



**Southwest Arkansas Workforce Development Board Meeting
November 10, 2016
SWAPDD - 10:30 a.m.**

AGENDA

Call to Order		Becky Ives, Chairman
Agenda Item 1	* Minutes of August 29, 2016	Becky Ives, Chairman
Agenda Item 2	*Report from Staff	Gina Frederick, Staff
Agenda Item 3	SWAWDB Responsibility to review AE Applications	Gina Frederick, Staff
Agenda Item 4	SWAWDB Regional & Local Transition Plan	Gina Frederick, Staff
Agenda Item 5	*Open Discussion	Becky Ives, Chairman
Adjournment		

Southwest Arkansas Workforce Development Board

August 29, 2016 – 10:00 a.m.
SWAPDD, Inc. – Magnolia, AR

Members Present: Becky Ives, Wes Stockwell, Joshua Taylor, John Mack, Tim Freel, Jelyn Wynn, James Lee Silliman, Barbara Hamilton, James Baine, Barbara Jones, Rory Gulick, Kensel Spivey, George Chitwood, and Jessie Foster

Chairman Becky Ives called the Southwest Arkansas Workforce Development Board meeting to order and declared a quorum at approximately 10:07 a.m.

Minutes of May 17, 2016 Meeting:

The minutes from the May 17, 2016 meeting were reviewed. James Lee Silliman moved to approve the minutes as written. Rory Gulick seconded the motion and it passed.

Report from Staff:

Gina Frederick reported the following:

- **Disclosure Statements** – Each year, the SWAWDB is required to sign disclosure statements. Forms were given to each member present.
- **Open House/Community Awareness Event** - One of the goals of the State Board is to increase awareness of Arkansas's Talent Development System. In an effort to increase community awareness of the services available through the Workforce Centers, the State will be hosting six events this fall throughout Arkansas. The first five events are open houses in Camden, Magnolia, Fayetteville, Fort Smith, and West Memphis. The sixth event will be a career expo at Verizon Arena in Little Rock on November 3rd. Employers, jobseekers, community leaders, and elected officials will be invited to the workforce center for an opportunity to learn about the center and the services available.
 - Camden Open House – September 14th - The Open House will be held from 10 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. for jobseekers and employers; however, a special time of 11:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. has been set aside specifically for employers. Lunch will be served to employers who pre-register online.
 - Magnolia – October 5, 2016 – Still in the planning stage.
- **Annual Report** - Copy of our PY15 Annual Report is on the table. Report will be submitted to the State by August 30th.
- **Regional/Local Plan Guidance** - We have received guidance from the State. The local areas are working together through this process. The goal is to have a completed draft ready to advertise for public comment (30 days) by November. The Plan has to be submitted to the State by December 30th.
- **Outstanding Monitoring Reports:**
 - PY12&13 - Has finally been resolved and closed out. The total of disallowed costs attached to PY 12/13 was \$10,726.35 (\$5,728.13 for Marketing that was not procured, \$1,061.44 for CM training/retreat, and \$3,936.78 for the lack of adequate documentation to support the vehicle depreciation.
 - PY14 – Received report on April 15, 2016. Responses were sent on May 13, 2016. We have not heard anything back on this report.
 - PY15 – Monitors were here the week of May 9th. We have not received the report yet. There were no major problems discussed at the exit interview.

Report of Chairperson:

Chairman Becky Ives requested that each Committee Chair keep a quarterly activities report of the actions taken during the committee meetings. Gina Frederick will email the Chairs a sample matrix to use. This will help with reporting to the State when information is requested.

SWAWDB Budget:

Tracy Chapple reviewed the PY 2016 Budget of the SWAWDB. Discussion followed. For PY14, all of the Adult and Youth funds were expended by the end of the grant (June 30, 2016). There was approximately \$9,075 of DLW funds that did not get expended and will be recaptured by the State. Discussion followed. James Baine moved to approve the PY16 Budget. James Lee Silliman seconded the motion and it passed.

Demand Occupations List - Additions:

Gina Frederick explained that each Local area has the option of adding up to 5 demand occupations for their area. SAU Tech and SouthArk Community have requested that the following be added to Southwest's Demand Occupations List:

- General Technology, CIP #47.0399
- Industrial Technology Mechatronics, CIP #15.0612

Both of these programs have been requested from Business and Industry and preference will be given to hiring individuals with these certifications. Discussion followed. James Baine moved to add these two programs to Southwest Arkansas' Demand Occupations List. James Lee Silliman seconded the motion and it passed.

Sector Strategies Discussion:

Tracy Chapple discussed sector strategies and how the local areas are getting the information needed in order for the Boards to make informed decisions on sectors in their areas. Industries are setting the bar for requirements. Discussion followed.

Workforce Issues:

James Lee Silliman stated that he and Rory Gulick had met with some of the businesses and industries in the Camden area. An issue that many of them have is the fact that they need skilled workers. Discussion followed. Rory Gulick stated that he is hearing the same from businesses and industries in all of the areas. The two main issues that business and industry is facing is:

- Soft Skills
- Technical Skills

Report from Adult Ed:

Barbara Hamilton reported on the WIOA Implementation Activities from Adult Ed. She stated that Adult Education Directors have participated in training on how to create a Career Pathways System. She also gave an update on Adult Ed programs, Employer Services, and Services to Targeted Populations. Discussion followed.

Report from Title I Provider:

Patrick Carter gave an update on Title I Adult, DLW, and Youth Activities. Discussion followed.

Shane Bennett presented and reviewed the Financial Report and Title I Budget. Transferring money from DLW funding stream to the Adult funding stream was discussed. James Baine moved to accept the financial report and approve the budget. Barbara Hamilton seconded the motion and it passed.

Election of Officers:

Gina Frederick explained that the State’s “Certification of Local Workforce Development Boards” Policy requires that local boards elect a chairperson annually from among the private sector business representatives.

Current Officers:

Becky Ives, Lockheed Martin – Chairman

Claudia Griffin, G&B Enterprises – Vice Chairman

James Baine moved to re-elect Becky Ives as Chairman and Claudia Griffin as Vice Chair. Barbara Jones seconded the motion and it passed.

Open Discussion:

The new performance measures were reviewed and discussed.

Adjournment:

There being no further business to discuss, James Lee Silliman moved to adjourn the SWAWDB meeting at approximately 12:00 p.m. Barbara Jones seconded the motion and it passed.

Becky Ives, Chairman

Date

Department of Career Education, Adult Education Division

Title: Review of Adult Education and Literacy Applications by Local Workforce Development Boards

Background:

A function of local workforce boards, identified under section 107(d)(11) of the *Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act* (WIOA), is to coordinate local workforce activities with education and training providers, including providers of adult education and literacy activities under Title II of WIOA. The coordination of education and training activities includes the review of applications for providing adult education and literacy activities submitted to the Department of Career Education, Adult Education Division for funding under Title II. Local board review of Title II applications is to ensure that applications for providing adult education and literacy activities are consistent with local workforce board plans (WIOA, 107(d)(11)(B)(i)(I)). If a local workforce board determines that an application is not consistent with the local workforce board plan, the local workforce board shall make recommendations to the eligible provider that “promote” alignment of the application to the local plan (WIOA, 107(d)(11)(B)(i)(II)). Local workforce boards are not responsible for approving or denying applications submitted under Title II of WIOA. They are, however, expected to evaluate the extent to which an application submitted under Title II addresses the requirements of the local plan developed in accordance with WIOA (WIOA, 108(b)(13)).

Title II of WIOA identifies three competitive grant programs for providing adult education and literacy services. They are Programs for Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Individuals (Sec. 225), Required Local Activities (Sec. 231(b)), and Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (Sec. 243). Because the process for awarding funds under Title II is competitive, applicants are required to submit their applications by the established deadlines to be considered for funding. In accordance with section 231(e)(1)(A), the Department of Career Education, Adult Education Division must consider the results of the local workforce board review of each application in awarding grants or contracts under Title II. For this reason, local workforce boards shall evaluate applications for funding according to criteria approved by the Department of Career Education, Adult Education Division. This evaluation will be one component in the overall review of Title II applications.

The Department of Career Education, Adult Education Division is responsible for developing the criteria used by local workforce boards in their review of adult education and literacy applications. The following criteria are proposed for consideration by the Department of Career Education, Adult Education Division.

In their review, local boards should consider the extent to which the eligible applicant:

- *Demonstrates its participation in carrying out activities related to the development and implementation of career pathways in the local area;*
- *Describes a plan for fulfilling its education and training and administrative responsibilities as a one-stop partner and for participating on the local workforce board;*

- *Aligns adult education and literacy activities with the education and training objectives and activities of the local workforce plan and the One Stop Delivery System, including concurrent enrollment in Title I and Title II programs under WIOA, as appropriate;*
- *Demonstrates a plan and strategies for effectively working with workforce partners identified by the local plan to share resources;*
- *Contributes to regional education and training efforts, including career pathways programs.*

Request for Proposal Application Process:

1. An eligible provider submits a completed Request for Proposal (RFP) application along with the evaluation rubric to the Local Workforce Development Board.
2. The Local Workforce Development board reviews the RFP application and provides written comments and suggestions to the eligible provider.
3. The eligible provider, if applicable, edits the RFP application as necessary and takes into account the feedback from the Local Workforce Development Board.
4. The eligible provider submits a final RFP application along with documentation of comments and suggestions by the Local Workforce Development Board to the Department of Career Education Adult Education Division.

Resource Person:

Trenia Miles, Ed.D.
Deputy Director, Adult Education Division
Department of Career Education
501.628.1970
trenia.miles@arkansas.gov

Southwest Arkansas Workforce Development Board Area

WDB Area - 7

Counties: Calhoun, Columbia, Dallas, Hempstead, Howard, Lafayette, Little River, Miller, Nevada, Ouachita, Sevier and Union

	Adult Education Program	County(ies) Served
	Cossatot Community College Jennifer Black, Director 183 College Dr. DeQueen, AR 71832 870-584-4471 jblack@cccua.edu	Howard, Sevier
	Miller County Literacy Council Richard Seymour, Director P.O. Box 1111 Texarkana, AR 75504-1111 870-774-0188 richardgseymour@gmail.com	Miller
	South Arkansas Community College Amy Sturdivant, Director P.O. Box 7010 El Dorado, AR 71731-7010 870-862-8131 asturdivant@southark.edu	Union
WDB Representative	Southern Arkansas University- Tech Barbara Hamilton, Director 237 Jackson Street Camden, AR 71701 870-837-4001 bhamilto@sautech.edu	Calhoun, Cleveland, Columbia, Dallas, Ouachita
	U of A Community College @ Hope Charles George, Interim Director 601 West 6th St Hope, AR 71801 870-772-8169 Charles.george@uacch.edu	Lafayette, Little River, Miller, Nevada, Hempstead
State Agency Contact	Sarah Yager, Program Advisor sarah.yager@arkansas.gov	

**Department of Career Education/Adult Education Division
Request for Proposals (RFP) Timeline**

Advertised..... November 10-12, 2016 *Application*
Arkansas Democrat-Gazette

Website-Posting..... November 10, 2016 to January 20, 2017
ACE/Adult Education Website
AALRC Website
Linked to the Department of Finance and Administration

Grant Writing Workshop..... November 29, 2016
Session I: 9:00 a.m. to noon
Session II: 1:00-4:00 PM
801 South Louisiana, Little Rock, AR 72201
RSVP to Alisha McCollum by phone or e-mail
(501) 907-2490 or alisha@aalrc.org

Intent-to-Apply..... December 19, 2016
Arkansas Department of Career Education, Adult Education Division
Three Capitol Mall, Room 303
Attention: Jennifer DeSilva-Guidotti
Little Rock, AR 72201

Fax: 501-682-1706 ***E-mail:** adulthood@arkansas.gov

***Subject line: Intent to Apply Form**

Bidders' Conference..... January 24-25, 2017
Arkansas Adult Learning Resource Center
Time: 1:00-3:00 p.m. each day
801 South Louisiana, Little Rock, AR 72201
RSVP to Alisha McCollum by phone or e-mail
(501) 907-2490 or alisha@aalrc.org
(Inclement weather date: January 31-February 1, 2017).

Proposal Due..... March 8, 2017 — *SWAWDB Review*
Review/Evaluate RFPs..... March 13-22, 2017
Notify Applicants..... March 24, 2017
Deadline to Appeal..... March 31, 2017
Project Period..... **July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018**

*Let Junia Miles know who sent in by deadline.
2/10/17 - 12:00 noon
before this date
send back by 2/24
copy Junia Miles*

PY 2016 Transitional Local Plan Southwest Arkansas Workforce Development Board

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

Section 1: Workforce and Economic Analysis

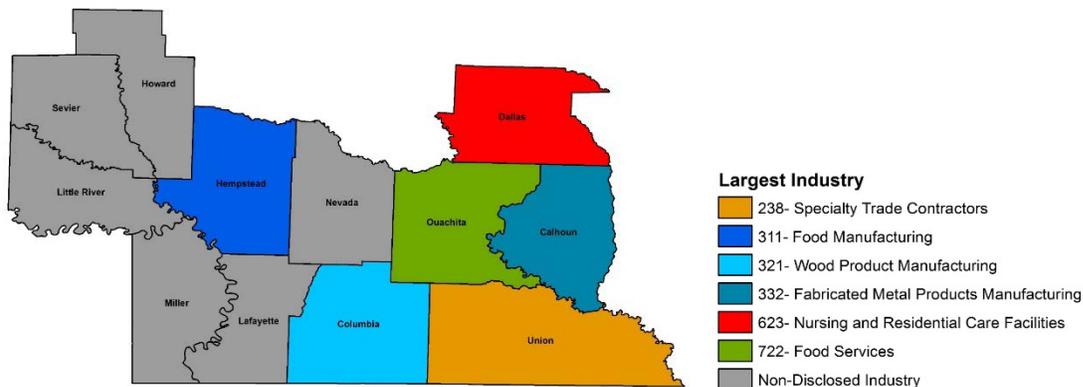
Please provide a separate response for each of the elements listed below.

- 1.1. Provide an analysis of the economic conditions, including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations; and the employment needs of employers in those industry sectors and occupations. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(A)] and [proposed 20 CFR 679.560(a)]

Note: Per WIOA Sec. 108(c), existing economic regional and/or local area analyses may be used if sourced data and/or derived analyses are economically relevant and current (i.e., within two years of the issuance of this guidance).

The following chart shows the Employment by Industry and County in the Southwest Region.

