact your local Indiana WorkOne Office near you for assistance in the translation and understanding of the information in this document and/or application

Other opportunities for EL services include classes offered through Title II Adult Education providers to help address language goals. One-stop partners are able to refer to and co-enroll these constituents in the local Adult Education program for assistance.

For further details regarding EL services, including Babel notice information, please refer to the NDP referenced above.

IV. COORDINATION WITH STATE PLAN PROGRAMS

Describe the methods used for joint planning and coordination among the core programs, and with the required one-stop partner programs and other programs and activities included in the Unified or Combined State Plan.

Throughout the development of the Combined Plan, the state has used a variety of methods to ensure coordination across agencies that administer programs and activities in our Combined Plan. State agencies, non-profit and private partners, and the general public have provided input throughout the Plan development process, all committed to a shared goal of creating a more integrated and effective workforce system that works for all Hoosiers. By having the Governor's Workforce Cabinet (GWC) spearhead efforts on the plan, the GWC has been able to bring together the 7 state agencies represented on the Cabinet to ensure greater collaboration on the State Workforce Plan.

Last summer, GWC staff held a meeting with the Agency Heads of those 7 state agencies to gather initial support from each agency for the state's first Combined Plan and chart a plan of action towards submission of the Plan in the spring of 2020.

A Listening Tour was conducted by GWC staff in the fall that included a stop in each of Indiana's 12 workforce regions. The Listening Tour stops were attended by staff from the core programs, required one-stop partner programs, other programs and activities included in the Combined Plan, and other interested stakeholders. Some of the common themes heard during the Listening Tour included the need to co-locate more services to reduce barriers for Hoosiers and the importance of considering common barriers, such as childcare and transportation, when trying to reach individuals with education and training services. Additionally, the importance of better external communication to ensure Hoosiers are aware of programs available to them and better internal communication across agencies to lessen duplication of services and ensure various funding streams are being used most effectively was brought up repeatedly. Completing the Listening Tour before beginning to draft the Plan allowed for the state to identify those common themes and work to incorporate that feedback heard from local regions directly into the Plan.

Indiana's Skillful Governor's Coaching Corps served as another valuable source of feedback in developing the Plan, as well. The Coaching Corps is an intensive program that recognizes the vital role of career coaches play in the talent development system and works to give them the tools and training they need to best serve individuals. Indiana is one of only two states to adopt this program, which selects a diverse mixture of individuals from public workforce centers, adult educational institutions, K-12 schools, and non-profits from all 12 Indiana workforce regions each year. At the end of the year-long program, coaches have the opportunity to recommend new policies and practices to state leaders. Common themes from the coach's presentations to state policymakers were the importance of additional training for career coaches and the need to reduce "red tape" for individuals through a simplified intake system and the lessening of redundancy between organizations. These themes played a prominent role in developing the goals and strategies central to the Plan.

Also in the fall, multiple committees began meeting to assist with developing the Plan. The committee members consisted of core partners, employers, education and training providers, advocacy organizations, and other stakeholders. Committees met regularly over a period of several months and played an active role in developing the Plan. They helped initially shape the overall goals and vision of the Plan and then offered continuous feedback as the various sections of the Plan were developed. The breadth of individuals represented on the committees allowed

for the State to draw on committee members with specific areas of expertise when drafting the various sections of the Plan. Committee members, particularly state agency staff, also had the opportunity to share sections of the Plan with relevant individuals outside of the committees and report back to their committee with feedback. These and other efforts ensured that each section of the Plan incorporated substantial feedback from multiple sources before reaching a completed state.

The Plan was posted for public comment on the GWC website and notice was sent out to a broad audience of the available public comment period. Additionally, a webinar was held that gave the opportunity for individuals across the state to offer live public comment. The committees met at the end of the public comment process to review the comments received and make any necessary updates to the Plan. The Plan was then submitted for final review and approval to the Governor's Workforce Cabinet before its submission.

V. COMMON ASSURANCES (FOR ALL CORE PROGRAMS)

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include assurances that:

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The State has established a policy identifying circumstances that may present a conflict of interest for a State Board or local board member, or the entity or class of officials that the member represents, and procedures to resolve such conflicts;	Yes
2. The State has established a policy to provide to the public (including individuals with disabilities) access to meetings of State Boards and local boards, and information regarding activities of State Boards and local boards, such as data on board membership and minutes;	Yes
3. The lead State agencies with optimal policy-making authority and responsibility for the administration of core programs reviewed and commented on the appropriate operational planning elements of the Unified or Combined State Plan, and approved the elements as serving the needs of the populations served by such programs;	Yes
4. (a) The State obtained input into the development of the Unified or Combined State Plan and provided an opportunity for comment on the plan by representatives of local boards and chief elected officials, businesses, labor organizations, institutions of higher education, the entities responsible for planning or administrating the core programs, required one-stop partners and the other Combined Plan programs (if included in the State Plan), other primary stakeholders, including	Yes

The State Plan must include	Include
other organizations that provide services to individuals with barriers to employment, and the general public, and that the Unified or Combined State Plan is available and accessible to the general public; (b) The State provided an opportunity for review and comment on the plan by the State Board, including State agency official(s) for the Unemployment Insurance Agency if such official(s) is a member of the State Board;	
5. The State has established, in accordance with WIOA section 116(i), fiscal control and fund accounting procedures that may be necessary to ensure the proper disbursement of, and accounting for, funds paid to the State through allotments made for the core programs to carry out workforce development activities;	Yes
6. The State has taken appropriate action to secure compliance with uniform administrative requirements in this Act, including that the State will annually monitor local areas to ensure compliance and otherwise take appropriate action to secure compliance with the uniform administrative requirements under WIOA section 184(a)(3);	Yes
7. The State has taken the appropriate action to be in compliance with WIOA section 188, Nondiscrimination, as applicable;	Yes
8. The Federal funds received to carry out a core program will not be expended for any purpose other than for activities authorized with respect to such funds under that core program;	Yes
9. The State will pay an appropriate share (as defined by the State board) of the costs of carrying out section 116, from funds made available through each of the core programs;	Yes
10. The State has a one-stop certification policy that ensures the physical and programmatic accessibility of all one-stop centers with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA);	Yes
11. Service providers have a referral process in place for directing Veterans with Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE) to DVOP services,	Yes

The State Plan must include	Include
when appropriate; and	
12. Priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses is provided in accordance with 38 USC 4215 in all workforce preparation, development or delivery of programs or services funded directly, in whole or in part, by the Department of Labor.	Yes

VI. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR CORE PROGRAMS

The State must address all program-specific requirements in this section for the WIOA core programs regardless of whether the State submits either a Unified or Combined State Plan.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR ADULT, DISLOCATED WORKER, AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES UNDER TITLE I-B

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include the following with respect to activities carried out under subtitle B—

A. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

1. REGIONS AND LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREAS

A. IDENTIFY THE REGIONS AND THE LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREAS DESIGNATED IN THE STATE

Indiana consists of twelve (12) local workforce development areas (LWDAs), or Regions, as identified in DWD Policy 2017-11 Regional Designations under WIOA available at: https://www.in.gov/dwd/files/3511/2017-11-P_Regional_Designations_WIOA.pdf.

All LWDAs are single Regions with the exception of LWDA 5 and 12, which are combined as a Planning Region.

Indiana's LWDAs consist of the following counties:

- Region 1: Lake, Porter, LaPorte, Newton, Jasper, Pulaski, Starke
- Region 2: St. Joseph, Elkhart, Marshall, Kosciusko, Fulton
- Region 3: LaGrange, Steuben, DeKalb, Whitley, Allen, Wabash, Huntington, Wells, Adams, Grant
- Region 4: Benton, White, Cass, Miami, Carroll, Howard, Tippecanoe, Warren, Fountain, Montgomery, Clinton, Tipton
- Region 5/12: Marion, Boone, Hamilton, Madison, Hancock, Shelby, Johnson, Morgan, Hendricks
- Region 6: Jay, Blackford, Delaware, Randolph, Henry, Wayne, Rush, Fayette, Union
- Region 7: Vermillion, Parke, Putnam, Vigo, Clay, Sullivan
- Region 8: Brown, Monroe, Owen, Greene, Lawrence, Daviess, Martin, Orange
- Region 9: Bartholomew, Decatur, Franklin, Jackson, Jennings, Ripley, Dearborn, Jefferson, Switzerland, Ohio

- Region 10: Crawford, Washington, Scott, Clark, Floyd, Harrison
- Region 11: Knox, Gibson, Pike, Dubois, Posey, Vanderburgh, Warrick, Spencer, Perry
- Region 12: Marion

B. DESCRIBE THE PROCESS USED FOR DESIGNATING LOCAL AREAS, INCLUDING PROCEDURES FOR DETERMINING WHETHER THE LOCAL AREA MET THE CRITERIA FOR "PERFORMED SUCCESSFULLY" AND "SUSTAINED FISCAL INTEGRITY" IN ACCORDANCE WITH 106(B)(2) AND (3) OF WIOA. DESCRIBE THE PROCESS USED FOR IDENTIFYING REGIONS AND PLANNING REGIONS UNDER SECTION 106(A) OF WIOA. THIS MUST INCLUDE A DESCRIPTION OF HOW THE STATE CONSULTED WITH THE LOCAL BOARDS AND CHIEF ELECTED OFFICIALS IN IDENTIFYING THE REGIONS

Indiana's local areas received initial designation approval from the Governor to maintain current local area designations during WIOA implementation in 2015 (WIOA Implementation Guidance WIOA T1-(107)P1) following written requests for designation pursuant to WIOA 106(b)(2) and TEGL 27-14.

In determining current local area (and regional) designations under WIOA, the State took part in a taskforce of the Indiana Career Council, which was focused on assessing system alignment. This taskforce thoroughly reviewed and discussed the workforce development board areas to determine if the 12 areas should be modified. After several meetings, which included input from local boards, the recommendation of the taskforce was to have the standing (WIA) local areas remain intact.

For initial designation, all 12 of the existing local areas met the criteria for performing successfully and maintaining fiscal integrity, as outlined in WIOA section 106(b)(2) and (3). Indiana verified, and continues to verify on an ongoing basis, these requirements through data reporting and monitoring efforts. Indiana has continued this structure through the state and local planning process, aligning its twelve local areas with its twelve WIOA regions. DWD Policy 2017-11 sets forth the criteria for designating regions and is available at: https://www.in.gov/dwd/compliance-policy/policy/active/. Indiana has one current regional planning area consisting of local areas 5 and 12. Additionally, interstate planning is underway with Kentucky.

*Since initial designations were approved, there have been no requests to retract or change designation status, and thus, the local areas and CEOs are considered to have requested continued designation pursuant to 20 CFR 679.250(e).

Note: Indiana is working to develop guidance to capture the local area designation process and procedures, beyond that which is currently discussed regarding designation of regions in DWD Policy 2017-11. The guidance will be consistent with 20 CFR 679.230 – 290 and other federal guidance.

Indiana's process will follow the below general outline:

General procedural requirements for designation of local areas: The Governor will consult with the Governor's Workforce Cabinet (GWC), the Department of Workforce Development (DWD), the Chief Elected Officials (CEOs) and affected local workforce development boards (WDBs). The process will include a public comment period before approval of a local area designation.

New Requests for designation: Designation or redesignation will take into consideration the extent to which the proposed area:

- is consistent with the labor market;
- is consistent with regional economic development within the State; and
- Has available Federal and non-Federal resources necessary to effectively administer activities and provisions required by WIOA, including whether the areas have the appropriate education and training providers, such as institutions of higher education and area career and technical education schools.

The Governor may approve a request at any time for designation as a workforce development area from any unit of general local government, including a combination of such units, if the GWC determines that the area meets applicable designation requirements and recommends designation.

Regardless of whether a local area has been newly designated, or designated via initial or subsequent designation, the Governor may redesignate a local area if the redesignation has been requested by a local area and the Governor approves the request.

Subsequent designations: The Governor may review a designated local area at any time to evaluate whether that the area continues to meet the requirements for subsequent designation under that paragraph. After initial designations, if the chief elected official and local WDB in local area submits a request for subsequent designation, the Governor must approve the request if the following criteria are met for the 2 most recent program years of initial designation:

- The local area performed successfully;
- The local area sustained fiscal integrity; and
- In the case of a local area in a planning region, the local area met the regional planning requirements described in WIOA 106(c)(1)

Regarding subsequent designation, as part of the bi-annual local board certification process, DWD Policy 2019-02 requires local areas to assure that they have performed successfully and have sustained fiscal integrity for the preceding two program years. These assurances are also reviewed as part of the State and Local Planning processes. *For purposes of subsequent designation, the local area and chief elected official must be considered to have requested continued designation unless the local area and chief elected official notify the Governor that they no longer seek designation. The following definitions apply to "performed successfully" and "sustained fiscal integrity":

- *Performed successfully* – means the local area met or exceeded all levels of performance and the local area has not failed any individual measure for the last two (2) consecutive program years
- *Sustained fiscal integrity* - as defined in WIOA sec. 106(e)(2), means that the Secretary has not made a formal determination, during either of the last 2 consecutive years preceding the determination regarding such integrity, that either the grant recipient or the administrative entity of the area misexpended funds provided under subtitle B due to willful disregard of the requirements of the provision involved, gross negligence, or failure to comply with accepted standards of administration.

C. PROVIDE THE APPEALS PROCESS REFERRED TO IN SECTION 106(B)(5) OF WIOA RELATING TO DESIGNATION OF LOCAL AREAS

Any units of general local government or grant recipients that request but are not granted initial or subsequent designation as a local area will have the opportunity to submit an appeal to the State Workforce Board (the GWC) in alignment with WIOA 106(b)(5), 20 CFR 683.630-640, and the Appeals process outlined below.

**Note - Indiana is in process of revising WIOA Complaint, Grievance, and Appeals guidance to ensure alignment with this process. Timelines and steps listed below are subject to change in alignment with the State's appeals and hearing processes.*

Appeals Process. In alignment with WIOA 106(b)(5), a denied request for local area designation by the Governor's Workforce Cabinet (GWC) may be appealed. An appeal must be submitted in writing (within 30 days of the denial) and must include the reason for appeal, all material originally submitted for consideration, and any additional relevant material responding to the denial from the GWC. An opportunity for a hearing must be provided. In the event of a hearing, it will be scheduled within 60 days of receipt of the appeal. If a decision on the appeal for designation has not been rendered in 90 days (from receipt of appeal) or is denied, the requesting entity may request review by the Secretary of Labor. The Secretary may require that the area be designated as a workforce development area if the Secretary determines that the entity was not accorded procedural rights under the State appeals process, or if the area meets the designation requirements.

D. PROVIDE THE APPEALS PROCESS REFERRED TO IN SECTION 121(H)(2)(E) OF WIOA RELATING TO DETERMINATIONS FOR INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING

The appeals process relating to determinations for infrastructure funding is outlined within the MOU/IFA and State Funding Mechanism Policies, which can be accessed at: https://www.in.gov/dwd/compliance-policy/policy/active/. If the WDB is unable to reach an agreement on the funding of infrastructure costs with all partners on or before July 1st of each year (or after the applicable extension of time deadline, if granted), the WDB or affected partner must notify DWD that an agreement cannot be reached. Once notified, the Governor must administer the State funding formula to determine the appropriate share of infrastructure contributions for all partners for the program year impacted. A required partner may appeal the Governor's determination on the basis of a claim that:

- The Governor's determination is inconsistent with the proportionate share
- The Governor's determination is inconsistent with the cost contribution caps

2. STATEWIDE ACTIVITIES

A. PROVIDE STATE POLICIES OR GUIDANCE FOR THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM AND FOR USE OF STATE FUNDS FOR WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES

GWC, in consultation with the DWD, develops policy and guidance for the statewide workforce development system. Policies for Title I, Title II, and Unemployment Insurance can be found at https://www.in.gov/dwd/activepolicies.htm. This guidance covers, but is not limited to, participant eligibility, priority of service; program standards; performance measures; staff qualifications, roles, and responsibilities; data collection, reporting and validation; confidential and privileged information; monitoring; property/asset management; funding, allocation, and MOUs; state and local board governance; veterans' services; equal opportunity and nondiscrimination; etc. Specific program guidance can be found at the link provided above.

B. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE INTENDS TO USE GOVERNOR'S SET ASIDE FUNDING. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL UTILIZE RAPID RESPONSE FUNDS TO RESPOND TO LAYOFFS AND PLANT CLOSINGS AND COORDINATE SERVICES TO QUICKLY AID COMPANIES AND THEIR AFFECTED WORKERS. STATES ALSO SHOULD DESCRIBE ANY LAYOFF AVERSION STRATEGIES THEY HAVE IMPLEMENTED TO ADDRESS AT RISK COMPANIES AND WORKERS

The GWC and DWD will work with the Governor's Office to enable funds from the discretionary fund to provide incentive grants to the regions. The incentive grants will be provided for uses consistent with WIOA and may require local Boards to agree to activities designed to better facilitate the partnership between the state and locals. For example, regions may be asked to agree to provide routine information, such as the names, role, and contact information for all Workforce Development Board members and ensure all board members complete an annual approved DWD Board Training. Each region is provided with funding from WIOA Dislocated Worker to address needs of dislocated workers specifically, and are encouraged to set aside a portion of those funds to assist them with Rapid response activities within their regions.

As posited in *Strategy 2.11*, Indiana uses a portion of the discretionary fund to create a pilot for a few regions to test consumer-driven operations (e.g., shifting hours of operation to evenings or Saturdays potentially to align with the volume of traffic or creating a virtual chat feature for those unable to go into the office). Through this pilot, the regions will determine the costs and benefits of staggering times, how to communicate the change in hours, and the coordination with administrative timelines and requirements. DWD will administer this pilot during FY 2022-2023 and FY 2023-24. By analyzing the costs, benefits, and return on investments from various consumer-driven strategies and operational practices, DWD will publish the best practices and lessons learned through this pilot for other regions to adapt.

If a region exhausts its Dislocated Worker funding, they can apply for a grant from DWD to assist them with Rapid Response activities. If DWD Rapid Response depletes the designated WIOA Dislocated Worker funding set aside for Rapid Activities, Indiana will pull only from the remaining Dislocated Worker funds of the Governor's discretionary fund. We are, therefore, able to issue Rapid Response Grants to any local region based on needs to implement activities for dislocated workers.

As a part of its layoff aversion strategy, Indiana DWD purchased (4th quarter of 2019) a predictor, scores, and ratings perspective program from Dun & Bradstreet. This program allows Indiana to use business intelligence from companies in a proactive manner to provide a solutions based approach to plan for and manage economic transition. This program uses a blend of financial fitness and material change data. Through this medium, DWD provides frontend consultation before a business catastrophe occurs and before a business and its workers become at risk. While this is product is fairly new to DWD and we are learning the nuances of its use, it will be used to:

- Actively engage local business,
- Use labor market data to drive decisions,
- Treat education like a job,
- Connect people to careers,
- Provide wrap-around student services,
- Tap innovative funding sources, and

- Embrace evaluation.

Use of this tool is new, and DWD is implementing a pilot to develop best practices in several regions. Both state and local business services team are determining how this information is going to be utilized and implemented statewide. Currently, DWD anticipates working closely with 2-3 pilot regions to develop a method and processes to use this information, offer technical assistance, and coordinate with employers to avoid layoffs at the community level. Indiana recently used this tool to analyze with the recent layoffs at a local trucking company to evaluate other employer impacts.

DWD and local regions determine prospects for layoff aversion by consulting with the Regional Managers (RM), Program Directors, state and local economic development organizations, and other entities. Business Service Representatives (BSR) solicit information from the employer about supplier firms in order to accurately assess the likelihood of secondary and tertiary layoffs.

In addition, layoff aversion must be discussed with the employer to further determine possible layoff aversion strategies. Discussions and strategies include determining:

- The proposed layoff schedule and the employer's plans to assist the dislocated workers, including the status of any collective bargaining negotiations affecting layoff benefits,
- The need for a voluntary labor management committee or workforce transition committee comprised of representatives of the employer, affected workers, their representatives, and/or other community entities as necessary to assist in planning and overseeing event-specific strategy that supports the reemployment of affected workers,[1]
- Appropriate labor representatives to consult and coordinate with when planning Rapid Response activities for impacted workers covered by a collective bargaining agreement,
- The need for peer-to-peer worker outreach to connect dislocated workers with services in conjunction with the labor management committee or its equivalent, and
- That procedures are in place for the timely access and referral to WorkOne programs, services, and information offered by the WIOA (including Wagner-Peyser), UI, TAA, and other workforce development programs.

[1] This work typically starts at the state-level but will involve close coordination with the local region. Whether the region steps in to lead or is more of a collaborator with the state depends on regional capacity, skill, and confidence level to manage.

C. IN ADDITION, DESCRIBE THE STATE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES TO PROVIDE RAPID RESPONSES IN CASES OF NATURAL DISASTERS INCLUDING COORDINATION WITH FEMA AND OTHER ENTITIES

In the case of a natural disaster, the State Rapid Response Unit will work closely with FEMA, the American Red Cross, the Business Services Unit, the regional Workforce Development Board, Designated Local Rapid Response Coordinator, and the Economic Development Board to provide services, recovery, and temporary relief by creating jobs through cleanup and restoration efforts. The Rapid Response and Business Services Units will assist in identifying business adversely affected and workers who lost their jobs as a result of the disaster. The Rapid Response and Business Services Unit will work with the local Workforce Development Boards to access existing funding at the state and regional level, as well as determine the need

for additional funding through a Disaster National Emergency Grant. The grant will be used to provide additional funding for cleanup and/or humanitarian efforts. DWD will provide technical assistance to the regions as needed and will assist in the efforts to provide the following information and services to the victims of the disaster: Disaster Unemployment Assistance UI claims filing, referrals to FEMA to file claims, and job matching and referrals to partner agencies.

D. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE PROVIDES EARLY INTERVENTION (E.G., RAPID RESPONSE) TO WORKER GROUPS ON WHOSE BEHALF A TRADE ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE (TAA) PETITION HAS BEEN FILED. (SECTION 134(A)(2)(A).) THIS DESCRIPTION MUST INCLUDE HOW THE STATE DISSEMINATES BENEFIT INFORMATION TO PROVIDE TRADE-AFFECTED WORKERS IN THE GROUPS IDENTIFIED IN THE TAA PETITIONS WITH AN ACCURATE UNDERSTANDING OF THE PROVISION OF TAA BENEFITS AND SERVICES IN SUCH A WAY THAT THEY ARE TRANSPARENT TO THE TRADE-AFFECTED DISLOCATED WORKER APPLYING FOR THEM (TRADE ACT SEC. 221(A)(2)(A) AND SEC. 225; GOVERNOR-SECRETARY AGREEMENT). DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE FUNDS THAT HAVE BEEN RESERVED FOR RAPID RESPONSE TO PROVIDE SERVICES FOR EVERY WORKER GROUP THAT FILES A TAA PETITION.

When a petition is filed that was not the result of a Rapid Response event, the TAA Unit of DWD notifies the region of the petition filing to initiate Rapid Response (RR) events, including initial fact finding and RR event scheduling. Once a certification is made, the TAA Unit disseminates a worker notification letter via mail notifying them of their eligibility for the TAA benefits and services, including case management, training, TRA, job search allowance, relocation allowance, and RTAA. The letter includes notification of deadlines for TRA income support.

Post- certification, in addition to the worker notification letter, Indiana TAA Unit issues Public Service Announcements, digital and/or print newspaper advertisements and extensive social media campaigns to target eligible workers within a certification group to engage them at a local WorkOne. Onsite orientations and in-person Rapid Response activities are offered in conjunction with TAA informational sessions while workers are still employed at a certified firm.

Workforce Development Boards are responsible for coordinating the Rapid Response services at the local level to ensure effective delivery of services. Each Workforce Development Board is responsible for the following:

- Designating a local Rapid Response Representative.
    - The representative may be a Workforce Development Board administrative staff or a local Rapid Response team member.
    - The representative will coordinate with the Regional Managers of Business Service (RM) and Rapid Response Program Director.
    - Representatives will be responsible for making contact with the business and introducing Rapid Response services.
- Establishing and maintaining a Local Rapid Response team.
    - Members of the team may include: representatives from the Workforce Development Board, WorkOne staff, service providers, labor organizations and/or State Labor Council (when the workforce is union represented), community/technical colleges, and/or other stakeholders and interested parties.

- Arranging an initial on-site meeting with employers, employee representatives, and Trade Coordinators to assess layoff schedules, determine employer plans to assist the workers, and introduce appropriate onsite Rapid Response activities for the WARN and Trade Act.
- Informing and including TAA coordinators for all onsite meetings including orientations.
- Obtaining a layoff list of affected workers and their contact information when applicable.
- Ensuring all Local Non-WARN notices are entered into ICC and included in the monthly data reports.
- Providing planning assistance for dislocation events.
- Ensuring Rapid Response orientation materials include informational packets on all available services at local WorkOnes and other community resources.
- Providing information on career counseling and job search assistance, resume preparation and interviewing skills workshops, local labor market, education and training opportunities (WIOA), health benefits (Cobra); and community resources.

B. ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKERS PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

1. WORK-BASED TRAINING MODELS

If the State is utilizing work-based training models (e.g. on-the-job training, incumbent worker training, transitional jobs, and customized training) as part of its training strategy and these strategies are not already discussed in other sections of the plan, describe the State's strategies for how these models ensure high quality training for both the participant and the employer.

The Governor's Workforce Cabinet and DWD will continue to engage partners in the development of strategies, frameworks, and models to best implement work-and-learn experiences as a part of the state strategies, including continuing to elevate the importance of work-and-learn models. By partnering with various employers to mitigate challenges and to determine best practices, the state is able to generate employer support for broader participation statewide. Also, participants are able to establish connections directly with potential employers by using this evidence-based approach to career readiness.

Indiana workforce regions have utilized work-based models for many years. On-the-job and customized trainings have been widely used and very effective tools. Indiana's policies are developed to ensure that our providers continually evaluate and improve their work and learn strategies. As we expand the use of work-based learning, we encourage the local Workforce Development Boards to monitor and review work-based learning programs through partnerships with schools, districts, and employers. Often, work-based learning experiences in the K-12 space are designed and evaluated between schools and employers. Our Boards can help ensure quality in these experiences for youth and adults by serving as intermediaries for employers, schools, institutions, and other stakeholders.

Indiana is working to increase and improve the work and learn models employed in the state. One specific model that the state is working to enhance and increase are **apprenticeships**. Indiana has a high number of existing US DOL registered apprenticeships and, with our work going forward, we intend to increase the opportunities for companies to develop and implement apprenticeship training for potential employees. To that end, the Governor, via executive order, established the Office of Apprenticeship and Work-Based Learning (OWBLA) at DWD to further

support federal registered apprenticeships and to create a state model for apprenticeship programs.

The Office of Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeship has developed a scalable framework for state-level apprenticeship programs, entitled State Earn and Learn (SEAL). The SEAL model strategically incorporates related instruction, on-the-job training, and rewards for skill gain, which all lead to an industry-recognized certification. SEALs develop a highly trained employee to fill the talent pipeline for Hoosier employers. These models are scaled across the state through a well-coordinated process between regional Workforce Development Boards and OWBLA regional directors. To ensure maximum outreach, participation, and the leverage of various funding, OWBLA recently entered into agreements with all twelve regional workforce development boards for them to become Registered Intermediaries with USDOL. This new structure will allow for the expansion of registered apprenticeship and SEALs, which can be used as a high quality pre-apprenticeship program. Additionally, this creates a mechanism for more efficient allocation of future apprenticeship grant funds

2. REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP

Describe how the State will incorporate Registered Apprenticeship into its strategy for service design and delivery (e.g., job center staff taking applications and conducting assessments).

The state is actively involved in continual evaluation of and updating its full strategy for the implementation of registered apprenticeships throughout the state. One way Indiana has merged other types of education and training programs is through partnerships between apprenticeships and our community colleges. Ivy Tech Community Colleges partner with registered apprenticeships to provide comparable college credits and confer degrees; Vincennes University work with non-unionized organizations to provide college credits and degrees for their registered apprenticeship programs. Indiana supports the connections between our community colleges and registered apprenticeships through allocating funds from the Unemployment Insurance Penalty and Interest fund.

To spearhead those efforts, the Office of Work Based Learning and Apprenticeships was established within DWD in 2018. The state continues to work with the USDOL Office of Apprenticeship in Indiana to coordinate information, expansion, and eligibility of apprenticeships in Indiana. Further development of registered apprenticeships will play an increasingly important role with businesses across all industries by providing a pipeline of skilled workers to help them remain competitive, thus creating a core component of Indiana's strategies for service design and delivery. Many employers are increasing their use of registered apprenticeships as a "grow your own" talent strategy to increase and diversify their pipeline of skilled workers. This proven workforce strategy offers apprentices opportunities to earn a salary while they learn the skills employers demand in a variety of occupations.

As of the close of the 2020-2021 program year, Indiana was reporting 18,435 total Registered Apprenticeship Programs with 42 new RAPs during the period. If including the ZA national progrms, the total number of active apprentices increased to 20,522 with 6,997 new apprentices during that program year, with a total of 1,155 registered apprenticeship programs being served by Indiana's Department of Labor Office of Apprenticeship staff and OWBLA. We are one of the largest apprenticeship states in the nation as far as size and number of programs available. Indiana is also one of the top states in terms of completions. Yet, like the rest of the nation, Indiana currently lacks much needed diversity in terms of ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status, and business sector roles.

DWD received both the ApprenticeshipUSA State Accelerator Grant and the ApprenticeshipUSA State Expansion Grant facilitate growing and expanding apprenticeships throughout the state. Through the support of these grants, DWD has worked with Indiana's USDOL Office of Apprenticeships and other key stakeholders to:

- Identify ways to integrate registered apprenticeship into state education and workforce systems (i.e. WIOA),
- Engage industry and other partners to expand apprenticeship to new sectors, such as IT, healthcare, cybersecurity and business services and to new non-traditional populations at scale,
- Conduct outreach and work with employers to start other new, quality work-based learning programs,
- Identify ways to promote greater inclusion and diversity in apprenticeship such as sub-grants with The Indiana Plan LLC,
- Conduct research on youth apprenticeship models,
- Serve as local partners to implement CTE Programs of Study under Perkins,
- Incorporate registered apprenticeship programs on to the state Education, Training and Provider List (ETPL), and
- Create a state apprenticeship model (SEALs).

As Indiana expands registered apprenticeships through OWBLA, we want to specifically direct this strategy towards our target populations. A highlight of those populations we intend to increase participation and completion of these programs include:

- **Veterans:** Purdue University was one of the grantees that received grant dollars through the Presidential Executive Order Expanding Apprenticeships specifically targeting veterans.[2] We will look to create more partnerships between INVets and employers that provide registered apprenticeship opportunities. Connecting the skill sets that veterans have gained during their time of service to these opportunities will provide a benefit to both veterans living in Indiana and our employer community.
- **Single mothers:** Greater access to registered apprenticeships in the skilled trades can help single mothers achieve economic security and fill predicted skills shortages in these sectors. From pre-apprenticeships to registered apprenticeships, opportunities to earn and learn in these trades provide good careers with family-sustaining earnings and long-term employment prospects are favorable. While apprenticeships in the trades offer good jobs with benefits, only a small minority of apprentices in the trades are women. Pre-apprenticeship programs can provide women with the foundational skills, supports, networks, and knowledge needed for entering and succeeding in an apprenticeship. As our WorkOnes can help promote these opportunities to single mothers, our business services need to simultaneously work with our businesses to make them inclusive and welcoming for women. As we promote non-traditional hiring practices through our business services representative, employers start to tap into this viable talent pipeline to fill jobs at various entry levels. Indiana can adapt resources and strategies the best practices identified by the National for Women's Equity in Apprenticeship and Employment.[3]

- **Ex-Offenders:** The occupations currently offered within the IDOC's Apprenticeship programs tend to be in industries where second chance employment is supported. Through both HIRE and WorkOnes, ex-offenders can be actively connected to these opportunities, if they align with their interests. Because they combine on-the-job training with classroom instruction, an ex-offender could learn academic and technical skills and earn a stable wage, with the option for regular pay increases during and after the program.

- **Historically underrepresented minorities:Pre-apprenticeship** and pre-employment programs can be especially valuable for people of color who have been historically underrepresented in certain industries and apprenticeships. These programs can be paired with Adult Education to help workers acquire a basic level of academic- and industry-relevant skills. Effective pre-apprenticeship programs expose workers to job sites and work environments, as well as provide income support for workers to address barriers to employment. Pre-employment and pre-apprenticeship programs also create formal access points to employers. Either apprenticeship program or WIOA Adult and Dislocated can help with direct expenses from this program, such as childcare and transportation.

- **Urban and Rural Populations:** Apprenticeships, both traditional registered apprenticeships through the US Department of Labor and non-traditional developed through Indiana's Office of Work Based Learning and Apprenticeship, can provide consistent wages, debt-free education and higher wages to urban and rural Hoosiers. Workers who complete an apprenticeship earn an average starting salary of $50,000 and earn about $300,000 more than comparable workers over their lifetimes. Employers also benefit from having the ability to build a pipeline of skilled workers.[4] Scaling access to state and federal apprenticeship programs will provide a way for urban students to earn postsecondary credentials and an income simultaneously. Pre- and/or youth-apprenticeship programs can aim to define clear career paths, help students (either in K-12 or adults) choose the best track for them, and prepare them to secure and succeed in full-time employment.

- **At-Risk Youth:** Apprenticeships can lack equity and diversity in their workforce, limiting access and opportunities to many of Indiana's target populations that could foster this talent pipeline. Indiana could employ pre-apprenticeship and bridge programs to increase access and improve the odds of success for candidates who need job-readiness supports, such as at-risk youth. Pre-apprenticeship programs can introduce people to the workplace culture and expectations, developing employability skills as part of the education and training. Younger apprenticeship candidates may not be job-ready upon their graduation from high school, and they may not want to take the traditional four-year higher education route. Merging pre-apprenticeships with the redesigned CTE programs of study could offer another option for high school students to earn a postsecondary credential and an income as they begin their career. If we connect pre-apprenticeships to high school CTE courses, wraparound supports critical to at-risk students' success (e.g., career counseling, mentoring, and accommodations) can assist students succeed in this opportunity.[5]

As of January 2021 all twelve Workforce Development Boards as registered apprenticeship intermediaries, with each having entered into a sub-recipient grant relationship with DWD in order to develop and scale registered apprenticeship programs in each region across Indiana. The intermediaries are responsible for occupation selection, standards and registration, and

reporting to DWD OWBLA. This structure supports State Plan goals to allow regions to drive efforts to attract and retain apprentices for high-wage, high-demand jobs that meet the economic needs of the individual region.

Indiana will continue to expand registered apprenticeship programs, as well as the number of apprentices enrolled in these programs. In further support of the Plan's Goals and Strategies, Indiana will also continue to expand the opportunities for students to participate in programs that lead to registered apprenticeship while earning high school credit toward graduation.

[1] US Department of Labor. Registered Apprenticeship National Results Fiscal Year 2018.

[2] Department of Labor, 2019. Overview of the Scaling Apprenticeship through Sector-Based Strategies Grant Program and Project Summaries.

[3] The National Center for Women's Equity in Apprenticeship and Employment at Chicago Women in Trades (CWIT) provides strategies and practical applications to increase the number of women entering and being retained in registered apprenticeship through our online resources, technical assistance, and training.

[4]US DOL Apprenticeship Toolkit.

[5] Jobs For the Future, 2019. Growing Equity and Diversity through Apprenticeship: Business Perspectives.

3. TRAINING PROVIDER ELIGIBILITY PROCEDURE

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

An Eligible Training Provider is an entity that provides a program of training services and has been determined to be eligible to receive Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I-B funding for training services through an Individual Training Account. These providers and programs will be included on Indiana's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). The provider must be open to the public and one of the following types of entities:

1. Institution of higher education that provides a program leading to a recognized postsecondary credential; or
2. Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs); or
3. Other public or private providers of training services, which may include:
    a. Community-based organizations;
    b. Joint labor-management organizations; and
    c. Eligible providers of adult education and literacy activities under Title II of WIOA if such activities are provided in combination with training services described at §680.350 of the WIOA regulations.

Indiana's ETPL is administered through the INTraining website. It is important to note the distinction between the INTraining website and the ETPL. The INTraining website is the means by which training providers submit applications to have their programs listed for Hoosiers to view and access. Once the providers submit the required program information to be determined eligible to be placed on the INTraining website, a more thorough review will be completed by DWD staff to determine whether the program is also eligible to receive WIOA funding, and,

therefore, be placed on the ETPL. The ETPL is a subset of INTraining and includes the selected INTraining providers and programs which have been determined eligible to receive WIOA funding.

The INTraining dashboard is viewable by the public and maintains multiple features which assist clients in finding the training program most suited to their needs. Job seekers have the ability to refine their search by utilizing a number of filters, including the ability to sort by programs funded "in certain areas" or "state wide". They may view all training programs in a particular region or sort by county. They may view only training programs that are offered 'on-line' or sort by 'off-line' (in person). If a job seeker is in pursuit of a particular type of credential, he or she may seek and sort the training options that specifically lead to an industry recognized certification, licensure, an apprenticeship , or an approved post-secondary credential.

The procedures, eligibility criteria, and information requirements for determining training provider initial and continued eligibility are outlined in DWD Policy 2020-16 and its companion guidance, DWD Technical Assistance 2020-17, Change 1 (the policy's TA guide), both of which can be found at: https://www.in.gov/dwd/compliance-policy/policy/active/. The new policy was released in June of 2021, shortly after the release of TEGL 8-19, Change 1. The companion TA guide serves as official state level guidance provided to complement DWD Policy 2020-16 to provide robust procedural and process direction for training providers. DWD is in the process of again updating these policy documents (to be completed before the end of 2022) in the following ways: more detailed description of the "minimally burdensome process" for RAPs to opt on to the ETPL; however, substantial information regarding the eligibility requirements for RAPs is shared in the Technical Assistance document in the section "Requirement and Eligibility Exceptions". DWD will remove most discussions of OJT (since DWD is developing a stand-alone policy) and other forms of exempted training; clarification around what DWD considers to be a 'substantial violation" of the requirement to submit accurate and timely information; and the inclusion of specific continued eligibility criteria.

Note: During the upcoming program year, the State will also enhance the continued eligibility criteria section in the policy and companion TA to include, more clearly, processes and procedures related to the following items:

- Access to training services throughout the state (including rural areas and through technology use);
- Information reported to state agencies on federal and state training programs other than WIOA Title I-B programs;
- Quality of the program of training services including a program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential;
- ETP's ability to provide trainings that are physically and programmatically accessible for individuals who are employed and individuals with barriers to employment, including individuals with disabilities;
- Timeliness and accuracy of ETP's performance reports; and
- A requirement that at least every 2 years (or sooner, if defined in state policy) ETPs must submit performance and cost information for each of the provider's programs of study that are on the ETP list.

Below are key points from the policy and its companion TA guide:

Initial Application: The INTraining initial application process consists of two application types: Provider Location and Program.

Step One: Provider Location Application

Training providers must complete and submit a provider location application through the INTraining portal. A separate provider location application is required for each training location the entity wishes to seek approval.

The provider location application requires information about the provider and training location. Required information will include, but is not limited to:

1. Address for training location
2. Contact information for training location
3. Provider type
4. Accreditations and licenses, if applicable

Provider locations will be subject to clearance checks, which must be passed to receive approval. Pass/fail determination will be at the discretion of DWD. Clearance checks may include, but is not limited to:

1. Indiana Department of Revenue
2. Indiana Secretary of State
3. DWD Unemployment Insurance Tax
4. Office of the Indiana Attorney General E. Better Business Bureau

F. Any relevant accrediting bodies, which may include, but are not limited to:

1. Indiana Department of Health
2. Indiana State Board of Nursing
3. Office for Career and Technical Schools
4. Board for Proprietary Education
5. Indiana Professional Licensing Agency

Step Two: Program Application

Once the provider location application has been approved, the training provider must complete a program application for <u>each</u> training program[1] it seeks to have included on the INTraining list. Programs must be offered to the general public to be eligible for consideration. Required information will include, but is not limited to:

1. Description of the program of training services
2. Information concerning whether the training provider is in a partnership with a business for the program of training services
3. Program related costs
4. Information addressing the alignment of training with in-demand industry sectors and occupations

5. Confirmation of compliance with 29 CFR Part 38, "Implementation of the Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act" Final Rule (January 3, 2017)[2]

If the training provider fails to complete either the provider location or program application or fails to provide any information being requested by DWD within sixty (60) days of submitting the application or of being notified of the omitted information, the provider location and/or program applications will be denied[3].

Upon satisfactory submission and approval of a provider and program application, the program will appear on the INTraining website. At this time, the system will automatically review the program specifics to determine whether the program is eligible to receive WIOA Title I funding and therefore be included on the ETPL.

[1] A single program application may be associated with several provider (or training) locations. A new program application is needed for different program types or when commensurate programs have different details (i.e., course length, tuition, work experiences, etc.).

[2] 29 CFR 38

[3] For more information on denials, see Conditions of Denial section of policy docs.

Initial ETPL Eligibility

Under WIOA, DWD has set specific requirements a program must meet to be eligible to receive WIOA funding and be listed as an ETP. Initial eligibility consists of meeting two requirements:

- In-demand metrics
- Performance metrics

The Governor's Workforce Cabinet (GWC) in consultation with DWD reserves the right to review and reestablish the initial and continued eligibility requirements on an annual basis

In-demand Metrics

When determining a program's eligibility to receive WIOA funding, DWD will consider the demand of the occupations the program trains towards. Indiana uses a scoring formula to rate occupations for both short-term and long-term outlooks to determine if the occupation is an in-demand occupation in a particular region. The formula considers the following characteristics: total job openings, growth openings, percentage change, real-time online job postings, labor market information, and wages. The final score results in a rating of one (1) through five (5) for each occupation, one (1) being least in-demand and five (5) being highly in-demand. The Indiana Career Ready INDemand website can be found at www.indianacareerready.com. Programs can qualify to be funded regionally or statewide.

1. Lead to an in-demand occupation in the region[1] and
    a. Occupations are based upon the Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) code to Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) crosswalk listed on the program application[2]
    b. Identified occupations must meet the INDemand threshold—a 3 (or higher) flame ranking

c. INDemand data is updated annually on INTraining at the beginning of every program year (July 1st)[3]

2. Lead to a post-secondary credential
    a. Industry Recognized Certification
    b. Licensure
    c. Apprenticeship
    d. Accredited Post-Secondary Program of Study
        i. Accredited short-term certificate (< Associate degree)
        ii. Associate degree
        iii. Bachelor's degree
        iv. Master's degree
        v. Doctoral degree

The other requirement for initial and continued eligibility is **Performance Metrics:**

[1] For information on an in-demand determination review request, please go to the Review of Regional Demand or Industry Recognized Certification section of policy docs.

[2] The CIP or SOC codes may be updated throughout the year as new codes are released by the regulatory body.

[3] The INDemand data will be updated each July utilizing April's bi-annual (every 2 years) report.

Performance Metrics

When determining a program's eligibility to receive WIOA funding, the State will consider the performance outcomes of the program. If a program does not have available data at the time of initial application, the program will receive a one-year data waiver. Programs can qualify to be regionally or statewide funded. Programs must meet the following minimum performance criteria:

1. Best of 2nd or 4th Quarter Completers Employment Rate greater than 30%; or
2. 50% or greater Credential Rate of all students served; or
3. Annual Total Completer's Median Earnings equal to or above $10/hour.

If a program has been denied inclusion on the ETPL for failure to meet the required in-demand and/or performance criteria, the provider and program will remain on the INTraining list but will be removed from the ETPL. This renders them ineligible to receive WIOA funding and prompts the removal of the funding icon until both in-demand and performance criteria have been met.

Indiana has set performance criteria to denote those programs that meet <u>exceptional</u> performance metrics. Programs must meet the following criteria to receive this designation:

1. Best of 2nd or 4th quarter completers employment rate greater than 60%; and

2. Credential rate of all students served greater than 80%; and
3. Annual total completer's median earnings equal to or above $15/hour.

It is worth noting that DWD wishes to raise the threshold of Performance Metrics, but, in consultation with the GWC, decided that during the pandemic, when training providers had to pivot many of their instructional practices, was not the appropriate time to do so. It is the program's desire to raise them with the next program year.

Continued Eligibility Requirements for INTraining and the ETPL

In accordance with WIOA, DWD has set specific requirements a training provider must meet or complete to maintain their eligibility on either list. Continued eligibility consists of meeting and completing four requirements: in-demand metrics, performance metrics, annual review, and federal performance reporting.

To maintain ETPL eligibility, in-demand metrics and performance metrics, as listed in the Initial Eligibility for the ETPL section, must continue to be met.

In addition to these requirements, DWD will update its current policy and companion TA to include language that addresses the following issues: access to training throughout the state which is physically and programmatically accessible for individuals who are employed or those with barriers to employment; reporting and accuracy of information on federal and state training programs, including performance and cost reports; and ensuring training program quality by requiring that programs lead to a recognized postsecondary credential. This work should be done by the end of calendar year 2022.

Annual Review

To maintain INTraining or ETPL inclusion, all training providers must complete an annual review of each provider location and program to ensure that the WIOA Title I-financially assisted program is conducted in a nondiscriminatory way according to WIOA Section 188 and 29 CFR Part 38. The annual review due date is based upon the provider location or program application's initial approval date; therefore, training providers may have to complete an annual review multiple times if they have separate locations and/or programs that were approved at different times throughout the year.

An annual review includes the training provider reviewing and making any necessary updates on the provider location or program application. The training provider will receive a sixty (60) day notification prior to the annual review due date informing them of the deadline for submission of the review and any updates. Upon submission, the updated program information will be reviewed by DWD staff. If the training provider does not complete the annual review by its due date, the application will be placed into an "Information Requested" status. If the training provider fails to complete the annual review within sixty (60) days of the program being placed into "Information Requested" status, the program application will be denied. The training provider may immediately re-apply[1].

[1] For more information on denials, please go to Conditions of Denial section of policy docs.

Performance Reporting (federal reporting)

To maintain INTraining or ETPL inclusion, all training providers must complete the annual federal performance reporting. Under WIOA, each state is required to submit student-level data for all training programs to USDOL on an annual basis. Student-level data should be reported at

the beginning and end of each cohort and must be reported by the **July 31st** deadline for that reporting period. The following requirements apply to federal performance reporting:

1. Student-level data **must** be reported before or during the open federal performance reporting time period of **July 1st through July 31st**.
2. Training providers are required to submit student-level data to DWD via the INTraining portal annually.
3. Student-level data must be reported under the program location in which the student was enrolled.
4. Training providers must report student-level data for every program location that was in "Staff Approved" status at any time during the reporting program year.
    a. **If the program did not serve any students, the training provider is still required to complete federal performance reporting.** The training provider will be able to indicate 'no students were served' during the reporting program year.
5. Student-level data must be submitted for **all** students, regardless of funding sources.
6.
    a. First name
    b. Last name
    c. Full social security number (or last four digits of the SSN)
    d. Address (only if full SSN is not available)
    e. Date of Birth
    f. Gender
    g. Race
    h. Course Start Date
    i. Course End Date
    j. Enrollment Status
    k. Name of Assessment(s) (if applicable)
    l. Assessment(s) Pass/Fail (if applicable)
    m. Deceased
    n. Incarcerated

Any program that does not successfully complete their reporting of appropriate program year student-level data by the July 31st deadline, will be placed into a **"Pending Data"** status and will **not** be fundable for a **minimum of six (6) months**. The training provider will still be obligated to submit student-level data during the six (6) month unfunded time frame. During and following the "Pending Data" status, the following rules apply:

1. **Training provider <u>completes</u> student-level data reporting during the pending data timeframe**—the program will move to "Suspended" status for the remainder of the six (6) month time period and will remain unfunded. At the end of the suspension, a funding determination will be made[1].
2. **Training provider <u>does not complete</u> student-level data reporting during the pending data time frame**—the program will be terminated for two (2) years. **Please note:** A new duplicate program application <u>will not</u> be accepted during the termination period. If a duplicate program is submitted, the new program will be denied[2].

[1] For more information, please go to Initial and Continued Eligibility Requirements section of policy docs. [2] For denial terms, please go to Conditions for Denial section of policy docs.

The companion TA guide addresses the exception to eligibility requirements for Registered Apprenticeships:

Requirement and Eligibility Exceptions

Apprenticeships

United States Department of Labor (USDOL) Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs)[1] are automatically eligible to be included on the ETPL and are exempt from federal, state, and local ETP eligibility and federal performance reporting requirements. The RAP will automatically be included on the ETPL once the program sponsor opts in and has provided the following information to DWD:

1. Occupations included within the RAP
2. The name and address of the RAP sponsor
3. The name and address of the Related Technical Instruction (RTI) provider, and the location of instruction if different than the program sponsor's address
4. The method and length of instruction
5. The number of active apprentices

RAPs will remain on the ETPL until:

1. The RAP sponsor notifies DWD it no longer wants to be included on the list
2. The program becomes deregistered under the National Apprenticeship Act
3. The program is determined to have intentionally supplied inaccurate information
4. A determination is made that the RAP substantially violated any provision of Title I of WIOA or the WIOA regulations, including nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of 29 CFR part 38

[1] Industry Recognized Apprenticeship Programs (IRAP) do not receive the same ETP exceptions that WIOA allows for RAPs; therefore, IRAPs seeking to be added to the ETPL must follow the same process requirements as other training providers that are not RAPS.

The companion TA guide also addresses general responsibilities of the Training Providers and addresses new monitoring processes that have been put into place, both to support accuracy and maintain quality training programs:

Provider Responsibilities

In addition to meeting and maintaining eligibility requirements, training providers are obligated to adhere to the following responsibilities:

1. Ensure instructor credentials meet the minimum qualifications:
    a. Possess a two-year degree from an institution recognized by the United States Department of Education or national accrediting body in the major area they are assigned to teach; or
    b. Possess practical experience of not less than two years in the major area they are assigned to teach and professional licensure or industry-recognized certification in the field.
    c. All faculty applications to teach in the school must be accompanied by transcripts, letters, and documents supporting the application.
    d. These requirements do not supersede any requirements set by another oversight agency that may be more stringent than that of INTraining.
2. In addition, and separate to the INTraining portal record, training providers must maintain a paper or digital record of all eligible participants using the following guidelines:
    a. Must contain copies of any documentation that pertains to the participant's eligibility, including all attendance records and any earned credential documentation.
    b. Must be kept in a secured area with limited access, as these files contain Personally Identifiable Information (PII).
    c. Must be kept for a minimum of 3 years.
3.
    a. For additional resources on ADA requirements, please refer to the following documents: ADA Compliance Standards, ADA checklists, WIOA Equal Opportunity Regulations, and WIOA Equal Opportunity Reference Guide.
4. Maintain at least one active email address that is regularly checked.
5. Respond within **5 business days** to **all** communications from DWD including phone calls, emails, online surveys, or requests for other documentation to assist the Department with ongoing program quality assurance measures.

Monitoring

Monitoring activities will include application and portal review, site-visits, and review of student records. DWD reserves the right to visit any training provider at any time on-site and unscheduled or request provider kept participant records for the purpose of program monitoring. Monitoring activities may include, but are not limited to:

1. Site visits (scheduled or unscheduled)
2. Staff or student interviews (scheduled visits only)
3. Classroom observation
4. Review of full participant records

5. Review of resources, tools, and curriculum
6. Review of program cost[1]
7. Review of instructor credentials
8. Review of ADA compliance
9. Review of any requirements related to the INTraining and ETPL policy[2]
10. Financial records
11. Review of EO compliance

DWD reserves the right to place INTraining providers and/or ETPs or programs on an improvement plan or to remove such training providers or programs from INTraining or the ETPL. Reasons for placement on an improvement plan or removal from INTraining or the ETPL may include, but are not limited to:

1. Poor performance
2. Misuse of funding
3. Loss of ETPL fundable status
4. Falsification of documentation
5. Observations or findings from monitoring activities, etc.

[1] DWD reserves the right to request an itemized list of program costs outside of what is requested on the application. If the training provider submits a program cost increase, the training provider may be required to submit a justification.

[2] INTraining and Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) Eligibility and Establishment Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I

Indiana's ETPL policy addresses termination of training programs, and the Technical Assistance provides more details regarding DWD determinations of 'denied' and 'terminated':

DWD Determinations

Conditions for Denial

DWD reserves the right to deny a training provider, provider location, or program from the INTraining or ETPL. Reasons may include, but are not limited to:

1. Failure to submit a completed application
2. Failure to submit requested information
3. Failure to complete annual review
4. Failure to meet in-demand metrics[1]
5. Failure to meet performance metrics
6. Failure to attain or retain required state licensure, certification, accreditation, or authorization to operate from the appropriate state oversight agency

If the training provider location or program is denied and removed from the INTraining list for any of the above reasons, the training provider may re-apply once the issue has been resolved. If the training provider location is only denied from the ETPL for any of the above reasons, the provider or program application will automatically be re-evaluated as new information is received. A denial is not appealable.

If a training provider location or program is denied and removed from the ETPL while WIOA participants are enrolled and have already begun their training, the participants may complete the program unless the provider or program has lost state licensure, certification, accreditation, or authorization to operate from the appropriate state oversight agency. If the provider has lost its authority to operate, DWD will make every effort to find alternative, comparable training for the participant.

Conditions for Termination

DWD reserves the right to terminate a training provider, provider location, or program from the INTraining or ETPL. Reasons may include, but are not limited to:

1. Failing to complete student-level data reporting requirements
2. Intentionally supplying inaccurate information
3. Misrepresenting costs or services
4. Substantially violating WIOA statutes or regulations
5. Barred by the federal government from receiving federal funds

If the training provider location or program is terminated for any of these reasons, the provider must wait at least two (2) years before re-applying. The training provider is liable to repay all WIOA adult and dislocated worker training funds received during the period of non-compliance. A termination is appealable[2].

The new policy and companion TA guide address a new and multi-tiered appeal process available to training providers who wish to challenge a termination:

Review of Termination

Training providers may request a review by DWD for any provider location or program that has been terminated. A training provider may request up to three reviews by DWD: administrative review, appeal of administrative decision, and objection to the Department Review Committee's decision.

Administrative Review

The request for an administrative review of termination from INTraining or the ETPL **must** be submitted electronically **to** INTraining@dwd.in.gov **within 10 business days** of the date of notice of its termination. The request for review must include the following:

1. Name of training provider
2. Program location ID, if applicable
3. Justification for review
4. Any documentation to support the provider's justification

The DWD Associate Chief of Workforce Education and Training will select an Administrative Review Committee comprised of three DWD staff members who were not involved in the initial decision. This committee will conduct a review and send notice of its decision to the parties within thirty (30) business days of receiving the request for an administrative review.

Appeal of Administrative Review Decision

An appeal of the administrative review decision must be submitted electronically to INTraining@dwd.in.gov within 15 business days of the date of the Notice of Administrative Review decision. The request for an appeal of the administrative decision must include the following:

1. Name of training provider
2. Program location ID, if applicable
3. Copy of Administrative Review Decision
4. Justification for appeal
5. Any documentation to support the appeal's justification

A Department Review Committee, designated by the DWD Commissioner, that has not been involved in the initial or the Administrative Review decision and are not Workforce Division team members, shall facilitate the appeal process. The Department Review Committee will schedule an administrative hearing not more than 60 business days after DWD receives the written request for appeal[3]. All appeal hearings will be held *de novo*, and the Workforce Education and Training Department will bear the burden of proof. Indiana Rules of Trial Procedure will govern the administrative proceedings. The Department Review Committee will issue a decision within 90 business days of the completion of the hearing.

Objection of the Department Review Committee's Decision

Not more than 15 days after the issuance of a written decision by the Department Review Committee, any party adversely affected by the order may file an objection to the decision in writing to the DWD Commissioner and request that the Commissioner review the decision. The party must identify the basis of the objection with reasonable particularity. No later than 30 after the objection is filed with the Commissioner, the Commissioner shall issue a final decision affirming, modifying, or dissolving the Department Review Committee's decision. The Commissioner may remand the matter, with or without instructions, to the Department Review Committee for further proceedings. The Commissioner is the ultimate authority (as defined by IC 4-21.5-1-15) for DWD.

A party may contest the decision of the ultimate authority by filing a petition for judicial review consistent with the requirements of I.C. 4-21.5- 5 et seq.

[1] For information on a review request, please go to section Review of Regional Demand or Industry Recognized Certification.

[2] For more information on appeals, please go to section Review of Termination.

[3] Only appeal requests received by DWD within fifteen (15) business days of the date of notice of the Administrative Review Decision shall be scheduled for an administrative hearing. All other requests will be denied.

4. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL IMPLEMENT AND MONITOR THE PRIORITY FOR PUBLIC ASSISTANCE RECIPIENTS, OTHER LOW-INCOME INDIVIDUALS, AND INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE BASIC SKILLS DEFICIENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF WIOA SEC. 134(C)(3)(E), WHICH APPLIES TO INDIVIDUALIZED CAREER SERVICES AND TRAINING SERVICES FUNDED BY THE ADULT FORMULA PROGRAM

DWD will continue to review its WIOA Adult Priority of Service (POS) guidance to better align with the federal vision and the strategies outlined within this Plan. DWD published guidance on WIOA Adult Priority of Service in early 2020, and updated this guidance in early 2022. (See Policy 2019-04, Change 1 at https://www.in.gov/dwd/compliance-policy/policy/active/) Additionally, local areas must have written policies that delineate how they will give priority of service and must adhere to these policies. DWD will review data and local policies to ensure priority is being carried out appropriately and will provide technical assistance as needed. DWD is continuing to evaluate local level benchmarks and will review data and local policies to ensure priority is being carried out appropriately. Technical assistance will be provided as needed.

5. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S CRITERIA REGARDING LOCAL AREA TRANSFER OF FUNDS BETWEEN THE ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKER PROGRAMS

In its 2021 Formula Allocation Memo, DWD reaffirmed that it allows Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) to transfer up to 100% of the Adult and Dislocated Worker allocations, provided local entities seek approval as noted in current WIOA allocation memo available at https://www.in.gov/dwd/compliance-policy/policy/active/

C. WITH RESPECT TO YOUTH WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES AUTHORIZED IN SECTION 129 OF WIOA—

With respect to youth workforce investment activities authorized in section 129 of WIOA—

1. IDENTIFY THE STATE-DEVELOPED CRITERIA TO BE USED BY LOCAL BOARDS IN AWARDING GRANTS OR CONTRACTS FOR YOUTH WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES AND DESCRIBE HOW THE LOCAL BOARDS WILL TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION THE ABILITY OF THE PROVIDERS TO MEET PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES BASED ON PRIMARY INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE FOR THE YOUTH PROGRAM AS DESCRIBED IN SECTION 116(B)(2)(A)(II) OF WIOA IN AWARDING SUCH GRANTS OR CONTRACTS.[11]

[11] Sec. 102(b)(2)(D)(i)(V)

The Department of Workforce Development (DWD) and local Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) recognize and adhere to 20 CFR § 681.400 to allow grant recipients/fiscal agents the option to directly provide some, or all, of the required youth workforce investment activities. When not directly providing services, the WDB will award grants or contracts on a competitive basis to providers of youth workforce activities, while taking into consideration the ability of providers to meet performance accountability measures based on the primary indicators of performance for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Youth program, as described in the WIOA Section 116(b)(2)(A)(ii). The Local WDB must also conduct oversight with respect to such providers.

DWD intends to issue refresher guidance in 2022 regarding Service Provider procurement, to be inclusive of the procurement of eligible youth providers; this guidance will reiterate the state-developed criteria for local boards to award grants for youth activities that are not directly provided by the grant recipient/fiscal agent. Among the state-developed criteria for local boards to consider are the following:

- Ability to deliver services to the targeted population in accordance with locally established guidelines;
- Experience in working with youth in similar programs and activities;
- Past and current collaboration with other service providers;
- Past performance record, including both programmatic and fiscal integrity;
- Understanding of and commitment to meeting goals and objectives; and
- Demonstration of understanding of and commitment to continuous improvement methods.

As local boards make decisions about youth provider procurement and to award contracts and grants to providers, they must also:

- Identify youth service providers based on criteria established in the State Plan;
- Take into consideration the ability of the provider to meet performance accountability measures;
- Award such grants or contracts on a competitive basis and in accordance with the Procurement Stands found at Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR parts 200 and 2900; and
- If the service provider (entity) selected fulfills another role in the local area, the LWDB must comply with applicable conflict of interest, separation of duties, and firewalls requirements in relation to WIOA's single entity/multiple role parameters.

DWD's procurement guidance will require local boards to identify eligible providers of youth workforce investment activities in the local area by awarding grants or contracts on a competitive basis, based on the recommendation of the youth standing committee, if the local board chooses to establish a standing youth committee under 20 CFR Section 681.100; if no such youth committee exists, the local board then must assign a committee that function. Where the local board elects to award contracts but determines there is an insufficient number of eligible providers of youth workforce investment activities in the local area, (such as a rural area), the local board may award grants or contracts on a sole source basis. The WDB committee must take into consideration the ability of providers to meet performance

accountability measures based on the primary indicators of performance for the WIOA Youth program.

Procurement of youth service providers must be in accordance with the Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR Parts 200 and 2900, in addition to applicable state and local procurement laws. Grantees and sub grantees must establish, maintain, and follow written procurement standards and procedures that are in compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

Currently, local areas are able to set their own parameters for procurement of youth services, thus not all areas describe or request specific performance plans related to primary performance indicators in their Request for Proposal. However, some local areas list metrics of success to ensure providers meet or exceed goals, including pay for performance goals. Awards are then made to organizations possessing the demonstrated ability to perform.

- As determined by USDOL and DWD, performance goals include:
- Placement in employment, education or training;
- Employment, education or training retention;
- Median earnings;
- Credential rate;
- Attainment of degree or certificate; or
- Measurable skills gains
- Valid satisfactory record of past performance in delivering the proposed or similar services, including demonstrated quality of services and successful outcome rates from past programs (including non-WIA/WIOA programming)
- Ability to provide services that can lead to the achievement of competency standards for customers with identified barriers or deficiencies.

For youth service provision, performance analysis will continue to focus on performance of required WIOA youth service performance and performance as outlined in JAG services. Guidance related to youth service provision procurement will adhere to 20 CFR 681.400.

2. DESCRIBE THE STRATEGIES THE STATE WILL USE TO ACHIEVE IMPROVED OUTCOMES FOR OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH AS DESCRIBED IN 129(A)(1)(B), INCLUDING HOW IT WILL LEVERAGE AND ALIGN THE CORE PROGRAMS, ANY COMBINED STATE PLAN PARTNER PROGRAMS INCLUDED IN THIS PLAN, REQUIRED AND OPTIONAL ONE-STOP PARTNER PROGRAMS, AND ANY OTHER RESOURCES AVAILABLE.

The purpose of WIOA youth services is to assist youth, (ages 14-21 if in-school youth; ages 16-24 if out-of-school youth), who face significant barriers to education and/or employment by providing resources and support to overcome those barriers and successfully transition to self-sufficient adulthood. This is accomplished by first assessing a participant's skills, interests, needs and goals, creating customized service plans in collaboration with the participant, and expanding the participant's connection to educational opportunities, the local economy, and community services. All youth metrics are linked together, there are no specific metrics for out-

of-school youth. All the strategies below are designed to increase participation of and outcome achievement of Indiana's out-of-school youth population.

For out-of-school youth, WIOA services can be the primary connection point for these individuals with both the workforce development and social services systems. By leveraging WIOA Youth services for these Hoosiers, they can attain success in gaining access to occupational opportunities within the local economy. In addition to the local approaches and partnerships described below as part of the 14 Youth Program Elements, DWD has adopted a number of high-level, statewide strategies to engage out-of-school youth and to improve their outcomes.

Aligning Resources. In 2021, DWD issued DWD Policy 2021-08, Co-enrollment and Common Exit. The state is emphasizing co-enrollment as a strategy across all partner programs in the State Plan. DWD is strongly encouraging broader co-enrollment of all participants, including out-of-school youth, in partner programming and other supportive services. Indiana's strategic co-enrollment approach facilitates service delivery alignment and encourages the braiding of resources to address the training and employment needs of job seekers and business customers at the local level. This resource alignment will improve outcomes and can, through a more efficient service-delivery approach, lead to more participants being served.

Emphasizing Work-based Learning and Learn-as-you-Earn Models. Indiana's Office of Work-based Learning and Apprenticeship (OWBLA), located within DWD, coordinates efforts to expand opportunities for registered apprenticeships and to develop flexible and scalable programs that focus on Indiana's key economic sectors. Registered apprenticeships, State Earn and Learn (SEAL) programs, Adult Education with OJT, and other opportunities provide great benefits to out-of-school youth, and OWBLA is working to expand these offerings around the state and across a variety of settings. OWBLA will continue to assess how to more effectively bridge these programs, including cross-program training of frontline staff and developing and implementing innovative approaches to help connect OSY and work-based learning opportunities.

In addition to these broad state efforts, DWD takes an approach emphasizing local partnerships built around the 14 Youth Program Elements. Some examples are described below.

1. Tutoring, study skills training, and dropout prevention strategies:

- Local programs may utilize their own strategies for individual tutoring or study skills training as appropriate and necessary. For example, Indiana's Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology operates the AskRose a homework help hotline for students statewide, a resource which is publicized and may be utilized by local areas.
- Additionally, Indiana's Adult Education system serves as the catalyst for academic remediation services and or preparation for the high school equivalency test for most of Indiana's out-of-school youth population.

2. Alternative secondary school services, or dropout recovery services as appropriate:

- Indiana utilizes the Jobs for America's Graduates out-of-school program model in one, high poverty local area to provide dropout recovery services; this program works in conjunction with Adult Education to combine employability skills curriculum and academic remediation to assist youth in achieving their academic and career goals.
- Additionally, as previously noted, all local areas partner with their adult education providers, operated by the Department of Workforce Development for dropout

recovery/ high school equivalency classes for youth participants. In local areas where other adult education providers exist, such as Goodwill's Excel Center (a re-engagement center), youth are enrolled, as appropriate.

3. Paid and unpaid work experiences, including summer employment and other opportunities throughout the year, pre-apprenticeship programs, internships and job shadowing, and on-the-job training opportunities:

- Indiana's local areas offer numerous work experiences (including summer employment, job shadowing, internships, and on-the-job training) at local employers for out-of-school youth. These work experiences range in length, but are typically short-term and can last up to twelve weeks. Many work experiences include a "boot camp" or employability skills training prior to the start, as well as milestone trainings regarding the jobsite, industry, or individual's onsite performance. All work experiences include some form of academic and occupational education aligned with their placement and/or career pathway.
- As a promising practice, many local areas also provide training to employers and supervisors before and during the onsite work experience. Topics range from understanding youth culture, youth barriers, and activities designed to import strategies to make the experience successful for both parties.

4. Occupational skills training:

- Indiana offers multiple access points for out-of-school youth participants to seek occupational skills training that will result in an industry-recognized credential. These could include a specific training program selected by the youth based on their career interest and aptitude results and/or the state's sponsored short-term, in-demand industry training occupations accessed through Next Level Jobs.
- Additionally, the state also includes apprenticeship programs, JobCorps, and YouthBuild in this program element.

5. Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities:

- Local areas offer this program element, as appropriate, for youth who are enrolled in a postsecondary education opportunity (including those in credential programs) and may need a short-term work experience or employability skills training, such as those found in the Jobs for America's Graduates program models. This also includes local "boot-camp" programs offered prior to short-term work experience, on-the job training, internships, or Adult Education's Integrated Education and Training (IET) program.
- The JAG program, including the out-of-school youth model, specifically identifies 37 core employability skills to align with workforce preparation activities.

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

- Local areas offer this program element, as appropriate, through local partnerships with colleges and other leadership training programs or providers. Some such examples include the Boys and Girls Club, Junior Achievement, Shafer Leadership Academy, the Indiana National Guard, and more.

7. Supportive Services:

- Local areas offer this program element, as appropriate, to assist OSY meet goals developed through the objective assessment, through the following examples of assistance:
    - Clothing assistance (potentially used for interviews, work experience, job placement, etc.) which could be in the form of a gift card to purchase work appropriate clothing or through a local partnership with a community based organization such as Dress for Success,
    - Transportation assistance (potentially used to participate in work experience, interviews, education or job placement, etc.), which could be in the form of gift cards for gas or through a local partnership with a community based ride-share/transportation provider,
    - Child and dependent care assistance (WIOA sponsored providers should be connected to CCDF or On-My-Way, when feasible based on available community supports),
    - Referrals to medical services such as drug/alcohol counseling services when needed; typically created at the local level,
    - Assistance with training materials such as books and equipment, which could be in the form of direct support to a bookstore or community college bursars office, and
    - Incentives for completion of participant goals.

8. Adult mentoring:

- Local areas offer this program element, as appropriate, through connections with partner organizations like the Boys and Girls Club, Starfish Initiative, local postsecondary college and university students, or other organizations that specialize in mentoring teens and young adults. DWD works at a statewide level with the Indiana Youth Institute to connect local WDB's with high-quality mentor programs in their area; additional use of IYI's mentoring resources in the form of professional development and program creation are utilized when needed/available.

9. Comprehensive guidance and counseling:

- Often, this program element is provided by the on-site youth case manager, especially for career and education counseling.
- However, if a youth, including an out-of-school youth, has a specific need for specialized counseling, local areas refer participants to drug and alcohol treatment facilities, mental health counselors and other organizations when appropriate.
- DWD works in collaboration with the Department of Mental Health and Addiction's youth focused team to provide training and share resources when available/appropriate for the out-of-school youth population.

10. Financial literacy education:

    a. Local areas have developed partnerships with individual financial institutions and local banks to provide financial literacy training to participants, including out-of-school youth. These include, but are not limited to, InvestEd, Regions Bank, Old National Bank, PNC Bank, and more.

    b. Local areas also utilize online curriculum and tools to provide digital financial literacy education; examples include materials through EverFi, Allison.com, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau and FDIC Youth Guide to Financial Literacy.

11. Entrepreneurial skills training:

    a. Local areas have established partnerships with their Small Business Administrations, Small Business Development Centers, state and local Chambers of Commerce, Ivy Tech's Cook Center for Entrepreneurship, and Junior Achievement as sources of curriculum, guest speakers, and mentors to youth participants, including out-of-school youth.

    b. Several local service providers have developed curriculum for this program element that focuses on the awareness and understanding of entrepreneurship and the steps to create a detailed business plan.

12. Services that provide labor market and employment information:

    a. Indiana operates a statewide career interest and work values website, Indiana Career Explorer, which provides all youth, including out-of-school youth, participants access to labor market information related to career pathways and Indiana specific in-demand occupations that align with their interests.

    b. Local areas have the ability to provide additional information and resources for this program element as appropriate.

13. Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to post-secondary education and training:

- Local areas employ numerous tactics that are regionally specific. They include, but are not limited to, college fairs and visits, Financial Aid application nights, or college bridge programs.

- Statewide partnerships with organizations such as the Commission for Higher Education and InvestEd help inform youth, their case managers, parents and mentors understand and navigate the financial aid and state scholarship application processes (such as 21st Century Scholars and Frank O'Bannon Scholarship).

- The Indianapolis-based YES (Youth Employability Skills) program is a statewide promising practice designed to recruit out-of-school youth through open hours at the Boys and Girls Club; youth are then matched with a REF (re-employment facilitator) to assess career interests, academic and employment goals, and then process through a mind-setting boot camp, with goals focused on student attainment of their high school equivalency diploma and/or entrance into training or employment.

14. Follow-up services for not less than 12 months after the completion of participation:

- Indiana requires follow-up services for all participants to occur at least once every 90 days after exit. In addition, Jobs for America's Graduates participants are contacted, at minimum once a month after exit, with student-specific goals to track the follow-up contact and services provided during the contact.

  The types and duration of services provided may vary based on the needs of the individual, but may include leadership development and supportive services; regular contact with a youth's employer including assistance in addressing work-related problems; assistance in securing better paying jobs, career pathway development and further education or training; work-related peer support groups; adult mentoring; or services necessary to ensure success in post-secondary training.

  The state's major focus for recruiting out-of-school youth and assisting them in achieving their goals is a partnership with Title II Adult Education programs. In the past two years, youth between the ages of 16-24 make up nearly 35% of the state's Adult Education enrollments, nearly all are drop-out students working on achieving their high school equivalency diploma. This partnership increases participation (enrollment and attendance) in both programs, as well as assisting in educating the out-of-school youth for preparation in career pathways and bridge short-term training programs with direct linkages to post-training employment.

  Joint statewide Youth and Adult Education Director meetings have been ongoing since 2014, as well as a focus for WorkOne youth providers to serve as members of regional Adult Education consortium meetings. At the state level, an ongoing partnership between department leadership has continued since 2014, where staff meet jointly on a bi-monthly basis or as needed, participate in monthly and annual training events, including the monthly Adult Education webinars, and annual Young Adult Services Summit, which provides professional development opportunities for out-of-school youth case managers. Local WorkOne staff participate in Adult Education program participant onboarding or welcome meetings and vice a versa to ensure all participants are aware of the array of services available to them in both programs. Adult Education partners serve on local standing youth committees and the statewide Youth Committee under the Governor's Workforce Cabinet.

  In addition to partnership with Title II Adult Education programs, recruiting and referral to Vocational Rehabilitation has been a statewide focus since the implementation of WIOA. This partnership allows out-of-school youth with significant barriers to employment to access funding for both intensive and basic services to assist them in their pursuits. Joint statewide training, local staff meetings, and specific referral forms/personal hand-offs are just some of the strategies VR and the statewide WorkOne system have implemented to ensure out-of-school youth participant access to programming. VR partners serve on local youth standing committees and on the statewide Youth Committee under the Governor's Workforce Cabinet.

Additional partnerships with the statewide community college system, foster care system and their service providers, Commission for Higher Education, Division of Mental Health and Addiction, Department of Child Services, Department of Education, and Department of Correction assist in helping local areas recruit potentially eligible out-of-school youth or provide them access to education or training funding and resources to assist them in completing goals

related to education, training, and employment. State leadership serve on a variety of cross-agency committees and taskforces focused on bridging the gaps between agency programs designed to serve the state's most vulnerable youth populations, including youth in foster care, juvenile offenders, homeless youth, those with mental health issues, and/or economically disadvantaged.

3. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL ENSURE THAT ALL 14 PROGRAM ELEMENTS DESCRIBED IN WIOA SECTION 129(C)(2) ARE MADE AVAILABLE AND EFFECTIVELY IMPLEMENTED, INCLUDING QUALITY PRE-APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS UNDER THE WORK EXPERIENCE PROGRAM ELEMENT. [12]

[12] Sec. 102(b)(2)(D)(i)(I)

In 2015, Indiana issued an interim WIOA Youth Manual, which was subsequently finalized in 2016 and has been updated every year since implementation. The purpose of this manual is to provide consistent guidance, strategies, promising practices, and documents that can be used by local areas to implement WIOA youth services, both in- and out-of-school. The document includes many of the same strategies included in response to Question (c)(2) above, but also details the process staff should use to recruit, determine eligibility, conduct an objective assessment, and maintain case files for each youth enrollment. Additionally, the DWD has issued policy (DWD Policy 2017-03, DWD Policy 2017-10 and DWD Policy 2018-01, Change 1 found at: https://www.in.gov/dwd/compliance-policy/policy/active/) surrounding requirements and effective practices for WIOA youth in the following areas:

Additionally, the DWD has issued policy surrounding requirements and effective practices for WIOA youth in the following areas:

- Eligibility Determinations, complete with definitions
- Work Experience program element, complete with definitions, guidance on fund expenditures and working with employer partners;
- 14 Youth Program Elements, complete with definitions, requirements and prohibitions; an updated version of this policy was issued in October 2021 to provide clarification on the provision of electronic devices as WIOA Youth Program supportive services and/or as an incentive.

The JAG National model, used as the primary vehicle to serve in-school youth, has multiple guidance and requirement handbooks which are guideposts for Indiana's implementation of this program, many of which were updated in 2021 in collaboration with JAG Indiana leadership serving on numerous workgroups to review and revise national standard operating procedures. .

All the above guidance and policy documents assist local areas to define and meet expectations of both youth constituents and requirements to ensure the effective implementation of the 14 program elements. In addition to written guidance, DWD hosts multiple annual professional development events for both in- and out-of-school case managers and administrators to utilize current promising practices and introduce beneficial partnerships to ensure the effective implementation of the 14 program elements.

DWD's Compliance Team conducts annual WIOA reviews in all 12 of our local areas. These reviews include interviews with the LWDA's youth service provider leadership and asks about how each of the 14 program elements are provided; responses are captured through the Program Review Interview Tool. The Compliance team also spends time interviewing sampled

case managers and conducts a file review of WIOA Youth cases to determine accuracy of reporting and adherence to policy requirements for the 14 program elements.

4. PROVIDE THE LANGUAGE CONTAINED IN THE STATE POLICY FOR "REQUIRING ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE TO ENTER OR COMPLETE AN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM, OR TO SECURE AND HOLD EMPLOYMENT" CRITERION FOR OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH SPECIFIED IN WIOA SECTION 129(A)(1)(B)(III)(VIII) AND FOR "REQUIRING ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE TO COMPLETE AN EDUCATION PROGRAM, OR TO SECURE AND HOLD EMPLOYMENT" CRITERION FOR IN-SCHOOL YOUTH SPECIFIED IN WIOA SECTION 129(A)(1)(C)(IV)(VII). IF THE STATE DOES NOT HAVE A POLICY, DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL ENSURE THAT LOCAL AREAS WILL HAVE A POLICY FOR THESE CRITERIA.

The state does not have a policy with specific language for "requires additional assistance to enter or complete an education program, or to secure and hold employment" for in- or out-of-school youth. WIOA allows states and/or local areas to define the requiring additional assistance criterion that is part of the Out-of-School Youth and In-School Youth eligibility. It clarifies that if this criterion is not defined at the state level and a local area uses this criterion in their Out-of-School Youth or In-School Youth eligibility, the local area must define this criterion in their local plan. Additionally, DWD and GWC will be issuing Local Planning guidance, which will include assurance from each local area (either within Local Plans or local policy) that these criteria are addressed. Review of local plans and regular monitoring and oversight of policies and procedures will also support compliance with this element.

Some examples of local definitions are below:

Region 5 Examples:

- A youth who has been or is currently underemployed (part-time and/or minimum wage), has been denied employment, and/or unable to obtain employment within six weeks and/or is unable to complete the ICC application;
- Any youth enrolled in an educational program (including alternative schooling) demonstrating a need for one of the fourteen youth services;
- A youth who is at-risk. At-risk is defined by the local school system and/or is a youth who has been suspended or expelled from school. At-risk youth is further defined as living in a household where a parent has a criminal record, or no high school education, or no established paternity for out of wedlock children;A youth who has an Individual Education Plan (school issued IEP) that identifies WIOA Youth Services as appropriate;
- A youth involved with the juvenile justice system in which either of the following has been filed: a petition alleging that the child is a Child in Need of Services, a petition alleging that a delinquent act has been committed, or a petition alleging that a status offense violation has occurred;
- A youth who is a victim of sexual misconduct;
- A youth who is in a household where the custodial parent is not receiving regular child support;
- A youth with a disability including ADD, ADHD, Learning Disability and/or other diagnosed or identified mental, emotional, behavioral, hidden or physical disability;
- A youth who is a single parent.

Region 7 Examples:

- Limited or no work experience;
- One or more parents have been incarcerated in the last twelve months;
- One or more parents dropped out of school;
- Mother or father is not employed;
- No one in the household is currently employed;
- Lacks transportation to and from work or school; or
- Lacks marketable skills that are in demand in the local labor market.

Region 9 Examples:

- Has poor attendance patterns in an educational program during the last 12 calendar months;
- Has been expelled from school within the last 12 calendar months;
- Has been suspended from school at least once within the last 12 calendar months;
- Has below average grades; or a GPA at or below 2.5;
- A member of a household with a parent/guardian that has a criminal record;
- Living in a household where a parent has no High School Diploma or its equivalent;
- Has poor work history, to include no work history, or has been fired from a job in the last 6 calendar months;
- Has dropped out of a postsecondary educational program during the past 12 calendar months; or
- Not receiving regular child support-youth resides in a household where the non-custodial parent has not paid child support on a timely basis as established by the support holder.

5. INCLUDE THE STATE DEFINITION, AS DEFINED IN LAW, FOR NOT ATTENDING SCHOOL AND ATTENDING SCHOOL AS SPECIFIED IN WIOA SECTION 129(A)(1)(B)(I) AND SECTION 129(A)(1)(C)(I). IF STATE LAW DOES NOT DEFINE "NOT ATTENDING SCHOOL" OR "ATTENDING SCHOOL," INDICATE THAT IS THE CASE AND PROVIDE THE STATE POLICY FOR DETERMINING WHETHER A YOUTH IS ATTENDING OR NOT ATTENDING SCHOOL.

Per DWD's Youth Eligibility Policy issued in 2017, the following definition of Compulsory School Attendance/Not Attending School is: Under the WIOA Youth eligibility requirements, the term "school" refers to both secondary and postsecondary school (credit-bearing courses only). Therefore, an individual attending either secondary or postsecondary is considered ISY.

WIOA added an additional provision for determining eligibility for an out-of-school youth (aged 16-24). This criterion is listed as "a youth who is within the age of compulsory school attendance, but has not attended school for at least the most recent complete school year calendar quarter. School year calendar quarter is based on how a local school district defines its school year quarters." Indiana's definition of Compulsory School Age per Indiana Code 20-33-2-6, includes all youth who, beginning of the fall school term for the school year in which the

student becomes seven years of age (we are currently monitoring a new Senate bill that would change the age to 5), until the date on which the student:

1. Graduates;
2. Becomes eighteen (18) years of age; or
3. Becomes sixteen (16) years of age but is less than eighteen (18) years of age and the requirements under section 9 concerning an exit interview are met enabling the student to withdraw from school before graduation.

Indiana has also defined its academic school year as "for each school year, a school corporation shall conduct at least one hundred eighty (180) student instructional days," per Indiana Code, 20-30-2-3. While there may be extenuating circumstances that a school district may request a waiver of these 180 days, which could include weather-related cancellations, the Indiana Department of Workforce Development would consider 180 student instructional days as the "school year."

For the purposes of out-of-school youth eligibility calculations, a "school calendar quarter" would be defined as 45 student instructional days. Weekends, holidays, or cancelled days in which school was closed would not count towards the 45 student instructional days. Some school corporations may define these 45 days as a "semester," but calculations for accuracy of total instructional days should still be verified by the case manager at the time of application and enrollment.

6. IF USING THE BASIC SKILLS DEFICIENT DEFINITION CONTAINED IN WIOA SECTION 3(5)(B), INCLUDE THE STATE DEFINITION WHICH MUST FURTHER DEFINE HOW TO DETERMINE IF AN INDIVIDUAL IS UNABLE TO COMPUTE OR SOLVE PROBLEMS, OR READ, WRITE, OR SPEAK ENGLISH, AT A LEVEL NECESSARY TO FUNCTION ON THE JOB, IN THE INDIVIDUAL'S FAMILY, OR IN SOCIETY. IF NOT USING THE PORTION OF THE DEFINITION CONTAINED IN WIOA SECTION 3(5)(B), INDICATE THAT IS THE CASE.

Per DWD's 2017 issued Youth Eligibility Policy, the State's definition is as follows:

The term "basic skills deficient" means, with respect to an individual:

- Have English reading, writing, or computing skills at or below the 8.9 grade level on a generally accepted standardized test; or
- Are unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society. This is defined as:
    - Lacks a high school diploma or equivalency and is not enrolled in secondary education;
    - Scores 8.9 or below on the Test for Adult Basic Education (TABE);
    - Is enrolled in Title II adult education (including enrolled for ESL);
    - Has poor English language skills (and would be appropriate for ESL even if the individual isn't enrolled at the time of WIOA entry into participation);
    - The case manager makes detailed observations of deficient functioning and records those detailed observations as justification in a case note.

For in-school only:

- Behind in credits to graduate on time with peer cohort;
- GPA 2.0 or below; or
- Have attempted and not completed any of the Postsecondary-Readiness Competencies of Indiana's Graduation Pathways.

In September 2019, DWD issued technical guidance related to the TABE, which has been utilized to determine basic skills deficiency for out-of-school youth. The latest version of the test proved to be too long and it was reported youth were overwhelmed and then disengaged with the program enrollment process. Below is the guidance issued to local staff:

"Regarding the question as to whether or not the TABE is a requirement to determine WIOA Title I Out-of-School Youth (OSY) eligibility, the answer is no, it is not a requirement for determining OSY eligibility. The TABE must be used if ascertaining a Measurable Skills Gain (MSG) through determination of Educational Functioning Level (EFL)."

Further, Adult Basic Education has different descriptors for literacy/English language arts and mathematics and six levels in each area. Literacy/English language arts levels have a description of basic reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language skills that can be expected from a person functioning at that level. The descriptors for the six ESL levels describe listening and speaking, reading and writing and functional and workplace skills that can be expected from a person functioning at that level. The descriptors do not provide a complete or comprehensive delineation of all of the skills at any given level but provide examples of the most critical concepts and skills for the level.

Adult Basic Education (ABE Levels 1-4) is a "program of academic instruction and education services below the secondary level (8th grade or less) that increase an individual's ability to read, write, and speak in English and perform mathematics necessary to attain a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, transition to postsecondary education or training, and obtain employment." **Adult Secondary Education** is considered grades 9-12 and are ABE Levels 5-6.

The ESL/English Language Acquisition Program (Levels 1-6) "consists of instruction designed to help eligible individuals who are English language learners (ELLs) to achieve competence in reading, writing, speaking, and comprehension of the English language, and that leads to attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent and transition to postsecondary education and training or employment."

More information can be found at https://nrsweb.org/sites/default/files/NRS-TA-Aug2019-508.pdf.

In addition to standardized assessments, staff may also use alternative measures to determine whether an individual meets the definition (especially around the ability to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society), including, but not limited to:

- Alternative evaluations (participation in try-out employment or work experience).
- Observation of individual while participating in program activities.
- Conversation with individual or his/her family, educators, and/or service providers.
- Review of work history with demonstrated deficiency in identified areas.

When using alternative measures such as those listed above, staff should document the individual's inability to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society, by citing specific examples of how it was determined that the person has such deficiency.

D. SINGLE-AREA STATE REQUIREMENTS

In States where there is only one local workforce investment area, the governor serves as both the State and local chief elected official. In such cases, the State must submit any information required in the local plan (WIOA section 106(d)(2)). States with a single workforce area must include—

1. ANY COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD THAT REPRESENT DISAGREEMENT WITH THE PLAN. (WIOA SECTION 108(D)(3).)

2. THE ENTITY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DISBURSAL OF GRANT FUNDS, AS DETERMINED BY THE GOVERNOR, IF DIFFERENT FROM THAT FOR THE STATE. (WIOA SECTION 108(B)(15).)

3. A DESCRIPTION OF THE TYPE AND AVAILABILITY OF WIOA TITLE I YOUTH ACTIVITIES AND SUCCESSFUL MODELS, INCLUDING FOR YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES. (WIOA SECTION 108(B)(9).)

N/A

4. A DESCRIPTION OF THE ROLES AND RESOURCE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE ONE-STOP PARTNERS.

N/A

5. THE COMPETITIVE PROCESS USED TO AWARD THE SUBGRANTS AND CONTRACTS FOR TITLE I ACTIVITIES.

N/A

6. HOW TRAINING SERVICES OUTLINED IN SECTION 134 WILL BE PROVIDED THROUGH INDIVIDUAL TRAINING ACCOUNTS AND/OR THROUGH CONTRACTS, AND HOW SUCH TRAINING APPROACHES WILL BE COORDINATED. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL MEET INFORMED CUSTOMER CHOICE REQUIREMENTS REGARDLESS OF TRAINING APPROACH.

N/A

7. HOW THE STATE BOARD, IN FULFILLING LOCAL BOARD FUNCTIONS, WILL COORDINATE TITLE I ACTIVITIES WITH THOSE ACTIVITIES UNDER TITLE II. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE BOARD WILL CARRY OUT THE REVIEW OF LOCAL APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED UNDER TITLE II CONSISTENT WITH WIOA SECS. 107(D)(11)(A) AND (B)(I) AND WIOA SEC. 232.

N/A

8. COPIES OF EXECUTED COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WHICH DEFINE HOW ALL LOCAL SERVICE PROVIDERS WILL CARRY OUT THE REQUIREMENTS FOR INTEGRATION OF AND ACCESS TO THE ENTIRE SET OF SERVICES AVAILABLE IN THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM, INCLUDING COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH ENTITIES ADMINISTERING REHABILITATION ACT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES.

N/A

E. WAIVER REQUESTS (OPTIONAL)

States wanting to request waivers as part of their title I-B Operational Plan must include a waiver plan that includes the following information for each waiver requested:

1. IDENTIFIES THE STATUTORY OR REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS FOR WHICH A WAIVER IS REQUESTED AND THE GOALS THAT THE STATE OR LOCAL AREA, AS APPROPRIATE, INTENDS TO ACHIEVE AS A RESULT OF THE WAIVER AND HOW THOSE GOALS RELATE TO THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN;

2. DESCRIBES THE ACTIONS THAT THE STATE OR LOCAL AREA, AS APPROPRIATE, HAS UNDERTAKEN TO REMOVE STATE OR LOCAL STATUTORY OR REGULATORY BARRIERS;

3. DESCRIBES THE GOALS OF THE WAIVER AND THE EXPECTED PROGRAMMATIC OUTCOMES IF THE REQUEST IS GRANTED;

4. DESCRIBES HOW THE WAIVER WILL ALIGN WITH THE DEPARTMENT'S POLICY PRIORITIES, SUCH AS:

A. SUPPORTING EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT;

B. CONNECTING EDUCATION AND TRAINING STRATEGIES;

C. SUPPORTING WORK-BASED LEARNING;

D. IMPROVING JOB AND CAREER RESULTS, AND

E. OTHER GUIDANCE ISSUED BY THE DEPARTMENT.

5. DESCRIBES THE INDIVIDUALS AFFECTED BY THE WAIVER, INCLUDING HOW THE WAIVER WILL IMPACT SERVICES FOR DISADVANTAGED POPULATIONS OR INDIVIDUALS WITH MULTIPLE BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT; AND

6. DESCRIBES THE PROCESSES USED TO:

A. MONITOR THE PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING THE WAIVER;

B. PROVIDE NOTICE TO ANY LOCAL BOARD AFFECTED BY THE WAIVER;

C. PROVIDE ANY LOCAL BOARD AFFECTED BY THE WAIVER AN OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT ON THE REQUEST;

D. ENSURE MEANINGFUL PUBLIC COMMENT, INCLUDING COMMENT BY BUSINESS AND ORGANIZED LABOR, ON THE WAIVER.

E. COLLECT AND REPORT INFORMATION ABOUT WAIVER OUTCOMES IN THE STATE'S WIOA ANNUAL REPORT.

7. THE SECRETARY MAY REQUIRE THAT STATES PROVIDE THE MOST RECENT DATA AVAILABLE ABOUT THE OUTCOMES OF THE EXISTING WAIVER IN CASES WHERE THE STATE SEEKS RENEWAL OF A PREVIOUSLY APPROVED WAIVER.

WAIVER REQUEST 1 STATE OF INDIANA*

UPDATE: US DOL ETA approved this waiver request but required the addition of unique Adult Education and Vocational Rehabilitation representatives, with voting privileges, on the GWC. Announced on August 2, 2022, Governor Holcomb has appointed the following to fulfill this requirement:

Marilyn Pitzulo, Indiana DWD, Associate Chief of Strategy/Design (Adult Education)

Theresa Koleszar, Indiana FSSA, Director of the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (VR)

Waiver of State Workforce Board Membership

Governor Holcomb's administration has made workforce development a signature pillar of his administration and is committed to ensuring that Hoosiers have the skills and training needed for success in a 21st century economy. State leaders also continues to make significant and crucial investments in our economic climate and Indiana has positioned itself as one of the premier states in America in which to start and grow businesses.

Indiana established the Governor's Workforce Cabinet in 2018 to spearhead these efforts, seeking to align the state's strategies across, education, workforce, economic development, social services, and other areas. The Cabinet became the state workforce board in 2018 through USDOL waiver approval and the waiver was renewed in 2020. The waiver structure facilitated Indiana's first Combined WIOA plan in 2020 and has helped bolster a wide variety of state strategies outlined throughout the waiver. This request seeks to renew the waiver for PY22 and PY23.

Moving from a 46-member state workforce board to a 31-member Cabinet reporting directly to the Governor has ensured and will continue to ensure collaboration across state agencies. The Cabinet has the ability to continue to drive strong collaboration among local governments, local workforce boards, various state agencies, and employers all across Indiana. The Cabinet's structure also allows it to be nimble and actionable to challenges that arise in addressing needs brought forward by various stakeholders key to the state's workforce and education efforts.

