



INNOVATE

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

January 21, 2020

10:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon

Embassy Suites

11301 Financial Centre

Little Rock, AR 72211

Arkansas Workforce Development Board

Full Board Meeting



AGENDA

January 21, 2020

ARKANSAS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD FULL BOARD MEETING

10:00 a.m.

Estimated Time: 2 Hr 10 Min

Call to Order (1 min) Tom Anderson, Chair

Report of Board Director (3 mins) Arnell Willis, Board Director

Agenda Item 1: ACTION

Minutes of October 15, 2019 Full Board Meeting (1 min)..... Tom Anderson, Chair

Report of Chairperson (5 mins)..... Tom Anderson, Chair

Report of Director (5 mins) Dr. Charisse Childers, Director
Arkansas Division of Workforce Services

Report of Staff (5 mins)..... Kris Jones, Employment Assistance - Assistant Director
Arkansas Division of Workforce Services

Report of Committees

- Strategic Planning Committee Overview (2 mins)Karen Breashears, Committee Chair
- Program & Performance Evaluation
Committee Overview (2 mins).....Abby Houseworth, Committee Chair
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
Oversight Committee Overview (2 mins).....Gan Nunnally, Committee Chair

Agenda Item 2: ACTION

Council Resolution 2020-1: Board Member Stipend (2 mins) Tom Anderson, Chair

Embassy Suites
11301 Financial Centre
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Agenda Item 3: INFORMATIONAL

Workforce Analysis (20 mins) Dr. Nathan Smith, Research Director
Arkansas Department of Commerce

Agenda Item 4: ACTION

Key Changes for Public Comment Draft

- o Sections 1-5 Common Elements of WIOA (PY2020-2023)
- o WIOA Title I and III Program-Specific Sections (20 mins)Kris Jones, Director of Staff

Agenda Item 5: INFORMATIONAL

WIOA Dashboard Update (10 min)Kris Jones, Director of Staff

Agenda Item 6: ACTION

PY18 Annual Report (10 min).....Kris Jones, Director of Staff

Agenda Item 7: ACTION

One-Stop Center Certification Review (20 min)Kris Jones, Director of Staff

Agenda Item 8: INFORMATIONAL

Administrative Forms – New Year (10 mins) Tom Anderson, Chair

Agenda Item 9: INFORMATIONAL

State-Funded Work Based Learning Program:

Incumbent Worker Training Program (10 mins).....W.J. Monagle, Director
Little Rock Workforce Development Board
Spencer Barksdale, Production Engineer
Essick Air

Announcements (2 mins)

Adjournment

**For Consideration of the
Arkansas Workforce Development Board**

January 21, 2020

AGENDA ITEM 1 – ACTION: Minutes of the October 15, 2019 Arkansas Workforce Development Board meeting.

RECOMMENDATION: It is recommended that the Arkansas Workforce Development Board approve the minutes of the October 15, 2019, Arkansas Workforce Development Board meeting.

INFORMATION/RATIONALE: Minutes of the meeting is attached.

UNOFFICIAL

MINUTES
ARKANSAS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
October 15, 2019

The Arkansas Workforce Development Board convened on October 15, 2019, beginning at 10:00 a.m. The televised meeting was conducted at Crowne Plaza, 201 South Shackelford Road, Little Rock, Arkansas. Chair Tom Anderson presided with the following members present: Mr. Len Blaylock, Ms. Karen Breashears, Mr. Lindsay Brown, Mr. Scott Bull, Ms. Chanda Chacon, Dr. Charisse Childers, Judge Brandon Ellison, Mr. Randy Finegan, Mr. Randy Henderson, Ms. Abby Houseworth, Mr. Alan Hughes, Ms. Rebecca Ives (10:23 a.m.), Mr. Johnny Key by proxy Ms. Erin Franks, Ms. Holley Little, Mr. Alan McClain, Dr. Maria Markham by proxy Ms. Alisha Lewis (10:08 a.m.), Mr. Brian Marsh, Dr. Trenia Miles, Mr. George Nunnally, Dr. Cassandra Williams-Stokes by proxy Ms. Angela Thomas, Dr. Julie Roberson, , Mayor James Sanders, Mr. Kelley Sharp, and Mr. Robert Thorne, and Dr. Diana Wright.

Mr. Jeff Griffin, Ms. Melissa Hanesworth, Mr. Mike Preston, and Mr. Mike Rogers were unable to attend.

Chair Anderson called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. upon seeing a quorum.

Chairman's Comments: Chair Tom Anderson welcomed and announced five new Arkansas Workforce Development Board members before recognizing Arkansas Workforce Development Board Director Mr. Arnell Willis to speak to the Full Board. Mr. Willis emphasized the importance of the topics included in the Full Board meeting are in accordance with the WIOA State Plan due in the next fiscal year. These topics included evaluation, sector strategies, career pathways, skills gap analysis, performance, and waivers. Director Willis added that they were key components by serving as guideposts in driving the entire system through the Action Plan for state projects and provides the framework for the local workforce development. Board Members began reviewing topics of the State Plan six months prior starting with the vision and mission statement. Director Willis ended by encouraging members to draw on their experiences with utilizing the system and by encouraging the participation of new members to engage in the process to provide a new perspective.

Agenda Item 1 – ACTION – Minutes of the July 16, 2019, Full Board Meeting and the June 25, 2019, Executive Committee Meeting: Chair Tom Anderson asked if there were any additional corrections or revisions to the July 16, 2019, Full Board meeting minutes or the June 25, 2019, Executive Committee Meeting minutes.

Hearing none, a motion to accept the July 16, 2019, Full Board meeting minutes and the June 25, 2019, Executive Committee Meeting minutes with no corrections or revisions was made by Mr. Alan Hughes and seconded by Judge Brandon Ellison. The motion carried unanimously with none opposed.

Report of Chairperson: Chair Anderson reported attending the National Association of State Workforce Board Chairs. The conference encompasses national representation of State Workforce Board Chairs and Liaisons held twice a year. Arkansas was represented well and was attended by State Senator Missy Irvin. Senator Irvin participated on a panel discussion and spoke to the Board Chairs and Directors on her legislation for four-week maternity leave for expecting mothers by utilizing catastrophic leave.

Chair Anderson reported his attendance in September at the two-day WIOA Partners' Meeting in Little Rock. Chair Anderson informed Board Members the two-day event provided the opportunity to learn about and engage with WIOA partners.

Lastly, Chair Anderson informed the Full Board about his attendance to the Central Local Workforce Development Board meeting. He encouraged the Board Members to attend their Local Workforce Development Board meetings to learn more about their Local Workforce Development Area.

Report of Director: Chair Tom Anderson recognized Board Member and Director of Arkansas Division of Workforce Services (ADWS) Dr. Charisse Childers to address the Full Board. Dr. Childers welcomed new members and thanked them for their interest, dedication, and participation. In addition to thanking current Board Members for their time and effort to carry on the current work being done, Dr. Childers encouraged all the Board Members to exchange information from the meetings with their local areas in order to assist a need in their region of the state. Lastly, Dr. Childers stated the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services is working the U.S. Department of Labor (US DOL) on the ADWS Central Office move to the Verizon building. Another notable change is the Arkansas Division of Services for the Blind will be opening a field office at the ADWS South University campus.

Report of Staff: Chair Anderson recognized Board Staff Mr. Kris Jones. Mr. Jones began by informing Board Members of a Transformation Team to review shared services to assist the State with this on-going process. Mr. Jones added Thomas P. Miller and Associates began working with Business Services Teams of Local Workforce Development Areas September 16, 2020. The focus is on the WIOA Work-Based Learning Program and registered apprenticeship. Additionally, the Business Services tool Salesforce went live on September 16, 2019.

Mr. Jones reported the WIOA Partners' Meeting on September 5-6, 2019, in Little Rock had more than 200 attendees. Some topics included SWOT analysis for the Local Workforce Development Areas, data analytics, labor market information, and customer center design. ADWS is implementing Project Management Training for staff to assist with organizational skills to assist in moving things forward.

The Little Rock Workforce Development submitted the first work-based learning program for incumbent worker.

The U.S. Department of Labor provided ADWS tentative dates for the next year's monitoring visits. The dates provided were March 23, 2020 for the West Central Local Workforce Development Board, and on July 20, 2020, for the Western Local Workforce Development Board.

Report of Committees:

Strategic Planning Committee: Chair Tom Anderson recognized Strategic Committee Chair Karen Breashears to provide a report of the Strategic Planning Committee meeting. Chair Breashears reported the committee met on September 25, 2019, and, having a quorum, approved the June 18, 2019, minutes via teleconference. The committee heard an update on the WIOA State Plan timeline and on Sector Regional Planning.

Both are required to be reviewed every two years. Both items were included in the Full Board agenda as discussion items. The Committee requested board members share their experiences using the State's workforce development system.

Hearing no additional questions or comments, Chair Anderson moved to the Program and Performance Evaluation Committee.

Program & Performance Evaluation Committee: Chair Anderson asked Committee Chair Abby Houseworth to provide an update for the Program and Performance Evaluation Committee. Ms. Houseworth reported the committee met via teleconference on September 25, 2019. The committee meeting covered the Arkansas Workforce Development Board Dashboard and WIOA PY18 Title I & III Performance Outcomes. Both topics were included in the Full Board agenda for discussion.

TANF Oversight Committee: Chair Anderson recognized Committee Chair George Nunnally to provide an update on the TANF Oversight Committee. Chair Nunnally reported the committee had a quorum and approved minutes for the April 29, 2019, and June 18, 2019, committee meeting minutes via teleconference on September 25, 2019.

He reported the committee heard a report on federal legislation updates and policy changes, TANF-funded projects Our House, Arkansas Better Dads Fatherhood Initiative, and Arkansas Career Pathways, and two success stories from Our House and the Arkansas Career Pathways Initiative. Since the 2019 Governor's Summit on Fatherhood on June 28, 2020, there were more than 350 in attendance. Out of those attending, there were 127 participants who took the AR Better Dad Challenge and more than 1,100 men that have taken the challenge to date.

Agenda Item 2 – ACTION – WIOA System Evaluation: Chair Anderson reported that during their September 25, 2019, teleconference meeting, of the Strategic Planning Committee recommended the Full Board hear a presentation, review and approve the WIOA System Evaluation to be included in the WIOA State Plan and in the Annual Reports. Chair Anderson recognized Associate Professor Dr. Brent Williams and Dr. Keith Vire of the University of Arkansas to present to Full Board on the WIOA System Evaluation.

Hearing none, a motion to approve the WIOA System Evaluation to be included in the State Plan and the Annual Reports as recommended by the Strategic Planning Committee with no additional revisions was made by Mr. Alan Hughes, and seconded by Mr. Robert Thorne. The motion carried unanimously with none opposed.

Agenda Item 3 – INFORMATIONAL – WIOA (PY2020-23) State Plan: Board Staff Kris Jones was requested to provide an update on WIOA (PY2020-23) State Plan. Mr. Jones reported the focus was to make sure there are volunteers for the more strategic sections of the plan: the vision, mission, and apprenticeship. He stated drafting of the strategic elements and operational elements will begin in November, and he hopes to have those by January 1, 2020. On January 7, 2020, the draft would go before the Strategic Planning Committee before going before the Full Board with any adjustments from the Strategic Planning Committee. On January 21, 2020, the draft of the State Plan would go before the Full Board for approval, go for public comment on February 1, 2020, and be submitted to the US DOL March 3, 2020. Adjustments made after submission may be made until June 30, 2020. These changes will be reported back to the board at the July meeting. Mr. Jones noted the State Plan can be changed at any time.

Strategic Planning Committee Chair Breashears reiterated the need for volunteers to review sections of the plan and encouraged Board Members to volunteer to assist reviewing the State Plan.

Agenda Item 4 – INFORMATIONAL – Sector and Regional Planning: Chair Anderson requested that Board Staff Mr. Kris Jones provide information to the Full Board on Sector and Regional Planning. Mr. Jones prefaced his remarks by informing Board Members US DOL Regional Administrator Nicholas Lalpui recommended Arkansas review Colorado as a model on sector strategies. Thomas P. Miller and Associates is assisting the Local Workforce Development Boards with refining sector strategies. Mr. Jones recommended raising funding levels and reporting requirements to see where the focus is across the state. Lastly, some more data is needed before proceeding. Board Member Dr. Childers encouraged members to review Colorado's website to gain additional understanding and insight and emphasized sector strategies must be employer-driven to be successful.

Agenda Item 5 – INFORMATIONAL – Updates to the Arkansas Workforce Development Board Dashboard: Upon request, Mr. Kris Jones informed Board Members anything under five percent was cut out; however, the service mix between the last quarter and this quarter is about the same. Board Staff sees no cause for alarm. The Dashboard Update Report was included in the Full Board Agenda Book. Mr. Jones recommended Board Members refrain from comparing the Local Workforce Development Boards because each has specific characteristics for the Local Area population being served. Mr. Jones requested that Mr. Dennis Williamson to provide inform the Board Members if the regional funds that played a role in assisting the Local Workforce Development Area and played a role. Mr. Williamson stated the funding was a key element in assisting them to provide outreach and training to local businesses.

Agenda Item 6 – INFORMATIONAL – WIOA PY18 Title I & III Performance Outcomes: Committee Chair Abby Houseworth requested that Mr. Elroy Willoughby to provide an update to the Full Board on the WIOA PY18 Title I and III Performance Outcomes. Mr. Willoughby noted USDOL considers a State has having met its goals if it reaches 90 percent of its negotiated rate. Additionally, he informed Board Members that Arkansas met all its goals. Next, Mr. Willoughby went through the performance outcomes for the Local Workforce Development Areas and shared North Central and Southeast Local Workforce Development Boards. North Central's performance allowed the State to receive customer-centered-design Technical Assistance

Training funds from USDOL to assist the Local Areas. Mr. Willoughby explained how ADWS Targeted Populations Advisor Eddie Lemm has been assisting the area in outreach. Another Local Workforce Development Area about which Mr. Willoughby provided information to Board Members was the Southeast Local Workforce Development Board. The number of people served by the Local Workforce Development Area increased following a visit from USDOL. After the monitoring visit from US DOL, the area received technical assistance and has increased its performance significantly.

Arkansas Workforce Division of Workforce Services Deputy Director Ron Snead was recognized by Chair Anderson to explain to Board Members how people who are laid off from a job are accounted. These individuals are counted as reportable individuals through the Local Offices for US DOL.

Agenda Item 7 – INFORMATIONAL –Salesforce Implementation Update: Chair Anderson recognized Mr. Mark McManus to provide an update to Board Members on Salesforce. Mr. McManus reported Salesforce went live on September 16, 2019, as a business service tool to track business engagement and outreach activities. ADWS purchased 35 licenses initially that was distributed to partners. Since that time, ADWS purchased an additional 20 licenses. Mr. McManus provided additional information on the implementation process, how the licenses are being utilized, and possible uses in the future. Currently, there is an established working group to assist in moving the system forward.

Agenda Item 8 - ACTION – High Concentration of Eligible Youth: Chair Anderson recognized Mr. Kris Jones to address the board on the methodology of High Concentration of Eligible Youth. Mr. Jones provided Board Members the criteria and data sources before proceeding.

Hearing none, a motion to approve the High Concentration of Eligible Youth as recommended by Board Staff with no additional revisions was made by Mr. Lindsay Brown, and seconded by Mr. Robert Thorne. The motion carried unanimously with none opposed.

Agenda Item 9 - ACTION – WIOA Title I Waiver Requests: Chair Tom Anderson invited Mr. Kris Jones to provide information to Board Members the WIOA Title I Waiver Requests. Board Staff went over the WIOA Title I Waiver Requests with the Local Workforce Development Boards before recommendation.

Hearing none, a motion to approve the WIOA Title I Waiver Requests as recommended by Board Staff with no additional revisions was made by Judge Brandon Ellison, and seconded by Ms. Karen Breashears. The motion carried unanimously with none opposed.

Board Open Discussion: Chair Anderson recognized Vice-Chair Scott Bull. Vice-Chair Bull provided information on the Coalition for Career Development and how Arkansas had been leading other states to develop their own career coaching. The focus is on high school students who want to go to work; however, the students do not know what their options or career choices are. Vice-Chair Bull added the students have not ever had anyone sit down and tell them what jobs they could do or how to plan out a career choice. He further cited statistics supporting the need for students and families to have guidance and direction to make a career choice. Another

component he touched on was making work-based learning a requirement. The Coalition for Career Development will have a summit in Washington D.C. January 8, 2020.

Announcements: Chair Anderson announced lunch will be provided for Board Members. The next Full Board meeting will be at 10:00 a.m. on January 21, 2020, at Embassy Suites in Little Rock. The Full Board will also receive training at the next meeting.

Board Members were reminded to file their Financial Disclosures with the Secretary of State before January 31, 2020. Board Staff will provide notaries to assist Board Members at the next meeting. Board Members will need to file for each board they are a member.

Adjourn: Chair Tom Anderson adjourned the meeting at 12:39 p.m., **on a motion made by Mr. Lindsay Brown, seconded by Mr. Robert Thorne, and carried unanimously with none opposed.**

Tom Anderson, Board Chair
Arkansas Workforce Development Board

Arnell Willis, Director Workforce Development
Arkansas Division of Workforce Services

*Minutes recorded by Rebecca Edwards
Arkansas Division of Workforce Services Staff*

**For Consideration of the
Arkansas Workforce Development Board**

January 21, 2020

AGENDA ITEM 2 – ACTION: Council Resolution 2020-1: Board Member Stipend

RECOMMENDATION: It is recommended that the Arkansas Workforce Development Board approve Council Resolution 2020-1 allowing board members to accept a stipend for reimbursement of expenses to attend meetings of the board.

INFORMATION/RATIONALE: Arkansas Code Annotated § 15-4-3704 allows the Arkansas Workforce Development Board by a majority vote of the total membership of the board cast during its first regularly scheduled meeting of each calendar year, the board may authorize payment to its members of a stipend not to exceed one hundred ten dollars (\$110) per meeting attended. The board members shall receive no other compensation, expense reimbursement, or in-lieu-of payments as provided in § 25-16-902.

A draft council resolution is attached for consideration by the board.

**ARKANSAS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
COUNCIL RESOLUTION NUMBER 2020 – 1**

WHEREAS, the Arkansas Workforce Development Board (AWDB) conducts its matters as an entity prescribed by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA); and

WHEREAS, the AWDB serves the Governor of the State of Arkansas as a policy advisory entity in accordance with WIOA law; and

WHEREAS, it has been determined that the AWDB and its activities are encompassed by A.C.A. §15-4-3706; and

WHEREAS, A.C.A. §15-4-3704 (h)(1) and (2) states, “By a majority vote of the total membership of the Arkansas Workforce Development Board cast during its first regularly scheduled meeting of each calendar year, the Arkansas Workforce Development Board may authorize payment to the appointed members of a stipend not to exceed one hundred ten dollars (\$110) per meeting attended of the full Arkansas Workforce Development Board or its committees, and the Arkansas Workforce Development Board members shall receive no other compensation, expense reimbursement, or in-lieu-of payments except as provided by A.C.A. §25-16-902.” and “The stipend shall be paid from Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funding awarded to the state and authorized for Arkansas Workforce Development Board activities.”

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Arkansas Workforce Development Board adopts as its official and stated policy the reimbursement of expenditures to its members in accordance with A.C.A. §15-4-3704 for the entire calendar year of 2020.

**For Consideration of the
Arkansas Workforce Development Board**

January 21, 2020

AGENDA ITEM 3 – INFORMATIONAL: Workforce Analysis

INFORMATION/RATIONALE: Workforce data provides the State the opportunity to review the current vision and mission of the State’s workforce development system in order to make strategic revisions or realignments of workforce development programs to support economic growth if needed.

An overview of the new Workforce Analysis data will be provided by the Research Division of the Arkansas Department of Commerce. This new data has been added to the Draft WIOA State Plan for Public Comment.

Input into the WIOA State Plan- 2020-23

Population

This section analyzes the demographics of Arkansas during 2010-30. Specifically, the study focuses on age and race populations at the state level, and urban-rural populations at the metropolitan, micropolitan and non-metropolitan level. Estimates (2010-18) are based on available data from the US Census Bureau and projections (2019-30) from the Institute for Economic Advancement at UALR and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Online Database.

Age Distribution

Figures 1-3 show Arkansas' population distribution by gender and age group for 2010, 2018 and 2030. As shown in these graphics, between 2010-18 the number of people 65+ grew substantially while the younger population (under-20) reduced. In fact, the 65+ group increased its share of the total population from 14.4% in 2010 to 17.0% in 2018, a growth of about 90,000 people. During the same period, the under 20 age group went down from 27.3% to 26.0%, a net decrease of about 14,000. Based on the population projections, by 2030, 26.7% of the state population will be under age 20 while 20.3% will be age 65 or older resulting in the older population continuing to increase its share of the total population. See Table 1 and Figure 4.

Population Pyramids for Arkansas

Figure 1

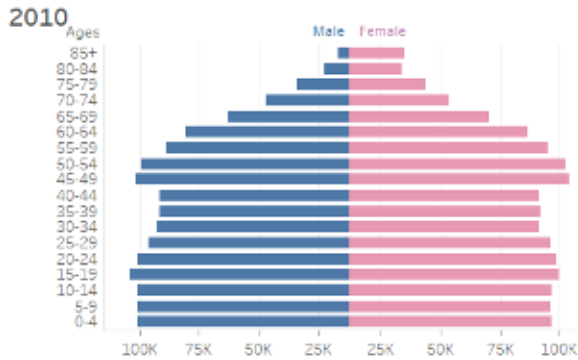


Figure 2

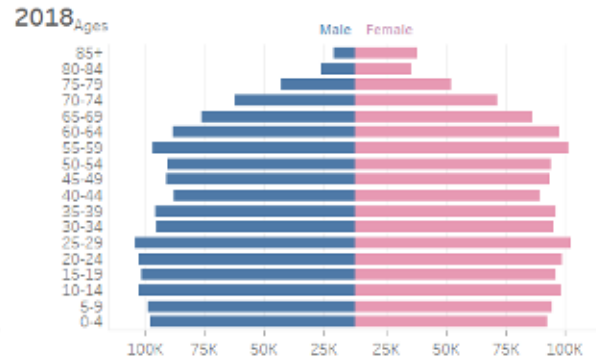


Figure 3

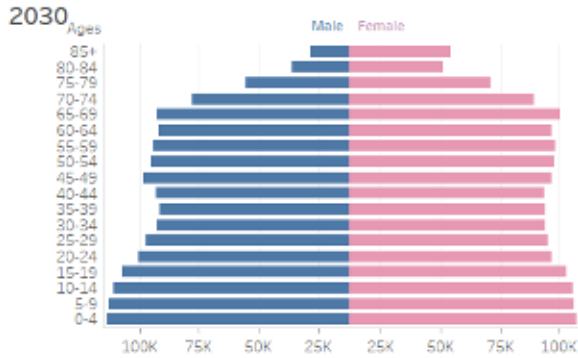
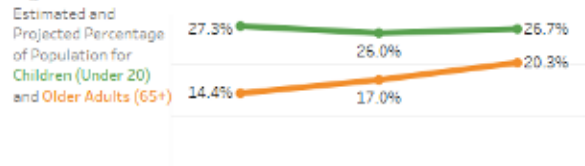


Table 1: Age Group Population Distribution for Arkansas

	2010	2018	2030
Under 20	795,930	782,120	866,073
Adults 20-64	1,700,007	1,719,878	1,717,729
Adults 65+	419,981	511,827	656,406
Grand Total	2,915,918	3,013,825	3,240,208

Figure 4



Sources

2010 data: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census estimates

2018 data: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division. Annual estimates. Release Date: June 2019

2030 data: Population Projections, United States, 2004 - 2030, by state, age and sex, on CDC WONDER Online Database (based upon U.S. Census Bureau data)

Racial and Ethnic Composition

This subsection describes the projected racial and ethnic composition of the state population from 2013-2060. Four major ethno-racial groups are identified: whites, blacks, Hispanics, and other races. Hispanics are not a racial group but rather an ethnic group, which means that whites, blacks and other races are found in this group. In this study, the whites, blacks and other races groups exclude Hispanics. The ethno-racial composition of the total population (all ages) and the younger population (under age 20) are examined.

Racial and Ethnic Composition, 2013-60

Figure 5: Arkansas Population - All Ages

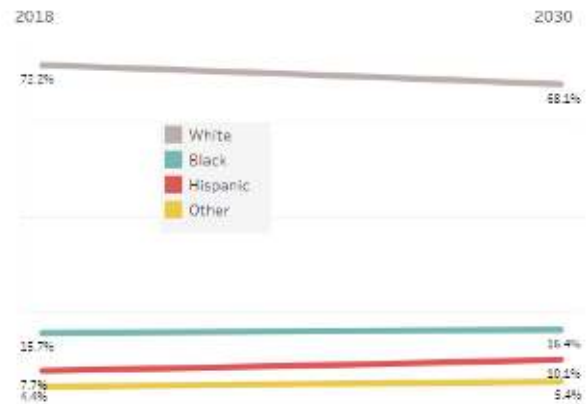
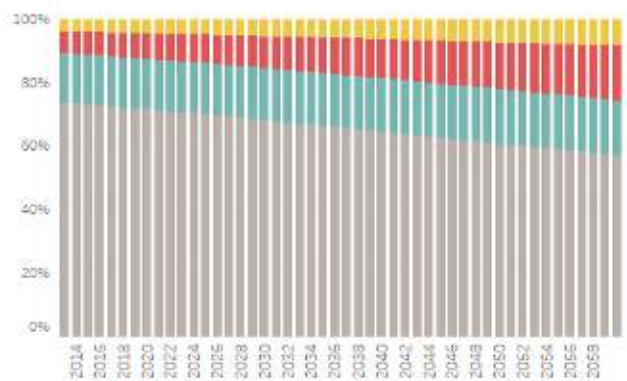
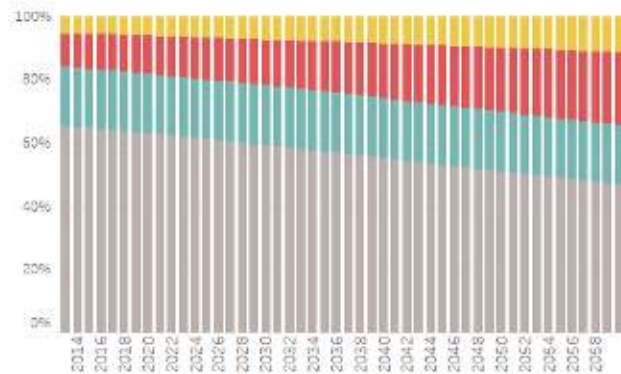
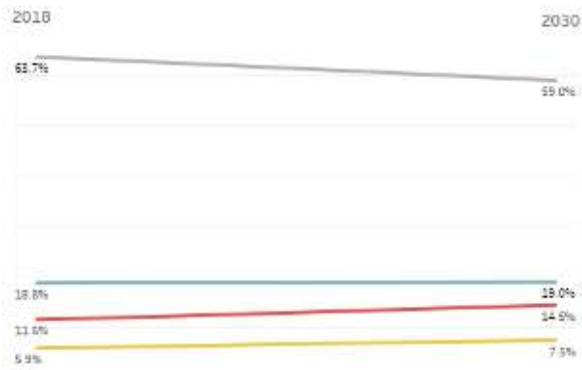


Figure 6: Arkansas Younger Population - Under 20



Source: Institute for Economic Advancement, College of Business, UALR. Projections 2013-20160 - Released in June 2014

According to Figures 5 and 6, whites constitute the current and projected predominant population group in Arkansas. The under 20 age group is more diverse than the total population with whites constituting 63.7% of the under 20 population in 2018 as compared to 72.2% of the total population (all ages).

The white population group is expected to experience a decrease in its share of the total population from 72.2% in 2018 to a projected 68.1% in 2030, a decrease of about 4.1 percentage points. The trend is also expected for the under age 20 population, with the share of the white group decreasing from 63.7% in 2018 to a projected 59.0% in 2030, a decrease of 4.7 percentage points.

The remaining three groups (blacks, Hispanics, and other races), all are expected to show an increase in their share of total population. However, the Hispanics are anticipated to experience the largest percentage growth going from 7.7% in 2018 to 10.1% in 2030. This is also true for the under age 20 population with the Hispanic group growing from 11.6% in 2018 to 14.5% in 2030.

Urban-Rural

There are two different definitions that categorize urban and rural areas in the country, one developed by the US Census Bureau and the other by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). The US Census Bureau defines urban and rural areas based strictly on population size and density and they do not necessarily follow municipal boundaries. The OMB follows a regional-economic concept to define counties or county-equivalent units as metropolitan, micropolitan or neither. A metropolitan area (MSA) consists of one or more counties with a core urban population of 50,000+ and a micropolitan area has a core urban population of at least 10,000 but less than 50,000. Metropolitan areas are categorized as urban while counties that are not part of a metropolitan area are considered rural. Table 4 lists the eight metropolitan areas in Arkansas and their constituents.

Population Estimates for Arkansas Metropolitan, Micropolitan and Other Rural Areas, 2010 - 2018

Map 1

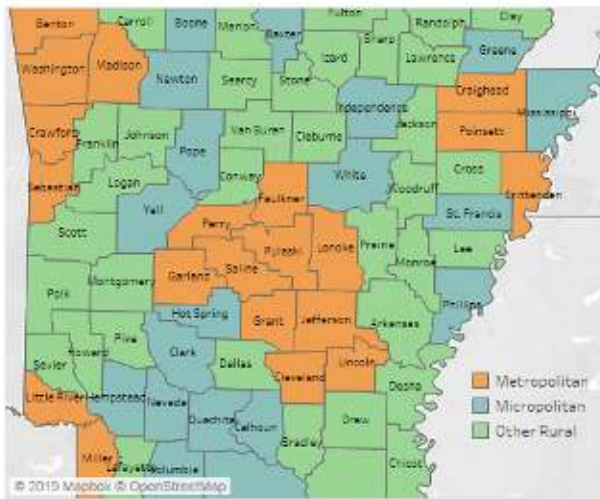


Figure 7: MSAs Population Share as a % of State Popul..

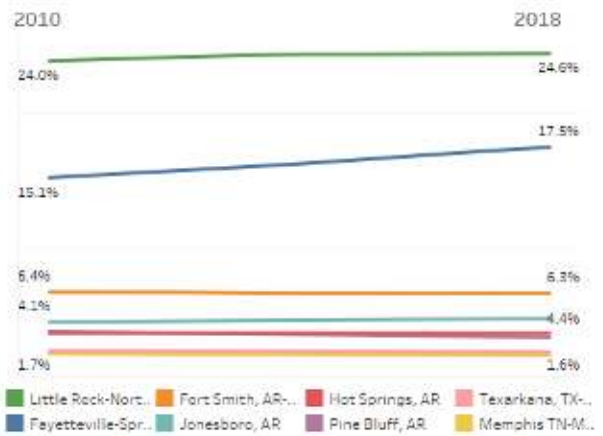


Table 2: Population Estimates

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Metropolitan	1,757,419	1,778,242	1,794,815	1,808,408	1,822,505	1,837,770	1,854,052	1,869,538	1,885,774
Micropolitan	609,048	609,081	607,459	604,343	602,452	601,724	600,260	597,897	596,251
Other Rural	555,511	553,084	545,835	546,778	542,769	538,904	536,118	535,162	533,800
Total	2,921,978	2,940,407	2,952,109	2,959,549	2,967,726	2,978,407	2,990,410	3,002,997	3,013,825

Table 3: Population Share as a % of State Population

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Metropolitan	60.1%	60.5%	60.8%	61.1%	61.4%	61.7%	62.0%	62.3%	62.6%
Micropolitan	20.8%	20.7%	20.6%	20.4%	20.3%	20.2%	20.1%	19.9%	19.8%
Other Rural	19.0%	18.8%	18.6%	18.5%	18.3%	18.1%	17.9%	17.8%	17.7%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: US Census Bureau, Population Division, Annual Estimates. Release Date: June 2019

This subsection follows the OMB definition of urban and rural to classify the state counties into three major groups: metropolitan, micropolitan, and other rural (see Map 1 above). Tables 2 and 3 provide annual population estimates for these three groups and their share of the total population from 2010-2018. Based on these figures, the majority of the state population is urban. In 2010, about 60% of all Arkansans lived in metropolitan areas while about 40% lived in rural areas (micropolitan and other rural). Population estimates from 2010-18 show that metropolitan areas are growing steadily but modestly. On the other hand, the populations of the micropolitan and other rural areas keep shrinking.

In 2018, the share of all Arkansans living in urban areas grew to 62.5% while population in rural areas (micropolitan and other rural) decreased to 37.5%.

Figure 7 examines population estimates at the metropolitan level from 2010-18. Out of eight metropolitan areas, Little Rock-North Little Rock-Conway, Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers, Fort Smith, and Jonesboro are the most populated. In 2010, these four areas alone hosted close to half (49.6%) of the state population and in 2018, their share passed the halfway mark with 52.8% of all Arkansans living in these metropolitan areas.

Table 4: Population Estimates for Metropolitan Counties as a % of State Population

Cbsa	County	Year (Population)									
		2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	
Little Rock-North Little Rock-Conway, AR	Pulaski	13.1%	13.2%	13.2%	13.2%	13.2%	13.2%	13.2%	13.1%	13.0%	
	Faulkner	3.3%	4.0%	4.0%	4.0%	4.1%	4.1%	4.1%	4.1%	4.1%	
	Saline	3.7%	3.7%	3.8%	3.8%	3.9%	3.9%	3.9%	4.0%	4.0%	
	Lonoke	2.4%	2.4%	2.4%	2.4%	2.4%	2.4%	2.4%	2.4%	2.4%	
	Grant	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%	
	Perry	0.4%	0.4%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	
Total	Total	24.0%	24.2%	24.3%	24.4%	24.5%	24.6%	24.6%	24.6%		
Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers, AR-MO	Benton	7.6%	7.8%	8.0%	8.1%	8.3%	8.4%	8.7%	8.9%	9.0%	
	Washington	7.0%	7.1%	7.2%	7.3%	7.4%	7.5%	7.6%	7.8%	7.9%	
	Madison	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	
	Total	15.1%	15.4%	15.7%	15.9%	16.2%	16.5%	16.8%	17.2%	17.5%	
Fort Smith, AR-OK	Sebastian	4.3%	4.3%	4.3%	4.3%	4.3%	4.3%	4.3%	4.3%	4.2%	
	Crawford	2.1%	2.1%	2.1%	2.1%	2.1%	2.1%	2.1%	2.1%	2.1%	
	Total	6.4%	6.4%	6.4%	6.4%	6.4%	6.4%	6.3%	6.4%	6.3%	
Jonesboro, AR	Craighead	3.3%	3.3%	3.4%	3.4%	3.5%	3.5%	3.5%	3.6%	3.6%	
	Poinsett	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	
	Total	4.1%	4.2%	4.2%	4.3%	4.3%	4.3%	4.3%	4.4%	4.4%	
Hot Springs, AR	Gorland	3.3%	3.3%	3.3%	3.3%	3.3%	3.3%	3.3%	3.3%	3.3%	
	Total	3.3%	3.3%	3.3%	3.3%	3.3%	3.3%	3.3%	3.3%	3.3%	
Pine Bluff, AR	Jefferson	2.6%	2.6%	2.5%	2.5%	2.4%	2.4%	2.4%	2.3%	2.3%	
	Lincoln	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.4%	0.4%	
	Cleveland	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	
	Total	3.4%	3.4%	3.3%	3.2%	3.2%	3.2%	3.1%	3.0%	3.0%	
Texarkana, TX-AR	Miller	1.5%	1.5%	1.5%	1.5%	1.5%	1.5%	1.5%	1.5%	1.4%	
	Little River	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%	
	Total	1.9%	1.9%	1.9%	1.9%	1.9%	1.9%	1.9%	1.9%	1.9%	
Memphis TN-MS-AR	Crittenden	1.7%	1.7%	1.7%	1.7%	1.7%	1.6%	1.7%	1.6%	1.6%	
	Total	1.7%	1.7%	1.7%	1.7%	1.7%	1.6%	1.7%	1.6%	1.6%	
Grand Total	Grand Total	60.1%	60.5%	60.8%	61.1%	61.4%	61.7%	62.0%	62.3%	62.5%	

Figure 8: International and Domestic Migration as a Share of MSA Population Change



Source: US Census Bureau, Population Division, Annual Estimates. Release Date: June 2019

Table 4 takes a more detailed look at the population estimates at the county level in the metropolitan areas. For example, in 2018, 21.1% of the state population lived in Pulaski, Faulkner and Saline counties in the LR-NLR-Conway metropolitan area. In the same year, within the Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers area, Benton and Washington counties were the most populated sharing 16.9% of the total population. Between 2010 and 2018, most of the gains in the state urban population came from population growth in Benton and Washington. During this period, these two counties alone increased their share of total population by 2.3 percentage points (Table 4).

In general terms, the population in a geographic region can vary over time due to changes in several factors: number of births, deaths, and migration. Figure 8 focuses on migration, international and

domestic, as source of annual population change for the LR-NLR-Conway and the Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers metropolitan areas from 2010-18. For instance, in 2011, 52.6% of the population change (from the previous year) in the LR-NLR-Conway MSA was due to migration into the area. Out of this, domestic migration accounted for 40.3% while international migration contributed 12.3%. On the other hand, in 2016, 18.9% of the population change was due to domestic migration out of the region (hence a negative percentage) while 32.7% was due to international migration into the area.

The overall migration patterns for these two metro areas are different. During this period, the Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers area experienced consistently positive international and domestic migration accounting jointly for about 60% or more of their annual population change. On the other hand, domestic migration in the LR-NLR-Conway area has been decreasing over the years and at times has even been negative. Since 2014, annual international migration in this area has accounted for a larger share of population change compared to their domestic counterpart.

Industry

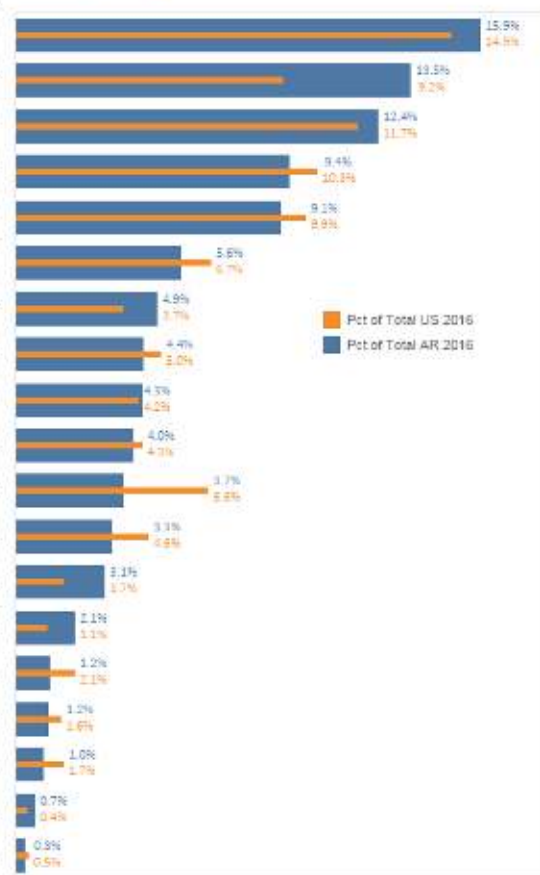
This section describes projected labor demand trends by industry sector for the state and Local Workforce Development Areas (WDA) for the decade of 2016-26. The analysis is based on the long-term (2016-26) State and Local WDA industry projections published by the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services and the national long-term industry projections published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The industries analyzed include all the 2-digit industry sectors defined by the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS), except for two – the self-employed and government sectors.

Industry Sectors at the State Level

Table 5: Number of Jobs by Industry Sector, Arkansas, Projections 2016-26

	2016	2026	Change
Health Care and Social Assistance	182,304	219,955	37,651
Manufacturing	154,599	150,865	4,266
Large			
Retail Trade	142,235	157,084	14,849
Educational Services	107,517	116,492	7,975
Accommodation and Food Services	104,238	119,183	14,945
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	64,767	71,267	6,490
Transportation and Warehousing	55,888	61,161	5,463
Construction	50,297	56,560	6,263
Medium			
Other Services (except Government)	49,734	51,225	1,491
Wholesale Trade	46,263	49,509	3,246
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	42,608	48,828	6,218
Finance and Insurance	38,305	41,071	2,766
Management of Companies and Enterprises	35,108	43,137	8,029
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	23,681	25,521	1,840
Information	13,562	13,315	-237
Small			
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	13,290	14,690	1,400
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	11,039	11,872	833
Utilities	7,696	7,975	279
Mining	4,008	3,916	-92
Total (19 Industries)	1,146,930	1,270,734	123,795

Figure 9: Share of Jobs (%) by Industry Sector, 2016, Arkansas and US



Sources: (1) Arkansas Division of Workforce Services, Labor Market Information and (2) Bureau of Labor Statistics, Employment Projections
 Note: Educational Services includes Local and State Government Education. Health Care and Social Assistance includes Local and State Government Hospitals.

Table 5 shows the employment projections by each industry sector in the state in 2016 and 2026. According to the data, labor demand in the state is expected to increase by 123,795 jobs between 2016-26. This increase will mainly come from growth in the top five industry sectors: Health care and Social Assistance, Manufacturing, Retail Trade, Educational Services, and Accommodation and Food Services, which jointly are anticipated to add 79,686 jobs.

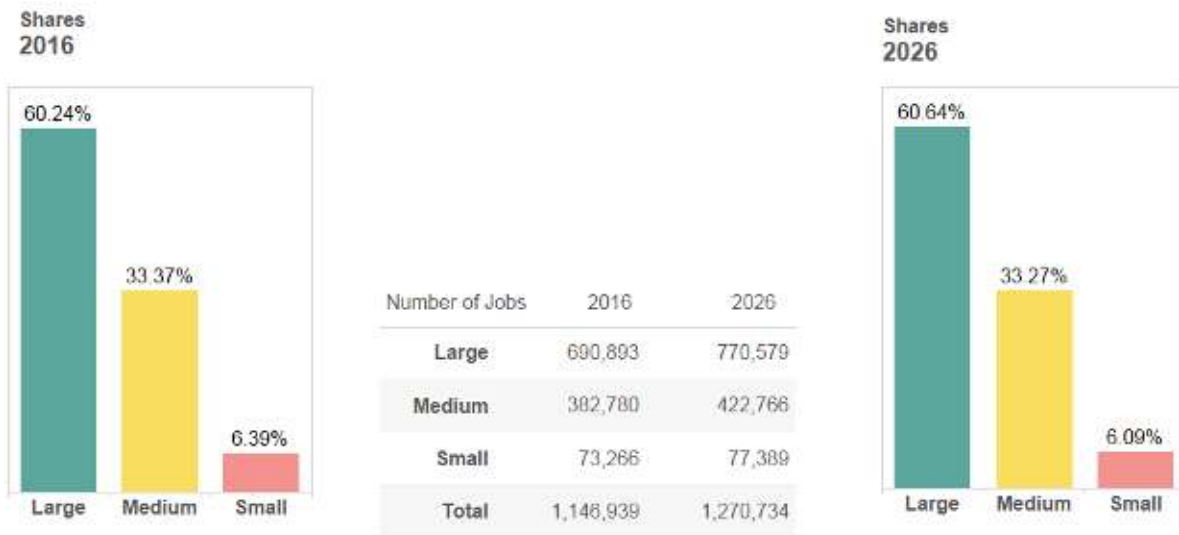
Figure 9 shows the employment numbers in 2016 as a percentage of the total jobs at the state and national level. According to these numbers, there are differences in the state and national job distribution patterns. The sectors in Arkansas that employ significantly more people compared to their counterparts in the nation are: (1) Manufacturing, (2) Transportation and Warehousing, (3) Management of Companies and Enterprises, and (4) Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting. On the other hand, the industry sectors that employ significantly less people than at the national level are: (1) Professional, Scientific and Technical Services, (2) Finance and Insurance, (3) Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services, and (4) Information.

To facilitate the analysis, the industry sectors at the state level are divided into three groups based on the number of jobs: Large (employing 100,000 or more), Medium (employing between 35,000-100,000) and Small (employing less than 35,000).

Even though the percentage distribution of jobs among the industry sectors in the state are different from the nation, the job distribution numbers among the three groups mentioned above are about the same. For instance, the large group (comprising the top five industry sectors) accounts for 60.3% of all jobs in Arkansas and 56% of all jobs in the country. The medium group (next eight industry sectors) accounts for 33.4 % of jobs in Arkansas and about 36.8% of jobs in the country and finally, the small group (consisting of the bottom six sectors) accounts for 6.4% of the state jobs and 7.4% of the nation’s jobs (Figure 9).

Figure 10 below shows the number of jobs and corresponding percentage share of state jobs for the three groups in 2016 and 2026. This figure shows that even though jobs are expected to increase by 123,795 in a decade, the percentage share of state jobs are projected to stay very close to the 2016 level for all three groups.

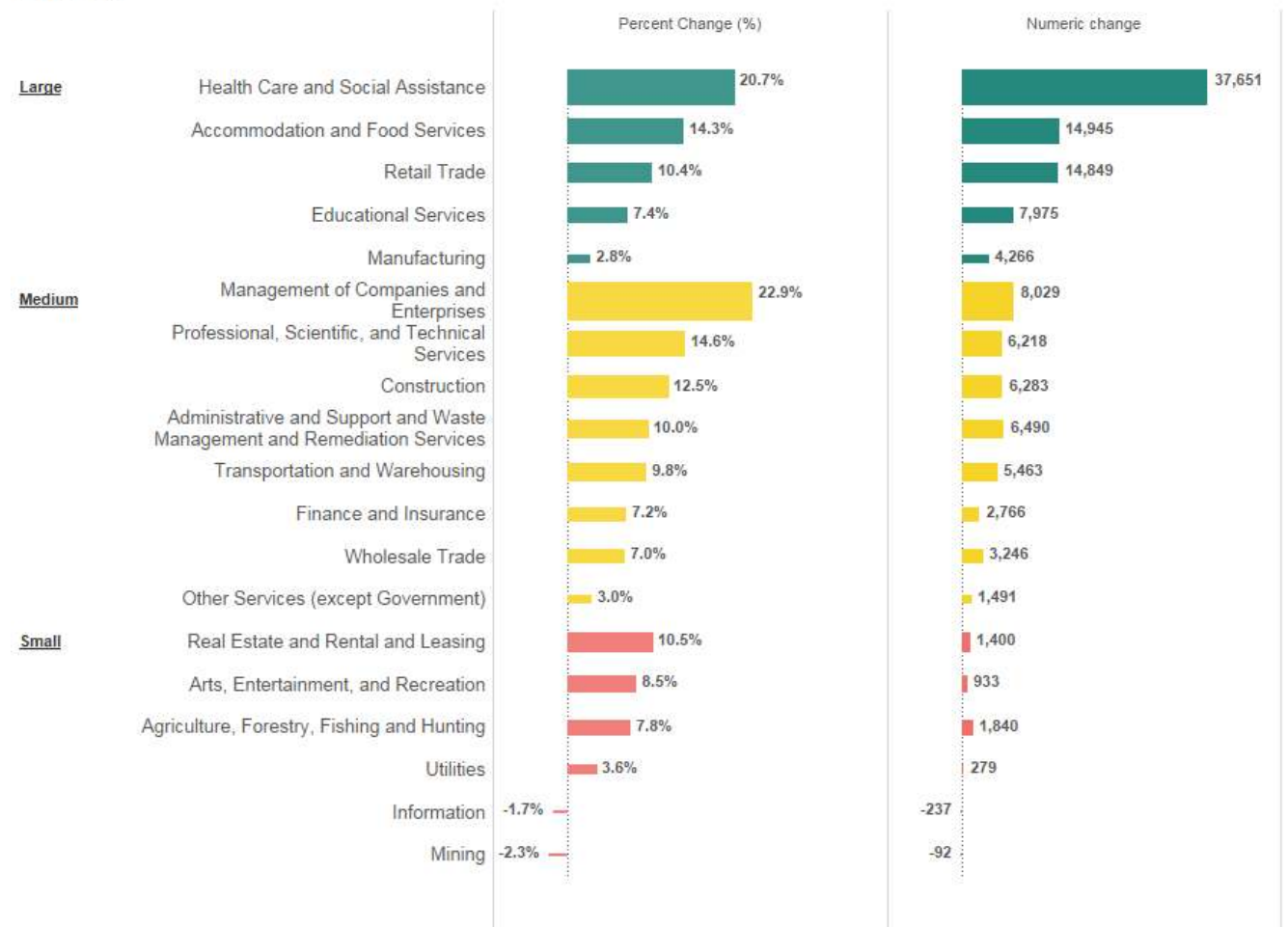
Figure 10: Number of Jobs by Industry Sector Size and Share (%) of State Total, 2016 and 2026



Source: Arkansas Division of Workforce Services, Labor Market Information- State Long Term Projections 2016-26

Figure 11 below displays the percentage and numeric change in the number of state jobs for the three groups between 2016 and 2026. All industry sectors are expected to show growth except for two – Information and Mining. For the large industry sectors, Health Care and Social Assistance is projected to show the fastest growth (20.7% increase and 37,651 additional jobs). Similarly, for the medium-sized industry sectors, Management of Companies and Enterprises is expected to grow the fastest (22.9% and 8,029 jobs) and likewise, among the small-sized sectors Real Estate and Rental and Leasing are expected to grow by 10.5% and 1,400 jobs.

Figure 11: Percent Change and Numeric Growth by Industry Sector, Arkansas, Projected Jobs 2016-26



Industry Sectors at the Local WDA Level

Arkansas is divided into ten local Workforce Development Areas. Figure 12 lists the ten areas along with their projected percent and numeric change in total employment for all sectors between 2016-2026. The Northwest WDA is expected to grow at the fastest rate (14.2%) and also add the most number of jobs (37,546).

Figure 12: Percent Change (%) and Numeric Growth by Region, Projections 2016-26

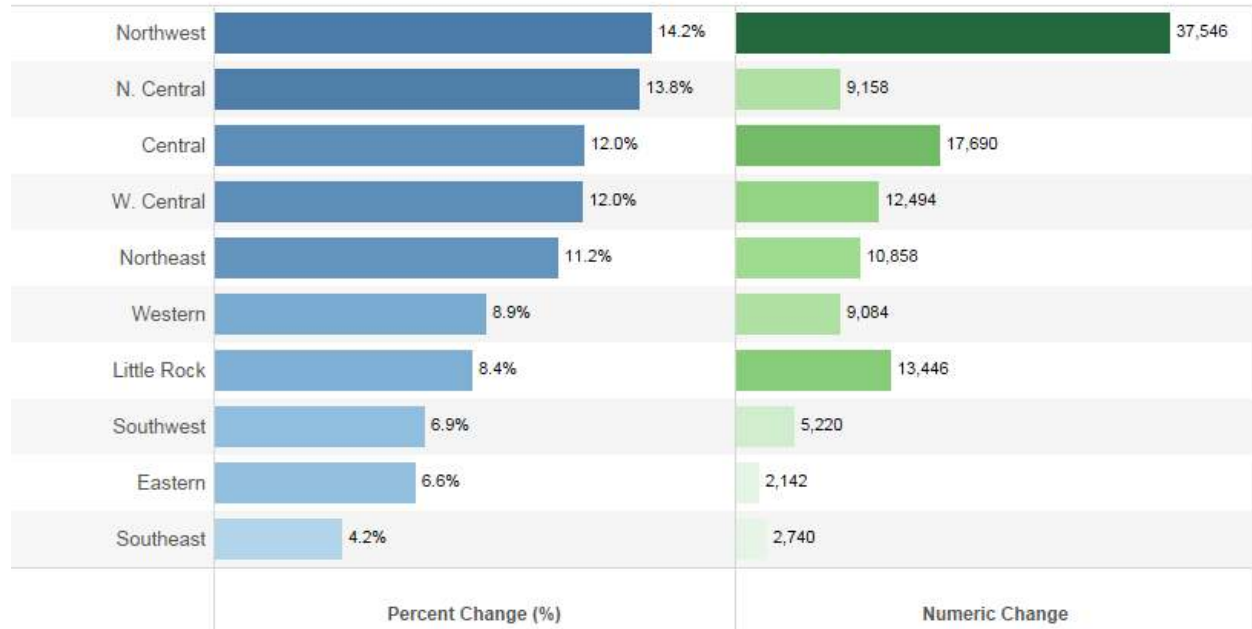


Table 6: Number of Jobs by Industry Sector and Local Region, Projections 2016

	Central	Eastern	Little Rock	N. Central	Northeast	Northwest	Southeast	Southwe..	W. Central	Western	
Large	Health Care and Social Assist..	21,320	5,996	38,493	12,924	16,734	31,861	11,452	10,169	16,336	15,267
	Manufacturing	11,610	3,393	7,465	8,083	19,358	34,341	14,275	19,064	15,984	20,888
	Retail Trade	23,462	4,904	15,705	9,621	12,777	31,982	7,724	8,861	14,240	12,614
	Educational Services	12,881	4,203	11,074	8,341	10,527	24,995	7,809	7,996	11,167	8,155
	Accommodation and Food Se..	16,999	3,023	13,588	6,041	8,692	26,132	4,420	5,328	11,249	8,720
	Total	86,272	21,519	86,325	45,010	68,088	149,311	45,680	51,418	68,976	65,642
Medium	Administrative and Waste Ser..	8,477	1,552	10,649	2,139	4,869	11,318	2,175	2,273	5,252	6,388
	Transportation and Warehous..	7,149	2,223	5,251	3,759	3,072	17,269	2,664	3,928	4,289	6,001
	Construction	9,956	921	4,775	2,368	3,794	10,910	2,076	3,599	4,563	3,906
	Other Services (except Gover..	8,580	1,297	8,960	2,669	2,707	9,631	2,420	3,524	4,796	4,286
	Wholesale Trade	6,599	2,117	6,928	1,646	3,386	9,794	2,072	1,914	1,942	3,560
	Professional and Technical S..	7,045	500	10,022	1,131	1,620	12,133	856	1,041	1,962	1,998
	Finance and Insurance	4,229	737	11,943	2,010	2,290	6,674	1,880	1,867	3,027	2,421
	Management of Companies a..	1,303	173	3,955	303	610	24,199	356	1,069	411	2,430
Total	53,338	9,520	62,483	16,025	22,348	101,928	14,499	19,215	26,242	30,990	
Small	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing ..	1,786			2,285	3,558	3,142	3,573	2,524	3,144	1,475
	Information	1,143	197	5,166	500	724	2,535	315	455	847	1,138
	Real Estate and Rental and L..	1,853	556	2,698	583	1,038	2,719	575	743	1,074	1,120
	Arts, Entertainment, and Recr..	1,470	674	1,526	508	511	3,042	236	386	2,139	495
	Utilities	515	208	1,538	669	447	1,119	580	539	1,345	653
	Mining, Quarrying, and Oil an..	550			609	102	132	55	739	536	816
Total	7,317	1,635	10,928	5,154	6,380	12,689	5,334	5,386	9,085	5,697	
Grand Total	146,927	32,674	159,736	66,189	96,816	263,928	65,513	76,019	104,303	102,329	

Note: The cells are shaded for dark blue to light gray based on job numbers.

Table 6 shows the number of jobs in 2016 for each of the industry sectors at the WDA level. The majority of the jobs across all industry sectors are located in three local Workforce Development Areas –

Northwest, Little Rock and Central. The three areas together account for about 51.2 % of all WDA jobs with the Northwest taking the largest share. Apart from jobs in Health Care and Social Assistance, the majority of the jobs in the large industry sectors are located in the Northwest. The Little Rock Area accounts for the largest number of jobs in Health Care and Social Assistance. Among the medium-sized industry sectors, most of the jobs in Transportation and Warehousing and Management of Companies and Enterprises are located in the Northwest.

Table 7 shows the estimated projected percentage change in the number of jobs for each of the industry sectors at the WDA level between 2016 and 2026. In the large industry sectors, the Health Care and Social Assistance sector is expected to grow significantly across all local WDAs, while Manufacturing shows modest growth or decline in all areas except for North Central and North East where it shows a relatively strong growth. Among the medium-sized sectors, Management of Companies and Enterprises is expected to experience the fastest growth among all industry sectors across all WDAs with the exception of West Central. Among the small-sized industrial sectors, Information shows an across the board decline with the exception of the Central WDA, which shows a significant growth. The Mining sector also shows a modest growth or decline in all WDAs except for the Northeast.

Table 7: Percent Change (%) in Industry Sector Jobs by Local Region, Projections 2016-26

		Central	Eastern	Little Rock	N. Central	Northeast	Northwest	Southeast	Southwe..	W. Central	Western
Large	Health Care and Social Assistance	24.9%	22.2%	17.6%	19.8%	17.1%	23.1%	18.8%	21.2%	20.9%	21.3%
	Manufacturing	-0.6%	-4.8%	3.2%	9.3%	8.9%	4.1%	-1.4%	0.1%	2.9%	0.3%
	Retail Trade	10.2%	6.0%	1.1%	10.4%	9.8%	16.9%	6.2%	10.6%	11.7%	10.0%
	Educational Services	9.5%	-1.6%	5.8%	9.2%	9.3%	10.8%	-1.1%	0.0%	9.0%	9.3%
	Accommodation and Food Services	16.5%	5.5%	8.3%	23.3%	8.9%	13.9%	7.9%	10.2%	27.9%	11.7%
Medium	Administrative and Waste Services	9.7%	10.1%	6.2%	26.7%	27.5%	11.7%	10.1%	19.5%	8.3%	4.5%
	Transportation and Warehousing	7.0%	6.8%	2.4%	10.3%	14.2%	14.1%	-7.1%	7.4%	12.9%	13.9%
	Construction	12.9%	4.2%	12.6%	15.0%	14.4%	14.3%	7.6%	9.5%	12.1%	10.3%
	Other Services (except Government)	7.2%	-0.6%	2.8%	3.3%	-0.9%	9.0%	-3.9%	-5.3%	-3.8%	-1.0%
	Wholesale Trade	4.2%	3.3%	4.4%	16.9%	4.2%	12.9%	-0.5%	0.4%	1.1%	3.5%
	Professional and Technical Services	15.7%	11.8%	12.1%	15.7%	15.6%	15.7%	17.2%	6.5%	15.7%	15.6%
	Finance and Insurance	4.5%	2.7%	6.4%	5.5%	4.1%	9.7%	-4.5%	-0.5%	22.5%	3.0%
	Management of Companies and Enterprises	30.5%	28.9%	11.3%	42.2%	37.9%	23.6%	16.0%	36.8%	-6.6%	24.4%
Small	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	15.6%			23.2%	4.0%	17.8%	-5.6%	8.6%	3.2%	4.7%
	Information	19.5%	-5.6%	-4.9%	-5.4%	-6.1%	-2.4%	-9.2%	-10.1%	2.4%	-4.0%
	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	6.9%	4.0%	8.4%	4.0%	9.2%	19.1%	6.4%	7.7%	14.0%	8.4%
	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	8.1%	5.0%	5.9%	9.7%	9.0%	10.8%	11.0%	-0.3%	7.5%	15.6%
	Utilities	15.7%	0.0%	4.2%	4.2%	1.1%	4.2%	0.5%	4.3%	4.2%	-4.9%
	Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	1.3%			-3.3%	12.8%	-20.5%	-9.1%	-5.3%	-4.3%	-0.9%

Note: Positive % changes are represented in shades of green while negative % changes are represented in shades of red.

Labor Force and Unemployment Rate

This section describes the State labor force and unemployment rate estimates for the period between January 2008 – September 2019 published by the Division of Workforce Services. Stated simply, the labor force includes all civilians 16 years and older who are employed or unemployed.

