



WSB Board Plan

2021 – 2024

Modifications



Workforce Solutions Borderplex Board Plan Modifications Program Years 2021–2024

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Table of Contents

Introduction	5
Part 1: Board Vision and Strategies	5
A. Vision and Goals	5
B. Board Strategies	10
C. High-Performing Board	13
Part 2. Economic and Workforce Analysis.....	14
A. Regional Economic and Employment Needs Analysis.....	14
B. Knowledge and Skills Analysis	21
C. Labor Force Analysis and Trends.....	24
D. Workforce Development Analysis	33
Part 3: Core Programs	36
A. Workforce Development System.....	36
B. Core Programs - Expand Access, Facilitate Development, and Improve Access.....	38
Part 4: One-Stop Service Delivery	40
A. One-Stop Service Delivery System.....	41
B. Cooperative Agreements	44
C. Employer Engagement, Economic Development, and Unemployment Insurance Program Coordination.....	45
D. Coordination of Wagner-Peyser Services	49
E. Integrated, Technology-Enabled Intake and Case Management.....	50
Part 5: Workforce Investment Activities	52

A. Economic Development and Entrepreneurial/Microenterprise Activities.....	52
B. Rapid Response Activity Coordination	54
C. Youth Activities and Services	56
D. Coordination with Secondary and Postsecondary Education Programs.....	60
E. Child Care and Early Learning.....	62
F. Transportation and Other Support Services	66
G. Coordination of Adult Education and Literacy (AEL).....	68
Part 6: Adult, Dislocated Workers, and Youth Services.....	70
A. Adult and Dislocated Worker Employment and Training.....	70
B. Priority to Recipients of Public Assistance and Low-Income Individuals	72
Part 7: Fiscal Agent, Grants, and Contracts.....	74
A. Fiscal Agent.....	74
B. Sub-Grants and Contracts.....	74
Part 8: Performance	77
A. Board Performance Targets.....	77
Part 9: Training and Services	79
A. Individual Training Accounts (ITAs).....	79
B. ITA Limitations	80
Part 10: Apprenticeship.....	80
A. Registered Apprenticeship Programs.....	80
B. ApprenticeshipTexas	81
Part 11: Public Comment.....	82
Appendix: Texas Workforce Investment Council Requirements	84
Focus on Employers.....	85
Engage in Partnerships	90
Align System Elements	92
Improve and Integrate Programs.....	96

Introduction

Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) §108 (20 Code of Federal Regulations §679.500–580), each Local Workforce Development Board (Board) is required to develop and submit to the state a comprehensive four-year plan (Board Plan) that identifies and describes policies and procedures as well as local activities that are in line with the State Plan. This Board Plan must be developed openly and be available to the public for comment for at least 15 days, but no more than 30 days, particularly to members of the business and educational communities as well as various other labor organizations. Along with submission of the Board Plan to the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), the Board must submit all public comments of disagreement with the plan to TWC. At the end of the first two-year period, the appropriate chief elected officials (CEOs) and the Board will review the local plan and prepare and submit modifications to reflect changes in the labor market and economic conditions, factors affecting the implementation of the plan, changes in financing, changes to the structure of the Board, and/or the need to revise strategies to meet local performance goals.

Part 1: Board Vision and Strategies

The strategic elements of the Local Workforce Development Board Planning Guidelines (Guidelines) are as follows:

A. Vision and Goals

(WIOA §108(b)(1)(E); 20 CFR §679.560(a)(5))

Boards must include a description of the Board's strategic vision to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency. The description must include:

- goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including early education services, and services for youth and individuals with barriers to employment; and
- goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on performance indicators described in WIOA §116(b)(2)(A).

WSB's Response:

Workforce Solutions Borderplex is the public workforce system in the six-county region, which includes Brewster, Culberson, El Paso, Hudspeth, Jeff Davis, and Presidio. We have established partnerships with various stakeholders within the region to improve education, employment, and economic development. WSB assists employers in finding quality employees and training individuals with the skills necessary to thrive in the workplace. As a non-profit organization, WSB receives state and federal tax dollars to provide employment and job training services within the Borderplex region. We administer a broad range of programs and services to address local workforce issues effectively and establish partnerships. The services are provided at no cost to customers.

WSB is focused on data driven regional economic development, business exploration, and business intelligence. To ensure that the WSB system continues its leadership role in workforce development for the region, the Board uses its mission and vision statements as guides to address workforce challenges and assist its customers, so they are competitive in the regional and global economies.

Our mission is "to empower all people to discover innovative resources and untapped possibilities to fuel business solutions" ~~to provide skilled workers for employers by advancing education, employment, entrepreneurship, and economic development opportunities in support of global competitiveness and regional prosperity.~~ Our vision is "Be a catalyst and conduit for a dynamic economy that achieves regional and global prosperity". ~~to empower the most dynamic workforce to achieve global competitiveness and regional prosperity.~~

At Workforce Solutions Borderplex, students and young adults are a priority in our mission to serve our region. We have developed special programs and initiatives to target this population to overcome barriers and find stability through employment or post-secondary education.

In addition to assisting employers in finding quality employees and training individuals with the skills necessary to thrive in the workplace, the Workforce Solutions Borderplex provides Child Care Services to over ~~610~~,000 children each year. This plays a vital role in supporting economic growth and economic self-sufficiency through the workforce system. By providing childcare assistance, parents throughout the workforce region can engage in work, education, and/or

training programs to obtain skills in demand by employers. This fosters movement towards financial stability and economic development. Therefore, childcare assistance positively impacts workers, businesses, children, and the community.

As a means of promoting quality in childcare, ~~the~~ WSB actively partners with childcare providers to offer mentoring services to those who want to go above and beyond the standards set forth by Child Care Licensing. WSB also provides training in early childhood education. The goal of these activities is to increase the quality of childcare in the region and increase the number of childcare facilities participating in Texas Rising Star (TRS) program so that parents can attend work, education or training.

Strategic Plan

Workforce Solutions Borderplex has established 5 Strategic Goals to maintain and continuously promote our mission and vision. Each objective is aligned with the Texas Workforce Commission performance measures.

1. Increase, simplify and enhance WSB services.

Objectives	TWC Measure
Establish temporary/rotating WSB locations to increase access. Effectively utilize relevant dashboards and infographics at Board, Committee, and internal meetings to inform better decision-making.	Credential, Employment, Choices work rate, Claimant re-employed within 10 weeks, and Average Children Served per day measures.
Enhance software functionality utilizing dashboards to align and simplify financial reporting w/service delivery/return on investment. Integrate childcare family population in all programs and initiatives to ensure services and programs are comprehensively impacting all customers.	<u>Credential, Employment, Choices work rate, Claimant re-employed within 10 weeks, Average Children Served per day and Employer Workforce Assistance measures.</u>
Increase the annual fund development goal of non-formula funds and utilize the new/additional funds to serve non-traditional clients with existing WSB services. Acquire \$500,000 in non-formula funds to utilize towards clients who do not typically qualify, enhance services, and/or develop innovative economic development programs.	Credential, Employment, Choices work rate, Claimant re-employed within 10 weeks, Average Children Served per day and Employer Workforce Assistance measures.
Automate workflow and eliminate need for hardcopy documentation, organization-wide. Automate workflow and process improvements by creating efficiencies with cross-functional software applications and enhancing our internal	Claimant re-employed within 10 weeks, Credential and Employment measures <u>Credential, Employment, Choices work rate, Claimant re-employed within 10 weeks, Average Children Served per day and</u>

digital literacy and skills.	Employer Workforce Assistance measures.
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2. Enhance customer experience with innovative and simplistic service and data-driven product design.

Objectives	TWC Measure
Develop an "Express Lane" model that evaluates, and addresses needs for expedited access to education and training programs. Develop a model to facilitate translation of degrees. Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy for the Pop-Ups and small center access points.	Credential measure Credential, Employment, Choices work rate, Claimant re-employed within 10 weeks, Average Children Served per day and Employer Workforce Assistance measures -
Conduct parent/teacher presentations to promote services and education about employment for students and/or persons with disabilities. Develop various options for enrollments into programs ranging from "self-managed," to "express," to "guided," to "concierge."	Credential and Employment measures Credential, Employment, Choices work rate, Claimant re-employed within 10 weeks, Average Children Served per day and Employer Workforce Assistance measures.
Add entrepreneurial & gig economy module options to all program clients' service plans and integrate SME and training providers who are offering the trainings and workshops. Develop methods and channels to embed jobseekers with disabilities into all workforce programs and initiatives.	Credential and Employment measures Credential, Employment, Choices work rate, Claimant re-employed within 10 weeks, Average Children Served per day and Employer Workforce Assistance measures. -
Develop childcare related initiatives to increase capacity, sustainability and access to childcare. Establish the "New Economy Readiness Workshops" at different scales based on customer abilities such as "basic digital literacy," "remote work," and "freelancer (entrepreneurial)" workshops.	Average Children Served per day. Credential & Employment measures -
Develop Digital Solutions Program for childcare providers (digital literacy + kits) [link to Digital Next Force]	Credential, Employment measures & Employer Workforce Assistance

3. Develop programs and initiatives to support an improved regional economy.

Objectives	TWC Measure
Spend at least \$500,000 in training/employment into occupations into the most in-demand industries: healthcare, technology, advanced manufacturing. Spend at least \$1,000,000 in training/employment into occupations across three in-demand industries: healthcare, technology, advanced manufacturing.	Credential and Employment measures

Establish program focused on supporting TANF & SNAP clients into work from home jobs. <u>Develop a Women's Solutions Bureau to identify gaps in gender equity and establish methods to increase access for under-represented populations among various occupations and programs.</u>	Choices Work Rate and Employment measures <u>Credential & Employment measures</u>
Develop projects with a priority on support & employment of women with access to resources, childcare, employment. Roll-out the SheBuild Program to transition women into male-dominated occupations. Launch, brand and promote NextForce as the division focused on youth and develop a range of programs targeted at youth subgroups: a) Opportunity Youth b) college drop-out recovery c) high school CTE (Career and Technical Education) entrepreneurs (Grind Talk Crew)	Credential and Employment measures - <u>Credential, Employment measures & Employer Workforce Assistance</u>
Develop a program that will focus on stop-out for those students that are near completing degrees but face barriers such as limited funding to continue school or other financial barriers that could be addressed by WSB support. <u>13. Support economic development efforts in the rural areas.</u>	Credential and Employment measures <u>Credential, Employment, Choices work rate, Claimant re-employed within 10 weeks, Average Children Served per day and Employer Workforce Assistance measures.</u>

4. Provide value to the community by establishing partnerships & leveraging resources.

Objectives	TWC Measure
Conduct wage analysis on one city incentive project to calculate ROI. <u>Establish the West Texas Aerospace Coalition and Training Center.</u>	Employer Workforce Assistance and Employment measures <u>Credential, Employment, Choices work rate, Claimant re-employed within 10 weeks, Average Children Served per day and Employer Workforce Assistance measures.</u>
Establish a plan to train and employ at least 20 transitioning soldiers into upper quartile occupations. <u>Develop the Early Education Chamber of Commerce with Early Matters El Paso partners.</u>	Credential and Employment measures <u>Credential, Employment, Average Children Served per day and Employer Workforce Assistance measures.</u>
<u>Develop and launch the WSB Business Solutions +Center (in-person and virtual services) to provide consultative and customized workforce recruitment and retention services.</u>	<u>Employment measures & Employer Workforce Assistance</u>

<u>Develop the framework for a Healthcare Center of Excellence.</u>	<u>Credential, Employment, Choices work rate, Claimant re-employed within 10 weeks, Average Children Served per day and Employer Workforce Assistance measures.</u>
<u>Establish a plan to train and employ at least 100 transitioning soldiers into upper quartile occupations by December 2023</u>	<u>Credential and Employment measures</u>

5. Increase and enhance the value and credibility of workforce board(s).

Objectives	TWC Measure
<u>Create a method to measure marketing effectiveness by measuring an increase in awareness and engagement through our various communications methods. Utilize the customer satisfaction survey tool and process to improve and enhance service delivery.</u>	Credential, Employment, Choices work rate, Claimant re-employed within 10 weeks, Average Children Served per day and Employer Workforce Assistance measures.
<u>Develop a customer satisfaction measurement tool & process. Distribute results to elected officials, BOD, clients, peers and community partners. Publish an annual Wage Analysis & Return on Investment Report and present to all six county governing bodies and economic development partners. Develop a standard "Status of the Workforce" presentation to present on-demand at business, civic and community meetings.</u>	<u>Credential, Employment, Choices work rate, Claimant re-employed within 10 weeks, Average Children Served per day and Employer Workforce Assistance measures.</u> <u>Employment measures</u>
<u>Publish an annual Wage Analysis & Return on Investment Report and present to all six county governing bodies and economic development partners. Develop a public (version) dashboard of workforce data accessible by businesses and partners.</u>	<u>Employment measures</u> <u>Credential, Employment, Choices work rate, Claimant re-employed within 10 weeks, Average Children Served per day and Employer Workforce Assistance measures</u>
<u>Enhance messaging to reach broader audiences.</u>	<u>Credential, Employment, Choices work rate, Claimant re-employed within 10 weeks, Average Children Served per day and Employer Workforce Assistance measures.</u>

B. Board Strategies

(WIOA §108(b)(1)(F); 20 CFR §679.560(a)(6))

Boards must include a description of the Board's strategy to work with the entities carrying out the core programs and with the required partners to align resources available to the local workforce development area (workforce area) to achieve the vision and goals.

WSB's Response:

Workforce Solutions Borderplex relies heavily on a foundation of community partnerships that make success a continuous attainment. Combining the forces of our strategic partners allows for the far-reaching and innovative solutions that make impactful shifts among the lives of individuals and the progress of local businesses. In the end, the entire community flourishes from these carefully orchestrated efforts and we are grateful for their trust, effectiveness and dependability.

- WSB has several strong partnerships with regional entities and local government organizations, many through contractual agreements, aimed at leveraging resources and improving workforce skills among the region. Some of those partners include the Borderplex Economic Alliance, City of El Paso, El Paso County, Rio Grande Council of Governments, El Paso Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and Council for Regional Economic Expansion and Entrepreneurship Development. WSB relies on a "Street Team" made of up staff that is mobile and agile and able to provide ~~employment services, program enrollment, and~~ partner linkages on-site at locations requested by partners, education institutions and employers. WSB has also established agreements with the local university, community college and medical school to obtain dedicated space on campus for which to directly provide these services to students. WSB has an office on Fort Bliss Base with dedicated staff that focuses specifically on serving job seekers that qualify as Veterans, spouses of Veterans, and transitioning soldiers and their spouses.
- Beginning in 2023, WSB will launch the Aligned Partnership Model, a community of agencies dedicated to helping participants find and secure quality employment and economic prosperity. The model provides a strategic connection to the public workforce system that leverages each agency's expertise. The Aligned Partner Model provides a solution for social service and public agency partners that reduces duplication and increases effectiveness.

~~All~~ WSB subrecipients have contracts with explicit performance measures that require them to collaborate and coordinate with one another. The success of one leads to the success of the other, all for the benefit of the regional employers

and job seekers.

~~In 2017, WSB developed a comprehensive web-based directory of regional community resources. Named "Services Navigator," the directory catalogues over 250 community partners that provide an array of workforce development services, including employment services, vocational services, training and education services, and supportive services. Services Navigator is utilized by AJC center staff as means to provide referrals to jobseekers, partners and staff. In 2019, WSB developed a partner referral form to connect to our customers to the various resources and services provided in our community. Through our enhanced partnerships with local organizations, the populations we serve received referrals and services for utility assistance, educational services, and other needs-related assistance. -~~

~~During COVID, WSB in partnership with El Paso County received a grant in 2021 to help area employers integrate technology to lessen the impact of COVID while increasing access to digital literacy and equity. These funds allowed WSB to extend our DTS project. WSB is currently working with EP County to secure additional funds to create another DTS pilot.~~

~~In addition, WSB in partnership with MasterCard and Microsoft will launch a pilot to provide families a digital transformation project that will incorporate tech adoption, integration, access to broadband, and other support. -~~

~~WSB received a \$1,000,000 from El Paso County as part of their Financial Assistance for Safety, Technology & Economic Resilience (FASTER) Grant Program. This grant will allow WSB to extend our Digital Transformation Solutions project through September 2021. The focus is to assist 100 local, small employers located in EP County who were negatively impacted by COVID. The grant will assist with the following:~~

~~Technical Consultation, Training and Equipment Acquisition Assistance for 100 local/ small businesses located in El Paso County. Services may include access to digital marketing, signage, moving sales online, website development cost and contactless payment technology (such as QR and POS), expanded email platforms, and developing their online presence, and/ or providing services virtually. Employers will receive up to \$3,500 of assistance to purchase technical equipment. Employers who hire a UI claimant or pay staff the WSB-~~

~~Living Wage, will also be eligible for an additional \$1,500 of assistance. In order to qualify, businesses need to demonstrate a negative impact due to COVID- (reduced revenue/increased costs).~~

C. High-Performing Board

(WIOA §108(b)(18); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(17))

Boards must include a description of the actions the Board will take toward becoming or remaining a high-performing Board, consistent with the factors developed by the Texas Workforce Investment Council (TWIC).

WSB's Response:

WSB establishes measures and strategies above and beyond the TWC contracted measures to ensure our Board's continuous improvement. Beyond the TWC metrics, WSB has included annual local metrics that measure and augment quality and quantity of the services to ensure workforce programs/initiatives effectiveness. WSB has a compliance and monitoring team that assists with providing oversight and quality to ensure projects and programs are aligned with TWC, TWIC and partner agencies to ensure value to our region and the Texas economy. WSB board staff meets with contractor staff to ensure quality customer service delivery, identify gaps, and adjust strategies or change procedures to improve outcomes.

WSB has designated project managers that will oversee projects and initiatives across teams. WSB focuses on our region's target industries/occupations to ensure programs and initiatives are consistent. WSB embedded the creates a project sheet into a project management system called Monday.com, as a tracking mechanism that includes purpose, budget, and target benchmarks. This project sheet has served as an excellent resource to keep all stakeholders informed, activities tracked, and rules centralized to monitor progress. WSB also created a WSB Letter as a means to provide guidance to our subrecipients when necessary.

In our efforts to strengthen linkages between education and our local talent, WSB has an outreach team responsible for providing resources to Middle and High school students with a comprehensive approach to in-demand occupations. By starting to plan at an early age for their future careers, students enter high school/post-secondary education better equipped to take advantage of their

strengths and develop skills in areas that need improvement. If more students start thinking about post-secondary education from the beginning of middle school and have resources to guide them through the process, a more significant number of students will overcome the obstacles that might hold them back from furthering their education. WSB helps push our community to improve educational attainment rates and ultimately produce a better-educated workforce. In time, this will allow El Paso to attract, create, and retain the kinds of jobs that will be critical to our continued success.

WSB has strong partnerships with regional entities and local government organizations, many through contractual agreements, to leverage resources and improve workforce skills throughout the region. Some of those partners include the Borderplex Alliance, City of El Paso, El Paso County, Rio Grande Council of Governments, El Paso Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and Council for Regional Economic Expansion and Entrepreneurship Development, University of Texas at El Paso and El Paso Community college.

~~We have incorporated in our website a directory of community services known as "Services Navigator." The Services Navigator search tool has more than 250 community partners that can assist with personal transportation, food assistance, childcare, career development, and benefits planning.~~

Part 2. Economic and Workforce Analysis

A. Regional Economic and Employment Needs Analysis (WIOA §108(b)(1)(A); 20 CFR §679.560(a)(1))

Boards must include a regional analysis of the following:

- The economic conditions, including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors, in-demand occupations, and target occupations
- The employment needs of employers in existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors, in-demand occupations, and target occupations

WSB's Response:

The labor market information [\(LMI\)](#), workforce, and career resource information are essential elements and tools that help shape and strengthen our economy. These components are necessary to help us answer questions that are tied to a robust workforce system. The goal of LMI is to help customers make informed

plans, choices, and decisions for a variety of purposes, including Workforce and economic trends, business investment, needs and expectations, career planning and preparation, training and education offerings, and job search opportunities. Accurate, objective, relevant, timely, and accessible workforce and labor market information is critical for:

- Building a skilled workforce that spurs business competitiveness and economic growth.
- Strengthening career pathways and guiding skill attainment for good jobs, economic opportunity, and career growth.
- Understanding the rapidly changing nature of work and how it impacts the workforce and U.S. economy.
- Spending workforce training and education funds effectively.

WSB continues to build our research capacity and has become a trusted source for our regional partners, organizations, and customers. WSB is enhancing our research projects to identify opportunities and gaps. One of the biggest challenges impacting our region is due to the COVID-19 impact and the acceleration of the Industrial Revolution 4.0, the adaptation of smart technology in traditional manufacturing and industrial practices. The continuous request for research, labor market analysis, and presentations has cultivated the growth and expansion of partnership opportunities. WSB distributes every month a labor market report to our partners that includes s our region's unemployment rate, labor force, industry sector distribution and industry employment changes.

