**Northeast Arkansas Workforce**

**Development Area**

**(NEAWDA)**

**Northeast Arkansas Counties**

**Clay, Craighead, Greene, Lawrence,**

**Mississippi, Poinsett, and Randolph**

**Regional & Local Plan**

**Workforce Innovation & Opportunities Act (WIOA) Transitional Plan**

**PY2016-PY2017**

**Section A: PY 2016 Transitional Regional Plan**

WIOA requires regional planning– a broad strategic approach to planning focused on the overarching vision, goals, alignment and shared responsibilities within the region. Arkansas intends to implement a two-tiered regional approach to meeting this requirement by allowing a two-year transitional plan. This approach provides latitude for regions that may not yet be able to fully address all of the outlined elements required in a four-year regional plan.

Northeast Arkansas Workforce Development Area’s responses are in **bold**.

* 1. Provide the following:
     1. A reference name for the planning region;

**Northeast Arkansas Workforce Development Area (NEAWDA)**

* + 1. Identification of the local workforce development areas that comprise the planning region;

**NEAWDA**

* + 1. Identification of the county(ies) each local workforce development area serves;

**NEAWDA is comprised of the following seven (7) counties:  Clay, Craighead, Greene, Lawrence, Mississippi, Poinsett, and Randolph.**

* + 1. Identification of the key planning region committee members charged with drafting the regional plan;

**Northeast Arkansas Workforce Development Board (NEAWDB) and its committees (as desired), Northeast Arkansas Chief Elected Officials (NEACEOs) and its committees (as desired), and Employment & Training Services, Inc. (ETS, Inc.)**

* + 1. Indication of the local workforce development area each committee member is associated with; and

**The members of the NEAWDB and other designees (as desired).**

* + 1. A list of key planning region committee meeting dates. [WIOA Sec. 106(a) and (c)]

**The following meetings were used to develop WIOA policies, activities, and services.**

* **NEACEOs Meetings: Tuesday, November 10, 2015 and Tuesday, May 3, 2016**
* **NEAWDB Meetings: Thursday, August 27, 2015, Thursday, October 22, 2015, Thursday, January 28, 2016, Thursday, April 28, 2016, Thursday, June 30, 2016, Thursday, September 22, 2016, and Thursday, December 15, 2016**
* **Youth Council Meetings: Thursday, March 31, 2016**
* **Regional Partner Meetings: Wednesday, May 13, 2015; Friday, August 14, 2015, Wednesday, September 23, 2015, Tuesday, October 20, 2015, Tuesday, November 17, 2015, Tuesday, January 26, 2016, Tuesday, March 29, 2016, Tuesday, May 10, 2016, Thursday, September 8, 2016, and Thursday, October 13, 2016**

# Provide a labor market and economic analysis of the workforce development planning region. This regional analysis must include:

* + 1. The economic conditions;

**Listed below is an overview of the economic conditions by county for NEAWDA: (provided by** [**http://www.iea.ualr.edu/arkansas-census-data.html**](http://www.iea.ualr.edu/arkansas-census-data.html)**)**

* + - 1. **Wage information for NEAWDA:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **NEAWDA**  **(2010-2014 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates)** | **Median Household Income** | **Per Capita Income** |
| **Clay County** | **$32,057** | **$18,434** |
| **Craighead County** | **$42,085** | **$23,244** |
| **Greene County** | **$39,500** | **$20,188** |
| **Lawrence County** | **$33,481** | **$17,064** |
| **Mississippi County** | **$34,424** | **$18,732** |
| **Poinsett County** | **$33,238** | **$17,110** |
| **Randolph County** | **$36,487** | **$19,528** |

* + - 1. **Population information for NEAWDA:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **NEAWDA**  **(2010-2014 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates)** | **Population 16 years and over** |
| **Clay County** | **12,759** |
| **Craighead County** | **77,762** |
| **Greene County** | **33,526** |
| **Lawrence County** | **13,754** |
| **Mississippi County** | **34,384** |
| **Poinsett County** | **19,111** |
| **Randolph County** | **14,149** |

* + 1. Labor force employment and unemployment data;

**Listed below is the current labor force employment data as of May 2016 (provided by Bureau of Labor Statistics** [**http://www.bls.gov/eag/eag.ar\_jonesboro\_msa.htm**](http://www.bls.gov/eag/eag.ar_jonesboro_msa.htm))

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Labor Force Data** | **May 2016** |
| **Civilian Labor Force** | **62,500** |
| **Employment** | **60,500** |
| **Unemployment** | **2,000** |
| **Unemployment Rate %** | **3.2%** |
| **Total Nonfarm** | **55,800** |
| **12-month % change** | **3.0%** |
| **Government** | **9,000** |
| **12-month % change** | **1.1%** |

**Listed below is the current unemployment rate by county as of September 2016 (provided by** [**www.discover.arkansas.gov**](http://www.discover.arkansas.gov)**):**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **County** | **Unemployment Rate** |
| **Clay County** | **5.1%** |
| **Craighead County** | **3.1%** |
| **Greene County** | **4.3%** |
| **Lawrence County** | **4.1%** |
| **Mississippi County** | **6.7%** |
| **Poinsett County** | **4.1%** |
| **Randolph County** | **4.6%** |

c. Information on labor market trends;

**Listed below are charts provided by** <http://www.discover.arkansas.gov/Local-Workforce-Development-Area-Statistics/Northeast-Arkansas>):

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Projected Industry Growth 2012-2022** | **Estimated Employment** | **Projected Employment** | **Numeric Change** | **Percent Change** |
| **Total All Industries** | **107445** | **120493** | **13048** | **12.14%** |
| **Natural Resources and Mining** | **2159** | **2394** | **235** | **10.88%** |
| **Construction** | **3103** | **3460** | **357** | **11.51%** |
| **Manufacturing** | **19486** | **21836** | **2350** | **12.06%** |
| **Trade, Transportation, and Utilities** | **19256** | **20320** | **1064** | **5.53%** |
| **Information** | **826** | **804** | **-22** | **-2.66%** |
| **Financial Activities** | **3145** | **3297** | **152** | **4.83%** |
| **Professional and Business Services** | **7320** | **8127** | **807** | **11.02%** |
| **Education and Health Services** | **25309** | **29936** | **4627** | **18.28%** |
| **Leisure and Hospitality** | **8029** | **9671** | **1642** | **20.45%** |
| **Other Services (except Government)** | **2709** | **3087** | **378** | **13.95%** |
| **Government** | **6642** | **6719** | **77** | **1.16%** |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Industry - Top Ten Growth Industries, 2012-2022 (Ranked by Net Growth)** | **Base Employment** | **Projected Employment** | **Net Growth** | **Percent Growth (%)** |
| **Food Services and Drinking Places** | **7,018** | **8,657** | **1,639** | **23.35%** |
| **Educational Services** | **10,537** | **11,921** | **1,384** | **13.13%** |
| **Food Manufacturing** | **2,219** | **3,451** | **1,232** | **55.52%** |
| **Social Assistance** | **3,645** | **4,797** | **1,152** | **31.6%** |
| **Ambulatory Health Care Services** | **4,329** | **5,454** | **1,125** | **25.99%** |
| **Administrative and Support Services** | **5,032** | **5,746** | **714** | **14.19%** |
| **Primary Metal Manufacturing** | **3,941** | **4,645** | **704** | **17.86%** |
| **Hospitals** | **4,345** | **4,878** | **533** | **12.27%** |
| **Nursing and Residential Care Facilities** | **2,453** | **2,886** | **433** | **17.65%** |
| **Specialty Trade Contractors** | **1,974** | **2,290** | **316** | **16.01%** |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Occupation - Projected Occupational Growth 2015-2017** | **Estimated Employment** | **Projected Employment** | **Numeric Growth** | **Percent Growth (%)** |
| **Total Occupations** | **108,732** | **114,056** | **5,324** | **4.90%** |
| **Management** | **9,822** | **10,007** | **185** | **1.88%** |
| **Business and Financial Operations** | **2,239** | **2,336** | **97** | **4.33%** |
| **Computer and Mathematical** | **649** | **675** | **26** | **4.01%** |
| **Architecture and Engineering** | **767** | **813** | **46** | **6.00%** |
| **Life, Physical, and Social Science** | **406** | **418** | **12** | **2.96%** |
| **Community and Social Service** | **2,185** | **2,259** | **74** | **3.39%** |
| **Legal** | **278** | **287** | **9** | **3.24%** |
| **Education, Training, and Library** | **6,706** | **6,815** | **109** | **1.63%** |
| **Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Medial** | **879** | **897** | **18** | **2.05%** |
| **Healthcare Practitioners and Technical** | **6,169** | **6,388** | **219** | **3.55%** |
| **Healthcare Support** | **3,135** | **3,218** | **83** | **2.65%** |
| **Protective Service** | **1,538** | **1,586** | **48** | **3.12%** |
| **Food Preparation and Serving Related** | **8,747** | **9,042** | **295** | **3.37%** |
| **Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance** | **3,311** | **3,479** | **168** | **5.07%** |
| **Personal Care and Service** | **3,198** | **3,311** | **113** | **3.53%** |
| **Sales and Related Occupations** | **11,226** | **11,760** | **534** | **4.76%** |
| **Office and Administrative Support** | **13,759** | **14,219** | **460** | **3.34%** |
| **Farming, Fishing, and Forestry** | **1,140** | **1,144** | **4** | **0.35%** |
| **Construction and Extraction** | **4,099** | **4,297** | **198** | **4.83%** |
| **Installation, Maintenance, and Repair** | **4,853** | **5,239** | **386** | **7.95%** |
| **Production** | **14,350** | **15,746** | **1,396** | **9.73%** |
| **Transportation and Material Moving** | **9,276** | **10,120** | **844** | **9.10%** |

D. Workforce development activities;

**Arkansas Workforce Centers (AWCs) are at the forefront of the workforce activities, and are a proud member of America’s Workforce Network. The three AWCs (Blytheville, Jonesboro, & Paragould) provide a menu of services linking employers and jobseekers throughout Northeast Arkansas.**

**The NEAWDB development activities are coordinated as follows:**

* **Regional Partner meetings - The following agencies attend these meetings: Arkansas Career Education (ACE), Arkansas Northeastern College (ANC), Arkansas State University System (ASU), Arkansas State University - Newport (ASUN), Black River Technical College (BRTC), Department of Workforce Services (DWS), Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS), Adult Education, Chambers of Commerce, Department of Human Services (DHS), Division of Services for the Blind (DSB), Arkansas Human Development Corporation (AHDC), and ETS, Inc. These agencies are responsible for all the core and non-core programs.**
* **The three AWCs are overseen at the regional/local level by the NEAWDB. Local boards are composed of local businesses, labor, partner agencies, and other key stakeholders to create a diverse and functional group. The boards, in alignment with the State’s vision, provide front line strategic implementation for state-wide initiatives in addition to their locally determined priorities. State initiatives include sector strategies, career pathway development, and delivery of standardized business services. Local priorities include layoff aversion, specific career pathway development (occupational skills training, On the Job Training (OJT), and other training), youth programs, targeted sector partnerships, work experience, and other services.**
* **Individuals are greeted at the reception desk of the AWCs. The reception desk position is designed to identify the needs of the individual by gathering information and then utilizing the appropriate resources. Customers are connected with staff who can answer their questions and identify barriers/issues.**
* **The Northeast Arkansas website,** [**www.neawia.com**](http://www.neawia.com)**, provides the following services/information to clients.**
  + **Contact information for AWCs**
  + **General Information about WIOA**
  + **Online Application**
  + **NEAWDB, NEACEO, and Regional Partner meeting dates/information**
  + **List of Partners**
  + **Menu of Services**
  + **Customer Survey**
  + **Job Opportunities**
  + **Community Events/Job Fairs**
  + **Local Chambers of Commerce**
* **Business/Industry Services include but are not limited to use of AWC facilities by a business for a variety of purposes such as:**
  + **Assessments – any test or assortment of tests used to measure the skills, interests and/or personality traits of a jobseeker, potential employee, or current employee.;**
  + **Hiring events – a customized event for a single employer that assists with recruiting, interviewing, and hiring for one or more positions;**
  + **Job fairs – event for multiple employers that assists with the recruiting, interviewing, and hiring for one or more positions;**
  + **Job postings – staff-entered or web-entered job orders approved by staff;**
  + **Labor market information – information on state and local labor market conditions; industries, occupations, and characteristics of the workforce; area business identified skills needs; employer wage and benefit trends; short and long-term industry and occupational projections; worker supply and demand; and job vacancies survey results;**
  + **Rapid Response – a variety of services to businesses that are facing restructuring and downsizing including onsite workshops for employees in transition; job placement assistance; and information on unemployment benefits;**
  + **Training and retraining - any service provided to a business that involves the training or retraining of current or future employees including OJT, work experience, Incumbent Worker Training, etc.**