	Total	Labor Force Participation Rate	Employment / Population Ratio	Unemployment rate
Population 16 years and over	2,351,061	58.1%	54.3%	6.3%
AGE				
16 to 19 years	159,890	35.6%	28.2%	20.7%
20 to 24 years	205,401	72.5%	63.7%	11.5%
25 to 29 years	196,865	78.3%	72.0%	7.3%
30 to 34 years	190,888	78.7%	73.1%	6.7%
35 to 44 years	367,460	78.3%	74.0%	5.2%
45 to 54 years	381,092	74.1%	71.0%	4.1%
55 to 59 years	193,913	64.7%	62.5%	3.5%
60 to 64 years	179,385	48.2%	46.9%	2.8%
65 to 74 years	277,145	22.1%	21.4%	3.0%
75 years and over	199,022	6.3%	6.1%	3.2%
RACE AND HISPANIC OR LATINO ORIGIN				
White alone	1,859,731	57.8%	54.6%	5.3%
Black or African American alone	346,651	57.3%	50.5%	11.6%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	15,335	52.0%	47.4%	8.4%
Asian alone	33,582	65.8%	62.7%	4.5%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	4,518	61.1%	57.1%	6.5%
Some other race alone	49,008	70.4%	66.8%	5.1%
Two or more races	42,236	58.5%	53.2%	8.4%
Hispanic or Latino origin (of any race)	137,412	68.7%	64.9%	5.1%
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	1,776,600	57.3%	54.1%	5.3%
Population 20 to 64 years	1,715,004	72.0%	67.6%	5.8%
SEX				
Male	848,276	77.0%	71.9%	6.0%
Female	866,728	67.2%	63.4%	5.5%
With own children under 18 years	316,317	71.5%	67.2%	5.9%
With own children under 6 years only	73,221	67.7%	61.7%	8.7%
With own children under 6 years and 6 to 17 years	65,400	64.5%	60.4%	6.2%
With own children under 6 to 17 years only	177,696	75.7%	72.1%	4.7%
POVERTY STATUS IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS				
Below poverty level	281,384	46.5%	36.1%	22.3%
At or above the poverty level	1,392,444	79.0%	75.7%	3.8%
DISABILITY STATUS				
With any disability	261,041	34.7%	30.5%	11.9%
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT				
Population 25 to 64 years	1,509,603	72.0%	68.2%	5.0%
Less than high school graduate	188,642	53.9%	48.8%	9.4%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	508,200	67.4%	63.2%	6.2%
Some college or associate's degree	463,632	74.9%	70.8%	4.9%
Bachelor's degree or higher	349,129	84.6%	82.4%	2.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Table 8 above takes a detailed look at the labor force data for the year 2017 calculated by the U.S. Census Bureau (based on the 2013-2017 American Community Survey). The table includes labor force participation rates, employment-to-population ratios and unemployment rates for various

demographics. The highest unemployment rates are found among the younger population, Blacks or African Americans, persons with disabilities, and those with less than a high school diploma.

Figure 13: Arkansas Labor Force and Number of Employed, January 2008 - September 2019

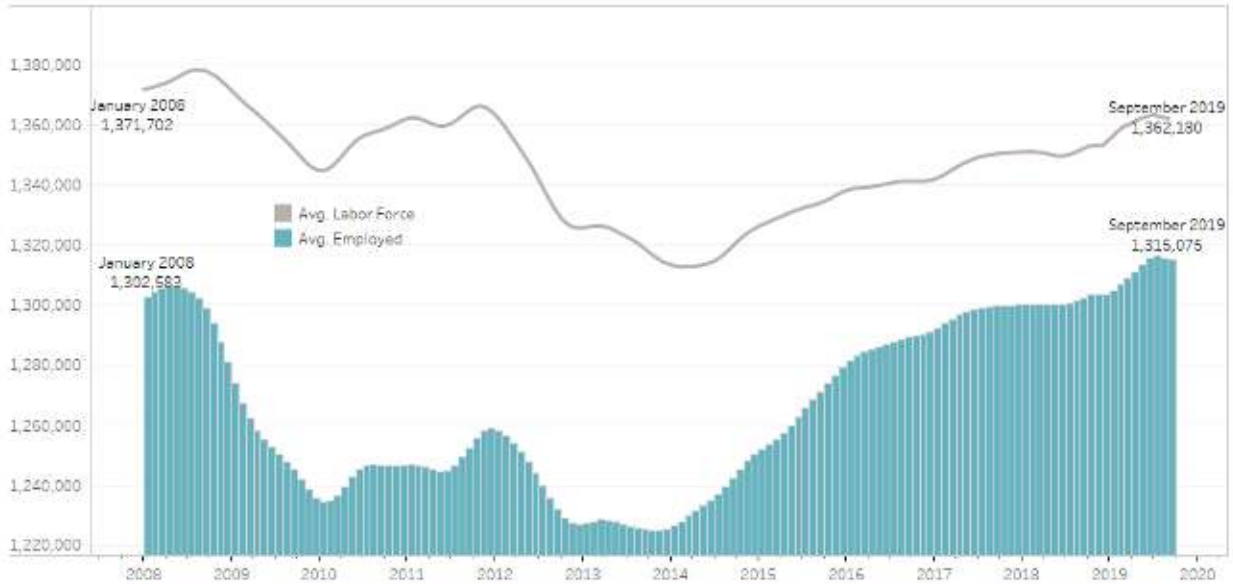


Figure 14: Arkansas Monthly Unemployment Rate, January, 2008 - September, 2019



Source: Division of Workforce Services, Labor Market Information

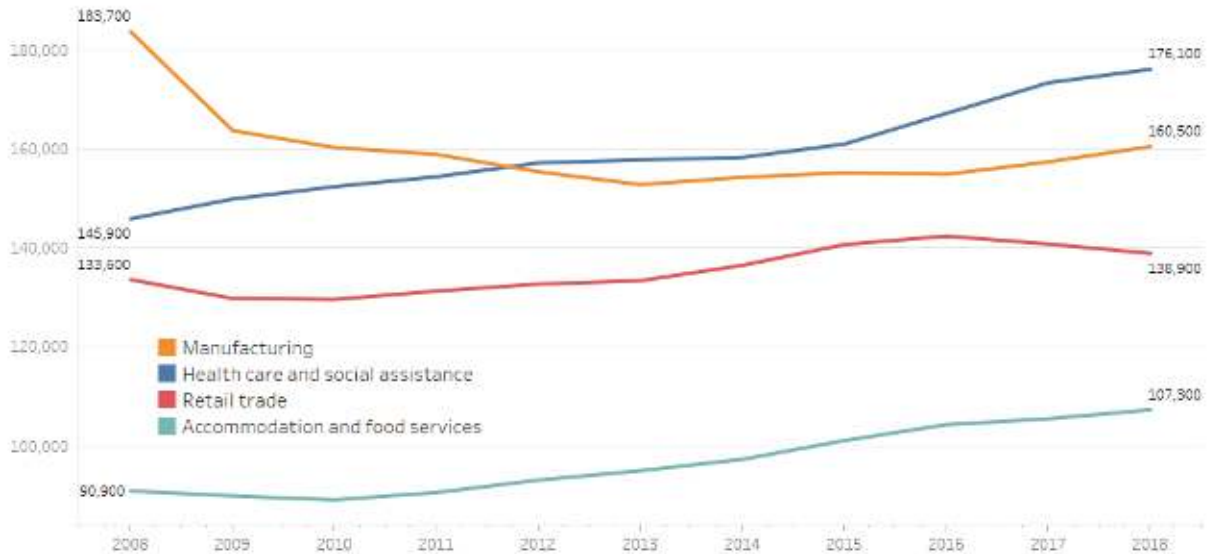
Figure 13 shows historical data (January 2008 – September 2019) for the State labor force and the number of employed. As a consequence of the Great Recession of 2008, both the labor force and the number of unemployed decreased from 2008 till 2010. They made a modest recovery from 2010-2012 and then shows a sharp decline again until 2014. From that point onward the labor force and number of unemployed have experienced a steady increase. However, since 2014 the number of employed has increased at a faster rate than the labor force. In fact, the number of employed in September 2019 has

surpassed the pre-recession level while the labor force is just approaching its pre-recession level. As a result, the unemployment rate has been steadily decreasing from its highest in May 2011 (8.5%) to its lowest at 3.4% in August 2019 (See Figure 14).

Nonfarm Industry Employment Estimates

Trends in the employment estimates from 2008-2018 for the Large, Medium, and Small nonfarm Industry Sectors are analyzed in this section. The Large, Medium, and Small Industry Sectors are defined in the above section on Industry Employment Projections. The Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting sector is excluded from this analysis while Utilities is incorporated into the Transportation and Warehousing sector.

Figure 15: Annual Employment Estimates for Large Industry Sectors, 2008-2018



Source: Arkansas Division of Workforce Services, Labor Market Information (CES)

NAICS Industry Title	2018	2016	2008	2-year Change		10-year Change	
				Numeric	%	Numeric	%
Manufacturing	160,500	154,900	183,700	5,600	3.6%	-23,200	-12.6%
Health care and social assistance	176,100	167,200	145,900	8,900	5.3%	30,200	20.7%
Retail trade	138,900	142,400	133,600	-3,500	-2.5%	5,300	4.0%
Accommodation and food services	107,300	104,300	90,900	3,000	2.9%	16,400	18.0%

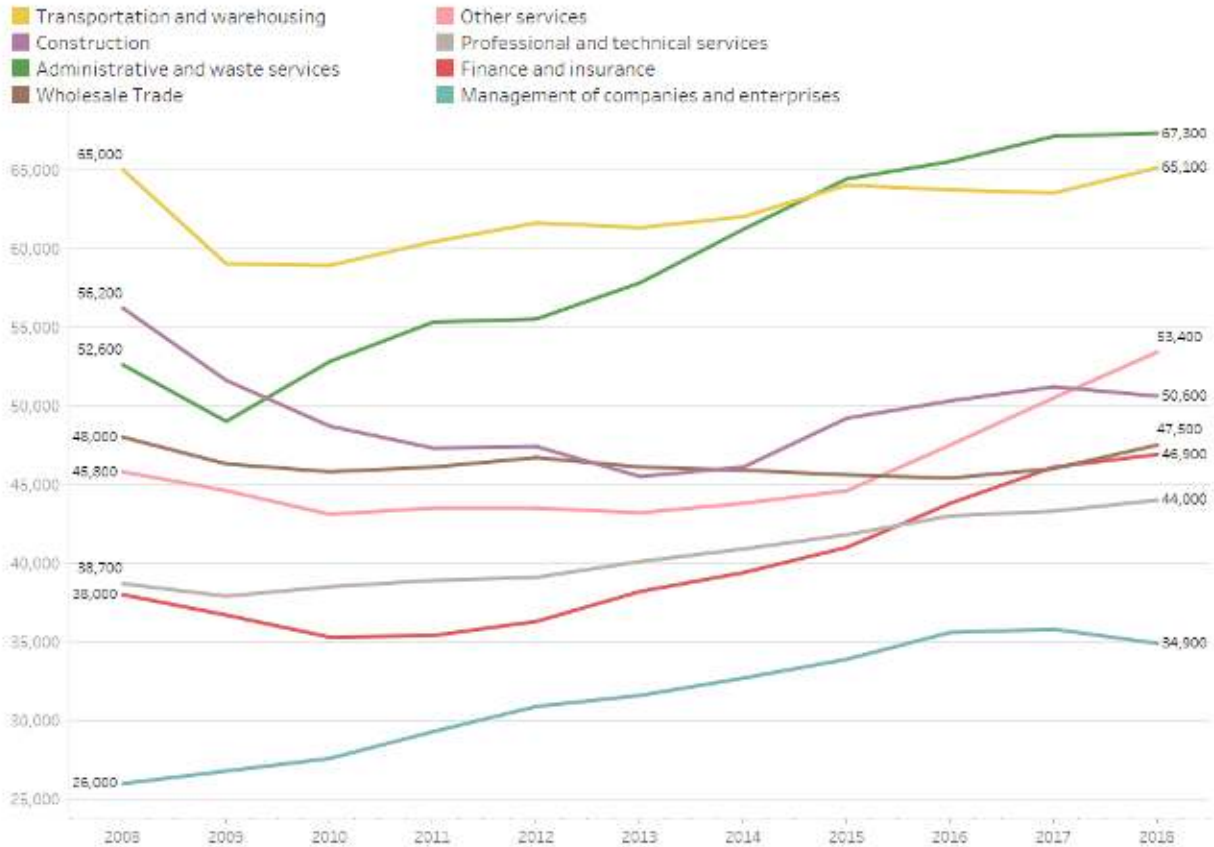
Source: Arkansas Division of Workforce Services, Labor Market Information.

Among the large sectors, Health Care and Social Assistance has been consistently increasing in the past decade while Manufacturing showed a sharp decline from 2008-2013 and since then shown a modest

growth in employment (see Figure 15). In terms of percentage change, Health Care and Social Assistance experienced the fastest growth at 20.7% (Table 9).

In the medium-sized sectors, all industries showed a modest growth from 2010 onward with Administrative and Waste Services experiencing the greatest numeric change with 14,700 jobs added while Management of Companies and Enterprises experienced the greatest percentage change at 34.2%. See Figure 16 and Table 10.

Figure 16: Annual Employment Estimates for Medium Industry Sectors, 2008-2018



Source: Arkansas Division of Workforce Services, Labor Market Information (CES)

Table 10: Medium Industry Sectors Annual Employment Estimates - 2018, 2016 and 2008

NAICS Industry Title	2018	2016	2008	2-year Change		10-year Change	
				Numeric	%	Numeric	%
Transportation and warehousing	65,100	63,700	65,000	1,400	2.2%	100	0.2%
Construction	50,600	50,300	56,200	300	0.6%	-5,600	-10.0%
Administrative and waste services	67,300	65,500	52,600	1,800	2.7%	14,700	27.9%
Wholesale Trade	47,500	45,400	48,000	2,100	4.6%	-500	-1.0%
Other services	53,400	47,500	45,800	5,900	12.4%	7,600	16.6%
Professional and technical services	44,000	43,000	38,700	1,000	2.3%	5,300	13.7%
Finance and insurance	46,900	43,800	38,000	3,100	7.1%	8,900	23.4%
Management of companies and enterprises	34,900	35,600	26,000	-700	-2.0%	8,900	34.2%

Source: Arkansas Division of Workforce Services, Labor Market Information.

For the small-sized sectors, all industries show either a decline or a slight increase in employment. The Mining and Logging sector showed the largest percentage decline at 43.9% (a loss of 4,700 jobs) followed by Information at 35.6% (6,200 jobs lost). See Figure 17 and Table 11

Figure 17: Annual Employment Estimates for Small Industry Sectors, 2008-2018



Source: Arkansas Division of Workforce Services, Labor Market Information (CES)

NAICS Industry Title	2018	2016	2008	2-year Change		10-year Change	
				Numeric	%	Numeric	%
Information	11,200	12,400	17,400	-1,200	-9.7%	-6,200	-35.6%
Real estate and rental and leasing	13,600	13,300	14,300	300	2.3%	-700	-4.9%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	11,300	11,000	9,900	300	2.7%	1,400	14.1%
Mining and logging	6,000	6,400	10,700	-400	-6.3%	-4,700	-43.9%

Source: Arkansas Division of Workforce Services, Labor Market Information.

Table 12 is a more comprehensive list of the nonfarm employment estimates for all industry sectors for 2018, 2016 and 2008.

NAICS Industry Title	2018	2016	2008	2-year Change		10-year Change	
				Numeric	%	Numeric	%
Total nonfarm	1,261,900	1,233,000	1,202,500	28,900	2.3%	59,400	4.9%
Total private	1,049,700	1,021,200	988,700	28,500	2.8%	61,000	6.2%
Goods-producing	217,100	211,500	250,600	5,600	2.6%	-33,500	-13.4%
Mining and logging	6,000	6,400	10,700	-400	-6.3%	-4,700	-43.9%
Construction	50,600	50,300	56,200	300	0.6%	-5,600	-10.0%
Specialty trade contractors	32,000	32,000	32,700	0	0.0%	-700	-2.1%
Manufacturing	160,500	154,900	183,700	5,600	3.6%	-23,200	-12.6%
Durable goods	76,500	74,500	95,300	2,000	2.7%	-18,800	-19.7%
Nondurable goods	84,100	80,400	88,400	3,700	4.6%	-4,300	-4.9%
Service-providing	1,044,800	1,021,500	951,900	23,300	2.3%	92,900	9.8%
Trade, transportation, and utilities	251,500	251,600	246,500	-100	0.0%	5,000	2.0%
Wholesale Trade	47,500	45,400	48,000	2,100	4.6%	-500	-1.0%
Retail trade	138,900	142,400	133,600	-3,500	-2.5%	5,300	4.0%
Transportation and warehousing	65,100	63,700	65,000	1,400	2.2%	100	0.2%
Information	11,200	12,400	17,400	-1,200	-9.7%	-6,200	-35.6%
Financial activities	60,500	57,100	52,400	3,400	6.0%	8,100	15.5%
Finance and insurance	46,900	43,800	38,000	3,100	7.1%	8,900	23.4%
Real estate and rental and leasing	13,600	13,300	14,300	300	2.3%	-700	-4.9%
Professional and business services	146,200	144,000	117,300	2,200	1.5%	28,900	24.6%
Professional and technical services	44,000	43,000	38,700	1,000	2.3%	5,300	13.7%
Management of companies and enterpr	34,900	35,600	26,000	-700	-2.0%	8,900	34.2%
Administrative and waste services	67,300	65,500	52,600	1,800	2.7%	14,700	27.9%
Education and health services	191,200	181,600	158,000	9,600	5.3%	33,200	21.0%
Educational services ^{1/}	15,100	14,500	12,100	600	4.1%	3,000	24.8%
Health care and social assistance	176,100	167,200	145,900	8,900	5.3%	30,200	20.7%
Ambulatory health care services	58,300	53,900	45,000	4,400	8.2%	13,300	29.6%
Social assistance	40,000	39,600	30,000	400	1.0%	10,000	33.3%
Leisure and hospitality	118,600	115,400	100,800	3,200	2.8%	17,800	17.7%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	11,300	11,000	9,900	300	2.7%	1,400	14.1%
Accommodation and food services	107,300	104,300	90,900	3,000	2.9%	16,400	18.0%
Accommodation	11,300	11,300	11,700	0	0.0%	-400	-3.4%
Food services and drinking places	95,900	93,000	79,200	2,900	3.1%	16,700	21.1%
Other services	53,400	47,500	45,800	5,900	12.4%	7,600	16.6%
Government	212,200	211,900	213,800	300	0.1%	-1,600	-0.7%
Federal government	20,100	20,300	21,200	-200	-1.0%	-1,100	-5.2%
State government	77,900	77,900	72,800	0	0.0%	5,100	7.0%
State government, excluding education	48,200	48,600	46,300	-400	-0.8%	1,900	4.1%
Local government	114,200	113,700	119,800	500	0.4%	-5,600	-4.7%
Local government, excluding education	44,200	44,100	NA	100	0.2%	NA	NA

Source: Division of Workforce Services, Labor Market Information.

1/ Educational Services does not include Local and State Government Education.

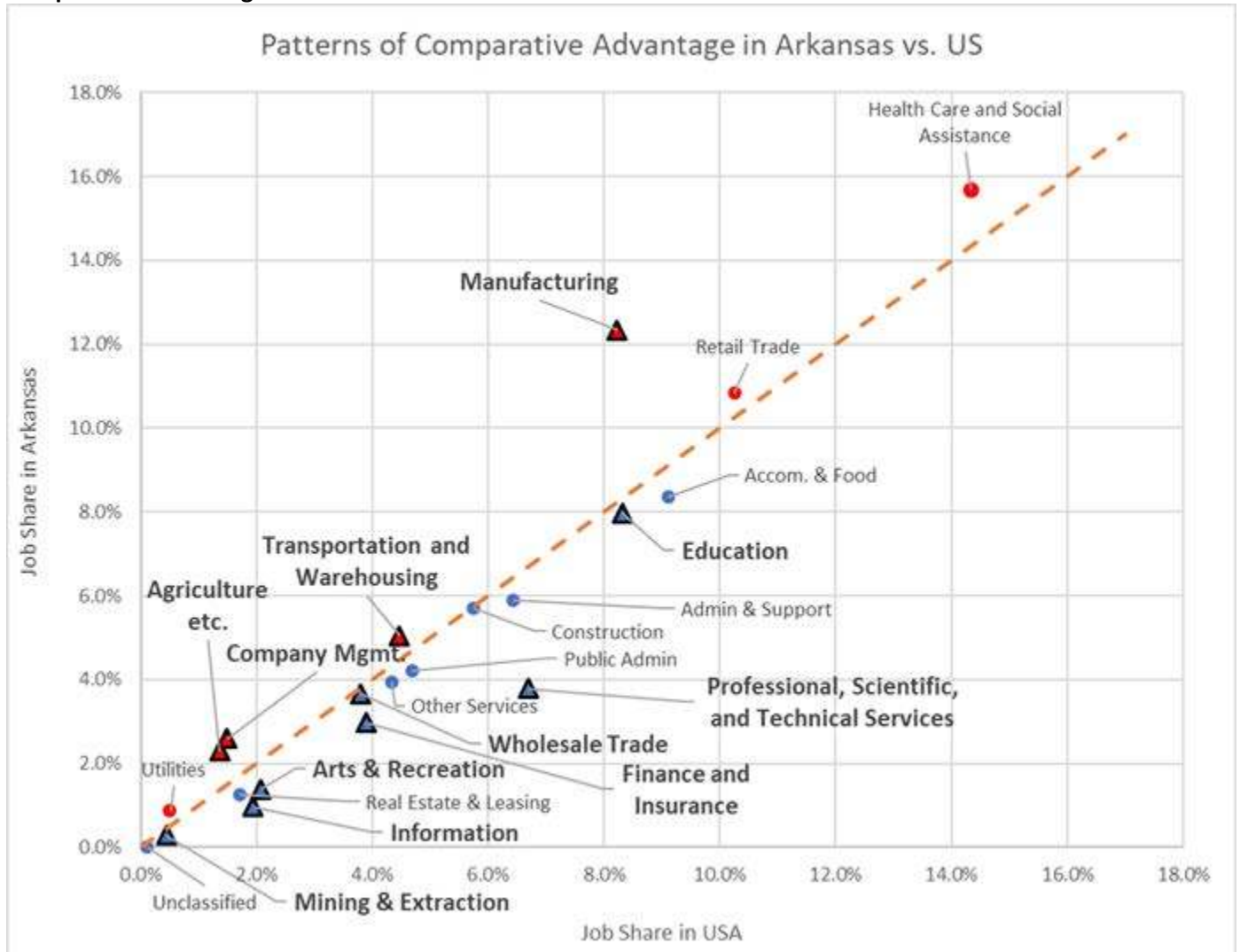
Additional Analysis for Consideration of the AWDB Strategic Committee

Attached is a regional breakdown of job shares by industry, with the major cities and nonmetropolitan regions of the state. Education and retail are distributed fairly evenly across the state, while others, are concentrated in particular regions. But by far the most concentrated is Management of Companies and Enterprises, which is 9.3% in Fayetteville MSA, small 1.7% in Little Rock and Fort Smith, and nearly nonexistent elsewhere. The second most concentrated is professional, scientific, and technical services, which is substantial (5%+) in Little Rock and Fayetteville. At the other end of the spectrum, education and retail are comparatively uniform across the state as well as accommodation and food services is another unsurprisingly well-distributed industry. These industries have to be close to customers.

Manufacturing is the third-most geographically distributed industry by the concentration measure, having a substantial foothold in every region.

Industry (NAICS 2-digit)	Concentration index
Management of Companies and Enterprises	2.46
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	1.22
Information	1.10
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	1.00
Finance and Insurance	0.99
Wholesale Trade	0.91
Public Administration	0.88
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	0.84
Construction	0.83
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	0.82
Other Services (except Public Administration)	0.80
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	0.79
Health Care and Social Assistance	0.78
Utilities	0.77
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	0.77
Accommodation and Food Services	0.76
Transportation and Warehousing	0.76
Manufacturing	0.76
Retail Trade	0.75
Educational Services	0.71

Comparative Advantage- Arkansas and US



The triangles represent “traded” industries, as opposed to “local” industries (as classified here: <https://clustermapping.us/sites/default/files/files/page/Categorization%20of%20Traded%20and%20Local%20Industries%20in%20the%20US%20Economy.pdf>). The dotted orange line is the 45 degree line: an industry that’s right on it has the same job share in AR and in the US. The red industries above the 45-degree line are industries where Arkansas has some concentration.

Notes-

1. Arkansas is a striking outlier for its concentration in manufacturing compared to the rest of the country.
2. Arkansas is also a striking outlier for its deficiency in professional, scientific, and technical services jobs.
3. Of the other three big tradable industries where Arkansas is above the national line, two—transportation and warehousing and agriculture—are, like manufacturing, are blue collar industries, but one—company management—is dramatically different.

4. Tradable industries where Arkansas is at a comparative disadvantage tend to be, like professional, scientific and technical services, comparatively “creative” or “intellectual” fields, like finance & insurance, arts & recreation, information, and education (though only slightly).
5. As for relatively non-traded or “local” industries, they’re mostly near the 45-degree line, reflecting the need for production to locate close to consumption.
6. Accommodation and food services is a bit below the line, which might reflect (a) Arkansas not being a major tourist destination and (b) low incomes and eating out being a bit of a luxury.
7. Utility, retail and health care are all a bit above the line, likely reflect low incomes and the “necessity” character of these goods. Also: retail might be higher because of Walmart; health care might be higher because Arkansas is a bit older and sicker than most places; and utilities might be higher because Arkansans are spread out physically—more expensive distribution of electricity—and/or because manufacturing and agriculture are somewhat energy- and/or water-intensive sectors.
8. Wholesale trade is below the line, although it seems like a potential area of comparative advantage for Arkansas, with its strength in logistics.

Input to WIOA Report: Tenure Analysis

Prepared by: ADFA Economic Policy Division

Date: December 16, 2019

Background: Some weeks ago, Kris Jones of the Division of Workforce Services suggested that the ADFA Economic Policy Division might help ADWS prepare workforce analytics for inclusion in the annual WIOA State Plan. This document was prepared in fulfillment of this request.

Important stylized facts about labor markets involve patterns of turnover, job stability, and length of tenure. Many hires lead to jobs of short duration, lasting less than a year. Such transient hires tend to comprise a small share of the total stock of jobs at any given time, however. Figure 1 shows the share of stable jobs existing at the end of 2018 that began in 2016 or later, by industry. Across all industries, about half of jobs had appeared, or the most recent hire into the job had taken place, three years prior or less. But the ratio varied greatly by industry, from 76% in accommodation and food services, to under 40% in utilities and education.

Figure 1: The share of the end-2018 workforce that was hired in 2016 or later varies greatly by industry

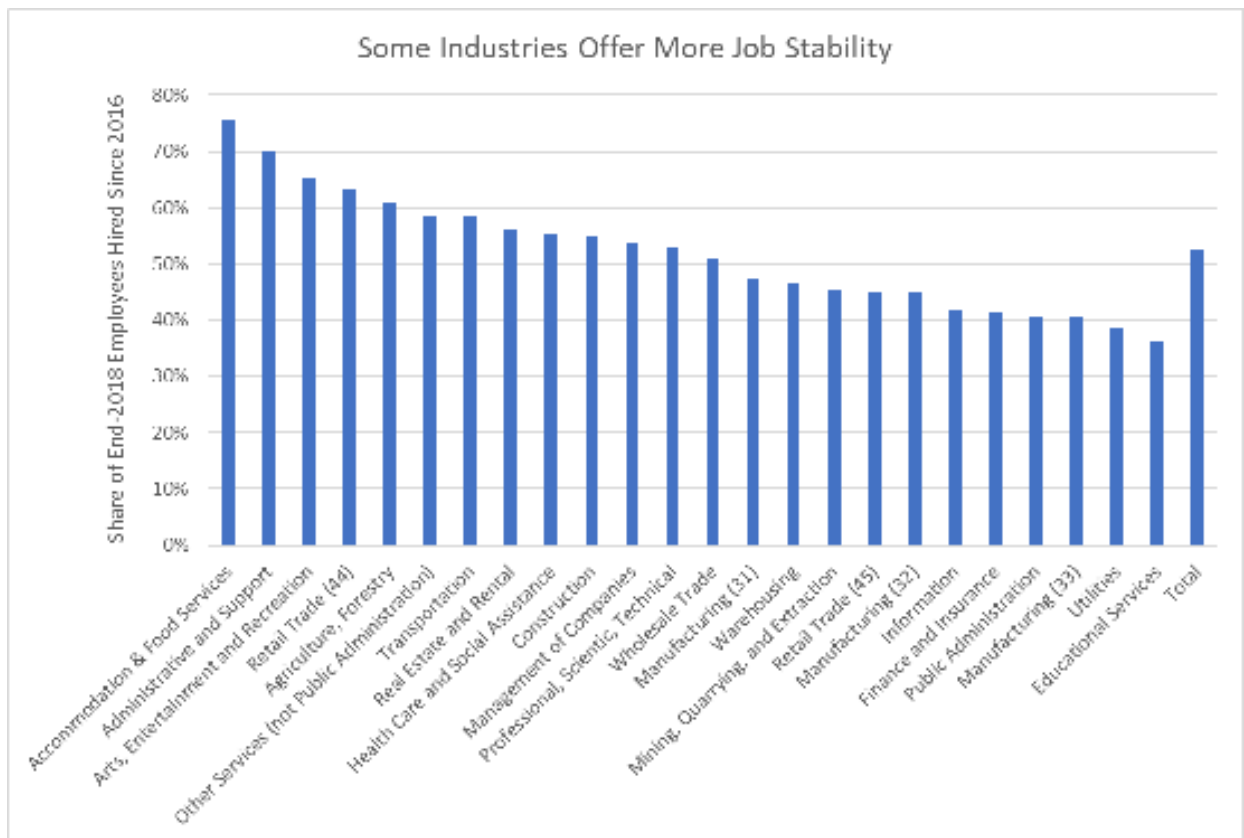
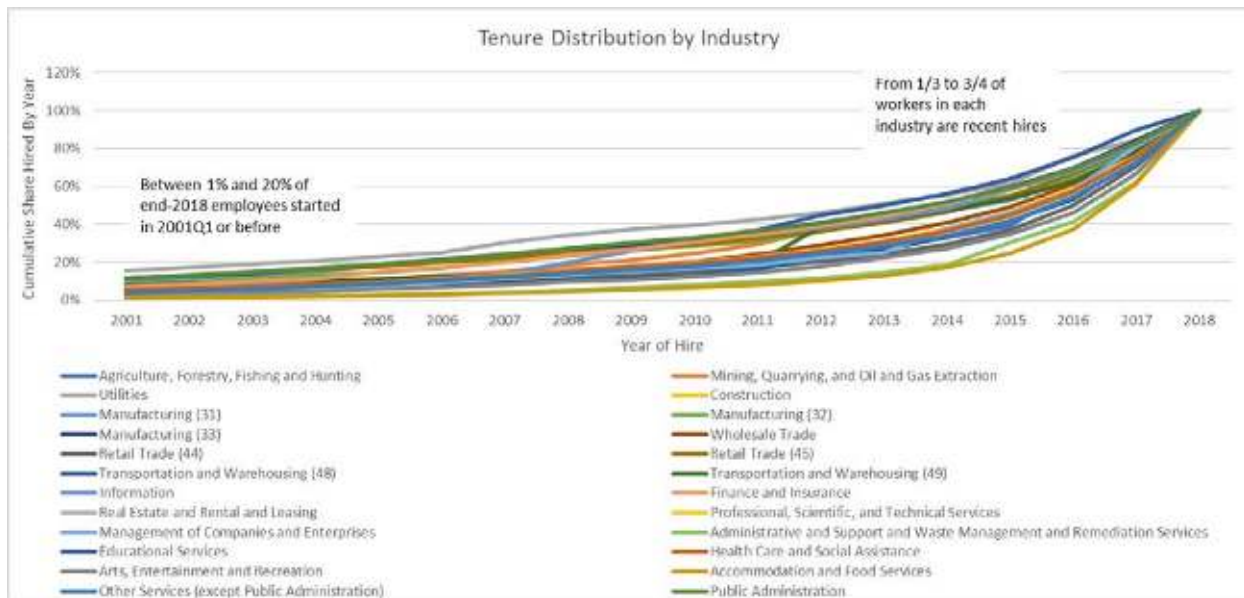


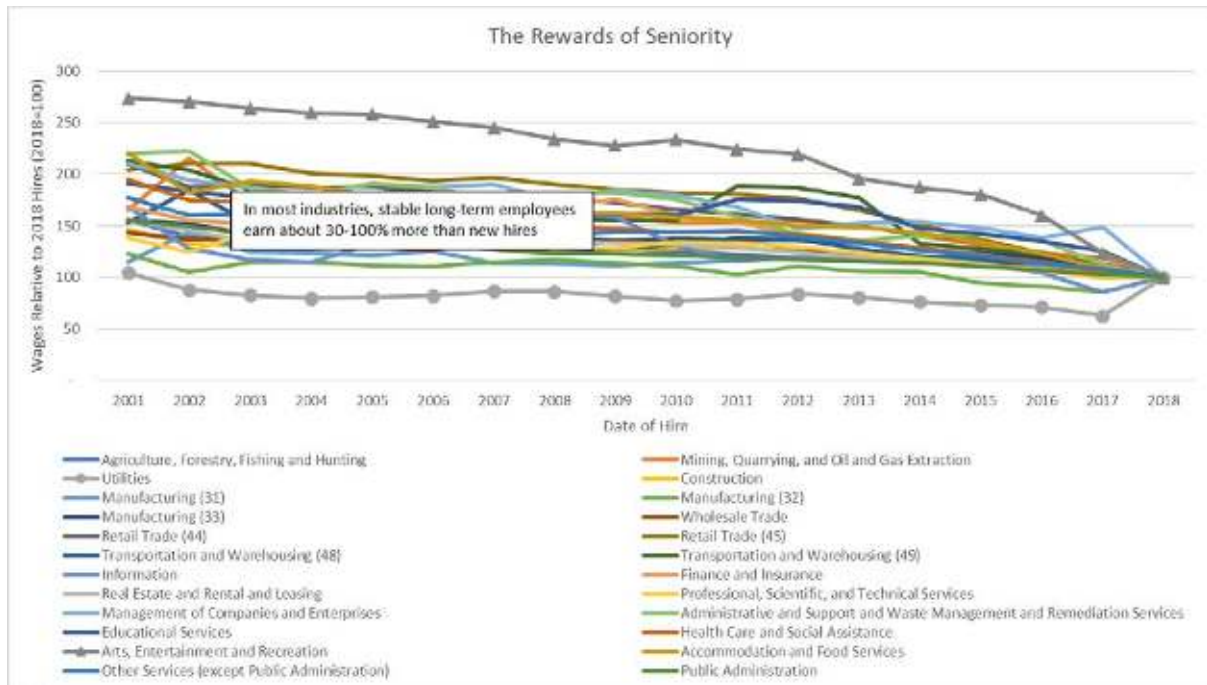
Figure 2 expands on Figure 1 by showing, for each industry, the cumulative share of the workforce that was hired during or before an ascending year. Each curve in Figure 2 represents an industry. The curves necessarily slope up because the share of the workforce that was hired during or before a given year is necessarily equal to or greater than the share that was hired during or before the previous year. The curves describe the accumulation of what became the end-2018 workforce. Besides sloping upward, the curves are all bowed towards the lower right corner of the chart, because a disproportionate share of the workforce are recent hires, many of whom will turn over, whereas long-term employees tend to be more stable. The expected future duration of a job is an increasing function of its past duration. But while all the curves share an upward slope and a bowed shape, some are much higher than others, reflecting very different turnover patterns across industries. The share of today's workers who were in their current jobs ten or fifteen years ago is many times greater in some industries than others.

Figure 2: Cumulative workforce shares by date of hire, by industry



Long-term jobs tend to pay better, as shown in Figure 3. Figure 3 shows the ratio of average wages of workers hired in each year (moving averages are used for the middle years to smooth fluctuations) to the average wages of recent hires. In most industries—utilities is an intriguing exception—the long-term workers earn substantially more than the recent hires. While obvious explanations for this include firm-specific on-the-job training and rewards for organizational loyalty, it could also reflect the skill and/or effort levels of transient versus permanent workers. Either way, it suggests the value of placing people in long-term, stable jobs.

Figure 3: Ratio of average wages by year of hire to average wages for 2018 hires



Department of Commerce Research Team

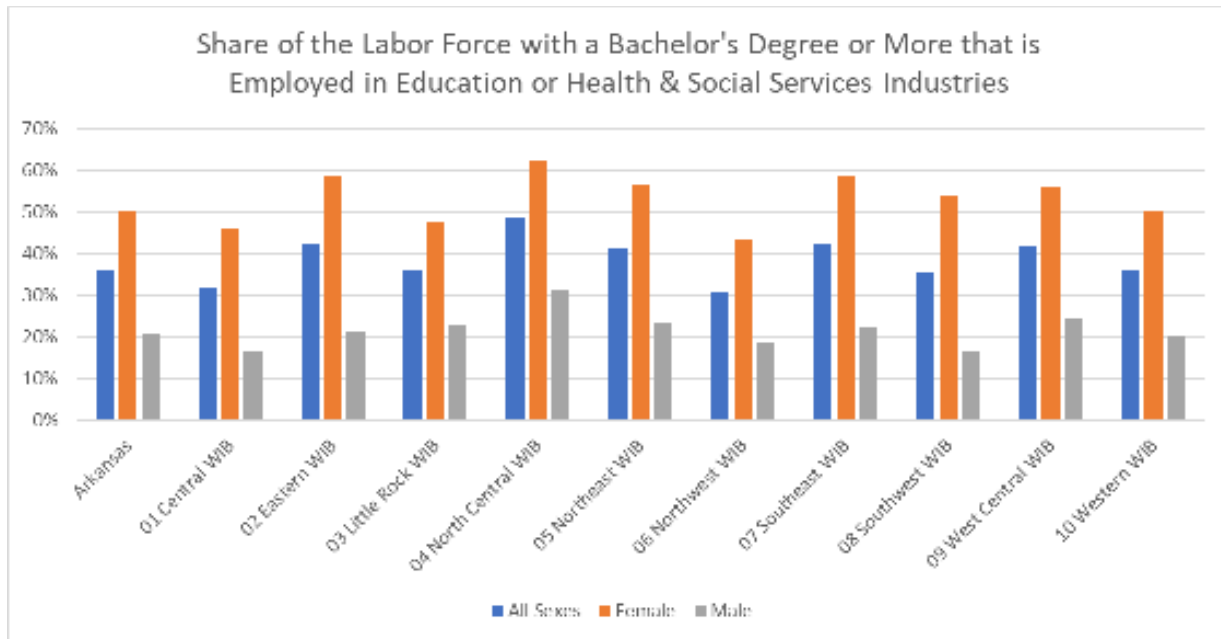
Inputs to WIOA State Plan

Origin and purpose of this document: Kris Jones of ADWS suggested some time ago that some analytical products of the Department of Commerce research team might strengthen the WIOA State Plan that is prepared annually by the Division of Workforce Services. More recently, December 20th was mentioned as a (soft?) deadline for when useful inputs could be provided. This document contains a few analytical items that the Division of Workforce Services might consider including. It was prepared by Dr. Nathan Smith and Dr. Nicolas Aguelakakis

Industries Employing College-Educated Workers, by Gender and Region

College-educated workers are found in all industries, but they are more concentrated in some industries relative to the workforce as a whole. These patterns of industry concentration vary somewhat by region as well. One striking pattern is that women with a Bachelor's degree or more tend to be concentrated in the health and education industries, especially outside metropolitan centers, as shown in Figure 1. The share of college-educated working women who are in health or education exceeded 60% in the North Central WIB area, and was nearly 60% in the Eastern and Southeast WIB areas. It was lowest in the Northwest WIB, at just over 40%.

Figure 1: College-educated women, but not men, are concentrated in the health and education industries (Source: QWI)

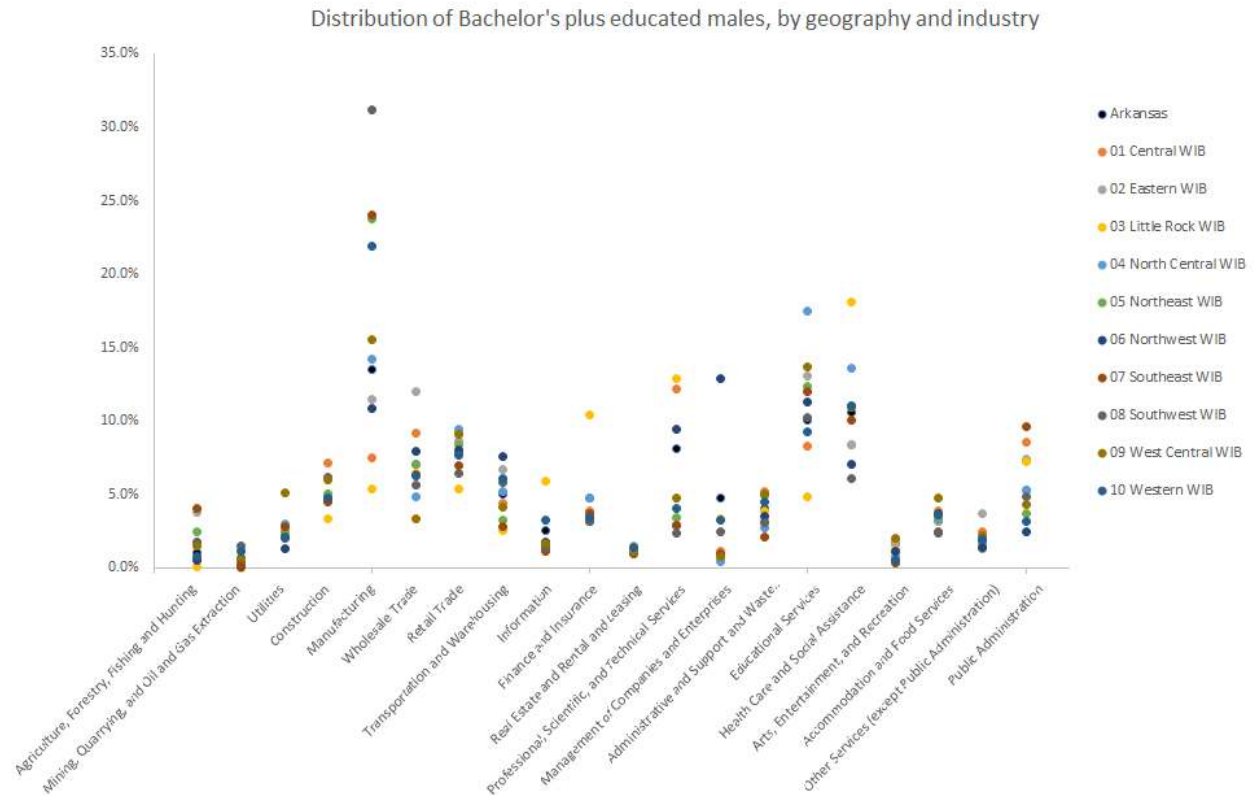


The share of college-educated men working in health and education was everywhere much lower than the share of college-educated working women. It was highest in the North Central WIB area, at just over 30%, and under 20% in the Northwest, Southwest, and Central WIB areas.

If college-educated men don't work in health and education, where do they work? Figure 2 shows that the answers vary a lot by region. Manufacturing, for example, employs 31% of college-educated working men in the Southwest WIB area, and 24% in the Northeast WIB area, but only 11% in the Northwest WIB area, 8% in the Central WIB area and 5% in the Little Rock WIB area. By contrast, professional, scientific and technical services employs 13% of college-educated working men in the Little Rock WIB area, 12% in

the Central WIB area, and 10% in the Northwest WIB area, but under 5% in most WIB areas and under 3% in some.

Figure 2: Industry distribution of Bachelor's degree or more educated males, by region (Source: QWI)



Educational Awards by Level, Region, and Field of Study

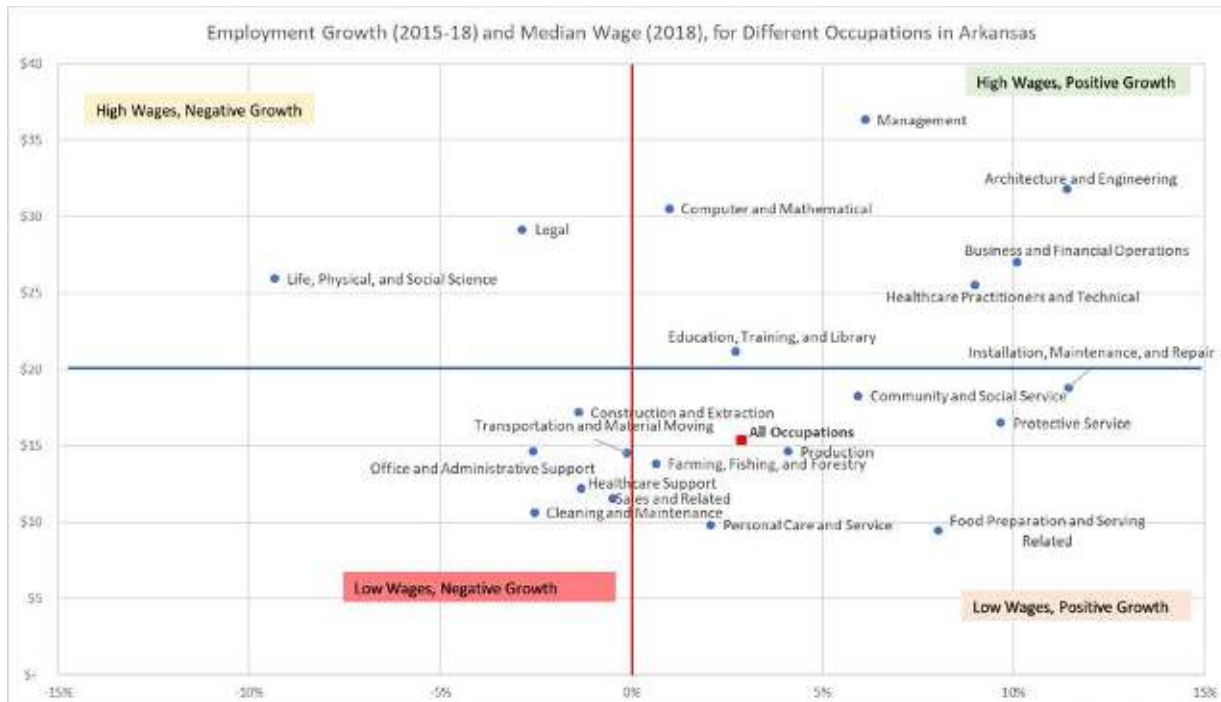
Figure 3 shows how many educational awards, altogether and at various levels, were awarded in each of the WIB regions of the state. Substantial interregional differences are visible. First, of course, regions with major Bachelor's degree granting institutions stand out for awarding more Bachelor's degrees per capita. Thus, Northwest WIB area, home of UA-Fayetteville, awards 184 Bachelor's degrees per 10,000 people, and Northeast WIB, home of ASU-Jonesboro, awards 146, but Southeast only 68, Southwest only 42 and Eastern WIB none. Little Rock WIB (UALR) and Central WIB (UCA) are the other Bachelor's degree hubs. There seems to be a pattern whereby regions that award fewer Bachelor's degrees tend to

	W B									
ALL	138	116	322	170	331	247	137	198	263	98
Business, Management & Marketing	18	3	33	9	27	43	12	14	22	15
Communication & Journalism	2	0	5	0	7	11	1	1	4	1
Education	14	1	20	4	107	12	10	12	34	7
Engineering	0	0	4	0	3	18	0	0	4	0
Health Professions	25	21	122	53	60	30	26	46	53	14
Law Enforcement & Protective Serv.	0	1	11	3	9	3	8	26	9	4
Legal Professions & Studies	1	0	13	0	0	5	0	0	0	0
Liberal Arts & Sci., Gen. Studies	30	31	14	39	35	20	21	23	34	12
Mechanic & Repair Technologies	3	1	0	10	2	1	1	4	6	1
Multi/Interdisciplinary Studies	1	1	4	3	2	0	4	6	21	9
Parks, Recreation, Leisure & Fitness	1	0	0	0	8	10	2	3	4	0
Public Admin. & Social Service	0	1	15	0	10	2	1	2	2	0
Transportation & Materials Moving	0	0	0	11	0	1	0	0	1	0
All the others	42	56	81	37	62	91	50	62	68	33

Looking for Growing Occupations with Good Wages

Occupational categories differ in prevailing pay rates and job growth, as shown in Figure 5. In recent years, there have been job losses for office and administrative support occupations in most regions of the state. Most regions have also seen a decline in legal occupations (except NW Arkansas) and in life, physical, and social science occupations. By contrast, there has been strong growth in food preparation and serving related occupations, though with considerable regional variation. However, food service is a poorly paid occupation, earning less than \$10/hour median wages throughout the state.

Figure 5: Occupational categories by median wages and job growth (Source: OES)



Some appealing occupational options are found in the upper-right sector of Figure 5. These occupations have both high job growth and solid to high wages. But all these occupations are predominantly high-skill occupations that tend to require a high level of education, including management, architecture and engineering, business and financial, computer and mathematical, and healthcare.

A promising occupational option for persons with limited aptitude or inclination for extended academic study may be installation, maintenance and repair occupations. These occupations are fairly job-rich, accounting for roughly 5% of the workforce in all regions. They pay well, with median wages substantially above \$15/hour everywhere except Hot Springs. And they have enjoyed strong job gains statewide in recent years, and in every region of the state except North Arkansas nonmetropolitan, where there was a slight decline. Job growth has been especially strong in NW Arkansas, Hot Springs, and Jonesboro.

Appendix A shows the regional distribution of employment growth and median wages for the larger occupational categories.

Appendix A. Employment Growth and Wages by Occupational Category and Region

Figure 6: Employment growth by occupational category and region

STATE	00-00	11-0000	13-0000	25-0000	29-0000	31-0000	33-0000	35-0000	37-0000	39-0000	41-0000	43-0000	47-0000	49-0000	51-0000	53-0000
	All	Management	Business and Financial Operations	Education, Training, and Library	Health care Practitioners and Technicians	Healthcare Support	Protective Services	Food Preparation and Serving Related	Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	Personal Care and Service	Sales and Related	Office and Administrative Support	Construction and Extraction	Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	Production	Transportation and Material Moving
Arkansas Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers, AR-MO	2.9%	6.1%	10.1%	2.7%	9.0%	-1.3%	9.7%	8.0%	-2.5%	2.1%	0.5%	-2.6%	-1.4%	11.4%	4.1%	-0.1%
Fort Smith, AR-OK	10.0%	5.1%	2.2%	23.7%	14.7%	22.1%	39.4%	17.4%	2.4%		1.9%	1.3%	9.7%	25.4%	8.6%	19.6%
Hot Springs, AR	0.9%	17.2%	21.9%	5.0%		11.0%	-9.3%	8.3%	-9.7%		3.7%	-7.0%	-6.0%	7.4%	-9.3%	-13.0%
Jonesboro, AR	0.4%	5.9%	16.5%	-7.3%		3.2%		13.3%			19.6%	0.4%	1.4%	34.7%	13.7%	15.2%
Little Rock-North Little Rock-Conway, AR	10.1%	14.4%	24.2%	-8.5%			-1.1%	27.1%	8.0%		5.2%	2.1%	2.3%	25.9%		3.0%
Pine Bluff, AR	2.9%	3.1%	18.0%	6.8%	8.4%	5.7%	13.1%	8.8%	-8.0%	2.0%	0.2%	-2.7%	1.2%	9.7%	-2.1%	3.4%
North Arkansas nonmetropolitan area	3.8%	8.0%	1.0%	17.9%	-9.7%	16.0%	-4.0%	-5.1%	-28.0%		4.0%	-3.5%	-26.5%	4.7%	7.9%	-1.3%
East Arkansas nonmetropolitan area	0.8%	6.7%	11.9%	8.4%	17.2%		16.1%	-1.4%	-8.5%		1.2%	1.3%	-16.2%	-2.1%	-3.3%	-0.5%
	1.9%	13.7%	-6.7%	-3.6%	12.2%	22.4%	8.5%	-9.7%		0.0%		-0.4%	9.6%	12.7%	-2.0%	-17.3%

West Arkansas nonmetropolitan area	0.0%	-1.1%	10.7%	10.1%	12.0%	11.3%	-4.0%	6.3%	-5.2%	30.0%	9.9%	-16.3%	-22.2%	18.0%	-1.1%	
South Arkansas nonmetropolitan area	2.0%	5.1%	1.3%	-0.6%	3.7%	18.4%	1.8%	-1.9%	14.2%	11.1%	8.5%	-10.0%	2.5%	3.3%	-1.8%	-8.0%

Figure 7: Median wages by occupational category and region

STATE	00-0000	11-0000	13-0000	25-0000	29-0000	31-0000	33-0000	35-0000	37-0000	39-0000	41-0000	43-0000	47-0000	49-0000	51-0000	53-0000
	All	Management	Business and Financial Operations	Education, Training, and Library	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	Healthcare Support	Protective Service	Food Preparation and Servicing Related	Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	Personal Care and Service	Sales and Related	Office and Administrative Support	Construction and Extraction	Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	Production	Transportation and Material Moving
Arkansas	15.3	36.4	27.0	21.2	25.5	12.2	16.5	9.5	10.6	9.8	11.6	14.7	17.2	18.8	14.6	14.5
Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers, AR-MO	16.5	46.5	31.0	22.2	27.4	12.6	17.3	9.6	11.8	10.4	12.0	15.6	17.4	19.0	13.9	17.0
Fort Smith, AR-OK	14.3	35.2	26.4	21.4	25.2	11.6	15.3	9.4	10.8	9.4	11.5	14.3	16.7	17.7	12.8	14.6
Hot Springs, AR	13.1	27.6	24.5	22.2	25.4	11.4	17.1	9.5	10.6	9.9	11.3	13.8	15.1	14.8	13.7	12.3
Jonesboro, AR	14.5	32.9	23.4	19.3	25.4	12.8	17.9	9.4	9.9	9.7	11.8	13.8	16.0	17.9	14.2	14.6
Little Rock-North Little Rock-Conway, AR	16.9	37.8	26.2	-	27.4	13.1	16.8	9.5	11.0	10.1	12.5	15.7	18.0	19.1	16.3	14.2
Pine Bluff, AR	15.3	34.4	24.3	21.8	25.6	11.5	17.5	9.4	10.0	9.7	10.7	14.1	19.0	19.1	15.6	12.9
North Arkansas nonmetropolitan area	13.7	29.1	21.7	20.4	22.6	11.8	15.9	9.4	10.3	9.5	10.8	13.4	15.9	18.2	14.0	12.7
East Arkansas nonmetropolitan area	14.4	33.1	24.6	19.5	22.5	11.7	15.9	9.4	10.0	9.7	10.1	13.9	16.4	18.7	17.1	12.9

West Arkansas nonmetropolitan area	14.2	31.0	24.3	20.7	22.3	11.2	15.9	9.4	10.2	9.4	10.6	13.7	16.1	20.1	14.4	13.5
South Arkansas nonmetropolitan area	14.3	31.4	24.1	19.8	22.0	11.2	15.3	9.3	9.5	9.5	9.8	13.2	17.0	18.5	14.8	13.5

**For Consideration of the
Arkansas Workforce Development Board**

January 21, 2020

AGENDA ITEM 4 - ACTION: WIOA 2020-2023 State Plan (DRAFT) Development

INFORMATION/RATIONALE: One of the functions of the Arkansas Workforce Development Board, under Arkansas Annotated 15-4-3706(1), is to assist the Governor in ***“the development, implementation, and modification of the state workforce development plan.”***

WIOA State Plans are separated into strategic and operational elements to facilitate cross-program strategic planning. The strategic elements include economic conditions, workforce characteristics, and workforce development activities. These elements drive the required vision and goals for the State’s workforce development system and alignment strategies for workforce development programs to support economic growth.

Each of the Board’s three standing committees reviewed their respective portions of the plan on January 7, 2020, with particular focus on key updates in the plan. The 2020-2023 State Plan is being presented to the Full Board for review and approval for public comment. To allow the Board an additional opportunity to provide additional feedback, the Executive Committee will meeting during the week of February 24th to 28th to consider changes following: public comment, additional recommendations by Workforce Development Board members via staff, CEOs, Department of Labor review, and other means of input.

The current draft of the PY2020-23 WIOA State Plan DRAFT may be found at:

<https://www.dws.arkansas.gov/programs/workforce-innovation/wioa-public-notice/>

It may also be found under the Arkansas Workforce Development Board Meetings for the January 21, 2020, Full Board Meeting at:

<https://www.dws.arkansas.gov/programs/workforce-innovation/arkansas-workforce-development-board-meeting-dates/>



WIOA State Plan PY2020-2023

DRAFT

WIOA State Plan

State of Arkansas FY2020-2023

Overview

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

Arkansas Governor Asa Hutchinson embarked upon his Transformation of Arkansas State Government in early 2019. As a result, the Transformation and Efficiencies Act 2019 authorized the reduction of the number of cabinet-level agencies from 42 to 15. This piece of state legislation went into effect on July 1, 2019 and reflects a reorganization of the workforce partner agencies in Arkansas. Specifically, the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services became the Division of Workforce Services and incorporated the former Arkansas Rehabilitation Services, Division of Services for the Blind, and Adult Education Services. This plan incorporates these changes and includes the following new acronyms:

- ADWS – Arkansas Division of Workforce Services
- DSB – Division of Services for the Blind
- ARS – Arkansas Division of Workforce Services – Arkansas Rehabilitation Services
- AES – Arkansas Division of Workforce Services – Adult Education Services

Options for Submitting a State Plan

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

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

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

- Career and technical education programs authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.)
- Employment and Training Programs under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (Programs authorized under section 6(d)(4) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(d)(4)))
- Work programs authorized under section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(o))
- Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers Programs (Activities authorized under chapter 2 of Title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2271 et seq.))
- Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program (Programs authorized under 38, U.S.C. 4100 et seq.)
- Unemployment Insurance Programs (Programs authorized under State unemployment compensation laws in accordance with applicable Federal law)
- Senior Community Service Employment Program (Programs authorized under Title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056 et seq.))

- Employment and training activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Community Services Block Grant Program (Employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.))*
- Reintegration of Ex-Offenders Program (Programs authorized under section 212 of the Second Chance Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17532))

* States that elect to include employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.) under a Combined State Plan would submit all other required elements of a complete CSBG State Plan directly to the Federal agency that administers the program. Similarly, States that elect to include employment and training activities carried by the Department of Housing and Urban Development and programs authorized under section 6(d)(4) and 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 that are included would submit all other required elements of a complete State Plan for those programs directly to the Federal agency that administers the program.

How State Plan Requirements Are Organized

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

- The **Strategic Planning Elements** section includes analyses of the State’s economic conditions, workforce characteristics, and workforce development activities. These analyses drive the required vision and goals for the State’s workforce development system and alignment strategies for workforce development programs to support economic growth.
- The **Operational Planning Elements** section identifies the State’s efforts to support the State’s strategic vision and goals as identified in the Strategic Planning Elements section. This section ensures that the State has the necessary infrastructure, policies, and activities to meet its strategic goals, implement its alignment strategy, and support ongoing program development and coordination. Operational planning elements include:
 - State Strategy Implementation,
 - State Operating Systems and Policies,
 - Assurances, and
 - Program-Specific Requirements for the Core Programs, and
 - Program-Specific Requirements for the Combined State Plan partner programs. (These requirements are available in a separate supplemental document, Supplement to the Workforce and Innovation Act (WIOA) Unified and Combined

State Plan Requirements. The Departments are not seeking comments on these particular requirements).