WSB regularly participates in regional economic development meetings. The purpose of the meetings is to discuss strategies, share information, identify needs and discuss collaborateion. Another strategy to maintain and nurture our regional partners' relationships is to host regular economic development meetings. The partners who attend these meetings and provide updates about their activities include but are not limited to the City of El Paso, El Paso County, Borderplex Alliance, TWC Regional Skills Development Fund representative, and Higher Ed partners. Also, WSB has partnered with Borderplex Alliance and the Federal Reserve to form a regional data analyst committee. The members of this committee include the City of El Paso Economic Development, CBRE (Commercial real estate services in the Texas/Mexico border region, including El Paso, Texas, Santa Teresa, New Mexico, and Cd. Juárez, Mexico), City of Las Cruces Economic Development, County of El Paso, FBI, Arrowhead Center, NMSU, Municipal Economic Development—Cd. Juárez, El Paso Electric, Jordan Foster, Office of Congress Woman Veronica Escobar, GECU and West Star Bank.

In order to continue to support economic development, WSB continues to expand on specialized research projects such as comprehensive Wage Data Analysis impacting the workforce and economic development. The comprehensive analysis data reports also consider other data-driven factors that can influence our regional economic growth, such as expanding our regional Supply Chain Industry Sector, to help identify business retention and development opportunities and gaps.

WSB is committed to providing strategies to meet the needs of the employers, job seekers, workers, and students residing in the Workforce Solutions Borderplex region. One of these strategies is to develop In-Demand Industries, In-Demand Occupations, and Target Occupations for the WSB region. These three lists were identified by analyzing labor market data, extensive research done by the Borderplex Alliance, and local wisdom.

In-Demand Industries

In alignment with the Office of the Texas Governor Economic Development, WSB has identified specialized industries that offer growth and development opportunities for our state and Borderplex region. WSB has identified specialized industries that offer growth and development opportunities for our state and Borderplex region. As the Borderplex region continues to focus on building and growing the Borderplex economy, WSB has also aligned target industries that were established under the Borderplex Alliance Ascend—2020–2025. The regional plan focuses on Plan for optimizing the region’s limited resources and supporting industries with the best infrastructure and promise for growth. The 2025 Ascend Plan -identifies the following target industries: Life Sciences, Business Services, Aerospace and Defense, Advanced Logistics, and Advanced Manufacturing.

The analysis to identify the Emerging In-Demand industries was quite extensive. The group surveyed demand and growing employers and developed a list of recommendations to the WSB Board. WSB partner with region economic development organization to help develop the regional economic plan. Our regional WSB 2021-2024 plan includes will focus on the following target industry sectors.

- ~~Advanced Logistics~~
- Advanced Manufacturing

- Business Support Services/Finance
- Defense and Aerospace
- ~~Education Training and Personal Development~~
- Life Sciences/Health Care

In-Demand Occupations

In-Demand occupations are occupations that have projected employment projected growth in our region.

The methodology utilized to create the In-Demand Occupations is the following:

- ✓ 10% or more projected growth in the next ten years
- ✓ 20 or more annual job openings

Please see Attachment A for the WSB In-Demand Industries and In-Demand Occupations

Target Occupation List

WSB annually maintains the Target Occupations List (TOL) that reflects regional in-demand and emerging industry sectors and occupations. The Target Occupations List was developed with the labor market data made available through the Texas Workforce Commission and in conjunction with Board members and employers.

The factors used to create the Target Occupation List (TOL) are employment growth, job openings, and the WSB living wage. The living wage is defined as the hourly rate that an individual must earn to support their family without the need for public assistance. It reflects geographic costs related to a family's likely minimum food, childcare, health insurance, housing, transportation, civic engagement, broadband and other necessities.

The following criteria was utilized to create the TOL:

- ✓ 10% or more projected growth in the next ten years
- ✓ 20 or more annual job openings
- ✓ ~~\$12.51-\$15.91~~ or more per hour (Entry Wage - WSB Current Living Wage)

We also refer to the TOL as the "Hot Jobs List", alluding that if it is a hot job, it is an occupation in-demand in our region. From this list, we have identified with a flame next to the occupation a group of "Hottest Jobs", which includes occupations that meet the following criteria:

- ✓ ~~In STEM occupations~~
- ✓ In the top 2 highest paying wage quartiles &










✓ eEntry wages are at or above the WSB Living Wage (\$15.91)


WSB 2021 Target Occupations List (TOL)









































Occupational Title	Employment Percent Change 2018-2028	Total Annual Openings	Entry Hourly Wage	Experienced Hourly Wage
Computer Information Systems				
Computer Systems Analysts	18.7%	42	\$ 26.85	\$ 47.07
Software Developers, Applications	37.5%	45	\$ 30.24	\$ 53.31
Network and Computer Systems Administrators	12.2%	38	\$ 24.56	\$ 38.09
Computer User Support Specialists	17.2%	111	\$ 22.01	\$ 22.88
Computer Network Support Specialists	12.1%	30	\$ 19.62	\$ 30.57
*Operations Research Analysts	54.1%	20	\$ 19.58	\$ 42.21
Construction				
Civil Engineers	12.0%	39	\$ 24.74	\$ 39.69
Cement Masons and Concrete Finishers	10.6%	78	\$ 12.92	\$ 18.12
*Operating Engineers and Other Construction Equipment Operators	11.5%	138	\$ 13.30	\$ 20.22
Electricians	13.2%	147	\$ 11.91	\$ 21.08
Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	10.6%	81	\$ 11.56	\$ 21.86
Construction and Building Inspectors	12.3%	25	\$ 15.76	\$ 27.82
Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers	8.7%	117	\$ 13.31	\$ 22.24
Culinary				
Chefs and Head Cooks	23.3%	18	\$ 17.48	\$ 28.58
Defense				
Detectives and Criminal Investigators	20.0%	205	\$ 29.68	\$ 45.21
Police and Sheriff's Patrol Officers	10.3%	160	\$ 20.05	\$ 33.90
*Police, Fire, and Ambulance Dispatchers	12.0%	36	\$ 14.79	\$ 19.93
Dispatchers, Except Police, Fire, and Ambulance	12.6%	79	\$ 11.92	\$ 21.39
Education				
Vocational Education Teachers, Postsecondary	11.3%	20	\$ 12.26	\$ 28.96
*Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education	10.4%	120	\$ 10.65	\$ 27.02
Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	0.5%	260	\$ 23.56	\$ 34.74
Middle School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	0.5%	160	\$ 24.17	\$ 35.46
Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	0.7%	250	\$ 24.06	\$ 35.57
Special Education Teachers, Kindergarten and Elementary School	0.0%	23	\$ 22.16	\$ 33.41
Special Education Teachers, Secondary School	0.0%	23	\$ 23.28	\$ 32.72
Librarians	20.6%	57	\$ 24.22	\$ 37.64

WSB Hot Jobs List FY23

Occupation Title	Projected Employment Percent Change within 10 years	Total Annual Openings	Entry Hourly Wage Year 2021	Experienced Hourly Wage Year 2021
Construction				
 Civil Engineers	14%	45	\$ 23.28	\$ 41.94
Security and Fire Alarm Systems Installers	14%	33	\$ 15.71	\$ 31.59
Electricians	21%	232	\$ 14.87	\$ 24.69
Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers	12%	132	\$ 14.47	\$ 23.81
Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	21%	115	\$ 13.42	\$ 24.01
Defense				
 Detectives and Criminal Investigators	14%	216	\$ 29.90	\$ 48.44
 Police and Sheriff's Patrol Officers	12%	171	\$ 21.73	\$ 34.64
 Probation Officers and Correctional Treatment Specialists	13%	21	\$ 16.36	\$ 23.36
Public Safety Telecommunicators	12%	27	\$ 14.74	\$ 18.90
Education				
 Preschool/Kindergarten Teachers, Except Special Education	10%	59	\$ 23.87	\$ 29.74
 Special Education Teachers, Secondary School	10%	28	\$ 23.72	\$ 29.01
 Special Education Teachers, Kindergarten and Elementary School	10%	30	\$ 23.65	\$ 28.96
 Middle School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	10%	178	\$ 23.43	\$ 28.61
 Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	11%	272	\$ 23.23	\$ 29.59
 Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	10%	314	\$ 23.07	\$ 28.83
 Librarians and Media Collections Specialists	11%	37	\$ 21.05	\$ 32.14
Career/Technical Education Teachers, Postsecondary	8%	30	\$ 12.95	\$ 24.88
Finance				
 Budget Analysts/Financial Analyst	18%	53	\$ 22.23	\$ 36.85
 Accountants and Auditors	17%	193	\$ 21.52	\$ 40.53
 Compliance Officers	16%	209	\$ 21.29	\$ 43.41
Loan Officers	27%	51	\$ 12.09	\$ 32.72
Human Resources				
 Human Resources Specialists	17%	113	\$ 16.07	\$ 31.87
Information Technology				
 Computer Systems Analysts/Information Security Analyst	14%	42	\$ 25.37	\$ 42.60
 Software Developers and Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers	29%	88	\$ 25.19	\$ 50.77
 Network and Computer Systems Administrators	15%	45	\$ 24.02	\$ 40.41
Manufacturing				
 Electrical Engineers	11%	12	\$ 27.87	\$ 45.93
 Industrial Engineers	21%	26	\$ 26.72	\$ 43.88
Mobile Heavy Equipment Mechanics, Except Engines	14%	60	\$ 17.30	\$ 26.39
Electrical and Electronics Repairers, Commercial and Industrial Equipment	17%	21	\$ 15.78	\$ 29.36
Industrial Machinery Mechanics and Technicians	22%	54	\$ 15.16	\$ 25.42
Marketing				
Public Relations Specialists	25%	65	\$ 14.89	\$ 29.17
Medical and Health				
 Medical Dosimetrists, Medical Records Specialists, and Health Technologist	18%	112	\$ 42.60	\$ 54.71
 Dental Hygienists	27%	14	\$ 26.08	\$ 36.82
 Registered Nurses	16%	469	\$ 25.38	\$ 37.24
 Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	33%	14	\$ 24.77	\$ 35.83
 Respiratory Therapists	32%	35	\$ 22.63	\$ 29.14
 Radiologic Technologists and Technicians	17%	48	\$ 19.84	\$ 32.30
 Occupational Health and Safety Specialists	15%	22	\$ 18.51	\$ 34.85
 Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	20%	196	\$ 17.81	\$ 23.83
 Healthcare Social Workers	17%	45	\$ 17.79	\$ 32.38
Physical Therapist Assistants	38%	38	\$ 17.02	\$ 33.47
 Surgical Technologists	12%	27	\$ 16.95	\$ 25.11
 Health Education Specialists	30%	26	\$ 16.07	\$ 27.57
Child, Family, and School Social Workers	13%	41	\$ 14.93	\$ 25.92
Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors	28%	51	\$ 13.92	\$ 26.40
Clinical Laboratory Technologists and Technicians	19%	78	\$ 13.82	\$ 25.39
Transportation and Logistics				
 Logisticians	46%	66	\$ 21.61	\$ 39.87
Other				
 Management Analysts	29%	78	\$ 25.31	\$ 44.45
 Operations Research Analysts	43%	19	\$ 21.45	\$ 38.29
 General and Operations Managers	20%	513	\$ 16.37	\$ 52.20

 Hottest Occupations are in top wage quartiles & entry wages are at or above the WSB living Wage (\$15.91)

 Substance abuse, behavioral disorder, and mental health counselors	18.5%	63	\$	14.19	\$	27.14
 Healthcare Social Workers	16.4%	38	\$	16.06	\$	28.93
 Medical and Clinical Laboratory Technicians	10.1%	40	\$	14.04	\$	26.63
 Mental Health and Substance Abuse Social Workers	14.5%	23	\$	13.37	\$	19.08
 Occupational Therapists	11.2%	18	\$	30.15	\$	46.15
 Respiratory Therapists	16.6%	23	\$	21.96	\$	29.26
 Speech-Language Pathologists	21.7%	33	\$	27.34	\$	44.12
 Registered Nurses	10.5%	398	\$	27.18	\$	39.92
 Dental Hygienists	15.5%	24	\$	23.82	\$	31.73
 Radiologic Technologists	13.2%	25	\$	21.33	\$	33.01
 Pharmacy Technicians	32.0%	239	\$	12.97	\$	18.05
 Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	15.0%	209	\$	19.40	\$	24.61
 Medical Records and Health Information Technicians	21.6%	46	\$	12.64	\$	22.86
 *Health Technologists and Technicians, All Other	23.4%	47	\$	12.55	\$	22.86
 Physical Therapist Assistants	27.9%	52	\$	19.58	\$	37.60
 *Dental Assistants	16.6%	114	\$	11.58	\$	18.67
 Phlebotomists	26.0%	30	\$	12.01	\$	15.69
Transportation and Logistics						
 Logisticians	21.5%	43	\$	23.09	\$	41.40
 Cargo and Freight Agents	16.0%	42	\$	14.27	\$	25.02
 Bus Drivers, Transit and Intercity	10.0%	92	\$	12.50	\$	17.95
 Property, Real Estate, and Community Association Managers	10.7%	38	\$	15.34	\$	33.45
 General and Operations Managers	16.6%	418	\$	22.60	\$	60.05
 Management Analysts	37.1%	80	\$	24.62	\$	47.15
Hottest Occupations - Top Wage Quartiles and/or (STEM) Advanced Industries						
Finance						
 Compliance Officers	21.7%	242	\$	24.62	\$	42.27
 Accountants and Auditors	17.8%	194	\$	19.62	\$	35.29
 Financial Analysts	24.8%	26	\$	23.71	\$	69.30
 Loan Officers	15.1%	36	\$	16.91	\$	45.09
 Insurance Sales Agents	23.9%	147	\$	11.89	\$	27.07
 *Insurance Claims and Policy Processing Clerks	19.2%	60	\$	12.58	\$	18.44
Human Resources						
 Human Resources Specialists	13.6%	128	\$	14.59	\$	31.21
 Training and Development Specialists	19.1%	83	\$	13.28	\$	32.53
Industrial Manufacturing						
 First-Line Supervisors of Mechanics, Installers, and Repairers	12.4%	99	\$	18.44	\$	31.28
 Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists	14.8%	168	\$	10.94	\$	21.79
 Industrial Machinery Mechanics	12.5%	50	\$	13.29	\$	23.07
 Maintenance Workers, Machinery	16.5%	33	\$	15.33	\$	23.98
 *Medical Equipment Repairers	26.6%	21	\$	15.91	\$	30.81
Marketing						
 Public Relations Specialists	18.7%	78	\$	11.36	\$	26.25
Medical and Health						
 *Medical and Health Services Managers	21.0%	92	\$	28.46	\$	55.76

In addition to the Hot Jobs, WSB has established a Step-up jobs list to increase equitable access among individuals with varied education, skills, non-academic needs, and barriers. Step-up jobs list may be utilized to provide training services to Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) workforce programs and other funding programs determined by the Board.

Step-up jobs-List will:

1. Identify target populations, recruitment strategies that primarily focusing on SNAP and TANF populations.
2. In addition to the WSB TOL (Hot Jobs), it will Aalign entry-level job opportunities with regional industry needs and career pathways in-addition to the WSB TOL (Hot Jobs).
3. If necessary, mix and match multiple credentials including prep courses to achieve the highest outcome.

Step-up jobs list may be utilized to provide training services to Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) workforce programs and other funding programs determined by the Board.

B. Knowledge and Skills Analysis

(WIOA §108(b)(1)(B); 20 CFR §679.560(a)(2))

Boards must include an analysis of the knowledge and skills needed to meet the employment needs of the employers in the region, including employment needs for in-demand industry sectors, in-demand occupations, and target occupations.

WSB's Response:

Globalization and advances in science and technology are transforming nearly every aspect of modern life, including how we communicate with each other, how we shop, how we make things, and how and where we work. Companies seek workers with greater proficiency in basic literacy and numeracy and more developed interpersonal, technical, and problem-solving skills. WSB region

needs to remain competitive on the world stage while fostering greater innovation and boosting shared prosperity. Our region requires a sufficient number of workers and a workforce with the right mix of skills to meet the diverse needs of the economy.

There has been a concern that shortages sometimes develop and persist in specific industries or occupations, leading to inefficiencies in the economy. The lack of skilled workers has made it difficult to fill jobs in high demand during the economic recovery particularly among "middle-skill" jobs requiring some post-secondary education and training. WSB is working on strategies to address the middle-skills gap by up-skilling middle-skills individuals with wages less than the WSB Living wage. Our goal is to increase labor productivity by offering more education and training for in-demand occupations.

Below are some of the WSB strategies:

- Skills Development Fund provides access to employers to develop a customized incumbent worker training program.
- WSB encourages legislation to make the workforce development system more demand-driven and accountable to better support the middle-skill workforce.
- WSB is increasing the annual fund development amount of non-formula funds to use the new/additional funds to serve non-WIOA clients with existing WSB services.
- SHEBuilds initiative. WSB is in partnership with community organizations to support and empower women in the community by providing them opportunities. WSB provides paid work experience opportunities to women entering the construction industry. Also, WSB provides opportunities for entrepreneurship in construction trades.
- WSB is in partnership with a local non-profit organization. "Project Arriba" assists students in the Nursing program, which is an in-demand occupation for our region.
- WSB has developed Texas Industry Partnership (TIP) programs along with our local Higher Ed partners to support students who are about to finish their education in an in-demand occupation.
- Our Business Unit has a team dedicated to address the employer's needs by providing qualified job candidates, register open positions in WIT, and organizing job fairs (virtual and in-person).

In our efforts to get insight from our community leaders, WSB is an active

member of the education provider organization planning committees, including the AEL and Career & Technical Education Committees among the independent school districts. Through these task forces, focus groups, industry round table discussions, and one-on-one interviews, WSB and its partners are continuously identifying employer skills and hiring needs within the target occupations.

To target special populations and their needs, WSB has staff dedicated to further developing opportunities for each of the following populations: individuals with disabilities and individuals in the military. ~~WSB has a Student HireAbility-Navigator staff to help improve access to employment and training services, and to increase employment opportunities for job seekers with disabilities. The Student HireAbility-Navigator focuses on services for students with disabilities who are in the early phases of preparing to transition to post-secondary education and/or employment. The navigator serves as a resource in the workforce development area to support, expand, and enhance the provisions of pre-employment transition services that are provided by Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and other partners and programs in the workforce development area. WSB is committed to increasing engagement for targeted special populations, WSB has staff dedicated to further developing opportunities for individuals with disabilities and promoting the HireAbility Campaign. The purpose of the TWC HireAbility Campaign is to raise awareness about the benefits of hiring people with disabilities and highlight their contributions in the workplace. WSB is improving access to employment and training services to increase transition and employment opportunities for clients with disabilities. WSB focuses on services for students and adults with disabilities who are in the early phases of preparing to transition to post-secondary education and/or employment. The navigator serves as a resource and connector in the workforce development area to support, expand, and enhance the provisions of pre-employment transition services that are provided by TWC Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and other partners and programs in the workforce development area. WSB also increases community awareness by providing resources and disability awareness training to employers and community partners.~~

Veterans and eligible spouses continue to receive priority of service for all DOL - funded job training programs. WSB continues to align efforts and strategies to ensure we maximize opportunities for our military population to connect with industry and employer needs. As the Borderplex economy continues to evolve,

service members can provide a unique skills set that benefit employers. WSB continues to collaborate with Ft. Bliss Army Community Services and the Ft. Bliss and the Soldier For Life Transition Program to outreach and inform military populations of opportunities. WSB will continue to focus efforts on providing skilling opportunities as military populations transition out of the military or re-locate to the Ft. Bliss and Borderplex area.

~~For the military population, WSB focuses specifically on serving job seekers that qualify as Veterans, spouses of veterans, and active-duty military, and transitioning service members, soldiers and active-duty their spouses.~~ WSB supports training and certification programs, job search assistance and/or placement, and skills development opportunities to make more marketable job candidates in the most in-demand, well-paying positions and industries.

~~Additionally, efforts to expand workforce development would be incomplete without addressing a key component of childcare.~~ Access to quality childcare plays a vital role in workforce development because duties have disproportionately impacted working mothers and often even further exasperated gender wage gaps. ~~Studies have shown that gender wage gaps may even instead be a result of "motherhood gaps."~~ Wages and salaries of mothers often suffer due to the burden of childcare much more than women without children or men in general. Childcare is often expensive, and women who lack the financial resources to afford childcare are faced with the choice to either spend a large portion of their income on childcare, contract lower-quality, cheaper childcare or leave the workforce. WSB continues to help close this gap, especially considering the impact of COVID-19 on childcare and the economy. Furthermore, WSB is working on expanding childcare services to increase economic prosperity in the region.

C. Labor Force Analysis and Trends

(WIOA §108(b)(1)(C); 20 CFR §679.560(a)(3))

Boards must include an analysis of the regional workforce, including current labor force employment and unemployment data, information on labor market trends, and educational and skill levels of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment.