Employment by Industry and County



*Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW),
Labor Market Information*

In the Southwest Region, the top three private industries (by Employment) in 2014 are:

1. Food Manufacturing
 - Employs 4,397 workers
 - 18 individual establishments
 - Represents 6.8% of total Employment
 - Projected Growth (2012-2022) is +1.1%
2. Food Services
 - Employs 4,353 workers

- 297 individual establishments
 - Represents 6.8% of total Employment
 - Projected Growth (2012-2022) is +16.0%
3. Truck Transportation
- Employs 3,240 workers
 - 198 individual establishments
 - Represents 5.0% of total Employment
 - Projected Growth (2012-2022) is -2.8%

*Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), Labor Market Information
Long-Term Employment Projections, Labor Market Information
North American Industry Classification System (NAICS), Industry Title of the 3-digit level*

The following shows a breakout of the entire region:

Employment Breakdown

- 78,341 Total Employees in 2014 (covered under UI tax law)
 - 82.0% of employees work in the Private Sector
 - 0.9% of employees work in Federal Government
 - 4.9% of employees work in State Government
 - 12.3% of employees work in Local Government

- Projected Employment Growth (2012-2022) All Sectors= +4.5%

Top Ten Projected Growth Industries (2012-2022)

Ranked by Net Growth

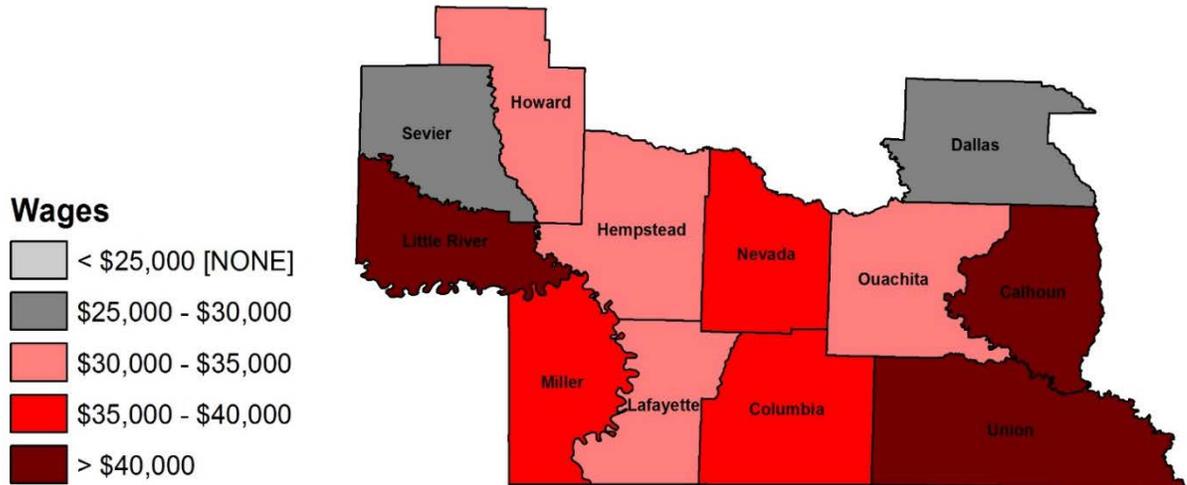
<u>Industry</u>	<u>Net Growth</u>	<u>% Growth</u>
Social Assistance	1,001	44.6%
Ambulatory Health Care Services	967	39.7%
Food Services and Drinking Places	701	16.0%
Nursing and Residential Care Facilities	519	16.1%
Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	440	16.6%
Wholesale Electronic Markets and Agents/Brokers	275	66.3%
Religious, Grantmaking, Civic, Professional, and Similar Organizations	206	9.6%
Educational Services	173	2.0%
Chemical Manufacturing	165	11.6%
Wood Product Manufacturing	163	7.4%

*Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), Labor Market Information
Long-Term Employment Projections, Labor Market Information
North American Industry Classification System (NAICS), Industry Title of the 3-digit level*

Wages by County

Southwest LWDA:

Calhoun, Columbia, Dallas, Hempstead, Howard, Lafayette, Little River, Miller, Nevada, Ouachita, Sevier, and Union



2014 Average Annual Wages (Private Sector)

2014 Average Annual Wages (Private Sector)

Ranked by County

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1) Little River County= \$52,766 | 7) Hempstead County= \$33,067 |
| 2) Calhoun County= \$51,245 | 8) Lafayette County= \$32,897 |
| 3) Union County= \$46,849 | 9) Ouachita County= \$30,943 |
| 4) Columbia County= \$38,362 | 10) Howard County= \$30,075 |
| 5) Miller County= \$36,368 | 11) Dallas County= \$29,871 |
| 6) Nevada County= \$36,367 | 12) Sevier County= \$29,284 |

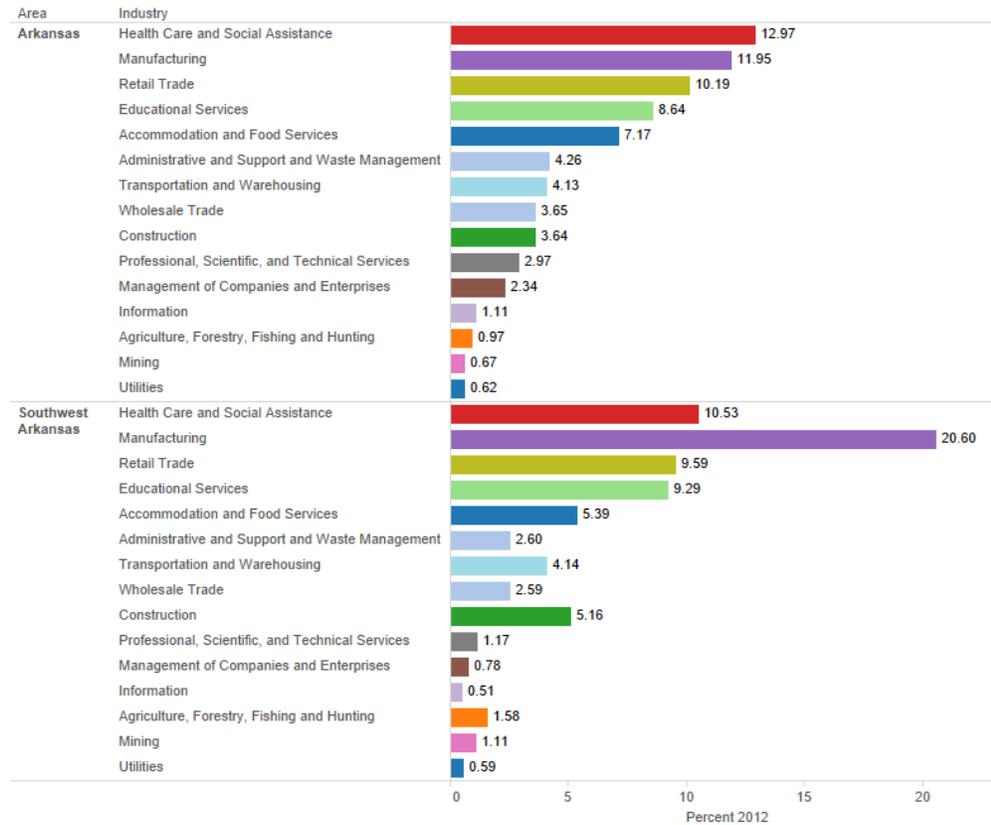
Southwest LWDA Annual Average Wage= \$38,249

Based on data obtained from the United States Census Bureau, the median average in the State of Arkansas is \$41,264. As compared to the average wage of the Southwest Region of \$38,249, we are \$3,015 below the State average.

*Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), Labor Market Information
Source: Unites States Census Bureau*

While Southwest's current and future industry outlook is similar to Arkansas, there are some differences.

Jobs by Industry 2012

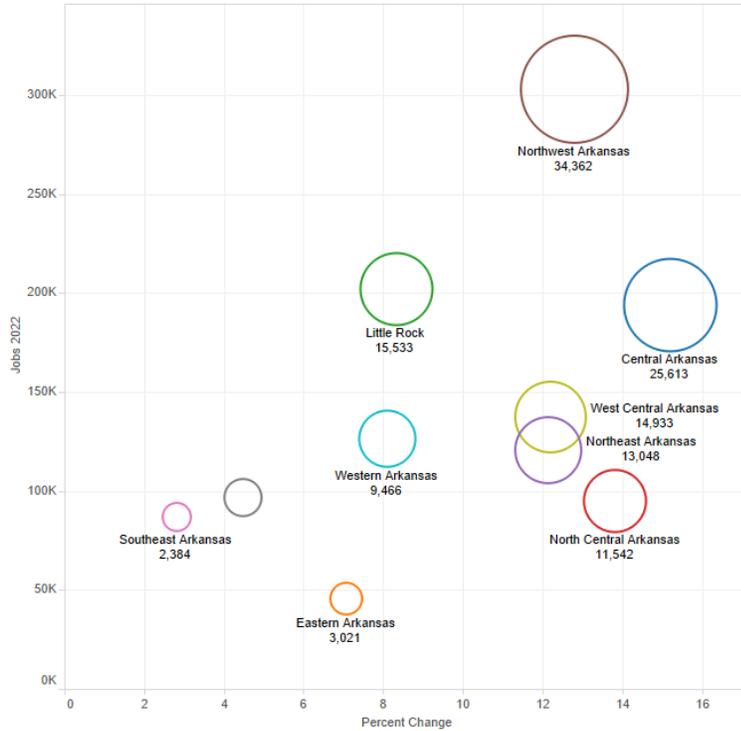


Manufacturing employs the highest percent of workers in Southwest at 20.60% and is higher than the State level of 11.95%. Health Care and Social Assistance is lower at 10.53% in Southwest compared to the State at 12.97%. Southwest is slightly below the State in the number employed in Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services, 1.17 percent to 2.97 percent, and in Accommodations and Food Services, 5.39 percent to 7.17 percent. There are actually a larger percentage of workers in Southwest in the Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting industry than at the State level. While manufacturing and transportation play a large role in the state's and Southwest's economy and employ a large number of its workers, these industries are also subject to increased efficiency which can lead to fewer jobs.

Source: <http://arkansasresearchcenter.org/arc/index.php?cid=154>

Looking at industry projections for Arkansas and its local workforce development areas, these differences become even more readily apparent. The bubble chart below shows each of Arkansas's local workforce development areas. The size of the bubble represents the number of jobs expected to be added to those local areas by 2022. The vertical axis represents the total number of jobs in those local areas, and the horizontal axis represents the percent of growth by local area.

Total Job Growth Region



The size of the bubble represents the number of jobs expected to be created. The gray bubble represents Southwest Arkansas – New Jobs 2022 – 4,141.

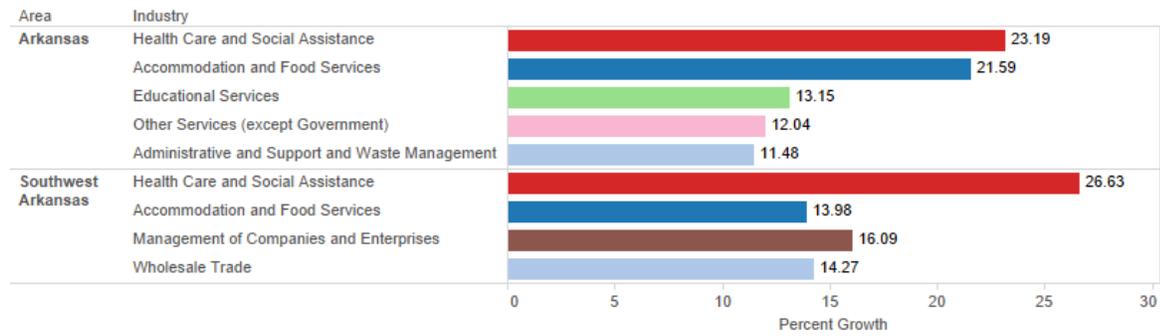
Projected Industry Growth 2012-2022

Industry	Estimated Employment	Projected Employment	Numeric Change	Percent Change
Total Employment, All Jobs	92,376	96,517	4,141	4.48
Natural Resources and Mining	2,489	2,342	-147	-5.91
Construction	4,763	4,912	149	3.13
Manufacturing	19,027	19,197	170	0.89
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	15,623	16,195	572	3.66
Information	471	459	-12	-2.55
Financial Activities	2,769	2,787	18	0.65
Professional and Business Services	4,201	4,266	65	1.55
Education and Health Services	18,309	21,073	2,764	15.10
Leisure and Hospitality	5,346	6,059	713	13.34
Other Services (Except Government)	3,406	3,633	227	6.66
Government (Excluding State/Local Education & Hospitals)	6,336	6,364	28	0.44

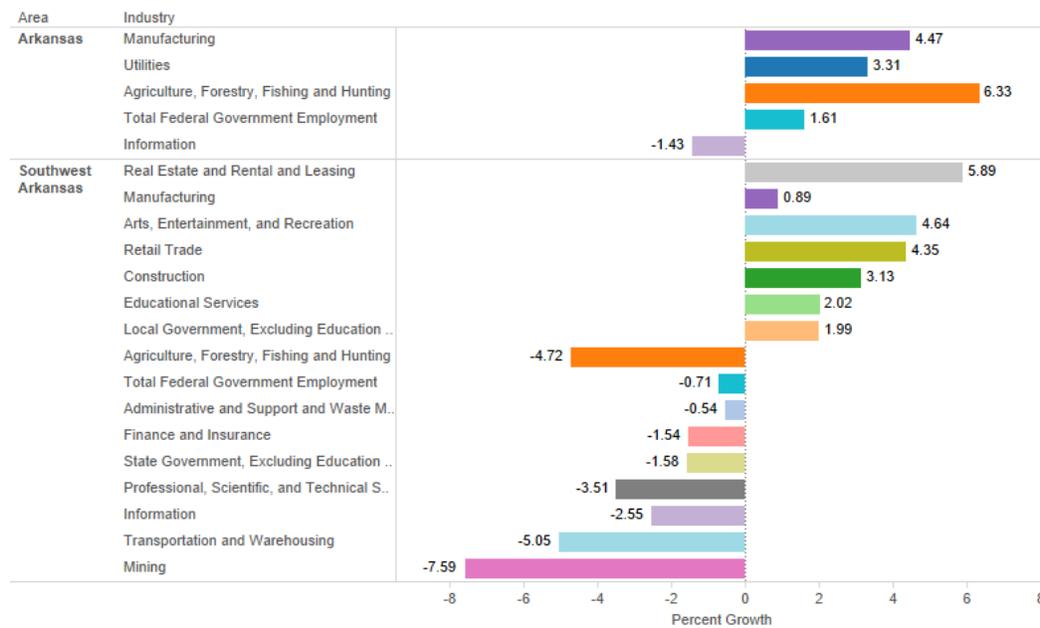
The Southwest Region is projecting an additional 4,141 (4.48%) jobs from 2012 to 2022. Natural Resources/Mining and Information show a decrease while the other industries show an increase.

Source: <http://www.discoverarkansas.net/>

Industry Growth



Industry Less Growth



Source: <http://arkansasresearchcenter.org/arc/index.php?cID=154>

1.2. Provide an analysis of the knowledge and skills required to meet the employment needs of the employers in the local area, including employment needs for in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

[WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(B)] and [proposed 20 CFR 679.560(a)]

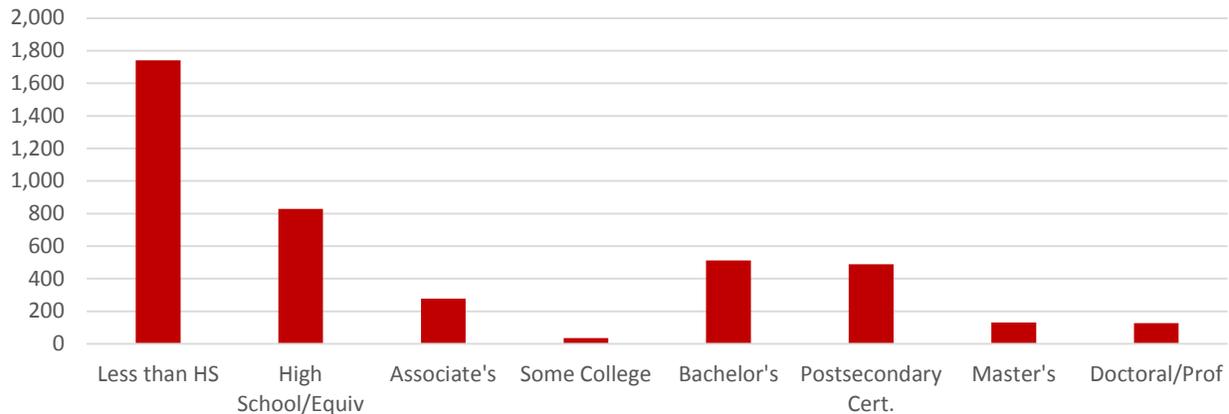
Basic knowledge and skills that employers need include literacy and math, problem solving, computing, communication, work readiness and other skills. These are things that almost every employer requires. In addition, skills that are particular to each job are varied. Advanced manufacturing employers are seeking individuals that have more technical skills, discuss transportation, distribution and logistics, etc. Reading skills are particularly needed as employees work more and more with technology improvements. Computation skills are needed to organize data for analysis and perform problem solving. The ability to write is the foundation for communication. Computer skills or technical skills are a requirement for many jobs. Workers are using new technology for advance information service. Manufacturing technology is creating more computation between companies because of the increase in capabilities of production and efficiency.