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

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

I. WIOA State Plan Type

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

Unified State Plan. This plan includes the Adult Program, Dislocated Worker Program, Youth Program, Wagner-Peyser Act Program, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program, and Vocational Rehabilitation Program. No

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

Combined Plan partner program(s)

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

Career and technical education programs authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.) No

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

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

Work programs authorized under section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(o)) No

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

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

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

Senior Community Service Employment Program (Programs authorized under title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056 et seq.)) No

Employment and training activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development No

Community Services Block Grant Program (Employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.)) No

Reintegration of Ex-Offenders Program (Programs authorized under section 212 of the Second Chance Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17532)) No

II. Strategic Elements

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

a. Economic, Workforce, and Workforce Development Activities Analysis

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

1. Economic and Workforce Analysis

A. Economic Analysis

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

i. Existing Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations

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

ii. Emerging Demand Industry Sectors and Occupation

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

iii. Employers' Employment Needs

Regarding the industry sectors and occupations identified in 1 and 2 above, provide an assessment of the employment needs of employers, including a description of the knowledge, skills, and abilities required, including credentials and licenses.

The State of Arkansas is in many ways a reflection of the changes facing the nation. Despite a population size of only one percent of the nation, seven of the Fortune 500 companies are headquartered here. This list includes the largest retailer in the world (Walmart), one of the largest food producers in the world (Tyson), and a national chain of gas stations (Murphy USA). The other four companies making that list, Murphy Oil, Dillard's, Windstream, and J.B. Hunt, further demonstrate the diverse economic base of the state. Arkansas is also fortunate to be home to major operations with companies headquartered in other states such as Baxter International, Lockheed Martin, Hewlett-Packard, FedEx, Post Foods, Kimberly-Clark, and Nucor to name a few. Arkansas has been fortunate to host the creation of unique information and service provider companies, such as Acxiom, Southwest Power Pool, and the aforementioned Windstream. The Arkansas workforce is cosmopolitan, with workers from all corners of the globe that come for the opportunities available in the Natural State.

Arkansas has many natural wonders and is a popular tourist destination. However, its greatest strength is in its human capital. Arkansas continues to be a leader in the extraction of energy and minerals, timber production, and agriculture. These industries also lead to a large number of jobs in the areas of support for these industries as well as in production of value-added products such as Tyson and Murphy USA. However, as reflected in the national trend, the Arkansas economy will generate most of its revenue through service industries. Much of Arkansas is rural, and the majority of service industries are located in metropolitan areas. This creates even greater challenges for economic development in the state's rural areas. Despite the challenges, rural areas of the state continue to be home to numerous contract manufacturers as well as manufacturers of unique products.

The Arkansas Economic Commission has identified 15 targeted industries for the state: Advanced Food Manufacturing and Packaging; Aerospace/Aviation; Biosciences; Data Centers; Distribution and Logistics Services; Firearms and Ammunition; Paper and Timber Products; Regional Headquarters; Smart Grid Technologies (Power Electronics); Software Development and Data Management Services; Steel Production; Sustainable Building Products and Fixtures; Technical Support Services; Transportation Equipment Manufacturing; and Walmart Suppliers. <http://www.arkansasedc.com/industries>

These targeted industries represent the diversity of Arkansas enterprises, a product of the natural resources, labor force, and entrepreneurial spirit available in the state.

To prepare this report and provide workforce boards in the state with tools for development planning in their own areas, data were downloaded and prepared from the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services Labor Market Information (LMI) website, <http://www.discover.arkansas.gov>. 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.

While Arkansas's current and future industry outlook is similar to the nation, there are important areas of distinction.

Jobs By Industry 2014

Industry	Arkansas	US
Health care and social assistance	15.57	14.59
Manufacturing	14.12	9.34
Retail trade	12.47	11.77
Educational services: state, local and private	9.97	10.43
Accommodation and food services	8.91	9.66
Administrative and support and waste mgt.	5.58	6.57
Transportation and warehousing	4.89	3.56
Wholesale trade	4.27	4.46
Construction	4.22	4.70
Other services (except public administration)	4.10	4.90
Professional, scientific, and technical services	3.72	6.40
Finance and insurance	3.33	4.55
Management of companies and enterprises	2.96	1.66
Information	1.25	2.10
Real estate and rental and leasing	1.19	1.57
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	1.18	1.06
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	0.96	1.61
Utilities	0.72	0.42
Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	0.62	0.65

Manufacturing employs a greater percentage of Arkansas workers, 14.12 percent, than at the national level of 9.34 percent. Health Care and Social Assistance is also larger at 15.57 percent in the state compared to 14.59 percent of the nation, in part because of high poverty and obesity rates in the state. Arkansas lags the nation in the number employed in Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services, 3.72 percent to 6.40 percent, but leads the nation in Management of Companies and Enterprises, 2.96 percent to 1.66 percent. These two areas are of special interest in Arkansas because they provide some of the highest wages in the state. Arkansas also leads in the percentage of workers in Transportation and Warehousing, 4.89 percent to 3.56 percent. J.B.

Hunt, the fifth leading commercial carrier in the nation, recently announced an expansion that will create over 1,000 jobs in the next few years. Despite the large role Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting play in the state, there are actually a similar percentage of Arkansas workers in those industries compared to the national level. While manufacturing and transportation play a large role in the state’s economy and employ a large number of its workers, these industries are also subject to increased efficiency which can lead to fewer jobs.

While Arkansas’s current workforce is somewhat similar to the nation’s, there are dramatic differences between regions of the state. For example, Manufacturing industries employ a dramatically different percentage of workers across the nation, state and regions.

MANUFACTURING 2014

Local Workforce Area	Percentage
Southwest	25.43
Southeast	23.06
Northeast	21.29
Western	21.29
Northwest	16.19
West Central	15.68
State of Arkansas	14.12
North Central	12.37
Eastern	9.56
U.S.	9.34
Central	8.26
Little Rock	4.74

Within the regions, manufacturing employment as a percentage of total employment varies greatly, ranging from 4.74 to 25.43 percent. A significant percentage of workers in the Southwest area are in manufacturing. In fact, six of the regions (also Southeast, Northeast, Western, Northwest and West Central) employ a higher percent than the state. North Central and Eastern fall between the state and nation, while only Central and Little Rock have a smaller percentage of manufacturing employees than the United States. This employment swing demonstrates that each region of the state has something of a unique makeup of industries in its area, with its own challenges for meeting the needs of employers in that region.

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 2024. 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

Area	Jobs 2024	Nchg	Percent 2014	Percent Change
West Central	110,815	8,952	100	8.8
Northeast	108,452	15,414	100	16.6
Western	108,539	9,378	100	9.5
North Central	72,189	7,986	100	12.4
Southeast	63,315	1,742	100	2.8
Eastern	35,235	1,441	100	4.3
Central	161,082	18,330	100	12.8
Little Rock	166,210	15,039	100	9.9
Northwest	237,838	27,982	100	13.3
Southwest	77,891	3,577	100	4.8

The Northwest local area is projected to continue to employ the largest number of Arkansans, over 237,000, and to have robust growth of 13.3 percent. However, the Northeast local area is projected to grow at a higher rate of 16.6 percent but will employ only about 108,000 workers. The Central (12.84 percent) and North Central (12.44 percent) local areas are also projected to have job growth at rates higher than the state average of 10.25 percent, while all other local areas will have below average growth. The Southeast local area is projected to have only 2.83 percent growth in jobs. The largest city in the Southeast, Pine Bluff, declined in population by 6.6 percent between 2000 and 2010 and declined another 4.43 percent between 2010 and 2013, earning it the title of one of the “Fastest Shrinking Cities” in the nation.

A look at a specific industry sector such as manufacturing also demonstrates the different needs of employers in those local areas.

Manufacturing Job Growth Region

Area	Jobs 2024	Nchg	Percent 2014	Percent Growth
Little Rock	7,401	233	5	3.3
Central	11,910	120	8	1.0
Eastern	3,405	173	10	5.4
North Central	8,416	477	12	6.0
West Central	16,308	332	16	2.1
Northwest	35,463	1,485	16	4.4
Western	21,288	176	21	0.8
Northeast	22,431	2,627	21	13.3
Southeast	13,397	-803	23	-5.7
Southwest	18,667	-231	25	-1.2

While the Northwest is projected to continue to have the most workers employed in manufacturing, over 35,000, the projected growth of 4.3 percent and addition of 1,485 manufacturing jobs is less than the 13.3 percent growth and addition of 2,627 jobs in the Northeast local area. The Southeast is projected to lose 803 jobs in that sector by 2024, a decline rate of 5.7 percent.

Manufacturing in Arkansas is very diverse, with the production of guided missiles, specialty petroleum products, railcars, heavy equipment, medical supplies, recreational boats, turbine blades, steel pipe, commercial trucks, tires, etc. This is in addition to the manufacturing of food products which is in virtually every region of the state, but also varies from the production of chips and cereal products in the Northeast, poultry products in the Northwest, and beef and pork processing in the West Central local area. What manufacturers in the state need in terms of a skilled workforce varies greatly by region, and the same is true for all other industry sectors. It is important that workforce development in the state be regionally focused and centered on the industry needs in those local areas.

The industries which will have the greatest rate of growth vary some between the national and state levels.

Industry Growth 2024

Area	Industry Sector	Percentage Growth
Arkansas	Accommodation and food services	18.895
Arkansas	Administrative and support and waste mgt.	11.64
Arkansas	Construction	11.847
Arkansas	Health care and social assistance	17.99
Arkansas	Professional, scientific, and technical services	13.059
Arkansas	Real estate and rental and leasing	11.352
Arkansas	Wholesale trade	10.505
US	Construction	12.9
US	Health care and social assistance	19.8
US	Professional, scientific, and technical services	12.5

In this example of the industry sectors in Arkansas which are projected to have a rate of growth of 10 percent or higher, what is most striking is that Accommodation and Food Services is not a top area of growth for the nation, even though it is projected to grow 18.9 percent at the state level. Arkansas’s second highest area of growth at 17.9 percent will be in Health Care and Social Assistance, and this is similar to the 19.8 percent growth at the national level.

The industries which will have the lowest rates of growth won’t very much.

Industry Least Growth 2024

Area	Industry Sector	Percentage Growth
Arkansas	Agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting	2.34
Arkansas	Information	-2.93
Arkansas	Manufacturing	2.98
Arkansas	Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	2.92
Arkansas	Utilities	1.42

Area	Industry Sector	Percentage Growth
U.S.	Agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting	-5.5
U.S.	Information	-1
U.S.	Manufacturing	-6.7
U.S.	Transportation and warehousing	2.9
U.S.	Utilities	-8.7

The above graph shows industries where projected growth by 2024 is less than 3 percent, which will be five industries in Arkansas and at the national level. While manufacturing is projected to have a modest growth of 2.98 percent in the state, at the national level manufacturing is projected to lose jobs with a rate of -6.7 percent.

B. Workforce Analysis

*The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the current workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment, as defined in section 3 of WIOA. * This population must include individuals with disabilities among other groups** in the State and across regions identified by the State. This includes: Individuals with barriers to employment include displaced homemakers; low-income individuals; Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians; individuals with disabilities, including youth who are individuals with disabilities; older individuals; ex-offenders; homeless individuals, or homeless children and youths; youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system; individuals who are English language learners, individuals who have low levels of literacy, and individuals facing substantial cultural barriers; farmworkers (as defined at section 167(i) of WIOA and Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 35-14); individuals within 2 years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program; single parents (including single pregnant women); and long-term unemployed individuals. ** Veterans, unemployed workers, and youth, and others that the State may identify.*

i. Employment and Unemployment

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

ii. Labor Market Trends

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

iii. Education and Skill Levels of the Workforce

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

iv. Skill Gaps

Describe apparent 'skill gaps'.

Population

This section analyzes the demographics of Arkansas during 2010-30. Specifically, the study focuses on age and race populations at the state level, and urban-rural populations at the metropolitan, micropolitan and non-metropolitan level. Estimates (2010-18) are based on available data from the US Census Bureau and projections (2019-30) from the Institute for Economic Advancement at UALR and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Online Database.

Age Distribution

Figures 1-3 show Arkansas' population distribution by gender and age group for 2010, 2018 and 2030. As shown in these graphics, between 2010-18 the number of people 65+ grew substantially while the younger population (under-20) reduced. In fact, the 65+ group increased its share of the total population from 14.4% in 2010 to 17.0% in 2018, a growth of about 90,000 people. During the same period, the under 20 age group went down from 27.3% to 26.0%, a net decrease of about 14,000. Based on the population projections, by 2030, 26.7% of the state population will be under age 20 while 20.3% will be age 65 or older resulting in the older population continuing to increase its share of the total population. See Table 1 and Figure 4.

Population Pyramids for Arkansas

Figure 1

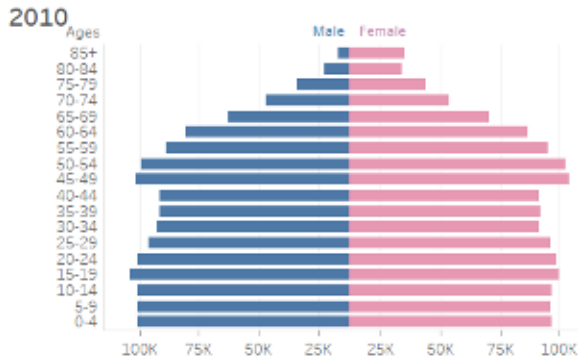


Figure 2

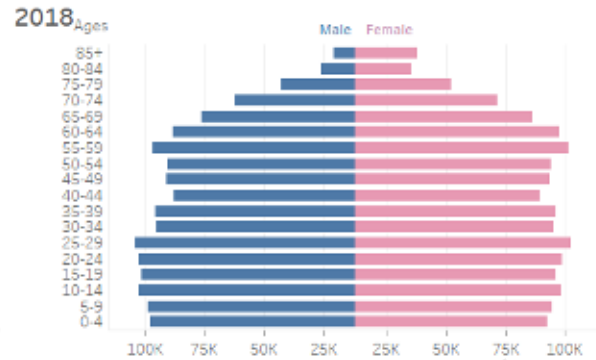


Figure 3

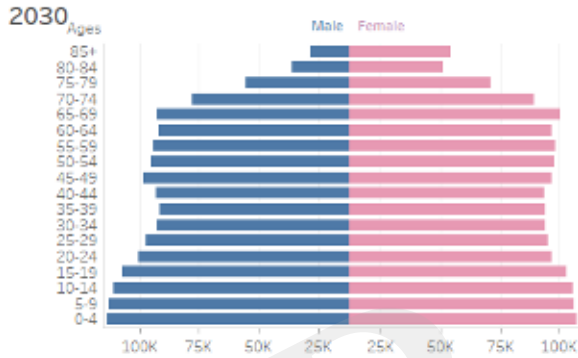


Table 1: Age Group Population Distribution for Arkansas

	2010	2018	2030
Under 20	795,930	782,120	866,073
Adults 20-64	1,700,007	1,719,878	1,717,729
Adults 65+	419,981	511,827	656,406
Grand Total	2,915,918	3,013,825	3,240,208

Figure 4



Sources

2010 data: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census estimates

2018 data: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division. Annual estimates. Release Date: June 2019

2030 data: Population Projections, United States, 2004-2030, by state, age and sex, on CDC WONDER Online Database (based upon U.S. Census Bureau data)

Racial and Ethnic Composition

This subsection describes the projected racial and ethnic composition of the state population from 2013-2060. Four major ethno-racial groups are identified: whites, blacks, Hispanics, and other races. Hispanics are not a racial group but rather an ethnic group, which means that whites, blacks and other races are found in this group. In this study, the whites, blacks and other races groups exclude Hispanics. The ethno-racial composition of the total population (all ages) and the younger population (under age 20) are examined.

Racial and Ethnic Composition, 2013-60

Figure 5: Arkansas Population - All Ages

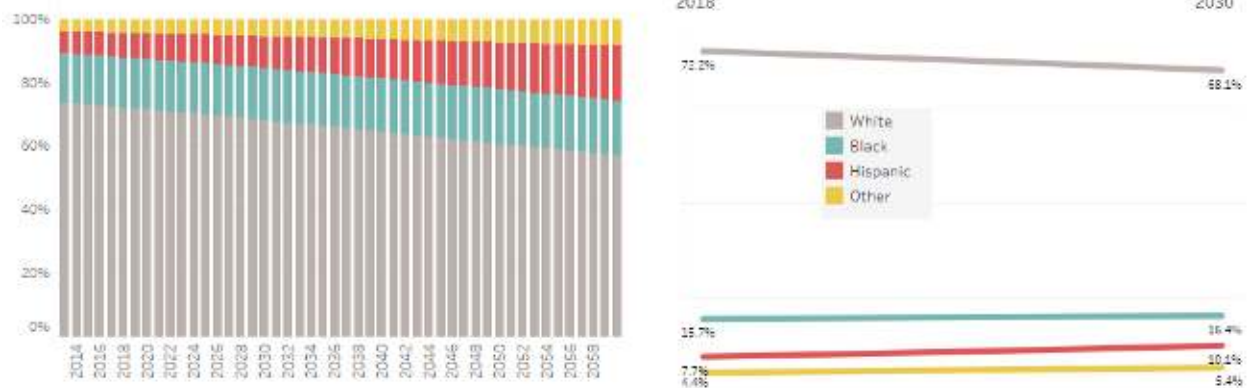
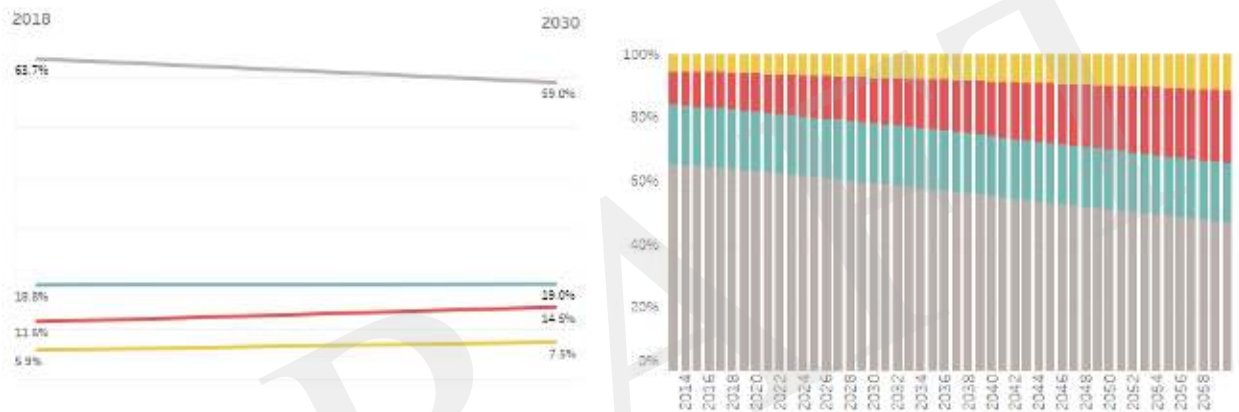


Figure 6: Arkansas Younger Population - Under 20



Source: Institute for Economic Advancement, College of Business, UALR. Projections 2013-20160 - Released in June 2014

According to Figures 5 and 6, whites constitute the current and projected predominant population group in Arkansas. The under 20 age group is more diverse than the total population with whites constituting 63.7% of the under 20 population in 2018 as compared to 72.2% of the total population (all ages).

The white population group is expected to experience a decrease in its share of the total population from 72.2% in 2018 to a projected 68.1% in 2030, a decrease of about 4.1 percentage points. The trend is also expected for the under age 20 population, with the share of the white group decreasing from 63.7% in 2018 to a projected 59.0% in 2030, a decrease of 4.7 percentage points.

The remaining three groups (blacks, Hispanics, and other races), all are expected to show an increase in their share of total population. However, the Hispanics are anticipated to experience the largest percentage growth going from 7.7% in 2018 to 10.1% in 2030. This is also true for

the under age 20 population with the Hispanic group growing from 11.6% in 2018 to 14.5% in 2030.

Urban-Rural

There are two different definitions that categorize urban and rural areas in the country, one developed by the US Census Bureau and the other by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). The US Census Bureau defines urban and rural areas based strictly on population size and density and they do not necessarily follow municipal boundaries. The OMB follows a regional-economic concept to define counties or county-equivalent units as metropolitan, micropolitan or neither. A metropolitan area (MSA) consists of one or more counties with a core urban population of 50,000+ and a micropolitan area has a core urban population of at least 10,000 but less than 50,000. Metropolitan areas are categorized as urban while counties that are not part of a metropolitan area are considered rural. Table 4 lists the eight metropolitan areas in Arkansas and their constituents.

Population Estimates for Arkansas Metropolitan, Micropolitan and Other Rural Areas, 2010 - 2018

Map 1

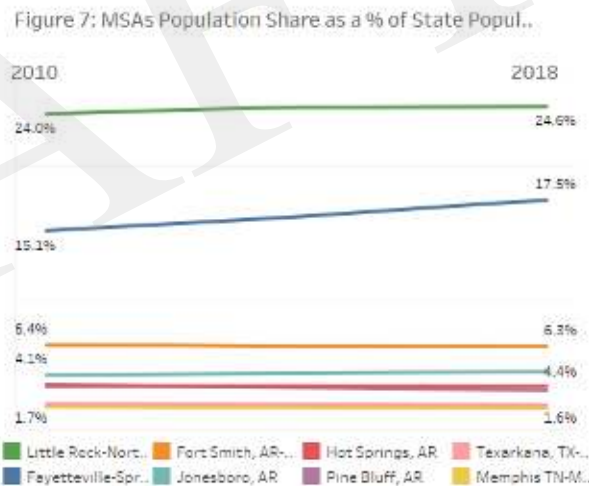
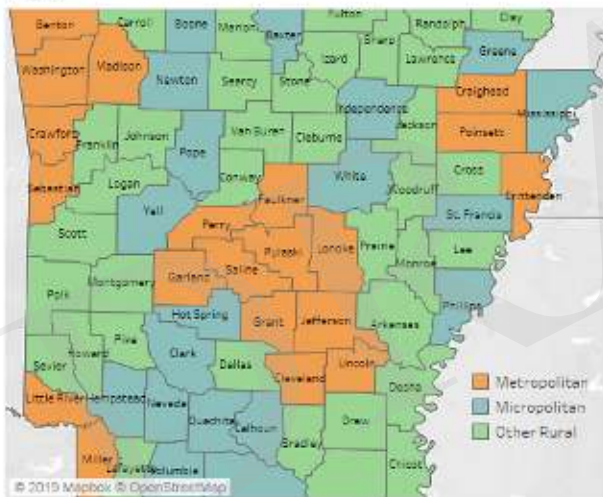


Table 2: Population Estimates

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Metropolitan	1,757,419	1,778,242	1,794,815	1,808,428	1,822,505	1,837,779	1,854,032	1,869,538	1,885,774
Micropolitan	609,048	609,081	607,459	604,343	602,452	601,724	600,260	597,897	596,251
Other Rural	555,511	553,084	548,025	546,779	542,769	538,904	536,118	533,162	533,800
Total	2,921,978	2,940,407	2,952,109	2,959,549	2,967,726	2,978,407	2,990,410	3,002,997	3,013,825

Table 3: Population Share as a % of State Population

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Metropolitan	60.1%	60.5%	60.8%	61.1%	61.4%	61.7%	62.0%	62.3%	62.5%
Micropolitan	20.8%	20.7%	20.6%	20.4%	20.3%	20.2%	20.1%	19.9%	19.8%
Other Rural	19.0%	18.8%	18.6%	18.5%	18.3%	18.1%	17.9%	17.8%	17.7%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: US Census Bureau, Population Division, Annual Estimates. Release Date: June 2019

This subsection follows the OMB definition of urban and rural to classify the state counties into three major groups: metropolitan, micropolitan, and other rural (see Map 1 above). Tables 2 and 3 provide annual population estimates for these three groups and their share of the total population from 2010-2018. Based on these figures, the majority of the state population is urban. In 2010, about 60% of all Arkansans lived in metropolitan areas while about 40% lived in rural areas (micropolitan and other rural). Population estimates from 2010-18 show that metropolitan areas are growing steadily but modestly. On the other hand, the populations of the micropolitan and other rural areas keep shrinking. In 2018, the share of all Arkansans living in urban areas grew to 62.5% while population in rural areas (micropolitan and other rural) decreased to 37.5%.

Figure 7 examines population estimates at the metropolitan level from 2010-18. Out of eight metropolitan areas, Little Rock-North Little Rock-Conway, Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers, Fort Smith, and Jonesboro are the most populated. In 2010, these four areas alone hosted close to half (49.6%) of the state population and in 2018, their share passed the halfway mark with 52.8% of all Arkansans living in these metropolitan areas.

Table 4: Population Estimates for Metropolitan Counties as a % of State Population

Cbsa	County	Year (Population)								
		2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Little Rock-North Little Rock-Conway, AR	Pulaski	13.1%	13.2%	13.2%	13.2%	13.2%	13.2%	13.2%	13.1%	13.0%
	Faulkner	3.9%	4.0%	4.0%	4.0%	4.1%	4.1%	4.1%	4.1%	4.1%
	Saline	3.7%	3.7%	3.8%	3.8%	3.9%	3.9%	3.9%	4.0%	4.0%
	Lonoke	2.4%	2.4%	2.4%	2.4%	2.4%	2.4%	2.4%	2.4%	2.4%
	Grant	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%
	Perry	0.4%	0.4%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%
Total		24.0%	24.2%	24.3%	24.4%	24.5%	24.5%	24.6%	24.6%	24.6%
Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers, AR-MO	Benton	7.6%	7.8%	8.0%	8.1%	8.3%	8.4%	8.7%	8.9%	9.0%
	Washington	7.0%	7.1%	7.2%	7.3%	7.4%	7.5%	7.6%	7.8%	7.9%
	Madison	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%
	Total	15.1%	15.4%	15.7%	15.9%	16.2%	16.5%	16.8%	17.2%	17.5%
Fort Smith, AR-OK	Sebastian	4.3%	4.3%	4.3%	4.3%	4.3%	4.3%	4.3%	4.3%	4.2%
	Crawford	2.1%	2.1%	2.1%	2.1%	2.1%	2.1%	2.1%	2.1%	2.1%
	Total	6.4%	6.4%	6.4%	6.4%	6.4%	6.4%	6.3%	6.4%	6.3%
Jonesboro, AR	Craighead	3.3%	3.3%	3.4%	3.4%	3.5%	3.5%	3.5%	3.5%	3.6%
	Poinsett	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%
	Total	4.1%	4.2%	4.2%	4.3%	4.3%	4.3%	4.3%	4.4%	4.4%
Hot Springs, AR	Garland	3.3%	3.3%	3.3%	3.3%	3.3%	3.3%	3.3%	3.3%	3.3%
Total	3.3%	3.3%	3.3%	3.3%	3.3%	3.3%	3.3%	3.3%	3.3%	
Pine Bluff, AR	Jefferson	2.6%	2.6%	2.5%	2.5%	2.4%	2.4%	2.4%	2.3%	2.3%
	Lincoln	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.4%	0.4%
	Cleveland	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%
	Total	3.4%	3.4%	3.3%	3.2%	3.2%	3.2%	3.1%	3.0%	3.0%
Texarkana, TX-AR	Miller	1.5%	1.5%	1.5%	1.5%	1.5%	1.5%	1.5%	1.5%	1.4%
	Little River	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%
	Total	1.9%	1.9%	1.9%	1.9%	1.9%	1.9%	1.9%	1.9%	1.8%
Memphis TN-MS-AR	Crittenden	1.7%	1.7%	1.7%	1.7%	1.7%	1.6%	1.7%	1.6%	1.6%
Total	1.7%	1.7%	1.7%	1.7%	1.7%	1.6%	1.7%	1.6%	1.6%	
Grand Total		60.1%	60.5%	60.8%	61.1%	61.4%	61.7%	62.0%	62.3%	62.5%

Figure 8: International and Domestic Migration as a Share of MSA Population Change



Source: US Census Bureau, Population Division, Annual Estimates. Release Date: June 2019

Table 4 takes a more detailed look at the population estimates at the county level in the metropolitan areas. For example, in 2018, 21.1% of the state population lived in Pulaski, Faulkner and Saline counties in the LR-NLR-Conway metropolitan area. In the same year, within the Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers area, Benton and Washington counties were the most populated sharing 16.9% of the total population. Between 2010 and 2018, most of the gains in the state urban population came from population growth in Benton and Washington. During this period, these two counties alone increased their share of total population by 2.3 percentage points (Table 4).

In general terms, the population in a geographic region can vary over time due to changes in several factors: number of births, deaths, and migration. Figure 8 focuses on migration, international and domestic, as source of annual population change for the LR-NLR-Conway and the Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers metropolitan areas from 2010-18. For instance, in 2011, 52.6% of the population change (from the previous year) in the LR-NLR-Conway MSA was due to migration into the area. Out of this, domestic migration accounted for 40.3% while international migration contributed 12.3%. On the other hand, in 2016, 18.9% of the population change was due to domestic migration out of the region (hence a negative percentage) while 32.7% was due to international migration into the area.

The overall migration patterns for these two metro areas are different. During this period, the Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers area experienced consistently positive international and domestic migration accounting jointly for about 60% or more of their annual population change. On the other hand, domestic migration in the LR-NLR-Conway area has been decreasing over the years and at times has even been negative. Since 2014, annual international migration in this area has accounted for a larger share of population change compared to their domestic counterpart.

Industry

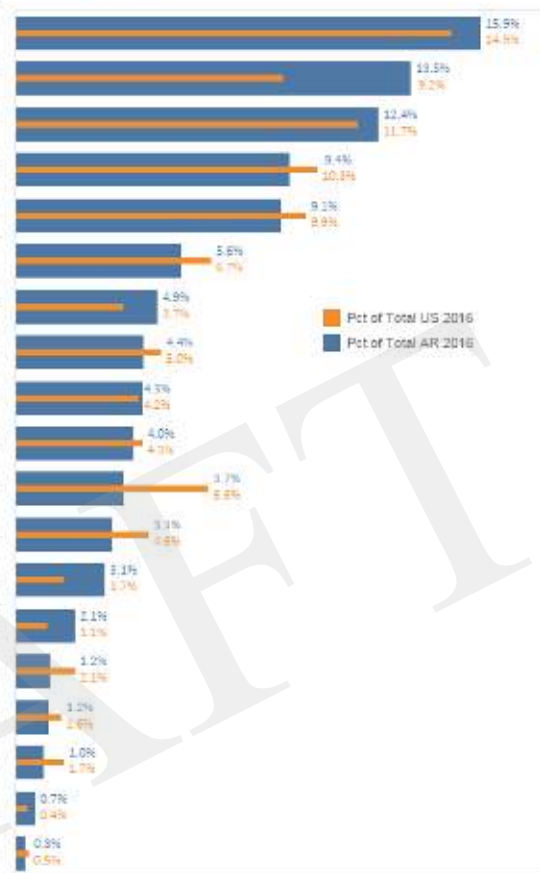
This section describes projected labor demand trends by industry sector for the state and Local Workforce Development Areas (WDA) for the decade of 2016-26. The analysis is based on the long-term (2016-26) State and Local WDA industry projections published by the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services and the national long-term industry projections published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The industries analyzed include all the 2-digit industry sectors defined by the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS), except for two – the self-employed and government sectors.

Industry Sectors at the State Level

Table 5: Number of Jobs by Industry Sector, Arkansas, Projections 2016-26

	2016	2026	Change
Health Care and Social Assistance	182,304	219,955	37,651
Manufacturing	154,599	158,865	4,266
Large			
Retail Trade	142,235	157,084	14,849
Educational Services	107,517	116,482	7,975
Accommodation and Food Services	104,238	119,188	14,945
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	64,767	71,267	6,490
Transportation and Warehousing	56,898	61,161	4,263
Construction	50,297	56,580	6,283
Medium			
Other Services (except Government)	49,734	51,225	1,491
Wholesale Trade	46,263	49,509	3,246
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	42,608	48,826	6,218
Finance and Insurance	38,305	41,071	2,766
Management of Companies and Enterprises	35,108	43,137	8,029
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	23,681	25,521	1,840
Information	13,562	13,315	-237
Small			
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	13,290	14,690	1,400
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	11,039	11,872	833
Utilities	7,696	7,975	279
Mining	4,098	3,916	-182
Total (19 Industries)	1,146,939	1,270,734	123,795

Figure 9: Share of Jobs (%) by Industry Sector, 2016, Arkansas and US



Sources: (1) Arkansas Division of Workforce Services, Labor Market Information and (2) Bureau of Labor Statistics, Employment Projections
 Note: Educational Services includes Local and State Government Education. Health Care and Social Assistance includes Local and State Government Hospitals.

Table 5 shows the employment projections by each industry sector in the state in 2016 and 2026. According to the data, labor demand in the state is expected to increase by 123,795 jobs between 2016-26. This increase will mainly come from growth in the top five industry sectors: Health care and Social Assistance, Manufacturing, Retail Trade, Educational Services, and Accommodation and Food Services, which jointly are anticipated to add 79,686 jobs.

Figure 9 shows the employment numbers in 2016 as a percentage of the total jobs at the state and national level. According to these numbers, there are differences in the state and national job distribution patterns. The sectors in Arkansas that employ significantly more people compared to their counterparts in the nation are: (1) Manufacturing, (2) Transportation and Warehousing, (3) Management of Companies and Enterprises, and (4) Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting. On the other hand, the industry sectors that employ significantly less people than at the national

level are: (1) Professional, Scientific and Technical Services, (2) Finance and Insurance, (3) Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services, and (4) Information.

To facilitate the analysis, the industry sectors at the state level are divided into three groups based on the number of jobs: Large (employing 100,000 or more), Medium (employing between 35,000-100,000) and Small (employing less than 35,000).

Even though the percentage distribution of jobs among the industry sectors in the state are different from the nation, the job distribution numbers among the three groups mentioned above are about the same. For instance, the large group (comprising the top five industry sectors) accounts for 60.3% of all jobs in Arkansas and 56% of all jobs in the country. The medium group (next eight industry sectors) accounts for 33.4 % of jobs in Arkansas and about 36.8% of jobs in the country and finally, the small group (consisting of the bottom six sectors) accounts for 6.4% of the state jobs and 7.4% of the nation’s jobs (Figure 9).

Figure 10 below shows the number of jobs and corresponding percentage share of state jobs for the three groups in 2016 and 2026. This figure shows that even though jobs are expected to increase by 123,795 in a decade, the percentage share of state jobs are projected to stay very close to the 2016 level for all three groups.

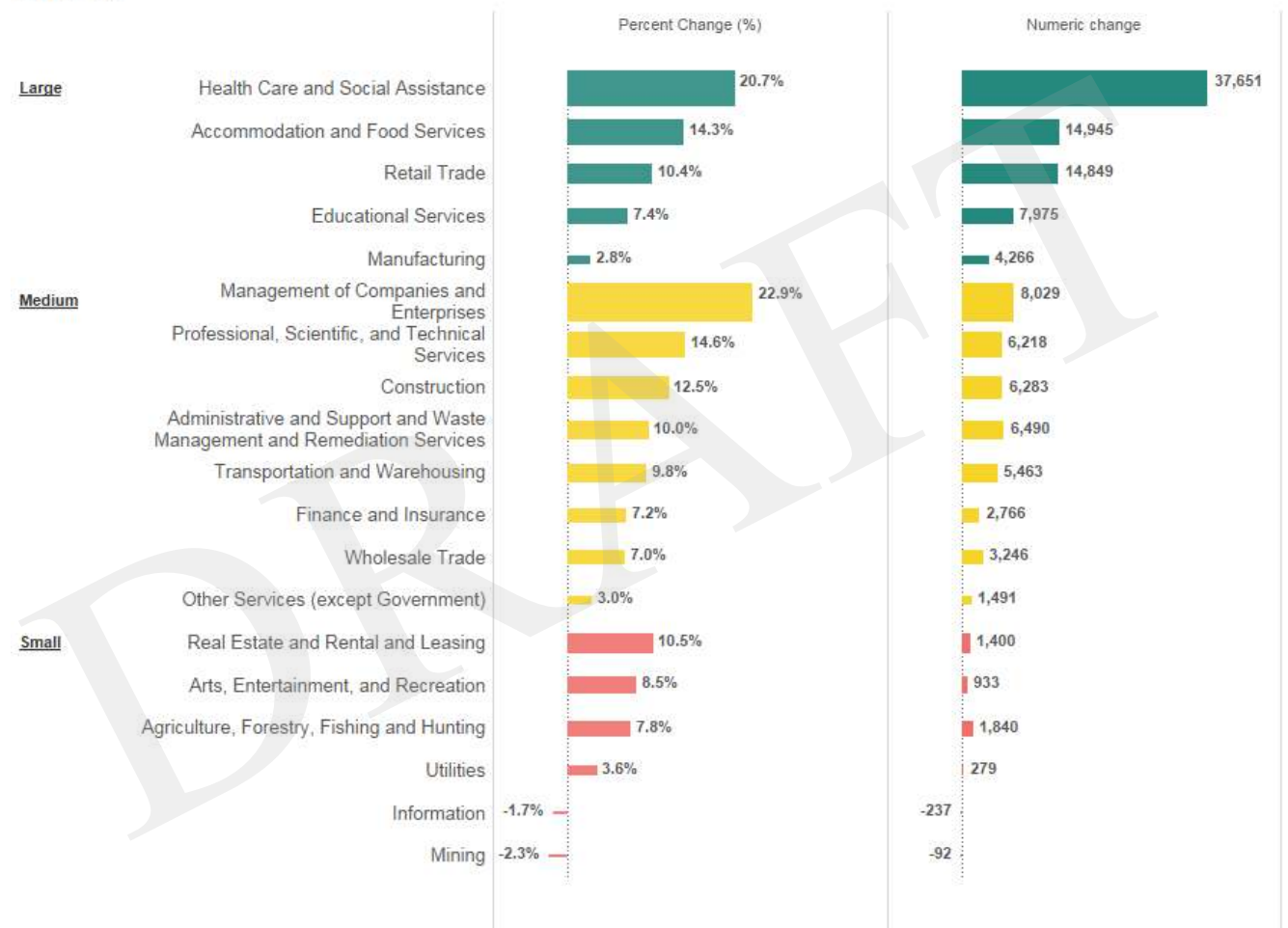
Figure 10: Number of Jobs by Industry Sector Size and Share (%) of State Total, 2016 and 2026



Source: Arkansas Division of Workforce Services, Labor Market Information- State Long Term Projections 2016-26

Figure 11 below displays the percentage and numeric change in the number of state jobs for the three groups between 2016 and 2026. All industry sectors are expected to show growth except for two – Information and Mining. For the large industry sectors, Health Care and Social Assistance is projected to show the fastest growth (20.7% increase and 37,651 additional jobs). Similarly, for the medium-sized industry sectors, Management of Companies and Enterprises is expected to grow the fastest (22.9% and 8,029 jobs) and likewise, among the small-sized sectors Real Estate and Rental and Leasing are expected to grow by 10.5% and 1,400 jobs.

Figure 11: Percent Change and Numeric Growth by Industry Sector, Arkansas, Projected Jobs 2016-26



Industry Sectors at the Local WDA Level

Arkansas is divided into ten local Workforce Development Areas. Figure 12 lists the ten areas along with their projected percent and numeric change in total employment for all sectors

between 2016-2026. The Northwest WDA is expected to grow at the fastest rate (14.2%) and also add the most number of jobs (37,546).

Figure 12: Percent Change (%) and Numeric Growth by Region, Projections 2016-26

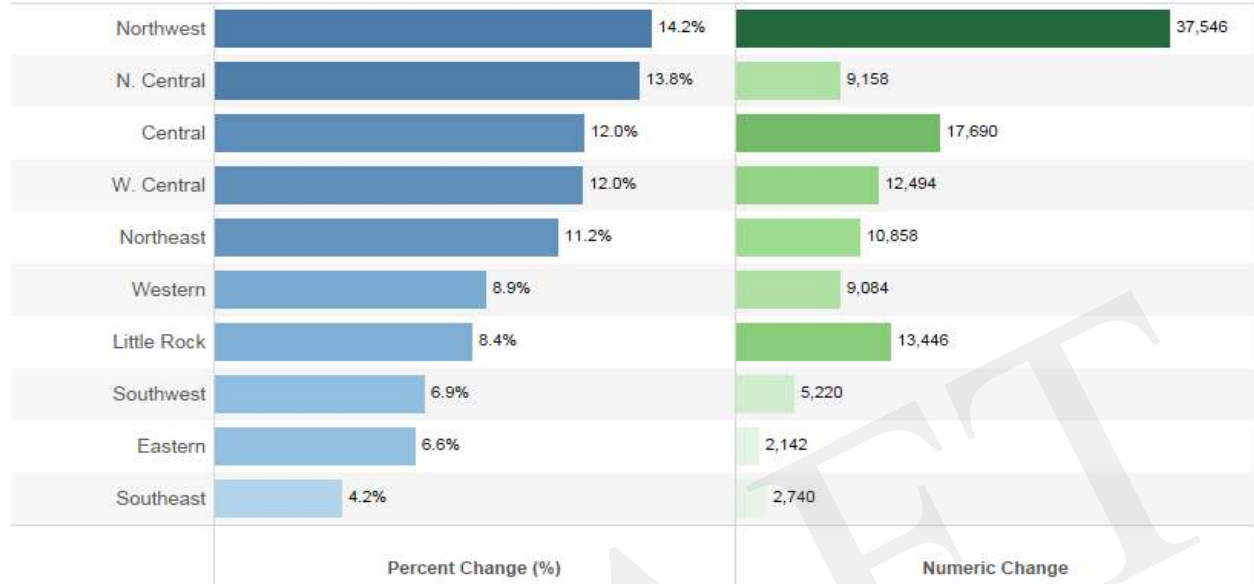


Table 6: Number of Jobs by Industry Sector and Local Region, Projections 2016

	Central	Eastern	Little Rock	N. Central	Northeast	Northwest	Southeast	Southwe..	W. Central	Western
Large										
Health Care and Social Assist..	21,320	5,996	38,493	12,924	16,734	31,861	11,452	10,169	16,336	15,267
Manufacturing	11,610	3,393	7,465	8,083	19,358	34,341	14,275	19,064	15,984	20,886
Retail Trade	23,462	4,904	15,705	9,621	12,777	31,982	7,724	8,861	14,240	12,614
Educational Services	12,881	4,203	11,074	8,341	10,527	24,995	7,809	7,996	11,167	8,155
Accommodation and Food Se..	16,999	3,023	13,588	6,041	8,692	26,132	4,420	5,328	11,249	8,720
Total	86,272	21,519	86,325	45,010	68,088	149,311	45,680	51,418	68,976	65,642
Medium										
Administrative and Waste Ser..	8,477	1,552	10,649	2,139	4,869	11,318	2,175	2,273	5,252	6,388
Transportation and Warehous..	7,149	2,223	5,251	3,759	3,072	17,269	2,664	3,928	4,289	6,001
Construction	9,956	921	4,775	2,368	3,794	10,910	2,076	3,599	4,563	3,906
Other Services (except Gover..	8,580	1,297	8,960	2,669	2,707	9,631	2,420	3,524	4,796	4,286
Wholesale Trade	6,599	2,117	6,928	1,646	3,386	9,794	2,072	1,914	1,942	3,560
Professional and Technical S..	7,045	500	10,022	1,131	1,620	12,133	856	1,041	1,962	1,998
Finance and Insurance	4,229	737	11,943	2,010	2,290	6,674	1,880	1,867	3,027	2,421
Management of Companies a..	1,303	173	3,955	303	610	24,199	356	1,069	411	2,430
Total	53,338	9,520	62,483	16,025	22,348	101,928	14,499	19,215	26,242	30,990
Small										
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing ..	1,786			2,285	3,558	3,142	3,573	2,524	3,144	1,475
Information	1,143	197	5,166	500	724	2,535	315	455	847	1,138
Real Estate and Rental and L..	1,853	556	2,698	583	1,038	2,719	575	743	1,074	1,120
Arts, Entertainment, and Recr..	1,470	674	1,526	508	511	3,042	236	386	2,139	495
Utilities	515	208	1,538	669	447	1,119	580	539	1,345	653
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil an..	550			609	102	132	55	739	536	816
Total	7,317	1,635	10,928	5,154	6,380	12,689	5,334	5,386	9,085	5,897
Grand Total	146,927	32,674	159,736	66,189	96,816	263,928	65,513	76,019	104,303	102,329

Note: The cells are shaded for dark blue to light gray based on job numbers.

Table 6 shows the number of jobs in 2016 for each of the industry sectors at the WDA level. The majority of the jobs across all industry sectors are located in three local Workforce Development Areas – Northwest, Little Rock and Central. The three areas together account for about 51.2 % of all WDA jobs with the Northwest taking the largest share. Apart from jobs in Health Care and Social Assistance, the majority of the jobs in the large industry sectors are located in the Northwest. The Little Rock Area accounts for the largest number of jobs in Health Care and Social Assistance. Among the medium-sized industry sectors, most of the jobs in Transportation and Warehousing and Management of Companies and Enterprises are located in the Northwest.

Table 7 shows the estimated projected percentage change in the number of jobs for each of the industry sectors at the WDA level between 2016 and 2026. In the large industry sectors, the Health Care and Social Assistance sector is expected to grow significantly across all local WDAs, while Manufacturing shows modest growth or decline in all areas except for North Central and North East where it shows a relatively strong growth. Among the medium-sized sectors, Management of Companies and Enterprises is expected to experience the fastest growth among all industry sectors across all WDAs with the exception of West Central. Among the small-sized industrial sectors, Information shows an across the board decline with the exception of the Central WDA, which shows a significant growth. The Mining sector also shows a modest growth or decline in all WDAs except for the Northeast.

Table 7: Percent Change (%) in Industry Sector Jobs by Local Region, Projections 2016-26

		Central	Eastern	Little Rock	N. Central	Northeast	Northwest	Southeast	Southwe..	W. Central	Western	
Large	Health Care and Social Assistance	24.9%	22.2%	17.6%	19.8%	17.1%	23.1%	18.8%	21.2%	20.9%	21.3%	
	Manufacturing	-0.6%	-4.8%	3.2%	9.3%	8.9%	4.1%	-1.4%	0.1%	2.9%	0.3%	
	Retail Trade	10.2%	6.0%	1.1%	10.4%	9.8%	16.9%	6.2%	10.6%	11.7%	10.0%	
	Educational Services	9.5%	-1.6%	5.8%	9.2%	9.3%	10.8%	-1.1%	0.0%	9.0%	9.3%	
	Accommodation and Food Services	16.5%	5.5%	8.3%	23.3%	8.9%	13.9%	7.9%	10.2%	27.9%	11.7%	
Medium	Administrative and Waste Services	9.7%	10.1%	6.2%	26.7%	27.5%	11.7%	10.1%	19.5%	8.3%	4.5%	
	Transportation and Warehousing	7.0%	6.8%	2.4%	10.3%	14.2%	14.1%	-7.1%	7.4%	12.9%	13.9%	
	Construction	12.9%	4.2%	12.6%	15.0%	14.4%	14.3%	7.6%	9.5%	12.1%	10.3%	
	Other Services (except Government)	7.2%	-0.6%	2.8%	3.3%	-0.9%	9.0%	-3.9%	-5.3%	-3.8%	-1.0%	
	Wholesale Trade	4.2%	3.3%	4.4%	16.9%	4.2%	12.9%	-0.5%	0.4%	1.1%	3.5%	
	Professional and Technical Services	15.7%	11.8%	12.1%	15.7%	15.6%	15.7%	17.2%	6.5%	15.7%	15.6%	
	Finance and Insurance	4.5%	2.7%	6.4%	5.5%	4.1%	9.7%	-4.5%	-0.5%	22.5%	3.0%	
	Management of Companies and Enterprises	30.5%	28.9%	11.3%	42.2%	37.9%	23.6%	16.0%	36.8%	-6.6%	24.4%	
	Small	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	15.6%			23.2%	4.0%	17.8%	-5.6%	8.6%	3.2%	4.7%
		Information	19.5%	-5.6%	-4.9%	-5.4%	-6.1%	-2.4%	-9.2%	-10.1%	2.4%	-4.0%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing		6.9%	4.0%	8.4%	4.0%	9.2%	19.1%	6.4%	7.7%	14.0%	8.4%	
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation		8.1%	5.0%	5.9%	9.7%	9.0%	10.8%	11.0%	-0.3%	7.5%	15.6%	
Utilities		15.7%	0.0%	4.2%	4.2%	1.1%	4.2%	0.5%	4.3%	4.2%	-4.9%	
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction		1.3%			-3.3%	12.8%	-20.5%	-9.1%	-5.3%	-4.3%	-0.9%	

Note: Positive % changes are represented in shades of green while negative % changes are represented in shades of red.

Labor Force and Unemployment Rate

This section describes the State labor force and unemployment rate estimates for the period between January 2008 – September 2019 published by the Division of Workforce Services. Stated simply, the labor force includes all civilians 16 years and older who are employed or unemployed.

	Total	Labor Force Participation Rate	Employment / Population Ratio	Unemployment rate
Population 16 years and over	2,351,061	58.1%	54.3%	6.3%
AGE				
16 to 19 years	159,890	35.6%	28.2%	20.7%
20 to 24 years	205,401	72.5%	63.7%	11.5%
25 to 29 years	196,865	78.3%	72.0%	7.3%
30 to 34 years	190,888	78.7%	73.1%	6.7%
35 to 44 years	367,460	78.3%	74.0%	5.2%
45 to 54 years	381,092	74.1%	71.0%	4.1%
55 to 59 years	193,913	64.7%	62.5%	3.5%
60 to 64 years	179,385	48.2%	46.9%	2.8%
65 to 74 years	277,145	22.1%	21.4%	3.0%
75 years and over	199,022	6.3%	6.1%	3.2%
RACE AND HISPANIC OR LATINO ORIGIN				
White alone	1,859,731	57.8%	54.6%	5.3%
Black or African American alone	346,651	57.3%	50.5%	11.6%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	15,335	52.0%	47.4%	8.4%
Asian alone	33,582	65.8%	62.7%	4.5%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	4,518	61.1%	57.1%	6.5%
Some other race alone	49,008	70.4%	66.8%	5.1%
Two or more races	42,236	58.5%	53.2%	8.4%
Hispanic or Latino origin (of any race)	137,412	68.7%	64.9%	5.1%
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	1,776,600	57.3%	54.1%	5.3%
Population 20 to 64 years	1,715,004	72.0%	67.6%	5.8%
SEX				
Male	848,276	77.0%	71.9%	6.0%
Female	866,728	67.2%	63.4%	5.5%
With own children under 18 years	316,317	71.5%	67.2%	5.9%
With own children under 6 years only	73,221	67.7%	61.7%	8.7%
With own children under 6 years and 6 to 17 years	65,400	64.5%	60.4%	6.2%
With own children under 6 to 17 years only	177,696	75.7%	72.1%	4.7%
POVERTY STATUS IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS				
Below poverty level	281,384	46.5%	36.1%	22.3%
At or above the poverty level	1,392,444	79.0%	75.7%	3.8%
DISABILITY STATUS				
With any disability	261,041	34.7%	30.5%	11.9%
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT				
Population 25 to 64 years	1,509,603	72.0%	68.2%	5.0%
Less than high school graduate	188,642	53.9%	48.8%	9.4%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	508,200	67.4%	63.2%	6.2%
Some college or associate's degree	463,632	74.9%	70.8%	4.9%
Bachelor's degree or higher	349,129	84.6%	82.4%	2.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Table 8 above takes a detailed look at the labor force data for the year 2017 calculated by the U.S. Census Bureau (based on the 2013-2017 American Community Survey). The table includes labor force participation rates, employment-to-population ratios and unemployment rates for various demographics. The highest unemployment rates are found among the younger population, Blacks or African Americans, persons with disabilities, and those with less than a high school diploma.

Figure 13: Arkansas Labor Force and Number of Employed, January 2008 - September 2019

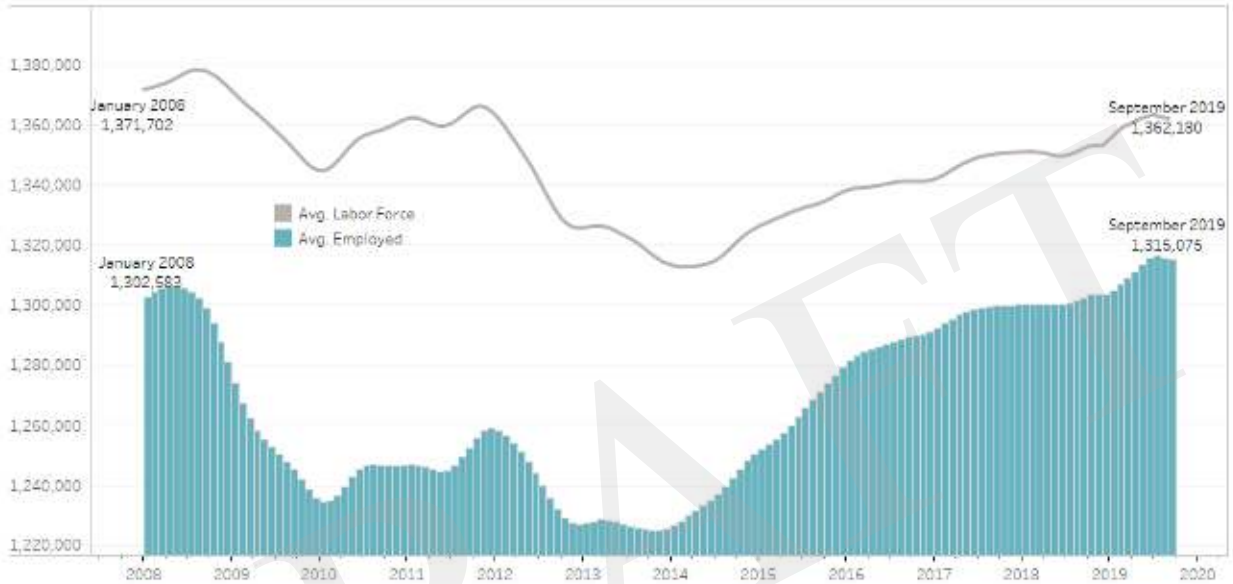
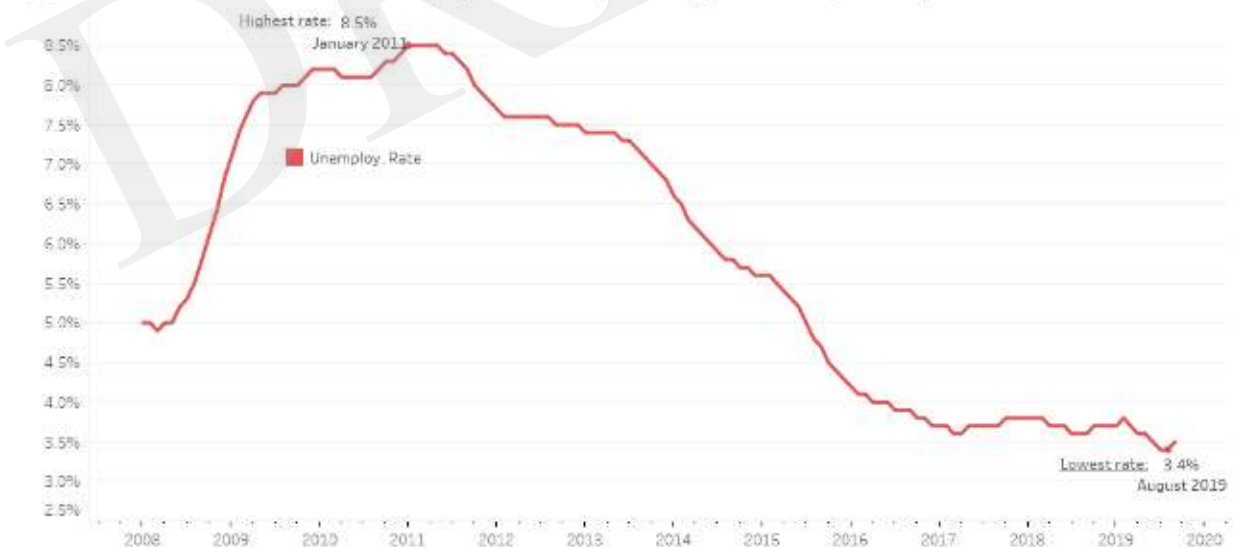


Figure 14: Arkansas Monthly Unemployment Rate, January, 2008 - September, 2019



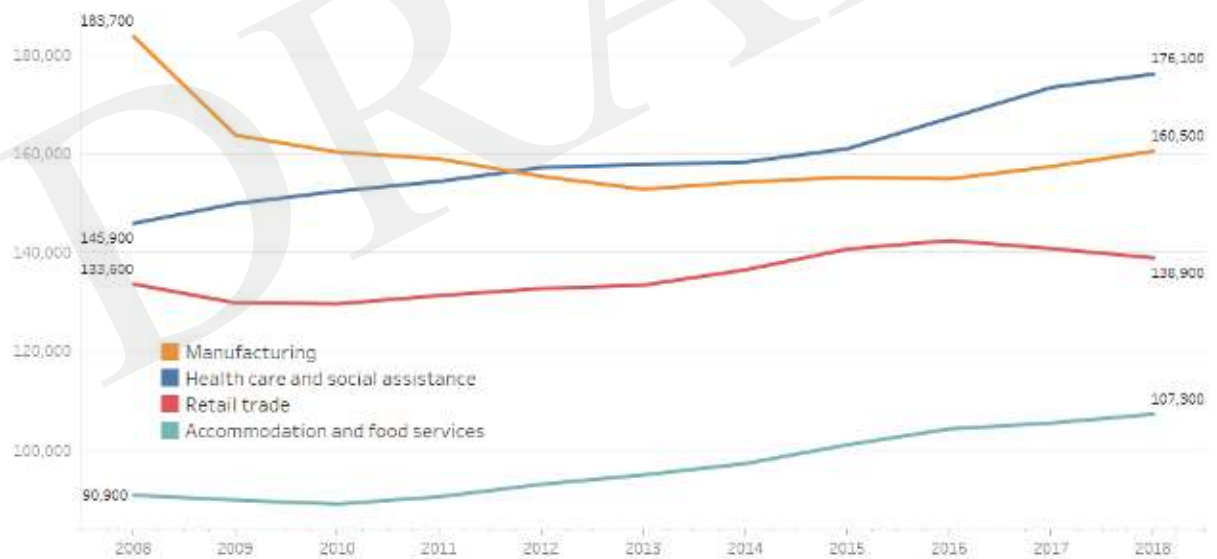
Source: Division of Workforce Services, Labor Market Information.

Figures 13 and 14 show historical data (January 2008 – September 2019) for the State labor force and the number of employed. As a consequence of the Great Recession of 2008, both the labor force and the number of unemployed decreased from 2008 till 2010. They made a modest recovery from 2010-2012 and then shows a sharp decline again until 2014. From that point onward the labor force and number of unemployed have experience a steady increase. However, since 2014 the number of employed has increased at a faster rate than the labor force. In fact, the number of employed in September 2019 has surpassed the pre-recession level while the labor force is just approaching its pre-recession level. As a result, the unemployment rate has been steadily decreasing from its highest in May 2011 (8.5%) to its lowest at 3.4% in August 2019 (See Figure 14).

Nonfarm Industry Employment Estimates

Trends in the employment estimates from 2008-2018 for the Large, Medium, and Small nonfarm Industry Sectors are analyzed in this section. The Large, Medium, and Small Industry Sectors are defined in the above section on Industry Employment Projections. The Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting sector is excluded from this analysis while Utilities is incorporated into the Transportation and Warehousing sector.