WSB's Response:

Workforce Solutions Borderplex (WSB) encompasses six counties. The region

includes urban El Paso County and the rural counties of Brewster, Culberson, Hudspeth, Jeff Davis, and Presidio. El Paso County is the most populated county with more than 865,000 residents, and the majority of the region's employers are located within El Paso County. The rural counties have a combined population of approximately 255,000 residents. The following table presents the population for each of the six counties in the Borderplex region.

County (Source: Census ACS 5-year estimates 2020 18)	Population 20 18
Brewster County, Texas	9,216 9,231
Culberson County, Texas	2,241 2,183
El Paso County, Texas	840,758 836,915
Hudspeth County, Texas	4,098 4,687
Jeff Davis County, Texas	2,242 2,245
Presidio County, Texas	7,123 6,808

The Borderplex region unemployment rate for ~~October 2020~~ October 2022 was ~~7.2~~ 4.3 percent, which signified a ~~3.51 percent-%~~ decrease from a year ago (October 20~~21~~19), with a total of ~~27,050~~ 16,104 unemployed individuals. ~~This increase was due to the impact of COVID.~~

The Labor Force for the Borderplex area (Brewster, Culberson, Jeff Davis, Hudspeth, Presidio and El Paso County) in ~~October 2020~~ October 2022 was ~~373,559~~ 373,223. Over the year, the Labor Force decreased by ~~4,343~~ 3,385.

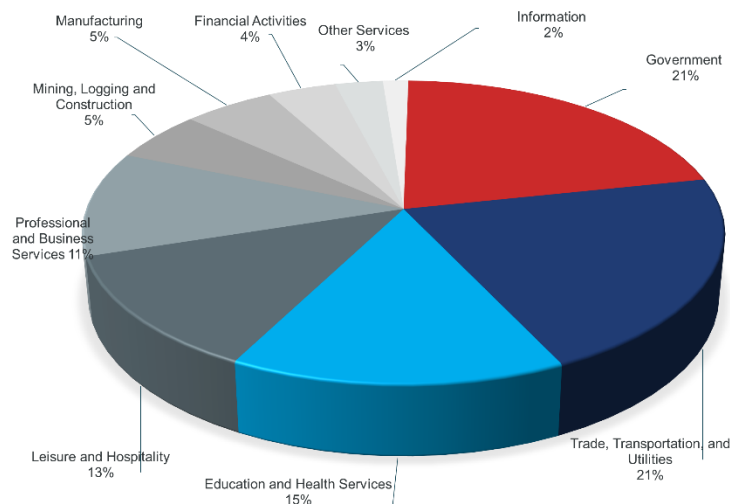
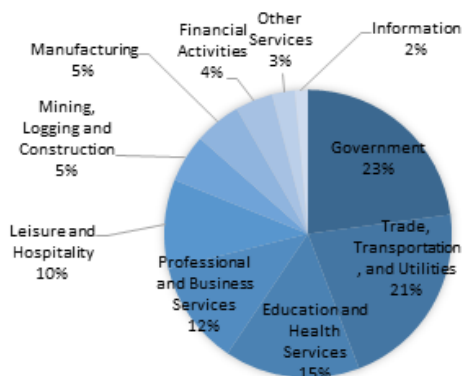
The number of employed in the Borderplex area for the month of ~~October 2020~~ October 2022 was ~~346,509~~ 357,223. Over the year, the number of employed decreased by ~~17,382~~ 489.

The number of unemployed in the Borderplex area for the month of ~~October 2020~~ October 2022 was ~~27,050~~ 16,104. Over the year, the number of unemployed decreased by ~~3,874~~ 13,039.

The three Super Sectors with the greatest employment for the El Paso MSA in ~~October 2020~~ October 2022 were (1) Government; (2) Trade, Transportation, and Utilities; and (3) Education and Health Services. These three Super Sectors represented 57% of the total nonfarm employment.

The three Super Sectors with the least employment for the El Paso MSA in ~~October 2020~~ October 2022 were (1) Financial Activities; (2) Other Services and (3) Information. These three Super Sectors represented 8% of the total nonfarm employment.

Employment Industry Sectors for El Paso MSA



Source: Texas Workforce Commission - November 2022

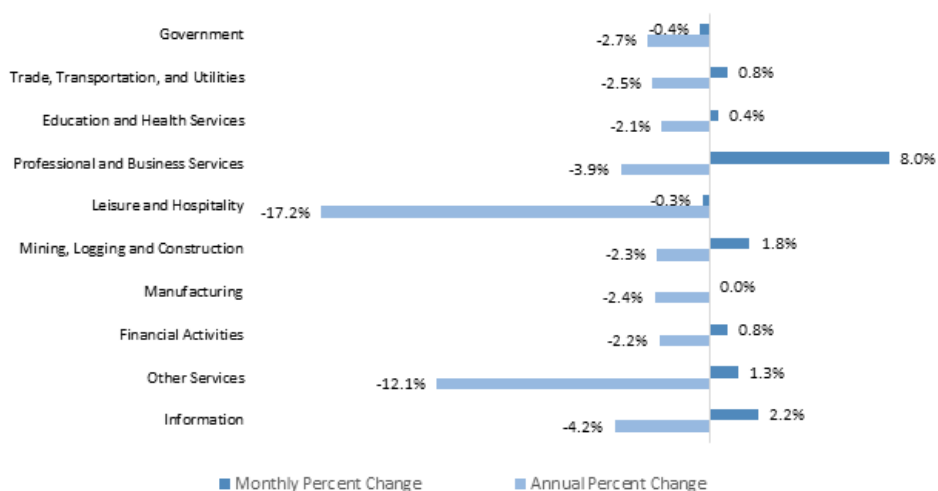
Current Employment Statistics (CES) indicated that the Total nonfarm employment for the El Paso MSA in ~~October 2020~~ October 2022 was ~~312,800~~ 329,200. ~~15,100~~ 4,600 total jobs ~~lost~~ added over the year ~~due to the impact of COVID~~. The total nonfarm employment for the El Paso MSA ~~decreased~~ increased by ~~4.6~~ 1.4% from a year ago (October 2021 ~~19~~ 22).

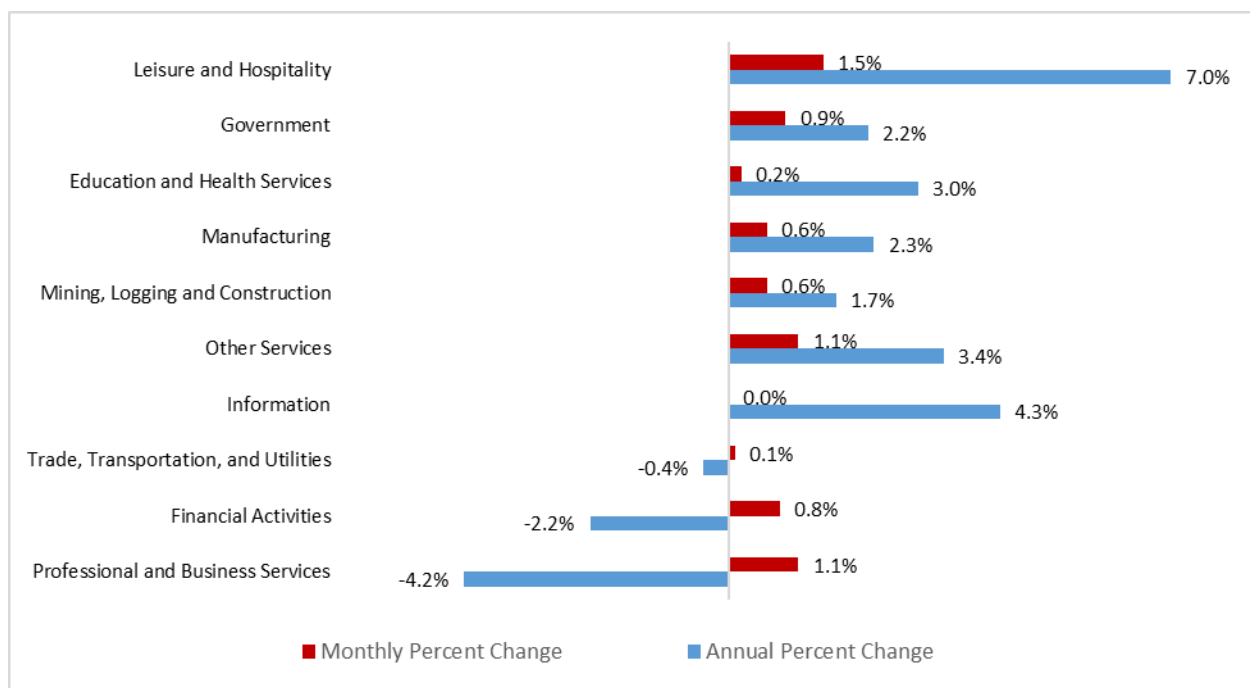
The three industry super sectors in ~~el El~~ El Paso MSA that had the most job losses over the past year were (1) ~~Leisure and Hospitality~~ Professional and Business Services (1,600 jobs lost); (2) ~~Trade, Transportation, and Utilities~~ Financial

Activities (300 jobs lost); and (3) Professional and Business Services Trade, Transportation, and Utilities (300 jobs lost).

The three industry super sectors in El Paso MSA that had the most jobs added over the past year were (1) Leisure and Hospitality (2,700 jobs added); (2) Government (1,500 jobs added); (3) Education and Health Services (1,400 jobs added).

Employment Percent change





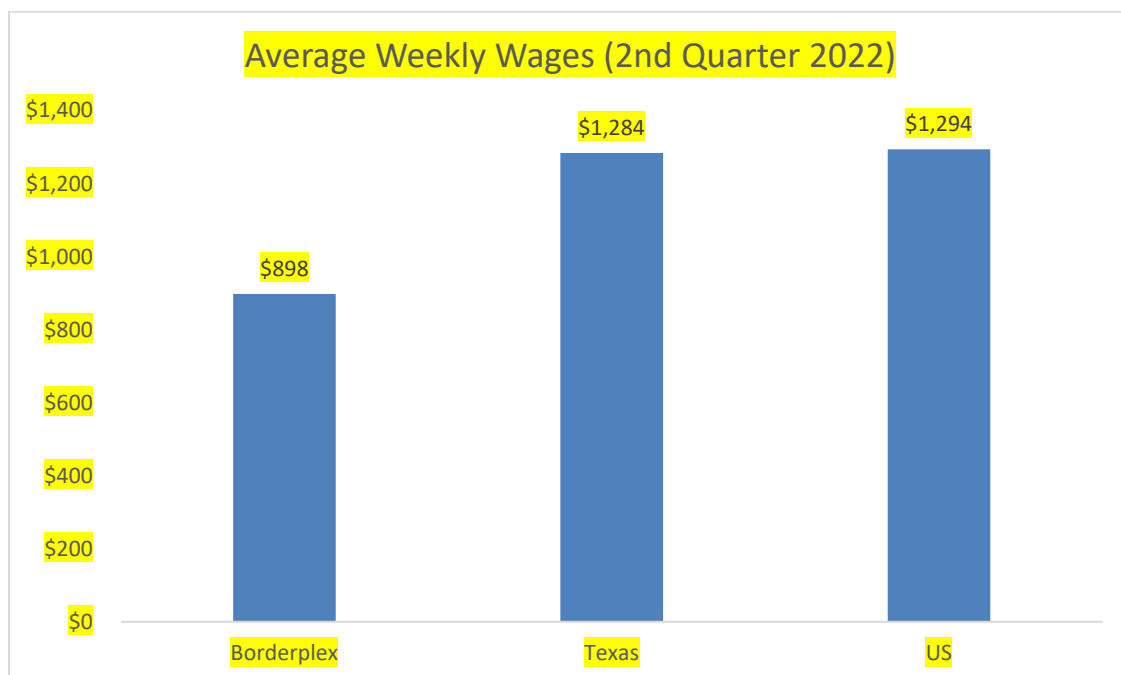
Source: Texas Workforce Commission - November 2020

Average Weekly Wages

The average weekly wages for the Borderplex region in 2020 quarter 2 were \$817.89, an increase of 5%, placing our wages far lower than the state (\$1,156.13) and the national average weekly wages (\$1,188.13). Many factors continue to contribute to these low wages. Still, low-wage occupations consistently remain common in the area, such as office and administrative support, sales, and food preparation and services.

Source: Texas Workforce Commission - November 2020

Average Weekly Wages (2nd Quarter 2020)					
	Q2 2020	Q1 2020	Q2 2019	Quarterly Change	Yearly Change
Borderplex	\$817.89	\$781.86	\$758.85	\$36.33	\$59.44
Texas	\$1,156.13	\$1,231.36	\$1,101.21	(\$75.84)	\$55.74
US	\$1,188.13	\$1,221.37	\$1,094.24	(\$34.80)	\$94.53



Source: Texas Workforce Commission - ~~November~~October 2022~~0~~

Regarding educational achievement, Census data (201~~65~~-20~~20~~19) indicated that ~~79~~8.~~5~~% of the El Paso county population (age 25 and older) had obtained a high school diploma or higher; and ~~nearly~~ 24~~3~~% have received a bachelor's degree or higher ~~education~~_degree.

OBJ

OBJ

Gaps in Employment and Education

The table below explains the skills gaps for the WSB region. Approximately ~~90~~66,000 employees that have high school or some college education earn less than the WSB living Wage (\$15.91).

Total Employees in El Paso TX, MSA	314,710
Employees with High School Education & Earnings below WSB Living Wage (\$12.31)	38,421
<u>Employees with Some College Education & Earnings below WSB Living Wage (\$12.31)</u>	<u>27,998</u>
Total	66,419
Percent Share	21%

The Hidden Pool - El Paso, TX MSA	
Total Employees (2021)	301,090
Employees with High School Education & Earnings below WSB Living Wage (\$15.91)	51,389
Employees with Some College Education & Earnings below WSB Living Wage (\$15.91)	38,427
Total	89,816
Employees with a high school & some college education earning below the WSB living wage	30%

Source: BLS 2021-19

Below is the Employment by Wage Quartile for El Paso MSA. 6870% of the total workers are concentrated in the lower quartiles. WSB is working in partnership with community leaders to offer training and work experience opportunities to upskill employees in the lowest quartiles and transition them to an occupation in the top wage quartiles. ~~WSB is an active member of the El Paso Collaborative for Academic Excellence (EPCAE), a data council who adopted this strategy as a regional goal.~~

Quartile	Occupation Category	UI Claimants March 1 - October 31		Year 2019	
		Employees	Median Earnings		
Highest Quartile	Management Occupations	4,527		11,930	\$ 41.80
	Legal Occupations	369		1,410	\$ 38.68
	Architecture and Engineering Occupations	554		2,950	\$ 31.18
	Computer and Mathematical Occupations	823		4,650	\$ 30.70
	Business and Financial Operations Occupations	2,532		11,980	\$ 29.43
	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	2,838		18,910	\$ 28.76
		11,643	12%	51,830	
Upper-middle Quartile	Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	197		1,410	\$ 27.87
	Education, Training, and Library Occupations	2,718		23,690	\$ 25.74
	Community and Social Service Occupations	1,514		3,340	\$ 22.60
	Protective Service Occupations	1,102		10,850	\$ 21.20
	Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	1,974		2,360	\$ 17.37
		7,505	8%	41,650	
Lower-middle Quartile	Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	5,081		13,440	\$ 17.13
	Construction and Extraction Occupations	5,607		11,710	\$ 15.61
	Office and Administrative Support Occupations	5,931		52,300	\$ 13.83
	Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	7,776		27,470	\$ 12.88
	Production Occupations	7,438		14,900	\$ 12.24
		31,833	33%	119,820	
Lower Quartile	Sales and Related Occupations	14,936		34,600	\$ 11.46
	Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	202		190	\$ 11.11
	Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	3,232		8,350	\$ 10.20
	Personal Care and Service Occupations	5,430		4,960	\$ 9.80
	Healthcare Support Occupations	5,029		20,120	\$ 9.34
	Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	16,096		33,190	\$ 9.20
		44,925	47%	101,410	

Source: BLS 2019

Occupation	EL Paso, TX MSA		
	Employment		Median Earnings
Management Occupations	15,700		\$ 38.03
Computer and Mathematical Occupations	4,460		\$ 29.96
Architecture and Engineering Occupations	3,090		\$ 29.34
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	17,600		\$ 29.23
Business and Financial Operations Occupations	12,980		\$ 29.09
Highest Quartile	53,830	18%	
Education, Training, and Library Occupations	21,750		\$ 24.72
Legal Occupations	1,550		\$ 22.91
Protective Service Occupations	10,460		\$ 22.79
Community and Social Service Occupations	3,980		\$ 21.32
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	2,270		\$ 18.51
Upper-middle Quartile	40,010	13%	
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	12,360		\$ 18.15
Construction and Extraction Occupations	12,660		\$ 17.35
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	44,380		\$ 14.44
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	29,100		\$ 14.20
Production Occupations	12,780		\$ 13.50
Lower-middle Quartile	111,280	37%	
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	260		\$ 12.41
Sales and Related Occupations	32,700		\$ 11.49
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	7,700		\$ 11.15
Personal Care and Service Occupations	4,100		\$ 10.50
Healthcare Support Occupations	20,330		\$ 10.48
Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	29,190		\$ 10.02
Lower Quartile	94,280	31%	

Source: BLS 2021

The table below indicates the men's and women's earning wages. In the majority, ~~20 out of the 24 occupations categories listed below~~, women earn less than men. Across all occupations women earn \$0.73 for every \$1 men earn.

~~OBJ~~

~~Source: Census.gov~~ ~~OBJ~~

Source: Census ACS 2021

Effects of Covid-19

~~Since March 2020, the Borderplex Region, like the rest of the United States, has~~

experienced the impact of COVID-19 both from a public health standpoint and economic effect. As cases of COVID-19 have continued to rise, additional government restrictions have been implemented by state or local governments, such as the closure of non-essential businesses. There have been over 127,000 ~~96,000~~ unemployment claimants from March 2020 through ~~October 2020~~ November 2022 in the Borderplex region. There is no doubt that COVID-19 has severely impacted a wide range of companies and the local economy.

Below are the top three occupations that had been the most impacted since March 2020. These three occupations represented 326 percent of the total number of claims.

Occupation	UI Claimants
Food Preparation & Serving Related Sales and Related	14,354 <u>16,318</u>
Sales & Related <u>Food Preparation & Serving Related</u>	13,484 <u>16,306</u>
Transportation & Material Moving	<u>7,019,054</u>

D. Workforce Development Analysis (WIOA §108(b)(1)(D); 20 CFR §679.560(a)(4))

Boards must include an analysis of workforce development activities in the region, including education and training.

WSB's Response:

WSB has one of the largest service areas of all workforce development boards in the state, serving six counties. The largest being El Paso County, which represents 97% of the population and vast majority of businesses in the WSB service area. The University of El Paso, Texas Tech, and El Paso Community College along with TWC-certified Career Schools and Colleges and training options, reside in El Paso County making access to workforce training relatively simple for El Paso County residents. However, residents of the five rural counties have limited access to other education and training providers. The largest education institution is in Sul Ross State University in Brewster County

but is 87 miles from Presidio, TX, 101 miles from Van Horn, TX and 166 miles from Sierra Blanca, TX.

In partnership with the COG (Council of Governments), WSB is addressing the struggles of the rural population. WSB created a Letter of Agreement with the COG to assist with being the first point of contact/liaison between WSB and rural businesses, elected officials, community-based organization. As part of being our contact/liaison, the COG conducts public presentations and information sharing at scheduled meetings with businesses and local officials regarding WSB and the services available for their community businesses and residents. This is done with the intent of Increasing engagement with businesses, community agencies, partners in the rural communities as well as provide access to labor market information. In addition, the COG rural team is supporting with outreach efforts on specific program initiatives and promoting WSB services by having direct contact with the rural community residents, employers and government entities while connecting them with our WSB contractors for delivery of services.

WSB has conducted extensive research projects to help identify business retention and skills gaps. Some of these projects include: Return on Investment for each workforce program; Supply Chain Industry Sector Analysis; developed and presented Labor Market Report describing wages, migration, and cost of living. This information has been presented to many professional and business organizations including the Chambers of Commerce, Rio Grande Economics Association, and others. The report has highlighted wages as a significant priority for the region.

~~Aside from the~~ In addition to the Target Occupations List (TOL) referred to as the Hot Jobs list, WSB has developed two additional occupations lists:

1. Hottest Job List - includes STEM occupations and occupations in the top two highest paying wage quartiles. Workforce Solutions Borderplex is aggressively working to transition employees into jobs above the midpoint and into the top two wage quartiles, specifically through STEM occupations. In our efforts to upskill these workers, we are trying to expand the current training programs into better-paying occupations, like STEM.
2. Rainy job list – includes occupations that have a projection of diminishing growth over the next ten years. WSB is working on up-skilling or redirecting these employees into hot jobs.

3. WSB also created a list referred to as the Step-Up Career Pathway list. This list focuses on supporting skilling up and training in an effort to increase equitable access among individuals with varied education, skills and barriers. This list aligns with entry-level job opportunities with regional industry needs and career pathways in addition to the WSB TOL (Hot Jobs).

2.