- Skill gaps exist in a wide classification of job classifications, but particularly in those classifications upgrading equipment to meet competition in their field.
- Substantial growth in the service sector requires skill preparation from basic entry-level employment to post-graduate training.
- Experience has indicated the educational capacity to meet skill gaps is constrained by funding, lack instructors, and reluctance to design new programs that fulfill the requirements of upgrading employers.

With new management techniques and organization systems, the employee customer interactions require a portfolio of skills in addition to basic and technical. Communication skills, analytical skills, problem solving and creative thinking with interpersonal skills to negotiate and influence, along with self-management skills are the menu for growth of an employee.

Often a company will require specific skills that an employee must possess in order to cope with new technology, market changes, and competition. Companies must be innovative and constantly upgrade knowledge and skills that are relevant to the success of the company.

Projected Employment Growth by Education Level (2012-2022)



Source: Occupational Statistics and Employment Projections, Labor Market Information
Long-Term Employment Projections, Labor Market Information

COUNTY	POPULATION 25 YEARS+	# High School grad or higher	% High School grad or higher	# bachelor degree or higher	% bachelor degree or higher
Calhoun	3,770	1,849	49.04%	400	10.61%
Columbia	15,088	5,317	35.23%	3213	21.29%
Dallas	5,446	2,892	53.10%	644	11.82%
Hempstead	14,679	5,332	36.32%	2049	13.95%
Howard	8,980	3,217	35.82%	1297	14.44%
Lafayette	5,138	2,241	43.62%	638	12.42%
Little River	9,082	3,607	39.72%	1068	11.76%
Miller	29,193	11,979	41.03%	3722	12.75%
Nevada	6,017	2,402	39.92%	855	14.21%
Ouachita	17,551	7,386	42.08%	2790	15.90%
Sevier	10,615	3,501	32.98%	876	08.25%
Union	27,906	10,182	36.49%	4847	17.37%

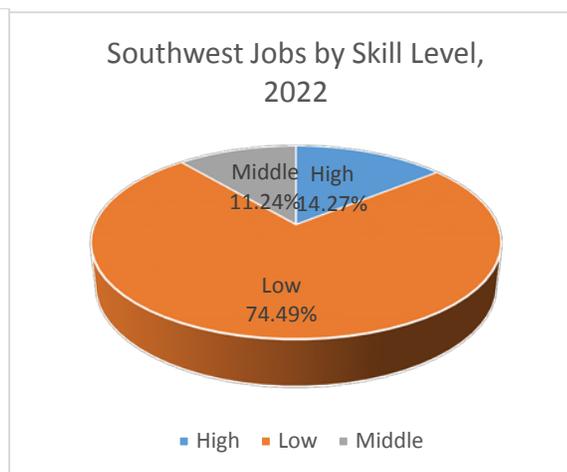
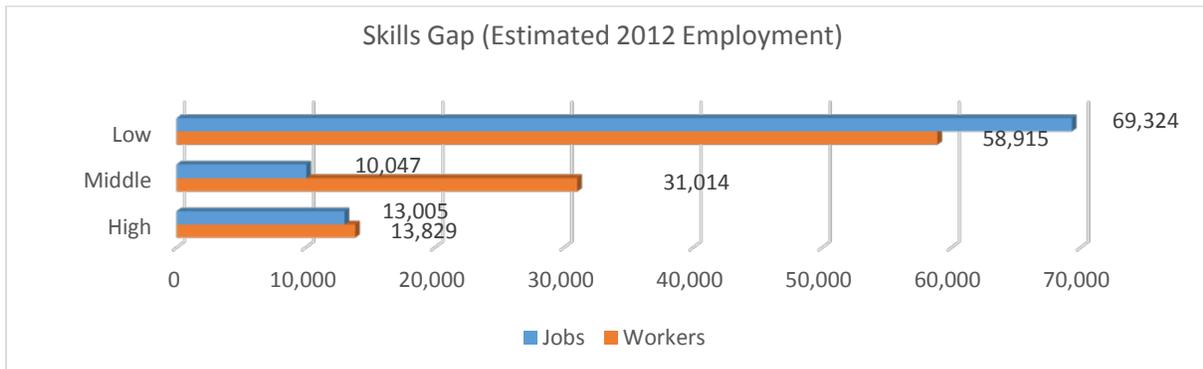
SW Region total # or average %	153,465	59,905	39.03%	22399	14.59%
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Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Educational Attainment (Population over Age of 25)

- 81.1% have High School Diploma/Equivalent or Higher
 - Lowest= 66.3% in Sevier County
 - Highest= 88.3% in Dallas County
- 12.8% have Bachelor's Degree or Higher
 - Lowest= 7.4% in Calhoun County
 - Highest= 20.3% in Columbia County

Skill	2012	2022	Net Growth	Percent Growth	Growth Annual Openings	Replacement Annual Openings	Total Annual Openings
High	13,005	13,775	770	5.92%	62	258	320
Low	69,324	71,894	2,570	3.71%	378	1,602	1,980
Middle	10,047	10,848	801	7.97%	80	188	268



SOC Title	Industry	2014 Wages
Registered Nurses	Healthcare	\$56,480
First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers	Manufacturing	\$50,240
Aircraft Mechanics and Service Technicians	Aerospace	\$43,240
Computer User Support Specialists	Information Technology	\$41,210
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	Trucking	\$36,350

Education Title	2014 Estimated Employment	2016 Projected Employment	Net Growth	Percent Growth	Annual Openings-Growth	Annual Openings-Replacement	Annual Openings-Total
Doctoral/Professional degree	1,354	1,366	12	0.89%	4	17	21
Master's degree	1,059	1,064	5	0.47%	2	14	16
Bachelor's degree	10,991	11,011	20	0.18%	38	210	248
Associate's degree	2,106	2,092	-14	-0.66%	3	34	37
Postsecondary non-degree award	7,539	7,537	-2	-0.03%	8	130	138
Some college, no degree	834	822	-12	-1.44%	0	16	16
High school diploma or equivalent	43,461	43,483	22	0.05%	243	871	1,114
Less than high school	22,695	22,982	287	1.26%	181	679	860

1.3. Provide an analysis of the local workforce, including current labor force employment (and unemployment) data, and information on labor market trends, and the educational and skill levels of the workforce in the region, including individuals with barriers to employment. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(C)] and [proposed 20 CFR 679.560(a)]

Total Population= 231,184 (7.9% of Arkansas' Population)

Population by Age

- 75.7% over the Age of 18
- 15.9% over the Age of 65
- 59.8% Aged 18-65

Population by Race

- 65.7% White
- 28.8% Black
- 0.5% Native American/Alaskan Native
- 0.5% Asian

- 0.0% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
- 2.8% Other
- 1.7% Two or More Races
- 6.1% Hispanic (Of Any Race)

Civilian Labor Force

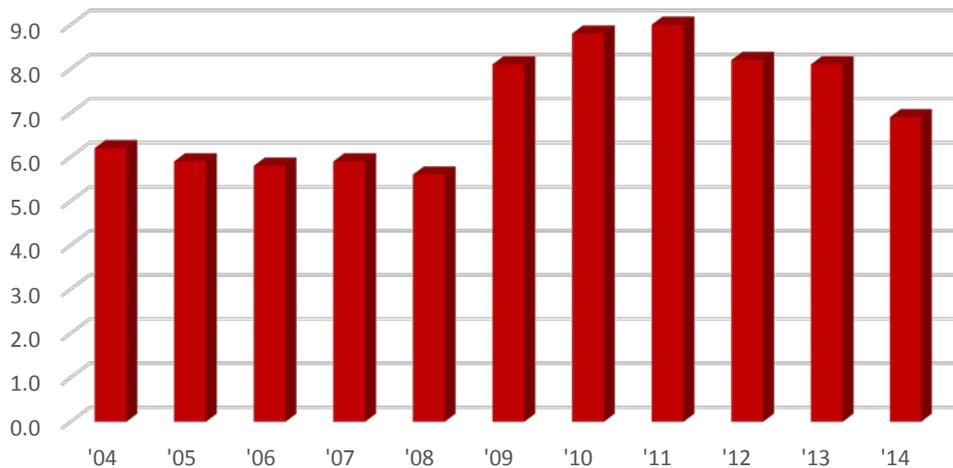
2014 Annual Average Civilian Labor Force Estimates

- Civilian Labor Force= 93,475
- Employment= 87,025
- Unemployment= 6,450
- Unemployment Rate= 6.9%

2014 Annual Average Unemployment Rates by County

- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| 5.9% = Howard County | 7.3% = Columbia County |
| 6.0% = Miller County | 7.6% = Union County |
| 6.1% = Hempstead County | 8.0% = Lafayette County |
| 6.1% = Nevada County | 8.1% = Ouachita County |
| 6.6% = Little River County | 9.5% = Dallas County |
| 6.8% = Calhoun County | 7.0% = Sevier County |

**Southwest LWDA Unemployment Rates
2004 – 2014 (Annual Average)**



Source: Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS), Labor Market Information

1.4. Provide an analysis and description of workforce development activities, including type and availability of education, training and employment activities. Include analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of such services, and the capacity to provide such services, in order to address the education and skill needs of the workforce and the employment needs of employers in the region.

[WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(D)] and [proposed 20 CFR 679.560(a)]

Southwest Arkansas’s workforce development activities are coordinated through the following agencies: Southwest Arkansas Planning and Development (SWAPDD)-Title I Provider, the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services (ADWS), the Arkansas Department of Career Education (ADCE), and Division of Services for the Blind (DSB). These agencies are responsible for all the core and non-core programs included in the combined state plan.

<u>Agency</u>	<u>Core Program</u>
SWAPDD	Adult (Title I) Dislocated Worker (Title I) Youth (Title I)
ADWS	Wagner-Peyser
ADCE	Adult Education and Family Literacy (WIOA Title II) Vocational Rehabilitation (Title I Rehabilitation)
DHS	Division of Services for the Blind (Title I Rehabilitation)

Non-Core Program

- Trade Adjustment Assistance
- Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Program (Title I)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program

The Southwest Arkansas Workforce Development Area consists of twelve counties, and is the largest region in the state. Workforce activities and initiatives are driven by Southwest Arkansas Workforce Development Board (SWAWDB). The SWAWDB is comprised of local businesses, educational institutions, partner agencies, and other key stakeholders to create a diverse and functional group. The board, in alignment with the States’ vision, provides front line strategic implementation for state-wide initiatives in addition to locally-determined priorities. State initiatives include sector strategies, career pathway development, and delivery of standardized business services. Local priorities include layoff aversion, specific career pathway development, youth programs, targeted sector partnerships, and work-based learning.

The SWAWDB carries out workforce activities by partnering through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to implement core, non-core, and other partner programs. With a foundation for service integration, Southwest Arkansas Workforce Development System operates under the “no wrong door” philosophy. Customers entering the center are engaged by an intake process that is designed to identify the needs of the individual by gathering information and then utilizing the appropriate resources for those needs. In some cases, the resources are initiated by a referral to a partner program. Customers

are given solutions and next steps to their questions, barriers, and issues by connecting directly with the appropriate workforce system partner as part of this philosophy.

The Arkansas Department of Career Education, Adult Education Division (ACE/AED) funds four local adult education programs, two literacy councils. The local service delivery systems are diverse. Programs are funded through public schools systems and community colleges. Local programs provide adult education services such as teaching academic skills to people who function from beginning reading through a 12.9 functioning grade level and English as a Second Language (ESL). These services are free and provided in classes held in locations throughout each county. Additional programs such as family literacy, Workforce Alliance for Growth in the Economy (WAGE™), and Career Readiness Certificate (CRC) are also offered in some counties.

Southwest Arkansas Workforce Centers provide Jobs Access With Speech (JAWS). JAWS computers are designed for visually impaired individuals to gain access to job services. These systems are available in both comprehensive and affiliate sites.

Workforce System Services – Unemployed and Underemployed

The Southwest Arkansas Workforce Centers offers the full array of career services outlined in WIOA 134(c)(2) for unemployed and underemployed jobseekers. Basic career services are available at all service locations throughout Southwest Arkansas. All workforce centers in Southwest Arkansas have computers, printers, copiers, printed resources, and staff to assist jobseekers. Many of the services, including Arkansas Job Link and Discover Arkansas LMI Portal, can be accessed virtually through the internet via computer, smart phone, or tablet. Arkansas Job Link is the state job matching system and the virtual one-stop-shop where Arkansans can centralize all their career search activities. It allows jobseekers to self-enter his/her resume(s) and job search 24/7. Arkansas Job Link also provides access to a toolbox of job search assistance links, including career exploration, training resources, self-marketing tools, Unemployment Insurance information, and additional job banks. The built-in event calendar communicates upcoming hiring events, job fairs, and other workforce activities.

Discover Arkansas LMI Portal allows jobseekers to make informed data-driven career decisions. This labor market system provides a wide variety of local and regional labor market services, such as labor trends, statistics, economics, demographics, salaries, and employer data. It allows jobseekers to set up a personal page for their career exploration data to be readily accessible. Basic career services also extend beyond the virtual world. After the initial assessment, customers, as appropriate, may be provided with direct linkages to additional workforce activities, including multiple education and training opportunities across the workforce system through partner referrals. Many of these partners are housed within the workforce center.

Jobseeker Services

The Southwest Arkansas Workforce Centers offers a full line of activities to prepare jobseekers for the modern workforce. They address many of the soft skills and technical skills training Arkansas employers require.

Pre-employability training is offered to jobseekers to better prepare the individual for entry into employment.

Labor exchange services also provide labor market information to the individuals seeking services. The information must be accurate and include information on local, regional and national labor markets,

such as: job vacancies, skills necessary to obtain the jobs, in-demand occupations and related earning potential, opportunities for advancement in those occupations

The Southwest Arkansas Workforce Centers provide the following career services:

Outreach, intake and orientation, Initial assessment, Labor exchange services, Eligibility determination, Referrals to programs, Performance and cost information, Information on unemployment insurance, Financial aid information, Follow-up services

Additionally, One-Stop and partners must provide appropriate services for individuals to obtain or retain employment. These services include, but are not limited to:

Individual Employment Plan (IEP), Career planning and counseling (no longer called case management), Comprehensive assessment, Occupational Skills Assessment, Short-term prevocational services, Internship and work experience, including transitional jobs and industry partnerships, Workforce preparation, Out-of-area job search, English language acquisition, Financial literacy

Training Services

Career services are not always enough to enable job seekers to obtain self-sufficient employment. In some instances, formal training is required. Arkansas Workforce Centers offer multiple training services such as:

Occupational skills training, On-the-job training (OJT), Registered Apprenticeships, Incumbent worker training, Skill upgrading and retaining, Entrepreneurial training, and Adult education and family literacy activities

Training services are funded through WIOA programs, Pell Grants, partner programs, and state and local grants. Local areas are responsible for establishing and implementing local policies for eligibility, Individual Training Account (ITA) limits, and the identification of in-demand sectors or occupations. Through multiple initiatives and projects, Arkansas has focused training and career development activities on sector strategies/partnerships and career pathway development. At the state level, the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) has been updated pursuant to WIOA Sections 122 and 134. This list ensures that Arkansans are able to make informed decisions on training providers and programs based on accurate data including completion and placement rates; labor market information; and wage expectations.