E. The educational and skill levels of the workforce, including individuals with barriers; and

**Per the United States Census Bureau (**[**http://www.census.gov/quickfacts/table/EDU635214/05**](http://www.census.gov/quickfacts/table/EDU635214/05)**), 84.3% of Arkansans (25 years or older) have obtained a High School diploma or higher and 20.6% of Arkansans (25 years or older) have obtained a bachelor’s degree or higher.**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Education Title** | **2014 Estimated Employment** | **2016 Projected Employment** | **Net Growth** | **Percent Growth** |
| **Doctoral or professional degree** | **2,115** | **2,179** | **64** | **3.03%** |
| **Master's degree** | **1,641** | **1,681** | **40** | **2.44%** |
| **Bachelor's degree** | **12,738** | **13,001** | **263** | **2.06%** |
| **Associate's degree** | **3,613** | **3,730** | **117** | **3.24%** |
| **Postsecondary non-degree award** | **7,320** | **7,622** | **302** | **4.13%** |
| **Some college, no degree** | **1,282** | **1,297** | **15** | **1.17%** |
| **High school diploma or equivalent** | **49,273** | **50,668** | **1,395** | **2.83%** |
| **Less than high school** | **29,505** | **30,463** | **958** | **3.25%** |

F. The development and implementation of sector initiatives for existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors or occupations for the region.

**The Projected Employment Opportunities List (PEOL) provides an annual list of occupations and training programs. The list provides the estimated annual wage for each occupation. WIOA eligible participants may be placed in training at approved 2 and 4 year State colleges. Past performance measures demonstrate the success of the training participants in demand occupations which led to self-sufficiency. A copy of the PEOL document can be located at (**[**http://www.discover.arkansas.gov/Occupation/Projected-Employment-Opportunities-List#414144840-view-the-list**](http://www.discover.arkansas.gov/Occupation/Projected-Employment-Opportunities-List#414144840-view-the-list)**)**

**The State of Arkansas has determined the following areas to be in high demand:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **SOCTitle** | **Industry** | **2014 Wages** |
| **Registered Nurses** | **Healthcare** | **$56,480** |
| **Electrical and Electronics Engineering Technicians** | **Engineering** | **$52,170** |
| **First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers** | **Manufacturing** | **$50,240** |
| **First-Line Supervisors of Fire Fighting and Prevention Workers** | **Public Safety** | **$46,530** |
| **Aircraft Mechanics and Service Technicians** | **Aerospace** | **$43,240** |

Indicate the sources of regional labor market and economic data. [WIOA Sec. 106(c)(1)(C)]

**The following websites were utilized:**

* **Discover Arkansas**
* **U.S. Census Bureau**
* **Bureau of Labor Statistics**

# Based upon the regional labor market and economic conditions analysis and *Arkansas’s Workforce Development Plan (PY 2016 –PY 2019*) describe the planning region’s economic and workforce development oriented vision and strategic goals. [WIOA Sec. 106(c) and Sec. 107(d)]

**NEAWDA’s vision parallels the state’s vision by providing employers with a skilled workforce. The network will be responsive to current and new employers’ workforce needs.**

**State Strategic Goal 1: Develop an efficient partnership with employers, the educational system, workforce development partners, and community based organizations to deliver a platform that will prepare a skilled workforce for existing and new employers.**

**Listed below are some ways the NEAWDA will meet Strategic Goal 1:**

* **NEAWDA provides tuition assistance to eligible WIOA participants in demand occupations at 2 and 4 year State colleges.**
* **NEAWDA provides a community calendar for employers and other partner agencies for job fairs, community outreach, hiring events, and other activities.**
* **The NEA Regional Partners are developing a new service packet for employers. This collaboration will provide a more strategic outreach with employers.**
* **The NEA Regional Partner meetings have provided a networking opportunity between agencies. The networking facilitates communication among the agencies and a better awareness of the available services.**
* **The NEA Regional Partner meetings have continued to identify and draw new community based organizations to the meetings.**

**State Strategic Goal 2: Enhance service delivery to employers and jobseekers.**

**Listed below are some ways the NEAWDA will meet Strategic Goal #2:**

* **Many of the objectives listed will be performed by the State. NEAWDA will provide input/recommendations as the draft forms become available.**
* **The NEAWDA website,** [**http://www.neawia.com/application.html**](http://www.neawia.com/application.html)**, has an online application for jobseekers. Based on the information entered by the jobseekers, referrals will be provided to appropriate partners.**
* **The NEAWDA website,** [**http://www.neawia.com/jobs.html**](http://www.neawia.com/jobs.html)**, provides jobseekers with a list of website links for job opportunities by company/industry.**
* **The NEAWDA website,** [**http://www.neawia.com/community.html**](http://www.neawia.com/community.html)**, provides a forum for employers’ and agencies’ upcoming events.**
* **A menu of services is available at the front desk of each AWC and through the NEAWDA website,** [**http://www.neawia.com/services.html**](http://www.neawia.com/services.html)**.**
* **Occupational skills training, work experience, and OJT will continue to be utilized to train the workforce and meet the needs of employers.**

**State Strategic Goal 3: Increase awareness of the State’s Talent Development System**

**Listed below are some ways the NEAWDA will meet Strategic Goal #3:**

* **The website,** [**www.neawia.com**](http://www.neawia.com)**, has become a valuable tool for the AWC staff, jobseekers, employers, various partner agencies, and the community. It offers the following components: AWC locations, overall information about NEAWDA, online application, meeting dates, community calendar, careers, menu of services, and survey section. The website is continually reviewed for new ways to assist the community, employers, and job seekers.**
* **NEAWDA provides outreach through the following venues: job fairs, hiring events, RES workshops, community based events, high school outreach, 2 and 4 year college outreach, dislocated worker taskforce outreach, veteran outreach, chamber of commerce outreach, and business outreach.**
* **The NEAWDB consists of 51% or more business sector. The NEAWDB members are informed of WIOA services, performance, and strategies. Business sector contribution is key to understanding the needs of employers in Northeast Arkansas.**

**State Strategic Goal 4: Address Skills Gaps**

**Listed below are some ways the NEAWDA will meet Strategic Goal #4:**

* **The AWC offers the Career Readiness Certificate (CRC). The CRC provides employers with a viable assessment tool which measures the skills of jobseekers. With this information, the employer takes out the guess work of the selection process. More information on the CRC can be found at** [**http://dws.arkansas.gov/Programs/CRC/index.htm**](http://dws.arkansas.gov/Programs/CRC/index.htm)**.**
* **The NEAWDA will focus on training in demand occupations. By focusing on in demand occupations, NEAWDA will increase the skill levels of the jobseekers and therefore will meet the needs of employers.**

# Describe regional strategies used to facilitate engagement of businesses and other employers, including small employers and in-demand industry sector occupations. Describe methods and services to support the regional workforce system in meeting employer needs. [WIOA Sec. 106(c)]

# The Regional Partner meetings have been effective in the following areas:

# Cross training agencies about each partner’s available services.

# Development of a uniform outreach packet. Agency information is being developed by each partner. This process will give a comprehensive presentation and help ensure consistent information is provided to small business and industry.

# Providing business/industry with an overall menu of services. Once provided, the business/industry can request information on specific services.

* **Coordination of business outreach to minimize duplicate appointments and simplify the process.**

# Describe how the planning region will define and establish regional workforce development service strategies. Describe how the planning region will develop and use cooperative workforce development service delivery agreements. [WIOA Sec. 106(c)(B)]

**These strategies will be defined and established by the Regional Partners, the NEAWDB, and the NEACEOs. The State agencies may be needed to ensure proper coordination/structure by all local partner agencies.**

**Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs) are currently utilized by the NEAWDA to collaborate/enhance economic development to better serve the present and future needs of employers in this area. The agreement allows the partners to ensure that all jobseekers, workers, and employers will be served comprehensively, in a seamless system, which addresses their needs, merges common services across programs, and minimizes duplication.**

# Describe how the planning region will define and establish administrative cost arrangements, including the pooling of funds for administrative costs, as appropriate, for the region. [WIOA Sec. 106(c)(E)]

**The NEAWDB will adhere to the administrative cost requirements as required under WIOA. Various MOU agreements will be developed among partners for sharing information and establishing administrative costs as necessary. Resource Sharing Agreements (RSAs) are utilized to designate costs and properly allocate them among benefiting partners.**

* 1. Describe how the planning region will determine and coordinate transportation and other supportive services for the region. [WIOA Sec. 106(c)(F)]

**Resource manuals have been developed by ARS to properly determine/identify available supportive services for the NEAWDA. In order to minimize duplication, the manuals have been disbursed during Regional Partner and staff meetings.**

* 1. Describe strategies and services the planning region will employ to coordinate workforce development programs/services with regional economic development services and providers. [WIOA Sec. 106(c)(G)]

**The NEAWDB coordinates services with partner agencies to ensure non-duplication and braided services are provided by various agencies. At the Regional Partner meetings, partner agencies have hosted each meeting to provide an overview of the services provided and the proper contact for their area by county. By cross training partners, partner agencies are better equipped to refer clients and serve the needs of the community.**

**The website,** [**www.neawia.com/community**](http://www.neawia.com/community)**, provides a centralized location for all partners regarding upcoming community events, job fairs, and hiring events. This process provides a uniform process to notify each agency of available regional services and events. This communication has led to more participation of partner agencies at each event.**

* 1. Describe how the planning region will establish an agreement concerning how the planning region will collectively negotiate and reach agreement with the State on local levels of performance for, and report on, the performance accountability measures described in WIOA Section 116(c), for local areas and the planning region. [WIOA Sec. 106(c)(H)] [proposed 20 CFR 677.210(b) and (c)] and [proposed 20 CFR 679.510(a)(2)]

**The State and the Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs) discussed the options on performance measure levels at the Director’s meeting on 10-6-16. After some discussion, the LWDAs agreed to keep the same performance measures as the State level.**

**Section B: PY 2016 Transitional Local Plan**

WIOA requires each local workforce area to develop a local plan that supports and is submitted as a component of its associated regional plan. The narratives framed in the local plan will include more detailed, actionable plans and objectives, consistent with the local plan’s respective regional plan strategic visions and goals.

Northeast Arkansas Workforce Development Area’s responses are in **bold**.

**Section 1: Workforce and Economic Analysis**

Please provide a separate response for each of the elements listed below.