A core component of the State's vision for workforce development recognizes that a true workforce strategy responsive to employer needs must align education from pre-k through postsecondary with traditional workforce programs and social services. To that end, Indiana includes as a part of the GWC representatives from all levels of education with policy-making authority in their respective organizations, to ensure that the input, concerns and needs raised by the diverse employer community represented on the Cabinet translate to development and implementation of scalable training programs responsive to those needs.

As Indiana's economy emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic, the Cabinet will continue to be a central part of the state's workforce strategies. This includes continuing to work across all partner programs on executing the strategies in the State Plan. Indiana is currently seeing record low unemployment, but challenges remain in getting more Hoosiers into the labor force and moving more people into meaningful training and high-wage jobs. The Cabinet will continue to strive for continuous improvement to our traditional workforce development programs and alignment of those programs with resources and strategies that assist in cross-agency communication. Collaboration with agency leadership spurred through the Cabinet is creating better connected services and innovative new ways to deliver services focused on the best experience for the people served not the system outcome.

1. Statutory and/or Regulatory Requirements the State would like to Waive:

State Workforce Development Board (SWDB) Membership and Establishment

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requirement for SWDB membership WIOA Sec. 101(b)(1) and (c) and the corresponding regulations at 20 CFR 679.110(b)-(c):

requirement to appoint specific members to the board described in this CFR section. The membership of the current Governor's Workforce Cabinet (Cabinet) and additional supplementary information about Cabinet membership may be found at the end of the waiver request in the appendix section. The appendix includes a roster with current membership, category represented, and vacancies. The State of Indiana asks that the waiver for the membership of the Cabinet be granted for a two-year period, PY 22 and PY 23.

2. Actions the State has undertaken to remove State or local barriers:

There are no state or local statutory or regulatory barriers to implementing the proposed waiver**.**

The Indiana General Assembly passed and Governor Holcomb signed Senate Enrolled Act 50 in 2018, Indiana Code 4-3-27. The bill created the Governor's Workforce Cabinet to comply with the federal requirements for a state workforce development board under WIOA.

3 and 4. State strategic goal(s) and Department of Labor priorities supported by the waiver:

The goal of continued waiver flexibility in the membership requirements of the SWDB under WIOA Sec. 101(b)(1) and (c) is to maintain a smaller, more nimble board in favor of efficiency and consensus-building, as well as keeping the priorly authorized membership flexibility to tap optimum policy-making authority across the entirety of Indiana's workforce development system (birth through adulthood), especially through the appointment of state leaders' who oversee or influence core and ancillary programs that co-enroll target populations, affect seamless program-to-program handoffs, share data, sometimes co-locate, and cross-train each other or local partners, e.g., WDBs, K-12 stakeholders, and employers.

An example of how Indiana has used its waiver flexibility to advance core state goals includes the inclusion of the Chancellor of Ivy Tech Community College, the nation's largest individually-accredited public community college system, and the President of Vincennes University, Indiana's multiple-campus, two-year university, to serve on the Cabinet. Their optimum-policy authority empowers state agencies, employers, stakeholders, and target populations to leverage state and federal resources to maximum effect for short-term certificates and credentials.

The vision of WIOA outlined in TEGL 19-14 highlights the importance of state workforce boards working in partnership with workforce, economic development, education, and social service organizations at the state level to ensure all jobseekers and businesses can access pathways to prosperity. Waiver flexibility has helped support Indiana in realizing this vision and ongoing flexibility will continue to assist the state in meeting several strategic goals in line with Department of Labor priorities.

State Strategic Goal #1: Setting a single vision for workforce policy.

The objective of the original and approved waiver was to enable the collaborative development, refinement, and implementation of a single state vision for workforce policy. During the first waiver period, the Cabinet shifted to the Governor's Office and became chaired by the state's Commissioner for Higher Education, a nationally-recognized state higher education executive officer. The Commissioner led the Cabinet throughout the second waiver period but stepped down this spring from both roles. The Governor has recently named a new chair since the submission of the original waiver request at the end of March. The new chair brings with him a variety of experiences in both the public and private sector critical to the Cabinet's ongoing mission. Continued membership flexibility is facilitating this process as well as ensuring continuity of the Cabinet's efforts, particularly in executing the state WIOA plan.

The Cabinet's daily objectives are led by a seasoned staff with experience in education and workforce; they liaise and collaborate with relevant state agencies and the Governor's Office daily, in addition to outside stakeholders spanning local government, federal government, education, business, and nonprofit sectors. The Governor's appointees are geographically diverse and represent key areas of Indiana's economy. Due to this broad-based, expert leadership, the goal of a single vision for workforce policy was realized. That singular, common workforce policy is bolstered through concrete guiding statements that the Cabinet can follow as different recommendations are made. The Mission, Vision, Goals, and Guiding Principles adopted by the Cabinet in 2019 can be found here.

These foundational elements were key during this last waiver period where the Cabinet completed the state's first Combined WIOA plan in 2020 and led the state's workforce recovery efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic. Without waiver flexibility, the Cabinet would not have had the requisite representation of all applicable state agencies and external stakeholders who oversee or influence the core and ancillary programs that serve the plan's target populations. Furthermore, implementing Indiana's key strategies, such as co-enrollment, co-location, data sharing, and cross-training would have otherwise been hindered without the waiver enabling the participation of multiple key principals with optimum policy-making authority.

One of the goals of the original waiver was to streamline board size to allow Indiana to react efficiently to changes in economic conditions and responsively meet the needs of employees and employers. This ability to react quickly and decisively, through the streamlined board structure, became incredibly important in 2020 at the onset of the pandemic. The Cabinet structure provided for efficient collaboration with Indiana employers, education and training providers, policymakers, and state and local partners to quickly mobilize resources and implement a comprehensive workforce recovery plan to respond to the substantial impact to the state's economy including both employers and individual citizens.

Through the leadership of the GWC, Indiana established the Rapid Recovery for a Better Future initiative providing resources and support for Hoosiers to secure education, training, as well as skills and career coaching, and increasing access to quality jobs. The GWC was able to utilize the state's workforce vision and goals to identify priority areas of focus for the Rapid Recovery effort, which included use of CARES funding to provide workforce training and other career coaching tools to help Hoosiers and employers on the path to economic recovery.

State Strategic Goal #2:Implement and track WIOA State Workforce Plan (State Plan) initiatives.

The waiver-enabled Cabinet structure was instrumental in Indiana completing its first Combined WIOA plan in 2020 through the work of Cabinet subcommittees, collaboration of constituent agencies and stakeholders, and coordinating work of Cabinet staff. Indiana's unique structure sustains implementation, allows for adjustments, and supports tracking progress of the State Plan. Having representation from all of the state agencies key to the development of the Plan on the Cabinet allowed for the state to develop a more comprehensive workforce plan with significant input from state agencies, employers, and other key stakeholders. The Plan includes a variety of strategies around co-enrollment, data sharing, cross-training, employer engagement, and co-location that were enhanced through the Combined WIOA plan and are being tracked as part of the Plan's progress.

One example of data sharing has occurred through a cross-agency project led by the Cabinet and the Department of Workforce Development focused on better connecting job seekers with employment and training opportunities, particularly those who are unemployed or

underemployed. A data sharing agreement has been put in place across several state agencies through the direction of the Cabinet that has facilitated this project, which seeks to use artificial intelligence and machine learning to help provide better resources to Hoosiers interacting with state programs. This project is being paired with efforts to streamline user experiences through a centralized website to serve customers in a more clear and relevant manner.

Employer engagement has also been a key focus, including through the Next Level Jobs Employer Training Grant which serviced over 1,200 employers during the pandemic. The Employer Training Grant received an additional infusion of $15 million in CARES funding (alongside investments in the Workforce Ready Grant discussed in state strategic goal #3). This resulted in employers being able to skill up 11,752 employees who were both retained and realized a wage increase. Significant increases were seen in participation of minority, women, and veteran owned businesses due to targeted strategies by the state. These results were supported by the infrastructure and relationships developed through the Cabinet that allowed the state to quickly deploy strategies to best serve Hoosier businesses.

Through these items and others, the Cabinet structure facilitated the submission of Indiana's first Combined Plan in 2020 and continues to serve an important role in tracking the implementation and progress of the State Plan.

State Strategic Goal #3: Continue to increase Indiana's educational attainment rate with a specific goal of having 60% of Hoosiers with a quality credential beyond high school by 2025

According to the Lumina Foundation in their Stronger Nation through Higher Education report, Indiana and the U.S. as a whole, must rapidly increase attainment rates to meet established attainment goals. Indiana's attainment rate stands at 48.3% and the Cabinet is an integral part of the state's efforts to reach a 60% attainment goal by 2025. We have seen consistent gains in our attainment rate in recent years, but more than 700,000 Hoosiers have begun but not completed postsecondary programs and another 400,000 lack any high school diploma or equivalency at all.

Earning postsecondary credentials, whether certificates or degrees, requires multiple state agencies and higher education entities setting and implementing plans toward this attainment goal. Without waiver flexibility, Indiana's Cabinet would have significant difficulties in leading the efforts of Indiana's workforce and education agencies towards the 60% goal. One of the state's central efforts to achieving this attainment benchmark is through targeting populations facing barriers to employment and training through Indiana's signature workforce development initiative, Next Level Jobs.

Next Level Jobs is made up of two grant programs, the Employer Training Grant and the Workforce Ready Grant. The Next Level Jobs Workforce Ready Grant (WRG) program provides free training to Hoosiers without education beyond high school in certificate programs that have been identified as part of Indiana's high-wage, high-demand sectors. The WRG program is administered in partnership by the DWD and the Commission for Higher Education (CHE) the former administers funding for non-credit bearing training programs, while the latter funds credit-bearing certificate and credential training programs. This collaboration between the two agencies, made possible through the direction and leadership of the Cabinet, allows for a balanced approach to providing Hoosiers with the opportunity to earn a credential in a high-demand field.

During the pandemic, Governor Holcomb allotted $50 million in CARES funding towards workforce recovery efforts. Due to the Cabinet structure and relationships built during the

Combined Plan process, the Cabinet was able to stand up a committee to determine how to effectively deploy the funding. The funding was primarily utilized to expand access and promote the Next Level Jobs program, with nearly half going to the Workforce Ready Grant. From the summer of 2020 through the end of 2021, 30,000 Hoosiers enrolled in a certificate program and nearly 18,000 completed a credential. Individuals who complete this training program see an average wage gain of $6,800.

The Cabinet's role in setting the vision and providing direction on a variety of initiatives central to Indiana's educational attainment goal is a key element in Indiana's broad-based effort to continue making progress towards this goal. Without waiver flexibility allowing for multiple applicable state agency leaders as well as multiple higher education institutions' leadership to sit on the Cabinet, Indiana would not have been able to realize system-wide integration to this extent, nor have been able to react as quickly to the COVID-19 pandemic. Going forward, maintaining the momentum of the Next Level Jobs program and other key initiatives will continue to be enabled through the continued flexibility provided by the Cabinet's waiver.

State Strategic Goal #4: Launch newly developed career and technical education programs of study during the 2022-2023 school year to advance opportunities for students participating in CTE.

Following the Cabinet's establishment as a distinct state agency in 2019, the Cabinet became the eligible agency for the Carl D. Perkins Act. Cabinet members and staff worked in concert with vast array of stakeholder types spanning the state to complete a comprehensive review of Indiana's CTE system. That Cabinet-led collaboration resulted in the complete redesign of 66 CTE programs of study which are more rigorous, career relevant, reverse-engineered to meet employer needs, and mirror the same credential training an adult would receive through postsecondary CTE offerings at career centers and community college campuses. This initiative, named Next Level Programs of Study, was available to secondary schools and career centers on an opt-in basis this school year (2021-2022), which has seen record enrollment and state investment in CTE coursework. Beginning next school year (2022-2023), Next Level Programs of Study will be mandatory statewide.

The waiver facilitated the ability to move CTE under the Cabinet and the Cabinet's stature allowed for the state to pull in various partners to complete the redesign of the state's CTE system over the past 2 years. Through the newly designed programs of study, students will experience greater quality, consistency, and intentionality in their CTE programming that would have been impossible to realize without a statewide, multistakeholder redesign. For example, Next Level Programs of Study provide students the opportunity to complete one year of postsecondary academic credit while in high school, preparing students to secure quality employment or quickly transition to an applicable postsecondary program with both confidence and competency that did not previously exist based on their experiences.

The new programs of study are set to launch in the 2022-2023 school year. An extension of the waiver will allow the Cabinet to seamlessly begin implementing these new courses, working in concert with the state's Department of Education and other stakeholders. The Cabinet will be specifically measuring three Measures of Program Quality outlined in the state's Perkins Plan - dual credits earned, credential attainment, and work-based learning participation.

Without waiver flexibility, the Cabinet's structure could not have accommodated a variety of high-level stakeholder voices critical to the success of the CTE redesign process over the last two years, such as specified appointments for the Secretary of the Indiana Department of Education, a school corporation superintendent, a high school principal, a regional career center

CTE director, and the Superintendent of the Department of Correction. Alongside employers sitting on the cabinet, these individuals and their wider colleague networks and associations, such as the Indiana Association for Career and Technical Association, played a central role in gathering feedback and results upon the opt-in launch of the new CTE programs this school year (2021-2022). Statewide momentum is accelerating for high school CTE that is rigorous and career relevant. This school year, Indiana disbursed a record $168 million in state tuition support for high school CTE classes.

Furthermore, waiver flexibility will be essential to monitoring mandatory, statewide adoption during the upcoming school year (2022-2023). Overall, Indiana's waiver flexibility is indispensable to realizing the full potential of its Perkins-funded and CTE programmatic efforts for high schoolers, adults, and incarcerated individuals.

State Strategic Goal #5: Increase access to work-based learning and apprenticeship opportunities

Indiana continues to focus on increasing access for both youth and adult populations to high-quality work based learning opportunities, including apprenticeships, as a key strategy for building the talent pipeline employers need. The diverse membership of the Cabinet, including state agencies responsible for developing a framework for WBL and employer representatives who benefit from such programs, provide critical input on how to build scalable programs responsive to employer needs.

Indiana recently submitted two complementary proposals for the U.S. Department of Labor's Apprenticeship Building America Grant. The Cabinet's career and technical education staff led the submission of a proposal for Section 2 of the grant, which focuses on increasing registered apprenticeship program opportunities for youth. The DWD Office of Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeship (OWBLA), in collaboration with regional Workforce Development Boards, also submitted a proposal for two of the ABA categories related to increasing opportunities for adult populations. This application seeks to build off prior iterations of US DOL apprenticeship grants that OWBLA has received to assist local boards and businesses.

Having completed the redesign of the state career and technical education programs in the last two years, one of the Cabinet's specific focuses is on integrating more opportunities for quality work-based learning opportunities, including apprenticeships, into CTE programs. Multiple cabinet-represented agencies and entities are prioritizing WBL and are currently participating in a business-led supply-and-demand study of WBL opportunities across the state, with a specific focus on rural and urban populations.

Outcomes identified in the DWD's grant application to expand apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship opportunities for adult populations includes strategies to serve 1,118 individuals through registered apprenticeship programs, with an additional 500 participants served through Indiana's pre-apprenticeship programs known as State Earn and Learn programs (SEALs). Utilizing the experience and reach of Cabinet members to build upon existing employer connections through local workforce development boards' employer networks will be critical to this effort.

Indiana has been successful in implementing strategies to consistently increase the use of work-based learning opportunities to create the skilled talent pipeline employers demand currently ranking 6th nationally in number of active apprentices and 8th for number of completions in CY 22. However, maintaining the momentum in doing so will be further enabled through the

continuity provided by the Cabinet's waiver and the continued partnerships with industry leaders, labor leaders, education leaders, equity partners, and community-based organizations that the waiver supports.

5. Quantifiable projected programmatic outcomes resulting from implementation of the waiver:

The projected programmatic outcomes supported by implementation of this waiver request include:

1. Increase Indiana's educational attainment rate with a specific goal of having 60% of Hoosiers with a quality credential beyond high school by 2025. Consistent with its Perkins submission, Indiana will target an 8% increase in credential attainment over the waiver period.

This outcome is supported by several items outlined in the waiver, including the full implementation of Indiana's new CTE courses, Next Level Programs of Study, and continued efforts to build on the successful results of the Next Level Jobs Workforce Ready Grant.

2. Expand work-based learning opportunities for both youth and adult populations. Indiana will target a 6% increase in work-based learning participation over the waiver period.

Strategies to achieve this outcome and recent progress are described in more detail under Strategic Goal #5. Additional specific goals around work-based learning and apprenticeship opportunities are being currently informed by a statewide study of current capacity, which includes involvement from several members of the Cabinet.

3. Increase employer engagement with a focus on engagement with minority-, women- and veteran-owned businesses. Indiana will target a 10% increase in employer engagement over the waiver period.

Recent growth towards this outcome is described in Strategic Goal #2, with a focus on Indiana's effort with the Employer Training Grant during the Rapid Recovery initiative responding to workforce disruption brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. DWD is currently engaged in a variety of initiatives to better measure employer satisfaction

The Cabinet is also in the process of developing a high-level dashboard that will be used by policymakers, state leaders, and others as a resource to measure the state's progress on a variety of top-level indicators across the education to workforce space. Examples include the postsecondary going rate, labor force participation, and median household earnings. Where specific goals do not currently exist, the Cabinet is actively working to outline goals for each of the indicators that will be included on the dashboard.

6. Individuals, groups, or populations benefiting, or otherwise impacted by the waiver:

The Cabinet drafted and submitted Indiana's State Plan with effective strategies to reach WIOA target populations front of mind. The most recent plan modifications and updates represent lessons learned during the first waiver period. Waiver flexibility began and sustained this implementation and was especially critical amidst the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, which wrought disparate impacts on WIOA target populations throughout Indiana. A reauthorization of the waiver will allow for the continued execution of the state plan without interruption.

An example of a target population delineated in the state plan and better served through the flexibility provided by the waiver is ex-offenders. Indiana's waiver flexibility provides

representation to the Superintendent of the Department of Correction (DOC), a department critical to providing adult education, CTE, credential training, and job placement to very high-need target populations before reentry. In addition to in-facility Adult Education and CTE training, DOC's Hoosier Initiative for Reentry (HIRE) program leverages state resources, SNAP/TANF assistance, and the Work Opportunity Tax Credit to train and then place offenders with employers.

Comparing this year's progress with same period last year (January – April), DOC's HIRE program has realized:

- 2021: Secured employment for 371 participants both before and immediately upon release involving 97 different businesses. The average hourly wages were $13.41; the majority of placements were in manufacturing.
- 2022: While the program has had fewer placements, it has realized higher average wages and greater employer engagement by securing employment for 285 individuals through 164 different businesses. The average hourly wages were $15.76; the majority of placements were again in manufacturing.

Other examples of DOC harnessing its Cabinet representation include utilizing Perkins funding for CTE equipment and machinery as well as ensuring released offenders are co-enrolled in supportive programs that remove barriers to employment and successful reentry, such as Medicaid and SNAP.

Another example are the nearly 30,000 Hoosiers without education beyond high school who completed a high-value credential through the Next Level Jobs Workforce Ready Grant program, as discussed under state strategic goal #3. The unique structure of membership on the Cabinet has allowed for the right stakeholders to be present to continuously refine and promote the Workforce Ready Grant to maximize its effectiveness in reaching Hoosiers.

The State Plan and information contained in the waiver highlight other populations that are being positively benefitted through the flexibility provided through Indiana's waiver.

7. How the State plans to monitor waiver implementation, including collection of measurable waiver outcome information:

One of the functions of the Cabinet is to review, monitor, and recommend changes to the state's workforce system. As such, there will continually be an eye toward how Hoosiers are impacted by the policy decisions of the Cabinet and the programs implemented at both a state and local level.

The GWC membership structure enables leadership to keep a close eye on progress and act quickly to partner when needed. State Plan implementation continued to be overseen by GWC staff, in collaboration with operations staff from partner programs, such as DWD, FSSA/VR, etc.

GWC, in collaboration with partners under the Combined Plan, will track and report waiver progress and updates on an annual basis as required in the WIOA Annual Performance Narrative. DWD submits this narrative following its performance data submission each Fall.

8. Assurance of State posting of the request for public comment (including the dates that the state made the draft request available for public comment) and notification to affected local workforce development boards:

The last waiver request was included in the Cabinet's State Plan process in 2020, which included vetting during by a Strategic Plan Review Committee and local meetings in all 12 workforce regions to discuss objectives in the State Plan and hear feedback from local partners.

This waiver request seeks to keep in place the Cabinet as the State Workforce Board for another 2 years, allowing the Cabinet to work alongside state agency partners to continue implementing the Combined WIOA plan. The request for an extension of the Waiver was discussed during the February 17, 2022, meeting of the Governor's Workforce Cabinet. The state plan was then released for public comment from February 24 to March 25.

At the beginning of the public comment period, formal notice was provided via email to the Cabinet, local workforce boards, and other key stakeholders (CTE directors, Adult Education directors, etc.) to notify them of the 30-day public comment period. The process was also outlined on the homepage of the Governor's Workforce Cabinet and the Department of Workforce Development with comments accepted through a publicly shared email, GWCpubliccomment@gov.IN.gov. After the closure of the period, the received public comments were carefully considered before this submission.

Upon receipt of the Waiver, formal notice will be sent to the Cabinet, local workforce boards, and other key stakeholders. A copy of the Waiver request and the Waiver will be available for review on the website of both the Governor's Workforce Cabinet and the Department of Workforce Development. These will also be available for public inspection at the offices of the Governor's Workforce Cabinet and the Indiana Department of Workforce Development.

APPENDIX 1: Governor's Workforce Cabinet Membership*

The Cabinet does have several non-voting members who participate as members. These members are all state agency leaders or state legislative leaders who have optimum policy-making authority over their programs and departments. They work directly with Cabinet staff and the Governor's Office on an ongoing basis to provide input and direction on decisions relating to their areas of oversight. All Cabinet members, whether voting or non-voting, have optimum policy-making authority, but staff is currently conducting a review under new leadership to determine if any replacements need to be made to ensure all stakeholders and interest groups are being represented with maximum effectiveness on the board.

The positions for the Governor's Workforce Cabinet as outlined in Indiana code are shared below with current members denoted in parentheses.

1. A chairperson appointed by the Governor. *(Ryan Kitchell)*
2. The secretary of career connections and talent, serving as a nonvoting member. *(This position is currently vacant)*
3. The commissioner of the department of workforce development. *(Fred Payne, Commissioner of the Indiana Department of Workforce Development – includes Adult Education)*
4. The secretary of commerce or the secretary of commerce's designee, serving as a nonvoting member *(Tony Denhart, Executive Vice President of Workforce and Talent at the Indiana Economic Development Corporation)*
5. The commissioner of the Indiana commission for higher education. *(Chris Lowery, Indiana Commissioner for Higher Education)*

6. The secretary of education *(Dr. Katie Jenner, Indiana Secretary of Education)*
7. The president of Ivy Tech Community College *(Dr. Sue Ellspermann, President of Ivy Tech Community College)*
8. The president of Vincennes University *(Dr. Chuck Johnson, President of Vincennes University)*
9. One (1) member representing a research university appointed by the governor *(Anne Hazlett, Senior Director of Govt. Relations/Public Affairs at Purdue University)*
10. One (1) member representing a comprehensive university or an independent college appointed by the governor. *(Dr. Ronald Rochon, President of the University of Southern Indiana)*
11. A member appointed by the governor who is an apprenticeship coordinator of a joint labor- management apprenticeship program approved by the United States Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, Office of Apprenticeship. *(Mark Kara, Assistant to the Coordinator for Local 150 Operating Engineers)*
12. A member representing high school career and technical education educators or directors appointed by the governor in consultation with the Indiana Association of Career and Technical Education Districts. *(Dr. Steve Rogers, Director of Walker Career Center)*
13. Either: *(this position is currently vacant)*
    a. A member representing manufacturing appointed by the governor in consultation with the Indiana Manufacturers Association; or
    b. An employee of the Indiana Manufacturers Association appointed by the Governor
14. A member representing a minority business enterprise appointed by the governor. *(Maurice Coates, Jr., President of CK United)*
15. A member representing a women's business enterprise appointed by the governor. *(Megan Glover, CEO of 120WaterAudit)*
16. A member representing a veteran owned business appointed by the governor. *(Tony Vespa, Founder of Vespa Group)*
17. A member representing the nonunion and construction trades appointed by the governor in consultation with the Associated Builders and Contractors, Inc., and the Indiana Builders Association. *(This position is currently vacant)*
18. Either:
    a. A business owner appointed by the governor in consultation with the Indiana Chamber of Commerce**.** *(Paul Perkins, President of Amatrol, Inc.)*
    b. An employee of the Indiana Chamber of Commerce appointed by the governor
19. A small business owner appointed by the governor in consultation with the National Federation of Independent Businesses. *(this position is currently vacant)*

20. A member of a community-based organization appointed by the governor. *(Jena Bellezza, Indiana Parenting Institute)*

21. Three (3) at-large business owners appointed by the governor, one (1) of whom is a business owner who employs less than fifty (50) employees. One (1) member appointed under this subsection shall be from an organization representing technology.

(Rebecca Schroeder, President of Whiteshire Hamroc)
(Megan Glover, CEO of 120WaterAudit)
(There is currently one vacancy for the 3rd spot in this category)

22. A school principal, appointed by the governor *(Jody French, Principal of Perry Central Jr./Sr. High School)*

23. A school superintendent, appointed by the governor *(Dr. Steve Thalheimer, Superintendent of Elkhart Community Schools)*

24. The commissioner of the department of correction, serving as a nonvoting member. *(Robert Carter, Indiana Department of Correction Commissioner)*

25. The secretary of family and social services, serving as a nonvoting member. *(Dr. Daniel Rusyniak, M.D., Secretary of Indiana Family and Social Services Administration – includes Vocational Rehabilitation)*

26. A member of the house of representatives appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives who serves as a nonvoting member. *(Representative Bob Behning, House Education Chair)*

27. A member of the senate appointed by the president pro tempore of the senate who serves as a nonvoting member. *(Senator Jeff Raatz, Senate Education and Career Development Chair)*

28. Any additional members designated and appointed by the governor.

(Chris Lamothe, recently retired CEO of Elevate Ventures)
(Rebecca McCuaig, Legal Counsel for Accelerate Indiana Municipalities, a statewide non-partisan advocacy organization for Indiana municipalities)

1. The members appointed under subsection (a)(13) through (a)(21) must be geographically diverse.

<u>WAIVER REQUEST 2 STATE OF INDIANA</u>

Waiver of Governor's reserve and local formula youth funds on OSY for PY22 and PY23.

1. The statutory and/or regulatory requirements the State would like to waive:

For PY22 and PY23:

The State of Indiana is requesting a waiver from Section 129(a)(4)(A) and 20 CFR 681.410, which require not less than 75 percent of funds allotted to states under Section 127(b)(l)(c), reserved under Section 128(a), and available for statewide activities under subsection (b), and not less than 75 percent of funds available to local areas under subsection (c), shall be used to provide youth workforce investment activities for OSY.

Indiana is requesting an extension of the following waiver to this statutory and regulatory provision:

A waiver of the requirement to expend 75 percent of funding on the OSY population. Indiana is requesting that this percentage be lowered to 50 percent.

A waiver of the requirement that local funding meets the 75 percent minimum expenditure requirement. Indiana requests that this percentage be lowered to 50 percent to align with the statewide target (see 1 above).

A waiver of the requirement to expend 75 percent of Statewide Activities funding on the OSY population. It is requested to reduce this percentage to 50 percent to allow flexibility of funding special projects that meet the vision and mission of the state.

Goals and expected programmatic outcomes of waiver

Because JAG Indiana serves students with significant barriers to graduation, approval of this waiver will allow Indiana to continue to invest in at-risk youth before they drop out of high school. When entering the program, approximately 40% of JAG Indiana students have low academic performance or are basic skills deficient.

JAG Indiana serves more than 3,500 in-school youth who are at risk for dropping out of high school in 125 school-based programs. JAG Indiana has proven outcomes with students graduating at a rate of over 93% (current data from December 2021), which remains higher than the 2021 state graduation rate of 86.7% for all students and 82.8% of those who receive Free/Reduced price meals. JAG Indiana and WIOA performance goals are aligned to achieve positive outcomes with a focus on attainment of a credential and placement in higher education or training, employment or military service.

School administrators and counselors refer students to the JAG Indiana programs because of the successful model and associated outcomes. This vulnerable population receives daily counseling and support by "Specialists" while delivering competency-based curriculum. Central to the JAG model is a focus on serving the most disadvantaged youth in communities most in need across Indiana. There is an inherent focus on diversity, equity and inclusion in our programming both in JAG and WIOA youth services, as enrollments across in-school and out-of-school youth lean into minority populations across multiple intersectionalities, including, but not limited to gender, race, sexual orientation and disability status. Access to high quality programming, like JAG, for these students is of the utmost importance to their sense of belonging and identity which fuels their success in school, as showcased in overall programmatic outcomes on page 3.

JAG Indiana has been long supported by a multitude of funding streams, including WIA (now WIOA) and a state dropout prevention funding line item in the state's biennium budget. However, due to COVID-19, funding support for state programs was decreased by 15% just prior to the start of the 2020-21 school year and has continued in the 2021-22 school year. Local Workforce Development Boards who operate JAG Indiana programs in their communities (over 90 different communities across the state) faced challenges in sustaining their long-successful programs which provide support to students most in need.

Due to the budget constraints, nearly 600 students across the state were due to be impacted by potential program closures. As they do, local WDB's and the Department of Workforce Development looked for myriad ways to continue to provide services to our most at-risk youth through streamlining service delivery in partnership with other state agencies and community

partners and an increase in the use of our prior WIOA waiver related to the 25% in-school limitation, with more regional partners taking advantage of the 50/50 split granted through our 2021 state plan waiver request. At the onset of the 2020 program year and like prior program years, numerous WDB's were on track to expend over 25% of their funds on the JAG Indiana in-school youth program, with the aid of the WIOA waiver; however, due to the impact of COVID-19 in schools these same WDB's face continued funding challenges with increased demand for in-school related services for the 2021 program year. As the 2020-21 school year began, Indiana, like most other states, was still in "lock-down" status with varying restrictions and re-opening plans in our school partners. These restrictions created issues such as:

- Virtual or hybrid students having no access to high school elective courses, such as JAG, which lead to low enrollments; Indiana saw an overall 15% decrease in enrollments during the 2020-21 school year;
- Virtual and hybrid students were disengaged in classes, which can be seen in the decreased attendance in JAG classes; Indiana saw an overall decrease in student contact hours from prior average of 120 to 85 average hours during the 2020-21 school year;

Despite a sense of "return to normal" for the 2021-22 school year, the above metrics continue to be less than pre-COVID years. JAG Indiana student average contact hours (as of December 2021) are projected to be 95 in May 2022 (up from 85 in prior school year). Enrollment numbers have also continued to decrease and at this time are now trending upwards of 20% below pre-COVID enrollments; however, Indiana typically sees some enrollment growth (approximately 5%) during the 2nd semester of January-May.

In line with the 2021 waiver request goals, specific goals of this 2022 waiver request are to:

Increase flexibility of WIOA Statewide Activities and formula funding to support:

-
    - The implementation of evidence-based programs and strategies;
    - Progress toward closing the economic inequity gap;
    - Placing more Hoosier youth on the path to high-wage skills; and
    - Increase college readiness.

All four of the above strategies can be met by continuing to serve and/or increase the number of high school youth served through the JAG Indiana dropout prevention program. This allows us to be proactive about addressing the out-of-school youth problem, while simultaneously increasing the number of youth who enter the workforce and/or post-secondary education with the skills to succeed in either goal.

Of the over 4,000 in-school JAG Indiana youth who were served last year, history shows that we could have expected 19% of them to drop out. Indiana's graduation rate of 83% for low-income youth (which is 3% less than the prior school year), the number of in school youth who were saved from out-of-school status is estimated at nearly 700 youth through the implementation of the JAG Indiana program. Despite challenges due to COVID-19, which forced students to stay home and learn remotely and/or caused temporary and sometimes permanent job loss among Hoosier youth, in nearly every category students enrolled in the JAG Indiana program achieved

results matching or exceeding its past outstanding outcomes for youth with barriers to success. Outcomes include:

* For the Class of 2020, a new metric, Post-Secondary Outcomes were added, and Positive Outcomes were eliminated.

**Data for the Class of 2021 is as of December 2021, which includes on 6 months of the follow-up period.

Although not all JAG Indiana students are co-enrolled into WIOA youth programming, nearly all in-school WIOA youth enrollments are JAG Indiana students. Blended funding is vital to the success of co-enrolled students, opening a bevy of supportive services, training funds and more that supports the long-term success of these co-enrolled WIOA in-school youth students, which has been historically documented in Indiana's successful attainment of WIOA performance measures, including employment, education or training placements, credential attainment, median earnings and measurable skills gains.

As of the writing of this waiver request, quarterly youth performance ending December 31, 2021 demonstrates Indiana's track record for success:

Alignment with U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) Policy Priorities

This waiver request aligns with the following USDOL policy priorities, as found in the USDOL Fiscal Year 2018 – 2022 Strategic Plan and the WIOA law and federal regulations:

•

- The USDOL Employment and Training Administration (ETA) has a strategic objective to create customer-focused workforce solutions for American workers, including development of a strong youth pipeline;
- The ETA has prioritized improvement of the effectiveness and efficiency of workforce development programs, including supporting state and local flexibilities to enable these entities to effectively tailor their workforce strategies to meet their needs;
- The ETA focuses on programs that support work-based learning, skills development, and work readiness while promoting training strategies that lead to credential attainment and closing the skills gap;
- The ETA has prioritized implementation of evidence-based programs and strategies, including adoption of proven programs and strategies;
- The WIOA places a strong emphasis on work experience for youth participants, requiring that 20 percent of WIOA Youth funding be expended on this element;
- The WIOA promotes strong partnerships to leverage resources and increase opportunities for youth; and
- The WIOA prioritizes participant success, as measured by skill gains, entry into and retention of employment

Quantifiable Projected Programmatic Outcomes Resulting from Implementation of the Waiver

As previously noted, Indiana's high school graduation rate has stagnated at less than 90% for years. While Indiana school counselors are over-burdened with increasing caseloads of students, averaging 532:1 (more than twice the recommended caseload), and growing administrative responsibilities, the State of Indiana is requesting increased flexibility of WIOA Statewide Activities funding to implement a statewide program focused on providing a comprehensive set of services designed to keep In-School Youth (ISY) attached to the education system to improve their rate of success in achieving educational and career goals. The DWD has identified the Jobs for America's Graduates program to be this solution in schools where it is most needed, given its previously described history of success and linkages to employers and community resources that will best benefit the students it serves.

Following the JAG National performance outcome requirements, DWD and the JAG Indiana program, pledge to strive to meet the following requirements:

Additionally, in the classroom, the following outcomes serve as guideposts to student success while they are active in the program:

Non-Senior Performance Outcomes	MY	AE
Standard 2.4a- High School Transition/Matriculation to Next Grade	90%	75%
Standard 2.4b- Improvement in Attendance Rate	70%	50%
Standard 2.4c- Academic Improvements	90%	75%
Standard 2.4d- Reduction of Discipline Referrals	60%	60%
Standard 2.4e- Reduction in One or More Indicators/Barriers at the end of the program year	90%	90%

Standard 2.5 -Program Goals for Model Applications	MY	AE
2.5a Improvement in Attendance Rate Participants who had 10 or more absences the previous school year will increase attendance during the current academic year.	70%	50%
2.5b – Academic Improvements (Measurable Skills Gains) Participants improve academic progress in	90%	75%

Standard 2.5 -Program Goals for Model Applications	MY	AE
reaching any of the goals towards high school completion (as defined by documented outcomes below): • Increased GPA • Increase in credit attainment • State Standardized Test(s) *Baseline Numbers for 2022		
2.5c- Participation in Career Association/Professional Association On average participants will complete a minimum number of hours in CA/PA meetings and activities.	10	7.5
2.5d- Completion of Service-Learning Projects On average participants will complete a minimum number of service-learning hours.	10	7.5
2.5e- Participation in Assessment Participants' interests and/or abilities will be assessed, and an individual development plan will be constructed and documented.	90%	90%
2.5f- Reduction of Discipline Referrals Participants who have been identified with the A.8 barrier will avoid additional discipline referrals during the school year (documented in- or out-of-school suspensions, expulsions).	60%	60%
2.5g- Average Number of Selection Criteria/Barriers	6.0	6.0
2.5h- Reduction in One or More Indicators/Barriers at the Completion of JAG Services	90%	90%

Standard 2.5 -Program Goals for Model Applications	MY	AE
Participants have a reduction of at least one indicator/barrier by the end of the program year.		
2.5i - Contact hours per participant Each participant should meet the average number of contact hours for their model application per full program year. *Recommended 40 hours per participant in the OOS model.	130	80
2.5j - Average number of JAG competencies attained *= over a 2 year period	up to 87*	20/37

Individuals impacted by waiver

Currently, JAG Indiana utilizes a limited amount of WIOA funds to operate its in-school model. If Indiana is limited to 25% of WIOA youth funding to serve only in-school youth, DWD would be forced to close over 15 JAG Indiana programs across the state, potentially removing over 600 students from the dropout prevention program and negatively impacting local communities statewide. As previously noted, due to COVID-19, the need for programming and services designed to assist students in graduating high school is more critical than ever, which has continued during the 2021-22 school year. This waiver will ultimately impact Indiana's at-risk young adult population. American Job Center and subcontracted service provider staff, workforce development partners, employers, parents, and school counselors will also benefit from the waiver.

Plans for Monitoring Implementation and Collecting Waiver Outcome Information

WIOA programmatic reviews will include an evaluation of how local waivers are being utilized to ensure programmatic goals and outcomes are being met. The regional Youth Directors and state staff dedicated to the administration of the WIOA Youth program will continually examine the effectiveness of waivers throughout the PY, including bi-annual desk reviews. This strategy ensures that the objectives described above, as well as those outlined in the existing state and local WIOA plans, are consistent with established objectives of the WIOA, and federal and state regulations.

Since 2006, the State has utilized an electronic case management system for all federal and state eligibility-based workforce investment programs. This system, Indiana Career Connect, is configured to support the full integration of programs, eligibility determination, service recording and tracking, and performance tracking for WIOA, TAA, Wagner-Peyser, Veterans Employment and Training Programs, and Reemployment Programs, as well as for local

programs throughout the State, regardless of funding source. Indiana Career Connect has been designed to record service delivery information on every client service while providing transaction records necessary to document program performance. This cross-match of data allows DWD and Workforce Development Boards to effectively determine such outcomes as credential attainment, employment status and participant earnings in a more rapid timeframe than other mechanisms. DWD will monitor the progress of the waiver implementation through analysis of local performance results as well as through ongoing oversight and exchanges with local area management and staff.

TITLE I-B ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include assurances that:

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The State has implemented a policy to ensure Adult program funds provide a priority in the delivery of training services and individualized career services to individuals who are low income, public assistance recipients and basic skills deficient;	Yes
2. The State has implemented a policy to ensure local areas have a process in place for referring veterans with significant barriers to employment to career services provided by the JVSG program's Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist;	Yes
3. The State established a written policy and procedure that set forth criteria to be used by chief elected officials for the appointment of local workforce investment board members;	Yes
4. The State established written policy and procedures to ensure local workforce investment boards are certified by the governor every two years in accordance with WIOA section 107(c)(2);	Yes
5. Where an alternative entity takes the place of a State Board, the State has written policy and procedures to ensure the alternative entity meets the definition under WIOA section 101(e) and the legal requirements for membership;	Yes
6. The State established a written policy and procedure for how the individuals and entities represented on the State Workforce Development Board help to determine the methods and factors of distribution, and how the	Yes

The State Plan must include	Include
State consults with chief elected officials in local areas throughout the State in determining the distributions;	
7. The State will not use funds received under WIOA Title I to assist, promote, or deter union organizing in accordance with WIOA section 181(b)(7);	Yes
8. The State distributes adult and youth funds received under WIOA equitably throughout the State, and no local area suffers significant shifts in funding from year-to-year during the period covered by this plan;	Yes
9. If a State Workforce Development Board, department, or agency administers State laws for vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, that board, department, or agency cooperates with the agency that administers Wagner-Peyser services, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and Youth Programs under Title I;	Yes
10. The State agrees to report on the impact and outcomes of its approved waivers in its WIOA Annual Report.	Yes
11. The State has taken appropriate action to secure compliance with the Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 2900, including that the State will annually monitor local areas to ensure compliance and otherwise take appropriate action to secure compliance with the Uniform Guidance under section WIOA 184(a)(3);	Yes

ADULT PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as “baseline” indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A “baseline” indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments

on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, "baseline" indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as "baseline" based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as "baseline" for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as "baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA." The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as "baseline" for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as "baseline" for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as "baseline." Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state's plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	77.4	77.4	77.4	77.4
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	76.5	76.5	76.5	76.5
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	6,760	6,760	6,760	6,760
Credential Attainment Rate	68.0	68.0	68.0	68.0
Measurable Skill Gains	56.3	61.0	56.3	63.0
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]

1

"Effectiveness in Serving Employers" is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.

DISLOCATED PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered

by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as "baseline" indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A "baseline" indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, "baseline" indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as "baseline" based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as "baseline" for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);

- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as "baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA." The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as "baseline" for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as "baseline" for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as "baseline." Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state's plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	74.7	74.7	74.7	74.7
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	75.6	75.6	75.6	75.6
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	8,098	8,098	8,098	8,098
Credential Attainment Rate	66.0	72.0	66.0	72.0
Measurable Skill Gains	50.6	61.0	50.6	63.0
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]

1

"Effectiveness in Serving Employers" is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.

YOUTH PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as "baseline" indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A "baseline" indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, "baseline" indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as "baseline" based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as "baseline" for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as "baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA." The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as "baseline" for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as "baseline" for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as "baseline." Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state's plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	78.4	78.4	78.4	78.4
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	78.6	78.6	78.6	78.6
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	3,341	3,341	3,341	3,341

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Credential Attainment Rate	62.0	65.0	62.0	65.0
Measurable Skill Gains	44.1	65.0	44.1	65.0
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]

1

"Effectiveness in Serving Employers" is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR WAGNER-PEYSER PROGRAM (EMPLOYMENT SERVICES)

All Program-Specific Requirements provided for the WIOA core programs in this section must be addressed for either a Unified or Combined State Plan.

A. EMPLOYMENT SERVICE STAFF

1. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL STAFF THE PROVISION OF LABOR EXCHANGE SERVICES UNDER THE WAGNER-PEYSER ACT, SUCH AS THROUGH STATE EMPLOYEES, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO STATE MERIT STAFF EMPLOYEES, STAFF OF A SUBRECIPIENT, OR SOME COMBINATION THEREOF.

Indiana's Wagner Peyser program covers the full range of labor exchange activities in our WorkOne system. In the comprehensive one-stop offices, the Department of Workforce Development employs over 120 employees through Wagner Peyser funding. These employees partner with the other staff who implement key components of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. Their tasks include, but are not limited to, initial client evaluation and assessment, job search assistance, re-employment assistance through the Indiana's Jobs for Hoosiers program, employer recruitment and other employer services. Indiana's state merit staff are closely tied to our employers across the state and provide a full range of services directly to our employers to assist them filling their open positions.

In addition to staff the Wagner Peyser grant provides tools for state staff and their partners to manage the labor exchange services necessary to match an employer with a potential employee. Some of these tools include Indiana's labor exchange system called Indiana Career Connect. Assessment tools to help employees and employers evaluate the skills needed for critical positions such as Indiana Career Explorer (ICE), WorkKeys, Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE) to name a few.

Indiana will also leverage the Skillful Governor's Coaching Corps to provide labor exchange services to constituents. This program is a partnership between Skillful and the state of Indiana. It is an 8-month program that gives career coaches the tools and training they need to better serve Hoosiers in our rapidly changing labor market. The participants represent a diverse mix of organizations: public workforce centers, adult educational institutions, K-12 schools, and non-profits from all 12 Indiana workforce regions. The work that this group completes serves as a foundation for professional development for school counselors and other school personnel to

help provide career guidance and advisement to students and parents to help them make more informed decisions.

In light of the recent changes to the Wagner-Peyser regulations that permits states to have increased staffing flexibility, Indiana will evaluate potential changes to staffing models and the state merit requirement over the next several fiscal years.

2. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL UTILIZE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES FOR EMPLOYMENT SERVICE STAFF TO ENSURE STAFF IS ABLE TO PROVIDE HIGH QUALITY SERVICES TO BOTH JOBSEEKERS AND EMPLOYERS

DWD will provide training to one-stop system staff by making use of various media to accommodate different learning styles. These will include, but not be limited to in-person training events, webinars, self-paced instruction, procedure manuals and best practices, and video recordings available online. DWD recently rolled out a new staff portal where all of these materials will be housed and accessible to all regional and DWD staff. Many training opportunities will also include step-by-step instruction guides with visual images incorporated into the guides. Additionally, with most of the training offerings being posted online, there is broader access for more partners within the One-Stop system. DWD will provide business systems and program training to include the case management and labor exchange system, the business engagement system, and assessment programs/tools for WorkOne constituents.

All DWD employees have been given LinkedIn Learning licenses and Wagner-Peyser staff are assigned job-related training modules to complete as part of their performance expectations and staff development.

3. DESCRIBE STRATEGIES DEVELOPED TO SUPPORT TRAINING AND AWARENESS ACROSS CORE PROGRAMS AND THE UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE (UI) PROGRAM AND THE TRAINING PROVIDED FOR EMPLOYMENT SERVICES AND WIOA STAFF ON IDENTIFICATION OF UI ELIGIBILITY ISSUES AND REFERRAL TO UI STAFF FOR ADJUDICATION

The UI program leadership attends quarterly meetings with Employment Services (ES) and WIOA regional operations staff to share information and trouble shoot issues occurring in the WorkOnes with UI claimants. The UI program also offers an annual training webinar for ES and WIOA front line staff to provide an overview of the UI systems and any changes or updates. The recording of the webinar is available to new staff as they come onboard throughout the year. A Frequently Asked Questions document has been developed to assist ES and WIOA front line staff. Additionally, all RESEA staff are provided training annually on how to spot potential issues that would require adjudication through activities such as work search.

B. EXPLAIN HOW THE STATE WILL PROVIDE INFORMATION AND MEANINGFUL ASSISTANCE TO INDIVIDUALS REQUESTING ASSISTANCE IN FILING A CLAIM FOR UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION THROUGH ONE-STOP CENTERS, AS REQUIRED BY WIOA AS A CAREER SERVICE

Indiana implemented technology solutions to help UI claimants with all aspects of their claim. These solutions were implemented in every one-stop comprehensive office across the state. The state identified designated computer terminals and phone lines (called UI kiosks) in every comprehensive office specifically for UI customers. The phones connect directly with the UI customer service contact center for assistance with their claim.

One of the features of UI kiosks is a remote desktop software called Bomgar. This software gives the contact center staff the ability to take over the screen of a UI claimant so they can help walk

the claimant through their claim. Any claimant that comes into a comprehensive office is directed to these computers and to the contact center for claim related questions.

The state also assists clients through a marketed toll-free phone number which is available to the public. All partners have been informed of this hotline and are encouraged to refer clients for all UI related services. The Employment Services staff in the regions also provide over the shoulder help to UI claimants as they are navigating the claims filing system.

C. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S STRATEGY FOR PROVIDING REEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE TO UI CLAIMANTS AND OTHER UNEMPLOYED INDIVIDUALS

Indiana provides comprehensive statewide reemployment assistance that seeks to support all claimants in returning to work as quickly as possible in high wage, high demand jobs. Indiana operates two levels of federal RESEA programs: Initial and Subsequent RESEA to meet the needs of eligible claimants. . The program introduces unemployed Hoosiers to WorkOne services and training opportunities during a one-day orientation and 1:1 Initial Interview, and provides access to additional reemployment services, as appropriate. It addresses the needs of Hoosier claimants less likely to exhaust their current UI claim, while offering the opportunity for claimants to learn about reemployment services and activities available through the WorkOne. Both Initial and Sub RESEA were designed to help UI claimants return to work sooner and enter a high-wage, high- demand career path; reduce weeks of unemployment; improve the solvency of the UI trust fund; and reduce fraudulent UI claims. Program participation is mandatory upon selection, unless the claimant qualifies for a Manual RES Waiver based on one of the following reasons: moved out of state, currently enrolled in state approved training, return to work date within 60 days of separation, or in good standing with a Union Hiring Hall.

The State of Indiana's reemployment strategy consists of the following: After UI claimants have received unemployment for four weeks, they are selected for Initial RESEA through WPRS profiling. Claimants are sent a notification to their home address on record to participate. Claimants are scheduled through Indiana's case management system to participate in RESEA services through one of the WorkOne AJCs at week six of their claim. Selected participants are required to attend RESEA Initial Orientation and a 1:1 Initial Interview to learn of available WorkOne services and additional program requirements which include:

1. Claimants working one-on-one with a case manager to discuss and deliver current Labor Market Information (LMI),
2. Enrolling in Indiana's Labor Exchange System - Indiana Career Connect,
3. Creating an Individual Reemployment Plan (IRP),
4. Tracking work search activities, and
5. Referral to ongoing reemployment services.

Claimants are also required to attend follow-up meetings as scheduled to review progress and make necessary adjustments to the IRP until employment is obtained.

If claimants have not been successful in obtaining employment by week fifteen, they will again receive a mail notification and are required to participate in Subsequent (Sub) RESEA at approximately week seventeen. Sub includes a one-on-one meeting with WorkOne staff to reassess the claimant's work search efforts, review occupations based on transferrable skills, update resume, and reemployment plans to help the individual return to work prior to

exhausting their UI benefits. Survival job search and potential need for referral to partner supportive services are also reviewed.

During PY20 Indiana implemented virtual options for RESEA services to accommodate social distancing and allow for more flexibility on how customers receive services. These options remain available.

D. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE W-P FUNDS TO SUPPORT UI CLAIMANTS, AND THE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN W-P AND UI, AS APPROPRIATE INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING:

1. COORDINATION OF AND PROVISION OF LABOR EXCHANGE SERVICES FOR UI CLAIMANTS AS REQUIRED BY THE WAGNER-PEYSER ACT;

Indiana's Wagner-Peyser and UI staff are connected within the same agency and partner together to support claimants throughout their engagement. Indiana has integrated systems which allow Wagner-Peyser registration to occur between UI and the State's Labor Exchange and Case Management System. Additionally, claimants have labor exchange access through both self-service and within any of the WorkOne.

2. REGISTRATION OF UI CLAIMANTS WITH THE STATE'S EMPLOYMENT SERVICE IF REQUIRED BY STATE LAW;

Indiana code IC 22-4-14-2 requires UI claimants to register with the Indiana's Employment Service. Indiana has developed automated and manual registration processes for claimants to ensure service delivery is seamless and readily available.

Wagner-Peyser and WorkOne staff facilitate the administration and initial review of the UI eligibility assessment/working test for claimants. Wagner-Peyser and WorkOne staff refer specific issue types to UI adjudication, when necessary, on those occasions when the automated UI issue system may not identify said issue.
WorkOne staff conduct one-on-one meetings with claimants to develop and update their IRP and provide reemployment services and referrals to training programs based on an individual's needs, interests and aspirations, and barriers to employment. WorkOne staff also engage UI claimants prior to or during their RESEA program to engage in other workforce programs, as appropriate.

3. ADMINISTRATION OF THE WORK TEST FOR THE STATE UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION SYSTEM, INCLUDING MAKING ELIGIBILITY ASSESSMENTS (FOR REFERRAL TO UI ADJUDICATION, IF NEEDED), AND PROVIDING JOB FINDING AND PLACEMENT SERVICES FOR UI CLAIMANTS; AND

Wagner-Peyser and WorkOne staff facilitate the administration and initial review of the UI eligibility assessment/working test for claimants. Wagner-Peyser and WorkOne staff refer specific issue types to UI adjudication, when necessary, on those occasions when the automated UI issue system may not identify said issue.

WorkOne staff conduct one-on-one meetings with claimants to develop and update their IRP and provide reemployment services and referrals to training programs based on an individual's needs, interests and aspirations, and barriers to employment. WorkOne staff also engage UI claimants prior to or during their RESEA program to engage in other workforce programs, as appropriate.

4. PROVISION OF REFERRALS TO AND APPLICATION ASSISTANCE FOR TRAINING AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES.

WorkOne staff conduct one-on-one meetings with claimants to develop and update their IRP and provide reemployment services and referrals to training programs based on an individual's needs, interests and aspirations, and barriers to employment. WorkOne staff also engage UI claimants prior to or during their RESEA program to engage in other workforce programs, as appropriate.

E. AGRICULTURAL OUTREACH PLAN (AOP). EACH STATE AGENCY MUST DEVELOP AN AOP EVERY FOUR YEARS AS PART OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN REQUIRED UNDER SECTIONS 102 OR 103 OF WIOA. THE AOP MUST INCLUDE AN ASSESSMENT OF NEED. AN ASSESSMENT NEED DESCRIBES THE UNIQUE NEEDS OF FARMWORKERS IN THE AREA BASED ON PAST AND PROJECTED AGRICULTURAL AND FARMWORKER ACTIVITY IN THE STATE. SUCH NEEDS MAY INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO: EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING, AND HOUSING.

1. ASSESSMENT OF NEED. PROVIDE AN ASSESSMENT OF THE UNIQUE NEEDS OF FARMWORKERS IN THE AREA BASED ON PAST AND PROJECTED AGRICULTURAL AND FARMWORKER ACTIVITY IN THE STATE. SUCH NEEDS MAY INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO: EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING, AND HOUSING.

The assessment of need is geared towards the farmworker activities that the DWD outreach, program, and Employer Services staff have observed through past outreach efforts. The current primary connection with the Indiana State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) and DWD is with respect to data. DWD staff utilize data provided by both the United Stated Department of Agriculture and ISDA to identify Indiana's primary crops and data for both state national rankings.

Historically, this has been the sole connection, since the ISDA and DWD have different focuses. The DWD focuses on Migrant/Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFWs) with respect to their housing, working conditions, rights, and access to job opportunities and employment services. ISDA mainly focuses on economic development opportunities, public affairs, soil conservation, FFA, and Indiana grain and buyer's warehouse and licensing. The Combined Plan, however, offers both state agencies the unique opportunity to begin exploring areas of overlap that can be leveraged for collaboration, such as outreach to farmers, corporations, and agriculture organization regarding both economic development opportunities for upskilling workers and ways to create awareness regarding MSFWs. ISDA's relationships with employer could help get outreach staff to MSFWs with more efficiency and ease. Additional strategies in which both agencies can leverage the activities of the other to further its goals will be examined during 2020 and 2021; implementation of these strategies will begin in 2022.

The needs of these farmworkers and farmworker families range from employment, housing, and education-related to non-agricultural job training and education.

1. **Employment:** During Indiana's peak season months, MSFWs are mainly hired through farm labor contractors or crew leaders, who recruit workers for the Agricultural Employer. During this strategic planning phase, the contractor is seeking talent with previous experience in the farm work industry, and usually hire the same workers season after season. The most demanding farm jobs in Indiana are still hand labor-intensive jobs to plant, weed, detassel, harvest, and sort the following crops: corn, tomatoes, melons, pumpkins and apples. These crops are also the top five labor intensive crops in Indiana for the current program year.

March/April to mid-November is considered peak season for Indiana. The farm work season relies heavily on a few factors: climate (either rainy conditions or droughts delay prepping the fields and planting) and shortage of workers both affect the season. Indiana has been experiencing fewer migrant workers, especially workers from Texas, migrating to Indiana. Anecdotal evidence seems to suggest that many older workers are retiring, the younger generations are seeking other employment opportunities, and some workers are even migrating to California to join farm work unions that pay a high wage with benefits which include healthcare options.

2. Education: MSFWs have multiple barriers to employment that can hinder their chances of advancing their education. For the most part, migrant farm work is a family affair and a way of life. Due to various migration paths throughout the year, migrant workers often do not receive sufficient education necessary to advancing in the labor market. Most migrant workers lack education, have a language barrier, and rarely want to relocate to Indiana to work or pursue other opportunities.

During peak season, the outreach program specialist encountered several English Learners that were detasseling corn for a short time period. Detasseling corn lasts only four to six weeks before workers move on to another state. Seasonal farmworkers in Indiana are pursuing other opportunities through the assistance of our local WorkOnes. During the last program year, 519 MSFWs received a Wagner-Peyser service and 34 received a WIOA Title I service.

3. Housing: Many migrant workers depend on employer-provided housing, since they are unfamiliar with the area and need housing that is close in proximity to where the farm work is being performed. Hoosier agricultural employers house approximately 3,550 MSFWs in temporary agricultural housing and/or agricultural labor camps (ALC) during the peak season. In the State of Indiana, an ALC Permit is required if an agricultural employer is going to house 5 or more MSFWs in one location. Additional information and time is required to process and complete an ALC Permit, which is done yearly. Pre-occupancy housing inspections are performed 45 days before the day of need or anticipated date of hire. The Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) performs all pre-occupancy agricultural domestic housing inspections to include H-2A inspections as well. The ISDH also assists with initial permits or permit renewals. Housing for MSFWs is difficult to find for a short period of time. This leads to renting non-traditional housing such as; apartments, motels, trailer parks, and other means of public accommodations.

Additionally, the State Monitor Advocate provides ongoing review of the delivery of services to and protections for MSFWs at all WorkOnes. Technical assistance has included: sharing are reviewing the MSFW-program performance (equity ratios), monitoring local one-stops to ensure proper provisions are being met, working with local Boards to connect and engage with agricultural employers, awareness of farmworker activity in each region, and inviting local Boards to conduct outreach with the state team during the peak season.

2. AN ASSESSMENT OF THE AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITY IN THE STATE MEANS: 1) IDENTIFYING THE TOP FIVE LABOR-INTENSIVE CROPS, THE MONTHS OF HEAVY ACTIVITY, AND THE GEOGRAPHIC AREA OF PRIME ACTIVITY; 2) SUMMARIZE THE AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS' NEEDS IN THE STATE (I.E. ARE THEY PREDOMINANTLY HIRING LOCAL OR FOREIGN WORKERS, ARE THEY EXPRESSING THAT THERE IS A SCARCITY IN THE AGRICULTURAL WORKFORCE); AND 3) IDENTIFYING ANY ECONOMIC, NATURAL, OR OTHER FACTORS THAT

ARE AFFECTING AGRICULTURE IN THE STATE OR ANY PROJECTED FACTORS THAT WILL AFFECT AGRICULTURE IN THE STATE

The needs of farmworkers in Indiana have remained strong from year to year due to consistent crops, overall agricultural production, and planting and harvesting cycles. The top five labor intensive crops in Indiana are corn, tomatoes, melons, pumpkins, and apples.

The majority of the farm work activity in the state occurs in the northwest, central, and southern regions of the state with bursts of pockets near the following counties; Adams, Madison, Vigo, Sullivan, and Knox counties. Peak season in Indiana varies between March/April to mid-November.

Even though agriculture in Indiana contributes an estimated $31.2 billion to the economy, growers are still expressing a shortage of hiring local domestic workers and are moving towards hiring foreign workers. Last fiscal year (Oct. 1 to Sept. 30, 2020), the Indiana State Workforce Agency (SWA) processed 176 agricultural clearance orders. As the Combined Plan is implemented over the next four years, DWD will increase collaboration and communication with the ISDA to extend its outreach efforts and impact for MSFWs.

The agricultural economic factors are projected to be the same next year with effective net results. The one factor that will shake up the farm industry is a new regulated agricultural commodity crop, hemp. This is still a fairly new commodity. Hemp can be planted, harvested, and maintained for fiber or oil processing.

3. AN ASSESSMENT OF THE UNIQUE NEEDS OF FARMWORKERS MEANS SUMMARIZING MIGRANT AND SEASONAL FARM WORKER (MSFW) CHARACTERISTICS (INCLUDING IF THEY ARE PREDOMINANTLY FROM CERTAIN COUNTRIES, WHAT LANGUAGE(S) THEY SPEAK, THE APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF MSFWS IN THE STATE DURING PEAK SEASON AND DURING LOW SEASON, AND WHETHER THEY TEND TO BE MIGRANT, SEASONAL, OR YEAR-ROUND FARMWORKERS). THIS INFORMATION MUST TAKE INTO ACCOUNT DATA SUPPLIED BY WIOA SECTION 167 NATIONAL FARMWORKER JOBS PROGRAM (NFJP) GRANTEES, OTHER MSFW ORGANIZATIONS, EMPLOYER ORGANIZATIONS, AND STATE AND/OR FEDERAL AGENCY DATA SOURCES SUCH AS THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR (DOL) EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ADMINISTRATION

During Program Year 2020 (July 1 2019 to June 30 2020), in partnership with NFJP, the Indiana SWA estimated about 22,498 MSFWs in the state; the majority of this population are migrants. The number of MSFWs that the state's outreach program was able to locate through outreach efforts was 1,408. During peak planting and harvesting periods in the state, the population is estimated at 12,000 workers. During the off season, the MSFW population is at its lowest, is estimated at 1,518 workers. In accordance to the definitions set forth in 20 CFR 651 and 20 CFR 655, individuals are predominantly from Latin America, with an increasing number of Haitians from the Caribbean and Dominican Republic. MSFWs from these regions speak Spanish and Creole.

4. OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

The local offices outreach activities must be designed to meet the needs of MSFWs in the State and to locate and contact MSFWs who are not being reached through normal intake activities. Describe the State agency's proposed strategies for:

Response is captured in (e)(4)(A) thru (e)(4)(E).

A. CONTACTING FARMWORKERS WHO ARE NOT BEING REACHED BY THE NORMAL INTAKE ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED BY THE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE OFFICES

Indiana has one fulltime and two part time (during peak seasons) outreach specialists who conducts outreach statewide.. During peak season, the outreach specialist conducts joint outreach to significant large numbers of MSFWs with the following agencies: the Wage and Hour Division (WHD), Migrant Education Program, Indiana Legal Services, The National Farmworkers Jobs Program (NFJP), and the Mexican Consulate. Additional partnerships and stakeholders are sought throughout the year in order to expand on the outreach plan for the upcoming season. The Migrant Education Program is under the umbrella of the Indiana Department of Education (DOE). This program provides education services to MSFWs during the peak season. DWD and DOE staff conduct joint outreach every year.

Recently, the state's outreach program has been working on a systematic approach for engaging MSFWs for services at our local WorkOnes. A weekly report from Indiana's labor exchange/case management system is completed in search of MSFWs who have completed a registration within the system. As part of our outreach efforts, staff communicate with potential MSFWs to determine if they fall into this category. They also inquire about the type of farm work being performed and update their employment history to reflect the seasonal farm work. During this communication, the outreach specialist provides an overview of the employment and training opportunities available at the nearest WorkOne and a brief overview of farmworker rights, along with awareness of the complaint system process.

B. PROVIDING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO OUTREACH STAFF. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE MUST INCLUDE TRAININGS, CONFERENCES, ADDITIONAL RESOURCES, AND INCREASED COLLABORATION WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS ON TOPICS SUCH AS ONE-STOP CENTER SERVICES (I.E. AVAILABILITY OF REFERRALS TO TRAINING, SUPPORTIVE SERVICES, AND CAREER SERVICES, AS WELL AS SPECIFIC EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES), THE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE AND EMPLOYMENT-RELATED LAW COMPLAINT SYSTEM ("COMPLAINT SYSTEM" DESCRIBED AT 20 CFR 658 SUBPART E), INFORMATION ON THE OTHER ORGANIZATIONS SERVING MSFWS IN THE AREA, AND A BASIC SUMMARY OF FARMWORKER RIGHTS, INCLUDING THEIR RIGHTS WITH RESPECT TO THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT.

For over a decade, the Indiana Department of Workforce Development contracted the outreach services under the monitor advocate system to a third party agency. Now that the SWA has a full-time dedicated advocacy staff, the SWA has been able to provide on-going technical assistance, bilingual materials, and recorded training webinars on the complaint system and human trafficking, to all outreach staff. Additionally, we make these resources available to all WorkOne staff staff via our staff portal: https://www.in.gov/dwd/workonestaff/. Another resource we make available to outreach staff and all our WorkOne staff is the MSFW desk aide, which assists WorkOne staff and make the outreach staff aware of the standard operating procedures for MSFWs. This aide also has the two definitions of seasonal and migrant farmworkers in order for outreach staff and WorkOne staff to determine whether participants are a MSFW.

As another form of technical assistance provided to outreach staff, the SWA provides opportunities for staff to participate in local events within the community of MSFW service and support agencies and groups. This allows our outreach staff learn about new programs and services as well as leverage and build partnerships.

The SWA schedules a pre-season agriculture roundtable (late February) and a post-season agriculture roundtable (mid-November), which are led by the State Monitor Advocate (SMA). At these meetings the SMA will connect with all outreach staff as well as the twelve workforce regions to provide training on several topics, such as: identifying and determining MSFWs at the local WorkOnes, an overview/refresher of the complaint system, farm labor contractor registrations, terms and conditions of employment for all agricultural job orders, and raising awareness in the form of presentations from other MSFW agencies. These pre and post season meetings provide technical assistance to the outreach staff in building stronger connections and collaborations with the WorkOne Centers.

C. INCREASING OUTREACH WORKER TRAINING AND AWARENESS ACROSS CORE PROGRAMS INCLUDING THE UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE (UI) PROGRAM AND THE TRAINING ON IDENTIFICATION OF UI ELIGIBILITY ISSUES

To increase outreach worker training, the SMA had conversations with SWA leadership and internal equal opportunity officer regarding the Unemployment Claimant Handbook only being available in English to MSFWs. The SWA had the handbook translated into the Spanish language, increasing its access and use among Indiana's MSFW population. . The SWA worked with the unemployment administration to have the "Filling for Unemployment Insurance" brochure translated to Spanish, and it is currently available for Hoosiers. These resources provide MSFWs with a better understanding of the UI program and allows advocacy staff to articulate the UI process with this information. This will better prepare MSFWs in applying for UI. Indiana designated UI computers in the one-stop comprehensive centers to help UI claimants with questions and/or issues about their claims. Staff direct claimants to use the computers, which connects them directly with a UI customer service representative at the call center. The UI call centers do have bi-lingual staff available for Spanish speakers. For languages besides Spanish, the call center is uses the state's QPA vendor for interpretation services.

The Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessments Program (RESEA) worked with the SWA and SMA to identify MSFWs within the program. RESEA forms and documents are available in the Spanish language for MSFWs who are English Learners.

D. PROVIDING STATE MERIT STAFF OUTREACH WORKERS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES TO ENSURE THEY ARE ABLE TO PROVIDE HIGH QUALITY SERVICES TO BOTH JOBSEEKERS AND EMPLOYERS

State merit outreach staff have two mandatory annual trainings, human trafficking and sexual harassment, followed by ongoing in-house professional development trainings throughout the year. The Business Engagement team provides training to the outreach staff on current employer grants and initiatives that can assist agricultural employers. The Business Engagement team also shares access to the Customer Relationship Manager System (CRM) and other employer related items. Employer service training will be provided to all outreach and advocacy staff to connect and engage with the agricultural community.

In light of the recent changes to the Wagner-Peyser regulations that permits states to have increased staffing flexibility, Indiana will evaluate potential changes to staffing models and the state merit requirement during 2022 and 2023.

E. COORDINATING OUTREACH EFFORTS WITH NFJP GRANTEES AS WELL AS WITH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE COMMUNITY SERVICE AGENCIES AND MSFW GROUPS

The SMA has a close working relationship with SWA outreach staff, NFJP grantee staff, and other MSFW organizations, such as the Mexican Consulate, Migrant Education Program, Department

of Wage and Hour, and Indiana Legal Services. The outreach program staff will continue to partner with NFJP grantee staff to identify MSFW needs. The SWA will continue to engage with other organizations for the purpose of identifying and assisting MSFWs through partnerships, such as those with food pantries and soup kitchens, to deliver goods and resources to migrant and seasonal farmworkers in the state of Indiana.

5. SERVICES PROVIDED TO FARMWORKERS AND AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS THROUGH THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM

Describe the State agency's proposed strategies for:

A. PROVIDING THE FULL RANGE OF EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING SERVICES TO THE AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITY, BOTH FARMWORKERS AND AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS, THROUGH THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM. THIS INCLUDES:

I. HOW CAREER AND TRAINING SERVICES REQUIRED UNDER WIOA TITLE I WILL BE PROVIDED TO MSFWS THROUGH THE ONE-STOP CENTERS

II. HOW THE STATE SERVES AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS AND HOW IT INTENDS TO IMPROVE SUCH SERVICES

To ensure MSFWs have access to services at Indiana's WorkOnes, the SMA identifies areas for improvement in the delivery of services to MSFWs. The SMA meets with service providers at the local level to identify priority issues and to develop a better processes to determine the appropriate technical assistance necessary. The SWA is exploring engagement of AmeriCorps workers to assist with outreach in key areas.

B. MARKETING THE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE COMPLAINT SYSTEM TO FARMWORKERS AND OTHER FARMWORKER ADVOCACY GROUPS

The SMA met with several MSFWs organizations and farmworker advocacy groups statewide to provide training on the complaint system. The SMA provides annual training at the IMFC (Indiana Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Coalition) meetings. The SMA also trained WorkOne staff and provided a recorded webinar, which can be used for onboarding, a refresher course, and/or mandatory training. The training and other MSFW related items can be found on the WorkOne Portal for staff to access at any time.

C. MARKETING THE AGRICULTURAL RECRUITMENT SYSTEM FOR U.S. WORKERS (ARS) TO AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS AND HOW IT INTENDS TO IMPROVE SUCH PUBLICITY.

DWD continues to provide agricultural employers assistance with their labor needs. When local domestic workers are not available, SWA provides technical assistance to growers to aid them in accessing the interstate Agricultural Recruitment System (ARS). We also intend on building a connection with the ISDA to help raise awareness among employers and agriculture organizations. Our local office staff continues to provide farm labor contractors assistance in preparing applications for certification within the U.S. Department of Labor. The SWA's advocacy team regularly provides an overview of this service to agricultural employers statewide. During 2020 and 2021, the SWA, along with the business service consultants, engaged in an ARS and Agricultural Employer Service training. The training was also provided to all 12 workforce regions. This training consisted of posting jobs on Indiana's labor exchange system, conducting local recruitment events or job fairs at the employment offices, and familiarizing staff with terms and conditions of employment.

6. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

A. COLLABORATION

Describe any collaborative agreements the state workforce agency (SWA) has with other MSFW service providers including NFJP grantees and other service providers. Describe how the SWA intends to build upon/increase collaboration with existing partners and in establishing new partners over the next four years (including any approximate timelines for establishing agreements or building upon existing agreements).

The SWA has two collaborative agreements or Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with the following entities:

1. A monetary MOU with the Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) for pre-occupancy farm worker housing inspections and
2. NFJP Proteus Inc., as mandated by TEGL 8-17.

Currently the SWA has two agreements or Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with the Indiana State Department (ISDH) of Health and the National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) grantee, Proteus Inc. The Department of Workforce Development (DWD) contracts the Indiana State Department of Health and its inspectors to conduct pre-occupancy farm worker housing inspections. This monetary MOU outlines the roles and responsibilities of each party regarding the housing inspections in the State of Indiana. The SWA will continue to partner with ISDH over the next two years and will renew the MOU on or before September 30, 2023.

The State Monitor Advocate (SMA) will continue to partner and collaborate with National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) as per TEGL 8-17, with the required non-monetary MOU between State Monitor Advocates and National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) grantees. This non-monetary MOU establishes a pathway to ensure that MSFWs will have access to career pathways, job training, and other supportive services offered between the two parties. This partnership will continue to work together within the next four years by, conducting joint outreach to MSFWs, data collecting, attending meetings, SMA providing complaint system training and any other events deem necessary. The non-monetary MOU is valid between 2020 and June 30, 2022 with renewal options evaluated by June 30, 2022. Therefore, as the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) engages with other migrant and seasonal farmworker agencies, new partnerships are created along with new agreements. The DWD created a common interest agreement between DWD & Wage and Hour Division (WHD). This Non-Monetary Common Interest Agreement runs from 2020 to December 11, 2023 and allow joints for outreach to be conducted when appropriate and assists the SMA with information sharing in regards to Agriculture employers, exchanging investigative leads, complaints, and referrals of possible violations, to the extent allowable by law or policy.

B. REVIEW AND PUBLIC COMMENT

In developing the AOP, the SWA must solicit information and suggestions from NFJP grantees, other appropriate MSFW groups, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations, and other interested organizations. In addition, at least 45 calendar days before submitting its final AOP, the SWA must provide a proposed plan to NFJP grantees, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations, and other organizations expressing an interest and allow at least 30 days for review and comment. The SWA must: 1) Consider any comments received in formulating its final proposed AOP; 2) Inform all commenting parties in writing whether their comments have been incorporated and, if not, the reasons therefore; and 3) Transmit the comments and recommendations received and its responses with the submission of the AOP.

The AOP must include a statement confirming NFJP grantees, other appropriate MSFW groups, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations and other interested employer organizations have been given an opportunity to comment on the AOP. Include the list of organizations from which information and suggestions were solicited, any comments received, and responses to those comments.

In accordance with 20 CFR Subpart B, 653.107 & 108 (4), the State Monitor Advocate participated in the preparation of the agricultural plan and has been afforded the opportunity to approve and comment on the plan. Such review indicates that the plan has been prepared properly, omitting none of the prescribed requirements, and properly describes the activities planned for providing services to both agricultural employers and migrant seasonal farmworkers.

WIOA Section 167 NFJP grantee, Indiana Farm Bureau, Purdue Agriculture Extension, Pathstone Corporation, Indiana Family & Social Services, Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority, Indiana Department of Education, Community Development Institute Head Start, and Indiana Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Coalition will be solicited for information and suggestions in the formulation of this plan and/or provided the opportunity to comment.

The AOP will be uploaded to the MSFW DWD webpage by the Department's webmaster.

On March 10, 2022, SMA emailed all members of the Indiana Migrant & Seasonal Farmworker Coalition to include (NFJP) to advise them about the Indiana's Strategic Plan & AOP and encourage comment.

Additionally, the Plan was posted for public comment on the GWC website and notice was sent out to a broad audience of the available public comment period. The committees met at the end of the public comment process to review the comments received and make any necessary updates to the Plan. The Plan was then submitted for final review and approval to the Governor's Workforce Cabinet before its submission

During the public comment period, the SWA did receive one comment in regards to the current processes for handling housing inspections for H2A workers. The comment reflected the need for a more robust strategy to conduct more rigorous inspection. The SWA reviewed this comment and advised that we would review this strategy in PY22 and PY23 and identify if additional resources would be need to conduct housing inspections for H2A workers.

C. DATA ASSESSMENT

Review the previous four years Wagner-Peyser data reports on performance. Note whether the State has been meeting its goals to provide MSFWs quantitatively proportionate services as compared to non-MSFWs. If it has not met these goals, explain why the State believes such goals were not met and how the State intends to improve its provision of services in order to meet such goals.

The provisions and proportionate services to MSFWs in Indiana have been steadily improving over the past 4 years, and in PY 18, the state achieved all of the five equity indicators, showing services provided to MSFWs and non-MSFWs. See the data chart below.

Equity Indicators	1-Referred to Jobs	2- Provided with a Service	3- Referred to Supportive Services	4-Provided with Career Guidance	5- Job Development Contacts	Achieved Equity:
Program Year 2016						
MSFWs	14.5%	90.3%	0.0%	14.5%	48.4%	
NON-MSFWs	21.5%	77.6%	0.0%	13.5%	26.3%	
	0.6	**1.16**	**0.00**	**1.07**	**1.84**	No
Program Year 2017						
MSFWs	68.2%	100%	2.4%	12.9%	11.8%	
NON-MSFWs	66.6%	100.00%	5.3%	16.0%	15.7%	
	1.02	**1.00**	**0.45**	**0.81**	**0.75**	No
Program Year 2018						
MSFWs	55.5%	100%	7.3%	43.6%	10.9%	
NON-MSFWs	39.2%	99.8%	5.1%	35.9%	8.1%	
	1.41	**1.00**	**1.42**	**1.22**	**1.34**	Yes

Achieving equity occurs when the ratio of MSFWs over non-MSFWs is greater than or equal to one.[1]

The following factors will address equity and ensure that MSFWs receive services on a basis which is qualitatively equivalent and quantitatively proportional to services provided to non-MSFWs. MSFWs who go into a local one-stop center to obtain the full range of employment and training services, include an overview of the complaint system, will receive a full Wagner-Peyser application with the following mandatory referrals to employment opportunity and supportive service. MSFWs will additionally receive services at their local WorkOne with an emphasis on career guidance and job development contacts, if applicable.

MSFWs who are not being reached by the normal intake activities at the local WorkOne will meet with the state's outreach program specialist, who will explain to MSFWs in their own language the availability of referrals, services, and an overview of the complaint system, as well as a basic summary of farmworker rights. If an MSFW is not able to visit a local WorkOne, outreach staff will enroll MSFW in Wagner-Peyser services, provide appropriate referrals and services in the field, and will then advise the SWA and SMA of the MSFW jobseeker. The SWA will then communicate with the local WorkOne where the MSFW resides to connect and engage

that individual with employment and training services at the AJC or other affiliate or access point sites. The SMA will continue to meet and discuss with the SWA ways to improve the delivery of services to MSFWs and the possibility of hiring or promoting additional outreach staff, such as AmeriCorps workers, to achieve equity and appropriate services or MSFW's.

Update for 2022

Equity Indicators	Referred to Employment	Provided with a Service	Referred to Supportive Services	Provided with Career Guidance	Job Development Contacts	Achieved Equity
Program Year 2018						
MSFWs	55.5%	100.00%	7.3%	43.6%	10.9%	
NON-MSFWs	39.2%	99.8%	5.1%	35.9%	8.1%	
	1.41	**100**	**1.42**	**1.22**	**1.34**	**Yes**
Program Year 2019						
MSFWs	24.03%	100.00%	3.90%	67.53%	7.14%	
NON-MSFWs	6.19%	100.00%	1.42%	86.27%	1.48%	
	3.88	**100**	**2.75**	**0.78**	**4.82**	**Yes**
Program Year 2020						
MSFWS	20.83%	100.00%	4.17%	70.83%	4.17%	
NON-MSFWs	4.88%	100.00%	1.08%	60.77%	0.83%	
	4.26	**100**	**3.86**	**1.16**	**5.02**	**Yes**
Program Year 2021						
MSFWs	18.92%	100.00%	5.41%	63.51%	4.05%	
NON-MSFWs	5.07%	100.00%	1.29%	53.62%	0.86%	**Yes**
	3.73	**100**	**4.19**	**1.18**	**4.70**	

[1] Data were retrieved from Performance & Quality Unit.

D. ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

The plan must include an explanation of what was achieved based on the previous AOP, what was not achieved and an explanation as to why the State believes the goals were not achieved, and how the State intends to remedy the gaps of achievement in the coming year.

Many achievements were made at the SWA level during PY20. In addition to the SMA and outreach staff, the SWA has hired an additional staff person to support outreach efforts and also plans to hire an additional staff person in PY22. The SWA also began the process of putting policies and procedures into place that support MSFW services in the WorkOne centers, while providing technical guidance on how to increase service levels. Finally, the SWA has several technical assistance trainings scheduled for PY22 to include the ARS, FLC Registrations, and MAS Refreshers and training. It should be noted there are a few opportunities of improvement that have been identified such as placements and referrals to clearance orders, stronger local recruitment for Ag employer job orders, and expanding printed and visual resources to be Spanish and multilingual. The SWA plans to review these opportunities throughout PY22 and PY23.

E. STATE MONITOR ADVOCATE

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

The Indiana State Monitor Advocate had the liberty to review and approve the SWA's Agricultural Outreach Plan (AOP) on the March 3, 2022.

WAGNER-PEYSER ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include assurances that:

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service is co-located with one-stop centers or a plan and timeline has been developed to comply with this requirement within a reasonable amount of time (sec 121(e)(3));	Yes
2. If the State has significant MSFW one-stop centers, the State agency is complying with the requirements under 20 CFR 653.111, State Workforce Agency staffing requirements;	Yes
3. If a State Workforce Development Board, department, or agency administers State laws for vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, that board, department, or agency cooperates with the agency that administers Wagner-Peyser Act services, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and Youth Programs under Title I; and	Yes
4. SWA officials: 1) Initiate the discontinuation of services; 2) Make the determination that services need to be discontinued;	Yes

The State Plan must include	Include
3) Make the determination to reinstate services after the services have been discontinued; 4) Approve corrective action plans; 5) Approve the removal of an employer's clearance orders from interstate or intrastate clearance if the employer was granted conditional access to ARS and did not come into compliance within 5 calendar days; 6) Enter into agreements with State and Federal enforcement agencies for enforcement-agency staff to conduct field checks on the SWAs' behalf (if the SWA so chooses); and 7) Decide whether to consent to the withdrawal of complaints if a party who requested a hearing wishes to withdraw its request for hearing in writing before the hearing.	

WAGNER PEYSER PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as "baseline" indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A "baseline" indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, "baseline" indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as "baseline" based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and

- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as "baseline" for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as "baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA." The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as "baseline" for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as "baseline" for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as "baseline." Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state's plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each

of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	66.9	74.0	66.9	74.0
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	69.0	69.0	69.0	69.0
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	6,723	7,500	6,723	7,500
Credential Attainment Rate	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Measurable Skill Gains	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]

1

"Effectiveness in Serving Employers" is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAMS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include a description of the following as it pertains to adult education and literacy programs and activities under title II of WIOA, the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA).

A. ALIGNING OF CONTENT STANDARDS

Describe how the eligible agency has aligned its content standards for adult education with State-adopted challenging academic content standards, as adopted under section 1111(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (20 U.S.C. 6311(b)(1)).

The College and Career Readiness Content Standards (CCR) form the instructional foundation of Adult Education program. These standards are used to identify academic skills that students need to know and be able to do. A career-infused classroom integrates contextualized instruction aligned to the CCR Standards with career awareness, self-exploration, career exploration, and career planning.

In Indiana, Adult Education providers are expected to provide standards-based instruction using the College and Career Readiness Standards. The gap between the knowledge and skills of adult learners and the expectation of colleges, training programs, and employers drives the movement to standards-based education. The standards were created as a manageable set of

foundational knowledge indispensable for addressing this gap and preparing adult learners for college and careers. Additionally, the standards provide direction on where to focus instruction, a coherent framework for scaffolding student learning, and consistent expectations across the state.

In mathematics, for example, the standards reflect content typically taught in both beginning and more advanced algebra and geometry courses, as well as in data analysis and statistics classes. The ELA/literacy standards demand robust analytical and reasoning skills and strong oral and written communication skills. Integrating these standards into instructional delivery is essential to enabling adult learners to meet the real-world demands of postsecondary training and employment.

B. LOCAL ACTIVITIES

Describe how the State will, using the considerations specified in section 231(e) of WIOA, fund each eligible provider to establish or operate programs that provide any of the following adult education and literacy activities identified in section 203 of WIOA, including programs that provide such activities concurrently. The Unified or Combined State Plan must include at a minimum the scope, content, and organization of these local activities.

ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY ACTIVITIES (SECTION 203 OF WIOA)

- Adult education;
- Literacy;
- Workplace adult education and literacy activities;
- Family literacy activities;
- English language acquisition activities;
- Integrated English literacy and civics education;
- Workforce preparation activities; or
- Integrated education and training that—

1. Provides adult education and literacy activities, concurrently and contextually with both, workforce preparation activities, and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster, and
2. Is for the purpose of educational and career advancement.

Special Rule. Each eligible agency awarding a grant or contract under this section shall not use any funds made available under this title for adult education and literacy activities for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are under the age of 16 and are enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under State law, except that such agency may use such funds for such purpose if such programs, services, or activities are related to family literacy activities. In providing family literacy activities under this title, an eligible provider shall attempt to coordinate with programs and services that are not assisted under this title prior to using funds for adult education and literacy activities under this title for activities other than activities for eligible individuals.

Adult education;

Literacy;

Workplace adult education and literacy activities;

Family literacy activities;

English language acquisition activities;

Integrated English literacy and civics education;

Workforce preparation activities; or

Integrated education and training that—

1. Provides adult education and literacy activities, concurrently and contextually with both, workforce preparation activities, and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster, and
2. Is for the purpose of educational and career advancement.

Special Rule. Each eligible agency awarding a grant or contract under this section shall not use any funds made available under this title for adult education and literacy activities for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are under the age of 16 and are enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under State law, except that such agency may use such funds for such purpose if such programs, services, or activities are related to family literacy activities. In providing family literacy activities under this title, an eligible provider shall attempt to coordinate with programs and services that are not assisted under this title prior to using funds for adult education and literacy activities under this title for activities other than activities for eligible individuals.

The Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD) solicits applications and proposals from entities eligible to receive WIOA Title II funds. Applicants can apply for funding in the following areas: Adult Education and Literacy Activities – WIOA Title II (per 29 USC §3272); Adult High School Credit Program/Adult Secondary Credit (ASC); Corrections Education and Education for Institutionalized Individuals; Integrated Education and Training Activities (IETs); Workforce Education Initiative (WEI); Professional Development Facilitator Network; and/or Indiana Online Only Distance Education.

An eligible individual is an individual who is 16 years of age or older; who is not enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under state law; who is basic skills deficient; does not have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and has not achieved an equivalent level of education; or is an English language learner.

To be awarded WIOA Title II funds in Indiana, applicant organizations must be an eligible provider as defined by WIOA (per 29 USC §3272). An applicant must be able to demonstrate past effectiveness in providing adult education and literacy activities before the applicant can be considered an eligible applicant. Data which demonstrate the applicant's effectiveness in providing adult education and literacy services include evidence of eligible individuals' academic gains (reading, writing, mathematics, and English language acquisition), employment outcomes, family literacy, attainment of

secondary credentials, transitions to postsecondary education, and workforce training. Indiana only requires an applicant to provide effectiveness data for the content domains that are relevant to the services in the state's application for funds. In the state's multi-year adult education competitive grant application (request for application), all applicant organizations should complete all questions listed under each consideration (I-XIII, XIV) regardless of the type(s) of funding the applicant is seeking. All applicant organizations should address Consideration XIV [General Education Provisions Act (GEPA)]. Considerations I-XIII represent the thirteen statutory considerations DWD must consider when awarding WIOA Title II funds, while Consideration XIV is used to meet the statutory GEPA plan required for all AEFLA funded sub-recipients. Failure to provide answers for the narrative portion of the application is grounds for non-consideration.In order to fund eligible providers, a rubric is utilized to score the narrative section for the thirteen considerations. Review teams utilize a 0-5 point Likert Scale to score the quality of each response. Reviewers provide notes or commentary to justify the score, provide brief details of what the applicant omitted or missed, and brief descriptions of anything "positive" about the application.

5 - Excellent; Applicant's response clearly demonstrates an understanding of the question, the consideration, and the challenges and expectations of an adult education provider. 4 - Good; Applicant's answer does a good job of generally providing support for its claims and demonstrates what would be expected out of a good adult education provider. 3 - Adequate; Applicant's response demonstrates some understanding, though this understanding may have to be inferred, of the question, consideration, and the challenges and expectations of an adult education provider 2 - Poor; Answer is not well supported, and does not demonstrate what would be expected out of an adult education provider 1 - Bad; Answer lacks any context or support, and in no way demonstrates what would be expected out of an adult education provider

0 - Incomplete; Applicant made no attempt to answer the question DWD utilizes overall scores, quality of grant submissions, and responses to the thirteen considerations to fund eligible providers. Additionally, the state reviews funding requests and proposed service delivery areas to ensure that every county in the state is covered. DWD awards multi-year adult education grants on a competitive basis, beginning with program year ("PY") 2020 (July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021), and ending PY2023 (July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024). After the initial year of this multi-year adult education grant award (PY2020), DWD requires sub-recipients apply for the renewal of funding through a non-competitive grant continuation RFA for the following program years: PY2021; PY2022; and PY2023. Renewals will be made on a program-by-program basis and will be contingent on the sub-recipient's ability to (1) Successfully implement the terms of the grant; (2) Meet both state and federal performance expectations; and (3) Provide demonstrated value to the community the sub-recipient serves. Funding for future grant continuations will include program performance. DWD reserves the right to hold a new competitive grant competition

3. Funds awarded to applicants are based on three levels of data:

1. The number of WIOA Title II eligible Hoosiers who lack a secondary school diploma (HSD or HSE);

2. The number of Hoosiers utilizing state and federal programs administered by Indiana's Family and Social Services Administration ("FSSA"); and

3. The number of enrollments in WIOA Title II programs in the previous year.

We encourage increased collaboration between Adult Education grant recipients and the local Workforce Development Boards.

County level data is aggregated at the economic development regional level; this determines the total amount of funds available for the region. Applicants must apply for a region or a portion of the funds available in each region they intend to serve.

Funding for future grant continuations will include program performance. DWD allows funding to be passed through a sub-recipient to subcontracted service provider(s). No more than 5% of the total amount awarded to grantees can be used by the grantee shall be used for administrative and non-instructional purposes. For DWD to maintain the federally-required Maintenance of Effort (MOE), Indiana requires that WIOA-funded Adult Education providers contribute a local match.

Other Requirements: The grant requires that local Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) be given an opportunity to review all applications submitted to DWD that propose to offer services within the WDB's workforce development area. Any recipient of funds awarded must provide reasonable accommodations to all qualified individuals (both employees and students) with disabilities, unless that accommodation would represent an undue burden in the exercising of the responsibilities of the sub-recipient to deliver adult education and literacy activities. Accepting an award is an acknowledgement that the grant recipient is in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Applicants are also required to acknowledge compliance with the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA).

C. CORRECTIONS EDUCATION AND OTHER EDUCATION OF INSTITUTIONALIZED INDIVIDUALS

Describe how the State will establish and operate programs under section 225 of WIOA for corrections education and education of other institutionalized individuals, including how it will fund, in accordance with the requirements of title II subtitle C, any of the following academic programs for:

- Adult education and literacy activities;
- Special education, as determined by the eligible agency;
- Secondary school credit;
- Integrated education and training;
- Career pathways;
- Concurrent enrollment;
- Peer tutoring; and
- Transition to re-entry initiatives and other post release services with the goal of reducing recidivism.

Each eligible agency using funds provided under Programs for Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Individuals to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution must give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional

institution within 5 years of participation in the program.

Each eligible agency using funds provided under Programs for Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Individuals to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution must give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within 5 years of participation in the program.

Indiana's process to award funds provided under Programs for Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Individuals is the same as above (b). Further, DWD awards between 1% and twenty 20% percent of the total funds made available through an RFA to be used specifically to provide adult education and literacy activities to eligible individuals currently incarcerated in a state prison or correctional facility, a county jail, or are currently participating in Indiana's community corrections program. DWD requires all programs providing adult education and literacy activities to criminal offenders in state or county custody to give priority to individuals who are likely to leave state or county custody within 5 years of receiving adult education and literacy services.

In the RFA, eligible providers list the location(s) where adult education activities including adult education, literacy, secondary school credit, English language acquisition, workforce preparation and IET to eligible individuals who are currently inmates in state prisons, county jails, or are part of Indiana's community corrections programs are planned. A description how the applicant plans to identify and provides services for eligible individuals with accommodated educational needs (disabilities and/or learning disabilities) in the corrections environment must be specified. Additionally, the applicant's capacity to deliver adult education and literacy activities must be addressed, as well as how the applicant plans to offer or partner with others to offer transitional services to eligible individuals exiting custody.

D. INTEGRATED ENGLISH LITERACY AND CIVICS EDUCATION PROGRAM

Describe how the State will establish and operate Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education programs under Section 243 of WIOA, for English language learners who are adults, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries, including how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be delivered in combination with integrated education and training activities.

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

Describe how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be designed to prepare adults who are English language learners for, and place such adults in, unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency.

Describe how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be designed to integrate with the local workforce development system and its functions to carry out the activities of the program.

In Indiana, WIOA Title II [§203(12)] authorizes the funding of programs providing adult education and literacy activities to English Learners (ELs), including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries, that enable adults to achieve competency in the English language and acquire both the basic and more advanced skills necessary to function

effectively as parents, workers, and citizens of the United States. These services include: 1) academic instruction in literacy and English language acquisition – reading, writing, speaking, and comprehending; 2) instruction on the rights and responsibilities of US citizenship and civic participation; and 3) workforce training.