Figure 15: Annual Employment Estimates for Large Industry Sectors, 2008-2018



Source: Arkansas Division of Workforce Services, Labor Market Information (CES)

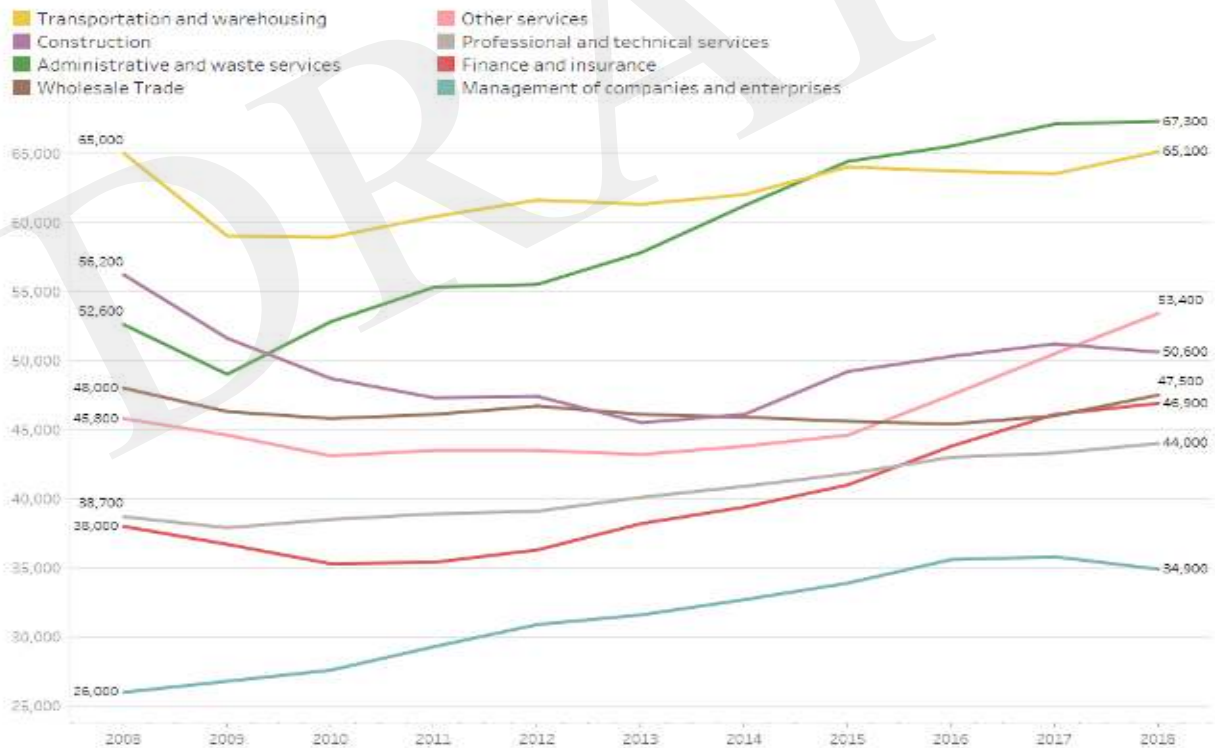
NAICS Industry Title	2018	2016	2008	2-year Change		10-year Change	
				Numeric	%	Numeric	%
Manufacturing	160,500	154,900	183,700	5,600	3.6%	-23,200	-12.6%
Health care and social assistance	176,100	167,200	145,900	8,900	5.3%	30,200	20.7%
Retail trade	138,900	142,400	133,600	-3,500	-2.5%	5,300	4.0%
Accommodation and food services	107,300	104,300	90,900	3,000	2.9%	16,400	18.0%

Source: Arkansas Division of Workforce Services, Labor Market Information.

Among the large sectors, Health Care and Social Assistance has been consistently increasing in the past decade while Manufacturing showed a sharp decline from 2008-2013 and since then shown a modest growth in employment (see Figure 15). In terms of percentage change, Health Care and Social Assistance experienced the fastest growth at 20.7% (Table 9).

In the medium-sized sectors, all industries showed a modest growth from 2010 onward with Administrative and Waste Services experiencing the greatest numeric change with 14,700 jobs added while Management of Companies and Enterprises experienced the greatest percentage change at 34.2%. See Figure 16 and Table 10.

Figure 16: Annual Employment Estimates for Medium Industry Sectors, 2008-2018



Source: Arkansas Division of Workforce Services, Labor Market Information (CES)

NAICS Industry Title	2018	2016	2008	2-year Change		10-year Change	
				Numeric	%	Numeric	%
Transportation and warehousing	65,100	63,700	65,000	1,400	2.2%	100	0.2%
Construction	50,600	50,300	56,200	300	0.6%	-5,600	-10.0%
Administrative and waste services	67,300	65,500	52,600	1,800	2.7%	14,700	27.9%
Wholesale Trade	47,500	45,400	48,000	2,100	4.6%	-500	-1.0%
Other services	53,400	47,500	45,800	5,900	12.4%	7,600	16.6%
Professional and technical services	44,000	43,000	38,700	1,000	2.3%	5,300	13.7%
Finance and insurance	46,900	43,800	38,000	3,100	7.1%	8,900	23.4%
Management of companies and enterprises	34,900	35,600	26,000	-700	-2.0%	8,900	34.2%

Source: Arkansas Division of Workforce Services, Labor Market Information.

For the small-sized sectors, all industries show either a decline or a slight increase in employment. The Mining and Logging sector showed the largest percentage decline at 43.9% (a loss of 4,700 jobs) followed by Information at 35.6% (6,200 jobs lost). See Figure 17 and Table 11

Figure 17: Annual Employment Estimates for Small Industry Sectors, 2008-2018



Source: Arkansas Division of Workforce Services, Labor Market Information (CES)

Table 11: Small Industry Sectors Annual Employment Estimates - 2018, 2016 and 2008

NAICS Industry Title	2018	2016	2008	2-year Change		10-year Change	
				Numeric	%	Numeric	%
Information	11,200	12,400	17,400	-1,200	-9.7%	-6,200	-35.6%
Real estate and rental and leasing	13,600	13,300	14,300	300	2.3%	-700	-4.9%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	11,300	11,000	9,900	300	2.7%	1,400	14.1%
Mining and logging	6,000	6,400	10,700	-400	-6.3%	-4,700	-43.9%

Source: Arkansas Division of Workforce Services, Labor Market Information.

Table 12 is a more comprehensive list of the nonfarm employment estimates for all industry sectors for 2018, 2016 and 2008.

Table 12: Arkansas Nonfarm Employment - Annual Average

NAICS Industry Title	2018	2016	2008	2-year Change		10-year Change	
				Numeric	%	Numeric	%
Total nonfarm	1,261,900	1,233,000	1,202,500	28,900	2.3%	59,400	4.9%
Total private	1,049,700	1,021,200	988,700	28,500	2.8%	61,000	6.2%
Goods-producing	217,100	211,500	250,600	5,600	2.6%	-33,500	-13.4%
Mining and logging	6,000	6,400	10,700	-400	-6.3%	-4,700	-43.9%
Construction	50,600	50,300	56,200	300	0.6%	-5,600	-10.0%
Specialty trade contractors	32,000	32,000	32,700	0	0.0%	-700	-2.1%
Manufacturing	160,500	154,900	183,700	5,600	3.6%	-23,200	-12.6%
Durable goods	76,500	74,500	95,300	2,000	2.7%	-18,800	-19.7%
Nondurable goods	84,100	80,400	88,400	3,700	4.6%	-4,300	-4.9%
Service-providing	1,044,800	1,021,500	951,900	23,300	2.3%	92,900	9.8%
Trade, transportation, and utilities	251,500	251,600	246,500	-100	0.0%	5,000	2.0%
Wholesale Trade	47,500	45,400	48,000	2,100	4.6%	-500	-1.0%
Retail trade	138,900	142,400	133,600	-3,500	-2.5%	5,300	4.0%
Transportation and warehousing	65,100	63,700	65,000	1,400	2.2%	100	0.2%
Information	11,200	12,400	17,400	-1,200	-9.7%	-6,200	-35.6%
Financial activities	60,500	57,100	52,400	3,400	6.0%	8,100	15.5%
Finance and insurance	46,900	43,800	38,000	3,100	7.1%	8,900	23.4%
Real estate and rental and leasing	13,600	13,300	14,300	300	2.3%	-700	-4.9%
Professional and business services	146,200	144,000	117,300	2,200	1.5%	28,900	24.6%
Professional and technical services	44,000	43,000	38,700	1,000	2.3%	5,300	13.7%
Management of companies and enterpr	34,900	35,600	26,000	-700	-2.0%	8,900	34.2%
Administrative and waste services	67,300	65,500	52,600	1,800	2.7%	14,700	27.9%
Education and health services	191,200	181,600	158,000	9,600	5.3%	33,200	21.0%
Educational services ^{1/}	15,100	14,500	12,100	600	4.1%	3,000	24.8%
Health care and social assistance	176,100	167,200	145,900	8,900	5.3%	30,200	20.7%
Ambulatory health care services	58,300	53,900	45,000	4,400	8.2%	13,300	29.6%
Social assistance	40,000	39,600	30,000	400	1.0%	10,000	33.3%
Leisure and hospitality	118,600	115,400	100,800	3,200	2.8%	17,800	17.7%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	11,300	11,000	9,900	300	2.7%	1,400	14.1%
Accommodation and food services	107,300	104,300	90,900	3,000	2.9%	16,400	18.0%
Accommodation	11,300	11,300	11,700	0	0.0%	-400	-3.4%
Food services and drinking places	95,900	93,000	79,200	2,900	3.1%	16,700	21.1%
Other services	53,400	47,500	45,800	5,900	12.4%	7,600	16.6%
Government	212,200	211,900	213,800	300	0.1%	-1,600	-0.7%
Federal government	20,100	20,300	21,200	-200	-1.0%	-1,100	-5.2%
State government	77,900	77,900	72,800	0	0.0%	5,100	7.0%
State government, excluding education	48,200	48,600	46,300	-400	-0.8%	1,900	4.1%
Local government	114,200	113,700	119,800	500	0.4%	-5,600	-4.7%
Local government, excluding education	44,200	44,100	NA	100	0.2%	NA	NA

Source: Division of Workforce Services, Labor Market Information.

1/ Educational Services does not include Local and State Government Education.

Arkansas Department of Commerce Research Team Inputs to WIOA State Plan

Important stylized facts about labor markets involve patterns of turnover, job stability, and length of tenure. Many hires lead to jobs of short duration, lasting less than a year. Such transient hires tend to comprise a small share of the total stock of jobs at any given time, however. Figure 1 shows the share of stable jobs existing at the end of 2018 that began in 2016 or later, by industry. Across all industries, about half of jobs had appeared, or the most recent hire into the job had taken place, three years prior or less. But the ratio varied greatly by industry, from 76% in accommodation and food services, to under 40% in utilities and education.

Figure 1: The share of the end-2018 workforce that was hired in 2016 or later varies greatly by industry

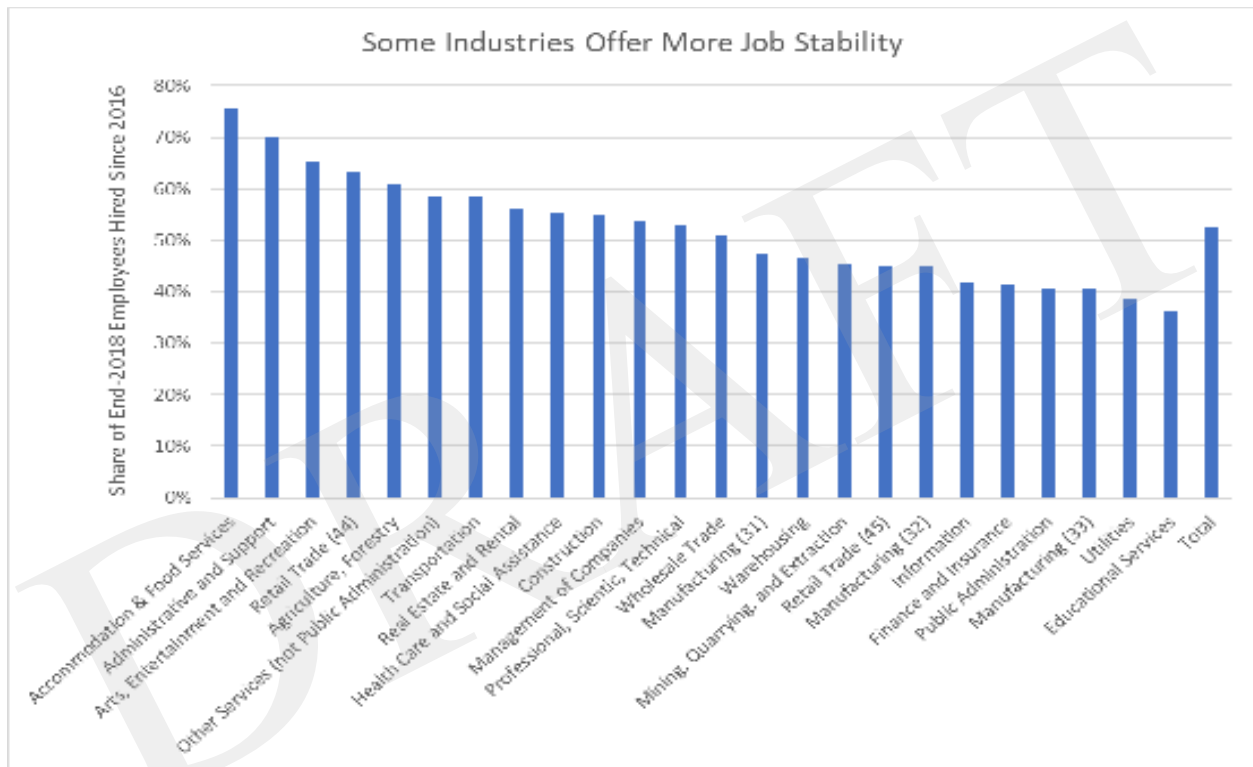
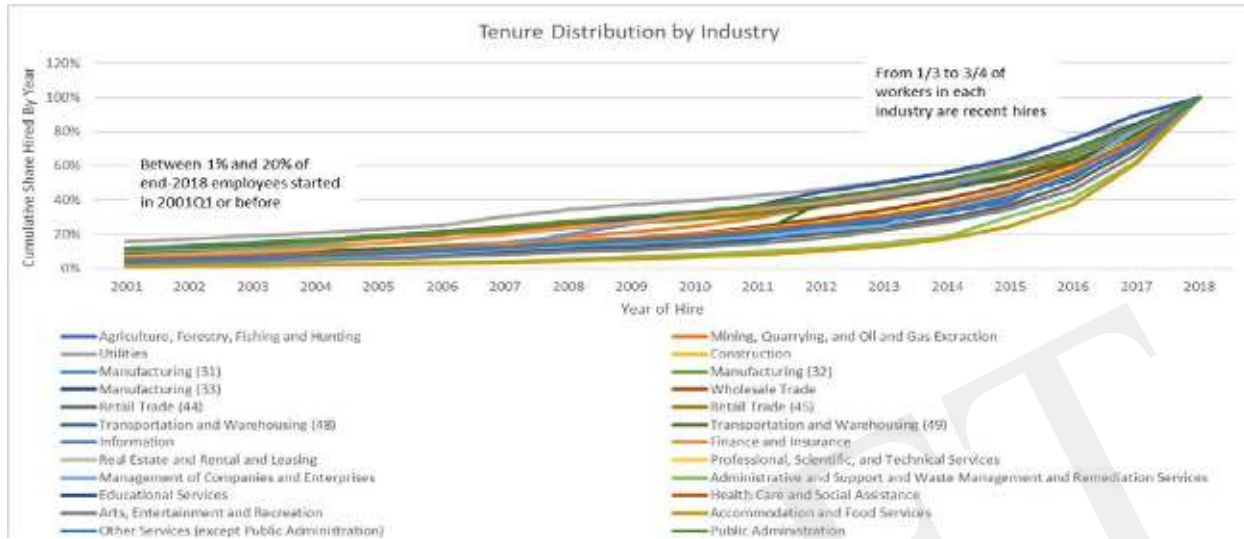


Figure 2 expands on Figure 1 by showing, for each industry, the cumulative share of the workforce that was hired during or before an ascending year. Each curve in Figure 2 represents an industry. The curves necessarily slope up because the share of the workforce that was hired during or before a given year is necessarily equal to or greater than the share that was hired during or before the previous year. The curves describe the accumulation of what became the end-2018 workforce. Besides sloping upward, the curves are all bowed towards the lower right corner of the chart, because a disproportionate share of the workforce are recent hires, many of whom will turn over, whereas long-term employees tend to be more stable. The expected future duration of a job is an increasing function of its past duration. But while all the curves share an upward slope and a bowed shape, some are much higher than others, reflecting very different

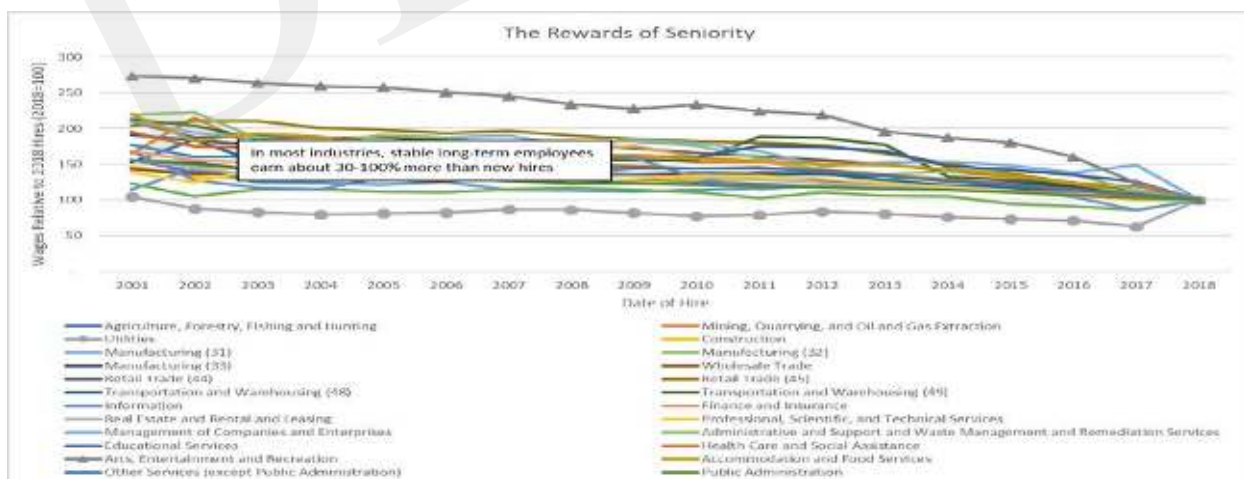
turnover patterns across industries. The share of today’s workers who were in their current jobs ten or fifteen years ago is many times greater in some industries than others.

Figure 2: Cumulative workforce shares by date of hire, by industry



Long-term jobs tend to pay better, as shown in Figure 3. Figure 3 shows the ratio of average wages of workers hired in each year (moving averages are used for the middle years to smooth fluctuations) to the average wages of recent hires. In most industries—utilities is an intriguing exception—the long-term workers earn substantially more than the recent hires. While obvious explanations for this include firm-specific on-the-job training and rewards for organizational loyalty, it could also reflect the skill and/or effort levels of transient versus permanent workers. Either way, it suggests the value of placing people in long-term, stable jobs.

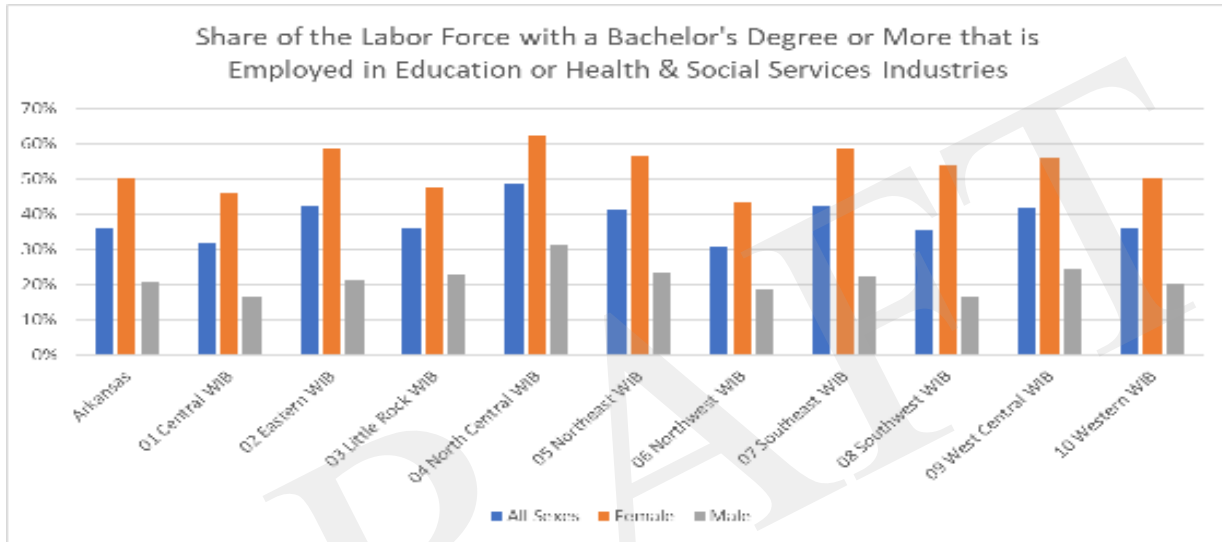
Figure 3: Ratio of average wages by year of hire to average wages for 2018 hires



Industries Employing College-Educated Workers, by Gender and Region

College-educated workers are found in all industries, but they are more concentrated in some industries relative to the workforce as a whole. These patterns of industry concentration vary somewhat by region as well. One striking pattern is that women with a Bachelor’s degree or more tend to be concentrated in the health and education industries, especially outside metropolitan centers, as shown in Figure 1. The share of college-educated working women who are in health or education exceeded 60% in the North Central WIB area, and was nearly 60% in the Eastern and Southeast WIB areas. It was lowest in the Northwest WIB, at just over 40%.

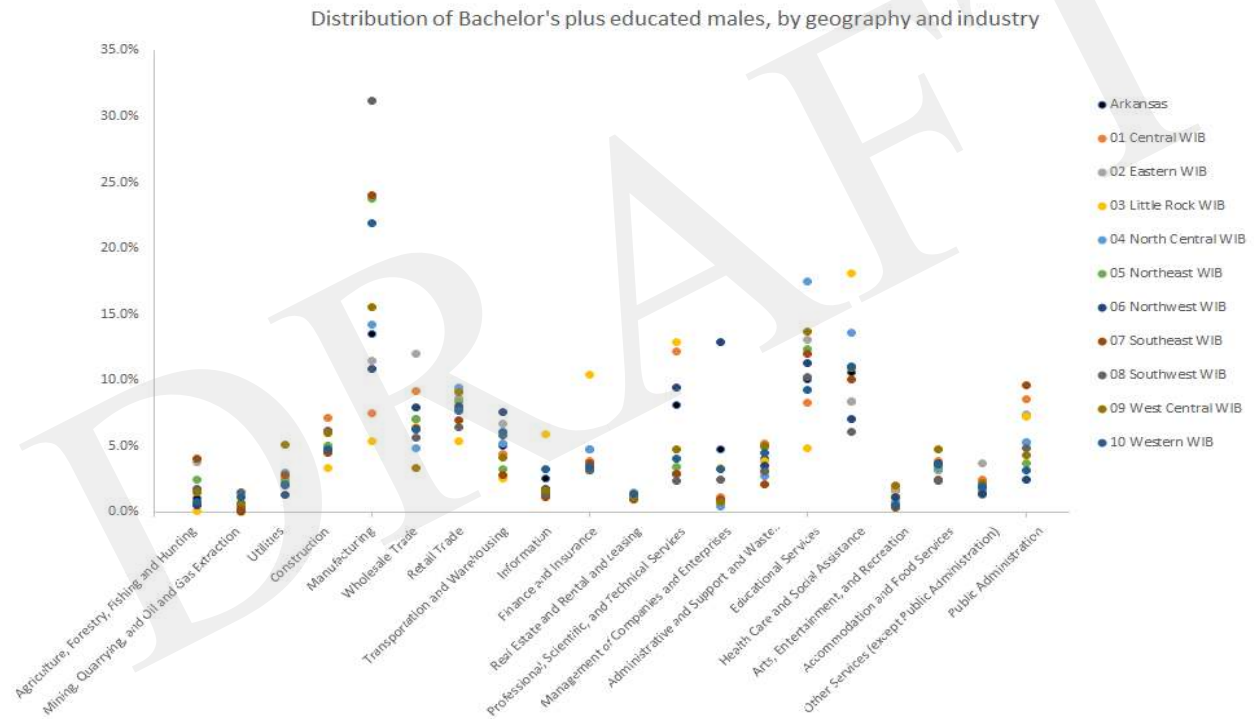
Figure 4: College-educated women, but not men, are concentrated in the health and education industries (Source: QWI)



The share of college-educated men working in health and education was everywhere much lower than the share of college-educated working women. It was highest in the North Central WIB area, at just over 30%, and under 20% in the Northwest, Southwest, and Central WIB areas.

If college-educated men don't work in health and education, where do they work? Figure 2 shows that the answers vary a lot by region. Manufacturing, for example, employs 31% of college-educated working men in the Southwest WIB area, and 24% in the Northeast WIB area, but only 11% in the Northwest WIB area, 8% in the Central WIB area and 5% in the Little Rock WIB area. By contrast, professional, scientific and technical services employs 13% of college-educated working men in the Little Rock WIB area, 12% in the Central WIB area, and 10% in the Northwest WIB area, but under 5% in most WIB areas and under 3% in some.

Figure 5: Industry distribution of Bachelor's degree or more educated males, by region (Source: QWI)



Educational Awards by Level, Region, and Field of Study

Figure 3 shows how many educational awards, altogether and at various levels, were awarded in each of the WIB regions of the state. Substantial interregional differences are visible. First, of course, regions with major Bachelor's degree granting institutions stand out for awarding more Bachelor's degrees per capita. Thus, Northwest WIB area, home of UA-Fayetteville, awards 184 Bachelor's degrees per 10,000 people, and Northeast WIB, home of ASU-Jonesboro, awards 146, but Southeast only 68, Southwest only 42 and Eastern WIB none. Little Rock WIB (UALR)

and Central WIB (UCA) are the other Bachelor’s degree hubs. There seems to be a pattern whereby regions that award fewer Bachelor’s degrees tend to award more certificates, which should make sense if all populations have some demand for postsecondary education and certificate programs and Bachelor’s degree programs are substitutes.

Figure 6: Awards per 10,000 people (Source: JobsEQ)

AGGREGATE	01 Central WIB	02 Eastern WIB	03 Little Rock WIB	04 North Central WIB	05 Northeast WIB	06 Northwest WIB	07 Southeast WIB	08 Southwest WIB	09 West Central WIB	10 Western WIB
All Award Levels	216.6	176.8	372.6	415.9	432.5	350.8	188.5	343.5	346.9	123.0
Certificate < 1 Yr	18.1	90.1	0.7	85.6	38.3	23.3	32.9	86.1	60.8	24.5
Certificate 1+ but < 2 Yr	39.8	30.4	0.6	89.7	26.5	27.8	27.0	93.4	43.1	11.1
Associate's Certificate 2+ but < 4 Yr	45.0	56.3	43.1	112.0	73.8	55.8	45.7	72.2	65.1	26.2
Bachelor's Post-Baccalaureate	83.9	-	184.6	94.0	146.0	184.0	68.3	42.0	146.9	61.2
Master's	0.7	-	13.7	-	2.0	1.6	-	0.3	1.8	-
Post-Master's	24.5	-	77.7	26.4	113.0	47.7	12.9	49.5	28.1	0.1
Doctorate	1.5	-	0.4	-	28.5	0.4	-	-	0.8	-
Doctorate	3.1	-	51.7	8.3	4.4	10.2	0.1	-	0.3	-

Figure 4 classifies awards by field of study (but not level) in order to shed light on regional differences in choice of field. The total numbers of awards differ because the data source, ARC’s Economic Security Report, does not include private institutions. In some cases, the concentration of graduates from particular fields of study in particular regions fits with known distributions of economic activity across the state. The fact that business and management awards per capita is highest in Northwest WIB area makes sense in light of the concentration of corporate headquarters in that part of the state. Likewise, the concentration of health professions degrees in Little Rock WIB area reflects Little Rock’s role as a hospital and health care hub with a large catchment area. It is less clear why education awards are concentrated in Northeast WIB area, or transportation awards in North Central WIB area.

Figure 7: Awards from public institutions by region, field of study

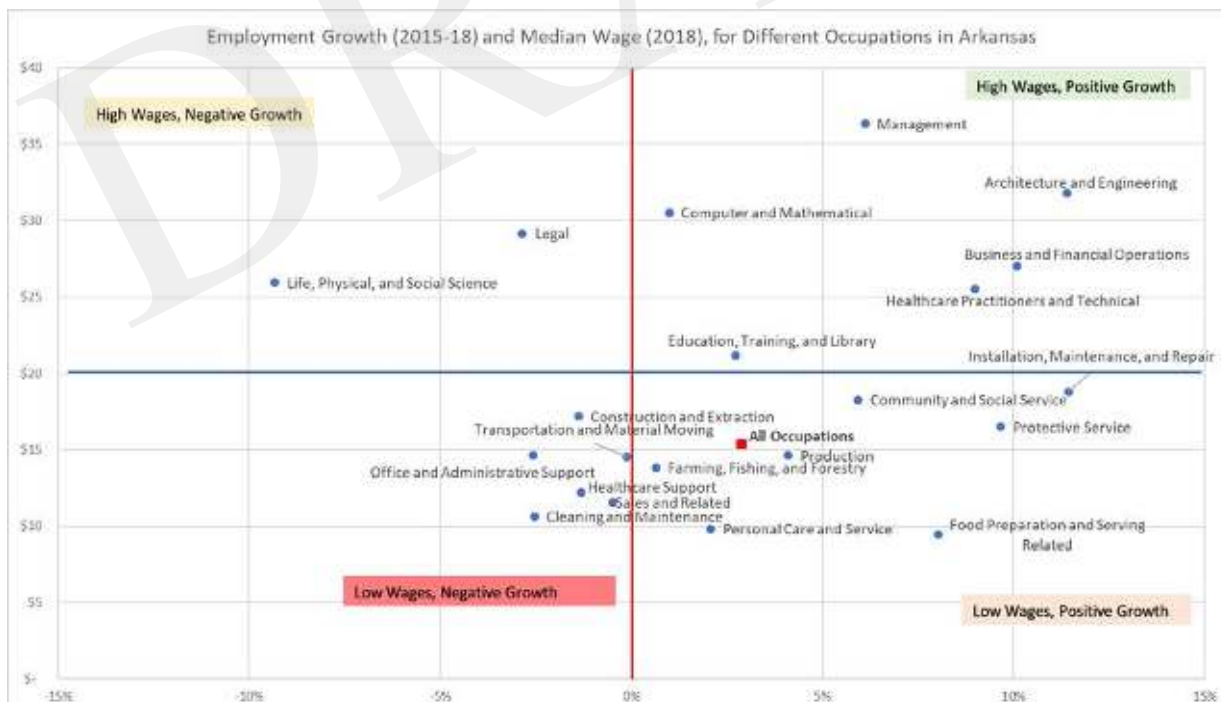
Awards per 10,000 people	01 Central WIB	02 Eastern WIB	03 Little Rock WIB	04 North Central WIB	05 Northeast WIB	06 Northwest WIB	07 Southeast WIB	08 Southwest WIB	09 West Central WIB	10 Western WIB
ALL	138	116	322	170	331	247	137	198	263	98
Business, Management & Marketing	18	3	33	9	27	43	12	14	22	15
Communication & Journalism	2	0	5	0	7	11	1	1	4	1

Education	14	1	20	4	107	12	10	12	34	7
Engineering	0	0	4	0	3	18	0	0	4	0
Health Professions	25	21	122	53	60	30	26	46	53	14
Law Enforcement & Protective Serv.	0	1	11	3	9	3	8	26	9	4
Legal Professions & Studies	1	0	13	0	0	5	0	0	0	0
Liberal Arts & Sci., Gen. Studies	30	31	14	39	35	20	21	23	34	12
Mechanic & Repair Technologies	3	1	0	10	2	1	1	4	6	1
Multi/Interdisciplinary Studies	1	1	4	3	2	0	4	6	21	9
Parks, Recreation, Leisure & Fitness	1	0	0	0	8	10	2	3	4	0
Public Admin. & Social Service	0	1	15	0	10	2	1	2	2	0
Transportation & Materials Moving	0	0	0	11	0	1	0	0	1	0
All the others	42	56	81	37	62	91	50	62	68	33

Looking for Growing Occupations with Good Wages

Occupational categories differ in prevailing pay rates and job growth, as shown in Figure 5. In recent years, there have been job losses for office and administrative support occupations in most regions of the state. Most regions have also seen a decline in legal occupations (except NW Arkansas) and in life, physical, and social science occupations. By contrast, there has been strong growth in food preparation and serving related occupations, though with considerable regional variation. However, food service is a poorly paid occupation, earning less than \$10/hour median wages throughout the state.

Figure 8: Occupational categories by median wages and job growth (Source: OES)



Some appealing occupational options are found in the upper-right sector of Figure 5. These occupations have both high job growth and solid to high wages. But all these occupations are predominantly high-skill occupations that tend to require a high level of education, including management, architecture and engineering, business and financial, computer and mathematical, and healthcare.

A promising occupational option for persons with limited aptitude or inclination for extended academic study may be installation, maintenance and repair occupations. These occupations are fairly job-rich, accounting for roughly 5% of the workforce in all regions. They pay well, with median wages substantially above \$15/hour everywhere except Hot Springs. And they have enjoyed strong job gains statewide in recent years, and in every region of the state except North Arkansas nonmetropolitan, where there was a slight decline. Job growth has been especially strong in NW Arkansas, Hot Springs, and Jonesboro.

Appendix A shows the regional distribution of employment growth and median wages for the larger occupational categories.

Appendix A. Employment Growth and Wages by Occupational Category and Region

Figure 9: Employment growth by occupational category and region

STATE	employment growth															
	00-0000	11-0000	13-0000	25-0000	29-0000	31-0000	33-0000	35-0000	37-0000	39-0000	41-0000	43-0000	47-0000	49-0000	51-0000	53-0000
	All	Management	Business and Financial Operations	Education, Training, and Library	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	Healthcare Support	Protective Service	Food Preparation and Serving Related	Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	Personal Care and Service	Sales and Related	Office and Administrative Support	Construction and Extraction	Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	Production	Transportation and Material Moving
Arkansas	2.9%	6.1%	10.1%	2.7%	9.0%	1.3%	9.7%	8.0%	2.5%	2.1%	0.5%	2.6%	1.4%	11.4%	4.1%	0.1%
Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers, AR-MO	10.0%	5.1%	2.2%	23.7%	14.7%	22.1%	39.4%	17.4%	2.4%	-	1.9%	1.3%	9.7%	25.4%	8.6%	19.6%
Fort Smith, AR-OK	0.9%	17.2%	21.9%	5.0%	-	11.0%	9.3%	8.3%	9.7%	-	3.7%	7.0%	6.0%	7.4%	9.3%	13.0%
Hot Springs, AR	0.4%	5.9%	16.5%	7.3%	-	3.2%	-	13.3%	-	-	19.6%	0.4%	1.4%	34.7%	13.7%	15.2%
Jonesboro, AR	10.1%	14.4%	24.2%	8.5%	-	-	1.1%	27.1%	8.0%	-	5.2%	2.1%	2.3%	25.9%	-	3.0%

Little Rock-North Little Rock-Conway, AR	2.9 %	3.1 %	18.0 %	6.8 %	8.4 %	5.7 %	13.1 %	8.8 %	8.0 %	2.0 %	0.2 %	2.7 %	1.2 %	9.7 %	2.1 %	3.4 %
Pine Bluff, AR	3.8 %	8.0 %	1.0 %	17.9 %	9.7 %	16.0 %	4.0 %	5.1 %	28.0 %		4.0 %	3.5 %	26.5 %	4.7 %	7.9 %	1.3 %
North Arkansas nonmetropolitan area	0.8 %	6.7 %	11.9 %		8.4 %	17.2 %	16.1 %	1.4 %	8.5 %		1.2 %	1.3 %	16.2 %	2.1 %	3.3 %	0.5 %
East Arkansas nonmetropolitan area	1.9 %	13.7 %	6.7 %	3.6 %	12.2 %	22.4 %	8.5 %	9.7 %		0.0 %		0.4 %	9.6 %	12.7 %	2.0 %	17.3 %
West Arkansas nonmetropolitan area	0.0 %	1.1 %	10.7 %	10.1 %	12.0 %	11.3 %	4.0 %	6.3 %	5.2 %	30.0 %	9.9 %	16.3 %	22.2 %	18.0 %		1.1 %
South Arkansas nonmetropolitan area	2.0 %	5.1 %	1.3 %	0.6 %	3.7 %	18.4 %	1.8 %	1.9 %	14.2 %	11.1 %	8.5 %	10.0 %	2.5 %	3.3 %	1.8 %	8.0 %

Figure 10: Median wages by occupational category and region

STATE	median wage (\$/hr)															
	00-0000	11-0000	13-0000	25-0000	29-0000	31-0000	33-0000	35-0000	37-0000	39-0000	41-0000	43-0000	47-0000	49-0000	51-0000	53-0000
	All	Management	Business and Financial Operations	Education, Training, and Library	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	Healthcare Support	Protective Service	Food Preparation and Serving Related	Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	Personal Care and Service	Sales and Related	Office and Administrative Support	Construction and Extraction	Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	Production	Transportation and Material Moving
Arkansas	15.3	36.4	27.0	21.2	25.5	12.2	16.5	9.5	10.6	9.8	11.6	14.7	17.2	18.8	14.6	14.5
Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers, AR-MO	16.5	46.5	31.0	22.2	27.4	12.6	17.3	9.6	11.8	10.4	12.0	15.6	17.4	19.0	13.9	17.0
Fort Smith, AR-OK	14.3	35.2	26.4	21.4	25.2	11.6	15.3	9.4	10.8	9.4	11.5	14.3	16.7	17.7	12.8	14.6
Hot Springs, AR	13.1	27.6	24.5	22.2	25.4	11.4	17.1	9.5	10.6	9.9	11.3	13.8	15.1	14.8	13.7	12.3
Jonesboro, AR	14.5	32.9	23.4	19.3	25.4	12.8	17.9	9.4	9.9	9.7	11.8	13.8	16.0	17.9	14.2	14.6
Little Rock-North Little Rock-Conway, AR	16.9	37.8	26.2	-	27.4	13.1	16.8	9.5	11.0	10.1	12.5	15.7	18.0	19.1	16.3	14.2
Pine Bluff, AR	15.3	34.4	24.3	21.8	25.6	11.5	17.5	9.4	10.0	9.7	10.7	14.1	19.0	19.1	15.6	12.9
North Arkansas nonmetropolitan area	13.7	29.1	21.7	20.4	22.6	11.8	15.9	9.4	10.3	9.5	10.8	13.4	15.9	18.2	14.0	12.7
East Arkansas nonmetropolitan area	14.4	33.1	24.6	19.5	22.5	11.7	15.9	9.4	10.0	9.7	10.1	13.9	16.4	18.7	17.1	12.9
West Arkansas nonmetropolitan area	14.2	31.0	24.3	20.7	22.3	11.2	15.9	9.4	10.2	9.4	10.6	13.7	16.1	20.1	14.4	13.5
South Arkansas nonmetropolitan area	14.3	31.4	24.1	19.8	22.0	11.2	15.3	9.3	9.5	9.5	9.8	13.2	17.0	18.5	14.8	13.5

2. Workforce Development, Education and Training Activities Analysis

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the workforce development activities, including education and training in the State, to address the education and skill needs of the workforce, as identified in Education and Skill Levels of the Workforce above, and the employment needs of employers, as identified in Employers' Employment Needs above. This must include an analysis of –

A. The State’s Workforce Development Activities

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

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

STATE AGENCY PROGRAM RESPONSIBILITY

Agency	Core Program	Non-Core Program
ADWS	§ Adult (Title I) § Dislocated Worker (Title I) § Youth (Title I) § Wagner-Peyser (Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by Title III)	§ Trade Adjustment Assistance for Worker Program (Chapter 2, Title II Tract Act) § Jobs for Veterans State Grants (Title 38, Chapter 41) § Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Program (Title I) § Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program (42 U.S.C.)
ADCE	§ Adult Education and Family Literacy (WIOA Title II) § Vocational Rehabilitation (Title I Rehabilitation, as amended by Title IV) as of July 1, 2016	
DHS	§ Vocational Rehabilitation for the Blind (Title I Rehabilitation, as amended by Title IV) as of July 1, 2016	§ SNAP Employment & Training

ARKANSAS WORKFORCE CENTERS

The Arkansas Workforce Centers are at the forefront of the workforce activities and represent Arkansas's version of the American Jobs Center. There are 30 workforce centers spread across the state providing access to many Arkansans. In addition to these locations, Arkansas has six mobile workforce center units that travel the state and provide service locations in rural parts of the State.

The Arkansas Workforce Centers are overseen at the state level by the ADWS and are managed locally by each of the local workforce development boards. Local boards are comprised of local businesses, labor, partner agencies, and other key stakeholders to create a diverse and functional group. The boards, in alignment with the States' vision, provide front line strategic implementation for state-wide initiatives in addition to their locally-determined priorities. State initiatives include sector strategies, career pathway development, and delivery of standardized business services. Local priorities include layoff aversion, specific career pathway development, youth programs, targeted sector partnerships, work-based learning, and others.

Local boards are tasked with procuring a one-stop operator for the daily operation of their perspective center(s) in accordance with WIOA 121(d). These boards carry out workforce activities by partnering locally through Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) to implement core, non-core, and other partner programs. Arkansas Workforce Centers are fully integrated with WIOA, Wagner-Peyser, Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG), Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Unemployment Insurance (UI), Adult Education and Family Literacy, Vocational Rehabilitation. Local partnerships and integration also exist in many areas with Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment and Training Programs and others.

With this foundation for service integration, Arkansas Workforce Centers operate under the "no wrong door" philosophy, while local areas have developed their own customer flow strategies that are unique to their areas. Typical 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 Division of Workforce Services - Adult Education Services funds 38 local adult education programs, nine community-based and/or privately operated literacy councils, and special projects such as the Arkansas Adult Learning Resource Center through state and federal grants. The service delivery systems are diverse. Programs are funded through a variety of local administrative entities, including public schools systems, community based organizations, colleges, community colleges, technical institutes, and the Arkansas Department of Corrections. 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 program's service area. Additional programs such as family literacy and Workforce Alliance for Growth in the Economy (WAGE™) are also offered in workplaces and correctional institutions. In the 2014-2015 program year, 27,636 adult Arkansans received

services from programs receiving adult education funding; 5,484 or 20 percent were ESL students and 2,939 or 11 percent were individuals in institutional settings such as correctional facilities or community corrections programs.

DSB continues to support its 17 accessible kiosks for consumers at Arkansas Workforce Center locations. The original ten kiosks were placed in the same cities where DSB has offices; the second set of seven kiosks was placed in cities with either two- or four-year institutions of higher education. The kiosks provide consumers the same access to the Internet to search for jobs as a sighted person seeking services from workforce centers. DSB provides training to workforce center staff and clients on the use of the kiosks.

WORKFORCE SYSTEM SERVICES - UNEMPLOYED AND UNDEREMPLOYED

Arkansas Workforce Centers offer the full array of career services outlined in WIOA 134(c)(2) for unemployed and underemployed jobseekers. Career services available at the centers vary because of local area inflexion and needs of particular communities. Basic career services are available at approximately 30 locations throughout Arkansas. Each center has 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 though 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 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 though partner referrals. Many of these partners are housed within the workforce center.

JOBSEEKER SERVICES

Individualized career services within the Arkansas Workforce Centers vary across the state, but all the offices offer 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 such as:

Labor exchange services must 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

All One-Stops must 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-Stops 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, 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 ADWS - Arkansas Rehabilitation Services 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 (StatsRRTC[1]) 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 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, 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.

[1] Reference: Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Disability Demographics and Statistics (StatsRRTC), (2008); Report on Disability Demographics for Arkansas; Retrieved 12/21/2015, URL: <https://www.disabilitystatistics.org/reports/report.cfm?fips=2005000emp-state>.

B. The Strengths and Weaknesses of Workforce Development Activities

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

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Initial analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of Arkansas's workforce development activities suggests that our talent development system has the right expertise and pockets of excellence.

Successfully serving common customers in our system will require continued collaboration, coordination and re-assessment. During a strategic planning session of the Arkansas Workforce Development Board, the following strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges were identified for the workforce development system in Arkansas.

STRENGTHS

- The State has strong workforce development programs in place; however, the state needs to focus on outreach and education about the services available.
- The State's business leaders are at the table as champions of the programs through input into program design, identification of skills development, and commitment to continuous improvement of the talent development system.
- Key industries are involved in strategic planning and committed to driving the talent development system in Arkansas.
- Economic development is involved in planning activities at the state and local level and has identified targeted industries.
- Partnerships at state level are strong and will enable the state to successfully and fully implement WIOA, thereby enhancing services to the public through the State's talent development system.
- Despite stagnant budgets, staffing has been maintained to provide services in all 75 counties.

WEAKNESSES

- Arkansas has a shrinking labor force.
- Secondary education's involvement in workforce development, strategic planning and program design needs to be strengthened.
- Funding for community colleges is insufficient.
- While there are strong partnerships in some areas of the state with community colleges and workforce development, involvement from all community colleges statewide should be stronger.
- Funding models for education are inadequate.
- Marketing and outreach of the State's talent development system is inadequate and too many employers and jobseekers are unaware of the services and opportunities available.
- Employers' outreach to students and their parents regarding potential occupations needs to be increased.
- Parent and students lack knowledge of business/industry in the State.
- Government is not at the table as an employer.
- Kiosks for consumers who are blind are not available statewide and staff turnover at the locations make it necessary to provide frequent and ongoing training.

- Staff training programs for serving the customers across agencies are not in place, especially recognizing the special needs of serving persons with disabilities.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Current Registered Apprenticeship presents tremendous opportunities for opening workforce development strategies.
- Strong industry/workforce partnerships exist in some areas of the State.
- The State has new leadership to drive the new current agenda of collaboration and coordination.
- Bringing community colleges to the table to enhance the State's talent development system.
- Opportunities for community college programs to increase capacity.
- Program-based learning needs to be explored and utilized.
- Community College partnerships should be expanded to increase credential attainment.

CHALLENGES

- Arkansas has an aging workforce and the younger generation is not skilled to replace retiring workers.
- Regional disparities in workforce and industries make it difficult to recruit new industries.
- Misalignment of services and programs could threaten enhanced service delivery and integrity of the talent development system.
- Duplication of efforts and programs reduces the efficiency of already stagnant or declining budgets.
- Systemic education issues exist in secondary and higher education.
- Industries may be lost due to a lack of skilled labor.
- There is a lack of existing workforce training funds.
- Budgets for workforce development programs are stagnant or declining due to a lack of funding from federal sources.
- Coordination at the state level for implementation of WIOA is strong; however, this level of collaboration and coordination is labor intensive and often takes team members away from oversight and leadership responsibilities. Maintaining the current level of collaboration is critical to success.

C. State Workforce Development Capacity

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

Arkansas is well-poised to provide workforce and talent development activities given the strong knowledge base of its practitioners. Due to nationally-recognized system components, such as a career pathway system with many bridges and stackable credentials; a robust Registered Apprenticeship program; and training programs that meet industry demands, our pursuit becomes one of continuous improvement. Arkansas has implemented a workforce system designed to increase capacity to serve more customers. Led by the strategic vision set by Governor Asa Hutchinson and the Arkansas Workforce Development Board, the functional design of the Arkansas workforce system starts with coordination at the highest level through the Governor's Workforce Cabinet, which provides a common direction at the state agency level for driving workforce development. This partnership at the highest level will increase capacity and extend the alignment of the system to a broader and more diverse population of jobseekers across the state.

The agencies represented in this plan, some who are new to being co-located in a workforce center, will develop a streamlined customer experience through referrals from and to core, non-core, and program partners to coordinate workforce activities and increase the capacity of each partner by allowing specialized services to function optimally and assist in the elimination of the duplication of services. Furthermore, through direction by the Arkansas Workforce Development Board and one of the objectives of this plan, the State will explore ways to increase capacity, especially in rural areas across the state beyond bricks-and-mortar, through virtual services.

Concern continues for many of the programs of this plan, including the WIOA Title I programs, Wagner-Peyser, TANF, and Adult Education that have experienced stagnant or declining funding over the last several years. The lack of new funding in many programs means the State must continue to find more efficient ways to provide services to Arkansans.

Although funding has been stagnant over the past 20 years in Adult Education, providers still serve all 75 counties in Arkansas. Adult education currently receives \$19 million in state funding and \$5.2 million in federal funding to serve approximately 28,000 clients. The funding continues to be used for Adult Education and Family Literacy activities, such as adult basic education, literacy, workplace education, family literacy activities, English language acquisition activities, integrated English literacy and civics education, workforce preparation, correctional education, and integrated education and training.

The Division of Adult Education Services has a strong working collaborative relationship with other state agencies and organizations to help provide education, literacy, and workforce services to clients that help reduce duplication of services and provide braided funding opportunities of approved activities. Some of the current collaborations include:

- The Arkansas Literacy Council to increase the number of literacy councils throughout the state
- The Division of Workforce Services and the Department of Human Services to provide educational support and training to Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) and Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) clients
- The Arkansas Rehabilitation Services to provide assistance for adult education students with a documented disability(ies)

- Local courts and community corrections programs to provide academic instruction to first time offenders and reentry individuals
- Arkansas Community Colleges (ACC) to provide career pathways that lead to a sustainable income to students without a high school diploma
- The Arkansas Department of Corrections to continue to provide federal funding to incarcerated adults without a high school diploma

In addition, besides the traditional classroom, one of the ways adult education is providing services is through distance education. Currently, 64 percent of adult education and literacy providers offer distance learning. The state office has restructured the distance learning program to provide professional development training and certified curricula that can assist with student learning. For students who are unable to attend an adult education or literacy council program or desire to work independently, distance learning has been a great alternative for education access.

The capacity of the state to provide workforce development for persons with disabilities is difficult to predict. The existing infrastructure for service provision is inadequate because of the added responsibilities related to transition services for students with disabilities. It will take creative partnerships with stakeholders in secondary education to be successful. It is critical for local resources to include provisions to assist people with disabilities to develop the skills needed for competitive integrated employment. The current staff members have designated duties above and beyond cross-training other agencies. Direct client services are positively impacted by these activities, so they are a priority; however, increased workloads and performance goals put a strain on vocational rehabilitation staff.

The State has a strong partnership between the workforce development system and Registered Apprenticeship (RA). This partnership has been strengthened through a series of USDOL RA focused discretionary grants awarded to the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services through the ApprenticeshipUSA Initiative. The awarded grants through the ApprenticeshipUSA Initiative include: the Arkansas Apprenticeship Pathways Initiative (AAPI), Arkansas Expands Apprenticeship (AREA), and the State Accelerator Planning grant. These grants promote the expansion of both the number of registered apprentices across the State as well as the number of occupational-based RA programs to meet employer-driven workforce needs in both traditional and non-traditional RA industries. Additionally, these grants promote an increased diversity in the population being served across RA programs. These grants are geared towards creating and expanding RA programs in targeted growth industries, strengthen employer and service provider partnerships, as well as provide an opportunity for participants to learn occupational specific skills as well as good wages while gaining college credit. Through partnerships with the Arkansas Apprenticeship Coalition, Community Colleges, ADWS and Local Workforce Development Area Business Services Outreach Staff, the USDOL State Office of Apprenticeship, and the Office of Skills Development, the State is working to utilize RA as an integrated WIOA workforce development tool to serve employer workforce development needs. Furthermore, all Registered Apprenticeship programs that desire so have been added to the list of approved eligible training providers.

b. State Strategic Vision and Goals

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

1. Vision

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

Vision

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

Mission

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

Arkansas’s Talent Development System Philosophy

- We believe that there must be a pipeline of skilled workers for employers and a job for every Arkansan that wants one.
- We believe that the talent development system of Arkansas must be relevant to the labor market in order to meet the needs of employers and jobseekers, and for Arkansas to compete globally.
- We believe that every Arkansan should have opportunity and access to training and education that leads to a career with gainful employment.
- We believe innovation and partnerships centered on local economic priorities maximizes effectiveness and puts the State in the best position to address local and regional workforce needs.
- We believe Arkansas’s workforce system should be a viable resource for business and industry.
- We believe that in order for the talent development system to be the preferred system, the system must be accountable, flexible, and align education and training with business and industry needs.
- We believe that in order for the talent development system to be effective, we must eliminate overlap and duplication of resources and services and streamline investment of funds.

Vision for the Arkansas Workforce Development Delivery System

The publicly funded workforce system envisioned by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) is quality focused, employer-driven, customer-centered, and tailored to meet the needs of regional economies. It is designed to increase access to, and opportunities for, the employment, education, training, and support services that individuals need to succeed in the

labor market, particularly those with barriers to employment. It aligns workforce development, education, and economic development programs with regional economic development strategies to meet the needs of local and regional employers, and provides a comprehensive, accessible and high-quality workforce development system. This is accomplished by providing all customers access to high-quality workforce development centers that connect them with the full range of services available in their communities, whether they are looking to find jobs; build basic educational or occupational skills; earn a postsecondary certificate or degree; obtain guidance on how to make career choices; or are businesses and employers seeking skilled workers.

The Arkansas Workforce Development Board adopted a vision for the Arkansas Workforce Development Delivery System at their regular quarterly meeting in October 2015. This vision provides standards for a high quality workforce center including customer service, innovation and service design, and systems integration and high-quality staffing.

The publicly funded workforce system envisioned by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) is quality-focused, employer-driven, customer-centered, and tailored to meet the needs of regional economies. It is designed to increase access to, and opportunities for, the employment, education, training, and support services that individuals need to succeed in the labor market, particularly those with barriers to employment. It aligns workforce development, education, and economic development programs with regional economic development strategies to meet the needs of local and regional employers, and provide a comprehensive, accessible and high-quality workforce development system. This is accomplished by providing all customers access to high-quality workforce development centers that connect them with the full range of services available in their communities, whether they are looking to find jobs, build basic educational or occupational skills, earn a postsecondary certificate or degree, or obtain guidance on how to make career choices, or are businesses and employers seeking skilled workers.

Under WIOA, partner programs and entities that are jointly responsible for workforce and economic development, educational, and other human resource programs collaborate to create a seamless customer-focused workforce delivery system that integrates service delivery across all programs and enhances access to the programs' services. The workforce delivery system includes six core programs (Title I adult, dislocated worker, and youth programs; Title II adult education and literacy programs; Title III Wagner-Peyser program; and Title IV vocational rehabilitation program), as well as other required and optional partners identified in WIOA. In Arkansas, these programs are administered by the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services (Titles I, II, III) and the Rehabilitation Services portion of Title IV. The Division of Services for the Blind administers the remaining portion of Title IV. Through the Arkansas Workforce Center network, these partner programs and their service providers ensure that businesses and job seekers—a shared client base across the multiple programs identified above— have access to information and services that lead to positive employment outcomes. Under WIOA, workforce centers and their partners:

- Provide job seekers with the skills and credentials necessary to secure and advance in employment with family-sustaining wages.
- Provide access and opportunities to all job seekers, including individuals with barriers to employment, such as individuals with disabilities, to prepare for, obtain, retain, and advance in high-quality jobs and high-demand careers.

- Enable businesses and employers to easily identify and hire skilled workers and access other supports, including education and training for their current workforce.
- Participate in rigorous evaluations that support continuous improvement of workforce centers by identifying which strategies work better for different populations.
- Ensure that high-quality integrated data inform decisions made by policy makers, employers, and job seekers.

The management of the Arkansas workforce delivery system is the shared responsibility of States, local boards, elected officials, the core WIOA partners, other required partners, and workforce center operators. The Departments encourage all of these entities to integrate the characteristics below into their work, including developing state, regional, and local strategic plans; establishing workforce center certification criteria; examining the state, regional, and local footprint of workforce centers; conducting competitions for selecting workforce center operators; developing local Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs); updating other workforce center policies and procedures; and operating and delivering services through the Arkansas Workforce Centers.

Characteristics of a High-Quality Arkansas Workforce Center

The characteristics identified below, consistent with the purpose and authorized scope of each of the programs, are designed to reflect elements that contribute to a high-quality workforce delivery system. They demonstrate the spirit and intent of the WIOA, and they will strengthen the successful integration and implementation of partner programs in Arkansas Workforce Centers. For clarity and readability the characteristics have been grouped into three functional categories: (a) Customer Service; (b) Innovation and Service Design; and (c) Systems Integration and High-Quality Staffing.

Customer Service

Arkansas Workforce Centers provide excellent customer service to job seekers, workers and businesses. Meeting the needs of job seekers, workers and businesses is important in developing thriving communities where all citizens succeed and businesses prosper. High-quality workforce centers:

- **Reflect a Welcoming Environment:** Reflect a welcoming environment to all customer groups who are served by the workforce centers. All workforce center staff are courteous, polite, responsive, and helpful to job seekers, businesses, and others who visit the workforce centers, either in person or by telephone or e-mail. Moreover, workforce center staff are sensitive to the unique needs of individuals with disabilities and are prepared to provide necessary accommodations.
- **Provide Career Services that Empower:** Provide career services that motivate, support and empower customers, including individuals with disabilities, to make informed decisions based on local and regional economic demand and effectively attain their personal employment and education goals.
- **Value Skill Development:** Value skill development by assessing and improving each individual's basic, occupational, and employability skills.

- **Create Opportunities:** Create opportunities for individuals at all skill levels and levels of experience by providing customers, including those with disabilities, as much timely, labor market, job-driven information and choice as possible related to education and training, careers, and service delivery options, while offering customers the opportunity to receive both skill-development and job placement services.
- **Improve Job Seeker Skills:** Improve the skills of job seeker and worker customers. Workforce centers offer access to education and training leading to industry-recognized credentials through the use of career pathways, apprenticeships, and other strategies that enable customers, including those with disabilities, to compete successfully in today's global economy. They provide businesses with access to the quantity and quality of talent they need and support upskill/backfill strategies that expand job opportunities in the community.
- **Deliver Quality Business Services:** Develop, offer, and deliver quality business services that assist specific businesses and industry sectors in overcoming the challenges of recruiting, retaining, and developing talent for the regional economy. To support area employers and industry sectors most effectively, workforce center staff identifies and has a clear understanding of industry skill needs, identify appropriate strategies for assisting employers, and coordinate business services activities across workforce center partner programs, as appropriate. This includes the incorporation of an integrated and aligned business services strategy among workforce center partners to present a unified voice for the workforce center in its communications with employers. Additionally, workforce centers use the forthcoming performance measure(s) on effectiveness in serving employers to support continuous improvement of these services.
- **Innovation and Service Design:** Arkansas Workforce Centers reflect innovative and effective service design.

Integrate Intake Process

Use an integrated and expert intake process for all customers entering the workforce centers. Frontline staff is highly familiar with the functions and basic eligibility requirements of each program, and can appropriately assist customers and make knowledgeable referrals to partner programs, as needed and as appropriate given the authorized scope of the program.