* 1. Provide an analysis of the economic conditions, including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations; and the employment needs of employers in those industry sectors and occupations. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(A)] and [proposed 20 CFR 679.560(a)]   
       
     Note: Per WIOA Sec. 108(c), existing economic regional and/or local area analyses may be used if sourced data and/or derived analyses are economically relevant and current (i.e., within two years of the issuance of this guidance)

**Listed below is an overview of the economic conditions by county for NEAWDA: (provided by** [**http://www.iea.ualr.edu/arkansas-census-data.html**](http://www.iea.ualr.edu/arkansas-census-data.html)**)**

* + - 1. **Wage information for NEAWDA:**

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* + - 1. **Population information for NEAWDA:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **NEAWDA**  **(2010-2014 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates)** | **Population 16 years and over** |
| **Clay County** | **12,759** |
| **Craighead County** | **77,762** |
| **Greene County** | **33,526** |
| **Lawrence County** | **13,754** |
| **Mississippi County** | **34,384** |
| **Poinsett County** | **19,111** |
| **Randolph County** | **14,149** |

* 1. Provide an analysis of the knowledge and skills required to meet the employment needs of the employers in the local area, including employment needs for in-demand industry sectors and occupations.   
     [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(B)] and [proposed 20 CFR 679.560(a)]

**The following tools are being utilized to help determine the skills levels of the workforce:**

* **AWC utilizes the CRC as an assessment tool for employers to determine the skill set of individuals. Even if a job seeker has a high school diploma, GED, or post-secondary degree, the CRC provides detailed information on the individual’s ability to complete regular tasks such as reading instructions, understanding directions, and being able to locate information.**
* **WIOA Youth services utilize the TABE test to determine the reading and math skill levels of clients. This process provides one of many components WIOA staff use to properly determine the steps needed to develop a workforce entry strategy.**
* **The State of Arkansas has developed a PEOL which provides the demand occupations based on employer input. This list allows LWDAs to enroll eligible participants in demand occupations at 2 and 4 year State colleges. This process provides employers with a skilled workforce for the in demand industry sections and occupations.**
  1. Provide an analysis of the local workforce, including current labor force employment (and unemployment) data, and information on labor market trends, and the educational and skill levels of the workforce in the region, including individuals with barriers to employment.   
     [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(C)] and [proposed 20 CFR 679.560(a)]

**Listed below is the current labor force employment data as of May 2016 (provided by Bureau of Labor Statistics** [**http://www.bls.gov/eag/eag.ar\_jonesboro\_msa.htm**](http://www.bls.gov/eag/eag.ar_jonesboro_msa.htm))

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Labor Force Data** | **May 2016** |
| **Civilian Labor Force** | **62,500** |
| **Employment** | **60,500** |
| **Unemployment** | **2,000** |
| **Unemployment Rate %** | **3.2%** |
| **Total Nonfarm** | **55,800** |
| **12-month % change** | **3.0%** |
| **Government** | **9,000** |
| **12-month % change** | **1.1%** |

**Listed below is the current unemployment rate by county as of September 2016 (provided by** [**www.discover.arkansas.gov**](http://www.discover.arkansas.gov)**):**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **County** | **Unemployment Rate** |
| **Clay County** | **5.1%** |
| **Craighead County** | **3.1%** |
| **Greene County** | **4.3%** |
| **Lawrence County** | **4.1%** |
| **Mississippi County** | **6.7%** |
| **Poinsett County** | **4.1%** |
| **Randolph County** | **4.6%** |

**Labor Market Trends:**

**Listed below are charts provided by** <http://www.discover.arkansas.gov/Local-Workforce-Development-Area-Statistics/Northeast-Arkansas>):

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Projected Industry Growth 2012-2022** | **Estimated Employment** | **Projected Employment** | **Numeric Change** | **Percent Change** |
| **Total All Industries** | **107445** | **120493** | **13048** | **12.14%** |
| **Natural Resources and Mining** | **2159** | **2394** | **235** | **10.88%** |
| **Construction** | **3103** | **3460** | **357** | **11.51%** |
| **Manufacturing** | **19486** | **21836** | **2350** | **12.06%** |
| **Trade, Transportation, and Utilities** | **19256** | **20320** | **1064** | **5.53%** |
| **Information** | **826** | **804** | **-22** | **-2.66%** |
| **Financial Activities** | **3145** | **3297** | **152** | **4.83%** |
| **Professional and Business Services** | **7320** | **8127** | **807** | **11.02%** |
| **Education and Health Services** | **25309** | **29936** | **4627** | **18.28%** |
| **Leisure and Hospitality** | **8029** | **9671** | **1642** | **20.45%** |
| **Other Services (except Government)** | **2709** | **3087** | **378** | **13.95%** |
| **Government** | **6642** | **6719** | **77** | **1.16%** |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Industry - Top Ten Growth Industries, 2012-2022 (Ranked by Net Growth)** | **Base Employment** | **Projected Employment** | **Net Growth** | **Percent Growth (%)** |
| **Food Services and Drinking Places** | **7,018** | **8,657** | **1,639** | **23.35%** |
| **Educational Services** | **10,537** | **11,921** | **1,384** | **13.13%** |
| **Food Manufacturing** | **2,219** | **3,451** | **1,232** | **55.52%** |
| **Social Assistance** | **3,645** | **4,797** | **1,152** | **31.6%** |
| **Ambulatory Health Care Services** | **4,329** | **5,454** | **1,125** | **25.99%** |
| **Administrative and Support Services** | **5,032** | **5,746** | **714** | **14.19%** |
| **Primary Metal Manufacturing** | **3,941** | **4,645** | **704** | **17.86%** |
| **Hospitals** | **4,345** | **4,878** | **533** | **12.27%** |
| **Nursing and Residential Care Facilities** | **2,453** | **2,886** | **433** | **17.65%** |
| **Specialty Trade Contractors** | **1,974** | **2,290** | **316** | **16.01%** |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Occupation - Projected Occupational Growth 2015-2017** | **Estimated Employment** | **Projected Employment** | **Numeric Growth** | **Percent Growth (%)** |
| **Total Occupations** | **108,732** | **114,056** | **5,324** | **4.90%** |
| **Management** | **9,822** | **10,007** | **185** | **1.88%** |
| **Business and Financial Operations** | **2,239** | **2,336** | **97** | **4.33%** |
| **Computer and Mathematical** | **649** | **675** | **26** | **4.01%** |
| **Architecture and Engineering** | **767** | **813** | **46** | **6.00%** |
| **Life, Physical, and Social Science** | **406** | **418** | **12** | **2.96%** |
| **Community and Social Service** | **2,185** | **2,259** | **74** | **3.39%** |
| **Legal** | **278** | **287** | **9** | **3.24%** |
| **Education, Training, and Library** | **6,706** | **6,815** | **109** | **1.63%** |
| **Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Medial** | **879** | **897** | **18** | **2.05%** |
| **Healthcare Practitioners and Technical** | **6,169** | **6,388** | **219** | **3.55%** |
| **Healthcare Support** | **3,135** | **3,218** | **83** | **2.65%** |
| **Protective Service** | **1,538** | **1,586** | **48** | **3.12%** |
| **Food Preparation and Serving Related** | **8,747** | **9,042** | **295** | **3.37%** |
| **Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance** | **3,311** | **3,479** | **168** | **5.07%** |
| **Personal Care and Service** | **3,198** | **3,311** | **113** | **3.53%** |
| **Sales and Related Occupations** | **11,226** | **11,760** | **534** | **4.76%** |
| **Office and Administrative Support** | **13,759** | **14,219** | **460** | **3.34%** |
| **Farming, Fishing, and Forestry** | **1,140** | **1,144** | **4** | **0.35%** |
| **Construction and Extraction** | **4,099** | **4,297** | **198** | **4.83%** |
| **Installation, Maintenance, and Repair** | **4,853** | **5,239** | **386** | **7.95%** |
| **Production** | **14,350** | **15,746** | **1,396** | **9.73%** |
| **Transportation and Material Moving** | **9,276** | **10,120** | **844** | **9.10%** |

**Per the United States Census Bureau (**[**http://www.census.gov/quickfacts/table/EDU635214/05**](http://www.census.gov/quickfacts/table/EDU635214/05)**), 84.3% of Arkansans (25 years or older) have obtained a High School diploma or higher and 20.6% of Arkansans (25 years or older) have obtained a bachelor’s degree or higher.**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Education Title** | **2014 Estimated Employment** | **2016 Projected Employment** | **Net Growth** | **Percent Growth** |
| **Doctoral or professional degree** | **2,115** | **2,179** | **64** | **3.03%** |
| **Master's degree** | **1,641** | **1,681** | **40** | **2.44%** |
| **Bachelor's degree** | **12,738** | **13,001** | **263** | **2.06%** |
| **Associate's degree** | **3,613** | **3,730** | **117** | **3.24%** |
| **Postsecondary non-degree award** | **7,320** | **7,622** | **302** | **4.13%** |
| **Some college, no degree** | **1,282** | **1,297** | **15** | **1.17%** |
| **High school diploma or equivalent** | **49,273** | **50,668** | **1,395** | **2.83%** |
| **Less than high school** | **29,505** | **30,463** | **958** | **3.25%** |

* 1. Provide an analysis and description of workforce development activities, including type and availability of education, training and employment activities. Include analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of such services, and the capacity to provide such services, in order to address the education and skill needs of the workforce and the employment needs of employers in the region. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(D)] and [proposed 20 CFR 679.560(a)] Put industries are the high growth and provide the educational entities. May be covered in 1.2 Regional.

**The recruitment of new business/industry is dependent on the skill level of the workforce. Based on the data obtained in Section 1.3, the workforce skill level is equal to a high school diploma or less.**

**WIOA Title I Services will address business/industry need for an improved workforce skill level in the following ways:**

* **Career Pathway Training - The Labor Market Information Department has developed the PEOL. The PEOL provides occupations in demand for the State of Arkansas. Information can be provided by each LWDA. Based on this information, the NEAWDB is able to determine current and projected employment opportunities in the NEAWDA. The NEAWDA utilizes 2 and 4 year state colleges/institutions to provide Career Pathway training to meet this need.**
* **OJT – The service refers to a program of occupational on the job training that uses instruction combined with supervised work at the job/worksite to train participants for a particular occupation. It is understood that one of the objectives of this program is to target suitable WIOA eligible Adult & Dislocated Workers (DLW) participants.**
* **Work Experience – The service is a planned, structured learning experience that takes place in a workplace for a limited period of time. The purpose of work experience is to gain new job skills and valuable experience.**

**The above services increase the skilled workforce pool to meet the needs of current and future employers.**

**Section 2: Strategic Vision and Goals**

Section 2 responses will require input from members of the local workforce development board and other local stakeholders. Please provide a separate response for each of the elements listed below.

## Describe the local board’s strategic vision and goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment). Include goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance described in section 116(b)(2)(A) in order to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(E)]

## Maintain a flexible and accountable workforce training system in collaboration with business, industry, labor and citizens through the AWC networks. The network will offer employers a resource for workers in existing and emerging occupations and empower Arkansans to receive employment/skilled services as well as job specific training.

## Describe how the local board’s vision and goals align with and/or supports the vision and goals for the State’s workforce development system as established by the Arkansas Workforce Development Board. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(E)] (See Appendix C: Transitional Planning References and Resources)

# The vision of NEAWDB is to improve the educational skills and economic status of the workforce through a coordinated menu of services made available at the AWCs. Northeast’s vision and goals align with the State’s workforce development system.

## Describe how the local board’s vision and goals contributes to each of the governor’s goals. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(E)] (See Appendix C: Transitional Planning References and Resources) Note: The State Plan includes a number of objectives under each goal.