To receive funding for Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) under WIOA [§243] in Indiana, a program must: 1) prepare adults who are ELs for unsubsidized employment in high-demand occupations or career pathways, which lead to economic self-sufficiency; 2) assist ELs in achieving competency in English reading, writing, speaking, and comprehension; 3) lead to a secondary school diploma (high school diploma or HSD) or its equivalent (HSE or high school equivalency); 4) lead to ELs entering postsecondary education or training; and 5) offer adult education instruction in combination with IET.

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

DWD competitively solicits applications for adult education grant funds to provide IELCE. The process is the same as (b) above. Indiana funds approximately five to seven programs, requesting a minimum level of funding under the act (WIOA Title II [§202]). An organization must be an eligible provider as defined by WIOA Title II and must have demonstrated effectiveness providing adult education and literacy activities. Organizations that have received grant awards in previous grant competitions are not guaranteed funding in new grant competitions. Applicants not funded as a result of previous grant competitions are not precluded from applying during new grant competitions nor will applicants not chosen for funding during a current competition be barred from applying for funding in any future grant competitions.

Describe how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be designed to prepare adults who are English language learners for, and place such adults in, unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency.

IETs for IELCE students are intentionally short-term, a minimum of 40 hours, and a maximum of 14 weeks. The certification must be industry-recognized and high-demand occupations prior to approval. These basic requirements provide adults opportunities that lead to economic self-sufficiency. The RFA requires potential providers to 1) explain how the applicant organization plans to provide contextualized instruction to eligible individuals; 2) how CCR standards will be used to enhance instruction and align with WIOA; 3) how career readiness and workforce skills will be taught to eligible individuals; 4) how the organization intends to offer contextualized instruction; and 5) how the organization will implement career awareness curriculum.

Applicants are required to address in the RFA 1) the specific occupation or occupational sector that the proposed IET will cover; 2) the funding that will be used for the training portion of the proposed integrated education and training; 3) the intensity and quality of the adult education and literacy activities component of the organization's proposed integrated education and training class(es); 3) the occupationally relevant materials that will be used; and 4) the specific workforce preparation activities that will be included in the proposed IET and how these activities will be provided.

Additionally, the RFA requires applicants to describe how the 3 required components of IETs will occur simultaneously with academic instruction in literacy and English language acquisition and instruction on the rights and responsibilities of US citizenship and civic participation.

Describe how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be designed to integrate with the local workforce development system and its functions to carry out the activities of the program.

In Indiana's RFA, entities must describe how the applicant plans to continually align its services with the workforce development regional plans (local plans) must also be included. The applicant organization's relationship with the one-stop partners in the communities where it is applying for funding and how the applicant organization intends to work with one-stop partners to ensure the efficient delivery of adult education and literacy services to eligible individuals must be addressed. This includes plans for co-enrollment, referral services, and infrastructure costs.

E. STATE LEADERSHIP

1. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE THE FUNDS TO CARRY OUT THE REQUIRED STATE LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES UNDER SECTION 223 OF WIOA

Alignment

In Indiana, there is robust alignment of adult education and literacy activities with other core programs and one-stop partners. Through state and local collaborations between adult education, vocational rehabilitation, family and social services, workforce employment providers, and other partners, Hoosiers participate in a sequential series of services that result in a seamless transition to employment and/or enrollment in postsecondary education or training. While clients enter through multiple doors, the objective is the same – a seamless referral system. In additional to traditional classes within school facilities, classes for eligible adult participants take place at workforce offices, community centers, houses of worship, employers, and postsecondary institutions.

Referral procedures and data sharing are in place among cross agencies. Beginning in 2022 adult education providers will have access to the newly developed Virtual Client Engagement (VCE) tool. This will allow providers to make learner referrals to partner agencies as well as schedule and attend appointments virtually. Curricula are aligned with the College and Career Readiness Standards to reflect the content most relevant to preparing adult students for success in colleges, technical training programs, work and citizenship—in the areas of English language arts/literacy and mathematics. Assessment and other professional development opportunities are shared between Core Partners. The workforce system provides assessment services and provides results to adult education partners and other agencies. Adult education coordinators convene regional consortia to discuss and share promising practices and barriers to participant success. In 2022 the role of adult education coordinators is being added to WIOA Regional Support Managers (RSM). These new roles will enhance the strong alignment and coordination already in place with regional WIOA partners.

Indiana Career Explorer is provided across systems to assist participants with the exploration of career possibilities, to help them make decisions about their future, and prepare for the next step in their education and career planning journey. Indiana Career Explorer is a comprehensive starting point for determining career interests and abilities and is a required part of orientation for all adult education participants. Meanwhile, Indiana Career Connect (ICC) and the Hoosier Talent Network are available to connect employers with job ready talent.

High Quality Professional Development

Indiana Adult Education has established a solid foundation for the delivery and operation of a high quality professional development program to facilitate and improve instruction.

Professional Development Facilitators (PDFs) are an anchor for state leadership activities. They are a network of lead adult education instructors who are trained to model and deliver the highest quality professional development both locally and regionally. Professional development delivered by PDFs are tied directly to state and federal adult education performance measures. PDFs develop local and regional professional development plans and share their knowledge and expertise to assist adult education programs and DWD with continuous adult education program improvement.

In addition to modeling effective teaching strategies, PDF responsibilities include development of local professional development plans in conjunction with program directors and DWD representatives; creation of new teacher trainings and orientations; delivery of assessment and accommodations trainings; and one-on-one assistance to instructors as required by DWD or requested by local program directors.

Supplemental professional development is offered based on a needs assessment. Sessions are reviewed by participants and evaluated by the professional development team. Local providers must incorporate lessons learned into local programming, performance targets, and provide feedback through written reports. Past examples included face-to-face trainings and virtual offerings on topics such as Addressing Racism in the Classroom; Evidence-Based Reading; Integrated Education and Training | Workforce Education Initiative Training; New Teacher Training; and Promising Strategies for the Implementation of Distance Education and Remote Instruction.

The state adult education office typically sponsors conferences in partnership with its professional organization. The event is a shared educational/professional development opportunity for adult educators, directors, administration and support staff, WorkOne staff, career and transition counselors, and other adult education stakeholders. The conference allows sharing of promising practices and presents opportunities to model effective strategies, including technology and resources, for adult educators.

Sessions are aligned with other one-stop partners to ensure that coordination occurs at all levels of engagement. Sessions are evaluated by participants and results are shared with DWD's professional development team as a guide in planning additional opportunities and technical assistance throughout the program year. DWD's professional development team reviews the conference's agenda and solicits session presenters based on this coordinated effort. Topics are chosen, in part, based on the state's professional development initiatives and how Indiana can strengthen and build upon its adult education delivery system based on negotiated performance targets.

<u>Disseminates Promising Practices</u>

DWD's adult education professional development initiative provides technical assistance; develops and disseminates instructional and programmatic practices based on scientifically valid research; promotes access to employment, education, and training services; and offers assistance in the use of technology. Teachers and instructional aides working nine (9) or more hours per week in adult education are required to complete a minimum of one (1) DWD adult education sponsored professional development initiative annually. Each DWD professional development initiative must be a minimum of 10 hours in length, will be extended over time, and will be either job embedded or require participation in a community of practice. In partnership with the state's professional organization, many COABE and LINCs trainings are made available to meet this requirement.

Each local professional development plan is approved individually by the professional development team and encompasses goals based on scientifically valid research that will contribute to meeting specific performance metrics. DWD's Workforce Education Initiative (WEI) pairs adult education, the workforce system, and businesses with employees who require basic skills upgrading to be successful on the job. An adult education coordinator serves as a workforce resource. Meanwhile, Integrated Education Training (IET) programs are approved individually at the state level, must be 40 hours in length and no more than 14 weeks in length, and lead to an industry-recognized credential. Curricula are evaluated and technical assistance is provided when required by the state adult education office.

Monitoring Quality and Improvement

The professional development team continually monitors and evaluates adult education programming throughout the state. Monthly reports are sent to programs outlining performance compared to the same time a year ago and to state averages. Performance metrics are shared and evaluated with PDFs to implement strategies to improve the delivery of instruction and services to participants and core partners. Monthly statewide webinars take place and include performance goals, and initiatives to meet benchmarks. Three adult education coordinators serve as members of the state's monitoring team. Risk assessments are conducted and programs are chosen for yearly monitoring visits. Reports are written and distributed, and technical assistance, including individualized professional development, is provided to correct deficiencies.

2. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE THE FUNDS TO CARRY OUT PERMISSIBLE STATE LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES UNDER SECTION 223 OF WIOA, IF APPLICABLE

In addition to regional support managers and state staff who provide technical assistance, Professional Development Facilitators (PDFs) provide "boots on the ground" to monitor and evaluate state and local initiatives that will foster improvement in teaching and learning. State goals are outlined each year and local professional development plans are created based on state initiatives and local goals. PDFs determine where needs exist and develop yearly plans to advance services, build communities of practice, monitor and evaluate performance targets, and institute promising practices based on sound research.

The Workforce Education Initiative (WEI) brings adult education, businesses, and employees together to skill up workers who lack basic skills and require additional training for improved performance on the job and career advancement. The state adult education office provides a dedicated position to provide this linkage. Each workforce project submitted must be approved by the state coordinator, who provides technical assistance, promotes promising practices, and monitors and evaluates performance.

Additionally, Indiana Adult Education requires that each funded provider employ an academic and career counselor. This position is a bridge between students, program staff, employers, workforce, higher education, and other core partners to lessen barriers to participation. The state adult education office provides a dedicated position to provide this coordination.

F. ASSESSING QUALITY

Describe how the eligible agency will assess the quality of providers of adult education and literacy activities under title II and take actions to improve such quality, including providing the activities described in section 223(a)(1)(B) of WIOA.

The state office employs regional support managers to provide technical assistance and state adult education staff provide targeted professional development in assigned regions. In addition

to visiting classes, the team reviews goals, conducts monthly desk audits, and provides analysis and interpretation of performance data. Each program is provided comparisons to how the provider is performing regionally and to state averages. Every program employs or has access to a Professional Development Facilitator (PDF), a lead teacher who works with instructional staff and leadership on program improvement and student success.

PDFs work hand-in-hand with the state's professional development team to set goals, identify and target areas of program improvement, and facilitate professional development trainings and activities that promote student achievement. Each PDF is responsible for the development of a local professional development plan, which must be approved by the state adult education team. Additionally, PDFs monitor and evaluate progress according to state benchmarks.

Three adult education staff serve as part of the state's monitoring team. The data team alerts state staff when questions arise or if there are irregularities in data submissions. The monitoring team utilizes a formal monitoring instrument to review and evaluate providers. Programs are chosen for monitoring based on a risk assessment. An exit interview is conducted at the conclusion of the visit with leadership and a formal report is written and submitted to the provider. A corrective action plan may be necessary and is coordinated through the regional adult education coordinator. Additional technical assistance and localized professional development are often required to correct deficiencies.

The state office employs a workforce coordinator and an academic and career coach liaison. The Workforce Education Initiative (WEI) targets employers with workers who possess basic skill deficiencies and desire to maintain their jobs or improve performance. Additionally, this project supports employers in hiring and retaining workers who will be able to meet demands for productivity, safety, and advancement. The state coordinator reviews and assesses the quality of each workforce application and proposal, and provides recommendations for improvement before the state will approve the project. Meanwhile, the academic and career coach liaison oversees, monitors, and evaluates the state project; each program is required to employ an individual in a similar position at the local level. The intent of this position is to reduce or eliminate barriers to student participation, and build a foundation to increase academic and career success for students.

Professional Development Facilitators (PDFs) are lead teachers in local programs who conduct needs assessments and gauge the quality of the professional development provided. In Indiana, professional development is based largely on local needs and state initiatives. A local program receives a stipend for its PDF and dollars are specifically provided for the PDF's own professional development. As a result, PDFs are required to submit local professional development plans that are monitored closely by the state team. In quarterly reports, PDFs assess the quality of the professional development locally and provide successes and challenges. The professional development team brings PDFs to statewide meetings twice a year along with directors of adult education to solicit recommendations and feedback. Any professional development offered must be applied and implemented in the classroom and results shared. A guiding question is, "Did the professional development impact instruction, learning, and student success?"

Targeted professional development trainings, including the joint annual conference developed by the professional development team and the professional organization, are evaluated individually by participants. Results are shared and analyzed to improve and build on future events and activities.

ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAM CERTIFICATIONS

States must provide written and signed certifications that:

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The plan is submitted by the State agency that is eligible to submit the plan;	Yes
2. The State agency has authority under State law to perform the functions of the State under the program;	Yes
3. The State legally may carry out each provision of the plan;	Yes
4. All provisions of the plan are consistent with State law;	Yes
5. A State officer, specified by title in the certification, has authority under State law to receive, hold, and disburse Federal funds made available under the plan;	Yes
6. The State officer who is submitting the plan, specified by the title in the certification, has authority to submit the plan;	Yes
7. The agency that is submitting the plan has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan; and	Yes
8. The plan is the basis for State operation and administration of the program;	Yes

ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAM ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include assurances that:

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The eligible agency will expend funds appropriated to carry out title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) only in a manner consistent with fiscal requirements under section 241(a) of WIOA (regarding the supplement-not-supplant requirement);	Yes
2. The eligible agency will ensure that there is at least one eligible provider serving each local area, as defined in section 3(32) of WIOA;	Yes
3. The eligible agency will not use any funds made available under title II of WIOA for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are not "eligible individuals" within the meaning of	Yes

The State Plan must include	Include
section 203(4) of WIOA, unless it is providing programs, services or activities related to family literacy activities, as defined in section 203(9) of WIOA;	
4. Using funds made available under title II of WIOA to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution, the eligible agency will give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program.	Yes
5. The eligible agency agrees that in expending funds made available under Title II of WIOA, the eligible agency will comply with sections 8301 through 8303 of the Buy American Act (41 U.S.C. 8301-8303).	Yes

AUTHORIZING OR CERTIFYING REPRESENTATIVE

CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING

Certification for Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements

The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

(1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a Member of
Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

(2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for
influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an
officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, ''Disclosure of Lobbying Activities,'' in accordance with its instructions.

(3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly. This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S.

Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than $10,00 0 and not more than $100,000 for each such failure.

Statement for Loan Guarantees and Loan Insurance

The undersigned states, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, ''Disclosure of Lobbying Activities,'' in accordance with its instructions. Submission of this statement is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required statement shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than $10,000 and not more than $100,000 for each such failure.

Please download and sign the forms below. Please scan and return the forms to wioa@ed.gov at the same time you submit your State Plan via the portal.

1. SF424B - Assurances – Non-Construction Programs (http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html)
2. Grants.gov - Certification Regarding Lobbying (http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html)
3. SF LLL Form – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (required, only if applicable) (http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html)

APPLICANT'S ORGANIZATION	**Enter information in this column**
Applicant's Organization	Indiana Department of Workforce Development
PRINTED NAME AND TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE	**Enter information in this column**
First Name	Fred
Fred	Payne
Title	Commissioner
Email	fpayne@dwd.in.gov

SECTION 427 OF THE GENERAL EDUCATION PROVISIONS ACT (GEPA)

In the text box below, describe the steps the applicant proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally-assisted program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs provide the information to meet the requirements of Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA), consistent with the following instructions posted at https://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/gepa427.doc.

All applicants are required to attach a description of the steps the applicant organization proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its federally assisted

program. Failure to address the GEPA consideration results in the non-consideration of the submitted application.

Programs address the special needs of students, teachers and other program beneficiaries to overcome barriers to programming and participation, including those based on gender, race, color, national origin, disability, and age. Through monitoring, the state office ensures that local providers give equal access to, and equitable participation in, all such projects.

Additionally, all WIOA Section 223 State Leaderships funds utilized for professional development will include steps to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, the federal grant program by local adult education personnel, including administrators, teachers, aides, academic and career coaches, and other staff who participate.

The state adult education office continually identifies improvement strategies and the need for targeted professional development offerings among instructional staff at the local level. Indiana utilizes State Leadership funds to formulate a local network of teachers to determine effective strategies for engaging them in improvement efforts. This activity continues to address barriers to equitable participation for students based on academic achievement to satisfy the GEPA requirement.

As a state office, the goal in Indiana is to prevent the elimination or underutilization in the workforce of members of any group on the basis of race or color, religion, nationality, age, gender or disability. Each state employee has the right to work in a professional atmosphere which promotes equal opportunities regardless of race, sex, religion, age, nationality, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability. The state does not tolerate, condone or allow any harassment or discrimination whether verbal, physical or environmental.

The state engages in an interactive process to identify reasonable accommodations wherever necessary for all employees or applicants with a known disability. Reasonable accommodations include, but is not limited to:

· Making existing facilities readily accessible and usable;

· Restructuring of a job or service, or of the way in which aid, benefits, services, or training is/are provided;

· Modified work schedules or training schedules;

· Acquisition or modification of equipment or devices;

· Appropriate adjustment or modifications of examinations, training materials, or policies; and

· Provision of readers or interpreters.

The state adult education office also ensures equitable access to, and participation in, all staff projects and activities conducted with federal and state adult education funds.

As an example, the state office previously identified a need for cultural competency specifically in regard to the social, emotional, and academic success of employees and students. Indiana will continually utilize State Leadership funds to provide professional development opportunities, in part, for program staff to address culturally responsive practices to satisfy the GEPA requirement.

ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as "baseline" indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A "baseline" indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, "baseline" indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as "baseline" based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as "baseline" for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);

- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as "baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA." The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as "baseline" for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as "baseline" for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as "baseline." Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state's plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	50.0	50.0	51.0	51.0
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	72.0	72.0	73.0	73.0
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	$5,000	$5,000	$5,250	$5,250
Credential Attainment Rate	73.0	68.0	74.0	69.0
Measurable Skill Gains	68.0	68.0	69.0	69.0
Effectiveness in	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Serving Employers [1]				

"Effectiveness in Serving Employers" is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (COMBINED OR GENERAL)

The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan [13] must include the following descriptions and estimates, as required by section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA:

_____

[13] Sec. 102(b)(2)(D)(iii) of WIOA

A. INPUT OF STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL

All agencies, except for those that are independent consumer-controlled commissions, must describe the following:

1. INPUT PROVIDED BY THE STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL, INCLUDING INPUT AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN, RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE COUNCIL'S REPORT, THE REVIEW AND ANALYSIS OF CONSUMER SATISFACTION, AND OTHER COUNCIL REPORTS THAT MAY HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED AS PART OF THE COUNCIL'S FUNCTIONS;

Commission on Rehabilitation Services Input on the 2022 comprehensive statewide needs assessment: Commission members reviewed a survey instrument and provided feedback, including expanding the collection of demographic information. The survey was released in October and Commission members assisted in distributing to a wide range of audiences. BRS also distributed the survey through several list serves, on social media sites, current VR participants, VR staff, and several stakeholders. After the survey closed, findings from the survey were shared with the Commission in November 2021 along with a draft outline of priority areas. Commission members had opportunity to provide feedback regarding VR priorities. In January, 22 data highlights from the CSNA were shared with members as well as additional details on priority areas, incorporating previous feedback from members. The priorities can be viewed in section (l) and served as a foundation for identifying state plan goals and priorities.

State Plan: BRS leadership met with the Commission on Rehabilitation Services on January 7, 2022, to review the VR section of the state plan. Commission members provided comments on numerous components of the state plan. They voiced overall support of the identified state plan goals and priorities.

Additional feedback is detailed in the sections below.

Services to Students and Youth: The commission supported continued collaboration between schools, Pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS) providers, and VR staff including VR Youth Counselors, including efforts to increase the number of students applying for VR services.

The commission suggested expanding representation on the statewide Transition Advisory Council to include current or former students with disabilities. Members supported increased opportunities for paid work-based learning experiences, however one member expressed a need for better education to students and families about the impact of wages on benefits.

BRS Response: BRS appreciates the support and suggestions from the commission and is in agreement with strategies to expand representation on the Transition Advisory Council and to seek opportunities for increased access to counseling on benefits and work incentives.

Supported Employment Services: The commission suggested that training to employment service providers include training on self-direction in order to better serve and empower participants.

BRS Response: BRS concurs with the importance of self-direction and has included strategies to increase incorporation of the LifeCourse framework, particularly for students and youth, to support this need.

Collaboration with Department of Workforce Development (DWD): The commission voiced support for the collaboration between VR and DWD, particularly regarding the potential for embedding staff in Work One centers to better bridge service provision across programs. A member suggested that developing sector specific partnerships would be beneficial and advised that this collaboration must start at the appropriate level in order to be embraced by employers.

BRS Response: BRS will work with commission members representing the business community as well as with DWD to explore expansion of sector specific partnerships.

Other Collaboration: The commission voiced support for the increased collaboration efforts between VR and the Division of Mental Health and Addiction (DMHA), Indiana's implementation of Individual Placement and Support (IPS) Supported Employment Services, and VR and DMHAs joint efforts to secure training and technical assistance through the Department of Labor Visionary Opportunities for Increasing Competitive Employment (VOICE) project. A member suggested that BRS consider collaboration with other state agencies to support the long-term care crisis and Direct Support Profession (SDP) staffing capacity challenges, specifically exploration of how BRS can support training to individuals with disabilities to become DSPs. Additionally, the commission suggested that BRS collaborate with Governor's office on diversity, equity and inclusion (DE&I) initiatives to improve service access and provision to underserved individuals.

BRS Response: BRS appreciates the support and suggestions from the commission. BRS will further explore strategies for VR participants to explore employment in the long-term care industry, including as DSPs. BRS agrees with the suggestion to collaboration on DE&I efforts and shared with the commission that these efforts are already underway. BRS is collaboration with leaders at the state level in both the Governor's office and the Family and Social Services Administration on DE&I efforts, such as providing subject matter expertise on various workgroups, reviewing policies and procedures, conducting a staff survey, and exploring support on the Employment First Plan implementation.

Order of Selection: The commission commended BRS for progress achieved with building capacity, including improving VR staff turnover to less than 10% over the last two years, to serve more eligible individuals, and supports continued efforts to end the order of selection process. The commission has a good understanding of the many factors that must be considered and evaluated to assess capacity to serve more individuals, including provider staff capacity.

BRS Response: BRS appreciates the ongoing support from the commission regarding efforts to serve more VR eligible individuals.

2. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S RESPONSE TO THE COUNCIL'S INPUT AND RECOMMENDATIONS; AND

See BRS responses in question (1) above.

3. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S EXPLANATIONS FOR REJECTING ANY OF THE COUNCIL'S INPUT OR RECOMMENDATIONS.

N/A

B. REQUEST FOR WAIVER OF STATEWIDENESS

When requesting a waiver of the statewideness requirement, the designated State unit must identify the types of services to be provided by the program on a non-statewide basis. The waiver request must also include written assurances that:

1. A LOCAL PUBLIC AGENCY WILL PROVIDE THE NON-FEDERAL SHARE OF COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE WAIVER REQUEST;

N/A

2. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WILL APPROVE EACH PROPOSED SERVICE BEFORE IT IS PUT INTO EFFECT; AND

N/A

3. REQUIREMENTS OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN WILL APPLY TO THE SERVICES APPROVED UNDER THE WAIVER.

N/A

C. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH AGENCIES NOT CARRYING OUT ACTIVITIES UNDER THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

Describe interagency cooperation with and utilization of the services and facilities of agencies and programs that are not carrying out activities through the statewide workforce development system with respect to:

1. FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL AGENCIES AND PROGRAMS;

Centers for Independent Living (CIL) and Independent Living Programs: The Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS) is the designated state entity for the Independent Living Program. BRS maintains a dedicated staff member as liaison to CILs as well as providers of services for independent living for older individuals who are blind (OIB program). BRS leadership and CIL Directors began quarterly meetings in 2019 to improve collaboration. This included increasing BRS knowledge of the local efforts of CILS and increasing awareness of CILs of BRS initiatives. These regular meetings have resulted in updates to contract metrics for CILs to address concerns expressed by CILs, and introduction of CILS to the LifeCourse Framework. VR makes it a priority to support the network of CILs in Indiana by providing additional funding with the use of SSA program income to support center operations in the provision of services to assist individuals with disabilities with increased independence and a better quality of life. BRS

leadership also meets quarterly with Indiana Statewide Independent Living Council (INSILC) staff and attends public meetings. Results of this increased collaboration have resulted in contract changes and improved communication.

Bureau of Developmental Disabilities Services (BDDS): BDDS is a bureau under the Division of Disability and Rehabilitative Services (DDRS - the Designated State Agency) and provides services for individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities that enable them to live as independently as possible in their communities. BDDS and VR offices are co-located in the State of Indiana, which enables partnership and continued collaboration. Field Operations directors from both programs work collaboratively to resolve any issues occurring in co-located offices. In addition, the jointly developed process for facilitation of a seamless transition from VR-funded supported employment to BDDS-funded extended services continues to be utilized. After job placement and stabilization, VR Counselors submit transfer documentation to ensure BDDS funded extended services are in place prior to VR case closure as appropriate. VR leadership participates actively on several BDDS waiver redesign workgroups, particularly as it pertains to employment opportunities for individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities.

Division of Mental Health and Addiction (DMHA): VR leadership meets quarterly with the Mental Health Employment Council to discuss new initiatives and identify how initiatives (Employment Service Model Revisions, order of selection, and Pre-ETS) impact Community Mental Health Centers (CMHC) and participants with mental health disabilities. Additionally, a representative from DMHA is an appointed member of the VR Commission. In FFY19, BRS and DMHA enhanced collaboration efforts to co-lead and kick-off a workgroup aimed at improving the effectiveness of services and improving employment outcomes for VR participants with mental health disabilities (including individuals with co-occurring disabilities). VR and DMHA also jointly submitted and were subsequently awarded 300 training and technical assistance hours through the Department of Labor (DOL), Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) VOICE project. As the VOICE project was completing, VR and DMHA jointly applied for a second round of technical assistance through ODEP, called the ASPIRE project, which was awarded. ASPIRE technical assistance has been helpful in the planning and kick-off of two early adopter CMHC Individual Placement and Support (IPS) sites.

Collaborative efforts with other state agencies, including Department of Education and Department of Workforce Development are detailed in other relevant sections of the VR portion of the state plan.

Other: VR maintains a collaborative working relationship with several advocacy, participant support groups and other organizations with a presence in Indiana, and national organizations. These include: the National Employment Team (The NET), the Indiana Resource Center for Families with Special Needs (INSOURCE); Indiana's Client Assistance Program; the Work to Include Coalition in partnership with the Indiana Governor's Council for People with Disabilities; the Indiana Association of People Supporting Employment First (IN-APSE), the Indiana Association of Rehabilitation Facilities in Indiana (INARF); the Arc of Indiana, and the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Indiana Chapter. Input from many of these groups is obtained through various workgroups such as the transition advisory council, the VR employment advisory group, the Mental Health Employment taskforce, as well as participation from several of these groups on the Commission on Rehabilitation Services.

2. STATE PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT UNDER SECTION 4 OF THE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 1998;

Assistive Technology Act Project: VR has a long-standing association with Easter Seals Crossroads Assistive Technology Center INDATA Project. The INDATA Project is federally funded through the Assistive Technology Grant and is designed to increase access to and awareness of assistive technology. INDATA's core services include: information and referral, funding assistance, public awareness and education, device demonstration, device loan, reutilized computers, and equipment reutilization. The INDATA Project is an international benchmark of success. The INDATA Project helped transform the Easter Seals Crossroads AT Center into more than just what the federal act requires. Now the AT Center has its own recording studio and broadcasts 24/7 podcasts around the world. They are known for their expertise and ability to train their staff in order to prepare each member for their national RESNA certification as an AT Provider. In addition, the INDATA Project staff provides VR Counselors ongoing assistive technology training and monthly webinars that are live streamed to VR staff. Furthermore, participants and VR staff can access the equipment loan library to test various types of equipment or borrow equipment to be used when repairs are necessary to previously purchased items. INDATA Project also partners with Centers for Independent Living, Area Agencies on Aging and Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRP) ensuring broad networking reach for persons with disabilities to understand what services are available and how they can best be utilized to assist with employment and independent living.

3. PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT BY THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE;

Department of Agriculture: VR participants utilize the Indiana AgrAbility/Breaking New Ground Outreach Program located at Purdue University. This program assists farmers with disabilities to assess barriers and the need for accommodations and identify possible resources. Breaking New Ground provides outreach to rural communities across a spectrum of disabilities including spinal injuries, amputations, arthritis, back impairments and behavioral health; making referrals to Indiana VR as appropriate.

4. NON-EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES SERVING OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH; AND

BRS continues to be a collaborative partner with DWD for services to all individuals with disabilities, including out-of-school youth. VR, DWD, and the Governor's Workforce Cabinet are exploring strategies for increased collaboration through strategic state planning meetings. VR also continues to partner with the Arc of Indiana and Self-Advocates of Indiana to provide Career Counseling and Information and Referral (CCIR) services to individuals employed at subminimum wage, including youth.

5. STATE USE CONTRACTING PROGRAMS.

State Use Program: BRS has assigned a designee to represent DDRS/VR on the Indiana State Use Committee, also known as the Ability Indiana Committee. The Committee continues to meet quarterly to review services, products, and employment data while monitoring new initiatives by providers. The Indiana Association of Rehabilitation Facilities (INARF) manages the program and acts in a liaison capacity to facilitate contracts with Certified Ability Indiana Organizations and the Indiana Department of Administration. INARF provided an overview of the State Use Program, known as Ability Indiana, to the Commission on Rehabilitation Services in 2019 to provide an educational opportunity and increase awareness of this program.

D. COORDINATION WITH EDUCATION OFFICIALS

Describe:

1. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S PLANS, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES FOR COORDINATION WITH EDUCATION OFFICIALS TO FACILITATE THE TRANSITION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES FROM SCHOOL TO THE RECEIPT OF VR SERVICES, INCLUDING PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES, AS WELL AS PROCEDURES FOR THE TIMELY DEVELOPMENT AND APPROVAL OF INDIVIDUALIZED PLANS FOR EMPLOYMENT FOR THE STUDENTS

Indiana VR and key partners continue to build a collaborative infrastructure for the purpose of streamlined transition of students with disabilities from school to the receipt of VR services, including pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS). Ongoing Indiana initiatives and WIOA requirements are aligned for VR to coordinate with Education officials and other key partners (e.g., Department of Workforce Development) to identify the best methods for providing successful transition services to students.

Serving transition-aged students continues to be a priority for VR, even more so with the advent of WIOA and Pre-ETS. Through the efforts of VR's dedicated transition staff, the Director of Youth Services, the Associate Director of Youth Services, and 8 youth counselors located throughout the state, VR has maintained Pre-ETS in all 92 Indiana counties and continues to expand availability to more schools and students. Pre-ETS is active in approximately 400 schools statewide, currently serving close to 8,000 students. Education to key stakeholders is a major part of this expansion. This includes VR staff and contractors providing Pre-ETS across the state, as well as outreach and education to students, parents, educators, and others. This education and outreach serves not only to educate about Pre-ETS requirements and availability, but also to quell misconceptions about services. This training has included face-to-face meetings with Pre-ETS contractors for the purpose of sharing resources, expectations, and accomplishments. Training with Pre-ETS contractors has also included webinars to VR staff, parents, and educators, presentations to local school systems, and providing ongoing updates to the statewide VR Transition Advisory Council. The focus of much of this outreach has been to aid in understanding of the importance of and how to access Pre-ETS for students with disabilities across the state. VR assisted in training Pre-ETS Career Coaches throughout the state in working with students with high support needs through a series of videos created in collaboration with PCG, collaborated with DOE on a webinar for Pre-ETS and school reentry (the "Pre-ETS Back to School Special"), and developed a document outlining best practices for Pre-ETS providers and schools to improve communication and information sharing on Pre-ETS activities, and portfolio and IEP requirements.

As mentioned previously, VR has 8 youth counselors who assist with continued expansion and maintenance of Pre-ETS . Youth counselors work in their respective regions throughout the state assisting with transition and Pre-ETS activities. They have each completed needs assessments focusing on VR area offices, school systems and Pre-ETS contractors and have introduced many positive changes. They have helped to strengthen the referral process and communication in general with VR and many school systems, assisted providers in accessing schools where Pre-ETS was not widely available, and provided numerous trainings and technical assistance to Pre-ETS and transition stakeholders. The current needs assessments have transformed to maintenance and expansion plans and are updated throughout the year to reflect current trends in Pre-ETS and transition activities. This allows the youth counselors to keep updated on student enrollment, referrals to VR, and strengths and concerns with transition and Pre-ETS processes. They work closely with all stakeholders to address concerns, highlight strengths, and continually improve processes, procedures and outreach to students and youth with disabilities.

VR, in collaboration with DOE, established a Statewide Transition Advisory Council to identify and address the barriers that continue to impact students with disabilities, and develop and implement strategies and services to make the transition successful for students and youth with disabilities. The VR/DOE MOU is currently being revised and the Transition Advisory Council will continue to serve as the VR/DOE MOU Oversight group and provide input and recommendations into the 5 key oversight areas. These 5 areas are:

1. Reviewing, addressing and facilitating resolution of concerns relating to transition and Pre-ETS for students with disabilities.
2. Supporting joint training for Partner Agency staff to promote mutual understanding of each Partner Agency's systems.
3. Providing professional development and technical assistance to LEAs and VR Area Offices that enhance collaboration and involvement with community-based organizations, employers, employer groups, and other agencies.
4. Developing and implementing processes for sharing appropriate individual or aggregate data and information regarding students with disabilities, who are being served or may potentially be served by a Partner Agency.
5. Identifying ways to provide timely information to students with disabilities and their families regarding specific work incentives and the positive impact of work on government benefits.

The Statewide Transition Advisory Council includes representation from a wide range of key partners and stakeholders, including the following: VR, DOE, local educational agencies' school personnel and administrators, Indiana Council of Administrators of Special Education (ICASE), the Bureau of Developmental Disability Services (BDDS), the Department of Workforce Development (DWD), Department of Corrections, Center for Deaf & Hard of Hearing Education (CDHHE), Community Mental Health Centers, Indiana Association of People Supporting Employment First (INAPSE), Indiana Association of Rehabilitation Facilities (INARF), Indiana Institute of Disability and Community – Center on Community Living and Careers (IIDC - CCLC), parent representation, the Arc of Indiana, INSOURCE, and other family advocacy groups. BRS will seek active representation of students with disabilities in 2022 in collaboration with VR Youth Counselors and Pre-ETS contractors.

IIDC-CCLC, along with partners from the Governor's Workforce Cabinet and Office of Career and Technical Education, DOE, IN*Source, and YTac, a federal technical assistance center, created the Career and Technical Education (CTE) workgroup with the goal of increasing enrollment of and positive outcomes for students with disabilities in CTE. The workgroup is in the process of interviewing school counselors at select CTE sites to determine their protocol for student selection, resources for assisting students with disabilities, and overall success rate. This information will be used to identify pilot sites throughout the state with the goal of providing training, technical assistance and other support to increase the number of students with disabilities enrolled and successfully completing CTE courses.

VR has contracted with IN*Source, a statewide parent training and information center, to provide specific Pre-ETS activities on a limited basis. These activities include specialized short-term self-advocacy training as well as training designed with both parents and students in mind to help them understand and assess the possibilities for postsecondary education, employment, and skills for independent living. This is done not only through group sessions with students,

but the use of employed mentors who have been through the process before and can share their experiences. Since these services are short-term and can be done throughout the state, they have helped to supplement our standard Pre-ETS programs in order to reach more students and help to fill in gaps when there is employee turnover with our existing contractors.

VR has counselors assigned to each school for outreach and education to teachers, students, and parents. These VR counselors collaborate with school staff to enable a seamless transition to life after high school. The goal for each student is for a VR application to be completed, and, for eligible participants who are being served, to have an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) in place, before exiting high school. While this process works well in many cases, as mentioned above, VR Youth Counselors continue to identify any areas of need in order to increase communication, improve the referral process and ensure students with disabilities are identified and connected to VR, as appropriate, in a timely manner.

Identified best practices include: LEA's and VR conferring at least one time per year to identify students who may require VR services, those requiring a VR counselor to attend their case conference, providing "VR 101" refreshers to school personnel, and a follow-up process for VR referrals.

Training for VR staff is planned for 2022 on improving collaboration between VR staff and contracted Pre-ETS providers, including improvements to the referral process from Pre-ETS to VR. VR counselors and/or area supervisors are also involved in local transition councils if they exist in the community. Councils are made up of local stakeholders who are involved in the transition from school to work and adult life. Councils could include, but are not limited to, students/family, school personnel, and service providers.

2. INFORMATION ON THE FORMAL INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT WITH THE STATE EDUCATIONAL AGENCY WITH RESPECT TO:

A. CONSULTATION AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO ASSIST EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES IN PLANNING FOR THE TRANSITION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES FROM SCHOOL TO POST-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING VR SERVICES;

VR and DOE have recently updated their interagency agreement, which includes strategies to maximize transition opportunities for students, the types of consultation and technical assistance VR may provide, and cross-training opportunities between VR and DOE among other elements. The MOU includes the following statements:

1. The student's Transition IEP will define the services and responsible payer for each of the services in accordance with 34 CFR 300.320(b). If DDRS/Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS)/Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services is responsible for payment of a service, this responsibility will be described in the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) in accordance with 34 CFR 361.45.
2. Each Partner Agency will maximize coordination in the use of federal funds.
3. Decisions related to which entity will be financially responsible for providing transition or pre-employment transition services that can be considered both a special education and a VR service must be made at the local level as part of the collaboration between the VR agency, state educational agency, and the local educational agency. When considering and assigning the financial responsibility of each agency for the provision of transition and pre-employment transition services to students with disabilities, the Partner Agencies decision will be based, at least in part, on the following criteria:

- Is the purpose of the service related to an employment outcome or education?
- ls the service one that the school customarily provides under IDEA, part B?
- ls the student receiving special education services 14 years or older or has entered grade 9?

The partner agencies developed procedures and processes for outreach efforts and identification of eligible and potentially eligible students with disabilities. The following will be delineated in the updated MOU:

1. Annually, DDRS, or qualified vendors, will work with LEAs so they may identify students with disabilities and potentially eligible students who need pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS).
2. The LEA's will work to increase identification of students with disabilities, such as through conducting career fairs or planning meetings and inviting DDRS to parents' nights. Schools will refer students with disabilities for purposes of 504 or at the time the individual begins IDEA services.
3. Anyone (an LEA, nurse, parent or student self-referral) can refer students for Pre-ETS and DDRS will work with the LEA to ensure seamless collaboration between transition services provided under IDEA and the Pre-ETS activities.
4. Annually, DDRS will provide written information regarding the availability of Pre-ETS for eligible and potentially eligible students with disabilities and the process for accessing these services.
5. Not all eligible or potentially eligible students with disabilities will require all five required Pre-ETS activities, however, all required Pre-ETS activities will be available statewide and delivered based on individual student need.

The MOU also includes a section pertaining to responsibilities of both BRS and DOE (SEA) related to contracting and documentation process under section 511 as contained in the regulations for SEA agreements:

- As identified in 34 CFR Part 397.30, IDOE shall ensure LEAs document completion or refusal of transition services and provide the documentation to DDRS by the prescribed intervals. Upon transmittal of the final documentation, IDOE shall provide a "cover sheet" to DDRS itemizing the documentation that has been provided to DDRS regarding the youth. IDOE must retain copies of the documentation in a manner consistent with the requirements of 2 CFR 200.333.
- Neither IDOE nor the LEA will enter into an arrangement with an entity holding a special wage certificate under section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act for the purpose of operating a program under which a youth with a disability is engaged in work at a subminimum wage.

Additionally, the MOU outlines shared responsibilities pertaining to documentation requirements for activities that youth seeking subminimum wage requirements must complete. The MOU outlines the required components of the documentation to demonstration completion of the required activities, as well as specific components to document a youth with disabilities' (or parent or guardian as applicable) refusal to participate in required activities. This section of the MOU was developed in consultation with national technical assistance partners to ensure all required components were addressed.

B. TRANSITION PLANNING BY PERSONNEL OF THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AND EDUCATIONAL AGENCY THAT FACILITATES THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THEIR INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS;

See 2(A)

C. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES, INCLUDING FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES, OF EACH AGENCY, INCLUDING PROVISIONS FOR DETERMINING STATE LEAD AGENCIES AND QUALIFIED PERSONNEL RESPONSIBLE FOR TRANSITION SERVICES;

See 2(A)

D. PROCEDURES FOR OUTREACH TO AND IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES WHO NEED TRANSITION SERVICES.

See 2(A)

E. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH PRIVATE NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

Describe the manner in which the designated State agency establishes cooperative agreements with private non-profit VR service providers.

VR purchases an array of services from a variety of vendors who complete the vendor registration process and meet criteria to provide services. VR maintains agreements in the registration system with each vendor. There are approximately 80 employment service providers, including Community Mental Health Centers who are registered vendors with BRS, and hundreds of other vendors such as medical providers, training institutions, evaluators, rehabilitation technology providers, independent contractors, and a variety of other organizations. VR promotes participant informed choice in the selection of services and service providers. BRS is exploring strategies to enhance the process for VR participants in making an informed choice in the selection of an employment service provider, including review of technology options to house helpful information about each provider.

F. ARRANGEMENTS AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Describe the designated State agency's efforts to identify and make arrangements, including entering into cooperative agreements, with other State agencies and other appropriate entities in order to provide supported employment services and extended employment services, as applicable, to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities.

Indiana receives approximately $350,000/year of Title VI B funds to provide supported employment (SE) services. VR has made a commitment to serve people with the most significant disabilities and also utilizes Title I dollars to serve this population. VR spent more than $2M million on hourly SE services and $5.9M on '4-week support' and 'retention' milestone payments for individuals with a most significant disability in FFY21, for a total of $7.9M on supported employment services in FFY21. Approximately 1100 participants received supported employment services in FFY21.

As mentioned above, supported employment services are carried out by accredited employment service providers and as outlined in the VR employment services manual.

For participants with intellectual/developmental disabilities eligible for services under the Bureau of Developmental Disabilities Services (BDDS), VR works collaboratively with BDDS to

provide SE services and seamless transition to extended services. The initial job placement, training and supports needed for stabilization are typically provided through VR. Extended Services through BDDS, natural supports or Medicaid Rehabilitation Option funding, provide additional work-related supports needed by the individual to continue to be as independent as possible in competitive, integrated employment. For BDDS participants, ongoing employment support services are identified in the participants' Individualized Support Plan and must be related to the participants' limitations in functional areas (i.e., self-care, understanding and use of language, learning, mobility, self-direction, capacity for independent living, economic self-sufficiency), as are necessary to maintain employment. As an individual reaches stabilization on the job, VR initiates documentation to BDDS to facilitate transfer to extended services, ensuring this documentation is provided at least 60 days prior to planned VR case closure, helping prevent any gap in receipt of needed supports as an individual transitions into extended services. Extended Services are provided in competitive, integrated settings where persons without disabilities are also employed. Extended Services do not include sheltered work or other similar types of vocational services furnished in specialized facilities or volunteer endeavors.

In July 2015, VR implemented a new employment service structure and expectations that increased access to VR-funded supported employment services to ensure that individuals with the most significant disabilities who require these services receive the supports they need to achieve stabilization on the job prior to transferring to extended services as appropriate (and if needed). This procedural change was designed to ensure more accountability from both VR and employment service providers in determining that individuals are stable in their jobs prior to VR closure and transfer to extended services, as applicable. Subsequent training has been provided since implementation of these changes throughout 2016-2019 through face-to-face and web-based modalities, as well as delivery of technical assistance to providers.

VR provides funding for extended services for youth with a most significant disability, for up to 4 years, for individuals who are not BDDS eligible or do not have another means of obtaining necessary extended services. Joint training was provided in early 2019 to both VR and employment service provider staff on VR-funded extended services, including the process for requesting services, documentation requirements, and criteria for receipt of services.

G. COORDINATION WITH EMPLOYERS

Describe how the designated State unit will work with employers to identify competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities in order to facilitate the provision of:

1. VR SERVICES; AND

It is the goal of the VR Business and Community Engagement (BC&E) team to focus on building long-lasting relationships with each employer it connects with in order to increase opportunities for competitive integrated employment for qualified individuals with disabilities.

A first meeting with an employer typically begins with a tour of the workplace, an overview of the different open positions available, and an in-depth listening session on what the business believes it needs to expand upon with their disability hiring goals. B&CE explores where employers are in their diversity hiring initiatives and explores some potential next steps employers can take to build a more inclusive workplace. Disability etiquette & awareness training for hiring managers and employees is most often a service the team is asked to help an employer to develop. The topics of student informational tours, work-based learning opportunities like internships and apprenticeships, and tax credits or incentives for employers

are all presented as ways to assist employers in building a talent pipeline and an inclusive workplace. The VR BC&E team have been able to make many connections between job seekers with disabilities and employers, resulting in job hires.

The BC&E team is exploring strategies to expand its capacity for business engagement in order to increase diversity hiring opportunities for job seekers with disabilities and meet the needs of more employers in their hiring efforts. The team also works closely with the Work to Include coalition, including development of an employer toolkit. The BC&E team shared numerous examples of employer toolkits developed in other parts of the U.S. and internationally and serves as a key resource on this project. Additionally, the Employment First Plan developed by the Commission on Rehabilitation Services, outlines several recommendations regarding enhanced employer engagement. A few highlights include sharing success stories, identifying model employers to serve as mentors for other employers, increased opportunities for paid internships or apprenticeships, and developing a library of resources including information on tax credits, accommodation resources, and other helpful information. The Employment First plan was finalized in 2020 and is posted on the Commission webpage. The VR BC&E team will be a key partner in the implementation of proposed strategies.

Another key example of how the engagement team works with employers to identify competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities is through partnering with the 4th largest employer in the state, the State of Indiana. In 2021, a disability inclusion committee was developed and chaired by the State Personnel head of talent acquisition. Monthly meetings resulted in the identification and removal of unnecessary barriers that were in job descriptions that might keep persons with disabilities from applying. For example, jobs that required a person have a drivers' license, but it was not connected in any way to the actual job duties. A disability awareness training for hiring managers was created and presented during March Disability Awareness Month. Also, individuals with vision impairments were able to provide key input on the new onboarding system and how it worked with the screen reading. All of these examples of efforts the employer is making to make Indiana a model for other employers in the state.

2. TRANSITION SERVICES, INCLUDING PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES, FOR STUDENTS AND YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES.

When engaging with businesses, the Business and Community Engagement Team regularly educates businesses about Pre-Employment Transition Services and opportunities for work based learning such as internships and on-site visits. The team will engage with the State Office of Work Based Learning and Apprenticeship and other regional initiatives and meet regularly to discuss opportunities for VR participants. If businesses express interest, this is shared with the Youth Services Team to collectively determine next steps. The VR Business and Community Engagement team worked with VR's Youth Services team to train youth counselors on business engagement and identifying opportunities at the local level. This has led to increased employer engagement in local communities that has aided Pre-ETS providers in supplying students with more robust work-based learning experiences. BRS will continue to explore opportunities for increased business engagement with youth and students with disabilities. VR modified its pay structure for work-based learning in 2019 to increase capacity for work-based learning opportunities for all eligible VR individuals including youth and students, and also continues to support work-based learning for eligible and potentially eligible students with disabilities through Pre-ETS. VR amended Pre-ETS provider contracts to include the provision of stipends for students in many work-based learning activities. This added incentive should increase

student participation in these activities, which have been shown to greatly improve post-school outcomes.

H. INTERAGENCY COOPERATION

Describe how the designated State unit will collaborate with the State agency responsible for administering each of the following programs to develop opportunities for competitive integrated employment, to the greatest extent practicable:

1. THE STATE MEDICAID PLAN UNDER TITLE XIX OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT;

VR has provided education and outreach regarding Indiana's Medicaid buy-in program (called M.E.D. Works) to increase access to competitive, integrated employment for individuals with disabilities receiving Medicaid. Through the VR-funded Benefits Information Network (BIN), VR participants also receive information about M.E.D. Works and how this program can enable them to both work and maintain their needed Medicaid benefits. The BIN process also educates VR participants to make overall informed choices about working, providing education not only about the impact on Medicaid, but also the impact on other federal and state benefits, and the use of federal and state work incentives to assist in achieving gainful employment. VR also engaged with the Office of Medicaid Policy and Planning (OMPP) in 2019 to better understand the funding structure for services that support employment carried out by community mental health centers (CMHCs). In 2021, VR, OMPP and Division of Mental Health and Addictions (DMHA) jointly conducted a funding gap analysis related to the delivery of Individual Placement and Support (IPS) and provided guidance to CMHC IPS early adopters on billable activities across the VR and Medicaid funding streams.

2. THE STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING SERVICES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES; AND

The Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS) and the Bureau of Developmental Disability Services (BDDS) are housed in the same division, the Division of Disability and Rehabilitative Services (DDRS). Additionally, VR and BDDS field offices are co-located, allowing for increased collaboration in serving mutual participants, educating referrals about each program's services and ensuring a smooth transition to extended services as appropriate upon exit from VR. (Please reference sections c, f, and q for more information.)

A representative from BDDS was appointed to the VR Commission in FFY18 and remains an active participant on the commission.

3. THE STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES.

VR enhanced its partnership with the Division of Mental Health and Addiction (DMHA) in 2019 through co-leading a workgroup aimed at improving employment services and outcomes to individuals with mental health disabilities. DMHA and VR also jointly submitted and were subsequently awarded 300 training and technical assistance hours through the Visionary Opportunities to Increase Competitive Employment (VOICE) project.

Approximately half of the community mental health centers across the state are registered employment service providers with VR for the provision of placement services including supported employment. Additionally, stakeholder members from these centers participate in the VR employment advisory workgroup which resulted in the roll-out of substantial modifications to the VR employment service model. These revisions were designed to better serve participants including those with the most significant disabilities and the highest support needs. Several revisions were made to the new draft model based on feedback from these

workgroup members to ensure the new model is effective in serving all individuals. VR Leadership meets quarterly with CMHCs from around the state to provide updates on VR initiatives and address questions and concerns.

In partnership with DMHA, BRS is supporting two early adopter Individual Placement and Support (IPS) CMHC sites aimed at increasing the focus on and prioritization of employment within the CMHCs and improving employment service access and outcomes for individuals with mental health conditions. These sites kicked off October 2021. BRS and DMHA will be evaluating these sites to monitor fidelity and outcomes, with plans for further expansion of IPS to other sites in the future.

I. COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT; DATA SYSTEM ON PERSONNEL AND PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

Describe the designated State agency's procedures and activities to establish and maintain a comprehensive system of personnel development designed to ensure an adequate supply of qualified State rehabilitation professional and paraprofessional personnel for the designated State unit, including the following:

1. SYSTEM ON PERSONNEL AND PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

A. QUALIFIED PERSONNEL NEEDS

Describe the development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on qualified personnel needs with respect to:

I. THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL WHO ARE EMPLOYED BY THE STATE AGENCY IN THE PROVISION OF VR SERVICES IN RELATION TO THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS SERVED, BROKEN DOWN BY PERSONNEL CATEGORY;

Projections of types and numbers of employees needed are based on current caseload sizes, demographic information regarding the population of Hoosiers with disabilities, trends regarding number of participants served in recent years, and current initiatives. The budget and state allocation available also drive the determination for the number of staff that can be sustained within Vocational Rehabilitation (VR).

As of January 2022, the Caseload Counselor to participant ratio is 1:98, however there is a higher than typical number of staff in trainee status at this time so this ration will be reduced once trainees are able to work caseloads independently. Over the last two years, VR has largely sustained caseloads of no more than 80 per VR Counselor, on average. VR has consistently hired 15-20 new counselors annually due to retirements, promotion of staff, and general turnover. The following are projections of the anticipated number of eligible individuals to be served under an IPE annually for each of the next five years.

FFY21 ACTUAL: 12,325

FFY22 ESTIMATE: 13,020

FFY23 ESTIMATE: 14,010

FFY24 ESTIMATE: 15,000

FFY25 ESTIMATE: 15,000

As of this submission, 11 VR Counselors, 8 VR Case Coordinators, 3 secretaries, 3 area supervisors, and 1 regional manager are eligible for retirement.

II. THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL CURRENTLY NEEDED BY THE STATE AGENCY TO PROVIDE VR SERVICES, BROKEN DOWN BY PERSONNEL CATEGORY; AND

1(A)(iii)

III. PROJECTIONS OF THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL, BROKEN DOWN BY PERSONNEL CATEGORY, WHO WILL BE NEEDED BY THE STATE AGENCY TO PROVIDE VR SERVICES IN 5 YEARS BASED ON PROJECTIONS OF THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS TO BE SERVED, INCLUDING INDIVIDUALS WITH SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL EXPECTED TO RETIRE OR LEAVE THE FIELD, AND OTHER RELEVANT FACTORS.

Row	Job Title	Total positions-current	Total positions needed within in next 5 years	Current vacancies	Projected vacancies over the next 5 years
1	Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors	169	179	7	30
2	Itinerant/Working Lead VR Counselors	7	7	0	0
3	VR Youth Counselors	10	10	2	1
4	VR Area Supervisors	26	26	0	3
5	VR Region Managers	5	5	0	2
6	BRS Management/Leadership Staff	10	10	0	2
7	VR Case Coordinators	62	65	4	8
8	VR Area Secretaries	19	19	2	3
9	Blind/VI/Deaf programs	5	5	2	2
10	BRS Central Office Staff	15	15	1	3

B. PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

Describe the development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on personnel development with respect to:

I. A LIST OF THE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE STATE THAT ARE PREPARING VR PROFESSIONALS, BY TYPE OF PROGRAM;

Indiana does not have any CACREP Accredited Rehabilitation master's programs in the state, and therefore there are 0 graduates to report. VR staff are encouraged to pursue online

rehabilitation counselor preparation programs through out-of-state institutions which are CACREP-approved.

VR encourages students studying in related fields to participate in internships with the VR agency and believes this to be a valuable recruiting practice. VR will continue to work with local universities to increase the number of interns with hopes of increasing the recruitment pool for vacant VR Counselor positions.

Due to the lack of accredited rehabilitation graduate programs in Indiana, BRS modified its minimum educational requirements for VR Counselor positions after WIOA was passed. Current minimum qualifications include a bachelor's degree in rehabilitation or a related area along with at least one year of related experience. Prior to this significant change, the minimum requirement was a master's degree in Rehabilitation or related area.

II. THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED AT EACH OF THOSE INSTITUTIONS, BROKEN DOWN BY TYPE OF PROGRAM; AND

Please see response to 1(B)(i) above.

III. THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO GRADUATED DURING THE PRIOR YEAR FROM EACH OF THOSE INSTITUTIONS WITH CERTIFICATION OR LICENSURE, OR WITH THE CREDENTIALS FOR CERTIFICATION OR LICENSURE, BROKEN DOWN BY THE PERSONNEL CATEGORY FOR WHICH THEY HAVE RECEIVED, OR HAVE THE CREDENTIALS TO RECEIVE, CERTIFICATION OR LICENSURE.

Please see response to 1(B)(i) above.

2. PLAN FOR RECRUITMENT, PREPARATION AND RETENTION OF QUALIFIED PERSONNEL

Describe the development and implementation of a plan to address the current and projected needs for qualified personnel including, the coordination and facilitation of efforts between the designated State unit and institutions of higher education and professional associations to recruit, prepare, and retain personnel who are qualified, including personnel from minority backgrounds and personnel who are individuals with disabilities.

In 2014, VR began a comprehensive restructuring of the field services staffing model to improve the quality of service provided to our participants. The addition of a new VR Case Coordinator role helped to ensure that the VR Counselor role is focused primarily on rehabilitation counseling and guidance. Further restructuring included the addition of 7 working lead VR Counselors to help cover caseloads tied to vacant positions and mentor newly hired VR Counselors. VR further shifted its staffing model in 2017 by shifting VR Counselors to either a designated role of performing intakes/application and eligibility/disability priority determination, or a designated role of IPE development and service planning/implementation and placement. All of these changes increased job satisfaction and created advancement opportunities, and the latter change improved efficiency and timeliness of eligibility determination and IPE development, and allowed for improvement in eligibility and disability priority determinations. With these changes, staff retention improved substantially, from over 50% turnover of VR Counselors in 2016 down to about 30% in 2018. For the last two years, VR Counselor turnover has been less than 10% as a result of developing more specialty VR Counselor assignments, efforts to achieve manageable caseload sizes, system modernization, and a salary adjustment further described in the next paragraph.

Of significant note is that the VR Counselor salary was increased in 2019 by over $4,000 and current VR Counselors received an increase of 10-13%. VR also created a new position in 2019

called a VR Counselor Trainee. While in this position, newly hired staff complete a 9-month training period. Once this 9-month period is over, and staff have made satisfactory progress as formally evaluated by the Area Supervisor, the VR Counselor Trainee promotes to a VR Counselor and receives a salary increase to the new minimum salary of the VR Counselor position. Additionally, the ongoing efforts to increase communication and training across VR are anticipated to continue to assist with improving retention. This includes ongoing weekly Field Operations Blast email of all changes or important notes for the week, quarterly statewide supervisor meetings, monthly regional management meetings, monthly field staff training webinars, new supervisor trainings, regional field visits, and other opportunities to bring staff together within the region or state. Additionally, Field Region Managers are an integral part of weekly Leadership Team meetings and give essential input on policies, training needs, new initiatives, priorities, etc. The VR Commission honors staff annually by presenting awards to four outstanding VR staff who are nominated by their peers.

VR continues to offer counselors and support staff opportunities to participate in special agency projects outside of their regular work routines, which helps to reinforce that leadership values and desires the input of field staff. As an example, numerous field staff participated in the development and implementation of a new VR Case Management system and a VR Claims Payment system, serving in a variety of capacities such as testing, piloting, Superuser, trainers, etc. More recently, VR staff are actively engaged in several workgroups including a Discovery cohort, DEI workgroup, professional development workgroup, and other groups.

VR has a long-standing history of hiring qualified candidates from minority backgrounds as well as individuals with disabilities for all BRS positions, including VR Counselors, support staff, and management roles. The Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA), the DDRS/BRS umbrella agency, has an Affirmative Action plan. Additionally, VR is participating in the FSSA Equity initiatives which are designed to promote diversity, equity and inclusion efforts, including hiring a more diverse workforce. VR Counselors also share openings as appropriate with VR participants and VR has hired several former participants into VR positions, including VR Counselor positions.

3. PERSONNEL STANDARDS

Describe the State agency's policies and procedures for the establishment and maintenance of personnel standards consistent with section 101(a)(7)(B) to ensure that designated State unit professional and paraprofessional personnel are adequately trained and prepared, including:

A. STANDARDS THAT ARE CONSISTENT WITH ANY NATIONAL OR STATE-APPROVED OR -RECOGNIZED CERTIFICATION, LICENSING, REGISTRATION, OR OTHER COMPARABLE REQUIREMENTS THAT APPLY TO THE PROFESSION OR DISCIPLINE IN WHICH SUCH PERSONNEL ARE PROVIDING VR SERVICES; AND

There are currently 16 VR staff who hold a CRC, with 4 additional staff enrolled in master's in rehabilitation counseling programs who plan pursue the CRC credential. Of the 186 current VR counselors, 5 have their CRC. VR also has 2 certified region managers, 5 certified area supervisors, and 4 individuals on the Central Office team who are CRC's.

B. THE ESTABLISHMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(7)(B)(II) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT, TO ENSURE THAT THE PERSONNEL HAVE A 21ST CENTURY UNDERSTANDING OF THE EVOLVING LABOR FORCE AND THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.

VR amended its hiring qualifications in 2016 as follows:

Master's degree from an accredited university in rehabilitation counseling, rehabilitation administration, counseling and guidance, social work, special education, sociology, audiology, education, speech pathology, or a closely related human service area or certification as a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) is preferred;

OR

In lieu of a Master's Degree, a Bachelor's degree from an accredited university in rehabilitation counseling, rehabilitation administration, counseling and guidance, social work, special education, sociology, psychology, audiology, education, speech pathology, or a closely related human service area or certification as a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC); AND

Demonstrated paid or unpaid experience, for not less than (1) one year, consisting of:

- Direct work with individuals with disabilities in a setting such as an independent living center;
- Direct service or advocacy activities that provide such individual with experience and skills in working with individuals with disabilities; or
- Direct experience as an employer, as a small business owner or operator, or in self-employment, or other experience in human resources, recruitment, or experience in supervising employees, training, or other activities that provide experience in competitive integrated employment environments.

Other preferred experience includes:

- Vocational counseling skills, motivational interviewing skills, or related counseling skills
- Awareness of cultural diversity, medical and psychological aspects of disability, counseling theories, assessment tools, job development and placement, Rehabilitation Act, ADA, IDEA, Social Security, Medicaid, Medicare, other state/federal programs, DWD programs, rehabilitation technology, economic and labor market trends, community organizations, and financial aid.
- Excellent oral and written communication skills, creativity, problem-solving, evaluation of services, and time management skills.
- Ability to communicate with diverse populations, flexibility, handling multiple tasks, maintaining professional demeanor, and ability to empathize.
- Ability to interpret psychological/medical evaluation reports and medical terminology.
- Familiarity with Assistive Technology and how to access AT services.
- Knowledge of local community and statewide resources preferred.
- Knowledge of local and statewide job market preferred.
- Willingness to obtain necessary continuing training/education for CRC maintenance, or if not a CRC willingness to work toward becoming eligible to sit for CRC examination.

The current hiring qualifications were put into place shortly following the passing of WIOA legislation. VR initially experienced an increased number of qualified applicants for VR Counselor vacancies as well as improved retention. However, with the continuous drop in the unemployment rate and increasingly competitive job market, recruitment challenges have

continued, particularly in certain parts of the state. The salary increases and other initiatives as described above has assisted VR in attracting more qualified candidates and improve retention, but some recruitment challenges are still present.

4. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Describe the State agency's policies, procedures, and activities to ensure that, consistent with section101(a)(7)(C) of the Rehabilitation Act, all personnel employed by the designated State unit receive appropriate and adequate training in terms of:

A. A SYSTEM OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT FOR PROFESSIONALS AND PARAPROFESSIONALS WITHIN THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, PARTICULARLY WITH RESPECT TO ASSESSMENT, VOCATIONAL COUNSELING, JOB PLACEMENT, AND REHABILITATION TECHNOLOGY, INCLUDING TRAINING IMPLEMENTED IN COORDINATION WITH ENTITIES CARRYING OUT STATE PROGRAMS UNDER SECTION 4 OF THE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 1998; AND

VR continues to assess training methods and curriculum in order to make necessary improvements to the development and delivery of training for staff, specifically new VR Counselors. Counselor training needs are assessed through survey, dialogue, supervisor recommendations, staff feedback, and agency directives. VR has a dedicated statewide training director to oversee all training initiatives, obtaining ongoing feedback from a variety of staff to work toward continuous improvement in the development and delivery of training. In early 2022, the VR training team was expanded to also include a VR Training Assistant Director as well as a Training Coordinator, taking the team from 1 to 3 staff. There is also exploration of expanding to a fourth staff member if warranted.

Training is provided through a variety of modalities, including regional trainings, webinars, and in-person workshops. VR has also contracted with CCLC-IIDC for the provision of training including maintenance and enhancements to the web-based Leadership Academy for the last several years. In recent years Orientation modules were revised to provide a more interactive experience for staff taking the courses. Content was updated, and quizzes, discussion questions and features designed to enhance supervisor to staff dialogue were incorporated. In 2018, the Core Course modules began undergoing this same revision process. Some of the topic areas covered through the Leadership Academy are listed below:

- VR New Counselor Orientation (8-week course covering The Field of Disability Services, Participant Statuses, Referral, Application, Eligibility & Disability Priority Category Determination, Fiscal Accountability, Services & Vendors, Additional Services, Comprehensive Assessment, Individualized Plan for Employment, Case Closure, & Post-Employment Services);
- WIOA Program Partners;
- Intro to the Rehabilitation Act and principles of Rehabilitation;
- Addictions;
- Ex-Offenders
- Independent Living; and
- Personality Disorder.

At the time of this submission, a request for proposal (RFP) is in process. Submitted proposals are being evaluated to determine training contractual partners for the next four years. BRS has

also secured a learning management system to bring many web-based training functions in-house.

In addition to formal classroom style or web-based training, a great deal of mentoring and coaching occurs at the local level, especially for new staff. Supervisors and Itinerant (working lead) VR Counselors play a large role in coaching new staff and will continue to be a key part of new staff training. Training curriculum specifically geared toward supervisors has been developed as well and was implemented in 2015. Training workshops have begun taking place regularly for new supervisors and ongoing training for all supervisors. Additionally, online training is required for new supervisors in regards to the human resources aspects of managing employees.

More recently, VR established VR Cohorts to focus on the essentials of counseling and guidance throughout the VR process. These are small groups of 5-10 newer VR staff who work with a skilled facilitator (a current VR Region Manager) and other trainees through a series of sessions.

B. PROCEDURES FOR THE ACQUISITION AND DISSEMINATION OF SIGNIFICANT KNOWLEDGE FROM RESEARCH AND OTHER SOURCES TO DESIGNATED STATE UNIT PROFESSIONALS AND PARAPROFESSIONALS.

VR also accesses training and resources offered by partners, including the statewide Assistive Technology IN-DATA program which offers 'first Friday' AT webinars specifically for VR staff. State and national subject matter experts are frequently invited to present to VR staff through Friday field chats, webinars, and other training modes. Example topic areas have included substance use, Individual Placement and Support, labor market information, postsecondary services, disability specific content, interpreting psychological evaluations, cultural diversity, and more. Many VR staff are also supported in attending state and national conferences and trainings to obtain relevant content, such as vehicle modifications, traumatic brain injury, program evaluation, transition services, and related. A weekly communications 'Blast' is also distributed to all staff to provide timely information and helpful resources. Furthermore, VR meets regularly with staff through weekly leadership team meetings which include VR region managers and the training team, bi-monthly supervisor meetings, and quarterly regional meetings with all VR field staff. These meetings have proven to be a great method of information sharing, opportunities to solicit feedback, clarification of procedures and practices, and insight into areas of concern.

5. PERSONNEL TO ADDRESS INDIVIDUAL COMMUNICATION NEEDS

Describe how the designated State unit has personnel or obtains the services of other individuals who are able to communicate in appropriate modes of communication with or in the native language of applicants or eligible individuals who have limited English speaking ability.

VR maintains the ability to communicate with VR participants in their preferred mode of communication in a variety of ways. VR staff access and coordinate foreign language translation, ASL communication, Communication Access Real Time (CART), etc. whenever needed. To ensure communication services are available despite a shortage of some providers (i.e., ASL interpreters, CART providers), VR has increased utilization of remote interpreting services. Publications and brochures are available in large print and Spanish versions. VR has VR Counselor Specialists to provide expertise and support for specific populations, including individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, individuals with low vision, and individuals with a traumatic brain injury. VR seeks candidates with some fluency in ASL for Counselor positions supporting participants with hearing loss. Our Aware (VR case management system) team has also expanded their understanding of the use of screen readers with JAWS and have provided

additional training to VR staff who use screen readers. Accessibility was also a key consideration in identifying a learning management system to improve delivery of web-based training, and as mentioned, BRS has recently secured an LMS that will allow us to further improve accessibility for staff.

6. COORDINATION OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT UNDER THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT

As appropriate, describe the procedures and activities to coordinate the designated State unit's comprehensive system of personnel development with personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

VR has a Director of Youth Services on staff to train and notify VR field staff of all changes and initiatives related to working with transition-aged youth. The Director of Youth Services also collaborates with other agencies, such as DOE and DWD, to conduct joint training and develop/distribute training materials and other resources. CCLC continues to serve as a transition resource to VR and DOE and develops and maintains a variety of resources in this area. The Transition Advisory Council has been expanded over the past two years and serves as an advisory group pertaining to statewide VR Transition initiatives, including Pre-ETS. In addition to VR, partners who sit on this group include parent advocates, DOE, DWD, local schools, IIDC, VR providers including Pre-ETS providers, Department of Corrections, the Division of Mental Health and Addiction (DMHA), and others. VR Youth Counselors conducted a needs assessment with local schools in 2019 and continue to update this to identify service and training needs. VR will be providing training to VR staff on improving collaboration with partners around transition, including strategies to increase the number of students receiving Pre-ETS who apply for VR services.

J. STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT

1. PROVIDE AN ASSESSMENT OF THE REHABILITATION NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES RESIDING WITHIN THE STATE, PARTICULARLY THE VR SERVICES NEEDS OF THOSE:

A. WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING THEIR NEED FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES;

The Rehabilitation Act, as amended by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires Vocational Rehabilitation state agencies to conduct a comprehensive statewide needs assessment every three years. The needs assessment included review of data on the general population in Indiana as well as data on individuals being served in the Indiana VR program. A survey was also conducted to gather input from individuals with disabilities and their families, stakeholders, employers, VR staff and others regarding the needs of individuals with disabilities in Indiana, particularly as they pertain to employment and transition services. Feedback was also obtained on an ongoing basis through the Commission on Rehabilitation Services, regular VR staff meetings, the VR Employment Advisory Group, The Transition Advisory Group, The Mental Health and Employment Taskforce, and a variety of workgroups with stakeholders. The comprehensive statewide needs assessment established VR program priorities for the next three years, fiscal year 2022-2024.

Indiana's 2022 comprehensive statewide needs assessment reflects a synthesis of quantitative and qualitative data addressing the state's overall vocational rehabilitation needs.

Data highlights from the full CSNA include a breakdown of individuals served in VR by disability service priority category.

Eligible VR Individuals Served by Disability Priority Category:

	FFY2019		FFY2019		FFY2021	
Priority Category 1: Most Significant Disability	8,889	81.9%	8,636	87.7%	8,448	90.6%
Priority Category 2: Significant Disability	1,798	16.6%	1,120	11.4%	792	8.5%
Priority Category 3: All Other VR Eligible Individuals	163	1.5%	88	.9%	83	.9%

The percentage of individuals (most significant disability) served in priority category one has increased significantly, representing over 90% of total individuals served in FFY2021 compared to 42.6% in FFY2016.

The CSNA survey instrument presented questions about the needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities and who might need supported employment to keep a job:

Do you know that VR can provide supported employment services for up to 24 months?

59.45% of combined respondents indicated 'yes' with 40.55% answering 'no.' 52.86% of individuals with disabilities indicated 'yes' with 47.14% answering 'no.' This indicates that over half of the respondents were aware that VR can provide supported employment services for up to 24 months.

What employment barriers exist for individuals with the most significant disabilities?

Highest reported barriers by combined respondents:

1. Employers' willingness to hire individuals needing significant support
   22.09%
2. Transportation (example: can't drive, bus not reliable)
   15.23%
3. Expectations of employers about individuals with disabilities working
   13.81%
4. Not enough employment specialists or job coaches
   10.73%
5. Expectations of professionals about individuals with disabilities working
   9.10%

Highest reported barriers by respondents reporting as a person with a disability:

1. Employers' willingness to hire individuals needing significant support
   22.95%

2. Expectations of employers about individuals with disabilities working
   16.17%
3. Expectations of professionals about individuals with disabilities working
   13.57%
4. Transportation (example: can't drive, bus not reliable)
   11.73%
5. Not enough employment specialists or job coaches
   7.99%

A notable difference between the two groups is that individuals with disabilities ranked expectations of both employers and professionals as higher barriers compared to combined respondents. respondents. Combined respondents ranked transportation and not enough employment specialists as higher barriers compared to respondents with disabilities.

What would improve employment services and outcomes for individuals with the most significant disabilities?

Highest reported needed improvements by combined respondents:

1. Education to employers about the value of hiring individuals with disabilities
   20.72%
2. Additional opportunities for work experience
   19.76%
3. Targeted efforts to transition individuals out of subminimum wage employment (sheltered workshops) and into competitive, integrated employment
   13.32%
4. Additional training to employment specialists and job coaches
   11.60%
5. Additional opportunities for career exploration
   10.04%

Highest reported needed improvements by respondents reporting as a person with a disability

1. Education to employers about the value of hiring individuals with disabilities
   21.68%
2. Additional opportunities for work experience
   18.95%
3. Targeted efforts to transition individuals out of subminimum wage employment (sheltered workshops) and into competitive, integrated employment
   12.96%
4. Additional training to employment specialists and job coaches
   12.70%
5. Additional opportunities for career exploration
   10.03%

Responses were very similar across both groups.

BRS also continued to support Establishment projects for several VR employment services providers through March 2021. The purpose of these projects was to increase provider capacity and training to serve VR participants, particularly those with the most significant disabilities. The CSNA includes outcomes from these projects including outcomes pertaining to the provision of supported employment services. Some highlights are as follows:

Number of Individuals in Supported Employment

PY16	PY17	PY18	PY19	PY20
774	2028	2698	2365	2398

The data does not represent all VR participants or all VR providers. This data represents supported employment data for participants served by a subset of VR providers.

In PY16, the reported baseline number of individuals in supported employment was 774, a statewide average of 19 per contracted establishment provider. This number significantly increased to 2,028 in PY17, resulting in a statewide average of 51, with a 162% increase. In PY18, the number of individuals in supported employment again increased to 2,698, resulting in a statewide average of 67, with a 33% increase. When comparing activity for the first two years of the Establishment projects, PY16 to PY18 resulted in a 249% increase in the number of individuals in supported employment.

The overall metric for this performance measure was a 30% increase in the number of individuals receiving VR-funded supported employment or on-the-job supports short-term by end of year 2 (PY18), and therefore, the statewide sum in both program years by far surpassed the required end of year 2 metric. The results of both program years were a significant accomplishment as supported employment services were underutilized in prior years. As a result of the Establishment projects, community rehabilitation programs devoted more time in the provision of supported employment services to assist VR participants in achieving stabilization and successful job retention.

In PY19, the reported number of individuals in supported employment was 2,365, a statewide average of 74, with a 27% increase. In PY20, this number slightly increased to 2,398, a statewide average of 75, with a 1% increase from PY19. When comparing activity for the remaining two years of the Establishment projects, increased supported employment utilization from PY18 to PY20 was a 29% increase in the number of individuals in supported employment.

The overall metric for the two final years was at least a 10% increase in the number of individuals receiving VR-funded supported employment or on-the-job supports short-term by end of year 3 (PY19) and an additional 10% increase by end of year 4 (PY20). PY19 met the overall metric for this performance measure; however, PY20 did not meet the additional 10% metric increase, largely contributed to COVID-19.

Again, even though the results differ from the first two years of the Establishment projects, and the overall metric wasn't met in year 4, the results still indicate that community rehabilitation programs are focused on utilizing supported employment, with more than a 200% increase in the number of individuals receiving supported employment services from baseline to end of the project period. As a result of the Establishment projects, community rehabilitation programs devoted more time providing supported employment services to assist VR participants in achieving stabilization and successful job retention.

Average Number of Hours for the Amount or Duration of Supported Employment or On-The-Job Supports Short Term, Per Person

PY16	PY17	PY18	PY19	PY20
16	18	23	19	16

As indicated above, the data does not represent all VR participants or all VR providers. This data represents supported employment data for participants served by a subset of VR providers.

In PY16, the baseline reported number of average hours spent on supported employment services or on-the-job supports short-term, per person, was 658, resulting in a statewide average of 16 hours. In PY17, the sum increased to 710, a statewide average of 18 hours, with an 8% increase. In PY18, the sum increased to 922, a statewide average of 23, with a 30% increase. When comparing activity for the first two years of the Establishment projects, PY16 to PY18 resulted in a 40% increase in the number of average hours spent on supported employment services or on-the-job supports short-term provided, per person.

The project metric was met, as the goal was a 30% increase in the amount or duration of supported employment services or on-the-job supports short-term that participants received by end of year 2. Through the Establishment project, it is clear that community rehabilitation programs devoted more time providing supported employment services to assist VR participants with achieving stabilization and successful job retention.

In PY19, the reported number of average hours spent on supported employment services or on-the-job supports short-term, per person, was 603, resulting in a statewide average of 19 hours, with an 8% decrease from the baseline. In PY20, the sum slightly decreased to 522, a statewide average of 16 hours, with a 13% decrease from PY19.

The overall metric for year 3 (PY19) was a 10% increase in the amount or duration of supported employment or on-the-job supports short-term, per person, and an additional 10% increase by end of year 4 (PY20). Neither of the goals were met in PY19 or PY20, which is likely largely contributed to COVID-19. Not only was participants' employment impacted by the pandemic as shared previously, but providers also reported increased difficulty with staff retention and recruitment during this time. Some VR participants also asked to pause services for a period of time due to the pandemic.

B. WHO ARE MINORITIES;

Data highlights from the full CSNA include a breakdown of individuals served in VR by race/ethnicity.

***Total Individuals Served: Race/Ethnicity**

	FFY2019		FFY2020		FFY2021	
American Indian or Alaska Native	139	1.4%	142	1.4%	123	1.2%
Asian	113	1.2%	131	1.3%	125	1.2%
Black or African	1,406	14.4%	1,493	14.7%	1,468	14.6%

	FFY2019		FFY2020		FFY2021	
American						
Does Not Wish to Identify	4	.0%	19	.2%	39	.4%
Hispanic or Latino	341	3.5%	349	3.4%	361	3.6%
Middle Eastern	31	.3%	39	.4%	42	.4%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	27	.3%	35	.3%	33	.3%
White	7,711	79.1%	7,969	78.3%	7,870	78.2%

**Numbers are duplicated as individuals may be counted in more than one category, therefore the total for all percentages may equal more than 100%.*

In FFY21, the majority of individuals served in VR (78.2%) were white, with the second largest population at 14.6% who were individuals who are black or African American. The percent of individuals who are white has decreased slightly over the last few years (79.8% in FFY18), while the percent of individuals who are Black or African American has increased slightly (14.1% in FFY18). For comparison, the below data compares total individuals served by race/ethnicity in VR compared to the Indiana population of individuals with disabilities by race/ethnicity.

Indiana disability population by race and VR participants served by race

Indiana	Number of people with a disability (all ages)	*Percentage of disability population by race/ethnicity	Served by VR PY 2020 (ages over 14)	Percentage of VR participants served by race
Total for Indiana	894,735 (13.5% of the total population)		12,284	
Race				
White	764,451	85.4%	10,323	84.0%
African American	84,964	9.5%	1,946	15.8%
American Indian/Alaska Native	N	N	168	1.4%
Asian	8,576	<1%	154	1.3%
Other race(s)	31,203	3.5%	351	2.9%

Indiana	Number of people with a disability (all ages)	*Percentage of disability population by race/ethnicity	Served by VR PY 2020 (ages over 14)	Percentage of VR participants served by race
Ethnicity				
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	34,758	3.9%	463	3.8%

*Calculated by dividing number of people in each race/ethnicity category by total count of people with a disability in Indiana.

Census - Table Results and ETA-9169 PY 2020 (Indiana Rehabilitation Federal Report)

Proportionally, VR serves a higher percentage of individuals who are African American and individuals who are Asian compared to the total Indiana disability population; conversely, a slightly lower percentage of individuals who are white, and individuals of other races.

The following is a summary of survey questions and responses in regard to services for minorities:

What racial/ethnic groups are unserved or underserved?

Highest reported unserved/underserved racial/ethnic groups by combined respondents:

1. African American or Black 24.14%
2. Hispanic or Latino 21.10%
3. Multi-racial 10.29%

Highest reported unserved/underserved racial/ethnic groups by respondents reporting as a person with a disability:

1. African American or Black 23.27%
2. Hispanic or Latino 18.81%
3. Caucasian 10.23%

Both groups ranked African American or Black and Hispanic or Latino as the two most unserved or unserved racial or ethnic groups, however combined respondents ranked multi-racial as the third most underserved or underserved racial or ethnic group, while respondents with disabilities ranked Caucasian as their third underserved or unserved racial or ethnic group.

What would improve services for racial/ethnic minority groups?

Highest reported needed improvements by combined respondents:

1. Increased outreach about available programs and services 20.31%
2. Diversity, equity and inclusion training for staff 16.47%
3. Ways to address language barriers 16.47%
4. Improved transportation options 15.08%
5. Access to peer mentors 11.95%

Highest reported needed improvements by respondents reporting as a person with a disability:

1. Increased outreach about available programs and services 19.74%
2. Diversity, equity and inclusion training for staff 17.29%
3. Ways to address language barriers 15.07%
4. Improved transportation options 13.79%
5. Access to peer mentors 12.03%

Responses were very similar across both groups.

C. WHO HAVE BEEN UNSERVED OR UNDERSERVED BY THE VR PROGRAM;

The following is a summary of survey questions and responses in regard to unserved or underserved populations:

Who is not being served well enough?

Highest reported responses by combined respondents:

1. Individuals with mental health conditions 13.40%
2. Individuals with the most significant disabilities (need more support to get and keep job) 13.09%
3. Individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities 7.95%
4. Individuals with autism 7.75%
5. Individuals residing in rural areas 7.40%

Highest reported responses by respondents reporting as a person with a disability:

1. Individuals with mental health conditions 13.18%
2. Individuals with the most significant disabilities (need more support to get and keep a job) 12.27%
3. Individuals with disabilities pursuing career paths and advanced degrees 7.58%
4. Individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities 5.78%
5. Individuals with traumatic brain injuries 5.60%
6. Individuals who are Deaf or hard of hearing 5.60%

While both groups reported individuals with mental health diagnosis and individuals with the most significant disabilities as the top two populations not being well enough, respondents with disabilities included individuals pursuing career paths and advanced degrees, individuals with traumatic brain injury, and individuals who are Deaf or hard of hearing as top populations not being served well enough. Combined respondents included individuals with autism and individuals residing in rural areas as top populations not being served well enough.

What would improve services for the underserved populations you selected in the previous question?

Highest reported improvements by combined respondents:

1. Increased outreach about available programs and services 21.60%
2. Improved transportation options 20.46%
3. Increased training for employment specialists or job coaches 14.38%
4. Diversity, equity and inclusion training for staff 13.06%
5. Ways to address language barriers 9.27%

Highest reported improvements by respondents reporting as a person with a disability:

1. Increased outreach about available programs and services 20.21%
2. Improved transportation options 17.75%
3. Diversity, equity and inclusion training for staff 15.54%
4. Increased training for employment specialists or job coaches 11.40%
5. Review of policies and practices to ensure equitable access to services 11.14%

Respondents with disabilities ranked diversity, equity and inclusion training for staff above increased training for employment specialists or job coaches, in contrast to combined respondents. Respondents with disabilities included review of policies and practices to ensure equitable access in their top 5, while combined respondents did not. Combined respondents included ways to address language barriers in their top 5, while respondents with disabilities did not.

D. WHO HAVE BEEN SERVED THROUGH OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM; AND

The Department of Labor (DOL) December 2021 disability employment statistics reports the following for individuals ages 16 and over:

Labor Force Participation

- People with disabilities: 22.3% (increase from 20.5% in 2020)
- People without disabilities: 67.2% (increase from 67.1% in 2020)

Unemployment Rate

- People with disabilities: 7.9% (decrease from 12.6% in 2020)
- People without disabilities: 3.5% (decrease from 7.9% in 2020)

Note: Labor Force participation refers to the percentage of the population who are working or looking for work while Unemployment Rate is the number of unemployed people as a percentage of the labor force.

The Wagner-Peyser National Quarterly report for 2020 (DOL, March 2021) showed that 192,419 individuals with disabilities received services from Wagner-Peyser. Services to individuals with disabilities is 5.3% of the total served.

The survey addressed a few questions about partnerships with the statewide workforce development system (i.e., Work One Centers).

How can VR and other Indiana workforce programs (example: Work One, Adult Education) support increased access to workforce services for people with disabilities?

Highest reported responses by combined respondents:

1. Increase communication about available programs and services 22.17%
2. Coordinating services among multiple partners 17.50%
3. Disability awareness training 14.87%
4. Making the referral process between workforce programs easier 13.50%
5. Increased VR presence in Work One Centers 11.05%

Highest reported responses by respondents reporting as a person with a disability:

1. Increase communication about available programs and services 20.95%
2. Disability awareness training 16.53%
3. Coordinating services among multiple partners 15.68%
4. Making the referral process between workforce programs easier 12.00%
5. Cross-training of staff 11.37%

Respondents with disabilities ranked a need for disability awareness training higher than combined respondents. One other difference between the two groups is that combined respondents ranked increased VR presence in Work One Centers in their top 5 responses, while individuals did not. Additionally, respondents with disabilities ranked cross-training of staff in their top 5 responses, while combined respondents did not.

What are positive things that are happening between Work One and VR?

This was an open-ended survey question. Respondent comments varied widely across the state. Noted positives include increased communication between Work One and VR staff, increased availability of a variety of training programs at the Work One Centers, availability of VR staff in the Work One Centers, and VR presence on Workforce Development Boards, coalitions, etc. In many areas the cross-training of staff in both agencies on programs and services were noted positives along with the cross-referral process resulting in improved communication and collaboration.

What opportunities do you see for increased collaboration among workforce programs to improve employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities?

This was an open-ended survey question. Common feedback regarding improving employment outcomes were comments pertaining employer buy-in to disability hiring. Expansion of services such as work experience, job shadowing, externship, mentoring, job fair participation, networking with HR representatives, and the development of secondary school education to work programs were identified. Employers indicated a continuing need for resources and guidance in job site accommodations, disability awareness, building basic employment skills to include independent living, and the availability of post-hire support services.

Additional areas identified by respondents included continuing efforts to improve communication, cross-training of VR and Work One Center staff, VR staff embedded in Work One Centers, and transportation barriers statewide.

E. WHO ARE YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, INCLUDING, AS APPROPRIATE, THEIR NEED FOR PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES OR OTHER TRANSITION SERVICES.

2021 data from the U.S. Department of Labor shows the following labor force participation and unemployment rate for youth:

Labor Force Participation for Youth:

- Age 16-19 with Disability: 24.3%
- Age 16-19 with No Disability: 36.8%
- Age 20-24 with Disability: 46.7%
- Age 20-24 with No Disability: 72%

Unemployment Rate for Youth:

- Age 16-19 with Disability: 21.1%
- Age 16-19 with No Disability: 11.4%
- Age 20-24 with Disability: 16.5%
- Age 20-24 with No Disability: 8.7%

Data highlights from the CSNA pertaining to services to youth and students are provided below:

Total Individuals Served: Age

	FFY2019	FFY2020	FFY2021
14-20 years	.5%	2.3%	7.0%
20-30 years	43.5%	44.5%	42.9%
30-40 years	16.6%	16.6%	16.4%
40-50 years	13.2%	13.2%	12.6%
50-60 years	15.6%	14.2%	13.5%
60-70 years	8.8%	7.6%	6.4%
70+ years	.11%	1.54%	1.13%

Nearly half of all individuals served were 30 years of age of younger with a continued drop in individuals age 40-70 served. The increased focus on serving students through Pre-ETS could be contributing to the increase in this younger population served in VR.

VR Eligible and Potentially Eligible Students Served Through Pre-ETS

	VR eligible and received Pre-ETS	Potentially eligible Pre-ETS only (no VR IPE)	Total students received Pre-ETS
PY2019	244	4,184	4,428
PY2020	546	3,871	4,417

	VR eligible and received Pre-ETS	Potentially eligible Pre-ETS only (no VR IPE)	Total students received Pre-ETS
PY2021	Not yet available	Not yet available	Not yet available

Over 4,000 students with disabilities received services during PY19 and PY20. The majority of students who received Pre-ETS in both years were those potentially eligible students who were not yet receiving VR services under an IPE.

The following is a summary of survey questions and responses in regard to youth and students with disabilities:

What are the biggest barriers students with disabilities have when making the transition from school to work?

Highest reported barriers by combined respondents:

1. Transportation (example: can't drive, bus not reliable)
   12.50%
2. Gap in services from school to work (student leaves school without connections to services)
   11.35%
3. Employers' willingness to hire individuals needing significant support
   10.86%
4. Concerns of individual or family about loss of benefits (examples: Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, housing assistance)
   9.90%
5. Lack of information or confusion about available services
   9.51%

Highest reported barriers by respondents reporting as a person with a disability:

1. Employers' willingness to hire individuals needing significant support
   12.51%
2. Expectations from professionals about individuals with disabilities working
   11.97%
3. Transportation (example: can't drive, bus not reliable)
   10.50%
4. Concerns of individual or family about loss of benefits (examples: Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, housing assistance)
   9.88%
5. Gap in services from school to work (student leaves school without connections to services)
   9.65%

While reported barriers were similar across both groups overall, of note is that respondents with disabilities reported expectations from professionals about individuals with disabilities working as the 2nd highest barrier, and this was not included in the top five barriers for combined respondents. Also of note is that while transportation was ranked as the top barrier

by combined respondents, both employers' willing ness to hire individuals needing significant support and expectations from professionals ranked as higher barriers than transportation by respondents with disabilities.

What are the needs of students with disabilities as they transition to employment and/or post-secondary education?

Highest reported needs by combined respondents:

1. Skills to get ready for work and independent living 26.89%
2. Work experience, internships 23.85%
3. Self-advocacy and self-determination skills 19.22%
4. Job exploration counseling 17.73%
5. Counseling on post-secondary education programs 10.01%

Highest reported needs by respondents reporting as a person with a disability:

1. Skills to get ready for work and independent living 24.95%
2. Work experience, internships 23.82%
3. Self-advocacy and self-determination skills 21.00%
4. Job exploration counseling 16.57%
5. Counseling on post-secondary education programs 10.55%

Responses were very similar across both groups.

What would improve VR services for students and youth with disabilities?

Highest reported needed improvements by combined respondents:

1. Additional opportunities for work experience
   17.17%
2. Increased knowledge of resources and opportunities that support employment
   15.39%
3. Better coordination between VR and schools
   15.15%
4. Earlier access to VR services
   12.23%
5. Additional opportunities for career exploration
   10.64%

Highest reported needed improvements by respondents reporting as a person with a disability:

1. Additional opportunities for work experience
   18.43%
2. Increased knowledge of resources and opportunities that support employment
   15.93%

3. Better coordination between VR and schools
   14.30%
4. Additional opportunities for career exploration
   12.58%
5. Earlier access to VR services
   11.89%

Responses by both groups were similar, except respondents with disabilities ranked additional opportunities for career exploration as a higher area of improvement v. earlier access to VR, in contracts to combined respondents.

How can employers be more involved with helping students and youth with disabilities transition to work and/or post-secondary education?

Highest reported responses by combined respondents:

1. Provide more work experiences/internships 24.72%
2. Increase their awareness of employment resources and supports (example: Vocational Rehabilitation, job coaching, accommodations)
   24.08%
3. Mentor students and youth 16.95%
4. Provide job fairs at schools (mock interviews/application practice) 15.04%
5. Offer tours at business sites 9.28%

Highest reported responses by respondents reporting as a person with a disability:

1. Increase their awareness of employment resources and supports (example: Vocational Rehabilitation, job coaching, accommodations)
   24.49%
2. Provide more work experiences/internships 21.73%
3. Mentor students and youth 17.81%
4. Provide job fairs at schools (mock interviews/application practice) 13.71%
5. Offer tours at business sites 10.06%

Responses by both groups were similar, except combined respondents ranked increased work experience/internships as a higher need v. increased awareness of employment resources and support, in contracts to respondents with disabilities.

According to the Indiana Department of Education (DOE) "Memorandum to State Board of Education Regarding Child Counts" for December 1, 2020, there was a non-duplicated child count of 169,169 students in special education. This is down from the year before by 22 students (-.013%). The breakdown according to disability is shown in the chart below.

Child Count Comparisons (December 2, 2019, and December 1, 2020)

Ages: 5B (kindergarten eligible)-22- Unduplicated State Totals by Disability

Primary Exceptionality Category	December 2019 Count	December 2020 Count	Increase/Decrease
Multiple Disability	1,961	1,862	-99
Orthopedic Impairment	1,378	1,301	-77
Blind or Low Vision	924	914	-10
Deaf or Hard of Hearing	2,293	2,303	10
Emotional Disability-Full Time	6,766	6,422	-344
Emotional Disability - All Other	6,019	5,857	-162
Specific Learning Disability	54,379	53,106	-1,273
Developmental Delay (Ages 5B-8}	5,187	7,807	2,620
Language/Speech Impairment	33,170	32,895	-275
Mild Cognitive Disability	9,417	8,979	-438
Moderate Cognitive Disability	3,336	3,202	-134
Severe Cognitive Disability	308	270	-38
Deaf Blind	28	26	-2
Autism Spectrum Disorder	16,413	16,281	-132
Traumatic Brain Injury	429	403	-26
Other Health Impairment	27,183	27,541	358
Total Unduplicated Count	169,191	169,169	-22 (-.013%)

Source: DOE-Special Education and DOE-Special Education for Voucher Students

The following is information as to Indiana's progress in meeting the Federal Indicators for IDEA in 2019, (LEAD, n.d.):

- 24.17% of youth no longer in secondary school had IEPs in effect at the time they left school and were enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school (Indicator 14a).