Supportive Services

In order to assist jobseekers in obtaining or retaining employment through career or training services, Southwest Arkansas Workforce Centers offer a variety of supportive services. Local areas are responsible for establishing a supportive service policy that outlines types, eligibility, limits, etc. Examples of supportive services include child care; transportation; needs-related payments; tools and equipment; uniforms; and other clothing. In addition to WIOA-funded supportive services, local areas have developed relationships with community partners that assist with utility payments, food, shelter, and other basic needs.

Business Services

The focal point of all workforce system activities is business and industry. These activities are taking place statewide and may include: Access to facilities –Use of Workforce Center facilities by a business

for a variety of purposes such as meetings, trainings, orientations, interviews, etc.; Assessments – Any test or assortment of tests used to measure the skills, interests and/or personality traits of a jobseeker, potential employee, or current employee; Business education – Seminars, round tables, workshops, focus groups, etc.; Business information – Information given to a business pertaining to a variety of incentive programs or other information requested that provides a benefit to that business; Hiring events – A customized event for a single employer that assists with recruiting, interviewing, and hiring of one or more positions; Job fairs – Event for multiple employers that assists with the recruiting, interviewing, and hiring of one or more positions; Job postings – Staff-entered or web-entered job orders approved by staff; Labor market information – Information on state and local labor market conditions; industries, occupations, and characteristics of the workforce; area business identified skills needs; employer wage and benefit trends; short and long-term industry and occupational projections; worker supply and demand; and job vacancies survey results; Rapid Response – A variety of services to businesses that are facing restructuring and downsizing including onsite workshops for employees in transition; job placement assistance; and information on unemployment benefits; Screening – Any service that involves the initial evaluation of applications or resumes that assists the employer in the recruiting process; Training and retraining - Any service provided to a business that involves the training or retraining of current or future employees including OJTs, Work Experiences, Incumbent Worker Training, etc.

The individual program services offered are detailed and provide program specific information in Section VI and VII.

Services to Disabled Persons

The Arkansas Department of Career Education, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ACE/ARS), provides vocational rehabilitation services to people with disabilities. Currently, there are significant barriers for people with disabilities in relation to attaining employment. A 2008 study (StatsRRTC1) indicated the employment rate for people with disabilities was 33.9 percent when compared to 79.1 percent for people without disabilities. Historically, there are significant barriers to the inclusion of people with disabilities into the overall strategy for economic development in Arkansas. ARS in partnership with the Arkansas Department of Human Services, Division of Services for the Blind (DSB) are leading the charge for providing targeted training and education for people with disabilities in order for them to develop the skills and abilities needed to attain competitive integrated employment in Arkansas.

Through the Governor's Executive Order 10-17, the Department of DSB coordinates with other state agencies to increase employment of Arkansans with disabilities. The order also aims to focus consumer services first toward the goal of self-sufficiency through employment.

Strengths and Weaknesses of Workforce Development Activities

Strengths:

- Southwest Arkansas has a strong workforce program to provide assistance to jobseekers.
- The SWAWDB has a strong representation of Private Industry of the strongest industry sectors in the region.
- Economic Development Organization serve on the SWAWDB.
- The Southwest Arkansas Workforce Development Area has a broad range of One-Stop partners who provide value-added services to jobseekers who enter the Workforce Centers.

Weaknesses:

- The Arkansas labor force is shrinking and being accelerated by the retirement of Baby Boomers.
- Quality of Life issues exist in rural areas throughout the region, causing brain-drain.
- Coordination with Economic Development could be strengthened.
- Marketing and Outreach Activities are below where they should be across the region to promote Southwest Arkansas's talent delivery system.
- Business Service Team could be better coordinated.

Opportunities:

- The Southwest Arkansas Workforce Development Region will embrace and implement sector strategies. * The State of Arkansas will provide the Southwest Region a base line of information to help with sector strategies.
- Expanded Current Registered Apprenticeship Opportunities present a major opportunity for the Southwest Arkansas Workforce Region.
- Tailored Curricular Development opportunities exist in wake of strengthened industry sector partnerships.

Challenges:

- Younger generations do not have the skills in place to replace the aging workforce.
- Many Industries may not feel the public sector can assist them in their workforce needs.
- Duplication of Workforce Development efforts not only causes redundancy for jobseekers and industry, it is also a major waste of resources.
- Industries may relocate if they do not have the workforce needed to thrive in the Southwest Arkansas region.

Section 2: Strategic Vision and Goals

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

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

Vision

Southwest Arkansas will have a world-class workforce that is well educated, skilled, and working in order to keep Southwest Arkansas's economy competitive in the global marketplace.

Mission

To Promote and support a talent development system in Southwest Arkansas that offers employers, individuals, and communities the opportunity to achieve and sustain economic prosperity.

- 2.2 **Describe how the local board's vision and goals align with and/or supports the vision and goals for the State's workforce development system as established by the Arkansas Workforce**

Development Board. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(E)] (See Appendix C: Transitional Planning References and Resources)

The SWAWDB's vision and goals align with the State's and will strive to have a workforce that is well educated, skilled and working in order to keep Southwest Arkansas competitive in the global marketplace.

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

The SWAWDA shares the Governor's vision for Economic Development and the State's Strategic Plan that defines a stronger partnership between education, economic development and the State Workforce system to attract, retain and grow Arkansas' high growth industries.

Southwest Arkansas mirrors the States goals as shown below.

Goals

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

Goal 1 Objectives:

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

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

Goal 2 Objectives:

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

Strategic Goal 3: Increase awareness of the Southwest Region's Talent Development System

Goal 3 Objectives:

1. Increase access to the workforce development system through a no wrong door approach to services.
2. Change employer and jobseeker perceptions of the workforce system.
3. Develop an image-building outreach campaign that educates Arkansans about the services and the career development opportunities available in the Region.
4. Utilize technology, including social media and search engine optimization, to better connect jobseekers and employers with the talent development system in Arkansas.

Strategic Goal 4: Address Skills Gaps

Goal 4 Objectives:

1. Develop and implement an action plan to close the basic core, technical, and soft skills gaps in the Southwest region.
2. Analyze the effectiveness of currently used job readiness standards and ensure coordination between the Arkansas Career Readiness Certificate program and the Workforce Alliance for Growth in the Economy (WAGE) program.

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

For participants enrolled in educational/skills training the goal is completion of training, obtain their credential and have measurable skills gain. These participants will be directed toward higher paying jobs

which have a livable wage to help ensure a higher retention rate well beyond program exit. For participants receiving basic and individualized career services the same goal applies.

Section 3: Local Area Partnerships and Investment Strategies

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

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

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

The Chief Elected Officials (CEO) of the Southwest Arkansas Workforce Development area met on June 22, 2015 and voted to designate Western Arkansas Planning and Development District as their Grant Recipient/Administrative Entity and Fiscal Agent for the Workforce Innovations and Opportunity Act. The CEO's also voted to appoint a representative among themselves to act on their behalf. Sevier County Judge Greg Ray was elected Chairman of the CEO's. The CEO's appointed the required members for the Workforce Development Board for their respective areas. The newly appointed Southwest Arkansas Workforce Development Board (SWAWDB) has entered into a CEO/Local Board Agreement. The SWAWDB has four committees appointed by the board chair. They are: One Stop Committee, Performance Committee, Disability Committee and Youth Standing Committee. All required partners have been appointed by their various state agencies with a representative sitting on the SWAWDB. Southwest Arkansas Planning and Development District currently has the contract for One-Stop Operator and Adult, DLW, Youth service provider. The SWAWDB will issue a new Request for Qualifications for One-Stop Operator prior to the beginning of PY-17.

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

The following Southwest Arkansas Workforce Centers are:

- Comprehensive
 - Camden, 237 Jackson SW, Camden, AR 71701, 870-836-5024 (8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m. M-F)
 - El Dorado, 523 East 6th, El Dorado, AR 71730, 870-863-0218 (8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m. M-F)
 - Hope, 205 Smith Road, Hope, AR 71801, 870-777-3421 (8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m. M-F)
- Affiliate

- Texarkana, 1702 Saint Michael Drive, Texarkana, TX 75503, 903-794-4163 (8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m. M-F)
- Magnolia, 104 Harvey Couch Blvd., Magnolia, AR 71753, 870-234-3440 (8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m. M-F)

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

See attached organizational chart.

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

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

A referral process will be in place between the local board and the core programs to coordinate work ensuring individuals seeking services are made aware of all core program services.

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

Workforce center staff will review the individuals' needs to determine what programs may be able to provide the appropriate services and then refer that individual to the corresponding program.

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

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

Engagement and coordination with employers continues to be developed by outreach, participation in events such as career expos, business and industry taskforce meetings, and through the continuous development of growing sectors. Also with Apprenticeships, on-the-job training, work based learning, and career pathways.

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

Better educating the business/industry on the full array of services at the Southwest Arkansas Workforce Centers. Also by providing Business services, outreach, job fairs, business expos, open house at workforce centers, apprenticeships, on-the-job training, work-based learning, etc.

C. Better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development;

The SWAWDA recognizes that in order for economic and workforce development to align; job placement activities must coincide with job creation activities, the private sector must be included in the decision making process, and data driven decision making needs to be used in all decisions pertaining to training programs. The SWAWDA will continue to engage with Economic Development Organizations to leverage WIOA grant opportunities for both existing and future businesses.

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

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

Unemployment Insurance is co-located in all of our Southwest Arkansas Workforce Centers. Partners at the workforce centers meet routinely and discuss methods to better serve all customers, including unemployed individuals.

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

The SWAWDA will engage partners such as the Small Business Administration, Arkansas Small Business and Technology Development Center, etc. These relationships will be used to connect clients who may wish to open their own business with partners who provide those specific services.

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

Coordination in the Southwest area is achieved through the referral process. Any participant that enters a workforce center for a request for services will be assessed to determine which partner would be better to assist them with the service they need.

The SWAWDB will coordinate education and workforce investment activities with secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities through input at partner meetings. There is also collaboration between the board and secondary and postsecondary education programs providing services to the youth.

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

All supportive services will be coordinated through the core programs as well as other resources available.

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

Center to WIOA is the integration of service delivery amongst multiple workforce and talent development programs. Southwest has strong partnerships among state agencies, two- and four year educational institutions, economic development, Registered Apprenticeship, and community-based organizations. A priority of the SWAWDB and central to the implementation of the strategic plan is to prevent and eliminate duplication across programs and align core programs. Alignment of core and optional programs will be made possible by the following strategies.

Reflect Robust Partnerships

Reflect the establishment of robust partnerships among partners. The one stop operator facilitates an integrated, co-located partnership that seamlessly incorporates services of the core partners and other workforce center partners.

Organize Service by Function

Organize and integrate services by function (rather than by program); when permitted by a program's authorizing statute and as appropriate, and by coordinating staff communication, capacity building, and training efforts. Functional alignment includes having workforce center staff who cross-trained to serve all customers seamlessly (including targeted populations) by providing a full range of services staffed by cross-functional teams, consistent with the purpose, scope, and requirements of each program.

Wagner-Peyser staff and the Title I Adult, DLW, and Youth provider staff are co-located in all Comprehensive Workforce Centers.

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

The Arkansas Department of Career Education will forward to the local areas the proposals that have met requirements to the RFP's for review and approval by the local board. The local boards should consider the extent to which the eligible applicant:

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

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

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

- **Emerging**
 - Has at least an interim coordinator, convener, or convening team;

- **Has engaged at least one private sector champion to help drive the launch and implementation of a sector partnership;**
 - **Includes individuals from workforce development, education, economic development and other programs or organizations in strategic partner roles;**
 - **Actively working to implement strategic priorities outlined in a launch meeting.**
- **Exploring**
 - **Is in the infancy stage, but actively considering or planning the preparation needed to launch a partnership;**
 - **Working to identify partners who would be involved;**
 - **Determining if the partnership really makes sense for the community.**

Advanced Manufacturing – Emerging, Ongoing

Aerospace Technology – Emerging

Healthcare – Emerging

**The State of Arkansas will provide the Southwest Region a base line of information which can be used for policy decision making by the Southwest Arkansas Workforce Development Board. This information will help SWAWDB align training programs to the needs of industry for the benefit for both the jobseeker and employers. Targeted training opportunities will provide participants with the increased probability of obtaining a good paying job. The increased labor pipeline will provide businesses with the workforce they need to operate and grow their companies throughout the region. This will be the SWAWDB’s first step in the journey to close the gap between workforce and economic development and move toward the tailoring of training programs to explicitly meet the needs of industry throughout the twelve counties in Southwest Arkansas.

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

The Southwest Arkansas Workforce Development area has partnered with Arkansas Department of Workforce Services (DWS) and SouthArk Community College (SACC) in the Sector Partnership NEG. Funds from this grant initiative will be used to provide dislocated workers and long-term unemployed individuals, pre-employment skills training and occupation specific training that lead to viable employment opportunities within the high-growth industry sectors of advanced manufacturing. SouthArk Community College is responsible for delivering workplace readiness and occupation-based training for displaced workers in the advanced manufacturing sector. A career counselor will offer specialized career counseling and will facilitate training programs that will lead to credentials in advanced manufacturing.

The Southwest Arkansas Workforce Development area received \$285,905 in PY 15 to partner with Arkansas Rehabilitation Services and the University of Arkansas for the Arkansas PROMISE, a research project for youth ages 14 – 16 who currently receive SSI benefits. PROMISE is a joint initiative of the U.S. Department of Education, the U.S. Social Security Administration, the U.S. Department of Health and

Human Services, and the U.S. Department of Labor. Fifty-four Promise Youth were offered work experience opportunities.

The Southwest Arkansas Workforce Development area has partnered with the Workforce Initiative Act Regional Workforce Grant Program. The primary goal of this grant program is to create long-term relationships between employers and regional workforce alliances to identify and address the challenge of job candidate skills gaps in the regional workforce pool. By ensuring that post-secondary educational institutions are producing the credentials employers need through consortia and data driven decision-making, Arkansas can meet the needs of current employers and also be more effective in recruiting new industry to the state. In Southwest, the following received the Workforce Initiative Regional Workforce Grant:

1. UA Cossatot - along with SouthArk Community College, SAU Tech and UA Hope --- received \$76,500.00 to plan for a project entitled: Regional Advanced Manufacturing Partnership: Building the Pipeline. It is focused on Industrial Technology/pre-Engineering courses. SAU Magnolia is also a partner related to transferability of courses/articulation.
2. SouthArk Community College – Futures in Information Technology - \$92,500 – Identify any information technology workforce needs and skills training gaps in 5 Union County School Districts.
3. SAU Tech – Aerospace Defense Sector Certification Pathways Planning Grant - \$57,130 – Focusing on Advanced Manufacturing/Production Technology

Section 4: Program Design and Evaluation

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

4.1 Describe the one-stop delivery system in the local area including:

The Southwest area is comprised of twelve counties: Calhoun, Columbia, Dallas, Hempstead, Howard, Lafayette, Little River, Miller, Nevada, Ouachita, Sevier, and Union Counties. The Southwest area is mostly rural in nature. There are three certified, Comprehensive workforce centers located in Hope (Hempstead Co.), Camden (Ouachita Co.) and El Dorado (Union County). Two affiliate centers are located in Magnolia (Columbia Co.) and Texarkana (Miller Co.).

All of the required WIOA partners are included in the Southwest certified one-stop delivery system. Workforce Centers directly provide the full array of employment services and connects customers to work-related training and education. The Workforce Centers provide career services, education and training, and supportive services that customers need to get good jobs and stay employed, and helps businesses find skilled workers and other services to support employer's needs. The Southwest One-Stop system has established strong, robust and sustained partnerships with core programs. All partners in the Southwest area are committed to the local vision of offering a fully integrated and accessible employer driven local workforce system that maximizes the resources of our education, workforce and economic development partners to develop the abilities and skills of job seekers and workers which will enable them to work and our businesses to remain in our area and grow.