**NEAWDA’s vision parallels the state’s vision by providing employers with a skilled workforce. The network will be responsive to current and new employers workforce needs.**

**State Strategic Goal 1: Develop an efficient partnership with employers, the educational system, workforce development partners, and community based organizations to deliver a platform that will prepare a skilled workforce for existing and new employers.**

**Listed below are some ways the NEAWDA will meet Strategic Goal 1:**

* **NEAWDA provides tuition assistance to eligible WIOA participants in demand occupations at 2 and 4 year State colleges.**
* **NEAWDA provides a community calendar for employers and other partner agencies for job fairs, community outreach, hiring events, and other activities.**
* **The NEA Regional Partners are developing a new service packet for employers. This collaboration will provide a more strategic outreach with employers.**
* **The NEA Regional Partner meetings have provided a networking opportunity between agencies. The networking facilitates communication among the agencies and a better awareness of the available services.**
* **The NEA Regional Partner meetings have continued to identify and draw new community based organizations to the meetings.**

**State Strategic Goal 2: Enhance service delivery to employers and jobseekers.**

**Listed below are some ways the NEAWDA will meet Strategic Goal #2:**

* **Many of the objectives listed will be performed by the State. NEAWDA will provide input/recommendations as the draft forms become available.**
* **The NEAWDA website,** [**http://www.neawia.com/application.html**](http://www.neawia.com/application.html)**, has an online application for jobseekers. Based on the information entered by the jobseekers, referrals will be provided to appropriate partners.**
* **The NEAWDA website,** [**http://www.neawia.com/jobs.html**](http://www.neawia.com/jobs.html)**, provides jobseekers with a list of website links for job opportunities by company/industry.**
* **The NEAWDA website,** [**http://www.neawia.com/community.html**](http://www.neawia.com/community.html)**, provides a forum for employers’ and agencies’ upcoming events.**
* **A menu of services is available at the front desk of each AWC and through the NEAWDA website,** [**http://www.neawia.com/services.html**](http://www.neawia.com/services.html)**.**
* **Occupational skills training, work experience, and OJT will continue to be utilized to train the workforce and meet the needs of employers.**

**State Strategic Goal 3: Increase awareness of the State’s Talent Development System**

**Listed below are some ways the NEAWDA will meet Strategic Goal #3:**

* **The website,** [**www.neawia.com**](http://www.neawia.com)**, has become a valuable tool for the AWC staff, jobseekers, employers, various partner agencies, and the community. It offers the following components: AWC locations, overall information about NEAWDA, online application, meeting dates, community calendar, careers, menu of services, and survey section. The website is continually reviewed for new ways to assist the community, employers, and job seekers.**
* **NEAWDA provides outreach through the following venues: job fairs, hiring events, RES workshops, community based events, high school outreach, 2 and 4 year college outreach, dislocated worker taskforce outreach, veteran outreach, chamber of commerce outreach, and business outreach.**
* **The NEAWDB consists of 51% or more business sector. The NEAWDB members are informed of WIOA services, performance, and strategies. Business sector contribution is key to understanding the needs of employers in Northeast Arkansas.**

**State Strategic Goal 4: Address Skills Gaps**

**Listed below are some ways the NEAWDA will meet Strategic Goal #4:**

* **The AWCs offer the Career Readiness Certificate (CRC) in Arkansas. The CRC provides employers with a viable assessment tool which measures the skills of jobseekers. With this information, the employer takes out the guess work of the selection process. More information on the CRC can be found at** [**http://dws.arkansas.gov/Programs/CRC/index.htm**](http://dws.arkansas.gov/Programs/CRC/index.htm)**.**
* **The NEAWDA will focus on training in demand occupations. By focusing on in demand occupations, NEAWDA will increase the skill levels of the jobseekers and therefore will meet the needs of employers.**

## Describe how the local board’s goals relate to the achievement of federal performance accountability measures. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(E)]

# The WIOA Title I Service Provider will strive to meet the needs of the customer, both employers and jobseekers, by providing quality services while meeting performance requirements, maximizing financial resources, and carrying out directives of the NEAWDB/NEACEOs. The WIOA Title I Service Provider will assist individuals in obtaining employment that leads to self-sufficiency, eliminate duplication of services, reduce operational costs, accommodate the workforce needs of employers, and improve customer satisfaction. The skills of the jobseeker may be improved through occupational skills training, work experience, and OJT services. This design not only improves the job skills of the jobseeker, but provides a more qualified employee to the employer.

**Section 3: Local Area Partnerships and Investment Strategies**

Many of the responses in this section, such as targeted sector strategies, should be based on strategic discussions with the local board and partners. Please provide a separate response for each of the elements listed below.

## Taking into account the analysis described in Appendix B - Section 1, describe the local board’s strategy to work with the entities that carry out the core programs to align resources available to the local area, in order to achieve the strategic vision and goals described in element 2.1. This analysis should include:

A description of the local workforce development system; include key stakeholders and entities associated with administrative and programmatic/service delivery functions. Examples include elected officials, advocacy groups, local workforce development board and committee structure, fiscal agent, operator(s), required program partners, and major contractors providing Adult/Dislocated Worker/Youth program elements. Describe respective roles and functional relationships to one another;

**The following meetings have been utilized to develop WIOA policies, activities, and services.**

* **NEACEOs Meetings: Tuesday, November 10, 2015 and Tuesday, May 3, 2016.**
* **NEAWDB Meetings: Thursday, August 27, 2015, Thursday, October 22, 2015, Thursday, January 28, 2016, Thursday, April 28, 2016, Thursday, June 30, 2016, Thursday, September 22, 2016, and Thursday, December 15, 2016**
* **Youth Council Meetings: Thursday, March 31, 2016**
* **Regional Partner Meetings: Wednesday, May 13, 2015; Friday, August 14, 2015, Wednesday, September 23, 2015, Tuesday, October 20, 2015, Tuesday, November 17, 2015, Tuesday, January 26, 2016, Tuesday, March 29, 2016, Tuesday, May 10, 2016, Thursday, September 8, 2016, and Thursday, October 13, 2016**

### A list of all Arkansas Workforce Centers in the local area; include address, phone numbers, and hours of operation; and

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **AWC - Comprehensive**  **2311 East Nettleton**  **Jonesboro, AR 72401**  **Phone Number: 870.910.8129**  **Fax Number: 870.932.5310**  **Days of Operation:**  **Monday – Friday**  **Business Hours:**  **8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.** | **AWC - Satellite**  **1015 Linwood Suite 4**  **Paragould, AR 72450**  **Phone Number: 870.236.8220**  **Fax Number: 870.236.8270**  **Days of Operation:**  **Monday – Friday**  **Business Hours:**  **8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.** | **AWC – Satellite**  **2825 S. Division St.**  **Blytheville, AR 72315**  **Phone Number: 870.762.5365**  **Fax Number: 870.762.0975**  **Days of Operation:**  **Monday –Friday**  **Business Hours:**  **8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.** |

### An attached organization chart that depicts the local board, administrative and fiscal entities, and service providers. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(F)]

**The organizational chart is Attachment A.**

## Describe the workforce development system in the local area that identifies the programs that are included in that system and how the local board will work with the entities carrying out core and other workforce development programs to support alignment to provide services, including programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et. seq), that support the strategy identified in the State plan under section 102(b)(1)(E). [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(2)]

## *Note:* The six (6) core programs identified by WIOA are: Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Adult Education and Literacy, Wagner-Peyser Program, and Vocational Rehabilitation.

**NEAWDA has identified the following areas to help ensure alignment of services under the State plan:**

* **Regional Partner meetings provide a forum in which individual agencies present information on their available services. This process allows other agencies to be more informed about partner services, minimize duplication, and streamline services.**
* **Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs) are in place between the partner agencies. MOUs give each agency authorization to share information.**
* **An online application has been developed that provides a snapshot on the possible needs of the client. This simplified process helps staff develop a strategy to meet the client’s needs and also collaborate with partner agencies on available services.**

## Describe how the local board, working with the entities carrying out core programs, will expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment, including how the local board will facilitate the development of career pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs, and improve access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential (including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable). [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(3)]

**Each AWC has a resource room in which the universal core services are made available to clients. Employment resources (job search, resume building, etc.) are available at the AWCs, Arkansas Job Link, and the website,** [**www.neawia.com**](http://www.neawia.com)**.**

**WIOA Title I Services addresses the training needs in the following ways:**

* **Career Pathway Training - The Labor Market Information Department has developed the PEOL. The PEOL provides occupations in demand for the State of Arkansas. Information can be provided by each local workforce development area (LWDA). Based on this information, the NEAWDB is able to determine current and projected employment opportunities in the NEAWDA. The NEAWDA utilizes 2 and 4 year state colleges/institutions to provide Career Pathway training to meet this need.**
* **OJT – The service refers to a program of occupational on-the-job training that uses instruction combined with supervised work at the job/worksite to train participants for a particular occupation. It is understood that one of the objectives of this program is to target WIOA eligible Adult & Dislocated Workers (DLW) participants and provide services to those who are most in need and capable of benefiting from the services.**
* **Work Experience – The service is a planned, structured learning experience that takes place in a workplace for a limited period of time. The purpose of work experience is to gain new job skills and valuable experience.**

**WIOA contacts partner agencies to coordinate client services. Partners co-enroll whenever possible to maximize services and minimize duplication. In order to increase communication among partner agencies, business, and the community; various information is provided about the hard to serve areas during the regional partner meetings, NEAWDB meetings, and NEACEOs meetings.**

## Identify and describe (for each category below) the strategies and services that are and/or will be used to:

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

**The NEAWDA Regional Partners will work together strategically to engage employers. This will occur by taking advantage of various partners’ resources such as community events, human resource meetings, chamber of commerce meetings, and other community outreach.**

### Support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses;

**Performance has repeatedly indicated that occupational skills training in demand occupations have supported the workforce requirements of the area. Other WIOA services such as work experience and OJT may be utilized to meet other workforce development needs.**

### Better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development; and

**The Regional Partner meetings have incorporated local chambers of commerce into their regular meetings. The meetings also facilitate announcements of upcoming job fairs and community events. Once notified of an event, the item is added to the website,** [**www.neawia.com/community.html**](http://www.neawia.com/community.html)**.**

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

**DWS (UI department) is co-located with WIOA at all Northeast AWCs. There is regular interaction between DWS and WIOA staff. DWS and WIOA management meet on a regular basis (Regional Partner meetings) to discuss services and strategies in Northeast Arkansas. DWS is also represented on the NEAWDB.**

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

## Describe local and regional efforts to support and/or promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services, in coordination with economic development and other partners. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(5)]

**NEAWDA will collaborate with chambers of commerce and 2 and 4 year state colleges to foster entrepreneurship and microenterprise services.**

## Describe how the local board coordinates education and workforce investment activities with relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(10)]

# The PEOL provides an annual list of occupations and training programs. The list provides the estimated annual wage for each occupation. WIOA eligible participants may be placed in training at approved 2 and 4 year State colleges. Past performance measures demonstrate the success of the training participants in demand occupations which led to self-sufficiency.

# NEAWDB has approved an Individual Training Account Policy for providing tuition and fee assistance to WIOA participants. The 2 and 4 year State colleges must submit applications for demand occupations into the Arkansas Consumer Reporting System (ACRS) for approval by the local Workforce Development Board. WIOA staff will coordinate with the 2 and 4 year State colleges to determine the unmet need of the WIOA participant and avoid duplication of services among partners.

## Describe efforts to coordinate supportive services provided through workforce investment activities in the local area, including facilitating transportation for customers. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(11)]

**The NEAWDB coordinates available services with partner agencies to ensure collaboration and to avoid duplication. Resource manuals of available supportive services (including transportation for customers) are being utilized to properly determine/identify available services for the NEAWDA. The Resource manuals have been disbursed during Regional Partner meetings and to WIOA staff.**

## Describe strategies to implement the operational goals of the local one-stop system, maximizing coordination of services provided by the State’s employment services under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.), and the local board’s service providers in order to improve services and avoid duplication. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(12)]

**Regional Partner meetings have been an effective vehicle for disseminating information to various partners, the community, and employers. These meetings are being utilized to coordinate job fairs, community events, business outreach, and community outreach.**

**DWS and ETS, Inc. are co-located at each of the three AWCs. There are no standalone Wagner Peyser or WIOA Title I Service Provider offices that provide direct services to clients. By co-locating, the community receives collaborated services and the staff are cross trained in relevant services.**

**Various MOU agreements are in place among partners for sharing information and establishing administrative costs as necessary. Resource Sharing Agreements are utilized to designate costs and properly allocate them among benefiting partners.**

## Describe how the local board will carry out a review of local applications submitted under WIOA Title II Adult Education and Literacy, consistent with the local plan (as described in WIOA Sec. 107(d)(11) and WIOA Sec. 232). [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(13)]

**The Department of Career Education has provided the following criteria to be reviewed by the local boards for eligible applicants:**

* **Demonstrates its participation in carrying out activities related to the development and implementation of career pathways in the local area;**
* **Describes a plan for fulfilling its education and training and administrative responsibilities as a one-stop partner and for participating on the local workforce board;**
* **Aligns adult education and literacy activities with the education and training objectives and activities of the local workforce plan and the One Stop Delivery System, including concurrent enrollment in Title I & Title II programs under WIOA, as appropriate;**
* **Demonstrates a plan and strategies for effectively working with workforce partners identified by the local plan to share resources;**
* **Contributes to regional education and training efforts, including career pathways programs.**

## Based on the analysis described in Appendix B - Section 1, identify the industries where a sector partnership is currently being convened in the local area or where there will be an attempt to convene a sector partnership and the timeframe. Categorize the sector partnerships as active, emerging, or exploring as defined below.