WSB is focused on advocacy for initiatives and programs that help the Borderplex region remain a viable and competitive area. Through various expansive research projects that focus on economic factors, opportunities and gaps, WSB continues to become a resource and advocate for advancement in the Borderplex area. WSB is able to share information by participating in various national, state, and regional meetings, committees and boards. WSB staff members are part of the El Paso Collaborative Academic Council, which is working on community score card and a unified vision that focus on quality education that leads to ample career pathways and supports a vibrant local economy and enhanced quality of life. Some of the leaders contributing to this council include the University of Texas at El Paso, El Paso Community College, Region 19, K-12 partners, the Federal Reserve Bank, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, and the Borderplex Alliance.

Staff members also participate on committees for CTE programs, Texas 60x30, and various economic development groups.

WSB ensures steady communication with our educational partners through the Training Provider Forums and one-on-one meetings. Workforce Solutions Borderplex hosts quarterly seminars to attract potential businesses who want to become a certified training provider while also educating current providers on the new federal requirements under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Certification through this Texas Workforce Commission Eligible Training Provider System (ETPS) allows training providers and educational institutions the opportunity to receive reimbursement for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) sponsored training for qualifying individuals. During the forum, WSB provides crucial and useful information to training providers such as the opportunities for training we can anticipate based on the current state of our region and skills gap analysis, and WSB TOL and resources. The one-on-one meetings have proven to be highly successful in identifying capacity, process and logistics matters, and the development of innovative training models.

WSB has an outreach team responsible for providing resources to Middle and High school students with a comprehensive approach to strengthening linkages between education and our local talent pipeline. These resources help the students to start thinking about their strengths from an early age. By planning for high school/post-secondary education in advance and starting to think ahead to their careers, students enter high school/post-secondary better equipped to take advantage of their strengths and further develop in areas that need improvement.

As an immediate response to the Covid-19 pandemic, WSB started providing services virtually. Our staff rapidly adapted to this change and we have consistently offer services through the following activities:

- Orientations via Zoom and Premiere Platform
- Intakes and workforce services via phone, email, Zoom, Teams, Skype
- Virtual onboarding via phone, email, Zoom, Teams, Skype
- One on one meetings via Teams or customer's preferred method of communication
- Webinars and Metrix Learning
- Tests are proctored remotely via Zoom
- The Business Services team conducts employer outreach, rapid response services via phone, Skype meetings, MS Teams, email, etc...
- Job Fairs are being conducted using the Premier Virtual Platform.
- Employment Services complete all RESEA requirements by outreaching UI claimants

WSB is pleased to be a part of an exciting new transition process to help companies thrive and grow after the hardships of the pandemic. With a new team of Digital Transformation Specialists, WSB helps businesses to better respond to the impact of COVID-19 by providing an improved customer experience through the incorporation of digital transformation strategies. This program includes services such as increase digital presence, build business website, social media accounts management, software and equipment purchases to facilitate conducting business online.

Part 3: Core Programs

A. Workforce Development System

(WIOA §108(b)(2); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(1))

Boards must include a description of the workforce development system in the

workforce area that identifies:

- the programs that are included in the system; and
- how the Board will work with the entities that facilitate core programs 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, that support the strategy identified in the State Plan under WIOA§102(b)(1)(E).

WSB's Response:

As the regional Workforce Development Boards, WSB is committed to supporting our economic expansion and develop the talent of our region and workforce for Texas. An integral part of our mission and success is to ensure our systems works in partnership with employers, educators, and community leaders to foster economic development and high-growth opportunities. WSB is committed to creating and implementing strategic initiatives and utilization of programs that expand opportunities and help meet the needs our regional industries. WSB administers and utilizes the following programs to align the state's workforce and programs around the needs of regional growth sectors:

- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) programs for Adults, Dislocated Workers and Youth
- Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)
- Employment Services (ES)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Choices
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAP E&T)
- Non-Custodial Parent program (NCP)
- Business Services Unit (BSU)
- Child Care Services
- Rapid Response Services
- Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA)

An integral part of the delivery of service is collaboration and alignment with partnering organizations and agencies. The WSB system includes partners who also help us in providing services that address the workforce needs and economic opportunities of the community. WSB works closely with ~~Motivation, Education and Training (MET), the local National Farmworkers Jobs Program, which provide services to Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers and their families.~~ MET staff is co-located in one of the WSB's American Job Centers. ~~t~~The Texas Veterans Commission (TVC). ~~TVC~~ staff is also

co-located in WSB's American Job Centers to provide services to veterans. We also collaborate and help provide services through AARP -SCSEP. The AARP Foundation SCSEP (Senior Community Service Employment Program) offers unemployed adults 55 and older work-based training and skill-building opportunities within a variety of community service organizations and agencies. ~~Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS), the local Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) consortium, and the local community college are also vital partners of the WSB system. VRS is now also co-located in our workforce center, VRS staff assist individuals with disabilities obtain training and employment and assist with the Breaking Barriers initiative to provide paid summer employment to youth.~~ Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS), the local Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) consortium, and the local education service centers are also vital partners of the WSB system. VRS is now also co-located in our workforce center, VRS staff assist individuals with disabilities to obtain Pre-employment transitioning services (Pre-ETS) and assist with breaking down barriers in the community. VRS and WSB collaborate on offering Work-Based Paid Learning Experiences such as the Summer Earn and Learn and Year-Round programs to youth with disabilities. Our AEL partners assist with literacy and adult education throughout the workforce area and they continue to build contextual learning in key occupational areas to better meet the needs of employers. AEL can also provide alternative training modes for our rural areas. El Paso Community College (EPCC) provides numerous job training programs authorized by the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006. WSB and CTE partners work together to ensure students and job seekers have access to regional labor market information, training programs, and, ~~to include~~ apprenticeship training opportunities, ~~that provide for the knowledge and skills in demand by employers.~~ WSB also collaborates with our regional school districts CTE programs to help identify opportunities for high school CTE students and provide them access to work experience ~~help align them in~~ -in-demand occupations. ~~through work experience and support services when qualified.~~

WSB ensures alignment with core partners and other workforce entities through monthly workforce center partner meetings and other regularly scheduled meetings. Ongoing communication is a key strategy to:

- a) providing the services that employers, job seekers and youth seek;
- b) avoiding duplication of effort; and
- c) braiding of services.

B. Core Programs - Expand Access, Facilitate Development, and Improve Access

(WIOA §108(b)(3); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(2))

Boards must include a description of how the Board will work with entities carrying out core programs to:

- expand access to employment, training, education, and support services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment;
- facilitate the development of career pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs, including specific career pathways occupations that the Board currently includes on its Target Occupations List, and career pathways occupations that the Board is planning to develop; 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).

Boards must include a description of the Board's plan for working with at least one of the Governor's industry clusters.

WSB's Response:

WSB has continued to expand our network within the Borderplex community to highlight the resources and access to employment, training, education, and support services, especially for eligible individuals with barriers to sustainable employment. The WSB Board has further developed our research regarding labor market analysis to be able to provide strategic solutions to enhance our economic development and expand job growth opportunities in our community. WSB is has continued to grow out network of partners and agencies to let the community know about resources to help our community access employment, training, education, and support services.

The Board meets at least monthly with its Career Center Operator that provides WIOA, Choices, NCP, SNAP E&T and TAA services, ~~Business Services contractor that provides services to employers as well as~~ ES₂ and RESEA as well as our Child Care Services contractor who provides subsidized childcare for parents who are working or are in training. In addition, WSB staff attend and/ or facilitate regular meetings within the community to include Texas Veterans Commission staff, ~~MET~~, AEL, our post-secondary training providers, community impact meetings and taskforces. We have developed a WSB Street Team whose focus is to engage in outreach in the community and provide information regarding our resources ~~and also conduct eligibility~~. Due to the onset of COVID-

19, we have pivoted in our outreach methods and eligibility in order to offer and conduct virtual outreach and eligibilities as well, this delivery method allowed us to expand our reach and streamline our process.

WSB offers numerous assessment tools and resources that help facilitate access to resources and career exploration pathways that align to our Regional Target Occupation List (TOL) in the Borderplex community. Through various outreach methods and dedicated staff, we conduct outreach sessions and meetings to highlight career opportunities and career ladders- pathways to help agencies, training providers, and the community learn how to access LMCI tools, Work In Texas, WSB training programs and services and connections to outside resources that promote our TOL also referred to our Hot Jobs List. Staff continue to receive updated training in an effort be are well versed in labor market information and resources to help our job seekers and participants access this vital information. WSB and partner meetings are regularly held so that co-enrollments can take place and WSB staff is provided with information on how staff can be co-enrolled.

We also incorporate the regional ~~regional~~ Borderplex strategic plan which WSB collaborated on and was recently ~~was~~ updated for 2020-2025, by one of our economic development organizations, the Borderplex Alliance. WSB and the regional strategic plan also aligns with three of the Texas Governor's industry clusters, Health Care Industry (Life Sciences), Information Technology, and Advanced Manufacturing. WSB ~~is~~ also partners with various entities and organizations to create access and pathways that lead to industry recognized certifications. WSB is focused on using programs like Skills Development Fund, supporting El Paso Community College to access state funding initiatives, provide collaboration and support on grants with our local ISD CTE programs, provide LMI and grant support to our post-secondary providers. WSB also facilitates and participates on industry task~~s~~ forces and our chambers to help identify and connect our community with real time data and discuss employer needs through training.

Lastly, WSB provides online tools that provide information about target industries, what can be expected in a particular job, and an online orientation of what services and documentation for specific services is needed. These online tools are provided to improve access to WSB system services which in turn improves access to activities that lead to recognized postsecondary credentials.

Part 4: One-Stop Service Delivery

A. One-Stop Service Delivery System (WIOA §108(b)(6); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(5))

Boards must include a description of the one-stop delivery system in the workforce area, including explanations of the following:

- How the Board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers and how providers will meet the employment needs of local employers, workers, and job seekers
- How the Board will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system, including to remote areas, through the use of technology and other means
- How entities within the one-stop delivery system, including the one-stop operators and the one-stop partners, will comply with WIOA §188 (related to Non-Discrimination), if applicable, and with 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 who have disabilities
- The roles and resource contributions of the one-stop partners

WSB's Response:

How the Board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers and how providers will meet the employment needs of local employers, workers, and job seekers

WSB maintains an open and continuous communication with our eligible training providers and community leaders to ensure alignment to the region's needs. Our Board hosts bimonthly Economic Development meetings where our partners share current and upcoming projects, and strategies to meet the employment needs of our region. We also maintain a good rapport with our training providers by offering Training Provider Forums and one-on-one meetings. During the forum, WSB provides crucial information on the current state of our region for training providers to anticipate and prepare to fulfill the demand of training programs. The one-on-one meetings ensure all concerns and questions are addressed and provide an opportunity to develop or adjust based on their employment needs of our region and customers.

How the Board will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system, including to remote areas, through the use of technology and other means

We are able to provide assistance through all of our service area, regardless of whether we have a physical location in that city or town. For this, we utilize our Mobile Unit, which consists of a large vehicle with electrical power, 4G LTE internet, laptops, printer, phone, and TV. Although primarily used for ES services, with the use of remote software, all of the services can be provided out of this ~~mobile unit . Mobile Unit.~~ We have also purchased 5 trailers that include everything that our mobile unit has, but in a more compact way. These can be attached on to any vehicle with a hitch and taken anywhere in the community. This facilitates reaching out and getting to customers instead of them getting to us.

~~Similar to the stations in which customers receive services in our center virtually without having face to face interaction with the staff, we have set up those stations at partner locations such as the El Paso County Housing Authority or the Pride Center for Foster Youth.~~ Additionally, technology designed to support people with disabilities through assistive technology is provided at our workforce centers. Our two large centers are equipped with a monitor for visually disabled and Dragon software that reads out loud for the visually impaired. There is a connection to a sign language interpreter, and the capability to print to braille. There is speech to text technology, and the desk adjust for a person using a wheelchair.

We have installed Monitors on our walls that rotate information about our services, programs, and initiatives and after the pandemic, of CDC guidelines and our augmented procedures for entering the centers. This will continue to be utilized as we adjust to the new normal for service delivery.

When the pandemic affected our center operations, we fitted the centers with a thermoscanner and created an online survey form that gets updated based on updated from CDC. When staff and customers come in, they step up to the thermoscanner that takes their temperature and checks for facemask. Staff and customers then complete a survey form using their cell phones and a QR code. Based on their temperature and the answers on their survey, ~~they are escorted to the resource room or waiting area for appointments. If they cannot be let in, they are invited to virtual services.~~

How entities within the one-stop delivery system, including the one-stop operators and the one-stop partners, will comply with WIOA §188 (related to Non-Discrimination), if applicable, and with 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 who have disabilities

Our board has incorporated Customer Care policy to ensure customers with disabilities including learning, emotional, or behavioral disabilities have equal access to services offered through the workforce system, in accordance with WD Letter 24-01, to include subsequent issuances and replacements.

1. Customers with disabilities will be provided equal opportunity and access to services offered through the workforce system. Assessment will occur to determine the following:
 - a. Identification of language needs; situations in which the customer will need accommodations;
 - b. Resources needed and determination of how the resources will be made available;
 - c. Communications with customers with disabilities will be as effective as communications with customers without disabilities. Written and verbal communication must be in a language that the individual customer understands (e.g., Sign language, Braille).
 - d. Refer individuals with a disability to appropriate resource services (e.g., Vocational Rehabilitation)
2. Interpreters or qualified staff must be used when communicating with customers through sign language.
3. Inclusion of customers with disabilities will be assessed to ensure equal opportunity and access to workforce system services.

One-stop operators and one-stop partners are provided access to trainings that include Diversity - EEO and Non-Discrimination, Ethics Training, and American with Disabilities Act Overview. The Student HireAbility Navigator in collaboration with Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services provide training on the use of equipment and technology that is accessible at the one-stop offices for persons with disabilities. In addition, VR offers sensitivity training as well as other areas related to working and assisting persons with disabilities to one-stop

operators and one-stop partners.

The Student HireAbility Navigator role in providing information, training, and technical assistance to Workforce Solutions Offices, local VR offices, school districts, Education Service Centers, community partners, and employers, regarding resources and activities available to assist students with disabilities to transition successfully to postsecondary education, employment, or both is part of ensuring operations, partners and the community are providing the resources and referrals to person with disabilities in order for the to be aware and access the resources available to them.

The roles and resource contributions of the one-stop partners

WSB's one-stop partners contribute the following roles and resources:

- ~~Grant Associates Dynamic Workforce Solutions~~ – center operations, case management staff, WIOA program case management, resource center management and youth program case management. ~~DWFS-Grant Associates~~ also provides curriculum for web-based skills training, soft skills training, and job readiness. ~~Grant Associates also provides-~~
- ~~Manpower Inc.~~ – business relationship development and maintenance, universal __client employment services, rapid response, Reemployment ____ Services ____ and Eligibility Assessment and call center management.
 - YWCA – childcare services. ~~Resources include childcare provider mentors and trainers.~~
 - Texas Veterans Commission – employment services for veterans and transitioning soldiers.
 - Motivation & Education Training – services for migrant seasonal farmworkers
 - Vocational Rehabilitation – services for job seekers with barriers to employment

B. Cooperative Agreements

(WIOA §108(b)(14); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(13))

Boards must provide copies of executed cooperative agreements that explain how all local service providers, including additional providers, will carry out the requirements for integration of and access to the entire set of services available in the local one-stop delivery system. This includes cooperative agreements (as defined in WIOA §107(d)(11)) between the Board or other local entities described in §101(a)(11)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 USC 721(a)(11)(B)) and the local office of a designated state agency or designated state unit that administers programs that are carried out under Title I of the

Rehabilitation Act (29 USC 720 et seq.) (other than §112 or part C of that title (29 USC 732, 741) and are subject to §121(f)) in accordance with §101(a)(11) of the Rehabilitation Act (29 USC 721(a)(11)) with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of services to individuals who have 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.

WSB's Response:

Given that Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS) falls under the purview of TWC and as based on TWC guidance, a ~~Letter of Agreement~~Cooperative Agreement with VRS is not required.

C. Employer Engagement, Economic Development, and Unemployment Insurance Program Coordination

(WIOA §108(b)(4); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(3))

Boards must include a description of the strategies and services that will be used in the workforce area to do the following:

- Facilitate engagement of employers in the workforce development programs, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors, in-demand occupations, and target occupations
- Support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the workforce area
- Better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development
- Strengthen links between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs

Note: This may include the implementation of initiatives such as incumbent worker training programs, on-the-job training programs, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies, career pathways initiatives, use of effective business intermediaries, and other business services and strategies designed to meet the needs of regional employers. These initiatives must support the strategy described above.

WSB's Response:

The business services consultants, recruiters, and job developers have developed strong relationships with employers across the Borderplex region-

to and provide all employers and partnersthem with resources available ~~to them~~ through WSB. Through these collaborations, our business services team members ~~can are able to~~ identify employers' ~~s talent~~ challenges and offer solutions. Within our partnerships with the business community, we are educating ~~employersthem~~ about the variety of different programs available to them, at WSB and the advantages of utilizing all Occupational our P programs to help leverage their need and can them identifyfind strong qualified candidates whom arethat are successfully completing trainingour programs and ~~are~~ ready to enter the workforce. Additionally, we promote the advantages of Paid and Unpaid Work Experience, On-The-Job Training, ~~and~~ Internship, and Apprenticeship Opportunities.

Services available to businesses include:

- Applicant recruitment, screening and referrals
- Posting job orders in Work in Texas website
- Hosting industry job fairs
- Customized hiring events
- Providing employers with resources such as
 - Labor market ~~tr~~ information
 - Prevailing wage for existing/new employers
 - Economic development plans
 - Employment and labor law resources
 - Unemployment Insurance
- Testing and pre-screening job candidates
- Employment skills training
 - TWC Skills Development Fund, Skills for Small Businesses, etc.
- Assistance with WOTC, Fidelity Bonding
- Rapid Response information and resources available to employer and their affected employees

The personalized visits conducted by the business services team members are meant to give us direct insight and intelligence about each industry and its the business community. These visitsy allow us to gauge how they are doingtap into our economic development, where we can identify industry needs and its trends, what the needs of the industry currently are, along with any plans for growth, and opportunities for innovation and development. It also allows us to get a better idea of how to utilize our funding in ways that benefit both ~~the~~ job seekers and the businessesbusinesses.

WSB also hosts bi-monthly economic development partner meetings with the City of El Paso Economic Development Department, El Paso County Economic Development Department, Medical Center of the Americas Foundation, and Borderplex Economic Alliance. We've also included post-secondary partners, and partners in education to come to these meetings, along with the local chambers of commerce and other organizations involved with economic development at different levels. We are able to share what each partner is working on and identify opportunities for joint efforts. These meetings provide insight into short-term business attraction and expansion projects that might require response from the various partners and also provide a long-term perspective into the future workforce needs of industries looking to move to or expand in the area.

When our Business Services Team connects with the employer, we ~~also~~ introduce our American Job Centers, ~~so they can be familiar with what we offer to job seekers.~~ to ensure we promote amenities available for both job seekers and employers. We share the resources available such as customized job fairs, interview space, and onboarding events. We encourage all employers to take advantage of these amenities.

The business services team also seeks potential business closures or relocation of businesses to offer Rapid Response as an early intervention service. American Job Center services, ~~and~~ unemployment insurance, and education and training opportunities are among some of the services covered with potential job seekers during the Rapid Response orientation. ~~During the Rapid Response orientation~~ Additionally, we assist with the following:

- Work in Texas (WIT) registration
- Introduction of Hot Jobs
- Resume updating/writing Composing or updating of their resume
- Reviewing job vacancies to provide referrals with job seeker industry interest
- Exploring potential barriers and guide job seeker to assistance with those
- Providing an individualized employment plan with steps how to level up their professional skills ~~s on how to get back into the workforce~~
- ~~Reviewing job postings to provide referrals to job seekers~~
- Providing the requirements of the unemployment insurance

During the Rapid Response orientation held by the Business Services Team, an Employment Services (ES) liaison will be is available and present to explain all ~~the~~ services provided at the one-stop centers. It is critical for the success of the

workforce system ~~to ensure that both that~~ BSU and ES work hand in hand to accomplish a successful orientation and provide all resources available to its job seekers with a common goal of establishing sustainable employment for each individual. ~~the task of getting job seekers connected with employers through various means in order to get back into the workforce successfully.~~

WSB will utilize Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Adult and Dislocated Worker funds to provide ~~for~~ incumbent worker training. Incumbent worker training serves to increase the competitiveness of the employee or employer and is designed to meet the specific requirements of an employer or group of employers to retain a skilled workforce, avert the need to lay off employees by assisting the workers in obtaining the skills necessary to retain employment. WSB will develop a Project Term Sheet/Letter of Agreement with the employer or group of employers involved in the project. The Letter of Agreement will include at a minimum: description of training and curriculum, factors used to determine project feasibility, purpose and expected outcomes, timelines and milestones, party funding commitments, and identification of training provider(s). WSB will request from the employer(s) employee information, that WSB will protect in accordance with the Personal Identifiable Information Policy, the use of unique cohort ID# to track training and will use Attachment 1 of WD Letter 06-19 to document worker training information.