- **Actively Engage Industry Sectors:** Design and implement practices that actively engage industry sectors and use economic and labor market information, sector strategies, career pathways, Registered Apprenticeships, and competency models to help drive skill-based initiatives.
- **Use Market Driven Principles:** Balance traditional labor exchange services with strategic talent development within a regional economy. This includes use of market-driven principles and labor market information that help to define a regional economy, its demographics, its workforce and its assets and gaps in skills and resources.
- **Use Innovative Delivery Models:** Incorporate innovative and evidence-based delivery models that improve the integration of education and training, create career pathways that

lead to industry-recognized credentials, encourage work-based learning, and use state-of-the-art technology to accelerate learning and promote college and career success.

Offer Virtual and Center-Based Services: Include both virtual and center-based service delivery for job seekers, workers, and employers. Both methods of delivery support the talent needs of the regional economy, although each may better serve different customers with different levels of service needs at any given time. The workforce delivery system can expand its reach by delivering robust virtual services; and increasing the accessibility of those services through community partners, such as libraries, community and faith-based organizations, and other partners.

Ensure Access to All Customers: Ensure meaningful access to all customers. Workforce centers must be physically and programmatically accessible to all customers, including individuals with disabilities. In so doing, workforce centers use principles of universal design and human-centered design, such as flexibility in space usage; the use of pictorial, written, verbal and tactile modes to present information for customers with disabilities or limited English proficiency; providing clear lines of sight to information for seated or standing users; providing necessary accommodations; and providing adequate space for the use of assistive devices or personal assistants. Workforce centers use assistive technology and flexible business hours to meet the range of customer needs.

Systems Integration and High-Quality Staffing

Arkansas Workforce Centers operate with integrated management systems and high-quality staffing. High-quality workforce centers:

- **Reflect Robust Partnerships:** Reflect the establishment of robust partnerships among partners. The workforce center operator facilitates an integrated, co-located partnership that seamlessly incorporates services of the core partners and other workforce center partners.
- **Organize Services 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 perform similar tasks serve on relevant functional teams, e.g. Skills Development Team, Business Services Team. Service integration focuses on serving 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.
- **Use Common Performance Indicators** Use common performance indicators to ensure that federal investments in employment and training programs are evidence-based, labor market driven, and accountable to participants and taxpayers. Center performance is transparent and accountable to the communities and regions served; data entry staff are trained and understand the importance of data validation, data collection processes, and the importance of accurate reporting.
- **Offer Highly Trained Career Counselors:** Staff the center with highly trained career counselors, skilled in advising job seekers of their options, knowledgeable about local

labor market dynamics, aware of available services inside and outside the workforce center, and skilled in developing customers' skills for employment success.

- **Implement Integrated Policies:** Develop and implement operational policies that reflect an integrated system of performance, communication, and case management, and use technology to achieve integration and expanded service offerings.
- **Cross-Train and Equip Center Staff:** Train and equip workforce center staff in an ongoing learning process with the knowledge, skills, and motivation to provide superior service to job seekers, including those with disabilities, and businesses in an integrated, regionally focused framework of service delivery. Center staff are cross-trained, as appropriate, to increase staff capacity, expertise, and efficiency. Cross-training allows staff from differing programs to understand every program and to share their expertise about the needs of specific populations so that all staff can better serve all customers.
- Center staff is routinely trained and are keenly aware as to how their particular function supports and contributes to the overall vision of the local board.
- **Maintain Integrated Case Management:** Develop and maintain integrated case management systems that inform customer service throughout the customer's interaction with the integrated system and allow information collected from customers at intake to be captured once. Customer information is properly secured in accordance with personally identifiable information guidelines, and facilitated as appropriate, with the necessary memoranda of understanding or other forms of confidentiality and data sharing agreements, consistent with federal and state privacy laws and regulations. Data, however, would be shared with other programs, for those programs' purposes, within the workforce system only after the informed written consent of the individual has been obtained, where required.

2. Goals

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

- A. Goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including preparing youth and individuals with barriers of employment* and other populations.***
- B. Goals for meeting the skilled workforce needs of employers.*

* Individuals with barriers to employment include displaced homemakers; low-income individuals; Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians; individuals with disabilities, including youth who are individuals with disabilities; older individuals; ex-offenders; homeless individuals, or homeless children and youths; youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system; individuals who are English language learners, individuals who have low levels of literacy, and individuals facing substantial cultural barriers; eligible migrant and seasonal farmworkers (as defined at section 167(i) of WIOA and

Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 35-14); individuals within 2 years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program; single parents (including single pregnant women); and long-term unemployed individuals.

** Veterans, unemployed workers, and youth and any other populations identified by the State.

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

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:

11. 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.

12. Develop an integrated data system that will enable the sharing of information between partner agencies to more efficiently service both employers and jobseekers.
13. Promote training that leads to industry recognized credentials and certification.
14. Support transportable skill sets for transportable careers.
15. Support career pathways development and sector strategy initiatives as a way to meet business and industry needs.
16. Expand service delivery access points by the use of virtual services.
17. Develop a common business outreach strategy with a common message that will be utilized by all workforce system partners.
18. 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.
19. Utilize customer satisfaction surveys to ensure continuous improvement of the State's talent development system.
20. 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:

21. Increase access to the workforce development system through a no wrong door approach to services.
22. Change employer and jobseeker perceptions of the workforce system.
23. Develop an image-building outreach campaign that educates Arkansans about the services and the career development opportunities available in the State.
24. Utilize technology, including social media and search engine optimization, to better connect jobseekers and employers with the talent development system in Arkansas.
25. 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:

26. Conduct a statewide skills and asset analysis to determine the skills gap present and resources available to solve the skills issue.
27. Develop and implement an action plan to close the basic core, technical, and soft skills gaps in Arkansas.
28. 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.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) has a focus on helping low-income and disadvantaged populations. Workforce development professionals operate within a highly integrated one-stop career system, complete with co-located partners, procured service providers, and shared resource leveraging. However, funding and available public resources are still finite and limited, so populations with significant or multiple barriers to employment should receive priority for services. Sometimes these populations will be referred to as “hard-to-serve” or “hard-to-employ” clients.

Some special populations the workforce system serves include, but are not limited to:

- Veterans and eligible spouses
- Individuals with disabilities, both youth and adults
- English language learners (Limited English Proficiency)
- Migrant and seasonal farmworkers
- Out-of-school youth
- Adult and youth ex-offenders (justice-involved)
- Public assistance recipients (TANF, SNAP, SSI, Medicaid, etc.)
- Youth in, or previously in, foster care
- Homeless individuals, both youth and adults
- Runaway youth
- Pregnant and parenting youth
- The long-term unemployed
- Low-income workers earning wages below self-sufficiency
- Basic skills deficient individuals
- The over 55 age group

The vision of the one-stop system is that service providers leverage all available assets, ensure universal access, and allocate funding for low income and special populations. Many local areas

have established more inclusive priority of service policies to ensure that their hard-to-serve and disadvantaged populations receive a focus in their service delivery.

Each of the four major goals of this plan will be implemented with the above listed special populations in mind to increase the services and enrollment of these populations. The ultimate goal is to find and help disadvantaged individuals, which in turn leads to greater overall economic prosperity for the State. Persistent, incremental accommodations or assistance can often result in a safety net that can eventually lead to huge gains for the individuals seeking help.....raising the overall level of economic prosperity for the community, when they achieve positive labor market outcomes. Thus, proactive intake of special populations helps the State attain a larger return on investment for the funding, assets and staff resources employed. This requires leadership and vision in labor market-relevant planning, including evaluation, assessments, data-driven decision-making, and collaboration to best meet the needs of special populations, jobseekers, workers and businesses alike. The four major goals, when implemented will achieve this outcome.

3. Performance Goals

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

WIOA ensures that Federal investments in employment and training programs are accountable to jobseekers, employers, customers, and taxpayers. WIOA establishes common performance measures across the four core programs and also requires other programs authorized by the Act to report on the same indicators. In addition, WIOA requires the establishment of primary indicators on credential attainment and skills gain and on the effectiveness of services to employers. Arkansas's common performance targets are located in Appendix 1.

4. Assessment

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

The Arkansas Workforce Development Board (AWDB) is the state board given statutory responsibility with overseeing the State's talent development system, evaluating effectiveness, and ensuring continuous improvement. The Program and Performance Evaluation Committee of the Board, which is led by a private sector chair, acts in an advisory capacity to the Board to carry out the following functions:

- Continuous improvement of the one-stop delivery system in local areas, including providing assistance to local boards, one-stop operators, one-stop partners, and providers with planning and delivery of services, such as training and supportive services to workers, jobseekers, and employers;

- Development and updating of comprehensive state performance accountability measures, including state adjusted levels of performance, to assess the effectiveness of the core programs in the state;
- Identification and dissemination of information on best practices, including best practices for:
 - The effective operation of one-stop centers, relating to the use of business outreach, partnerships, and service delivery strategies, including strategies for serving individuals with barriers to employment;
 - The development of effective local boards, which may include information on factors that contribute to enabling local boards to exceed negotiated local levels of performance, sustain fiscal integrity, and achieve other measures of effectiveness; and
 - Effective training programs that respond to real time labor market analysis; effectively use direct assessment and prior learning assessment to measure an individual's prior knowledge, skills, competencies, and experiences; and that evaluate such skills; and competencies for adaptability; to support efficient placement into employment or career pathways;
 - Objective criteria and procedures for use by local boards in assessing the effectiveness and continuous improvement of one-stop centers;
 - The preparation of an annual report;
 - The development of the statewide workforce and labor market information system;
 - The development of such other policies as may promote statewide objectives for, and enhance the performance of, the workforce development system in the state; and
 - The development of strategies for aligning technology and data systems across one-stop partner programs to enhance service delivery and improve efficiencies in reporting on performance accountability measures. This would (include the design and implementation of common intake, data collection, case management information, and performance accountability measurement and reporting processes and the incorporation of local input into such design and implementation, to improve coordination of services across one-stop partner programs).

This committee will meet at least quarterly to review progress of accomplishing state goals, performance outcomes, and program evaluations. The committee will give direction on needed improvements, and identify and disseminate best practices.

To date, a primary focus of the state has been the implementation of the new workforce system strategic plan and the development of a balanced scorecard approach to system evaluation. Work will continue on studies and reports to support the implementation of the systemic strategic plan and to design and launch projects to strengthen the four strategic pillars that form the foundation of the strategic plan: efficient partnerships, enhanced service delivery, increased awareness of the State's talent development system, and addressing skills gaps. Additionally, the AWDB will evaluate programs to identify any gaps or duplications in planning or service delivery, and any other programs that adversely affect the seamless delivery of services. Any problems identified by AWDB will be included in the annual report on strategic plan implementation and the results of measures taken by AWDB to address those problems.

Program and other data from across the workforce system are critical in evaluating the extent to which workforce system programs, services, and products are meeting the needs of customers and stakeholders. The collection of key data, as well as the reporting and analysis of that data, in a consistent and useful manner are essential in demonstrating outcomes, determining if changes are required or desired, and establishing benchmarks for future performance.

Under the new strategic plan, the AWDB will continue to work with system partners to improve and systematize these processes. The system evaluation structure will be redesigned, yet will continue to address all elements required by statute.

The State Board will assess the overall effectiveness of Arkansas' workforce development system by reviewing and evaluating program-specific reports on a quarterly as well as an annual basis of all workforce development activities administered by state agencies involved with workforce development. Key areas of focus include developing linkages and better coordination with vocational education, apprenticeship, adult education and literacy, vocational rehabilitation programs, and other workforce development and training programs. It is the plan of the State Board to develop data tools, such as a performance dashboard, to assist them in determining the effectiveness of the system.

In Summer 2019, the State Board began negotiating a contract with the University of Arkansas – Fayetteville to complete a comprehensive workforce system evaluation. The evaluation will use designs that employ the most rigorous analytical and statistical methods that are reasonably feasible, such as the use of control groups (20 CFR § 682.220) as appropriate:

- A. Local Integration Study- Sample Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title I or Title III participants for 3 Local Workforce Development Areas. This part of the evaluation will focus on two primary areas: 1. Co-enrollment and Co-funding of REQUIRED WIOA Partners and 2. Leveraging of Local Resources available in the Local Workforce Development Area.
 1. Sample Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title I and Title III participants for 3 Local Workforce Development Areas-to determine if, based on the participants information in the Case File, the participant might have been eligible to receive services under the required partners listed in 20 CFR § 678.400.
 2. For each local area selected, interview leadership to identify partner programs and non-profits that collaborate with the Workforce Centers beyond the list of required partners above. For all partners, required in number 1 and other partners identified in 2, report whether there exists:
 - Memorandums of Understanding between the programs/entities
 - Referral Procedures
 - Training for partners regarding the services provided or alternative print materials to assist in collaboration OR
 - An alternative method to refer clients between the partners effectively
 3. Identify and report entities in the selected local areas that provide services to the following targeted populations:

- Displaced Homemaker
- Low Income
- Limited English Proficiency
- Migrant Worker
- Disabled
- Veteran
- Older Worker
- Out of School Youth
- Foster Youth
- Basic Skill Deficient
- Ex-Offender
- Single Parent
- TANF Recipient
- SNAP Recipient
- SSDI Recipient
- UI Claimant
- Long-Term Unemployed

4. For all programs and services identified in steps 1, 2, and 3, report whether sampled participants were: referred to or co-enrolled in other programs or services.

B. In the Comprehensive Centers for the 3 Local Areas selected for sampling, report case studies on effectiveness of identifying and closing Skill-Gaps

Interview staff for examples of:

- i. Skills-gap identification on either the occupation level, based on demand, or the skill-level based on interaction with an employer.
- ii. Determine the services that were provided to address the skills-gap
- iii. Provide an assessment of the effectiveness of the services provided in closing the skills-gap, if possible.

C. Review a sample of Arkansas Workforce Centers against the State’s certification policy and applicable laws/regulations for four comprehensive centers and two affiliate centers. Each of the six centers selected should be located in different Local Workforce Development Areas and may be selected from Local Workforce Development Areas that overlap the 3 selected above

D. Conduct a statewide customer service survey for business customers of WIOA Title I and Title III receiving services over the most recent 12 months available.

E. Provide evaluation status reports on a monthly basis on overall project goals. These reports will be issued at the end of February, March, April, May, June, and July of 2020.

F. Provide a preliminary evaluation report by August 15, 2020.

G. Provide a final evaluation, with results, best practices, and recommendations by September 30, 2020.

c. State Strategy

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

1. Describe the strategies the State will implement, including industry or sector partnerships related to in-demand industry sectors and occupations and career pathways, as required by WIOA section 101(d)(3)(B), (D). “Career pathway” is defined at WIOA section 3(7) and includes registered apprenticeship. “In-demand industry sector or occupation” is defined at WIOA section 3(23).

The state's workforce system is complex, comprising numerous programs, services, and initiatives administered by state agencies, secondary and higher education, community and technical colleges, local adult education providers, Registered Apprenticeship, and vocational rehabilitation providers. System partners are responsible for the delivery of a wide range of workforce education and training programs and related services, as well as education programs that support career preparation and advancement.

The system is interrelated because the programs and agencies serve either a common customer or are charged with achieving similar employment and education outcomes for their targeted customer groups. Therefore, the strategic planning process is designed to identify and focus on systemic issues that affect multiple parts of the system programs or agencies that address broad, big-picture workforce issues. Because the system strategic plan focuses on issues that span agencies and programs, it fulfills a unique and complementary role in the workforce system and does not duplicate the purpose or scope of other agency or program plans.

Several priority issues were identified by the Arkansas Workforce Development Board that are being addressed by system partners during our ongoing strategic planning activities.

Industry Sector Partnerships

The Arkansas Sector Partnership (ASP), a partnership of employers, state agencies, education providers, Registered Apprenticeship, and community leaders, will engage project stakeholders in ongoing regional planning efforts across the state to assess workforce development needs and job demand. Input obtained from regional planning efforts will be used to adjust training (on an as needed basis) to meet employer needs. The ASP will utilize a regional planning sector framework that focuses on critical factors that include: 1) existing labor market information and other workforce related data; 2) regional input from community stakeholders; 3) industry sector/employer input; 4) aligned education and training activities to meet employer needs; 5)

aligning business services/workforce services/case management services to serve workforce customers (both employers and dislocated workers); and 6) continuous improvement and sustainability after the life of the grant.

ASP will engage in regional planning activities, structured around WIOA regions, including assessing the workforce development and economic landscape to identify employer training needs, industry trends, and areas of job growth. The resulting information, data, and analysis will serve as a basis for serving dislocated workers and employers under ASP as well as serve as the cornerstone of WIOA regional and statewide planning activities. The regional and sector strategies planning activities will include career pathways to design career ladders that will focus on hard to serve individuals.

Both geographic and industry-based sector strategies are proven to be effective methods for aligning workforce service providers and community partners to address the occupational based training needs of employers.

The ASP regional planning process will also assess existing workforce services and community resources infrastructure to support workforce development efforts emphasizing the needs of hard to serve populations including those participating in career pathways. The ASP will engage in the following activities to ensure the development of a comprehensive regional and sector plan:

- Partnership and program development with stakeholders, employers, and training programs;
- Acquisition, analysis, and utilization of LMI and workforce information to identify regional trends;
- Asset mapping and other analysis, such as SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats);
- Developing regional plans;
- Training for staff in State and local areas necessary to facilitate regional planning and implement regional strategies;
- Establishing social and/or peer learning networks among regions using sector strategies;
- Identifying and mapping the necessary skills and competencies for in-demand jobs;
- Assessing how well those skills and competencies are reflected in existing training programs and curricula; and
- Identifying aligned industry credentials for those skills and competencies needed.

This structure will also ensure that employers and regional industry representatives are actively engaged in designing and implementing strategies in five key areas: 1) serving on the project's leadership team; 2) helping implement program strategies and goals; 3) identifying and mapping the necessary skills and competencies for the programs; 4) assisting with curriculum development and designing the program; and 5) assisting with the design of an assessment and/or credential that will address industry skill needs.

Finally, the state utilized WIOA Set-Aside funds to award additional funding to each of the state's ten (10) Local Workforce Development Areas. This additional funding was used for

regional planning purposes and designed to assist the areas in their ongoing broad strategic approaches.

Career Pathways

Arkansas leaders recognize the need for an education and training system that addresses the state's economic challenges. Through the Arkansas Career Pathways Initiative (CPI), the state has sought to coordinate publicly funded education with social services and workforce and economic development programs to produce a better-trained workforce and promote economic growth. The Arkansas Career Pathways Initiative is a series of connected education and training programs and support services that enable individuals to secure employment within a specific industry or occupational sector and to advance over time to successively higher level of education and employment in that sector. Each step on a career pathway is designed explicitly to prepare workers and students for the next level of employment and education. Using the career pathways framework, the workforce system seeks to target jobs in industries of importance to local economies and create avenues of advancement for current workers, jobseekers, and future labor market entrants, as well as a supply of qualified workers for employers.

Community colleges play a linchpin role in career pathways. The career pathways framework promotes systemic reform for community colleges -- providing a model that better aligns their various mission areas of workforce development, academic credentialing, transfer preparation, and remediation with the needs of employers. Pathways commonly feature community colleges working in partnership with other educational entities, workforce and economic development agencies, employer and labor groups, and social service providers to ensure investments in education and training pay off for the region's economic vitality. Students entering into adult literacy or college remedial coursework are better able to advance to and succeed in college-level programs, and all students can more readily earn postsecondary credentials and make progress toward a career. Incumbent workers are provided training opportunities that help increase their skills and subsequent wages.

CPI, which began serving clients in fall 2005, seeks to improve the earnings through postsecondary education attainment of Arkansas's low-income "TANF-eligible" adults by enabling them to work in industries of regional importance. Administered by the Arkansas Department of Higher Education (ADHE) with funding from the Division of Workforce Services (DWS), ADHE/CPI provides an opportunity for 25 campuses to develop Career Pathways Initiatives. Through the implementation of WIOA, the State seeks to use lessons learned and the framework created through the CPI to educate and encourage other jobseekers to utilize career pathways as a method for preparing for their eventual career.

CPI's objectives for program participants are:

- Increased enrollment in college-level certificate and associate degree programs;
- Increased attainment of college-level certificates and associate degrees;
- Increased job attainment and job retention in key industries; and
- Improve the level of engagement among educators and employers to generate work opportunities for students and serve the workforce needs of the private sector.

Finally, Arkansas has become aware that some of the WIOA program partners are currently utilizing a software product that helps job seekers build career plans based upon their individual knowledge, skills, and abilities from previous jobs and education. The product then recommends occupations, career clusters, training programs, and available jobs. The software program is applicable to all types of workforce clients: youth, dislocated workers, TANF or SNAP E&T participants, Veterans, individuals with disabilities, and more.

In early 2018, discussions began in earnest to implement the use of this product across all WIOA programs and participants.

Registered Apprenticeship

Many of the things that keep Arkansas's many industries operative today were built long ago by trade and craftsmen. Fewer people are choosing a career in the trades, even as demand and unemployment rates continue to escalate. Arkansas, like many states in America, is suffering from a widening skills gap that desperately needs to be filled. That means, for everyone who enjoys modern day necessities like electricity, indoor plumbing, paved roads, air conditioning, homes, and buildings to live and work in, things could take a downward turn, because craftsmen and tradesmen are retiring at an alarming high rate, and not enough people are training to take their place.

Tradesmen and craftsmen are needed now more than ever. For those men and women that do step up to fill the ever-growing expertise gap in Arkansas, big opportunities await. From work-while-you learn apprenticeships to career-elevating college and technical courses, there are hundreds of ways to kick start a craft career in Arkansas.

Support for Registered Apprenticeship continues to grow in the State due to the relationship between the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Apprenticeship, the Arkansas Apprenticeship Coordination Steering Committee (a Governor appointed committee), the Arkansas Apprenticeship Coalition, the Office of Skills Development, the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services, and the Arkansas Workforce Development Board who collaborate continuously to address key issues regarding workforce development needs throughout the State of Arkansas.

As a way to attract more workers to Registered Apprenticeship, the Arkansas Apprenticeship Coordination Steering Committee established a website to inform jobseekers who may be interested. <http://arkansasapprenticeship.com/>. This website informs prospective apprentices of the occupations, the training, and what employment opportunities exist.

Closing the Gap 2020 - A Master Plan for Higher Education in Arkansas

A master plan for improving Arkansas higher education attainment was presented to the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board on October 30, 2015. The 2015-2020 five year planning cycle adopted in this plan is a critical component in the long-term objective to reach the 2025 goal of a 60 percent post-secondary attainment rate in Arkansas, increasing from the current estimate of 43.4 percent. By 2020, the plan is to reduce the educational attainment gap in Arkansas by increasing the number of postsecondary credentials by 50 percent over the 2013-2014 academic year levels; increasing the number of certificates awarded to 19,200; associate's degrees to 12,700; and bachelor's degrees to 19,900.

As the State moves to the implementation stage of the Closing the Gap Master Plan, the plan has been divided into core subsections. Each subsection has a committee tasked with finding the best way to implement the policy that will help achieve the goals of the master plan related to their subsection. The subsections include:

- Adult Learners
- College Readiness
- Remediation
- Student Success Innovation
- Affordability
- Institutional Funding
- Non-Formula Funding
- Communication Strategies

Supporting Goals

Below is a summary of proposed goals from the Closing the Gap 2020 Master Plan. The Closing the Gap 2020 Master Plan is accessible online at https://static.ark.org/eeuploads/adhe/Closing_the_Gap_2020.pdf.

GOAL 1: Raise completion and graduation rates of colleges and universities by 10 percent.

- Reduce the percentage of students needing remediation to prepare them for college-level course work.
- Reduce the time needed for students to complete remedial requirements.
- Raise first year retention rates of students to Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) regional averages.

GOAL 2: By fall 2018, increase the enrollment of adult students, age 25 to 54, by 50 percent.

- Reduce the remedial course enrollments for adults by 50 percent through alternative means of preparing adults for college-level work
- Improve communication of the value of higher education to non-traditional students

GOAL 3: Raise the attainment rates of underserved student groups in the state by 10 percent.

- Raise the overall college-going rate for all student groups by 5 percent from 50.1 percent to 55.1 percent
- Raise the underserved student college-going rate to equal that of other students
- Raise completion rates of underserved student groups equal to other students.

GOAL 4: Improve College Affordability through Effective Resource Allocation

- Reduced time to degree for students
- Allocate 25 percent of state scholarship funds to need-based programs
- Re-allocate institutional spending to maximize efficiency and effectiveness

Jobs for Arkansas's Graduates (JAG)

The Jobs for Arkansas's Graduate (JAG) program is a state affiliate of the national Jobs for America's Graduates. Middle and high school students, who are experiencing barriers to graduation, are provided a comprehensive set of services designed to keep them in school through graduation and improve the rate of success in achieving their education and career goals. Along with the academic support, JAG also provides work-based learning experiences that will assist students to further their education and training in pursuit of a rewarding career.

The JAG model is based on and evaluated by a series of performance measures and standards, which allow the program to report student outcomes. The data collected and reported includes student demographics, contact hours with students, graduation rate, direct work experience, job placement one year after graduation, and employment outcomes.

The former Arkansas Department of Career Education and Arkansas Division of Workforce Services established a strong partnership to ensure Arkansas high students graduate and continue on the path to success either in today's workforce in or postsecondary education.

Arkansas Career Coach Program

The College and Career program is designed to motivate and support Arkansas students to achieve their goals as it relates to college and career planning. Students may begin working with a Career Coach in the 8th grade (7th, if enrolled in Career Orientation) with continued services through high school graduation. Career Coaches work in partnership with the Career Orientation instructors and school counselors to assist with the development and revision of the student's college and career plans. The College and Career Coach program provides assistance and information for resources in the areas of: academic tutoring, career counseling, mentoring, financial guidance, and other supports necessary for postsecondary education/training access, retention, and success.

The Arkansas College and Career Coach Program was introduced as a pilot initiative in January 2010. The program was administered through the former Arkansas Department of Career Education and established partnerships with the Arkansas Department of Education, Arkansas Department of Higher Education, and Arkansas Division of Workforce Services. During the pilot phase, the program was designed to provide college and career planning services and activities to middle/high school students within the twenty-one most economically challenged counties across the state of Arkansas. After the completion of the pilot phase, the program demonstrated a positive impact in the areas of college-going rate, ACT Scores, remediation rates, and financial aid applications and was expanded beyond the initial twenty-one counties.

Sector and Regional Planning

One of the functions of the Arkansas Workforce Development Board found in 20 CFR § 679.130 and under WIOA sec. 101(d) is assisting the Governor in the:

“Development and continuous improvement of the workforce development system, [including the] development and expansion of strategies to meet the needs of employers, workers, and job seekers particularly through industry or sector partnerships related to in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

In a 2019 USDOL Region IV meeting, the USDOL Regional Administrator introduced the State of Colorado Workforce Development Council’s Sector Strategies Plan. Arkansas has developed a similar strategy.

On February 9, 2017 **Progression of Continuous Improvement under WIOA-**

February 9, 2017 - Release of Issuance PY16-10 to Local Workforce Development Boards- “Guidance for Implementation of Sector Strategies under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act”.

<https://www.dws.arkansas.gov/src/files/PY16-10-Guidance-for-Implementation-of-Sector-Strategies-under-the-WIOA.pdf>

June 8, 2018- Release of Issuance PY17-09 to Local Workforce Development Boards- “Applications for Regional Planning and Industry/Sector Partnerships Funding Assistance”.

<https://www.dws.arkansas.gov/src/files/PY-17-09-LWDB-Assistance-Proposals-Issuance.pdf>

CURRENT- Planning adjustments to Regional planning fund requirements, including increased allotments (funding permitted) and reporting requirements that would allow Arkansas to report on Sector Strategy implementation.

Finally, a comprehensive review of the Colorado program identified the following areas in which Arkansas can make improvements in the development of its system.

Quick GAP between AR and CO information, based on the website:

Colorado Web Page	Key Content	Currently Available at ADWS	Next Steps and Additional Requirements
Sector Partnerships	Map of Active Sector Partnerships	Not Available	ADWS would require LWDB receiving Sector Planning funds to provide a list of engaged employers in the sector partnerships and how this aligns with local plans.
Sector Partnerships Community of Practice	Webinars by Sector	Not Available	ADWS and LWDBs would need to establish the sector partnerships before this would be feasible, so no change in current strategy.
Sector Partnership Directory	For each Sector Partnership established: POC, Chairs,	Not Available	Currently, ADWS would require LWDB receiving Sector Planning funds to provide a list of engaged employers in the sectors in their reporting. We would need to provide

	web pages for the sector, local area, Conveners		additional support or funding to establish a web page for each sector as a later improvement.
Colorado Web Page	Key Content	Currently Available at ADWS	Next Steps and Additional Requirements
Sector Partnership Technical Assistance	Contact information for TA and resources	Access to Technical Assistance from Staff and other resources could be gathered and provided on a similar web page	
Industry Intermediary Consortium	List of engaged Trade Associations		This might not be necessary at first. ADWS could provide the information in the Sector Partnership page, for each partnership the association is participating. A strategy should be considered for developing and sustaining relationships with industry associations and professional associations (i.e., SHRM, etc.). This provides an opportunity for broadened industry impact across several companies in a region. Currently, ADWS would require LWDBs receiving Sector Planning funds to report Trade Associations similarly to engaged businesses.
Statewide Education Sector Partnership	NA	NA	NA- No similar statewide sector partnerships are in place, but might result from further efforts.
Business Engagement Guide	Overview and Access to a 31 pg document for engagement	TPMA study material and other resources are currently available to share on a similar website	*Could be combined with the Technical Assistance page
Phase I	Phase II	Phase III	Phase IV
Complete	Relatively Administrative	Mostly Administrative	Mostly Administrative
Guidance to LWDBs and Initiation of Sector Planning Funds	Increase Funding Levels Available and allow flexibility for Sector OR Regional Planning Add requirements to engage at least 3 employers, establish	Establish web pages: Technical Assistance (and resources) Business Engagement Guide Sector Partnerships	Add Sector Meeting information on the individual Local WDB pages we have already established, which would mirror the “community of

	chairs, support meetings and conventions, engage trade associations, report participating businesses and associations, and post meeting materials on their website.	Sector Partnership Directory to mirror Colorado resources	practice” page in Colorado
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2. Describe the strategies the State will use to align the core programs, any Combined State Plan partner programs included in this Plan, required and optional one-stop partner programs, and any other resources available to the State to achieve fully integrated customer services consistent with the strategic vision and goals described above. Also describe strategies to strengthen workforce development activities in regard to weaknesses identified in section II(a)(2).

Center to WIOA is the integration of service delivery amongst multiple workforce and talent development programs. Arkansas has strong partnerships among state agencies, two- and four-year educational institutions, economic development, Registered Apprenticeship, and community-based organizations. A priority of the Arkansas Workforce Development Board 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 workforce center 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 perform similar tasks serve on relevant functional teams, e.g. Skills Development Team, Business Services Team. Service integration focuses on serving 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.

Use Common Performance Indicators Use common performance indicators to ensure that federal investments in employment and training programs are evidence-based, labor market driven, and accountable to participants and taxpayers. Center performance is transparent and accountable to the communities and regions served; data entry staff are trained and understand the importance of data validation, data collection processes, and the importance of accurate reporting.

Offer Highly Trained Career Counselors Staff the center with highly trained career counselors, skilled in advising job seekers of their options, knowledgeable about local labor market dynamics, aware of available services inside and outside the workforce center, and skilled in developing customers’ skills for employment success.

Implement Integrated Policies Develop and implement operational policies that reflect an integrated system of performance, communication, and case management, and use technology to achieve integration and expanded service offerings.

TANF and WIOA programs will enter a Memorandum of Understanding to coordinate and establish a common intake, assessment, and client engagement model. A low-income job seeker may qualify for the Medicaid or SNAP program, under their respective eligibility and enrollment rules and be referred to TANF through MOUs with the Arkansas Department of Human Services. TANF staff will be instructed to engage these individuals through a low touch model, and offer referral services to education and workforce partners who could best service them. And, where these job-seekers can be considered TANF eligible, they can then be enrolled in direct TANF services provisioning through TANF funded programs, as well as optimize service provisioning through co-enrollment with partnering programs. TANF and WIOA programs have also agreed in the MOU to leverage their existing IT systems to achieve these objectives and others, such as the development of referral forms to streamline services to these clients.

Cross-Train and Equip Center Staff Train and equip workforce center staff in an ongoing learning process with the knowledge, skills, and motivation to provide superior service to job seekers, including those with disabilities, and businesses in an integrated, regionally focused framework of service delivery. Center staff are cross-trained, as appropriate, to increase staff capacity, expertise, and efficiency. Cross-training allows staff from differing programs to understand every program and to share their expertise about the needs of specific populations so that all staff can better serve all customers. Center staff is routinely trained and are keenly aware as to how their particular function supports and contributes to the overall vision of the local board.

Maintain Integrated Case Management Develop and maintain integrated case management systems that inform customer service throughout the customer's interaction with the integrated system and allow information collected from customers at intake to be captured once. Customer information is properly secured in accordance with personally identifiable information guidelines, and facilitated as appropriate, with the necessary memoranda of understanding or other forms of confidentiality and data sharing agreements, consistent with federal and state privacy laws and regulations. Data, however, would be shared with other programs, for those programs' purposes, within the workforce system only after the informed written consent of the individual has been obtained, where required.

III. Operational Planning Elements

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

A. State Strategy Implementation

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include—

1. State Board Functions

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

The Arkansas Workforce Development Board (AWDB) was established under Arkansas Act 907 of 2015 and WIOA Section 101(d). The AWDB has policy-making and oversight responsibilities for the Arkansas Workforce Development system and carries out its required functions as provided in WIOA Section 101(d). The Board provides feedback on policies, programs, and system effectiveness to core workforce partners and employers. Additionally, Arkansas Act 907 of 2015 gives the AWDB responsibility for oversight of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program.

The AWDB operates under a committee structure of four standing committees, which include the Executive Committee, Strategic Planning Committee, Program and Performance Evaluation Committee, and TANF Oversight Committee.

The board and committees meet quarterly and may call special meetings as necessary. Each of the statutory roles and responsibilities outlined in WIOA Section 101(d) and A.C.A. §15-4-3706 have been assigned to the committee which best fits the function of the role or task. The chairs of the standing committees report to the full board at each quarterly meeting their activities and progress in accomplishing their goals.

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall be formed and meet as needed between the quarterly board meetings at the call of the chair of the executive committee or upon the request of seventy-five percent (75%) of the executive committee members.

The Executive Committee shall have the authority of the Board to act during the interim between Board meetings but shall defer to the Board, whenever practical, action on matters of major policy implications.

Strategic Planning Committee

The Strategic Planning Committee shall act in an advisory capacity to the Board to carry out the following functions:

- The development, implementation, and modification of the state workforce development plan
- The review of statewide policies, of statewide programs, and of recommendations on actions that should be taken by the state to align workforce development programs in the state in a manner that supports a comprehensive and streamlined workforce development system in the state, including the review and provision of comments on the state plan, if any, for programs and activities of one-stop partners that are not core programs;
- The development and continuous improvement of the workforce development system in the state, including:

- The development of strategies to support staff training and awareness across programs supported under the workforce development system;
- The development and review of statewide policies affecting the coordinated provision of services through the state’s one-stop delivery system, including the development of—
- The development of strategies for technological improvements to facilitate access to, and improve the quality of, services and activities provided through the one-stop delivery system, including such improvements to:
 - Enhance digital literacy skills;
 - Accelerate the acquisition of skills and recognized postsecondary credentials by participants;
 - Strengthen the professional development of providers and workforce professionals; and
 - Ensure such technology is accessible to individuals with disabilities and individuals residing in remote areas;
- The development of allocation formulas for the distribution of funds for employment and training activities for adults, and youth workforce investment activities, to local areas.

Program and Performance Evaluation Committee

The Program and Performance Evaluation Committee shall act in an advisory capacity to the Board to carry out the following functions:

- The continuous improvement of the one-stop delivery system in local areas, including providing assistance to local boards, one-stop operators, one-stop partners, and providers with planning and delivering services, including training services and supportive services, to support effective delivery of services to workers, jobseekers, and employers;
- The development and updating of comprehensive state performance accountability measures, including state adjusted levels of performance, to assess the effectiveness of the core programs in the state;
- The identification and dissemination of information on best practices
- including best practices for:
 - The effective operation of one-stop centers, relating to the use of business outreach, partnerships, and service delivery strategies, including strategies for serving individuals with barriers to employment;
 - The development of effective local boards, which may include information on factors that contribute to enabling local boards to exceed negotiated local levels of performance, sustain fiscal integrity, and achieve other measures of effectiveness; and
 - Effective training programs that respond to real time labor market analysis, that effectively use direct assessment and prior learning assessment to measure an individual’s prior knowledge, skills, competencies, and experiences, and that

evaluate such skills, and competencies for adaptability, to support efficient placement into employment or career pathways;

- The objective criteria and procedures for use by local boards in assessing the effectiveness and continuous improvement of one-stop centers;
- The preparation of an annual report;
- The development of the statewide workforce and labor market information system;
- The development of such other policies as may promote statewide objectives for, and enhance the performance of, the workforce development system in the state; and
- The development of strategies for aligning technology and data systems across one-stop partner programs to enhance service delivery and improve efficiencies in reporting on performance accountability measures (including the design and implementation of common intake, data collection, case management information, and performance accountability measurement and reporting processes and the incorporation of local input into such design and implementation, to improve coordination of services across one-stop partner programs).

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Oversight Committee

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Oversight Committee provides oversight of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program and ensures that all program participants are receiving the assistance, information, and the services needed to help these low-income parents prepare for and connect with employment that will lead to a self-sufficient wage.

2. Implementation of State Strategy

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

A. Core Program Activities to Implement the State's Strategy

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

The six (6) core programs under the major components of WIOA were consolidated under the newly formed Arkansas Department of Commerce on July 1, 2019. These core programs, along with optional plan partners, carry out the state vision for its workforce development system. All core partners participate at both the executive level as well as the senior management level. In fact, the Arkansas WIOA Roundtable's membership includes senior management representatives

from all core programs meets regularly to discuss the ongoing development of the state's workforce system.

Specifically, ADWS uses funds made available under WIOA Title I to support local workforce development board activities to provide services through the adult, dislocated worker, and youth programs. Services through these programs include career services such as outreach, intake, and orientation; initial assessment; labor exchange services; eligibility for services; referrals to programs; performance and cost information; information on unemployment insurance; financial aid information; and follow-up services. Additionally, for those who qualify, training and supportive services will be provided. Training services may include occupational skills training, on-the job training (OJT), Registered Apprenticeships, incumbent worker training, and skill upgrading and retaining.

ADWS provides labor exchange services through funds provided under WIOA Title III including labor market information to the individuals seeking services. The information will include information on local, regional and national labor market areas such as:

- Job vacancies in labor market areas
- Information on job skills necessary to obtain the jobs
- Local, in-demand occupations and related earning potential
- Opportunities for advancement in those occupations

Additionally, One-Stops 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

The ADWS - Adult Education Services shall use funds made available under section 222(a)(2) for the following adult education and literacy activities (Section 203 of WIOA):

- Adult Education
- Literacy

- Workplace adult education and literacy activities
- Family literacy activities
- English language acquisition activities
- Integrated English literacy and civics education
- Workforce preparation activities; or
- Integrated education and training that:

Provides adult education and literacy activities, concurrently and contextually with both, workforce preparation activities, and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster, and is for the purpose of educational and career advancement.

Adult Education and Literacy Activities include instruction and education services below a postsecondary level in reading, writing, and speaking in English, and computing and solving problems. These services increase a student’s ability to achieve a secondary school diploma or equivalent, transition to postsecondary education and training, and obtain employment.

Workplace Adult Education and Literacy Activities include instruction at a workplace or an off-site location that is designed to improve the productivity of the workforce. will include contextualized literacy, English language acquisition, and workforce preparation at Educational Functioning Levels appropriate to learners. Successful workplace literacy activities involve strong partnerships with employers or employee organizations in the design and delivery of the instructional program based on workplace needs.

Family Literacy Activities include interactive literacy activities between parents or family members and their children. To offer family literacy activities as defined in WIOA requires coordination with other services for the children’s component.

English Language Acquisition includes adult education and literacy activities for English language learners with an additional skill requirement, comprehension of the English language.

Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education will provide Immigrants and English learners access to English language acquisition services and civics education and may include workforce training. English infused with civics education helps immigrants and English learners understand the American system of government and what it means to be a citizen and to be involved in civics activities. To live and work in the United States means not only a command of the language, but equally important are the civics-related skills and knowledge necessary to become involved parents, workers, and community members. Therefore, every adult education and literacy council program offering English language acquisition services will also include civics education.

Workforce Preparation includes activities, programs, or services designed to help individuals acquire a combination of basic academic skills and employability skills such as critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills, and self-management skills. These activities include competencies in utilizing resources, using information, working with others, understanding systems, and obtaining skills necessary for successful transition into and completion of postsecondary

education or training, or employment. Workforce preparation skills will be integrated in the adult basic education and literacy curriculum, therefore, occurring concurrently with adult basic and literacy skills instruction

Integrated education and training activities include instruction in basic academic skills and/or English language acquisition skills, workforce preparation activities, and workforce training contextualized for specific occupations or occupational clusters. Education will be provided in the context of industry-specific needs that involve employers and is integrated with occupational skills training. Programs will provide work-relevant instruction through career pathways and integrated education and training activities. Instruction will be offered at Educational Functioning Levels appropriate to learners. The purpose of instruction will be education and career advancement. Providers will assist students in their roles as parents and family members by providing foundational skills that enable them to support their children's learning needs and improve economic self-sufficiency for their families.

Funds may not be used for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are under the age of 16 and are enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under State law, except for such purpose if such programs, services, or activities are related to family literacy activities. In providing family literacy activities under this title, an eligible provider shall attempt to coordinate with programs and services that are not assisted under this title prior to using funds for adult education and literacy activities under this title for activities other than activities for eligible individuals.

The ADWS – Rehabilitation Services provides those activities necessary to assist individuals with disabilities to prepare for, secure, retain, or regain gainful employment. An individualized plan for employment (IPE) is the foundation for all activities for eligible individuals. Both the outcome goal and the services outlined on each individual's IPE must be consistent with their respective strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, informed choice and economic self-sufficiency. VR services, as practicable, should likewise align with the resources of core partners, and other stakeholders to ensure that people with disabilities meet or exceed their IPE goals. In addition to VR counseling, IPE's may include pre-employment transition and transition services, rehabilitation technology, training for careers that are in demand, post-secondary education, placement with employers, interpreters, accommodations needed for job placement or retaining employment, restorative medical services, positive behavior supports, internships, paid work experiences, and pre-apprenticeship training.

The Division of Services for the Blind (DSB) engages in activities similar to its partner ADWW - Rehabilitation Services. One hundred percent of DSB-funded services are focused on the most significantly disabled, individuals who are blind or severely visually impaired. DSB provides this population with specialized vocational rehabilitation counseling services, which are designed to assist persons who are blind or have visual impairments to prepare for employment that is commensurate within their abilities, interests and informed choice, and is consistent with their strengths, resources, concerns and capabilities. Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors in conjunction with their consumers develop employability plans, which outline the barriers, services, and steps to reach their employment goals. Referrals are made to partner programs to provide any additional services necessary to meet or exceed the employment goals in their plans. In addition to vocational counseling, DSB funds transition services; training for careers that are in demand; post-secondary education; placement with employers; accommodations needed for

job placement or retaining employment; restorative medical services; internships; paid work experiences; pre-apprenticeship training; vending stand opportunities under the Randolph-Shepherd Act; and business ownership opportunities under the Small Business Program. In recent years, DSB has begun placing more emphasis on the employer as a customer.

Since 2014, the core programs have worked diligently together to align services across core programs and other program partners and are including other non-core programs such as TANF, Trade Adjustment Assistance, Career and Technical Education, Carl D. Perkins secondary and post-secondary programs, Registered Apprenticeship and others. Staff from the core agencies is actively engaged in training opportunities that include all operational levels of the core partners and key stakeholders named in the combined plan. Arkansas has a good history of core programs alignment, but to better facilitate these activities, strategies including a common intake process, inter-agency data sharing, case management integration, and co-location of resources when possible, are being developed and implemented. This cross-agency team is currently in the process of developing a state policy regarding co-enrollment and developing common intake processes. This process will encompass all programs located in the Arkansas Workforce Centers and will not be limited to only core programs.

B. Alignment with Activities outside the Plan

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

The best way to ensure that activities continue to be aligned with programs and activities provided by mandatory one-stop partners is through communication. The purpose of the WIOA law is to ensure that core state agencies work together to enhance the workforce development system. As a state, we have created a combined state plan that will serve as the blueprint of how the system will work. Local Workforce Investment Boards have been restructured to ensure that all core agencies are represented including employers and other optional-one stop partners. It is up to the local Workforce Investment Board to ensure that local activities are aligned with the State Plan and the law.

To best align services and resources, core and optional programs will develop joint policies and initiatives that spur collaboration, braiding of resources, and support the inclusion of key stakeholders in development and implementation. In order to continue to be inclusive of other programs and align with all workforce development resources in Arkansas, it is imperative that the work of the WIOA Roundtable continue and transition from an implementation body to a coordination and continuous improvement body. By doing so, we set ourselves up to more efficiently bring in other federal, state, and private or non-profit resources to the benefit of our citizens. By utilizing this design, the WIOA Roundtable can approach additional partner programs with a united front.

Through the WIOA Roundtable, optional partners are at the table including Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Trade Adjustment Assistance, Career and Technical Education,

Carl D. Perkins (secondary and post-secondary), SNAP Employment & Training, and Job for Veterans State Grant. While these partners are optional, we consider their input as vital to making the Arkansas workforce development system streamlined and effective. Every policy developed for statewide implementation is reviewed by subject matter experts from both core and non-core programs.

C. Coordination, Alignment and Provision of Services to Individuals

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

Customer-focused services to individuals is a priority for the Arkansas Workforce System. All core partners provide services to individuals within statutory requirements of the programs. Since the implementation of WIOA, leaders from core, mandatory partners, and several optional partners in the workforce development system have been working to better align programming to best serve the people of Arkansas. Through the forming of the WIOA Roundtable, an interagency team of core and non-core partner programs, opportunities for leveraging resources to better serve the needs of people utilizing the workforce system have been developed and the shared knowledge of programs have led to better coordination of services. The assumption is all individuals who access the workforce system are eligible for all services provided by workforce partners, and it is the obligation of the system to serve these individuals to the highest level of satisfaction and outcome.

For example, currently ADWS - Rehabilitation Services has counselors that come to the Adult Education programs to provide services to eligible students. Likewise, adult education providers have offered classes onsite at some of the Rehabilitation offices. This has been proven to be very beneficial for students because it reduces the barriers of transportation and increases the support clients may need to successfully transition.

In addition, both Arkansas Rehabilitation Services and local workforce boards offer on the job training to clients who qualify. Several adult education students have been able to gain valuable work experience as well as a salary while working towards their high school equivalency diploma.

Core, mandatory, and optional partners are meeting on a monthly basis to discuss implementation and service delivery issues. Through this venue, program alignment, performance accountability, policy integration, data integration, infrastructure funding, and streamlined services are discussed. Committees have been established on each of these topics and the workgroups meeting at least monthly, and oftentimes more frequently. The four core state agencies are jointly developing policy guidance for use across programs to ensure that coordination of services and activities is occurring. This jointly developed guidance is then shared with the Arkansas Workforce Development Board for consideration and adoption statewide. One such jointly developed policy is the Arkansas Workforce Centers Certification Policy, which establishes standards for use by local core, mandatory, and optional partner

personnel to ensure a high level of services in the workforce centers and to support the coordination of services delivered by all partners. In order for centers to become certified and eventually meet excellence standards, partners must come together to coordinate activities, align services, and meet the needs of both jobseekers and employers.

The goal of the certification process is to develop a world-class workforce center network that goes well beyond the minimal requirements established by the Federal Workforce Investment Act. It is critical to make the centers user friendly and attractive, creating a public image that is inviting to jobseekers, education seekers, and employers seeking skills and talent in the local labor markets.

The certification policy brings all the tools approved by the Arkansas Workforce Development Board (AWDB) into a single reference for Local Workforce Development Board members and partner programs involved in certifying or recertifying local Arkansas Workforce Centers. It is the intent of the AWDB to provide this instrument as a guide to what is expected, not to provide the means of how it is to be accomplished. Ongoing organizing, implementation, and ensuring continuous improvement of the local certification process are the responsibility of the local boards and partners.

Included are minimum core standards that must be a part of the local certification and recertification process. In a clear, concise manner this guide documents the Arkansas Workforce Board Certification Process needed by the local board when conducting certification site visits. It also reviews the Quality Assurance Process to be used by the Arkansas Workforce Development Board (AWDB) to ensure minimum standards are met and that the Arkansas Workforce Center brand name is protected. It is expected that each local workforce investment area may supplement these core standards with additional locally applicable criteria and performance measures to ensure continuous improvement.

Certification is not just about a one-time designation. It is an ongoing process that keeps all parties involved and achieving at high performance levels. As such, the certification process also allows for achieving excellence standards as continuous improvement planning occurs. This certification process serves as an opportunity to continually re-examine, improve, and revise procedures to ensure that the Arkansas workforce development system is a primary asset in Arkansas's economic growth and subsequent high quality of life.

In early 2020, the State Workforce Development Board reviewed and updated the local certification process to ensure that workforce center partners coordinate their services to employers through the development of business service liaison teams operating under a common message and clear menu of services among all partners.

The excellence standards of the certification criteria require the following higher levels of coordination:

- Coordination with economic development and social service leaders
- Coordinated marketing messages among all workforce center partners
- Coordination with other workforce centers, especially business service liaison teams from other workforce centers

D. Coordination, Alignment and Provision of Services to Employers

Describe how the entities carrying out the respective core programs, any Combined State Plan partner program included in this plan, required and optional one-stop partner programs will coordinate activities and resources to provide comprehensive, high-quality services to employers to meet their current and projected workforce needs and to achieve the goals of industry or sector partners in the state. The activities described shall conform to the statutory requirements of each program.

The Arkansas Workforce System partners ensure that there is a coordinated, aligned, delivery model for services to employers. Partners, who meet on a regular basis, will continue to meet and align their resources and support to the local needs of employers. The melding of the partners and employers safeguards the coordination of educational and training services in alignment with the performance measures established by the boards and through each partner's governing authority under WIOA.

With this in mind, and in order to provide comprehensive, high-quality services to employers to meet their current and projected workforce needs, and to achieve the goals of industry sector partners in the state.

WIOA Roundtable, consisting of core partners, meets monthly to share information, identify resources, and build relationships. Because of the large number of members, working committees are utilized to work on specific issues and the policy committee is tasked with the coordination, alignment and provision of services to employers. A working group has been established that consists of leaders from each agency tasked with business relations from all of the core programs and key workforce stakeholders. The intent of this partnership is to allow for all business relations representatives to be versed in the services provided by all core programs and key stakeholders in order to provide this information to employers.

The Arkansas Workforce Center Certification Criteria requires the center to have a business liaison team as the single point of contact for business services. It is expected that staff involved with initiating employer contacts will participate on the team in a coordinated outreach program under the Arkansas Workforce Center name and marketing approach. The team will consist of business contact staff from all partner programs and will, at a minimum, provide the following structure and coordination in approaching the business community:

- A team leader to coordinate the activities of the team
- A coordinated "script" to market the system to employers
- Use of the Arkansas Workforce Center name as the primary marketing approach, with agency specialty areas (i.e. Arkansas Rehabilitation Services, Services for the Blind, DVOP/LVER Veterans Services) presented as a part of the overall system as needed
- An information sharing strategy that makes contact results available to all team members
- A clear menu of services across all partners

- A division of duties with employer sector specializations as deemed appropriate for quality customer service
- Multiple agency participation with clear cost and information sharing commitments
- At a minimum, job search, employer contacts, job orders, or job development leads performed by any center staff as a result of outreach will be entered into the Wagner-Peyser database (Arkansas Job Link)

Arkansas has received several discretionary grants from the U.S. Department of Labor to address workforce development and training needs of Arkansas employers and jobseekers. Specifically through the Arkansas Apprenticeship Pathway Initiative, Arkansas Sector Partnership, and the Arkansas Job Driven National Emergency Grant, the State has been able to connect with numerous employers throughout the state to identify existing and emerging occupations and training needs. These grants have enabled to the state to be very flexible and immediately responsive to the training needs identified by employers. Through the use of project management teams comprised of core, mandatory, and optional partners in addition to Registered Apprenticeship, two- and four-year educational institutions, local workforce development boards, and non-profit organizations, the State is able to most effectively deliver services through these grants and maximize on subject matter expertise from all involved.

Arkansas understands that the WIOA legislative mandate has changed workforce development. As such, we are currently seeking a “business facing” workforce development solution that is a collaborative platform to connect people, jobs, programs, and data to advance the economic viability of our state.

The ADWS - Adult Education Services offers a trademarked job readiness program, Workforce Alignment for Growth in the Economy (WAGE™) in which students can earn up to six certificates in industrial, employability, customer service I and II, office technology, and bank teller. Adult Education WAGE Coordinators work with local employers to customize training that meets the needs of their workforce. In order to stay abreast of employers’ needs, the WAGE Advisory Committee is made up of 51% business and industry and chaired by an employer.

Salesforce Implementation

Salesforce is a customer relations management tool that will assist business services teams to track and report business engagement activities across partner programs. In Fall 2019, the initial implementation of Salesforce began and allowed business services staff to begin recording actual business engagement activity in the system. As we launched the system, we established a “working group” to assist in developing some ground rules (or protocols) for moving us forward utilizing the tool. The “working group” also takes the lead in working through any issues that may arise using the system and determining their potential solutions.

The Salesforce tool is being developed in four phases (or sprints) that include:

- Sprint 1 – Business Leads and Account Management
- Sprint 2 – Training Application
- Sprint 3 – Reports and Dashboards

- Sprint 4 – Needs Assessment and Skills Gap Analysis

The testing, development, and training on the product are complete.

Currently, evaluating several “next steps” to broaden the base of Salesforce users as well as enhance the system’s value through collaborative efforts and data integration.

Here is a listing of potential next steps:

- Purchasing additional licenses to broaden the user base among partner programs. This is in addition to the original 35 licenses that have been purchased.
- Assessing/evaluating potential integration with Arkansas Economic Development Commission employer needs assessment data.
- Assessing and evaluating potential opportunities for integration with Arkansas Job Link data.
- Assessing and evaluating the utilization of an external community portal feature within the system that could provide capabilities to interface with employers.
- Evaluating whether to continue administrative support with the Salesforce vendor (Coastal Cloud) under a managed services agreement over the next year.

E. Partner Engagement with Educational Institutions

Describe how the State’s Strategies will engage the State’s community colleges and area career and technical education schools, as partners in the workforce development system to create a job-driven education and training system. WIOA section 102(b)(2)(B)(iv).

Core and non-core programs have strong partnerships with the State’s two- and four-year institutions of higher education, especially at the community college level. Several Arkansas Workforce Centers are located on community college campuses, which enable a streamline process to move jobseekers into needed training or resources to upgrade their skills on the campus. Community colleges are at the forefront of workforce development in Arkansas and have strong connections with local employers, which enable core and non-core programs such as the WIOA Title I Youth, Adult, and Dislocated Worker programs, Trade Adjustment Assistance, and the TANF program to connect their customers to training that leads to occupations that are in-demand.

The TANF program funds the Arkansas Career Pathways Initiative that provides funding to the State’s community colleges to provide post-secondary training to low-income custodial parents that are TANF eligible. This program provides supports to eligible parents to begin training in a career pathway that will enable them to move up the ladder of success in their chosen field.

Service delivery systems for adult education programs are funded through a variety of local administrative entities, including public school systems, colleges, literacy councils, and one

correctional institution to name a few. In fact, fifty percent of administrative units for adult education fall under the administration of community colleges. Many local adult education programs work directly with colleges in supporting summer transition bridge programs to college. Others assist in helping students increase their basic academic skills in order to reduce the need for remediation.

The former Department of Career Education, Adult Education Division (ADCE-AED) partnered with the Arkansas Community Colleges to offer Accelerating Opportunity to four community colleges and adult education programs in the state. Accelerating Opportunity is a community college initiative of Jobs for the Future whose goal is to ensure that more workers have the skills needed to earn credentials that lead to family-sustaining careers. The initiative aims to change how Adult Basic Education is structured and delivered through a collaborative effort in which a basic skills instructor and technical college instructor co-teach and plan the curriculum for low skill level adults in a technical course leading to a certificate credential. For the 2016-2017 program year, 84 students were enrolled in a college career pathways program. Nine of these students were adult education participants. Five students earned their high school equivalency diploma and 11 certifications.

At the end of each semester, program directors evaluate the success of the career pathways program. Program areas may include the type of career pathway chosen and the number of certifications, retention rate, educational gains, and demographic information to name a few. In addition, identifying and reducing barriers is another component that must be considered. Based on the assessment, adjustments are made to ensure that the program has optimal success.

ADWS - Vocational Rehabilitation partners actively engage the State's education and training providers including community colleges and area career and technical education schools as partners in the workforce development system to create job-driven education and training opportunities for people with disabilities. A transition committee of the WIOA Roundtable was formed to develop strategies and partnership with secondary education partners. This group includes statewide leaders in secondary and post-secondary Career and Technical Education and secondary special education. In addition, higher education, secondary education, career and technical education, two-year colleges, registered apprenticeship and secondary schools for the blind and deaf are represented at the WIOA Roundtable and have access to information related to activities of the core programs and opportunities for collaboration, coordination, and partnering.

Division of Services for the Blind (DSB) has a partnership which provides college preparatory classes to blind and low vision students utilizing the campus of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. DSB has arranged for college and technical school tours for blind and low vision students, so that the students and the institutions of higher education can interact and discuss career goals prior to applying for admission.

F. Partner Engagement with Other Education and Training Providers.

Describe how the State's Strategies will engage the State's other education and training providers, including providers on the state's eligible training provider list, as partners in the workforce development system to create a job-driven education and training system.

The core and non-core partners have a strong partnership with the Arkansas Department of Higher Education, Arkansas Community Colleges, Registered Apprenticeship, and the Arkansas

Board of Private Career Education, the licensing board for private education in Arkansas. This partnership will be nurtured under the implementation of this plan and encourage training providers from both public and private institutions to engage with the State's workforce development system and provide feedback for continuous improvement.

For example, one adult education provider offered an Electrical Apprenticeship program last year. Apprentices entering the electrical trade are required to be licensed by the Arkansas Department of Labor, Board of Electrical Examiners. This is a four-year program consisting of 640 hours of classroom instruction coinciding with 8,000 hours of on-the-job training. When a student completes the program, he or she will be granted a "release to test" and can submit an application to sit for the journeyman electrician's exam. The adult education classes are offered through partnership with the Arkansas Construction Education Foundation. Last year the adult education program served 12 students for 448 hours (in basic math as part of the electrical program).

Through partnership with the Arkansas Apprenticeship Coalition, the State has collected necessary data to add all Registered Apprenticeship programs desiring such to the list of approved eligible training providers. The Arkansas Division of Workforce Services has and will continue to work with local workforce development boards to educate training providers on the process to become eligible training providers in an effort to increase the number of providers and customer choice in training.

The Arkansas Division of Workforce Services has partnered with the Arkansas Research Center and the Arkansas Department of Higher Education in an effort to compile required performance data for the continued eligibility of training providers in an effort to offset the administrative burden to the provider. The State anticipates that this assistance will enable many eligible training providers to remain on the list of approved training providers that otherwise would have dropped off due to the significant reporting requirements under WIOA.

G. Leveraging Resources to Increase Educational Access

Describe how the State's strategies will enable the State to leverage other Federal, State, and local investments that have enhanced access to workforce development programs at the above institutions, described in section (E).