* + - **Active**
      * Has a clear coordinator, convener, or convening team;
      * Is led by industry as demonstrated by private sector members playing leadership roles;
      * Has broad industry engagement as demonstrated by industry members attending meetings, partnering on activities, providing in-kind or financial resources, or similar;
      * Includes critical and engaged partners across programs from workforce development;
      * Can demonstrate that the partnership is not “just a workforce thing,” “just an economic development thing,” or “just an education thing.”
      * Operates in a true labor market region, not within the confines of a workforce area or other geopolitical boundaries;
      * Operates under some kind of shared strategic plan, road map, etc.;
      * Can demonstrate clearly identified priorities and an action plan, be able to demonstrate recent or current activities, services or products that are a direct outcome of the partnership.

**At this time, WIOA does not have any sector partnerships meeting the “Active” criteria.**

* + - **Emerging**
      * Has at least an interim coordinator, convener, or convening team;
      * Has engaged at least one private sector champion to help drive the launch and implementation of a sector partnership;
      * Includes individuals from workforce development, education, economic development and other programs or organizations in strategic partner roles;
      * Actively working to implement strategic priorities outlined in a launch meeting.

**At this time, WIOA does not have any sector partnerships meeting the “Emerging” criteria.**

* + - **Exploring**
      * Is in the infancy stage, but actively considering or planning the preparation needed to launch a partnership;
      * Working to identify partners who would be involved;
      * Determining if the partnership really makes sense for the community.

**1. Exploring the Medical Industry –**

**WIOA has had great success with participants who graduate with a certificate/diploma from the 2 and 4 year State colleges in these demand occupations. The graduates are being hired by local medical industries.**

**2. Exploring the Engineering Field –**

**WIOA has had great success with participants who graduate from the 4 year State colleges in these demand occupations. The graduates are being hired by local engineering industries.**

## Does the local board currently leverage or have oversight of funding outside of WIOA Title I funding to support the local workforce development system? Briefly describe the additional funding and how it will impact the local system. If the local board does not currently have oversight of additional funding, describe any future plans to pursue them.

**NEAWDB currently utilizes Promise funds and Arkansas Sector Partnership funds to assist with overall infrastructure. The leverage helps in the following ways:**

* **By sharing the operational overhead (lease space/utilities/internet/communication) among multiple funding streams, additional WIOA funds may be redirected to serving additional participants in work experience and occupational training services.**
* **Leveraging funds allows for the opportunity to network and/or coordinate with agencies who are unaware of WIOA services. Networking increases the community awareness, maximization of services, and helps avoid duplication.**

**Section 4: Program Design and Evaluation**

Many of the responses below should be based on strategic discussions between the local board and one-stop partners. Please provide a separate response for each of the elements listed below.

* 1. Describe the one-stop delivery system in the local area including:

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

**The following items are key tools utilized by the NEAWDA:**

* **Internal Monitoring of the NEAWDA.**
* **Financial Expenditure Reports to the NEAWDB and NEACEOs**
* **Slot In Agreements with local 2 and 4 year State colleges**
* **Surveys via website for local AWCs**
* **Occupational Questionnaire of WIOA participants**
* **Annual audit of ETS, Inc.**
* **Legislative audit of 2 and 4 year State colleges**

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

**The NEAWDA has developed a website,** [**www.neawia.com**](http://www.neawia.com)**, for providing technological access to rural communities. The website provides location address/contact information, job listings, partner services, community events, online application, and meeting dates for the NEAWDB/NEACEOs/Regional Partners, etc.**

1. How entities within the one-stop delivery system, including one-stop operators and the one-stop partners, will comply with WIOA section 188, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities, including providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities.   
   [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(6)(C)] (See Appendix C: *Transitional Planning References and Resources)*

**The State of Arkansas’ EO Manager, Ms. Gloria Johnson, provides the local EO officer with the required documentation to comply with various provisions of the state and federal government. AWCs have an annual ADA compliance checklist and a complaint log is provided to Ms. Johnson as requested.**

**As required, the State of Arkansas provides training.**

1. List all required and optional program partners; indicate the program(s) each partner provides and the physical location where the program(s) can be accessed. Describe the roles and resource contributions of the partners. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(6)(D)]

**The AWC (Comprehensive Center) has the following required programs co-located in Jonesboro, AR: Wagner Peyser (Department of Workforce Services), WIOA Title I Services (Employment & Training Services, Inc.), and Adult Education (Arkansas State University – Newport).**

**Wagner Peyser**

**The One Stop delivery system provides universal access to an integrated array of labor exchange services so that workers, job seekers and businesses can find the services they need in one stop and frequently under one roof in easy-to-find locations.    
  
The Employment Service focuses on providing a variety of employment related labor exchange services including but not limited to job search assistance, job referral, and placement assistance for job seekers, re-employment services to unemployment insurance claimants, and recruitment services to employers with job openings. Services are delivered in one of three modes including self-service, facilitated self-help services and staff assisted service delivery approaches. Depending on the needs of the labor market other services such as job seeker assessment of skill levels, abilities and aptitudes, career guidance when appropriate, job search workshops and referral to training may be available.  
  
The services offered to employers, in addition to referral of job seekers to available job openings, include assistance in development of job order requirements, matching job seeker experience with job requirements, skills and other attributes, assisting employers with special recruitment needs, arranging for Job Fairs, assisting employers analyze hard-to-fill job orders, assisting with job restructuring and helping employers deal with layoffs.   
  
Job seekers who are Veterans receive priority referral to jobs and training as well as special employment services and assistance.  In addition, the system provides specialized attention and service to individuals with disabilities, migrant and seasonal farm-workers, ex-offenders, youth, minorities and older workers.**

**WIOA Title I Services**

**Employment & Training Services, Inc. (WIOA Title I Services) provides Adult, Dislocated Worker (DLW), and Youth services to Northeast Arkansas. Services include but are not limited to work experience, occupational skills training, on-the-job training, referrals to partner agencies, are co-located at each of the three AWCs. There are no standalone Wagner Peyser or WIOA Title I Service Provider offices that provide direct services to clients. By co-locating, the community receives collaborated services and the staff are cross trained in relevant services.**

**Adult Education**

**Adult education programs provide basic skills classes to adults with less than a high school education. Adult education in Arkansas is based on the following philosophy:**

* **All adults can learn.**
* **All adults have the right to education that enhances their ability to effect positive changes in their lives.**
* **All adults have the right to obtain the life skills that they need to become self- sufficient, actively participating members of society.**
* **All adults have the right to complete their education through the high school level.**

**The following services are available but not limited to:**

* **Adult Basic Education and General Adult Education serve adults with less than a high school education.**
* **GED® offers adults the opportunity to earn the GED® credential.**
* **English as a Second Language (ESL) serves individuals whose native language is not English.**
* **Correctional education provides basic skills education to incarcerated individuals who lack a high school diploma.**
* **Family literacy classes serve the basic skills needs of children and their parents.**
* **Workforce Alliance for Growth in the Economy (WAGE™) offers academic and job skills instruction to unemployed and underemployed Arkansans.**

**Arkansas Rehabilitation Services**

**To achieve its mission of preparing Arkansans with disabilities to work and lead productive and independent lives, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS) provides a variety of training and career preparation programs.**

**Services include: career and technical education and training; transition services for high school students with disabilities who are moving from high school to post-secondary education or work; scholarships and leadership programs for students with disabilities; diagnosis and evaluation of capacities and limitations; guidance and counseling; job placement; OJT; physical and cognitive restorative services; assistive technology; community rehabilitation programs; and supported employment services.**

**Northeast Arkansas is served out of the Jonesboro Field Office located at 2920 Longview Drive, Jonesboro, AR 72401. This office serves the following counties: Craighead, Poinsett, Greene, Clay, Randolph, Jackson, and Lawrence.**

1. Describe how the workforce centers are implementing and transitioning to an integrated technology-enabled intake and case management information system for core programs [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(21)]

**The local workforce centers are utilizing the Arkansas Job Link (AJL) for software access (intake/core services) for applicants and case manager staff.**

* 1. Describe the local board’s assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(7)]

**Northeast has a long history of occupational skills training and work experience. A brief summary is provided below.**

**Occupational skills training provides clients with tuition and fee assistance in demand occupational skills training at state 2 and 4 year colleges. This service closes the gap between job seekers in the community and employers who need a skilled workforce for their industry. By meeting the needs of current employers, the skilled workforce will help attract new industry to the area. During the 2015-2016 allocation year, over 300 participants were served in occupational skills training with Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth funds.**

**Work experience provides another avenue for growing the skill set of jobseekers in the local area. Work experience takes a “hands on approach” by developing good work habits and new job skills for individuals. These items are crucial for jobseekers to obtain full time employment. WIOA staff have worked diligently to establish worksites who will embrace this job skill process.**

* 1. Describe how the local board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(8)]

**Northeast collaborates with the State Dislocated Worker Taskforce by presenting at local workshops. The presentations provide information on the available services in the area and coordinates with the State and local partners to encourage reengagement of clients into the workforce.**

**Northeast notifies the State Dislocated Worker Taskforce of any closings in the area in order to ensure client needs are addressed in the area.**

* 1. Describe the local board’s assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce activities, including activities for youth with disabilities. Identify successful models and best practices for youth workforce activities relevant to the local area. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(9)]

*Note:* This section must include a description of the program design elements as well as how the local area will implement the 14 program elements.