- 64.33% of youth who are no longer in secondary school had IEPs in effect at the time they left school and were enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school (Indicator 14b).
- 75.83% of youth who are no longer in secondary school had IEPs in effect at the time they left school and were enrolled in higher education or in some other postsecondary education or training program; or they were competitively employed or in some other employment within one year of leaving high school (Indicator 14c). (M. Oja personal communication, December 18, 2021).

2. IDENTIFY THE NEED TO ESTABLISH, DEVELOP, OR IMPROVE COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE; AND

BRS entered into contracts with 47 VR Employment Service Providers for Establishment projects in April 2017 to improve capacity for the provision of quality employment services, including supported employment. The objective of the project was to enhance employment service provider staffing capacity and training, with an emphasis on foundational, hands-on skills training. The contract period for Establishment projects ran for a four-year period, ending March 2021.

During the four-year project, community rehabilitation programs encountered substantial changes and challenges which required internal modifications and innovative thinking, in order to continue to improve staff capacity and training, to ensure timely and quality employment services were provided to VR participants, including supported employment services. Of particular note was the implementation of an order of selection for Indiana VR in August 2017 which shifted the population served in VR, and the COVID-19 pandemic starting in March 2020.

Data from the four-year Establishment projects has been reviewed and, in light of the above changes mentioned, overall findings include the following:

Performance Metric	Outcome
Decrease in the average number of days to initiate new VR referrals	On average, the number of business days to initiate face-to-face services upon receipt of initial referral decreased and met the required performance metric each year.
Increase in the **number of Individuals** receiving supported employment or on-the-job supports, short-term, per person	There was a substantial increase in the **number of individuals** receiving supported employment or on-the-job supports, short-term, compared to the initial reported statewide baseline. The overall data shows that community rehabilitation programs devoted more time in provision of supported employment services to assist VR participants with achieving stabilization and successful job retention.
Increase in the **average number of hours** spent on supported employment or on-the-job supports, short-term, per person	There was an increase in the **average amount or duration** of supported employment or on-the-job supports received by participants, with a slight decrease in years 3 and 4. The average for year 3 was still in line with previous years;

Performance Metric	Outcome
	however, the drop in year 4 is likely associated with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and the impact this had on participants.
Increase in the number of placements in competitive integrated employment	There was an initial increase in the number of placements in competitive integrated employment, with a drop in years 3 and 4. However, the statewide average held steady other than a decrease in year 4, which is likely associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.
Increase in the number of individuals who retained employment at least 90 days following stabilization	There was an increase in the number of individuals who retained employment at least 90 days following stabilization, with a drop in years 3 and 4. The average remained steady, with a drop in year 4, which is likely associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.
Increase in the average number of hours worked per week for individuals in competitive, integrated employment	The average number of hours worked per week for individuals in competitive, integrated employment remained constant throughout the Establishment project period.
Increase in the average pay for individuals in competitive integrated employment	The average pay for individuals in competitive integrated employment **continued to increase** throughout the Establishment Project period. Comparing the reported statewide average baseline data to end-of-year four data showed an overall 27% increase.

VR is exploring other targeted needs related to the establishment, development or improvement of CRPs, which may include increasing capacity and skills needed to successfully serve VR participants with mental health conditions or VR participants who are working to transition from sub-minimum wage employment to competitive, integrated employment. The needs for these populations or others will be further explored in 2022.

3. INCLUDE AN ASSESSMENT OF THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES FOR TRANSITION CAREER SERVICES AND PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES, AND THE EXTENT TO WHICH SUCH SERVICES ARE COORDINATED WITH TRANSITION SERVICES PROVIDED UNDER THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT

With the advent of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), VR agencies must earmark 15% of federal VR funds for the provision of Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) to students with disabilities. Students with disabilities is defined as students in secondary or postsecondary school between the ages of 14 through the school year in which the student becomes 22, who are eligible for, and receiving, special education or related services under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, or is an individual with a disability for purposes of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Students may be eligible for and receiving VR services, or they may be "potentially eligible." VR considers a potentially eligible student to be a student with a disability as defined above who is not currently receiving VR services under an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE).

Indiana provides Pre-ETS to students with disabilities in all 92 counties through both contracted community rehabilitation programs and internal VR staff. Both students who are eligible for VR services as well as those potentially eligible for VR services receive Pre-ETS. Over 7,000 students, served by 12 contracted providers, received pre-ETS through the program year ending June 2021.

Additionally, Pre-ETS contracts were amended in the fall of 2021 to align contractors' updated budget estimates with actual contract budgets to assist VR in reaching their 15% pre-ETS required spend. Additionally, stipends for students participating in certain work-based learning activities were added to contracts to encourage more student involvement in work-based learning, which is a clear predictor of post high school success.

The number of students served through Pre-ETS and type of Pre-ETS activities received is outlined in the Tables below.

VR Eligible and Potentially Eligible Students Served Through Pre-ETS

	VR eligible and received Pre-ETS	Potentially eligible Pre-ETS only (no VR IPE)	Total students received Pre-ETS
PY2019	244	4,184	4,428
PY2020	546	3,871	4,417
PY2021	Not yet available	Not yet available	Not yet available

Over 4,000 students with disabilities received services during PY19 and PY20. The majority of students who received Pre-ETS in both years were those potentially eligible students who were <u>not</u> yet receiving VR services under an IPE. There may be a need to implement strategies to increase the number of students receiving pre-ets who apply for VR services.

In 2019, Indiana created eight VR Youth Counselor positions to assist with pre-employment transition services (pre-ETS) and general transition outreach to students, families, schools, and providers. They completed local area needs assessments to better understand availability of and access to pre-ETS, develop methods of expanding pre-ETS, improve relationships among VR, schools and providers, and determine the technical assistance and training needs of schools, providers, and VR staff. These assessments led to our youth counselors bringing pre-ETS to more school systems throughout the state, assisting with training of pre-ETS career coaches, and providing community and business outreach to increase work-based learning activities and strengthen overall programming for students with disabilities. Additionally, youth counselors act as liaisons between local education agencies and Vocational Rehabilitation, working on improving referrals processes, attending case conferences, and assisting schools and VR with understanding each other's systems to improve outcomes for transition aged youth.

Please also see information in j1E above for further information.

The complete CSNA can be viewed at vrs.in.gov

K. ANNUAL ESTIMATES

Describe:

1. THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS IN THE STATE WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES

According to the 2020 Census, Indiana's population is 6,785,528 (Census, n.d.), and 13.7% among the noninstitutionalized population in 2015-2019 (nearly 930,000), age 18-64, reported a disability. This is slight decrease compared to 2012-2016 (14% reported a disability).

The Department of Labor (DOL) March 2022 (the most recent data available as of this revision) disability employment statistics reports the following for individuals ages 16 and over:

Labor Force Participation

- People with disabilities: 23.1%
- People without disabilities: 67.9%

Unemployment Rate

- People with disabilities: 8.8%
- People without disabilities: 3.5%

8.8% of the projected disability population in Indiana, or approximately 82,000 is an estimate of the number of individuals in Indiana with a disability who are seeking employment and may be eligible for VR services in 2023.

Annual estimated number of individuals with disabilities in the state who may be eligible for VR services, for the next fiscal year: 82,000.

2. THE NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WHO WILL RECEIVE SERVICES UNDER:

A. THE VR PROGRAM;

A State VR agency is required to implement an order of selection when it anticipates that it will not have sufficient personnel and/or fiscal resources to fully serve all eligible individuals. Indiana BRS lacks sufficient resources to serve all eligible individuals in the VR program. The primary resource factors that warrant continuation of the order of selection through the term of this state plan amendment include a need to serve over 2663 individuals on the order of selection waiting list prior to opening all disability service priority categories, and a current employment service provider staffing deficit. The annual projected number of eligible individuals in the VR program is 15,000. VR anticipates that resources will be insufficient to serve all eligible individuals in FY22 and FY23, and anticipates having sufficient resources to serve up to 13,020 individuals in FY22 and 14,010 individuals in FY23. (A breakdown by funding source is outlined in the table below).

B. THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM; AND

Of the eligible individuals anticipated to be served annually in FFY22 and FFY23 outlined in section (2) (A) above, Supported Employment (SE) funds are sufficient to serve approximately 117 eligible individuals each year. More than 117 eligible individuals are anticipated to need SE services, given that the majority of individuals served will be individuals with the most significant disabilities, many of whom will need SE services. VR Title I grant funds will be used in addition to SE funds to ensure the availability of SE services.

C. EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY, IF UNDER AN ORDER OF SELECTION.

For FY22, the following numbers of individuals are projected to be served in each priority category:

- Priority category 1: 10,600 Individuals with a Most Significant Disability (MSD) are projected to be served.
- Priority category 2: 2,400 individuals with a Significant Disability (SD) are projected to be served.
- Priority category 3: 20 individuals with a Non-Significant Disability (NSD) are projected to be served.

For FY23, the following numbers of individuals are projected to be served in each priority category:

- Priority category 1: 10,600 Individuals with a Most Significant Disability (MSD) are projected to be served.
- Priority category 2: 3,400 individuals with a Significant Disability (SD) are projected to be served.
- Priority category 3: 10 individuals with a Non-Significant Disability (NSD) are projected to be served.

3. THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR VR SERVICES, BUT ARE NOT RECEIVING SUCH SERVICES DUE TO AN ORDER OF SELECTION; AND

Indiana implemented an order of selection on August 1, 2017, and anticipates a continued need to operate under the order of selection for FFY22 and FFY23. At the end of 2021, 2,663 eligible individuals are assigned to a closed disability priority category and have been deferred for services. Indiana anticipates that approximately 700 newly eligible individuals will be assigned to a closed disability service priority category annually.

4. THE COST OF SERVICES FOR THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS ESTIMATED TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES. IF UNDER AN ORDER OF SELECTION, IDENTIFY THE COST OF SERVICES FOR EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY.

The tables below provide the FY22 and FY23 projected budget for the Indiana VR program, with a breakdown by source of funding.

FY22 Budget

Funding Source	Client services	Pre-employment transition services	*Administration/ other	
Title I VR	37,660,000	9,200,000	30,800,000	
Title VI Part B SE	340,000			
Program Income	0			
TOTAL	38,000,000	9,200,000	30,800,000	78,000,000

*Administration includes personnel including 186 VR Counselors providing counseling and guidance, career exploration, and other services to VR applicants and participants (total staff counts can be reviewed in section i); leasing; equipment; training for new VR staff, seasoned staff, VR vendors, employment service providers, and other stakeholders; travel expenses

related to meeting clients in their local communities; Information Technology; other contractual expenses including benefits counseling; and related. Any increase in staffing will increase administration expenses. *2022 admin expenses are higher than FY23 projected admin expenses due to special projects occurring during 2022, e.g., enhanced training for providers, value-based rate evaluation, CSNA, updated equipment for staff, and additional IT system modernization and streamlining.*

FY23 Budget

Funding Source	Client services	Pre-employment transition services	*Administration/ other	
Title I VR	39,660,000	9,200,000	28,800,000	
Title VI Part B SE	340,000			
Program Income	500,000			
TOTAL	40,500,000	9,200,000	28,800,000	78,500,000

*Administration includes personnel including 186 VR Counselors providing counseling and guidance, career exploration, and other services to VR applicants and participants (total staff counts can be reviewed in section i); leasing; equipment; training for new VR staff, seasoned staff, VR vendors, employment service providers, and other stakeholders; travel expenses related to meeting clients in their local communities; Information Technology; other contractual expenses including benefits counseling; and related. Any increase in staffing will increase administration expenses.

VR estimates annual client services costs for Title I at $37.66 million for FY22 and $39.66M for FY23.

VR estimates that 13,020 eligible individuals will be served in FY22 at a cost of $38M, and 14,010 will be served in FY23 at a cost of $40.5M, using all available funding sources (Title I, Supported Employment, and Program Income).

The projected annual average cost per individual receiving services under an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) and total projected costs for client services by disability priority category for FY22 is outlined in the table below.

Disability priority category	Projected Number to be Served	% of Total	Projected Number of Rehabilitations	***Annual Average Cost per individual	Projected Costs
1) Most Significant Disability (MSD)	10,600	81.4%	5,300	$3,000	$31.8 M
2) Significant Disability (SD)	*2,400	18.4%	1200	$2,575	$6.18M
3) Non-Significant Disability (NSD)	*20	<1%	10	$1,200	$24,000

Disability priority category	Projected Number to be Served	% of Total	Projected Number of Rehabilitations	***Annual Average Cost per individual	Projected Costs
Total	13,020		**6,510		$38M

*Individuals in all priority categories who had an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) in place prior to the implementation of the order of selection continued to receive services after the order was implemented.

**Average time to achieve stable employment is 25 months from IPE

***Represents an average cost per year, per participant and not an average total cost per participant. Individuals often remain in services for two years or more. The cost to serve an individual under IPE varies greatly and often exceeds the average.

The projected annual average cost per individual receiving services under an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) and total projected costs for client services by disability priority category for FY23 is outlined in the table below.

Disability priority category	Projected Number to be Served	% of Total	Projected Number of Rehabilitations	***Annual Average Cost per individual	Projected Costs
1) Most Significant Disability (MSD)	10,600	75.7%	5,300	$3,000	$31.8 M
2) Significant Disability (SD)	*3,400	24.3%	1,700	$2,575	$8.7M
3) Non-Significant Disability (NSD)	*10	<1%	5	$1,200	$12,000
Total	14,010		**7,005		$40.5M

*Individuals in all priority categories who had an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) in place prior to the implementation of the order of selection continued to receive services after the order was implemented.

**Average time to achieve stable employment is 25 months from IPE.

***Represents an average cost per year, per participant and not an average total cost per participant. Individuals often remain in services for two years or more. The cost to serve an individual under IPE varies greatly and often exceeds the average.

L. STATE GOALS AND PRIORITIES

The designated State unit must:

1. IDENTIFY IF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES WERE JOINTLY DEVELOPED AND AGREED TO BY THE STATE VR AGENCY AND THE STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL, IF THE STATE HAS A COUNCIL, AND JOINTLY AGREED TO ANY REVISIONS

Goals, outcomes, and priorities were reviewed and discussed with the State Rehabilitation Council, providing an opportunity for input and comments. The council was in agreement with the goals and priorities outlined below.

2. IDENTIFY THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES IN CARRYING OUT THE VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS

GOAL 1: Improve the quality of services and outcomes

Priority 1.1: Implement new innovative training strategies for VR Counselors and other VR staff, such as increased use of itinerant (working lead) VR Counselors as regional trainers, enhancements to web-based modules including development of content for VR Case Coordinators, or other strategies. Provide training to staff on post-secondary services, transition responsibilities, extended services to youth with a most significant disability, and training on strengths-based service provision to specific populations such as individuals with mental health conditions and individuals transitioning from subminimum wage employment to competitive, integrated employment. At least two new training focus areas will be identified annually with training provided to applicable staff during PY20-21. This goal is extended into PY22-23.

Outcome 1.1: Achieved for PY20-21. All training goals outlined above were achieved, along with provision of additional training including inclusive service delivery, cultural competencies, and training on serving individuals with substance use disorder.

Priority 1.2: Identify and implement at least two new strategies during PY20-21 for effective training to VR employment service providers, including opportunities for hands-on training to build skills, training focused on strengths-based service provision to individuals with high support needs, opportunities for joint training with VR staff, and other needed topics. Also, track data on the number of foundational training hours Establishment project provider staff receive annually, ensuring that staff receive at least 10 hours of foundational, hands-on training annually through the life of the Establishment projects (through March 2021).

Outcome 1.2: Achieved. While training largely shifted to remote access during the pandemic, training goals for providers were achieved. A coaching network was implemented during the evaluation period to bolster classroom and online based foundational skills training, aimed at improving provider staff skills.

Amended Priority 1.2 for PY22-23 due to expiration of establishment projects: Identify and implement at least two new strategies during PY22-23 for effective training to VR employment service providers, including opportunities for hands-on training to build skills, training focused on strengths-based service provision to individuals with high support needs, opportunities for joint training with VR staff, and other needed topics. Identify additional strategies to build capacity within providers to serve VR participants, such as facilitating supervisor circles and obtaining recommendations from the Discovery cohort on needed revisions to Discovery service practices.

Priority 1.3: Convene appropriate stakeholders, including VR, Division of Mental Health and Addiction (DMHA), Community Mental Health Centers, NAMI, Key Consumer Organization, individuals with lived experience, and others through a statewide task force during PY20-21. The taskforce will identify specific strategies aimed at improving services and outcomes for VR participants with mental health conditions (including individuals with co-occurring disabilities),

such as exploration of the use of establishment projects, training, resource mapping, or other activities with at least two strategies implemented during PY20-21. Establish baseline data on services and outcomes for VR participants with mental health disabilities by December, 2020.

Outcome 1.3: Achieved. In collaboration with DMHA and other partners outlined above, two early adopter Individual Placement and Support (IPS) sites were implemented in October 2021. As part of the IPS kick-off, VR identified and trained designated IPS VR Counselor Liaisons to partner on the project at the local early adopter site level. VR also repurposed a current position to create a VR IPS Trainer who will support early adopter sites through training and ongoing technical assistance. Additionally, enhanced education and outreach activities were completed during the evaluation period regarding the important role that employment plays in the recovery process for individuals with mental health conditions. In addition to providing numerous training topics to VR staff and providers, as well as presenting to various stakeholder groups (e.g., INARF, NAMI, mental health council, Commission on Rehabilitation Services, national conferences), VR also partnered with DMHA to launch a mental health and employment online resource hub. This resource includes videos and other materials covering topics such as stigma, employment and recovery, IPS, interviews with individuals with lived experiences, and related information. Baseline data was also secured which reflected a 25% success rate for VR participants with mental health conditions obtaining employment, leaving much room for improvement.

Amended Priority 1.3: Continue to engage appropriate stakeholders, including VR, Division of Mental Health and Addiction (DMHA), Community Mental Health Centers, NAMI, Key Consumer Organization, individuals with lived experience, and others through a statewide taskforce during PY22-23. The taskforce will continue its efforts to improve services and outcomes for VR participants with mental health conditions as well as serve as the advisory board for the early adopter IPS sites. In collaboration with DMHA, VR will evaluate outcomes of early adopter IPS sites such as employment rate, average wages and hours worked, length of time to placement, and other relevant data elements. Project evaluation will be conducted during the PY22-23 state plan period.

Priority 1.4: Identify and implement strategies to improve employment outcomes, such as exploration of the need for Establishment projects to further improve service provision by community rehabilitation programs, analysis of the impact of discovery activities on employment outcomes, increased utilization of supported employment services, sharing emerging best practices, or other strategies. The number of VR participants achieving employment will increase by 10% (pre-pandemic baseline 2160) and average hourly wages will increase by at least 5% (PY20 baseline $12.30).

Outcome 1.4: Priority is ongoing; however, these targets were significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. VR will continue to identify and implement strategies to improve outcomes post-pandemic. Targets for the next two years have been revised due to the impact on the employment rate during the pandemic. Targets are based on the number of individuals achieving employment pre-pandemic and baseline wages from PY20.

GOAL 2: Improve capacity to serve VR eligible individuals

Priority 2.1: Identify and implement strategies to improve staff capacity to serve eligible individuals, including improved recruitment through use of interns in VR field offices, outreach to colleges and universities, or other strategies; and improved retention through implementation of strategies to improve VR staff job satisfaction such as improved communication and training to staff, and increased opportunities for staff to participate in

special projects and workgroups in areas that match their interests. At least one recruitment and retention strategy will be implemented annually during PY20-23.

Outcome 2.1: Achieved for PY20-21. Staff retention has increased substantially over the last few years, with only 8% turnover of VR Counselor positions this last year. During the first two years of the state plan period, VR initiated the Discovery Cohort, a project involving numerous VR staff who are evaluating the current discovery services and expectations, identifying best practices as well as areas of improvement, and conducting small pilots in their local areas. Additionally, VR created a new VR Counselor specialty position with a focus on serving VR participants in postsecondary training. Indiana VR was selected to present at a national conference to share staff recruitment/retention and satisfaction strategies due to the significant strides accomplished with Indiana VR staffing. Additional strategies will continue to be implemented during the next two years.

Priority 2.2: Identify and implement strategies to improve fiscal capacity to serve eligible individuals, including exploration of opportunities for braided funding, review of VR rules on high-cost service areas (e.g., home modifications, vehicle modifications), increasing knowledge of comparable benefits such as those offered through core WIOA programs, and other strategies. Implement at least one new strategy annually in PY20-21.

Outcome 2.2: Achieved. VR expanded its written agreement with the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) for the provision of pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS) through the Jobs for Americas Graduates (JAG) program for students with disabilities. Match funds have been increased, allowing VR to draw additional federal funds, while expanding Pre-ETS to more students. VR is also braiding dollars with other state agencies for the IPS early adopter project mentioned in item 1.3 above.

Amended Priority 2.2: Spending patterns have changed during the pandemic due to reduced applicants and vendors pausing services, resulting in increased carryover funding. VR will strategically invest increased carryover to fill service gaps and expand services to more eligible individuals. VR aims to release at least 1,000 individuals from the order of selection waiting list annually during PY22-23, while sustaining our improved staff capacity, and implement at least two innovative strategies to address service gaps such as enhanced benefits and work incentives counseling.

Priority 2.3: Continue streamlining efforts such as continued system modernization including enhancements to the VR Claims Payment System, exploration of a streamlined referral process with core WIOA programs, and review of VR rules and processes to identify opportunities for reduced administrative burden. At least one streamlining effort will be implemented annually during PY20-23.

Outcome 2.3: Achieved for PY20-21. VR implemented additional improvements to both the VR case management system (Aware) and the VR Claims Payment System (CPS), streamlining administrative processes for both VR staff and vendors. One example is the implementation of DocuSign to allow for better ease of capturing signatures from participants. The process for conducting quarterly follow up activities was also significantly streamlined through full implementation of the SWIS agreement with DWD, enabling VR to meet federal requirements with reduced burden on field staff. Enhancements to the Pre-ETS portal were also implemented to improve program monitoring and internal controls.

GOAL 3: Enhance collaboration with a variety of partners to ensure that job seekers with disabilities have access to a variety of pathways to employment

Priority 3.1: Continue collaboration with core WIOA partners through strategies such as implementation of a combined state plan, maintaining and enhancing written partnership agreements, implementing Indiana's SWIS agreement, joint participation in special projects such as the Visionary Opportunities to Increase Competitive Employment (VOICE) training and technical assistance project, and other efforts. At least one new or enhanced collaboration effort will be achieved annually in PY20-23.

Outcome 3.1: Achieved for PY20-21. In addition to strong collaboration on development of the combined state plan, VR partnered at the local level with several workforce regions to implement a shared scheduling software to streamline the referral process across VR and other workforce programs. Agreements for infrastructure funding also continued and the JAG agreement was significant enhanced to target services to a larger population of students with disabilities. Additional collaborative projects are in development and this goal remains relevant through the remainder of the state plan period.

Priority 3.2: Continue to build capacity for business engagement through implementation of new and innovative strategies and partnerships. Strategies may include distribution of a toolkit for businesses with helpful resources for hiring job seekers with disabilities, ongoing and continued education to workforce development boards on improving opportunities for employment for individuals with disabilities, enhancing resources such as a dedicated VR webpage for businesses, providing training to stakeholders including employment service providers, coordinating with the Governor's Council for Persons with Disabilities to amplify their awareness campaigns and education events during National Disability Awareness Month and National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM), and increasing partnerships at the local, state, and national level. At least one new or enhanced strategy will be implemented annually PY20-23.

Outcome 3.2: Achieved for PY20-21. Indiana VR's business engagement team launched a resource webpage to expand business access to information about resources for hiring job seekers with disabilities. The business engagement team's reach has continued to increase through social media followers and a weekly resource and opportunity email. The team supported a successful NDEAM event in Evansville in October 2021 to bring together local workforce partners to educate about workforce resources and outreach to local businesses on hiring job seekers with disabilities. VR's Business and Community Engagement Director is actively engaged in the Employment First and Work to Include stakeholder groups, helping to connect the group to state agencies and resources including the Diversity Inclusion Committee. Because of this connection, there were two trainings presented to hiring managers in 2021 around disability inclusion and etiquette and the employment of persons with disabilities.

Priority 3.3: Identify best practices in the delivery of required Pre-ETS activities such as incorporation of the LifeCourse Framework, and identify areas of growth such as increased focus on career and technical education for students with disabilities and collaboration with Department of Education on a new student portfolio and graduation pathway requirements, and increased access to paid work experiences. Enhance Pre-ETS coordinating activities through increased transition efforts of VR staff including dedicated VR Youth Counselors. Enhance the Memorandum of Understanding with DWD to increase participation of students with disabilities in the Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) program. Ensure that 15% of VR federal funds are earmarked for Pre-ETS each federal fiscal year and increase the number of students receiving Pre-ETS annually. Increase the number of students receiving Pre-ETS who apply for VR services in PY22-23.

Outcome 3.3: Partially Achieved for PY20-21. While challenges in serving students during the pandemic were numerous, VR has continued to earmark 15% of funds for Pre-ETS. Several strategies were implemented to increase utilization of Pre-ETS funds, including increased availability of stipends to support paid work experiences for students with disabilities, and expanding Pre-ETS contracts to additional partners, including IN*Source to help fill gaps in service and offer more options to students. As indicated above, the MOU with DWD for JAG was expanded to serve more students and there may be further room for expansion in the coming years. A mandatory training series was required for Pre-ETS career coaches on working with high support needs students to increase competence of staff and availability of Pre-ETS to these students.

Priority 3.4: Continue collaboration with other state agencies, such as participation in key advisory groups for BDDS especially as it pertains to competitive integrated employment, co-leading the IPS early adopter project with DMHA, and collaboration with other state agencies in the implementation of Employment First philosophy in Indiana in alignment with the Employment First Act. Increase opportunities for targeted local partnership such as enhanced collaboration with 14c facilities, local workforce programs, community mental health centers, local schools, and others. Increased collaboration may improve education and awareness across organizations, create opportunities for shared participants or shared service costs, and increase referrals to VR. At least one new collaborative partnership will be achieved annually in PY20-23.

Outcome 3.4: Achieved for PY20-21. VR further enhanced collaboration with DMHA over the past two years culminating in implementation of IPS early adopter sites. This collaboration has been expanded to include representation from the Office of Medicaid Policy and Planning, which has been crucial in developing guidance on braided and sequenced funding to fiscally support IPS services. VR continues to support Employment First efforts, such as presenting the Employment First plan to agency leadership across numerous state agencies in May 2021, providing VR representation on the Employment First committee, and connecting the committee to state resources and partners such as state personnel department.

3. ENSURE THAT THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES ARE BASED ON AN ANALYSIS OF THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

A. THE MOST RECENT COMPREHENSIVE STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT, INCLUDING ANY UPDATES;

Goals outlined in section (2) align with the 2022 comprehensive statewide needs assessment (CSNA). The CSNA, completed in December 2021 outlined the following five priority areas:

Priority 1: Improving Employment Outcomes

In addition to the strategies included under priority area 1, priorities 2-5 below are also anticipated to positively impact employment outcomes for VR participants.

1.A. Raising expectations around employment for individuals with disabilities

Education to businesses, schools, families, and other stakeholders is an ongoing need. This strategy aligns closely with Indiana's Employment First plan and efforts to improve competitive, integrated employment outcomes for Hoosiers with disabilities. BRS will identify specific strategies to promote increased expectations, such as further incorporation of the LifeCourse Framework in transition and pre-ets service delivery. Strategies 1.B. and 1.C. will also help to support improve expectations.

1.B. Increasing opportunities for work-based learning

Work based learning is one of the best tools we have for increasing employment outcomes, raising expectations, and improving skills of job seekers with disabilities. BRS will continue to ensure that both VR participants and pre-ets participants have access to work based learning opportunities including paid internships. Increased business engagement (1.C.) will also help to generate additional opportunities for work-based learning.

1.C. Improving employer engagement

BRS will continue to partner with the Department of Workforce Development and local workforce boards to expand business partnerships, and to support awareness and hiring events during both National Disability Awareness month in March and National Disability Employment Awareness Month in October each year. Additionally, BRS will explore strategies to better connect job seekers to openings through technology, and hold focus groups with VR field staff to assess how the BRS Business and Community Engagement Director can best support and collaborate with local staff.

1.D. Increasing the quality of outcomes

BRS recognizes a need to implement strategies to improve VR participant employment wages, expand opportunities to new and diverse employment industries, and better promote and support participants in pursuing Career Pathways and postsecondary credentials. BRS has sought technical assistance from the VR Technical Assistance Center and will be prioritizing training on career pathways to VR staff in 2022. Many of the other priority areas and strategies included in this section will also support improved quality of outcomes, such as improved provider capacity and improved collaboration with partner organizations and agencies.

1.E. Enhancing counseling on benefits and work incentives

While BRS has a robust statewide benefits information network, areas of improvement have been identified. BRS will identify and implement strategies such as expansion of the benefits information network to include access to follow up services after placement to increase utilization of work incentives and address participant questions and concerns through various phases of their employment process.

Priority 2: Employment Service Provider Capacity

BRS will identify and implement strategies to improve provider capacity, such as review of rate structures, service definitions, and training processes, as well as opportunities to streamline administrative tasks and documentation requirements. The VR Employment Advisory Group will continue to be a forum for providing feedback, as well as quarterly meetings with INARF and quarterly meetings with Community Mental Health providers. VR participant feedback regarding employment services on VR participant satisfaction surveys will also be viewed and considered in the identification of best practices as well as areas for further improvement.

Additionally, BRS will continue to support a training contract for providers and will seek opportunities for expansion of the coaching network, to ensure hands-on mentoring is available to new employment specialists and those needing to increase their skills in the provision of employment services to VR participants.

Priority 3: Collaboration

BRS has developed effective partnerships with several internal and external agencies and stakeholders, however efforts to further enhance collaboration with targeted partners has been identified as a need.

3A. Transition School to Work

BRS will revisit practices in transition school to work and collaboration with local schools with the goal of increasing the number of students who apply for VR services and who access pre-ets.

3B. Workforce Partners

BRS will seek opportunities to enhance collaboration with workforce partners and better leverage resources in serving mutual participants. BRS will identify and implement strategies such as increased presence of VR staff in Work One centers and the use of embedded staff to assist individuals in accessing services.

3C. State agency collaboration

BRS will continue to enhance collaboration with the Indiana Division of Mental Health and Addiction (DMHA), particularly targeted to the implementation of the evidenced based supported employment model, Individual Placement and Support (IPS). BRS and DMHA will jointly support IPS early adopter sites and ensure braided and sequenced funding supports the sustainability of these sites. DMHA and BRS will be evaluating data and outcomes of the early adopter sites, identify areas of improvement, and explore strategies for expansion and sustainability of IPS in Indiana.

Additionally, BRS will collaborate closely with the Indiana Bureau of Development Disability Services (BDDS) to implement strategies to promote competitive integrated employment for individuals employed at subminimum wage. BRS and BDDS will review data, review best practices, and identify opportunities to support 14(c) entities in transitioning individuals into competitive, integrated employment.

Priority 4: Reducing Order of Selection wait lists while sustaining VR staff capacity

BRS is targeting quarterly releases of eligible individuals from the order of selection wait list over the next few years. BRS will closely review both VR and provider staff capacity, as well as resource availability, to assess the pace at which individuals can be released. BRS will review data on each release regarding the percent of individuals who entered services in order to inform BRS regarding the timing and size of subsequent releases. As capacity gaps are identified, BRS will identify strategies to address these.

Priority 5: Underserved/Unserved Populations

BRS identified a need to improve services to individuals with mental health conditions when completing the prior needs assessment in 2019. Much focus on improving employment services and outcomes for individuals with mental health conditions has occurred over the past three years, including enhanced partnership with DMHA on the development of a taskforce, obtaining technical assistance from the DOL/ODEP, developing a web-based resource hub on employment and mental health, targeted training to VR and provider staff, and implementing IPS early adopter sites. These efforts have laid a foundation but further progress is needed to improve access to services that support employment as well as outcomes for participants with mental health conditions. Additional strategies will be identified and implemented such as further training, increased capacity of community mental health centers to provide VR employment services, and investigating options for expansion and sustainability of IPS.

Strategies will also be identified to improve services to individuals with diverse needs, and individuals in racial and ethnic minority groups including individuals who are African American or Black and individuals who are Hispanic or Latino. This may include improve outreach and

further enhancements to current diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives. Other priority areas and strategies outlined above, such as enhanced collaboration and capacity building with providers will also support better serving all VR participants, including those with diverse needs.

B. THE STATE'S PERFORMANCE UNDER THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES OF SECTION 116 OF WIOA; AND

Goals outlined in section (2) align with performance accountability measures of section 116 of WIOA.

C. OTHER AVAILABLE INFORMATION ON THE OPERATION AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE VR PROGRAM, INCLUDING ANY REPORTS RECEIVED FROM THE STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL AND FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM MONITORING ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED UNDER SECTION 107.

A monitoring visit was conducted by RSA in April, 2017, resulting in a corrective action plan to address several findings. All findings were resolved and the corrective action plan was closed by RSA in 2019.

M. ORDER OF SELECTION

Describe:

1. WHETHER THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WILL IMPLEMENT AND ORDER OF SELECTION. IF SO, DESCRIBE:

A. THE ORDER TO BE FOLLOWED IN SELECTING ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS TO BE PROVIDED VR SERVICES

After thorough review and evaluation, BRS determined that Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) needed to implement an order of selection for serving eligible individuals in August 2017. VR lacked sufficient resources to serve all eligible individuals, as further outlined below. This determination follows identification and implementation of numerous strategies to improve capacity over the past several years, and ongoing efforts to increase capacity. VR continues to experience challenges in recruiting qualified personnel, though staff retention has improved significantly over the last two years. Aside from VR Counselor recruitment, the most significant current staff capacity challenge pertains to VR employment service providers, many of whom are experiencing wait lists as a result of staff recruitment and retention challenges within their organizations.

Additionally, approximately 2663 eligible VR individuals are currently on the order of selection waitlist, and VR is unable to open closed service categories until the individuals on the waiting list have access to services. As such, Indiana VR anticipates that available and projected resources will not be adequate to ensure the provision of the full range of vocational rehabilitation services, as appropriate, to all eligible individuals in federal fiscal years 2022-2023.

VR anticipates that it will be necessary to continue with the closure of two of its three priority categories under the order of selection described below. The order of selection was implemented August 1, 2017 after receiving approval from the Rehabilitation Services Administration. As of August 1, 2017, individuals determined eligible and assigned to the MSD priority category are served. BRS will annually evaluate available personnel and fiscal

resources, to determine whether resources will be adequate to provide services to additional eligible individuals who are deferred for services in a closed disability priority category, while offering the full range of services to individuals implementing an IPE and meeting federal timeliness requirements. To date, resources have been sufficient to release approximately 1,000 eligible individuals from the order of selection waitlist, so VR is making progress toward serving more eligible individuals, but more capacity building is needed to make further progress.

Priority Categories:

Effective August 1, 2017, individuals are served in the following order of priority under the Order of Selection:

- Priority Category 1: Individuals determined to have a most significant disability (MSD);
- Priority Category 2: Individuals determined to have a significant disability (SD); and,
- Priority Category 3: All other eligible individuals (Individuals determined to have a non-significant disability (NSD)).

MSD: An individual who has a severe physical or mental impairment that seriously limits three or more functional capacities (communication, interpersonal skills, mobility, self-care, self-direction, work skills, or work tolerance) in terms of an employment outcome, requires multiple vocational rehabilitation services over an extended period of time, and has one or more physical or mental disabilities determined to cause comparable substantial functional limitation.

SD: An individual who has a severe physical or mental impairment that seriously limits one or more functional capacities (communication, interpersonal skills, mobility, self-care, self-direction, work skills, or work tolerance) in terms of an employment outcome and whose vocational rehabilitation can be expected to require multiple vocational rehabilitation services over an extended period of time.

NSD: All other VR eligible individuals.

Basis for Order of Selection – Prohibited Factors:

The Order of Selection shall not be based on any other factors, including:

(1) Any duration of residency requirement, provided the individual is present in the State;

(2) Type of disability;

(3) Age, gender, race, color, or national origin;

(4) Source of referral;

(5) Type of expected employment outcome;

(6) The need for specific services or anticipated cost of services required by an individual; or

(7) The income level of an individual or an individual's family

B. THE JUSTIFICATION FOR THE ORDER

There are three key critical factors to consider in determining whether VR must continue to operate under an order of selection: staffing capacity, fiscal resources, and the amount of time necessary to serve eligible individuals assigned to a closed disability priority category who are

in deferred services status. As of December 2021, 2663 eligible individuals are assigned to a closed disability priority category and have been deferred for services. Indiana anticipates that approximately 700 newly eligible individuals will be assigned to a closed disability service priority category annually.

BRS has outlined five sequential steps to work toward serving all eligible individuals, ensuring federal requirements to serve individuals in order of disability priority and application data are met:

Step 1 – serving VR eligible individuals assigned to disability priority category 1, or those with the most significant disabilities. Priority category 1 is 'open.' Priority category 2 (individuals with significant disabilities), and priority category 3 (all other eligible/non-significant disability) are 'closed,' meaning that VR eligible individuals assigned to categories 2 and 3 are deferred for services. Approximately 87% of eligible individuals are assigned to Priority Category 1 are prioritized to receive services, with 13% experiencing a waitlist period.

Step 2 - As VR identifies that resources are adequate, individuals in priority category 2 will be released from deferred services status in phases. VR has released approximately 1000 individuals assigned to Priority category 2 from deferred status as of the end of 2021. Estimated staffing and fiscal resource needs outlined further below are focused on building capacity to continue to proceed with step two.

Step 3 - After step 2 is complete, VR would then assess whether staffing and fiscal capacity are adequate to progress to step 3, which is opening priority category 3. Once a category is open, there is no waiting time for services for newly eligible individuals assigned to that open category. The actions outlined for steps 2 and 3 would then be repeated for steps 4 and 5, dependent on sufficiency of resources, for priority category 3.

Each of these three key factors – staffing capacity, fiscal resources, and length of time to complete each sequential step outlined above - will be addressed below, including specific challenges with each factor as well as strategies to mitigate challenges.

Staffing capacity: Since implementing an order of selection in August 2017, VR has closely reviewed the percent of eligible individuals determined to meet criteria for priority category 1 (individuals with a most significant disability), an open service category. The percentage of eligible individuals assigned to priority category 1 is currently 87%. Indiana recognizes that it is not uncommon to see an increase in the percentage of eligible individuals determined to meet criteria for open service categories once a VR state agency implements an order of selection, and did anticipate some increase, however the increase was larger than projected. Prior to order of selection, approximately 42% of eligible individuals met criteria for priority category one, and the increase to 87% is significant.

On average, 20-25% of VR Counselor positions were either vacant or filled with new staff in trainee status during FFY2019. This improved to less than 10% of vacant or new staff in positions in FFY20-21 due to implementation of numerous initiatives including salary adjustments, creation of VR Counselor Specializations, staff recognition opportunities, streamlined communication, and improved training. The improvements in VR staff retention have enabled VR to progress to step 2 and approximately 1,000 individuals have been released from the order of selection waitlist from priority category 2. As of the end of 2021, 1553 individuals remain on the priority category 2 wait list.

While VR staff capacity has improved, staff retention and recruitment challenges have significantly increased within our VR provider network over the past two years. Many providers

have waiting lists for services because they are having great difficulty recruiting and retaining qualified staff, and this has become particularly challenging with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. VR is working toward implementing strategies to mitigate these challenges, but at this time, provider staff capacity remains a factor that must be considered in the assessment of Indiana VR's ability to continue to release individuals from the order of selection waitlist at the current pace.

Demands on VR Counselors were significantly increased with requirements under WIOA, such as increased data collection and required post-exit follow up on VR participants. Indiana VR has also revised expectations of VR Counselors regarding engagement in the employment services process, to ensure a team approach to job placement and supported employment services. With these modified requirements and expectations, ideal average caseload sizes must be smaller. This is another critical factor to consider when assessing capacity to release individuals from the wait list. Great strides have been noted in achieving manageable caseload sizes and it will be critical to maintain these manageable levels going forward. Obtaining manageable caseload sizes has been key to improving staff retention.

The current average caseload size has been around 75-80 participants per counselor position over the last couple of year, which BRS considers to fall within an ideal range. The caseload size ratio is currently higher based on some atypical turnover during the latter half of 2021 and the higher than typical number of staff in trainee status. Overall, much improvement has been realized through efforts to improve internal VR staff capacity, however, the increasingly competitive job market is having some negative impact on retention and recruitment of VR staff. Furthermore, staff recruitment and retention challenges among the VR provider network have exacerbated.

Fiscal Resources: A primary fiscal challenge is the federal requirement to earmark 15% of federal funds for pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS). This shift in funds reduced the amount of funding available for VR client services for eligible VR participants. While BRS has taken steps to mitigate this challenge, the requirement to shift funds nevertheless presents significant challenge. VR's earmark requirement is estimated at approximately $9.2M for FFY22, which reduces the available budget for VR client services to an amount insufficient to provide the full range of VR services to all eligible individuals.

Additional staff positions will be necessary to continue to build staff capacity to support the provision of services to all eligible individuals as Indiana works to end the order of selection over the next several years, however this also has a fiscal impact. Any additional staff positions will result in added and ongoing expense. The need for expanded or altered office space to accommodate any added staffing also has a budget impact. All of these factors must be considered in determining whether fiscal resources are adequate to provide the full range of VR services to all eligible individuals. Indiana VR continues to lack sufficient fiscal resources to serve all eligible individuals. Of the 2663 total number of eligible individuals deferred for services as of the end of 2021, 1553 were assigned to priority category 2. VR has sufficient fiscal resources to serve a portion of these individuals over the next two federal fiscal years as previously outlined, however does not have sufficient fiscal resources nor staff capacity to serve all individuals waiting for services in FFY22 or FFY23. Staff and fiscal capacity is insufficient to open all disability priority services categories at this time.

Length of time to serve eligible individuals assigned to a closed disability priority category: While fiscal and staffing resources are two critical factors to evaluate in order to determine capacity to provide the full range of VR services to all eligible individuals, a third equally critical factor must be considered. The third factor is the amount of time necessary to

serve the eligible individuals in deferred services status. As of the end of 2021, 2,663 VR eligible individuals were in deferred services status (i.e., assigned to closed disability priority categories). While two priority categories remain closed, Indiana VR anticipates that approximately 700 newly eligible individuals will be assigned to a closed disability service priority category annually. Therefore, the total number of eligible individuals deferred for VR services will continue to grow as VR works to release individuals in delayed status in over several phases.

There are five sequential steps that must be followed in serving individuals in deferred status, in order of priority and application date as federally required. Those five steps are outlined in more detail below to better articulate how the 'length of time' factor must be considered in determining the ability to move out of an order selection.

Step One: Step one as indicated in the graphic above is the current status, with all eligible individuals assigned to priority category 1 receiving VR services with no waiting period. Approximately 80% of eligible individuals are assigned to priority category 1.

Step Two: When VR determines that sufficient resources are available, step two is to begin serving eligible individuals deferred for services who are assigned to priority category 2. These individuals must be served in order of application date and would be released from deferred status in phases. It is important to understand that disability priority category 2 remains 'closed' until all eligible individuals deferred for services in service priority category 2 are served. This means that during step two, newly eligible individuals assigned to priority category 2 would continue to experience a waiting period before services could begin.

Step Three: After all eligible individuals in priority category 2 who have been deferred for services have the opportunity to develop an IPE to initiative services, VR will determine whether fiscal and staffing resources are adequate to progress to step three, which is opening priority category 2. Once a priority category is open, there is no waiting period for services for individuals assigned to that category.

Step Four: The process outlined in Step two is repeated for individuals in deferred status in priority category 3.

Step Five: The process outlined in Step three is repeated for individuals in deferred status in priority category 3. Once all disability service priority categories are open, VR moves out of order of selection.

Given the sequential steps required to move out of an order of selection, VR has focused its assessment of capacity and resource needs on movement to step two as outlined in the process above. VR has been releasing individuals in priority category 2 from deferred status in phases. VR has reviewed the service area location of individuals deferred in priority category 2 to assess staff capacity at each individual field office. This has been a useful exercise in determining the number of individuals to be released at a given time. As of the end of 2021, VR has completed four separate releases with an approximate total of 1,000 individuals released from delayed status since January 2020.

VR's available and projected resources are not adequate to ensure the provision of the full range of vocational rehabilitation services, as appropriate, to all eligible individuals in FFY22 and FFY23. In consideration of the three factors as outlined above, staff capacity, fiscal resources, and time needed to serve those in deferred services status, BRS must continue to operate under an order of selection. BRS plans to continue releasing eligible individuals deferred for services

in priority category 2 throughout FY22 and FY23, however anticipates that two priority categories will remain closed during this period.

C. THE SERVICE AND OUTCOME GOALS

VR has continued to serve all eligible individuals who were receiving services under an approved IPE prior to implementation of the order of selection on August 1, 2017, and some of those individuals remain in services to date. Based on review of data on the number of individuals served in each category in FFY21, the number of individuals projected to be served in each priority category in FFY22 and FFY23, as well as the number of individuals projected to achieve their vocational outcomes based on current employment rate, are as follows:

FFY22

- Priority category 1: 10,600 Individuals with a Most Significant Disability (MSD) are projected to be served.
    - 5,300 individuals with a MSD will achieve their employment goals
- Priority category 2: 2,400 individuals with a Significant Disability (SD) are projected to be served.
    - 1,200 individuals with a SD will achieve their employment goals
- Priority category 3: 20 individuals with a Non-Significant Disability (NSD) are projected to be served. This number represents individuals who had an IPE in place prior to implementation of the Order of Selection.
    - 10 individuals with a NSD will achieve their employment goals

FFY23

- Priority category 1: 10,600 Individuals with a Most Significant Disability (MSD) are projected to be served.
    - 5,300 individuals with a MSD will achieve their employment goals
- Priority category 2: 3,400 individuals with a Significant Disability (SD) are projected to be served.
    - 1,700 individuals with a SD will achieve their employment goals
- Priority category 3: 10 individuals with a Non-Significant Disability (NSD) are projected to be served. This number represents individuals who had an IPE in place prior to implementation of the Order of Selection.
    - 5 individuals with a NSD will achieve their employment goals

D. TIME WITHIN WHICH THESE GOALS MAY BE ACHIEVED FOR INDIVIDUALS IN EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY WITHIN THE ORDER; AND

The average length of time from initial IPE to employment stabilization is approximately 25.8.

* The number of individuals projected to achieve their employment goals outlined above does not reflect the number of placements in one FFY, as the average time to achieve employment stabilization is 25.8 months from IPE.

E. HOW INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES ARE SELECTED FOR SERVICES BEFORE ALL OTHER INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

VR will continue to process referrals, complete application/intake, and determine eligibility and severity determination for all new referrals. Individuals who are determined to be an individual with a MSD (Priority category 1) will be prioritized for services. Individuals in the other disability priority categories will be deferred for services, and will be served according to application date and in order of priority, as sufficient resources become available. The process if further outlined below:

1. VR will continue to take all referrals and schedule individuals for intake appointments, per federal requirements.
2. VR Counselors will meet with each applicant for their intake appointment and will determine eligibility and disability priority category assignment for all VR eligible individuals, per federal requirements.
3. Eligible individuals who are MSD will jointly develop the IPE with their VR Counselor, and necessary services will be implemented. Individuals who are SD and NSD will be deferred for services. Information and referral will be provided as appropriate for these individuals including sharing of local area office resource guides.
4. As sufficient resources become available to serve individuals who were deferred for services, BRS will assign individuals released from deferred services status to the appropriate VR Office and VR Counselor. Individuals in priority category 2, SD, would be the next priority for release from deferred services status, based on earliest application date, and in accordance with federal requirements.
5. Once the individual is released from deferred services status, the case will be distributed to the appropriate office/VR Counselor, and IPE will be developed and necessary services will be implemented as appropriate.

2. IF THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT HAS ELECTED TO SERVE ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS, REGARDLESS OF ANY ESTABLISHED ORDER OF SELECTION, WHO REQUIRE SPECIFIC SERVICES OR EQUIPMENT TO MAINTAIN EMPLOYMENT

In FY22, BRS will further examine its capacity to provide specific services or equipment to assist individuals assigned to a closed disability service priority category with maintaining employment. BRS has sought technical assistance in this area and has reviewed processes utilized in other state VR agencies, and will continue its review in FY22. Under the current order of selection process, approximately 90% of eligible individuals are determined to meet criteria for priority category 1 and are able to access VR services. Only 10% of eligible individuals are being placed on a waitlist due to the order of selection process. BRS recognizes that is may provide select, specific services or equipment to those on the waitlist in order to support them in maintaining employment. BRS' current promulgated rules do not provide VR with the necessary authority to provide those services at this time, and therefore BRS is not electing to serve eligible individuals who require specific services or equipment to maintain employment (specifically for those on the wait list), however BRS recognizes the value of this opportunity and is actively working to modify VR rules to address this. Once the rules are amended, this will be revisited and modified as applicable.

N. GOALS AND PLANS FOR DISTRIBUTION OF TITLE VI FUNDS

1. SPECIFY THE STATE'S GOALS AND PRIORITIES FOR FUNDS RECEIVED UNDER SECTION 603 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Goal 1: VR Supported Employment providers will increase knowledge and skills on the provision of supported employment services, including greater understanding and focus on development of natural supports, job readiness training techniques, customized employment, and strategies for achieving stabilization on the job.

Measure: BRS will invest in training for supported employment providers including classroom-based, web-based, and hands-on workshops that focus on job coaching and job readiness training techniques. BRS will examine strategies for improvement of community rehabilitation providers to ensure capacity to carry out increased expectations under the new model, such as provision of funding for Establishment projects. At least one new training strategy will be implemented annually, such as micro-training or innovative hands-on training opportunities.

Goal 3: BRS will implement strategies to increase the quality of outcomes for individuals receiving supported employment services.

Measure: There will be a 10% increase in average wages for individuals exiting VR after receiving supported employment services by the end of the state plan period. Baseline PY20 average wages assessed through establishment project data was $10.28.

2. DESCRIBE THE ACTIVITIES TO BE CONDUCTED, WITH FUNDS RESERVED PURSUANT TO SECTION 603(D), FOR YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING:

A. THE PROVISION OF EXTENDED SERVICES FOR A PERIOD NOT TO EXCEED 4 YEARS; AND

Extended services are ongoing support and other appropriate services that are needed to support and maintain an individual with a most significant disability in supported employment and that are provided by a State agency, a private nonprofit organization, employer, or any other appropriate resource. There are times when extended services are required for a youth with a most significant disability to maintain employment but they may not be available through traditional sources (e.g., the youth does not qualify for BDDS funding or a Medicaid Waiver, or natural supports are not available). In these instances, VR may provide funding to assist youth with the most significant disabilities in maintaining an employment outcome in supported employment.

VR may provide funding for extended services for youth with the most significant disabilities for up to 4 years. A youth is an individual age 24 or younger. A youth may receive VR-funded extended services for up to 4 years based on individual need. VR funding may not be utilized for the provision of extended services for individuals age 25 and older, or for any individual who is not an individual with a most significant disability. A youth may be eligible for extended services if the following conditions are met:

- The individual has achieved stabilization.
- The individual is age 24 or younger.
- The individual is MSD.
- The individual requires extended services to continue to be successful in maintaining competitive, integrated employment after stabilization and retention.
- The exploration and implementation of natural supports has been completed, and it has been documented (see below) that there is no other funding source (e.g. BDDS waiver,

Medicaid Rehabilitation Option, etc.) for the provision of extended services, and that adequate natural supports are unavailable.

VR extended services are carried out through accredited employment service providers and funded as hourly fee-for-service reimbursement. For individuals who need extended services and meet criteria for VR funded extended services, VR issues an authorization for extended services to a provider selected by the individual. The provider must submit necessary documentation to VR including progress reports to obtain reimbursement.

B. HOW THE STATE WILL LEVERAGE OTHER PUBLIC AND PRIVATE FUNDS TO INCREASE RESOURCES FOR EXTENDED SERVICES AND EXPANDED SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES.

VR provides Supported Employment (SE) services for VR participants with most significant disabilities (MSD), with Title I and Title VI-B funds. Participants are able to access SE services through Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs), which include Community Mental Health Centers (CMHCs) across the state.

VR implemented major revisions to VR employment services in July 2015, with a key objective to increase access to supported employment services. Prior to these revisions, VR purchased employment services primarily through a Results Based Funding (RBF) approach. One significant revision that occurred is that SE services are no longer fully funded through employment milestones (or the previous RBF model). Because many individuals with MSD will require SE services that extend beyond the employment milestone payments, SE services are funded in addition to the current core employment milestone payments. VR funding for SE services is outlined in the Table below. (Please note that the complete employment service model, implemented July 2015, can be viewed at www.vrs.in.gov). For more specific information, please see section (q).

VR provided substantial training opportunities for both VR an CRP staff over the past six years, including face-to-face training, webinars, and written guidance such as FAQs and a comprehensive employment services manual. VR also entered into contracts with more than 40 CRPs to expand capacity to provide supported employment as well as staff training in this area, through Establishment projects. These projects began April 2017 and ended during the state plan period, in March 2021. Data collected through Establishment project providers indicates an overall increase in the provision of supported employment services when compared to baseline.

VR continues to work collaboratively with the Bureau of Developmental Disabilities Services (BDDS), the Division of Mental Health and Addiction (DMHA), the Department of Education, IIDC, INARF, INAPSE, the Arc of Indiana, and other key stakeholders to improve competitive integrated employment opportunities for participants with the most significant disabilities through supported employment. Interagency collaboration will aim to increase the quality of SE services, including customized employment, and ensure appropriate extended services are appropriately utilized when necessary for long-term supports.

VR provides work experiences or job-shadow opportunities to students and youth with disabilities who are eligible for VR services. Furthermore, Project SEARCH provides students and youth with quality internship experiences in preparation for competitive employment.

O. STATE'S STRATEGIES

Describe the required strategies and how the agency will use these strategies to achieve its goals and priorities, support innovation and expansion activities, and overcome any barriers to accessing the VR and the Supported Employment programs (See sections 101(a)(15)(D) and

(18)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act and section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA)):

1. THE METHODS TO BE USED TO EXPAND AND IMPROVE SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

Training: Over the past few years, VR has increased emphasis on the importance of supported employment services as evidenced by systemic changes to the VR employment services process, enhanced training on supported employment, implementation of Establishment projects with a key focus of increasing provision of supported employment services, and providing ongoing opportunities for feedback from VR staff and employment services providers to understand best practices as well as further areas of improvement. An additional training strategy recently identified and implemented is the delivery of 'micro-training' to employment service providers, which may offer the benefit of providing training in a more digestible manner and increase access to participation in training for those who cannot devote a full day or more to a training; implementation of a provider coaching network to provide hands-on mentoring of new staff; and targeted training on inclusive service delivery.

VR recognizes a need to continue to increase the provision of training to both VR staff and provider staff to improve the quality of services provided to VR participants. VR issued a request for proposal in late 2019 to seek innovative strategies for training and plans to award training contracts in 2020. Topic areas of focus over the next two years aim to improve employment services and outcomes for targeted populations, including individuals with mental health disabilities, transition aged students, and individuals transitioning from sub-minimum wage employment to competitive, integrated employment, as well as a focus on strengths based service delivery. Additional topic areas will be evaluated through needs assessments and ongoing feedback from staff and stakeholders. Training will be delivered through a variety of modalities including web-based, classroom based, and hands-on sessions.

VR has also enhanced orientation and training for new VR Counselors, including implementation of VR Counseling and Guidance cohorts to hone in on development of vocational counseling and guidance skills. Web-based training also continues to be provided and enhanced based on program changes and staff feedback. VR also developed content targeted to VR Case Coordinators in 2021. Office supervisors and regional Itinerant Counselors (working leads) also continue to provide training at the ground level.

Training focused on inclusive service delivery and DE&I efforts has also been a major focus during the first two years of the state plan period.

Staff Capacity: VR continues to evaluate staffing capacity and has implemented several shifts in staff structure over the past several years, including the addition of VR Case Coordinators as well as VR Counselor Working Leads across the state. More recently, VR shifted VR Counselors between two distinct roles – VR intake and eligibility specialists, and VR caseload counselors. This shift has created added efficiency as evidenced by improved timeliness of eligibility and IPE development, increased equity related to eligibility and disability priority determinations, and improved staff satisfaction with their jobs. In 2019, a VR Counselor Trainee position was created and VR Counselor salaries were adjusted to better align with the market rate. Additional strategies include the use of interns in VR field offices, implementing additional specialty VR Counselor positions including a focus on working with students in post-secondary training, and providing increased opportunities for VR staff to participate in workgroups or special projects in their areas of interest to increase engagement and potentially job satisfaction and retention.

Ongoing opportunities for streamlining for gained efficiency will also continue to be explored, such as additional enhancements to the VR claims payment system and a review of VR rules and processes to identify unnecessary administrative burdens. VR is working to promulgate new rules by 2023.

An additional area of concern is employment service provider staff capacity, which appears to have become more challenging following the onset of the pandemic. BRS is identifying strategies to help mitigate these provider capacity challenges and is targeting implementation of these strategies in 2022.

Collaboration: Starting in 2020, VR will identify strategies to improve both statewide and local collaboration through expanding existing partnerships and development of new partnerships, which may include targeted collaboration at each VR office with a variety of partners based on local need, and enhanced statewide collaboration with other state agencies such as the Division of Mental Health and Addiction (DMHA). DMHA and VR have already started working toward improved collaboration through jointly leading a workgroup aimed at improving employment outcomes for VR participants with mental health disabilities, and jointly applying for and subsequently receiving 300 training and technical assistance hours through the Visionary Opportunities to Increase Competitive Employment (VOICE) project aimed at improving competitive, integrated employment for individuals with mental health disabilities. More recently VR and DMHA were successful in securing a second round of DOL/ODEP technical assistance and have jointly implemented two Individual Placement and Support (IPS) early adopter sites within local community mental health centers.

VR will also continue to explore new and expanded partnerships with other workforce programs and state and local agencies that may lead to shared service provision or blended funding opportunities. This may include an expanded partnership with DWD through increased participation of students with disabilities in the Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) Program, active participation on BDDS systems improvement initiatives, especially as it pertains to employment opportunities for individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities and increased opportunity for individuals working at subminimum wage to transition to competitive, integrated employment.

Additional details about collaboration with other state agencies is outlined in sections c, d, and h of the VR portion of the state plan.

2. HOW A BROAD RANGE OF ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY SERVICES AND DEVICES WILL BE PROVIDED TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES AT EACH STAGE OF THE REHABILITATION PROCESS AND ON A STATEWIDE BASIS

Assistive Technology During the Rehabilitation Process: Pursuant to the Indiana VR rules, VR Counselors review each individual's need for Assistive Technology (AT) devices and services at each stage of the rehabilitation process (i.e. eligibility determination, plan development and implementation, and placement). This is done through personal interviews with the participant, observations, and professional AT evaluations. Appropriate training is also provided as necessary, to ensure that participants are able to independently utilize their adaptive equipment.

Assistive Technology Statewide: VR has awarded the Assistive Technology Grant to a statewide 501(c)(3) assistive technology program, Easter Seals Crossroads INData Project. Contract deliverables include: coordination and collaboration with VR on AT services; increasing public awareness, training and technical assistance; providing device demonstrations, a device loan program, device reutilization program and state financing. This

'INDATA' program also offers targeted training to VR staff to increase staff knowledge on the availability and provision of AT services and devices.

3. THE OUTREACH PROCEDURES THAT WILL BE USED TO IDENTIFY AND SERVE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES WHO ARE MINORITIES, INCLUDING THOSE WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, AS WELL AS THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN UNSERVED OR UNDERSERVED BY THE VR PROGRAM

BRS continues to employ a diverse staff across the state and maintain a diverse group of stakeholder partners, which assists VR in reaching individuals across various diversity groups. In review of VR's 2022 CSNA, approximately 84% of VR individuals served in PY20 were white, while 15.8% were African American, 1.4% were American Indian or Alaskan native, 1.3% were Asian, and 2.9% were other races. Of those served, 3.8% were Hispanic or Latino. This closely mirrors the minority population in Indiana as outlined in the 2022 CSNA.

For individuals with the most significant disabilities, VR continues to collaborate with BDDS, DOE, local educational agencies, INARF, and others to ensure opportunities are afforded to these individuals to achieve employment. Efforts to further reach this population are outlined under state strategy items (1) and (5).

VR is also exploring the need for targeted outreach and collaboration at each local VR field office level, and will further explore underserved or underserved populations at the local level to determine needed collaboration and outreach.

VR implemented a workgroup in 2020 focused on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, composed of several VR staff who have provided recommendations to BRS Leadership. Several key BRS staff also participate in DE&I workgroups conducted by our parent agency, the Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA). FSSA hired a Chief Equity Officer in 2021 who has been a great resource to the VR program and has provided helpful input into the development of a survey for all VR staff to solicit feedback and identify areas of improvement. VR has provided frequent training on topics related to DE&I to both staff and providers, and has reviewed data to identify service and outcome gaps. BRS will continue to work with the FSSA Chief Equity Officer to identify and implement strategies to improve DE&I across the program, from both a staffing and client services level.

4. THE METHODS TO BE USED TO IMPROVE AND EXPAND VR SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, INCLUDING THE COORDINATION OF SERVICES DESIGNED TO FACILITATE THE TRANSITION OF SUCH STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL TO POSTSECONDARY LIFE (INCLUDING THE RECEIPT OF VR SERVICES, POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, AND PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES)

One of the key VR employment service revisions is an increase in VR-funded Discovery activities. The menu of services and activities that is available through the Discovery process has been enhanced, and may include work experience, situational assessments, job shadows, informational interviews, vocational testing, and other related activities. BRS recognizes the importance of Discovery for job seekers with disabilities, and particularly for students or other individuals with disabilities who have little or no work history, or a history of jobs that were not quite the right 'fit.'

VR has also improved services for transition aged youth, including coordinated training with the Business and Community Engagement team to increase business partnerships at the local level and provide more robust work-based learning experiences for students with disabilities. BRS has a dedicated youth services director, a youth services associate director , and 8 youth

counselors located throughout the state, who have worked to expand and improve relationships with key transition stakeholders. The director and associate director facilitate the VR Transition Advisory Council, engaging in one-on-one conversations, and presenting and educating various stakeholder groups about VR and pre-employment transition services. The Transition Advisory Council has been instrumental in increasing outreach and education related to transition aged youth. Specifically, collaboration with representatives from IIDC, DOE, and DWD on the council has aided in outreach to school systems, training of educators on transition, VR, and Pre-ETS, and services available to transition-aged youth through DWD and other sources.

Furthermore, the 8 VR youth counselors have completed and continue to update needs assessment with local schools and VR offices to identify best practices and gaps in services, have helped to facilitate improved relationships at the local level between VR and schools, and have worked with VR's Director of Youth Services to outline recommended best practices and improved strategies for VR transition efforts. These staff are discussed in greater detail throughout the VR section of the state plan.

5. IF APPLICABLE, PLANS FOR ESTABLISHING, DEVELOPING, OR IMPROVING COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE

BRS entered into Establishment Project contracts with community rehabilitation programs (CRPs) in April, 2017 to increase capacity to carry out increased expectations under the current employment services funding structure, which was implemented in 2015. A key focus of these projects is improved provision of supported employment services to individuals with the most significant disabilities, and to further increase training and skills of direct services staff, with the overall goal of improving employment outcomes. These projects ended March 2021. Project outcomes are included in the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA). Projects were initiated based on feedback on needed improvements to CRPs, to ensure capacity to serve VR participants under the new employment service model, particularly those with the most significant disabilities.

VR will evaluate the need for establishment projects to enhance capacity to serve specific target populations, including individuals with mental health disabilities and individuals transitioning from sub-minimum wage employment to competitive, integrated employment, which were identified as underserved populations in the VR comprehensive statewide needs assessment completed in 2019. The CSNA completed in early 2022 also identified ongoing priority in these areas. If VR determines that establishment projects are necessary and appropriate, VR will work closely with RSA to outline project requirements and ensure that establishment projects comply with federal requirements.

6. STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE THE PERFORMANCE OF THE STATE WITH RESPECT TO THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA

VR is reporting employer engagement data through DWD's INGage system, and continues to engage in communication with DWD regarding strategies for further improvement of the collection of this data in line with new performance accountability measures. BRS' MOU with DWD regarding data exchange, specifically wage data and other data necessary for federal reporting, has been updated. As a result, VR receives UI wage information for VR participants who have achieved employment and is reporting this data through quarterly RSA-911 reporting. Substantial modifications to the VR case management system were implemented to accurately capture all new federal reporting requirements, including post-exit data collection, and BRS has provided training to field staff regarding collection of expanded data elements. In 2020, VR provided enhanced training to staff to improve data collection on measurable skills

gains and postsecondary credential attainment. VR's negotiated measure of performance for Measurable skill gains is 20% for PY20 and 21% for PY21. Since establishing these measures, VR has made great strides in improving MSG performance, achieving 64.2% MSG for PY20. VR's expected levels of performance for common performance indicators for PY22 and PY23 are as follows:

	Program Year: 2022		Program Year: 2023	
	Expected Level	Negotiated Level	Expected Level	Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit) [22]	46%		47%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit) [22]	44%		45%	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit	$2900		$3000	
Credential Attainment Rate	15%		15%	
Measurable Skill Gains	50%		50%	

VR is poised to see improved performance on performance indicators in the coming years due to the strategies outlined above. VR will also be providing targeted training to VR staff in 2022 on career pathways, implementing strategies to improve employment service provider capacity, reviewing staff performance metrics, and revisiting employer engagement efforts to identify opportunities for enhancement.

7. STRATEGIES FOR ASSISTING OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM IN ASSISTING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

VR continues to engage in collaborative discussion with DWD on several initiatives, and cross-training and education has been a major part of this effort. Training regarding disability etiquette, reasonable accommodations, and other topics was conducted with Work One staff in 2017. BRS staff sit on local workforce development boards in each region and offer subject matter expertise regarding training and employment services for job seekers with disabilities. Representatives from all 12 DWD Regions participated in a roundtable summit in June, 2017 co-hosted by BRS and DWD. BRS and DWD Leadership meet regularly to enhance collaboration and share information and updates. Federal monitoring visits occurred for both BRS and DWD in 2017, and there was cross-participation of both programs in these visits. More recently, VR and DWD have ramped up collaboration around business engagement efforts through the use of a single system to track efforts, jointly meeting with businesses, and jointly conducting outreach events such as a lunch and learn event with human resources professionals in 2019. VR and

DWD also implemented an additional MOU in 2019 to increase participation of students with disabilities in the Jobs for America's Graduates Program (JAG) through an interagency cash transfer agreement. VR and DWD have further expanded this collaboration effort in 2020 and 2021 reaching more students with disabilities throughout the state.

BRS staff sit on local workforce development boards in each region and provide subject matter expertise regarding training and employment services for job seekers with disabilities as well as resources for employers from VR's Business & Community Engagement Team.

The Business & Community Engagement team meets with DWD leadership staff and gives updates on employers partners with around the state on a regular basis. The B&CE team also uses the same customer relationship manager that DWD is using (INGage) to track services to businesses. Because of the regular engagement, the B&CE team was recently connected to an employer who needed resources to support an employee returning to work after a severe workplace injury. Because of the ongoing relationship with DWD and their familiarity with services VR provides, they made an immediate referral to VR to work with the employer. On many occasions, the VR B&CE team and DWD joined together to tour employer work sites and continue to explore opportunities to support employers.

8. HOW THE AGENCY'S STRATEGIES WILL BE USED TO:

A. ACHIEVE GOALS AND PRIORITIES BY THE STATE, CONSISTENT WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT;

All of the strategies listed above support VR's goals and priorities and were developed after thorough review of priorities identified in the comprehensive statewide needs assessment (CSNA) completed in February 2022. Focus on increased outreach and collaboration among partners, capacity building, and overall efforts to improve employment outcomes including effective training are aligned with the strategies outlined above as well as priorities outlined in the CSNA. The five identified priorities outlined in the CSNA can be viewed in section (j) of the VR portion of the state plan.

B. SUPPORT INNOVATION AND EXPANSION ACTIVITIES; AND

The Innovation and Expansion authority is utilized to support the Indiana State Independent Living Council (INSILC), as well as new and innovative initiatives that open the door for new employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities and/or increase opportunities for those with the most significant disabilities. One approach is through continued investment in and enhancement of VR's Business and Community Engagement Team to lead innovate business outreach efforts for the VR program.

C. OVERCOME IDENTIFIED BARRIERS RELATING TO EQUITABLE ACCESS TO AND PARTICIPATION OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE STATE VR SERVICES PROGRAM AND THE STATE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES PROGRAM.

The VR employment service revisions implemented July 2015 increased access to discovery activities and supported employment services to individuals with the most significant disabilities who require supported employment services. The previous structure did not always allow for appropriate service provision or provide funding necessary for those VR participants with the most significant disabilities who have very high support needs.

BRS continues to partner with the Arc of Indiana and Self-Advocates of Indiana to provide career counseling and information and referral services (CCIR) to individuals employed at subminimum wage. CCIR services are provided in a one-on-one or group setting. Group settings

include a presentation which incorporates peer success stories. During the presentation, attendees receive information about local resources regarding employment services and other-related information; discuss potential competitive, integrated employment opportunities and ways to learn more about a new career field (i.e. informational interviewing or job-shadowing); and discuss the importance of seeking assistance and guidance from a support network, such as family members or friends. Following the Q&A portion of the presentation, attendees receive a certificate of participation documenting completion of the CCIR activities. VR and the ARC are in collaboration to identify strategies to enhance the delivery of CCIR, such as development of a video to offer a different training modality and a streamlined process for referral to VR. VR staff have also begun to have some presence at 14(c) facilities to supplement CCIR activities and provide information about VR services. VR made efforts to increase presence of VR staff during FFY20, however this was impacted by the pandemic. VR will resume these efforts as facilities reopen after experiencing closures during the pandemic.

VR recognized individuals with mental health disabilities as an underserved population as outlined in the 2019 CSNA (and more recently, the 2022 CSNA) in terms of the effectiveness of services and achievement of employment outcomes. A dedicated workgroup was established in 2019 comprised of representatives from VR, DMHA, CMHCs, NAMI, Key Consumer Organization, the Indiana Mental Health Council, and individuals with lived experience. DMHA and VR collectively sought and received an opportunity for training and technical assistance through ODEP, securing two rounds of training and TA. The project is focused on capacity building to improve competitive, integrated employment outcomes for individuals with mental health disabilities, including supporting two early adopter Individual Placement and Support (IPS) sites.

P. EVALUATION AND REPORTS OF PROGRESS: VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT GOALS

Describe:

1. AN EVALUATION OF THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE VR PROGRAM GOALS DESCRIBED IN THE APPROVED VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN FOR THE MOST RECENTLY COMPLETED PROGRAM YEAR WERE ACHIEVED. THE EVALUATION MUST:

A. IDENTIFY THE STRATEGIES THAT CONTRIBUTED TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS

GOAL 1: Improve the quality of services and outcomes:

Priority 1.1: Implement new innovative training strategies for VR Counselors and other VR staff, such as increased use of itinerant (working lead) VR Counselors as regional trainers, enhancements to web-based modules including development of content for VR Case Coordinators, or other strategies. Provide training to staff on post-secondary services, transition responsibilities, extended services to youth with a most significant disability, and training on strengths-based service provision to specific populations such as individuals with mental health disabilities and individuals transitioning from subminimum wage employment to competitive, integrated employment. At least two new training focus areas will be identified annually with training provided to applicable staff.

Outcome 1.1: Achieved. All training goals outlined above were achieved, along with provision of additional training including inclusive service delivery, cultural competencies, and training on serving individuals with substance use disorder.

Priority 1.2: Identify and implement at least two new strategies during the first 2 years of the state plan for effective training to VR employment service providers, including opportunities for hands-on training to build skills, training focused on strengths-based service provision to

individuals with high support needs, opportunities for joint training with VR staff, and other needed topics. Also, track data on the number of foundational training hours Establishment project provider staff receive annually, ensuring that staff receive at least 10 hours of foundational, hands-on training annually through the life of the Establishment projects (through March, 2021).

Outcome 1.2: Achieved. While training largely shifted to remote access during the pandemic, training goals for providers were achieved. A coaching network was implemented during the evaluation period to bolster classroom and online based foundational skills training, aimed at improving provider staff skills.

Priority 1.3: Convene appropriate stakeholders, including VR, Division of Mental Health and Addiction, Community Mental Health Centers, NAMI, Key Consumer Organization, individuals with lived experience, and others through a statewide task force during the first 2 years of the state plan. The taskforce will identify specific strategies aimed at improving services and outcomes for VR participants with mental health disabilities (including individuals with co-occurring disabilities), such as exploration of the use of establishment projects, training, resource mapping, or other activities with at least two strategies implemented. Establish baseline data on services and outcomes for VR participants with mental health disabilities by the end of 2020.

Outcome 1.3: Achieved. In collaboration with DMHA and other partners outlined above, two early adopter Individual Placement and Support (IPS) sites were implemented in October 2021. As part of the IPS kick-off, VR identified and trained designated IPS VR Counselor Liaisons to partner on the project at the local early adopter site level. VR also repurposed a current position to create a VR IPS Trainer who will support early adopter sites through training and ongoing technical assistance. Additionally, enhanced education and outreach activities were completed during the evaluation period regarding the important role that employment plays in the recovery process for individuals with mental health conditions. In addition to providing numerous training topics to VR staff and providers, as well as presenting to various stakeholder groups (e.g., INARF, NAMI, mental health council, Commission on Rehabilitation Services, national conferences), VR also partnered with DMHA to launch a mental health and employment online resource hub. This resource includes videos and other materials covering topics such as stigma, employment and recovery, IPS, interviews with individuals with lived experiences, and related information. Baseline data was also secured which reflected a 25% success rate for VR participants with mental health conditions obtaining employment, leaving much room for improvement.

Priority 1.4: Identify and implement strategies to improve employment outcomes, such as exploration of the need for Establishment projects to further improve service provision by community rehabilitation programs, analysis of the impact of discovery activities on employment outcomes, increased utilization of supported employment services, sharing emerging best practices, or other strategies. The number of VR participants achieving employment will increase by 10% (baseline 2160) and average hourly wages will increase by at least 5% (baseline $11.48).

Outcome 1.4: Partially achieved. These targets were significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic., with the number of individuals achieving employment decreasing during the last two years. BRS conducted a questionnaire process in 2020 to evaluate the impact of the pandemic on the employment status of VR participants who were employed at the time the pandemic began and still had an open case with VR during the questionnaire window. Approximately two-thirds of respondents were negatively impacted in terms of their

employment status, with the majority of those impacted through lay-off or furlough. BRS was successful in increasing hourly average wages to $12.30 in PY20, a 7% increase from baseline.

GOAL 2: Improve capacity to serve VR eligible individuals.

Priority 2.1: Identify and implement strategies to improve staff capacity to serve eligible individuals, including improved recruitment through use of interns in VR field offices, outreach to colleges and universities, or other strategies; and improved retention through implementation of strategies to improve VR staff job satisfaction such as improved communication and training to staff, and increased opportunities for staff to participate in special projects and workgroups in areas that match their interests. At least one recruitment and retention strategy will be implemented annually during the first 2 years of the state plan.

Outcome 2.1: Achieved. Staff retention has increased substantially over the last few years, with only 8% turnover of VR Counselor positions in PY20. During the first two years of the state plan period, VR initiated the Discovery Cohort, a project involving numerous VR staff who are evaluating the current discovery services and expectations, identifying best practices as well as areas of improvement, and conducting small pilots in their local areas. Additionally, VR created a new VR Counselor specialty position with a focus on serving VR participants in postsecondary training. Indiana VR was selected to present at a national conference to share staff recruitment/retention and satisfaction strategies due to the significant strides accomplished with Indiana VR staffing.

Priority 2.2: Identify and implement strategies to improve fiscal capacity to serve eligible individuals, including exploration of opportunities for blended funding, review of VR rules on high cost service areas (e.g. home modifications, vehicle modifications), increasing knowledge of comparable benefits such as those offered through core WIOA programs, and other strategies. Implement at least one new strategy annually during the first 2 years of the state plan.

Outcome 2.2: Achieved. VR expanded its written agreement with the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) for the provision of pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS) through the Jobs for Americas Graduates (JAG) program for students with disabilities. Match funds have been increased, allowing VR to draw additional federal funds, while expanding Pre-ETS to more students. VR is also braiding dollars with other state agencies for the IPS early adopter project mentioned in item 1.3 above.

Priority 2.3: Continue streamlining efforts such as continued system modernization including enhancements to the VR Claims Payment System, exploration of a streamlined referral process with core WIOA programs, and review of VR rules and processes to identify opportunities for reduced administrative burden. At least one streamlining effort will be implemented annually during the first 2 years of the state plan.

Outcome 2.3: Achieved. VR implemented additional improvements to both the VR case management system (Aware) and the VR Claims Payment System (CPS), streamlining administrative processes for both VR staff and vendors. One example is the implementation of DocuSign to allow for better ease of capturing signatures from participants. The process for conducting quarterly follow up activities was also significantly streamlined through full implementation of the SWIS agreement with DWD, enabling VR to meet federal requirements with reduced burden on field staff. Enhancements to the Pre-ETS portal were also implemented to improve program monitoring and internal controls.

Priority 2.4: Increase education to stakeholders including schools, VR vendors, state agencies, local organizations, advocacy groups, and others about order of selection and the actual v.

perceived impact on VR applicants and eligible individuals. Maintain and update an informational page on the VR website including annual updates to local resource guides to improve awareness of other organization and programs that may be able to provide services to VR participants who are assigned to a closed priority category. Present to a wide range of stakeholders such as those mentioned above to share relevant information, encourage referrals to VR, and address perceived barriers to making referrals to VR. At least two educational opportunities will occur annually during the first 2 years of the state plan.

Outcome 2.4: Achieved. BRS shares data regarding the percent of eligible individuals who are prioritized for services with stakeholders frequently, including through an annual update on order of selection posted online, and presentations to the VR Council, INARF, Centers for Independent Living, schools, the division of disability and rehabilitative services advisory group, the 1102 taskforce, and others.

GOAL 3: Enhance collaboration with a variety of partners to ensure that job seekers with disabilities have access to a variety of pathways to employment.

Priority 3.1: Continue collaboration with core WIOA partners through strategies such as implementation of a combined state plan, maintaining and enhancing written partnership agreements, implementing Indiana's SWIS agreement, joint participation in special projects such as the Visionary Opportunities to Increase Competitive Employment (VOICE) training and technical assistance project, and other efforts. At least one new or enhanced collaboration effort will be achieved annually during the first 2 years of the state plan.

Outcome 3.1: Achieved. In addition to strong collaboration on development of the combined state plan, VR partnered at the local level with several workforce regions to implement a shared scheduling software to streamline the referral process across VR and other workforce programs. Agreements for infrastructure funding also continued and the JAG agreement was significant enhanced to target services to a larger population of students with disabilities.

Priority 3.2: Continue to build capacity for business engagement through implementation of new and innovative strategies and partnerships. Strategies may include development of a toolkit for businesses with helpful resources for hiring job seekers with disabilities, education to workforce development boards on improving opportunities for employment for individuals with disabilities, enhancing resources such as a dedicated VR webpage for businesses, providing training to stakeholders including employment service providers, conducting awareness and education events during National Disability Employment Awareness Month, and increasing partnerships at the local, state, and national level. At least two new or enhanced strategies will be implemented annually during the first 2 years of the state plan.

Outcome 3.2: Achieved. Indiana VR's business engagement team launched a resource webpage to expand business access to information about resources for hiring job seekers with disabilities. The business engagement team's reach has continued to increase through social media followers and a weekly resource and opportunity email. The team supported a successful NDEAM event in Evansville in October 2021 to bring together local workforce partners to educate about workforce resources and outreach to local businesses on hiring job seekers with disabilities. VR's Business and Community Engagement Director is actively engaged in the Employment First and Work to Include stakeholder groups, helping to connect the group to state agencies and resources including the Diversity Inclusion Committee. Because of this connection, there were two trainings presented to hiring managers in 2021 around disability inclusion and etiquette and the employment of persons with disabilities.

Priority 3.3: Identify best practices in the delivery of required Pre-ETS activities such as incorporation of the LifeCourse Framework, and identify areas of growth such as increased focus on career and technical education for students with disabilities and collaboration with Department of Education on a new student portfolio and graduation pathway requirements. Enhance Pre-ETS coordinating activities through increased transition efforts of VR staff including dedicated VR Youth Counselors. Enhance the Memorandum of Understanding with DWD to increase participation of students with disabilities in the Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) program. Provide an annual summary, highlighting Pre-ETS efforts and the number of students served. Ensure that 15% of VR federal funds are earmarked for Pre-ETS each federal fiscal year and increase the number of students receiving Pre-ETS annually.

Outcome 3.3: Partially Achieved. While challenges in serving students during the pandemic were numerous, VR has continued to earmark 15% of funds for Pre-ETS. Several strategies were implemented to increase utilization of Pre-ETS funds, including increased availability of stipends to support paid work experiences for students with disabilities, and expanding Pre-ETS contracts to additional partners, including IN*Source to help fill gaps in service and offer more options to students. As indicated above, the MOU with DWD for JAG was expanded to serve more students and there may be further room for expansion in the coming years. A mandatory training series was required for Pre-ETS career coaches on working with high support needs students to increase competence of staff and availability of Pre-ETS to these students.

Priority 3.4: Continue collaboration with other state agencies, such as participation in key advisory groups for BDDS home and community-based waiver redesign, co-leading the VOICE training and technical assistance project with DMHA, and collaboration with other state agencies in the implementation of Employment First philosophy in Indiana in alignment with the Employment First Act. Increase opportunities for targeted local partnership such as enhanced collaboration with 14c facilities, local workforce programs, community mental health centers, local schools, and others. Increased collaboration may improve education and awareness across organizations, create opportunities for shared participants or shared service costs, and increase referrals to VR. At least one new collaborative partnership will be achieved annually during the first 2 years of the state plan, as evidenced by an increase in referrals for a targeted population or implementation of process for shared service provision.

Outcome 3.4: Partially Achieved. While VR further enhanced collaboration with numerous partners, overall referrals decreased during the public health emergency. BRS expanded collaboration with DMHA over the past two years culminating in implementation of IPS early adopter sites. This collaboration has been expanded to include representation from the Office of Medicaid Policy and Planning, which has been crucial in developing guidance on braided and sequenced funding to fiscally support IPS services. VR continues to support Employment First efforts, such as presenting the Employment First plan to agency leadership across numerous state agencies in May 2021, providing VR representation on the Employment First committee, and connecting the committee to state resources and partners such as state personnel department.

B. DESCRIBE THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES

The COVID-19 public health emergency was the most significant factor that impeded progress with achieving some goals, specifically outreach efforts to increase referrals, and employment outcomes. See responses to section A above for more information.

2. AN EVALUATION OF THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM GOALS DESCRIBED IN THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SUPPLEMENT FOR THE MOST RECENT PROGRAM YEAR WERE ACHIEVED. THE EVALUATION MUST:

A. IDENTIFY THE STRATEGIES THAT CONTRIBUTED TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS

Goal 1: VR Supported Employment providers will increase knowledge and skills on the provision of supported employment services, including greater understanding and focus on development of natural supports, job readiness training techniques, customized employment, and strategies for achieving stabilization on the job.

Measure: BRS will invest in training for supported employment providers including classroom-based, web-based, and hands-on workshops that focus on job coaching and job readiness training techniques. BRS will examine strategies for improvement of community rehabilitation providers to ensure capacity to carry out increased expectations under the new model, such as provision of funding for Establishment projects. At least one new training strategy will be implemented annually, such as micro-training or innovative hands-on training opportunities.

Outcome: Achieved. Provider training was enhanced with the addition of mentoring/coaching to supplement classroom-based training. Additionally, BRS continued to support establishment projects through the end of the 4-year project period. During the final year of the establishment project period, 2398 individuals received supported employment services, compared to a baseline 774 individuals receiving supported employment prior to project start.

Goal 2: VR will increase the provision of supported employment to individuals with a most significant disability, through increased education and training to VR and CRP staff.

Measure: Increased provision of supported employment services by employment services providers receiving funding through Establishment projects. This will be measured through quarterly reports submitted by providers, comparing supported employment utilization by end of year 4 of the project (March, 2021) compared to supported employment utilization at the end of year two of the project (March, 2019). The targeted percent increase from year 2 to year 4 is to increase supported employment utilization by an additional 10%.

Outcome: Partially achieved. While overall supported employment utilization increased as a result of the establishment project, the COVID-19 pandemic had a negative impact on the fourth and final year of the project. The supported employment utilization peaked in year 2 of the project with 2698 receiving this service, with a small decrease in year 3 (2365) and year 4 (2398). However, the overall supported employment utilization increased substantially from baseline pre-project (774) to all four years of the project period.

B. DESCRIBE THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES

The COVID-19 public health emergency was the most significant factor impeding progress toward one component of the second goal as outlined in the response in section p.2.A. The number of individuals receiving services from VR decreased during the pandemic, resulting in a reduction in the utilization of supported employment services.

3. THE VR PROGRAM'S PERFORMANCE ON THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY INDICATORS UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA

VR made necessary modifications to the data collection system to ensure new required data elements are tracked and collected, including post-exit data, and all data is included in the

submission of quarterly RSA-911 reports. The goals outlined above helped to drive performance regarding median wages and employment rates, as well as measurable skill gains and credential attainment. In 2020, VR improved collection of data related to measurable skill gains and postsecondary credential attainment, with technical assistance from WINTAC. A webinar was held with statewide VR management staff to improve training and guidance to field staff on data collection needs related to core performance measures. VR is tracking employer engagement data in DWD's INGage system, a joint effort with DWD. Tracking data for employer engagement in a single system across WIOA core programs allows for efficient and robust reporting of outcomes for this core performance indicator.

4. HOW THE FUNDS RESERVED FOR INNOVATION AND EXPANSION (I&E) ACTIVITIES WERE UTILIZED

VR continued to support the Indiana Statewide Independent Living Council (INSILC) with I&E funds. INSILC continues to use funding to support a team of staff to assist the council in carrying out their core functions and meet goals outlined in the State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL). VR has also maintained a small business and community engagement team who have a presence across Indiana to share resources and educate businesses about opportunities to employ individuals with disabilities. This team is led by a Director of Business and Community Engagement, and the efforts of this team continue to increase VR's social media following each year, as well as increase the number of business partners through outreach and training to businesses and increased hiring opportunities for VR participants.

Q. QUALITY, SCOPE, AND EXTENT OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Include the following:

1. THE QUALITY, SCOPE, AND EXTENT OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED TO INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES

Indiana's Supported Employment (SE) services are highly individualized and involve ongoing support services and other appropriate services needed to support and maintain an individual with the most significant disability (MSD), including youth with the most significant disabilities, in SE for a period of time that generally does not exceed 24 months. Such services, such as job coaching, are for individuals who have SE and long-term supports identified on the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). Often, because of the nature and severity of the individuals' disability, there is a need for extended services that are provided by a State agency, private nonprofit organization, natural supports, or any other appropriate resources that are funded outside of VR. VR funding is available for the provision of extended services to Youth with a MSD, for a period not to exceed four years, if the youth has exhausted 24 months of SE services, and is not eligible for extended services through other sources.

Eligible VR participants with a MSD obtain SE services through accredited Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs) across the state. SE services are provided from the time of job placement through achievement of stabilization and retention (90 days after stabilization). The expected outcome of SE services is to ensure that stabilization on the job has appropriately occurred after a period of gradually decreasing needed supports and a correlated demonstration of increased independence. The intensive level of support needs should be well-documented by the CRPs in the Employment Support and Retention Plan, and the expectation of fading (i.e., decreasing the amount of support as a consumer becomes more proficient in

completing job duties) is important to reach optimal independence. VR acknowledges that fading of supports may not always occur in a completely linear process, and levels of SE support may ebb and flow depending on the needs of the individual. However, a pattern of increased independence and reduced need for support (fading) should be evident prior to the identification that stabilization has occurred for an individual needing SE services. More specifics regarding Supported Employment may be found in the Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation Services – Manual of Employment Services at www.vrs.in.gov.

2. THE TIMING OF TRANSITION TO EXTENDED SERVICES

It is critical that early conversations take place regarding the anticipated need for extended services between VR, the participant and the CRP to begin planning for the transition to extended services, including the possibility of VR funding youth extended services if no other (or inadequate) funding sources are available. It is important to recognize the impact that a good job match with appropriate and intensive ongoing supports may have on the amount and type of extended services an individual may need long term in order to maintain his/her job. It is also valuable to begin identifying and exploring natural supports an individual may have available to him/her early in the process. When it has been determined that a participant is stable on the job, the process to transition to extended services begins, and this process must identify the participant's ongoing specific need(s), types of supports and services, the sources of extended services, and the projected number of hours of support needed. VR Counselors are required to assist in facilitating the seamless transition to extended services prior to VR case closure (or, in the case of VR funded youth extended services, prior to stabilization). The Stabilization Notification form is completed for VR participants who require extended services. The form is completed following achievement of stabilization. VR and CRP personnel work jointly to complete this document. VR forwards the completed form to entities providing supports at least 60 days prior to achievement of Milestone 3 (Retention).

VR administration continues to focus on the need to ensure quality SE service; as such services are essential in securing quality employment outcomes for those participants with MSD. VR will continue to work closely with the Bureau of Developmental Disability Services, the Division of Mental Health and Addiction, and CRPs to identify areas of concern, implement needed changes in practices, and provide training and/or technical assistance.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (COMBINED OR GENERAL) CERTIFICATIONS

States must provide written and signed certifications that:

1. THE (ENTER THE NAME OF DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY OR DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, AS APPROPRIATE,) IS AUTHORIZED TO SUBMIT THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN UNDER TITLE I OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973 (REHABILITATION ACT), AS AMENDED BY WIOA[14], AND ITS SUPPLEMENT UNDER TITLE VI OF THE REHABILITATION ACT[15];

ENTER THE NAME OF DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY OR DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, AS APPROPRIATE

Bureau of Rehabilitation Services

2. AS A CONDITION FOR THE RECEIPT OF FEDERAL FUNDS UNDER TITLE I OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR THE PROVISION OF VR SERVICES, THE (ENTER THE NAME OF DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY)[16] AGREES TO OPERATE AND ADMINISTER THE STATE VR SERVICES PROGRAM IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN[17] , THE REHABILITATION ACT, AND ALL APPLICABLE

REGULATIONS[18] , POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES ESTABLISHED BY THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION. FUNDS MADE AVAILABLE UNDER SECTION 111 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT ARE USED SOLELY FOR THE PROVISION OF VR SERVICES AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN;

ENTER THE NAME OF DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY

Division of Disability and Rehabilitative Services

3. AS A CONDITION FOR THE RECEIPT OF FEDERAL FUNDS UNDER TITLE VI OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES, THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AGREES TO OPERATE AND ADMINISTER THE STATE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES PROGRAM IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SUPPLEMENT TO THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN[19] , THE REHABILITATION ACT, AND ALL APPLICABLE REGULATIONS[20] , POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES ESTABLISHED BY THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION. FUNDS MADE AVAILABLE UNDER TITLE VI ARE USED SOLELY FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE SUPPLEMENT TO THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN;

4. THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AND/OR THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT HAS THE AUTHORITY UNDER STATE LAW TO PERFORM THE FUNCTIONS OF THE STATE REGARDING THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT;

5. THE STATE LEGALLY MAY CARRY OUT EACH PROVISION OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT.

6. ALL PROVISIONS OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT ARE CONSISTENT WITH STATE LAW.

7. THE (ENTER THE NAME OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW) HAS THE AUTHORITY UNDER STATE LAW TO RECEIVE, HOLD, AND DISBURSE FEDERAL FUNDS MADE AVAILABLE UNDER THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT;

ENTER THE NAME OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW

Theresa Koleszar

8. THE (ENTER THE TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW) HAS THE AUTHORITY TO SUBMIT THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND THE SUPPLEMENT FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES;

ENTER THE TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW

Director, Bureau of Rehabilitation Services

9. THE AGENCY THAT SUBMITS THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT HAS ADOPTED OR OTHERWISE FORMALLY APPROVED THE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT.

FOOTNOTES

[14] Public Law 113-128.
[15] Unless otherwise stated, "Rehabilitation Act" means the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as

amended by WIOA, signed into law on July 22, 2014.
[16] All references in this plan to "designated State agency" or to "the State agency" relate to the agency identified in this paragraph.
[17] No funds under title I of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.
[18] Applicable regulations, in part, include the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 76, 77, 79, 81, and 82; 2 CFR part 200 as adopted by 2 CFR part 3474; and the State VR Services program regulations.
[19] No funds under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved supported employment supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.
[20] Applicable regulations, in part, include the citations in footnote 6.