WSB has also developed partnerships with employers and colleges to provide our community students with introduction to work experience and career exploration that aligns with career pathways through a paid internship. We also incorporate OJT's in instances where employers want to keep the participant and we explore apprenticeship opportunities where applicable.

Employers that are struggling to fill positions utilizing their traditional hiring model have come to us with specific needs in their company. Utilizing our consultative approach, we suggested that an internship model would benefit to attract new talent to their company. Internships allow the employer to sell their company and the benefits of working for them, while providing the student with industry experience. We also leverage our relationship and collaboration with the local colleges to identify the right match for this employer. This internship model provides the client with wrap around services (i.e. work related items, certification fees, transportation) and support while they find sustainable employment.

D. Coordination of Wagner-Peyser Services (WIOA §108(b)(12); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(11))

A description of plans, assurances, and strategies for maximizing coordination, improving service delivery, and avoiding duplication of Wagner-Peyser Act services and other services provided through the one-stop delivery system.

WSB's response:

~~The e~~Employment ~~s~~Services team ~~builds~~ build both strong working relationships and networking relationships with our community through professional interactions with employers and job seekers. Employment Services keeps abreast of all WD letters, amendments, board initiatives, and partner programs through team collaboration, weekly all-staff meetings, and monthly all-partner meetings. ~~The employment services team will keep up to date on all WD letters and amendments, board initiatives and our partner programs providing our job seekers appropriate service referrals to address barriers our clients may be facing that prevent them from securing gainful employment. Monthly trainings will be facilitated and tracked by management, leads and partner point of contacts such as CCSA, Veterans, MET, and VRS. By providing job seekers with partner/community referrals, Employment Services help address barriers job seekers face that prevent them from securing gainful employment. Regular customer follow-up ensures services are received and tracked. Employment services will use~~ use technology to serve as the project manager of our clients. Microsoft TEAMS, Outlook, Premier Platform and other technological platforms ~~will be~~ are ~~sused~~ used to track ~~client~~ customer progress, ~~to~~ avoiding duplication of services. ~~Quality follow up with our client will continue through until a successful placement is made. Employment Services conduct regular follow-ups until job seekers secure employment. To ensure quality service delivery is provided virtually and in person, Employment Services participate in pop up events and utilize TEAMS, Zoom, TextUS, WIT emails, and Premier Platform. Employment Services can assist a customer wherever they are in English and Spanish.~~

~~To ensure the One Stop delivery model is implemented throughout our region, including rural locations, ES will utilize pop ups, Mobile Unit, Teams and Zooms meetings, TextUs, Call'EmAll, one on one services over the phone, Premier Platform and any other technology platforms to ensure quality service delivery is provided in both English and Spanish.~~

Complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act, ES ~~shall~~receives annual trainings and support to ensure compliance of applicable provisions regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities.

E. Integrated, Technology-Enabled Intake and Case Management
(WIOA §108(b)(21); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(20))

Boards must include a description of how one-stop centers are implementing and transitioning to an integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information system for programs carried out under WIOA and by one-stop partners.

WSB's response:

This section is separated into 3 different categories. The first is user experience, where we focus on utilizing technology to enhance the interaction of the customers in our centers as well as remotely. The second is staff utilization and productivity in which the focus lies in efficiency. Finally, we will discuss remote services, in which we will present the use of technology to physically reach places in which we do not have a permanent location.

User experience

In 2020 TWC brought to light VOS greeter, a replacement for WCCT which will allow us to track customers as they come into our Workforce Centers. This application is fully integrated with the Work-In-Texas platform making it seamless at the time of obtaining information in order to provide a better service to the customer. Having a centralized application also allows for different agents to aid, whether it is employment services, veteran services, childcare, or even the call center. The information is homogenous.

To better serve WIOA customers, we have created our specialized services form. There is logic programmed into the form, so as the customer provides their information, the form is automatically determining eligibility. That information is then sent to the staff where they can input it into TWIST, confirm that the customer is eligible and start providing services. The form also has document upload fields so that they can provide the necessary documentation for their case to be opened. Another form that we use that impacts user experience is our partner referral form. This allows for interagency referral of customers. If a

customer goes to another agency and they might be in need of WSB services, the partner agency can refer them to us, and we will be able to reach out to that customer. Our plan is to analyze the results of the given forms and streamline them to provide a more efficient experience for the customer.

~~When it comes to partner, WSB also has a tool called the Services Navigator. This tool allows for customers to be able to look for other services that WSB may not provide. Whether it is food, transportation, health services, etc. There is a directory of different community organizations that can provide aid. This directory is updated every 2 years, to have the most updated information and to include any new organizations in the community. Our plan is to maintain this service in perpetuity.~~

A similar process has been ~~stablished with~~established for our Childcare Services. First, we have a waitlist application. Similarly, to the WIOA application, this application allows the customer to submit their information electronically from their home computer or mobile device. Once a place becomes available in the waitlist, an electronic packet is sent to the customer via Adobe Sign with prefilled information that the customer previously provided. In this manner the customer, does not have to do double entry and acknowledges with digital signatures as they fill out the packet.

The points covered so far have been in the sense of intake, there are other the global COVID-19 pandemic has pushed us to take precautions that were deemed unnecessary; however, we have the responsibility to provide a safe environment for our clients and staff. When our doors are open, we have touchless temperature screening stations, and a digital screening form at the entrance of our centers. Additionally, when a customer sits down to receive ES services, they are speaking to a representative through a computer with the use of TeamViewer remote software. Our plan is to expand this to all programs. We are also providing virtual orientations, just as we would in our physical centers using Microsoft TEAMS and Zoom. Additionally, we provide virtual job fairs in which jobseekers can register, upload their resume, and speak with representatives from different employers.

Staff and Productivity

Now that we have discussed the use of technology on the front end, we can proceed with its use in the production/staff side of the operation. All our programs are currently paperless. All the current files that were previously done

physically in paper have been scanned and imputed into our Document Management System. The application that we are currently using is Cabinet. All the files that are received electronically in the previously explained manners are stored in this centralized system. Our goal is to streamline this process in order to have more efficient staff and increase the amount of effective time.

Staff is also utilizing Formstack, which is the tool used for the customer facing forms, for internal forms that assist with transfer of information within departments. This allows for uniformity, traceability and reliability of information. Additionally, staff also utilize Adobe Sign to send paperwork for digital signature, for which there is not a premade template or for forms that are not built by WSB. Both services are secured with encryption of the data during transfer and at rest.

Our Childcare services provider utilizes an in-house application for case management that links directly to the TWIST Adhoc database. When used in conjunction with TWIST, staff is able to corroborate information, or create pre-filled paperwork that can be sent out to customers via Adobe Sign. This automation allows for staff to work efficiently as they do not have to do a double input of information.

Mobile units

We are also able to provide assistance through all of our service area, regardless of whether we have a physical location in that city or town. For this, we utilize our Mobile Unit, which consists of a large vehicle with electrical power, 4G LTE internet, laptops, printer, phone, and TV. Although primarily used for ES services, with the use of remote software, all of the services can be provided out of this Mobile Unit. ~~We have also purchased 5 trailers that include everything that our mobile unit has, but in a more compact way. These can be attached on to any vehicle with a hitch and taken anywhere in the community. This facilitates reaching out and getting to customers instead of them getting to us.~~

~~Similar to the stations in which customers receive services in our center virtually without having face to face interaction with the staff, we have set up those stations at partner locations such as the El Paso County Housing Authority or the Pride Center for Foster Youth.~~

Part 5: Workforce Investment Activities

A. Economic Development and Entrepreneurial/Microenterprise

Activities

(WIOA §108(b)(5); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(4))

Boards must include an explanation of how the Board will coordinate local workforce investment activities with regional economic development activities that are carried out in the workforce area and how the Board will promote entrepreneurial-skills training and microenterprise services.

WSB's Response:

Workforce Solutions Borderplex actively engages and collaborates with several regional economic development agencies including [El Paso Chamber, El Paso Hispanic Chamber](#), Borderplex Alliance, City of El Paso Economic Development Department, [El Paso County Economic Development](#), Medical Center of the Americas, Council for Regional Economic Expansion and Education Competitiveness, ~~El Paso Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Pioneers 21~~, and Adult Education Literacy Consortium.

Workforce Solutions Borderplex also has several Memorandums of Understanding with several partners for specific workforce related projects as described below:

- Borderplex Alliance assists with regional economic planning and industry analysis. WSB also partners with Borderplex Alliance on new business recruitment as well as business retention and expansion strategies;
- City of El Paso regarding regional business needs and policy strategies to help expand economic development opportunities;
- WSB collaborates with Council on Regional Economic Expansion and Educational Development to identify and partner on educational attainment needs throughout the region to include early childhood through post-secondary education;
- El Paso Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and The El Paso Chamber to help develop regional entrepreneurship trainings, host industry led roundtables and regional state of conferences;
- Adult Education Consortium provides WSB resources for students in GED and/or vocational training as well as provide training for industry recognized credentials;
- WSB is also a coalition member of the West Texas Aerospace and Defense Manufacturing Coalition which will help small supply chain manufacturers increase capabilities in advance manufacturing. their

WSB ~~additionally~~ continues to work with various partners for Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) efforts, including microenterprise and entrepreneurial skills training. microenterprises that locate or start-up in the Borderplex region. WSB ~~provides assistance with networking, recruiting, and may assist employers~~ wemployers with work experience. participants through it trained program participants through a paid work-experience. WSB also hosts and facilitates entrepreneurship workshops and bootcamps through out the year.

B. Rapid Response Activity Coordination (WIOA §108(b)(8); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(7))

Boards must include a description of how the Board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the workforce area with statewide rapid response activities described in WIOA §134(a)(2)(A).

WSB's Response:

Rapid Response is a pro-active, business-focused, and flexible strategy designed to respond to layoffs and closings by quickly coordinating services and providing immediate aid to companies and their affected workers.

Rapid Response teams work with employers and any employee representative(s) to quickly maximize public and private resources to minimize disruptions associated with job loss. The Rapid Response team will offer provide the orientation at the companies' convenience with customized services on-site orientations at an affected company the affected companies' facility, and will be available to accommodate allny= work schedules, and shifts in both English and Spanish. assist companies and workers through the painful transition associated with job loss.

We have taken a proactive approach of reaching out to employers for the initial contact as soon as we receive notice of a company closure or relocation through word of mouth or as a WARN letter is received by Texas Workforce Commission. ~~Initial contact is made with employers, we have taken a proactive approach to this. Once contact has been made, an introduction to Rapid~~

Response is given to the employer where we break down the structure of the orientation with step-by-step instructions to process their unemployment insurance claim, along with services which will be available to all employees through Dislocated Worker funds. The Rapid Response coordinator will ensure all interactions and progress will be tracked on a Rapid Response Tracker shared with the Quality manager and the Board. When we hear that a business is experiencing any kind of layoff, we reach out to employer them to find out more information about the impact to their employees and to identify what the best approach would be according to their need. Rapid Response services are fully customizable to the need of theeach employer, regardless of the size. We want to ensure that the affected business is aware of the services available to them and their employees. The orientation is customized by employer and can be conducted in person or virtually via phone, Skype, MS Teams, WebEx or Zoom depending on what platform works best for them. In preparation for the Rapid Response orientation, iInformationnformation will be provided to its employees with the encouragement to bring an updated resume to the orientation as this will be the first step for an Employment Services Specialist to help guide the individual with their Work in Texas registration. Two Employment specialist will be assigned to assist the employees with assistance in filling out their Work in Texas Registration form. about affected workers is provided by the employer to the Rapid Response ahead of time, so that necessary information can be distributed to the employees them prior to the orientation. When orientations areis conducted in person, affected employees are given provided with a folder with with information regarding the services available to them. Due to the impact of COVID-19 a virtual session could be offered via phone, MS Teams, WebEx or Zoom, although it is encouraged to be held in person. we have transitioned our folder into a virtual binder (<https://www.livebinders.com/b/2715623>) which can be easily shared with them, and it also conveniently allows them to fill out the registration form online from the location of their choice as long as they attend the orientation. The virtual binder also allows us to easily customize it based on the employer and share the virtual binder with both, employer and staff, prior to orientation.

Our virtual orientations allows us to bring different departments and partners to the orientations to ensure that we are addressing all the needs of the affected workers and educating them about all the different resources available to them through their transition during this difficult time. Some partners include: Child Care services, TAA, TVC, ES, AEL, Trainingour Programs and Eligibility team. During this time, the Business Services team can also offer a reverse job fair,

meaning we will invite a few employers to meet with the affected employees at the facility to offer on-the-spot interviews. -Another service we can provide is an in-dept orientation and introduction to the updated Targeted Industries and its occupations along with Labor Market information and stress management seminars.

Once the orientation is complete, the Rapid Response coordinator will add the rapid response number, and all Rapid Response services onto the employer profile in Work in Texas. The Employment Services Specialist will also include the rapid response orientation service, date and information on each clients' Work in Texas profile.

C. Youth Activities and Services

(WIOA §108(b)(9); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(8))

Boards must include a description and assessment of the type and availability of workforce investment activities for youth in the workforce area, including activities for youth with disabilities. This description must include an identification of successful models of such activities.

WSB's Response:

- Workforce Solutions Borderplex (WSB) has facilitated a successful WIOA Youth program that has supported in-school youth to continue attending secondary school and enter post-secondary or work placement upon graduation. WSB has also provided work experience to both in and out of school youth ~~through a summer program~~ wherein youth work in a setting where they obtain both technical and soft skills that are necessary to be successful when they enter the workforce in regionally targeted occupations. WSB has supported out-of-school youth to obtain a secondary high school equivalent and enter post-secondary or work placement. WSB has worked with businesses in the community to provide on-the-job training for ~~out-of-school~~out-of-school youth. WSB will continue to serve in and out-~~oof~~-school youth that meet WIOA eligibility to support them and guide them in entering post-secondary school or permanent work placement. WSB will continue to provide services that, includeing the WIOA Youth 14 elements ~~to both in-school and out-of-school youth~~ to remove barriers and increase job readiness, increase confidence, social skills, and to prepare youth for successful transition into the workforce.

Many employers in the Borderplex are willing to hire individuals with disabilities, as part of Workforce Services to employers WSB has established job fair events specifically for job seekers who have disabilities, such as a HireAbility Job Fair and a Reverse Job Fair. These events support the efforts and connect students with disabilities with employment, work experience and exposure to real world employment.

WSB strives to build a workforce that is diverse and inclusive. In collaboration with the TWC HireAbility Campaign WSB has established initiatives to inform and engage employers about hiring individuals with disabilities. WSB Board and Business Services staff has developed events such as HireAbility Business Forum and the HireAbility Job Fair to educate employers on the untapped talent of individuals with disabilities in our community. In addition, WSB also collaborates with Vocational Rehab to provide Disability Awareness Training to employers in our community.

WSB collaborates with partners such as Vocational Rehabilitation, Project Search, Project Hire, and ISDs in our region by inviting individuals with disabilities to participate in these job fair events. In addition, WSB will continue to support individuals with disabilities through the Student HireAbility Program. The Student HireAbility Navigator will focus exclusively on services for students with disabilities who are in the early phases of preparing for transition to post-secondary education and employment. WSB collaborates with partners such as Vocational Rehab, ISDs, Region 19, Region 18, the University of Texas at El Paso, and El Paso Community College. In addition, WSB also collaborates with work readiness programs such as Project Search and Project Higher. The partnership and collaboration between these organizations allow WSB to offer Pre-Employment Transitioning programs and post-secondary opportunities to individuals with disabilities. WSB is also committed to serving the Texas Hireability Campaign by organizing events such as job fairs and business forums to bring awareness to hiring individuals with disabilities.

WSB has established a reverse job fair for youth. The reverse job fair is a unique model and different than your traditional job fair setting. Borderplex Certified youth set up booths to display their portfolios, skills and talents to employers. Employers have direct access to interview youth and hire on the spot! Given its success, WSB will continue to use this model to aid our youth in marketing their newly gained skills and get them employed. In addition, WSB has begun to incorporate this type of event for students with disabilities who have completed intensive work experience through a program called Project Search that works with students who are transitioning out of high school. As well as incorporating this model for the graduates of a post-secondary education through the Project HIGHER program offered by El Paso Community College. WSB has developed and established reverse job fairs for youth. Reverse job fairs are a unique model and different than your traditional job fair setting. This model has been successful for students with disabilities in vocational rehab. Employers have direct access to view the student's portfolios to interview youth and hire on the spot. WSB has utilized this model for students with disabilities who have

completed intensive work experience through programs such as Project Search, El Paso Community College Project Higher Program, and Region 19 Charting the Course. These programs focus on work readiness and pre-employment transitioning skills, targeting students with disabilities in high school and post-secondary. ~~WSB has established a reverse job fair for our clients with disabilities who have completed intensive work experience through a program called Project Search. Project Search works with students who are transitioning out of high school into the workforce. Reverse job fairs are a unique model and different than your traditional job fair setting. This model has been successful for students with disabilities in vocational rehab. Employers have direct access to view the student's portfolios to interview youths and hire on the spot.~~ In addition, WSB has incorporated a speed interview model for Borderplex certified youths who have completed work base learning in conjunction with job readiness workshops and are now transitioning into permanent employment. Youths will also be able to leverage technology by using QR codes enabling potential Employers to access the youths' resume/portfolio for review.

WSB through its operations contractor facilitates a TEKS aligned curriculum that provides both in-school and out-of-school youth with career development skills. These include soft skills, entrepreneurial skills, leadership skills, and financial literacy. WSB through partners and their operations contractor provide activities that help youth prepare for post-secondary education and work placement such as labor market and employment information, paid and unpaid work experience that have academic and occupational education as components; they include summer employment, pre-apprenticeships, internships, and On-the-Job training opportunities. Youth attending secondary school and working to achieve their GED are provided with tutoring to help them to prepare for tests. WSB partners with organizations such as Job Corps and other alternative secondary education providers to support disconnected youth to achieve academic and employment goals. Support services are provided to eligible customers, as funding permits, and when the support services are reasonable and, necessary and directly related to participation in eligible career services, programs and authorized rules and regulations. Before support services are provided coordination and partnership with other entities, both within the workforce center and those not co-located, will occur to ensure non-duplication of support services, as required in WIOA. Finally, WIOA Youth Program participants are provided with follow up services for one year with the intent to support continued success in post-secondary education or work placement.

SEAL – Summer Earn and Learn Program

Summer Earn and Learn (SEAL) Program establishes a mechanism by which pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS) are provided to students with disabilities, as required under Title IV of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), which modified the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Rehabilitation Act). SEAL is a statewide strategy that includes Work Readiness Training and Paid Work Experience for students with disabilities. It will be offered in each local workforce development area (LWDA) during the summer months, when students are out of school.

SEAL includes basic work-based learning and training services for students with disabilities that provide:

- pre-employment work readiness training and preparation for the work experience placement;
- work experience to help participants gain familiarity with the workplace environment and develop transferable job skills; and
- paid compensation for time worked on the job.

TANF 2 Growing Forward

WSB provides opportunities to school-age youth ages 14 to 24, focusing on at-risk and opportunity youth. The youth are outreached primarily through relationships with area school districts and other youth community organizations. This program offers part-time employment opportunities for youth who need help to secure unsubsidized employment opportunities. Subsidized employment and work experience help promote youth's well-being and successful development. These opportunities help address some of the inequities and disadvantaged conditions. Under the TANF 2 Growing Forward initiative WSB served a minimum total of 234 youth, of 65 youth in our rural areas, with TANF Subsidized Employment opportunities to In-School and Out-of-School youth in both full time and part time work experience opportunities. This subsidized employment initiative will implement a youth employment program focusing on subsidized employment that provides youth employment opportunities for in-school and out-of-school youth participants in our workforce development area. This program will offer part-time employment opportunities

for youth who need help to secure unsubsidized employment opportunities. This program will give youth the opportunity to explore interests and develop critical skills.

~~Youth Job Skills~~

~~Initiative with high concentrations of youth who are school dropouts, and UI claimants under the age of 24, that will benefit from additional funding to develop strategies to provide enhanced service delivery to these eligible youth, specifically out of school youth (OSY) without a secondary school diploma or recognized equivalent. Boards will develop strategies for outreaching eligible participants and engaging them in services, with the goal of providing them with the skills they need to obtain and retain employment.~~

Year-Round Work Experience

The Year-Round Paid Work Experience Program is an initiative that offers Work-based learning participation in work activities in a real work setting that are designed to help individuals with disabilities gain soft and hard skills for work, learn about, and experience actual work in possible fields of interest, and provide these individuals with the opportunity to have hands-on exposure to jobs. Paid work experience is an effective strategy for providing work-based learning opportunities to individuals with disabilities, and particularly for students with disabilities.

The objective of the Paid Work Experience Services is to increase work-based learning opportunities for VR Participants who are students with disabilities through Texas' integrated workforce system.