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

The SWAWDB, primarily made up of business representatives, will gather information from local employers on skills gaps and deficiencies found in our local workforce. Partner meetings will be coordinated that will address the needs of employers in high-demand industries and collaborate with local service providers to ensure that services offered are in-line with the needs of local employers. Service Providers will be required to report performance information that will be analyzed to ensure that local workforce development system is operating at an optimum level. Monitoring of service providers, review of eligible training providers to ensure there is a range of programs included on the list that include the growth occupations.

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

The SWAWDB has three comprehensive workforce centers and two affiliate centers. Each Career Planner covers three counties in the region. In order to serve those residents who are unable to travel to the centers, the Southwest area will coordinate with local officials to obtain a meeting space for clients to gather information and receive services. SWAWDB will coordinate with ADWS to dispatch a mobile unit to outlying areas that are in high demand of services.

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

Qualified applicants with disabilities, as defined in the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), are invited to request any needed accommodations to participate in the application process covered by area offices. This process includes information related to completing the application, intake/eligibility determination, assessment and testing. All Workforce Centers will be ADA compliant in Southwest Arkansas. In addition, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS) is available in the Southwest Arkansas Workforce Centers to serve the needs of workers with disabilities. The Southwest area will:

- Provide training to staff on applicable provisions of the ADA using material jointly developed by the partners and State entities.
- Bring together core program partners to integrate services and supportive services, and leverage resources to improve services to individuals with disabilities and other protected groups.
- Explore changes in service delivery design and programs by establishing partnerships, alternate assessments, and programs that better connect education, training, workforce, and supportive services to improve employment outcomes of individuals with disabilities.

- Encourage active engagement with the business sector to identify the skills and support that workers with disabilities need and communicate these needs to the partners, education and training providers, as well as job seekers with disabilities.
- Continue to provide physical and programmatic accessibility to employment and training services for individuals with disabilities.
- Assess the physical and programmatic accessibility of all our centers and training facilities.
- Work with Vocational Rehabilitation to provide clients with disabilities extensive pre-employment transition services so they can successfully obtain employment.
- Strive to improve the employment outcomes of individuals with disabilities and other protected groups who are unemployed, underemployed, or receiving Social Security disability benefits, by utilizing services available through our local centers to connect them to existing successful career pathways programs.

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

The required partners for the Southwest Arkansas Workforce Delivery Area are Adult Education, Title I (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Services), DWS – Employment Services, and Arkansas Rehabilitation. Arkansas Community Corrections has been a significant partner in the southwest area by providing referrals through the Alternative Sentencing Program.

Adult Education provides a number of services to assist individuals in preparation for employment, such as: GED, TABE, WAGE certification, CRC certification, pre-employability skills training, and ESL classes.

Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth provides services to individuals through basic career services, individualized career services, and training services. Title I assists clients in paying for training costs, as well as supportive services to alleviate barriers to employment.

Department of Workforce Services (DWS) provides employment services through Unemployment Insurance and Job Services for those individuals working towards re-entry into the workforce. DWS also provides Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) to help decrease the burden of living expenses.

Arkansas Rehabilitation offers services to people with disabilities, and provide them with the appropriate accommodations to be successful in the workforce. They also provide training assistance to those who are seeking an education and qualify for their services.

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

The State of Arkansas is in the process of implementing a common intake and a case management system for the core partners.

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

Adult and DLW employment and training activities will consist primarily of those available through the eligible training provider list. This list will contain certified providers offering training programs relevant to current labor market demands and will be customized for the local area. Dissemination of the provider list through area one-stops and their partners will ensure that providers meet the employment needs of local employers and job seekers.

Upon determination of customer needs to receive training services, ITAs will be used in all available training programs. The maximum amount allowable in each ITA will be \$15,000. Participants will receive an ITA for the training program they have selected through the eligible training provider list to be presented to the individual school. This ITA will include the name of the training program as well as the maximum amount allowable to be charged within the ITA. Schools will bill the Title I Program Provider upon enrollment each semester. Amounts reimbursed will be deducted from the ITA maximum allowed. Each additional semester enrollment will reflect the balance on the ITA so the school, participant, case manager and Title I Program Provider will be aware of funds remaining. Unused funds in each individual ITA at completion of training will be used for other WIOA participants.

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

The Governor's Dislocated Worker Task Force division of Business Retention & Workforce Transition is responsible for the statewide rapid response and layoff aversion activities. The Dislocated Worker Task Force notifies the Southwest Arkansas Workforce Development Area of all closures and layoffs through the Rapid Response program. Once notified, meetings and workshops are scheduled to explain all WIOA services available to the affected dislocated workers. Customers are enrolled in WIOA services as appropriate.

The Business Retention & Workforce Transition team may conduct a worker assistance workshop, attended by representatives of local and state agencies and affected workers to review available resources. Services and needs discussed at the workshop may include retraining and educational opportunities, unemployment insurance, social service programs, credit counseling, insurance options and resources to find a new job.

The Task Force Coordinator also serves as the liaison to the local chambers of commerce throughout the area. Information is provided to them about the affected workers, including their occupations and their educational and skill levels. The local AWC staff builds on the services provided through the Governors Dislocated Workers Taskforce by providing information and services to the affected employees. Dislocated workers are given a full array of services available to them through the Arkansas Workforce Center partnership and community organizations.

State and local WIOA partners will continue to build and maintain relationships with the business community to help with early warning of potential layoffs and promote early intervention. Together, the following services will be provided:

- Layoff aversion activities
- Immediate and on-site contact with employers and local community representatives

- Assessment and planning to address the layoff schedule, assistance needs of impacted workers, re-employment prospects, and available resources
- Information and access to unemployment compensation benefits and programs, AWC services, and employment and training activities, including Trade Act, Pell Grants, GI Bill, WIOA DLW Program, and other resources
- Necessary services and resources, such as workshops, resource and job fairs to support re-employment assistance
- Trade Act petition services through the Governors Dislocated Workers Taskforce

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

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

The Title I provider will provide, or make an appropriate referral to provide the fourteen required program elements to eligible youth participants in Southwest Arkansas. These services include:

- *Tutoring, study skills training and instruction leading to secondary school completion, including dropout prevention strategies*
 - Clients in need of tutoring will be referred to Adult Education
- *Alternative secondary school offerings*
 - Clients who require an alternative to traditional education establishments, will be referred to Adult Education to acquire a GED.
- *Paid and unpaid work experiences that have as a component academic and occupational education. May include summer employment opportunities or throughout the school year, pre-apprenticeship programs, internships and job shadowing, and on-the-job training.*
 - Title 1 will provide work experiences and on-the-job training for clients who are interested in a specific career field, in order to improve their chances at earning a self-sufficient wage in a career of their interest.
- *Occupational skills training*
 - Title 1 will assist eligible clients with obtaining financial resources, enrollment, and supportive services for training that is directly related to in demand occupations in the state.
- *Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster.*
 - SWAWDB will establish Career Pathways thru partnerships, which will outline individualized steps that progress clients from current academic level, to an employability status that will result in earning a self-sufficient wage.
- *Leadership development opportunities, which include community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social behaviors*
 - SWAWDB will use partnerships and Career Ready 101 to provide leadership development and other pre-employability classes. Clients will participate in peer-centered activities throughout their enrollment, to promote positive social behaviors
- *Supportive services*

- After assessments, SWAWDB will provide supportive services to eligible clients to alleviate barriers. Referrals to other agencies will be made in order to better serve clients.
- *Adult mentoring*
 - Southwest will make referrals to community and faith-based organizations to provide one-on-one encouragement and direction.
- *Follow-up services*
 - Southwest will provide Youth clients with 12 months of Follow-Up Services after exiting the program. Staff will maintain contact with clients and provide services, such as support and guidance, to assist in a successful transition in to the workforce.
- *Comprehensive guidance and counseling, including drug and alcohol abuse counseling, as well as referrals to counseling, as appropriate for the needs of the individual youth*
 - After thorough assessments, Staff will provide individualized counseling and make appropriate referrals to partnering agencies for Youth clients in need of formal counseling and additional supports.
- *Financial Literacy*
 - Staff will provide financial literacy training through the Career Ready 101 platform. Additional training will be provided in person for those clients who require additional assistance.
- *Entrepreneurial skills training*
 - Clients who are interested in entrepreneurial skills training will be referred to local education facilities that offer such training. Career Planners will assess individual's needs and barriers to ensure the client is properly prepared for training.
- *Services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area. (Career Awareness, Career Counseling, Career Exploration).*
 - All Youth clients will be required to take Interest Inventories such as O-Net and Texas Cares assessments to identify career interests. Staff will assist individuals in career exploration and counseling to map out career pathways that best suit the client.
- *Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and training.*
 - Clients interested in post-secondary education will be referred to Adult Education for college preparatory classes. Career Planners will counsel on what to expect when transitioning in post-secondary education, and provide advice such as: time management, study habits, and educational resources.

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

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

Continuous monitoring of the programs to ensure compliance with the laws and performance measures are met. Board members should have a complete understanding of their role and inventory its own resources. Have policies and procedures in place. Update the labor market analyses and data to be aware of emerging trends. Work with community colleges to determine the needs of employers.

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

The individual training accounts (ITA) system is used by participants who are eligible for training services and choose to attend training. A case manager uses the WIOA Training Expenditure Form and Financial Aide documentation from institution to determine a participant's financial need from WIOA. The individual selects the course of study from the eligible training provider list. The individual must have made application and received determination from other funding sources and present the award letter to the career specialist to show the monetary amounts of unmet financial need. Consideration of all available funds, excluding loans, will determine the person's overall need for WIOA funding. The ITA may be used to cover any education related expenses. Case manager will make sure that there is no duplication of services.

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

The ETP list is available online in all workforce centers. Participants approved for training through the ITA system must choose one of the approved programs in order to receive an ITA. Contracts may be used if it reflects a training program that is in demand.

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

The SWAWDB uses the Projected Employment Opportunities List as the basic guide for determining in-demand occupations. All training providers will complete an online electronic application through the automated Arkansas Consumer Reporting System. All training must be directly linked to employment opportunities either in the local area or in an area to which an individual is willing to relocate. Any training for a participant that is paid for by WIOA funds must be on the Projected Employment Opportunities List for the state or local area. To be included on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), providers must submit an electronic application to the local board for their approval.

Section 5: Compliance

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

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

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

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

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

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

Western Arkansas Planning and Development District, Inc.

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

The Southwest Arkansas Workforce Development Board (SWAWDB) and their staff will develop a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for One-Stop Operator in the Southwest Arkansas Workforce Development Area and the Youth Service Provider. The RFQs will be advertised in local and statewide newspapers.

The One-Stop Committee will review and score all RFQ's received for the One-Stop Operator. They will then make a recommendation to the SWAWDB and CEO's.

The Youth Committee will review and score all applications received for the Youth Service Provider and make their recommendations to the full board and CEO's.

The SWAWDB, with the approval of the CEO's will make their selections on both providers and the subcontracts will begin on July 1, 2017.

5.4 Describe the local area's negotiated local levels of performance for the federal measures and their implications upon the local workforce system; attach the completed Performance Targets Template. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(17)]

Note: See Appendix C: Transitional Planning References and Resources "Performance Targets Template".

At this time, the State provides the performance measures for each Local Workforce Development Area.

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

Financial reports will be provided to the SWAWDB quarterly in order for the SWAWDB to remain informed of all activities throughout the Title 1 funding. The SWAWDB staff will provide monitoring reports of the fiscal operations of the one stop operator and youth service provider. There will also be a separate procured audit of the one stop operator on an annual basis.

SWAWDB Staff will review applications for the Eligible Training Provider List.

5.6 Describe the process used by the local board for the receipt and consideration of input into the development of the local plan in compliance with WIOA section 108(d). Describe the process to provide an opportunity for public comment prior to submission of the local plan. Be sure to address how members of the public, including representatives of business, labor organizations, and education were given an opportunity to provide comments on the local plan. [WIOA Sec. 108 (b)(20)]

Upon completion of the local plan, an advertisement will be placed in the statewide newspaper giving the public time to review and submit any comments back to SWAWDB for a 30 day period. The plan will remain on display for that 30 day period and anyone wishing to review may stop by the local office of SWAWDB between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

5.7 Prior to the date on which the local board submits a proposed local plan, the proposed local plan must be made available to members of the public through electronic and other means.

A. Describe how the local board made the proposed local plan available for public comment. [WIOA Sec. 108(d)(1)];

The SWAWDB Regional and Local Plan will be made available through email or if requested, a hard copy will be mailed. A copy will be posted on the State Web Page.

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

This will be addressed after the 30 day comment period. Any comments received will be reviewed and a response will be provided.

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

This will be addressed after the 30 day comment period. Any comments received will be reviewed and a response will be provided.

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

Annette Hughey
WIOA Equal Opportunity Officer
SWAPDD, Inc.
101 Harvey Couch Blvd.
Magnolia, Arkansas 71754
Telephone: (870) 235-7522

Section 6: Plan Assurances

Planning Process and Public Comment		References
<input type="checkbox"/>	6.1 The local board has processes and timelines, consistent with WIOA Section 108(d), to obtain input into the development of the local plan and provide the opportunity for comment by representatives of business, labor organizations, education, other key stakeholders, and the general public for a period that is no less than 30 days.	WIOA Sections 108(d); proposed 20 CFR 679.550(b)
<input type="checkbox"/>	6.2 The final local plan is available and accessible to the general public.	Proposed 20 CFR 679.550(b)(5)
<input type="checkbox"/>	6.3 The local board has established procedures to ensure public access (including people with disabilities) to board meetings and information regarding board activities, such as board membership and minutes.	WIOA Section 107(e); proposed 20 CFR 679.390 and 679.550
Required Policies and Procedures		References
<input type="checkbox"/>	6.4 The local board makes publicly-available any local requirements for the public workforce system, such as policies, including policies for the use of WIOA Title I funds.	Proposed 20 CFR 679.390
<input type="checkbox"/>	6.5 The local board has established a written policy or procedure that identifies circumstances that might present conflict of interest for any local workforce investment board or entity that they represent, and provides for the resolution of conflicts.	WIOA Section 107(h); proposed 20 CFR 679.410(a)-(c)
<input type="checkbox"/>	6.6 The local board has copies of memoranda of understanding between the local board and each one-stop partner concerning the operation of the one-stop delivery system in the local area, and has provided the State with the latest versions of its memoranda of understanding.	WIOA Section 121(c); proposed 20 CFR 678.500-510
<input type="checkbox"/>	6.7 The local board has written policy or procedures that ensure one-stop operator agreements are reviewed and updated no less than once every three years.	WIOA Section 121(c)(v)
<input type="checkbox"/>	6.8 The local board has negotiated and reached agreement on local performance measures with the local chief elected official(s) and the Governor.	WIOA Sections 107(d)(9) and 116(c); proposed 20 CFR 679.390(k) and 677.210(b)
<input type="checkbox"/>	6.9 The local board has procurement policies and procedures for selecting one-stop operators, awarding contracts under WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker funding provisions, and awarding contracts for Youth service provision under WIOA Title I in accordance with applicable state and local laws, rules, and regulations, provided no conflict exists with WIOA.	WIOA Sections 121(d) and 123; proposed 20 CFR 678.600-615 and 681.400
<input type="checkbox"/>	6.10 The local board has procedures for identifying and determining the eligibility of training providers and their programs to receive WIOA Title I individual training accounts	WIOA Sections 107(d)(10), 122(b)(3), and 123; Proposed 20 CFR 679.370(l)-(m) and 680.410-430