CERTIFICATION SIGNATURE

Signatory information	Theresa Koleszar
Name of Signatory	Theresa Koleszar
Title of Signatory	Director, Bureau of Rehabilitation Services
Date Signed	3/09/2022

ASSURANCES

The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate and identified in the State certifications included with this VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, through signature of the authorized individual, assures the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), that it will comply with all of the requirements of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, as set forth in sections 101(a) and 606 of the Rehabilitation Act. The individual authorized to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement makes the following assurances: **The State Plan must provide assurances that:**

The State Plan must include	Include
1. Public Comment on Policies and Procedures: The designated State agency assures it will comply with all statutory and regulatory requirements for public participation in the VR Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, as required by section 101(a)(16)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act.	
2. Submission of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and Its Supplement: The designated State unit assures it will comply with all requirements pertaining to the submission and revisions of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement for the State Supported	

The State Plan must include	Include
Employment Services program, as required by sections 101(a)(1), (22), (23), and 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act; section 102 of WIOA in the case of the submission of a unified plan; section 103 of WIOA in the case of a submission of a Combined State Plan; 34 CFR 76.140.	
3. The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures it will comply with the requirements related to:Administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan:	
3.a. The establishment of the designated State agency and designated State unit, as required by section 101(a)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act	
3.b. The establishment of either a State independent commission or State Rehabilitation Council, as required by section 101(a)(21) of the Rehabilitation Act. The designated State agency or designated State unit, as applicable (A or B must be selected):	
3.b.(A) "is an independent State commission" (Yes/No)	No
3.b.(B) "has established a State Rehabilitation Council" (Yes/No)	Yes
3.c. Consultations regarding the administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, in accordance with section 101(a)(16)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act	
3.d. The financial participation by the State, or if the State so elects, by the State and local agencies, to provide the amount of the non-Federal share of the cost of carrying out the VR program in accordance with section 101(a)(3)	
3.e. The local administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, in accordance with section 101(a)(2)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act. Select yes or no, as appropriate, to identify if the designated State agency allows for the local administration of VR funds (Yes/No)	No
3.f. The shared funding and administration of joint programs, in accordance with section	No

The State Plan must include	Include
101(a)(2)(A)(ii) of the Rehabilitation Act. Select yes or no, as appropriate, to identify if the designated State agency allows for the shared funding and administration of joint programs (Yes/No)	
3.g. Statewideness and waivers of statewideness requirements, as set forth in section 101(a)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act. Is the designated State agency requesting or maintaining a waiver of statewideness for one or more services provided under the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan? (Yes/No) See Section 2 of this VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan	No
3.h. The descriptions for cooperation, collaboration, and coordination, as required by sections 101(a)(11) and (24)(B); and 606(b) of the Rehabilitation Act	
3.i. All required methods of administration, as required by section 101(a)(6) of the Rehabilitation Act	
3.j. The requirements for the comprehensive system of personnel development, as set forth in section 101(a)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act	
3.k. The compilation and submission to the Commissioner of statewide assessments, estimates, State goals and priorities, strategies, and progress reports, as appropriate, and as required by sections 101(a)(15), 105(c)(2), and 606(b)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act	
3.l. The reservation and use of a portion of the funds allotted to the State under section 110 of the Rehabilitation Act for the development and implementation of innovative approaches to expand and improve the provision of VR services to individuals with disabilities, particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities	
3.m. The submission of reports as required by section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act	
4. Administration of the Provision of VR Services: The designated State agency, or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures that it will:	

The State Plan must include	Include
4.a. Comply with all requirements regarding information and referral services in accordance with sections 101(a)(5)(D) and (20) of the Rehabilitation Act	
4.b. Impose no duration of residence requirement as part of determining an individual's eligibility for VR services or that excludes from services under the plan any individual who is present in the State in accordance with section 101(a)(12) of the Rehabilitation Act	
4.c. Provide the full range of services listed in section 103(a) of the Rehabilitation Act as appropriate, to all eligible individuals with disabilities in the State who apply for services in accordance with section 101(a)(5) of the Rehabilitation Act? (Yes/No)	No
4.d. Determine whether comparable services and benefits are available to the individual in accordance with section 101(a)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act	
4.e. Comply with requirements regarding the provisions of informed choice for all applicants and eligible individuals in accordance with section 102(d) of the Rehabilitation Act	
4.f. Comply with requirements regarding the provisions of informed choice for all applicants and eligible individuals in accordance with section 102(d) of the Rehabilitation Act	
4.g. Provide vocational rehabilitation services to American Indians who are individuals with disabilities residing in the State, in accordance with section 101(a)(13) of the Rehabilitation Act	
4.h. Comply with the requirements for the conduct of semiannual or annual reviews, as appropriate, for individuals employed either in an extended employment setting in a community rehabilitation program or any other employment under section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, as required by section 101(a)(14)of the Rehabilitation Act	
4.i. Meet the requirements in sections 101(a)(17) and 103(b)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act if the State	

The State Plan must include	Include
elects to construct, under special circumstances, facilities for community rehabilitation programs	
4.j. With respect to students with disabilities, the State,	
4.j.i. Has developed and will implement,	
4.j.i.I. Strategies to address the needs identified in the assessments; and	
4.j.i.II. Strategies to achieve the goals and priorities identified by the State, to improve and expand vocational rehabilitation services for students with disabilities on a statewide basis; and	
4.j.ii. Has developed and will implement strategies to provide pre-employment transition services (sections 101(a)(15) and 101(a)(25))	
5. Program Administration for the Supported Employment Title VI Supplement:	
5.a. The designated State unit assures that it will include in the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan all information required by section 606 of the Rehabilitation Act	
5.b. The designated State agency assures that it will submit reports in such form and in accordance with such procedures as the Commissioner may require and collects the information required by section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act separately for individuals receiving supported employment services under title I and individuals receiving supported employment services under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act	
5.c. The designated state unit will coordinate activities with any other State agency that is functioning as an employment network under the Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency program under Section 1148 of the Social Security Act	
6. Financial Administration of the Supported Employment Program:	
6.a. The designated State agency assures that it will expend no more than 2.5 percent of the State's allotment under title VI for administrative costs of carrying out this program; and, the designated	

The State Plan must include	Include
State agency or agencies will provide, directly or indirectly through public or private entities, non-Federal contributions in an amount that is not less than 10 percent of the costs of carrying out supported employment services provided to youth with the most significant disabilities with the funds reserved for such purpose under section 603(d) of the Rehabilitation Act, in accordance with section 606(b)(7)(G) and (H) of the Rehabilitation Act	
6.b. The designated State agency assures that it will use funds made available under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act only to provide supported employment services to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including extended services to youth with the most significant disabilities, who are eligible to receive such services; and, that such funds are used only to supplement and not supplant the funds provided under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act, when providing supported employment services specified in the individualized plan for employment, in accordance with section 606(b)(7)(A) and (D), of the Rehabilitation Act	
7. Provision of Supported Employment Services:	Yes
7.a. The Designated State Agency Assures That it Will Provide Supported Employment Services as Defined in Section 7(39) of the Rehabilitation Act	
7.b. The designated State agency assures that:	
7.b.i. The comprehensive assessment of individuals with significant disabilities conducted under section 102(b)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act and funded under title I of the Rehabilitation Act includes consideration of supported employment as an appropriate employment outcome, in accordance with the requirements of section 606(b)(7)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act	
7.b.ii. An individualized plan for employment that meets the requirements of section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act, which is developed and updated with title I funds, in accordance with sections 102(b)(3)(F) and 606(b)(6)(C) and (E) of the Rehabilitation Act	

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as "baseline" indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A "baseline" indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, "baseline" indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as "baseline" based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as "baseline" for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as "baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA." The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as "baseline" for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as "baseline" for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as "baseline." Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state's plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	46.0%	51.3%	47.0%	53.3%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	44.0%	48.3%	45.0%	50.3%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	$2900	$3431	$3000	$3534
Credential Attainment Rate	15.0%	20.0%	15.0%	21.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	50.0%	63.8%	50.0%	64.8%

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]

1

"Effectiveness in Serving Employers" is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.

VII. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR COMBINED STATE PLAN PARTNER PROGRAMS

States choosing to submit a Combined State Plan must provide information concerning the six core programs—the Adult program, Dislocated Worker program, Youth program, Wagner-Peyser Act program, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act program, and the Vocational Rehabilitation program— and also submit relevant information for any of the eleven partner programs it elects to include in its Combined State Plan. When a State includes a Combined State Plan partner program in its Combined State Plan, it need not submit a separate plan or application for that particular program. 24 If included, Combined State Plan partner programs are subject to the "common planning elements" in Sections II-IV of this document, where specified, as well as the program-specific requirements for that program.

[24] States that elect to include employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.) under a Combined State Plan would submit all other required elements of a complete CSBG State Plan directly to the Federal agency that administers the program. Similarly, States that elect to include employment and training activities carried by the Department of Housing and Urban Development would submit all other required elements of a complete State Plan for those programs directly to the Federal agency that administers the program.

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS AUTHORIZED UNDER THE THE CARL D. PERKINS CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION ACT OF 2006, AS AMENDED BY THE STRENGTHENING CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION FOR THE 21ST CENTURY ACT (PERKINS V) (TITLE 20, UNITED STATES CODE (20 U.S.C. 2301 ET SEQ.))

NOTE: Unless otherwise noted, statutory references in this section are to Pub. L. 115–224,— *The Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act* ("Perkins V" or "the Act"). (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.) The term "the State" used throughout this section refers to the State Perkins Eligible Agency and "the State Plan" refers to the "Perkins State Plan".

(OMB Control Number: 1830-0029)

A. PLAN DEVELOPMENT AND CONSULTATION

1. Describe how the State plan was developed in consultation with the stakeholders and in accordance with the procedures in section 122(c)(2) of Perkins V. See Text Box 1 for the statutory requirements for State plan consultation under section 122(c)(1) of Perkins V.

2. Consistent with section 122(e)(1) of Perkins V, each eligible agency must develop the portion of the State plan relating to the amount and uses of any funds proposed to be reserved for adult career and technical education, postsecondary career and technical

education, and secondary career and technical education after consultation with the State agencies identified in section 122(e)(1)(A)-(C) of the Act. If a State agency, other than the eligible agency, finds a portion of the final State plan objectionable, the eligible agency must provide a copy of such objections and a description of its response in the final plan submitted to the Secretary. (Section 122(e)(2) of Perkins V)

3. Describe opportunities for the public to comment in person and in writing on the State plan. (Section 122(d)(14) of Perkins V)

Text Box 1: Statutory Requirements for State Plan Consultation

- (c) PLAN DEVELOPMENT.—
- (1) IN GENERAL.—The eligible agency shall—
    - (A) Develop the State plan in consultation with—
        - (i) Representatives of secondary and postsecondary career and technical education programs, including eligible recipients and representatives of 2-year minority serving institutions and historically Black colleges and universities and tribally controlled colleges or universities in States where such institutions are in existence, adult career and technical education providers, and charter school representatives in States where such schools are in existence, which shall include teachers, faculty, school leaders, specialized instructional support personnel, career and academic guidance counselors, and paraprofessionals;
        - (ii) Interested community representatives, including parents, students, and community organizations;
        - (iii) Representatives of the State workforce development board established under section 101 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3111) (referred to in this section as the ‘‘State board’’);
        - (iv) Members and representatives of special populations;
        - (v) Representatives of business and industry (including representatives of small business), which shall include representatives of industry and sector partnerships in the State, as appropriate, and representatives of labor organizations in the State;
        - (vi) Representatives of agencies serving out-of-school youth, homeless children and youth, and at-risk youth, including the State Coordinator for Education of Homeless Children and Youths established or designated under section 722(d)(3) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11432(d)(3));
        - (vii) Representatives of Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations located in, or providing services in, the State; and
        - (viii) Individuals with disabilities; and
    - (B) Consult the Governor of the State, and the heads of other State agencies with authority for career and technical education programs that are not the eligible agency, with respect to the development of the State plan.
- (2) ACTIVITIES AND PROCEDURES.—The eligible agency shall develop effective activities and

Text Box 1: Statutory Requirements for State Plan Consultation

procedures, including access to information needed to use such procedures, to allow the individuals and entities described in paragraph (1) to participate in State and local decisions that relate to development of the State plan. (3) CONSULTATION WITH THE GOVERNOR.—The consultation described in paragraph (1)(B) shall include meetings of officials from the eligible agency and the Governor's office and shall occur—

- (A) During the development of such plan; and
- (B) Prior to submission of the plan to the Secretary.

(Section 122(c)(1) of Perkins V)

1. **Plan Development and Consultation**

1. **Describe how the State plan was developed in consultation with the stakeholders and in accordance with the procedures in section 122(c)(2) of Perkins V. See Text Box 1 for the statutory requirements for State plan consultation under section 122(c)(1) of Perkins V.**

As Industry 4.0 continues to transform Indiana's economy and workforce needs, Governor Holcomb's administration, as well as employers, schools, institutions of higher education, and other community stakeholders, have examined the role and purpose Career and Technical Education (CTE) has in our educational and talent development system. Long-term success in the rapidly changing economy requires continually increasing levels of proficiency of technical knowledge and skills. CTE can serve offer hands-on application and real-world relevancy for students of all levels. To ensure CTE courses and programs are integral to Indiana's larger secondary and postsecondary education and workforce systems, we must re-envision how CTE courses connect to core academic courses, relevant technical and technological skills, and practical application and problem-solving. The case for a more narrow approach to CTE, separate from either core academics or higher level technical skills, is often based on the notion that not every student goes to college. This argument creates a need an educational alternative for the students who, by desire or by necessity, go directly into the workforce after high school graduation. As Indiana re-envisions CTE across the state, we will redefine the perception that CTE is an alternative to academic courses targeted only for the non-college bound, but for all students, in both K-12 and adults, interested in accessing middle-wage and middle-skill careers aligned to greater economic mobility.

Long-term success in our ever-evolving economy increasingly depends on higher levels of academic proficiency, regardless of whether one intends to pursue education after high school. The ability to effectively problem-solve, think critically, communicate, collaborate, design, and

innovate are all essential skills in our globalized economy. Redesigning our approach to CTE will increase the quality, consistency, and intentionality behind these programs. This new vision for teaching and learning CTE will help all Hoosiers – both youth and adults – understand both the breadth and depth of career pathways and opportunities in Indiana.

Development of Indiana's Perkins V State Plan and the redesign of CTE began in May 2018 with the formation of the Governor's Workforce Cabinet (GWC) and the CTE Action Team. When active, the CTE Action Team consisted of representatives from the Department of Workforce Development (DWD), Commission for Higher Education (CHE), Department of Education (DOE), Office of Career and Technical Education, postsecondary representatives, and various industry stakeholders. These members included:

- Chairman -Paul Perkins, President of Amatrol, Inc.
- Alan Taylor, Director of Career and Technical Education for Prosser Career Center
- Mark Kara, Assistant to the Coordinator for Local 150 Operating Engineers
- Jason Ells, Senior Vice President of Custom Concrete
- Maurice Coates, President of CK United
- Bob Stutz, CEO Salesforce Marketing Cloud
- Nick Goodwin, Chief Strategy Officer Department of Workforce Development
- Beth Meguschar, Associate Chief Operating Officer Department of Workforce Development
- Amanda McCammon, Chief of Workforce & STEM Alliances Department of Education
- Stefany Deckard, State CTE Director Department of Education
- Josh Garrison, Associate Commissioner Indiana Commission for Higher Education
- Stephanie Sample, Associate Commissioner for Strategy and External Affairs Commission for Higher Education
- Ron Hoke, Curriculum and Equipment Specialist Vincennes University Katie Mote, Vice President of Operations Southern Indiana Ivy Tech Community College
- Dr. Byron Ernest, State Board of Education
- Brian Pawlowski, Executive Vice President Garatoni Family Office

The CTE Action Team completed a comprehensive review of the entire CTE system, which included an evaluation of how the current CTE system functions in relation to the reauthorization of the federal Carl D. Perkins Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act and alignment to the changing needs of the economy. In addition to the state's review, KSM Consulting delivered a report on Indiana's CTE system in December 2018, confirming many of the same issues that the CTE Action Team had discovered and also providing some new insights into the complexity of Indiana's CTE system. A summary of the findings from the CTE Action Team's Review and the KSM Consulting report include:

- Indiana's CTE system is widely misaligned in critical areas. Prior to July 1, 2019, authority for Perkins V rested with the State Board of Education, though the responsibility for administration and oversight of the CTE system was disparately housed across multiple agencies, including the Department of Education (DOE), Department of Workforce Development (DWD), and the Commission for Higher Education (CHE). This division of responsibility led to an often fractured system with poor alignment between secondary and postsecondary CTE, as well as full integration with the talent development system.
- Secondary CTE is operating under a plan developed in 2009. It is not consistently aligned with postsecondary CTE delivered at Ivy Tech, Vincennes, on-the-job training, or third party providers. Many programmatic standards are also outdated and archaic. Under our current system, we cannot ensure that students designated as CTE concentrators have the relevant knowledge and skills to move directly into employment or additional postsecondary educational opportunities. To ensure students receive high-quality CTE instruction and experiences, CTE in Indiana must be a rigorous and valuable pathway that includes opportunities to earn postsecondary credits and industry-recognized credentials prior to graduation.
- A lack of consistent, readily-available data and information limits the public's and policymakers' understanding of CTE, thus making it difficult to monitor the quality of student outcomes and performance. The challenges associated with accountability has led to discrepancies and inequities in outcomes and output, often overlapping with many of the demographic challenges recognized within the target populations.
- Clarifying strategic objectives for the CTE system would inform decisions on structure, funding, and curriculum flexibility. Improving data collection and availability, realigning systems, and revising funding formulas without first clarifying the purpose behind such actions would likely lessen the chance that skills-related outcomes improve. If Indiana is to increase its economic competitiveness and global relevance in the years ahead, we must make strategic, intentional investments in ensuring Hoosiers have the skills and abilities needed to succeed both now and in the future. CTE can play an important role in imparting such skills and abilities, and its role in doing so can be improved with strategic investments.
- The current CTE system creates a variety of barriers that make it difficult for innovative programs to be developed outside the traditional delivery methods. Community and industry representatives need to have a greater voice in the creation of CTE pathways. Indiana must to look for new, innovative solutions to increase the number of opportunities for students and to overcome content areas with a deficit of teachers.

Indiana's Vision for the Talent Development System: 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.[1] We will endeavor to increase intergenerational social and economic mobility by:

- Ensuring quality career 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.

To actualize Indiana's Vision, we must redesign our current CTE offerings to create an educational system comprised of stackable postsecondary and industry-recognized credentials aligned toward sustainable careers.

Action steps toward this Vision Include:

- Simplifying oversight and alignment of CTE policies and administration to ensure better outcomes for students.
- Providing more flexibility for schools with accompanying accountability of student outcomes for CTE programs.
- Ensuring that each CTE program delivers the knowledge and skills needed by improving the quality, consistency, and intentionality of CTE programs of study.
- Promoting the value, benefits, and effectiveness of CTE to parents, students and employers.

Indiana's Combined Plan: Development of the Combined Plan has played an integral role in leading the development and integration of the Perkins V Plan. Rather than creating this Plan in isolation, Indiana leveraged the opportunity of administrative reorganization efforts to incorporate this federal program as part of the larger approach to talent development. As the Combined Plan was developed from a human-centered perspective, Perkins was viewed from the lens of a particular target population. Focusing on how all of our educational, workforce development, and social service programs benefit those Hoosier with barriers to employment allows Indiana to systematically braid funds and blend services provided by a variety of federal, state, and philanthropic programs and activities.

The development of the Combined Plan began with a statewide listening tour. The tour included a stop in each of Indiana's 12 economic regions. Attendees had the opportunity to learn more about the Plan, including which Core, Partner, and other related state and federal programs were to be included. At each meeting, attendees were asked to provide input on various aspects of the talent development system through a set of discussion questions. CTE was represented at nearly each of the listening tour stops through the attendance of district directors, school administrators, and instructors.

Various committees were convened to provide input and feedback on the development of the Combined Plan. Through these committees, discussions focused on how federal and state programs, including CTE through Perkins, could be utilized to better support Hoosiers. This process has helped to broaden the impact and scope of the CTE system, as well as facilitate in-

depth conversations regarding collaboration between Perkins and WIOA. One example centered on increasing the number of opportunities for Integrated Education and Training programs through co-location of Adult Education at secondary and postsecondary schools, CTE centers, and institutions of higher education. Other possible collaborations that emerged through this process was embedding Vocational Rehabilitation and Pre-Employment Transition Services into CTE courses, as well as furthering connections between CTE and WIOA Youth programs (e.g., Jobs for America's Graduates).

2. **Consistent with section 122(e)(1) of Perkins V, each eligible agency must develop the portion of the State plan relating to the amount and uses of any funds proposed to be reserved for adult career and technical education, postsecondary career and technical education, and secondary career and technical education after consultation with the State agencies identified in section 122(e)(1)(A)-(C) of the Act. If a State agency, other than the eligible agency, finds a portion of the final State plan objectionable, the eligible agency must provide a copy of such objections and a description of its response in the final plan submitted to the Secretary. (Section 122(e)(2) of Perkins V)**

The GWC, as the eligible agency, has reviewed and approved the Perkins section of the Combined Plan regarding the distribution amounts and the use of funds in consultation with secondary postsecondary career and technical education and adult education through direct communication and through the various committees. As a part of the public comment process, the Perkins V State Plan will be shared with stakeholders and representatives that were consulted for additional input and feedback. If any organization has an objection to the distribution and use of funds detailed in the state plan, it may file an objection with the GWC. Any objections along with the GWC's response will be included in the final plan submitted.

3. **Describe opportunities for the public to comment in person and in writing on the State plan. (Section 122(d)(14) of Perkins V)**

Prior to drafting the final version of the Combined Plan, the GWC conducted a statewide listening tour to gather public input on all the Core WIOA Programs and the Partner Programs included in the Plan. The listening tour held a meeting in each of the 12 economic regions of the state. Comments and takeaways from the listening tour were considered and included in the Combined Plan and the Perkins V Program Requirements where appropriate and applicable.

A draft of the Combined Plan will be posted on GWC's and DWD's website for public review and comment. The GWC will have a dedicated email address to receive public comments. The draft will be posted for 30 days prior to final revisions and submission.

In addition to being posted on the GWC website as a part of the Combined Plan, the Perkins V Program Requirements will be shared with key stakeholder groups, including IACTED Directors, postsecondary representatives, Adult Education, and secondary teachers and administrators.

These stakeholder groups will have the opportunity to provide comments either in-person or through email messages.

[1] The Stanford Center on Poverty and Inequality defines income mobility as, "A child's chance of moving up in the income distribution relative to her parents" (Economic Mobility, 2015).

B. PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

- 1. State's Vision for Education and Workforce Development
    - a. Provide a summary of State-supported workforce development activities (including education and training) in the State, including the degree to which the State's career and technical education programs and programs of study are aligned with and address the education and skill needs of the employers in the State identified by the State workforce development board. (Section 122(d)(1) of Perkins V)
    - b. Describe the State's strategic vision and set of goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including special populations) and for meeting the skilled workforce needs of employers, including in existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations as identified by the State, and how the State's career and technical education programs will help to meet these goals. (Section 122(d)(2) of Perkins V)
    - c. Describe the State's strategy for any joint planning, alignment, coordination, and leveraging of funds between the State's career and technical education programs and programs of study with the State's workforce development system, to achieve the strategic vision and goals described in section 122(d)(2) of Perkins V, including the core programs defined in section 3 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3102) and the elements related to system alignment under section 102(b)(2)(B) of such Act (29 U.S.C. 3112(b)(2)(B)); and for programs carried out under this title with other Federal programs, which may include programs funded under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 and the Higher Education Act of 1965. (Section 122(d)(3) of Perkins V)
    - d. Describe how the eligible agency will use State leadership funds made available under section 112(a)(2) of Perkins V for each of the purposes under section 124(a) of the Act. See Text Box 2 for the required uses of State leadership funds under section 124(a) of Perkins V. (Section 122(d)(7) of Perkins V)

Text Box 2: Required Uses of State Leadership Funds

(a) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—

From amounts reserved under section 112(a)(2), each eligible agency shall—

- (1) Conduct State leadership activities to improve career and technical education, which shall include support for—
    - (A) Preparation for non-traditional fields in current and emerging professions, programs for special populations, and other activities that expose students, including special populations, to

Text Box 2: Required Uses of State Leadership Funds

high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand occupations;

- (B) Individuals in State institutions, such as State correctional institutions, including juvenile justice facilities, and educational institutions that serve individuals with disabilities;
- (C) Recruiting, preparing, or retaining career and technical education teachers, faculty, specialized instructional support personnel, or paraprofessionals, such as preservice, professional development, or leadership development programs; and
- (D) Technical assistance for eligible recipients; and

(2) Report on the effectiveness of such use of funds in achieving the goals described in section 122(d)(2) and the State determined levels of performance described in section 113(b)(3)(A), and reducing disparities or performance gaps as described in section 113(b)(3)(C)(ii)(II).

(Section 124 of Perkins V)

- 2. Implementing Career and Technical Education Programs and Programs of Study
  - a. Describe the career and technical education programs or programs of study that will be supported, developed, or improved at the State level, including descriptions of the programs of study to be developed at the State level and made available for adoption by eligible recipients. (Section 122(d)(4)(A) of Perkins V)
  - b. Describe the process and criteria to be used for approving locally developed programs of study or career pathways (see Text Box 3 for the statutory definition of career pathways under section 3(8) of Perkins V), including how such programs address State workforce development and education needs and the criteria to assess the extent to which the local application under section 1321 [1] will—
    - i. Promote continuous improvement in academic achievement and technical skill attainment;
    - ii. Expand access to career and technical education for special populations; and
    - iii. Support the inclusion of employability skills in programs of study and career pathways. (Section 122(d)(4)(B) of Perkins V)
  - c. Describe how the eligible agency will—
    - i. Make information on approved programs of study and career pathways (including career exploration, work-based learning opportunities, early college high schools, and dual or concurrent enrollment program opportunities) and guidance and advisement resources, available to students (and parents, as appropriate), representatives of secondary and postsecondary education, and special populations, and to the extent practicable, provide that information and those resources in a language students, parents, and educators can understand;

- ii. Facilitate collaboration among eligible recipients in the development and coordination of career and technical education programs and programs of study and career pathways that include multiple entry and exit points;
- iii. Use State, regional, or local labor market data to determine alignment of eligible recipients' programs of study to the needs of the State, regional, or local economy, including in-demand industry sectors and occupations identified by the State board, and to align career and technical education with such needs, as appropriate;
- iv. Ensure equal access to approved career and technical education programs of study and activities assisted under this Act for special populations;
- v. Coordinate with the State board to support the local development of career pathways and articulate processes by which career pathways will be developed by local workforce development boards, as appropriate;
- vi. Support effective and meaningful collaboration between secondary schools, postsecondary institutions, and employers to provide students with experience in, and understanding of, all aspects of an industry, which may include work-based learning such as internships, mentorships, simulated work environments, and other hands-on or inquiry-based learning activities; and
- vii. Improve outcomes and reduce performance gaps for CTE concentrators, including those who are members of special populations. (Section 122(d)(4)(C) of Perkins V)

Text Box 3: Statutory Definition of Career Pathways

The term 'career pathways' has the meaning given the term in section 3 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3102)

(7) Career pathway.--The term "career pathway'' means a combination of rigorous and high-quality education, training, and other services that—

- (A) Aligns with the skill needs of industries in the economy of the State or regional economy involved;
- (B) Prepares an individual to be successful in any of a full range of secondary or postsecondary education options, including apprenticeships registered under the Act of August 16, 1937 (commonly known as the "National Apprenticeship Act''; 50 Stat. 664, chapter 663; 29 U.S.C. 50 et seq.) (referred to individually in this Act as an "apprenticeship'', except in section 171);
- (C) Includes counseling to support an individual in achieving the individual's education and career goals;
- (D) Includes, as appropriate, education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster;
- (E) Organizes education, training, and other services to meet the particular needs of an individual in a manner that accelerates the educational and career advancement of the individual to the extent

Text Box 3: Statutory Definition of Career Pathways

practicable;

- (F) Enables an individual to attain a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and at least 1 recognized postsecondary credential; and
- (G) Helps an individual enter or advance within a specific occupation or occupational cluster. (Section 3(7) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act [Public Law 113- 128])

(Section 3(8) of Perkins V)

- d. Describe how the eligible agency, if it opts to do so, will include the opportunity for secondary school students to participate in dual or concurrent enrollment programs, early college high school, or competency-based education. (Section 122(d)(4)(D) of Perkins V)
- e. Describe how the eligible agency will involve parents, academic and career and technical education teachers, administrators, faculty, career guidance and academic counselors, local business (including small businesses), labor organizations, and representatives of Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations, as appropriate, in the planning, development, implementation, and evaluation of its career and technical education programs. (Section 122(d)(12) of Perkins V)
- f. Include a copy of the local application template that the eligible agency will require eligible recipients to submit pursuant to section 134(b) of Perkins V. See Text Box 4 for the statutory requirements for local applications under section 134(b) of Perkins V.
- g. Include a copy of the comprehensive local needs assessment template and/or guidelines that the eligible agency will require of eligible recipients to meet the requirements of section 134(c) of Perkins V. See Text Box 5 for the requirements for the comprehensive local needs assessment under section 134(c) of Perkins V.
- h. Provide the eligible agency's definition for "size, scope, and quality" that will be used to make funds available to eligible recipients pursuant to section 135(b) of Perkins V.

Text Box 4: Statutory Requirements of Local Applications

- (b) CONTENTS.—The eligible agency shall determine the requirements for local applications, except that each local application shall contain—
- (1) A description of the results of the comprehensive needs assessment conducted under subsection (c);
- (2) Information on the career and technical education course offerings and activities that the eligible recipient will provide with funds under this part, which shall include not less than 1 program of study approved by a State under section 124(b)(2), including—
    - (A) How the results of the comprehensive needs assessment described in subsection (c) informed the selection of the specific career and technical education programs and activities selected to be funded;
    - (B) A description of any new programs of study the eligible recipient will develop and submit to

the State for approval; and

- (C) How students, including students who are members of special populations, will learn about their school's career and technical education course offerings and whether each course is part of a career and technical education program of study;

- (3) A description of how the eligible recipient, in collaboration with local workforce development boards and other local workforce agencies, one-stop delivery systems described in section 121(e)(2) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3151(e)(2)), and other partners, will provide—
  - (A) Career exploration and career development coursework, activities, or services;
  - (B) Career information on employment opportunities that incorporate the most up-to-date information on high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand industry sectors or occupations, as determined by the comprehensive needs assessment described in subsection (c); and
  - (C) An organized system of career guidance and academic counseling to students before enrolling and while participating in a career and technical education program;
- (4) A description of how the eligible recipient will improve the academic and technical skills of students participating in career and technical education programs by strengthening the academic and career and technical education components of such programs through the integration of coherent and rigorous content aligned with challenging academic standards and relevant career and technical education programs to ensure learning in the subjects that constitute a well-rounded education (as defined in section 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965);
- (5) A description of how the eligible recipient will—
  - (A) Provide activities to prepare special populations for high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand industry sectors or occupations that will lead to self-sufficiency;
  - (B) Prepare CTE participants for non-traditional fields;
  - (C) Provide equal access for special populations to career and technical education courses, programs, and programs of study; and
  - D) Ensure that members of special populations will not be discriminated against on the basis of their status as members of special populations;
- (6) A description of the work-based learning opportunities that the eligible recipient will provide to students participating in career and technical education programs and how the recipient will work with representatives from employers to develop or expand work-based learning opportunities for career and technical education students, as applicable;
- (7) A description of how the eligible recipient will provide students participating in career and technical education programs with the opportunity to gain postsecondary credit while still attending high school, such as through dual or concurrent enrollment programs or early college high school, as practicable;
- (8) A description of how the eligible recipient will coordinate with the eligible agency and institutions of higher education to support the recruitment, preparation, retention, and training, including professional development, of teachers, faculty, administrators, and specialized instructional support

Text Box 4: Statutory Requirements of Local Applications

personnel and paraprofessionals who meet applicable State certification and licensure requirements (including any requirements met through alternative routes to certification), including individuals from groups underrepresented in the teaching profession; and

- (9) A description of how the eligible recipient will address disparities or gaps in performance as described in section 113(b)(3)(C)(ii)(II) in each of the plan years, and if no meaningful progress has been achieved prior to the third program year, a description of the additional actions such recipient will take to eliminate those disparities or gaps.

(Section 134(b) of Perkins V)

Text Box 5: Statutory Requirements for Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment

- (c) COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT.—
- (1) IN GENERAL.—To be eligible to receive financial assistance under this part, an eligible recipient shall—
    - (A) Conduct a comprehensive local needs assessment related to career and technical education and include the results of the needs assessment in the local application submitted under subsection (a); and
    - (B) Not less than once every 2 years, update such comprehensive local needs assessment.
- (2) REQUIREMENTS.—The comprehensive local needs assessment described in paragraph
    - (1) Shall include each of the following:
    - (A) An evaluation of the performance of the students served by the eligible recipient with respect to State determined and local levels of performance established pursuant to section 113, including an evaluation of performance for special populations and each subgroup described in section 1111(h)(1)(C)(ii) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.
    - (B) A description of how career and technical education programs offered by the eligible recipient are—(i) sufficient in size, scope, and quality to meet the needs of all students served by the eligible recipient; and (ii)(I) aligned to State, regional, Tribal, or local in-demand industry sectors or occupations identified by the State workforce development board described in section 101 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3111) (referred to in this section as the ''State board'') or local workforce development board, including career pathways, where appropriate; or (II) designed to meet local education or economic needs not identified by State boards or local workforce development boards.
    - (C) An evaluation of progress toward the implementation of career and technical education programs and programs of study.
    - (D) A description of how the eligible recipient will improve recruitment, retention, and training of career and technical education teachers, faculty, specialized instructional support personnel, paraprofessionals, and career guidance and academic counselors, including individuals in groups underrepresented in such professions.
    - (E) A description of progress toward implementation of equal access to high-quality career and technical education courses and programs of study for all students, including— (i) strategies to

overcome barriers that result in lower rates of access to, or performance gaps in, the courses and programs for special populations; (ii) providing programs that are designed to enable special populations to meet the local levels of performance; and (iii) providing activities to prepare special populations for high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand industry sectors or occupations in competitive, integrated settings that will lead to self-sufficiency.

(Section 134(c) of Perkins V)

- 3. Meeting the Needs of Special Populations
  - a. Describe the eligible agency's program strategies for special populations, including a description of how individuals who are members of special populations—
    - i. Will be provided with equal access to activities assisted under this Act;
    - ii. Will not be discriminated against on the basis of status as a member of a special population;
    - iii. Will be provided with programs designed to enable individuals who are members of special populations to meet or exceed State determined levels of performance described in section 113, and prepare special populations for further learning and for high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand industry sectors or occupations;
    - iv. Will be provided with appropriate accommodations; and
    - v. Will be provided instruction and work-based learning opportunities in integrated settings that support competitive, integrated employment. (Section 122(d)(9) of Perkins V)
- 4. Preparing Teachers and Faculty
  - a. Describe how the eligible agency will support the recruitment and preparation of teachers, including special education teachers, faculty, school principals, administrators, specialized instructional support personnel, and paraprofessionals to provide career and technical education instruction, leadership, and support, including professional development that provides the knowledge and skills needed to work with and improve instruction for special populations. (Section 122(d)(6) of Perkins V)

[1]Based on the context of this requirement, the reference to the local application process under "section 132" appears to be a typographical error in the Perkins V statute. The correct section for local applications in Perkins V is section 134. Therefore, eligible agencies should respond to this item using the provisions in section 134 of Perkins V.

Program Administration and Implementation

1. **State's Vision for Education and Workforce Development. States that elect to include employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.) under a Combined State Plan would submit all other required elements of a complete CSBG State Plan**

directly to the Federal agency that administers the program. Similarly, States that elect to include employment and training activities carried by the Department of Housing and Urban Development would submit all other required elements of a complete State Plan for those programs directly to the Federal agency that administers the program.

A. Provide a summary of State-supported workforce development activities (including education and training) in the State, including the degree to which the State's career and technical education programs and programs of study are aligned with and address the education and skill needs of the employers in the State identified by the State workforce development board. (Section 122(d)(1) of Perkins V)

Governor's Workforce Cabinet: In March 2018, the Governor's Workforce Cabinet (GWC) was established by Senate Bill 50 and received a federal waiver in June 2018 to fill the role of Indiana's federally-mandated state workforce development board. Through this legislation and waiver, the GWC assumed authority for overseeing the entire talent development system for the state, from early education to adult education and training opportunities. Legislation passed in 2019 established the GWC as the eligible agency for the Carl D. Perkins Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act. On July 1, 2019, the Office of Career and Technical Education was reassigned from the Indiana Department of Education to the GWC. Moving to the GWC created the opportunity for better alignment of CTE with all other workforce development activities and to serve as an integral element to the talent development system.

Next Level Jobs: This state program aims to equip working-age Hoosiers and Indiana employers with the training and skills opportunities needed to succeed in the 21st Century economy. Developed in partnership by the Governor, the Indiana Commission for Higher Education, and the Indiana Department of Workforce Development, with support from the Indiana General Assembly, Next Level Jobs features two targeted programs: Workforce Ready Grants and Employer Training Grants.

- **Workforce Ready Grants** help to remove the financial barriers that may prevent Hoosiers from getting the training they want or need for a career in one of Indiana's five high-demand fields: Advanced Manufacturing, Building and Construction, Health and Life Sciences, IT and Business Services, and Transportation and Logistics. The grants cover remaining tuition and fees in both credit and non-credit bearing programs after other financial aid has been applied up to $5,500 for up to two years. The goal for Workforce Ready Grants is to increase career exploration and credential completion in Indiana's high priority sectors.
- **Employer Training Grants** reimburse employer costs for training, upskilling, or reskilling employees for six months in a high-demand fields, like Advanced Manufacturing, Agriculture, Building and Construction, Health and Life Sciences, IT and Business Services, and Transportation and Logistics. Training costs up to $5,000 per employee may be reimburse with up to a maximum of $50,000 for each employer. Employer Training Grants have been expanded to allow employers to be reimbursed up to $1,000 for training high school students as long as the student earns a credential.

Office of Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeships (OWBLA)/State Earn and Learns (SEALs): Located within the Department of Workforce Development and part of the Next Level Agenda, this division develops and implements a framework of various work-based learning pathways for both youth and adults. It partners with the US Department of Labor to expand registered apprenticeships, develop flexible, scalable programs focused on high-wage, high-demand occupations. Since its inception, OWBLA has developed several State Earn and Learns (SEALs) for both youth and adults. SEALs are training programs that combine an educational component with on-the-job training. SEALs offer participants postsecondary credits and the opportunity to earn industry-recognized certifications. Most SEALs are aligned to the state's CTE pathways.

To better integrate work-based learning and CTE, the responsibility for developing and implementing a framework for work-based learning pathways for K-14 has been shifted to the Office of CTE under the GWC. This shift will help to ensure that WBL is an integral part of the newly developed Next Level Programs of Study.

Local Career Coaching Grants: These state grants provide an opportunity for K-12 and postsecondary representatives, employers, and community-based organizations to collaborate on comprehensive, career-focused solutions for their community. The goal is for partners to work together to create a sustainable system for the delivery of local, state, and national career information, as well as increase the educational attainment levels required for those careers. The career coaching system should provide students and adults with opportunities to participate in experiential learning and training in order to make well-informed decisions about their futures.

Skillful Governor's Coaching Corps: This program is a partnership between Skillful and the state of Indiana. It is an 8-month program that gives career coaches the tools and training they need to better serve Hoosiers in our rapidly changing labor market. The participants represent a diverse mix of organizations: public workforce centers, adult educational institutions, K-12 schools, and non-profits from all 12 Indiana workforce regions. In addition to developing their personal coaching skills, participants work in teams to develop new practices and technologies to improve career services. These practices are then recommended to state leadership for adoption. The work that this group completes serves as a foundation for professional development for school counselors and other school personnel to help provide career guidance and advisement to students and parents to help them make more informed decisions.

Hoosier Initiative for Re-Entry: The Hoosier Initiative for Re-Entry (HIRE) program helps people involved with the legal system reintegrate into society and creates career paths to give them the opportunities to improve their lives in a sustainable way through work. HIRE works with clients both pre- and post-release to secure employment. Offenders who display a positive track record during their incarceration, participated in programming opportunities during incarceration, and show drive and determination may qualify for the HIRE program. HIRE coordinators deliver all or applicable portions of the HIRE Academy for participants that targets soft skills, workplace aptitude, and motivation. The HIRE Academy is required for all adult offenders who enroll in a vocational training program within IDOC.

Graduation Pathways: Beginning with the class of 2023, students must satisfy three requirements to graduate from high school. They must complete the course requirements for one of the high school diplomas, demonstrate employability skills through project-, service-, or work-based learning experience, and complete at least one postsecondary-ready competency. Three of the nine postsecondary-ready competencies are directly related to CTE. Students have the option of earning a state- and industry-recognized credential or certification, completing one year of a federally-recognized apprenticeship, or earning CTE concentrator status in an approved pathway.

State CTE Tuition Support: Through Indiana Code 20-43-8, each Indiana secondary school corporation is entitled to receive a grant for CTE courses in addition to their basic tuition support. The grant amount is based upon the number of students enrolled in CTE courses. Selected CTE courses are either flat-funded or are funded based on their designation as high, moderate, or less than moderate value. The CTE tuition support incentivizes schools to offer career and technical education programs and courses, as well as offsets course-related costs (e.g., facilities, equipment, supplies, and materials).

B. Describe the State's strategic vision and set of goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including special populations) and for meeting the skilled workforce needs of employers, including in existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations as identified by the State, and how the State's career and technical education programs will help to meet these goals. (Section 122(d)(2) of Perkins V)

Indiana's strategic vision is to create a talent system that provides all Hoosiers equitable opportunities for lifelong learning and increased personal economic mobility, as well as provides employers the talent to grow and diversify their workforce. We will endeavor to increase intergenerational social and income mobility by:

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

Indiana has two overarching targets for its talent system:

- By 2025, at least 60% of Hoosiers will attain a quality credential beyond a high school diploma; and
    - As the state begins to think beyond 2025, Indiana knows that we must begin focusing on high school students to be able to sustain and grow the 60% credential attainment goal.

- Engagement between employers and the talent development system increases to identify and address the skills gaps with greater responsivity and efficiency.

Indiana's Combined Plan has five goals for our talent development and social services system which will actualize our Vision:

Goal 1. Focus on meeting the individual needs of constituents.

- CTE is an integral component of the talent development system that can help individuals meet their current needs while providing opportunities to earn stackable credentials. Broadening the scope of CTE by integrating it with other programs through co-location and co-enrollment will help Hoosiers find and navigate the talent development pathway that meets their needs.
- As part of our efforts to scale career coaching and navigation, we will include mentorship and advising around the benefits and multiple options of higher education and lifelong learning. This will encompass ways to address short-term associated costs and the long-term economic benefits.
- Increase the number of participants, including those with barriers, who have defined career pathways and have gained transferrable skills, received industry-recognized credentials, and/or earned college credits.

Goal 2. Simplify state systems to facilitate greater access to information, resources, and services for constituents, state personnel, and case managers.

- State agencies will coordinate outreach personnel throughout the state to co-locate services. This will require personnel to be mobile throughout their region to spend time in hubs of activity throughout – such as WorkOnes, schools, libraries, community centers, and city halls.
- We will leverage Governor Holcomb's work in the American Workforce Policy Advisory Board, initiated by the White House, to create an effective data charter between the state agencies represented on the Governor's Workforce Cabinet.

Goal 3. Align programs towards creating a healthy, engaged, and prepared workforce.

- The best way to prevent future reliance on these programs is through our education system. Career and technical education has historically been neglected in Indiana. Through a redesign of our career and technical courses, we are embedding more academic rigor and industry relevance. During middle and high school, students will have the opportunity to earn the content necessary to be enrolled and successful in a postsecondary education or training program or employed in high-wage, high skill, and in-demand occupations.
- Our CTE redesign strategy, as well as Indiana's other in-school programs for at-risk youth (e.g., JAG), are directed towards preventing Hoosiers from needing adult basic education or other triage services in the future.

- If an individual does fall through the cracks, our out-of-school youth and adult focused programs must be career bridges, merging adult basic education practices with technical training.

Goal 4. Maximize state and federal resources through impact-driven programs for Hoosiers.

- In Indiana, a great deal of overlap exists between the populations served through our various state and federal programs. Co-enrollment of constituents into multiple programs, when applicable, will allow us to better braid funding to meet both Goals 1 and 2. For example, we can co-enroll certain constituents into both out-of-school youth and Adult Education programs; co-enroll constituents into Wagner-Peyser for career coaching through a WorkOne and SNAP Employment & Training to gain the skills; or co-enroll a high school student in JAG for preventive services, a CTE program for technical skills, and 21st Century Scholars for future access. Co-enrollment will not just simplify navigation of our complex system, it will also allow the government to truly meet people where they are and provide the additional resources and support necessary to improve their lives.
- As a state, we need to evaluate our programs not based on access or completion alone, but on the impact our programs have on people's lives. The question we must constantly strive to answer is: did this program allow an individual to become social and economically mobile. Skill attainment, completion rates, and conferred credentials should be assessed, but that will no longer be the only measures of successful workforce development programs. We will leverage our data charter through the Management Performance Hub to determine if, after completing a program, a constituent is earning a higher wage and is in a sustainable career pathway. In addition to focusing on the immediate impact, we will also evaluate programs based on these metrics one-year post-completion of a program.

Goal 5. Foster impactful relationships between businesses, community partners, and government agencies.

- In order for both businesses and constituents to be successful in this talent development system, we need to increase work-based learning opportunities for both youth and adults. This must include on-the-job training, federal and state apprenticeships, internships, job shadow experiences, and incumbent worker training.
- Once businesses and industries are engaged, either through K-12 partnerships, sector strategies, or recruitment services, the talent system must build and sustain these partnerships.
- Employers must be seen as holistic partners that can serve as an additional supplement to braided state and federal programs. Through our partnership, we can convey the mutual benefit investing in individuals will have for employers in terms of talent development, recruitment, and retention. This will include showcasing businesses that invest in programs for Hoosiers and finding ways for those to work more closely with the state and non-profit programs.

C. Describe the State's strategy for any joint planning, alignment, coordination, and leveraging of funds between the State's career and technical education programs and programs of study with the State's workforce development system, to achieve the strategic vision and goals described in section 122(d)(2) of Perkins V, including the core programs defined in section 3 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3102) and the elements related to system alignment under section 102(b)(2)(B) of such Act (29 U.S.C. 3112(b)(2)(B)); and for programs carried out under this title with other Federal programs, which may include programs funded 1965. (Section 122(d)(3) of Perkins V)

One critical strategy we will implement by 2022 is creating career pathway alignment across the entire talent development system. Indiana's secondary CTE programs have historically been developed and operated separately from postsecondary and vice versa. Both secondary and postsecondary CTE have often been separated from the workforce development system. One of the best places we can begin in the joint planning process is to create common Indiana career pathways with multiple entry and exit points that will be used for the entire talent development system. Through our Combined Plan we can merge two disparate concepts established in different federal laws – career pathways under WIOA and programs of study under Perkins. We will merge these two concepts under a process of creating singularly defined pathways that provide opportunities for both youth and adults, beginning with secondary schools and aligned skills and running through postsecondary education and credential or degree completion.

[1]

Combining career pathways and programs of study into one concept allows Indiana to serve both adults and high school students through coordinated, aligned, and structured pathways leading towards recognized postsecondary credentials. Additionally, career pathways and programs of study in the same employment sector could share employer partnerships and industry-recognized credentials identified as most relevant for their local economies. They would leverage each other's industry connections and other strengths, reducing duplication, maximizing funding, and building wide-reaching partnerships. Aligning our Programs of Study to postsecondary education will also further the matriculation between our Adult Education

programs and higher education. For example, Adult Education providers could take our established model for our Programs of Study and supplement it with academic remediation, financial literacy, and digital literacy, creating a new type of IET model.

These aligned pathways will provide an additional benefit to youth by providing an opportunity to accelerate their time through a pathway by beginning a pathway in high school through dual enrollment/dual credit programs. This acceleration will lead to a greater number of high school graduates having a postsecondary credential that may be used as a stepping stone for advancement through a pathway or transference to another pathway. Most importantly, credential completion for youth while in high school will help to prevent these individuals from potentially relying on government benefits (e.g., SNAP and TANF) as adults.

Furthermore, Indiana has a talent development system comprised of wide-ranging and broad workforce development and education programs spanning federal programs, state initiatives, and private investments. This has been beneficial for Hoosiers, as there are multiple resources and supports available to help individuals access opportunities for lifelong learning and increased personal economic mobility. The proliferation of programs, however, has also created an often convoluted and complex system to navigate. In some instances, we have state, federal, and private programs trying to reach the same populations facing inequities, which has created a system of inefficiencies in delivering resources to Hoosiers. Our current program-by-program approach to serving constituents and businesses has resulted in a profusion of program-specific solutions that may not deliver the full range of services a Hoosier needs to improve his or her economic mobility. If the talent development system is to better meet our constituents, address the barriers preventing them from accessing education and employment opportunities, and ensure our program are having the intended impact on lives, we must integrate, align, and simplify access to our array of resources and services.

Indiana is taking a unique approach to the Combined Plan. Rather than taking a program-specific approach, we are examining the alignment of programs through the system's lens to the overarching needs of target populations. We hope this approach focuses our state agencies not just on programmatic requirements and funding streams but more on how the entire system can provide various supports an individual might need to be successful. CTE is at the core of talent development and, as such, plays a crucial role with nearly all of our targeted populations. In the section below, we will summarize how CTE may be able to meet the needs of several key target populations:

- **Low-Income Adults:** Postsecondary CTE includes the following industry clusters: Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources, Science, Engineering & Technologies, Manufacturing & Processing, Business, Management, and Administration, Architecture & Construction, Health Services, Information Technology, and Transportation and Logistics. These programs also work closely with businesses to offer work-based learning experiences. Currently, the majority of postsecondary Perkins funds goes towards facilities and equipment costs. As Indiana encourages more co-location of state government agencies and programs, we hope to see the same practices applied to our education spaces. This will allow us to maximize our investments in equipment, facilities, supplies, and instructors between our secondary and postsecondary institutions. It will also build greater articulation in the CTE space among secondary,

adult education, and postsecondary programs. Local regions can determine how to increase co-location partnerships through varied schedules, hours, and instructors.

As postsecondary and secondary CTE programs co-locate and pool funding for equipment, facilities, and supplies, this will allow us to direct Perkins funds towards career counseling for low-income individuals who attend a postsecondary CTE program. Through postsecondary Perkins funds, we can expand our work-based learning activities for low-income adults to include career exploration and engagement experiences at businesses and postsecondary institutions. Connecting WIOA Core Programs to Perkins allows us to make career coaching more experiential for low-income Hoosiers.

Indiana also intends to intertwine our Perkins funds with WIOA Core Programs to help create robust career pathways/programs of study that will span all CTE and technical education programs. Connecting the career pathways under WIOA and the programs of study under Perkins into one concept allows Indiana to serve both adults and high school students through coordinated, aligned pathways leading towards recognized postsecondary credentials. Additionally, similar career pathways and programs of study in the same sector could share employer partnerships and industry-recognized credentials identified as most relevant for their local economies. They would leverage each other's industry connections and other strengths, reducing duplication, maximizing funding, and building wide-reaching partnerships.

- **Unemployed Adults:** Stat Earn and Learns or other options for work-based learning could complement the CTE Programs of Study offered at Ivy Tech Community College and Vincennes University. Through the Combined Plan, Indiana will merge the career pathways under WIOA and the programs of study under Perkins into one concept. Through postsecondary Perkins funds, we can also expand our work-based learning activities for adult students to include career exploration and engagement experiences. Our Perkins funds could offer a variety of career exploration and awareness opportunities connected to postsecondary education and employment. Through talent tours, job shadowing, worksite tours, class audits, campus visits and tours, industry speakers, and informational interviews, Perkins can help make connections for adult students to postsecondary education and jobs as they transition to more challenging work.

- **Individuals needing to be upskilled or reskilled:** Our postsecondary Perkins funds can help those in need or upskilling/reskilling gain access to career exploration and engagement through our community college campuses. This will provide opportunities to learn about fields, programs, and opportunities that may be less traditional for some subgroups (e.g., registered apprenticeships for single mothers). Perkins funds can help fund equipment, facilities, and instructional needs for career pathways at both secondary and postsecondary schools. By merging our career pathways under WIOA with the Perkins programs of study, Indiana will be able to better serve Hoosiers of all levels through coordinated pathways that lead to recognized postsecondary credential attainment and career advancement.

- **Ex-Offenders**: Currently, Indiana grants $150,000 of Perkins funding to the IDOC to utilize for equipment and machinery for Career-Technical Education programs. This funding specifically supports training and upskilling offenders while they are incarcerated. Continuing to dedicate Perkins funds to providing quality environments for CTE operations for incarcerated individuals will allow us to maximize other funding streams to focus on wraparound supports and job placement during their re-entry. Through an Integrated Education and Training model, which can be partially funded through WIOA Adult Education, we can help meet the academic and technical needs of this target population. The IDOC specifically focuses Perkins towards specific occupations that are most attainable for ex-offenders, coordinated with Indiana's Promoted Certifications list.

During the 2018-2019 school year, the Indiana Department of Correction had 2,538 individuals participate in 11 separate CTE programs with 46 separate classes in 13 facilities. In SY 18-19 1,728 individuals completed certification programs as noted below:

Auto Technology: 48 students at 2 Sites	Cosmetology: 25 students at 2 Sites
Auto Body: 30 students at 1 Site	Logistics: 219 students at 4 Sites
Commercial Carpentry: 145 students at 5 Sites	Landscaping: 48 students at 1 Site
Business Technology & IC3: 515 students at 11 Sites	MSME & NCRC: 444 students at 10 Sites
Culinary Arts & ACF: 227 students at 9 Sites	Welding: 8 students at 1 Site

Going forward the OCTE will work with the IDOC to review additional high need areas, like Industrial Maintenance and Industry 4.0, to determine if there is the possibility of adding new programs of study.

As Adult Education focuses on the academic needs of ex-offenders, Perkins funding can supplement Integrated Education and Training (IET) programs to provide them with technical skills. Program reviews reveal that Indiana has maximized the capacity of current instructors and potential measurable skill gains for students. To increase access to and successful completion of Indiana's high school equivalency will require an increase in trained staff. Co-mingling WIOA Title II and Perkins funds would allow for CTE instructors to receive professional development for academic integration, increasing the capacity of current programs and potentially growing IET opportunities.

One example of this type of blended programming is in Region 9. The Adult Education provider, River Valley Resources (RVR), has partnered with the IDOC and Ivy Tech to offer MSSC-CPT certification as an IET program at the Madison Women's Corrections Facility. This class is co-taught between Ivy Tech and RVR teachers. These classes use braided funding of Adult Education IET dollars and non-credit bearing Workforce Ready Grant dollars, depending on the

program year and student eligibility. Additionally, RVR enrolls and funds Madison Correctional Facility students in traditional AE programming at the prison to remediate basic skills and teach workforce readiness and employability to women for AWS Welding and NIMS CNC training at Ivy Tech. While IDOC funds the training portion of these programs, we hope to expand our use of **Second Chance Pell Grants** to increase training opportunities for current and former offenders. Several Indiana institutions for higher education are in the process of leveraging the flexibility to use Second Chance Pell to fund both technical training certifications and two and four-year degree programs through the US Department of Education. Perkins could be used to help fill in funding gaps for technical training or equipment. This maximizes the time Hoosiers have during their sentences to focus on rehabilitation and upskilling, thus allowing them to have a smoother re-entry into the workforce.

- **Individuals with Disabilities:** Using Perkins Leadership funds, Indiana will create a Special Populations Recruitment Initiative, which will promote recruitment and retention efforts of this target population in both secondary and postsecondary CTE programs. This grant opportunity will support professional development to increase the effectiveness of teachers, faculty, specialized support personnel, and paraprofessionals in relation to the recruitment and instruction of special populations. Indiana intends to explore further opportunities to use Perkins to support educational institutions that serve individuals with disabilities, as we understand that this target population has the same capabilities to achieve in the CTE realm if provided the proper supports.

- **Historically underrepresented minorities:** We want to ensure there is equitable access and representation of minority students in all career clusters. Fewer racially and ethnically diverse students are represented in STEM pathways, specifically healthcare and IT. Ensuring secondary and postsecondary students access those CTE programs in high-wage occupations, such as those in our advanced industries, is critical to addressing the wage gap. We need to actively recruit and retain students into programs that can give them the technical skills needed for success in well-paid occupations. Often grade requirements may preclude certain subgroups from qualifying for entrance into these programs, which reinforces the need to establish and maintain high expectations for academic achievement in grades 3 through 8. Through Comprehensive Local Needs Assessments, we want our CTE districts and Workforce Boards to examine policies that may be inhibiting equity and identify ways to increase minority students' access to programs leading to middle- and high-wage jobs.

Our CTE districts can use Perkins and their state CTE tuition support to partner with either schools or community colleges to build co-requisite models for academics and technical classes. Often used in higher education, the co-requisite model melts remediation with introductory courses and provides students with the opportunity to earn credit towards their degree concurrently with remedial support, rather than completing a remedial course prior to enrolling in the credit-bearing course. Leveraging Perkins as a funding source, Workforce Development Boards can help CTE districts build similar models in the secondary CTE space, integrating academic remediation concurrent with the technical course.

Access alone, though, is not sufficient to close the achievement and wage gaps for this target population. We need students to earn credentials, complete programs of study, and enroll in postsecondary education programs. A portion of our Perkins Leadership dollars will go towards supporting recruiting special populations into a wide-range of CTE courses. Additionally, we will also focus our funding towards similar professional development for CTE instructors and administrators as above – with diversity and inclusion practices and culturally responsive instruction – to support our special populations in CTE at both the secondary and postsecondary levels. Part of Perkins includes Civil Rights monitoring. The Office of CTE will provide technical assistance to help our CTE districts proactively comply with all Civil Rights regulations, rather than waiting for a monitoring visit.

In the postsecondary space with adult learners, similar strategies – professional development and examining equity in access – can also be replicated through Indiana's Perkins Leadership dollars. Perkins can also be used to further other equitable strategies for historically underrepresented minorities. Through our Perkins Reserve funds, we plan to administer grants to community colleges that create and implement local strategies to close performance gaps. Because Ivy Tech Community College has pioneered the use of the co-requisite model in math, our community college system could build a similar model with CTE courses.[2] Contingent upon programmatic academic needs, postsecondary Perkins could integrate academics further into technical courses by concurrently offering any remedial support with technical classes. This could help remove a barrier some of our historically underrepresented minorities who seek postsecondary education face.

As well, we will require our postsecondary Perkins recipients to focus on more academic integration, including science, into our CTE programs of study, which meets the goal of Perkins V and provides students with higher levels of academic proficiency, which is becoming increasingly critical in today's evolving economy. Perkins can also fund a continuum of work-based learning opportunities for minority students in the secondary and postsecondary space, from job shadowing to internships. We will also focus Perkins funding towards greater career awareness and guidance. This type of guidance should be targeted towards pursuing lifelong learning for our historically underrepresented minorities, encouraging them to leverage stackable credentials towards higher degrees. Though higher education is not an equalizer when it comes to wages for minorities, it does boost economic opportunities and mobility prospects. This type of counseling could include financial aid opportunities to help offset costs, including both federal and state programs.

- **Urban Populations:** Through the CTE Redesign efforts under Perkins, we hope to improve the postsecondary attainment of urban students while they are in high school, providing them with greater opportunities for future economic mobility and personal fulfillment. Our K-12 and postsecondary institutions are designing structured academic and career pathways for students that explicitly lead and/or transfer to careers providing family-supporting wages. To do this we must ensure that schools in the most economically disadvantaged communities across the state have access to the same quality equipment and course offerings as those of their peers. By ensuring equity in the academic space for all, we seek to give all Hoosier students, regardless of neighborhood, a chance to achieve in the CTE setting, leading to careers in some of the most in demand

careers in the state. Perkins can supplement state tuition support for CTE to help provide state-of-the-art equipment and facilities, as well as instructional strategies that support various learning styles and needs. The redesigned programs of study (or career pathways under WIOA) will facilitate the extension of postsecondary pathways into high schools through intensive collaboration between community colleges with K–12 systems.

Perkins can support advising (including both academic and career planning) in high schools and colleges should provide prospective and current students with information regarding various opportunities for employment in specific fields, projected earnings (at entry level and beyond), and the levels of educational attainment associated with high employment and high wages. Perkins can help support this activity and professional growth in both secondary and postsecondary, using local **Wagner-Peyser** staff to help fill any gaps. Perkins can also supplement the expansion of the work-based learning continuum, career guidance, and employability development at the secondary and postsecondary level. For adults or at-risk youth, these programs can also braid in funds through WIOA Title I to assist with wages or other funding supports. Indiana's **Local Career Coaching Grants** may be utilized in tandem with Perkins and other funding sources (such as **Title IV under the Every Student Succeeds Act**) as a means to expand this type of advising to more students.

- **Rural Populations:** One development we hope to implement widely in our rural schools and CTE districts is an Entrepreneurship Capstone course. This will encourage and support the next generation of entrepreneurs to build individual capacity and support new business creation. Our rural CTE districts and community colleges implementing career-technical education programs must link education with future careers, especially in growing industries, such as healthcare and IT, and advanced industries (agricultural biosciences, aircraft and aerospace, automotive/mobility, and logistics).

In rural regions, specifically, our K-12 schools and community colleges campuses must focus dual enrollment and credit opportunities and other efforts on the student populations that are less likely to be college-bound, which greatly overlap with our At-Risk and other target populations. This will create a more equitable system that does not let a person's life circumstances or obstacles dictate his/her opportunity to succeed, as well as taps into these students' potential to earn a postsecondary credential as a key economic development strategy for our rural counties. Increasing postsecondary access for all rural students will help both attract and retain talent in these areas. This may require a mindset shift among rural Hoosiers around the growing necessity of higher learning to find personal and economic success. Through Indiana's **communications strategy**, we hope to target high school students, in particular, with information regarding the long-term benefits of all types of higher education. As our CTE programs of study are redesigned to embed consistently aligned dual credit or enrollment courses in secondary CTE ones, we hope this begins to increase the postsecondary attainment in rural areas. This will require intentionality and counseling from our community stakeholders, though, to ensure the success and sustainability of these efforts.

Some Indiana districts have strong partnerships with either Ivy Tech Community College or Vincennes University to provide career or colleges success coaches on-site in high schools. Vincennes University receives $3 million in state funding for expansion of its early college model. This model innovatively puts students, particularly those facing barriers, on the track to enroll in some form of postsecondary education. As we endeavor to increase co-location, we hopes to see these types of partnerships between our K-12 districts and postsecondary institutions also increase. Perkins funds could assist with establishing secondary-postsecondary partnerships, as our educational institutions seek to pool their Perkins resources together. Through co-location, secondary and postsecondary programs can combined funds to update facilities and equipment regularly. Perkins can help expand access to postsecondary success coaches. Parke Heritage High School, a rural school in Rockville, Indiana, is an example of this type of partnership with an Ivy Tech representative embedded in its guidance department. This has assisted students, teachers, and guidance counselors in completing aligned sequences of dual credit courses and raising postsecondary attainment and completion while a student earns a high school diploma. While this is one type of co-location option, similar to the various types of co-location described above, Workforce Development Boards can assist schools and postsecondary partners in determining which approach may work best for the local context, using Perkins as a resource to help execute this strategy.

- **At-Risk Youth:** At-risk youth can gain both academic and technical skills through Perkins-funded programs. The reauthorized Perkins builds off the previous versions of this federal law to eliminate the two-track approach and raise expectations for students who take Career-Technical Education (CTE) courses. Indiana must ensure that CTE students are taught to the same academic standards and expectations as other students by integrating rigorous and challenging academic content into our CTE programs. To adequately prepare our K-12 students for middle-skill jobs, must erase the notion that CTE can hold students to lower academic expectations than non-CTE students or a "non college-bound" track. Economic mobility in Indiana requires pursuit of any type of postsecondary education during the course of one's life. We must prepare our CTE students to meet those same expectations as our "college-bound" students.

To achieve this goal of raising CTE quality, consistency, and intentionality across the state, the Office of CTE is embarking upon a CTE redesign, with new Programs of Study set to implement in the 2021-2022 academic year. Through the CTE redesign, Indiana will expand the opportunities for dual credit and early college for all students. This will be instrumental for low-income students because of the subsidized cost for these programs. Each redesigned Program of Study will provide students the opportunity to complete at least 30 postsecondary credits (or one year) of postsecondary education. When available, all CTE Programs of Study will be intentionally aligned to a postsecondary credential, specifically certificates and technical certificates offered through Ivy Tech Community College and Vincennes University.

Increasing this type of postsecondary access and intentional credit accumulation will benefit low-income youth in these programs. Through similar models that offer students who are traditionally underrepresented in postsecondary education the opportunity to pursue a high school diploma while simultaneously earning college credits, like the Early College High School Initiative, the CTE redesign emphasizes rigor, relevance, and relationships in courses. Rigorous

instruction builds students' content knowledge and learning habits; relevance engages students in understanding why they are learning a topic and in making real-world connections; and relationships supports student engagement and achievement. Incorporating these features into our CTE programs can improve high school students' access to and success in college, as a similar principles did in the Early College model.[3]

In high school, these redesigned Programs of Study will be structured into four courses. Each program of study will begin with a principles course, which will provide key foundational knowledge for the pathway. The principles course will be followed by two advanced, non-duplicative, occupational-specific courses. The fourth course will be a pathway capstone course. Directly aligning the program of study courses to postsecondary courses will give students who continue through concentrator status and beyond the opportunity to complete the technical courses required for a technical certificate or certificate of graduation through dual credit or dual enrollment. The goal of the CTE redesign is to ensure that all CTE programs are providing the necessary knowledge and skills for postsecondary success to all students. By standardizing program quality across the state, we can ensure at-risk youth have consistency and quality in their CTE access, regardless of where they live.

Indiana has used Perkins funds to create an Assessment Grant to provide funding to eligible secondary recipients to support state-approved, industry-recognized licensing and certification examinations or assessments leading to a recognized postsecondary credential. This grant opportunity helps recipients bridge the cost-gap for all CTE students, including low-income students. CTE centers are incentivized through the assessment grant to have low-income students, as well as other special populations, earn certifications. Special population students were weighted to count for 1.25 in the calculation to determine the amount of funds for each recipient.

Indiana leads the nation in the number of students served through the **Jobs For America's Graduates (JAG)** program. The goal is to increase the number of JAG students who participate in CTE. JAG students represent many of the special population groups within Perkins. By encouraging greater participation of JAG students in CTE programs, we can build upon the strengths of the supportive services of the JAG program and simultaneously provide those students with an opportunity to begin and proceed in a career pathway. The Office of CTE staff has been invited to present at the JAG instructors summer workshops and will further explore opportunities for collaboration in the near future.

- **Adults without a HS diploma and/or basic skills deficient:** Indiana plans to be more intentional about integrating CTE and Adult Education. The goal is to increase the number of Integrated Education and Training opportunities by co-locating programs. Co-location may occur at a CTE center, a secondary or postsecondary institution, or an employer. This will allow us to maximize our investments in updates to equipment, facilities, supplies, and instructors. It also builds greater articulation between adult and postsecondary education, as well as secondary and postsecondary education. This is currently occurring at in some areas throughout the state. The Hoosier Hills Career Center in Monroe County, for example, co-locates programs through Adult Education

and staff from the WorkOne at the career center. Hoosier Hills has braided in philanthropic dollars from Strada Education Network to expand JAG to the career center, which provides mentoring and dropout prevention services to students at the career center. Local regions can determine how to increase co-location partnerships through varied schedules, hours, and instructors.

Through these partnerships, we can interweave our Perkins funds with our WIOA Title II to help create robust career pathways. Instructionally, AE and Perkins can blend together to craft IETs that serve populations. Adult Education providers can work with schools or community colleges to access Perkins programming to help offset technical training costs, including equipment, supplies, or instructors. Some states that are currently executing this type of braided funding target their funds thusly:

- Perkins funds can cover accredited training facilities, state-of-the art equipment, and articulated training curriculum.
    - WIOA Title II funds can go towards overload pay for high school instructors, training in CTE core content, field experts, and consumables.

Because WIOA Title II can also fund technical training, local regions must examine how the two funding sources can be coordinated to promote career pathways for all Hoosiers. Braiding our WIOA Title II and Perkins funds can create alignment between our programs of study under Perkins and our career pathways under WIOA. For example, utilizing WIOA Title II funds to have local (high school) teachers provide AE programming vs. contracting with external vocational entities offers several benefits, including cost savings, an already-established knowledge of and relationship with the local community, and that teachers are already trained in various instructional strategies. This can help foster deeper connections between school district leadership, parents, and community members. Replicating programs in both the secondary and adult education space will allow for comparable skills and concepts to be taught to all Hoosiers.

Through postsecondary Perkins funds, we can expand our work-based learning activities for adult students to include career exploration and engagement experiences. As adult students progress into high school level curricula in their AE program, our Perkins funds could offer a variety of career exploration and awareness opportunities connected to postsecondary education and employment. Through talent tours, job shadowing, worksite tours, class audits, campus visits and tours, industry speakers, and informational interviews, Perkins can help make connections for adult students to postsecondary education and jobs as they transition to more challenging work. Because our Perkins dollars flow through our community colleges, AE providers would need to work with these institutions to build these experiences into programs. Connecting WIOA Title II to Perkins allows us to make career coaching more experiential for our adult students. As well, through our community colleges, our adult students can learn how they can continue their educational pursuits through financial aid opportunities, like the Pell Grant or credit-bearing Workforce Ready Grants.

D. Describe how the eligible agency will use State leadership funds made available under section 112(a)(2) of Perkins V for each of the purposes under section 124(a) of the Act. See Text Box 2 for the required uses of State leadership funds under section 124(a) of Perkins V. (Section 122(d)(7) of Perkins V)

The development of the Combined Plan has illuminated new opportunities for implementing and improving CTE into an already diverse talent development system. CTE is currently delivered through Perkins in a variety of settings, including postsecondary institutions, secondary career centers, shared programs at local high schools as part CTE cooperatives or consortia, and Department of Correction facilities. The Plan has illustrated a need to expand Perkins support and coordination of CTE programs to adult education programs, juvenile justice facilities, at-risk youth programs (e.g., JAG), and Vocational Rehabilitation and Pre-Employment Transition Services.

Expansion of CTE will require additional state CTE staff and leadership funds to ensure high-quality CTE programs. Traditionally, Indiana has operated on a minimal leadership budget that focused on providing basic levels of service. Set aside funds for leadership purposes have been limited to a little over 5% of the total Perkins allocation. In order to meet these new demands, we plan to increase the set aside funds for leadership to approximately 8.25%. This increase will provide us with the necessary funding to accomplish our goals and still distribute 90% of the total Perkins allocation to eligible recipients.

Indiana will use allocated state leadership funds to conduct the following required state leadership activities in order to meet the Plan's Goals for the talent development system and to support continual improvement of Indiana's CTE system.

- **Non-Traditional Training & Employment:** A competitive grant opportunity that provides grantees an opportunity to improve non-traditional participation in CTE programs related to current and emerging high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand occupations or fields of work. Grantees will increase non-traditional participation in CTE programs through (a) mentorship opportunities, (b) parent/peer/community involvement programs, (c) early exposure initiatives, and (d) recruitment activities. These four options represent the most effective avenues for increasing non-traditional student involvement in CTE.[4] This grant will be open to current secondary and postsecondary eligible recipients; local school districts; business and industry partners and Workforce Development Boards; minority-serving institutions; representatives of special populations; and local agencies serving out-of-school youth, homeless youth, and at-risk youth. This grant supports the continuum of education and workforce development.

The Office of CTE plans to designate one of their Career Specialists as an expert that is responsible for providing technical assistance to schools and career centers for the support of special populations, specifically non-traditional students. A portion of the funds set aside for non-traditional preparation may be used for professional development for the Career Specialist, as well as cover expenses associated with providing technical assistance to schools.

- **Individuals in State Institutions:** The Department of Corrections and Juvenile Justice Facilities will receive non-competitive grant funds to support CTE and workforce training through the DOC and the Juvenile Justice System. The allocation to DOC will continue to be $150,000; the allocation to juvenile justice is a new grant of $100,000. These grants provide support to individuals in state correctional institutions and juvenile justice facilities. Funds may be used to support a variety of activities, such as: direct student instruction, the purchase of CTE program-specific materials and equipment, the integration of academic skills into CTE programming, career exploration, employability skills, and fostering relationships between these individuals and the occupational options available post-release.

- **Educational Institutions that Serve Individuals with Disabilities:** Indiana intends to explore opportunities to provide non-competitive grants to the School for the Deaf and the School for the Blind. The Office of CTE will work with these two institutions to build a bridge to CTE programs at nearby CTE Centers, employers, and schools for their students. We will also explore the possibility of offering competitive grants to other educational institutions including institutions that serve adults with disabilities.
- The Office of CTE will reevaluate this strategy to determine if this is the best use of funds. The Special Populations Recruitment Initiative described below is the higher priority at this point in time.

- **Special Populations Recruitment Initiative:** This grant opportunity will support the elimination of inequities in student access to high-quality CTE programs of study. This grant opportunity will support professional development to increase the effectiveness of teachers, faculty, specialized support personnel, and paraprofessionals in relation to the recruitment of special populations into CTE programs. This funding will also go towards similar professional development for CTE instructors and administrators as above – with differentiated instructional practices – to support our special populations in CTE at both the secondary and postsecondary levels. Indiana intends to explore opportunities to use Perkins to support educational institutions in serving individuals with disabilities. The first step will be to allocate non-competitive grants to the School for the Deaf and the School for the Blind to build a bridge to CTE programs at nearby CTE Centers, employers, and schools for their students.

Misconceptions regarding physical or developmental abilities of these students may preclude them from participating in certain career clusters. IDEA funding should ensure that all necessary accommodations for a students' success are in place to facilitate enrollment in and completion of CTE courses. This can pair with Perkins funds to ensure those supports are in place for students with disabilities. CTE districts and schools must partner together to ensure these funding streams work in conjunction with one another to support these students. Access alone, though, is not sufficient to close the achievement and wage gaps for this target population. We need students to earn credentials, complete programs of study, and enroll in postsecondary education programs.

The Office of CTE plans to increase its staff by adding Career Specialists. One of the Career Specialists will be trained to provide targeted technical assistance and support to recipients in order to support special populations, including individuals with disabilities. The specialist will develop resources and provide professional development to help eligible recipients and school districts better support special population students. All CTE specialists will also be able to provide support to secondary schools, career centers, and postsecondary institutions to identify performance gaps and develop strategies to eliminate or reduce those gaps.

These funds will also be used to cover travel expenses for at least one CTE staff member to attend the 2020 NTACT Capacity Building Institute in order to provide input on the state's transition plan for students with disabilities. The CTE staff member will join representatives from Vocational Rehabilitation and the Office of Special Education through the IDOE. This will continue the work that began in December 2019 at the NTACT pre-conference.

This past year, the OCTE required participation in an Equity Lab as a part of the revised CLNA process. All of the efforts described above will require schools and CTE districts to have a standing equity and access team and to take steps to improve gaps identified through opportunity gap analysis as completed in the Equity Lab.

- **Recruit, Prepare, and Retain CTE Teachers and Faculty:** Indiana supports new CTE teachers in multiple ways. The Workplace Specialist Program administered by Ball State University is a supplemental licensure program for individuals that have workplace experience but have not completed a traditional teacher preparation program. Workplace Specialists have the opportunity to gain the pedagogical knowledge and skills necessary to earn their Workplace Specialist II teaching license. The program requires a combination of face to face sessions with online course work.
    - The Office of CTE also administers the New and Newer Teacher Workshop held in conjunction with the Indiana Association for CTE (IACTE) Fall Conference. The workshop is a one day pf pre-conference activities, which provide new and newer teachers a series of sessions focusing on classroom management, developing lesson plans, and integrating work-based learning into their classrooms. The Office of CTE supports the IACTE Fall Conference through financial support and by facilitating professional development sessions.
    - The Office of CTE has supported the Coaching for Beginning Agriculture Teachers, which is a mentoring program for first year agriculture educators. With the support of IACTE, Indiana intends to expand this program to all CTE areas. We are also watching very closely the plans of the national ACTE group and the potential replication of the Teach Ag program for all CTE areas.
    - The OCTE has contracted with IACTE to develop a teacher recruitment, preparation and retention initiative. IACTE has been given an additional $75000 to develop FocusEd. Through the FocusEd initiative, IACTE has been able to develop an online platform for professional development, have initiated a beginning teacher mentoring and coaching program, and a CTE teacher recruitment initiative.

- The increased rigor and alignment to postsecondary courses will require significant upskilling of current CTE teachers. In order to address this, need we must provide multiple professional development opportunities. One possibility is to scale the Vincennes Welding Academy model and partner with a postsecondary institution and an industry employer or provider to develop summer workshops or academies for teachers to increase their skill levels. These workshops will include technical instruction, as well as instructional practice. Workshops and academies could be used as a refresher course of industry skills to prepare instructors for the required industry certification exams that are required to be credentialed to teach dual credit courses. We intend to use leadership funds support these professional development opportunities.
- An additional career specialist will be hired to support program development and to work with IACTE to coordinate and provide professional development for CTE instructors.

- **Providing Technical Assistance for Eligible Recipients:** The Office of CTE staff currently consists of six individuals that provide technical assistance in three areas; 2 staff members are dedicated to data and accountability; 1 member assists with fiscal compliance; and 3 staff members provide program technical assistance. Technical assistance is provided both preemptively and upon request.
  - Preemptive technical assistance provided by the data and accountability specialists includes training workshops for school personnel responsible for entering data into the CTE database. Program specialists and fiscal compliance technical assistance is primarily offered through email or telecommunications on an as needed basis.
  - As mentioned earlier, Indiana intends to increase its capacity to provide preemptive technical assistance through the addition of career specialists. The Office of CTE recognizes the need to support schools as they address and decrease performance gaps. We believe this can be accomplished by having at least one career specialist focus on supporting special population students. The Office of CTE also needs to be prepared to offer implementation workshops for schools to help with the rollout and enactment of Next Level Programs of Study. Part of this assistance will be the development of technical assistance documents and resources.
  - Another high priority area is supporting schools in providing work-based learning opportunities for students. To accomplish this goal the OCTE will be hiring 3 regional directors that will work remotely. Regional directors will be a combination of program and implementation specialists. A primary focus will be the implementation of CTE programs integrated with high-quality WBL and industry engagement.
  - The Office of CTE has identified a need to have better communications with postsecondary institutions. CTE Staff have already held meetings to help postsecondary submit their data and prepare for completing the Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment. We will continue future meetings to discuss how the Office of CTE could better support postsecondary CTE.

- **Reporting on performance levels and gaps:**
    - The state of Indiana and Office of CTE will develop and publicly release an annual report which will highlight the accomplishments of CTE from the past year, as well as provide reports on the use of funds and performance on indicators. This annual report is one method for helping the public better understand CTE and its effectiveness.
    - Update: The OCTE has taken steps over the last two years to improve their data and reporting systems. These improvements will help to ensure that an annual report is provided but also the possibility of providing more real-time online tools to demonstrate the effectiveness of CTE.
    - The Office of CTE will be one of the participating agencies in the development and implementation of the talent development system communication plan.
    - A Program of Study Guide will be developed and shared with students and parents to provide information on the benefits of CTE.

Other Priorities for State Leadership Funds:

- Support for Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs);
- Support for the Indiana Association of Career and Technical Education (including financial support for the fall conference and other professional development events);
- Programs of Study Pilot Grant assists with the development statewide programs of study – including new courses, updated standards, equipment and facilities, career guidance, and advisement resources. The first phase will include planning grants that will provide support to schools for the development of an implementation plan. The second phase will include implementation grants for selected planning grant recipients. The pilot programs will provide CTE the opportunity to identify challenges to implementation and develop resources for the implementation workshops this fall;
    - Update: The pilot grants have been completed. We have shifted from the use of Leadership funds to Reserve funds to support NLPS implementation.
- The Perkins Assessment Grant provides funding to eligible secondary recipients to support state-approved, industry-recognized licensing, and certification examinations or assessments leading to a recognized postsecondary credential. This grant opportunity helps recipients bridge the cost-gap for all CTE students – including special populations students. This program also directly meets the state's goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including special populations) and for meeting the skilled workforce needs of employers, including in existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations as identified by the State;
- Professional development activities and workshops for school and career counselors and postsecondary transitional counselors;
    - We will work with community foundations and other workforce development partners to develop a team model for career advising that schools will be able to

implement. One possibility includes the **Skillful Coaching Corps** program, which is a train the trainer model focused on developing career coaching skills in a variety of professions, including school counselors.

  - The Office of CTE will review progress made by Local Career Coaching Grant recipients to determine the possibility of scaling the strategies statewide.
  - Update: Local Career Coaching Grants have been suspended. However, career advising remains a priority area of focus for the OCTE. The Office will evaluate other possibilities for the use of leadership funds to support career advising efforts. This is also another area of focus for OCTE Career Specialists.

- Expansion and improvement of middle school CTE programs will be the next phase of the state's CTE redesign. This will focus primarily on aligning standards to upper secondary courses in order to start career exploration earlier. This will provide students more time to focus on career exploration, allowing them to take full advantage of the opportunity to earn a credential in a field aligned to their interests and abilities prior to high school graduation; and
  - Update: expansion of middle school CTE programs will become the primary area of focus over the next year. With NLPS implementation reaching full scale next year, OCTE staff can begin reviewing the middle school programs.
- Support for CTE programs for adults and out-of-school youth concurrent with their completion of secondary school education in a school or other educational setting. Perkins recipients will work with Adult Education to increase the number of Integrated Education and Training programs.
- Update: This has been limited due to Covid.

2. **Implementing Career and Technical Education Programs and Programs of Study**

A. Describe the career and technical education programs or programs of study that will be supported, developed, or improved at the State level, including descriptions of the programs of study to be developed at the State level and made available for adoption by eligible recipients. (Section 122(d)(4)(A) of Perkins V)

In an effort to develop common and intentionally aligned career pathways and programs of study, we are proposing that Indiana return to the 16 Federal Career Clusters (listed below). Currently, secondary CTE utilizes 12 career clusters and postsecondary only uses 8 career clusters to organize pathways. This reorganization would help to align which programs of study are eligible for funding at the secondary and postsecondary levels. This may possibly help braid funds to create more joint programs of CTE.

• Advanced Manufacturing • Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources	• Health Science • Hospitality and Tourism

• Architecture and Construction • Arts, A/V Technology & Communications • Business Management & Administration • Education and Training • Finance • Government & Public Administration	• Human Services • Information Technology • Law, Public Safety, Corrections & Security • Marketing • Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics • Transportation, Distribution & Logistics

Postsecondary Programs of Study: The postsecondary CTE system in the state of Indiana is concentrated between Ivy Tech Community College and Vincennes University. Ivy Tech has more than 40 locations throughout the state of which 18 campuses are eligible recipients for Perkins funds. Vincennes University's main campus is in Vincennes, and it supports other sites in Jasper, Fort Branch, and Indianapolis. While other Indiana institutions offer technical and associate's programs, as well programs or majors in the clusters above, Ivy Tech and Vincennes are the only public institutions that primarily offer certificate through associate level programs.

Ivy Tech and Vincennes both offer a variety of programs including certificate level, associate degree programs, transfer programs, and non-credit bearing opportunities.

- **Certificate (CT) and Certificate of Program Completion (CPC)**: This is the shortest term, credit-bearing program offered by Ivy Tech and Vincennes, respectively. Certificates are entry-level or advanced credentials of up to 29 credit hours; may contain at least one industry or nationally-recognized certification; and may contain courses meeting Technical Certificate and/or Associate of Applied Science degree requirements.
- **Technical Certificate (TC) or Certificate of Graduation (CG)**: Technical Certificates and Certificates of Graduation are designed as an intermediate workplace credential with credits meeting degree requirements of the related associate degree. These often require about 30 credit hours and includes a combination of technical and general education courses. In most cases, all of the courses required for a technical certificate can be applied to the requirements for an applied associate degree.
- **Applied Associate Degree (AAS)** – The Associate of Applied Science degree structure is designed for immediate workforce preparation upon completion, although many of the courses may transfer into related baccalaureate programs.
- **Approval of Postsecondary CTE Programs:** All degree programs, Associates and above, are approved through the Commission for Higher Education (CHE). An application is submitted and reviewed by the Academic Affairs and Quality Committee. After a review and vetting process, the proposed program is then referred to the Commission for approval.

Programs below an associate's degree, like technical certificates, may be approved through a Routine Staff Action (RSA). The postsecondary institution completes an application that is

submitted to the CHE. The application is then reviewed by the Academic Affairs and Quality Committee. Applications are evaluated on six main criteria:

1. Characteristics of the program - what type of program, mode of delivery, internships offered.
2. Rationale institutional and state - evidence of labor market demand, sub categories
3. Cost of and support for the program – faculty, facilities and the nature of support using existing resources
4. Similar and related programs offered within the state - related programs at the institution and other institutions, articulation to associate and baccalaureate programs.
5. Quality and other aspects – credit hours, learning outcomes/competencies, licensure and certification, accreditation, placement of graduates.
6. Projected head count, FTE enrollments and degrees conferred.

With the transition to CTE under the Governor's Workforce Cabinet, the GWC serves as the monitoring and accountability agency for postsecondary CTE; we include a representative from the Office of CTE to serve with the AAQ Committee to review all applications for postsecondary CTE programs.

CHE maintains a database of all programs offered at postsecondary institutions in the state. In addition to the titles of programs, the database also contains student level data. CHE, postsecondary institutions, and the Office of CTE have reached an agreement to share postsecondary data in the Indiana Technical Education Reporting System (InTERS) database. The sharing of data will allow all CTE data to be located in one unified system.

Secondary Programs of Study: Currently, Indiana is operating with two sets of career pathways or programs of study. Students in the 2020-2022 cohorts may follow the Perkins IV pathways that are based on Indiana's previous definition of a CTE concentrator, requires students to earn six credits in a pathway. The class of 2023 must follow the Perkins V CTE Concentrator Course Sequences that were developed to align with the Perkins V definition of a CTE concentrator. Students may choose from over 60 career pathways under Perkins IV or Perkins V. The link below provides lists of the current pathways:
https://www.in.gov/gwc/2437.htm

Update: The Class of 2022 is the last cohort that can utilize the Perkins IV pathways. Class of 2023 and 2024 also have the option of utilizing NLPS courses to meet the Perkins V definition of a CTE Concentrator. The Class of 2025 must use NLPS courses. Shifting all cohorts to Perkins V will help with some of the inconsistencies in data.

There are many great examples of high quality CTE being offered throughout the state of Indiana. The changing economy, a greater spotlight on talent development systems and extensive reviews, completed by various groups has brought to light that our current system lacks consistency, quality, and intentionality between secondary and postsecondary CTE. In order to strengthen Indiana's CTE system, the GWC, Office of CTE, CHE, Ivy Tech, and Vincennes have begun an extensive redesign of CTE programs of study.

The GWC, Indiana General Assembly, SBOE, and the Office of CTE have already taken some steps to improve the current system and to prepare Perkins recipients for the changes to come. In November 2018, Indiana changed its definition of a CTE concentrator for Graduation Pathways to align with the Perkins V formal definition. A CTE Concentrator for Graduation Pathways must earn a C average in at least two non-duplicative advanced courses within a particular program or program of study. This change necessitated the development of the Perkins V CTE Concentrator Courses sequences to replace the Perkins IV pathways, which were aligned to the old definition of earning 6 credits from any of the courses included in an approved pathway.

The Perkins V concentrator course sequences were built using the current courses and course structures. A majority of current CTE courses may be offered for anywhere from 1 to 3 credits per semester. In addition to potential inconsistencies, most of Indiana's current courses are based on out-of-date standards that are poorly aligned to postsecondary CTE courses or industry standards and do not always lead to a postsecondary certification or credential.

To address these challenges, the Office of CTE, in collaboration with Ivy Tech Community College and Vincennes University, is working to review and redesign all of the state's current CTE pathways. The newly designed pathways will be identified as Next Level Programs of Study and will improve the quality, consistency, and intentionality of CTE programs of study. Next Level Programs of Study will be ready for full implementation by the 2021-2022 school year. The Office of CTE will develop a plan to help recipients transition from the Perkins IV and Perkins V pathways over the next 3-4 years.

Update: Full scale implementation got pushed back one year, partly due to Covid. However, transition plans have been developed and there were over 50,000 enrollments in NLPS courses during 21-22 SY.

Next Level Programs of Study will be structured into 4 courses. Each program of study will begin with a principles course which will provide broad aspects of an industry and key principles required for the career pathway. The principles course will be followed by two advanced, non-duplicative, career-specific technical courses. A student will have earned CTE concentrator status upon completion of the two advanced CTE courses. The fourth course will be a pathway capstone course that may be taken for 2 to 6 high school credits. This design will ensure students designated as CTE concentrators have the relevant knowledge and skills to move directly into employment or additional postsecondary educational opportunities.

The principles course and the two advanced courses will each articulate to one or two postsecondary courses. The pathway capstone course may articulate to as many as five postsecondary courses. Directly aligning the program of study courses to postsecondary courses will give students who continue through concentrator status and beyond the opportunity to complete the technical courses required for a technical certificate or certificate of graduation through dual credit or dual enrollment. The Office of CTE will work with secondary CTE providers to create opportunities for students to complete the dual credit academic coursework needed to earn the postsecondary credential.

Sample Program of Study:

Schools and career centers will be able to offer the programs of study in the way that works best with their master schedule. A high school may choose to offer the four courses of the program of study one-at-a-time over 3-4 years; or a career center, which often has students attend for a half day, will be able to concurrently enroll students in multiple courses. For example, a career center may enroll a student in the principles course and the two advanced courses at the same time. The Office of CTE will work with CTE faculty to develop pacing guides that include variations in local schedules.

The Office of CTE will be supplying a variety of technical assistance resources, such as necessary equipment and facility guides, targeted professional development, and career guidance and advising resources, as the Next Level Programs of Study are implemented over the next 3-4 years. These additional resources will not only help to ensure that Next Level Programs of Study will help increase the likelihood of valued student outcomes.

Update: Several resources have already been developed. The next goal is to provide individual program of study marketing/advising sheets.

Implementation Process and Timeline:

September – December 2021:

- In September and November, the Office of CTE invited secondary and postsecondary CTE instructors to attend two summit sessions, where the instructors were grouped by pathway or program of study. The goal of these sessions was to share the vision for Next Level Programs of Study and to gather the instructors input on potential course sequences.
- In October, a Secondary School Principals and CTE District Directors Working Group was established. Since then, multiple meetings, both in-person and virtually, have occurred. The goal of the working group is to gather feedback from principals and directors regarding the program of study structure and to develop implementation resources to help schools and career centers implement Next Level Programs of Study.
- The competencies for the programs of study developed during phase 1 were vetted through steering teams comprised of secondary and postsecondary instructors during the spring of 2021. The competencies were then published in a CTE review document.

- Schools had the opportunity to opt-in to NLPS courses for the 2021-2022 school year. Many schools and career centers took advantage of this opportunity leading to well over 50,000 enrollments in NLPS courses. The schools were supported through implementation webinars that were held in the winter and spring 2020-2021.
- We plan to use leadership and reserve funds to support schools and career centers offering Next Level Programs of Study pilot programs were available to schools forthe 2020-2021 school year. 12 schools and career centers were selected to implement NLPS courses. The pilot programs have provided valuable information to help with the development of technical resource materials and to prepare for full scale implementation workshops.

Next Steps:

- CTE staff will continue to convene secondary and postsecondary educators both in-person and virtually to finalize course sequences and to develop relevant secondary course standards for each course included in the program of study. This process will also help to establish the statewide articulation agreements between the secondary and postsecondary courses. In the spring of 2020, the course standards will be reviewed and validated by industry representatives.
    -
        - Update: The remaining programs of study will have been vetted early in the spring of 2022. The Office of CTE is also working external partners to have the competencies validated by industry.
- We plan to use leadership and reserve funds to support schools and career centers offering Next Level Programs of Study pilot programs during the 2020-2021 school year. The pilot programs will provide valuable information to help with the development of technical resource materials and to prepare for the implementation workshops.
    -
        - Update: Secondary Reserve grants have been offered the last two years to encourage local recipients to adopt and implement NLPS.
- Beginning in late fall of 2020, the Office of CTE will facilitate regional workshops for school teams to provide technical assistance for wide scale implementation during the 2021-2022 school year.
    -
        - As we prepare for full scale implementation, a greater need for technical assistance through webinars, conferencing with individual schools, and providing implementation resources has emerged. This will continue to require a great deal of attention over the next couple of years.