Education is the key to successfully implement career pathways programs across the state. The Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) federal funds support the advancement of individuals into postsecondary education and work. The grants to eligible providers require states to consider "whether the eligible provider's activities provide learning in context, including through integrated education and training, so that an individual acquires the skills needed to transition to and complete postsecondary education and training programs, obtain and advance in employment leading to economic self-sufficiency, and to exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship" (Section 231(e) (8)). The integration of literacy instruction and occupational skills training is an allowable activity that states can use leadership and federal funds to support.

AEFLA funds may be used to support the portion of an Integrated Education and Training (IET) or career pathways program that provides instruction in reading, writing, mathematics, or English proficiency that is below the postsecondary level. This instruction in basic literacy skills and the English language should be contextualized to support the occupational skills portion of

the program. Curriculum for a career pathways program should adequately address both the basic literacy skills and the occupational competencies needed for the participant to complete the program successfully. AEFLA funds may be used to plan, develop, and deliver the portions of the curriculum that address basic literacy skills.

As part of the state's Accelerating Opportunity partnership with the Arkansas Community Colleges (ACC), adult education was able to use funds to support instruction, curriculum and development, and training; whereas, the ACC was able to use funds to pay the tuition and fees for students without a high school diploma. Both enrolled college students in a career pathway and participating adult students were able to benefit from having a contextualized and basic skills instructor co-teaching together. Lastly, as a result, over 200 credentials have been awarded to students participating in career pathways.

ARS's comprehensive approach to transition services will provide increased access to education. By working closely with students with disabilities to align their individual plans for employment with their individual education plans; opportunities for increasing accessibility and accommodations needed for postsecondary education increase significantly. The intent of this focus on transition is to make the best use of resources of secondary education providers and vocational rehabilitation while facilitating education and training that leads to careers that spur economic development of the state.

DSB researches and applies all federal and state comparable services and similar benefits available for educational access at all institutions of higher education, career, community college, and area career and technical schools. Once this is done, DSB provides financial support to the participants individually, based on their goals and needs. We work in conjunction with Arkansas Division of Workforce Services and the Arkansas Career Pathways Initiative to identify training programs that lead to real world employment experiences to match education with obtaining employment.

Through the implementation of a co-enrollment policy for core and non-core programs, opportunities for braided funding will be realized that will essentially "stretch" the funding available through the programs. This is possible by each program contributing what they can instead of one program picking up the entire cost of training and supportive services. Non-core programs will be incorporated into this customer flow and co-enrollment process.

Furthermore, the Arkansas Community Colleges, the association representing all two-year colleges in the State, has been a vital partner in delivering services through several discretionary grants including the Arkansas Apprenticeship Pathway Initiative, the Arkansas Sector Partnership, and the Arkansas Job Driven National Emergency Grant. Their leadership and partnership has assisted the State in better connecting the workforce development center system with the State's two-year college system.

H. Improving Access to Postsecondary Credentials

Describe how the State's strategies will improve access to activities leading to recognized postsecondary credentials, including Registered Apprenticeship certificates. This includes credentials that are industry-recognized certificates, licenses or certifications, and that are portable and stackable.

A master plan for improving Arkansas higher education attainment was presented to the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board on October 30, 2015. The 2015-2020 five year planning cycle adopted in this plan is a critical component in the long-term objective to reach the 2025 goal of a 60 percent post-secondary attainment rate in Arkansas, increasing from the current estimate of 43.4 percent. By 2020, the plan is to reduce the educational attainment gap in Arkansas by increasing the number of postsecondary credentials by 50 percent over the 2013-2014 academic year levels; increasing the number of certificates awarded to 19,200; associate's degrees to 12,700; and bachelor's degrees to 19,900.

Title I of WIOA allows funds to be provided for adults and dislocated workers who meet WIOA Title I eligibility requirements for occupational skills training, on-the-job training, programs that combine workplace training with related instruction, skills upgrading and retraining, entrepreneurial training, job-readiness training, adult education and literacy activities described in section 134(3) (D) of WIOA. ADCE-AED is collaborating with Title I programs to combine resources, reduce duplication of services, and provide support to Arkansans.

During the state's administrators' meeting the program manager from the Office of Apprenticeships does a workshop session on apprenticeship programs across the state and how adult education can be a partner in the process. Apprentices who may need additional academic assistance are often referred to adult education. One of the challenges is the availability of evening classes offered in the adult education centers to accommodate working adults. One of the ways the state is combatting this issue is by increasing the number of distance learning classes being offered to provide around the clock access.

The Arkansas Adult Learning Resource Center (AALRC), adult education's professional development center, hired consultants, Michelle Carson and Libby Livings-Eassa, to provide over 40 hours of professional development training on Career Pathways to adult education directors, staff, and partners. Career pathway is a new concept for many adult education providers and in order for this to be a successful initiative, training was imperative. Administrators' were reminded of adult education's role in assisting students to gain portable and stackable certificates. Programs were encouraged to start identifying partners who can help develop career pathways for students. Adult education directors were also reminded that career pathways is now one of the 13 considerations that must be met in order to receive federal funds; "whether the eligible provider's activities coordinate with other available education, training, and social service resources in the community, such as by establishing strong links with elementary schools and secondary schools, postsecondary educational institutions, institutions of higher education, local workforce investment boards, one-stop centers, job training programs, and social service agencies, business, industry, labor organizations, community-based organizations, nonprofit organizations, and intermediaries, for the development of career pathways Section 231(e) (8)).

Local adult education providers have been working with community colleges, apprenticeship programs, Title I programs, and health care providers to offer industry-recognized certificates, licenses or certifications, that are portable and stackable. Currently, some providers have offered National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER) certifications, Certified Nursing Assistant credentials, Industrial Safety, OSHA training, and Welding to name a few. Other core partners such as Arkansas Rehabilitation Services, TANF, DHS, and DWS assist by

either paying for some of these classes and certifications or offering support services such as transportation and childcare.

Over the last five years, ARS has worked to align resources for training and education resulting in industry recognized postsecondary credentials. ARS first focused on its own provider of postsecondary training, the Arkansas Career Training Institute where the training and services provided did not result in industry recognized postsecondary credentials. Now, all training programs meet national accreditation standards, and students are able to attain multiple industry recognized credentials. In addition, when individual plans for employment are designed, the training and education must result in these types of credentials demonstrating value in the attainment of competitive integrated employment.

ARS has plans to utilize statewide registered apprenticeship training providers to facilitate placement in registered apprenticeship and one provider has been approved as a vendor for this service. During FFY 2016, there were plans for six 40-hour pre-apprenticeship training classes to train 90 people with disabilities. However, this plan was altered based on availability of the pre-apprenticeship training providers. By the conclusion of FFY 2017, 42 VR consumers successfully completed pre-apprenticeship training. For the first class in FFY 2016, of the 19 successful completers, 14 achieved competitive integrated employment, 12 are employed in high skill, high demand careers, and two are actively searching for employment.

There are plans for continued expansion of the use of pre-apprenticeship for VR clients in Arkansas. In the second quarter of FFY 2018, 100 students have registered for pre-apprenticeship training.

DSB has traditionally paid tuition for vocational and postsecondary education that will lead to employment. DSB will increase its use of Registered Apprenticeship training opportunities for its consumers and align its resources for training and education resulting in industry-recognized postsecondary credentials.

It is imperative for staff from core and non-core programs to increase engagement with training providers and programs that lead to postsecondary credentials engage to ensure that they apply and are accepted onto the Eligible Training Provider List.

I. Coordinating with Economic Development Strategies.

Describe how the activities identified in (A) will be coordinated with economic development entities, strategies and activities in the State.

The State recognizes that workforce development cannot be performed in a vacuum without the connection to economic development and the priorities established by both state and local economic development entities. To ensure that economic development strategies are at the forefront of state, regional, and local planning, representatives of economic development organizations are on the state and local boards. Furthermore, economic development representatives are members of the WIOA Roundtable, which is the interagency WIOA planning team. Seven of the ten local workforce development boards have administrative and fiscal entities that are also local economic development organizations.

This close connection ensures that local planning is on target with local economic development strategies. Furthermore, in 2015, the Arkansas Department of Higher Education implemented the

Workforce Investment Initiative, which provided funding for regional workforce development planning. To qualify and apply for funding, applicants had to have a partnership that included the support of the local workforce development board, educational entities, and that planning was based on local economic development strategies.

b. State Operating Systems and Policies

*The Unified or Combined State Plan must include a description of the State operating systems and policies that will support the implementation of the State strategy described in **Section II Strategic Elements**. This includes—*

1. The State operating systems that will support the implementation of the State’s strategies. This must include a description of—

A. State operating systems that support coordinated implementation of State strategies (e.g., labor market information systems, data systems, communication systems, case-management systems, job banks, etc.).

Arkansas JobLink (AJL) is the state’s integrated web-based workforce development management information system (MIS) used by the state and local areas to share and manage participant data between the Wagner-Peyser program, the Trade Adjustment Assistance program and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act program. AJL provides jobseekers, employers, and workforce development professionals with tremendous flexibility and capacity for accessing, tracking, and reporting services: self-directed, staff-facilitated, staff-assisted, and case management.

All staff has access to and can view all services provided to clients regardless of individual program funding. This approach allows funding streams (regardless of specific target group) to consider the “complete package” of services provided or made available to the client reducing duplication of effort and maximizing outcomes. It also facilitates a single process to extract required data for the generation and submission of performance or demographic client details as required by current mandates. In short AJL provides all workforce partners with a “whole person view” of the services available, or provided to, each client or group.

Arkansas Job Link provides:

- One-stop case management, data collection and reporting
- A single-job placement system, which is used by all partner agencies
- Program management and reporting for WIA adult, dislocated worker, youth programs, labor exchange, and Trade Adjustment Assistance
- A staff assisted and a self-service job match system for jobseekers and employers
- An eligibility determination process that leads staff to identify programs for which the individual might be eligible
- Because of this program, jobseekers and business clients receive significant benefits affecting opportunity and success. Impacts are:

- Entry to the system from multiple locations, including home or office
- Decreased number of times the client has to provide basic information
- Access to additional useful information (career preparation, labor market, disabilities resources, support services, etc.)
- Better-prepared and more timely referrals between partner agencies
- Jobseeker access to job listings and employer access to resumes.

Arkansas has taken a lead in the development of a direct electronic interface between our AJL and Unemployment Insurance (UI) systems. Through this interface we ensure that all UI claimants are registered for work and eliminates repetitive information gathering from UI claimants. We have also implemented a proactive approach to Reemployment Services (RES) and Reemployment and Eligibility Assessments (REA) to claimants with the goal of reducing the average length of time a client is out of work. This effort would have been exponentially more difficult if we were not dealing with an integrated service delivery system. Through the use of electronic wage matching, records are regularly updated with information received from the State and other sources to identify those who have obtained employment and calculate average earnings.

Each quarter, quarterly wage record information is loaded into AJL to measure the progress on State and local common performance measures. The quarterly wage information includes wages paid to an individual, the social security account number, the name of the individual, and the Federal employer identification number of the employer paying the wages to the individual. State wage records are available to other member states through the Wage Record Interchange System (WRIS) on a quarterly basis. Likewise, Arkansas is able to track participants that work or move outside of Arkansas for performance measurement purposes through WRIS wage records from member states.

All local WIOA Title I service providers have access to the state wage record information for the purpose of measuring local common performance measures. AJL can be found at <https://www.arjoblink.arkansas.gov>.

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.

The Adult Education Services Division utilizes the Literacy, Adult and Community Education System (LACES) for reporting purposes. All programs receiving adult education federal and state funds from the Adult Education Services must report student data for both reportable individuals and participants in LACES, which is an online accessible system that allows the state and local programs to complete reports for the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE). Required information includes demographic measures, participation measures, and follow-up measures. Approved users can access the website at <https://laces.literacypro.com/laces/>.

The Adult Education Services implemented LACES for the 2017-18 program year. Previously, the state used the Adult Education Reporting Information System (AERIS) from the 2005 PY through the 2016 PY.

Data collected on each adult student include demographic data (age, gender, ethnicity), barriers to employment, county residence, entering educational functioning levels as defined by the National Reporting System (NRS), progression through educational functioning levels, employment status at entry, follow-up achievements, test scores, class enrollment, and daily attendance. Data collected on each instructor/tutor include personal data, title, certification, classes, and attendance for each class. Through the data collected above, federal, state, and local reports are generated using any and/or all of the data. In addition, through a memorandum of understanding between the Arkansas Department of Higher Education and the Division of Workforce Services, follow-up measures for exited participants that enter post-secondary education or gain employment can be tracked.

All adults who receive services from adult education and literacy programs are considered reportable individuals. Adults who have received services, have a completed Intake Form, and have at least one contact hour of instruction, should be entered into LACES whether an assessment has been administered. Students who have 12 or more contact hours within a program year (July 1 to June 30) are considered participants by the National Reporting System (NRS) of the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE). Students should be pre-tested before they have acquired 12 instruction contact hours.

All student data must be entered into LACES by the 15th of each month for the previous month's data. All data must be reviewed by the 22nd of each month for the previous month's data. This includes post-test scores in which students do not show educational gains. Students with both a pretest and post-test will be recorded in NRS Table 4B, which is a required federal table. In addition, all assessment scores in the system should be dated on the exact date the test was given. Test documentation must be available in the students' files and is subject to monitoring during site visits and program reviews.

Each program is required to maintain and follow a policy and procedure for data entry that includes checks and balances for data collection steps, personnel responsible for entering data, and personnel who checks and verifies data. The process is the same for all adult education providers regardless of location. Verification of data is checked through desk audits and on-site visits by state program advisors.

According to Assurance 13 of the Adult Education Services Division Assurances, which is signed at the time of the adult education grant award, all programs that receive adult education funds agree to submit student data according to schedules set by the Adult Education Services Division. If programs are missing data in LACES, or have data with errors or deviations, they will be notified by a program advisor and will be required to correct the problem within one month. According to Assurance 33, the Adult Education Services Division may reduce funding or terminate agreements in part or whole if it has been determined that a program has failed to comply with the assurances.

The Arkansas Rehabilitation Services system of record for Vocational Rehabilitation is System 7™ is a highly configurable and intuitive case management platform. System 7™ has built-in design-for-configurability using an XML and table-driven approach. Custom applications can be delivered quickly and affordably as well as interface with multiple outside sources. With HTTPS and SSL security, data will remain secure in transit and at rest. System 7™ is web-based, does not require installation on individual user workstations, and can be used anywhere there is an

Internet connection. Its use of switch settings and role based security delivers a secure and flexible solution. System 7™'s Report Control Center and table-driven approach also allows custom data queries and easy ad-hoc reporting. Users can easily view and collect data in real time.

System 7™ offers an intuitive Graphical User Interface (GUI) and contains an existing VR form set for use in implementing the case management functionality. Interactive electronic forms that mirror an agency's paper forms can be used to enter data directly into the system, eliminating time wasted on transcription from paper into traditional information management systems. In addition to providing a form set, another desirable feature of System 7™ is that tools are included that allows the VR agency to maintain and create their own reports and letters. Also, System 7™ supports digital signatures using multiple models of electronic signature pads. In addition, it allows for centralized storage of scanned documents, as well as functionality that allows forms and notes to be sent to other users securely.

Information within System 7™ is separated into modules, each of which is integral to and enhances the functionality of the system as a whole. The case management module tracks consumer information, while the vendor and services module allows participating vendors to be added to the application and linked to the services they offer. An employment module tracks employers and job opportunities. The System 7™ voucher module provides a means for preparing, reviewing, and controlling, and submitting fiscal information to any third party fiscal system. Budget accounts are created and maintained within System 7™. Authorizations and invoices are used to track which vendors provided which services to a consumer or group of consumers.

AWARE System. The DHS Division of Services for the Blind's (DSB) case management system is known as AWARE from Alliance Enterprises, Inc. This case-management system provides records management software for Vocational Rehabilitation. It provides systems to monitor case progression, program finances, and overall agency performance. It also contains a job bank of employers who have hired blind and visually impaired clients of DSB.

DSB operates as a true web-based system, meaning it has the accessibility of Internet technology coupled with security to provide access to case information on a need-to-know basis. Data can be accessed, collected, and reported on the vocational rehabilitation program for the blind from any workstation within the state's network, or if allowed by agency policy with a secure connection from outside the state network. Staff who works with participants at schools, job sites or other facilities can "check out" a case(s) and use perform case work in the field. Upon returning to the office, staff checks the case back into the central system.

DSB is also pursuing Data Sharing Agreements with the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services and has an agreement with the Arkansas Research Center through the Department of Health and Human Services in order to collect and report on employment outcomes.

Arkansas Workforce Integrated Networks System (ARWINS) ARWINS is an information services platform conceived and developed by the Arkansas TANF Digital Transformation Office to support job training and other services for TANF families. With appropriate extensions, this IT system aligns perfectly with the desired outcomes across many unique welfare and workforce development programs like SNAP, Medicaid and WIOA. Just as important, ARWINS is affordable with the ability to be supported by in-house IT staff. It is built using open source

software, specifically Ruby on Rails, and it follows the service standards and conventions promoted by the Whitehall Project, (for the UK Government) U.S. Department of Labor, Instagram and Bloomberg among others. Thus, the software, as open source, has been used, tested, and proven by a variety of other adopters, allowing new projects to benefit from those past experiences allows for wide-spread usage at an affordable cost.

ARWINS is designed for digital use. It is future oriented and geared toward today's end users. In an effort to match the current and future needs of a variety of users, ARWINS is compatible with laptops and mobile devices—any device size or type, enabling usage anytime, anywhere, at the full convenience of the end user.

Because ARWINS was initially developed for managing and reporting TANF programs, it has a wide-array of configurable assessments and supports. It is designed to analyze information provided to support staff and consumers in overcoming barriers that prevent long term sustainable employment. It was also designed in a format that could be modified to enable individuals, including vulnerable populations, to use the system as a tool to support their own growth and development, empowering them to be engaged in their own success!

ARWINS is a web-based suite of tools and resources that provides:

Jobseekers:

- A workforce system registration module that integrates structured work readiness assessments to identify employment barriers across a range of factors, such as:

- Employment History
- Education
- Legal Issues
- Physical and mental health problems
- Substance Abuse
- Transportation
- Child Care

- Ability to develop a consumer and family-centric career pathway plan that incorporates an employment preparation plan. This plan includes a wrap-around barrier reduction plan that consists of temporary supportive services offered across traditional workforce (core WIOA partners) and welfare reform (TANF) programs as well as social programs like SNAP, Child Care, and Medical Services.

Employers and Providers:

- A workforce system registration module that gives access to a one-stop workforce services experience
- Insight and access to customized labor market information
- Expanded visibility to potential traditional and non-traditional jobseeker candidate databases
- Program administrators and operating partners

- Screening, intake, eligibility determination and benefits issuance (EBT)
- Initial and ongoing case management
- Single view of a consumer where appropriate and feasible vis-à-vis a single individual view that intersects provision of contextual and behavioral consumer data
- Consumer information can be recorded once and shared across multiple programs for integrated work readiness assessment, employment planning, cross-program eligibility determination, and aligning provider services, referrals, and invoicing, with case management tracking.
- An outreach and communication platform that integrates with social media channels to organize events, partnering organizations and entities, as well as active constituent relationship management
- The system looks for and alerts users to indicators of events that need attention prior to, rather than following, an event that may be avoided when identified in time. For example, a TANF case manager may become aware that a participant is nearing sanction early enough to prevent that action.
- Program Performance - Reporting, Fraud, Overpayments and Collections, Quality Assurance

ARWINS tracks payments to education, training and service providers across all programs. Integrated processing and tracking allows partners to share resources for payments, consolidate payment requests, and track payments across multiple programs for each consumer across the entire participant budget. ARWINS tracks and identifies total costs of benefits provided to any consumer. This information can be used to determine total costs per consumer participating in a range of activities as well as provides data on which development paths are most effective and cost efficient enabling outcome and expenditure planning and reporting.

ARWINS also manages the privacy and security that is needed, and within this constraint, allows multiple professionals to record and review appropriate information about the consumers they serve. Security can be configured in a way that allows each participant's service team, whether collocated or not, to stay current on what is being addressed, how, the expected outcomes, and actual results for that participant. This provides each team member, which may include a variety of professionals from different partnering organizations or businesses, a view of the universe of that participant, including needs, barriers, progress, and goals. ARWINS intends to allow communities to configure security in a way that supports the needs of the teams while protecting the privacy of the individual.

The Workforce Data Quality Initiative (WDQI) supports the development of, or enhancements to, longitudinal administrative databases that integrate workforce data education data. WDQI also emphasizes promoting improvements and the level of quality of these systems, in addition to increasing the accessibility of performance data, including data reported by employment services and training providers. Education data is being collected under the Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems (SLDS) initiative funded by the U.S. Department of Education to which the WDQI is a parallel effort. The SLDS emphasizes the collection of workforce data and the WDQI was created, in part, to accompany the work being done on the education side to gather longitudinal data. WDQI is a collaborative partnership at the Federal level between the Departments of Labor and of Education. The long-term WDQI and Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems goal for

States is to use their longitudinal data systems to follow individuals through school and into and through their work life. WQDI grant recipients are expected to demonstrate similarly established partnerships between state workforce and educational agencies. High quality and consistent data that is available from service providers about services offered, and how well their customers benefited as they enter or re-enter the labor market, are integral to informed consumer choices. In Arkansas, the WDQI is administered by the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services through partnership with the Arkansas Department of Education, Arkansas Department of Higher Education, Department of Human Services, Office of Skills Development and the Arkansas Research Center.

Data made available through the WDQI has been utilized to produce performance outcomes for various workforce development programs and to produce the baseline performance data for the WIOA core performance goals.

A cross agency team has been developed to review the existing data systems and to develop a plan for integrating the data available through these systems. The Arkansas Division of Workforce Services has been identified as the lead state agency and will be responsible for working with the Arkansas Department of Information Systems to develop an Information Technology Plan for implementation.

Arkansas Act 912 of 2017 established a Chief Data Officer and Chief Privacy Officer within the Arkansas Department of Information Systems. This Act supports the state's vision of sharing data across state agencies, while ensuring that all data will be properly protected under the joint leadership of the Chief Privacy Officer, Chief Security Officer, and Chief Data Officer.

It is the hope of the Governor that Arkansas will become the first state in this nation to achieve statewide data sharing and transparency capability.

B. Data-collection and reporting processes used for all programs and activities, including those present in one-stop centers*.

SEE ABOVE

2. The State policies that will support the implementation of the State's strategies (e.g., co-enrollment policies and universal intake processes where appropriate). In addition, provide the State's guidelines for State-administered one-stop partner programs' contributions to a one-stop delivery system.

With the passage of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014, the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services and its Adult Education Services, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services, and Division of Services for the Blind began meeting to discuss the implication of the new legislation and begin necessary discussions for the successful implementation of the federal law in Arkansas.

In November 2014, representatives from each of these agencies formed a WIOA Roundtable that met monthly and soon were joined by additional representatives from Registered Apprenticeship, higher education, secondary education, two- and four-year educational institutions, Carl D.

Perkins secondary and post-secondary programs, Career and Technical Education, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, human services, and elected officials to engage in discussions about integration of services provided by a multitude of service providers. This planning team established committees to focus on critical areas in WIOA implementation to include: finance, IT system integration, policy development, core performance measures, sector strategies, and the development of the state workforce development plan.

The WIOA Roundtable Policy Committee meets routinely and has engaged the use of work groups formed from staff members across all agencies to draft policies for consideration by the policy committee. Each agency has representation on the policy committee in order to coordinate and align activities. After the WIOA Roundtable Policy Committee has reviewed and approved the policy, it goes to the appropriate committee of the Arkansas Workforce Development Board for consideration and adoption. The Arkansas Division of Workforce Services as staff support for the AWDB takes lead on posting policies for public comment and making WIOA Title I-B policies available for all staff to access on the WIOA page of the website www.dws.arkansas.gov/wioa.htm.

In Fall 2017, the initial WIOA Title I-B Policy Manual was presented to and approved by the Arkansas Workforce Development Board, which included the following:

Co-Enrollment and Co-Funding- Policy Number: WIOA I-B- 2.7

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to describe the requirements and regulations concerning co-enrollment and/or co-funding of WIOA Title I-B participants with various WIOA Title I-B programs, with other WIOA programs, with Arkansas Job Center partners, and with other appropriate entities, in accordance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA), the WIOA Final Rule, Training and Employment Guidance Letters (TEGLs) published by the Employment and Training Administration of the U.S. Department of Labor (ETA), and policies of the Arkansas Workforce Development Board (AWDB).

REFERENCE:

WIOA § 134(b)(2)(A)(v)

20 CFR 680.230

20 CFR 680.350

20 CFR 681.430 - 440

TEGL 19-16

A.C.A. 15-4-3711(a)(10)(D)

POLICY:

Under WIOA I-B, participants may be eligible for youth, adult, and/or dislocated worker services. The participant may also be eligible for the services of other one-stop partners, as well as services for non-one-stop partners. WIOA I-B case managers must be informed about the services of all WIOA funding streams (including other titles and subtitles). Case managers must

coordinate with other agencies as appropriate to provide the full array of services documented as needed by the participant [WIOA § 134(b)(2)(A)(v); 20 CFR 680.230]. Co-enrollment (or dual-enrollment) and/or co-funding with other entities is encouraged in order to give participants the best array of services [TEGL 19-16].

Co-enrollment within WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs

Individuals who meet the respective program and service eligibility requirements may participate in Adult/Dislocated Worker and Youth programs concurrently. Local programs operators may determine the appropriate level and balance of services under the Youth and Adult/Dislocated Worker programs. This determination depends not only on the eligibility requirements of each program, but also on the services needed by each participant [TEGL 19-16].

Services available under each funding stream will depend on eligibility for services under that funding stream. Local program operators may determine the appropriate level and balance of services for each individual under each program. Local program operators must identify and track the funding streams that pay the costs of services and ensure no duplication of services [20 CFR 681.430]. However, if it is determined that only the Youth or the Adult/Dislocated Worker program array of services is appropriate for an individual aged 18 - 24, then the local program provider may enroll the participant in only one program [20 CFR 681.440].

Co-enrollment and Co-funding with Other Programs

WIOA Title I-B program providers are encouraged to work with other Workforce Center partners and other entities to provide a full array of needed services to participants. Not only does this strategy provide more services, it provides more case management to the participant, thus providing greater probability for success.

WIOA funding for training is limited to participants who are unable to obtain grant assistance from other sources to pay the costs of their training or require assistance beyond that available under grant assistance from other sources to pay the costs of such training. WIOA Title I-B Service Providers must not only ensure that participants apply for Pell Grants and other appropriate grants, but they must also coordinate funding with other one-stop partners and other entities for which the participant is eligible [20 CFR 680.230]. In order to appropriately coordinate funding and co-enrollment, case managers must be trained in programs and eligibility requirements of other one-stop partners and other local and state entities providing services needed by their participants so they can leverage the funding of other sources to provide all services needed by WIOA Title I-B participants [A.C.A. 15-4-3711(a)(10)(D)]. DOL has established a goal of co-enrolling 50% of TAA participants in either WIOA Title I Adult or Dislocated Worker programs. Therefore, co-enrollment of TAA participants into the WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker or Adult program is strongly encouraged if the TAA participant meets eligibility requirements. The specific services provided to these participants will depend on the needs of the participant and funding availability in the local area. Some of these potential entities include, but are not limited to:

- Career Pathways Initiative for custodial parents attending Arkansas two-year colleges
- Single Parent Scholarship Funds for each county (www.aspsf.org/scholarships)
- Arkansas Rehabilitation Services and Division of Services for the Blind

- TEA / Work Pays
- TAA
- WIOA Title I-D Dislocated Worker Grants and other Discretionary Grants
- Veterans' Services
- State and institutional scholarships
- Department of Human Services
- Food Stamp Employment and Training Programs
- Arkansas Human Development Corporation (National Farmworker Jobs Program)
- American Indian Center of Arkansas
- Local housing authority
- Local homeless shelter(s)
- Local food banks and distribution centers
- Local provider of assistance with utilities
- Local provider of older worker services (Title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965, 42 U.S.C. § 3056 et seq.)
- Community Service Block Grants
- Programs funded by the Second Chance Act
- Other Arkansas Job Center partners, as appropriate

WIOA Title I-B Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth participants should be referred to and co-enrolled (or co-funded) with these services and other available services as appropriate. Local areas should have policies and procedures in place to ensure that other funds are leveraged [A.C.A. 15-4-3711(a)(10)(D), 20 CFR 680.230(b)].

WIOA Title I-B Adult and Dislocated Worker funds may support adult education and literacy activities of the Adult Education Services Division, the Arkansas Literacy Council, and other programs providing adult education and literacy activities if the participant is also engaged in one of the following [20 CFR 680.350]:

- Occupational skills training, including training for nontraditional employment
- On-the-job training (OJT)
- Incumbent worker training, as described in ADWS Policy No. WIOA I-B - 3.6 (Incumbent Worker Training)
- Programs that combined workplace training and related instruction, which may include cooperative education programs
- Training programs operated by the private sector
- Skill upgrading and retraining
- Entrepreneurial training

Local areas must ensure that services are not duplicated for individuals enrolled in multiple programs.

3. State Program and State Board Overview

A. State Agency Organization

Describe the organization and delivery systems at the State and local levels for the programs covered in the plan, including the organizational structure. Include an organizational chart.

Arkansas Division of Workforce Services administers nine of the thirteen programs represented in this plan. The agency goal is to provide quality workforce services that support the development of a well-trained workforce that meets employer needs. The Division provides many services that support both jobseekers and employers and helps people succeed throughout their working lives. We support workers during times of unemployment, track and analyze labor market trends, and link businesses and jobseekers to a diverse range of employment services provided by the state's workforce system. Through DWS' local offices, the needs of employers and job-seeking individuals are facilitated by matching qualified workers with an employer's specific employment needs.

DWS avidly supports Arkansas's employer community and is cognizant of their needs. DWS offers many services to Arkansas jobseekers and residents including: referral to suitable employment opportunities; job training assistance to economically disadvantaged individuals and those dislocated due to business closings, layoffs, and natural disasters; case management for disabled veterans; assessment of an individual's needs and referral to supportive agencies and programs.

The agency director is appointed by the Governor and is a member of the Governor's Workforce Cabinet. The agency has approximately 1,000 employees and has eight divisions which include: Unemployment Insurance, Employment Assistance, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Legal Services, Financial Management and Administrative Services, New Hire Registry and Career Readiness Certification, and Field Operations.

Below is a list of programs administered by the Department.

- Wagner-Peyser Employment Services
- Local Veterans Employment Representatives
- Disabled Veterans Outreach Program
- WIOA Youth Program
- WIOA Adult Program
- WIOA Dislocated Worker Program
- Rapid Response and Layoff Aversion
- Trade Adjustment Assistance
- Alien Labor Certification
- Workforce Opportunity Tax Credit

- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- Transitional Employment Assistance
- Arkansas Work Pays Program
- Labor Market Information
- Unemployment Insurance
- Trade Readjustment Allowance
- New Hire Registry
- Career Readiness Certification
- Discretionary Grants

Note: Effective July 1, 2019, the Division added the Adult Education Services and Arkansas Rehabilitation Services under the Governor's Transformation.

The Arkansas Division of Workforce Services also serves as the Governor's Administrative Entity for WIOA Title I funding, provides staffing support for the Arkansas Workforce Development, provides technical assistance to local workforce development boards, and monitors their activities. The agency operates the above listed programs through a budget of just over \$1 billion annually and awards funding for WIOA Title services to ten local workforce development boards for delivery of services locally in addition to numerous sub grantees for delivery of services through the TANF program and discretionary grants awarded to the agency from multiple sources.

The Office of Skills Development (OSD) is under the authority and leadership of the Career Education and Workforce Development Board. The State Board is appointed by the Governor and is charged with the responsibility for overseeing and directing the work of ADCE. The Director for the agency is appointed by the Governor. Their mission is to provide leadership and contribute resources to serve the diverse and changing career educational needs of Arkansas youth, adults, and persons with disabilities.

Please note that under the Governor's Transition Plan, the yet to be appointed Secretary of Commerce will have transitional authority regarding the Boards and organizations falling under the Department of Commerce. This transitional authority may impact the staffing of the Career Education and Workforce Development Board.

Adult Education Services (AES) funds 36 local adult education programs and literacy councils and the Arkansas Adult Learning Resource Center (AALRC), the adult education's professional development training center. The adult education programs are supported with \$5.2 million received under Title II of the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act and \$19 million in state funding.

The Designated State Agency for General Vocational Rehabilitation in Arkansas is the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services - Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS). Title IV of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and as amended in 1998, provides for states receiving federal vocational rehabilitation funds to appoint a state director and to create a State Rehabilitation Council (SRC).

Currently, the state director of the Arkansas vocational rehabilitation program is the Commissioner of Arkansas Rehabilitation Services. This director was previously appointed by the ACE Director. The ARS Commissioner and the senior leadership of ARS provided oversight and coordination for three major components including, Field Services, the Arkansas Career Training Institute, and the programs under Access and Accommodations.

Please note that under the Governor's Transition Plan, the yet to be appointed Secretary of Commerce will have transitional authority regarding the state director of the Arkansas vocational rehabilitation program as well as the Commissioner of Arkansas Rehabilitation Services.

Field Services personnel provide the local level coordination and facilitation of all general vocational rehabilitation services. This includes, but is not limited to, vocational rehabilitation counseling, vocational case management, eligibility determination, individual employment plan development, transition services, and job placement. The Arkansas Career Training Institute is a comprehensive vocational rehabilitation center and provides an array of training, vocational evaluation, accommodation, and supportive services for ARS clients. The programs organized under Access and Accommodations provide an array of assistive technology, technical assistance, and advocacy services for consumers with significant disabilities, and their potential employers, concerning ergonomics and accommodations in the workplace, i.e., flashing light systems, modified keyboards, voice activated software, and text magnification aids.

The Department of Human Services (DHS) is Arkansas's largest state agency, with more than 7,500 employees working to ensure citizens are healthy, safe and enjoying a high quality of life. The agency's skilled and passionate staff cares for Arkansans of all ages. People needing support will find at least one local DHS office in each of the state's 75 counties. Arkansans may apply for a vast array of services at their local county office as well as online. Services include ARKids First health insurance for children, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as food stamps), Transitional Employment Assistance (TEA) and Medicaid. Through a blend of federal and state Medicaid funds, DHS pays for 64 percent of the babies born in Arkansas each year and for the care of 69 percent of the state's nursing home patients. Additionally, DHS protects children and the elderly who have been abused or neglected; finds adoptive homes for foster children; funds congregate and home-delivered meals for the elderly; regulates nursing homes and childcare facilities; supports high-quality early childhood education; treats and serves youth in the juvenile justice system; oversees services for blind Arkansans; runs residential facilities for people with developmental disabilities; manages the Arkansas State Hospital and Arkansas Health Center for those with acute behavioral health issues; and supports nonprofit, community and faith-based organizations that depend on volunteers to continue programs vital to our communities. The agency also works with a system of community mental health care centers to provide mental health services to nearly 74,000 people each year. In all, DHS serves more than 1.2 million Arkansans every year. To manage these services and programs efficiently, DHS has ten divisions and five support offices headquartered in Little Rock in addition to the 85 county offices.

Previously, two of DHS' programs were represented in this plan including Vocational Rehabilitation Services provided through the Division of Services for the Blind and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment & Training Program.

Under the Governor's Transition Plan, the Division of Services for the Blind is the designated State Agency to provide services for rehabilitation and social services to blind and severely visually

impaired persons age 14 and above in Arkansas. Previously, the agency had a director appointed by the Governor, but federal regulations stipulate the vocational rehabilitation designated state unit must utilize a commissioner. The DSB Director and the senior leadership of DSB provide oversight and coordination within the constraints of state and federal laws to fulfill its mission through the following goals:

Please note that under the Governor's Transition Plan, the yet to be appointed Secretary of Commerce will have transitional authority regarding the state director of the Arkansas vocational rehabilitation program as well as the Commissioner of Arkansas Rehabilitation

- Employment - To assist Arkansans who are blind or visually impaired to secure or maintain employment and consistent with their skills, abilities, and interests.
- Rehabilitation - To assist Arkansans who are blind or visually impaired to live as independently as possible through the development of skills, accommodations, or adaptations that are necessary to perform all activities of daily living.
- Prevention of Blindness - To assist in preventing blindness stabilizing vision, and, where possible, restoring vision.
- Field Services personnel provide the local level coordination and facilitation of all general vocational rehabilitation services for individuals with blind or visual impairment issues. This includes, but is not limited to, vocational rehabilitation counseling, vocational case management, eligibility determination, individual employment plan development, transition services, and job placement.
- Business and Technology personnel provide assistance to educate consumers to develop management and business ownership within the Vending Facility Program (VFP). The Vending Facility Program Services are available to eligible blind persons who are interested in and have the necessary skills to manage snack bars

Beginning July 1, 2019, consistent with the Governor's Transition Plan, all core partner programs will be in the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services (ADWS). Please note that under the Governor's Transition Plan, the yet to be appointed Secretary of Commerce will have transitional authority regarding Boards and Organizations falling under the newly-created Department of Commerce. This transitional authority may impact the titles of program administrators. Changes to all Organizational Charts will be provided once they are approved by the Secretary of Commerce or Governor.

B. State Board

Provide a description of the State Board, including—

The Arkansas Workforce Development Board was created by Arkansas Act 907 of 2015 and serves as the policymaking and oversight body for the State's workforce development system. The Arkansas Workforce Development Board is a 32-member private sector led board. Of the 32 members, 17 members are private sector business leaders from various industries from

throughout Arkansas. Also represented on the board are representatives from organized labor, Registered Apprenticeship, chief elected officials, community-based organizations, and the directors of the state agencies responsible for workforce services, career education, economic development, vocational rehabilitation, education, and higher education.

The membership roster for the Arkansas Workforce Development Board can be found online at <http://dws.arkansas.gov/workforce-innovation/> and includes the membership category of representation as well as their professional affiliation.

The board meets on a quarterly basis and has a standard agenda layout to ensure that all of the activities of the board are being reported consistently and that the Executive Committee is able to monitor those activities. The order of business includes:

- Roll call
- Action on the minutes of the preceding meeting(s)
- Report of the Chairperson
- Report of the staff director
- Report of the Executive Committee
- Report of the standing committees
- Report of any ad hoc committees
- Other specified agenda items
- Communications, petitions and miscellaneous
- Adjournment

STATE BOARD MEMBERSHIP ROSTER

The Arkansas Workforce Development Board Membership Roster, as of January 1, 2020 is:

1. Mr. Thomas Anderson (Chair) Business Representative
2. Mr. Len Blaylock Business Representative
3. Mr. Scott Bull (Vice-Chair) Business Representative
4. Mr. Mike Rogers Business Representative
5. Ms. Melissa Hanesworth Business Representative
6. Dr. Julie Roberson Business Representative
7. Mr. George Nunnally Business Representative
8. Ms. Abby Houseworth Business Representative
9. Mr. Randy Finegan Business Representative
10. Ms. Rebecca Ives Business Representative
11. Ms. Holley Little Business Representative
12. Mr. Paul Riveria Business Representative
13. Ms. Chanda Chacon Business Representative

14. Mr. Robert Thorne Business Representative
15. Mr. Jeff Griffin Business Representative
16. Mr. Randy Henderson Business Representative
17. Dr. Diana Wright Business Representative
18. Mr. Kelley Sharp Labor & Apprenticeship
19. Mr. Lindsay Brown Org. Labor
20. Mr. Alan Hughes Organized Labor
21. Ms. Karen Breashears Labor & Apprenticeship
22. Mr. Brian Marsh Community-Based Org.
23. Dr. Maria Markham Train. or Educ. of Eligible Youth
24. Mr. Johnny Key Train. or Educ of Eligible Youth
25. Dr. Trenia Miles State Agency Director
26. Dr. Charisse Childers State Agency Director
27. Mr. Alan McClain State Agency Director
28. Ms. Cassondra Williams-Stokes State Agency Director
29. Sec. Mike Preston Economic Development
30. James Sanders City Mayor
31. Brandon Ellison County Judge
32. **Asa Hutchinson Governor**

i. Membership roster

Provide a membership roster for the State Board, including members' organizational affiliations.

SEE ABOVE

ii. Board Activities

Provide a description of the activities that will assist State Board members and staff in carrying out State Board functions effectively.

Every new member is provided a thorough orientation that includes information on the following:

- Introduction to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
- Introduction to the Arkansas Workforce System to include the purpose, guiding principles, employer-driven focus, importance of business relationships, and services to employers and jobseekers
- Information regarding the Arkansas Workforce Centers including the hallmarks of excellence, goal of workforce centers, accessing services, operational and functional requirements for a workforce center, partner programs, more detailed info on employer and jobseekers services, employment resources, assessments, job coaching, and building toward excellence

- Information on the workforce board including the board vision, mission, role of the board, strategic planning, using labor market information, oversight responsibilities, evaluation, innovation, collaboration, attracting and involving employers, and targeted industries in the State
- Information regarding how to be a successful board member including areas of responsibility, the appointment process, key characteristics of a successful workforce board member, networking, conflict of interest, Arkansas Freedom of Information Act, and board staff roles

Since its formation in June 2015, newly appointed and experienced members receive annual training regarding their roles and responsibility as a board member. Additionally, the full board and its Strategic Planning, Program and Performance Evaluation, and TANF Oversight Committees conduct quarterly meetings.

4. Assessment and Evaluation of Programs and One-Stop Program Partners

A. Assessment of Core Programs

Describe how the core programs will be assessed each year based on State performance accountability measures described in section 116(b) of WIOA. This State assessment must include the quality, effectiveness, and improvement of programs broken down by local area or provider. Such state assessments should take into account local and regional planning goals.

The State will assess its core programs through on-going continuous improvement strategies including:

- State and local level fiscal and programmatic monitoring (on-site and/or desk reviews) of all programs within our combined plan
- Customer Satisfaction Surveys (for both the jobseeker and employer) are conducted annually
- State and local level data validation of all programs within our combined plan
- The Program and Performance Evaluation Committee, a subcommittee of Arkansas Workforce Development Board, will meet quarterly to make recommendations on performance standards for the forthcoming year and to review actual outcomes across programs, make recommendation for improvement and/or corrective action to ensure attainment of performance standards for all partners
- As a state agency, there are annual audits of programs conducted and specific, as needed, audits conducted by a third party

The state also ensures that local workforce development areas meet performance accountability measures and will provide technical assistance when needed. ADWS plans to issue a policy on system assessment to ensure that the current actions are being coordinated in a way that allows core partners to review relevant information and take action to improve the system.

Each agency will be responsible for conducting an evaluation of their programs and reporting results to the PPE Committee of the State Board.

B. Assessment of One-Stop Program Partner Programs

Describe how other one-stop delivery system partner program services and Combined State Plan partner programs included in the plan will be assessed each year. Such state assessments should take into account local and regional planning goals.

At a minimum, workforce delivery system partner program services, and the partner programs included in this Combined State Plan, will be assessed using performance measures they have in common, in addition to other performance accountability measures required by each program's funding source(s) and grants. Performance will be reviewed at both the state and the local workforce area level.

Each program's performance in each of the primary indicators of performance will be a start point for further evaluation of the quality, effectiveness and opportunities for improvement. Each partner program will submit their performance metrics into a statewide dashboard on a quarterly basis. Each partner program will report out to the Program and Performance Evaluation (PPE) Committee with their accomplishments, plans, and strategies to continue to make improvements, how they address areas that are not being met and the identification of resources or support they need to move forward.

The state and local areas will be assessed based on a comparison of the actual performance level with the adjusted level of performance each quarter and annually. The following definitions will be utilized to determine if a core program exceeded, met, or failed to meet the negotiated levels of performance. These definitions are developed based on the understanding that they are the same definitions to be utilized by the federal agencies in determining if the State met performance. Absent federal guidance on this subject at the time of plan development, these definitions may need to be adjusted subsequent to the issuance of federal guidance later in 2016.

Levels of Proficiency and Actions "Exceed" Condition: If the actual performance in any indicator is greater than 100 percent of the adjusted level, the measure will be considered to "exceed" the measure's adjusted rate.

Action: This is an indication that the program is providing high quality and effective services. The state or local area is expected to, consistent with economic conditions and characteristics of the participants continue to improve its performance. The programs are encouraged to innovate in service delivery, processes and practices. An example is to evaluate programs through a process improvement models, such as Lean Six Sigma, process mapping, simulation, DRIVE.

"Meet" Condition: If the actual performance in any indicator is 90 percent or more and lower than 100 percent of the adjusted level, this measure will be determined to "meet".

Action: The program is required to improve its performance to meet 100 percent of the adjusted rate. The program will continue to improve processes, practices and to adjust strategies in order to create a higher quality workforce system.

"At-Risk" Condition: If the actual performance in any indicator is more than 50 percent and below 90 percent of the adjusted level, the measure will be characterized as "At-Risk ". According to the proposed threshold outlined in §677.190(d)(1), each program is required to average at least a 90 percent average of their indicator scores in order to pass the Overall Program Score criteria. Additionally, the second threshold in §677.190(d)(1) requires the state's Overall Indicator Score to be an average score of 90 percent or greater in each indicator across

all core programs. In the case of performance characterized as "At-Risk", the individual indicator does not achieve 90 percent of the adjusted score. This may put the state or local area at risk of failing the Overall Indicator Score and Overall Program Score criteria. Meeting the 50 percent threshold is only an indicator that the quality and effectiveness of the program in a specific measure meets the minimum standards established by the Federal government in a specific measure. This performance level is however, not an indication that the overall quality and effectiveness of the program necessarily met.

Action: The program is required to improve its performance to meet the 90 percent threshold by improving processes, practices and to adjust strategies in order to create a higher quality workforce system.

"Fail" Condition: If the actual performance in any indicator is less than 50 percent and the adjusted level, this measure will "fail" the proposed threshold outlined in §677.190(d) (2). This indicates a specific measure requires improvement in order to be compliant with federal standards. It is the minimum standard of the quality and effectiveness of services.

Action: In instances when the state or a local area falls below this threshold, immediate technical assistance will be provided by the appropriate office to improve the proficiency of staff members in providing WIOA services, provide an opportunity to develop strategies to improve the program's ability to meet performance measures.

Levels of Proficiency Requirements:

- Exceeding Indicator Greater than 100 percent
 - Innovate and stay on top
 - Strive for national excellence
- Meet Indicator between 90-100 percent
 - Process, practice improvement, adjust strategies
- At-Risk Indicator between 50-90 percent
 - Technical Assistance available, process, practice improvement, adjust strategies
- Fail Indicator Less than 50 percent
 - Immediate mandatory Technical Assistance, process, practice improvement

Additional Metrics

In addition to the primary indicators of performance, secondary metrics may be created and reviewed to more fully assess the activities and performance of a program. The data elements on the WIOA annual state and local report as well as the Eligible Training Provider reports will be reviewed to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to workforce training programs. Areas for improvement may be identified from these metrics.

In early 2018, the new chair of the Arkansas Workforce Development Board began to shift the Board's focus beyond the implementation phase and began expressing a desire to implement "evidence-based" policymaking. While this idea is currently in its infancy, it is expected that the framework will include four (4) key components: 1) program assessment via the systematic review of all available program data 2) developing an inventory of funded programs 3)

categorizing programs by their evidence of effectiveness, and 4) attempting to identify each programs' return on investment.

Additionally, the State Board believes that this approach will identify best practices, highlight gaps in our service delivery system, and allow for strategic program improvement.

C. Previous Assessment Results

Beginning with the state plan modification in 2018 and for subsequent state plans and state plan modifications, provide the results of assessments of the effectiveness of the core programs and other one-stop partner programs and Combined State Plan partner programs included in the Unified or Combined State plan during the preceding 2-year period (i.e. the 2-year period of the plan modification cycle). Describe how the State is adapting its strategies based on these assessments.

The Arkansas Workforce Development Board has monitored the performance of WIA (now WIOA) Title I programs as well as the Wagner-Peyser Performance. All common and supplemental measures were met or exceeded. A formal evaluation of the Arkansas Workforce Center System has not been conducted since before program year 2011. However, the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services (ADWS) has continued to conduct annual monitoring of programmatic and fiscal management of grants to ensure that funds are being spent in compliance with federal and state laws and regulations. As part of this ongoing annual monitoring, we have also included a risk management protocol for our WIOA formula and discretionary grants under the purview of ADWS.

The WIOA Roundtable, made up of representatives of the WIOA core partners, plan to re-institute Customer Satisfaction Surveys. These surveys will be similar to those formerly required under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). Using the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) as a guide, we will capture common customer satisfaction information from both program participants and employers that can be aggregated and compared across the WIOA partner programs. We believe that this will allow us to assess our workforce system as well as gauge our progress toward continuously improving our service delivery.

The Arkansas Division of Workforce Services oversees the performance outcomes Vocational Rehabilitation and Adult Education to ensure both federal and state standards are met.

In addition, the continuation of oversight of performance outcomes, the Program and Performance Evaluation committee focuses on partners' performance and eligible training providers. Not only do they establish and monitor partner performance, they also look at continuous improvement strategies related to credential, skills gains, and business performance. The levels of performance established by the Adult Education Division for each of the core indicators of performance for adult education and literacy activities are expressed in objective, quantifiable, and measureable forms and will show progress towards continuously improving performance.

In order to ensure optimal return on the investment of federal and state funds in adult education and literacy activities, Adult Education Services shall reach an agreement with the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE) on target levels of performance for each of the core indicators of performance for each year of the grant. In addition, the state office shall submit

an annual report to OCTAE showing progress and continuous improvement. Adult Education Services will continue to conduct annual reviews and evaluations on local programs according to goals and objectives established and agreed upon by the Adult Education Services and the local program.

Entering Educational Functioning Level	2015-16	2016-17
Target	Target	
ABE* Level 1	48%	49%
ABE Level 2	43%	44%
ABE Level 3	41%	43%
ABE Level 4	42%	44%
ASE** Level 5	40%	48%
ASE Level 6	N/A	N/A
ESL*** Level 1	34%	32%
ESL Level 2	43%	39%
ESL Level 3	40%	46%
ESL Level 4	42%	48%
ESL Level 5	34%	39%
ESL Level 6	27%	20%

Levels of Performance (Adult Education): Core Indicators (CI) of Performance - Section 116(b) of WIOA measures the percentage of Adult Education participants (12 contact hours or more) who complete or advance one or more educational levels in reading, writing, and speaking in the English language; numeracy; problem solving; English language acquisition; and other literacy skills measured by mastery of one or more competencies identified on a standardized instrument approved by Adult Education Division (AED). For 2016-17, the achievement of a secondary school diploma was included in these measurements. The completion percentages for each level is outlined below.

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*ABE= Adult Basic Education; ** ASE= Adult Secondary Education; ***ESL= English as a Second Language

Follow-up Outcome Measures were changed between the 2015-16 and 2016-17 program years due to implementation of WIOA. For 2016-17, target indicators were not implemented and actual

achievements have not yet been calculated. All follow up measures apply to those participants who exited during the program year.

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2015-16 Follow-up Outcome Measures	2015-16 Target	2016-17 Follow-up Outcome Measures	2016-17 Targets
Entered Employment*	67%	Employed 2 nd Quarter after exit	Targets for the WIOA follow-up measures have not been set.
Retained Employment**	76%	Employed 4 th Quarter after exit	
Enter Post-Secondary Education or Training***	97%	Median Earning 2 nd Quarter after exit	
GED****	29%	Attained a Secondary School Diploma/Recognized Equivalent and Enrolled in Postsecondary Education or Training within one year of exit	Baseline data will be submitted in the 2017-18 and 2018-19 program years.
		Attained a Secondary School Diploma/Recognized Equivalent and Employed within one year of exit	
		Attained a Postsecondary Credential while enrolled or within one year of exit	

*Includes learners employed and not employed at time of entry and in the labor force, and attain employment by the first quarter after exit quarter.

**Includes learners who were employed at the time of entry and who were employed the third quarter after exit

***Includes learners who earned a secondary credential while enrolled in adult education, or had secondary credentials at entry, or are enrolled in a class specifically designed for transition to postsecondary education or training.

****Includes learners who took all GED tests, or enrolled in adult high school at the high ASE level.

During FY2016 and FY2017, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS) met or exceeded all performance measures required by the Rehabilitation Services Administration. ARS increased the number of individuals who achieved employment outcomes from 2,412 in FY 2016 to 2,630 in FY 2017.

The above successes can be attributed to ARS' goals and strategies to expand and improve services offered to individuals with disabilities. ARS significantly improved its name recognition resulting in improved referrals and increased employment outcomes. ARS provided education to employers about disability issues and the value and experience individuals with disabilities has to offer. Vocational rehabilitation counselors and business relations representatives were trained

on how to better reach the unserved and underserved minority populations, and how to utilize Assistive Technology at Work (AT@Work) and the Increasing Capabilities Access Network (ICAN) to provide individuals with disabilities with a broad range of assistive technology services and devices.

In collaboration with stakeholders, ARS developed a job coaching training certificate program and implemented it in FY2014 through FY2015. The job coach training was offered online and through live training throughout the state to supported employment providers. ARS worked closely with the Arkansas Career Training Institute (ACTI), a comprehensive rehabilitation center, to place graduates in employment. ACTI provided counseling and case management, vocational assessments and evaluations, vocational training, and employability skills. The Arkansas Transition Program and ACTI partnered to develop and implement the Transition Employment Program (TEP). This program targeted high school students to provide training and work experiences during the summer following their junior year. TEP continues to expand. Since the inception of the program in FFY 2014, over 200 students with disabilities completed the five-week program. This is remarkable since the pilot class had only 14 successful completers. For FFY 2018, the program will be shortened to four weeks. This is based on feedback from students and parents.

ARS, in collaboration with Arkansas Transition Services, provided guidance to high schools to improve transition services from school to post-school activities including postsecondary educational and employment opportunities. In addition, ARS worked with Arkansas PROMISE, a research project, open to youth ages 14 to 16 who currently receive SSI benefits. Participants and their families received services to support their education and career goals. Services included: intensive case management, two paid competitive work experiences, education and employment training and support for youth and families, health and wellness training, and benefits counseling.

ARS continued to support Project SEARCH, an international one-year internship program for individuals with developmental disabilities who desire sustainable, competitive employment.

Pre-employment Transition

In order to improve the transition of students with disabilities from school to postsecondary education and employment, the Arkansas Rehabilitation Services and the Division of Services for the Blind will support the following transition services to Vocational Rehabilitation personnel, the Arkansas Department of Education, Special Education Unit, and the local education agencies by:

1. Providing direct instruction to vocational rehabilitation counselors, school transition personnel, and other persons supporting students with disabilities through group conferences, providing instructional materials and guidelines, reporting forms, training through webinars, and fielding telephone/email communications;
2. Coordinating public speaking and training activities on transition services provided by local education agencies under IDEA;

3. Developing model transition demonstration projects, and establishing or supporting partnerships involving the local education agencies to achieve the goals of improved transition outcomes.

ARS executed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs) and WIOA partners to provide pre-employment transition services. Additionally, ARS has increased the utilization of pre-employment transition training services at ACTI.

During FFY 2016 and FFY, 2017 ARS received technical assistance from the Arkansas Department of Education and the National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NTACT). NTACT continues to provide targeted technical assistance and professional development to a combination of organizations including VR, LEA, and VR service providers to implement evidence based and promising practices ensuring students with disabilities, including those with significant disabilities, graduate prepared for success in postsecondary education and employment.

DSB previous assessment results provides the results of an assessment of the effectiveness of the core programs and other one-stop partner programs and Combined State Plan partner program included in the plan during the preceding 2-year period. Describe how the State is adapting its strategies based on these assessments.

During FY2014 and FY2015, DSB increased the number of individuals who achieved employment outcomes from 335 in FY2014 to 366 in FY2015. In FY2014, sixty-three percent of the participants who exited the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program for the blind and visually impaired achieved an employment outcome. Sixty-eight percent of individuals who exited the VR program for the blind and visually impaired achieved an employment outcome in FY2015. All DSB clients are individuals with significant visual impairments or blindness.

Below is a detailed report of the strategies used in FY2015 and the assessment results of those strategies. DSB is using these strategies to strengthen and improve service delivery to visually impaired and blind participants who want to work by focusing on independent living skills that will allow participants to have freedom of movement, self-care skills, and the technological access they need to compete with non-disabled individuals. Next, DSB focuses on educational preparation in high school, career counseling and work experience situations. Youth and adult clients with no previous work history require similar strategies. DSB has improved from FY2014 to FY2015 by focusing on post-secondary educational preparation programs for participants, programs that are readily available in the job market and have frequent hiring upon graduation. Participants are encouraged to be active partners in their career selection by researching career fields, visiting job sites, and talking to colleges. DSB clients know who is hiring and where prior to beginning a field of study. DSB assists by making the connections and conversations happen. Moving forward DSB will focus on improving relationships with employers so that participants have ready access to real world situations and possibilities.

Evaluation and Reports of Progress: VR and Supported Employment Goals. An evaluation of the extent to which the VR program goals described in the approved VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan for the most recently completed program year were achieved. The evaluation must:

- Identify the strategies that contributed to the achievement of the goals.
- Describe the factors that impeded the achievement of the goals and priorities.

2015 VR Goals: Below are the evaluation and reports of progress for the most recently completed FY 2015 VR Goals and Priorities, covering October 1, 2014 - September 30, 2015:

Goal 1: DSB will increase the employment opportunities for people who are blind or severely visually impaired. Strategy: VR Counselors and Rehabilitation Teachers will make job contacts with employers. Performance Measure: • Each VR Counselor and Rehabilitation Teacher will make two face-to-face job contacts with employers per month. • A brochure will be developed to give employers. Goal Met/Extended: Counselors and Rehabilitation Teachers continue to make two face-to-face contacts with employers per month and document them in monthly reports. Development of an employer brochure is continuing in cooperation with the Adult Education Services. Strategy: DSB will encourage and support viable self-employment. Performance Measure: • All self-employment proposals will be reviewed by a team composed of the Business and Technology Unit Manager, the Field Services Administrator, and the VR Counselor to ensure that a proposal is realistic and sustainable before it is approved and any funds are provided. • In addition to the goal and steps of self-employment being on the IPE, the consumer must complete a written business plan with the DSB business-ownership team described above. • A brochure will be developed to provide interested consumers with information about DSB's small business self-employment program. • Staff will receive training in Operation Jumpstart, a hands-on, microenterprise development program designed to help entrepreneurs test the feasibility of their business ideas and plan to launch new ventures. DSB's Operation Jumpstart's mission is to help consumers who have expressed an interest in starting their own business, explore the possibility, develop a business plan, and start their own business. In doing so we help them become economically independent and be an active part of their communities. Goal Met/Extended: This process was followed and business plans were submitted and approved. However, the Small Business Program was restructured and moved to the Field Services unit. As a result, plans for a small business brochure are being revised. Instead of doing an

Operation Jumpstart training in 2015, it was decided to do one-on-one assistance to consumers as needed using the Small Business Developer.

Strategy: Based upon consumer response and effectiveness, DSB will continue to hold Job Clubs to assist participants in acquiring job seeking skills and improving their probability of securing employment. Job Clubs also encourage peer mentoring.

Performance Measure:

- Job Clubs will be held at least once a month at the DSB Tech Lab and field offices.

Goal Met: Job Clubs are being conducted as planned.

Strategy: DSB will continue to refer individuals for benefits counseling.

Performance Measure:

- Area Supervisors will monitor caseloads to ensure that VR Counselors will refer at least 10 consumers per caseload for benefits counseling.
- The monthly report will be revised to capture this information.