**Program element #1 - Tutoring, study skills training, instruction and evidence-based dropout prevention and recovery strategies that lead to completion of the requirements for a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent (including a recognized certificate of attendance or similar document for individuals with disabilities) or for a recognized postsecondary credential;**

**Tutoring – designed to improve the academic knowledge and skills of youth in specific areas. It involves a tutor helping a youth acquire knowledge and skills in a specific area. The tutor provides instruction on a one-on-one basis, group setting or internet based. The tutor provides feedback on the youth’s performance allowing the youth to learn from his or her mistakes. Tutoring should be available to those who need additional help with school subjects, or who have fallen behind academically. Those transitioning from secondary to postsecondary education may also benefit from tutoring. Some youth have learning disabilities or have a learning style that requires additional instructional assistance.**

**Study skills - a set of abilities that allow youth to learn effectively and efficiently on their own. Good study skills allow a youth to do well in all phases of education and to make all phases of life an opportunity for learning. Study skills training involves instruction and practice activities on a range of strategies from planning and organizing time to reading comprehension, increasing concentration, and test taking. Instruction may be one-on-one, a group activity. Youth may work alone in some practice activities and in groups for others. The purpose of a study skills program is to help youth improve the skills needed to learn and understand information.**

**Dropout prevention strategies - interventions designed to keep youth in school until graduation from high school. These strategies ensure that youth stay in school to get their high school diploma and continue with some postsecondary education or long term employment. WIOA staff work with local guidance counselors to identify and address potential obstacles for graduation.**

**Recovery strategies - Northeast collaborates with Adult Education who provides basic academic skills, basic computer skills, GED preparation, and reading/writing proficiency, classes to WIOA Youth. These services can be provided at the Adult Education locations and some services may be provided online.**

**Program element #2 - Alternative secondary school services, or dropout recovery services, as appropriate;**

**Alternative schools offer specialized, structured curriculum inside or outside of the public school system which may provide work, study, and/or academic intervention for students with behavior problems, physical/mental disabilities, who are at risk of dropping out, who are institutionalized or adjudicated youth and/or youth who are in legal custody of the Department of Human Services (or similar entity) and are residing in an institution. This service will be offered through the local Alternative Schools.**

**Northeast works closely with alternative schools throughout the area. Alternative schools will be one of many sources for referrals for eligible WIOA Youth participants. The primary goal is for the youth to obtain their high school diploma or a GED.**

**Program element #3 - Paid and unpaid work experiences that have academic and occupational education as a component of the work experience, which may include the following types of work experiences: (i) Summer employment opportunities and other employment opportunities available throughout the school year; (ii) Pre-apprenticeship programs; (iii) Internships and job shadowing; and (iv) On-the-job training opportunities;**

**Work Experience is a planned/structured learning experience that takes place in a private for-profit, non-profit, or public sectors workplace for a limited period of time. Work experience is temporary. Work experience for a participant in WIOA helps individuals obtain the skills they need to succeed in the workplace. Work experience provides a helpful means for an individual to gain experience that leads to unsubsidized employment. It should promote the development of good work habits and work skills. Work experience for youth has an academic and occupational education component. The academic component is currently being provided by partner agencies (such as Adult Education, Literacy Council, etc.) and/or WIOA staff with a teaching background.**

**The summer employment opportunities (SEO) include a planned and structured learning experience that takes place in a private or public worksite for approximately six (6) weeks. Summer employment opportunities provide new academic/work skills that will lead to future employment. Students that are at a high risk of dropping out of school will be followed throughout the year as a part of a year-round intervention strategy. SEO will offer work experience and provide academic enrichment activities to enhance employability skills. Academic enrichment activities consist of effective and comprehensive services provided to eligible youth, which improves their academic skills and provides effective connections to employers.**

**Program element #4 - Occupational skill training, which includes priority consideration for training programs that lead to recognized postsecondary credentials that align with in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the local area involved, if the Local WDB determines that the programs meet the quality criteria described in WIOA sec. 123;**

**Occupational skills training provides clients with tuition and fee assistance in demand occupational skills training at state 2 and 4 year colleges. This service closes the gap between job seekers in the community and employers who need a skilled workforce for their industry. By meeting the needs of current employers, the skilled workforce will help attract new industry to the area.**

**Program element #5 - Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster;**

**Northeast works closely with local apprenticeship throughout the area. Local apprenticeship organizations will be one of many sources for referrals for eligible WIOA Youth participants. The primary goal is for the youth to be trained and employed in a demand occupation that leads self sufficiency.**

**Program element #6 - Leadership development opportunities, including community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social and civic behaviors;**

**Leadership development opportunities are opportunities that encourage responsibility, employability, and other positive social behaviors. Other activities included such as positive social behavior and soft skills, decision making, team work and other activities. Leadership development is a broad set of activities that encourage responsibility, employability, and other positive social behaviors. The purpose of leadership development activities is to develop skills and attitudes that are important in all areas of life to include education, employment, family, and community. Many youth do not have those skills and attitudes. Leadership development provides encouragement and support to youth and assist in developing skills and instilling confidence as they transition into adulthood. Types of leadership development opportunities include but are not limited to:**

* **Exposure to postsecondary education**
* **Community and service learning projects**
* **Peer-centered activities, including peer mentoring and tutoring**
* **Organizational and team work training, including team leadership training**
* **Training in decision-making, including determining priorities**
* **Citizenship training, including life-skills training such as parenting, work-behavior training, and budgeting of resources**

**Positive Social Behaviors include but not limited to:**

* **Positive attitudinal development**
* **Self-esteem building**
* **Openness to working with individuals from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds**
* **Maintaining healthy lifestyles, including being alcohol and drug free**
* **Maintaining positive relationships with responsible adults and peers, and contributing to the well being of one’s community, including voting**
* **Maintaining a commitment to learning and academic success**
* **Avoiding delinquency**
* **Postponed and responsible parenting**
* **Positive job attitudes and work skills**

**Leadership Development Activities include but are not limited to:**

* **Community volunteering**
* **Service learning**
* **Peer mentoring or tutoring**
* **Serving on youth councils, community, or advocacy organization boards**
* **Leadership training, such as how to work in a team, how to run meetings, diversity training**
* **Life skills training, such as parent education, financial education, goal setting, conflict resolution**

**Leadership Development Opportunities are available through several community based organizations throughout the local area. Their events are posted on the website community calendar,** [**www.neawia.com/community**](http://www.neawia.com/community)**.**

**Program element #7 - Supportive services, including the services listed in §681.570;**

**Supportive services include assistance such as transportation, child care, dependent care, and housing that is necessary to enable an individual to participate in WIA youth program activities. ARS developed a resource directory by county.**

**Program element #8 - Adult mentoring for a duration of at least 12 months, that may occur both during and after program participation;**

**Adult mentoring is a one-on-one supportive relationship between an adult and a youth that is based on trust. High-quality adult mentoring programs include an adult role model who builds a working relationship with a youth and who fosters the development of positive life skills in youth. Youth should receive adult mentoring for the period of participation and a subsequent period, for a total of not less than 12 months.**

**The purpose of mentoring activities is to help youth succeed in the school or the workplace, facilitate positive social behaviors and learn leadership and citizenship skills.**

**Benefits of adult mentoring include self-confidence/self-esteem, increase motivation, enhance achievements/aspirations, and ease transition to adulthood. Adult mentoring is available through several community based organizations throughout the local area.**

**Program element #9 - Follow-up services for not less than 12 months after the completion of participation, as provided in §681.580;**

**Follow-up services are activities after completion of participation to monitor youths’ success during their transition to employment and further education and to provide assistance as needed for a successful transition.**

**Program element #10 - Comprehensive guidance and counseling, which may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling, as well as referrals to counseling, as appropriate to the needs of the individual youth;**

**Comprehensive guidance and counseling is a process of helping youth make and implement informed educational, occupational, and life choices. Comprehensive guidance and counseling programs impart skills through counselor-directed learning opportunities that help youth achieve success through academic, career, personal, and social development. An effective comprehensive guidance and counseling program develops a youth’s competencies in self-knowledge, educational and occupational exploration, and career planning.**

**Many at-risk youth need assistance in making informed decisions and choices. The purpose of comprehensive guidance and counseling is to promote growth in each youth’s educational, personal, social, and employability skills. Career and employment counseling includes but is not limited to the provision of career and occupational information to include Labor Market Information (LMI). Participants may receive information on various occupations that will assist them in making career choices.**

**As needed, WIOA staff will refer participants to partner programs for counseling in drug, alcohol, mental health, etc.**

**Program element #11 - Financial literacy education;**

**Financial literacy education includes direct training of one or more participants with staff. Staff uses online information to teach basic skills in bank transactions (bank statement reconciliation, debit/credit), debt management (loans, credit cards, etc), budgeting (actual vs estimated, savings, etc.), and other useful real life skills as needed.**

**Program element #12 - Entrepreneurial skills training;**

**Northeast will partner with local 2 and 4 year state colleges, local chambers of commerce, and economic development agencies. These members are represented in the Regional Partner meetings.**

**Program element #13 - Services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area, such as career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration services; and**

**The Northeast AWCs utilize** [**www.arjoblink.arkansas.gov**](http://www.arjoblink.arkansas.gov) **for up to date information about labor market information, employment information, in demand industry sectors. This access point is beneficial to metro and non-metro areas due to the 24 hour online access.**

**Northeast partners with DWS to provide access for career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration services.**

**Program element #14 - Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and training.**

**Northeast provides individual guidance and counseling, including career pathway discussion; assistance with applications for FAFSA; and referral to enrollment and career counseling services at Post-secondary institutions.**

* 1. Describe local board actions to become and/or remain a high-performing local board, consistent with the factors developed by the Arkansas Workforce Development Board. These factors have not been determined but will include effectiveness and continuous improvement criteria for local boards. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(18)]

(See Appendix C: *Transitional Planning References and Resources)*

**Northeast will develop strategies to adhere to the factors as determined by the Arkansas Workforce Development Board. Board member training was provided by Mayer & Mayer on April 2016 in Little Rock, Arkansas. The purpose of the training was to work on core strategies for serving the employers and people of the community.**

**NEAWDB meetings provide crucial information such as budget vs expenditures, performance measures, policies, etc. This information ensures the NEAWDB has the necessary tools to serve the people and employers of Northeast Arkansas.**

* 1. Describe how training services will be provided in accordance with WIOA Sec. 134(c)(3)(G), the process and criteria for issuing individual training accounts. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(19)]

**The NEAWDB has developed an Individual Training Account (ITA) policy for the Northeast Arkansas. The policy provides guidelines for the NEAWDA in which the ITAs will be issued and maintained.**

* 1. If contracts for training services are used, describe processes utilized by the local board to ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs, regardless of how the training services are to be provided*.* [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(19)]

**Northeast utilizes the Eligible Training Provider (ETP) list. An ETP list is available to staff in the workforce center via the ACRS website. Participants who have been approved for training must choose one of the approved programs in order to receive an ITA.**

* 1. Describe the process utilized by the local board to ensure that training provided is linked to in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the local area, or in another area to which a participant is willing to relocate. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(22)] and [WIOA Sec. 134(c)(3)(G)(iii)]

**Northeast Arkansas is part of the Arkansas Consumer Reporting System (ACRS). All training providers must complete an online electronic application. The application must be linked to an in-demand occupation/industry at the state or local level. Each application must be approved by the NEAWDB prior to issuing an ITA. Demand occupations from neighboring workforce areas may be used as well.**

**Section 5: Compliance**

Responses are focused on the local area’s compliance with federal or state requirements. Please provide a separate response for each of the elements listed below.

* 1. Describe the replicated cooperative agreements, as defined by WIOA 107(d)(11), in place between the local board and the Vocational Rehabilitation programs operated in the area with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities and to other individuals, such as cross training of staff, technical assistance, use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers, and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration, and coordination. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(14)]

**Local ARS Field offices or other ARS organizational units will replicate cooperative agreements in part or in whole with local divisions of WIOA core programs.   These may include the following:**

* **provision of intercomponent staff training and technical assistance with regard to:**
* **the availability and benefits of, and information on eligibility standards for, vocational rehabilitation services; and**
* **the promotion of equal, effective, and meaningful participation by individuals with disabilities in workforce investment activities in the State through the promotion of program accessibility, the use of nondiscriminatory policies and procedures, and the provision of reasonable accommodations, auxiliary aids and services, and rehabilitation technology, for individuals with disabilities;**
* **use of information and financial management systems that link all components of the statewide workforce development system, that link the components to other electronic networks, including nonvisual electronic networks, and that relate to such subjects as employment statistics, and information on job vacancies, career planning, and workforce innovation and opportunity activities; use of customer service features such as common intake and referral procedures, customer databases, resource information, and human services hotlines;**
* **establishment of cooperative efforts with employers to:  
  facilitate job placement; and**
* **carry out any other activities that the designated State unit and the employers determine to be appropriate; identification of staff roles, responsibilities, and available resources, and specification of the financial responsibility of each component of the statewide workforce investment system with regard to paying for necessary services (consistent with State law and Federal requirements); and specification of procedures for resolving disputes among such components.**

**Development of these agreements at the local level must include the local manager (field office district manager or the top executive at the organizational units of ARS).  The agreement must be signed by the local manager, the supervising Senior Leader from ARS, and the Commissioner of ARS or his/her designee. Copies of the agreement will be maintained by the local manager and Chief Fiscal Officer of ARS.**

* 1. Identify the entity responsible for the disbursal of grant funds as determined by the Chief Elected Official(s). [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(15)]

**ETS, Inc.**

* 1. Describe the competitive processes to award the subgrants and contracts for activities funded by WIOA Title I programs within the local area. This includes, but is not limited to, the process used to award funds to a one-stop operator and other sub-recipients/contractors of WIOA Title I adult, dislocated worker, and youth services. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(16)]

**The NEACEOs and NEAWDB has designated ETS, Inc. to be the grant recipient/fiscal agent/administrative entity and WIOA Title I Service Provider (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth). The One-Stop Operator must be procured.**

**Under WIA, the Designated One-Stop Operator for the NEAWDA is a consortium of three required partners:  AHDC, DWS, and ETS, Inc. This current process is efficient and does not require an overall One-Stop Operator budget. The current operator will stay in place until new procurement is finalized.**

**Listed below is a tentative timeline that is subject to change:**

1. **The One-Stop operator RFP or RFQ document will be developed by March 31, 2017.**
2. **Deadline for receipt of formal proposals/qualifications will be April 31, 2017.**
3. **Evaluation and awarding of proposals/qualifications will be May 31, 2017.**
4. **Any other contract/budget negotiations will be finalized by June 15, 2017.**
   1. Describe the local area’s negotiated local levels of performance for the federal measures and their implications upon the local workforce system; attach the completed Performance Targets Template. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(17)]

N*ote:* See Appendix C: Transitional Planning References and Resources “Performance Targets Template”.