B. Describe the process and criteria to be used for approving locally developed programs of study or career pathways (see Text Box 3 for the statutory definition of career pathways under section 3(8) of Perkins V), including how such programs address State

workforce development and education needs and the criteria to assess the extent to which the local application under section 134 will—

Joint Programs of CTE eliminated some of the roadblocks for employers to partner directly with secondary programs to create innovative and industry-aligned CTE programs. Schools now have the option to develop Joint Programs of CTE without the approval of the district CTE director or local cooperative. Legislation was passed in April of 2019 that allowed schools the opportunity to partner with a local employer, a postsecondary institution, or eligible third party training provider to offer a CTE program. For the first year, schools were asked to provide details in InTERS regarding the CTE courses offered through a Joint Program. The Office of CTE is exploring the possibility of having schools register Joint Programs of CTE to gather more information regarding the structure, quality, and expected student outcomes.

During the transition year as we develop Next Level Programs of Study, we have asked for local communities to share any recommendations for locally created pathways with the Office of CTE. The Office of CTE is reviewing each of these recommendations based upon statewide data and feedback to determine if they should be developed as a statewide program of study or if they should remain at the local level. To date, the Office of CTE has worked with local groups to work on state approved programs of study for Precision Agriculture, Health Informatics, and Engineering Technology.

If it is determined that there is a need for a locally created pathway, the school or group will have to submit a formal application, which includes all the elements of a state approved program of study. CTE staff will have 60 days to review the submitted application and will either forward a recommendation for approval to the State Board of Education or will work with the submitting group over a 30 day period to revise and strengthen the locally created program of study application.

Both Joint Programs of CTE and locally developed programs of study must meet the minimum criteria and expectations and provide the same opportunities as established by a state approved program of study.

i. The criteria to assess the extent to which the local application under section 134 will— promote continuous improvement in academic achievement and technical skill attainment;

Eligible recipients have been asked to submit the CLNA by the mid-February. This will not only provide time for CTE staff to review and verify the results of the CLNA but also allow us to use information gathered from the CLNA to revise the local application. Revising the Local Application to align with Perkins requirements will help to ensure that eligible recipients are meeting needs based on the CLNA and addressing critical aspects of program development.

The Office of CTE has overhauled its CLNA process to be much more goal oriented and to focus on continuous improvement. Each of the questions within the CLNA require 5 elements to completely answer. The elements include a description of the current state, evidence that supports the description of the current state, detailing the root causes of the current state, a potential goal or desired state, and a ranking of the significance of any gap. The potential goals are then consolidated for each criteria in the CLNA to focus on the greatest needs. The last step in the CLNA process then is to gather stakeholder feedback on the priority goals and potential strategies.

Afterwards the Priority goals are directly transferred to the Local Application so that users, as they enter each activity, must, make sure that the activity will have an impact on one or more of the priority goals. Additionally, recipients are able to focus on the expected outcomes and evaluation methods to address each of the potential strategies included in the Local Application. Office of CTE is encouraging recipients to approach their Local Application as a two year application. The belief is that a more focused effort on a select group of priorities for a longer period of time, will ultimately lead to greater improvements.

The Office of CTE staff will be developing state trends that will be used as a comparison to evaluate a local recipient's performance. As information becomes available, CTE will also consider how local performance aligns to national performance.

ii. The criteria to assess the extent to which the local application under section 134 will—expand access to career and technical education for special populations; and

The first step to expanding access to career and technical education for special populations is to ensure that all students **have** access to high-quality programs. Two of the driving factors of the CTE redesign was to ensure greater quality and consistency between all programs of study, regardless of where they are being offered. To ensure that each recipient is offering a program of study in the manner it was intended, each recipient must complete a self-evaluation of each program of study. In conjunction with the evaluation, each recipient will also be asked to provide a program inventory as a part of the local application. In addition to the course sequences offered, recipients will be asked to provide assurances on how they will meet the components of a high-quality program of study, including contact hours, work-based learning opportunities, career guidance and advising, and the opportunity to earn dual credits and/or postsecondary credentials.

Another component of the Office of CTE's revised CLNA, required each eligible recipient to participate in an Equity Lab. Indiana has modeled its lab after Ohio, who presented at the national NTACT conference two years ago. The labs provide disaggregated data for enrollment trends and performance outcomes in a manner that helps to identify equity gaps. Additionally, lab participants were provided an overview of equity and access in CTE, a data analysis strategy, and assistance to understand how the results of the equity lab may be used to complete the CLNA.

The data provided to eligible recipients for the CLNA included disaggregated data. The review of the CLNA by CTE staff detailed above will evaluate how well the disaggregated data was used to identify potential performance gaps. In addition to the recipient's disaggregated data, the Office of CTE will review disaggregated enrollments in each program to ensure that special population students have fair access to high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand pathways. Recipients are also required to submit the names and contact information of stakeholders involved with the CLNA process.

The CLNA requires each participant to respond to several questions directly related to providing equity and access to special population students. Those questions include:

1. To what degree are student groups taking part in CTE at disproportionate levels in comparison to overall student population?
2. Do any discrepancies exist between the demographics of students enrolled in high, moderate, and less than moderate value programs of study?
3.
4. To what degree are learners earning dual credit at disproportionate levels based on demographics or special population standing?
5. To what degree are learners earning postsecondary credentials at disproportionate levels based on demographics or special population standing?
6. To what degree are learners participating in work-based learning experiences at disproportionate levels based on demographics or special population standing?
7. To what degree are learners being placed after program completion at disproportionate levels based on demographics or special population standing?

The recipient's responses to these questions will be reviewed by CTE staff to identify any potential issues. CTE staff will consult the recipient's local application to make sure that any concerns are addressed in their strategies and activities.

iii. Support the inclusion of employability skills in programs of study and career pathways. (Section 122(d)(4)(B) of Perkins V)

Indiana now requires the inclusion of employability skills into all courses. These employability standards will be incorporated into the Next Level Programs of Study along with standards for academic integration. Indiana has also included an employability skills requirement into its new graduation requirements, which are required for the 2023 cohort. Students must complete a project-based learning, service learning or a work-based learning experience in order to meet the requirement.

The recipient's responses to the narrative section of the CLNA regarding work-based learning (WBL) and career and technical student organizations will be reviewed to identify how WBL and leadership development is being implemented into every classroom. The application will also be reviewed to determine the percentage of students that have the opportunity to experience more comprehensive forms of WBL.

The program of study inventory included in the local application will require each recipient to include assurances that students who enroll in the program of study will have the opportunity to participate in career and technical student organizations and what types of work-based learning experiences will be included in each course.

C. Describe how the eligible agency will—

i. Make information on approved programs of study and career pathways (including career exploration, work-based learning opportunities, early college high schools, and dual or concurrent enrollment program opportunities) and guidance and advisement resources, available to students (and parents, as appropriate), representatives of secondary and postsecondary education, and special populations, and to the extent practicable, provide that information and those resources in a language students, parents, and educators can understand;

The Office of CTE recognizes that a communication strategy centered on all components of a program of study is necessary to ensure the success of Next Level Programs of Study. There are several opportunities to make information available.

- A career guide will be developed that provides details for each program of study within all of Indiana's 16 recognized career clusters. The guide will be the first line of communication with school personnel, parents, and students. Schools will have the opportunity to purchase copies of the guide that may be made available at parent nights, college and career fairs, or other events.
- The second opportunity will be a redesign of the CTE website. In addition to a number of resources, the website will host a digital version of the career guide. The website address will be included on all forms of communications and will be consistently updated to ensure users have the most relevant information.
- A key component to the early implementation efforts will be regional implementation workshops. We will organize and facilitate a workshop in each economic region of the state. Schools and career centers will be invited to send teams of school personnel including administrators, school counselors and CTE instructors. Throughout these multi-day workshops the teams will work to develop an implementation plan that takes into account all of the components of a high-quality program of study.
- The Governors Workforce Cabinet is working with an outside communications consulting group to develop a unified communications plan for the talent development system. CTE will support this effort through leadership funds and will be included in the communications plan.
- Career guidance and advisement training and resources are a growth opportunity for CTE. Long-term plans to address this need include providing a greater number of career guidance resources for school counselors and instructors, as well as looking for opportunities to provide training for school personnel that provide guidance services for students and parents.
- CTE has worked collaboratively with DOE, DWD, and OWBLA to develop a Work-Based Learning Manual that will provide guidance to WBL coordinators across the state on the characteristics of high quality WBL programs. Currently, this group is developing a pilot training session for WBL coordinators or other school personnel that are involved with college and career readiness. The first training will take place in early March.

ii. Facilitate collaboration among eligible recipients in the development and coordination of career and technical education programs and programs of study and career pathways that include multiple entry and exit points;

The Combined Plan, along with efforts to develop common career pathways for both secondary students and adults, has led to collaboration between postsecondary, secondary, and Adult Education to develop pathways with multiple entry and exit points. Our goal is to create career pathways based upon the model developed as a part of the Advancing Career and Technical Education in State and Local Career Pathways Systems project. Our focus is on developing pathways or programs of study that are built using stackable credentials. Employing stackable credentials in this manner allows us to meet short-term needs of adults, while providing them re-entry points along the way. Our secondary to postsecondary programs of study will provide students the opportunity to reach the middle-skills level of the model. By design, students will have the opportunity to continue on to pursue associate's or bachelor's degree options. Most importantly, secondary students will have the same opportunities as adults to exit and reenter programs of study as their career progresses. They would be able to do this without starting over or retaking classes that were completed during high school.

The Next Level Programs of Study design process includes multiple opportunities for secondary and postsecondary instructors to collaborate on the development and coordination of the CTE programs of study. The process of backwards mapping of postsecondary programs of study into secondary programs of study will include a combination of in-person and virtual summits among faculty and instructors in various sectors and programs. Collaborative groups of postsecondary and secondary instructors will work to create secondary course sequences, new and revised courses with relevant standards, and dual credit articulation agreements. Over the next two years, these groups will also collaborate on curriculum mapping and curriculum resources. Once implemented the sector/program of study groups will be included in the continuous improvement and review process for each program of study.

In addition to the development of Next Level Programs of Study, the GWC and Office of CTE will encourage collaboration between schools, industry partners, postsecondary institutions, and eligible training providers to offer Joint Programs of CTE and/or WBL opportunities.

iii. Use State, regional, or local labor market data to determine alignment of eligible recipients' programs of study to the needs of the State, regional, or local economy, including in-demand industry sectors and occupations identified by the State board, and to align career and technical education with such needs, as appropriate;

Through the Next Level Jobs initiative, the state has identified 5 high demand areas. The areas include Advanced Manufacturing, Building and Construction, Information Technology and Business Services, Transportation and Logistics and Health Sciences, all of which are included in **Workforce Ready Grants**.

DWD has also worked with the Office of CTE to provide labor market information for recipients to use to complete the CLNA. These data along, with the analysis questions, will help recipients

to evaluate their program of study offerings in terms of how well they meet the local labor market information.

The Office of CTE added a requirement to the CLNA to participate in a regional collaboration meeting hosted by the regional workforce boards. One of the goals of the meeting was to discuss labor market data for the different economic regions. Additionally, recipients were required to complete a quadrant analysis of each CTE program of study. The quadrant analysis was based on the relationship between the supply (enrollments in a program of study) and the demand for the occupations aligned with those programs.

State funding for secondary CTE is currently based on classifying courses into categories based upon the demand and wage data that are associated with those courses. DWD uses the demand and wage data to designate courses as high, moderate, or less than moderate value. This tiered funding model incentivizes schools and recipients to offer programs of study aligned to high-wage and in-demand careers. Schools/Career Centers have the opportunity to appeal the occupational ranking when there is evidence of local demands or wages that exceeds the demand and wages for the state. One area we will improve is how we consider emerging careers and those careers resistant to automation in the funding formula.

The OCTE has convened a statewide needs assessment group of stakeholders. One of the questions the group is considering is an updated, more thorough definition of high-wage, high-skill, and in-demand.

iv. Ensure equal access to approved career and technical education programs of study and activities assisted under this Act for special populations;

The eligible agency and the Office of CTE will take several steps to ensure equal access to programs of study for special populations. The first step in ensuring equity and access to all students is to create opportunities for all students to have access to high-quality programs of study. One goal of the CTE redesign is to ensure that all CTE programs are providing the necessary knowledge and skills to be successful in the career pathway.

One step that the state has already taken is to form a Transition Advisory Council. The Council is composed of representatives from Vocational Rehabilitation/Pre-Employment Transition Services, Office of Special Education from the Indiana Department of Education, Office of CTE, The Arc, and The IU Center for Learning and Community Living. The goal of the Council is to increase the number of students with disabilities that are participating in CTE and to increase the number of positive student outcomes for students with disabilities. The group has identified 6-7 eligible recipients to interview regarding their current support practices for students with disabilities. The interviews will be used to identify the best practices. After identifying best practices, the group will support implementation of these practices at a variety of CTE sites through a pilot program.

The GWC has a Methods of Administration Coordinator on staff, as well. In addition to monitoring secondary and postsecondary institutions for Civil Rights compliance, the MOA

Coordinator will also be providing technical assistance and professional development to help schools proactively meet Civil Rights guidelines.

Schools are incentivized through the assessment grant to have special population students earn certifications. Special population students were weighted to count for 1.25 in the calculation to determine the amount of funds for each recipient.

The Office of CTE will designate at least one program specialist to specialize in providing technical assistance and professional development to schools on supporting special populations. The specialist will identify, share, and support implementation of best practices that have been proven to decrease performance gaps between general CTE students and special populations.

Another component of the Office of CTE's revised CLNA, required each eligible recipient to participate in an Equity Lab. Indiana has modeled its lab after Ohio, who presented at the national NTACT conference two years ago. The labs provide disaggregated data for enrollment trends and performance outcomes in a manner that helps to identify equity gaps. Additionally, lab participants were provided an overview of equity and access in CTE, a data analysis strategy, and assistance to understand how the results of the equity lab may be used to complete the CLNA.

The Office of CTE will work with the Indiana Afterschool Network to encourage the creation of out-of-school CTE activities for special population and non-traditional students. This could be an after-school program or summer camps.

v. Coordinate with the State board to support the local development of career pathways and articulate processes by which career pathways will be developed by local workforce development boards, as appropriate;

The GWC serves as Indiana's state workforce board. As the state board with oversight of all workforce development agencies and activities, the GWC, along with the Office of CTE, will work to develop common career pathways. The common career pathways will focus on stackable knowledge and credentials in order to help individuals find a pathway to career success. This will help all workforce development organizations meet the needs of the individuals in a way that promotes lifelong learning along a sustainable career trajectory rather than a short-term fix.

Schools and Career Centers that wish to apply for planning and implementation grants for the Next Level Programs of Study are encouraged to partner with postsecondary, local Workforce Development Boards, and other community groups involved in the talent development system.

Local communities and Workforce Development Boards will be able to use these common pathways as a model for the development of local pathways or Joint Programs of CTE. The Office of CTE will be able to work with and provide guidance documents to help Workforce Development Boards take the right steps in the development of these local pathways.

vi. Support effective and meaningful collaboration between secondary schools, postsecondary institutions, and employers to provide students with experience in, and understanding of, all aspects of an industry, which may include work-based learning such as internships, mentorships, simulated work environments, and other hands-on or inquiry-based learning activities; and

The Office of CTE, DOE, and OWBLA have all worked with a cadre of work-based learning coordinators from around the state to develop a WBL manual. The manual details the criteria for high-quality WBL programs and provides coordinators access to resources to help with implementation. In conjunction with the manual, the agencies will be piloting a one day training and professional development seminar for WBL Coordinators in early March. The training program will be further developed into an annual or semi-annual opportunity for new WBL coordinators to participate in the training.

Update: The Office of CTE in collaboration with other agencies are working to revise and improve the WBL Manual and other WBL resources. One possibility being considered is the collaboration on a single Work and Learn website in partnership with the Indiana Chamber of Commerce.

The WBL Manual also details a WBL continuum that ranges from learning **about** work to learning **through** work. The continuum provides key characteristics of a wide range of WBL experiences that are appropriate for all ages from primary school through secondary and postsecondary education.

OWBLA continues to work with several schools across the state to develop State Earn and Learn (SEALs) programs. The SEALs are aligned to the common career pathways that Next Level Programs of Study are aligned to. Sector partnerships from around the state, such as **Catapult** through Conexus and **INFAME**, are working with CTE providers to develop work-based learning opportunities, including internships and apprenticeships.

Update: The work of developing wbl programs through K-14 programs has been transitioned from OWBLA to the OCTE. This decision was made in hopes of better integrating high-quality wbl experiences like internships and youth apprenticeships into CTE programs.

Work-based learning is a high priority for the entire talent development system. The GWC plans to increase the promotion of work-based learning opportunities through the development criteria for WBL experiences. CHE has included a goal that 100% of postsecondary programs will require an internship, work-based learning, research project, or other student engagement experience that has career relevance.

vii. Improve outcomes and reduce performance gaps for CTE concentrators, including those who are members of special populations. (Section 122(d)(4)(C) of Perkins V)

The first gap that must be addressed is the disparity between what a CTE concentrator is at one school compared to another school. By redesigning programs of study to contain more consistent and relevant standards in the first three courses and by directly aligning the programs of study to postsecondary programs, we will ensure that all schools are meeting the essential knowledge and key technical skills required for each pathway. If all students have equal access to the necessary knowledge and skills of a CTE pathway, then students will be able to perform better. Better student performance in courses that directly align to postsecondary programs will help more students earn postsecondary credentials.

Another component of the Office of CTE's revised CLNA, required each eligible recipient to participate in an Equity Lab. Indiana has modeled its lab after Ohio, who presented at the national NTACT conference two years ago. The labs provide disaggregated data for enrollment trends and performance outcomes in a manner that helps to identify equity gaps. Additionally, lab participants were provided an overview of equity and access in CTE, a data analysis strategy, and assistance to understand how the results of the equity lab may be used to complete the CLNA.

The Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment provides a great opportunity to develop a continuous improvement process at the local and state level. CTE is providing disaggregated performance data to each school for use in their CLNA. These data, along with the analysis questions included in the CLNA, will draw attention to existing performance gaps for schools. Reviewing the CLNA and the local application will serve as an opportunity to complete an extensive audit on each individual program and also the system as a whole.

The CLNA and local application process must be followed with targeted technical assistance that helps schools and centers to develop strategies rooted in best practice to address the performance gaps. Requiring this type of technical assistance will be new for Indiana. Career specialists will need additional training on analyzing data and researching best practices.

Under Perkins IV, Indiana had contracts with assessment vendors to pay for a select group of assessments. For this fiscal year, we have developed an assessment grant which provides funds to districts to pay for the certification assessments that they choose based upon the number of assessments the school provided the previous year. We plan to increase our support for certification assessments in the coming years in hopes of encouraging/incentivizing more schools to offer certifications.

D. Describe how the eligible agency, if it opts to do so, will include the opportunity for secondary school students to participate in dual or concurrent enrollment programs, early college high school, or competency-based education. (Section 122(d)(4)(D) of Perkins V)

Indiana CTE students currently have the opportunity to earn a number of dual credits (postsecondary credits from a high school course taught by a credentialed high school instructor). Dual enrollment (a high school students completing a postsecondary course on a

postsecondary campus with a postsecondary instructor) is a growing trend and something that is made more possible with the development of SEALs and Joint Programs of CTE.

The GWC/CTE would like to expand the opportunities for dual credit and early college in CTE programs through the Next Level Programs of Study. The goal of each Next Level program of study will be to provide each student the opportunity to complete at least one year's worth of postsecondary education and training. When available, all CTE programs of study will be intentionally aligned to a postsecondary credential, specifically certificates and technical certificates. The state will have an articulation agreement with ITCC and Vincennes through the CTE dual credit crosswalk developed by CHE. Our goal is to provide each student a CTE early college experience with a chance to earn a postsecondary credential.

Embedded within each program of study will be industry-recognized certifications aligned to either individual courses or exit points. Certifications that appear on the promoted industry certification and count toward Graduation Pathways will be given priority.

E. Describe how the eligible agency will involve parents, academic and career and technical education teachers, administrators, faculty, career guidance and academic counselors, local business (including small businesses), labor organizations, and representatives of Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations, as appropriate, in the planning, development, implementation, and evaluation of its career and technical education programs. (Section 122(d)(12) of Perkins V)

The CLNA process will provide an opportunity for a wide variety of stakeholders to provide input and feedback on local CTE programs. Local recipients are required to submit the names of stakeholders that participated in the process. The CLNA provides opportunities to evaluate individual pathways, as well as the comprehensive CTE program of the site.

A Listening Tour was conducted by GWC staff in the fall that included a stop in each of Indiana's 12 workforce regions. The Listening Tour stops were attended by staff from the core programs, required one-stop partner programs, other programs and activities included in the Combined Plan, and other interested stakeholders. Some of the common themes heard during the Listening Tour included the need to co-locate more services to reduce barriers for Hoosiers and the importance of considering common barriers, such as childcare and transportation, when trying to reach individuals with education and training services. Additionally, the importance of better external communication to ensure Hoosiers are aware of programs available to them and better internal communication across agencies to lessen duplication of services and ensure various funding streams are being used most effectively was brought up repeatedly. Completing the Listening Tour before beginning to draft the Plan allowed for the State to identify those common themes and work to incorporate that feedback heard from local regions directly into the Plan.

The Plan was posted for public comment on the GWC website and notice was sent out to a broad audience of the available public comment period. Additionally, a webinar was held that gave the opportunity for individuals across the state to offer live public comment. The committees met at the end of the public comment process to review the comments received and make any necessary updates to the Plan. The Plan was then submitted for final review and approval to the Governor's Workforce Cabinet before its submission.

The design process for Next Level programs of study includes opportunities for secondary and postsecondary instructors to contribute on the course sequences and standards. The principals and CTE directors working group focuses on the administrative and implementation aspects. Industry groups, like Agrinovus, Conexus, and IMA, have been consulted on the development of the course sequences and will help vet the standards for courses.

IACTE represents a direct line to the majority of CTE instructors in the state. In order to improve communication with career and technical education teachers we must work to improve our working relationship with IACTE. Ideas for improvement include the Office of CTE providing regular updates to the IACTE executive board. We also believe developing a more specific scope of work will help to ensure that funds are being utilized effectively.

F. Include a copy of the local application template that the eligible agency will require eligible recipients to submit pursuant to section 134(b) of Perkins V. See Text Box 4 for the statutory requirements for local applications under section 134(b) of Perkins V.

The Local Application Template will be updated to meet Perkins V requirements. In order to ensure alignment between the Local Application and the CLNA, the updates to the Local Application will be made after CLNAs are submitted in the middle of February. A draft of the updated application will be provided with the plan submission.

The local application is also completed in an online portal. The following screen shots are of each of the tabs that must be completed by the eligible recipient.

Activity Program Descriptions and Budget

Activity Details

Budgeted Amount

Indicators / Improvement Plans

Grant Questions

G. Include a copy of the comprehensive local needs assessment template and/or guidelines that the eligible agency will require of eligible recipients to meet the requirements of section 134(c) of Perkins V. See Text Box 5 for the requirements for the comprehensive local needs assessment under section 134(c) of Perkins V.

CLNA Process

The Office of CTE has redesigned the CLNA from a lengthy questionnaire to a more organized and structured 6-step process. Steps 1 and 2 involve planning and organization. Recipients will first identify a core leadership team and then develop a plan for engaging all required stakeholders. A series of activities have been created in Step 3 to facilitate a more structured and in-depth review of CTE elements. Step 4 will utilize the findings from Step 3 to gather stakeholder input on goals and strategies to expand and improve CTE programs.

Districts will then submit their CLNA for review and use the submitted CLNA to complete their Local Application during the spring of 2022.

The Indiana Office of CTE has developed a series of five activities within Step 3 that will address the six required components each district must complete as part of the CLNA process. Each activity will serve a different purpose and should provide greater structure to the CLNA process. Details and guidance steps are provided in the following section of this document.

The Office of CTE recommends that districts follow the sequence that is designated in the graphic above with the understanding that there may be a great deal of overlap and some activities will be taking place simultaneously. Regional Workforce Boards have been asked to schedule the Regional Collaboration Meeting early in the process to better inform other areas of the work. Eligible recipients are encouraged to start with the Program of Study Size, Scope, and Quality activity while waiting for the Regional Collaboration meeting to take place. The Program of Study activity will provide some of the data points that should be considered as a part of the Student Performance activity. The Office of CTE will host Equity Lab Sessions in October and November. While it is not mandatory to have completed the Program of Study and Student Performance activities before the Equity Lab, it may be helpful. The Recruitment, Retention, and Training activity includes developing a professional development plan that may be influenced by the results of other activities.

Indiana Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (CLNA)

- Regional Collaboration
    - What industry trends are expected to impact career opportunities the most in your local area over the next few years?
    - To what degree do your CTE program enrollments match projected job openings for the state and region?

    - How would you rate and/or describe the employer engagement within your region?

- Program of Study Size, Scope and Quality
    - Based on your district's internal Program Quality Assessment, which pathways earned the highest quality ratings? Which pathways have the most room for growth?
    - Based on your district's internal Program Quality Assessment, which quality components are the strongest at the district level? Which quality components need improvement?
    - To what degree have your programs of study been converted to Next Level Programs of Study?
    - How well does your current facilities and equipment meet capacity needs and industry standards for each program?
    - Please rate or describe the effectiveness of your work-based learning efforts as a district and on a program level?
    - Please rate or describe the effectiveness of your career advisement/career development efforts as a district and on a program level?
- Student Performance
    - To what degree are learners persisting in programs to earn concentrator status and to complete Level II/Capstone courses? Consider gaps that may exist between conducting schools (shared and unshared programs) and individual programs of study.
    - How does the district rate in terms of students earning dual credits? Consider gaps that may exist between conducting schools (shared and unshared programs) and individual programs of study.
    - How does the district rate in terms of students earning postsecondary credentials? Consider gaps that may exist between conducting schools (shared and unshared programs) and individual programs of study.
    - How does the district rate in terms of providing work-based learning experiences for students? Consider gaps that may exist between conducting schools (shared and unshared programs) and individual programs of study.
    - How does the district rate in terms of student placement? Consider gaps that may exist between conducting schools (shared and unshared programs) and individual programs of study.
    - Equity and Access To what degree are student groups taking part in CTE at disproportionate levels in comparison to overall student population?
    - Do any discrepancies exist between the demographics of students enrolled in high value, moderate value, and less than moderate value programs of study?
    - To what degree are learners earning concentrator status at disproportionate levels based on demographics or special population standing?

    - To what degree are learners earning dual credit at disproportionate levels based on demographics or special population standing?
    - To what degree are learners earning postsecondary credentials at disproportionate levels based on demographics or special population standing?
    - To what degree are learners participating in work-based learning experiences at disproportionate levels based on demographics or special population standing?
    - To what degree are learners being placed after program completion at disproportionate levels based on demographics or special population standing?
- Teacher Recruitment, Retention, and Training
    - Rate the overall effectiveness of the district's faculty.
    - How well are your recruitment and retention efforts helping you to meet current and future staffing needs?
    - How effective are your current professional development efforts?

Results of the CLNA are entered into the Indiana's CLNA Portal. The portal is an online template that allows schools to enter narrative sections along with attaching documents.

The CLNA portal is divided into questions aligned to each activity required by the CLNA.

Each section is a series of questions that walk the recipient through completion including a description of the current state, evidence for the current state, root causes, desired state, and a rating of the gap.

H. Provide the eligible agency's definition for "size, scope, and quality" that will be used to make funds available to eligible recipients pursuant to section 135(b) of Perkins V.

Secondary Size, Scope, and Quality: Indiana does not want to place subjective limits or requirements on schools and or career centers in terms of the number of programs offered or the number of students enrolled. Therefore, an eligible recipient will only be required to offer at least one program of study. However, schools and career centers should provide a sufficient number of programs of study to ensure that a significant percentage of students have the opportunity to participate in CTE programs of study that meet the needs of the local labor market.

To be of sufficient size, scope and quality, a CTE program of study in Indiana must include or be making progress toward including the following components:

- The program of study must be able to meet the minimum facility and equipment requirements for a minimum of 10 students. Moderate and High Value programs of study will take steps to expand the number of students enrolled, equipment, and/or facilities if the waitlist exceeds 50% of the current capacity.

- Programs of study, including joint programs of CTE and locally developed pathways that have been registered with the state, must adhere to state-approved courses and course sequences. Each program of study must address the standards and competencies associated with each state-approved course through relevant, real-world and applied instructional strategies.
- Secondary programs of study should be structured to encourage persistence in students to go beyond CTE Concentrator status and to pursue valued postsecondary credentials, like certificates, degrees and industry certifications that are integrated into the program of study.
- Students and their families are provided career advisement and academic guidance to help students identify career interests and to best prepare for college and career opportunities. Students should have a personalized multi-year graduation plan that is connected to postsecondary education.
- Programs of study are accessible to all students, specifically students who are members of special populations, by being free from unnecessary barriers to enrollment or participation. Historically underrepresented students are actively recruited and have the opportunity to succeed through necessary accommodations and supportive services.
- The program of study includes the development of employability and leadership skills through a wide range of embedded and stand-alone work-based learning opportunities and participation in career and technical student organizations.
- Programs of study must maintain on-going relationships among education, business and other community stakeholders, such as advisory boards or sector partnerships to help validate and keep current the technical and workforce readiness skills and program improvement.
- The program of study is focused on continuous improvement and engages with partners and stakeholders to achieve performance targets for Perkins performance indicators and utilizes data to identify and reduce disparities and performance gaps among population groups.

Postsecondary Size Scope and Quality: To be of sufficient size, scope and quality, a CTE program of study in Indiana must include or be making progress toward including the following components:

- Postsecondary CTE programs must be aligned with business and industry as validated by local or regional business advisory committees and must be part of one of the allowable cluster areas.
- Postsecondary eligible institutions must provide students with the opportunity to earn a certificate, associate's degree, industry certification, and/or licensure approved by the state in a CTE approved career cluster.
- A postsecondary program of study provides students the opportunity to be a CTE Concentrator. Which is defined as a postsecondary student that earned at least 12 credits within a CTE program or completed such a program if the program encompasses fewer than 12 credits.

- Programs/Programs of Study are strongly encouraged to include work-based learning opportunities for students.
- The program or programs of study achieve or consistently makes progress toward state-determined levels of performance and engages in periodic evaluation, informed by data, to reduce or eliminate disparities or performance gaps and to improve program quality and effectiveness.
- Programs/Programs of Study are accessible to and supportive of all students, especially students who are members of special populations.
- Postsecondary programs of study provide opportunities for secondary alignment, and can provide evidence of operational agreements with secondary schools.

I. Meeting the Needs of Special Populations

1. **Describe the eligible agency's program strategies for special populations, including a description of how individuals who are members of special populations—**

i. Will be provided with equal access to activities assisted under this Act;

ii. Will not be discriminated against on the basis of status as a member of a special population;

iii. Will be provided with programs designed to enable individuals who are members of special populations to meet or exceed State determined levels of performance described in section 113, and prepare special populations for further learning and for high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand industry sectors or occupations;

iv. Will be provided with appropriate accommodations; and

v. Will be provided instruction and work-based learning opportunities in integrated settings that support competitive, integrated employment. (Section 122(d)(9) of Perkins V)

The GWC and Office of CTE will provide expanded professional development and guidance to eligible recipients regarding special populations and non-traditional students. We will also focus this funding towards professional development for CTE instructors and administrators– with diversity and inclusion practices and culturally responsive instruction – to support our special populations in CTE at both the secondary and postsecondary levels. Similarly, this funding will also go towards similar professional development for CTE instructors and administrators – with differentiated instructional practices – to support our special populations in CTE at both the secondary and postsecondary levels. Indiana intends to explore opportunities to use Perkins to support educational institutions in serving individuals with disabilities. The first step will be to allocate non-competitive grants to the School for the Deaf and the School for the Blind to build a bridge to CTE programs at nearby CTE Centers, employers, and schools for their students. Part of Perkins includes Civil Rights monitoring. The Office of CTE will provide

technical assistance to help our CTE districts proactively comply with all Civil Rights regulations, rather than waiting for a monitoring visit. Additional professional learning opportunities will be made available through the Office of CTE and the addition of a Career Specialist. Topics may include integrating Universal Design for Learning, integrating academic skills and reducing performance gaps.

Update: The Office of CTE will work with the School for the Deaf and the School for the Blind to determine the best path forward for providing their students the best opportunity to participate in CTE programs. It needs to be determined if the best use of funds is to provide funding directly to these institutions or to provide grants for eligible recipients to provide programs for these students.

We will leverage leadership funds to offer separate grant opportunities through the Special Populations Recruitment Initiative and the Non-Traditional Training & Employment grant. We want to ensure there is equitable access and representation of students with disabilities in all career clusters. Ensuring secondary and postsecondary students access those CTE programs in high-wage occupations, such as those in our advanced industries, is critical to the unemployment gap. We need to actively recruit and retain students into programs that can give them the technical skills needed for success in well-paid occupations. Using Perkins Leadership funds, Indiana will create a Special Populations Recruitment Initiative. This grant opportunity will support professional development to increase the effectiveness of teachers, faculty, specialized support personnel, and paraprofessionals in relation to the recruitment of special populations into CTE programs.

Update: These grant opportunities have been delayed due to Covid and a lack of staff capacity. Now that the OCTE has been able to add Career Specialists, we should once again be able to provide opportunities like the ones discussed in the paragraph above.

Misconceptions regarding physical or developmental abilities of these students may preclude them from participating in certain career clusters. IDEA funding should ensure that all necessary accommodations for a students' success are in place to facilitate enrollment in and completion of CTE courses. This can pair with Perkins funds to ensure those supports are in place for students with disabilities. CTE districts and schools must partner together to ensure these funding streams work in conjunction with one another to support these students. Access alone, though, is not sufficient to close the achievement and wage gaps for this target population. We need students to earn credentials, complete programs of study, and enroll in postsecondary education programs.

All competitive grants, including the program of study pilot program implementation grants, will require recipients to describe how the funds will be used to expand access and support students of special populations. Through the Perkins Assessment Grant, we have incentivized special populations' participation in the attainment of industry-recognized certifications and postsecondary credentials. The Office of CTE will continue to look for opportunities to incentivize inclusion and achievement for special population students. We will also be providing grants for postsecondary and secondary through the use of reserve funds that will be targeted on implementing high quality programs of study and reducing/eliminating performance gaps.

We need to ensure there is equitable access and representation of minority students in all career clusters. Fewer racially and ethnically diverse students are represented in STEM pathways, specifically healthcare and IT. Ensuring secondary and postsecondary students access those CTE programs in high-wage occupations, such as those in our advanced industries, is critical to addressing the wage gap. We need to actively recruit and retain students into programs that can give them the technical skills needed for success in well-paid occupations. Often grade requirements may preclude certain subgroups from qualifying for entrance into these programs, which reinforces the need to establish and maintain high expectations for academic achievement in grades 3 through 8. Through Comprehensive Local Needs Assessments, we want our CTE districts and Workforce Boards to examine policies that may be inhibiting equity and identify ways to increase minority students' access to programs leading to middle- and high-wage jobs.

In order to provide greater supports, especially to postsecondary and adult CTE students, local Workforce Development Boards, CTE centers, schools, and postsecondary institutions can leverage this opportunity through the Combined Plan to execute and expand strategies regarding the co-location services, co-enrollment of individuals, and braiding fund between Perkins and other WIOA programs. We will also expand CTE opportunities for youth by connecting with other WIOA youth programs like JAG and Pre-ETS. Examples of these connections include the development of a transitions working group, which needs to be expanded to include postsecondary, and providing professional development to JAG instructors at their summer conference in order to help them provide better career guidance and advising regarding CTE opportunities.

Update: There has not been a sufficient amount of Leadership funds available to support these programs through funding. Going forward, the OCTE will need to work closely with these groups and to create grant opportunities for shared programs. After NLPS implementation, it may be possible to use Reserve funds for these types of joint opportunities.

The Office of CTE will be reviewing statewide enrollment data by programs to ensure that special population students are being given the opportunity to pursue high-skill, high-age, and in-demand career pathways. This review will include a review of admission requirements and policies for CTE programs of study to ensure that they are not creating a disparate impact or creating unintended consequences against an individual group. The GWC has a Methods of Administration Coordinator on staff. In addition to monitoring secondary and postsecondary institutions for Civil Rights compliance, the MOA Coordinator will also be providing technical assistance and professional development to help schools proactively meet equity and accessibility guidelines.

The Office of CTE staff will also provide guidance and technical assistance for administrators on ways that state and federal funds may be utilized to reduce barriers to CTE participation and performance for special population students. This may include strategies for reducing out-of-pocket expenses or covering a portion of salaries for paraprofessionals to provide the necessary accommodations to students.

The Office of CTE will develop resources and guidance to create greater partnerships between schools and employers in order to expand paid work-based learning experiences. One

possibility includes the cooperative education course, which is being restructured to support students who have a part-time job. The cooperative education course relaxes some of the prerequisite requirements and requires school-based instructional time that focuses on career exploration, employability, and transition skills. The Office of CTE staff will also prepare guidance for WBL coordinators, administrators and employers to ensure they are aware that Employer Training Grants may now be used for students in a WBL program.

Pre-ETS can support WBL opportunities through CTE and other means by helping offset the stipends and costs of WBL programs. **EARN Indiana** provides employers with up to 50% of the student's hourly wage, in the secondary space, and supplementing that funding with Pre-ETS funding may increase access specifically for students with disabilities. By connecting Pre-ETS to our WBL programs in this way, we can encourage both employers and students with disabilities to pursue this mutually beneficial experience.

J. Preparing Teachers and Faculty

i. Describe how the eligible agency will support the recruitment and preparation of teachers, including special education teachers, faculty, school principals, administrators, specialized instructional support personnel, and paraprofessionals to provide career and technical education instruction, leadership, and support, including professional development that provides the knowledge and skills needed to work with and improve instruction for special populations. (Section 122(d)(6) of Perkins V)

Professional development (PD) is encouraged through Perkins basic grant funds to eligible recipients and through state-level programs related to the recruitment and retention of CTE educators, faculty, and staff. We will be offering additional PD and regional workshops for secondary school counselors, postsecondary transition counselors and career counselors.

Update: Most of the PD efforts over the last couple of years have focused on NLPS Implementation. Other efforts have been delayed due to Covid and staffing shortages. The hiring of a Career Specialist that focuses on teacher recruitment, retention, and professional development the OCTE will be better prepared to offer sessions on a variety of topics. Additionally, the partnership with IACTE to create FocusEd will also help with these efforts.

The Next Level Programs of Study may require significant upskilling of current CTE instructors and faculty, especially at the secondary level. Indiana needs to explore the possibilities of developing a three tier professional development model:

- The first tier includes online, self-paced modules that focus on both content and instructional practice. These modules could be developed through a partnership between the Office of CTE, IACTE, and postsecondary institutions.
- The second tier includes the development of professional learning communities, which include discussion boards and curriculum resources. Curriculum resources could include available curriculum, postsecondary textbooks and unit plans, and open educational resources. The Office of CTE would only provide a list of available resources. This list would not include an endorsement or recommendation to be used except for

the required postsecondary materials. Chat rooms could be implemented to allow practitioners the opportunity to communicate with each other.

- The third tier includes in-person workshops. These workshops could be modeled after the VU summer welding academy. Secondary teachers are brought on campus for two to three days to learn from equipment providers and postsecondary instructors. A portion of the costs for this are covered through a sponsorship by the equipment provider. Another opportunity for growth is to improve the focus of IACTE Fall Conference sessions by utilizing performance data to identify needed areas of support.
    - While it has been difficult to hold in-person workshops or professional development during Covid, we hope to better implement this third tier of professional development over the next two years.

The Office of CTE has supported the Coaching for Beginning Agriculture Teachers, which is a mentoring program for first year Ag educators. With the support of IACTE, Indiana intends to expand this program to all CTE areas. We are also closely monitoring the plans of the national ACTE group and the potential replication of the Teach Ag program for all CTE areas.

Update: The mentoring program for beginning teachers in all CTE areas is being provided through the FocusEd initiative that has been created through a partnership between IACTE and the OCTE.

Indiana supports a Workplace Specialist Program, which provides an avenue for licensure for individuals with industry expertise but no formal teacher preparation training. The program is administered by Ball State University and is a combination of in-person sessions and online course work. The goal is to provide the industry specialist with the basic pedagogical knowledge and skills necessary to be successful in the classroom.

Indiana has created greater opportunities through legislation to bring new CTE teachers to the classroom by allowing schools to utilize individuals with only workplace experience. This legislation requires that the teachers meet minimum work experience requirements. It has the potential to enhance employer and school connections through a sort of employee on loan program. The concept includes the possibility of employers allowing staff to serve as instructors with paid time office. The Office of CTE will develop guidance and recommendations for schools and career centers that focuses on best practices of utilizing these instructors. The Office of CTE will work with industry representatives to develop an employer engagement guide that would include this possibility of providing a part-time staff member.

[1] U.S. Department of Education Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education, December 2015. Advancing Career and Technical Education in State and Local Career Pathways Systems.

[2] Ivy Tech Community College modeled this program after the Accelerated Learning Program, which originated at the Community College of Baltimore County, and has shown consistent student success with nearly double the pass rates.

[3] Berger et al., 2013. Early College, Early Success: Early College High School Initiative Impact Study.

[4] National Alliance for Partnerships in Equity. Nontraditional Career Preparation: Root Causes and Strategies.

C. FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

- 1. Describe the criteria and process for how the eligible agency will approve eligible recipients for funds under this Act, including how—
    - a. Each eligible recipient will promote academic achievement;
    - b. Each eligible recipient will promote skill attainment, including skill attainment that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential; and
    - c. Each eligible recipient will ensure the local needs assessment under section 134 takes into consideration local economic and education needs, including, where appropriate, in-demand industry sectors and occupations. (Section 122(d)(5) of Perkins V)
- 2. Describe how funds received by the eligible agency through the allotment made under section 111 of the Act will be distributed—
    - a. Among career and technical education at the secondary level, or career and technical education at the postsecondary and adult level, or both, including how such distribution will most effectively provide students with the skills needed to succeed in the workplace; and
    - b. Among any consortia that may be formed among secondary schools and eligible institutions, and how funds will be distributed among the members of the consortia, including the rationale for such distribution and how it will most effectively provide students with the skills needed to succeed in the workplace. (Section 122(d)(8) of Perkins V)
- 3. For the upcoming program year, provide the specific dollar allocations made available by the eligible agency for career and technical education programs and programs of study under section 131(a)-(e) of the Act and describe how these allocations are distributed to local educational agencies, areas career and technical education schools and educational service agencies within the State. (Section 131(g) of Perkins V)
- 4. For the upcoming program year, provide the specific dollar allocations made available by the eligible agency for career and technical education programs and programs of study under section 132(a) of the Act and describe how these allocations are distributed to eligible institutions and consortia of eligible institutions within the State.
- 5. Describe how the eligible agency will adjust the data used to make the allocations to reflect any changes in school district boundaries that may have occurred since the population and/or enrollment data was collected, and include local education agencies without geographical boundaries, such as charter schools and secondary schools funded by the Bureau of Indian Education. (Section 131(a)(3) of Perkins V)
- 6. If the eligible agency will submit an application for a waiver to the secondary allocation formula described in section 131(a)—
    - a. Include a proposal for such an alternative formula; and

- b. Describe how the waiver demonstrates that a proposed alternative formula more effectively targets funds on the basis of poverty (as defined by the Office of Management and Budget and revised annually in accordance with section 673(2) of the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9902(2)) to local educational agencies with the State. (Section 131(b) of Perkins V)

Also indicate if this is a waiver request for which you received approval under the prior Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (Perkins IV).

- 7. If the eligible agency will submit an application for a waiver to the postsecondary allocation formula described in section 132(a)—
  - a. Include a proposal for such an alternative formula; and
  - b. Describe how the formula does not result in a distribution of funds to the eligible institutions or consortia with the State that have the highest numbers of economically disadvantaged individuals and that an alternative formula will result in such a distribution. (Section 132(b) of Perkins V)

Also indicate if this is a waiver request for which you received approval under the prior Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (Perkins IV).

- 8. Provide the State's fiscal effort per student, or aggregate expenditures for the State, that will establish the baseline for the Secretary's annual determination on whether the State has maintained its fiscal effort, and indicate whether the baseline is a continuing level or new level. If the baseline is new, please provide the fiscal effort per student, or aggregate expenditures for the State, for the preceding fiscal year. (Section 211(b)(1)(D) of Perkins V)

(c) <u>Fiscal Responsibility</u>

1. **Describe the criteria and process for how the eligible agency will approve eligible recipients for funds under this Act, including how—**

A. Each eligible recipient will promote academic achievement;

B. Each eligible recipient will promote skill attainment, including skill attainment that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential; and

C. Each eligible recipient will ensure the local needs assessment under section 134 takes into consideration local economic and education needs, including, where appropriate, in-demand industry sectors and occupations. (Section 122(d)(5) of Perkins V)

Each eligible recipient is approved based on their responses to the local application. For FY 2021, the local application must correlate to the recipient's CLNA results. The Office of CTE staff will complete an extensive review of each recipient's CLNA and Local Application to ensure the necessary alignment and to identify potential concerns or the need for technical assistance. During the first year, this review process will be the primary method of monitoring recipients.

The CLNA process provided disaggregated data for each Perkins V Performance Indicator, including academic skill attainment. Recipients identified performance gaps through analysis of this data. One challenge that recipients face is that many students completed the ESSA required student assessments before enrolling in a CTE program of study. This challenge will require the GWC, the Office of CTE, and eligible recipients to look for other ways to promote academic attainment.

As a first step, integrated academic standards will be included in each Next Level Program of Study. The Office of CTE will encourage schools and career centers to integrate the assessments of these academic skills into their technical skill assessments.

Many individuals have expressed concern about the ability of CTE students to earn the academic dual credits required to complete a technical certificate (TC) or certificate of graduation (CG). Completion of postsecondary math, language arts, and communication courses are often a requirement for earning a TC or CG and also serve as a gateway to higher levels of postsecondary education and training. In order to increase the number of postsecondary credentials awarded, we must integrate these skills into our programs of study and provide support to CTE instructors for integrating core academics into their curriculum. To increase the integration of core academics into CTE requires developing and encouraging teachers of CTE courses and academic courses to work together to align their coursework and jointly teach cross-disciplinary projects that tackle real-world problems. Through project-, problem-, or work-based learning opportunities, in partnership with employers or higher education, coordinating academia with the applied learning of CTE will help students understand the breadth and depth of career opportunities in Indiana's economy. The Office of CTE will also work with traditional high schools to increase the number of opportunities for CTE students to complete required academic dual credit courses and to identify best practices of cross-disciplinary approaches.

Beyond providing students the opportunity to earn a TC or CG, industry-recognized certifications will be embedded into the Next Level Programs of Study whenever available and appropriate. Industry certification exams may be used as a measure of technical skill attainment. The Office of CTE, through our pathway development groups, must identify or develop common assessments for courses and programs of study that do not have an aligned industry certification exam.

Indiana has funded the cost of certifications through Perkins Leadership funds. Prior to this year, only a limited selection of assessments were funded through a contract between select vendors and the state. This year, the state increased the amount of funds set aside to cover the cost of assessments; and the funds were distributed directly to eligible recipients. This process gives recipients more flexibility to choose which assessments to fund and will lead to improved reporting of the results. While the new process is an improvement over previous years, Indiana needs to explore more sustainable ways of covering the expenses for certifications in the future.

Update: With the full scale of implementation of Graduation Pathways, the Office of CTE has determined that it is not sustainable to continue to fund Industry Certifications through leadership funds. Over the next two years, the Office of CTE will pursue a shift to state funding.

During the 2021 legislative session, a $200,000 line item was set aside to cover certification costs as a part of the biennial budget. It is estimated that at least $600,000 will be needed to adequately support the attainment of these certifications.

As part of the CLNA process, the Office of CTE provided eligible recipients with relevant labor market information aligned to CTE courses for their economic region. Recipients will utilize this information to identify gaps between the needs of the community and the programs of study they offer. Prior to the CLNA process for FY22, the Office of CTE will explore the possibility of having eligible recipients of an economic region collaborate on the CLNA process.

2. **Describe how funds received by the eligible agency through the allotment made under section 111 of the Act will be distributed—**

A. Among career and technical education at the secondary level, or career and technical education at the postsecondary and adult level, or both, including how such distribution will most effectively provide students with the skills needed to succeed in the workplace; eligible recipients must use Perkins distribution funds in ways that correlate to the results of their CLNA and section 135 of Perkins V legislation.

Indiana has traditionally withheld a minimal amount for Leadership funding, choosing to allocate about 93% of the total award to eligible recipients. In order to meet the requirements of Perkins V, the eligible agency will increase Perkins Leadership to approximately 8.25% of the total allocation for the upcoming fiscal year; approximately 90% of the total award will support the Local Formula Distribution for secondary and postsecondary eligible recipients.

Indiana Code [IC 20-20-38-12] requires that at least 60% of Perkins funds be allocated to secondary level career and technical education. Indiana currently allocates 65% of the local formula distribution to secondary eligible recipients and 35% to postsecondary eligible recipients. Indiana has not traditionally included adult education providers as eligible recipients. This split was originally determined by DWD and has been in place for several years. Given the shift in priorities in the Combined Plan and the change in eligible agency, the split will be reevaluated prior to the FY22.

Indiana will also set aside 3-5% of the distributed funds for the Reserve Fund. These funds will be used for competitive grants to prioritize the implementation of programs of study and narrow equity gaps in performance.

B. Among any consortia that may be formed among secondary schools and eligible institutions, and how funds will be distributed among the members of the consortia, including the rationale for such distribution and how it will most effectively provide students with the skills needed to succeed in the workplace. (Section 122(d)(8) of Perkins V).

Nearly all secondary public, non-charter schools are members of a consortium or CTE district. Some consortia are organized as cooperatives with the individual schools offering shared programs, while most consortia share a common career center for the district. Secondary schools and charter schools that meet the minimum funding level required by Perkins legislation can become CTE districts.

In most cases, Perkins funds are distributed to the CTE District through a fiscal agent for the consortium. In consortia where there is a centralized career center, Perkins funds go to the career center. In consortia that are organized as a cooperative, Perkins funds are distributed through local processes established by the consortium board of directors and are guided by the CTE director. State CTE funds are distributed to the individual secondary schools based on student enrollments regardless of where the student receives the training. In most cases, sending schools pay a tuition fee to the career center.

3. For the upcoming program year, provide the specific dollar allocations for each eligible recipient made available by the eligible agency for career and technical education programs and programs of study under section 131(a)-(e) of the Act and describe how these allocations are distributed to local educational agencies, areas career and technical education schools and educational service agencies within the State. (Section 131(g) of Perkins V).

The specific allocations for each eligible recipient will be included in this Plan once the amount of the FY 21 Perkins State Allocation is made available. Indiana utilizes the formula set forth in Perkins legislation to determine the allocation for each recipient.

70% to the number of individuals aged 5-17, inclusive, who reside in the school district and are from families below the poverty level for the preceding fiscal year;

30% to the number of individuals aged 5-17, inclusive, who reside in the school district.

The Office of CTE calculates the distribution for each school district. The CTE District's total award is determined by the sum of the formula distribution for each school district in the consortium or cooperative.

4. For the upcoming program year, provide the specific dollar allocations for each eligible recipient made available by the eligible agency for career and technical education programs and programs of study under section 132(a) of the Act and describe how these allocations are distributed to eligible institutions and consortia of eligible institutions within the State. Section 132 relates to the distribution of funds for postsecondary

education programs. We calculate the distribution based on the formula requirements in Perkins V:

Each eligible institution or consortium of eligible institutions shall be allocated an amount that bears the same relationship to the portion of funds made available under section 112(a)(1) to carry out this section for any fiscal year as the sum of the number of individuals who are Federal Pell Grant recipients and recipients of assistance from the Bureau of Indian Affairs enrolled in programs, which meet the requirements of section 135, offered by such institution or consortium in the preceding fiscal year bears to the sum of the number of such recipients enrolled in such programs within the state for such year.

5. Describe how the eligible agency will adjust the data used to make the allocations to reflect any changes in school district boundaries that may have occurred since the population and/or enrollment data was collected, and include local education agencies without geographical boundaries, such as charter schools and secondary schools funded by the Bureau of Indian Education. (Section 131(a)(3) of Perkins V).

Each year, the Office of CTE makes adjustments to the membership of each eligible recipient's consortium or cooperative. These changes will lead to changes in the amount of the eligible recipient's allocation due to the formula and process utilized to determine the local allocation. Indiana utilizes the data provided as is by the US Census Bureau to determine allocation amounts. No adjustments to the data are made due to changes in district boundaries.

Allocations for charter schools and other schools without boundaries are determined based on the proportion of students enrolled in the charter school compared to the number of students enrolled in the public school corporation where the charter is located.

6. If the eligible agency will submit an application for a waiver to the secondary allocation formula described in section 131(a)—

Indiana does not plan to apply for a waiver to the secondary allocation formula for FY21.

A. Include a proposal for such an alternative formula; and

N/A

B. Describe how the waiver demonstrates that a proposed alternative formula more effectively targets funds on the basis of poverty (as defined by the Office of Management and Budget and revised annually in accordance with section 673 (2) of the Community

Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9902(2)) to local educational agencies with the State. (Section 131(b) of Perkins V).

N/A

C. Also indicate if this is a waiver request for which you received approval under the prior Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (Perkins IV).

N/A

7. If the eligible agency will submit an application for a waiver to the postsecondary allocation formula described in section 132(a)—

Indiana does not plan to apply for a waiver to the secondary allocation formula for FY21.

A. Include a proposal for such an alternative formula; and

N/A

B. Describe how the formula does not result in a distribution of funds to the eligible institutions or consortia with the State that have the highest numbers of economically disadvantaged individuals and that an alternative formula will result in such a distribution. (Section 132(b) of Perkins V). Also indicate if this is a waiver request for which you received approval under the prior Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (Perkins IV).

N/A

8. If the eligible agency will award reserve funds to eligible recipients under section 112(c) of Perkins V, describe the process and criteria for awarding those funds.

For FY21, the Office of CTE will set aside a Reserve of $1,000,000 for secondary and postsecondary recipients. The distribution of Reserve funds will be based upon the 65%/35% split between secondary and postsecondary eligible recipients.

Secondary Reserve grants during FY 2021 and FY 2022 will be utilized for the Next Level Programs of Study Pilot Programs. Reserve funds will be used to fund pilot programs offered through eligible recipients in rural areas; area with high percentages of CTE concentrators or CTE participants; areas with high numbers of CTE concentrators or CTE participants; or areas with disparities or gaps in performance as described in section 113(b) (3)(C)(ii). Preference will be given to eligible recipients who plan to offer one of the state-identified priority pathways. Competitive grants will be awarded based upon the development of an implementation plan submitted through the planning grant process (May 2020). Remaining Reserve funds in FY 2021 and FY 2022 will used to foster innovative practices aimed at reducing or eliminating performance gaps.

Postsecondary grants during FY 2021 and FY 2022 will be used for either purpose outlined above, with priority placed on programs or practices that are offered collaboratively with secondary and/or adult education.

9. Provide the State's fiscal effort per student, or aggregate expenditures for the State, that will establish the baseline for the Secretary's annual determination on whether the State has maintained its fiscal effort, and indicate whether the baseline is a continuing level or new level. If the baseline is new, please provide the fiscal effort per student, or aggregate expenditures for the State, for the preceding fiscal year. (Section 211(b)(1)(D) of Perkins V).

Indiana's aggregate expenditures for Career and Technical Education are $158,972,889.00. This includes the state's Perkins allocation of $28,478,889.00 (FY20). The state match for Perkins Administration is $494,000.00. The state-level additional pupil count funding totals $130,000,000. The additional pupil count funds represent state funds that are distributed directly to public and charter LEAs for student enrollments in CTE courses. The $130,000,000 represents a cap that has been established through legislation for the FY 2021.

Update: The $130,000,000 cap was rescinded before it was ever implemented.

D. ACCOUNTABILITY FOR RESULTS

- 1. Identify and include at least one (1) of the following indicators of career and technical education program quality—
    - a. The percentage of CTE concentrators (see Text Box 6 for the statutory definition of a CTE concentrator under section 3(12) of Perkins V) graduating from high school having attained a recognized postsecondary credential;
    - b. The percentage of CTE concentrators graduating high school having attained postsecondary credits in relevant career and technical education programs and programs of study earned through a dual or concurrent enrollment program or another credit transfer agreement; and/or
    - c. The percentage of CTE concentrators graduating from high school having participated in work-based learning. (Section 113(b)(2)(A)(iv)(I) of Perkins V)

Include any other measure(s) of student success in career and technical education that are statewide, valid, and reliable, and comparable across the State. (Section 113(b)(2)(A)(iv)(II) of

Perkins V) Please note that inclusion of "other" program quality measure(s) is optional for States.

Provide the eligible agency's measurement definition with a numerator and denominator for each of the quality indicator(s) the eligible agency selects to use.

- 2. Provide on the form in Section V.B, for each year covered by the State plan beginning in FY 2020, State determined performance levels or each of the secondary and postsecondary core indicators, with the levels of performance being the same for all CTE concentrators in the State. (Section 113(b)(3)(A)(i)(I) of Perkins V)

Text Box 6: Statutory Definition of CTE Concentrator

The term 'CTE concentrator' means—

- (A) At the secondary school level, a student served by an eligible recipient who has completed at least 2 courses* in a single career and technical education program or program of study; and
- (B) At the postsecondary level, a student enrolled in an eligible recipient who has—
    - (i) Earned at least 12 credits within a career and technical education program or program of study; or
    - (ii) Completed such a program if the program encompasses fewer than 12 credits or the equivalent in total. (Section 3(12) of Perkins V)

* This means that once a student completes 2 courses in a single CTE program or program of study, they are counted as a CTE concentrator.

(Section 3(12) of Perkins V)

- 3. Describe the procedure the eligible agency adopted for determining State determined levels of performance described in section 113 of Perkins V, which at a minimum shall include—
    - a. A description of the process for public comment under section 113(b)(3)(B) of Perkins V as part of the development of the State determined levels of performance (see Text Box 7 for the statutory requirements for consultation on State determined performance levels under section 113(b)(3)(B) of Perkins V);
    - b. An explanation for the State determined levels of performance that meet each of the statutory requirements in Text Box 8; and
    - c. A description of how the State determined levels of performance set by the eligible agency align with the levels, goals and objectives other Federal and State laws, (Section 122(d)(10) of Perkins V).

As part of the procedures for determining State determined levels of performance, describe the process that will be used to establish a baseline for those levels.

- 4. Provide a written response to the comments regarding State determined performance levels received during the public comment period pursuant to section 113(b)(3)(B) of Perkins V. (Section 113(b)(3)(B)(iii) of Perkins V).

As part of the written response, include a description of any the changes made to the State determined performance levels as a result of stakeholder feedback.

- 5. Describe how the eligible agency will address disparities or gaps in performance as described in section 113(b)(3)(C)(ii)(II) of Perkins V in each of the plan years, and if no meaningful progress has been achieved prior to the third program year, a description of the additional actions the eligible agency will take to eliminate these disparities or gaps. (Section 122(d)(11) of Perkins V)

As part of the written response, and pursuant to the Report of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP),[2] the eligible agency could indicate that it will analyze data on the core indicators of performance to identify gaps in performance, explain how they will use evidence-based research to develop a plan to provide support and technical assistance to eligible recipients to address and close such gaps, and how they will implement this plan. The eligible agency is not required to submit a new State plan prior to the third program year in order to address this requirement.

Text Box 7: Statutory Requirements for Consultation on State Determined Performance Levels

- (B) PUBLIC COMMENT.—
    - (i) IN GENERAL.—Each eligible agency shall develop the levels of performance under subparagraph (A) in consultation with the stakeholders identified in section 122(c)(1)(A).
    - (ii) WRITTEN COMMENTS.—Not less than 60 days prior to submission of the State plan, the eligible agency shall provide such stakeholders with the opportunity to provide written comments to the eligible agency, which shall be included in the State plan, regarding how the levels of performance described under subparagraph (A)—
        - (I) Meet the requirements of the law;
        - (II) Support the improvement of performance of all CTE concentrators, including subgroups of students, as described in section 1111(h)(1)(C)(ii) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, and special populations, as described in section 3(48); and
        - (III) Support the needs of the local education and business community.
    - (iii) ELIGIBLE AGENCY RESPONSE.—Each eligible agency shall provide, in the State plan, a written response to the comments provided by stakeholders under clause (ii).

(Section 113(b)(3)(B) of Perkins V)

[2] See page 11 of Committee Report at https://www.congress.gov/115/crpt/srpt434/CRPT-115srpt434.pdf.

(d) Accountability for Results

1. **Identify and include at least one (1) of the following indicators of career and technical education program quality—**

A.The percentage of CTE concentrators (see Text Box 6 for the statutory definition of a CTE concentrator under section 3(12) of Perkins V) graduating from high school having attained a recognized postsecondary credential;

B. The percentage of CTE concentrators graduating high school having attained postsecondary credits in relevant career and technical education programs and programs of study earned through a dual or concurrent enrollment program or another credit transfer agreement; and/or

C. The percentage of CTE concentrators graduating from high school having participated in work-based learning. (Section 113(b)(2)(A)(iv)(I) of Perkins V).

Indiana plans to track and report on all three measures of program quality. The state feels that each indicator represents a critical measure of program quality and tracking all three will provide the most complete picture.

The measures will be calculated in the following manner:

Postsecondary Credential Attainment Numerator: The unduplicated number of CTE concentrators in the reporting cohort who attained a postsecondary credential. A postsecondary credential will be defined as a promoted industry certification or state issued license that counts as an Indiana's Graduation Pathways Postsecondary Readiness Competency, or a postsecondary certificate, technical certificate, or degree.

Postsecondary Credit Attainment Numerator: The unduplicated number of CTE concentrators in the reporting cohort who earned at least 9 postsecondary credits in courses that map toward a postsecondary certificate or degree program.

Work-Based Learning Participation Numerator: The unduplicated number of CTE concentrators in the reporting cohort who participated in at least 75 hours of a work-based learning experience where the student has a work record in a position(s) aligned to the student's career pathway on their graduation plan. Examples of a work-based learning that would fit this definition include: job site placement and internship; apprenticeship/pre-apprenticeship; State Earn and Learn; clinical or practicum; school-based enterprise; or simulated work environment.

Denominator: The unduplicated number of CTE concentrators in the reporting cohort.

2. **Include any other measure(s) of student success in career and technical education that are statewide, valid, and reliable, and comparable across the State. (Section 113(b)(2)(A)(iv)(II) of Perkins V) Please note that inclusion of "other" program quality measure(s) is optional for States.**

The Office of CTE staff will use FY 2021 as an opportunity to explore additional measures of student success. One possibility is a persistence measure that would measure the percent of CTE participants that go on to earn concentrator status. A more formal definition would be provided in future updates of the Perkins V plan.

Update: The Office of CTE has not created a more formal definition. However, a greater focus has and will continue to be placed on the number of students that have persisted to earn concentrator status. One place where this focus has already been implemented is through the Equity Labs that were required as a part of the revised CLNA process.

3. **Provide the eligible agency's measurement definition with a numerator and denominator for each of the quality indicator(s) the eligible agency selects to use.**

N/A

4.Provide on the form in Section V.B, for each year covered by the State plan beginning in FY 2020, State determined performance levels or each of the secondary and postsecondary core indicators, with the levels of performance being the same for all CTE concentrators in the State. (Section 113(b)(3)(A)(i)(I) of Perkins V)

Column I	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4	Column 5	Column 6
Secondary Indicators	**Baseline**	**FY 2020**	**FY 2021**	**FY 2022**	**FY 2023**
1S1: Four-Year Graduation Rate	94.99	95	95.5	96	96.5
1S2: Extended Graduation Rate	96.56	97	97.5	98	98.5
2S1: Academic Proficiency in Reading Language Arts	61.20	64	67	70	73
2S2: Academic Proficiency in Math	36.87	43	48.5	54.5	60
2S3: Academic Proficiency in Science	24.73	28	32	36	40
3S1: Post Program Placement	79.49	80.5	82	83.5	85
4S1: Non-Traditional Program	29.87	31	33	35	36

Column I	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4	Column 5	Column 6
Concentration					
5S1: Program Quality- Attained a recognized postsecondary credential	21.00	20.34	23	25	28
5S2: Program Quality – Attained Postsecondary Credits	10.04	12	15	20	25
5S3: Program Quality – Participated in WBL	16.34	14.9	17.5	20	22.5

Column I	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4	Column 5	Column 6
Postsecondary Indicators	**Baseline**	**FY 2020**	**FY 2021**	**FY 2022**	**FY 2023**
1P1: Post Program Placement	99.5	99.5	99.5	99.5	99.5
2P1: Earned Recognized Postsecondary Credential	36.63	38	39	40	41
3P1: Non-Traditional Program Concentration	27.18	28	29	30	31

5. **Describe the procedure the eligible agency adopted for determining State determined levels of performance described in section 113 of Perkins V, which at a minimum shall include**

A. A description of the process for public comment under section 113(b)(3)(B) of Perkins V as part of the development of the State determined levels of performance (see Text Box 7 for the statutory requirements for consultation on State determined performance levels under section 113(b)(3)(B) of Perkins V);

B. An explanation for the State determined levels of performance that meet each of the statutory requirements in Text Box 8; and

C. A description of how the State determined levels of performance set by the eligible agency align with the levels, goals and objectives other Federal and State laws, (Section 122(d)(10) of Perkins V).

Response captured below in (6).

6. As part of the procedures for determining State determined levels of performance, describe the process that will be used to establish a baseline for those levels.

Secondary CTE Participant: Any student who completes not less than one Career and Technical Education program or program of study.

Secondary CTE Concentrator: Any student who has completed at least two advanced courses in a single Career and Technical Education program or program of study.

Postsecondary CTE Participant: A postsecondary CTE student is any postsecondary student that is enrolled in a designated CTE program regardless of whether or not they completed secondary CTE.

Postsecondary CTE Concentrator: A postsecondary CTE Concentrators will be any postsecondary CTE participant who earns at least 12 credits within an approved CTE pathway; or has completed a postsecondary program.

Indiana's state levels of performance are determined using the statutory requirements established in Perkins V with a few clarifications. These include that academic proficiency is based upon the student's first attempt on the state assessment. This holds true for the postsecondary performance levels as well.

The state-determined levels of performance were established by first converting individual program year's data to the statutory requirements of Perkins V. A table of the data from the last four years, along with the calculated 3 year average, is included in Appendix 4. One final step was to review the data on 3-year averages to look for any anomalies. The anomalies that were discovered are discussed below.

The baseline levels for all indicators, except 2S1, 2S2 and 2S3, were determined by taking the 3-year average. Indicators 2S1, 2S2 and 2S3 utilized the performance levels for the 2018-2019 cohort. The performance levels for this cohort were significantly lower due to the state transitioning from End of Course Assessments to the Indiana Statewide Testing for Educational

Progress (ISTEP). The use of a single cohort's performance as the baseline, mirrors the process used by the Department of Education to establish the performance levels for ESSA.

A review of the past performance also identified a concern with 3S1: Post Program Placement. Over the last three years there has been a 6-8% decrease in performance. This trend follows an all-time high level of performance in the 2014-15 Cohort. There are some reporting errors that are causing the 2018-19 cohort level of performance to be at 64%. The Office of CTE is working to resolve the reporting issues. The baseline level for 3S1 was determined by excluding the most recent year's performance from the 3 year average.

Once the baseline levels were determined, a goal for the FY 2024 program year was established for each performance indicator. The goal was determined by comparing Indiana's performance to national performance and the performance of neighboring states. The total growth needed to meet the established goal by FY 2024 was divided by four to help establish a percent increase goal for each year of the plan. This process will help to ensure continuous improvement over the span of the Perkins V plan.

In addition to being available for public comment along with the rest of the Perkins V plan and the state's WIOA combined plan, the performance level goals were shared through an email with eligible recipients. The email was shared with eligible recipients by January 31, 2020.

The two performance indicators that most align with the WIOA combined plan are the postsecondary credential attainment and post program placement. These performance indicators are included in the strategic goals for the state. Indiana plans to require all talent development programs to track and monitor all of the WIOA performance levels. The purpose of collecting this data is for comparison purposes to help identify the best uses of state resources.

Prior to the third year of the Perkins V plan, the state of Indiana will need to reevaluate all eligible performance levels. The changing of the concentrator definition (November 2018) to meet the Perkins V two course definition, program of study requirements and alignment, and the possible transition to a college entrance exam as the state's academic assessment for ESEA may necessitate resetting baseline levels and performance targets.

A review of performance data from the last two years demonstrated a need for the Office of CTE to reset our baseline level data for 5S1- Credential Attainment and 5S3 – Work-Based Learning Participation. As mentioned earlier, there were several changes that led to inaccuracies in our baseline performance levels, including the change from the six credit definition of a concentrator to the Perkins V two course definition. This change required the Office of CTE to use projections on the number of Perkins 5 concentrators that were significantly lower than the actual number of Perkins V concentrators. This caused the percentages of concentrators meeting 5S1 and 5S3 to be significantly inflated.

The adjusted performance levels for 5S1 and 5S3 were determined by calculating a three-year average of actual performance rather than projections. Performance levels for the next 3 years

by setting a target that was above the three-year average and would include a 2 – 3% increase each year. .

Once determined, we followed the same communication and public comment plan as the original state plan. This included posting the plan for online review by interested stakeholders. Stakeholders had the opportunity to submit email responses to propose any changes or to share concerns.

Additionally, the OCTE shared a detailed presentation regarding state determined performance levels with the Area CTE Directors of eligible recipients. This presentation included an explanation of the challenges of determining baseline levels and reviewed the actual performance from the past three years. Following the in-person presentation an email was sent to all directors that summarized the information from the presentation and seeking their feedback. We received on one response to this email that supported the change in SDPLs.

Lastly, the GWC had convened an advisory board of cabinet members and representatives from other stakeholder groups to assist with changes to the state plan. The need for resetting the SDPLs and the modified performance levels were shared with this group. The group had no objections to adjusting the SDPLs.

7. **Provide a written response to the comments regarding State determined performance levels received during the public comment period pursuant to section 113(b)(3)(B) of Perkins V. (Section 113(b)(3)(B)(iii) of Perkins V). As part of the written response, include a description of any the changes made to the State determined performance levels as a result of stakeholder feedback.**

State-determined levels of performance were shared as a part of the complete combined plan posted online in February 2022. The plan was then available for public comment via an established email address. No public comments regarding the SDPLs were received as a part of this process. No changes were necessary to the plan or the SDPLs as a result of the public comments.

8. **Describe how the eligible agency will address disparities or gaps in performance as described in section 113(b)(3)(C)(ii)(II) of Perkins V in each of the plan years, and if no meaningful progress has been achieved prior to the third program year, a description of the additional actions the eligible agency will take to eliminate these disparities or gaps. (Section 122(d)(11) of Perkins V). As part of the written response, and pursuant to the Report of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP), the eligible agency could indicate that it will analyze data on the core indicators of performance to identify gaps in performance, explain how they will use evidence-based research to develop a plan to provide support and technical assistance to eligible recipients to address and close such gaps, and how they will implement this plan. The eligible agency is not required to submit a new State plan prior to the third program year in order to address this requirement.**

During the 2019-2020 program year, the state of Indiana will use the CLNA process as the primary mode for reviewing and auditing the performance of eligible recipients. At the secondary level, disaggregated data have been provided to each eligible recipient for each of the performance indicators. The Office of CTE plans to conduct a thorough review of each eligible recipients CLNA and Local Application not only ensure alignment, but also, to identify performance gaps. Identified gaps will be documented to help the state determine what

technical assistance and support is needed. Career Specialists, who specialize in specific technical assistant areas, will analyze the results of this review and be responsible for developing a strategic plan for providing professional development and technical assistance to the state and individual recipients through a variety of formats.

The review process for CLNA will also help the Office of CTE to identify and prepare for any necessary changes to the CLNA process in two years. One possibility is to require jointly developed CLNA by secondary and postsecondary recipients on a regional basis.

The Eligible Agency and the Office of CTE are committed to better utilizing InTERS, Indiana's extensive CTE data collection portal, to improve data informed decision making and monitoring program quality through high quality outcomes. Over the course of the next two years, Office of CTE staff will develop a real time auditing and monitoring system using InTERS reports or a data dashboard. This auditing and monitoring process will be used to identify individual schools that may require a more intensive on-site monitoring visit and/or be in need of targeted technical assistance. InTERS allows us the opportunity to drill down beyond the district level and to monitor the performance of individual schools and individual programs of study within a school. Having this type of data will be critical to improving the consistency and quality of programs of study.

Indiana will still make use of the required improvement plans for eligible recipients based upon local agreed upon levels (AULs) that are set via negotiation with each local recipient. In past years, Indiana has required schools to create an emergency improvement plan to require immediate action to address poor performance. The emergency improvement plans were followed by a school improvement plan as a part of the Local Application.

TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES (TANF)

States that include TANF in the Combined State Plan must outline how the State will meet the requirements of section 402 of the Social Security Act including how it will:

(OMB Control Number: 0970-0145)

A. CONDUCT A PROGRAM DESIGNED TO SERVE ALL POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS IN THE STATE (NOT NECESSARILY IN A UNIFORM MANNER) THAT PROVIDES ASSISTANCE TO NEEDY FAMILIES WITH (OR EXPECTING) CHILDREN AND PROVIDES PARENTS WITH JOB PREPARATION, WORK, AND SUPPORT SERVICES TO ENABLE THEM TO LEAVE THE PROGRAM, SPECIFICALLY CASH ASSISTANCE, AND BECOME SELF-SUFFICIENT (SECTION 402(A)(1)(A)(I) OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT)

THIS SECTION OF THE ORIGINAL STATE PLAN HAS BEEN DELETED AND UPDATED IN 2022 WITH THE TEXT BELOW.

This State plan was developed in accordance with Section 402 of the Social Security Act, as amended by the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-193). This State plan is submitted as a new plan for the purposes of the state's eligibility for federal funding under part A, Title IV, of the Social Security Act. The information submitted below restates the pertinent requirements of Section 402 and then provides the information that outlines the provisions of Indiana's program.

Indiana Family and Social Services Administration

Indiana's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Plan is administered by the Indiana Family and Social Service Administration (FSSA). FSSA provides a broad array of services to the State including institutional and community-based programs for the elderly and disabled; mental health and addiction services, Medicaid and other health care services and programs, and direct services such as child care assistance, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and cash assistance. FSSA administers the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant, which includes TANF cash assistance and other programs funded in whole or in part with TANF or maintenance of effort funds.

Within FSSA, the Division of Family Resources (DFR) has the responsibility for determining TANF eligibility, delivering benefits and employment services. DFR is also responsible for SNAP and enrollment in the Medicaid program. Traditionally, DFR provides TANF cash assistance and employment services at one of its ninety-two county offices or the office of a contracted employment service provider.

Under IC 12-14-1, Indiana defines a 'qualifying family' as means a family meeting the following conditions:

1. The family consists of :

1.

    a. A pregnant woman,

1.

    a. Child under age 18 or

1.

    a. A child between ages 18 and 24 attending secondary or post-secondary school at least half-time

2. The children listed above must reside with a custodial parent or other adult caretaker relative

3. The gross family income must be less than 400% FPL

Each TANF or MOE program must meet these minimum requirements but who is included in the household and how household income is calculated for eligibility purposes varies by each programs' policies, laws and regulations.

STATE PLAN REQUIREMENTS

The following is a description of Indiana's plan for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program under Section 402 (a) of the Social Security Act, as amended by the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-193).

Section 402 (a) (1) OUTLINE OF FAMILY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

(A) General Provisions

(i) Indiana will transfer a portion of the federal TANF Block Grant to supplement the Child Care Development Fund in addition to funding the following programs:

- TANF Child Care Assistance
- Early Intervention-First Steps
- Healthy Families (A child abuse prevention strategy)
- Father Engagement Programs
- Parent Education Program
- Parenting/Family Functioning Assessment
- Visitation Facilitation

- Tutoring / Literacy Classes
- Community Based Family Preservation Services
- Community Partners for Child Safety
- Teen Pregnancy Prevention
- Pregnancy Support Program
- TANF and IMPACT

Child Care Assistance

The child care needs for TANF recipients will be funded through use of both the Child Care Development and the TANF block grant. Assistance will be available to support the approved employment and training activities of the parent/caretaker who receives TANF assistance or who would receive TANF except for the imposition of a program sanction.

TANF funds also will be utilized for child care services for parents and relatives who are working and meet the income eligibility criteria of the Child Care Development Funds Program. Child care eligibility is capped at 127% of the federal poverty level.

TANF funds for child care will be blended with those of CCDF and accessed through the CCDF Voucher system. The funding source of child care services will be transparent to the families receiving child care subsidies.

Early Intervention/First Steps

First Steps is Indiana's Part C Early Intervention Program for infants, toddlers and their families. It is a family centered, locally based, coordinated system that provides services to children (0-3rd birthday) who are developmentally vulnerable. Services are intended to prevent

or minimize disabilities with the goal of maximizing the potential of these children so that they can function as contributing members of society. Families with income under 250% FPL are eligible for the program. This initiative is reasonably expected to achieve outcomes under TANF Purpose #1: Provide assistance to needy families so that children may be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives.

Healthy Families Indiana

The Healthy Families Program is a voluntary, multifaceted home visitation program designed to promote healthy families and healthy children administered by the Indiana Department of Child Services. Healthy Families Indiana (HFI) provides screening and assessment of families throughout the state identified as at-risk of child abuse or neglect. If the screening and assessment finds physical or mental health issues, HFI provides a referral to WIC Programs, health clinics and local hospitals for services. Services are provided at no cost and include child development, access to health care, parent education, staff training and community coordination/education. The program model includes screening, assessment and home visiting. Services can begin for eligible families either prior to or at the time of birth and can continue until the child is five years of age. This program is open to all Hoosier families regardless of income but TANF state and federal funds will only be used for families with incomes below 250% of the federal poverty level. This initiative is reasonably expected to achieve outcomes under TANF Purpose #1: Provide assistance to needy families so that children may be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives.

Father Engagement Programs

Father Engagement Programs provide assistance and support to fathers whose minor children are involved with the Department of Child Services (DCS). Providers work actively with DCS employees to engage fathers successfully in services that will improve safety, stability, well-being and permanency for their children. Providers will assist fathers in strengthening the relationship with their children and promoting positive relationships between the families and the local DCS family case managers and others involved in their children's case.

The Father Engagement Programs support the purposes of TANF because the services aim to strengthen the relationship between fathers and their children and promote positive relationships. Job Placement and training services for non-custodial parent(s) initiative is reasonably expected to achieve outcomes under TANF Purpose #2: To provide services that promote job preparation, work and marriage. The remainder of services provided under this initiative are reasonably expected to achieve outcomes under TANF Purpose #4: Encouraging the formation and maintenance of two-parent families. Unless stated otherwise, Indiana defines for TANF that a 'qualified family' must have a gross family income below 400% FPL. Indiana Code (IC) 12-14-1(3)

Parent Education Program

Parent Education is the provision of structured, parenting skill development experiences. Education regarding parenting, discipline and child development is a means to provide parents whose children are "at risk" or have been abused or neglected with tools to assist them in the lifelong task of disciplining, understanding and loving their children. Family-centered parent training programs include family skills training and family activities to help children and parents take advantage of concrete social supports. A *combination* of individual and group parent training is the most effective approach when building skills that emphasize social connections and parents' ability to access social supports. However, the *individual* approach is most effective when serving families in need of specific or tailored services.

The following evidence-based programs are approved for use in these Parent Education efforts: Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT), STAR Parenting Program, Systematic Training for Effective Parenting (STEP), Strengthening Families Program (SFP), Incredible Years, Parent Management Training-Oregon Model (PMTO), Positive Parenting Practices (Triple P), Parents as Teachers-Born to Learn, Safe-Care, Nurturing Program, Active Parenting, Effective Black Parenting by the Center for the Improvement of Child Caring, 1-2-3 Magic and Parenting with Love and Limits.

This initiative is reasonably expected to achieve outcomes under TANF Purpose #4: Encouraging the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.

Parenting/Family Functioning Assessment

Parenting/Family Functioning Assessment consists of an in-home evaluation that includes standardized test instrument(s) to identify the strengths and needs of the family. The service is most appropriately used when the needs of the family are so complex that a traditional assessment completed by an IN DCS Family Case Manager is not able to determine the services necessary to improve the family's functioning. These families tend to have multiple caregiver ratings on the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) of 2 or higher which indicates complex needs.

The interviews/assessments required include: Parenting/family functioning assessment to include an interview with the adults and children being assessed in their current home environment and completion by adults of standardized test(s) to include a parenting inventory (such as Parent-Child Relationship Inventory; Adult Adolescent Parenting Inventory-2; Family Assessment Device, Version 3; Family Assessment Measure Version III (FAM-III); and/or the Child Abuse Potential Inventory and /or another Standard Risk Assessment Instrument.

This initiative is reasonably expected to achieve outcomes under TANF Purpose #3: Prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies and TANF Purpose #4: Encouraging the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.

Visitation Facilitation

This service provides visitation between parents/children/siblings/and or others who have been separated. It allows the child to reconnect with their family in a safe environment. Supervised visitation allows DCS Case Workers to assess the relationship with the parent in strengthening their parenting skills and developing new skills.

The youth must be available and participate in the visitation. The parent(s) as well as other family members in the home must participate in the visitation as scheduled session along with the youth. The full participation of the parent is very important to the success of the service. Provider will document and report to the DCS Case Worker the date, times of the visitation, who attended, positive interactions between parent and child, any interventions used and parent's response to that direction, any tasks given to the parent prior to next visit, any other pertinent information or concerns.

For two parent families, this initiative is reasonably expected to achieve outcomes under TANF Purpose #4: Encouraging the formation and maintenance of two-parent families. For single parent families, this initiative is reasonably expected to achieve outcomes under TANF Purpose #1: Provide assistance to needy families so that children may be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives. Unless stated otherwise, Indiana defines for TANF that a 'qualified family' must have a gross family income below 400% FPL. Indiana Code (IC) 12-14-1(3)

Tutoring / Literacy Classes

Tutoring/Literacy Classes are provided to children involved with the Department of Child Services (DCS) system, in order to raise the academic performance of these school aged youth to a level consistent with state education standards. This program is carried out using qualified vendors under carefully drafted agreements. Services are provided in a manner that is age and developmentally appropriate and consistent with the child's academic ability and learning style, interpersonal characteristics and special needs. Children are connected as appropriate with both formal and informal community supports, services and activities that promote their literacy skills. The child's characteristics such as race, culture, ethnicity, language and personal history including child abuse and neglect are considered when choosing or designing program interventions, materials and curriculum. The provider will develop an education plan to address the child's literacy and math needs.

This initiative is reasonably expected to achieve outcomes under TANF Purpose #3: Prevent and reduce the incidence of adolescent and out of wedlock pregnancies.

Community-Based Family Preservation Services

Family Preservation Services are services designed to work with families who have had a substantiated incident of abuse and/or neglect, but, where DCS believes the child(ren) can remain in the home with their caregiver(s) with the introduction of appropriate services to the family. "Caregiver" is broadly defined to include: Birth parent(s), Adoptive parent(s), Relative caregiver(s), Fictive kinship caregiver(s), Other caregiver(s) who has been providing care and housing to the child(ren) and who has been deemed to be appropriate by the Department of Child Services (DCS). These services are for the entire family.

Family Preservation Services include the assessment of child/parent/family resulting in an appropriate service/treatment plan that is based on the assessed need. Family Preservation Services are home-based and monitor and address any safety concerns for the child(ren). Any interventions are strength-based and family-driven with the family actively participating in identifying the focus of services.

This program is available for all children and their families in an Informal Adjustment (IA) or In-Home Child in Need of Services (CHINS) case with DCS, however, TANF state and federal funds will only be used for two-parent families or families below 250% of the federal poverty level. For two-parent families, this initiative is reasonably expected to achieve outcomes under TANF Purpose #4: Encouraging the formation and maintenance of two-parent families. For single-parent families with incomes below 250% of the federal poverty level, this initiative is reasonably expected to achieve outcomes under TANF Purpose #1: Provide assistance to needy families so that children may be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives. (June 2020 start)

Community Partners for Child Safety

The Community Partners for Child Safety Program (CPCS) program provides primary and secondary child abuse and neglect prevention services in every region in the state. CPCS collaborates with other community resources within each region to create a coordinated prevention network. Families are able to access prevention services through self-referral, referral from another community agency, or the DCS Helpline implemented in May of 2021. Participation in services is voluntary. CPCS also provides Community Liaisons for direct services to connect families to resources to strengthen the family unit and prevent child abuse and neglect. Contracted CPCS agencies work with the DCS Regional Services Council to identify needs within the region and the community resources available. These resources could include, but are not limited to local DCS offices, hospitals, faith-based organizations, schools, First Steps, Head Start, and Healthy Families Indiana. In general, each region and community defines its own needs and resources as updated through the DCS Biennial Regional Services Strategic Plans or other needs assessment strategies. Providers in this program will also assist fathers in strengthening their relationship with their children and promoting positive relationships between the families and others involved in their children's life.

CPCS providers will utilize DCS approved assessment tools including the North Carolina Family Assessment (NCFAS) and Protective Factors Survey-2 (PFS-2), provide direct home based services, connect families to community resources, provide on-call crisis intervention, and provide supportive services to families on a voluntary basis. Because CPCS is a short-term program (serves families for an average of three months) CPCS will work with the family to develop no more than three (3) goals (e.g. parenting skills, life skills development, and self-improvement) to strengthen the family and prevent child abuse and neglect. When providing direct service CPCS liaisons use evidence-based practices, such as, Motivational Interviewing, 1-2-3 Magic, Nurturing Parenting, and Parents as Teachers curricula. DCS staff may conduct site visits and case file reviews as a means of ensuring quality service provision.

This program meets the requirement for:

TANF Purpose #1: Assist needy families so that children may be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives: CPCS is a free and voluntary home-based case-management services program that connects families to resources to strengthen the family and prevent child abuse and neglect so they the children may be safely maintained in their home. Community resources include youth services, schools, social services, health care, public health, hospitals, child care, community mental health agencies, local DCS offices, child abuse prevention agencies like Healthy Families and Prevent Child Abuse Councils, youth services bureaus, child advocacy centers, faith-based programs, twelve-step programs, youth and more. When providing direct service CPCS liaisons use evidence-based practices, such as, Motivational Interviewing, Parents as Teachers, Strengthening Families, 1-2-3 Magic, Nurturing Parent, Period of Purple Crying, S_T_E_P Program, Common Sense Parenting, and Active Parenting.

TANF Purpose #2: End the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work and marriage: The CPCS program benefits strengthens families by connecting them resources in their own community that help meet the needs of them family and allow them to parent successfully. Community Partners for Child Safety is a voluntary short-term Home Visiting and family goal focused prevention program. The intention is to give families the assistance, tools and resources needed to make it through life's challenging times without having substantiated cases of child abuse and neglect.

The Community Partners program is critical to ensuring that no family falls through the cracks, and is able to find the resources that can help the family have the tools to successfully handle life's crisis situations. Community Partners also work on building a prevention network within the communities, partnering with other agencies including, but not limited to schools, social services agencies, health care providers, public health, hospitals, childcare providers, community mental health agencies, local DCS offices, child abuse prevention agencies, Healthy Families, local Prevent Child Abuse Councils, Youth Services Bureaus, Child Advocacy Centers, and faith-based organizations.

CMCS Providers utilize HBCM referrals to access community resource that target obtaining employment by utilizing resources available in the community to build job skills and identify goals such as educational obtainment to work towards future career goals.

TANF Purpose #4: Encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families:

CPCS is a voluntary program for parents who are interested in strengthening and maintaining their family and in especially focused on crisis intervention to provide families with resources and support that will help the family stay together in times of stress. This is done by providing family support and advocacy, goal planning, referral services for family counseling and parenting education as well as financial assistance for family counseling as well as short term emergency problems.

Teen Pregnancy Prevention

FSSA has partnered with the Indiana State Department of Health in order to provide family planning services to those in need of services. This program is designed to reduce pregnancies among adolescent females through a comprehensive program which offers confidential birth control services, involves parents and equips young people to prevent sexual coercion. This program encourages participation of families, parents and/or legal guardians in decisions of minors to seek family planning services and pregnancy prevention through collaboration with multiple agencies including the Indiana Family Health Council, health care agencies and schools. This initiative is reasonably expected to achieve outcomes under TANF Purpose #3: Prevent and reduce the incidence of adolescent and out of wedlock pregnancies.

Pregnancy Support Program

FSSA has entered into an additional partnership with the State Department of Health and Real Alternatives, Inc. The comprehensive services offered include, but are not limited to, the following specific services: Information and counseling regarding pregnancy, fetal development, childbirth, child care, parenting, and adoption; Mentoring services related to parenting and life skills; Referral to other services available to support pregnant females and childbirth, including neonatal health care services; Promotion of public awareness of other resources that support childbirth; Programs to provide or assist expectant parents and their unborn children to obtain certain goods and services including, cribs and car seats, maternity and baby clothes, and temporary child care. Supports women in Indiana who thought they were experiencing an unplanned/crisis pregnancy, but who are found to be not pregnant by: Providing information on the risks of sexually transmitted diseases, relationship counseling, decision-making counseling, chastity information, teen pregnancy prevention programs, and other counseling to modify risk-taking behavior;

This program is intended to serve TANF purposes 3 and 4 through encouraging the formation and maintenance of two-parent families while providing pregnancy support services to expectant parents as well as preventing and reducing the incidence of adolescent and out of wedlock pregnancies.

Indiana uses the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) Block Grant to provide cash assistance and Indiana Manpower Placement and Comprehensive Training (IMPACT) Employment, Training, and Support Services to eligible TANF families. As a way for Indiana to maximize its resources in the talent development space and reduce duplicated efforts, IMPACT will coordinate more closely with WorkOnes regarding funding training and education. Since November 1, 2007, cash assistance applicants deemed mandatory for IMPACT have been referred to IMPACT for employment and training services. **Due to COVID-19 public health emergency originally declared by Indiana Governor Eric Holcomb (Executive Order 20-02) on March 6, 2020, and extended through subsequent Executive Orders, Indiana had waived the mandatory work requirements for all TANF applicants/recipients from the date of this original order through July 31st, 2021. As of August 1, 2021, all mandatory work requirements were re-instated.**

TANF Cash Assistance: Financial eligibility for cash assistance includes both an income and resource test. The family must qualify using applicable income and resource standards. The income standard for initial eligibility is listed below:

Assistance Groups which Include Adults and Children

# of Members	Monthly Amount
1	$139.50
2	229.50
3	288.00
4	346.00
5	405.50
6	463.00
7	522.50
8	580.00

Assistance Groups which Include only Children

# of Members	Monthly Amount

# of Members	Monthly Amount
1	$139.50
2	198.00
3	256.50
4	315.00
5	373.50
6	432.00
7	490.50
8	549.00

The family remains eligible until its countable income exceeds 100% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. This extension of income eligibility allows for continued access to employment services. In determining eligibility, the following disregards are applied to gross earned income:

- $90 – Work Expense disregard

- $30 and 1/3 Disregard – In addition to the work expense disregard, a work incentive disregard of $30 and 1/3 is applied to the remaining earned income for four consecutive months.

- $30 Disregard – Upon expiration of the $30 and 1/3 disregard, an applicant/recipient is entitled to a deduction of $30 from the earned income remaining after the standard work expense disregard is subtracted their eight (8) month period) and begins the month following the month the $30 and 1/3 disregard expired.

In determining the benefit amount, 25% of gross earnings and 100% of non-exempt unearned income is used in the benefit calculation, thus 75% of earned income is disregarded in the benefit calculation.

The resource standard for initial eligibility is $1,000. Once determined eligible, the case is subject to a resource standard of $1,500.

Indiana Manpower Placement and Comprehensive Training (IMPACT) Employment, Training and Support Services: IMPACT's combined approach of employment with education and training programs will best prepare an individual for career advancement and wage increases. Indiana will support and expand the development of training programs integrated into or delivered in tandem with a Hoosier's employment experience. Individuals eligible for cash assistance will be given comprehensive personal and family strength and needs

assessments, individualized service coordinated plans based upon the assessments, and referrals to appropriate service providers to overcome initial and on-going employment barriers. A key element of the education and training programs for low-income individuals will be work-based learning opportunities (e.g., on-the-job training, paid internships, pre-apprenticeships, and State Earn and Learns), allowing these individuals to both earn an income and advance their technical knowledge. Career pathways for low-income individuals must include short-term credentials of value that will stack towards postsecondary credentials and degrees along a career pathway, options for on-the-job training, and flexible participation options (part-time, extended hours, and online modules).