D. Coordination with Secondary and Postsecondary Education Programs (WIOA §108(b)(10); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(9))

Boards must include a description of how the Board will coordinate its workforce investment activities with relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services.

WSB's Response:

Based on local policy and in compliance with WIOA, a training provider must

meet the following criteria to become an approved TWC Eligible Training Provider:

- A training provider must be appropriately licensed, regulated, or accredited, or must be exempt from regulation under Texas Education Code, Chapter 132, with authorization in a Letter of Exemption from TWC Career Schools and Colleges.
- Training programs must align with the Board's target occupations list and demonstrate that it offers its training programs in partnership with businesses.
- Training providers must be in operation at least two years prior to date of application and submit the last two years audited financial statements.
- A Provider must submit the required program and student information requested by TWC.

WSB staff maintains frequent, open, and proactive communication with our Training Providers. In our effort to communicate adherence to strategic goals, skills training needs, performance tracking, process improvements, and anything else relevant to ensuring a positive and collaborative partnership, WSB hosts Training Providers forums. To keep a frequent and open communication with our Training Providers, our staff is continuously meeting with them for one-on-one meetings to address specific concerns or new programs and opportunities.

WSB offers training services to job seekers who are unable to find employment at the Board's defined living wage. To ensure that the training services continue to meet the employment needs of local employers, workers, and job seekers, WSB reviews and modifies the target occupations list yearly. In order to assist a customer to make an informed decision when selecting a training program, WSB staff utilizes the most up to date TWC Eligible Training Providers List to provide as many options available and their program details. In addition, WSB promotes alternative industry recognized certificates for all participants.

WSB is an active member in the region's Pre-K – 12 education system by being part of the Region 19 Education Service Center Career and Technical Education Advisory Committee. As part of this committee, WSB can present labor market data to the regional school districts and encourage alignment between secondary education curriculum and postsecondary career pathways. WSB facilitates connections between the ISDs, training providers, El Paso Community

College, the Higher Ed providers, and employers to create complementary linkages between high-school and post-secondary. An example of these linkages is the development of a fast-track program to a Bachelor of Science in Nursing as a result of the partnership between the Ysleta ISD, El Paso Community College, and Texas Tech University Health Science Center El Paso (TTUHSC). After receiving conditional acceptance to the nursing program at TTUHSC, high school students work on their pre-requisite college courses while in high school with EPCC dual credit courses, and by the time they graduate high school, they will be on track to earn their B.S.N. in just 16 months. The Board will continue to support unique projects to enhance career pathways and year-round opportunities for students.

We also have an outreach team responsible for providing resources to Middle and High school students with a comprehensive approach to strengthening linkages between education and our local talent pipeline. By planning for high school in advance and starting to think ahead to their careers, students enter high school better equipped to take advantage of their strengths and develop in areas that need improvement. If more students start thinking about higher education beginning in middle school and have resources to guide them through the process, a more significant number of students will overcome the obstacles that might hold them back from post-secondary education. In our efforts to provide more opportunities to our younger population, WSB, in partnership with a different ISD each year, plans a career fair where employers from our target industries get to share more about their occupations and opportunities.

E. Child Care and Early Learning

(40 TAC §809.12 Board Plan for Child Care Services)

Each Board must include a description of how the Board is strategically managing childcare and early learning within its workforce system to enhance school readiness and strengthen and support the childcare industry.

Note: This may include efforts to:

- Coordinate with employers, economic development, and other industry leaders to increase the awareness and importance of early learning as a workforce and economic development tool
- Support improved school readiness through higher quality childcare, including Texas Rising Star, and through partnership opportunities such as

- prekindergarten partnerships
- Support the needs of the childcare industry, which could include assistance with business development or shared services, as well as opportunities to support professional growth and career pathways for early education

WSB's Response:

Workforce Solutions Borderplex will work with contractors and community partners to provide services that are customer friendly and accessible within the 6 counties. Services include eligibility determination for qualified families, supporting and providing resources to families and contracted childcare facilities, and fostering quality childcare. Family Center Employment (a.k.a. 2Gen)

- Collaborate with the Workforce Center operator and ~~Business Services contractor~~ to provide access to the full range of available workforce services. Maintain an ongoing referral process with Workforce Center partners to provide resources to parents and their family.
- Foster on-going relationship with participating parents through a follow-up process
- Establish Continue a relationship with Head start and Region 19 partners ~~211~~ to continue reaching out to parents that need CCS services.
- ~~Conduct three Advisory Council Meetings that include childcare industry partners and daycares owners.~~
- Enhance ~~Build stronger relationships with Homeless organizations that provide services to children with disabilities and their families so they may have~~ to help access childcare services and refer to appropriate workforce programs. ~~organizations that can help improve their job skills.~~

Involvement with Early Matters El Paso collaborative will continue to focus on the importance of early learning and economic development tool as business partners will be invited to join the collaborative as childcare is a benefit to employers because stable childcare facilitates regular work attendance which in turn fosters economic growth. ~~Partnerships with agencies like Avance will be used to enhance quality childcare availability in our area.~~

~~Workforce Solutions Borderplex strategic plan of revision of childcare application to prioritize Texas Rising Star providers is intended to increase enrollment at~~

~~Texas Rising Star daycares. Second strategic plan of purchasing equipment and materials for daycares wanting to become Texas Rising Star provider was developed to increase the total number of Texas Rising Star providers. Increasing Texas Rising Star enrollment and increasing the number of Texas Rising Star providers will enhance our area school readiness. Workforce Solutions Borderplex will be working with our local district partners to develop and maintain prekindergarten partnerships to make school readiness a priority for our area.~~

WSB will be focusing on supporting CCS Providers during their TRS pathway while still ensuring current TRS Providers receive the support to maintain their certification. This is part of an outreach strategy towards building the child care capacity for parents while enhancing the quality of care for their children. As CCS Providers move along the TRS pathways, WSB will be providing opportunities for the staff to build their skill sets through training, professional and educational development, while focusing in areas that will assist the providers to meet the TRS certification criteria. In addition, WSB is committed to increasing capacity in our region that falls under the definition of a Desert Area. The activities have a target audience and means to measure the outcomes. The activities listed in the plan were developed to address requests from our CCS providers as they begin to move from Entry Level designation to a TRS pathway and TRS Certification. The plan is in alignment with our board's strategic goals such as increase, simplify, and enhancement of WSB services, develop programs and initiatives to support and improve regional economy, and provide value to the community by establishing partnerships and leveraging resources.

Scholarships will continue to be granted to TRS Provider teaching staff who are willing to attend Child Development courses at EPCC, working towards achieving an Associate degree in Early Childhood Education and will. ~~The scholarships will be for EPCC and the purpose is to provide professional developmental courses as well as assist providers and staff to maintain or meet the TRS educational measures.~~ In addition, WSB will connect and support TRS Providers with the resources available under the TEACH program.

Professional Child Developmental trainings and resources will continue to be provided to CCS Providers in the TRS pathway and certified TRS providers, ~~and Potential TRS Providers.~~ Three Ttrainers will be selected from the Texas Early Childhood Professional Development System Registrar and others from vendors

or trainers who meet one of the following Texas Human Resources Code 42.0421 (f) - (g) or TWC Child Care Services Guide: H-204 qualifications. ~~Three trainings will be at least 2 hours in length and one training will include a kit. Trainings will include the following topics below:~~

- Business and Administration of Child Care Facilities
- Best practices office management
- Curriculum Training (all ages)
- Working with children who have disabilities (all ages)
- Social and Emotional (all ages)
- Creating Outdoor Environments (all ages)
- ~~The Children's Learning Institute (CLI) Engage Training~~
- ~~Trainings given by Texas Early Childhood Professional Development (TECPDS) Navigation Training~~
- ~~Teacher aide session~~
- ~~Time management classroom management stay on task (preschool and school age)~~
- Challenging behaviors and communication training (all ages)
- ~~Teacher/ child interaction Implicit Bias and Empathy training (all ages)~~
- ~~Managing Stress training~~

Assessor and Mentor Staff Annual Training and Collaboration are key to maintaining and assuring the Texas Rising Star program provides high level guidance to area local provider. Assessor and Mentors will complete 36 or more training hours a year and begin based on their employment start month. ~~A year will begin for the mentor at their hire anniversary date. CLI Engage online trainings will also be available and encourage if training opportunities are missed or staff is unable to attend. Assessor and Mentor staff will adhere to training guidelines in accordance with TRS regulations for the balance of online and in person training. Mentors will have opportunity to attend the trainings stated below: (There may be an exception to trainings held outside of El Paso)~~

- ~~Texas Association for the Education of Young Children (TAEYC) Conferences or National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Conferences~~
- ~~Special Needs Conferences and Trainings~~
- ~~TECPDS registered trainings~~
- ~~Trainings covering the Core Competencies~~
- ~~CLI Webinars~~

- ~~TRS trainings by TWC or local WSB~~

~~Contract Mentor staff and WSB Assessor staff will meet, at a minimum, on a quarterly basis. If circumstances arise meetings can be held more frequently if indicated to discuss findings and coordinate any TRS topics and findings. Mentors will also communicate with assessors when needed through email or phone call. Any new Mentor staff hired will attend a "New Hire" training presented by the Assessor staff. Assessment results meetings with Mentor and Assessor staff will be conducted for any TRS provider who has completed a Recertification, Category Reassessment, Star Level Evaluation or an Initial Assessment, prior to results being disclosed to the Provider. Once initial assessment results meeting between Mentor and Assessor staff is conducted, the Mentor and Assessor staff will meet with the provider share assessment results.~~

F. Transportation and Other Support Services (WIOA §108(b)(11); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(10))

Boards must include a description of how the Board will provide transportation, including public transportation, and other appropriate support services in the workforce area in coordination with WIOA Title I workforce investment activities.

WSB's Response:

Workforce Solutions Borderplex's strategy for the coordination of transportation resources and other supportive services centers on taking advantage of both internal and external community resources to ensure the accessibility and affordability of services. WSB has collaborated with various organizations that provide resources in the region to assist those in need of support services. Before support services are provided with workforce funding, coordination and partnership with other entities, both within the workforce center and those not co-located, occurs to ensure non-duplication of support services, as required in WIOA.

Support services are provided to eligible customers, as funding permits funding permitting, and when the support services are reasonable and, necessary and directly related to participation in eligible career services, programs and authorized rules and regulations.

Transportation support services are available to assist participants with gasoline expenses, bus passes, ride services (Uber and Lyft), and any other allowable transportation services as set forth by federal regulations and/or state rule or guidance. ~~pay for mileage or set rate,~~ Support services are also available to assist those in need of automobile related repairs, consumables (tires, ~~b~~Battery, etc.), or expenses incurred to meet state driver/vehicle requirements ~~transportation-related expenses~~ (driver's licenses, car insurance, registration fees), in the WIOA Dislocated Worker, Adult, and Youth programs as well as in HHSC's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) employment programs.

If transportation assistance is available through other resources in the community, workforce customers will be connected with those resources. However, if after an assessment is made that external organizations cannot provide those resources eligibility is determined for supportive services.

Transportation assistance is provided in coordination with WIOA Title 1 workforce activities through bus cards, ride services (~~taxicabs,~~ Uber ~~and,~~ Lyft), gasoline cards, and any other allowable transportation services as set forth by federal regulation and/or guidance to assist WIOA participants in traveling to and from workforce activities.

Additional supportive services are also available to ~~our~~ workforce program customers ~~to,~~ include ~~ing~~ assistance with room and board, ~~lodging and travel assistance,~~ lodging and travel assistance (to eligible participants) training-related expenses, work-related expenses (uniform/clothing & tools), needs-related payments, short term crisis/housing assistance to include utilities, vision care (eye exam and eyeglasses), interview clothing assistance, telecommunication, work from home equipment, high school equivalency exams, and childcare.

Funding to support customer needs exists to most of our enrolled workforce customers with co-enrollment in both the WIOA and Child Care Program taking place in order to maximize funding resources. Childcare may be provided through community resources or if those are not available then through workforce program assistance to include subsidized childcare through the WSB Child Care Services. WSB Child Care Services coordinates with pre-K and Head Start to make wrap around childcare available when possible.

G. Coordination of Adult Education and Literacy (AEL)

(WIOA §108(b)(13); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(12))

Boards must include a description of how the Board will coordinate WIOA Title I workforce investment activities with AEL activities under WIOA Title II. This description must include how the Board will carry out the review of local applications submitted under Title II consistent with WIOA §§107(d)(11)(A) and (B)(i) and WIOA §232.

WSB's Response:

Workforce Solutions Borderplex (WSB) has collaborated with current AEL provider, the Far West Adult Education Consortium (FWAEC) over the last four years. Integration of services has been continuous with consistent communication on delivery of services including AEL. In our collaboration and partnership, we have worked on several projects and activities to further integrate AEL services into our workforce system. We continue strengthening this partnership through a more calculated approach to assisting our various populations and aligning their programs with our target occupations list. Various levels of WSB staff have trained AEL staff on intake best practices as well as co-hosted outreach sessions in collaboration with other AEL providers, partners, and employers. Meetings are coordinated and held with workforce staff leadership and AEL directors to ensure full awareness and collaboration on the utilization of AEL services is implemented in workforce centers.

The AEL consortium serves the following population: Individuals who need to gain or retain employment, want to improve basic skills, require a GED to find a job or enter college, seek to improve computer skills, look to attain citizenship, wish to earn an industry-recognized certification.

The AEL Consortium has established several tracks for adults to enroll into GED Classes that combine training with an industry-recognized certificate. ~~Options available to adults include but are not limited to:~~

- ~~• Security Officer~~
- ~~• Pre-Apprenticeship Electrician Certification~~
- ~~• Office Administration (Microsoft Office Specialist)~~

- ~~Dental Assistant~~
- ~~Welding & Maintenance Repair Technician~~
- ~~Automotive Technician~~
- ~~CompTIA and IT Security certifications~~
-

More industry-recognized certifications are developing as AEL continues to work with WSB business services unit to identify employers who can partner with AEL to create customized curriculum.

The AEL consortium has a process by which to enroll individuals.

1. Information Session
2. Verification of Documents (Texas ID, etc.)
3. Completion of Application
4. Interview (goal setting, initial career planning, identification of barriers and support systems, educational background, needs assessment)
5. Assessment
6. Orientation – expectations, policies & procedures, goal setting, student learning plan, assessment scores, student contract, and rights & responsibilities
7. Length and Order of Events vary depending on course and location

Contingent on eligibility through the process above AEL can provide the following services.

- Tuition
- Training materials (where applicable)
- Exam certification cost (where applicable)
- Transliteration costs (where applicable)

Partnership with WSB enhances job readiness services and for those that are co-enrolled with WSB programs they would be eligible to receive additional support services. All AEL participants, regardless of WIOA/WSB program participation, are eligible to participate in all Job Readiness workshops provided in person or through virtual platforms. All workshops are available Monday through Friday. Registration for virtual Job Readiness Workshops can be accessed through: https://borderplexjobs.formstack.com/forms/ready_to_work_webinars . The following are a list of available workshops:

- Resume and Cover Letter Writing
- Interview Prep/Virtual Interview Preparation
- Social Media
- Registering in Work in Texas
- Effective Job Search

The primary goal of all job readiness workshops is to provide guidance to all individuals whether they are fluent in the virtual ways of today or need some guidance.

For those AEL participants that can commit to a longer form of workshop, the WSB also has the Workforce Ready Certification program. This intensive, three-day workshop provides the customer with one-on-one workshop instruction, resume review, mock interview opportunities, the development of a 30 second “Elevator Pitch,” and self-branding exercises. Once all coursework has been completed, the participant is provided with a virtual Workforce Ready “badge” to include on digital resumes or web-based application/employment sites. This badge indicates that a customer has been determined to have an elevated level of job readiness skills and professional workplace knowledge. Customers can register for this series here:

https://borderplexjobs.formstack.com/forms/borderplex_certification_series .

As applications under Title II are received by WSB, they will be reviewed by key program staff and administration to ensure alignment with WIOA and board plan activities, consistent with WIOA §§107(d)(11)(A) and (B)(i) and WIOA §232.

Through our business services unit we are collaborating with our AEL partners to assist their students transition from training into direct employment. With coordination of services, we are able to place them in a training related field and support them in the best way possible. Our goal is for our workforce ready customers to be the most prepared in their respective industry.

Part 6: Adult, Dislocated Workers, and Youth Services

A. Adult and Dislocated Worker Employment and Training (WIOA §108(b)(7); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(6))

Boards must include a description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the workforce

area. Boards must include a description and assessment of the type and availability of adult, dislocated worker and youth employment and training activities in the workforce area.

Boards must also include the list of assessment instruments (tools) used for adult, dislocated worker, and youth.

WSB's Response:

WSB has developed a strategy to develop and provide different employment and training activities to our WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth customers by tailoring our services to each participant needs. Each WIOA participants are provided an initial and objective assessment. The initial intake assessment serves to establish basic information necessary for the client to make a smooth transition to desired services, including registration or access to Work-In-Texas, preliminary eligibility to the various WIOA and/or entitlement programs, and identification of the client's preliminary needs and desires. Based on initial education and skills assessment, staff will assist the client with goal setting and goal achievement by applying [Client Family](#)-Centered Coaching techniques which will lead the client in making more sustainable and impactful outcomes as well as collect information appropriate for job seekers who may qualify for program funded activities. Once made eligible for the WIOA program, WSB staff will prepare to conduct an objective assessment to cover each participant's basic skills [\(such as: NRS National Reporting System for Adult Education, to include TABE/ CASA\)](#), occupational skills, educational background, prior work experience, employability, career interests, aptitudes, financial needs, and the need for supportive services will be conducted. [The youth program will accommodate the client as needed by providing assessments to be administered at the client's worksite, training facility and residence.](#) An analysis of this information is the basis for realistic employment and training goals, in which WSB staff will develop into an Individual/[Family](#) Employment Plan with the applicant in one or more sessions with a Career [Navigator Specialist/Coach](#). Additional labor market information, such as demand occupations, real-time employer vacancies, training providers' data, and a scan of supportive services offered by other agencies, shall be given to the applicant so that he/she may make informed choices. Once this is performed, allocation of adult, dislocated worker and youth funds will be determining the availability of funds for each participant enrolled in the program.

B. Priority to Recipients of Public Assistance and Low-Income Individuals

(20 CFR §679.560(b)(21))

Boards must include the Board policy to ensure that priority for adult individualized career services and training services will be given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient, consistent with WIOA §134(c)(3)(E) and §680.600 of the Final Regulations, as well as veterans and foster youth, according to the priority order outlined in the WIOA Guidelines for Adults, Dislocated Workers, and Youth. Boards must also include a list of any Board-established priority groups, if any.

WSB's Response:

Priority of service will be provided in accordance with federal and state rules and regulations and in accordance with all guidance and requirements set forth by the Texas Workforce Commission. Priority will be given to eligible federal qualified veterans and spouses, eligible state qualified veterans and spouses, and eligible foster youth over all other equally qualified and eligible individuals for workforce services as set forth in Texas Workforce Commission WD Letter 43-11, Change 2, WD Letter 25-15, WD Letter 8-15, Change 2, and U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) TEGL 3-15, to include subsequent issuances or replacements. Should a conflict exist between federal, state and WSB' Headquarters (HQ) policy, federal and state policy will control.

Eligible veterans and qualifying spouses and eligible foster youth must be identified at their point of entry and informed of their right to priority of service, the full array of workforce services available under priority of service and informed of any eligibility requirements for those programs and services. Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Adult Funds, priority must be provided to:

- Recipients of public assistance;
- Other low-income individuals; and
- Individuals who are basic skills deficient

WIOA funding for individualized career services and training services will be limited to participants who:

- are unable to obtain grant assistance from other sources to pay for individualized career services and training services; or

- require assistance beyond that available under grant assistance from other sources to pay for these services.

Veterans and eligible spouses continue to receive priority of service for all DOL-funded training programs as detailed in WD Letter 25-15. Priority for WIOA individualized career services and training services must be provided in the following order:

1. Eligible veterans and eligible spouses, as defined in WD Letter 25-15, who are also recipients of public assistance, low-income, or basic skills deficient.
2. Non-covered persons (individuals who are not veterans or eligible spouses) who are recipients of public assistance, low income, or basic skills deficient in the following order:
 - a. Foster youth and former foster youth (as defined in WD Letter 43-11, Change 2) as required by Texas Family Code §264.121
 - b. Non-foster youth
3. All other eligible veterans and eligible spouses.
4. Priority populations established by the governor and/or WSB' Headquarters (HQ) in the following order:
 - a. All other foster youth and former foster youth, as required by Texas Labor Code §264.121
 - b. Local WSB (HQ)priority groups
5. Non-covered individuals outside of the groups given priority under WIOA.

WSB has a large population of outside the basic WIOA Adult and Youth Program Federal Income Guideline parameters but has a demonstrated need for assistance to become self-sufficient. Identifying LWDB priority groups further allow WSB to develop and provide a better skilled workforce to meet the demands of our regional employers.