**Northeast Arkansas requested the local performance levels be the same as the state performance level requirements. At the October 11, 2016 Arkansas Workforce Development Board (AWDB), the AWDB approved the committees’ recommendation for the 10 LWDAs to adhere to the state performance level requirements.**

* 1. Describe the indicators used by the local board to measure performance and effectiveness of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), eligible providers and the one-stop delivery system, in the local area.

[WIOA Sec. 108(b)(17)]

**The NEAWDB is provided the following information at quarterly meetings:**

1. **Current Expenditures vs. Budget**
2. **Current Performance vs. Required**
3. **Participant Expenditures by service categories**
4. **New enrollments by semester for Occupational Skills Training**
5. **Preparation and approval of NEAWDB policies**

**The other reports are provided as received:**

* 1. **Internal Monitoring**
  2. **DWS Monitoring**
  3. **Vendor’s List**
  4. **Other Monitoring (if necessary)**
  5. Describe the process used by the local board for the receipt and consideration of input into the development of the local plan in compliance with WIOA section 108(d). Describe the process to provide an opportunity for public comment prior to submission of the local plan. Be sure to address how members of the public, including representatives of business, labor organizations, and education were given an opportunity to provide comments on the local plan. [WIOA Sec. 108 (b)(20)]

**NEAWDA provided the following opportunities for public comment on the regional and local plan:**

1. **Northeast requested input on the regional and local plan draft during the Regional Partner meetings, One Stop consortium meetings, and NEAWDB meetings. A website link with each new draft was made available to the above parties for comment during development.**
2. **The local plan draft will be advertised in the Arkansas Democrat Gazette and the local website,** [**www.neawia.com**](http://www.neawia.com)**, notifying the community of the 30 day comment period. The regional & local plan will be made available electronically, by mail, and in person.**
   1. Prior to the date on which the local board submits a proposed local plan, the proposed local plan must be made available to members of the public through electronic and other means.
   2. Describe how the local board made the proposed local plan available for public comment. [WIOA Sec. 108(d)(1)];

**The regional & local plan will be made available electronically, by mail, and in person.**

* 1. Describe how the local board collected and considered public comments for inclusion in the proposed local plan. [WIOA Sec. 108(d)(2)]; and

**All comments are to be in written form and should be sent to ETS, Inc. 2805 Forest Home Road, Jonesboro, AR 72401**

* 1. If any comments were received that represent disagreement with the proposed local plan, include such comments within the local plan’s attachments. [WIOA Sec. 108(d)(3)]

**Any written comments received during the public comment period will be included as an attachment to this plan with a response by the NEAWDB or its agent, ETS, Inc.**

* 1. List the name, organization, and contact information of the designated equal opportunity officer for each workforce center within the local area.

**Mike Willyerd, Paragould Workforce Center, 1015 Linwood Suite #4, Paragould, AR 72450**

**Section 6: Plan Assurances**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Planning Process and Public Comment** | **References** |
|  | * 1. The local board has processes and timelines, consistent with WIOA Section 108(d), to obtain input into the development of the local plan and provide the opportunity for comment by representatives of business, labor organizations, education, other key stakeholders, and the general public for a period that is no less than 30 days. | WIOA Sections 108(d); proposed 20 CFR 679.550(b) |
|  | * 1. The final local plan is available and accessible to the general public. | Proposed 20 CFR 679.550(b)(5) |
|  | * 1. The local board has established procedures to ensure public access (including people with disabilities) to board meetings and information regarding board activities, such as board membership and minutes. | WIOA Section 107(e); proposed 20 CFR 679.390 and 679.550 |
|  | **Required Policies and Procedures** | **References** |
|  | * 1. The local board makes publicly-available any local requirements for the public workforce system, such as policies, including policies for the use of WIOA Title I funds. | Proposed 20 CFR 679.390 |
|  | * 1. The local board has established a written policy or procedure that identifies circumstances that might present conflict of interest for any local workforce investment board or entity that they represent, and provides for the resolution of conflicts. | WIOA Section 107(h); proposed 20 CFR 679.410(a)-(c) |
|  | * 1. The local board has copies of memoranda of understanding between the local board and each one-stop partner concerning the operation of the one-stop delivery system in the local area, and has provided the State with the latest versions of its memoranda of understanding. | WIOA Section 121(c); proposed 20 CFR 678.500-510 |
|  | * 1. The local board has written policy or procedures that ensure one-stop operator agreements are reviewed and updated no less than once every three years. | WIOA Section 121(c)(v) |
|  | * 1. The local board has negotiated and reached agreement on local performance measures with the local chief elected official(s) and the Governor. | WIOA Sections 107(d)(9) and 116(c); proposed 20 CFR 679.390(k) and 677.210(b) |
|  | * 1. The local board has procurement policies and procedures for selecting one-stop operators, awarding contracts under WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker funding provisions, and awarding contracts for Youth service provision under WIOA Title I in accordance with applicable state and local laws, rules, and regulations, provided no conflict exists with WIOA. | WIOA Sections 121(d) and 123; proposed 20 CFR 678.600-615 and 681.400 |
|  | * 1. The local board has procedures for identifying and determining the eligibility of training providers and their programs to receive WIOA Title I individual training accounts | WIOA Sections 107(d)(10), 122(b)(3), and 123; Proposed 20 CFR 679.370(l)-(m) and 680.410-430 |
|  | * 1. The local board has written procedures for resolving grievances and complaints alleging violations of WIOA Title I regulations, grants, or other agreements under WIOA and written policies or procedures for assisting customers who express interest in filing complaints at any point of service, including, at a minimum, a requirement that all partners can identify appropriate staff contacts and refer customers to those contacts. | WIOA Section 181(c); proposed 20 CFR 683.600 |
|  | * 1. The local board has established at least one comprehensive, full-service one-stop center and has a written process for the local Chief Elected Official and local board to determine that the center conforms to the definition therein. | WIOA Section 121(e)(2)(A); proposed 20 CFR 678.305 |
|  | * 1. All partners in the local workforce and education system described in this plan ensure the physical, programmatic and communications accessibility of facilities, programs, services, technology and materials in one-stop centers for individuals with disabilities. | WIOA Section 188; 29 CFR parts 37.7-37.9; 20 CFR 652.8(j) |
|  | * 1. The local board ensures that outreach is provided to populations and sub-populations who can benefit from one-stop services. | WIOA Section 188; 29 CFR 37.42 |
|  | * 1. The local board implements universal access to programs and activities to individuals through reasonable recruitment targeting, outreach efforts, assessments, service delivery, partner development, and numeric goals. | WIOA Section 188; 29 CFR 37.42 |
|  | * 1. The local board complies with the nondiscrimination provisions of Section 188, and assures that Methods of Administration were developed and implemented. | WIOA Section 188; 29 CFR 37.54(a)(1) |
|  | * 1. The local board collects and maintains data necessary to show compliance with nondiscrimination provisions of Section 188. | WIOA Section 185; 29 CFR 37.37 |
|  | * 1. The local board complies with restrictions governing the use of federal funds for political activities, the use of the one-stop environment for political activities, and the local board complies with the applicable certification and disclosure requirements | 2 CFR Part 225 Appendix B; 2 CFR Part 230 Appendix B; 48 CFR 31.205-22; RCW 42.52.180; TEGL 2-12; 29 CFR Part 93.100 |
|  | * 1. The local board ensures that one-stop Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker (MSFW) and business services staff, along with the Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker program partner agency, will continue to provide services to agricultural employers and MSFWs that are demand-driven. | WIOA Section 167 |
|  | * 1. The local board follows confidentiality requirements for wage and education records as required by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), as amended, WIOA, and applicable Departmental regulations. | WIOA Sections 116(i)(3) and 185(a)(4); 20 USC 1232g; proposed 20 CFR 677.175 and 20 CFR part 603 |
|  | **Administration of Funds** | **References** |
|  | * 1. The local board has a written policy and procedures to competitively award grants and contracts for WIOA Title I activities (or applicable federal waiver), including a process to be used to procure training services made as exceptions to the Individual Training Account process. | WIOA Section 108(b)(16); proposed 20 CFR 679.560(a)(15); WIOA Section 134(c)(3)(G); proposed 20 CFR 680.300-310 |
|  | * 1. The local board has accounting systems that follow current Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and written fiscal-controls and fund-accounting procedures and ensures such procedures are followed to insure proper disbursement and accounting of WIOA adult, dislocated worker, and youth program funds. | WIOA Section 108(b)(15) |
|  | * 1. The local board ensures compliance with the uniform administrative requirements under WIOA through annual, on-site monitoring of each local sub-recipient. | WIOA Section 184(a)(3); proposed 20 CFR 683.200, 683.300, and 683.400-410 |
|  | * 1. The local board has a written debt collection policy and procedures that conforms with state and federal requirements and a process for maintaining a permanent record of all debt collection cases that supports the decisions made and documents the actions taken with respect to debt collection, restoration, or other debt resolution activities. | WIOA Section 184(c); 20 CFR Part 652; proposed 20 CFR 683.410(a), 683.420(a), 683.750 |
|  | * 1. The local board will not use funds received under WIOA to assist, promote, or deter union organizing. | WIOA Section 181(b)(7); proposed 20 CFR 680.850 |
|  | **Eligibility** | **References** |
|  | * 1. The local board has a written policy and procedures that ensure adequate and correct determinations of eligibility for WIOA-funded basic career services and qualifications for enrollment of adults, dislocated workers, and youth in WIOA-funded individualized career services and training services, consistent with state policy on eligibility and priority of service. | Proposed 20 CFR Part 680 Subparts A and B; proposed 20 CFR Part 681 Subpart A |
|  | * 1. The local board has a written policy and procedures for awarding Individual Training Accounts to eligible adults, dislocated workers, and youth receiving WIOA Title I training services, including dollar and/or duration limit(s), limits on the number of times an individual may modify an ITA, and how ITAs will be obligated and authorized. | WIOA Section 134(c)(3)(G); Proposed 20 CFR 680.300-320 |
|  | * 1. The local board has a written policy and procedures that establish internal controls, documentation requirements, and leveraging and coordination of other community resources when providing supportive services and, as applicable, needs-related payments to eligible adult, dislocated workers, and youth enrolled in WIOA Title I programs. | WIOA Sections 129(c)(2)(G) and 134(d)(2); proposed 20 CFR 680.900-970; proposed 20 CFR 681.570 |
|  | * 1. The local board has a written policy for priority of service at its workforce centers for local workforce providers that ensures veterans and eligible spouses are identified at the point of entry, made aware of their entitlement to priority of service, and provided information on the array of employment, training and placement services and eligibility requirements for those programs or services. | Jobs for Veterans Act; Veterans’ Benefits, Health Care, and Information Technology Act; 20 CFR 1010; TEGL 10-09 |

**Appendix C: Transitional Planning References and Resources**

1. **State of Arkansas’s Combined Workforce Development Strategic Plan *(State Plan)***On July 22, 2014, President Obama signed the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) providing a framework for Governors and states to make changes to their workforce systems. The federal law sets the parameters for the workforce system which is an integral part of the State’s ability to serve jobseekers and employers. WIOA will enable the State to align workforce priorities across multiple partners, training providers, employers and others to ensure we are creating a skilled workforce for today and the future.   
     