Due to the COVID-19 public health emergency, the following policy changes were made and in effect through July 2021:

- For applicants, removing the upfront applicant job search requirements

- For those receiving TANF, removing the work requirement and full family sanction. Please note that our employment and training staff with the IMPACT program will be reaching out to clients via phone to offer services. Participation in the call and offer of services is strictly voluntary with no risk to TANF benefits.

As of August 1, 2021, all mandatory work requirements were re-instated.

For descriptions of the work activities that IMPACT will use, please refer to Indiana's Work Verification Plan. Under the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005, States are required to submit a Work Verification Plan explaining how it will verify the participation hours for the various work activities TANF recipients have been assigned to.

Case management and service coordination will focus on job placement, complemented by supplemental education, training, and skills development. Referrals to the Division of Disability and Rehabilitative Services and the Department of Workforce Development will be emphasized for those seeking talent development programming. Case management, education and training, and supportive services are provided to the client at no cost. The following is a list of the supportive services available to an IMPACT participant under the TANF Program:

Type of service	Payment Limits	Time limits
Clothing	$300	Per 12 month period
Transportation Expense	$200/month	TANF-Personal vehicle at $.15 per mile, other at actual cost; FS- $.10 per mile or $2.00 per day whichever is higher.

Type of service	Payment Limits	Time limits
Vehicle Repair and Maintenance	$750	Per 12 month period.

Transportation expenses and vehicle maintenance may continue during IMPACT participant's employment for 90 days following the loss of TANF benefits. Through co-enrollment in WIOA Core Programs, however, an individual may continue to receive follow-up services for up to 12 months.

Domestic violence and substance abuse are factors that can impede any family's ability to become self-sufficient. The prevalence of these factors may be prevalent among low-income families. These issues can be extremely difficult to identify and, although current policies permit exceptions and extensions to the state TANF time limit, when a domestic violence situation prevents an individual from participating in employment or training, very few individuals seek these opportunities. Due to the complexity of these issues, Indiana's Family and Social Services Agency has worked to raise both staffs' and individuals' awareness of the exemption and extension options.

B. REQUIRE A PARENT OR CARETAKER RECEIVING ASSISTANCE TO ENGAGE IN WORK (DEFINED BY THE STATE) ONCE THE STATE DETERMINES THE PARENT OR CARETAKER IS READY TO ENGAGE IN WORK, OR ONCE HE OR SHE HAS RECEIVED 24 MONTHS OF ASSISTANCE, WHICHEVER IS EARLIER, CONSISTENT WITH THE CHILD CARE EXCEPTION AT 407(E)(2) (SECTION 402(A)(1)(A)(II) OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT)

A parent or caretaker receiving assistance under TANF will be required to engage in work once the state determines the parent or caretaker is ready to engage in work, or once the parent or caretaker has received assistance under the program for 24 months (whether or not consecutive). Whichever timeline an individual meets is the one that applies to his/her work requirements.

This first one is determined early during the thorough assessment process using the assessment, which asks, what family/parent/relative supports are in place to assist with childcare.

If child care assistance is needed, available and used, it is appropriate child care since it utilizes State approved/licensed child care providers based on State rates and based on proximity to a client's home since clients select their provider. This covers "appropriate child care", "affordable child care arrangements" and where informal care has proven to be unsuitable to client's needs. Since clients select where their children go, would be a reasonable distance in most all cases.

Policy:

2525.10.00 ASSESSING STRENGTHS AND BARRIERS TO SELF-SUFFICIENCY

A comprehensive evaluation of an individual's needs and barriers is completed prior to beginning IMPACT activities. The participant must be actively involved in the completion of the assessment and in creating the self-sufficiency plan, including assisting in identifying strengths, interests and goals.

Details about IMPACT rights, responsibilities, activities and supportive services are also included as part of the assessment process.

The following areas should be addressed, as appropriate:

Transportation Resources: What type of transportation is accessible and used, and if transportation assistance is needed.

Child Care Needs: Determine the need for reliable child care and the presence of any special needs that must be addressed in the development of the child care plan.

Support Network: Identify those persons who provide emotional, social, or other support to the individual and family.

Work instructions Section 6.6.1 Supportive Services Determination

TANF and AJS clients:

When a participant has childcare in place, and a newborn needs to be added to the voucher, DO NOT have the participant give up the CCDF voucher that is currently in place, participant will not be eligible for child care for 90 days. The brand new baby will be placed on a waiting list and

the participant will need to discuss their situation with the CCDF vendor to see if there is a scholarship program or sliding fee scale or any other arrangement that can be worked out.

Due to COVID-19 public health emergency originally declared by Indiana Governor Eric Holcomb (Executive Order 20-02) on March 6, 2020, and extended through subsequent Executive Orders, Indiana had waived the mandatory work requirements for all TANF applicants/recipients from the date of this original order through July 31st, 2021. As of August 1, 2021, all mandatory work requirements were re-instated.

C. ENSURE THAT PARENTS AND CARETAKERS RECEIVING ASSISTANCE ENGAGE IN WORK IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 407 (SECTION 402(A)(1)(A)(III) OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT). CONSISTENT WITH THE REQUIRED STRATEGIC ELEMENTS DISCUSSED IN SECTION II (A)(2) HEREIN, PROVIDE A SPECIFIC ANALYSIS OF HOW THE STATE'S WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES ARE ADDRESSING EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING SERVICES FOR PARENTS OR CARETAKERS RECEIVING ASSISTANCE

Indiana will ensure that parents and caretakers receiving assistance under the program will engage in work activities in accordance with Section 407 of the Social Security Act, which establishes allowable work activities and participation rates. TANF staff will refer the individual to a local WorkOne for employment and career services. Please refer to Indiana's TANF Work Verification Plan for the details on how Indiana monitors work participation hours.

As noted in previous sections, due to COVID-19 public health emergency originally declared by Indiana Governor Eric Holcomb (Executive Order 20-02) on March 6, 2020, and extended through subsequent Executive Orders, Indiana had waived the mandatory work requirements for all TANF applicants/recipients from the date of this original order through July 31st, 2021. As of August 1, 2021, all mandatory work requirements were re-instated.

D. TAKE SUCH REASONABLE STEPS AS THE STATE DEEMS NECESSARY TO RESTRICT THE USE AND DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION ABOUT INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES RECEIVING ASSISTANCE UNDER THE PROGRAM ATTRIBUTABLE TO FUNDS PROVIDED BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT (SECTION 402(A)(1)(A)(IV) OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT)

The State will continue to restrict the use and disclosure of information about individuals and families receiving TANF assistance in accordance with state laws, I.C.5-14-3-4 and I.C. 12-14-1-7 and the Internal Revenue Code, Sections 7213 A and 7431. For TANF processing, FSSA DFR has a dedicated eligibility system solution that fully complies with IRS Publication 1075, which cites and supports compliance with all aspects of 7213A and 7431. Additionally, FSSA DFR has dedicated State employed staff for processing federal tax information (FTI) in support of TANF. This staff is fully made aware of the implications of the cited State laws and IRS code, along with all applicable aspects of IRS Publication 1075. FSSA has dedicated security staff who work with the internal business, policy, operations, and system teams to realize security and policy requirements set forth in these laws and IRS code. This security team in turn works with the IRS for ongoing IRS Publication 1075 Safeguard Security Report (SSR) submissions and audits to demonstrate Sections 7213A and 7431 compliance, along with IRS Publication 1075 in general. This SSR process happens annually, and FSSA DFR continues to retain its compliance with IRS Publication 1075, as validated again in the most recent SSR acceptance from the IRS on June 26, 2020, based on the State's submission on April 30, 2020. In terms of I.C. 5-14-3-4 and I.C. 12-

14-1-7, all vendor contracts and MOUs associated with data sharing TANF data include this expectation in the boilerplate sections of their agreements with FSSA DFR. This compliance is subject to FSSA Audit as well as State Board of Accounts audits as applicable.

E. ESTABLISH GOALS AND TAKE ACTION TO PREVENT AND REDUCE OUT-OF-WEDLOCK PREGNANCIES, WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON TEENAGE PREGNANCIES (SECTION 402(A)(1)(A)(V) OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT)

Indiana continues to establish goals and take action to prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies, with special emphasis on teenage pregnancies. The Indiana Department of Health is the lead agency in monitoring health outcomes and coordinating strategies to encourage abstinence and reduce teen pregnancy. The current rate for births to children age 15-19 is 28.0 births per 1,000 and can be found in the Indiana Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program Needs Assessment.

Indiana also includes pregnant youth as part of its 'At-Risk Youth' target population emphasized within WIOA Title I – In- and Out-of-School Youth programming.

F. CONDUCT A PROGRAM DESIGNED TO REACH STATE AND LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS, THE EDUCATION SYSTEM, AND RELEVANT COUNSELING SERVICES, THAT PROVIDES EDUCATION AND TRAINING ON THE PROBLEM OF STATUTORY RAPE SO THAT TEENAGE PREGNANCY PREVENTION PROGRAMS MAY BE EXPANDED TO INCLUDE MEN (SECTION 402(A)(1)(A)(VI) OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT)

Indiana currently conducts programs to provide education and training on teenage pregnancy prevention and statutory rape through prosecutor's offices, faith communities, schools, hospitals, and health departments to provide education and training regarding the problem of teenage pregnancy and statutory rape. Please refer to the Indiana Sexual Violence Primary Prevention Plan which includes services offered to men: http://www.state.in.us/isdh/files/Indiana_Sexual_Violence_Primary_Prevention_Plan_2016-2021.pdf. This plan was developed by the Indiana State Department of Health and its community partners programs. We hope to augment these efforts through increased co-location of our Division of Family Resources (DFR) offices, which administers TANF, and other community hubs of activity, such as schools, libraries, and community centers. Co-location to help provides these services to both staff and individuals may take varied forms depending on the local need:

- Formal co-location,
- Using itinerant staff,
- Mobile locations, and
- Referral relationships.

G. IMPLEMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES AS NECESSARY TO PREVENT ACCESS TO ASSISTANCE PROVIDED UNDER THE STATE PROGRAM FUNDED UNDER THIS PART THROUGH ANY ELECTRONIC FUND TRANSACTION IN AN AUTOMATED TELLER MACHINE OR POINT-OF-SALE DEVICE LOCATED IN A PLACE DESCRIBED IN SECTION 408(A)(12), INCLUDING A PLAN TO ENSURE THAT RECIPIENTS OF THE ASSISTANCE HAVE ADEQUATE ACCESS TO THEIR CASH ASSISTANCE (SECTION 402(A)(1)(A)(VII) OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT)

Indiana Code Section 12-13-14-4.5 outlines the distribution of cash benefits through automated teller machines or point of sale terminals, as well as retailers eligible for participation in EBT, and the penalties for not following the prescribed requirements. In addition, Indiana Administrative Code 470 IAC 10.3-5-8 requires owners or operators of restricted establishments as being responsible for posting signs containing notice that ATM or POS terminals may not be used for distribution of TANF assistance or refugee assistance.

During the 2013 session, the Indiana State Legislature passed Senate Bill 559, now known as Public Law 197, which requires ATM and point of sale owners, vendors, or third party processors to disable access to TANF cash assistance at prohibited locations.

Federal Restrictions: On February 22, 2012, President Obama signed into law the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012 (P.L. 112-96), which among its provisions, requires states receiving TANF grants to implement policies and procedures restricting access to TANF benefits via EBT at liquor stores, gaming establishments, and adult entertainment establishments. On September 10, 2012, DFR mailed a one-time notice to all current TANF payees and authorized representatives informing them of the access restrictions. Also in September 2012, DFR modified the TANF approval notices to include language about these restrictions. In October 2012, the mailer attached to all EBT cards included language regarding the restrictions.

In January 2013, Indiana implemented an EBT restricted site database matching system. This system contains information via a match with the State Alcohol/Tobacco Commission. This tool provides DFR with a list of possible violations. A DFR staff member reviews each reported match and determines whether the site is a restricted location. With the exception of packaged liquor, small brewers, and Type II gaming permits, this system requires the staff member to Google the address to become informed of the type of business at this location. If the business is not restricted (e.g., Applebee's or T.G.I. Friday's), the DFR staffer will mark the transaction as permissible in the reporting tool. If the business is in a restricted location (e.g., Vickie's Lounge or Old Point Tavern, etc.), DFR will send a letter to the TANF recipient informing him/her of the infraction with the date and location provided. In this letter, the TANF recipient is notified that any further infractions will be sent to the county prosecutor for enforcement. If the individual makes an inappropriate transaction in a subsequent month, a second letter will be sent to the individual informing him/her that DFR has referred the case to the prosecutor for appropriate action. Copies of the notices will be attached to the client's eligibility case.

- Initial Letter: A client will initially receive a letter informing him/her that it is a crime to access their TANF benefits at 'restricted' locations. The EBT Brochure and website will be referred to for reference and further information.

- Subsequent Letters: After the initial warning, if the individual continues to use his or her benefits in a 'restricted' location, s/he will receive a second letter informing him or her that the EBT card has been used again to access benefits in a restricted location and that DFR has notified local law enforcement of the crime. DFR will refer these cases to the FSSA Office of Investigations and Compliance. From the second letter forward, the FSSA Office of Investigations and Compliance will investigate clients who have made transactions in restricted areas and will send its findings to local law enforcement and/or Prosecutor.

H. ENSURE THAT RECIPIENTS OF ASSISTANCE PROVIDED UNDER THE STATE PROGRAM FUNDED UNDER THIS PART HAVE THE ABILITY TO USE OR WITHDRAW ASSISTANCE WITH MINIMAL FEES OR CHARGES, INCLUDING AN OPPORTUNITY TO ACCESS ASSISTANCE WITH NO FEE OR CHARGES, AND ARE PROVIDED INFORMATION ON APPLICABLE FEES AND SURCHARGES THAT APPLY TO ELECTRONIC FUND TRANSACTIONS INVOLVING THE ASSISTANCE, AND THAT SUCH INFORMATION IS MADE PUBLICLY AVAILABLE (SECTION 402(A)(1)(A)(VIII) OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT)

Cash benefits may be redeemed at any commercial POS machine and financial institution's automated teller machine (ATM) that displays the QUEST logo. Merchants that accept the Hoosier Works EBT card display the QUEST logo in order to inform cardholders that their cards may be used at that location. Hoosier Works cardholders can use their EBT card in all fifty states plus Washington, D.C. as well as the U.S. territories of Guam and the Virgin Islands. Hoosier Work cardholders all have access to the Conduent EBT Website at www.connectebt.com, which provides information on where a cardholder can access their cash benefits. If a Hoosier Works EBT cardholder contacted the state with concerns of no ATM/POS available in their area to access cash benefits, the state would work with our EBT vendor, Conduent, in order to set up a POS device in the cardholder's area or work with local banks in the area to determine a solution for increased accessibility.

The first TANF cash withdrawal is free, after that the 2nd – 12th withdrawal is $1.25 (this is charged by Indiana's EBT contractor, Conduent). After 12 withdrawals, all withdrawals are again free. Therefore, Conduent receives a maximum of $13.75 per month in ATM fees per client.

There are about 1,600 POS participating merchants offering surcharge-free cash EBT only merchants. These are locations such as Kroger, Wal-Mart, etc. which offer cash back). Information about surcharges is current in our EBT brochure. TANF withdrawal and surcharge information is listed in the "Avoid Fees & Additional Charges" section of the brochure.

I. INDICATE WHETHER IT INTENDS TO TREAT FAMILIES MOVING FROM ANOTHER STATE DIFFERENTLY FROM OTHER FAMILIES UNDER THE PROGRAM, AND IF SO HOW (SECTION 402(A)(1)(B)(I) OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT)

Indiana does not intend to treat families moving into Indiana from another state differently than other families under the program.

J. INDICATE WHETHER IT INTENDS TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO NON-CITIZENS, AND IF SO INCLUDE AN OVERVIEW OF THE ASSISTANCE (SECTION 402(A)(1)(B)(II) OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT)

Indiana intends to provide assistance under the program to the individuals who are not citizens of the United States to the degree permitted under federal law.

K. SET FORTH OBJECTIVE CRITERIA FOR THE DELIVERY OF BENEFITS AND THE DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY AND FOR FAIR AND EQUITABLE TREATMENT, INCLUDING AN EXPLANATION OF HOW IT WILL PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR RECIPIENTS WHO HAVE BEEN ADVERSELY AFFECTED TO BE HEARD IN A STATE ADMINISTRATIVE OR APPEAL PROCESS (SECTION 402(A)(1)(B)(III) OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT)

Indiana will continue to use objective criteria for the delivery of benefits and the determination of eligibility, as well as for fair and equitable treatment during an administrative appeal process. The Hearings and Appeals Section of Family and Social Services Administration will serve to address the unresolved issues between the applicants and recipients of TANF and the entities that administer the assistance programs. This appeals process continues to serve the fair hearing requirements of the SNAP and Medicaid Programs, as well. The appeals process is specifically defined in our Indiana on-line policy manual, Section 4200. A link to this section of the manual is included here for reference: https://www.in.gov/fssa/files/4200.pdf

L. INDICATE WHETHER THE STATE INTENDS TO ASSIST INDIVIDUALS TO TRAIN FOR, SEEK, AND MAINTAIN EMPLOYMENT (SECTION 402(A)(1)(B)(V) OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT)—

1. PROVIDING DIRECT CARE IN A LONG-TERM CARE FACILITY (AS SUCH TERMS ARE DEFINED UNDER SECTION 1397J OF THIS TITLE); OR

2. IN OTHER OCCUPATIONS RELATED TO ELDER CARE, HIGH-DEMAND OCCUPATIONS, OR OCCUPATIONS EXPECTED TO EXPERIENCE LABOR SHORTAGES AS, DETERMINED APPROPRIATE BY THE STATE FOR WHICH THE STATE IDENTIFIES AN UNMET NEED FOR SERVICE PERSONNEL, AND, IF SO, SHALL INCLUDE AN OVERVIEW OF SUCH ASSISTANCE.

Indiana will develop career pathways under WIOA (programs of study under Perkins) that are built around careers and competencies in healthcare (which includes both child and elder care) and other high-wage, high-demand occupations. Our Workforce Ready Grants, a state program, will pay the tuition and mandatory fees for eligible high-value certificate programs at Ivy Tech Community College, Vincennes University, or other approved providers. The qualifying high-value certificate programs were selected based on employer demand, wages, job placements and program completion rate. These programs are aligned with Indiana's highest demand sectors:

- Advanced Manufacturing
- Building & Construction
- Health Sciences

- IT & Business Services

- Transportation & Logistics

Depending on an individual's career aspirations, this is a state-funded resource WorkOnes can direct low-income individuals towards to help mitigate the costs of training. This state program will cover the costs of training and education, while the WorkOne can provide ongoing counseling, coaching, and other career services and job training for someone receiving TANF through WIOA Titles I, II, or III (as applicable). TANF E&T could assist with wraparound services, such as transportation, childcare, equipment and supplies, and other supports an individual needs in order to access the labor market. This may not be the best fit for every individual, since it is restricted to certain sectors and may not provide immediate income relief, but it could be a future opportunity within an individual's career pathway. TANF E&T programs will coordinate with other Core and Partner Programs. The TANF block grant will be used to help cover costs of any certification, credentialing, or examination costs, easing one barrier to Hoosiers earning postsecondary credentials.

M. PROVIDE FOR ALL MOE-FUNDED SERVICES THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION: THE NAME OF THE PROGRAM BENEFIT OR SERVICE, AND THE FINANCIAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA THAT FAMILIES MUST MEET IN ORDER TO RECEIVE THAT BENEFIT OR SERVICE. IN ADDITION, FOR TANF MOE-FUNDED SERVICES (CO-MINGLED OR SEGREGATED MOE) DESCRIBE THE PROGRAM BENEFIT PROVIDED TO ELIGIBLE FAMILIES (SSP SERVICES DO NOT HAVE TO INCLUDE A DESCRIPTION BUT THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES ENCOURAGES IT) (§263.2(B)(3) & §263.2(C) PREAMBLE PAGES 17826-7)

In addition to the federal funded TANF programs, Indiana will utilize TANF Maintenance of Effort (MOE) funds to support the following separate state programs for families who meet the definition of TANF eligible detailed below:

- Textbook Reimbursement Program

- Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)

- Individual Development Accounts (IDA)

- Early Intervention/First Steps Medical Services

- Community Health Centers

- Community Based Services

- Solely-State Funded Cash Assistance Minimum Grants

Textbook Reimbursement Program: Indiana provides payment for the elementary and secondary school textbook rental fee of families whose income is less than 185% of the federal poverty level. Benefits for this program are accessed through an application form processed by the school system. The application is a form, which facilitates access to the free or reduced price school meals programs administered through the United States Department of Agriculture.

Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC): This tax credit is available to an individual who, in a year, has at least one qualified child. As of the 2021 tax year, the following thresholds apply.

- $51,464 if you have three or more qualifying children, increasing to $57,414 if you're married and file a joint return.
- $47,915 if you have two qualifying children, increasing to $53,865 if you're married and file a joint return.
- $42,158 if you have one qualifying child, increasing to $48,108 if you're married and file a joint return.
- $15,980 if you have no qualifying children, or $21,920 if you're married and file a joint return.

The EITC cannot exceed 9% of the federal credit. It is only the refundable portion of the tax credit is reported as MOE.

Individual Development Accounts (IDA): The IDA Program is designed to offer Hoosier households the opportunity to build assets, accumulate savings, and learn personal finance skills so that they may pay for education, start or buy a business, or buy a home. The funds are administered by a Community Development Corporation (CDC). Qualified individuals receive state funds to match their contributions to the IDA. The state match is three times the amount deposited by the individual up to $800 per year. The state contribution for families with dependent children who receive public assistance or have incomes less than 200% of the federal poverty level will be counted towards MOE.

Early Intervention/First Steps Medical Services: First Steps provides medical services to all Hoosiers regardless of eligibility. First Steps does not provide comprehensive medical care, but provides services determined necessary by the child's early intervention team to meet the his or her developmental needs. Services are authorized through the development of an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) with the support of the child's primary care physician. Funding will be used to pay for the costs of services that are not otherwise paid by Medicaid. Funding is blended with existing sources and will be transparent to the family, although the funding will be separately identifiable for the purposes of accountability. Unless stated otherwise, Indiana defines for TANF that a 'qualified family' must have a gross family income below

400% FPL. Indiana Code (IC) 12-14-1(3)

Community Health Centers: The Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) and Office of Primary Care (OPC) administers the Community Health Center (CHC) Operating Grant. Funds are received from part of the Master Tobacco Settlement as authorized by the Indiana Senate Enrolled Act 108 – 111th General Assembly, March 2000. The ISDH-OPC promotes the development and operation of community-based primary healthcare services, including family planning, in areas of need that improve the health status of medically underserved populations of Indiana.

A community health center provides primary health care services by state licensed professionals, which are also comprehensive in scope, coordinated within the community, acceptable, accessible, affordable, appropriate, and available. Payment for services is based upon a sliding fee scale. Unless stated otherwise, Indiana defines for TANF that a 'qualified family' must have a gross family income below 400% FPL. Indiana Code (IC) 12-14-1(3)

Community Based Services: Through a variety of local agencies, townships, and third-party foundations, and community-based organizations and service providers, Indiana offers an extensive array of MOE help and services to children and families whose income is less than 250% of the federal poverty level. These include, but are not limited to, the following examples:

- Township emergency financial and material assistance and services programs;
    - Food assistance programs, including pantries, soup kitchens, and summer feeding programs;
    - Youth development and mentoring programs;
    - Pre-school and child development programs;
    - After-school programs of education, homework guidance, recreation, and enrichment;
    - Programs of United Way agencies that meet a TANF purpose;
    - Individual, marital, and family counseling services;
    - Community centers that provide a variety of family supports and services;
    - Comprehensive domestic violence services and shelters that provide families counseling, a safe haven, and the provision of basic needs;
    - Homelessness shelters, housing, employment, and stabilization services;
    - Income tax clinics;
    - Employment, housing and community re-engagement for ex-offenders;
    - Residential shelter and outreach to independent teens;
    - Classes in parenting, child development, and financial management;

    - Programs that provide public awareness, education, and advocacy to prevent child abuse and neglect in families, to prevent out-of-wedlock pregnancies, and to promote marriage and fatherhood; and
- Postsecondary career, vocational, and technical education programs for youth or parents.

Solely-State Funded Cash Assistance Minimum Grants: Since October 1, 2011, TANF Cash Assistance recipient families determined eligible for a $0 TANF grant due to employment income are eligible for a minimum. The minimum grant paid will be solely state funded. To qualify for a minimum grant, the family must meet the following criteria:

- The household's income is below the TANF cash assistance income eligibility limit (100% FPL).
- The household's countable income is above the maximum benefit amount.
- A parent or caretaker has income from employment.
- Parent or caretaker is not serving a sanction or voluntary quit penalty.
- The family must be receiving TANF cash assistance in the month prior to becoming a $0 grant case.

The family must continue to meet all financial and non-financial requirements of the TANF Cash Assistance program to receive the minimum payment. If the family meets all other eligibility requirements, the minimum grant remains in place until:

- The household's circumstances change (income decreases, change in household composition, etc.)

and it is once again eligible for a TANF grant;

- The employed parent/caretaker loses employment; or

The household's countable income exceeds 100% FPL.

TANF CERTIFICATIONS

States that include TANF in the Combined State Plan must provide a certification by the chief executive officer of that State, that during the fiscal year, the State will:

The State Plan must include	Include
1. Operate a child support enforcement program under the State Plan approved under part D. (section 402(a)(2) of the Social Security Act);	Yes
2. Operate a foster care and adoption assistance program under the State Plan approved under part E, and that the State will take such actions as are necessary to ensure that children receiving assistance under such part are eligible for medical assistance under the State Plan under title XIX. (section 402(a)(3) of the Social Security Act);	Yes
3. Specify which State agency or agencies will administer and supervise the program referred to in paragraph (1) for the fiscal year, which shall include assurances that local governments and privatesector organizations (section 402(a)(4) of the Social SecurityAct)—	
3. (A) have been consulted regarding the plan and design of welfare services in the State so that services are provided in a manner appropriate to local populations; and	Yes
3. (B) have had at least 45 days to submit comments on the plan and the design of such services;	Yes
4. Provide each member of an Indian tribe, who is domiciled in the State and is not eligible for assistance under a tribal family assistance plan approved under section 412, with equitable access to assistance under the State program funded under this part attributable to funds provided by the Federal Government. (section 402(a)(5) of the Social Security Act);	Yes
5. Establish and enforce standards and procedures to ensure against program fraud and abuse,including standards and procedures concerning nepotism, conflicts of interest among individuals responsible for the administration and supervision of the State program, kickbacks, and the use of political patronage. (section 402(a)(6) of the Social Security Act);	Yes
6. (optional) Establish and Enforcing standards and procedures to (section 402(a)(7) of the Social	

The State Plan must include	Include
Security Act).—	
6.i. screen and identify individuals receiving assistance under this part with a history of domestic violence while maintaining the confidentiality of such individuals;	Yes
6.ii. refer such individuals to counseling and supportive services; and	Yes
6.iii. waive, pursuant to a determination of good cause, other program requirements such as time limits (for so long as necessary) for individuals receiving assistance, residency requirements, child support cooperation requirements, and family cap provisions, in cases where compliance with such requirements would make it more difficult for individuals receiving assistance under this part to escape domestic violence or unfairly penalize such individuals who are or have been victimized by such violence, or individuals who are at risk of further domestic violence.	Yes

EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAMS UNDER THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (PROGRAMS AUTHORIZED UNDER SECTION 6(D)(4) OF THE FOOD AND NUTRITION ACT OF 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(D)(4)))

A. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS [27]

The State agency must prepare and submit an Employment and Training (E&T) Plan to its appropriate Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) Regional Office. The E&T Plan must be available for public inspection at the State agency headquarters. A State agency may include its plan for the SNAP E&T program in a Combined Plan under WIOA but will require FNS approval prior to implementation and must continue to make a copy of the plan available for public inspection. If a State includes SNAP E&T in a Combined Plan under WIOA, the State agency will detail the following for each year covered by the Combined Plan:

[27] 7 CFR § 273.7(c)(6)

1. THE NATURE OF THE E&T COMPONENTS THE STATE AGENCY PLANS TO OFFER AND THE REASONS FOR SUCH COMPONENTS, INCLUDING COST INFORMATION. THE METHODOLOGY FOR STATE AGENCY REIMBURSEMENT FOR EDUCATION COMPONENTS MUST BE SPECIFICALLY ADDRESSED. IF A STATE AGENCY PLANS TO OFFER SUPERVISED JOB SEARCH IN ACCORDANCE WITH PARAGRAPH (E)(2)(I) OF THIS SECTION, THE STATE AGENCY MUST ALSO INCLUDE IN THE E&T PLAN A SUMMARY OF THE STATE GUIDELINES IMPLEMENTING SUPERVISED JOB SEARCH. THIS SUMMARY OF THE STATE GUIDELINES, AT A MINIMUM, MUST DESCRIBE: THE CRITERIA USED BY THE STATE AGENCY TO APPROVE LOCATIONS FOR SUPERVISED JOB SEARCH, AN EXPLANATION OF WHY THOSE CRITERIA WERE CHOSEN, AND HOW THE SUPERVISED JOB SEARCH COMPONENT MEETS THE REQUIREMENTS TO DIRECTLY SUPERVISE THE ACTIVITIES OF PARTICIPANTS AND TRACK THE TIMING AND ACTIVITIES OF PARTICIPANTS;

Indiana offers services on a voluntary basis to SNAP recipients who choose to participate in the Indiana Manpower Placement and Comprehensive Training (IMPACT) Employment, Training, and Support Services Program. Voluntary SNAP IMPACT participants, including Able Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWDs), begin with a comprehensive orientation that details the benefits of the program. Each person is assessed and a Self-Sufficiency Plan (SSP) is developed. Clients are then placed in appropriate activities, referrals are made, and supportive services are provided.

The Combined Plan offers Indiana the opportunity to evaluate the overlap of employment and training services offered through IMPACT with similar services offered at our American Job

Centers (WorkOnes). WorkOnes are Indiana's one-stop centers for jobseekers and employers when it comes to career and employment resources. IMPACT, however, can offer much more than job training services to low-income individuals, because it seeks to address a broad range of barriers that may inhibit individuals from seeking and maintaining employment, such as supportive services like transportation reimbursement. As a way for Indiana to maximize its resources in the talent development space and reduce duplicated efforts, IMPACT will coordinate more closely with WorkOnes regarding funding training and education.

Currently, IMPACT services/activities include:

-
    - Assessment
    - Job Search
    - Job Search Readiness
    - Job Retention Services
    - Job Skills Training
    - Adult Basic Education
    - English as a Second Language
    - High School
    - High School Equivalence Program
    - Vocational Training
    - On-the-job Training and apprenticeships
    - Community Work Experience (CWEP), also known as Workfare
    - Work Experience Program

Because all of these services are offered through our WIOA Core Programs, a critical step in integrating how Indiana administers its federal workforce development programs is to merge SNAP E&T workforce development programs with the WorkOnes. Offices for the Division of Family Resources will continue to determine eligibility and refer any SNAP recipient to the WorkOne (either the physical location or the embedded staff members) for career development and training opportunities. For Hoosiers eligible for SNAP benefits, we intend on co-enrolling those individuals in our employment and training programs offered through our WorkOnes. The federal agency support for the co-enrollment design through WIOA is central to the connectivity

design described in this Plan. Co-enrollment between WIOA and SNAP E&T means that the individual is fully enrolled in both programs and counted in both programs' performance accountability reporting data.

Once an individual qualifies for SNAP E&T, s/he should be referred to the WorkOne to learn about potential education and training programs either through the state, an employer, or a third-party training provider, as well as adult education programs for those without a high school diploma, and the training partner program offerings associated with each.

Communication between partners will be ongoing to ensure the constituent's engagement after the referral was made. After this orientation, WIOA Core Programs can fund the constituent's completion of any intake assessment needed to determine his/her current level of educational attainment and skills, training and career goals.

SNAP individuals looking for work experience or training will be referred to WorkOnes through WIOA funding, with SNAP E&T able to supplement training costs and cover supportive services. Through co-enrollment in both federal programs, SNAP and TANF resources could be used to support any goals for the participant that cannot be funded by WIOA Title I and Title II dollars. The primary benefit of closer coordination between SNAP E&T offices and Indiana's workforce system will include us maximizing our federal dollars to provide Hoosiers with the supports they need to attain economic mobility.

Beginning July 1, 2015, Indiana reinstated time limited benefits for Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWDs). This continued up to March 2020 when the COVID pandemic began and the requirement was waived. The ABAWD requirement outlined below is anticipated to re-start with the expiration of the federal public health emergency. Our anticipation would be that this work requirement for ABAWDs would be re-started sometime in CY 2022.

ABAWDs who are not employed 80 hours or more per month are referred to the IMPACT program upon authorization of the SNAP case (not occurring under public health emergency). An IMPACT appointment is auto-scheduled to give the individual an opportunity to fulfill the work requirement and remain eligible for SNAP. As a way for Indiana to maximize its resources in the talent development space and reduce duplicated efforts, IMPACT will coordinate more closely with WorkOnes regarding training and education.

2. A DESCRIPTION OF THE CASE MANAGEMENT SERVICES AND MODELS, HOW PARTICIPANTS WILL BE REFERRED TO CASE MANAGEMENT, HOW THE PARTICIPANT'S CASE WILL BE MANAGED, WHO WILL PROVIDE CASE MANAGEMENT SERVICES, AND HOW THE SERVICE PROVIDERS WILL COORDINATE WITH E&T PROVIDERS, THE STATE AGENCY, AND OTHER COMMUNITY RESOURCES, AS APPROPRIATE. THE STATE PLAN SHOULD ALSO DISCUSS HOW THE STATE AGENCY WILL ENSURE E&T PARTICIPANTS ARE PROVIDED WITH TARGETED CASE MANAGEMENT SERVICES THROUGH AN EFFICIENT ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESS;

Included in response a.1.

3. AN OPERATING BUDGET FOR THE FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR WITH AN ESTIMATE OF THE COST OF OPERATION FOR EACH FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR COVERED BY THE COMBINED PLAN. ANY STATE AGENCY THAT REQUESTS 50 PERCENT FEDERAL REIMBURSEMENT FOR STATE AGENCY E&T ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS, OTHER THAN FOR PARTICIPANT REIMBURSEMENTS, MUST INCLUDE IN ITS PLAN, OR AMENDMENTS TO ITS PLAN, AN ITEMIZED LIST OF ALL ACTIVITIES AND COSTS FOR WHICH THOSE FEDERAL FUNDS WILL BE CLAIMED, INCLUDING THE COSTS FOR CASE MANAGEMENT AND CASEWORK TO FACILITATE THE TRANSITION FROM ECONOMIC DEPENDENCY TO SELF-SUFFICIENCY THROUGH WORK. COSTS IN EXCESS

OF THE FEDERAL GRANT WILL BE ALLOWED ONLY WITH THE PRIOR APPROVAL OF FNS AND MUST BE ADEQUATELY DOCUMENTED TO ASSURE THAT THEY ARE NECESSARY, REASONABLE AND PROPERLY ALLOCATED. A STATE MUST SUBMIT A PLAN AMENDMENT TO REQUEST BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS AT LEAST 30 DAYS PRIOR TO PLANNED IMPLEMENTATION;

Direct Costs:

	State cost	**Federal cost**	**Total**
a) Salary/Wages	$43,116.06	$43,116.05	$86,232.11
b) Fringe Benefits* Approved Fringe Benefit Rate Used _23.33____%	$10,058.98	$10,058.98	$20,117.96
c) Contractual Costs (Admin Only)	$2,794,232.82	$2,794,232.82	$5,588,465.65
d) Non-capital Equipment and Supplies	$114,442.68	$114,442.68	$228,885.36
e) Materials	$250.00	$250.00	$500.00
f) Travel	$1,000.00	$1,000.00	$2,000.00
g) Building/Space	$301,125.96	$301,125.96	$602,251.92
h) Equipment & Other Capital Expenditures	$2,500.00	$2,500.00	$5,000.00
Total Direct Costs	$3,266,726.50	$3,266,726.50	$6,533,453.00

Indirect Costs:

	State cost	**Federal cost**	**Total**
Indirect Costs*Approved Indirect Cost Rate Used:___%	$206,097.81	$206,097.81	$412,195.62

In-kind Contributions:

	State cost	**Federal cost**	**Total**
State in-kind contribution			
Total Administrative Cost (Total of items I, II, and III)			

100 Percent Federal E&T Grant		1,537,444.00	1,537,444.00
50 percent Additional Administrative Expenditure			

Participant Reimbursement (State plus Federal):

a) Dependent Care (including contractual costs)	$250,000.00	$250,000.00	$500,000.00
b) Transportation & Other Costs (including contractual costs)	$170,000.00	$170,000.00	$340,000.00
c) State Agency Cost for Dependent Care Services			
Total 50 percent Participant Reimbursement Expenses	$420,000.00	$420,000.00	$840,000.00
	State cost	**Federal cost**	**Total**
V. Total Costs	$3,892,824.31	$3,892,824.31	$7,785,648.62

Indiana offers services on a voluntary basis to SNAP recipients who choose to participate in the IMPACT Program. Voluntary SNAP IMPACT participants, including ABAWDs, begin with a comprehensive orientation that details the benefits of the program. Each person is assessed and a self-sufficiency plan (SSP) is developed. Clients are then placed in appropriate activities, referrals are made, and supportive services are provided.

2022 update

Indiana submits the SNAP Employment and Training State Plan for each federal fiscal year direct to USDA/Food and Nutrition Service (FNS). FNS must review and approve each submission and any subsequent amendments to the State Plan submitted during each applicable fiscal year. The State Plan for each year includes services to be provided per regulations as well as estimates of those participating and cost estimates.

Indiana offers services on a voluntary basis to SNAP recipients who choose to participate in the IMPACT Program. Voluntary SNAP IMPACT participants, including ABAWDs, begin with a comprehensive orientation that details the benefits of the program. Each person is assessed and a self-sufficiency plan (SSP) is developed. Clients are then placed in appropriate activities, referrals are made, and supportive services are provided.

4. THE CATEGORIES AND TYPES OF INDIVIDUALS THE STATE AGENCY INTENDS TO EXEMPT FROM E&T PARTICIPATION, THE ESTIMATED PERCENTAGE OF WORK REGISTRANTS THE

STATE AGENCY PLANS TO EXEMPT, AND THE FREQUENCY WITH WHICH THE STATE AGENCY PLANS TO REEVALUATE THE VALIDITY OF ITS EXEMPTIONS;

Indiana offers services on a voluntary basis to SNAP recipients who choose to participate in the IMPACT Program. Voluntary SNAP IMPACT participants, including ABAWDs, begin with a comprehensive orientation that details the benefits of the program. Each person is assessed and a self-sufficiency plan (SSP) is developed. Clients are then placed in appropriate activities, referrals are made, and supportive services are provided.

5. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE POPULATION THE STATE AGENCY INTENDS TO PLACE IN E&T;

The screening process is an evaluation done by the eligibility worker to determine if an individual should or should not be referred for Employment & Training Services. The

"screening" process is separate from identifying exemptions from work requirements and the client assessment done after referral to E&T. During the eligibility interview, state eligibility staff review the applicant's circumstances and determines their Employment & Training status. All ABAWD's who are not currently working 80 hours per month (employment/self-employment) are automatically referred to the contracted vendor (MAXIMUS) for services.

SNAP individuals that choose to voluntarily participate are referred to the contracted vendor when the appropriate information is entered in the eligibility system, and the case is authorized.

As a way for Indiana to maximize its resources in the talent development space and reduce duplicated efforts, IMPACT will coordinate more closely with WorkOnes regarding training and education.

6. THE ESTIMATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS THE STATE AGENCY EXPECTS TO PLACE IN E&T;

Anticipated number of voluntary E&T participants	5,000
Anticipated number of ABAWDs in the state during the Federal FY	18,000

7. THE GEOGRAPHIC AREAS COVERED AND NOT COVERED BY THE E&T PLAN AND WHY, AND THE TYPE AND LOCATION OF SERVICES TO BE OFFERED;

The Division of Family Resources (DFR) administers IMPACT Employment and Training

program services in all of Indiana's counties. MAXIMUS, a contracted vendor, provides employment and training services statewide for both TANF and SNAP populations. Individuals are referred to the nearest office for services. Under the contract no state staff are directly involved in providing IMPACT services. DFR staff determines a SNAP recipient's IMPACT status and authorizes SNAP benefits. DFR Central Office provides administrative oversight. As a way for Indiana to maximize its resources in the talent development space and reduce duplicated efforts, IMPACT will coordinate more closely with WorkOnes regarding training and education.

8. THE METHOD THE STATE AGENCY USES TO COUNT ALL WORK REGISTRANTS AS OF THE FIRST DAY OF THE NEW FISCAL YEAR;

Work registrants are counted by calculating the number of unique individuals with a SNAP

participation status of "eligible," without an open TANF Assistance Group. Duplication is

prevented by counting individuals identified as "unique" and not having been counted in the

month prior.

9. THE METHOD THE STATE AGENCY USES TO REPORT WORK REGISTRANT INFORMATION ON THE QUARTERLY FORM FNS–583;

	Counting the number of individuals: With participation status EA (Eligible Adult) With a SNAP (FS) OPEN AG Without an OPEN TANF AG With Work Registration code 03 as ABAWD or with Work Registration code of 01 as NON-ABAWD for each component listed Because an individual could be counted in multiple components throughout the year, the total participants by component will not match the total number of unique work registrants for the year. TOTAL COMPONENT PARTICIPATION is the sum of each of the columns. Note: The above components counts are based on completed hours > 0, except for IMPACT ASSESSED.
7. Number of Individuals who participated in the E&T Program during the fiscal year	Calculated only for the last quarter in the fiscal year by a unique count of the Number of Individuals Participating in each component, i.e. each person will be counted only once regardless of the total number of components in which he or she participated. **Note:** The line number count is based on completed hours > 0

10. THE METHOD THE STATE AGENCY USES TO PREVENT WORK REGISTRANTS FROM BEING COUNTED TWICE WITHIN A FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR. IF THE STATE AGENCY UNIVERSALLY WORK REGISTERS ALL SNAP APPLICANTS, THIS METHOD MUST SPECIFY HOW THE STATE AGENCY EXCLUDES THOSE EXEMPT FROM WORK REGISTRATION UNDER 7 C.F.R. §273.7(B)(1). IF THE STATE AGENCY WORK REGISTERS NONEXEMPT PARTICIPANTS WHENEVER A NEW APPLICATION IS SUBMITTED, THIS METHOD MUST ALSO SPECIFY HOW THE STATE AGENCY EXCLUDES THOSE PARTICIPANTS WHO MAY HAVE ALREADY BEEN REGISTERED WITHIN THE PAST 12 MONTHS AS SPECIFIED UNDER 7 C.F.R. §273.7(A)(1)(I);

Work registrants are counted by calculating the number of unique individuals with a SNAP participation status of “eligible,” without an open TANF Assistance Group, who have not been identified as exempt. Duplication is prevented by counting individuals identified as “unique” and not having been counted in the month prior.

11. THE ORGANIZATIONAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE UNITS RESPONSIBLE FOR CERTIFICATION AND THE UNITS OPERATING THE E&T COMPONENTS, INCLUDING UNITS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM, IF AVAILABLE. FNS IS SPECIFICALLY CONCERNED THAT THE LINES OF COMMUNICATION BE EFFICIENT AND THAT

NONCOMPLIANCE BY THE PARTICIPANT BE REPORTED TO THE CERTIFICATION UNIT WITHIN 10 WORKING DAYS AFTER THE NONCOMPLIANCE OCCURS;

Work Registration Penalties for non-compliance with Work Registration are only imposed on individuals who are mandatory for Work Registration. Indiana is currently a voluntary state, therefore the only sanctions applied are those for Voluntary Quit or Voluntary Reduction of Hours. For applicants who have voluntarily quit employment, without good cause, in the 60 days prior to application date, or after application, but prior to authorization, the individual is disqualified for a minimum of 2 months, or until the individual complies, whichever is later. For recipients who voluntarily quit without good cause, or voluntarily reduce hours below 30 per week without good cause, the penalties are a minimum of two months (or until complies) for first offense; minimum of 6 months (or until complies) for second offense; minimum of 36 months (or until complies) for third offense. In all cases, the minimum sanction must be served, but client is not eligible until in compliance. "Compliance" is when an individual obtains employment comparable in salary or hours to the job that was quit/reduced.

12. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE STATE AGENCY AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS IT PLANS TO COORDINATE WITH FOR THE PROVISION OF SERVICES, INCLUDING ORGANIZATIONS IN THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM, IF AVAILABLE. COPIES OF CONTRACTS MUST BE AVAILABLE FOR INSPECTION; THE STATE AGENCY MUST DOCUMENT HOW IT CONSULTED WITH THE STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD. IF THE STATE AGENCY CONSULTED WITH PRIVATE EMPLOYERS OR EMPLOYER ORGANIZATIONS IN LIEU OF THE STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD, IT MUST DOCUMENT THIS CONSULTATION AND EXPLAIN THE DETERMINATION THAT DOING SO WAS MORE EFFECTIVE OR EFFICIENT. THE STATE AGENCY MUST INCLUDE IN ITS E&T STATE PLAN A DESCRIPTION OF ANY OUTCOMES FROM THE CONSULTATION WITH THE STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD OR PRIVATE EMPLOYERS OR EMPLOYER ORGANIZATIONS. THE STATE AGENCY MUST ALSO ADDRESS IN THE E&T STATE PLAN THE EXTENT TO WHICH E&T ACTIVITIES WILL BE CARRIED OUT IN COORDINATION WITH THE ACTIVITIES UNDER TITLE I OF WIOA;

Indiana's workforce development system includes the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) that administers the Department of Labor (DOL) programs and all other public, for-profit, and non-profit entities delivering employment and training services. At this time, the relationship between DWD, the local workforce investment boards, and Division of Family Resources is limited, but there are efforts in place to increase both communication and potential partnership. Two key strategies include co-location (physically, embedded or iterant staff members, or virtually through a chatbox feature) and co-enrollment.

On April 11, 2019, DFR executive staff attended a meeting with Indiana workforce partners. Included in this meeting were discussions regarding: Roles and responsibilities of required WIOA partners; cost sharing; agreements between workforce partners; Indiana WorkOne Centers; how partners are working with WorkOne centers. We hope to formalize cross-training of WIOA Core Programs, TANF, and SNAP eligibility and program allowances from the senior staff level at the state agencies to the frontline staff at the WorkOnes and other offices.

At this time, the bulk of the relationship between workforce partners and DFR is coordinated on a county by county basis by DFR's employment and training provider, MAXIMUS. As a way for Indiana to maximize its resources in the talent development space and reduce duplicated efforts, IMPACT will coordinate more closely with WorkOnes regarding training and education. IMPACT participants have the option to pursue co-enrollment in Workforce Innovation and

Opportunity Act (WIOA) programs in the local Indiana Department of Workforce Development WorkOne office. WorkOne programs complement activities already assigned to the participant.

IMPACT services are administered through FSSA (Division of Family Resources) and WIOA services are administered through the Department of Workforce Development.

WIOA Title I services focus on the needs of Adults, Dislocated Workers, and in-school & out-of-school Youth. WIOA Title II provides Adult Education for those individuals without a high school diploma and/or deficient in basic skills. Title III, Wagner-Peyser, provides employment services to any Hoosier. Title IV is Vocational Rehabilitation, which is administered by the Family and Social Services Agency, to eligible individuals with a disability. WorkOne staff document

program outcomes in DWD's system of record (currently Track One). WorkOne offices also provide services under Unemployment Insurance and may have state, local, or private grant funding to offer specialized services.

While some of the services are similar, each program designs the specific components to meet the individual needs of the customer (or participant) and the associated outcomes of each program. Some individuals may be eligible to participate in both programs (WIOA and IMPACT) allowing the participant to tap into the unique offerings of each program based on program policies.

DWD has identified five priority that offer employment opportunities in high-demand and high-wage careers. These priority sectors for Indiana are Advanced Manufacturing, Agriculture, Health Sciences, Information Technology, and Transportation, Distribution and Logistics. To better coordinate services with DWD, the MAXIMUS Employer Services Team and Training Liaisons focus on the same sectors, especially when identifying vocational training and skills development opportunities.

Since the passage of WIOA, DWD has established a priority of service policy that requires that each workforce development area to enroll 50% or more of adult participants in one of the priority categories (i.e. recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, or individuals who are basic skills deficient). The MAXIMUS Career Development Team seeks to capitalize on this priority of service, working closely with WorkOne to support WIOA eligibility determinations for SNAP participants, as well as collaborative assessment processes, and case management coordination and integration. By leveraging and integration of resources from multiple programs, the IMPACT program can support the development of a skilled workforce.

Other Employment Programs

- TANF, General Assistance, etc.
- Coordination efforts, if applicable

Indiana operates an employment program for TANF participants. No TANF client will receive SNAP E&T services.

IMPACT will initiate coordination efforts with the following employment programs:

- **Next Level Jobs and the Workforce Ready Grant:** Next Level Jobs is part of Governor Holcomb's Next Level Indiana agenda to continue the positive momentum and improve the state's workforce for employers. As part of the initiative, the 2017 General Assembly approved funds for Indiana's Workforce Ready Grant program to provide free training

for working-age Hoosiers in the state's highest demand jobs. These industries have higher median salaried jobs and are rapidly growing in Indiana including Advanced Manufacturing, Building & Construction, Health & Life Sciences, Information Technology & Business Services, and Transportation & Logistics. MAXIMUS Training Liaisons refer

IMPACT participants to this funding as another source for those SNAP E&T participants who wish to engage in training.

- **Vocational Rehabilitation:** Employment and training services through Vocational Rehabilitation (VR), a program of the Family and Social Services Administration's (FSSA) Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS), are also available to SNAP voluntary participants who are disabled. Vocational Rehabilitation Services are offered in all 92 counties. Vocational Rehabilitation is an engaged partner to increase educational access to job-seekers that may need VR services and supports to be successful in other state and federal programs. VR is able to provide services to assist with barriers stemming

from an individual's disability that assists in access to existing programs or aids in

successfully completing a program.

- **HUD Employment and Training Programs:** The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grants out Federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) dollars to the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA). OCRA uses this funding to administer the Workforce Development Program (WDP), which provides Indiana communities access to resources to develop and maintain a high quality

workforce increasing the skills and capacity of current and future members of Indiana's

workforce.

- **Job Corps:** Indiana has two Jobs Corps Centers: Atterbury and IndyPendence. These centers offer no-cost education and career technical training programs administered by the U. S. Department of Labor. These programs are intended to help young people, ages 16-24, improve the quality of their lives through career, technical, and academic training. These centers also offer other services, such as, career planning, on-the-job

training, job placement, food service, driver's education, health and dental care, a bi- weekly basic living allowance and clothing allowance. A Job Corps representative participates on the work-based learning taskforce of the State Workforce Board and is on the local workforce development board and the youth advisory committee in the Regions where Job Corps facilities are located. MAXIMUS will collaborate with Job Corps IndyPendence for recruitment in the Marion County offices.

- **Trade Adjustment Assistance programs (TAA):** Through DWD and its WorkOne system, Indiana utilizes Rapid Response events for entities and worker groups that have identified the need through the filing of a TAA petition. When available, the state provides onsite, and at other offsite locations, Rapid Response information sessions. These sessions include the dissemination of TAA information including; procedures for filing, benefits, and other necessary information. Indiana uses Rapid Response funds to deliver this information to all groups regardless of their affiliation.

- **Unemployment Insurance:** The Worker Profiling Reemployment Services (WPRS), Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessments (*RESEA*), and Jobs for Hoosiers

(JFH) programs capture unemployed Hoosiers at the fourth week of their claim and include: UI eligibility review, claimant-centered labor market information, referral to a self-directed job search, and an orientation to the one-stop services. In addition, REA participants complete an Individual Reemployment Plan (IRP) and receive additional services such as job search workshops, job search assistance, employment counseling, and referrals to other employment services.

13. THE AVAILABILITY, IF APPROPRIATE, OF E&T PROGRAMS FOR INDIANS LIVING ON RESERVATIONS AFTER THE STATE AGENCY HAS CONSULTED IN GOOD FAITH WITH APPROPRIATE TRIBAL ORGANIZATIONS;

N/A for Indiana.

14. IF A CONCILIATION PROCESS IS PLANNED, THE PROCEDURES THAT WILL BE USED WHEN AN INDIVIDUAL FAILS TO COMPLY WITH AN E&T PROGRAM REQUIREMENT. INCLUDE THE LENGTH OF THE CONCILIATION PERIOD; AND

N/A for Indiana, since we are not a mandatory E&T state.

15. THE PAYMENT RATES FOR CHILD CARE ESTABLISHED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROVISIONS OF 45 CFR 98.43, AND BASED ON LOCAL MARKET RATE SURVEYS.

If the participant is not eligible for CCDF funding, or if CCDF funding is not readily available, SNAP funds may be accessed for childcare costs. Priority SNAP childcare will be available on a limited basis for participation in IMPACT services and up to a 90 day employment retention period. Payment rate maximums are set in accordance with the federal Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) and based on local market rate surveys.

16. THE COMBINED (FEDERAL/STATE) STATE AGENCY REIMBURSEMENT RATE FOR TRANSPORTATION COSTS AND OTHER EXPENSES REASONABLY NECESSARY AND DIRECTLY RELATED TO PARTICIPATION INCURRED BY E&T PARTICIPANTS. IF THE STATE AGENCY PROPOSES TO PROVIDE DIFFERENT REIMBURSEMENT AMOUNTS TO ACCOUNT FOR VARYING LEVELS OF EXPENSES, FOR INSTANCE FOR GREATER OR LESSER COSTS OF TRANSPORTATION IN DIFFERENT AREAS OF THE STATE, IT MUST INCLUDE THEM HERE.

Indiana currently extends job retention services for a minimum of 30 days and not more than 90 days after an individual who received IMPACT services gains employment. Indiana intends on submitting a waiver for the 90-day Retention Services Requirement and Increase Retention Services to 365-days under SNAP. Through this waiver to expand follow-up SNAP E&T services for 365 days will align with WIOA Core Programs follow-up services. Additionally, by extending follow-up services, we will increase the number of individuals building sustainable employment, assist individuals in recognizing skills by increasing attendance, onboarding, and incorporating employer values into work performance, and help individuals in establishing long-term, sustainable employment, increasing income and economic mobility, and creating opportunities to utilize their skills in their communities. This will extend the opportunity for Hoosiers to receive transitional support, increasing the likelihood of job retention and decreasing potential future need for SNAP. In addition, it will bring education and training services in alignment with WIOA. The individual must be receiving SNAP benefits in the month of or the month prior to beginning job retention services. Services are provided unless the person is leaving SNAP because of disqualification. Services will begin the day the job is reported to IMPACT.

SNAP E&T participants are limited to a combined monthly total of $125 for the following supportive services:

- Clothing, Uniforms, Shoes – Up to $300 per 12-month period, per client. Available to assist the participant with a voucher for clothing, uniforms, or shoes up to 90 days after beginning of employment if needed to assist the participant with an interview for a job, begin employment, or engage in assigned education and training activities.
- Transportation Expenses – Public and private transportation assistance is available and offered if the participant needs this support to participate in education and training activities or begin employment which continues up to 90 days after beginning of employment. Participants must use the least expensive, accessible form of transportation. Bus passes or bus tokens may be provided if public transportation is available. Gas cards may be provided for private transportation when this is the least expensive option. The gas cards, bus passes and bus tokens may be for one day, one week or a month.

Funds spent in these service categories while a TANF participant will count toward the 12-month limits if the client becomes eligible for SNAP only.

17. INFORMATION ABOUT EXPENSES THE STATE AGENCY PROPOSES TO REIMBURSE. FNS MUST BE AFFORDED THE OPPORTUNITY TO REVIEW AND COMMENT ON THE PROPOSED REIMBURSEMENTS BEFORE THEY ARE IMPLEMENTED.

Actual expenses incurred up to the maximum amounts are paid for clothing and uniforms. Gas cards, bus passes, and bus tokens will be advanced based on projected participation transportation expenses using best available information. Case notes will be entered at every issuance of supportive services to track compliance with the program and eligibility for supportive services.

Dependent care will be managed by the same contracted entity that manages CCDF. MAXIMUS will forward a referral and appropriate childcare at a licensed facility that offers services within the approved rates will be arranged by the contractor. The referral is good for a maximum of 4 weeks. If child care needs to continue to be provided beyond the 4 weeks, another referral will be submitted by MAXIMUS. Case notes will be entered at every referral to track client compliance with the program and eligibility for supportive services.

18. FOR EACH COMPONENT THAT IS EXPECTED TO INCLUDE 100 OR MORE PARTICIPANTS, REPORTING MEASURES THAT THE STATE WILL COLLECT AND INCLUDE IN THE ANNUAL REPORT IN PARAGRAPH (C)(17) OF THIS SECTION. SUCH MEASURES MAY INCLUDE:

A. THE PERCENTAGE AND NUMBER OF PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS WHO RECEIVED E&T SERVICES AND ARE IN UNSUBSIDIZED EMPLOYMENT SUBSEQUENT TO THE RECEIPT OF THOSE SERVICES;

Not applicable

B. THE PERCENTAGE AND NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS WHO OBTAIN A RECOGNIZED CREDENTIAL, A REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP, OR A REGULAR SECONDARY SCHOOL DIPLOMA (OR ITS RECOGNIZED EQUIVALENT), WHILE PARTICIPATING IN, OR WITHIN 1 YEAR AFTER RECEIVING E&T SERVICES;

Not applicable

C. THE PERCENTAGE AND NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS WHO ARE IN AN EDUCATION OR TRAINING PROGRAM THAT IS INTENDED TO LEAD TO A RECOGNIZED CREDENTIAL, A REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP AN ON-THE-JOB TRAINING PROGRAM, A REGULAR

SECONDARY SCHOOL DIPLOMA (OR ITS RECOGNIZED EQUIVALENT), OR UNSUBSIDIZED EMPLOYMENT;

Not applicable

D. MEASURES DEVELOPED TO ASSESS THE SKILLS ACQUISITION OF E&T PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS THAT REFLECT THE GOALS OF THE SPECIFIC COMPONENTS INCLUDING THE PERCENTAGE AND NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS WHO ARE MEETING PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS OR ARE GAINING SKILLS LIKELY TO LEAD TO EMPLOYMENT; AND

Not applicable

E. OTHER INDICATORS APPROVED BY FNS IN THE E&T STATE PLAN.

Not applicable

B. ABLE-BODIED ADULTS WITHOUT DEPENDENTS (ABAWD) [28]

1. A State agency interested in receiving additional funding for serving able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs) subject to the 3- month time limit, in accordance with 7 C.F.R. §273.7(d)(3), must include the following for each Federal fiscal year covered by the Combined Plan under WIOA:

[28] 7 CFR § 273.7(c)(7)

1. ITS PLEDGE TO OFFER A QUALIFYING ACTIVITY TO ALL AT-RISK ABAWD APPLICANTS AND RECIPIENTS;

This section does not apply to Indiana since we are not currently a pledge state.

2. ESTIMATED COSTS OF FULFILLING ITS PLEDGE;

This section does not apply to Indiana since we are not currently a pledge state.

3. A DESCRIPTION OF MANAGEMENT CONTROLS IN PLACE TO MEET PLEDGE REQUIREMENTS;

This section does not apply to Indiana since we are not currently a pledge state.

4. A DISCUSSION OF ITS CAPACITY AND ABILITY TO SERVE AT-RISK ABAWDS;

This section does not apply to Indiana since we are not currently a pledge state.

5. INFORMATION ABOUT THE SIZE AND SPECIAL NEEDS OF ITS ABAWD POPULATION; AND

This section does not apply to Indiana since we are not currently a pledge state.

6. INFORMATION ABOUT THE EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND WORKFARE COMPONENTS IT WILL OFFER TO MEET THE ABAWD WORK REQUIREMENT

This section does not apply to Indiana since we are not currently a pledge state.

TRADE ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE (TAA)

There are no program-specific state planning requirements for TAA. If the state includes TAA in a Combined State Plan, the state must incorporate TAA in its responses to the common planning elements in sections II, III, IV, and V of the WIOA State Plan requirements instrument.

Yes

JOBS FOR VETERANS' STATE GRANTS

(OMB Control Number: 1225-0086)

The Jobs for Veterans' State Grants (JVSG) are mandatory, formula-based staffing grants to States (including DC, PR, VI and Guam). The JVSG is funded annually in accordance with a funding formula defined in the statute (38 U.S.C. 4102A (c) (2) (B) and regulation and operates on a fiscal year (not program year) basis, however, performance metrics are collected and reported quarterly on a Program Year basis (as with the ETA-9002 Series). Currently, VETS JVSG operates on a multi-year grant approval cycle modified and funded annually.

In accordance with 38 U.S.C. § 4102A(b)(5) and § 4102A(c), the Assistant Secretary for Veterans' Employment and Training (ASVET) makes grant funds available for use in each State to support Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists and Local Veterans' Employment Representatives (LVER) staff. As a condition to receive funding, 38 U.S.C. § 4102A(c)(2) requires States to submit an application for a grant that contains a State Plan narrative, which includes:

A. HOW THE STATE INTENDS TO PROVIDE EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING AND JOB PLACEMENT SERVICES TO VETERANS AND ELIGIBLE PERSONS UNDER THE JVSG;

As the designated State Workforce Agency (SWA), DWD is in the process of preparing the 2020 – 2024 Plan, in accordance with the established timelines for submission. Service to veterans is a priority in all of Indiana's WorkOne offices. DWD continues to work with each region to highlight and drive priority of service to veterans, and, most significantly, to drive an overall focus on helping veterans in Indiana achieve full employment.

JVSG funds are provided to states to fund two staff positions: the Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program Specialist (DVOP) and the Local Veterans' Employment Representative (LVER). These positions are fully integrated into the WorkOne offices. The DVOP's role is to provide individualized career services to veterans with significant barriers to employment (SBE) through case management; the LVER's role is to facilitate employment opportunities and advocate on behalf of veterans with employers.

WorkOne offices take a coordinated approach to serving eligible veterans in order to help them overcome barriers to gaining or maintaining employment. The DVOP specialist is the WorkOne expert on programs available to assist veterans with SBE in improving their skills, helping them take the next step up in their careers. The DVOPs provide individualized career services (intensive services) within Indiana's case management model to eligible SBE veterans. The DVOP delivers these services as part of an integrated service delivery system in accordance with the requirements of VPL 03-14. As outlined within IAW VPL 03-14 and GO Memo 01-18, 50% of Veteran receiving ICS will receive these services through the case management framework, which is defined as a receipt of a comprehensive assessment and a written plan at a minimum. DVOPs maintain an active caseload of veterans with SBE, as determined by the local needs of veterans presenting an SBE during assessment of self-attestation to WIOA/Wagner-Peyser staff. DVOPs provide a comprehensive assessment and a written plan, based on an Objective Assessment Summary (OAS) in the Indiana's case management system (Indiana Career Connect) on all case managed clients.

VPL 03-19: This document describes additional populations eligible to receive services provided by DVOP specialists. VPL 03-14 and TEGL 19-13 state that under 38 U.S.C. 4103A(a)(l)(C), the Secretary of Labor may identify additional groups of veterans who are entitled to receive

intensive services from DVOP staff. Vietnam-era veterans have been added to the list of populations already identified as being eligible to receive services from DVOP specialists.

VPL 03-14 and TEGL 19-13. That guidance limits the populations of eligible veterans and eligible persons that may be served by a DVOP specialist and defined those categories of eligible veterans and eligible persons (to include TSMs, caregivers, spouses) who are being prioritized because they have Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE).

The populations described in this section are eligible to be served by DVOPs, in addition to those populations described in VPL 03-14, VPL 03-14 Change 1 and VPL 03-14 Change 2.

DOL's employment programs, including JVSG, WP, and WIOA programs, individualized career (intensive services) are provided to both unemployed participants who require such services to obtain employment and to employed participants, who require such services to obtain or retain employment leading to self-sufficiency. In accordance with U.S.C. 4103A(a), DVOPs must provide intensive services to eligible veterans and eligible persons to meet their employment needs, prioritizing service to special disabled and other disabled veterans, as defined by U.S.C. 4211, and to other eligible veterans in accordance with priorities determined by the Secretary of Labor. The statute also requires that DVOPs place maximum emphasis on assisting veterans who are economically or educationally disadvantaged.

An eligible veteran or eligible person is determined to have a Significant Barrier to Employment (SBE) if he or she attests to belonging to at least one criteria below:

- A special disabled or disabled veteran, as those terms are defined in 38 U.S.C § 4211 (l) and (3); Special disabled and disabled veterans are those:
    - who are entitled to compensation (or who but for the receipt of military retired pay would be entitled to compensation) under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs; or,
    - were discharged or released from active duty because of a service -connected disability;
- A homeless person, as defined in Sections 103(a) and (b) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11302(a) and (b)), as amended;
- A recently-separated service member, as defined in 38 U.S.C § 4211(6), who has been unemployed for 27 or more weeks in the previous 12 months, i.e. the term of unemployment over the previous 12 months remains 27 weeks; however, the requirement of27 consecutive weeks is eliminated;
- An offender, as defined by WIOA Section 3 (38)1, who is currently incarcerated or who has been released from incarceration, i.e. the expanded definition of SBE includes any eligible veteran or eligible person who is currently or was formerly incarcerated by removing the within the last 12 months requirement;
- Lacking a high school diploma or equivalent certificate; or
- Low-income individual (as defined by WIOA Section 3 (36))2
    - In addition to the above clarifications to the definition of SBE, the following guidance is provided to improve the identification and support of disabled veterans.

- In accordance with prior guidance, the determination of disability under the SBE definitions must be made solely on the basis of self-identification. Note that any individual who separated from active duty because of a service-connected disability qualifies as a disabled veteran regardless of the number of days of active duty served, as does any veteran with a disability rating provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) (or a military Service issued disability determination) as described in 38 U.S.C. § 4211(1). An individual who attests to having a disability claim pending with the VA should be considered to have an approved claim for the purposes of determining SBE.

- Special Populations Veterans aged 18-24.Veterans aged 18-24 possess limited civilian work history which can make transitioning to the civilian labor force difficult. Based on this fact, veterans between the ages of 18 and 24 may benefit from individualized career services provided by a DVOP specialist. Vietnam-era Veterans. Pursuant to 38 U.S.C. 4211, the term "Veteran of the Vietnam Era" is an eligible veteran any part of whose active military, naval, or air service was during the Vietnam era I The Bureau of Labor Statistics and Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) data indicate that there are still a sizeable number of Vietnam-era Veterans in the workforce, and many face difficulty in finding and maintaining employment. Served any part of active duty military, naval, or air service during the Vietnam era (02/28/1961 – 05/07/1975). Eligible Transitioning Service Members), Spouses, and Caregivers In annual appropriation bills since the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2014, Congress authorized NSG grants to support services as described in VPL 07-4 to:

- Transitioning members of the Armed Forces who have been identified as in need of intensive services (now referred to as Individualized Career Services);
    - Members of the Armed Forces who are wounded, ill, or injured and receiving treatment in military treatment facilities (MTF) or warrior transition units (WTU); and
    - The spouses or other family caregivers3 of such wounded, ill, or injured members.

This guidance is meant to limit the number of eligible veterans and eligible persons who DVOP specialists serve. Limiting DVOP specialists to serving only the eligible veterans and eligible persons who meet the criteria. While the DVOP specialists' provision of intensive services (individualized career services) to these veterans and eligible persons may include some core services, serving a more limited population will allow DVOP specialists enough time to devote a majority of their time to providing intensive services. The veterans who do not fall into one of the categories that are served by DVOP specialists are eligible to be served by other AJC Staff, including WIA, WP, and other AJC program staff. WorkOne uses the Veteran Self Attestation as the means to identify SBE Veterans, which are spread throughout the caseload of the WorkOne case managers. Those Veterans being identified as being most in need of DVOP services are referred to the DVOP for individualized career services. This limits the number of SBE Veterans being served by the DVOP.

WorkOne offices take a coordinated approach to serving eligible veterans in order to help them overcome barriers to gaining or maintaining employment. The DVOP is the WorkOne expert on programs available to assist veterans with SBE in improving their skills, helping them take the next step up in their careers. The DVOPs provide intensive services within a case management

model to eligible veterans. The DVOP delivers these services as part of an integrated service delivery system in accordance with the requirements of VPL 03-14. DVOPs maintain an active caseload of veterans with SBE as determined by the local needs of veterans presenting SBE during assessment of self-attestation to WIOA/Wagner-Peyser staff.

Upon entry an individual is welcomed by staff and then staff identify those eligible veterans or eligible persons with significant barriers to employment (SBE) and/or other additional service population criteria eligible to be served by Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program specialist (DVOPs) as found in current VPLs. Then they direct those eligible veterans or eligible persons with SBEs and or other additional service population criteria to the (DVOPs) for assistance with intensive services (Individualized Career Services) and case management. The DVOP is not to perform intake duties or point of entry functions for non-SBE veterans or any functions normally assigned to other AJC partner staff or other automated procedures, thereby detracting from their ability to provide services, case management, or outreach duties related to meeting the employment needs of eligible veterans and eligible persons. Additionally, under no circumstances will the LVER perform any of these functions. In the event that a DVOP Specialist is not available, the veteran or eligible person should be referred to the appropriate Wagner-Peyser or Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) staff in addition to scheduling or referring to an available DVOP specialist by appointment. Under normal operating circumstances, all WorkOne customers are greeted by the welcome team and moved on to the appropriate staff for assistance.

DVOPs also reach out to eligible veterans that have been served by the WorkOne system who may have completed a self-registration in Indiana's case management system (Indiana Career Connect) or are being co-case managed and/or receiving services by other WorkOne staff, to prevent unsuccessful outcomes among SBE veterans. The DVOP reaches out to assist the WorkOne partner staff, because the DVOP is the WorkOne expert on programs available to assist veterans with an SBE in improving their skills and helping them take the next step up in their careers. In the event that a DVOP specialist does not have a full case-load of eligible veterans and eligible persons who meet the SBE criteria, the DVOP specialist may perform additional activities, in the order specified below:

1. Review all open case files reflected in the State of Indiana's case management system (Indiana Career Connect) of current participants with a SBE or in a priority category and perform case management duties; and
2. Conduct relationship building, outreach and recruitment activities with other service providers in the local area, to enroll SBE and priority category veterans in an AJC.

LVERs are the outward-facing branch of JSVG. These positions are integrated into the WorkOne Employment Team or Business Services Team (or equivalents) and advocate for employment and training opportunities for veterans with businesses, industries, unions, and apprenticeship programs. LVER staff work closely with veteran service organizations (VSOs) throughout the state to promote employment and training services available to veterans. LVERs work closely with employers, unions, trade organizations, apprenticeship programs and other business and community groups to promote veteran hiring, training and development, and career advancement. LVERs in Indiana also partner with the Economic Opportunity Corporation, the Lieutenant Governor's Office, and the Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs to coordinate veterans' employment in the state.

Additional details regarding the policy and procedures applicable to DVOPs and LVERs providing services to or on behalf of veterans are included in DWD Policy 2019-03 available via DWD's active policies website at: https://www.in.gov/dwd/compliance-policy/policy/active/.

B. THE DUTIES ASSIGNED TO DVOP SPECIALISTS AND LVER STAFF BY THE STATE; SPECIFICALLY IMPLEMENTING DVOP AND LVER DUTIES OR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES AS OUTLINED IN 38 U.S.C. § 4103A AND 4104. THESE DUTIES MUST BE CONSISTENT WITH CURRENT GUIDANCE;

In Veterans' Program Letters 03-14, Ch.1 and Ch.2, and 03-19, DVOP specialists facilitate individualized career services to veterans with barriers to employment and/or special training needs which include:

- Conducting a comprehensive assessment (minimum requirement)
- Developing an individual employment plan that is documented (minimum requirement)
- Chapter 31 Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment Case Management
- Coordinating supportive services
- One-on-One Career Counseling
- Providing short term pre-vocational services
- Group Counseling

Case Management and Tracking

The DVOP specialist is the DWD case tracker for veterans in the United States Department of Veterans Affairs Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Program (Title 38, Code of Federal Regulations, and Chapter 31). This program requires extensive follow-up, and the DVOP specialist must be allowed sufficient time to do the case management and intensive services to meet these requirements. The DVOP specialist works closely with the LVER & WorkOne Business Service. This is accomplished by collaborating together, along with the Veteran needing meaningful employment and Employers seeking to hire Veterans. Case management includes three elements defined by VETS: comprehensive assessment, written plan of action, and consistent contact, to ensure that veterans in Chapter 31 programs who are "job ready" receive priority in their job search and job referrals, as determined by the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC) at the VA.

In accordance with Department of Labor Veterans' Employment and Training Service (DOL-VETS)

Technical Assistance Guide 01-16, Change 1 Att, dated 07-2016, DVOPs are required to complete a service every two weeks for the Chapter 31 Veterans that they are case managing. Typically, this service will also be recorded in the current State client tracking systems under the Chapter 31 Case Management selection.

The DVOP specialist is the WorkOne expert on programs available to assist SBE veterans in improving their skills so they can take the next step up in their careers. This would include workshops where the DVOPs is able to participate in, such as a LVER or AJC sponsored employment workshop where SBE or additional service population eligible may exist. Workshops are where the DVOP is able to provide over-the-shoulder and hands-on computer assistance, resume writing, interviewing skills, career exploration, all at no cost, to give you the

competitive edge needed for a successful job search. The DVOP specialist is required to do outreach to target all veterans. DVOPs will coordinate outreach activities with their formal and functional managers to ensure maximum efficiency of the event.

In the event that a DVOP specialist does not have a full case-load of eligible veterans and eligible persons, the DVOP specialist may perform additional outreach activities. For example, at such locations, this may include:

- Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment (VR&E) Services
- Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program (HVRP)
- VA Medical and other Centers
- Veterans' Administration Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC)
- Homeless shelters
- Civic and service organizations
- Community Stand Downs
- Military installations
- WIOA partners
- State Vocational Rehabilitation Services
- County Service Veterans Service Officer

Case Noting

Case notes for veterans in the Chapter 31 program are confidential and will be kept in the current State of Indiana client tracking system. Specific veterans' disability data may not be recorded in any computer system. The only data that can be recorded is the percentage of disability rated by the US Department of Veterans Affairs.

Rapid Response for Dislocated Veterans

At a minimum, the DVOP should be a part of the Rapid Response Team at selected Rapid Response events for dislocated veterans, ensuring that SBE veterans are offered JVSG services.

Local Veterans' Employment Representative (LVER) Roles

In the Veterans' Program Letter 03-14, the following are the mandated functions for the

Local Veterans' Employment Representative Staff:

1. As an integral part of the State's Labor Exchange System, LVER staff work with employers to promote veterans as job seekers who have highly marketable skills and experience.
2. LVER staff advocate for veterans to gain employment and training opportunities with business, industry, and community-based organizations. To accomplish this, LVER staff participates in a variety of outreach activities including, but not limited to:
    a. Planning and participation in job fairs.

b. Coordinating with unions, apprenticeship programs, and business organizations to promote employment and training opportunities for veterans.

c. Promoting credentialing and training opportunities for veterans with training providers and licensing agencies.

3. LVER staff establishes, facilitates, and/or maintains regular contact with employers to include federal contractors. They should coordinate with employer relations representatives as part of the WorkOne system to include veterans in their marketing efforts.

4. LVER staff provides and facilitates a full range of employment, Veteran Program and Priority of Service training, and placement services to meet the needs of priority veterans in targeted categories identified and approved in the WIOA Combined State Plan. These services may include, but are not limited to:

    a. Conducting job search assistance workshops in conjunction with employers.

    b. Providing job development opportunities.

LVERs are an essential part of and fully integrated into the WorkOne network. They are included among the WorkOne partner staff, which consists of all staff employed by programs or activities operated by WorkOne partners that provide online and/or in-person workforce development or related support services as part of the workforce development system. The LVER should be integrated into the WorkOne Employment Team or Business Services Team (or equivalents). The specific responsibility of the LVER is to advocate for veterans for employment and training opportunities with businesses, industries, unions, and apprenticeship programs. An LVER may ask employers specifically to seek veterans for positions in their companies. Optimally, the employer would target specific positions for veterans with certain skills (based on the veterans' military training/military occupational specialty). Under no circumstances will the LVER provide related services to non-veteran customers, unless the customer is an eligible person covered by priority of service.

The LVER staff must be able to inform the community of veteran services. LVER staff should be encouraged to attend meetings of the local Chamber of Commerce, area unions, and hiring events to promote all the WorkOne services, both as a networking tool and for the opportunity to speak about veterans' programs. These services include Face-to-face review of IndianaCAREERConnect.com, direct referral to jobs (Both established jobs and job development), assistance looking for a job, developing a resume and preparing for an interview, referral to other federal, state and local agencies, information on Veteran's rights and employment benefits, assistance transitioning into civilian employment, training incentives and grants, guidance finding vocational training, post-employment counseling and Occupational skills assessment. These services provide Veterans with the necessary information they need to find and secure suitable employment and make the transition from the military to the civilian workforce. All representatives are honorably discharged service members that specialize in assisting in your employment needs.

Joint Responsibilities of DVOPs and LVERs: U.S. DOLVETS Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program (HVRP)

To better serve the SBE homeless veteran population, the HVRP and the WorkOne American Job Center Indiana teams will collaborate together to:

1. Partner with AJC staff to properly enroll all HVRP participants, and

2. Ensure a staff member (WIOA or DVOPs) is present during the enrollment process to facilitate accurate reporting and strong working relationships.

It is also encouraged for HVRP awarded grantees and local WorkOne staff to share information on their services and ensure new staff members are fully trained on AJC services and enrollment requirements.

Therefore, when appropriate, DVOPs will be assigned to a current, local HVRP awarded grantee to facilitate this partnership and co-enrollment. When a DVOP is unavailable, a WIOA employee may be selected to fill this role. The WorkOne staff member assigned to facilitate co-enrollment will also be the primary point of contact to ensure HVRP grant requirements are accurately reflected in Indiana Career Connect. Additionally, LVERs will combine employment efforts with the identified AJC facilitator to connect co-enrolled HVRP clients to Employers and employment opportunities within the workforce envelope.

Outreach Accountability

In order to maintain accountability for time spent on outreach, each LVER and DVOP shall report the results of their outreach activities, including but not limited to travel logs in writing via e-mail or Outlook Calendar Shares to their WorkOne local management staff. If necessary, copies of these documents and schedules will be provided to formal State Managers, and/or functional managers when applicable.

These reports will be used by the LVER staff, Regional Operators, and the Workforce Development

Boards (WDB) to produce the required quarterly reports for the State Veteran Program Director and Department of Labor Veterans' Employment and Training Services as required in Public Law 107-288 and VPL 01-15. Outreach activities will be reviewed by supervisors and those that are determined by the management team to be unproductive may be discontinued.

National Veterans Training Institute (NVTI)

All DVOPs and LVERs are required to attend veteran related courses at NVTI within 18 months of assignment or hire. Typically, most veteran representatives will attend at least two courses offered by NVTI. In some instances, the DWD State Veterans Coordinator may elect to send veterans' representatives to additional courses based on career development.

Indiana Seamless Transition Program

In some instances, LVERs and DVOPs will be called upon to assist with the State of Indiana Seamless Transition Program for State National Guard and Military Reservists returning from deployment. This may include the Yellow Ribbon Program for returning deployed service members.

Negotiated Performance Measures

The State of Indiana Veterans' Program negotiates Performance Targets with the U.S. Department of Labor Veterans' Employment and Training Service (DOLVETS) for the JVSG program which uses data metrics retrieved from Participant Individual Record Layout (PIRL) to report outcomes. The following entities are charged with the responsibility of meeting the VETS Negotiated Performance Targets: Indiana Department of Workforce Development, the State's regional Workforce Development Boards (WDBs), the State Workforce Innovation Council (the State's Workforce Investment Board), Regional Workforce.

DWD Policy 2019-03 further defines the required roles and responsibilities for Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists and Local Veterans' Employment Representatives (LVER) staff and their integration into WorkOne offices.

C. THE MANNER IN WHICH DVOP SPECIALISTS AND LVER STAFF ARE INTEGRATED INTO THE STATE'S EMPLOYMENT SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEM OR AMERICAN JOB CENTER;

DVOP specialists and LVERs are an essential part of and fully integrated into the AJC network. They are included among the AJC partner staff, which consists of all staff employed by programs or activities. DVOP specialists and LVERs are an essential part of and fully integrated into the AJC network. They are included among the AJC partner staff, which consists of all staff employed by programs or activities operated by AJC partners listed in 29 U.S.C. 2841(b) that provide online and/or in-person workforce development or related support services as part of the workforce development system. Other AJC partner staff members include staff of WIOA, WP, and other AJC network partner programs. The LVER should be integrated into the WorkOne Employment Team or Business Services Team (or equivalents). The difference between the LVER and any other member of the team is that the LVER advocates for veterans for employment and training opportunities with businesses, industries, unions, and apprenticeship programs. They may ask employers specifically to seek veterans for positions in their companies. Optimally, the employer would target specific positions for veterans with certain skills (based on the veterans' military training/military occupational specialty). Under no circumstances will the LVER provide related services to non-veteran customers unless the customer is an eligible spouse covered by priority of service.

The LVER staff must be able to inform the community of veteran services. LVER staff should be encouraged to attend meetings of the local Chamber of Commerce, area Unions, and Hiring Events to promote all the WorkOne services; both as a networking tool and for the opportunity to speak about veterans' programs. To inform the community Veteran services provided by the WorkOne. These services include Face-to-face review of IndianaCAREERConnect.com, direct referral to jobs (Both established jobs and job development), assistance looking for a job, developing a resume and preparing for an interview, referral to other federal, state and local agencies, information on Veteran's rights and employment benefits, assistance transitioning into civilian employment, training incentives and grants, guidance finding vocational training, post-employment counseling and Occupational skills assessment. These services provide Veterans with the necessary information they need to find and secure suitable employment and make the transition from the military to the civilian workforce. If you are a Veteran, please visit your nearest WorkOne Career Center and speak to a Veteran's representative today. All representatives are honorably discharged service members that specialize in assisting in your employment needs.

DVOP specialists and LVERs are an essential part of and fully integrated into the AJC network. They are included among the WorkOne partner staff, which consists of all staff employed by programs or activities operated by AJC partners listed in 29 U.S.C. 2841(b) that provide online and/or in-person workforce development or related support services as part of the workforce development system. Other WorkOne partner staff members include staff of WIOA, WP, and other AJC network partner programs.

D. THE INCENTIVE AWARD PROGRAM IMPLEMENTED USING THE 1% GRANT ALLOCATION SET ASIDE FOR THIS PURPOSE, AS APPLICABLE;

The JVSG Annual Incentive Awards are distributed IAW VPL 01-22 Att. 5 on a Quarterly and Annual basis. The following are eligible to receive an award:

- Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists;
- Local Veterans' Employment Representative (LVER) staff;
- Individuals providing employment, training, and placement services to veterans under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), including labor exchanges funded by the Wagner-Peyser Act; and
- An employment service team or office

Incentive awardees will be chosen from their efforts in promoting the improvement of employment services to veterans by JVSG-funded staff, AJC staff, and AJC partner staff. JVSG staff nominated for an award must be selected based on criteria that adheres to their statutory roles and responsibilities. The following criteria for achievements or efforts will be used, based upon the role of the selected participants:

Development of a program for which the impact may not be directly measurable (e.g., a resume skill-building program)

Promotion of entry into federal employment

Promotion of HIRE Veterans Medallion Program

Outstanding case management

Exemplary job fair support

Vocational rehabilitation marketing

Direct marketing to employers

Exceptional performance beyond job requirements, outside of established performance goals

Ideas that are implemented to improve the system, improve performance, reduce time or cost, or to promote collaboration

Performance measures between 1 October to 30 September of award year

Outreach/community relations efforts, e.g., Chambers of Commerce, employers

Generation of positive publicity for a local office

Increase awareness of relevant issues within the employer community

Enhancement of on-the-job training, customized job training, or compensated work therapy

Efforts to assist hard-to-place populations (e.g., veterans experiencing homelessness)

Collaborative success in providing all services to veterans, which may include success in employer relations and "great customer service" to veteran clients

The Quarterly Incentive Awards will not exceed $2,000 (no more than 2 $1,000 awards will be distributed in any given quarter) for a total of $8,000 awarded during the FY.

- The Annual Incentive Awards are divided up into two categories: Annual Awards and a Veterans Service Provider of the Year Award. The Annual Awards provide a monetary bonus of $2,500 to $3,000 each. The Veteran Service Provider of the Year is in overall recognition of continual outstanding excellence in service to veterans and will receive a $4,000 award

- The Annual Incentive Awards will not exceed the remainder of total award allocation in our effort recognize individuals working in various specialized programs that serve targeted groups of veterans.

The Incentive Award programs implemented uses the 1% grant allocation (amount reflects the FY Grant allocation, based upon the grant formula and is subject to change every grant FY) set aside for this purpose, as applicable.

Purpose: This directive provides guidance and information on nominating person for the Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Annual Performance Incentive Award Program as established in the Jobs for Veterans Act (Public Law 107-228).

References: Title 38, United States Code Section 4112, as amended by Public Law 107-288.

Period of Award and Submission Date: Veterans' Annual Performance Incentive Awards will be based on performance or activities conducted during the period of October 1st of current Fiscal Year (FY) through September 30th of following FY.

DWD JVSG Annual Performance Incentive Award Program: The State of Indiana is participating in the Annual Veterans Incentive Awards program. The total funds for incentive awards remains at 1% of the overall grant estimate that DOL/VETS provides for specific program years.

Award Nominee Selection Criteria

Individuals nominated to receive a Performance Incentive Award will meet the following Performance Incentive Award selection criteria.

a. Nominees must have received at least one (1) annual performance evaluation.

b. Nominees must have received a minimum of "Meet Expectations" in all rating areas of their annual performance evaluation.

c. Nominees must clearly have performed outstanding service to the veteran population.

d. DVOP nominees must clearly have demonstrated exceptional services in the areas of Individual Career Services to Veterans, Services to Veterans with Barriers, and Outreach to Targeted Veterans.

e. LVER nominees must clearly have demonstrated exceptional services in the areas of Employer Outreach, Job Placement of Veterans, and Job Development for Veterans.

f. Staff nominees must clearly have demonstrated the exceptional services to veterans which are above and beyond their normal scope of duties within the Work One office and who foster and work to strengthen employment and training opportunities aimed at improving services for veterans.

In addition, the following criteria will also be considered by the board during the selection process.

a. Outreach activities to community and veterans' service organizations.

b. Coordination and partnering efforts to enhance veterans' opportunities.

c. Job development efforts, such as job fairs, Chamber of Commerce events, etc.

d. Participation in local and state employment and training activities for veterans.

e. Participation in group related veterans' activities.

f. Enhancement of training opportunities for veterans.

g. Volunteer services to veteran organizations or facilities.

Nomination Process

Anyone can nominate an eligible recipient for an Annual Incentive award. All nominations must be submitted on the appropriate DVOPS Award Recommendation Form, LVER Award Recommendation Form or Staff Award Recommendation Form. Supporting documents will be used as attachments to the appropriate form. Only one nominee can be listed on each form. The individual who recommends a person for an award must sign the recommendation form. These recommendation forms can be accessed through Word, handwritten, or typed. To access the forms please use the web address at the end of this directive.

Nomination Packet

The Incentive Award Nomination Packet will consist of: the nominee's most recent Employee Work Profile and Performance Appraisal Report or Working Test, and the appropriate (DVOPS/LVER/Staff) Incentive Award Recommendation Form. Additional information to support the recommendation may also be submitted as part of the packet: however, this is not required.

Nomination Approval Process

All Performance Incentive Award Nomination Packets will be reviewed and approved by the Functional Manager, and Center manager if appropriate, and the assigned Veteran Program Support Specialist (VPSS). The Performance Incentive Award Nomination Packet will be scanned, and then e-mailed to the appropriate DWD VPSS for their respective regions. The VPSSs will then submit the nominations to the DWD State Veteran Program Director (SVPD). There will be no changes/alterations allowed to the award nomination packet once it reaches the DWD SVPD. All nominations will be submitted to the DWD VPSS by the close of business on the second week of August in the current Fiscal Year (FY). The State Veteran Program Director will receive the nominations packets by close of business on the last business day of August, in the current FY.

Performance Incentive Award Selection Board

The Performance Incentive Award Selection Board will convene at the direction of the State Veteran Program Director, DWD. The board will consist of five (5) voting members; three (3) veterans, and two (2) non-veterans. In addition to the voting members of the board, the DWD State Veteran Program Director will serve as a non-voting technical advisor and recorder for the board. All voting members of the board will be recommended and approved by the Director, Field Operations. The board will convene prior to the planned Annual Conference for the FY and before the end of the current FY, to review and approve the annual incentive award recipients.

Funds to be distributed by the DWD Payroll Department.

E. THE POPULATIONS OF ELIGIBLE VETERANS TO BE SERVED, INCLUDING ANY ADDITIONAL POPULATIONS DESIGNATED BY THE SECRETARY AS ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES, AND ANY ADDITIONAL POPULATIONS SPECIFICALLY TARGETED BY THE STATE WORKFORCE AGENCY FOR SERVICES FROM ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM PARTNERS (E.G., NATIVE AMERICAN VETERANS; VETERANS IN REMOTE RURAL COUNTIES OR PARISHES);

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expert on programs available to assist veterans with SBE in improving their skills, helping them take the next step up in their careers. The DVOPs provide individualized career services (intensive services) within Indiana's case management model to eligible SBE veterans. The DVOP delivers these services as part of an integrated service delivery system in accordance with the requirements of VPL 03-14. As outlined within IAW VPL 03-14 and 03-19, Veterans receiving Individual Career Services (ICS) will receive these services through the case management framework, which is defined as a receipt of a comprehensive assessment and a written plan at a minimum. DVOPs maintain an active caseload of veterans with SBE, as determined by the local needs of veterans presenting an SBE during assessment of self-attestation to WIOA/Wagner-Peyser staff. DVOPs provide a comprehensive assessment and a written plan, based on an Objective Assessment Summary (OAS) in the Indiana's case management system (Indiana Career Connect) on all case managed clients.

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VPL 03-14 and TEGL 19-13. That guidance limits the populations of veterans and eligible persons that may be served by a DVOP specialist and defined those categories of veterans and eligible persons (TSMs, caregivers, spouses) who are being prioritized because they have Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE).

The populations described in this section are eligible to be served by DVOPs, in addition to those populations described in VPL 03-14, VPL 03-14 Change 1 and VPL 03-14 Change 2.

DOL's employment programs, including JVSG, WP, and WIOA programs, individualized career (intensive services) are provided to both unemployed participants who require such services to obtain employment and to employed participants, who require such services to obtain or retain employment leading to self-sufficiency. In accordance with U.S.C. 4103A(a), DVOPs must provide intensive services to eligible veterans and eligible persons to meet their employment needs, prioritizing service to special disabled and other disabled veterans, as defined by U.S.C. 4211, and to other eligible veterans in accordance with priorities determined by the Secretary of Labor. The statute also requires that DVOPs place maximum emphasis on assisting veterans who are economically or educationally disadvantaged.

An eligible veteran or eligible person is determined to have a Significant Barrier to Employment (SBE) if he or she attests to belonging to at least one criteria below:

The updated list of eligible veterans and eligible persons defined as having a SBE is provided below.

- A special disabled or disabled veteran, as those terms are defined in 38 U.S.C § 4211 (l) and (3); Special disabled and disabled veterans are those:
    - who are entitled to compensation (or who but for the receipt of military retired pay would be entitled to compensation) under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs; or,
    - were discharged or released from active duty because of a service- connected disability;

- A homeless person, as defined in Sections 103(a) and (b) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11302(a) and (b)), as amended;
- A recently-separated service member, as defined in 38 U.S.C § 4211(6), who has been unemployed for 27 or more weeks in the previous 12 months, i.e. the term of unemployment over the previous 12 months remains 27 weeks; however, the requirement of27 consecutive weeks is eliminated;
- An offender, as defined by WIOA Section 3 (38)1, who is currently incarcerated or who has been released from incarceration, i.e. the expanded definition of SBE includes any eligible veteran or eligible person who is currently or was formerly incarcerated by removing the within the last 12 months requirement;
- Lacking a high school diploma or equivalent certificate; or
- Low-income individual (as defined by WIOA Section 3 (36))2

In addition to the above clarifications to the definition of SBE, the following guidance is provided to improve the identification and support of disabled veterans.