- Individuals whose income is above WIOA's low-income threshold but is below the WSB' Headquarters (HQ) Living Wage. Low income is defined in WIOA as 70% of the Lower Living Standard Income Level or (LLSIL) established every year by the Department of Labor. WSB has a large population outside the basic federal income guidelines parameters but has demonstrated need for assistance to become self-sufficient and less vulnerable to associated economic hardships and instability. The WSB living wage is defined in Ch.3, Section 1 of this policy manual. This priority group comes after the first groups described above.

- Underpaid - defined as individuals who are currently employed and whose wage compensation is not commensurate with their experience and/or education. Current employment must be listed on most recent WSB Target Occupations List (TOL) and individual occupational hourly earnings must be at or below the 25% wage percentile for that occupation. Individuals must meet at least one of the following criteria:
 - Individuals who have over 5 years work-experience in similar occupation, but current earnings are at or below the listed 25% wage percentile as per current WSB TOL or
 - Individuals who have obtained a degree (associates or higher) related to current WSB TOL and are not working and/or earning the median wage in their training related occupation. This priority group comes after the first groups described above.

Part 7: Fiscal Agent, Grants, and Contracts

A. Fiscal Agent

(WIOA §108(b)(15); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(14))

Boards must include identification of the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds described in WIOA §107(d)(12)(B)(i)(III), as determined by the CEOs or the governor under WIOA §107(d)(12)(B)(i).

WSB's Response:

Workforce Solutions Borderplex (WSB) is responsible for disbursing the state and federal grant funds provided under this plan. WSB is responsible for the planning, evaluation and oversight of workforce development programs/services in the Borderplex region.

B. Sub-Grants and Contracts

(WIOA §108(b)(16); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(15))

Boards must include a description of the competitive process that will be used to award the sub-grants and contracts for WIOA Title I activities.

WSB's Response:

~~WSB will procure the required products and services to perform its mission through one of three methods: 1. micro and/or small purchase; 2. competitive~~

negotiation, or 3. State of Texas Cooperative Contracts. WSB will procure the required products and services to perform its mission through one of three methods: 1) Micro and/or Small purchase procedures; 2) Competitive negotiation, or 3) Purchasing Cooperatives & State Contracts. The purchasing thresholds represent limits for the total purchase amount of similar goods and services by all departments in the aggregate, or in total, as a whole amount of the contract. "Separate", "split", or "sequential" purchases of goods or services made separately and/or over a period that in normal purchasing practices would be purchased as a group or whole in one transaction is a violation of state law and WSB policy.

1. Micro-Purchases - Aggregate amount up to \$10,000: Goods or services up to \$10,000 per purchase, unless superseded by the terms and conditions of the TWC grant award; (i.e., relatively simple purchases for which the aggregate cost does not exceed the micro-purchase threshold.). These items can be ordered, received, invoiced and paid via procurement card (P-Card), check request or ACH (electronic) payment. Micro-purchases must be made based on the price being reasonable. Purchasers can make micro-purchases without soliciting price or rate quotations when using an approved vendor (Approved Vendor list) or if the Purchaser considers the price to be reasonable based on information such as research, experience, prior purchases, or other information. The basis used to determine price reasonableness of a purchase must be noted in support documentation with the payment request. The purchaser will certify that reasonableness was obtained by providing their signature on the required purchase form(s), Reference TWC's FMGC Procurement Supplement, I.1: Procurement by Micro-purchase Procedures.

2.

Small Purchases - Aggregate amount of \$10,000.01 - \$250,000.00: The small purchase method of procurement will be used for purchases of products or services with an aggregate cost of up to \$250,000.00 ~~up to \$250,000.00~~ \$10,000.01 to \$250,000.00. Every effort must be made to source and compare for a minimum of two quotes required either by phone, fax, email and/or prospective vendor's web sites. Purchasers must obtain price or rate quotations from an adequate number of qualified sources for all purchases. WSB recommends (but does not require) that purchasers obtain quotations from at least three (3) qualified sources. The receipt of at least three (3) quotations better positions the purchaser to

identify “low ball” quotes and quotes that exceed typical market rates than does obtaining only two (2) quotations.

3. Competitive Negotiation Method - Aggregate amount of \$250,000.01 or more:

- i. When more than one source is expected, the competitive negotiation method of procurement is also generally referred to as Request for Proposal (RFP) or Request for Qualifications (RFQ). The RFP/RFQ procurement process shall be utilized when purchases or services are anticipated to have an aggregate cost greater than \$250,000.
- ii. WSB will develop a solicitation that specifies a detailed scope of work, including geographic area to be served, timeline for product or service delivery, and deliverable results or actions, and allows prospective bidders to understand the expectations of the solicitation in order to maintain a fair and equitable competitive process.
- iii. The issuance of an RFP or RFQ does not guarantee a contract or commitment from WSB.
- iv. At a minimum, competitive solicitations should be posted for 21 but preferably for 30 days, if time permits, from the first day of advertisement of a bid. More complicated solicitations take longer for vendors to respond and therefore may require a longer posting period.
- v. If the services solicited meet the definition of workforce services, a pre-award fiscal integrity review is conducted as mandated by the Texas Administrative Code, Title 40, Part 20, Chapter 802, Subchapter B §802.21. The pre-award fiscal integrity review is approved by the Fiscal Manager.

4. Cooperative Purchases: In accordance with Texas Government Code Section 791.025, WSB, is eligible to participate in purchasing agreements and cooperatives. The procurement procedures used by the cooperative or network should satisfy the procurement requirements of this manual, e.g., full and open competition, requirements for small purchase, competitive proposal, and sealed bid requirements, conflicts of interest, federal debarment, etc. Such Purchasing Cooperatives or Networks include, but are not limited to:

- i. Texas Department of Information Resources (DIR); and
- ii. Texas Smart Buy.
- iii. Other interlocal agreements with specific governmental agencies for

specific purchases.

Part 8: Performance

A. Board Performance Targets

(WIOA §108(b)(17); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(16))

Boards must include a description of the local levels of performance negotiated with TWC and the CEOs consistent with WIOA §116(c), to be used to measure the performance of the area and to be used by the Board for measuring the performance of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), eligible providers under WIOA Title I subtitle B, and the one-stop delivery system in the area.

WSB's Response:

The National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB) document indicates the following: The purpose of WIOA is to better align the workforce system with education and economic development to create a collective response to economic and labor market challenges on the national, state, and local levels. WIOA continues the trend in workforce legislation by further engaging the private sector to lead local workforce development efforts and focuses on introducing increased flexibility and accountability of board members. WIOA encourages an improved response to labor market needs by connecting board performance to outcomes that require an understanding of the correlation between training investments and economic return. Changes in WIOA prompt Workforce Development Boards to be increasingly engaged in the business of collaboration, convening and partnership.

WSB contracted the sub-recipient for the Operation and Management of Workforce Career Centers. The systems utilized to evaluate the performance measures are The Workforce Information System of Texas (TWIST) and Work In Texas (WIT) reports, as well as ad hoc reporting. Failure to meet acceptable measures of performance requires WSB to implement Technical Assistance Plans, Corrective Action Plans, or sanctions for continuous low performance. WSB will adopt the performance measures and targets set by TWC. Below are the TWC WIOA Performance Measures:

1. Employed/Enrolled Q2 Post Exit – C&T Participants
2. Employed/Enrolled Q2-Q4 Post Exit – C&T Participants

3. Median Earnings Q2 Post Exit – C&T Participants
4. Credential Rate – C&T Participants
5. Employed Q2 Post Exit – Adult
6. Employed Q4 Post Exit – Adult
7. Median Earnings Q2 Post Exit – Adult
8. Credential Rate – Adult
- 8.9. Measurable Skills Gain – Adult
- 9.10. Employed Q2 Post Exit – DW
- 10.11. Employed Q4 Post Exit – DW
- 11.12. Median Earnings Q2 Post Exit – DW
- 12.13. Credential Rate – DW
- 13.14. Measurable Skills Gain – DW
- 14.15. Employed/Enrolled Q2 Post Exit – Youth
- 15.16. Employed/Enrolled Q4 Post Exit – Youth
- 16.17. Median Earnings Q2 Post Exit – Youth
- 17.18. Credential Rate – Youth
- 18.19. Measurable Skills Gain -Youth

In addition to the WIOA Measures, Texas Workforce Commission has established the following performance measures:

- **Claimant Reemployment within 10 weeks** - The percent of monetarily eligible, registered initial claimants subject to work search reemployed within 10 weeks.
- **# ~~Of~~ Employers Receiving Workforce Assistance** - The number of employer locations that receive ~~s~~Services such as: Taking job postings, providing specialized testing to job seekers on behalf of an employer, performing employer site recruitment, Job Fairs, providing employer meeting or interview space, providing customized or incumbent worker training, entering a subsidized/unpaid employer agreement, Providing Rapid Response, Job Development, Work Opportunity Tax Credit, etc.
- **Choices Full Engagement Work Rate ~~—All Family Total—~~** The percent of Employment Expected Choices Families that meet their Participation Goal through any combination of allowable activities, exclusively thru paid employment (or school for teens) supplemented by Employment Preferred Families and those in the 2-month Ramp Up phase who meet participation exclusively thru paid employment (or school for teens)
- **Average Number Children Served Per Day Combined ~~—~~** The Average Number of Units of Low Income, Transitional, Homelessness, Choices, TANF Applicant, SNAP E&T, and Former DFPS Child Care paid for or

subsidized by CCDF or Title XX funds during the performance period.

One-stop service delivery

WSB administers separate workforce investment, educational, and other human resource programs and funding streams, referred to as One-Stop partners. This delivery method allows a collaboration to create a seamless system of service delivery that will enhance access to the programs' services and improve long-term employment outcomes for individuals receiving assistance. The WSB One-Stop delivery system enhances the range and quality of workforce development services that are accessible to individuals seeking assistance.

Part 9: Training and Services

A. Individual Training Accounts (ITAs)

(WIOA §108(b)(19); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(18))

Boards must include a description of how training services outlined in WIOA §134 will be provided through the use of ITAs, including, if contracts for training services will be used, how the use of such contracts will be coordinated with the use of ITAs under that chapter, and how the Board will ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs, regardless of how the training services are to be provided.

WSB's Response:

WIOA funding for individualized career services and training services will be limited to participants who:

- are unable to obtain grant assistance from other sources to pay for individualized career services and training services; or
- require assistance beyond that available under grant assistance from other sources to pay for these services.

Training services available to other federal workforce programs including but not limited to Trade Adjustment Assistance, SNAP E&T, etc., or others as allowed by federal or state regulations.

The TWC Eligible Training Provider [List System](#) may be used for training services by all WSB programs as allowable by specific program regulations. WSB has the authority to contract with Training Providers directly for a specific program,

initiative, project, purpose, or period through a project specific contract.

Participants will be provided access to the ETPL list and this will ensure that they have a choice of occupational training throughout the state. ETPL ensures the accountability, quality and labor-market relevance of programs, and ensures informed customer choice for individuals eligible for training. Participants will also be provided access to information about the Board's Target Occupations List.

B. ITA Limitations (20 CFR §663.420)

Boards may impose limits on the duration and amount of ITAs. If the state or Board chooses to do so, the limitations must be described in the Board Plan, but must not be implemented in a manner that undermines WIOA's requirement that training services are to be provided in a manner that maximizes customer choice in the selection of an Eligible Training Provider. Exceptions to ITA limitations may be provided for individual cases and must be described in Board policies.

WSB's Response:

The provision of training funds is made available via an Individual Training Account (ITA) or project specific contract, intended to help WSB area qualified residents with access to post-secondary education, including certificate and degree programs, and training for industry recognized credentials, and support leading to skilled, well-compensated jobs with anticipated high employment demand. ITAs are limited to a two-year period and maximum of \$10,000 for training programs. Board reserves the right to extend these limits in a case-by-case basis and where applicable to high impact opportunities.

WSB will not utilize funds for training programs that are offered for free by partners and/or Training Providers in the region. Exceptions will be approved on a case-by-case basis by WSB management, including Project Director.

Part 10: Apprenticeship

A. Registered Apprenticeship Programs

Boards must include a description of how the Board will encourage Registered

Apprenticeship programs in its workforce area to register with the Eligible Training Provider System in order to receive WIOA funding.

WSB's Response:

In an effort to increase apprenticeship programs on the TWC Eligible Training Provider System, WSB has strengthened our outreach and partnerships with DOL registered apprenticeship programs and unions in our area. WSB continues to promote apprenticeship with its regional partners and businesses to increase ETPS registrations. In its efforts to increase the availability of apprenticeships in the region. Outreach also includes engagement with our AEL partners, Education Service Centers, and various independent school districts, specifically the CTE programs. Meetings have been held to discuss expanding apprenticeships into industry when customized training. WSB will continue to encourage all apprenticeship programs in the WSB area to register with the Eligible Training Provider System in order to receive WIOA funding. WSB will focus and dedicate outreach efforts to highlight apprenticeship benefits and value.

B. Apprenticeship Texas

Boards must include a description of the Board's strategy and commitment to support ApprenticeshipTexas efforts across the state, as applicable.

WSB's Response:

WSB is committed to expanding apprenticeship opportunities is will continue to work on innovative strategies to inform employers and our community the value and effectiveness of apprenticeship models. WSB's partnerships with economic development agencies and employers have assisted in hosting industry council meetings with employers to identify training needs. WSB actively seeks apprenticeship programs' placement on the Eligible Training Provider System and promotes the advantages of the earn-while-you-learn apprenticeship model.

WSB is actively pursuing ways in which apprenticeship programs can be expanded in the workforce area to encompass apprenticeships for industries beyond the construction field. WSB ~~recently~~ received, in a nationwide ~~partnershippartnership~~, a DOL funded grant TechQuest, that will help us to expand apprenticeship in the Information Technology sector. WSB has also been awarded a TWC IT apprenticeship pilot that will run from 2022- 2023. -

Additionally, WSB staff are also engaged in two task forces that are looking at apprenticeship opportunities in ~~both~~ healthcare, ~~and~~ ~~a~~ Aerospace and ~~d~~ Defense, ~~and~~ ~~m~~ Manufacturing. Apprenticeship areas of interest include coding and healthcare as well as other areas in which employers are seeking customized training.

~~WSB has also been awarded a TWC IT apprenticeship pilot that will run from 2022-2023.~~

WSB continues to work with apprenticeship partners in the trades. WSB has hosted workshops and boot camps highlighting the Multi-Craft Core Curriculum Apprenticeship Readiness programs. These boot camps and workshops are force-training programs that prepare participants to apply for, enter, and successfully complete a building trades apprenticeship program. Successful completion of the Multi-Craft Core Curriculum Apprenticeship Readiness Program provides the participants direct entry into the RAP (Registered Apprenticeship Programs) for building trades.

As part of our scope of work for our Business Services Unit, staff will also receive updated training and development to be able to help market and provide more information regarding Apprenticeship Texas. WSB has also earmarked funds to support participants who elect apprenticeship training should they need support services to get started on their training

Part 11: Public Comment

Boards must include a description of the process used by the Board, consistent with WIOA §108(d), 20 CFR §679.550(b) and §679.560(b) and (e), to:

- make copies of the proposed local plan available to the public through electronic and other means, such as public hearings and local news media;
- include an opportunity for comment by members of the public, including representatives of business, labor organizations, and education;
- provide at least a 15-day, but no more than a 30-day period for comment on the plan before its submission to TWC, beginning on the date that the proposed plan is made available, before its submission to TWC; and
- submit any comments that express disagreement with the plan to TWC along with the plan.

WSB's Response:

The public comment period was from January 26, 2023 through February 26, 2023.

The Board provided an 31-day public comment period before submission of the Board Plan. Notification of the 31-day public comment period was posted on the Workforce Solutions Borderplex website, and a press release was sent to major local newspapers, as well as to other Borderplex media outlets to alert the public. An advertisement notice was posted on social media platform for expanded audience viewership.

Furthermore, notice of the public comment period was sent electronically to our Board of Directors, our Chief Elected Officials, regional government agencies, regional ISDs, higher education institutions, and community partners, with an invitation to submit their comment.

Appendix: Texas Workforce Investment Council Requirements Local Workforce Development Board 2023 Plan Modifications

The Texas Workforce Investment Council (TWIC) is charged under Texas Government Code §2308.101(5), 2308.302(a), and 2308.304(a)(b)(4), and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA) (Public Law 113–128) with recommending the plans of Local Workforce Development Boards (Boards) to the governor for consideration and approval. TWIC reviews each Board plan to ensure that local goals and objectives are consistent with the statewide goals and objectives in the system plan, The Texas Workforce System Strategic Plan FY 2016–FY 2023.

Additionally, state law charges TWIC with reporting annually to the governor and to the Texas legislature on the implementation of the system strategic plan and monitoring the operation of the state’s workforce system to assess the degree to which the system is effective in achieving state and local goals and objectives. Therefore, TWIC also reviews Board plans and plan modifications to determine each Board’s progress in implementing strategies that align with the strategic plan for the Texas workforce system. Following endorsement by TWIC at a regularly scheduled quarterly meeting, the Board plans are sent to the governor for consideration and approval. Each Board’s responses to the following planning elements are reviewed by TWIC for alignment and are the basis for recommending approval.

Demonstrating Alignment with Texas’ Workforce System Strategic Plan

The four sections below list and describe the four system goals from The Texas Workforce System Strategic Plan FY 2016–FY 2023 that identify critical, high-priority system issues for the state. Boards inform the development of strategic goals and objectives and are essential to the implementation of the workforce system plan. Board plan responses apprise TWIC of innovative practices and how key strategies in the system plan translate into local action to move the system forward. Examples of select Board responses will be presented to TWIC under each goal. All 28 Boards will be represented in the briefing for the approval of the plans.

For each goal:

- briefly describe how the Board is working to fulfill the intent of the goal as specified in the description; and
- include the corresponding page number(s) within your plan that further details the identified strategy or initiative.

System Goal 1 and Rationale

Focus on Employers

Effective engagement with employers informs many system strategies and functions that address the changing needs of industry as well as state and regional economies. Education and training are a primary system function that may require multiple state and local entities to work with similar employers to design instruction or adjust career and technical education program and delivery options. Coordination and partnerships with employers are essential to gain insight and implement initiatives while ensuring that industrial productivity continues.

~~By accessing critical education and labor data sets, employers can better find and plan for skilled workers to meet their needs in both the immediate time-frame and the future. Through greater engagement with employers, education and training providers can better design career and technical education content and delivery options that are more aligned with industry needs.~~

~~Providers can make adjustments in program content to benefit employers and students, as well as address both state and regional economic needs.~~

System Goal 1 - Local Board Response

Please describe how your local Board has improved employer engagement and efforts to collaborate with any other entities that require input, participation, and/or partnership with employers.

Specifically, describe how you coordinate efforts to gain more comprehensive insight on employer needs while reducing the demand on the employers who would otherwise be responding to multiple requests. Identify the primary outcomes and, where relevant, list key entities involved and type of information requests for each entity.

**Board response and corresponding plan page number(s): pg. 38-419,
pg. 14**

~~WSB is working on strategies to address the middle skills gap by up-skilling middle skills individuals with wages less than the WSB Living wage. Our goal is to increase labor productivity by offering more education and training for in-demand occupations.~~

~~Below are some of the WSB strategies:~~

- ~~• Skills Development Fund provides access to employers to develop a customized incumbent worker training program.~~
- ~~• WSB encourages legislation to make the workforce development system more demand-driven and accountable to better support the middle-skill workforce.~~
- ~~• WSB is increasing the annual fund development amount of non-formula funds to use the new/additional funds to serve non-WIOA clients with existing WSB services.~~
- ~~• SHEBuilds initiative. WSB is in partnership with community organizations to support and empower women in the community by providing them opportunities. WSB provides paid work experience opportunities to women entering the construction industry. Also, WSB provides opportunities for entrepreneurship in construction trades.~~
- ~~• WSB is in partnership with a local non-profit organization. "Project Arriba" assists students in the Nursing program, which is an in-demand occupation for our region.~~
- ~~• WSB has developed Texas Industry Partnership (TIP) programs along with our local Higher Ed partners to support students who are about to finish their education in an in-demand occupation.~~
- ~~• Our Business Unit has a team dedicated to address the employer's needs by providing qualified job candidates, register open positions in WIT, and organizing job fairs (virtual and in-person).~~

~~In our efforts to get insight from our community leaders, WSB is an active member of the education provider organization planning committees, including the AEL and Career & Technical Education Committees among the independent school districts. Through these task forces, focus groups, industry round table discussions, and one-on-one interviews, WSB and its partners are continuously identifying employer skills and hiring needs within the target occupations.~~

WSB received a \$1,000,000 from El Paso County as part of their Financial Assistance for Safety, Technology & Economic Resilience (FASTER) Grant Program. This grant will allow WSB to extend our Digital Transformation Solutions project through September 2021. The focus is to assist 100 local, small employers located in EP County who were negatively impacted by COVID. The grant will assist with the following:

Technical Consultation, Training and Equipment Acquisition Assistance for 100 local/ small businesses located in El Paso County. Services may include access to digital marketing, signage, moving sales online, website development cost and contactless payment technology (such as QR and POS), expanded email platforms, and developing their online presence, and/ or providing services virtually. Employers will receive up to \$3,500 of assistance to purchase technical equipment. Employers who hire a UI claimant or pay staff the WSB Living Wage, will also be eligible for an additional \$1,500 of assistance. In order to qualify, businesses need to demonstrate a negative impact due to COVID (reduced revenue/increased costs).