   An effective workforce development system will be built on a foundation of alignment, innovation, employer engagement, accountability structures and improved data. Arkansas will look beyond WIOA to set broad goals for a comprehensive workforce development system. We will do this by providing the highest quality of service to jobseekers and employers through well-coordinated approaches at the state and local levels. System access will be enhanced through the use of technology and creative partnerships with community organizations and other service providers. While access will be improved for all jobseekers, the provision of services and training will be focused on those most in need and hardest to serve.   
     
   The four main goals in the State’s Combined WIOA Plan are as follows:

**Strategic Goal 1: Develop an efficient partnership with employers, the educational system, workforce development partners, and community -based organizations to deliver a platform that will prepare a skilled workforce for existing and new employers.**

Goal 1 Objectives:

1. Expand employer partnerships through the support of industry engagement.
2. Identify and promote best practices (private and public) for developing and sustaining partnerships.
3. Expand partnership with economic development to refine sector strategies.
4. Improve communication/participation between education entities, local and state boards, government agencies, community-based organizations, and employers.
5. Increase accountability and clarity of action between all workforce related boards.
6. Increase the utilization of Registered Apprenticeship programs as viable talent development opportunities.
7. Increase connections with employers and Vocational Rehabilitation agencies to provide support and employment for youth and adults with disabilities.
8. Partner with K-12 education, higher education, career and technical education, and adult education to provide consistent rules and eliminate barriers to implementing training programs around the State.
9. Explore data sharing opportunities with non-governmental organizations that are committed partners to the state’s workforce center system that will lead to improved intake, referral, and case management for customers served by multiple agencies (both public and private).
10. Expand small business participation.

**Strategic Goal 2: Enhance service delivery to employers and jobseekers.**

Goal 2 Objectives:

1. Develop a common intake process for jobseekers and businesses that will efficiently connect them with services available from all workforce development partner programs and identify any barriers to employment that need to be addressed.
2. Develop an integrated data system that will enable the sharing of information between partner agencies to more efficiently service both employers and jobseekers.
3. Promote training that leads to industry recognized credentials and certification.
4. Support transportable skill sets for transportable careers.
5. Support career pathways development and sector strategy initiatives as a way to meet business and industry needs.
6. Expand service delivery access points by the use of virtual services.
7. Develop a common business outreach strategy with a common message that will be utilized by all workforce system partners.
8. Develop a menu of services available at each service delivery access point that provides a list of the services and training opportunities available through Arkansas’s talent development system.
9. Utilize customer satisfaction surveys to ensure continuous improvement of the State’s talent development system.
10. Explore data sharing opportunities with non-governmental organizations that are committed partners to the state’s workforce center system that will lead to improved intake, referral, and case management for customers served by multiple agencies (both public and private).

**Strategic Goal 3: Increase awareness of the State’s Talent Development System**

Goal 3 Objectives:

1. Increase access to the workforce development system through a no wrong door approach to services.
2. Change employer and jobseeker perceptions of the workforce system.
3. Develop an image-building outreach campaign that educates Arkansans about the services and the career development opportunities available in the State.
4. Utilize technology, including social media and search engine optimization, to better connect jobseekers and employers with the talent development system in Arkansas.
5. Develop a user-friendly website that provides a common repository of information about career development opportunities that are relevant to K-12 education, parents, educators, adults, employers, government agencies, and the general public.

**Strategic Goal 4: Address Skills Gaps**

Goal 4 Objectives:

1. Conduct a statewide skills and asset analysis to determine the skills gap present and resources available to solve the skills issue.
2. Develop and implement an action plan to close the basic core, technical, and soft skills gaps in Arkansas.
3. Analyze the effectiveness of currently used job readiness standards and ensure coordination between the Arkansas Career Readiness Certificate program and the Workforce Alliance for Growth in the Economy (WAGE) program.

PY 2016 – PY 2019 Combined State Plan to be found at http://dws.arkansas.gov/wioa.htm

1. **State Policy and Guidance.**State policy can be found at <http://dws.arkansas.gov/wioa.htm>
2. **Labor Market and Workforce Information.**
3. **Discover Arkansas**Labor Market Information Portal Arkansas Labor Market Information (LMI) is posted online using the Discover Arkansas web portal located at www.discoverarkansas.net and is available to the general public.
4. **Arkansas State Plan Economic and Workforce Analysis**The Arkansas Combined State Plan includes an analysis of the current workforce. The data provided in Section II of the state plan under strategic elements may be very helpful to local boards in conducting a local area and regional economic and workforce analysis.   
     
   To provide local workforce boards in the state with tools for development planning in their own areas, data were downloaded and prepared from the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services Labor Market Information (LMI) website, <http://www.discoverarkansas.net>. These data were then turned into interactive visualizations, which are available at the following websites. These visualizations can be downloaded as an image or in PDF format. The goal is to help stakeholders at the state and local level better understand future industry and occupational needs and to provide workforce development boards with the tools needed to better serve their areas.  
     
   The data available at <http://arkansasresearchcenter.org/arc/index.php?cID=153> includes:

* Industries in 2012
* Job Growth in 2022
* Projected Job Growth by Workforce Development Area
* Projected Job Growth by Industry
* Percent Workforce in 2022

These data demonstrate the current makeup of the workforce by major industry, as well as projections of the number of jobs these industries will need in 2022. To the right of the visualizations are "filters" to help explore the data choosing multiple regions to compare, such as United States vs. Arkansas, Arkansas vs. workforce region, or directly compare regions.

The data available at <http://arkansasresearchcenter.org/arc/index.php?cID=154> includes:

* Arkansas Occupations, Current and 2022 Projections, which includes data visualizations concerning occupations in Arkansas, both currently and projections for 2022. Occupations are listed by their Standard Occupation Code (SOC) title. The SOC system is hierarchical. SOC Major codes are the top level occupational areas, such as "Construction and Extraction Occupations." At the next level would be SOC Minor, one of which for the above would be "Construction Trades Workers." Finally there is SOC Detail, such as “Stonemasons” or “Carpenters.” This web tool allows users to manipulate the data by indicating the level of detail desired.

1. **PY 2016 Performance Targets Template.** *(Attached)*
2. **Other Resources.**

* TEN 1-15; Promising Practices in Achieving Universal Access and Equal Opportunity: A Section 188Disability Reference Guide; July 6, 2015
* TEGL 37-14; Update on Complying with Nondiscrimination Requirements: Discrimination Based on Gender Identity, Gender Expression and Sex Stereotyping are Prohibited Forms of Sex Discrimination in the Workforce Development System; May 29, 2015
* Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

**Transitional PY2016 – PY 2017 Local Plan**

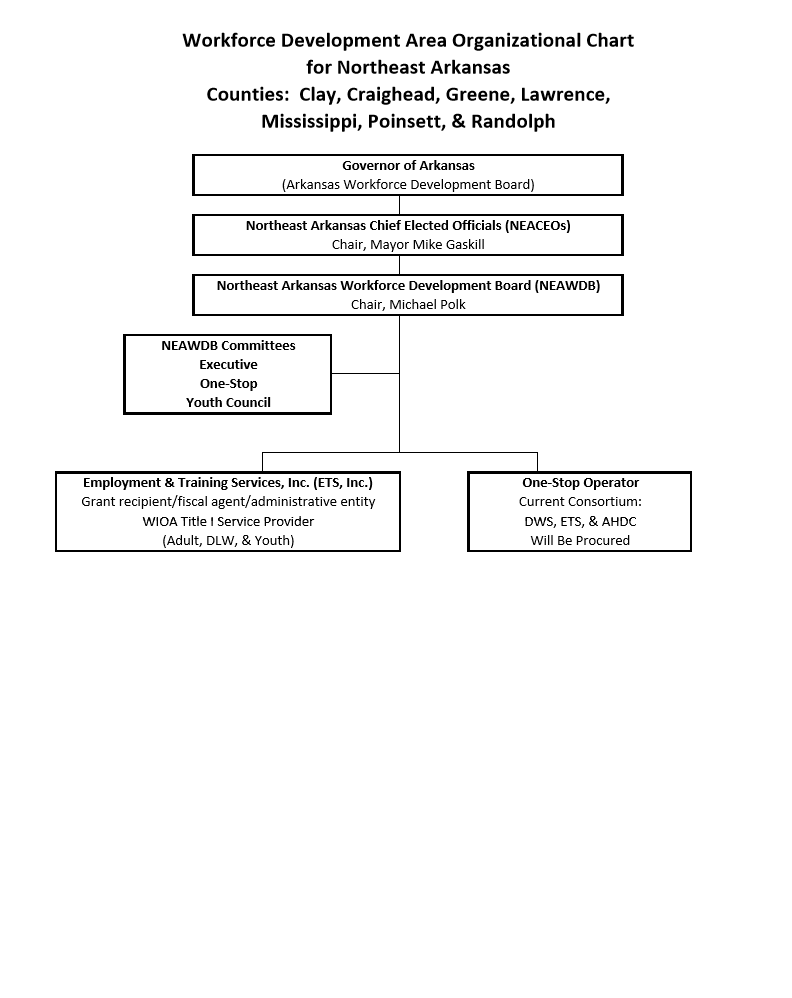
**Appendix C: Local Area WIOA Negotiated Performance Goals**

**Name of local workforce development area: Northeast Arkansas**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **WIOA Performance Measures** | **Local Area PY165 Performance Goals** |
| **Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)** | **Negotiated Goals** |
| **Adult** | **82.50%** |
| **Dislocated Worker** | **77.00%** |
| **Youth** | **75.00%** |
| **Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)** | **Negotiated Goals** |
| **Adult** | **78.00%** |
| **Dislocated Worker** | **74.50%** |
| **Youth** | **71.20%** |
| **Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)** | **Negotiated Goals** |
| **Adult** | **$5,842.00** |
| **Dislocated Worker** | **$6,400.00** |
| **Youth** | **N/A** |
| **Credential Attainment Rate** | **Negotiated Goals** |
| **Adult** | **75.30%** |
| **Dislocated Worker** | **75.00%** |
| **Youth** | **70.00%** |
| **Measurable Skill Gains** | **Negotiated Goals** |
| **Adult** | **Baseline** |
| **Dislocated Worker** | **Baseline** |
| **Youth** | **Baseline** |
| **Effectiveness in Serving Employers** | **Negotiated Goals** |
| **Adult** | **Baseline** |
| **Dislocated Worker** | **Baseline** |
| **Youth** | **Baseline** |

Baseline Indicator Explanation: Each State submitting a Unified or Combined Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The State is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education on state adjusted levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

To effect an orderly transition to the performance accountability system in Section 116 of the WIOA, the Departments will use the transition authority under WIOA sec. 503(a) to designate certain primary indicators of performance as “baseline” indicators in the first plan submission. A “baseline” indicator is one for which States will not propose an expected level of performance in the plan submission and will not come to agreement with the Departments on adjusted levels of performance. “Baseline” indicators will not be used in the end of the year performance calculations and will not be used to determine failure to achieve adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The selection of primary indicators for the designation as a baseline indicator is made based on the likelihood of a state having adequate data on which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance and such a designation will vary across core programs.

Attachment A.