Goal Met: The White River Area Agency on Aging continues as an employment network doing benefits counseling for DSB consumers. Instead of revising the monthly report, a form specific to benefits counseling referrals was developed.

Strategy: DSB will continue to refer eligible Older Blind individuals to VR.

Performance Measure:

- DSB will refer 100% of eligible Older Blind individuals to VR.

Goal Met: All Older Blind individuals interested in employment are referred to VR.

Strategy: DSB will continue to recognize successful consumers and their employers and will encourage peer mentoring.

Performance Measures:

- Each counselor who has been in his/her position for at least a year will nominate one individual from his/her caseload as a candidate for state Consumer of the Year and encourage the individual to serve as a peer mentor to other people who are blind or severely visually impaired.
- DSB will award Consumer of the Year candidates and their employers with trophies/plaques and related publicity.

Goal Met: Counselors are nominating outstanding Consumers of the Year, and the consumers and their employers are being recognized with trophies/plaques and publicity.

Strategy: DSB will continue to expand its assistive technology services and improve access to these services and equipment.

Performance Measures:

- DSB will acquire specialized training to develop the skills and credentials of Rehabilitation Teachers.
- DSB will continue to assign new Rehabilitation Teachers to assistive technology training as vacant positions are filled, so that staff can provide basic technology support to consumers in their respective geographic areas statewide. Supervisors will schedule veteran RTs for remedial training as a formal part of their professional development plan.
- DSB will continue to provide training to new Workforce Services staff as vacancies occur in order to increase their knowledge of accessible technology and the needs of consumers.
- DSB staff will continue to meet consumers at Workforce Services offices, including DSB-sponsored accessible kiosks, in order to assist consumers in their job searches and in becoming more comfortable interacting with the public in an employment setting.

Goal Met: DSB provided new Rehabilitation Teachers with assistive technology training and continued to train Workforce Services staffs. VR Counselors met consumers at accessible kiosks to assist them in their job searches.

Strategy: DSB will increase the skills, credentials and professional affiliations of its novice Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors as they move to assume senior counseling responsibilities in connection with DSB overall succession planning.

Performance Measures:

- Novice counselors will attend a specific orientation to VR issues and will participate in specialized training, through the Arkansas Rehabilitation Association or other qualified sources.
- Novice counselors will be exposed to professional organizations each year, as documented in their professional development plans.

Goal Met: Novice counselors were given the opportunity to attend the ARA annual conference and to apply for stipends to attend the conferences of professional organizations.

Strategy: DSB will contract with local providers to secure select VR services to capitalize on the established relationships of such contractors with local employers, to secure appropriate employment for DSB clients in geographic proximity to their homes.

Performance Measure:

- Deliverables within the contracts will be met.

Goal Met: Instead of contracting with employment providers, DSB decided to pay private, local job placement specialists on a fee-for-service basis.

Strategy: DSB will establish multi-layered support systems for clients by developing performance based contracts with Faith-Based Organizations (FBO's) and other providers across the state, as an extension of their missions, to provide depth to volunteer employment-related transportation and other services in rural areas of the state.

Performance Measure:

- Deliverables within the contracts will be met.

Goal Met: Deliverables were met by CIL's who participated in the RFQ and contracted with DSB, but some CIL's chose not to participate. No responses were received from FBO's.

Strategy: DSB will establish an information clearinghouse and scheduled demonstration lab on selected college campuses to inform Transition Partner organizations of the needs of students with significant vision problems, and the cost-effective resources available to them.

Performance Measure:

- An information clearinghouse and scheduled demonstration lab will be established on at least one college campus.

Goal Met: The Business and Technology Unit demonstrated technology to college and high school students on a college campus.

Strategy: DSB will explore ways to better utilize the DSB central Tech Lab.

Performance Measure: • DSB will redesign the technology needs assessment and database process for the DSB central Tech Lab to better align it with RSA guidelines on Rehabilitation Engineering. This is a specific initiative of the DSB Leadership Training Team, in partnership with the Oklahoma Wicked Innovation: Next Generation Solutions (WINGS) leadership training project.

Goal Met: A survey about Tech Lab services was received by consumers and DSB staff. The response rate was very low, but the WINGS project itself led to the purchase of an instructional library for use when teaching in the Tech

Lab. This library includes tutorials for MS Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Outlook for use with JAWS, MAGic, Window-eyes, and Internet Explorer. The tutorials are updated on a regular basis and additional instructional materials for other software and equipment is added as needed or available. Strategy: DSB will convert its client data MIS system to a web-based environment.

Performance Measures:

- Counselors will be able to enter client data and gather signatures during local visits, which will streamline the flow of services.
- The new system will facilitate the production of statistical reports.

Goal Met: DSB purchased the AWARE data management system and all staff are now proficient in its use.

Strategy: To augment the efforts of DSB staff, DSB will use peer mentoring in a variety of situations to allow experienced consumers to provide information, advice, and support to less experienced consumers, often leading and guiding by example of his/her success in an area.

Performance Measures:

- Peer mentoring will be used to connect consumers interested in self-employment with individuals who have owned small businesses and can offer advice and support.
- Consumers of the Year will be encouraged to provide peer mentoring to other individuals who are blind and severely visually impaired that are trying to manage their rehabilitation plans, gain marketable skills, and secure good jobs.
- Participants in Job Club will be encouraged to mentor each other in their searches for employment and development of job readiness skills.

Goal Met: Peer mentoring is occurring as planned. Goal 2: DSB will increase its services to transition students. Strategy: DSB will support training and the exchange of information among state transition partner organizations.

Performance Measure:

- DSB will sponsor or participate in at least one training or event that will bring together transition partners for the purpose of exchanging information that will specifically benefit students who are blind or severely visually impaired.

Goal Met: A Parent Summit was held in Harrison and West Memphis in 2015 for transition students and their families from throughout the state. Transition partners were invited to attend and some were asked to make presentations. The success of the summit confirmed that additional summits will be held around the state in coming years.

Strategy: DSB will update the collaborative database of transition students as needed.

Performance Measure:

- The Transition Coordinator will review the database to insure it is being maintained by Rehabilitation Assistants, who input local information.

Goal Met: The Transition Coordinator reviewed the database and insured it was being maintained.

Strategy: VR Counselors will continue to track transition students on their caseloads to insure that the IPE is developed or updated before a student graduates from high school.

Performance Measure:

- Area Supervisors will monitor this during case reviews to insure that no transition student will graduate without a current IPE.

Goal Met: Case reviews showed no students were graduating without current IPE's.

Strategy: DSB will hold Parent Summits around the state to assist parents and other stakeholders in becoming more knowledgeable and better prepared to advocate for their children at Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meetings.

Performance Measure:

- In FY 2015, DSB will invite ESVI Regional Certified

Vision Consultants and transition parents to Parent Summits with VR Counselors and Rehabilitation Teachers, to provide information about students' rights and accommodations.

Goal Met: A Parent Summits were held in West Memphis and Harrison for transition students and their families from throughout the state. ESVI was included on the agenda. The information provided included IEP's, but topics extended beyond high school and into college services. The success of the summit confirmed that additional summits will be held around the state in coming years.

Strategy: VR Counselors or Rehabilitation Teachers will make face-to-face visits to each school counselor assigned to students who are blind or visually impaired in their territories.

Performance Measure:

- VR Counselors or Rehabilitation Teachers will have from the beginning of the school year to December 1, to complete the face-to-face visits to school counselors described above.

Goal Met: VR Counselors made face-to-face contacts within required timeframes.

Strategy: DSB will continue to provide assessments to transition students specifically focused on activities of daily living, including but not limited to, mobility, knowledge of available transportation resources, self-advocacy, and acquisition of a variety of reading options, awareness of job opportunities, and rights and responsibilities as an informed consumer.

Performance Measure:

- All transition students will be referred to Rehabilitation Teachers for assessment of daily living skills and needed instruction.

Goal Met: Transition students are referred for assessments in accordance with policy and the State Plan.

Strategy: DSB will continue to strengthen relationships with public schools, including Arkansas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

Performance Measure:

- DSB will continue its system of mail-outs and emails to public schools.

Goal Met: Mail-outs and emails are sent to contacts in public schools and have improved communication and strengthened relationships.

Strategy: DSB will continue to strengthen relationships with ESVI.

Performance Measures:

- DSB will continue its system of mail-outs and emails to area ESVI representatives. In addition to the local networking efforts, the Transition Coordinator will dialogue with ESVI at a state level to discover any transition students that need services and should be referred to DSB.

- DSB will refer young consumers to ESVI and will encourage referrals from ESVI to DSB.

Goal Met: Mail-outs and emails are sent to ESVI Regional Certified Vision Consultants and have improved communication and strengthened relationships. The Transition Coordinator maintains contact with ESVI at a state level.

Goal 3: DSB will expand its outreach efforts to include the general public, as well as the unserved, underserved, minorities, and stakeholders.

Strategy: DSB will use exhibit booths to educate the public about DSB services and their availability.

Performance Measure:

- Each VR Counselor will man at least one DSB exhibit at a widely attended or significantly relevant event in his/her territory. Goal Met: VR Counselors met or exceeded this goal in each territory.

Strategy: DSB will contract with CIL's to reach out to faith-based organizations and inform them of DSB services.

Performance Measure:

- CIL's will submit to DSB copies of minutes of meetings with faith-based groups, reports on trainings, and monthly reports, including the number of faith-based referrals.

Goal Met: DSB staff monitoring the contract determined that CIL's submitted program and financial documentation as required by the RFQ.

Strategy: DSB will increase its services to minorities.

Performance Measures:

- DSB will make at least one minority outreach effort to Hispanic, Asian, or other ethnic groups in each of its geographic areas in FY 2015.

Goal Met: VR Counselors met or exceeded this goal in each area.

Strategy: Area Supervisors and DSB administrative staff will continue to attend the state conferences of blindness consumer groups, and opportunities will be offered to direct service staff as well.

Performance Measure:

- DSB will continue to send at least five supervisors/administrators to these conferences and will make presentations as requested.

Goal Met: DSB exceeded the number of supervisors and administrators that were to be sent to conferences of blindness consumer groups. Opportunities to attend these conferences were extended to direct service staff, and some staff chose to participate. An evaluation of the extent to which the Supported Employment (SE) program goals described in the Supported Employment Supplement for the most recent program year were achieved. The evaluation must:

- Identify the strategies that contributed to the achievement of the goals.
- Describe the factors that impeded the achievement of the goals and priorities.

Evaluation of FY 2015 SE Goals: Below are the evaluation and reports of progress for the most recently completed FY 2015 SE Goals and Priorities, covering October 1, 2014 - September 30, 2015:

Goal 1: Increase the number of Supported Employment Providers to better serve DSB consumers.

Strategy: DSB will provide resources to significantly expand the capacity of its partners World Services for the Blind (WSB) and Arkansas Lighthouse for the Blind (LFB) as Community Rehabilitation Programs to provide Supported Employment services to DSB consumers.

Performance Measure: • WSB and LFB will begin providing SE services to at least half of the DSB consumers in supported employment during FY 2015.

Goal Met: DSB referred 100 percent of its SE consumers to WSB and LFB in 2015. DSB also established a methodology for each VR Counselor to submit two SE referrals to WSB, so that 26 consumers would be referred each year forward of 2015.

Strategy: DSB will continue to collaborate with other agencies, such as Arkansas Chapter of APSE: Advancing Employment, Connecting People, to expand the number of SE providers.

Performance Measure: • At least two new potential SE providers will be identified and contacted.

Goal Met: Career Links and Friendship Community Care became new SE providers for DSB.

Strategy: DSB will encourage consumers' family members and other natural support individuals to become SE providers.

Performance Measure: • DSB will collaborate with TACE and other organizations to develop training for the family support member and consumer.

Goal Met: Training for natural supports was developed in 2013 and finalized and held in March 2014, trainings continued into 2015.

Strategy: DSB will continue to encourage CRPs to become Employment Networks (ENs).

Performance Measure: • A meeting will have taken place with at least one CRP to discuss the possibility of its becoming an EN. Goal Met: DSB discussed the possibility of becoming EN's with WSB and LFB.

Goal 2: Increase the quality of SE Providers for individuals who are blind or severely visually impaired. Strategy: DSB will collaborate with TACE and other organizations to develop training for the family support member and consumer. Performance Measures: • At least one training on SE will be offered to family support personnel and SE consumers. Goal Met: DSB collaborated with TACE, WSB and LFB to develop the training for natural supports. The first training was held in March 2014 and continued into 2015. Strategy: Orient DSB staff to new program design. Performance Measures: • At least one staff training on SE program design will be conducted in FY 2015. Goal Met: Staff received training on the new program design at the annual field service meeting.

DSB is transitioning into using the performance accountability measures under section 116 of WIOA. Steps have been taken to conduct a statistical analysis over the last three years in order to develop a baseline of performance percentages for the agency in order to move forward to set applicable performance standards under section 116 of WIOA.

D. Evaluation

Describe how the State will conduct evaluations and research projects on activities under WIOA core programs; how such projects will be coordinated with, and designed in conjunction with, State and local boards and with State agencies responsible for the administration of all respective core programs; and, further, how the projects will be coordinated with the evaluations provided for by the Secretary of Labor and the Secretary of Education under WIOA.

The Arkansas Workforce Development Board (AWDB) has the responsibility for ensuring public accountability by evaluating the effectiveness of the overall workforce development system. For the federal WIOA performance accountability measures and state measures, each core partner will have a monitoring and corrective action process at the state level that assures identified deficiencies, to the extent they occur, are addressed. This process is intended to be based primarily on data analysis, but shall also include monitoring tools at the discretion of the core program. If annual performance targets are not met by any core program, the AWDB may request that the core program submit a corrective action plan.

In the event of a corrective action plan being implemented, the partner will provide regular progress reports to ADWS and other parties.

The AWDB will evaluate its core programs through on-going continuous improvement strategies including:

1. Program performance effectiveness utilizing the State's Information Management System at the state and local level
2. Review of state and local level data presented on a performance dashboard

3. Core Program Monitoring and Compliance reviews annually
4. Local Workforce Development Area annual reports
5. State and local risk assessment evaluations to review:
 - Governance
 - Administrative, program/grant, and financial management systems o Program services, delivery systems, and documentation, and o Performance accountability.
 - Statewide core partner meetings held bi-annually to discuss and review program effectiveness, best practices and provide technical assistance.

As previously mentioned, we plan to enhance our evaluation protocols beyond the standard program performance matrix with the re-introduction of customer satisfaction surveys for both program participants and employers. We believe that this will provide WIOA core program administrators and Local Workforce Boards with sufficient data to assess the quality of our state's workforce development system.

Additionally, we plan to seek guidance from and coordinate with the Employment and Training Administration - Office of Policy Development and Research to ensure that our efforts are in line with the increased focus upon program evaluations under WIOA.

New Evaluation

As required by 20 CFR § 682.200(d), States must use funds reserved by the Governor for statewide activities to conduct evaluations of activities under the WIOA title I core programs in order to promote continuous improvement, research and test innovative services and strategies, and achieve high levels of performance and outcomes.

ADWS, following input from the AWDB during the July 16, 2019, meeting negotiated a contract for an evaluation with the University of Arkansas. The following requirements are the basis of the negotiation.

The following evaluations using *designs that employ the most rigorous analytical and statistical methods that are reasonably feasible, such as the use of control groups* (20 CFR § 682.220) as appropriate:

- A. Local Integration Study- Sample Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title I or Title III participants for 3 Local Workforce Development Areas. This part of the evaluation will focus on two primary areas: 1. Co-enrollment and Co-funding of REQUIRED WIOA Partners and 2. Leveraging of Local Resources available in the Local Workforce Development Area.
 1. Sample Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title I and Title III participants for 3 Local Workforce Development Areas-to determine if, based on the participants information in the Case File, the participant might have been eligible to receive services under the required partners listed in 20 CFR § 678.400.

2. For each local area selected, interview leadership to identify partner programs and non-profits that collaborate with the Workforce Centers beyond the list of required partners above. For all partners, required in number 1 and other partners identified in 2, report whether there exists:
 - Memorandums of Understanding between the programs/entities
 - Referral Procedures
 - Training for partners regarding the services provided or alternative print materials to assist in collaboration OR
 - An alternative method to refer clients between the partners effectively

3. Identify and report entities in the selected local areas that provide services to the following targeted populations:
 - Displaced Homemaker
 - Low Income
 - Limited English Proficiency
 - Migrant Worker
 - Disabled
 - Veteran
 - Older Worker
 - Out of School Youth
 - Foster Youth
 - Basic Skill Deficient
 - Ex-Offender
 - Single Parent
 - TANF Recipient
 - SNAP Recipient
 - SSDI Recipient
 - UI Claimant
 - Long-Term Unemployed

4. For all programs and services identified in steps 1, 2, and 3, report whether sampled participants were: referred to or co-enrolled in other programs or services.

B. In the Comprehensive Centers for the 3 Local Areas selected for sampling, report case studies on effectiveness of identifying and closing Skill-Gaps

Interview staff for examples of:

- I. Skills-gap identification on either the occupation level, based on demand, or the skill-level based on interaction with an employer.
- II. Determine the services that were provided to address the skills-gap
- III. Provide an assessment of the effectiveness of the services provided in closing the skills-gap, if possible.

- C. Review a sample of Arkansas Workforce Centers against the State’s certification policy and applicable laws/regulations for four comprehensive centers and two affiliate centers. Each of the six centers selected should be located in different Local Workforce Development Areas and may be selected from Local Workforce Development Areas that overlap the 3 selected above
- D. Conduct a statewide customer service survey for business customers of WIOA Title I and Title III receiving services over the most recent 12 months available.
- E. Provide evaluation status reports on a monthly basis on overall project goals. These reports will be issued at the end of February, March, April, May, June, and July of 2020.
- F. Provide a preliminary evaluation report by August 15, 2020.
- G. Provide a final evaluation, with results, best practices, and recommendations by September 30, 2020.

5. Distribution of Funds for Core Programs

Describe the methods and factors the State will use in distributing funds under the core programs in accordance with the provisions authorizing such distributions.

A. For Title I programs

For Title I programs, provide a description of the written policies that establish the State's methods and factors used to distribute funds to local areas for—

i. Youth activities in accordance with WIOA section 128(b)(2) or (b)(3),

The Arkansas Workforce Development Board (AWDB) coordinates and establishes policy for conducting all employment and training activities within the workforce investment system created by the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 and Arkansas Code §15-4-3707 through 15-4-3713, including all activities conducted in and through Arkansas’s one-stop centers. The criteria for funding the programs included in this plan will be consistent with the federal and state laws governing those programs and are described in detail in the funding sections below.

The chief elected official or lead elected official in a local workforce development area will serve as the local grant recipient for, and shall be liable for any misuse of, the grant funds allocated to the local area for youth, adult, and dislocated worker activities under Sections 128, 129, 132, and 133 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

In a case in which a local workforce development area includes more than one unit of general local government, the chief elected officials of such units will execute an agreement that specifies the respective roles of the individual chief elected officials, including responsibility for maintaining the integrity of the allocated funds. If, after a reasonable effort, the chief elected officials are unable to reach agreement about this responsibility, the Governor makes the determination. The local plan must include the agreement concerning this responsibility.

In order to assist in the disbursement of the grant funds, the chief elected official or lead elected official of a local workforce development area may designate an entity to serve as a local grant

sub-recipient for such funds or as a local fiscal agent. Such designation shall not relieve the chief elected official or lead elected official of the liability for any misuse of grant funds. The local grant recipient or sub-recipient will disburse such funds for workforce development activities at the direction of the local board. The local grant recipient or sub-recipient will disburse the funds immediately on receiving such direction from the local board. The local board, in partnership with the chief elected official(s), will conduct oversight with respect to local programs of youth activities authorized under WIOA Section 129, local employment and training activities authorized under WIOA Section 134, and the One-Stop delivery system in the local area.

WIOA Title I Youth Funding Allocation Formula The in-state allotment of funds to local workforce investment areas for Title I youth activities under the Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act will be made using the formula described at Section 128(b)(2)(A)(i), as follows:

- 33 1/3 percent of the funds to the local workforce investment areas will be based on the relative number of unemployed individuals in areas of substantial unemployment in each workforce development area compared to the total number of unemployed individuals in all areas of substantial unemployment in the state
- 33 1/3 percent of the funds based on the relative excess number of unemployed individuals in each workforce development area compared with the total excess number of unemployed individuals in the state
- 33 1/3 percent of the funds based on the relative number of disadvantaged youth in each workforce development area compared to the total number of disadvantaged youth in the state

To ensure that youth funds are distributed equitably and to avoid significant shifts in funding levels to local areas, a hold-harmless provision will be applied. Under this provision, consistent with WIOA Section 128(b)(2)(A)(ii), a local area will not receive an allocation percentage for a fiscal year that is less than 90 percent of the average allocation percentage of the local area for the 2 preceding fiscal years. Amounts necessary for increasing such allocations to local areas to comply with the preceding sentence will be obtained by ratably reducing the allocations to be made to other local areas.

In accordance with WIOA law, Arkansas Workforce Development Board has adopted a funding allocation methodology for those Local Areas with High Concentrations of Eligible Youth. This methodology calculates determines each Local Area's weighted average of "eligible youth" and, if the average exceeds the overall state average, additional funding will be awarded.

ii. Adult and training activities in accordance with WIOA section 133(b)(2) or (b)(3),

The in-state allotment of funds to local workforce investment areas for Title I adult activities under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act will be made using the formula described at Section 132(b)(1)(B)(ii), as follows:

- 33 1/3 percent of the funds to the local workforce development areas will be based on the relative number of unemployed individuals in areas of substantial unemployment in each workforce development area compared to the total number of unemployed individuals in all areas of substantial unemployment in the state

- 33 1/3 percent of the funds based on the relative excess number of unemployed individuals in each workforce development area compared with the total excess number of unemployed individuals in the state
- 33 1/3 percent of the funds based on the relative number of disadvantaged adults in each workforce development area compared to the number of disadvantaged adults in the state

To ensure that adult funds are distributed equitably and to avoid significant shifts in funding levels to local areas, a hold-harmless provision also will be applied. Under this provision, consistent with WIOA Section 132(b)(1)(B)(iv), a local area will not receive an allocation percentage for a fiscal year that is less than 90 percent of the average allocation percentage of the local area for the 2 preceding fiscal years. Amounts necessary for increasing such allocations to local areas to comply with the preceding sentence will be obtained by ratably reducing the allocations to be made to other local areas.

iii. Dislocated worker employment and training activities in accordance with WIOA section 133(b)(2) and based on data and weights assigned.

Funds for dislocated workers will be allocated based on an allocation formula prescribed by the Governor of Arkansas. This formula may be amended by the Governor not more than once for each program year. The formula will use the most appropriate information available to the Governor to distribute amounts to address Arkansas’s worker readjustment assistance needs. The in-state allotment of funds to local workforce development areas for Title I dislocated worker activities under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act will be distributed by placing the following weights on six factors:

- 5 percent insured unemployment
- 15 percent unemployment concentrations
- 30 percent plant closings and mass layoffs
- 15 percent declining industries
- 5 percent farmer-rancher economic hardship
- 30 percent long-term unemployment

To ensure that dislocated worker funds are distributed equitably and to avoid significant shifts in funding levels to local areas, a hold-harmless provision also will be applied. Under this provision, consistent with WIOA Section 133(b)(2)(B)(iii), a local area will not receive an allocation percentage for fiscal year 2016 or subsequent fiscal year that is less than 90 percent of the average allocation percentage of the local area for the 2 preceding fiscal years. Amounts necessary for increasing such allocations to local areas to comply with the preceding sentence will be obtained by ratably reducing the allocations to be made to other local areas.

Not more than twenty-five percent of the total state allotment will be reserved for Rapid Response activities. Rapid Response activities in Arkansas are administered by Arkansas Division of Workforce Services as the lead agency of the Governor’s Dislocated Worker Task Force.

B. For Title II:

i. Multi-year grants or contracts

Describe how the eligible agency will award multi-year grants or contracts on a competitive basis to eligible providers in the State, including how eligible agencies will establish that eligible providers are organizations of demonstrated effectiveness.

(i) The Adult Education Services Division will award multi-year grants to eligible local providers through a competitive Request for Proposal (RFP) process for the purpose of developing, implementing, and improving adult education and literacy within the state. The grant will be for a four-year cycle that applies to all programs; however, the ADCE-AED state office will review the performance level of providers after two years to determine whether or not to do a new competition. All programs competed will adhere to direct and equitable provisions to award funds under WIOA sections 225 (Corrections Education), 231 (Grants and Contracts for Eligible Providers), and 243 (Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education). The same grant announcement, application, and process will be used for all proposals and all proposals will be treated the same way in evaluation, and evaluated by the 13 considerations as found in the law at 231 (e)(1-13).

A formula method is used to determine the amount of funding and takes into consideration the literacy rate and the core indicators of performance as outlined in Title II of the WIOA law. The formula is designed to consider the levels of performance in the local programs as compared to established federal benchmarks as a basis for an increase or decrease in funds.

Demonstrated effectiveness of an eligible provider will be determined by provided performance data in its application. According to Arkansas Act 892 of 2015, Section 25-30-103, “All funds that become available for adult education shall first be distributed to those administrative units determined to be operating effective and efficient adult education programs, under criteria established by the Career Education and Workforce Development Board. The criteria shall include the relative efficiency of administration of the program in the counties served and achievement of the federal performance indicators.” The state will identify, assess, and award grants using the RFP process of providers who have demonstrated effectiveness in providing adult education activities to eligible individuals. An eligible individual is an individual who has attained 16 years of age; who is not enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under State law; and who is basic skills deficient; does not have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and has not achieved an equivalent level of education; or is an English language learner.

In addition, other factors that will be considered in the ability of the eligible providers to meet the literacy needs in the area may include, but not limited to, the ability to comply with WIOA and state expectations, the ability to provide services to special populations such as an individual with barriers to employment as defined in WIOA Section 3 (24), past performance of the entity in providing literacy instruction and meeting programmatic goals, overall program management, timely submission of financial and quarterly reports to the state office, and the overall qualification and expertise of the providers’ personnel. The list of criteria used to evaluate effectiveness and the scoring rubric has been made available as part of the RFP process. At the

end of two years, the state will reevaluate the providers to determine whether to conduct a new Request for Proposal competition or not.

Currently, the adult education providers in the state are divided into five regions and include the Northeast, Southeast, Southwest, Northwest, and Central Regions. Although there may be multiple providers within an area, the state has reconfigured all 75 counties to better align with the 10 Workforce Development Boards (WDB). The purpose of restructuring the state is to help align service delivery under WIOA and enhance the coordination and support of the overall economic development of the State.

Adult education/literacy providers are housed under a local education agency such as a school districts, community colleges, institutions of higher education, and literacy organizations. Other eligible providers have been and will continue to be considered using a direct and equitable process. Funding is awarded to local adult education/literacy providers through a competitive grant process based on literacy rate and the core indicators of performance as outlined in Title II of the WIOA law. Applications are competitive, open, and available to all eligible applicants. Grants/contracts are awarded for one year, with two one-year renewals based on performance and available funding.

No less than 95% of federal funds shall be expended for carrying out adult education and literacy activities; and the remaining amount, not to exceed 5%, shall be used for planning, administration (including carrying out the requirements of section 116), professional development, and the activities described in WIOA paragraphs (3) and (5) of section 232.

Applications—Title II of the Workforce Innovation an Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014 (Public Law 113-128) Sections 223, 225, 231, 232: Each eligible provider desiring a grant or contract shall submit Request for Proposal (RFP) application to the Adult Education Services Division containing support information and assurances that will include the following: (1) a description of how funds awarded under this title will be spent consistent with the requirements of this title; (2) a description of any cooperative arrangements the eligible provider has with other agencies, institutions, or organizations for the delivery of adult education and literacy activities; (3) a description of how the eligible provider will provide services in alignment with the local plan under section 108, including how such provider will promote concurrent enrollment in programs and activities under title I, as appropriate; (4) a description of how the eligible provider will meet the State adjusted levels of performance described in section 116(b)(3), including how such provider will collect data to report on such performance indicators; (5) a description of how the eligible provider will fulfill one-stop partner responsibilities as described in section 121(b)(1)(A), as appropriate; (6) a description of how the eligible provider will provide services in a manner that meets the needs of eligible individuals; and (7) information that addresses the considerations described under section 231(e), as applicable.

Eligible Providers—WIOA Section 203 (5) The term “eligible provider” means an organization that has demonstrated effectiveness in providing adult education and literacy activities that may include: (A) a local educational agency; (B) a community-based organization or faith-based organization; (C) a volunteer literacy organization; (D) an institution of higher education; (E) a public or private nonprofit agency; (F) a library; (G) a public housing authority; (H) a nonprofit institution that is not described in any of subparagraphs (A) through (G) and has the ability to provide adult education and literacy activities to eligible individuals; (I) a consortium or

coalition of the agencies, organizations, institutions, libraries, or authorities described in any of subparagraphs (A) through (H); and (J) a partnership between an employer and an entity described in any of subparagraphs (A) through (I).

Grant Process—The Adult Education Services Division will run a classified advertisement in a statewide newspaper of record for three consecutive days, including the weekend, notifying the public of the availability of federal funds and providing information on how to apply. This information and the Request for Proposal (RFP) application will also be posted on the Department of Finance and Administration’s website (www.dfa.arkansas.gov) as well as the Adult Education Services’ website

<http://arcareereducation.org/>Individuals may also request an application by mail or e-mail by sending a written request to 3 Capitol Mall Little Rock, AR 72202 or AdultEd@arkansas.gov. Any eligible provider submitting a completed application for any adult education funding by the due date will be considered for funding.

Evaluation of Applications—Section 231 (e) (1-13) Each eligible provider submitting a completed Request for Proposal (RFP) Application by the due date specified by the ADCE-AED will be evaluated using a rubric. In cases where a program’s past performance is low, a meeting with the evaluation committee may be required. The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss the eligible provider’s proposal and past performance and to determine whether the candidate would be a viable applicant for funds. Goals may be negotiated and educational benchmarks may be established for the provider’s program before any funding is awarded.

In awarding grants or contracts under this section, an applicant must meet the following 13 considerations in order to be considered for funding: (1) the degree to which the eligible provider would be responsive to: (A) regional needs as identified in the local plan under section 108; and (B) serving individuals in the community who were identified in such plan as most in need of adult education and literacy activities, including individuals: (i) who have low levels of literacy skills; or (ii) who are English language learners; (2) the ability of the eligible provider to serve eligible individuals with disabilities, including eligible individuals with learning disabilities; (3) past effectiveness of the eligible provider in improving the literacy of eligible individuals, to meet State-adjusted levels of performance for the primary indicators of performance described in section 116, especially with respect to eligible individuals who have low levels of literacy; (4) the extent to which the eligible provider demonstrates alignment between proposed activities and services and the strategy and goals of the local plan under section 108, as well as the activities and services of the one-stop partners; (5) whether the eligible provider’s program: (A) is of sufficient intensity and quality, and based on the most rigorous research available so that participants achieve substantial learning gains; and (B) uses instructional practices that include the essential components of reading instruction; (6) whether the eligible provider’s activities, including whether reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, and English language acquisition instruction delivered by the eligible provider, are based on the best practices derived from the most rigorous research available and appropriate, including scientifically valid research and effective educational practice; (7) whether the eligible provider’s activities effectively use technology, services, and delivery systems, including distance education in a manner sufficient to increase the amount and quality of learning and how such technology, services, and systems lead to improved performance; (8) whether the eligible provider’s activities provide learning in context, including through integrated education and training, so that an individual acquires the

skills needed to transition to and complete postsecondary education and training programs, obtain and advance in employment leading to economic self-sufficiency, and to exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship; (9) whether the eligible provider's activities are delivered by well-trained instructors, counselors, and administrators who meet any minimum qualifications established by the State, where applicable, and who have access to high quality professional development, including through electronic means; (10) whether the eligible provider's activities coordinate with other available education, training, and social service resources in the community, such as by establishing strong links with elementary schools and secondary schools, postsecondary educational institutions, institutions of higher education, local workforce investment boards, one-stop centers, job training programs, and social service agencies, business, industry, labor organizations, community-based organizations, nonprofit organizations, and intermediaries, for the development of career pathways; (11) whether the eligible provider's activities offer flexible schedules and coordination with Federal, State, and local support services (such as child care, transportation, mental health services, and career planning) that are necessary to enable individuals, including individuals with disabilities or other special needs, to attend and complete programs; (12) whether the eligible provider maintains a high-quality information management system that has the capacity to report measurable participant outcomes (consistent with section 116) and to monitor program performance; and (13) whether the local areas in which the eligible provider is located have a demonstrated need for additional English language acquisition programs and civics education programs.

In addition, the eligible provider must use its own data in demonstrating past effectiveness. The state reserves the right to implement an adult education rule or policy that is not a federal requirement; however, if this is the case, the Adult Education Services Division will clearly identify it as a State or outlying area requirement.

Demonstrated Effectiveness According to Arkansas Act 892 of, Section 25-30-103, "All funds that become available for adult education shall first be distributed to those administrative units determined to be operating effective and efficient adult education programs, under criteria established by the Career Education and Workforce Development Board. The criteria shall include the relative efficiency of administration of the program in the counties served and achievement of the federal performance indicators."

To be considered effective and efficient, local adult education programs and literacy councils receiving adult education funds will be required to meet or exceed the percentage of the federal negotiated core indicators as determined by the Deputy Director of Adult Education Services Division. Programs not meeting percentage requirement in the first year will be required to submit an improvement plan. The improvement plan will address each core indicator of performance that was not met and will include measurable objectives for correcting deficiencies during the following year. State program advisors will provide technical assistance to each program submitting an improvement plan and closely monitor programs during the year. Core indicators of performance are defined in the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014, Title II, the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA); however, using the core indicators as criteria for effective and efficient evaluations and imposing a minimum score is a state decision.

Programs that do not meet the percentage requirement of their negotiated core indicators of performance for a second consecutive year will be assigned a state technical assistance team to

assist the program in addressing its deficiencies. The team members may include, but not limited to, state and local staff, administrators, teachers and students. Quarterly progress reports will be submitted by the program being monitored to the Adult Education Division describing the progress being made to bring the program into compliance with core indicators. Programs not achieving percentage requirement of their negotiated core indicators of performance for three consecutive years will be submitted to the Career Education and Workforce Development Board for appropriate action prior to continuation of funding.

ii. Ensure direct and equitable access

Describe how the eligible agency will ensure direct and equitable access to all eligible providers to apply and compete for funds and how the eligible agency will ensure that it is using the same grant or contract announcement and application procedure for all eligible providers.

The Adult Education Services Division will use the same grant announcement and application process for all eligible providers in the state. In addition, all eligible providers will have direct and equitable access to apply and compete for grants or contracts and will be treated the same in evaluation. The Request For Proposal (RFP) applications will be shared in the form of a classified advertisement in the statewide newspaper, The Arkansas Democrat Gazette, an announcement on the Department of Finance and Administration and Division of Workforce Services' websites, and the use of other means of available communication in order to ensure that all perspective eligible providers will have access to the same standardized information. Any noncurrent provider inquiring about adult education and literacy grants through the state office prior to the grant official announcement will be added to the e-mail distribution list of current adult education providers. Once the RFP grant announcement has been officially posted on the website and in the public newspaper, the state office will send notification out to all potential eligible providers on the state's e-mail distribution list. The grant application procedures will be the same for all eligible providers.

C. Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation

In the case of a State that, under section 101(a)(2)(A)(i) of the Rehabilitation Act designates a State agency to administer the part of the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan under which VR services are provided for individuals who are blind, describe the process and the factors used by the State to determine the distribution of funds among the two VR agencies in the State.

Distribution of funds between the two Vocational Rehabilitation designated state units, (Arkansas Rehabilitation Services and the Division of Services for the Blind) is done under written agreement of the heads of the two DSUs in consideration of the incidence and severity of disability and the historical cost of rehabilitation for the two populations. Such agreement distributes 88% of the VR grant to Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS) and 12% to Division of Services for the Blind (DSB). In accordance with section 101(a)(2)(A)(i) of the Rehabilitation Act, Arkansas state law designates the Division of Services for the Blind (DSB) as the state agency to administer the part of the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan under which VR services are provided for individuals who are blind.

6. Program Data

A. Data Alignment and Integration

Describe the plans of the lead State agencies with responsibility for the administration of the core programs, along with the State Board, to align and integrate available workforce and education data systems for the core programs, unemployment insurance programs, and education through postsecondary education, and to the extent possible, the Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan. The description of the State's plan for integrating data systems should include the State's goals for achieving integration and any progress to date.

i. Describe the State's plans to make the management information systems for the core programs interoperable to maximize the efficient exchange of common data elements to support assessment and evaluation.

This plan represents thirteen workforce development programs that utilize seven different data systems to determine eligibility for programs, capture case management activities and provide data for required federal and state reporting requirements. It is the intent of the Arkansas Workforce Development Board to integrate these data systems so that a common portal will exist to streamline intake for programs, exchanging information for case management purposes and provide the necessary data for required federal and state reporting.

ii. Describe the State's plans to integrate data systems to facilitate streamlined intake and service delivery to track participation across all programs included in this plan.

Efforts to identify an integration method for these various data systems is ongoing, with the ultimate goal of securing a common intake overlay for each of these legacy systems. WIOA Title I Statewide Activities funding has been earmarked for this project and the project began in the Spring 2016 with a formal evaluation of the systems currently being used and the data needs of each program. The project development is led by the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services and coordinated with the other partner agencies through the Information Technology Committee of the WIOA Interagency Roundtable. Progress is being monitored by the Arkansas Workforce Development Board.

iii. Explain how the State board will assist the governor in aligning technology and data systems across required one-stop partner programs (including design and implementation of common intake, data collection, etc.) and how such alignment will improve service delivery to individuals, including unemployed individuals.

The state board has established data systems alignment as one of its objective under the overall goal of enhancing service delivery to workforce customers. The Board has charged staff with researching the availability of an integrated data system that will enable the sharing of information between partner agencies to more efficiently service both employers and jobseekers. The identification of such a system must be in compliance with the Governor's overall vision.

iv. Describe the State's plans to develop and produce the reports required under section 116, performance accountability system. (WIOA section 116(d)(2)).

Until such time that an integrated system can be built, the core program agencies will work cooperatively to produce the required federal performance reports utilizing Unemployment

Insurance wage data and the Arkansas Longitudinal Data System, which connects data from education, higher education and workforce programs.

Planning Note: States should be aware that Section 116(i)(1) requires the core programs, local boards, and chief elected officials to establish and operate a fiscal and management accountability information system based on guidelines established by the Secretaries of Labor and Education. States should begin laying the groundwork for these fiscal and management accountability requirements, recognizing that adjustments to meet the elements above may provide opportunity or have impact on such a fiscal and management accountability system.

B. Assessment of Participants' Post-Program Success

Describe how lead State agencies will use the workforce development system to assess the progress of participants who are exiting from core programs in entering, persisting in, and completing postsecondary education, or entering or remaining in employment. States may choose to set additional indicators of performance.

Moving forward, the Arkansas Workforce Development Board's vision is for the state's workforce development system partners to develop the ability to capture a more complete set of customer data from all federal and state-funded employment and training programs coupled with a customer-focused data model that will allow aggregating data into any combination of programs and characteristics. This will allow our system to meet program reporting requirements as well as permit other views of the data. Key to its effectiveness is the ability to report a participant's outcomes the same way for every program or aggregation of data.

While the progress of participants who are exiting from the core programs will be assessed through follow up by the core programs that provided service, it is important to remember that follow-up services should help each participant complete training and/or maintain employment. Furthermore, follow-up should provide a continuous link to the workforce system as a whole, including referral networks and partner programs. While there may be some variances in the follow-up, based upon needs of the individual, a consistent message in each follow-up contact will ensure that participants know which services are available to them, even after program exit.

The WIOA Roundtable will seek to develop a common follow-up procedures that are designed for the purpose of career planning, rather than required program performance reporting.

C. Use of Unemployment Insurance (UI) Wage Record Data

Explain how the State will meet the requirements to utilize quarterly UI wage records for performance accountability, evaluations, and as a source for workforce and labor market information, consistent with Federal and State law. (This Operational Planning element applies to core programs.)

Unemployment Insurance (UI) Wage Record Data will be utilized for data matching purposes for assessing and reporting on state and local employment and training program performance, evaluating training provider performance, and for other purposes allowed by state law and data sharing agreements among state agencies. By utilizing UI Wage Data, the State can measure entered employment, employment retention, and earnings of the individual. This will help measure the success of the workforce development services being provided.

Furthermore, the State will utilize Wage Record Interchange System (WRIS) data to track performance outcomes. The use of WRIS data permits state workforce program performance agencies to secure wage data of individuals who have participated in workforce investment programs in one state, then subsequently secured employment in another. By participating in WRIS, the State has a more robust picture of the effectiveness of workforce development programs and is able to report more comprehensive outcomes against their performance measures.

D. Privacy Safeguards

Describe the privacy safeguards incorporated in the State's workforce development system, including safeguards required by section 444 of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g) and other applicable Federal laws.

The State is aware that a key element of success to utilizing data across agencies for either improved customer service or improved measurement and tracking of outcomes is ensuring the integrity of all data and ensuring confidential data is treated as such. This is accomplished with various technical safeguards and ensuring personnel handling this data are properly trained in all relevant regulations and the fundamentals of handling personal and confidential data. Technical safeguards may include:

- Approved processes that limit access to the data to only those personnel who require access to carry out their daily job functions;
- Network security, monitoring, firewalls, etc. to prevent unauthorized access to data from entities outside of State government;
- Encryption technology; and
- Secure data transport mechanisms.

Data Sharing Agreements are used when confidential information is shared with another entity. All partners that will provide and share data in collaboration efforts will enter into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) and/or a data sharing agreement to ensure security of sensitive information.

All partners expressly agree to abide by all applicable federal, state, and local laws regarding confidential information and to adhere to the same standards of confidentiality as state employees, including but not limited to: 29 U.S.C. 2935; as amended by WIOA - reports, recordkeeping, and investigations. 29 U.S.C. 2871(f)(3); as amended by WIOA - regarding confidentiality. 20 CFR Part 603 - safeguards and security requirements regarding disclosed information under Unemployment Compensation. 42 U.S.C. 503 - regarding state laws governing Unemployed Insurance operations. 20 CFR 617.57(b) - regarding disclosure of information under the Trade Act. 29 U.S.C. 491-2(a)(2); as amended under WIOA - regarding information to be confidential under the Wagner-Peyser Act. The Privacy Act (5 U.S.C. 552). The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g). }34 CFR 361.38 - protection, use, and release of personal information of Vocational Rehabilitation Services participants. HIPAA: 45 CFR 164.500 - 164.534. 2 CFR 200.303 - regarding reasonable measures to safeguard protected personally identifiable information.

7. Priority of Service for Veterans

Describe how the State will implement and monitor the priority of service provisions for veterans in accordance with the requirements of the Jobs for Veterans Act, codified at section 4215 of 38 U.S.C., which applies to all employment and training programs funded in whole or in part by the Department of Labor. States should also describe the referral process for veterans determined to have a significant barrier to employment to receive services from the Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG) program's Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist.

Arkansas provides veterans' priority of service as mandated by Veterans Program Letter 07-09, "Implementing Priority of Service for Veterans and Eligible Spouses in all Qualified Job Training Programs Funded in Whole or in Part by the U.S. Department of Labor. Service is provided to ensure veterans and covered persons receive consideration for all opportunities, for which they qualify. This increased focus includes the implementation of strategies and policies designed to ensure veterans and eligible persons of veterans receive the highest level of quality service within the framework of priority of service.

Arkansas requires that all Arkansas Workforce Center staff members provide priority of service to veterans and eligible persons while Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialists focus their efforts on serving veterans in most need of intensive services including disabled veterans and the targeted veteran population identified in the State Plan.

Local offices must ensure that veterans and eligible persons are served first and that this protocol is addressed in the functional alignment plans and customer flow process. During the registration process, a series of questions identifies veteran status. Once the veteran or other eligible person is identified, the first available AWC staff conducts an initial assessment. This initial assessment uses a customized intake form, to help determine if the veteran or other eligible person has a Significant Barrier to Employment (SBE) or that they may be a member of another special priority group. During the initial assessment it is determined that the veteran has a SBE; they will be immediately referred to a Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Specialist (DVOP) or other trained staff for the provision of intensive case management service and other services the veterans may need to meet their career goals.

Arkansas's policy for priority of service to veterans includes up to a 24 hour hold for new job orders placed in the AJL system. Local Veteran Employment Representative (LVER) staff has access to federal contractor job listings through VetCentral, which are fed into the AJL system. This access provides opportunities for priority referrals of target veterans to Federal contractors. After registration in VetCentral, the system provides automatic notifications to the veteran when a job opening occurs in their field.

Services to veterans through the Gold Card Initiative are available at the Arkansas Workforce Centers (AWC). The Gold Card Initiative provides unemployed post-9/11 era veterans with the intensive and follow-up services they need to succeed in today's job market. The Gold Card initiative is a joint effort of the Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration (ETA) and the Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS).

ADWS monitors priority of service by providing guidance and reviewing policies within the Agency. The priority of service policy VPL 07-09 was disseminated through ADWS Issuance 09-08 to ensure that a written copy of the policy is available at the point of entry. All AWC's are

monitored for priority of service for veterans and eligible persons using the Arkansas Joblink system 9002 series reports. Offices are monitored for visible signage informing all veterans of priority of service offered. Additionally, office managers are required to be notified if any discrepancies are found, and implementation of corrective actions are undertaken. Specific programs such as referral to Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment services through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, and job developments created through partners of the workforce system are promoted to all staff to encourage the referral and application of veterans.

8. Addressing the Accessibility of the One-Stop Delivery System for Individuals with Disabilities

Describe how the one-stop delivery system (including one-stop center operators and the one-stop delivery system partners), will comply with section 188 of WIOA (if applicable) and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) with regard to the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs, services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities. This also must include a description of compliance through providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities. Describe the State's one-stop center certification policy, particularly the accessibility criteria.

The workforce center delivery system (including one-stop center operators and the workforce delivery system partners) will comply with section 188 of WIOA and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) with regard to the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs, services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities. The State ensures that Arkansas Workforce Center system complies with section 188 of WIOA and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 through the development and implementation of a Methods of Administration Policy that outlines all requirements of the system. Reviews are conducted annually to make sure that workforce centers meet requirements. Furthermore, training is offered at least annually to equal opportunity officers of the local workforce development boards. To demonstrate compliance with this provision, the one-stop center operators and the delivery system partners will collaborate to develop and provide periodic and new-hire staff training and system-wide support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities. A rotating certification review team will be established, to provide scheduled evaluation, certification and recertification of the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs, services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities and to address any compliance issues that arise.

According to the Arkansas Workforce Center Certification criteria, all Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance requirements must be met before a center is eligible to receive the Arkansas Workforce Center certification, or utilize the Arkansas Workforce Center name and logo. Both the Methods of Administration and the Arkansas Workforce Center Certification criteria are being updated to reflect changes in the WIOA law. The original Methods of Administration policy and Arkansas Workforce Center Certification policies are available online at <http://dws.arkansas.gov/AWDB/Information.htm> under the Policies and Procedures section.

Programs that apply for funding from the Adult Education Services Division have access to the resources, training, and materials available from the Arkansas Adult Learning Resource Center

(AALRC). The AALRC is responsible for providing information, materials, resources, and training to local programs to assist in ensuring equitable access to and participation in those programs, including all students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries.

All local programs are required to post public notices that address non-discrimination policies regarding accessibility and participation regardless of gender, race, national origin, age, or religion, in accordance with the Civil Rights Act. In addition, local programs are required to provide on-going information to applicants, participants, beneficiaries, and other interested parties regarding the rights of people under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and Title II applications to their particular programs, services, and activities. Methods of providing information include publication in handbooks, manuals, and enrollment and application materials that are distributed to the public to describe the local program and its activities. Other methods include the display of informational posters in local programs and other public places and/or information broadcast on television or radio. Public notice of ADA requirements must be made available in alternative formats to meet the diverse communication needs of persons with disabilities.

Since 1995, the AALRC has specifically addressed two major barriers to program access in Arkansas. Steps taken to address barriers to access are listed below:

- Provide in-depth training about learning disabilities to all programs.
- Assist programs in complying with legal requirements as mandated by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the ADA, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Assistance includes providing information, training, and resources.
- Assist programs in coordinating with other state agencies and organizations that provide services and resources for individuals with disabilities, such as the Office for the Deaf and Hearing Impaired (ODHI), Increasing Capabilities Access Network (ICAN), and Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS).
- Provide training to a variety of state agencies and organizations about learning disabilities and how to coordinate services, including screening, diagnosis, materials and resources, strategies and accommodations, and referrals. Provide training and information to all state GED[®] examiners about requesting and receiving accommodations on the GED[®] tests.
- Provide assistance to local programs in the administration of other tests and instructional materials with accommodations.
- Work with publishing companies to ensure test materials used in adult education and literacy programs are available in alternative formats e.g., CD/DVD, Braille, large-print, etc., to accommodate students with disabilities. Also, that the tests have been field-tested and conform to test norms for adults with disabilities populations.
- Continue to coordinate training efforts with University Affiliated Programs to provide training in the ADA for local service providers.
- Create a seamless, statewide system which ensures that any adult education or literacy student with possible undiagnosed learning disabilities will have access to diagnostic assessment; that local programs providing services know how to access the statewide system; and that the system

includes an agreed-to protocol regarding gender, race, national origin, color, disability, or age, to ensure equitable accessibility and participation.

- Assist local programs in the provision of instructional materials available in alternative formats, as well as assisting in the implementation of accommodated instruction for students with disabilities.
- Assist local programs in the acquisition of technology devices that assist accommodated instruction and assessment for students with disabilities.

9. Addressing the Accessibility of the One-Stop Delivery System for Individuals who are English Language Learners.

Describe how the one-stop delivery system (including one-stop center operators and the one-stop delivery system partners) will ensure that each one-stop center is able to meet the needs of English language learners, such as through established procedures, staff training, resources, and other materials.

The One-Stop Delivery System must meet the needs of the limited English proficient (LEP) individuals seeking services. One stop centers and system partners should provide multi-lingual forms, brochures, and other related materials that relate to services, information, and guidance to LEP individuals. Multi-lingual materials should reflect the common or dominate language(s) locally. One stop centers should establish relationships with local businesses to provide employment referrals compatible for LEP individuals. One stop centers and system partners should establish an effective referral process to local adult education centers with English as a second language (ESL) classes to provide LEP individuals language education and other educational services, such as gaining a high school equivalency diploma and employability certificates. One stop center staff should be trained to access the appropriate materials and resources for LEP individuals. When possible and needed, an effort to hire and train bilingual staff should be made. There are ten workforce centers in the State that have bilingual staff members. Furthermore, the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services has contracts with various vendors to provide interpreter services in multiple languages. These interpreter services can be utilized by LEP individuals and staff members in any of the State's workforce centers.

IV. Coordination with State Plan Programs

Describe the methods used for joint planning and coordination among the core programs, and with the required one-stop partner programs and other programs and activities included in the Unified or Combined State Plan.

With the passage of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014, the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services and its Career Education Services Division, Rehabilitative Services Division, and Division of Services for the Blind began meeting to discuss the implication of the new legislation and begin necessary discussions for the successful implementation of the federal law in Arkansas.

In November 2014, representatives from each of these agencies formed a WIOA Roundtable that met monthly and soon were joined by additional representatives from Registered Apprenticeship,

higher education, secondary education, two- and four-year educational institutions, Carl D. Perkins secondary and post-secondary programs, Career and Technical Education, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, human services, and elected officials to engage in discussions about integration of services provided by a multitude of service providers. This planning team established committees to focus on critical areas in WIOA implementation to include: finance, IT system integration, policy development, core performance measures, sector strategies, and the development of the state workforce development plan.

The WIOA Roundtable continues to meet monthly to discuss ways to best align programs, prevent duplication, and increase access to services for jobseekers and employers. This plan was developed jointly by members of the Arkansas WIOA Roundtable.

In March 2015 and September 2015, a meeting of directors, managers, and supervisors from local workforce development boards and core partners was held and attended by more than 250 individuals from across Arkansas to talk about implementation strategies at the local level.

The Arkansas Workforce Development Board, a business led board, was formed in May 2015 and includes the directors of the core partner program agencies as members in addition to secondary education, higher education, and economic development. The goals and strategies included in this plan are the product of many months of strategic planning and input from various sources.

In July 2015, a statewide WIOA training and strategy session was held and was attended by 500 individuals representing state and local workforce boards members, core and optional workforce partner programs, secondary and higher education, state and local economic development, community-based organizations, employers, and elected officials.

In November and December of 2015, a strategic planning session was held by the Arkansas Workforce Development Board to frame out the goals and strategies to be included in the state plan. An invitation was extended to the Arkansas Career Education and Workforce Development Board, the oversight board for the agency that administered the Adult Education and Vocational Rehabilitation Services programs, to join in the planning process to ensure that both boards were moving in the same direction as it relates to workforce development in Arkansas.

Beginning in 2016 and continuing in 2017, the biannual WIOA statewide partners meetings have been conducted. These meetings are a continuation of the training and strategy sessions that began in 2015 and provide ongoing opportunities for all WIOA partner representatives to convene and discuss the ongoing development of the state's workforce development system.

V. Common Assurances (for all core programs)

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include assurances that—

1. The State has established a policy identifying circumstances that may present a conflict of interest for a State Board or local board member, or the entity or class of officials that the member represents, and procedures to resolve such conflicts; Yes
2. The State has established a policy to provide to the public (including individuals with disabilities) access to meetings of State Boards and local boards, and information regarding

activities of State boards and local boards, such as data on board membership and minutes; Yes

3. The lead State agencies with optimal policy-making authority and responsibility for the administration of core programs reviewed and commented on the appropriate operational planning elements of the Unified or Combined State Plan, and approved the elements as serving the needs of the populations served by such programs; Yes

4. (a) The State obtained input into the development of the Unified or Combined State Plan and provided an opportunity for comment on the plan by representatives of local boards and chief elected officials, businesses, labor organizations, institutions of higher education, the entities responsible for planning or administering the core programs, required one-stop partners and the other Combined Plan programs (if included in the State Plan), other primary stakeholders, including other organizations that provide services to individuals with barriers to employment, and the general public, and that the Unified or Combined State Plan is available and accessible to the general public; (b) The State provided an opportunity for review and comment on the plan by the State Board, including State agency official(s) for the Unemployment Insurance Agency if such official(s) is a member of the State Board; Yes

5. The State has established, in accordance with WIOA section 116(i), fiscal control and fund accounting procedures that may be necessary to ensure the proper disbursement of, and accounting for, funds paid to the State through allotments made for the core programs to carry out workforce development activities; Yes

6. The State has taken appropriate action to secure compliance with uniform administrative requirements in this Act, including that the State will annually monitor local areas to ensure compliance and otherwise take appropriate action to secure compliance with the uniform administrative requirements under WIOA section 184(a)(3); Yes

7. The State has taken the appropriate action to be in compliance with WIOA section 188, Nondiscrimination, as applicable; Yes

8. The Federal funds received to carry out a core program will not be expended for any purpose other than for activities authorized with respect to such funds under that core program; Yes

9. The State will pay an appropriate share (as defined by the State board) of the costs of carrying out section 116, from funds made available through each of the core programs; Yes

10. The State has a One-Stop certification policy that ensures the physical and programmatic accessibility of all One-Stop centers with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA); Yes

11. Service providers have a referral process in place for directing Veterans with Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE) to DVOP services, when appropriate; and Yes

12. Priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses is provided in accordance with 38 USC 4215 in all workforce preparation, development or delivery of programs or services funded directly, in whole or in part, by the Department of Labor. Yes

VI. Program-Specific Requirements for Core Programs

The State must address all program-specific requirements in this section for the WIOA core programs regardless of whether the State submits either a Unified or Combined State Plan.

Program-Specific Requirements for Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Activities under Title I-B

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include the following with respect to activities carried out under subtitle B--

a. Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Activities General Requirements

1. Regions and Local Workforce Development Areas

A. Identify the regions and the local workforce development areas designated in the State.

The State of Arkansas consists of ten local workforce development areas and nine planning regions.

The ten local workforce development areas (LWDA) are as follows: Central LWDA, which consists of Faulkner, Lonoke, Monroe, Prairie, Pulaski, Saline counties; the City of Little Rock LWDA, which consists of the city limits of Little Rock, Arkansas; Eastern LWDA, which consists of Cross, Crittenden, Lee, Phillips, Saint Francis counties; North Central LWDA, which consists of Cleburne, Fulton, Jackson, Independence, Izard, Sharp, Stone, Van Buren, White, Woodruff counties; Northeast LWDA, which consists of Clay, Craighead, Greene, Lawrence, Mississippi, Poinsett, Randolph counties; Northwest LWDA, which consists of Baxter, Benton, Boone, Carroll, Madison, Marion, Newton, Searcy, Washington counties; Southeast LWDA, which consists of Arkansas, Ashley, Bradley, Chicot, Cleveland, Desha, Drew, Grant, Jefferson, Lincoln counties; Southwest LWDA, which consists of Calhoun, Columbia, Dallas, Hempstead, Howard, Lafayette, Little River, Miller, Nevada, Ouachita, Sevier, Union counties; West Central LWDA, which consists of Clark, Conway, Garland, Hot Spring, Johnson, Montgomery, Perry, Pike Pope, Yell counties; and Western LWDA, which consists of Crawford, Franklin, Logan, Polk, Scott, Sebastian counties.

For planning purposes, the following nine regions were identified: Central Region, which is made up of the Central LWDA and the City of Little Rock LWDA; Eastern Region, which is made up of the Eastern LWDA; North Central Region, which is made up of the North Central LWDA; Northeast Region, which is made up of the Northeast LWDA; Northwest Region, which is made up of the Northwest LWDA; Southeast Region, which is made up of the Southeast LWDA; Southwest Region, which is made up of the Southwest LWDA; West Central Region, which is made up of the West Central LWDA; and the Western Region, which is made up of the Western LWDA.

B. Describe the process used for designating local areas, including procedures for determining whether the local area met the criteria for “performed successfully” and “sustained fiscal integrity” in accordance with 106(b)(2) and (3) of WIOA. Describe the

process used for identifying regions and planning regions under section 106(a) of WIOA. This must include a description of how the State consulted with the local boards and chief elected officials in identifying the regions.

The local workforce development areas were selected based on infrastructure already in place under the previous federal law (Workforce Investment Act) and the alignment those areas have with local economic development planning districts. Each of the previous ten local workforce investment areas had sustained fiscal integrity as defined by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, and while only one of the ten local areas had met 100 percent of all nine performance targets two years in a row, the local areas did meet performance within 80 percent of targets, which is the measure of success for the State as a whole.

All multi-county local workforce development areas are considered to be regions for the purposes of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act planning. Any local workforce development area that is smaller than two counties will be part of a region for WIOA planning purposes with the local workforce development area(s) that closely aligns with the region's economic development planning district or metropolitan statistical area.

Local boards and chief elected officials were consulted during the formation of both the local workforce development areas and regions. The opportunity for public comment was also provided and many chief elected officials provided positive comments in support of the structure.

C. Provide the appeals process referred to in section 106(b)(5) of WIOA relating to designation of local areas.

For purposes of appeal, a unit of general local government (including a combination of such units) or grant recipient that requests but is not granted designation of an area as a local area may submit an appeal to the Arkansas Workforce Development Board under an appeal process established in the State plan. If the appeal does not result in such a designation, the Secretary of Labor, after receiving a request for review from the unit or grant recipient and on determining that the unit or grant recipient was not accorded procedural rights under the appeals process described in the State plan, may require that the area be designated as a local area.