The business services consultants, recruiters, and job developers have developed strong relationships with employers across the Borderplex region to provide all employers and partners with resources available through WSB. Through these collaborations, our business services team members can identify employers' challenges and offer solutions. Within our partnerships with the business community, we are educating employers about the variety of programs available to them, and the advantages of utilizing all Occupational Programs to help leverage their need and can identify qualified candidates whom are successfully completing training programs and ready to enter the workforce. Additionally, we promote the advantages of Paid and Unpaid Work Experience, On-The-Job Training, Internship, and Apprenticeship Opportunities. Services available to businesses include:

- Applicant recruitment, screening and referrals
- Posting job orders on Work in Texas website
- Hosting industry job fairs
- Customized hiring events
- Providing employers with resources such as
 - o Labor market information
 - o Prevailing wage for existing/new employers
 - o Economic development plans
 - o Employment and labor law resources
 - o Unemployment Insurance

o

- Testing and pre-screening job candidates
- Employment skills training
- o TWC Skills Development Fund, Skills for Small Businesses, etc.
- Assistance with WOTC, Fidelity Bonding
- Rapid Response information and resources available to employer and their affected employees

The personalized visits conducted by the business services team members are meant to give us direct insight and intelligence about each industry and its business community. These visits allow us to tap into our economic development, where we can identify industry needs and its trends, along with plans for growth, and opportunities for innovation and development. It also allows us to get a better idea of how to utilize our funding in ways that benefit both job seekers and businesses.

Through conversations between the business services team and the employer, an introduction is done for all One-Stop Service Centers to ensure we promote all amenities available for both job seekers and employers within its resource areas. Along with the resource areas, we encourage the availability for customized job fairs, interview space, and onboarding events. All services can be done within the centers conference rooms and available at any time at the convenience of the employer. We encourage all new, up-in-coming employers to take advantage of this amenity.

The business services team also seeks potential business closures or relocation of businesses to offer Rapid Response as an early intervention service. One-stop service centers, unemployment insurance, and education and training opportunities are among some of the services covered with potential job seekers during the Rapid Response orientation. During the Rapid Response orientation we explain the one-stop center has a full team available for them to assist with the following:

- Work in Texas (WIT) registration
- Introduction of Hot Jobs
- Composing or updating of their resume
- Reviewing job vacancies to provide referrals with job seeker industry interest
- Exploring potential barriers and guide job seeker to assistance with those
- Providing an individualized employment plan with steps how to level up their professional skills
- Providing the requirements of the unemployment insurance

During the Rapid Response orientation held by the Business Services Team, an Employment Services (ES) liaison will be available and present to explain all services provided at the one-stop centers. It is critical for the success of the workforce system to ensure that both BSU and ES work hand in hand to accomplish a successful orientation and provide all resources available to its job seekers with a common goal of establishing sustainable employment for each and every individual.

WSB will utilize Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Adult and Dislocated Worker funds to provide incumbent worker training. Incumbent worker training serves to increase the competitiveness of the employee or employer and is designed to meet the specific requirements of an employer or group of employers to retain a skilled workforce, avert the need to lay off employees by assisting the workers in obtaining the skills necessary to retain employment. WSB will develop a Project Term Sheet/Letter of Agreement with the employer or group of employers involved in the project. The Letter of Agreement will include at a minimum: description of training and curriculum, factors used to determine project feasibility, purpose and expected outcomes, timelines and milestones, party funding commitments, and identification of training provider(s). WSB will request from the employer(s) employee information, that WSB will protect in accordance with the Personal Identifiable Information Policy, the use of unique cohort ID# to track training and will use Attachment 1 of WD Letter 06-19 to document worker training information. WSB has also developed partnerships with employers and colleges to provide our community students with introduction to work experience and career exploration that aligns with career pathways through a paid internship. We also incorporate OJT's in instances where employers want to keep the participant and we explore apprenticeship opportunities where applicable.

Employers that are struggling to fill positions utilizing their traditional hiring model have come to us with specific needs in their company. Utilizing our consultative approach, we suggested that an internship model would benefit to attract new talent to their company. Internships allow the employer to sell their company and the benefits of working for them, while providing the student with industry experience. We also leverage our relationship and collaboration with the local colleges to identify the right match for this employer. This internship model provides the client with wrap around services (i.e. work related items, certification fees, transportation) and support while they find sustainable employment.

System Goal 2 and Rationale

Engage in Partnerships

~~Through collaborative and transparent processes, workforce system partners focus on outcomes that improve the employability of all program participants— from across a wide spectrum of capabilities and experiences—to meet employer needs. The leveraging of partnerships to enhance system alignment and outcomes depends on trust, a culture of collaboration both within and external to the workforce system, deep working relationships, and technical capacity to communicate to share needs, data, and information. Partnerships can provide for common planning, intake, and reporting on outcomes, as well as ensuring a “no wrong door” approach to the provision of workforce programs and services. Workforce system partners leverage local and regional partnerships to enhance system alignment and improve outcomes and reporting. Partnerships rely on a culture of collaboration and trust, deep working relationships, and communication to provide a solid foundation on which to coordinate planning, integrate processes, and develop the collective technical capacity to share needs, data, and information.~~

System Goal 2 - Local Board Response

Please describe your primary (top) partnerships, how you use them to address key strategies in your plan, and the significant outcomes and progress related to the partnerships. In addition, specifically describe partnerships that foster innovation and improved participant engagement and outcomes in workforce development.

**Board response and corresponding plan page number(s): Pg. 23, 38, 67-70
~~Pg. 6, Pg. 8, Pg. 39~~**

WSB has several top performing partnerships with our local partners and organizations. Our regional TWC Adult Education Provider Grantee the Far West Adult Education Consortium has been a key partnership that we have successfully aligned with to all our workforce services and programs. The strength of this partnership has led to working on several projects with our youth, and justice involved populations. Our partnership has assisted several opportunity youth attain their GED and move on to post-secondary education as part of co-enrollment with our WIOA program. As a board and we were in the top four in co-enrollments for the State with our AEL partners. We are also part of the County of El Paso Re-Entry Task Force which is made up of the regional agencies and organizations that serve the justice involved population. Being part of this task force has helped WSB connect to the justice involved population through various agencies and co-enroll them in our workforce services. Our AEL partners are providing GED services to re-entry justice involved individuals in the county jail and have also created a standalone agreement with the County DWI Drug Court for direct referrals. Those that need additional services are providing a referral to WSB for employment services or a possible eligibility check based on their release date and situation. WSB also maintains a strong working relationship with our TWC funded foster youth transition center The PRIDE Center. Our Career Navigators work closely with their Case Managers and cohost hiring fairs and programming to increase enrollment of foster youth in WIOA.

~~Workforce Solutions Borderplex relies heavily on a foundation of community-partnerships that make success a continuous attainment. Combining the forces of our strategic partners allows for the far reaching and innovative solutions that make impactful shifts among the lives of individuals and the progress of local businesses. In the end, the entire community flourishes from these carefully-orchestrated efforts and we are grateful for their trust, effectiveness and dependability.~~

~~Workforce Solutions Borderplex also has several Memorandums of Understanding with several partners for specific workforce related projects as described below:-~~

- Borderplex Alliance assists with regional economic planning and industry analysis. WSB also partners with Borderplex Alliance on new business recruitment as well as business retention and expansion strategies;
- City of El Paso regarding regional business needs and policy strategies to help expand economic development opportunities;
- WSB collaborates with Council on Regional Economic Expansion and Educational Development to identify and partner on educational attainment needs throughout the region to include early childhood through post-secondary education;
- El Paso Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and The El Paso Chamber to help develop regional entrepreneurship trainings, host industry led roundtables and regional state-of-conferences;
- Adult Education Consortium provides WSB resources for students in GED and/or vocational training as well as provide training for industry-recognized credentials;
- SHEBuilds initiative—WSB is in partnership with community organizations to support and empower women in the community by providing them opportunities. WSB provides paid work experience opportunities to women entering the construction industry. Also, WSB provides opportunities for entrepreneurship in construction trades.—
- WSB is in partnership with a local non-profit organization. “Project Arriba” assists students in the Nursing program, which is an in-demand occupation for our region.—
- WSB has developed Texas Industry Partnership (TIP) programs along with our local Higher Ed partners to support students who are about to finish their education in an in-demand occupation.—

System Goal 3 and Rationale

Align System Elements

Aligning workforce programs and services ensures transparent processes and efficient “no wrong door” access that can improve transitions and help all participants complete programs of study, earn credentials of value, and gain critical employability skills. Primarily, seamless alignment supports greater portability and transferability for Texans in or preparing to enter the labor

market.

By improving transitions, aligning programs, and ensuring portability and transferability, Texas improves access and the ability of all participants to complete programs of study, earn credentials, transition to further education, and gain critical employability skills. Texas employers are better positioned to find and hire the employees they need through an enhanced education and training pipeline.

System Goal 3 - Local Board Response

Please describe alignment efforts and the status, outcomes, and plan for continuous improvement of system alignment in your region. In the description, include barriers, considerations, and proposed actions to overcome the barriers.

Board response and corresponding plan page number(s): Pg. ~~6, Pg. 58, Pg. 2930-31~~

WSB alignment with VR, AEL, and other CBO's continues as we dedicate ourselves to service our special populations. WSB has integrated them selves into organizations that are directly servicing these populations to provide a wrap around services model for the customer.

An integral part of the delivery of service is collaboration and alignment with partnering organizations and agencies. The WSB system includes partners who also help us in providing services that address the workforce needs and economic opportunities of the community. WSB works closely with The Texas Veterans Commission (TVC). TVC staff is also co-located in WSB's American Job Centers to provide services to veterans. We also collaborate and help provide services through AARP -SCSEP. The AARP Foundation SCSEP (Senior Community Service Employment Program) offers unemployed adults 55 and older work-based training and skill-building opportunities within a variety of community service organizations and agencies.

Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS), the local Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) consortium, and the local education service centers are also vital partners of the WSB system. VRS is now also co-located in our workforce center, VRS staff assist individuals with disabilities to obtain Pre-employment transitioning

services (Pre-ETS) and assist with breaking down barriers in the community. VRS and WSB collaborate on offering Work-Based Paid Learning Experiences such as the Summer Earn and Learn and Year-Round programs to youth with disabilities. Our AEL partners assist with literacy and adult education throughout the workforce area and they continue to build contextual learning in key occupational areas to better meet the needs of employers. AEL can also provide alternative training modes for our rural areas. El Paso Community College (EPCC) provides numerous job training programs authorized by the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006. WSB and CTE partners work together to ensure students and job seekers have access to regional labor market information, training programs, and apprenticeship training opportunities. WSB also collaborates with our regional school districts CTE programs to help identify opportunities for high school CTE students and provide them access to work experience –in-demand occupations. WSB ensures alignment with core partners and other workforce entities through monthly workforce center partner meetings and other regularly scheduled meetings. Ongoing communication is a key strategy to:

- a. providing the services that employers, job seekers and youth seek;
- b. avoiding duplication of effort; and
- c. braiding of services

~~WSB has partnerships with various entities and organizations to create access and pathways that lead to industry recognized certifications. WSB is focused on using programs like Skills Development Fund, supporting El Paso Community College to access state funding initiatives, provide collaboration and support on grants with our local ISD CTE programs, provide LMI and grant support to our post-secondary providers. WSB also facilitates and participates on industry task forces and our chambers to help identify and connect our community with real-time data and discuss employer needs through training. WSB provides online tools that provide information about target industries, what can be expected in a particular job, and an online orientation of what services and documentation for specific services is needed. These online tools are provided to improve access to WSB system services which in turn improves access to activities that lead to recognized postsecondary credentials.~~

~~WSB is committed to expanding apprenticeship opportunities is will continue to work on innovative strategies to inform employers and our community the value and effectiveness of apprenticeship models. WSB's partnerships with economic development agencies and employers have assisted in hosting industry council meetings with employers to identify training needs. WSB actively seeks~~

apprenticeship programs' placement on the Eligible Training Provider System and promotes the advantages of the earn-while-you-learn apprenticeship model. WSB is actively pursuing ways in which apprenticeship programs can be expanded in the workforce area to encompass apprenticeships for industries beyond the construction field. WSB recently received in a nationwide partnership a DOL-funded grant TechQuest, that will help us to expand apprenticeship in the Information Technology sector. Additionally, WSB staff are also engaged in two task forces that are looking at apprenticeship opportunities in both healthcare and Aerospace and Defense Manufacturing. Apprenticeship areas of interest include coding and healthcare as well as other areas in which employers are seeking customized training.—

As part of our scope of work for our Business Services Unit, staff will also receive updated training and development to be able to help market and provide more information regarding Apprenticeship Texas. WSB has also earmarked funds to support participants who elect apprenticeship training should they need support services to get started on their training

In addition to assisting employers in finding quality employees and training individuals with the skills necessary to thrive in the workplace, the Workforce Solutions Borderplex provides Child Care Services to over 6,000 children each year. This plays a vital role in supporting economic growth and economic self-sufficiency through the workforce system. By providing childcare assistance, parents throughout the workforce region can engage in work, education, and/or training programs to obtain skills in demand by employers. This fosters movement towards financial stability and economic development. Therefore, childcare assistance positively impacts workers, businesses, children, and the community.—

As a means of promoting quality in childcare, the WSB actively partners with childcare providers to offer mentoring services to those who want to go above and beyond the standards set forth by Child Care Licensing. WSB also provides training in early childhood education. The goal of these activities is to increase the quality of childcare in the region and increase the number of childcare facilities participating in Texas Rising Star (TRS) program so that parents can attend work, education or training.

System Goal 4 and Rationale

Improve and Integrate Programs

Coordination and integration of system processes focused on high-priority programmatic needs support service delivery; increase participant access, learning, and transitions through education and training; and improve decision-making at the system, partner, and participant levels.

~~Accelerate employment and improve efficiencies through shared resources that can be leveraged to create new, relevant, and innovative opportunities that serve the needs of all stakeholders. By addressing high-priority programmatic needs through an integrated strategy, decision-making at the system, partner, and participant levels is improved and system service delivery is enhanced. The changing economic and educational landscapes provide opportunities to share relevant data through appropriate "push" mechanisms in an organized manner to key stakeholders who rely on information generated by system partners.~~

System Goal 4 - Local Board Response

Please describe local efforts to integrate processes and share resources across programs in your region. Identify efficiencies realized and improved participant outcomes as a result. Describe how this work can be leveraged to create new, relevant opportunities that serve the needs of all stakeholders.

Board response and corresponding plan page number(s): ~~pg 9-14 pg. 7, pg. 11-12~~

WSB continues to build our research capacity and has become a trusted source for our regional partners, organizations, and customers. WSB is enhancing our research projects to identify opportunities and gaps. One of the biggest

challenges impacting our region is the Industrial Revolution 4.0, the adaptation of smart technology in traditional manufacturing and industrial practices. The continuous request for research, labor market analysis, and presentations has cultivated the growth and expansion of partnership opportunities. WSB distributes every month a labor market report to our partners that include our region's unemployment rate, labor force, industry sector distribution and industry employment changes.

WSB has continuously evolved to address the needs of our community and the workforce services it provides. The relationships established with community-based organizations (CBO's) have created a network of aligned partners that provide a strategic connection to the workforce system. Each organization we partner with leverages their strengths and expertise in a progression of services and resources that move our customers into a career pathway. Through these efforts we can reduce duplication and increase effectiveness. This is critical in our efforts to prioritize services to special populations such as foster youth, young adults, dislocated workers, and the unemployed.

~~Another strategy to maintain and nurture our regional partners' relationships is to host regular economic development meetings. The partners who attend these meetings and provide updates about their activities include the City of El Paso, El Paso County, Borderplex Alliance, TWC Regional Skills Development Fund representative, and Higher Ed partners. Also, WSB has partnered with Borderplex Alliance and the Federal Reserve to form a regional data analyst committee. The members of this committee include the City of El Paso Economic Development, CBRE (Commercial real estate services in the Texas/Mexico border region, including El Paso, Texas, Santa Teresa, New Mexico, and Cd. Juárez, Mexico), City of Las Cruces Economic Development, County of El Paso, FBI, Arrowhead Center, NMSU, Municipal Economic Development—Cd. Juárez, El Paso Electric, Jordan Foster, Office of Congress Woman Veronica Escobar, GECU and West Star Bank.~~

~~In order to continue to support economic development, WSB continues to expand on specialized research projects such as comprehensive Wage Data Analysis impacting the workforce and economic development. The comprehensive analysis data reports also consider other data-driven factors that can influence our regional economic growth, such as expanding our regional~~

~~Supply Chain Industry Sector, to help identify business retention and development opportunities and gaps.~~

~~In 2017, WSB developed a comprehensive web-based directory of regional community resources. Named "Services Navigator," the directory catalogues over 250 community partners that provide an array of workforce development services, including employment services, vocational services, training and education services, and supportive services. Services Navigator is utilized by AJC center staff as means to provide referrals to jobseekers, partners and staff.~~

Strategic Opportunities to Drive Local Implementation

Before TWIC began the process to develop the new system strategic plan, Board directors were invited to provide input on issues and opportunities for consideration in system planning.

Please consider the responses you provided (above) to local board area implementation of the four primary goals in the current system plan and identify how the new system strategic plan can help future implementation of your regional goals and strategies related to the following:

Increase engagement of target populations, including Opportunity Youth, Texans with disabilities, foster youth, and sex-trafficking victims.

Describe Board strategies that support engagement of sometimes underserved populations.

Board response and corresponding plan page number(s):

WSB has partnered with several community-based organizations to increase the engagement of target populations. Through the El Paso Collaborative for Academic Excellence at the University of Texas at El Paso, WSB has partnered with other organizations to form the El Paso Opportunity Youth Network. The

target audience being the over 14,000 disconnected youth throughout El Paso. Data is being collected and strategic partnerships are being developed to address the need for reengagement in this region. These partnerships include Big Brothers Big Sisters of El Paso, Paso del Norte Foundation, Emergence Health Network, and the City of El Paso. WSB has increased the engagement of foster youth by working closely with the Pride Center, the local transition center, to provide quality work experience and support services. The Youth Career Navigators are working in tandem with the case managers at the Pride Center to keep the foster youth better engaged in the WIOA program. **Pt. 5 Section C. Youth Services Pg. 44**

WSB has connected with EP Cares, a nonprofit organization committed to helping women coming out of the sex industry. WSB has been able to connect these victims with Employment Services, job readiness workshops and much needed resources such as childcare.

WSB is committed to increasing engagement for targeted special populations, WSB has staff dedicated to further developing opportunities for individuals with disabilities and promoting the HireAbility Campaign. The purpose of the TWC HireAbility Campaign is to raise awareness about the benefits of hiring people with disabilities and highlight their contributions in the workplace. WSB is improving access to employment and training services to increase transition and employment opportunities for clients with disabilities. WSB focuses on services for students and adults with disabilities who are in the early phases of preparing to transition to post-secondary education and/or employment. The navigator serves as a resource and connector in the workforce development area to support, expand, and enhance the provisions of pre-employment transition services that are provided by TWC Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and other partners and programs in the workforce development area. WSB also increases community awareness by providing resources and disability awareness training to employers and community partners. **Pt. 2 Knowledge and Skills Analysis, Section B, Pg. 17-18**

WSB collaborates with partners such as Vocational Rehab, Region 19, Region

18, the University of Texas at El Paso, El Paso Community College, Project Search, Project Higher, and ISDs in our region to support the disability community. In addition, WSB will continue to support individuals with disabilities through the TWC HireAbility Program by providing services, training, and employment opportunities. The Student HireAbility Navigator will focus exclusively on services for students with disabilities who are in the early phases of preparing for transition to post-secondary education and employment.

Section C. Youth Services Pg. 44

Improve efficiency and outcomes through data-driven decision-making and investments.

Describe Board strategies that support data-driven decision-making and investments.

Board response and corresponding plan page number(s):

WSB is committed to providing data driven programs and initiatives in an effort to maximize results, meet the local workforce needs, and have positive return on investment.

As the regional workforce economic partner, WSB continues to expand our specialized research projects such as comprehensive regional WSB Wage Data Analysis, our regional Supply Chain Industry Sector analysis which help with Business Retention, and Expansion (BR&E) opportunities and gaps. WSB is committed to providing data driven strategies to meet the needs of the employers, job seekers, workers, and students residing in the Workforce Solutions Borderplex region. On an annual basis, WSB develops a comprehensive in-demand industry and occupation list. WSB also creates an annual Target Occupation List (TOL/Hot Jobs) based on extensive labor market analysis, local wisdom, and alignment with regional economic development partners.

In our effort to create efficiency, alignment, and improve economic development, WSB shares research information and resources across the region with our employers, education, and economic development partners.