<input type="checkbox"/>	6.11 The local board has written procedures for resolving grievances and complaints alleging violations of WIOA Title I regulations, grants, or other agreements under WIOA and written policies or procedures for assisting customers who express interest in filing complaints at any point of service, including, at a minimum, a requirement that all partners can identify appropriate staff contacts and refer customers to those contacts.	WIOA Section 181(c); proposed 20 CFR 683.600
<input type="checkbox"/>	6.12 The local board has established at least one comprehensive, full-service one-stop center and has a written process for the local Chief Elected Official and local board to determine that the center conforms to the definition therein.	WIOA Section 121(e)(2)(A); proposed 20 CFR 678.305
<input type="checkbox"/>	6.13 All partners in the local workforce and education system described in this plan ensure the physical, programmatic and communications accessibility of facilities, programs, services, technology and materials in one-stop centers for individuals with disabilities.	WIOA Section 188; 29 CFR parts 37.7-37.9; 20 CFR 652.8(j)
<input type="checkbox"/>	6.14 The local board ensures that outreach is provided to populations and sub-populations who can benefit from one-stop services.	WIOA Section 188; 29 CFR 37.42
<input type="checkbox"/>	6.15 The local board implements universal access to programs and activities to individuals through reasonable recruitment targeting, outreach efforts, assessments, service delivery, partner development, and numeric goals.	WIOA Section 188; 29 CFR 37.42
<input type="checkbox"/>	6.16 The local board complies with the nondiscrimination provisions of Section 188, and assures that Methods of Administration were developed and implemented.	WIOA Section 188; 29 CFR 37.54(a)(1)
<input type="checkbox"/>	6.17 The local board collects and maintains data necessary to show compliance with nondiscrimination provisions of Section 188.	WIOA Section 185; 29 CFR 37.37
<input type="checkbox"/>	6.18 The local board complies with restrictions governing the use of federal funds for political activities, the use of the one-stop environment for political activities, and the local board complies with the applicable certification and disclosure requirements	2 CFR Part 225 Appendix B; 2 CFR Part 230 Appendix B; 48 CFR 31.205-22; RCW 42.52.180; TEGL 2-12; 29 CFR Part 93.100
<input type="checkbox"/>	6.19 The local board ensures that one-stop Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker (MSFW) and business services staff, along with the Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker program partner agency, will continue to provide services to agricultural employers and MSFWs that are demand-driven.	WIOA Section 167
<input type="checkbox"/>	6.20 The local board follows confidentiality requirements for wage and education records as required by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), as amended, WIOA, and applicable Departmental regulations.	WIOA Sections 116(i)(3) and 185(a)(4); 20 USC 1232g; proposed 20 CFR 677.175 and 20 CFR part 603
	Administration of Funds	References
<input type="checkbox"/>	6.21 The local board has a written policy and procedures to competitively award grants and contracts for WIOA Title I activities (or applicable	WIOA Section 108(b)(16); proposed 20 CFR

	federal waiver), including a process to be used to procure training services made as exceptions to the Individual Training Account process.	679.560(a)(15); WIOA Section 134(c)(3)(G); proposed 20 CFR 680.300-310
<input type="checkbox"/>	6.22 The local board has accounting systems that follow current Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and written fiscal-controls and fund-accounting procedures and ensures such procedures are followed to insure proper disbursement and accounting of WIOA adult, dislocated worker, and youth program funds.	WIOA Section 108(b)(15)
<input type="checkbox"/>	6.23 The local board ensures compliance with the uniform administrative requirements under WIOA through annual, on-site monitoring of each local sub-recipient.	WIOA Section 184(a)(3); proposed 20 CFR 683.200, 683.300, and 683.400-410
<input type="checkbox"/>	6.24 The local board has a written debt collection policy and procedures that conforms with state and federal requirements and a process for maintaining a permanent record of all debt collection cases that supports the decisions made and documents the actions taken with respect to debt collection, restoration, or other debt resolution activities.	WIOA Section 184(c); 20 CFR Part 652; proposed 20 CFR 683.410(a), 683.420(a), 683.750
<input type="checkbox"/>	6.25 The local board will not use funds received under WIOA to assist, promote, or deter union organizing.	WIOA Section 181(b)(7); proposed 20 CFR 680.850
	Eligibility	References
<input type="checkbox"/>	6.26 The local board has a written policy and procedures that ensure adequate and correct determinations of eligibility for WIOA-funded basic career services and qualifications for enrollment of adults, dislocated workers, and youth in WIOA-funded individualized career services and training services, consistent with state policy on eligibility and priority of service.	Proposed 20 CFR Part 680 Subparts A and B; proposed 20 CFR Part 681 Subpart A
<input type="checkbox"/>	6.27 The local board has a written policy and procedures for awarding Individual Training Accounts to eligible adults, dislocated workers, and youth receiving WIOA Title I training services, including dollar and/or duration limit(s), limits on the number of times an individual may modify an ITA, and how ITAs will be obligated and authorized.	WIOA Section 134(c)(3)(G); Proposed 20 CFR 680.300-320
<input type="checkbox"/>	6.28 The local board has a written policy and procedures that establish internal controls, documentation requirements, and leveraging and coordination of other community resources when providing supportive services and, as applicable, needs-related payments to eligible adult, dislocated workers, and youth enrolled in WIOA Title I programs.	WIOA Sections 129(c)(2)(G) and 134(d)(2); proposed 20 CFR 680.900-970; proposed 20 CFR 681.570
<input type="checkbox"/>	6.29 The local board has a written policy for priority of service at its workforce centers for local workforce providers that ensures veterans and eligible spouses are identified at the point of entry, made aware of their entitlement to priority of service, and provided information on the array of employment, training and placement services and eligibility requirements for those programs or services.	Jobs for Veterans Act; Veterans' Benefits, Health Care, and Information Technology Act; 20 CFR 1010; TEGL 10-09

Appendix C: Transitional Planning References and Resources

I. State of Arkansas's Combined Workforce Development Strategic Plan (*State Plan*)

On July 22, 2014, President Obama signed the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) providing a framework for Governors and states to make changes to their workforce systems. The federal law sets the parameters for the workforce system which is an integral part of the State's ability to serve jobseekers and employers. WIOA will enable the State to align workforce priorities across multiple partners, training providers, employers and others to ensure we are creating a skilled workforce for today and the future.

An effective workforce development system will be built on a foundation of alignment, innovation, employer engagement, accountability structures and improved data. Arkansas will look beyond WIOA to set broad goals for a comprehensive workforce development system. We will do this by providing the highest quality of service to jobseekers and employers through well-coordinated approaches at the state and local levels. System access will be enhanced through the use of technology and creative partnerships with community organizations and other service providers. While access will be improved for all jobseekers, the provision of services and training will be focused on those most in need and hardest to serve.

The four main goals in the State's Combined WIOA Plan are as follows:

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

Goal 1 Objectives:

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

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

Goal 2 Objectives:

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

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

Goal 3 Objectives:

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

Strategic Goal 4: Address Skills Gaps

Goal 4 Objectives:

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

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

II. State Policy and Guidance.

State policy can be found at <http://dws.arkansas.gov/wioa.htm>

III. Labor Market and Workforce Information.

A. Discover Arkansas

Labor Market Information Portal Arkansas Labor Market Information (LMI) is posted online using the Discover Arkansas web portal located at www.discoverarkansas.net and is available to the general public.

B. Arkansas State Plan Economic and Workforce Analysis

The Arkansas Combined State Plan includes an analysis of the current workforce. The data provided in Section II of the state plan under strategic elements may be very helpful to local boards in conducting a local area and regional economic and workforce analysis.

To provide local workforce boards in the state with tools for development planning in their own areas, data were downloaded and prepared from the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services Labor Market Information (LMI) website, <http://www.discoverarkansas.net>. These data were then turned into interactive visualizations, which are available at the following websites. These visualizations can be downloaded as an image or in PDF format. The goal is to help stakeholders at the state and local level better understand future industry and occupational needs and to provide workforce development boards with the tools needed to better serve their areas.

The data available at <http://arkansasresearchcenter.org/arc/index.php?CID=153> includes:

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

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

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

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

IV. PY 2016 Performance Targets Template. See below.

V. Other Resources.

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

Transitional PY2016 – PY 2017 Local Plan

Appendix C: Local Area WIOA Negotiated Performance Goals

Name of local workforce development area:

WIOA Performance Measures	Performance Goals	
	PY16	PY17
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	Negotiated Goals	
Adult	82.5%	82.5%
Dislocated Worker	77.0%	77.0%
Youth	75.0%	75.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	Negotiated Goals	
Adult	78.0%	78.0%
Dislocated Worker	74.5%	74.5%
Youth	71.2%	71.2%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)	Negotiated Goals	
Adult	\$5,842	\$5,842
Dislocated Worker	\$6,400	\$6,400
Youth	\$	
Credential Attainment Rate	Negotiated Goals	
Adult	75.3%	75.3%
Dislocated Worker	75.0%	75.0%
Youth	70.0%	70.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	Negotiated Goals	
Adult	Baseline	
Dislocated Worker	Baseline	
Youth	Baseline	
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Negotiated Goals	
Adult	Baseline	
Dislocated Worker	Baseline	
Youth	Baseline	

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

conjunction with the Secretary of Education on state adjusted levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

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

PY 2016 – PY 2017 Transitional Regional Plan Southwest Arkansas Workforce Development Board

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

1.1. Provide the following:

- A. A reference name for the planning region;
Southwest Arkansas Workforce Development Region
- B. Identification of the local workforce development areas that comprise the planning region;
The Southwest Arkansas Workforce Development Region is comprised of the Southwest Arkansas Workforce Development Area.
- C. Identification of the county(ies) each local workforce development area serves;
The Southwest Arkansas Workforce Development Area is comprised of the following counties in Southwest Arkansas: Calhoun, Columbia, Dallas, Hempstead, Howard, Lafayette, Little River, Miller, Nevada, Ouachita, Sevier, and Union.
- D. Identification of the key planning region committee members charged with drafting the regional plan; **The SWAWDB, the core partners, and businesses are responsible for drafting the regional plan.**
- E. Indication of the local workforce development area each committee member is associated with; **Members responsible for drafting the regional plan are part of The Southwest Arkansas Workforce Development Area.**
- F. A list of key planning region committee meeting dates. [WIOA Sec. 106(a) and (c)] **This core group has met on several different occasions: July 22, 2015, February 3, 2016, May 24, 2016, and September 29, 2016. Arkansas’ ten Local Workforce Board Directors met and worked together on plans May 24, June 14, July 29, August 23, September 28, during 2016.**

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

- A. The economic conditions;
- B. Labor force employment and unemployment data;
- C. Information on labor market trends; grams,
- D. Workforce development activities;
- E. The educational and skill levels of the workforce, including individuals with barriers; and
- F. The development and implementation of sector initiatives for existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors or occupations for the region.

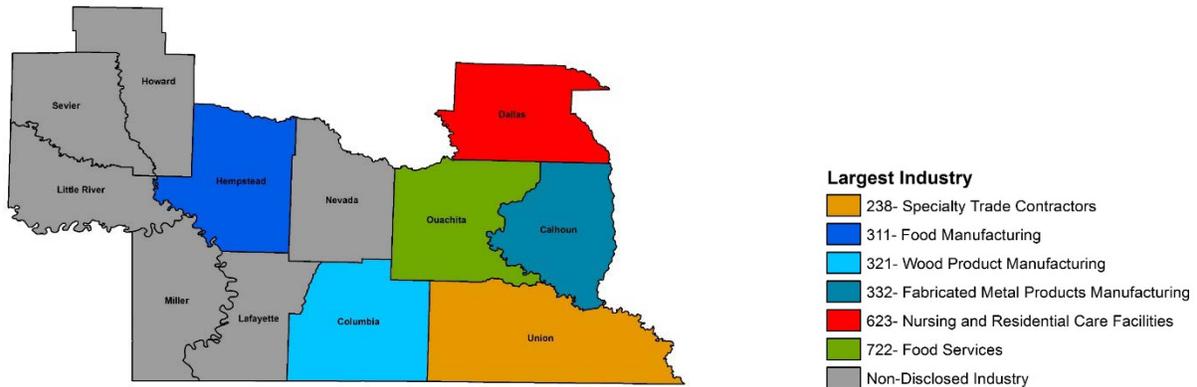
Indicate the sources of regional labor market and economic data. [WIOA Sec. 106(c)(1)(C)] & Training Program

1.2 Labor Market and Economic Analysis of the West Central Workforce Development Region

A. Economic Conditions; Labor Force Employment and Unemployment Data

The following chart shows the Employment by Industry and County in the Southwest Region.

Employment by Industry and County



*Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW),
Labor Market Information*

In the Southwest Region, the top three private industries (by Employment) in 2014 are:

1. Food Manufacturing
 - Employs 4,397 workers
 - 18 individual establishments
 - Represents 6.8% of total Employment
 - Projected Growth 92012-2022) is +1.1%
2. Food Services
 - Employs 4,353 workers
 - 297 individual establishments
 - Represents 6.8% of total Employment
 - Projected Growth (2012-2022) is +16.0%
3. Truck Transportation
 - Employs 3,240 workers
 - 198 individual establishments
 - Represents 5.0% of total Employment
 - Projected Growth 92012-2022) is -2.8%

*Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), Labor Market Information
Long-Term Employment Projections, Labor Market Information
North American Industry Classification System (NAICS), Industry Title of the 3-digit level*

The following shows a breakout of the entire region:

Employment Breakdown

- 78,341 Total Employees in 2014 (covered under UI tax law)
 - 82.0% of employees work in the Private Sector
 - 0.9% of employees work in Federal Government
 - 4.9% of employees work in State Government
 - 12.3% of employees work in Local Government
- Projected Employment Growth (2012-2022) All Sectors= +4.5%

Top Ten Projected Growth Industries (2012-2022)

Ranked by Net Growth

<u>Industry</u>	<u>Net Growth</u>	<u>% Growth</u>
Social Assistance	1,001	44.6%
Ambulatory Health Care Services	967	39.7%
Food Services and Drinking Places	701	16.0%
Nursing and Residential Care Facilities	519	16.1%
Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	440	16.6%
Wholesale Electronic Markets and Agents/Brokers	275	66.3%
Religious, Grantmaking, Civic, Professional, and Similar Organizations	206	9.6%
Educational Services	173	2.0%
Chemical Manufacturing	165	11.6%
Wood Product Manufacturing	163	7.4%

Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), Labor Market Information
Long-Term Employment Projections, Labor Market Information
North American Industry Classification System (NAICS), Industry Title of the 3-digit level

2014 Average Annual Wages (Private Sector)

Ranked by County

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1) Little River County= \$52,766 | 7) Hempstead County= \$33,067 |
| 2) Calhoun County= \$51,245 | 8) Lafayette County= \$32,897 |
| 3) Union County= \$46,849 | 9) Ouachita County= \$30,943 |
| 4) Columbia County= \$38,362 | 10) Howard County= \$30,075 |
| 5) Miller County= \$36,368 | 11) Dallas County= \$29,871 |
| 6) Nevada County= \$36,367 | 12) Sevier County= \$29,284 |

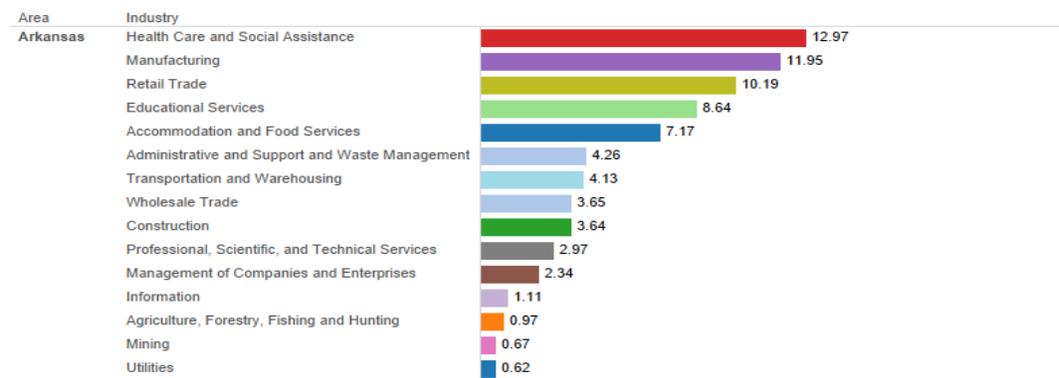
Southwest LWDA Annual Average Wage= \$38,249

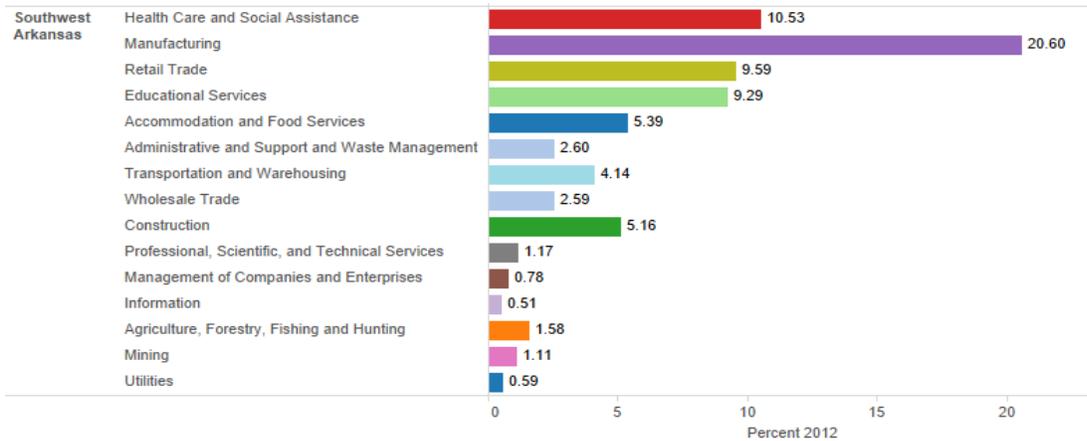
Based on data obtained from the United States Census Bureau, the median average in the State of Arkansas is \$41,264. As compared to the average wage of the Southwest Region of \$38,249, we are \$3,015 below the State average.

Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), Labor Market Information
Source: Unites States Census Bureau

While Southwest's current and future industry outlook is similar to Arkansas, there are some differences.

Jobs by Industry 2012

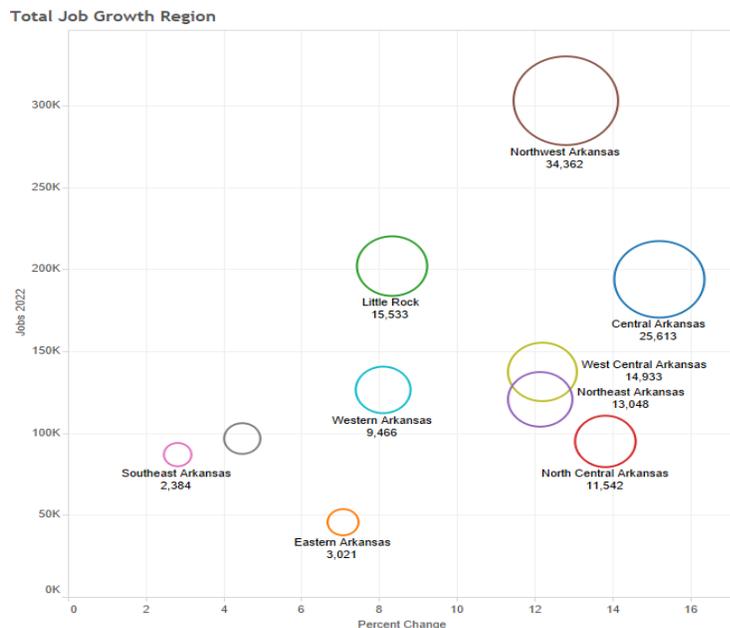




Manufacturing employs the highest percent of workers in Southwest at 20.60% and is higher than the State level of 11.95%. Health Care and Social Assistance is lower at 10.53% in Southwest compared to the State at 12.97%. Southwest is slightly below the State in the number employed in Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services, 1.17 percent to 2.97 percent, and in Accommodations and Food Services, 5.39 percent to 7.17 percent. There are actually a larger percentage of workers in Southwest in the Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting industry than at the State level. While manufacturing and transportation play a large role in the state’s and Southwest’s economy and employ a large number of its workers, these industries are also subject to increased efficiency which can lead to fewer jobs.

Source: <http://arkansasresearchcenter.org/arc/index.php?clD=154>

Looking at industry projections for Arkansas and its local workforce development areas, these differences become even more readily apparent. The bubble chart below shows each of Arkansas’s local workforce development areas. The size of the bubble represents the number of jobs expected to be added to those local areas by 2022. The vertical axis represents the total number of jobs in those local areas, and the horizontal axis represents the percent of growth by local area.



The size of the bubble represents the number of jobs expected to be created. The gray bubble represents Southwest Arkansas – New Jobs 2022 – 4,141.

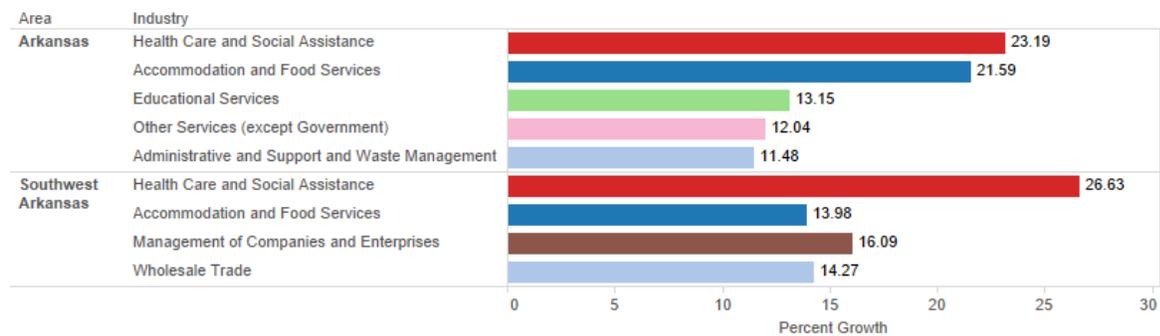
Projected Industry Growth 2012-2022

Industry	Estimated Employment	Projected Employment	Numeric Change	Percent Change
Total Employment, All Jobs	92,376	96,517	4,141	4.48
Natural Resources and Mining	2,489	2,342	-147	-5.91
Construction	4,763	4,912	149	3.13
Manufacturing	19,027	19,197	170	0.89
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	15,623	16,195	572	3.66
Information	471	459	-12	-2.55
Financial Activities	2,769	2,787	18	0.65
Professional and Business Services	4,201	4,266	65	1.55
Education and Health Services	18,309	21,073	2,764	15.10
Leisure and Hospitality	5,346	6,059	713	13.34
Other Services (Except Government)	3,406	3,633	227	6.66
Government (Excluding State/Local Education & Hospitals)	6,336	6,364	28	0.44

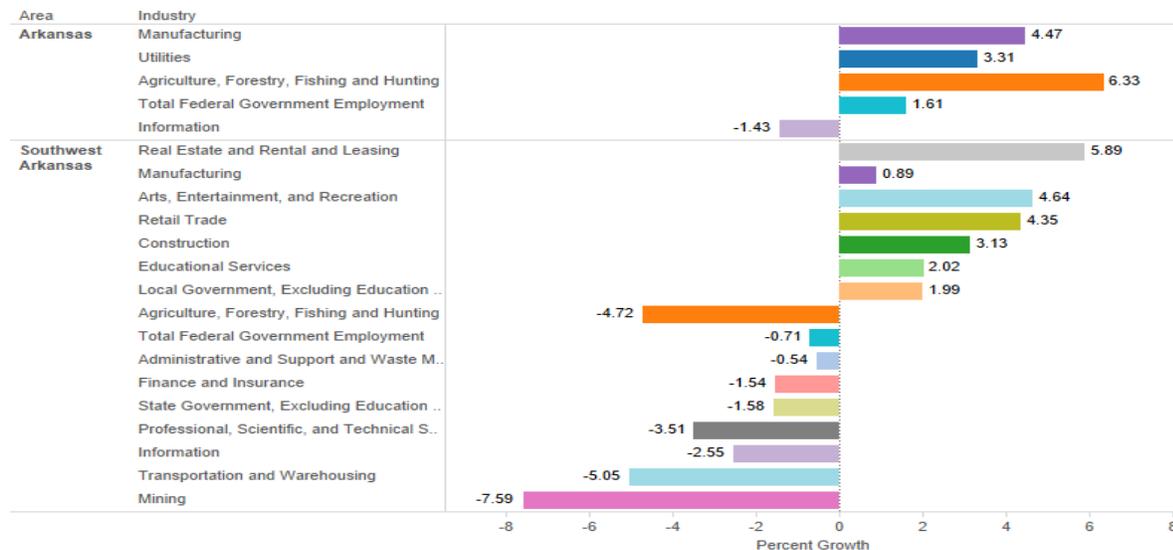
The Southwest Region is projecting an additional 4,141 (4.48%) jobs from 2012 to 2022. Natural Resources/Mining and Information show a decrease while the other industries show an increase.

Source: <http://www.discoverarkansas.net/>

Industry Growth



Industry Less Growth



Source: <http://arkansasresearchcenter.org/arc/index.php?cID=154>

B. Labor Force employment and unemployment data

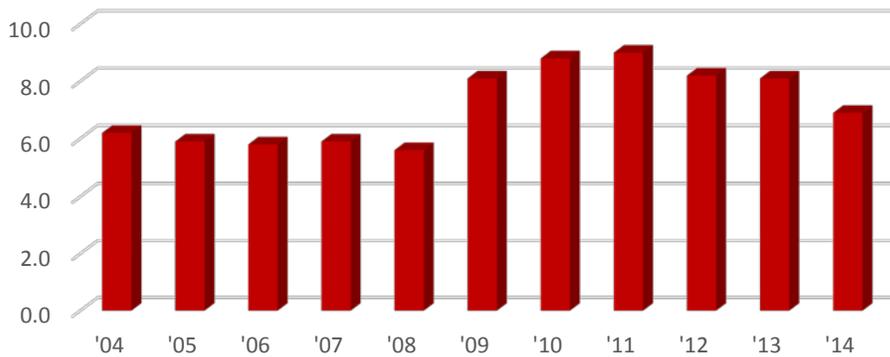
2014 Annual Average Civilian Labor Force Estimates

- Civilian Labor Force= 93,475
- Employment= 87,025
- Unemployment= 6,450
- Unemployment Rate= 6.9%

2014 Annual Average Unemployment Rates by County

- 5.9% = Howard County
- 6.0% = Miller County
- 6.1% = Hempstead County
- 6.1% = Nevada County
- 6.6% = Little River County
- 6.8% = Calhoun County
- 7.3% = Columbia County
- 7.6% = Union County
- 8.0% = Lafayette County
- 8.1% = Ouachita County
- 9.5% = Dallas County
- 7.0% = Sevier County

Southwest LWDA Unemployment Rates 2004 – 2014 (Annual Average)



Source: Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS), Labor Market Information

C. Information on labor market trends;

The top ten projected growth occupations (ranked by net growth) for Southwest are as follows:

Occupation	Net Growth	% Growth
Personal Care Aids	536	50.1%
Combined Food Prep & Serving, Including Fast Food	333	21.7%
Licensed Practical & Licensed Vocational Nurses	211	22.3%
Home Health Care Aids	182	24.8%
Nursing Assistants	172	12.9%
Sales Representative, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products	170	21.0%
Registered Nurses	150	15.5%
Cashiers	135	5.9%
First-Line Supervisors of Food Prep & Serving Workers	114	18.1%
Retail Salespersons	111	5.2%

Top Occupations by Southwest LWDA Industries

1) Food Manufacturing

- Meat, Poultry, and Fish Cutters and Trimmers
- Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand
- Helpers- Production Workers
- *Non-Disclosed Occupation*
- Cleaners of Vehicles and Equipment

2) Food Services

- Combined Food Prep and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food
- Waiters and Waitresses
- Cooks, Fast Food
- First-Line Supervisors of Food Prep and Serving Workers
- Cooks, Restaurant

3) Truck Transportation

- Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers
- Office Clerks, General
- *Non-Disclosed Occupation*
- *Non-Disclosed Occupation*
- Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists

Source: Employment and Wage Survey data, Labor Market Information

Southwest LWDA Top Occupations

Food Manufacturing

- **Meat, Poultry, and Fish Cutters and Trimmers**
 - Median Wages in 2014= \$10.79 hourly, \$22,442 annually
 - Required Education= High School Diploma/Equivalency/On-the-Job Training
 - Projected Growth (2012-2022)= +4.1%
- **Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand**
 - Median Wages in 2014= \$9.87 hourly, \$20,539 annual
 - Required Education= High School Diploma/Equivalency/On-the-Job Training
 - Projected Growth (2012-2022)= +2.8%
- **Helpers- Production Workers**
 - Median Wages in 2014= \$10.66 hourly, \$22,171 annually
 - Required Education= High School Diploma/Equivalency/On-the-Job Training
 - Projected Growth (2012-2022)= +0.8%
- ***Non-Disclosed Occupation***
 - Median Wages in 2014= *Wages are Non-Disclosed*
 - Required Education= High School Diploma/Equivalency/On-the-Job Training
 - Projected Growth (2012-2022)= -2.3%
- **Cleaners of Vehicles and Equipment**
 - Median Wages in 2014= \$10.52 hourly, \$21,887 annually
 - Required Education= High School Diploma/Equivalency/On-the-Job Training
 - Projected Growth (2012-2022)= -0.2%

Truck Transportation

- **Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Driver**

- Median Wages in 2014= \$17.53 hourly, \$36,467 annually
- Required Education= High School Diploma/Equivalency/Certification
- Training available outside the LWDA (6 locations in Arkansas)
- Projected Growth (2012-2022)= -1.4%
- **Office Clerks, General**
 - Median Wages in 2014= \$10.70 hourly, \$22,249 annual
 - Required Education= High School Diploma/Associates/Vocational
 - Training at U of A Community College- Hope
 - Projected Growth (2012-2022)= -2.9%
- **Non-Disclosed Occupation**
 - Median Wages in 2014= *Wages are Non-Disclosed*
 - Required Education= High School Diploma/Equivalency/Certification
 - Training available online, depending on field
 - Projected Growth (2012-2022)= +2.9%
- **Non-Disclosed Occupation**
 - Median Wages in 2014= *Wages are Non-Disclosed*
 - Required Education= Associates/Bachelor's in General Business
 - Training at any community college or university (104 in Arkansas)
 - Projected Growth (2012-2022)= +2.3%
- **Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists**
 - Median Wages in 2014= \$14.54 hourly, \$30,240 annually
 - Required Education= High School Diploma/Equivalency/Certification
 - Training at U of A Community College- Hope
 - Projected Growth (2012-2022)= -1.7%

Source: Occupational Statistics and Employment Projections, Labor Market Information

D. Workforce development activities;

Southwest Arkansas's workforce development activities are coordinated through the following agencies: These agencies are responsible for all the core and non-core programs included in the combined state plan.