- In accordance with prior guidance, the determination of disability under the SBE definitions must be made solely on the basis of self-identification. Note that any individual who separated from active duty because of a service-connected disability qualifies as a disabled veteran regardless of the number of days of active duty served, as does any veteran with a disability rating provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) (or a military Service issued disability determination) as described in 38 U.S.C. § 4211(1). An individual who attests to having a disability claim pending with the VA should be considered to have an approved claim for the purposes of determining SBE.

Special Populations

Veterans aged 18-24.

Veterans aged 18-24 possess limited civilian work history which can make transitioning to the civilian labor force difficult. Based on this fact, veterans between the ages of 18 and 24 may benefit from individualized career services provided by a DVOP specialist.

Vietnam-era Veterans.

Pursuant to 38 U.S.C. 4211, the term "Veteran of the Vietnam Era" is an eligible veteran any part of whose active military, naval, or air service was during the Vietnam era I The Bureau of Labor Statistics and Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) data indicate that there are still a sizeable number of Vietnam-era Veterans in the workforce, and many face difficulty in finding and maintaining employment.

Served any part of active duty military, naval, or air service during the Vietnam era (02/28/1961 – 05/07/1975).

Eligible Transitioning Service Members), Spouses, and Caregivers

In annual appropriation bills since the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2014, Congress authorized NSG grants to support services as described in VPL 07-14 to:

1. Transitioning members of the Armed Forces who have been identified as in need of intensive services (now referred to as Individualized Career Services);

2. Members of the Armed Forces who are wounded, ill, or injured and receiving treatment in military treatment facilities (MTF) or warrior transition units (WTU); and
3. The spouses or other family caregivers3 of such wounded, ill, or injured members.

DWD Policies 2019-03 and 2015-08 provide additional definitions of the populations of eligible veterans to be served by the one-stop delivery system partners, and can be accessed on DWD's active policies webpage at : https://www.in.gov/dwd/compliance-policy/policy/active/.

F. HOW THE STATE IMPLEMENTS AND MONITORS THE ADMINISTRATION OF PRIORITY OF SERVICE TO COVERED PERSONS;

The description of how the state implements and monitors priority of service to covered persons is included in the Common Elements of the WIOA State Plan.

G. HOW THE STATE PROVIDES OR INTENDS TO PROVIDE AND MEASURE, THROUGH BOTH THE DVOP AND AMERICAN JOB CENTER STAFF:

1. JOB AND JOB TRAINING INDIVIDUALIZED CAREER SERVICES,

Per VPL 01-22, a response to this section is not required.

2. EMPLOYMENT PLACEMENT SERVICES, AND

Per VPL 01-22, a response to this section is not required.

3. JOB-DRIVEN TRAINING AND SUBSEQUENT PLACEMENT SERVICE PROGRAM FOR ELIGIBLE VETERANS AND ELIGIBLE PERSONS;

Per VPL 01-22, a response to this section is not required.

H. THE HIRE DATE ALONG WITH MANDATORY TRAINING COMPLETION DATES FOR ALL DVOP SPECIALISTS AND LVER STAFF; AND

Per VPL 01-22, a response to this section is not required.

I. SUCH ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AS THE SECRETARY MAY REQUIRE.

The established JVSG performance targets will cover veterans served by JVSG staff only.

Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit = 65%

Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit = 63%

Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit = $6,000.00

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE (UI)

(OMB Control Number: 1205-0132)

The Unemployment Insurance (UI) program requires a State Quality Service Plan (SQSP) on a 2-year planning cycle that is a condition of receipt of administrative funding to administer the program. The SQSP is the State's UI performance management and planning process that allows for an exchange of information between Federal and State partners to enhance the UI program's ability to reflect their joint commitment to performance excellence and client-centered services.

A formal two-year SQSP is submitted biennially. On the off years, States may be required to modify the SQSP with additional corrective action plans and narrative if they are failing any new performance measures, and they are required to provide updated budget documents, certifications, and assurances. ETA Handbook No. 336, 18th Edition provides detailed guidance for the preparation and submittal of the SQSP and supplemental guidance is provided in an annual UIPL, issued as UIPL 15-19 for the FY 2020 SQSP. The Social Security Act (SSA) sections 302 and 303 authorize the Secretary of Labor to provide funds to administer the UI program and govern the expenditure of those funds. States that choose the option to include UI in a WIOA Combined State Plan will be required to submit their SQSP through the Combined State Plan process. The SQSP must be prepared in accordance to the instructions in ET Handbook 336, 18th Edition and there are no changes to the established SQSP cycle if a State chose to submit their SQSP through the Combined State Plan process.

A. CONTENTS OF A COMPLETE UI SQSP PACKAGE

A complete UI SQSP package includes the following documents, as described in Chapter 1, ETA Handbook 336, 18th Edition:

1. TRANSMITTAL LETTER

A cover letter to the appropriate Regional Office (RO) transmitting all the required SQSP documents.

2. BUDGET WORKSHEETS/FORMS

Budget worksheets/forms and plan for program administration based on projected allocations received from the Federal partner. These forms include Worksheet UI-1 and SF 424, SF 424A and SF 424B. The SF 424A is only required if the State vary the quarterly distribution of base claims activity staff years.

3. THE STATE PLAN NARRATIVE

State Plan Narrative is a vital element of the SQSP that provides a vehicle for sharing with the Federal partner State-specific efforts that affect the administration of the UI Program. The State Plan Narrative allows the State to describe in a single narrative: a) State performance in comparison to the Government Performance Review Act goals; b) actions planned to correct deficiencies regarding UI programs, UI program reviews and reporting requirements; and c) results of customer satisfaction surveys (optional).

Overview: State Priorities and Strategic Direction to Ensure Continuous Improvement.

- **Cross Functional Areas:** The last 12 months have brought much change to Indiana's UI Program. During the fall of 2018, new leadership embarked upon two major projects focused on improving UI Benefits staff retention (which is discussed further in the UI Benefits section below) and overall efficiencies of the Quality, Policy, Integrity and Training (QPIT) Unit. The National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA) Integrity Center visited Indiana in October of 2018. Additionally, Indiana launched enhancements to the Employer Self-Service (ESS) in Uplink in March of 2019 (discussed further in the UI Tax section below).

The results of the QPIT efficiency review resulted in the following:

- Reinstated an overall UI Training Unit: This effort brings all UI Trainers to one team.

- Created separate UI Internal Quality Unit: This effort focuses on providing coaching and feedback directly to staff in all UI areas.
- Created a UI Performance Unit: This effort brings all staff responsible for UI reporting to one team, streamlining data validation efforts and allowing time and focus for data integrity projects.
- Created UI Special Projects position: This effort brought forth a single point of contact to coordinate projects that span across functional areas, such as implementing the NASWA Integrity Center recommendations.

As noted above, the NASWA Integrity Center was invited to Indiana to review specific areas of the Indiana UI system. This visit resulted in a better understanding of the current processes for new leadership, areas for growth and where efficiencies may be gained, and a formal report and recommendations from the NASWA team. Coordinating analysis and implementation of the recommendations from the NASWA report has been assigned to the UI Special Projects position mentioned above. In addition to the NASWA Integrity Center visit, Indiana is in the final stages of finalizing an MOU with the NASWA Integrity Data Hub.

Complementing the NAWSA team, Indiana also completed all 15 of the UI Self-Assessments. There was one internal finding and resolution (discussed further in Section 2 below). In addition to the self-assessments, Indiana added a new process to the TPS review. As reviewers are examining processes and systems during the TPS review, they are documenting notable efforts and best practices, as well as overall process and system challenges. This effort will allow leadership to recognize staff for positive practices, as well as identify areas of improvements.

Update for 2022

During the last 12 months, Indiana has focused on the following: processing the unprecedented workload; striving for timely and accurate payments; doubling of state staff; adding three vendors to assist with increased volume of workload; implementing, updating, ending, re-starting and ending again the pandemic related programs; undertaking multiple system changes to implement, update end, re-start and end again the pandemic related programs; disseminating multiple communications to claimants and employers regarding changes in the pandemic related programs; responding to the plethora of media requests and misinformation from the media; implementing strategies to boost and maintain staff morale; train and provide equipment to several hundreds of new staff; determine and implement teleworking procedures that allow for maximum flexibility with routine monitoring for accountability; acquire and implement several fraud prevention and detection tools, software and methodologies.

The last 12 months continue to bring change to the UI Program in Indiana. Indiana continued to explore and/or implement recommendations from the NASWA Integrity Center. Major projects included switching benefit payment vendors, overhauling the Tax CORE Training (discussed in the UI Tax section below), and pivoting the UI IT staff to the Agile approach to software development. All priorities and strategic plans for 2020 came to a halt in March due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Since March of 2020, Indiana UI has been solely focused on the unprecedented workload in all areas.

During February 2020, DWD moved to a new payment vendor allowing claimants to make an election between payment methods which includes same day direct deposit to a qualified checking or savings account or a stored value card. As long as the claimant timely elects their

payment method at the same time that they register for a Claimant Self-Service (CSS) account, the claimant can receive their first payment distribution the day after their claim voucher is approved for payment.

The UI IT leadership worked with UI Business to implement a more streamlined approach to develop and deliver software enhancements. The Agile method focuses on system/customer interactions and developer/business collaborations. This approach served the Indiana UI Team very well during the Covid-19 pandemic, as IT deployments were able to be scheduled weekly as opposed to taking several months to receive an IT deliverable.

Indiana started working with a vendor to refine and update the contact center IVR. While this project was halted due to the pandemic, Indiana was able to accomplish the following: added new language and prompts; added tax prompts; added screen pops (claimants enter personal information and their information auto-populates on the screen when the contact center agents picks up the call, reducing the time for the agent to verify the identity of the caller); and added self-service options (claimants can enter personal information and the system will relay specific details, such as remaining benefit balance and last payment date and amount). The Benefits and Tax contact centers were merged for efficiency.

Another accomplished priority during this reporting period was the remove of social security numbers from UI forms.

Backlogs

Adjudication Backlogs: Indiana's plan to continuously address the adjudication backlog is to continue to hire and train new staff. Hiring has become challenging, as the qualified candidate pool has slowed to a trickle. Training has started to do refresher trainings for all adjudication staff hired during the pandemic and received the abbreviated training. All existing adjudication staff will go through the full 12 weeks of adjudication training in cohorts, starting in January of 2022, as a method of retraining with a quality emphasis. Training for all adjudication new hires is in person to maximize learning. Quality reviews have resumed. Adjudication staff are also absorbing the adjudication workload from the Fraud Unit to allow those staff to focus on the increased fraud workload. Vendor staff is being utilized to perform fact finding for adjudication work. To maintain and/or increase morale, mandatory overtime has ended. However, voluntary overtime continues to be an option. Adjudication staff continue to be exempt from the 'return to work' mandate from the Governor (except for those with internet, production or performance concerns), to maximize flexibility to retain staff.

Appeals Backlogs: Indiana's plan to continuously address the appeals backlog in the clerk area is to continue to hire and train new staff. Hiring has slowed in Indianapolis area, thus hiring efforts have moved to other parts of the state. An increased starting salary was approved and has been requested to be extended. In efforts to attract more qualified staff. In-person training was reinstated. The unit has added Team Leads to assist with increase volume of work and staff. Indiana's plan to continuously address the appeals backlog in the ALJ area is to continue to hire and train new staff. The State continues to struggle in hiring for all positions. Due to the statutory obligation to hire attorneys licensed in Indiana, the ALJ positions have been extremely

hard to hire and retain. Recruitment efforts have included targeted job fairs for retirees, part time and out of state qualified candidates. The ALJ position continue to be exempt from the 'return to work' mandate from the Governor (except for those with internet, production or performance concerns), to maximize flexibility to retain staff. While training is still abbreviated, it was extended from 8 days to two and a half weeks. In addition to all of the above efforts, Indiana is also undergoing an initiative to move the full Appeals Division to paperless. This effort will maximize ALJ time for hearings, streamline processes for clerks and allow for much easier remote work.

- **UI Benefits:** Historically, Indiana was overly optimistic about the ability to bring both quality and timeliness of benefits processing into core measurement standards. Meeting both of these standards in FY 2019 and 2020 remains a significant challenge. Over the past few years, the Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD) launched several initiatives in the UI Benefits program to improve performance in the areas of quality, timeliness, and first payment promptness. Quality improvement strategies have succeeded, with the agency achieving 79% separation quality and 85% nonseparation quality in the second quarter of CY2019. The focus on quality determinations has resulted in a struggle with nonmonetary determination timeliness and first pay promptness.

1. Training and Staffing: Indiana has struggled with negative UI Benefits staff turnover during the last several years. Although adjudicators received a salary increase in 2017, this one action did not decrease or slow the rate of turnover. New leadership of the UI division took a different approach to resolving this issue. Several roundtable conversations were held during September and October of 2018 with UI Benefits frontline adjudicators, adjudicator supervisors, Benefits Timeliness and Quality (BTQ) staff, and UI leadership. These roundtables were held to understand directly from the staff their thoughts on what is and is not going well and what is preventing adjudicators from staying. From this feedback, several policy changes have occurred in efforts to increase staff retention. Some examples include: adjusting the vacation policy to allow for an increase of staff who could be off, especially during holidays, while maintaining appropriate coverage; reinstating a flex-time policy; and piloting telework for both adjudicators and contact center staff. UI Leadership again worked with the State Personnel Department (SPD) to review the classification and salary range for adjudication work. Conversations this time focused on the complexity of the work and the skillset needed to accurately complete adjudication work. DWD strongly encouraged SPD staff shadow adjudicators and not solely review job descriptions to understand the work. As a result, SPD created a new classification specifically for adjudicators, Claims Investigators. The new classification is tiered to allow for upward economic mobility and succession planning. Claims Investigator Trainees have a higher starting salary and will receive a salary increase when they are able to pass the Working Test period. DWD is monitoring the impact of this reclassification as well as all the other changes on staff retention.

During the roundtable discussions, staff voiced wanting additional time with the Quality Manager for feedback, both positive and negative, and coaching from supervisors. The next task in the overall adjudication retention project is to revamp the internal quality review process. Historically, this process mimicked BTQ, though BTQ staff split their time between reviews and training. In PY2019, BTQ staffed reviewed 7,000 issues and held four 12-week training sessions. Feedback on quality pulls were minimal, occasionally only a sentence. Adjudicators voiced needing and wanting more quality feedback. Revamping the benefits internal quality process is

ongoing with implementation beginning in fourth quarter of 2019. DWD will monitor the impact of the new process on Benefit, BTQ, and Benefits Accuracy Measurement (BAM) metrics.

Indiana has continued its adjudication training program, though a review of the current 12-week training began in the fourth quarter of 2019. Any changes will be implemented throughout 2020. Indiana continues to hold monthly adjudication quality meetings, where members of the BAM, BTQ, and Adjudication Training Units meet with adjudication supervisors, the Director of Benefits, and the Associate Chief UI Officer to identify quality issues and training needs. Monthly refresher training lectures for adjudication staff, as well as ad hoc updates, are offered on unique issues as they arise.

2. Prevention, Detection, and Recovery of Improper Payments: Indiana has continued to make the prevention and detection of improper payments a priority by focusing on claimant messaging and work search initiatives. New administration, along with NASWA Integrity Center recommendations, have initiated efforts to provide claimants with understandable and easy-to-locate information. When the new claimant intake system was launched in 2017, it was designed with improper payment prevention in mind. This included many warnings and sign-offs about what not to do when filing a claim and weekly certification. After a few years of usage, however, it was determined that there was insufficient claimant education about what they should be doing. This has led to claimant confusion and simply guessing what they should be entering when filing a claim and weekly certification. This can lead to improper payments.

In early 2019, Indiana released a website (unemployment.in.gov) to explain and facilitate the UI process for the constituent. This website is used by both claimants and employers with the most sought after links provided on this page. Currently in progress are videos to walk through filing a weekly certification and a separate video about how to correctly report earnings. Also provided to claimants in 2019 was a work search log in a fillable PDF format. Indiana requires claimants keep a log of their weekly work search activities but has never provided the claimants with a form to utilize. The link to the log is available in multiple locations and is used weekly by claimants. The work search question page on the weekly certification was modified to help claimants better understand the work search requirements for the week. The previous question was modified to more clearly state the requirements. More information regarding work search projects is included in the section, WIOA and Reemployment.

As mentioned above, during the Self-Assessment process, Indiana found that the work done by the Benefit Payment Control (BPC) unit performing fraud and new hire investigations were limiting the scope of their work. This was implemented during the aftermath of the Recession when their workload was extremely high. Although necessary at the time, this process has since been recognized as insufficient for prevention, detection, and recovery of improper payments. The BPC unit has since updated their procedures and has lifted the previously imposed restrictions on the limits of their investigations.

In FY 2016, the agency implemented State Information Data Exchange System (SIDES), SIDES Web Services, SIDES E-Response, and SIDES Outreach, which are intended to increase quality, timeliness, and quantity of employer participation in the adjudication process. Since implementation, positive outcomes include: quicker employer response times, better and more complete information within the initial employer response, and immediate confirmation of receipt of the employer's claim response instead of waiting on busy fax lines. While a few unintended consequences have arisen (e.g., differences in UI SIDES and SIDES E-Response functionality and some ISPs blacklisting DWD email addresses, which prevented the notification of many SIDES E-Response employers of claims), Indiana continues to be part of the 100% Club (since October of 2016), consistently meeting the requirement to receive 50% of employer

responses to claims through UI SIDES and SIDES E-Response. We started meeting the requirement to receive 35% of employer responses to claims through SIDES E-Response in May 2018, only 24 months after the first SIDES E-Response requests were sent. In addition, DWD has been highlighted by NASWA Best Practices for promoting SIDES web service projects to high volume and multistate employers. DWD has won the NASWA SIDES Overall Outstanding Performance for two consecutive years (2017 and 2018). DWD continues to be a top 10 performer in overall SIDES stats each month, often hitting the top 5.

In prior years, Indiana struggled with overpayment recoveries. Indiana previously used SBR funds to implement the Treasury Offset Program (TOP) for fraud overpayments in FY 2015. The agency has fully implemented TOP for the recovery of fraudulent and eligible non-fraudulent overpayments and has vastly increased collections on overpayments by doing so. Additionally, Indiana has implemented automated wage garnishment for eligible claimants as of March 2019. The automated wage garnishment system is housed in the UI Program's Uplink environment, which allows for better tracking, auditing, and data analytics. The automated system provides a mechanism for collections staff to review prioritized lists of debtors and sort the list using various parameters (e.g., total debt amount, total wage records, most recent wage records, etc.). All documentation, including orders and notices, will be housed within the system, which will automatically generate notices and orders when appropriate during the life of the garnishment case.

During the reporting period, the collections unit has collected a total of $2,830,574.91 through wage garnishments, $5,988,320.10 through voluntary payments, $5,192,353.42 through federal TOP intercepts, $2,399,782.77 through state tax intercepts, and $2,454,835.01 through offsets. Moreover, the agency has continued its partnership with county prosecutors and the Attorney General's Office to prosecute fraudsters and collect overpayments.

Update for 2022

Historically, Indiana was overly optimistic about the ability to bring both quality and timeliness of benefits processing into core measurement standards. Meeting both quality and timeliness standards in FY 2019 and 2020 remains a significant challenge. Over the past few years, the Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD) launched several initiatives in the UI Benefits program to improve performance in the areas of quality, timeliness, and first payment promptness. Quality improvement strategies have succeeded, with the agency achieving 79% separation quality and 85% nonseparation quality in the second quarter of CY2019. The focus on quality determinations has resulted in a struggle with nonmonetary determination timeliness and first pay promptness. A major priority for 2020 was to do additional root cause analysis of this area. While this project started during the first quarter of 2020, efforts were stalled due to lack of available resources. As noted above all 2020 priorities were stalled in efforts to divert all available resources toward the increased workload in all functional areas due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Training, Internal Quality and Staffing

During this reporting period, Internal Quality was revamped to focus on coaching staff to make quality decisions. This process included several planning meetings, gathering input from the quality managers, adjudicators, adjudicator supervisors and Benefits leadership staff. The new process includes identifying common errors in quality reviews to inform training agendas. Identifying common errors in the BTQ and BAM process was being explored for the same purpose. The resulting Quality Management Performance Plan was due to be implemented in April of 2020. These efforts were stalled due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Prior to the pandemic, the training unit was able to revamp the Adjudication training to include more competency-based materials. Additional updates were planned for 2020 however were stalled due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Indiana also amended its work search requirements from three (3) work searches per week to one (1) per week.

- UI Tax Administration:

1. Performance Improvement: Indiana continues to exceed federal standards for new employer status determinations time lapse. The reorganization of the Tax Performance System (TPS) Unit under the same division as other quality units and trainers has resulted in improved communication between the TPS Unit and the Tax Divisions. This has, in turn, allowed the agency to identify root causes of several quality issues. Improvements in this area have led directly to the state's passing performance in TPS reviews for all functions except Credits in at least one of the last three years.

Uplink system core functionality was launched for Tax in FY 2015 and FY 2016, as planned. Current system upgrades include identifying all barriers to quality that exist in Uplink at this time and to develop a multiple phase initiative to increase quality and integrity at all levels. In 2017, to correct its deficiencies, Indiana evaluated current the Uplink system defects. The agency then developed system resolutions for identified defects. Specifically, the agency completed the compilation of all known defects and required process improvements in the target areas of Status New, Successorship, Collections, and Inactivations. Tax and IT staff established a feasible timeline for addressing the defects and improvements and then moved forward to pursuing these projects beginning in FY 2017 and continuing through FY 2021. As development nears completion, staff will test application updates and then release application updates into production in a well-planned and widely-communicated manner.

Enhancements to the Employer Self Service (ESS) domain were released in spring of 2019. Additional phases are planned to make improvements in the detection of registration errors, unreported successorships, and communication of credits in order to push computed measures with regard to timely determination of successorships to a more acceptable level, proactively correct registration errors including legal name and business type mismatches, provide for timely notification of employer overpayments (credits), and to fully integrate mandatory audit trail events into processing actions.

There is direct accountability in Indiana's Status, Employer Account Maintenance, and Collection Enforcement Units, as work items are distributed by the last two digits of an account number. The agency has gained some operational efficiency under this method and each auditor is able to take a more holistic approach to account resolution. With the process improvements and new work items created in future releases of the planned system enhancement, continued improvement in all quality review areas is expected.

2. Addressing Worker Misclassification: The new field audit software package was fully implemented in June of 2016. This implementation included integration with the Uplink system, which automated audit result processing of adjustments and wage records, in addition to ownership and profile updates. The IRS 1099 extract data are being compared with data from Indiana's system to generate reports that provide the information needed to target existing employers who may be misclassifying workers. Additionally, these data analytics allow Indiana to identify businesses that currently have not registered for a SUTA account but are issuing 1099s. The investigators also investigate tips received from other DWD divisions, other governmental agencies, and the public.

- WIOA and Reemployment: Indiana has increased collaboration and communication between UI and our workforce development programs. Specifically, UI is working with the RESEA program on several projects: TAA/TRA; Wagner-Peyser; and regional WIOA partners. The official title of Indiana's UI Leader is Chief Officer of UI and Workforce Solutions. She has been tasked with uniting both UI and WIOA Core Programs to ensure collaboration, communication, and efficiencies. As such, she leads the DWD internal committee on Workforce Best Practices. This allows her to stay current on both UI and workforce development needs, accomplishments, and areas of growth.

One example of increased collaboration and communication started with ensuring UI is represented on the regional customer service survey (see section F below). This collaboration has grown to include routine information sharing between UI and the workforce side. Specially, UI provides contact center stats to the WDB Regions quarterly. It is important that regional office staff understand wait times and customer services hurdles in order to provide general assistance to claimants who visit a WorkOne to engage with a UI kiosk. UI has developed, with the assistance of regional partners, FAQs regarding filing UI claims. UI works diligently with Wagner-Peyser staff and WIOA leadership to ensure regional staff are educated on the type of assistance they can and cannot offer and when to refer a UI clamant to the contact center. UI Contact Center leadership have visited several regional offices to observe claimant/regional staff interactions. This project has assisted in understanding the type of information the regional office staff need to assist claimants.

TAA and UI TRA staff have recently started meeting weekly. The focus of these meetings is to increase communication, gain a better understanding of the impact of processes to each side, and to collaborate on areas of improvements.

UI is also an active participant in the Infrastructure Costs process, consulting with other DWD workforce programs prior to negotiation meetings. This level of communication ensures UI has an understanding of the full impact of funding decisions at the agency level. In addition, both UI contact center and adjudication staff refer claimants to their local WorkOne, when appropriate. Indiana continues to refer all UI claimants to RESEA (except those with relevant waivers) for reemployment services. The Indiana UI program has focused on increased communication and collaboration with the RESEA program staff over the past year. This has resulted in increased communication between these two divisions.

In Indiana, UI claimants are granted access to IndianaCareerConnect.com (ICC) upon filing an initial claim for benefits. This strategy to quickly connect claimants to ICC, Indiana's labor exchange service, assists in the reemployment efforts to refer claimants to available job openings early in their claims. ICC is also where all records are kept for a claimant's reemployment activities and services received. In order to expedite the communication between RESEA and UI Adjudication, on May 17, 2019 Indiana implemented an integrated system communication structure between ICC and Uplink. This new line of communication electronically notifies UI Adjudication of potential issues in a streamlined process rather than the manual process that previously existed, which included faxing paper documents and manual data entry for issue creation. This integration has saved UI Adjudication staff and RESEA program staff a significant amount of time and resources.

Indiana has cross-trained the UI benefits unit and the RESEA policy unit to understand each other's policies and requirements. The units have met many times and have worked together to study possible changes to programs. The UI benefits unit has also concentrated efforts on learning about the RESEA program and how it focuses on claimants work search activities. Statutorily in Indiana, the RESEA program is required to review the claimants work search

activities. The UI benefits unit hopes to utilize the RESEA program's knowledge on how to help claimants utilize their work search activity options to become reemployed, while meeting UI standards for work search activities.

UI is a full partner as Indiana makes decisions around the RESEA evaluation requirement. UI leadership is co-leading this effort with DWD Research and Analysis leadership. DWD has identified a RESEA evaluation team, which is charged with developing and implementing the RESEA evaluation plan and will include opportunities for even better systems integration.

Update for 2022

Enhancements to the Employer Self Service (ESS) domain were released in spring of 2019. These enhancements have provided numerous benefits across the Department, notably the Cashiering unit with increased deposit timeliness, and reduction of on-site staff to process mail trays. Multiple new work items have been added to detect conflicted registrations and have revised the business type identification to be much more robust. DWD began enforcement of the electronic reporting requirement in 2Q2019 by issuing delinquency notices to all employers that mailed in reporting in violation of the regulations. In 4Q2019, Indiana began fining those employers $25 for the same. Performance dashboards are used to show the improvement in timely reporting as a result of the first effort with the 1Q2020 results being impacted by COVID, but not as significantly as it would have been were we still over 50% non-electronic reporting. Beginning with 2Q2020, Indiana began enforcement of the requirement to pay electronically by changing our policy on mailed in payments. DWD is determining timeliness by the delivery date of the payment rather than the postmark date. In addition, because of the ESS enhancements, many employers have reached out to the department for more information on several topics. The Tax and Compliance Units have started hosting employer webinars. One of the most popular webinars was on determining localization for multistate workers. Additional example of webinar topics included: worker misclassification and SOC codes. The webinar efforts were stalled due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

At the end of 2019, Indiana undertook the process of revamping the Tax CORE training. This process brought all interested stakeholders to review existing training topics and gather information on new topics to add. In addition, competency-based materials were developed. All related work instructions for the Tax and Compliance Unit were updated by the end of 2019. On the Tax quality side, DWD created and published a Third-Party Agent handbook which we have been told is the first of its kind.

Compliance Administration

DWD has implemented multiple fraud prevention and detection measures. CARES ACT Strategies: DWD is sharing information with the Integrity Data Hub (NASWA), and acting on information received from IDH. Also, through data analytics, DWD has identified several factors that are more likely to be fraudulent claims that are flagged for further review. DWD has identity verification procedures in place and is in the process of utilizing the IDH identity verification tool as well as contracting with ID.me. Lastly, DWD is working with state and federal law enforcement partners and with financial institutions to identify fraudsters and collect any payments. There were no high dollar overpayments reported on the 227 during the time period noted.

WIOA and Reemployment

Indiana continues increased collaboration and communication with Workforce Programs. Specifically, UI is working with the RESEA program on several projects; TAA/TRA; Wagner

Peyser program and regional WIOA partners. Indiana's UI Leader's formal title is Chief Officer of UI and Workforce Solutions. She has been tasked with uniting both programs to ensure collaboration, communication and efficiencies. This allows her to stay current on both UI and Workforce needs/accomplishments and areas of collaboration.

One example of increased collaboration and communication started with ensuring UI is represented on the Regional customer service survey (see section F below). This collaboration has grown to routine information sharing between UI and the Workforce side. Specially, UI provides contact center stats to the Regions quarterly. It is important that regional office staff understand wait times, etc. in order to provide general assistance to claimant who visit an AJC to engage with a UI kiosk. UI has developed with the assistance of the Region's a FAQs regarding filing UI claims. UI works diligently with Wagner Peyser and WIOA leadership to ensure regional staff are educated on the type of assistance they can/cannot offer and when to refer a UI clamant to the contact center. UI Contact Center leadership have visited several regional offices to observe claimant/regional staff interactions. This project has assisted in understanding the type of information the regional office staff need to assist claimants.

UI continues to be an active participant in the Infrastructure Costs process, consulting with other DWD Workforce programs prior to negotiation meetings. This level of communication ensures UI understands the full impact of funding decisions at the Agency level. In addition, both UI contact center and adjudication staff refer claimants to their local AJC when appropriate.

Indiana continues to refer all UI claimants to RESEA (except those with relevant waivers) for reemployment services. The Indiana UI program has focused on increased communication and collaboration with the RESEA program staff over the last year. This has resulted in several shared positive outcomes, including increased communication. Additionally, UI took over the RESEA reporting during this reporting period, increasing communication and shared goals.

The RESEA program was paused for several months, while the American Job Centers were closed. The program started a phased in approach to serving claimants in June of 2021. As of the writing of this report, the state is not yet at 100% serving capacity. Regional partners, much like the State and all other employers are struggling to attract and retain quality employees.

Federal Emphasis (GPRA goals): Indiana's efforts to meet the GPRA goals and National Priorities for FY 2019 are discussed generally in Part A (First Pay Promptness) above. The agency will continue to strive to meet or exceed performance goals against the GPRA goals. See CAP plans to review expectations and processes to be put into place to achieve these metrics (for First Pay Promptness).

Regarding the Employer Tax Liability Determinations Made Timely goal, Indiana made a significant change in UI reporting for 2019, which prevents an employer from filing until they have registered completely. This change should decrease the number of accounts that make payments without prior registration and which are always set up with a liability date in the 1st quarter of the year. As the number of "pre-assigned" accounts with the default 1st quarter qualification is decreased, the computed measure will increase.

Update for 2022

The agency will continue to strive to meet or exceed performance against the GPRA goals. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Indiana does not have available resources to dedicate to discover the root cause for any discrepancies between State performance and GPRA goals. Indiana does not have available resources to develop action plans to achieve the GPRA goals and targets.

Program Review Deficiencies (Causes for Failures): Data Validation: Indiana has successfully conducted and transmitted all data validation except for Benefits Module 4 – Appeals. Indiana has automated this review process in the Uplink system. There are hard-coded limitations and deficiencies to what information the system is able to produce over time. As a result, the information required to conduct this review is not available to the data validator.

Throughout the year, data validation staff identified and resolved new issues with both Tax and Benefit populations. These issued were in part due to extracts, as well as the accuracy of Federal Report data. The state has identified the root cause for a majority of the remaining deficiencies; however, more research is needed, particularly into the cause of Module 4 Non-Separations and Module 4 Inactivation/Termination. One outstanding obstacle to be resolved is inadequate IT resources. The state implemented several system enhancements throughout 2018 and 2019. These enhancements have occupied significant resources in previous years, reducing the ability to resolve Data Validation issues. The state intends to prioritize correcting issues with federal reporting as the next major IT project.

Update for 2022: Nothing to report

Program Deficiencies – (plans to correct deficiencies identified): Nothing to report. **Update for 2022:** Nothing to report

Reporting Deficiencies Corrections (identify actions to correct):

- Incorrect Recording of Issue Detection Date: The deficiency to meet the metric for correct issue detection date is due to incorrect issue detection dates auto-populated by the Uplink system, as well as staff data entry errors. The auto-populated dates are fields that can be edited by adjudication staff while working on the issues. Each quarter, the BTQ staff provide a list of all incorrect or notable issue detection dates for analysis. The results are different each quarter, which makes solving the problem more complex. Previous efforts were focused on specific issue types, which were identified with incorrect detection dates. The focus of this analysis was too narrow, resulting in insignificant change. Recent efforts to identify and analyze the root causes are focused on hard-coded system information utilized to populate the fields.

Members of the BTQ unit and the Director of UI Benefits will continue to track and analyze the data utilized for Issue Detection Date recording to identify causes and to recommend changes.

- Lower Authority Appeals Monitoring Findings: The launch of the Uplink system resulted in unintended consequences for the Appellate Division. As noted in previous SQSP submissions and DOL monitoring responses, errors in the Uplink system caused federal reports to fail (specifically ETA 5130, ETA 9054, and ETA 9055). The Performance unit has been analyzing the problem to determine the root causes in order to resolve the problem.

In order to sufficiently identify the problem, the Performance unit has met with the Appeals unit to better understand their processes and procedures and specifically how activities in Appeals are counted in Uplink. Identified through these continuing conversations is the necessity of a manual count, which is not accounted for in Uplink reporting. Each of these manual processes are currently being reviewed to be better understood. Once understood, these manual processes can then be converted into automated processes in Uplink. If implemented prior to an accurate understanding, the problem of incorrect reporting would remain. After all accurate processes and counts have been finalized, the IT department will be notified of how to correct

the problems and implement the solutions. The IT department has been made aware that necessary changes are forthcoming, and they will be prioritized accordingly.

Update for 2022

Incorrect Recording of Issue Detection Date and UI Reporting requirements. Indiana failed these additional performance metrics.

Preliminary examinations show that there are a couple reasons regarding why we fail recording the correct issue detection date:

- Indiana's Uplink system struggles to determine the correct date when there are duplicate issues.
- Uplink cannot determine the correct date when investigators find an issue exists that the system was previously not aware of.

At this time, we believe most of this can be avoided through training if investigators are made aware of the manual approach to changing the detection date.

Indiana has re-transmitted various ETA reports throughout the reporting year where inconsistencies/discrepancies were discovered. Indiana will continue to transmit ETA reports in a timely fashion.

Customer Service Surveys: Customer Service Surveys: WorkOnes and Uplink Customer Service worked in partnership to design a customer satisfaction survey to identify and address the essential needs and level of service claimants receive while visiting the WorkOne office or speaking with representatives from the UI Contact Center. This includes over-the-shoulder help that Wagner-Peyser staff provide to UI claimants, telephone assistance provided by the UI Contact Center staff, and RESEA services provided in the WorkOne. The UI leadership team meets on a regular basis with the workforce leadership team to review the results and determine any action that might be needed.

DWD continues to work with the Indiana General Assembly on trust fund solvency, as the funding of the trust fund is determined by the statutory framework in the Indiana Code.

Update for 2022

WorkOne (Indiana's American Job Centers) and Uplink Customer Service worked in partnership to design a customer satisfaction survey to identify and address the essential needs and level of service claimants receive while visiting the WorkOne office or speaking with representatives from the UI Contact Center. This includes over the shoulder help that Wagner Peyser staff provide to UI claimants, telephone assistance provided by the UI Contact Center staff, and RESEA services provided in the WorkOne. The UI leadership team meets on a regular basis with the Workforce leadership team to review the results and determine any action that might be needed.

Assurances: The state will comply with the assurances listed in HB 336, Appendix I. Pertinent dates for the implementation, testing, and updating of the plans are as follows:

1.
    a. IT Contingency Plan
        i. Implemented – 7/28/2008

ii. Tested – All DWD systems are highly redundant and clustered systems that are tested, maintained, and updated according to precise documented procedure that are delegated according to role. The last major test coincided with the replacement of all application and web servers coinciding with upgrades to all supporting software technologies. These server replacements and software upgrades were concluded on March 28, 2018. These upgrades reflect complete shutdowns, server replacements/rebuilds, software loads, complete system restores, and testing procedures. Another set of server upgrades were due before Q4 2019 to remove a few remaining Windows 2008 servers.

iii. Reviewed/Updated – All Contingency and Continuity of Operations Plans were reviewed by IRS auditors as part of a Safeguards Security Audit on July 24, 2018. DWD has received the results of that audit and has responded to noted findings in IRS-issued corrective action plans on April 30, 2019. Plans were updated during the 1st quarter of 2018 in support of the server and software upgrades concluded on March 28, 2018.

b. System Security Plan

i. Implemented – 02/18/10

ii. Tested – 09/01/15 through 07/24/18

iii. Reviewed/Updated – DWD has developed agency and application security plans to fit current NIST 800-53 requirements and in a new prescribed format required by the Indiana Office of Technology. These documents were the foundation for an IRS Safeguards Security report that was submitted April 30, 2018, and was reviewed during an on-site Safeguards Security Audit that occurred on July 24, 2018. DWD has received the results of that audit and has responded to noted findings in IRS-issued corrective action plans on April 30, 2019. All security plans are stored in Archer, the state's enterprise governance, risk, and compliance tracking system and updated on a yearly basis. The last updates to DWD's security plans were completed on July 10, 2019.

c. Risk Assessment

i. Implemented – 5/1/2006

ii. Tested – 09/01/15 through 07/24/18

iii. Reviewed/Updated – 07/24/2018: DWD participates in the Indiana Office of Technology (IOT) monthly vulnerability assessments utilizing Nexpose reports and reviews of current security risks in biweekly security meetings with the state CISO. The state has also purchased a license for Tenable Nessus, which allows the state and individual agencies to scan servers and applications to the same level utilized by the IRS during Safeguards Security Audits. Application scanning is also performed every six months utilizing IBM Security AppScan. All security plans, including Risk Assessment Planning, have been reviewed during the full audit of DWD compliance with IRS Safeguards Publication 1075

conducted on July 24, 2018. DWD has provided a set of corrective action plan responses on April 30, 2019 and on October 31, 2019. All security plans have been given an annual update, as required by IOT, on July 10, 2019. An annual review of risk assessment information, including system categorization, data classification, and recovery objectives, is conducted with system owners on a yearly basis.

Indiana has a centralized IT agency, the Indiana Office of Technology (IOT), which has the primary operational responsibility for the state's IT systems. The IOT maintains and reviews the IT-related policies and plans referenced in this section. All plans identified above are up-to-date.

DWD continues its participation in the Treasury Offset Program (TOP), in conjunction with the United States Department of the Treasury – Bureau of Fiscal Service. Indiana submitted an initial Safeguards Security Report on January 16, 2015. DWD has participated in two tri-annual audits and has submitted bi-yearly corrective action plan reports since the initial report. The last full audit of agency compliance with IRS Safeguards Publication 1075 was conducted during the week of July 24, 2018 and the initial corrective action plan report was submitted on April 30, 2019.

In conjunction with IOT, DWD has fully implemented two new, robust information security tools, Archer and Varonis DatAdvantage. Archer is a governance, risk, and compliance tracking system that has been implemented statewide for managing the state's and DWD's information security profile and compliance issues. Additional modules are being added to Archer that allow for comprehensive audit results tracking and abatement management. A second tool, Varonis DatAdvantage, has been implemented to monitor file usage activity, user access rights to file servers, and shares across the agency. Additionally, DWD has embarked on an ambitious project to bring its Uplink system into a firewalled, protected zone on the state's network. This will bring the entire Uplink system into compliance with the Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA) Security Technical Implementation Guides (STIGs). DWD has made significant progress in this initiative, both the A-Track and B-Track, for both development and QA database servers are in full operational, day-to-day use. Supporting systems for production batch scheduling and file transport have been moved to the protected zone and thoroughly tested. The Stage pre-production, 2-node database RAC servers have been tested and are in full operational, day-to-day use by September 30, 2019. The production 2-node database RAC servers were unit and regression tested in October 2019 and are in full operational use beginning in December 2019. The cutover to Stage and production have been delayed in support of other state-level initiatives related to security improvements and in support of high priority DWD business needs to enhance the functionality of the Uplink system. All databases in all Uplink environments utilize Oracle Advanced Security for encryption of both data-at-rest and in-transit.

Update for 2022

The state will comply with the assurances listed in HB 336, Appendix I.

Pertinent dates for the implementation, testing, and updating of the plans are as follows:

1.

    a. IT Contingency Plan

        i.

1. IOT's contingency plan was implemented 7/28/2008 and last updated spring 2019 (ver. 2.5). DWD's plan was revamped 7/2014, using the Department of Homeland Security template, and submitted to Indiana Department of Homeland Security 7/2014. The 2014 DWD COOP was updated in 2019/2020 and approved by the DWD Facilities Director on 4/27/2021. The most significant COOP changes related to the inclusion of IT systems information, lessons learned from the COVID pandemic, and synchronizing its content with the State's IT (IOT) COOP. To maintain system high availability, DWD also relies on project plans, with detailed tasks/roles that support the periodic replacement and upgrades of servers and software.

2. Tested –The last major test coincided with the replacement of all application and web servers coinciding with upgrades to all supporting software technologies, concluded on March 28, 2018. These upgrades reflect complete shutdowns, server replacements/rebuilds, software loads, complete system restores, and testing procedures. A more recent plan was concluded 3/2020 with the replacement of servers and the operating system upgrade from Windows 2008 to Windows 2012.

3. DWD's disaster recovery testing in the 2nd half of 2019 had performance issues. DWD is currently configuring 8 virtual servers in support of a revised application architecture that will better support a recovery at the alternate datacenter. No testing is planned in the remainder of 2021 in support of this architecture change.

4. Reviewed/Updated – The 2014 DWD COOP was updated in 2019/2020 and approved by the DWD Facilities Director on 4/27/2021. The most significant COOP changes related to the inclusion of IT systems information, lessons learned from the COVID pandemic, and synchronizing its content with the State's IT (IOT) COOP.

b. System Security Plan

i.

1. Implemented – 02/18/10 (IOT). The DWD Agency System Security plan was documented 12/21/2016, utilizing the FEDRAMP template. More specifically, DWD's Uplink System Security plan was implemented 12/1/2017 via a submission to the State's IOT, security risk and compliancy tool, Archer.

2. Tested – The Uplink SSP has been going through an ongoing update/review/approval/audit process since 09/01/15 in support of various Federal (IRS, SSA, DOE, OCSE, NDNH, DOL) and State (DOE, SBOI) audits. The Uplink SSP, to the Indiana State Board of Accounts as dated version 2/16/2021.

3. Reviewed/Updated – DWD has developed agency and application security plans in 2016 to fit current NIST 800-53 requirements and in a new prescribed format required by the Indiana Office of Technology. These documents were the foundation for an IRS Safeguards Security report that was submitted April 30, 2018 and was reviewed during an on-site Safeguards Security Audit that occurred on July 24, 2018. DWD has received the results of that audit and has responded to noted findings in IRS-issued corrective action plans on April 30, 2019. The SSP supported the 3/2020 SSA triennial audit. Security plans are stored in Archer, the state's enterprise governance, risk and compliance tracking system. The last formal update to the DWD security plan was completed on 2/16/2021 in support of the 4/2021 ISBO audit.

c. Risk Assessment

i.

1. Implemented – 5/1/2006

2. Tested – At least annually, 09/01/15 through 7/2021. Per State IOT policy, DWD performs self-risk assessments at both the agency level and systems level, with the results maintained in the Archer risk/compliance security tool. IOT provides annual risk assessments for the State agencies via contracted 3rd party vendors. Federal (IRS, SSA, DOE, DOL, NCSE) agencies perform periodic onsite audits as well. IOT contracted 3rd party vendor Pondurance to performed penetration security tests of all DWD servers 9/2019 - 10/2019. IOT contracted 3rd party vendor Mako Group to perform infrastructure penetration security tests of State resources and sourced Cloud services July 2021.

3. Reviewed/Updated – Security findings are reviewed and updated on a monthly basis, via the monthly DWD security plan-of-action worksheet. DWD participates with the Indiana Office of Technology (IOT) in monthly vulnerability assessments utilizing Nexpose reports and reviews of current security risks in biweekly security meetings with the state CISO. The state has also purchased a license for Tenable Nessus, which allows the state and individual agencies to scan servers and applications to the same level utilized by the IRS during Safeguards Security Audits. Application scanning is also performed every six months utilizing IBM Security AppScan. All security plans, including Risk Assessment Planning has been reviewed during the full audit of DWD compliance with IRS Safeguards Publication 1075 conducted on July 24, 2018. DWD has provided a set of corrective action plan responses on April 30, 2019 and October 31, 2019. A subsequent set of responses were provided on April 30, 2020. The SSA performed a triennial audit during March 2020, with follow-up responses provide to SSA successfully completed May 2021. The next IRS triennial audit is scheduled for 3/2021. All security plans have been given an annual update, as required by

IOT on July 10, 2019. An annual review of risk assessment information, including system categorization, data classification, and recovery objectives are conducted with system owners on a yearly basis.

Indiana has a centralized IT agency, the Indiana Office of Technology (IOT) that has the main operational responsibility for the infrastructure of the state's IT systems. The IOT maintains and reviews the IT related policies and plans referenced in this section. All plans identified above are up to date.

DWD continues its participation in the Treasury Offset Program (TOP) in conjunction with the United States Department of the Treasury – Bureau of Fiscal Service. Indiana submitted an initial Safeguards Security Report on January 16, 2015. DWD has participated in two tri-annual audits and has submitted bi-yearly corrective action plan reports since the initial report. The last full audit of agency compliance with IRS Safeguards Publication 1075 was conducted during the week of July 24, 2018 and the initial corrective action plan report was submitted on April 30, 2019. The last 6-month CAP report, in support of the 2018 triennial audit is due 10/2021.

In conjunction with the Indiana Office of Technology, DWD utilizes information security tools such as Archer, McAfee, QRadar, Rapid7. Archer is a governance, risk, and compliance tracking system that has been implemented statewide for managing the state's and DWD's information security profile and compliance issues. Additional modules are being added to Archer that allow for comprehensive audit results tracking and abatement management. QRadar allows DWD to detect anomalies in network traffic to/from devices storing or processing confidential data. The InsightVM/Rapid7 tool scans devices connected to the network allowing DWD to address significant software vulnerabilities.

Also, in conjunction with the IOT, DWD has embarked on an ambitious project to bring its Uplink system into a firewalled, protected zone on the State of Indiana network. In 9/2019, DWD completed the relocation of Uplink's database servers into segregated protected zones. The application servers remain to be relocated. Eventually this will bring the entire Uplink system into compliance with the Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA) Security Technical Implementation Guides (STIGs). All databases, in all Uplink environments, utilize Oracle Advanced Security for encryption of both data-at-rest and in-transit.

Assurance of Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA)

Indiana assures annualized training for the DUA staff, starting in Spring of 2022. Indiana has already developed DUA Standard Operating Procedures. This manual will be updated prior to the annual trainings, starting in Spring of 2022.

4. CORRECTIVE ACTION PLANS (CAPS)

CAPs are expected as a part of the SQSP when State's annual performance does not meet the established criteria for core measures, Secretary's Standards, UI program, assurances, and other program deficiencies identified in the annual SQSP guidance provided by the Department. The CAP must list both specific milestones for key corrective actions or improvement activities, and the completion date for each milestone.

5. UI PROGRAM INTEGRITY ACTION PLAN (UI IAP)

The UI IAP outlines the strategies the State will undertake during the planning period regarding the prevention reduction and recovery of UI improper payments.

6. ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

The organization chart must conform to the requirement for delivery of service through public employment offices, or such other designated providers as the Secretary may authorize; show the State's configuration from the Governor of the State down to the point of Employment

Service and UI customer service delivery; and provide sufficient detail to show each organizational unit involved and the title of the unit manager.

7. SQSP SIGNATURE PAGE

The State administrator must sign and date the SQSP Signature Page. By signing the Signature Page, the State administrator certifies that the State will comply with all the assurances and activities contained in the SQSP guidelines.

Though a State needs to submit the complete SQSP package on a 2-year cycle, there are certain documents contained in the SQSP package which are required to be submitted by States annually as part of the off-year submission. The documents which are required to be submitted annually are considered a modification to the complete SQSP submitted the previous year. Since funds for State UI operations are appropriated each year, each State is required to annually submit the transmittal letter, budget worksheets, organizational chart and the signature page. The modification may also include CAPs for new identified performance deficiencies, and any required modifications to existing CAPs.

Since the UI program is a required one-stop partner, States have the option of including UI in the Combined State Plan authorized by WIOA sec. 103.

Update for 2022

B. REQUIREMENTS FOR STATES ELECTING TO INCLUDE UI IN THE COMBINED STATE PLAN

States that elect to include UI in the Combined State Plan must:

1. SUBMIT AN SQSP IN THE FOLLOWING MANNER DEPENDING ON THEIR TIMING IN THE SQSP CYCLE:

A. IF A STATE IS IN THE FIRST YEAR OF THEIR 2-YEAR CYCLE, THE STATE IS REQUIRED TO SUBMIT THE MOST RECENTLY APPROVED COMPLETE SQSP PACKAGE. A COMPLETE SQSP

PACKAGE WILL INCLUDE THE TRANSMITTAL LETTER, BUDGET WORKSHEETS/FORMS, STATE PLAN NARRATIVE, CAPS (INCLUDING THE MILESTONES AND THE COMPLETION DATE FOR EACH MILESTONE), THE UI IAP, ORGANIZATIONAL CHART, AND THE SQSP SIGNATURE PAGE. ONE OF THE KEY GOALS FOR THE UI PROGRAM IS TO ENSURE THAT CLAIMANTS ARE ABLE TO SUCCESSFULLY RETURN TO WORK. AS SUCH, THE SQSP STATE PLAN NARRATIVE MUST PROVIDE A DISCUSSION OF THE PLAN COORDINATION WITH OTHER WIOA COMBINED PLAN PROGRAMS TO ENSURE A COORDINATED EFFORT AND INTEGRATED SERVICE DELIVERY.

See Unemployment Insurance (UI) Section a. 1 through 7.

B. IF A STATE IS IN THE SECOND YEAR OF THE 2-YEAR CYCLE, THE STATE IS REQUIRED TO SUBMIT THE MOST RECENTLY APPROVED COMPLETE SQSP PACKAGE WITH A MODIFICATION THAT MUST INCLUDE THE TRANSMITTAL LETTER, BUDGET WORKSHEETS/FORMS, ORGANIZATIONAL CHART, AND THE SQSP SIGNATURE PAGE. THE MODIFICATION MAY ALSO INCLUDE CAPS FOR NEW IDENTIFIED PERFORMANCE DEFICIENCIES, AND ANY REQUIRED MODIFICATIONS TO EXISTING CAPS. THE CAP MUST LIST BOTH SPECIFIC MILESTONES FOR KEY CORRECTIVE ACTIONS OR IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITIES, AND THE COMPLETION DATE FOR EACH MILESTONE.

See Unemployment Insurance (UI) Section a. 1 through 7.

2. SUBMIT THE REQUIRED OFF-YEAR SQSP COMPONENTS AS A MODIFICATION TO THE COMBINED STATE PLAN ON THE SAME CYCLE AS THE REGULAR SQSP PROCESS WHICH MUST BE APPROVED BY SEPTEMBER 30TH EACH YEAR

See Unemployment Insurance (UI) Section a. 1 through 7.

SENIOR COMMUNITY SERVICE EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM (SCSEP)

(OMB Control No. 1205-0040)

A. ECONOMIC PROJECTIONS AND IMPACT

1. DISCUSS LONG-TERM PROJECTIONS FOR JOBS IN INDUSTRIES AND OCCUPATIONS IN THE STATE THAT MAY PROVIDE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR OLDER WORKERS. (20 CFR 641.302(D)) (MAY ALTERNATIVELY BE DISCUSSED IN THE ECONOMIC ANALYSIS SECTION OF STRATEGIC PLAN.)

The following graph identifies the Top 20 Common Occupations for Hoosiers 55+. See additional information in the section below.

Targeting these occupations and sectors when creating training plans will be critical in ensuring future job placement for this target population. As new sectors and occupations are discovered and created within the economy, Indiana is prepared to adapt to meet the needs of SCSEP clients and the employer base.

2. DISCUSS HOW THE LONG-TERM JOB PROJECTIONS DISCUSSED IN THE ECONOMIC ANALYSIS SECTION OF STRATEGIC PLAN RELATE TO THE TYPES OF UNSUBSIDIZED JOBS FOR WHICH SCSEP PARTICIPANTS WILL BE TRAINED AND THE TYPES OF SKILL TRAINING TO BE PROVIDED. (20 CFR 641.302(D))

Older workers are remaining in the workforce longer due to various economic factors, such as lack of financial planning, healthcare costs, and cost of living. Indiana, through its partnerships with Title I programs, WorkOne American Job Centers (AJCs) and SCSEP providers, assists participants with training opportunities, computer resources, and connections to community partners to secure unsubsidized employment. Indiana is working with its sub-grantees to provide and align training to meet both current and job openings.

Indiana's SCSEP providers utilize the previous chart to determine which occupations will be in demand and to help identify potential gaps in training. Training opportunities include: basic computer skills, resume, financial literacy, and other reemployment service workshop training. IN SCSEP participants also have access to other motivational and informational workshops which help accelerate their journeys to fulfilling careers. Topics such as: building confidence, discovering hidden jobs, interview success, customer service, LinkedIn, and finding your career passion.

Soft skills training is also provided to help the jobseeker grow their work search and job retention skills for successful employment.

The chart below shows projected long term changes for the occupations common to Hoosiers 55+:

These projections can be utilized to identify high growth opportunities, as long as there is a match with skills, strength, and interest by our SCSEP participants. Without taking these matches into consideration the risk for successfully maintaining employment diminishes.

3. DISCUSS CURRENT AND PROJECTED EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE STATE (SUCH AS BY PROVIDING INFORMATION AVAILABLE UNDER §15 OF THE WAGNER-PEYSER ACT (29 U.S.C. 491-2) BY OCCUPATION), AND THE TYPES OF SKILLS POSSESSED BY ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS. (20 CFR 641.325(C))

The data provided below are included in the Indiana Economic Analysis 2018 Report (most recent report available), prepared by the DWD Research & Analysis team. A complete copy of the report is available at: https://www.hoosierdata.in.gov/docs/annual_econ_analysis/INDIANA%20ECONOMIC%20ANALYSIS%20REPORT%20PY2018.pdf

Age Distribution of the Workforce: The age distribution of Indiana's workforce is shown below. Between the 2015 and 2020 estimates of the age distribution, Indiana's workforce continued to grow older. The number of workers age 55 and older increased year over year, while workers under age 55 decreases. For additional details, see Economic Analysis Section.

The data provided below are included in the Indiana Economic Analysis 2018 Report (most recent report available), prepared by the DWD Research & Analysis team. A complete copy of the report is available at: https://www.hoosierdata.in.gov/docs/annual_econ_analysis/INDIANA%20ECONOMIC%20ANALYSIS%20REPORT%20PY2018.pdf

Industries showing the highest employment increases from 2013 to 2018 and Skills needed for each are included below.

- **Manufacturing:** Indiana manufacturers grew employment by 50,097 over this time frame. Manufacturing remains the largest increase in the recovery of total jobs of all industries. Manufacturing had a growth rate of 10.2% as an industry for Indiana and pays wages greater than average, with average weekly wages of $1,205 during 2018.
- **Health Care and Social Assistance:** Health care and social assistance facilities have grown by 9.0% in the last 5 years with an increase of 36,376 jobs. This sector growth includes physicians' offices, hospitals, and a wide range of providers. Wages in this industry increased by 11.6% in 2018 to an average weekly wage of $1,036.
- **Accommodation and Food Services:** The Accommodation and Food service industries have grown at a rate of 7.2% since 2013, adding 18,154 jobs. While many of these jobs are lower or middle wage jobs, growth in these industries indicates growth in consumer spending and confidence and may indicate positive economic trends for the state. This industry includes many part time workers, and average weekly wages were just $320 during 2018.
- **Construction:** The Construction industry grew by 17,760 or 14.4% between 2013 and 2018. This sector grew slowing early in the economic recovery but has gained momentum in recent years. The average weekly wages for this industry are at $1,123 for 2018
- **Administrative Support and Waste Services:** This industry has grown by 14,443 over this five year period, at a rate of 8.2%. Gains have been dominated by growth in

temporary employment services. Once concentrated in office support or manufacturing, recent growth indicates employment services now provide temporary labor to a wide variety of industries throughout the state. Wages for these industries vary widely, and the weekly averages may include part time workers. During 2018 the average weekly wage for this industry sector was $635.

- **Professional and Technical Services:** Professional and Technical Services has shown healthy growth from 2013 to 2018. This is an industry that will be key to Indiana's future. Among the industries this sector contains are Legal Services, Architectural and Engineering, Research and Development and Computer Systems Design and Related Services. Many of these areas have been the focus of Indiana economic development. The sector has grown 17,224 jobs at a 16.8% gain over the past five years. The average weekly wages for 2018 for this sector are above the state average at $1,340.
- **Transportation and Warehousing:** Transportation and Warehousing has grown by 22,565 from 2013-2018. This industry has also been a target for economic development for several years. This industry grew by 17.2% during this five year period. The average weekly wages for Transportation and Warehousing were at $902 for 2018.

B. SERVICE DELIVERY AND COORDINATION

1. A DESCRIPTION OF ACTIONS TO COORDINATE SCSEP WITH OTHER PROGRAMS. THIS MAY ALTERNATIVELY BE DISCUSSED IN THE STATE STRATEGIES SECTION OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN, BUT REGARDLESS OF PLACEMENT IN DOCUMENT, MUST INCLUDE:

A. PLANNED ACTIONS TO COORDINATE ACTIVITIES OF SCSEP GRANTEES WITH WIOA TITLE I PROGRAMS, INCLUDING PLANS FOR USING THE WIOA ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM AND ITS PARTNERS TO SERVE INDIVIDUALS AGED 55 AND OLDER. (20 CFR 641.302(G), 641.325(E))

SCSEP serves older workers when other programs do not, and it can help supplement other training programs to better serve older workers. Indiana must coordinate SCSEP with the talent development system at-large to maximize resources, prevent duplication of services, and increase access for older Hoosiers. This program must be fully integrated into WorkOne offices through physical, virtual, or mobile co-location. Local regions can also explore embedding or using itinerant staffing models.

SCSEP funds the following activities:

- Wages and benefits (must account for at least 75% of funds),
- Training,
- Job placement assistance, including job development and job search assistance,
- Supportive services (e.g., health and medical costs, transportation, work-related equipment, childcare, etc.),
- Outreach, recruitment and selection, intake, orientation, and assessments, and
- Other employment, training, and education services that may help a constituent secure unsubsidized employment.

Through braided funding between WIOA Title I, Wagner-Peyser, and SCSEP, as well as the utilization of Indiana Career Ready (ICR), our SCSEP staff can work to connect a senior's

employment history, personal background, and non-work activities and skills (e.g., hobbies, household activities, faith-related activities, etc.) with the current labor market needs to expedite the training and placement process for the participant. Wagner-Peyser could also help fund business outreach, recruitment, and selection and job search and placement for the SCSEP participant. Additionally, if a senior qualifies for another WIOA Core Program, those funds could help provide training and assessments. SCSCEP funds should prioritizes wages and benefits and supportive services, such as transportation or medical costs, when possible.

Indiana's SCSEP subgrantee, National Able, and other SCSEP partners will develop training that emphasizes digital literacy and computer skills training, life coaching, and financial management skills for its participants. This will require finding innovative curricula and preparation activities that ensure the optimal learning environment and reinforce workplace "realities" regarding the work-a-day schedule, dress, and turnaround on assignments. Our SCSEP training and services must also be tailored to assist individual circumstances, such as older women entering the labor force for the first time, reentry after retirement, the loss of a spouse, or a lack of basic computer and internet skills. For those seniors who qualify, WIOA Adult can help fill any funding gaps or provide training opportunities, specifically in financial and digital literacy.

Indiana utilizes WorkOnes to coordinate SCSEP with WIOA. Through DWD, we train WIOA case managers on the SCSEP program and potential indicators of a constituent's needs, which may be met by SCSEP, WIOA, and/or other programs and training opportunities. Furthering co-enrollment will be a goal as we implement SCSCEP over the next 4 years.

The state monitoring plan reviews referrals to SCSEP to ensure program candidate referrals are being completed properly on a regular basis. State leadership who oversee the SCSEP grant have quarterly calls with the grantees to go over the administration and coordination of SCSEP efforts, provide technical assistance, and share best demonstrated practices.

B. PLANNED ACTIONS TO COORDINATE ACTIVITIES OF SCSEP GRANTEES WITH THE ACTIVITIES BEING CARRIED OUT IN THE STATE UNDER THE OTHER TITLES OF THE OLDER AMERICANS ACT (OAA). (20 CFR 641.302(H))

The State Grantee SCSEP Program Administrator is housed in the DWD Central Office and manages the other Older Americans Act (OAA) funds and programs. DWD meets monthly with the Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA) and Indiana's Area Agencies on Aging, which provide case management, information, and referrals to various services for persons who are aging or developmentally disabled, to coordinate activities under OAA. The SCSEP Administrator hosts regular meetings to coordinate all OAA programs and is connected to the Employment Services Program which is charged with increasing the employment of people served by Office of Aging and Disability Services (OADS). Additionally, DWD-OADS has a Memorandum of Understanding with Vocational Rehabilitation Services to coordinate access to services and supports for older individuals with disabilities.

DWD plans to hold bi-monthly meetings with the service provider that manages the OAA, who is also housed in the DWD building. In addition, weekly meetings by phone or face-to-face with all parties involved who help to serve our SCSEP clients, as well as partner with FSSA to co-case manage the individual to ensure successful referral for additional services.

C. PLANNED ACTIONS TO COORDINATE SCSEP WITH OTHER PRIVATE AND PUBLIC ENTITIES AND PROGRAMS THAT PROVIDE SERVICES TO OLDER AMERICANS, SUCH AS COMMUNITY AND FAITH- BASED ORGANIZATIONS, TRANSPORTATION PROGRAMS, AND PROGRAMS FOR THOSE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS OR DISABILITIES. (20 CFR 641.302(I))

Local non-profit social service agencies, such as Community Action Agencies (United Way, Gleaners Food Bank, Wheeler Mission, etc.), Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP), Adult Education, Area Agencies on Aging, and faith-based agencies, are working across the state to provide all the necessary services and safety nets for older individuals. Indiana will continue work with key partner organizations who provide these services needed for low-income Hoosiers, especially those who have multiple barriers to employment.

High-Priority services needed in Indiana:

- Fuel Assistance (LiHEAP)
- Transportation
- Food (Meals on Wheels, SNAP, CSFP)
- Health Care
- Respite Care
- Long Term Care
- Job Re-training/Adult Education
- English as Second Language
- Substance Abuse

Indiana SCSEP also works with Area Agencies on Aging to provide services to the senior Hoosiers. Indiana SCSEP currently has 69 active Host Agencies, with whom we partner to provide training opportunities to program participants. Many organizations throughout the state, such as the Vigo County Public Library, WorkOne Lafayette, and Terre Haute Housing Authority, provide Indiana SCSEP with meeting space and the technology which allows us to facilitate workshops for program participants. Other organizations, such as WorkOne Columbus, the Ivy Tech Community College system, YMCA of Michiana, The ARC of Greater Boone County, and RISE Inc., provide training for program participants and staff on topics pertinent to mature job seekers and seniors writ large. Michigan City Housing Authority, City of Gary Redevelopment Commission, North Township Trustees Office, Fort Wayne Urban League, and other organizations coordinate with Indiana SCSEP to provide housing assistance to program participants. All of the programs mentioned above have an active reciprocal referral relationship with Indiana SCSEP, and many SCSCEP participants are co-enrolled in two or more programs to meet their needs.

Indiana SCSEP is connected with the economic development organizations in every county of the state through delivery of WIOA services through each Workforce Development Board. WorkOne offices partner with local economic development officers to identify potential growth opportunities and strive to match SCSEP participants with job openings when skills and abilities match job requirements. We also plan to reach out to local nonprofit groups that could help fill some gaps in our current availability of resources. We will work to create a coalition in each area to keep these providers abreast of rising needs in specific locations of the state.

D. PLANNED ACTIONS TO COORDINATE SCSEP WITH OTHER LABOR MARKET AND JOB TRAINING INITIATIVES. (20 CFR 641.302(J))

Indiana has initiated several projects with regard to its operating systems that will support implementation of the strategies described above, such as:

- Hoosiers by the Numbers: This site is Indiana's Labor Market Information (LMI) website and includes many virtual tools with information for community leaders and individuals.
- Indiana Business Research Center (BRC): It assists in the hosting, developing, and distributing the Workforce Information Database (WID), as mandated by the Workforce Information Grant. This site offers data tools and resources for all of the Bureau of Labor Statistics Employment and Wage programs. This includes information on the incumbent workforce, unemployment trends, labor force estimates, and projections for future occupations in demand.

Indiana endeavors to use a variety of approaches to understand the magnitude of ever-changing, real-time labor market information trends. Currently, future skills and job demand are analyzed using both traditional labor market information data and supplemental labor market information through real-time job posting analytics and employer engagement. Sources include:

- Real–time data obtained from analyzing current job postings, posted resumes, and other relevant unstructured and structured data sources;
- Advanced data analysis tools and techniques;
- Data gleaned from direct employer engagement (i.e. in the form of employer surveys, meetings with employers, economic development initiatives, etc.); and
- Data developed by external, industry-specific modeling tools that include forward looking data.

The site is designed for career counselors, job seekers, policy makers, and the general public.

DWD populates the WID with state and local data that cover at least the most recent 10-year period. This database serves as the primary source for Hoosiers by the Numbers and is supplemented by the Stats Indiana database, which is maintained by IBRC. The data cover counties, metropolitan statistical areas, and economic growth regions, in addition to statewide estimates and aggregates.

Hoosiers by the Numbers had more than 106,804 active sessions and nearly 71,126 new users on the site between July 2018 and June 2019, according to the web analytics tracked by DWD. Approximately 13,986 of the page visit sessions were from mobile devices or tablets, showing an increase of 13.73% above last year's total of 11,925. This is an indicator that the enhancements to create mobile friendly applications have been successful and popularity of use in these formats is on the rise. Furthermore, on average visitors viewed approximately 4.03 pages per session and were on the site for approximately six minutes. To achieve this type of online traffic, marketing and promotion of IndianaCareerReady.com and accompanying sites included:

- Regular social media posts and promotion throughout the year on DWD social assets (Twitter, Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn). In 2019, there were 153 direct posts promoting IndianaCareerReady.com and the related tools on DWD social assets.
- IndianaCareerReady.com is a featured front page tool on the main DWD website and is prominently displayed on the footer of most DWD press releases that go out to media and subscribers throughout the state and beyond. In 2019, we distributed 66 statewide

press releases to an audience of 774 media recipients and subscribers, each of which contained the Indiana Career Ready logo.

- Highlighting DWD's online resources is a part of the main DWD PowerPoint presentation, which is used throughout the year and the state, both in-person and on-line in webinars, at Virtual Job Fairs, and other deliveries and events. Online resources was a regular part of the Next Level Jobs presentations we conducted throughout 2018 and much of 2019, both as webinars and in-person.
- INDemandJobs.com is also featured on other state programs' website, such as the NextLevelJobs.org.
- DWD regularly promotes IndianaCareerReady.com and related online tools through its regional offices.
- Pop-up banners and posters have been created to enhance in-person promotion and marketing efforts. Current banners and posters include: INDemandJobs, Indiana Career Ready, and Indiana Career Explorer. Examples of use and promotion are: the Indiana State Fair, JobSpark, statewide conferences, and direct mailings Hoosier schools and guidance counselors.'
- DWD created videos on Indiana Career Explorer and Indiana Career Connect highlighting the mobile app, which are on YouTube and are regularly promoted and shared.

The core of Hoosiers by the Numbers is strong navigation geared toward people looking for their county or region or a specific piece of data on a workforce related topic. The site is powered by more than 7 billion records in the joint databases of the IBRC and DWD and is meant to serve as a leading informational site for business developers, researchers, and the public alike.

E. ACTIONS TO ENSURE THAT SCSEP IS AN ACTIVE PARTNER IN THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM AND THE STEPS THE STATE WILL TAKE TO ENCOURAGE AND IMPROVE COORDINATION WITH THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM. (20 CFR 641.335)

WorkOne offices are often the cornerstone in collaboration between SCSEP with WIOA. Case managers look for opportunities during the intake and evaluation process to identify participants appropriate to for co-enrollment into SCSEP. This process determines what needs the Hoosier has and which programs and activities will best address those needs to get him/her back to work as soon as possible. Indiana cross-trains WIOA case managers on the SCSEP program and what may be indicators of an individual's needs, which may be met by SCSEP, WIOA, and/ or other programs and training opportunities. Promising practices in coordinating the two programs are regularly discussed at staff training meetings on a weekly basis. The state monitoring plan includes examining whether or not appropriate referral to SCSEP is occurring on a regular basis. State leadership overseeing the SCSEP grant have monthly calls with the grantees to review the administration and coordination of SCSEP, provide technical assistance, and share best practices.

F. EFFORTS TO WORK WITH LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OFFICES IN RURAL LOCATIONS.

Indiana SCSEP is connected with the economic development organizations in every county of the state through delivery of WIOA services through each Workforce Development Board. Increasing co-location (e.g., physical, embedded staffing, or mobile/temporary) between SCSEP

and WIOA staff in various programming offices and hubs of community activity in our rural regions will help foster greater partnership and economic development efforts. WorkOne offices continue to partner with local economic development officers to identify potential growth opportunities and strive to match SCSEP participants with job openings when skills and abilities match job requirements.

2. THE STATE'S LONG-TERM STRATEGY FOR ENGAGING EMPLOYERS TO DEVELOP AND PROMOTE OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE PLACEMENT OF SCSEP PARTICIPANTS IN UNSUBSIDIZED EMPLOYMENT. (20 CFR 641.302(E)) (MAY ALTERNATIVELY BE DISCUSSED IN THE STATE STRATEGIES SECTION OF STRATEGIC PLAN.)

Indiana's grantee and sub-grantee long-term strategies for engaging employers include attending community meetings, posting flyers, and tri-folders in not-for-profits, host agencies, and federal businesses; making cold calls to potential employers; and participating in booth events, such as job and community fairs.

In addition, DWD will provide our Business Services Representatives with SCSEP training information, including key strategic items. All training materials will be made available on DWD's Field Operation Resource Center where all DWD staff may review at any time for new hire or refresher training. Leveraging the DWD Business Services team will provide us with additional opportunities to connect with new SCSEP business partners and potential SCSEP employers in the community.

SCSEP staff may partner with Wagner-Peyser (WP) staff for:

1. Funding assistance for business outreach, recruitment/selection, job search and placement for the SCSEP participant, and
2. To help connect a senior's employment history, personal background, and non-work activities and skills (e.g., hobbies, household activities, faith-related activities, etc.) with the current labor market needs to expedite the training and placement process for the participant.

Other strategies from our Combined State Plan include:

1. A plan to create a SEAL program specifically for seniors that will:

- Incorporate both subsidized employment, digital literacy, and on-the-job training through sector partnerships.
- Provide work-based training opportunities such as: federally-recognized apprenticeships, internships, job shadow experiences, State Earn and Learn programs through DWD's Office of Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeship, and incumbent worker training.

(See page 11 of this Combined State Plan for additional details)

2. Connect to Indiana Technical Community College (ITCC) or Vincennes University (VU) for upskilling in IT

- Green Thumb Project is an example of potential IT projects

3. Connect to Adult Education (AE) for basic skills support

- Co-enrollment in WP

4. Connect to Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) for assistive technology

- Co-enrollment in WP

5. WorkOne AJC's may employing SCSEP participants to:

- Help administer other workforce programs,
- Hoosier seniors with diverse backgrounds may be hired to work in roles that require various language and/or cultural competencies
- Fill roles at the Welcome desk or providing over the shoulder assistance in the public computer labs

3. THE STATE'S LONG-TERM STRATEGY FOR SERVING MINORITY OLDER INDIVIDUALS UNDER SCSEP. (20 CFR 641.302 (C))

Indiana currently serves diverse groups of minority and underserved Hoosiers. SCSEP enrollment levels for minorities match or exceed state population levels in each category with the exception of the Latino and Asian populations. All outcome levels for minorities match or exceed program-wide outcomes, as well. According to PY 2017's Minority Report, Indiana SCSEP is serving 295.6% of the percentage of minorities in the state.[1]

Indiana and its sub-grantee specifically target recruitment and enrollment of members of our high-needs populations, which includes outreach to community- and faith-based organizations, Area Agencies on Aging, veterans organizations, food pantries, senior centers, homeless shelters, organizations that focus on minority and English Learner populations, and Vocational Rehabilitation providers. Staff members have formed partnerships with various organizations that provide services to minority groups in the communities in which the state and its sub-grantee work, establishing formal agreements that facilitate open lines of communication with respect to follow-up, referrals, activities, and, most importantly, meaningful experiences for SCSEP participants. Indiana and its sub-grantee have worked with various unique multi-barrier participants who, before joining SCSEP, were afforded little to no access to services. Additionally, to expand available services for minority groups, bilingual staff to help eliminate potential language barriers.

DWD also partner with national organizations and their local affiliates within our communities, such as the National Association of Minority Organizations, National Minority Business Council, AARP, Senior Corps, and the National Asian Pacific Center on Aging, among others. Through these partnerships, Indiana is able to identify the various needs of minority populations and the means to collaborate regarding programmatic and service provision. Some of the additional organizations DWD strives to work with include, but are not limited to, the Indiana Black Expo, Inc., the Indiana Latino Institute, the Indiana Minority Health Coalition, Inc., and the Richard L. Roudebush VAMC Minority Veterans Program.

[1] US Department of Labor. SCSCEP Minority Report PY 2017.

4. A LIST OF COMMUNITY SERVICES THAT ARE NEEDED AND THE PLACES WHERE THESE SERVICES ARE MOST NEEDED. SPECIFICALLY, THE PLAN MUST ADDRESS THE NEEDS AND LOCATION OF THOSE INDIVIDUALS MOST IN NEED OF COMMUNITY SERVICES AND THE GROUPS WORKING TO MEET THEIR NEEDS. (20 CFR 641.330)

Local non-profit social service agencies, such as Community Action Agencies (United Way, Gleaners, Wheeler Mission, etc.), Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP), Adult Education, Area Agencies on Aging and faith-based agencies, are working across the state to

provide all the needed services and necessary safety nets. These organizations help to provide the services needed for low income Hoosiers, but are especially critical for older Hoosiers who have multiple barriers to employment and limited resources. The State will continue to maintain an active list of key partner organizations.

High-Priority Services Needed in Indiana:

- Fuel Assistance (LiHEAP) – Central and Northern Indiana
- Transportation - Statewide
- Food (Meals on Wheels, SNAP, CSFP) - Statewide
- Health Care - Statewide
- Respite Care - Statewide
- Long Term Care - Statewide
- Job Re-training/Adult Education - Statewide
- English as Second Language – Central and Northern Indiana
- Substance Abuse – Southern Indiana

One of the current challenges that SCSEP staff are trying to overcome is many clients' reluctance to accept work which pays enough to financially disqualify them for some of the assistance programs, such as subsidized insurance or supportive services, but may make it financially difficult to secure these needed services on their own.

5. THE STATE'S LONG-TERM STRATEGY TO IMPROVE SCSEP SERVICES, INCLUDING PLANNED LONG-TERM CHANGES TO THE DESIGN OF THE PROGRAM WITHIN THE STATE, AND PLANNED CHANGES IN THE USE OF SCSEP GRANTEES AND PROGRAM OPERATORS TO BETTER ACHIEVE THE GOALS OF THE PROGRAM. THIS MAY INCLUDE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE DEPARTMENT AS APPROPRIATE. (20 CFR 641.302(K))

At this time, Indiana is not proposing any significant changes in the design of the program. Program administration and performance will continue being reviewed and evaluated on an ongoing basis.

6. THE STATE'S STRATEGY FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT IN THE LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE FOR SCSEP PARTICIPANTS' ENTRY INTO UNSUBSIDIZED EMPLOYMENT, AND TO ACHIEVE, AT A MINIMUM, THE LEVELS SPECIFIED IN OAA SECTION 513(A)(2)(E)(II). (20 CFR 641.302(F))

DWD administers SCSEP programming in Indiana through a single sub-grantee, National Able Network (NAN). NAN is responsible for providing programming to all 217 authorized state SCSEP positions. It has continuously administered SCSEP programming in states around the country since 1986. The current SCSEP national grantees operating in Indiana are NAN, AARP, Goodwill Industries (GII), and Senior Service America, Inc. (SSAI). Indiana will advise USDOL of any changes in the use of grantees and/or program operators.

DWD's strategy for continuous improvement includes the following:

- Partner with DWD Business Services;

- Build stronger relationships with existing host agencies, participants, and partner agencies for referrals;
- Create SCSEP partner contact list;
- Speak with regional leadership about the need for host agencies and participants;
- Hold an annual grantee meeting to discuss pressing issues and BDP's including but not limited to: reducing exit rates, participant and host agency recruiting, succession planning, and coordination amongst the different organizations' staff;
- Hold an annual grantee and WorkOne partner meeting to enhance program understanding and partner needs. as well as to improve collaboration between partners; and
- Establish a policy regarding the level and length of time a variance may occur before taking action and defining a framework for handling equitable distribution variances going forward.

C. LOCATION AND POPULATION SERVED, INCLUDING EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION

1. A DESCRIPTION OF THE LOCALITIES AND POPULATIONS FOR WHICH PROJECTS OF THE TYPE AUTHORIZED BY TITLE V ARE MOST NEEDED. (20 CFR 641.325 (D))

The chart below breaks down Indiana's 55+ population by:

- County,
- # of this population unemployed at 3.4%,
- # of SCSEP positions,
- Ratio of positions to unemployed, and
- Identifies the counties with a 40% or higher rural population.

The process for assessing and determining the movement of positions was completed in part by defining "rural" counties as those where the rural population is greater than 40%.

The state has sought to ensure equitable distribution of AJC offices and is utilizing online options to enhance access to SCSEP and virtual reemployment services in the more rural areas identified in the far right column by a "Y".

The graph below breaks down the total population of each region by race:

- The “Count” column shows the # of non-white residents.
- “#” column identifies the rank of each county out of 50 by % of other races.
- Black residents are the 2nd highest ethnic group behind
- Hispanics represent the next highest population group

The graph below identifies the % of Indiana's population living in households where languages other than English are spoken at home in comparison with the entire country.

The three previous charts provide valuable insight into identifying Indiana's most at risk counties including populations with barriers such as higher than average unemployment rates, greater distance/travel challenges to WorkOne AJC's. Additional factors may include race and English as a second language. All of these factors influence placement of SCSEP positions and help us identify, by county, areas where additional resources such as interpreter services, multi-lingual documents and forms, and additional funding may be needed to provide additional support and WorkOne AJC staff.

2. LIST THE CITIES AND COUNTIES WHERE THE PROJECT WILL BE CONDUCTED. INCLUDE THE NUMBER OF SCSEP AUTHORIZED POSITIONS AND INDICATE WHERE THE POSITIONS CHANGED FROM THE PRIOR YEAR.

No changes occurred in 2019 and none are anticipated in 2020. Changes since 2020 are reflected below:

SubGranteeCode	CountyName	Previous seats	Current seats	Change
IN008	Adams	2	2	

SubGranteeCode	CountyName	Previous seats	Current seats	Change
IN008	Allen	6	6	
IN008	Bartholomew	5	4	-1
IN008	Boone	3	2	-1
IN008	Clark	7	8	1
IN008	Decatur	4	4	
IN008	DeKalb	3	3	
IN008	Delaware	5	5	
IN008	Elkhart	8	8	
IN008	Floyd	6	6	
IN008	Fountain	2	2	
IN008	Grant	4	4	
IN008	Hamilton	7	9	2
IN008	Hancock	2	2	
IN008	Hendricks	4	4	
IN008	Howard	5	5	
IN008	Huntington	3	3	
IN008	Jackson	9	9	
IN008	Kosciusko	2	2	
IN008	LaGrange	4	3	-1
IN008	Lake	12	13	1
IN008	LaPorte	7	7	
IN008	Lawrence	11	10	-1
IN008	Madison	4	4	
IN008	Marion	10	10	
IN008	Marshall	4	4	
IN008	Monroe	5	5	
IN008	Morgan	5	5	
IN008	Noble	5	4	-1
IN008	Owen	3	3	

SubGranteeCode	CountyName	Previous seats	Current seats	Change
IN008	Porter	7	8	1
IN008	Rush	4	4	
IN008	Scott	5	6	1
IN008	St. Joseph	6	7	1
IN008	Steuben	5	4	-1
IN008	Switzerland	2	3	1
IN008	Tippecanoe	7	8	1
IN008	Vanderburgh	2	2	
IN008	Vigo	2	2	
IN008	Wabash	4	4	
IN008	Washington	5	7	2
IN008	Wells	5	4	-1
IN008	Whitley	3	2	-1
		214	217	

3. DESCRIBE CURRENT SLOT IMBALANCES AND PROPOSED STEPS TO CORRECT INEQUITIES TO ACHIEVE EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION.

Analysis and resulting trends lead Indiana to believe that positive variances are due to high program need and a large number of host agencies in relatively close proximity to grantee and sub-grantee staff. This tends to be in mid to large urban areas. Negative variances are due to a combination of low program need due to strong regional economies, an inadequate number of host agencies, host agencies having lower participant capacity, and distant program staff. Distance is compounded by low program funding levels that inhibit the ability of staff to travel and conduct participant and host agency recruiting efforts. We have noticed that participants need a great deal of support just to stay engaged in SCSEP, otherwise, they exit. DWD will continue to study variance trends. Additional analysis will provide a clearer picture of the situation and the best way to implement any final decisions.

4. THE STATE'S LONG-TERM STRATEGY FOR ACHIEVING AN EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF SCSEP POSITIONS WITHIN THE STATE THAT:

A. MOVES POSITIONS FROM OVER-SERVED TO UNDERSERVED LOCATIONS WITHIN THE STATE IN COMPLIANCE WITH 20 CFR 641.365.

Indiana is looking at realigning SCSEP positions in underserved counties. where practical, specifically, those with less than a 01:1 Participant to Position ratio by reducing positions from highest served counties. Impacted counties are illustrated in the table in the section below. Additional studies of optimal Participant to Position ratios in different parts of the state are needed. DWD's ultimate goal is to develop a position movement policy that specifies under what conditions positions would be moved and how this would be accomplished.

B. EQUITABLY SERVES RURAL AND URBAN AREAS.

Indiana is looking at realigning SCSEP positions in rural areas to a .01:1 Participant to Position ratio in counties greater than 40% rural by reducing positions from highest served counties. Indiana is also focused on realigning SCSEP positions in areas with a .04:1 Participant to Position ratio. Impacted counties are illustrated in the Tables 1 and 2 below:

Table 1:

Table 2:

C. SERVES INDIVIDUALS AFFORDED PRIORITY FOR SERVICE UNDER 20 CFR 641.520. (20 CFR 641.302(A), 641.365, 641.520)

Program eligible older workers must be residents of Indiana, 55 years of age or older, unemployed, with family income at 125% or less of the federal poverty line (after allowable exclusions), as established by the United States Department of Health and Human Services (US DHHS). Service priority is given to individuals meeting one or more of the barriers to employment:

- Is a veteran or a spouse of veteran,
- Is 65 years of age or older,
- Has a disability,
- Has limited English proficiency,
- Has low literacy skills,
- Resides in a rural area,
- Has low employment prospects,
- Has failed to find employment after utilizing services provided under Title I of WIOA of 2014,
- Is homeless or at risk for homelessness, or
- Is formerly incarcerated.

In addition to the above barriers to employment warranting priority of service, SCSEP clients that interface with the WorkOne system may also be eligible for WIOA priority of service. DWD will continue to review its WIOA Adult Priority of Service (POS) guidance to better align with the federal vision and the strategies outlined within this Plan. DWD's current POS guidance can be found at https://www.in.gov/dwd/compliance-policy/policy/active/. Additionally, local areas must have written policies that delineate how they will give priority of service and must adhere to these policies. DWD will review data and local policies to ensure priority is being carried out appropriately and will provide technical assistance as needed. DWD is continuing to evaluate local level benchmarks and will review data and local policies to ensure priority is being carried out appropriately. Technical assistance will be provided as needed.

5. THE RATIO OF ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS IN EACH SERVICE AREA TO THE TOTAL ELIGIBLE POPULATION IN THE STATE. (20 CFR 641.325(A))

Please see information included in the table below:

6. THE RELATIVE DISTRIBUTION OF ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WHO:

A. RESIDE IN URBAN AND RURAL AREAS WITHIN THE STATE

The process for assessing and determining the movement of positions was done in part by defining more rural areas as those where the population was in a county with greater than 40% of the population living in a rural area. The state has sought to ensure equitable distribution of WorkOne offices and is utilizing online options to enhance access to services. Please see information included in the table:

B. HAVE THE GREATEST ECONOMIC NEED

Indiana utilized median household income to determine the relative distribution of those with the greatest economic need. The majority of individuals with this barrier to employment are located in two bands of rural areas, one running southeast roughly from north central to east central Indiana, and the other from west central to south central Indiana. The first band is mostly served by the state; the state serves parts of the second area, but the majority of Hoosiers in this area are served by AARP, Goodwill, and National Able Network (NAN).

C. ARE MINORITIES

Northwest, northeast, and central Indiana have the highest distribution of minority individuals in the state.

The highest concentration of Asian Hoosiers is in central and west central Indiana with an outlying pocket in the Fort Wayne area. The two densest areas with African-American populations are northwest and central Indiana (Gary and Indianapolis). The next two more moderately populated areas are Elkhart and Fort Wayne. The densest areas of Latino population are in central, northwest, and north central Indiana (Indianapolis, Lafayette, and Elkhart). The

highest distribution of mixed (two or more) race individuals are in southwest and eastern Indiana.

D. ARE LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT

While individuals who speak a language other than English in the home are not necessarily limited with their proficiency with English, it provides a pool of potential eligible program participants. Spanish is by far the most common language spoken at home other than English (4.6%). When comparing this with the distribution of minority populations, the areas with the greatest propensity for English language challenges are in central, northwest, and north central Indiana (Indianapolis, Lafayette, and Elkhart). The second most common group of languages includes Asian languages, and so central/west central Indiana and the Fort Wayne area have the next greatest propensity for English language challenges. A third group is that of Syrian refugees in central and north eastern parts of the state.

E. HAVE THE GREATEST SOCIAL NEED. (20 CFR 641.325(B))

Indiana used the level of SNAP recipients as the primary indicator to determine those with the greatest social need. Richmond, Indianapolis, Gary, Muncie, and Anderson are cities within Indiana that have the highest number of SNAP recipients in the state. Outside of these urban centers, the majority of SNAP recipients reside in the rural parts of the state.

F. FORMERLY INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS, AS DEFINED IN TEGL 17-20

Indiana is newly assessing the relative distribution of eligible individuals who are formerly incarcerated, now defined a priority level of service for the SCSEP program. To better understand the population of individuals that may be eligible, we have partnered with Indiana Department of Corrections to aggregate data on individuals, 55+, incarcerated and their anticipated release dates. We plan to review this data regularly and work to establish partnerships to connect these eligible individuals to SCSEP and workforce programs and services. The below chart depicts currently anticipated releases over the next three years.

7. A DESCRIPTION OF THE STEPS TAKEN TO AVOID DISRUPTIONS TO THE GREATEST EXTENT POSSIBLE, WHEN POSITIONS ARE REDISTRIBUTED, AS PROVIDED IN 20 CFR 641.365; WHEN NEW CENSUS OR OTHER RELIABLE DATA BECOME AVAILABLE; OR WHEN THERE IS OVER-ENROLLMENT FOR ANY OTHER REASON. (20 CFR 641.325(I), 641.302(B))

To avoid program disruption based on new census, program results, or other data, DWD will have annual operational meetings with all SCSEP partners in order to continually evaluate current operations and develop strategies and implementation plans in a proactive manner. Topics discussed will include:

- Staffing will be distributed to allow for shifting to nearby areas experiencing population growth.
- Other funding sources will be reallocated as needed to address changes in population and service need.
- Partner organizations in communities will be used to more effectively connected participants with services in One Stop offices.
- Mobile location, mobile application, call center and online service options will be employed.

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR APPENDIX

ALL WIOA CORE PROGRAMS

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

ADULT, DISLOCATED WORKER, AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES - ADULT PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as "baseline" indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A "baseline" indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, "baseline" indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as "baseline" based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as "baseline" for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);

- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as "baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA." The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as "baseline" for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as "baseline" for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as "baseline." Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state's plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	77.4	77.4	77.4	77.4
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	76.5	76.5	76.5	76.5
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	6,760	6,760	6,760	6,760
Credential Attainment Rate	68.0	68.0	68.0	68.0
Measurable Skill Gains	56.3	61.0	56.3	63.0
Effectiveness in	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Serving Employers [1]				

"Effectiveness in Serving Employers" is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.

ADULT, DISLOCATED WORKER, AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES - DISLOCATED PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as "baseline" indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A "baseline" indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, "baseline" indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as "baseline" based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and

- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as "baseline" for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as "baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA." The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as "baseline" for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as "baseline" for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as "baseline." Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state's plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	74.7	74.7	74.7	74.7
Employment (Fourth Quarter	75.6	75.6	75.6	75.6

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
After Exit)				
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	8,098	8,098	8,098	8,098
Credential Attainment Rate	66.0	72.0	66.0	72.0
Measurable Skill Gains	50.6	61.0	50.6	63.0
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]

1

"Effectiveness in Serving Employers" is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.

ADULT, DISLOCATED WORKER, AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES - YOUTH PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as "baseline" indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A "baseline" indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, "baseline" indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as "baseline" based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);

- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as "baseline" for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as "baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA." The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as "baseline" for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as "baseline" for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as "baseline." Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state's plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each

of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	78.4	78.4	78.4	78.4
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	78.6	78.6	78.6	78.6
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	3,341	3,341	3,341	3,341
Credential Attainment Rate	62.0	65.0	62.0	65.0
Measurable Skill Gains	44.1	65.0	44.1	65.0
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]

1

"Effectiveness in Serving Employers" is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.

WAGNER-PEYSER ACT - WAGNER PEYSER PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as "baseline" indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A "baseline" indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, "baseline" indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as "baseline" based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as "baseline" for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as "baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA." The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as "baseline" for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers

indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as "baseline" for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as "baseline." Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state's plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	66.9	74.0	66.9	74.0
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	69.0	69.0	69.0	69.0
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	6,723	7,500	6,723	7,500
Credential Attainment Rate	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Measurable Skill Gains	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]

1

"Effectiveness in Serving Employers" is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.

ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAM - ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as "baseline" indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A "baseline" indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, "baseline" indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as "baseline" based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as "baseline" for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as "baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA." The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as "baseline" for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as "baseline" for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as "baseline." Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state's plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	50.0	50.0	51.0	51.0
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	72.0	72.0	73.0	73.0
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	$5,000	$5,000	$5,250	$5,250
Credential Attainment Rate	73.0	68.0	74.0	69.0
Measurable Skill Gains	68.0	68.0	69.0	69.0
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]

1

"Effectiveness in Serving Employers" is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as "baseline" indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A "baseline" indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, "baseline" indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as "baseline" based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the

Departments will designate the following indicators as "baseline" for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as "baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA." The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as "baseline" for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as "baseline" for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as "baseline." Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state's plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	46.0%	51.3%	47.0%	53.3%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	44.0%	48.3%	45.0%	50.3%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	$2900	$3431	$3000	$3534
Credential Attainment Rate	15.0%	20.0%	15.0%	21.0%

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Measurable Skill Gains	50.0%	63.8%	50.0%	64.8%
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]

1

"Effectiveness in Serving Employers" is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM (BLIND) - VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as "baseline" indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A "baseline" indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, "baseline" indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as "baseline" based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as "baseline" for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as "baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA." The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as "baseline" for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as "baseline" for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as "baseline." Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state's plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter				

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
After Exit)				
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)				
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)				
Credential Attainment Rate				
Measurable Skill Gains				
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]

1

"Effectiveness in Serving Employers" is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.

ADDITIONAL INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Not applicable to Indiana at this time.

OTHER APPENDICES

Waiver content has been removed from this section. Please see Title I section "e. Waiver Requests" for Indiana's current waiver requests.