<u>Agency</u>	<u>Core Program</u>
SWAPDD	Adult (Title I) Dislocated Worker (Title I) Youth (Title I)
ADWS	Wagner-Peyser
ADCE	Adult Education and Family Literacy (WIOA Title II) Vocational Rehabilitation (Title I Rehabilitation)
DHS	Division of Services for the Blind (Title I Rehabilitation)

Non-Core Program

Trade Adjustment Assistance
Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Program (Title I)
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program

The Southwest Arkansas Workforce Development Area consists of twelve counties, and is the largest region in the state. Workforce activities and initiatives are driven by Southwest Arkansas Workforce Development Board (SWAWDB). The SWAWDB is comprised of local businesses, educational institutions, partner agencies, and other key stakeholders to create a diverse and functional group. The board, in alignment with the States' vision, provides front line strategic implementation for state-wide initiatives in addition to locally-determined priorities. State initiatives include sector strategies, career pathway development, and delivery of standardized business services. Local priorities include layoff aversion, specific career pathway development, youth programs, targeted sector partnerships, and work-based learning.

The SWAWDB carries out workforce activities by partnering through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to implement core, non-core, and other partner programs. With a foundation for service integration, Southwest Arkansas Workforce Development System operates under the "no wrong door" philosophy. Customers entering the center are engaged by an intake process that is designed to identify the needs of the individual by gathering information and then utilizing the appropriate resources for those needs. In some cases, the resources are initiated by a referral to a partner program. Customers are given solutions and next steps to their questions, barriers, and issues by connecting directly with the appropriate workforce system partner as part of this philosophy.

The Arkansas Department of Career Education, Adult Education Division (ACE/AED) funds four local adult education programs, two literacy councils. The local service delivery systems are diverse. Programs are funded through public schools systems and community colleges. Local programs provide adult education services such as teaching academic skills to people who function from beginning reading through a 12.9 functioning grade level and English as a Second Language (ESL). These services are free and provided in classes held in locations throughout each county. Additional programs such as family literacy, Workforce Alliance for Growth in the Economy (WAGE™), and Career Readiness Certificate (CRC) are also offered in some counties.

Southwest Arkansas Workforce Centers provide Jobs Access With Speech (JAWS). JAWS computers are designed for visually impaired individuals to gain access to job services. These systems are available in both comprehensive and affiliate sites.

Workforce System Services – Unemployed and Underemployed

The Southwest Arkansas Workforce Centers offers the full array of career services outlined in WIOA 134(c)(2) for unemployed and underemployed jobseekers. Basic career services are available at all service locations throughout Southwest Arkansas. All workforce centers in Southwest Arkansas have computers, printers, copiers, printed resources, and staff to assist jobseekers. Many of the services, including Arkansas Job Link and Discover Arkansas LMI Portal, can be accessed virtually through the internet via computer, smart phone, or tablet. Arkansas Job Link is the state job matching system and the virtual one-stop-shop where Arkansans can centralize all their career search activities. It allows jobseekers to self-enter his/her resume(s) and job search 24/7. Arkansas Job Link also provides access to a toolbox of job search assistance links, including career exploration, training resources, self-marketing tools, Unemployment Insurance information, and additional job banks. The built-in event calendar communicates upcoming hiring events, job fairs, and other workforce activities.

Discover Arkansas LMI Portal allows jobseekers to make informed data-driven career decisions. This labor market system provides a wide variety of local and regional labor market services, such as labor trends, statistics, economics, demographics, salaries, and employer data. It allows jobseekers

to set up a personal page for their career exploration data to be readily accessible. Basic career services also extend beyond the virtual world. After the initial assessment, customers, as appropriate, may be provided with direct linkages to additional workforce activities, including multiple education and training opportunities across the workforce system through partner referrals. Many of these partners are housed within the workforce center.

Jobseeker Services

The Southwest Arkansas Workforce Centers offers a full line of activities to prepare jobseekers for the modern workforce. They address many of the soft skills and technical skills training Arkansas employers require.

Pre-employability training is offered to jobseekers to better prepare the individual for entry into employment.

Labor exchange services also provide labor market information to the individuals seeking services. The information must be accurate and include information on local, regional and national labor markets, such as: job vacancies, skills necessary to obtain the jobs, in-demand occupations and related earning potential, opportunities for advancement in those occupations

The Southwest Arkansas Workforce Centers provide the following career services:

Outreach, intake and orientation, Initial assessment, Labor exchange services, Eligibility determination, Referrals to programs, Performance and cost information, Information on unemployment insurance, Financial aid information, Follow-up services

Additionally, One-Stop and partners must provide appropriate services for individuals to obtain or retain employment. These services include, but are not limited to:

Individual Employment Plan (IEP), Career planning and counseling (no longer called case management), Comprehensive assessment, Occupational Skills Assessment, Short-term prevocational services, Internship and work experience, including transitional jobs and industry partnerships, Workforce preparation, Out-of-area job search, English language acquisition, Financial literacy

Training Services

Career services are not always enough to enable job seekers to obtain self-sufficient employment. In some instances, formal training is required. Arkansas Workforce Centers offer multiple training services such as:

Occupational skills training, On-the-job training (OJT), Registered Apprenticeships, Incumbent worker training, Skill upgrading and retaining, Entrepreneurial training, and Adult education and family literacy activities

Training services are funded through WIOA programs, Pell Grants, partner programs, and state and local grants. Local areas are responsible for establishing and implementing local policies for eligibility, Individual Training Account (ITA) limits, and the identification of in-demand sectors or occupations. Through multiple initiatives and projects, Arkansas has focused training and career development activities on sector strategies/partnerships and career pathway development. At the state level, the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) has been updated pursuant to WIOA Sections 122 and 134. This list ensures that Arkansans are able to make informed decisions on training

providers and programs based on accurate data including completion and placement rates; labor market information; and wage expectations.

Supportive Services

In order to assist jobseekers in obtaining or retaining employment through career or training services, Southwest Arkansas Workforce Centers offer a variety of supportive services. Local areas are responsible for establishing a supportive service policy that outlines types, eligibility, limits, etc. Examples of supportive services include child care; transportation; needs-related payments; tools and equipment; uniforms; and other clothing. In addition to WIOA-funded supportive services, local areas have developed relationships with community partners that assist with utility payments, food, shelter, and other basic needs.

Business Services

The focal point of all workforce system activities is business and industry. These activities are taking place statewide and may include: Access to facilities – Use of Workforce Center facilities by a business for a variety of purposes such as meetings, trainings, orientations, interviews, etc.; Assessments – Any test or assortment of tests used to measure the skills, interests and/or personality traits of a jobseeker, potential employee, or current employee; Business education – Seminars, round tables, workshops, focus groups, etc.; Business information – Information given to a business pertaining to a variety of incentive programs or other information requested that provides a benefit to that business; Hiring events – A customized event for a single employer that assists with recruiting, interviewing, and hiring of one or more positions; Job fairs – Event for multiple employers that assists with the recruiting, interviewing, and hiring of one or more positions; Job postings – Staff-entered or web-entered job orders approved by staff; Labor market information – Information on state and local labor market conditions; industries, occupations, and characteristics of the workforce; area business identified skills needs; employer wage and benefit trends; short and long-term industry and occupational projections; worker supply and demand; and job vacancies survey results; Rapid Response – A variety of services to businesses that are facing restructuring and downsizing including onsite workshops for employees in transition; job placement assistance; and information on unemployment benefits; Screening – Any service that involves the initial evaluation of applications or resumes that assists the employer in the recruiting process; Training and retraining - Any service provided to a business that involves the training or retraining of current or future employees including OJTs, Work Experiences, Incumbent Worker Training, etc.

The individual program services offered are detailed and provide program specific information in Section VI and VII.

Services to Disabled Persons

The Arkansas Department of Career Education, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ACE/ARS), provides vocational rehabilitation services to people with disabilities. Currently, there are significant barriers for people with disabilities in relation to attaining employment. A 2008 study (StatsRRTC1) indicated the employment rate for people with disabilities was 33.9 percent when compared to 79.1 percent for people without disabilities. Historically, there are significant barriers to the inclusion of people with disabilities into the overall strategy for economic development in Arkansas. ARS in partnership with the Arkansas Department of Human Services, Division of Services for the Blind (DSB) are leading the charge for providing targeted training and education for people with disabilities in order for them to develop the skills and abilities needed to attain competitive integrated employment in Arkansas.

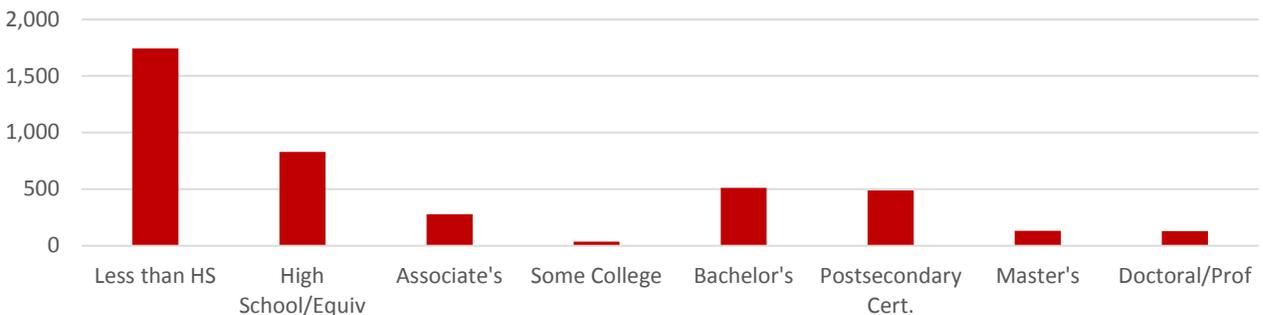
Through the Governor’s Executive Order 10-17, the Department of DSB coordinates with other state agencies to increase employment of Arkansans with disabilities. The order also aims to focus consumer services first toward the goal of self-sufficiency through employment.

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

COUNTY	POPULATION 25 YEARS+	# High School grad or higher	% High School grad or higher	# bachelor degree or higher	% bachelor degree or higher
Calhoun	3,770	1,849	49.04%	400	10.61%
Columbia	15,088	5,317	35.23%	3213	21.29%
Dallas	5,446	2,892	53.10%	644	11.82%
Hempstead	14,679	5,332	36.32%	2049	13.95%
Howard	8,980	3,217	35.82%	1297	14.44%
Lafayette	5,138	2,241	43.62%	638	12.42%
Little River	9,082	3,607	39.72%	1068	11.76%
Miller	29,193	11,979	41.03%	3722	12.75%
Nevada	6,017	2,402	39.92%	855	14.21%
Ouachita	17,551	7,386	42.08%	2790	15.90%
Sevier	10,615	3,501	32.98%	876	08.25%
Union	27,906	10,182	36.49%	4847	17.37%
SW Region total # or average %	153,465	59,905	39.03%	22399	14.59%

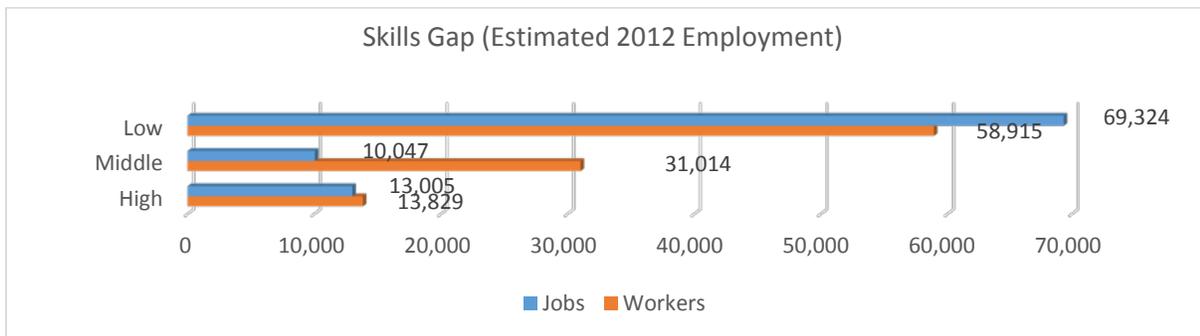
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Projected Employment Growth by Education Level (2012-2022)



Source: Occupational Statistics and Employment Projections, Labor Market Information
Long-Term Employment Projections, Labor Market Information

Skill	2012	2022	Net Growth	Percent Growth	Growth Annual Openings	Replacement Annual Openings	Total Annual Openings
High	13,005	13,775	770	5.92%	62	258	320
Low	69,324	71,894	2,570	3.71%	378	1,602	1,980
Middle	10,047	10,848	801	7.97%	80	188	268



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

The Projected Employment Opportunities List provides an annual list of occupations and training programs. The list provides the estimated annual wage for each occupation. WIOA eligible participant may be placed in training at approved 2 and 4 year State colleges. WIA performance measures demonstrate the success of the training in placing participants in demand occupations which led to self-sufficiency. <http://www.discoverarkansas.net/>

The State of Arkansas will provide the Southwest Region a base line of information which can be used for policy decision making by the Southwest Arkansas Workforce Development Board. This information will help SWAWDB align training programs to the needs of industry for the benefit for both the jobseeker and employers. Targeted training opportunities will provide participants with the increased probability of obtaining a good paying job. The increased labor pipeline will provide businesses with the workforce they need to operate and grow their companies throughout the region. This will be the SWAWDB’s first step in the journey to close the gap between workforce and economic development and move toward the tailoring of training programs to explicitly meet the needs of industry throughout the twelve counties in Southwest Arkansas.

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

Vision

Southwest Arkansas will have a world-class workforce that is well educated, skilled, and working in order to keep Southwest Arkansas’s economy competitive in the global marketplace.

Goals

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

Goal 1 Objectives:

1. Expand employer partnerships through the support of industry engagement.
2. Identify and promote best practices (private and public) for developing and sustaining partnerships.
3. Expand partnership with economic development to refine sector strategies.
4. Improve communication/participation between education entities, local and state boards, government agencies, community-based organizations, and employers.
5. Increase accountability and clarity of action between all workforce related boards.

6. Increase the utilization of Registered Apprenticeship programs as viable talent development opportunities.
7. Increase connections with employers and Vocational Rehabilitation agencies to provide support and employment for youth and adults with disabilities.
8. Partner with K-12 education, higher education, career and technical education, and adult education to provide consistent rules and eliminate barriers to implementing training programs around the State.
9. Explore data sharing opportunities with non-governmental organizations that are committed partners to the state's workforce center system that will lead to improved intake, referral, and case management for customers served by multiple agencies (both public and private).
10. Expand small business participation.

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

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

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

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

Strategic Goal 4: Address Skills Gaps

1. Participate in a statewide skills and asset analysis to determine the skills gap present

and resources available to solve the skills issue.

2. Help to implement an action plan to close the basic core, technical, and soft skills gaps in Arkansas. Analyze the effectiveness of currently used job readiness standards and ensure coordination between the Arkansas CRC program and the WAGE program.

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

WIOA coordinates with partners to effectively target businesses and employers. The Business Service Teams will provide an overview of all the agencies and leave a packet of services which the employer can review. This approach has been successful in maximizing information with minimal intrusion. Southwest has developed partnerships and alliances through the Chambers of Commerce, Educational Cooperatives, and educational institutions at all levels, apprenticeship and labor organizations in our communities.

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

The SWAWDB will define workforce development strategies by working with partners to determine the best ways to provide services with guidance from the State regarding requirements and opportunities. Cooperative service delivery agreements can be memorandums of understanding for the local workforce system.

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

Southwest will use resource sharing agreements and the memorandums of understanding for the local workforce system.

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

Partner programs within the Southwest Region will determine and coordinate transportation and other supportive services as allowable by their program.

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

Southwest will continue to partner with regional economic development services and providers by leveraging resources with the Southwest Arkansas Planning District, Chambers of Commerce and other economic development organizations.

1.9 Describe how the planning region will establish an agreement concerning how the planning region will collectively negotiate and reach agreement with the State on local levels of performance for, and report on, the performance accountability measures described in WIOA Section 116(c), for

**local areas and the planning region. [WIOA Sec. 106(c)(H)] [proposed 20 CFR 677.210(b) and (c)]
and [proposed 20 CFR 679.510(a)(2)]**

At this time, the State provides the performance measures for each Local Workforce Development Area.