All appeals for reconsideration of local workforce development area designation should be submitted to the following address:

Arkansas Workforce Development Board Attn: Appeal/Grievance Review P.O. Box 2981 Little Rock, Arkansas 72202

D. Provide the appeals process referred to in section 121(h)(2)(E) of WIOA relating to determinations for infrastructure funding.

The State distributed a MOU template to Local Boards in Summer 2017. This template included the requirements for funding infrastructure costs. In part, the template provided guidance that local boards, with the agreement of chief elected officials of the area, must develop and enter into memorandums of understanding (MOU's) with statutorily required one-stop partners for operation and funding of a one-stop delivery system in the local area. Local boards may also enter into MOU's with other optional partners, as described by WIOA. Among several required provisions, the MOU must include a final plan, or an interim plan if needed, on how the infrastructure costs of the one-stop centers will be funded.

The template included a dispute resolution that if a one-stop partner appeals to the state regarding infrastructure costs and the appeal results in a change to the one-stop partner's infrastructure cost contributions, the MOU must be updated to reflect the final one-stop partner infrastructure cost contributions.

2. Statewide Activities

A. Provide State policies or guidance for the statewide workforce development system and for use of State funds for workforce investment activities.

All policies for use by local workforce development boards in administration of WIOA Title I programs and for information on statewide activity programs are posted online on the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services website at www.dws.arkansas.gov/wioa.htm.

B. Describe how the State intends to use Governor's set aside funding. Describe how the State will utilize Rapid Response funds to respond to layoffs and plant closings and coordinate services to quickly aid companies and their affected workers. States also should describe any layoff aversion strategies they have implemented to address at risk companies and workers

The State intends to use the funding set aside for statewide activities for the required and allowable activities. Since Arkansas is a small state, the state set aside funding is smaller in comparison to larger states. The majority of the funding will be used for administration of the WIOA Title I grant, grants management, monitoring, support of state board activities, evaluations, technical assistance to local boards and training providers, training for case managers, capacity building for local boards and partners, and the integration of data systems, to include intake and case management systems. Not more than 25 percent of the total state allotment will be reserved for Rapid Response activities. Rapid Response activities in Arkansas are administered by Arkansas Division of Workforce Services as the lead agency of the Governor's Dislocated Worker Task Force.

C. In addition, describe the State policies and procedures to provide Rapid Responses in cases of natural disasters including coordination with FEMA and other entities.

Arkansas's Division of Workforce Services Rapid Response protocols are designed to address adverse economic and / or community impacts resulting from actual or imminent natural or manmade crisis or disaster. These protocols include maintaining communications, close coordination and establishment of appropriate partnership arrangements with other entities and resources, including FEMA if necessitated by the situation. Protocols also dictate appropriate oversight arrangements to ensure requisite scope, design speed, monitoring and supervision of emergency operations.

Rapid Response partners with government agencies and with disaster response entities to ensure it fulfills its obligation to deliver services and transition workers to new employment as quickly as possible. In the event of a disaster, Rapid Response will utilize its partnerships with Emergency management organizations (i.e., state emergency management agencies and FEMA); Chief Elected Officials (CEO); Chambers of Commerce; Economic development organizations; Labor and industry organizations; USDOL, to stay on top of the events as they occur to make sure we are in place to assist areas and workers affected by disaster. In addition, partnerships are

in place with the Arkansas Workforce Centers and local workforce development boards. Rapid Response is a key convener to plan a state's response to a disaster and has a role in the delivery of reemployment and transition services to those impacted by a disaster.

Rapid Response will ensure the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services website is updated with needed information, and the team will secure access for affected areas to utilize Mobile Workforce Centers that are ready to be deployed when needed. These units can assist with communications, emergency unemployment, insurance claim assistance, etc. These preparations, combined with flexibility and creativity in responding to the truly unexpected events of a disaster, allow Rapid Response to quickly and effectively respond to major events.

As stated above, Mobile Workforce Centers are part of Rapid Response's resources; the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services maintains a fleet of Mobile Workforce Centers consisting of three RV style vehicles and two 5th wheel trailers which are supported by a 2008 Ford F-350 Pickup. The Mobile Centers contain multiple computer stations (with full internet connectivity), public announcement systems, printers, copiers and fax machines. These units are also equipped with flat-televisions, DVD/VCR players, Smart-boards, JAWS (Jobs Application with Speech) software for visually impaired jobseekers and are handicap accessible. These units supplement local office resources, support opportunity and job fairs, promote employer hiring initiatives and facilitate numerous training endeavors designed to assist jobseekers across the state. Additionally, the Mobile Centers have been utilized for Rapid Response Worker Transition Centers. The Mobile Workforce Centers have become very popular at various Community Outreach events and have been deployed several times to aid in disaster response initiatives both in Arkansas and in neighboring states. These units have been identified as an asset for natural disaster response by the State Arkansas Department of Emergency Management (ADEM).

D. Describe how the State provides early intervention (e.g., Rapid Response) to worker groups on whose behalf a Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) petition has been filed. (Section 134(a)(2)(A).) This description must include how the State disseminates benefit information to provide trade-affected workers in the groups identified in the TAA petitions with an accurate understanding of the provision of TAA benefits and services in such a way that they are transparent to the trade-affected dislocated worker applying for them (Trade Act Sec. 221(a)(2)(A) and Sec. 225; Governor-Secretary Agreement). Describe how the State will use funds that have been reserved for Rapid Response to provide services for every worker group that files a TAA petition.

Arkansas's Rapid Response protocols and the partnership with the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Program have been recognized by Department of Labor.

- If there is the slightest possibility that reduction in workforce is trade affected the necessary info is gathered by Rapid Response personnel and a petition is submitted to the DOL;
- Once DOL issues a petition number Rapid Response notifies the Company representatives and TAA staff;
- Petition progress is monitored by both Rapid Response and Trade Program staff on the DOL website;

- Upon Certification, If the Company is unwilling or unable to provide a workers list then UI data is engaged to establish eligibility for workers;
- Trade Program staff prepares Eligibility Letters which are mailed to every client listed on the workers list (workers list vetted through Rapid Response). Notices of Eligibility may also be placed in local newspapers of general circulation;
- TAA Information Sessions are scheduled and invitation letters are mailed to eligible clients. The purpose of these Information Sessions is to meet with the dislocated workers and convey information about the benefits for which they may be eligible along with important timelines and information on other supportive services that may be available to them.

Arkansas's Rapid Response will continue to utilize its allocated funding to provide services to all companies experiencing a workforce reduction and affected workers including those for whom a Trade Petition is filed with the U.S. DOL. These services include Worker Assistance Workshops, Transition Assistance, Referral Services and Trade Petition preparation and submission. During the DOL's investigation process, Rapid Response serves as the primary point of contact pending certification, at which time Trade Program staff is engaged and continue to partner with Rapid Response staff to facilitate provision of services to identified workers.

ADWS' Rapid Response Unit developed and maintains a Rapid Response Tracking System (RRTS) which is used by Agency personnel to monitor and track all dislocation events including certification status of Companies for whom a Trade Petition was submitted to the U.S. Department of Labor.

b. Adult and Dislocated Worker Program Requirements

1. Work-Based Training Models

If the State is utilizing work-based training models (e.g. On-the-job training, Incumbent Worker training, Transitional Jobs, and Customized Training) as part of its training strategy and these strategies are not already discussed in other sections of the plan, describe the State's strategies for how these models ensure high quality training for both the participant and the employer.

Through the use of work-based training models, training objectives will be aligned with employer goals in such a way that when the participant meets objectives, they will also be meeting the employer goals. This process will begin with new employee orientation training where participants will learn workplace ethics and acquire soft skills training. While doing work-based training, participants will be introduced to new production models and technologies. The state will also strengthen partnerships with Registered Apprenticeship systems to help jobseekers immediately start working and increase their work literacy and earnings.

2. Registered Apprenticeship

Describe how the State will incorporate Registered Apprenticeship into its strategy for service design and delivery (e.g., job center staff taking applications and conducting assessments).

The Arkansas Division of Workforce Services (ADWS) has a strong partnership with Registered Apprenticeship (RA) and consistently includes Registered Apprenticeship training as a training option in discretionary grant proposals and encourages local workforce development boards to

utilize RA as a workforce development tool serving both employers and job seekers. The ADWS is working with local workforce development boards to more fully integrate RA and other work-based learning options into WIOA Title I.

Under the USDOL awarded ApprenticeshipUSA State Accelerator grant, ADWS is working with RA partners and stakeholders to develop a State Plan for RA Expansion and Diversification. A major component in the development of the State Plan for RA Expansion and Diversification includes an asset mapping analysis that will identify assets and funding streams associated with RA and look for opportunities to leverage resources for potential expansion to serve both employers and job seekers within growth industry and occupational fields. The State Plan for RA Expansion and Diversification is due to be completed by May 31, 2018.

Information on RA is shared with dislocated workers that attend information sessions while preparing for or recovering from a layoff. Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) staff routinely notify TAA eligible clients of the option to pursue RA as a viable training option. Registered Apprenticeships are presented to clients as a training option at both the TAA Information Sessions and during one-on-one assessments. If a client expresses interest in an Apprenticeship program, they are provided with the appropriate RA program contact information for follow-up purposes to learn more about RA training and employment opportunities.

The partnership between the Workforce system and RA programs will serve to increase options for both youth and adults. The RA “earn while you learn” model provides job seekers with a USDOL recognized skill attainment credential while allowing for an upwardly mobile career pathway. Likewise, RA benefits employers by developing highly skilled employees, reducing turnover rates, increasing productivity, and lowering the cost employee recruitment efforts. Adults, dislocated workers and youth have opportunities under RA to increase their earnings, skill sets, and will receive training in a high demand industry. Apprentices in Arkansas Registered Apprenticeships are co-enrolled in Title-I programs, when appropriate. ITAs and supportive services will be provided as wrap around support to participants in Registered Apprenticeships. On-the-Job-Training (OJT) contracts may be written with registered apprenticeship providers for the training portion of the program. Registered Apprenticeship program, OJT contracts must follow the State and local policies on OJT and depending on the length of the program, these funds may cover some or all of the registered apprenticeship training. Attainment of a credential, employment, retention of employment and wages of apprentices will be counted in performance measures for those who meet program eligibility requirements.

The Arkansas Apprenticeship Pathway Initiative (AAPI) provides \$4,000,000 of grant funds from the U.S. Department of Labor to create and expand registered apprenticeships in targeted H-1B growth industries, strengthen employer and service provider partnerships, as well as provide an opportunity for participants to learn occupational specific skills as well as good wages while gaining college credit.

The industries of focus for this grant include advanced manufacturing and the construction trades with opportunities for expansion into other industry growth sectors based on employer demand. A primary goal under the AAPI is to enroll 600 RA’s over the life the grant. The grant has an end date of September 30, 2020.

Arkansas Expands Apprenticeship (AREA) provides \$900,000 of grant funds from the U.S. Department of Labor to create, expand, and diversify registered apprenticeships in growth industries. The industries of focus for this grant include advanced manufacturing, construction trades, and transportation with opportunities for expansion into other industry growth sectors based on employer demand. A primary goal under the AREA is to enroll 100 RA's and 100 pre-apprentices over the life the grant. The grant has an end date of April 30, 2019.

3. Training Provider Eligibility Procedure

Provide the procedure, eligibility criteria, and information requirements for determining training provider initial and continued eligibility, including Registered Apprenticeship programs (WIOA Section 122).

To be included on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), providers must submit an online application to the Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) for the area where they wish to provide training services. A separate electronic application must be submitted for each training program, and the training program must be on the current Projected Employment Opportunities List. An application can be made online through the Arkansas Consumer Report System. The Arkansas Consumer Report System, or ACRS for short, is an interactive web site that contains a comprehensive listing of training providers and programs within the State of Arkansas. However, ACRS is best known as the web site that houses the WIOA Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). This list is a subset of providers and programs that have been certified by Local Workforce Development Boards (LDBs) as eligible providers of training under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. Through this website, training providers who wish to be included on the ETPL can submit an electronic application and LDBs can evaluate the applications.

Providers who may apply to be included on the ETPL include:

- An institution of higher education that provides a program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential;
- Another public or private provider of a program of training services, which may include joint labor-management organizations, and eligible providers of adult education and literacy activities, if such activities are provided in combination with occupational skills training. These providers must have all appropriate licenses to operate in the State of Arkansas and will be required to submit copies of such licenses. The information will then be verified by the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services (ADWS).
- An entity that carries out programs under the National Apprenticeship Act will be included and maintained on the ETPL for so long as their program remains registered. These providers will be required to contact ADWS to make known their desire to be listed and provide documentation that verifies their program is a registered apprenticeship program certified by the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Apprenticeship.

The procedures for initial and continued eligibility for the Eligible Training Provider List are available online at: www.dws.arkansas.gov/wioa.htm

As of July 1, 2015, the TAA program for the State of Arkansas utilizes the WIOA Eligible Training Provider (ETP) List for enrollment of TAA participants in training in demand occupations.

4. Describe how the State will implement and monitor the priority for public assistance recipients, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient in accordance with the requirements of WIOA sec. 134(c)(3)(E), which applies to individualized career services and training services funded by the Adult Formula program.

The requirements of priority of service that apply to adult recipients of public assistance, other low income individuals and individuals who are basic skills deficient as described in WIOA 3(5)(B) will be included in a directive to the local workforce development boards. The state management information system (MIS) will be utilized to identify adults who have been designated as meeting this definition. Specific allowable documentation to be stored in the case manager's participant folder will be itemized and communicated to the local boards, and will be reviewed during regular monitoring visits.

5. Describe the State's criteria regarding local area transfer of funds between the adult and dislocated worker programs.

A local board may transfer, up to and including 100 percent of the funds allocated to the local area for a fiscal year between the adult employment and training activities and the dislocated worker employment and training activities. Under the Workforce Investment Act, the State had a waiver that increased the level of transfer between the adult and dislocated worker funding streams. The waiver provided greater flexibility in the design of local area adult and dislocated worker service delivery plans and enhanced the ability of local boards to respond to changing workforce and economic dynamics. Local boards were able to provide targeted assistance in response to customer needs.

In order to transfer funds between programs, the local workforce development board shall submit a funds transfer request to the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services, stating the amount of the requested transfer, the percentage of funds the transfer represents, the reason for the transfer, and an assurance that adequate funds still remain in the contributing program to support existing and future enrollments. The Arkansas Division of Workforce Services, as the Governor's Administrative Entity, will review the transfer request and issue a determination on the request.

c. Youth Program Requirements

With respect to youth workforce investment activities authorized in section 129 of WIOA, —

1. Identify the State-developed criteria to be used by local boards in awarding grants or contracts for youth workforce investment activities and describe how the local boards will take into consideration the ability of the providers to meet performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance for the youth program as described in section 116(b)(2)(A)(ii) of WIOA in awarding such grants or contracts.*

* Sec. 102(b)(2)(D)(i)(V)

Arkansas's strategy for providing comprehensive services for youth calls for a collaborative approach with local boards to prepare youth for success in a global, demand-driven economy. The state will issue policy guidance regarding the competitive sub-grant award process for youth workforce investment activities. In an effort to meet the needs specific to the local area, local boards will develop a process of review to determine if providers are able to meet performance accountability measures based on the criteria below. Consequently, state monitors will review local area polices and processes so as to ensure compliance.

1. Vision, Mission and Philosophy
2. Management Plan
3. Financial Plan
4. Employer Services
5. Individual Customers
6. Marketing
7. Partner Coordination Service Plan
8. Site/Location Plan
9. Organizational Qualifications
10. Performance/Experience
11. Anticipated Program Deliverables
12. Anticipated Program Outcomes
13. Budget Procedures

2. Describe the strategies the State will use to achieve improved outcomes for out-of-school youth as described in 129(a)(1)(B), including how it will leverage and align the core programs, any Combined State Plan partner programs included in this Plan, required and optional one-stop partner programs, and any other resources available.

In order to improve the outreach and recruitment of out-of-school youth, the Arkansas Division of Workforce Service will partner with the Office of Skills Development, the Department of Human Services, and other community-based organizations to create a streamline pathway and align services to meet the needs of youth participants. Core programs will no longer serve out-of-school youth in siloes, but rather through a referral system leveraged within these partnerships. Local Workforce Development Boards will work with referrals of able bodied young adults in the SNAP Employment & Training sector of the Department of Human Services, juvenile offenders within the juvenile justice system, clients receiving housing assistance through the local housing authority agencies and community organizations assisting homeless youth to boost enrollment and performance in the out-of-school youth core programs. These partners may prove

beneficial in addressing persons with identified and unidentified disabilities, high school equivalency credentials, leadership development and supportive service needs.

As part of the State's overarching outreach strategy, we will hire a Targeted Populations Advisor who will be solely devoted to developing our comprehensive outreach plan to reach certain populations, including Out-of-School youth.

3. Describe how the state will ensure that all 14 program elements described in WIOA section 129(c)(2) are made available and effectively implemented, including quality pre-apprenticeship programs under the work experience program element.*

* Sec. 102(b)(2)(D)(i)(I)

A state issued directive listing the 14 elements will require that all are made available to individuals in each local area. During their regular visits state monitors will review local policies, participant folders, conduct interviews with participants and staff, and review literature containing information relating to available services.

4. Provide the language contained in the State policy for “requiring additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program, or to secure and hold employment” criterion for out-of-school youth specified in WIOA section 129(a)(1)(B)(iii)(VIII) and for “requiring additional assistance to complete an education program, or to secure and hold employment” criterion for in-school youth specified in WIOA section 129(a)(1)(C)(iv)(VII). If the state does not have a policy, describe how the state will ensure that local areas will have a policy for these criteria.

The definition and requirements for the youth additional assistance high risk category are specific to the local area. A state issued directive will require each local area to establish a policy that is specific to their area of service that applies to the predominant population of youth within their service boundaries.

5. Include the State definition, as defined in law, for not attending school and attending school as specified in WIOA Section 129(a)(1)(B)(i) and Section 129(a)(1)(C)(i). If State law does not define “not attending school” or “attending school,” indicate that is the case and provide the state policy for determining whether a youth is attending or not attending school.

Mandatory school attendance is required for individuals between the age of five and 17. The statute requires enrollment in an approved school including private, public, parochial or home school that meets the requirements for legal operation. The individual must attend school each day the school is open unless:

- The child has received a high school diploma or its equivalent,
- A child 16 years of age or older who is enrolled in a post-secondary vocational-technical institution, a community college, or two-year or four-year institution of higher education, or

- Any child 16 years of age or older who is enrolled in an adult education program.

A specific definition for “not attending school” is not available other than an individual who does not comply with the above.

6. If using the basic skills deficient definition contained in WIOA Section 3(5)(B), include the State definition which must further define how to determine if an individual is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English, at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual’s family, or in society. If not using the portion of the definition contained in WIOA Section 3(5)(B), indicate that is the case.

The state definition of basic skills aligns with the definition at WIOA 3(5)(B) and is used in conjunction with the priority categories for adult eligibility to receive individualized career services and/or training services. Additionally out-of-school youth who have attained a secondary diploma and are low-income must also be basic skills deficient or an English language learner.

d. Single-area State Requirements

In States where there is only one local workforce investment area, the governor serves as both the State and local chief elected official. In such cases, the State must submit any information required in the local plan (WIOA section 106(d)(2)). States with a single workforce area must include—

- 1. Any comments from the public comment period that represent disagreement with the Plan. (WIOA section 108(d)(3).)**
- 2. The entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds, as determined by the governor, if different from that for the State. (WIOA section 108(b)(15).)**
- 3. A description of the type and availability of WIOA title I Youth activities and successful models, including for youth with disabilities. (WIOA section 108(b)(9).)**

Arkansas is not a single-area State.

- 4. A description of the roles and resource contributions of the one-stop partners.**
- 5. The competitive process used to award the subgrants and contracts for title I activities.**
- 6. How training services outlined in section 134 will be provided through individual training accounts and/or through contracts, and how such training approaches will be coordinated. Describe how the State will meet informed customer choice requirements regardless of training approach.**

7. How the State Board, in fulfilling Local Board functions, will coordinate title I activities with those activities under title II. Describe how the State Board will

carry out the review of local applications submitted under title II consistent with WIOA secs. 107(d)(11)(A) and (B)(i) and WIOA sec. 232.

8. Copies of executed cooperative agreements which define how all local service providers will carry out the requirements for integration of and access to the entire set of services available in the one-stop delivery system, including cooperative agreements with entities administering Rehabilitation Act programs and services.

e. Waiver Requests (optional)

States wanting to request waivers as part of their title I-B Operational Plan must include a waiver plan that includes the following information for each waiver requested:

1. Identifies the statutory or regulatory requirements for which a waiver is requested and the goals that the State or local area, as appropriate, intends to achieve as a result of the waiver and how those goals relate to the Unified or Combined State Plan;

2. Describes the actions that the State or local area, as appropriate, has undertaken to remove State or local statutory or regulatory barriers;

3. Describes the goals of the waiver and the expected programmatic outcomes if the request is granted;

4. Describes how the waiver will align with the Department's policy priorities, such as:

- **supporting employer engagement;**
- **connecting education and training strategies;**
- **supporting work-based learning;**
- **improving job and career results, and**
- **other guidance issued by the Department.**

5. Describes the individuals affected by the waiver, including how the waiver will impact services for disadvantaged populations or individuals with multiple barriers to employment; and

6. Describes the processes used to:

- **Monitor the progress in implementing the waiver;**
- **Provide notice to any local board affected by the waiver;**
- **Provide any local board affected by the waiver an opportunity to comment on the request;**

- **Ensure meaningful public comment, including comment by business and organized labor, on the waiver.**
- **Collect and report information about waiver outcomes in the State’s WIOA Annual Report**

7. The Secretary may require that States provide the most recent data available about the outcomes of the existing waiver in cases where the State seeks renewal of a previously approved waiver;

The State of Arkansas anticipates seeking a waiver after the full approval of the State's Medicaid Expansion Program, called Arkansas Works.

Arkansas Works provides health care coverage to Arkansans who are U.S. citizens and certain legally residing immigrants ages 19-64 with household incomes below 138 percent of the Federal Poverty Level for their family size. If determined eligible for this program, individuals will be enrolled in either a Qualified Health Plan or Employer Sponsored Insurance (ESI). Medicaid will pay most or all of the premiums for the plan while the individual may be responsible for co-pays and a small part of the premium. If eligible, individuals may have a small co-pay for doctor visits, prescriptions and certain other medical services. All Arkansas Works Program recipients will be referred to the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services for free job assistance services.

WAIVER REQUEST 1

Out-of-School Youth Expenditure Requirement

1. The statutory and/or regulatory requirements the State would like to waive

ADWS is seeking a waiver of the requirement under WIOA §129(a)(4) and 20 CFR 681.410 that the state and local workforce areas spend not less than 75 percent of youth funds to provide services to out-of-school youth (OSY).

2. Actions the State has taken to remove state or local barriers

There are no state or local statutory or regulatory barriers that would impede implementation of the requested waiver.

3. State strategic goal(s) and Department of Labor priorities (e.g. expansion of apprenticeship, improved employer engagement, etc.) supported by the waiver

This request is for a waiver to allow the state and all workforce areas in Arkansas the flexibility to direct up to 50 percent of youth funds to deliver workforce and educational services to ISY, while continuing to serve OSY as a priority population.

On September 20, 2018, DOLETA granted this same waiver request to Texas, reducing the OSY expenditure requirement from 75 percent to not less than 50 percent of youth funds. DOLETA

authorized the waiver for WIOA program years 2018 and 2019 (July 1, 2018, through June 30, 2020).

While the provision of services to OSY is vital, the requirement to expend 75 percent of youth statewide and formula funds on OSY prohibits states and workforce areas from using discretion when serving youth based on state and local demographics, resources, economies, employment outlooks, and other labor market factors. The requirement also weakens Title I's ability to design and deliver meaningful career pathway programs to all youth, regardless of school status. The 75 percent OSY expenditure requirement limits state and local ability to carry out such initiatives that provide necessary educational and training experiences for students and that meet employer's workforce education and skills needs.

Reducing the OSY expenditure requirement to 50 percent and permitting flexibility to calculate OSY expenditures on a collective statewide basis, instead of per workforce area, would allow ADWS and Boards to continue serving the OSY population while also increasing their ability to meet the needs of ISY throughout the state in alignment with WIOA's intent by supporting career pathways and the preparation of young people for in-demand careers in the workforce, regardless of a youth's school status. Under this waiver, Boards would continue to serve OSY as a priority population and track OSY services, expenditures, and performance metrics.

Approval of this waiver request would allow ADWS to meet the following state goals:

- **Serve youth regardless of school status:** Allow Boards flexibility to increase spending on providing education and training to ISY would not only increase the workforce opportunities available to all youth, but also help prevent at-risk ISY from dropping out of school or not pursuing additional education and training that would lead to meaningful work and economic self-sufficiency.
- **Serve ISY in rural communities:** Help ISY living in rural workforce areas overcome the unique economic and employment challenges facing rural—and often remote—Arkansas communities.
- **Serve youth according to local and statewide need:** Provide local- and state-level flexibility to serve OSY and ISY in a way that best meets each workforce area's needs according to population, resources, economy, employment outlook, and other labor market factors.
- **Continue serving out-of-school youth as a priority population:** ADWS and Boards will continue to give priority of service to OSY and achieve any OSY expenditure target authorized by DOLETA through this waiver request.

This waiver request aligns with DOL's policy priorities in that it:

- focuses on ensuring that eligible youth achieve secondary and postsecondary educational success;

- increases youths’ access to and opportunities for the education, training, employment, and support services that they need;
- aligns with WIOA’s intent by supporting career pathways and the preparation of young people for in-demand careers; and ensures that ISY do not fall into an at-risk category because of expenditure restrictions.

4. Projected programmatic outcomes resulting from implementation of the waiver

Approval of this waiver would permit Boards the opportunity to determine how best to meet the educational and training needs of youth, regardless of school status, and specific to the population, geographical location, and economic and employment conditions of each workforce area. Increasing outreach to ISY while maintaining a focus on serving OSY will help develop a larger pool of young people qualified and prepared to meet the current and future needs of employers in their workforce areas and throughout the state.

5. Individuals, groups, or populations benefiting from the waiver

- At-risk ISY statewide who face barriers to education, training, and employment
- OSY because they will continue to be served as a priority population in accordance with WIOA
- Boards through increased flexibility to develop unique solutions to better serve youth according to local conditions and needs

6. How the State plans to monitor waiver implementation, including collection of waiver outcome information

Upon DOL’s approval of this waiver request, ADWS will communicate the waiver allowance to Boards and workforce system partner programs. ADWS will monitor progress under this waiver by reviewing monthly performance reports submitted by the Boards, through regularly scheduled meetings with Board executive directors, and through its monitoring and performance accountability system. ADWS will report waiver outcomes in the state’s WIOA Annual Report.

7. Assurance of State’s posting of the request for public comment and notification to affected Local Workforce Development Boards

ADWS will include this waiver request as part of the agency’s PT2020-2023 WIOA Combined State Plan when the plan was presented for public comment. ADWS has notified all Boards and sought their input regarding this waiver request.

WAIVER REQUEST 2

Eligible Training Providers Performance Reporting Requirements

1. The statutory and/or regulatory requirements the State would like to waive

ADWS is seeking a waiver of WIOA §116(d)(4) and 20 CFR §677.230(a)(5) in order to allow eligible training providers (ETPs) to collect and report performance data for WIOA-funded participants only.

2. Actions the State has taken to remove state or local barriers

There are no state or local statutory or regulatory barriers that would impede implementation of the requested waiver.

3. State strategic goal(s) and Department of Labor priorities (e.g. expansion of apprenticeship, improved employer engagement, etc.) supported by the waiver

Under WIOA §116(d)(4)(A) and 20 CFR §677.230(a)(5), ETPs must report performance data with respect to all individuals engaging in a program of study (or the equivalent). While ADWS recognizes the value and importance of monitoring provider performance, requiring ETPs to produce data on all individuals instead of just WIOA-funded participants places an undue burden on ETPs to collect, enter, and report excessive data. This is especially burdensome when ETPs have many students of whom only a small percentage are WIOA participants. DOL and ED acknowledge this burden in their response to comments regarding 20 CFR §677.230 in the preamble to the WIOA Final Rule by stating, “The Departments are cognizant of the reporting burden the ETP performance report places on ETPs and do not want to place additional burden on these entities,” yet did not modify the regulatory text to ease that burden.

Further, ETPs and ADWS are concerned that providing data—including Social Security numbers—on all individuals engaging in a program of study (or the equivalent) instead of WIOA-funded participants only may conflict with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), which protects the privacy of student education records. Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student to release any information from a student’s education record (34 CFR §99.30). Releasing student information on individuals who are not workforce system participants without their explicit consent may be in violation of federal law and compromise their personally identifiable information (PII) and potentially make those students vulnerable to identity theft and privacy risks.

Burdensome reporting requirements combined with mandatory submission of PII for non-WIOA-funded participants disincentivizes training providers from participating or remaining in the ETP system. A shortage of participating providers could result in limited customer choice locally or even statewide.

Under this waiver, ETPs will continue to collect and report performance data for all WIOA-funded participants in accordance with WIOA §116(d)(4)(A) and as specified at 20 CFR §677.230.

Approval of this waiver request would allow ADWS to meet the following state goals:

- **Ease undue reporting burden on ETPs:** Reporting performance data on all individuals engaging in a program of study (or the equivalent) consumes considerable time and expense. Reducing ETPs’ reporting requirements to include only WIOA-funded participants would save considerable time and expense to allow ETPs to focus on

education and training outcomes while still providing the required data on WIOA-funded participants.

- **Ensure protection of non-WIOA participants' PII:** Not reporting data for individuals who are not WIOA participants would reduce ETPs' liability for potential breach of those individuals' PII.
- **Ensure that local areas have sufficient numbers of and diversity of training providers:** Establishing a more provider-friendly system will help ensure that local areas have sufficient numbers of and diversity of training providers necessary to create an effective marketplace of training programs for WIOA participants utilizing ITAs.
- **Incentivize training providers to participate in the ETP system:** Minimizing the reporting burden and eliminating the need to provide sensitive data on non-WIOA-funded students would make ETP participation more attractive to training providers and would therefore help increase the number of new ETPs and retain providers that are already participating in the ETP system.
- **Ensure accuracy of performance data:** Eliminating reporting barriers and limiting reporting to only WIOA-funded participants would result in more consistent and more accurate provider performance data.
- **Maximize customer choice:** A provider friendly ETP system attracts more training providers, resulting in increased customer choice.
- This waiver request aligns with DOL's policy priorities in that it:
- connects education and training strategies by reducing the reporting burden on ETPs, thus allowing them to focus more time and resources on producing successful outcomes for WIOA-funded participants; and
- further protects the privacy rights of ETPs' students who are not WIOA participants.

4. Projected programmatic outcomes resulting from implementation of the waiver

Approval of this waiver would reduce the reporting burden on ETPs and allow them to focus more time and resources on producing successful outcomes for WIOA-funded participants as well as for their non-WIOA students.

5. Individuals, groups, or populations benefiting from the waiver

- Eligible training providers

6. How the State plans to monitor waiver implementation, including collection of waiver outcome information

Upon DOL's continued approval of this waiver request, ADWS will communicate the waiver allowance to Boards and workforce system partner programs. ADWS will monitor progress under this waiver by continuing to collect data from ETPs on their WIOA-funded students and to submit that data via ADWS's annual report to DOL. ADWS will report waiver outcomes in the state's WIOA Annual Report. If the state requests renewal of this waiver, then TWC will provide the most recent outcomes data available.

7. Assurance of State’s posting of the request for public comment and notification to affected Local Workforce Development Boards

ADWS will include this waiver request as part of the agency’s PT2020-2023 WIOA Combined State Plan when the plan was presented for public comment. ADWS has notified all Boards and sought their input regarding this waiver request.

Waiver Impact

Through this waiver, ETPs will be more willing to submit data on their WIOA-funded students and to remain in the ETP program, thus allowing the Arkansas workforce system to continue delivering essential training services that meet the needs of employers, job seekers, and workers.

WAIVER REQUEST 3

Waiver to increase on-the-job-training reimbursement up to 90 percent for businesses with 50 or fewer employees. WIOA Section 134(c) (3)(H)(i) and 20 CFR 680.720 (b)

Arkansas is requesting a waiver to the current allowable employer reimbursement rate of up to 50 percent of the wage rate of the On-the-Job-Training (OJT) participant for the extraordinary costs of providing training and additional supervision related to the OJT as described in the WIOA Section 134(c) (3)(H)(ii). The waiver require has been developed following the WIOA guidelines in Section189 (i)(3)(B) and the WIOA Federal regulation at 20 CFR 680.720(b).

Arkansas is proposing a sliding scale of reimbursement to the employer based on its size and capability. Under this waiver, the following scale will be implemented: up to 90% reimbursement for employers with 50 or less employees; up to 75% reimbursement for employers with a workforce between 51 and 250 employees. For employers with 251 employees or more, the statutorily defined 50% limit will continue to apply.

The waiver is requested for all WIOA formula funds: Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, National Dislocated Worker Grants, as well as other Discretionary grants, as appropriate.

1. The statutory and/or regulatory requirements the State would like to waive

ADWS is seeking a waiver of the requirement under WIOA Section 134(c) (3)(H)(ii)(II) and the accompanying regulations as promulgated at 20 CFR 680.720 (b) state that employers may be reimbursed up to 50 percent of the wage rate of an OJT participant for the extraordinary costs of providing the training and additional supervision related to the OJT.

2. Actions the State has taken to remove state or local barriers

There are no state or local statutory or regulatory barriers that would impede implementation of the requested waiver.

3. Description of the waiver goals; relationship of goals to the strategic plan goals; and expected programmatic outcomes:

The waiver is consistent with national policy to develop a workforce system that is responsive to the demands of both individual and employer customers. The State anticipates the following goals will be achieved with approval of the waiver request:

- Maximize the flexibility needed to impact local economic vitality and direct resources where demand for services is greatest by assisting local areas in marketing OJT as a vehicle to engage employers, particularly in targeted sectors, to hire and provide training to new workers. This will build the capacity and future viability of both the workforce and the industries themselves.
- Assist with the transformation of the current workforce system to a demand-driven, sector based and regionally driven talent development pipeline.
- Increase training and transitional employment opportunities for unemployed workers and hard-to serve youth and adults.
- Equip individuals with relevant job training and transferable skills in high-skill, high-wage, high demand occupations and industries.
- Increase business usage of the local workforce system by providing added incentives to hire and train new workers.

Local workforce development boards have provided feedback with regard to employer needs for assistance with economic competitiveness in the current economic downturn. Allowing businesses to be reimbursed on a sliding scale will address the primary reason for prior limited use of OJT and increase employer participation.

Employer feedback indicates that they will be more likely to use this opportunity if reimbursement was greater than 50%. Small to medium-sized employers are responsible for the majority of all the jobs in Arkansas, therefore the State estimates that small to medium-sized employers will comprise a significant percentage of OJT opportunities.

4. Projected programmatic outcomes resulting from implementation of the waiver

Approval of this waiver would increase the opportunity to utilize the OJT model to hire and train new workers.

5. Description of the individuals impacted by the waivers:

The need for training is especially acute for those workers most in need: dislocated workers transitioning to new occupations and industries, long-term unemployed individuals in need of advancing outmoded skills in order to catch up with emerging technologies, and low-income and entry-level workers seeking to start their careers in a weak economic climate. Approval of the waiver will increase training options for WIOA-eligible job seekers.

The reduced match requirement for employers, particularly new start-ups and other small to medium-sized businesses, will provide an attractive and cost-effective financial incentive. This

waiver will allow Arkansas businesses to more rapidly adapt to both technological and general marketplace changes by improving their capacity to expand and remain competitive with affordable OJT options uniquely designed to achieve their specific developmental goals.

6. How the State plans to monitor waiver implementation, including collection of waiver outcome information

Upon DOL's continued approval of this waiver request, ADWS will communicate the waiver allowance to Boards and workforce system partner programs. ADWS will monitor progress under this waiver and to submit that data via ADWS's annual report to DOL.

7. Description of the process used to: Ensure meaningful public comment, including comment from business and labor; provide notice to any local board affected by the waiver; provide affected local boards the opportunity to comment; and monitor implementation:

ADWS will include this waiver request as part of the agency's PT2020-2023 WIOA Combined State Plan when the plan was presented for public comment. ADWS has notified all Boards and sought their input regarding this waiver request.

WAIVER REQUEST 4

Waiver to allow flexibility in the use of funds reserved by the Governor to provide disaster relief as permitted under Dislocated Worker Grants for disaster relief, including temporary work. WIOA Section 134(a)(2)(A), WIOA Section 134(a)(2)(B) and WIOA Section 134(a)(3)

1. The statutory and/or regulatory requirements the State would like to waive

Arkansas requests a waiver of WIOA Section 134(a)(2)(A), (2)(B), and (3) to add flexibility in the use of the funds reserved by the Governor for use to provide statewide rapid response activities, for use to provide statewide employment and training activities, and to underwrite or fund disaster relief to affected areas of pending National Dislocated Worker Grants.

Under this allowance, Governor's funds would only be used to fund temporary cleanup efforts and will only be made available to local areas impacted under a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) declaration. Governor's funds allotted to local areas under this waiver, who are subsequently awarded funds under the pending National Dislocated Worker Grants application, will refund the Governor's discretionary funds.

The purpose of this waiver request is to expedite the delivery of temporary cleanup resources and will be limited to one \$200,000 allotment, per Local Area, per qualifying event.

2. Actions undertaken to remove state or local statutory or regulatory barriers

There are currently no state or local statutory or regulatory barriers to implementing any of the requested waivers.

3. State strategic goal(s) and Department of Labor priorities (e.g. expansion of apprenticeship, improved employer engagement, etc.) supported by the waiver

This request is for a waiver will provide local workforce areas in Arkansas the flexibility to more quickly implement cleanup efforts while awaiting the final approval of subsequently awarded funds under the pending National Dislocated Worker Grants application

4. Projected programmatic outcomes resulting from implementation of the waiver

Approval of this waiver would greatly enhance local workforce areas' ability to address emergency situations swiftly that negatively impact Arkansans suffering from disasters.

5. Description of the individuals impacted by the waivers:

This waiver would benefit those workers most in need, dislocated workers, as well as the general citizenry of the geographical areas that are negatively impacted by disasters.

6. How the State plans to monitor waiver implementation, including collection of waiver outcome information

Upon DOL's continued approval of this waiver request, ADWS will communicate the waiver allowance to Boards and workforce system partner programs. ADWS will monitor progress under this waiver and to submit that data via ADWS's annual report to DOL.

7. Description of the process used to: Ensure meaningful public comment, including comment from business and labor; provide notice to any local board affected by the waiver; provide affected local boards the opportunity to comment; and monitor implementation:

ADWS will include this waiver request as part of the agency's PT2020-2023 WIOA Combined State Plan when the plan was presented for public comment. ADWS has notified all Boards and sought their input regarding this waiver request.

Title I-B Assurances

The State Plan must include assurances that:

1. The State has implemented a policy to ensure Adult program funds provide a priority in the delivery of training services and individualized career services to individuals who are low income, public assistance recipients and basic skills deficient; Yes
2. The State has implemented a policy to ensure local areas have a process in place for referring veterans with significant barriers to employment to career services provided by the JVSG program's Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist; Yes
3. The state established a written policy and procedure that set forth criteria to be used by chief elected officials for the appointment of local workforce investment board members. Yes
4. The State established written policy and procedures to ensure local workforce investment boards are certified by the governor every two years in accordance with WIOA section 107(c)(2). Yes
5. Where an alternative entity takes the place of a State Board, the State has written policy and procedures to ensure the alternative entity meets the definition under WIOA section 101(e) and the legal requirements for membership. No
6. The State established a written policy and procedure for how the individuals and entities represented on the State Workforce Development Board help to determine the methods and factors of distribution, and how the State consults with chief elected officials in local areas throughout the State in determining the distributions. Yes
7. The State will not use funds received under WIOA Title I to assist, promote, or deter union organizing in accordance with WIOA section 181(b)(7). Yes
8. The State distributes adult and youth funds received under WIOA equitably throughout the State, and no local area suffers significant shifts in funding from year-to-year during the period covered by this plan. Yes
9. If a State Workforce Development Board, department, or agency administers State laws for vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, that board, department, or agency cooperates with the agency that administers Wagner-Peyser services, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and Youth Programs under Title I. Yes
10. The State agrees to report on the impact and outcomes of its approved waivers in its WIOA Annual Report. Yes
11. The State has taken appropriate action to secure compliance with the Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 2900, including that the State will annually monitor local areas to ensure compliance and otherwise take appropriate action to secure compliance with the Uniform Guidance under section WIOA 184(a)(3); Yes

**For Consideration of the
Arkansas Workforce Development Board**

January 21, 2020

AGENDA ITEM 5 – INFORMATIONAL: WIOA Dashboard Update

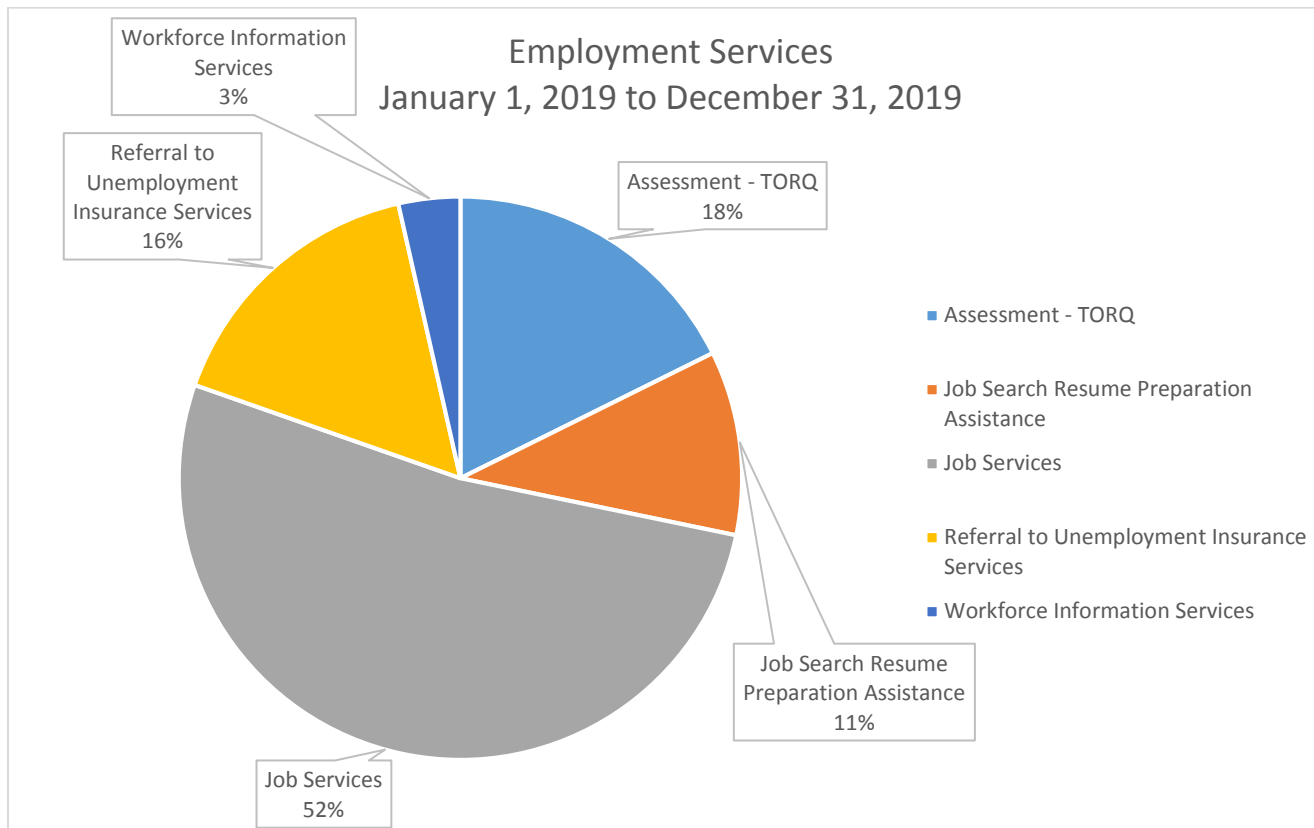
INFORMATION/RATIONALE: One of the functions of the Arkansas Workforce Development Board, under Arkansas Annotated 15-4-3706 (3), is to assist the Governor in ***“the development and continuous improvement of the state workforce development system.”***

Information provided in the WIOA Dashboard may be utilized for strategic planning.

AWDB Dashboards

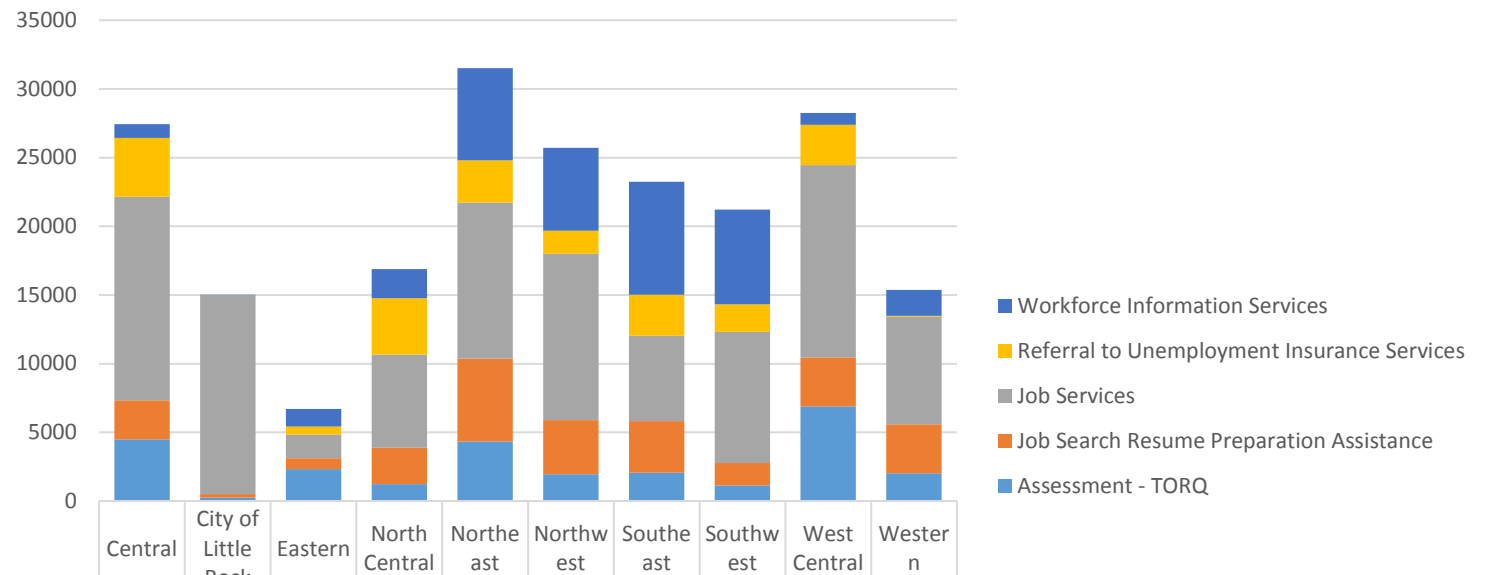
Participant Services and Service Mix

Staff Administrators consider this service mix to be consistent with expectations. Greatest changes were 2% since last quarter)



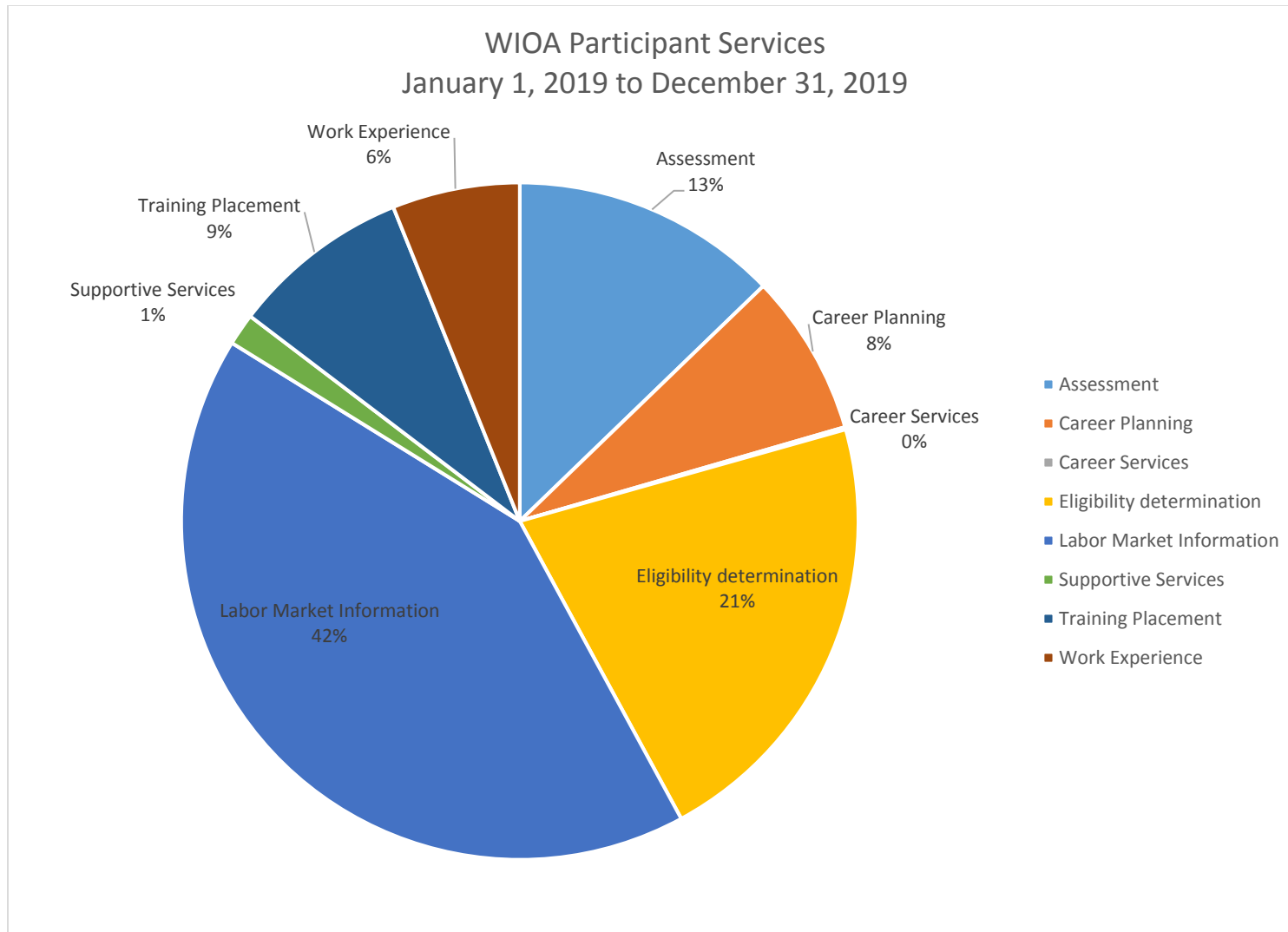
The deviations in LR “Workforce Information Services” and TORQ assessments are due to keying. Both services are available in the center and may be keyed as “Job Services”.

Employment Services Per Arkansas LWDB January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2019



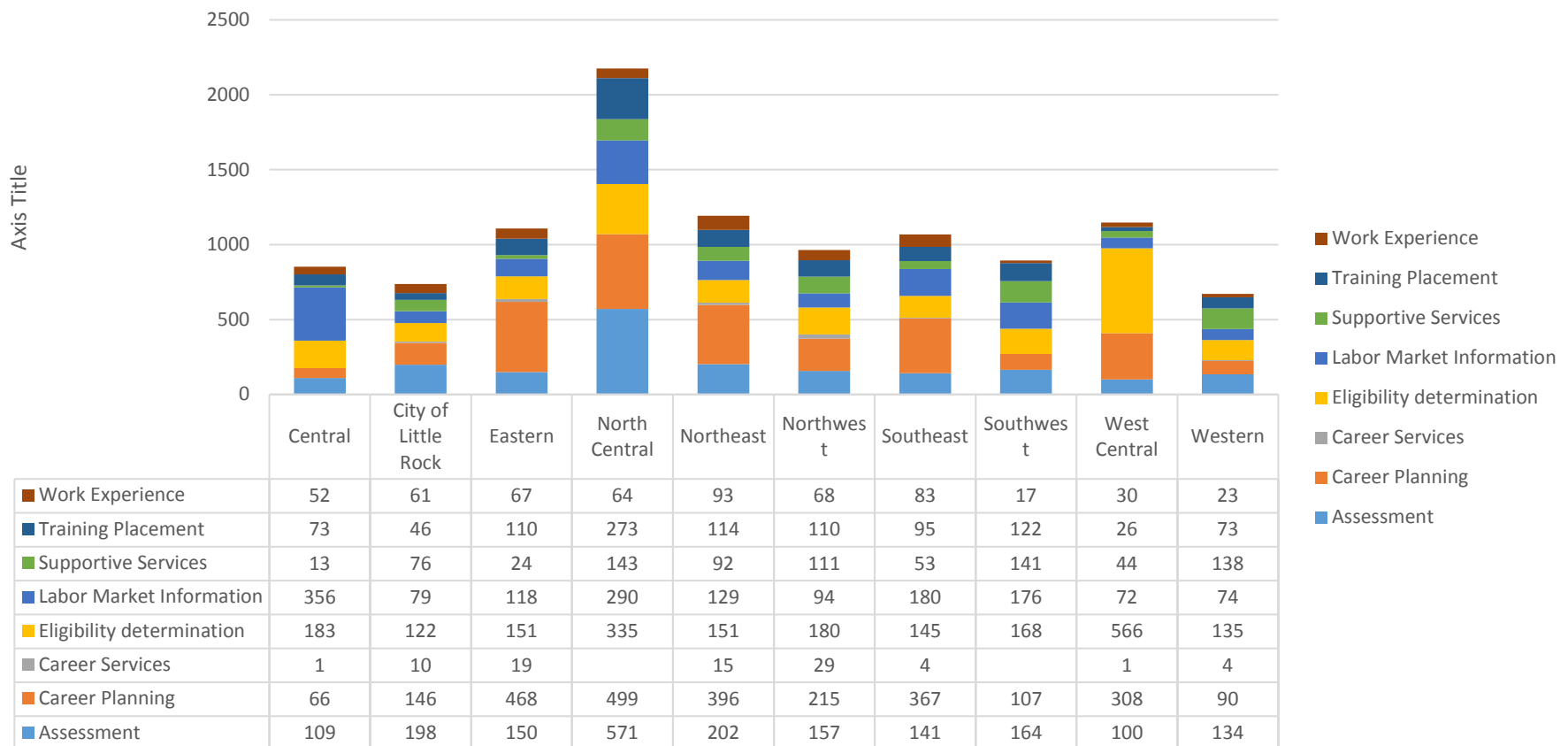
	Central	City of Little Rock	Eastern	North Central	Northeast	Northwest	Southeast	Southwest	West Central	Western
Workforce Information Services	1020	44	1275	2126	6689	6032	8224	6901	850	1898
Referral to Unemployment Insurance Services	4272	27	576	4112	3078	1671	2987	1999	2945	50
Job Services	14824	14453	1728	6765	11369	12123	6201	9543	14004	7845
Job Search Resume Preparation Assistance	2843	258	793	2667	6029	3918	3767	1643	3546	3554
Assessment - TORQ	4487	247	2327	1222	4338	1963	2059	1133	6897	2022

Staff Administrators consider this service mix to be consistent with expectations. Please note that Supportive Services may not be keyed when covered through referrals.



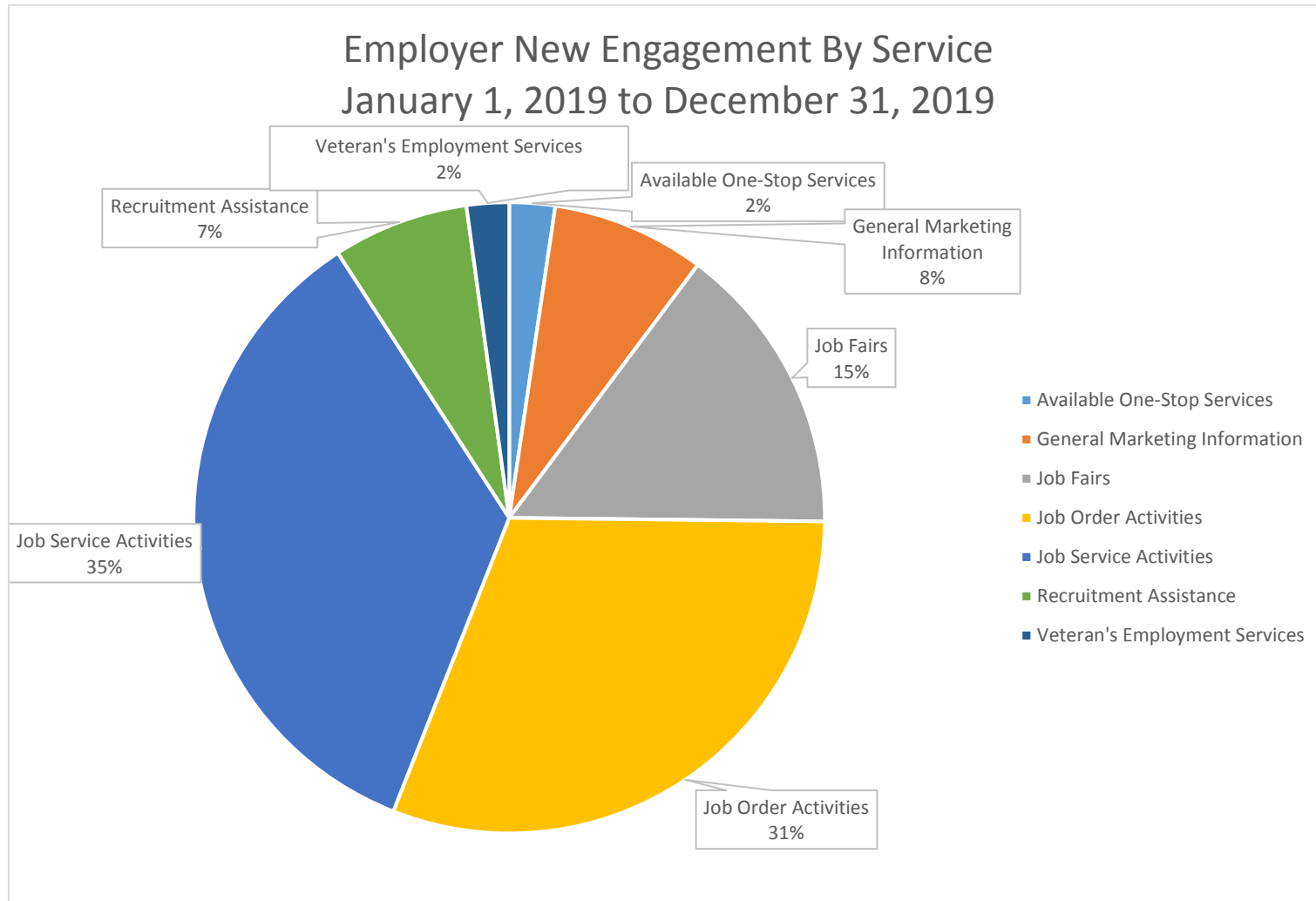
The deviation from the state pattern is the absence of Supportive Services in Southeast. However, in response to DOL monitoring, Southeast has implemented a more robust supportive services policy. (Supportive Services have climbed since the last report from 9 to 53, showing a significant increase in this rolling year report.)

WIOA Participant Services Per Arkansas LWDB
January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2019



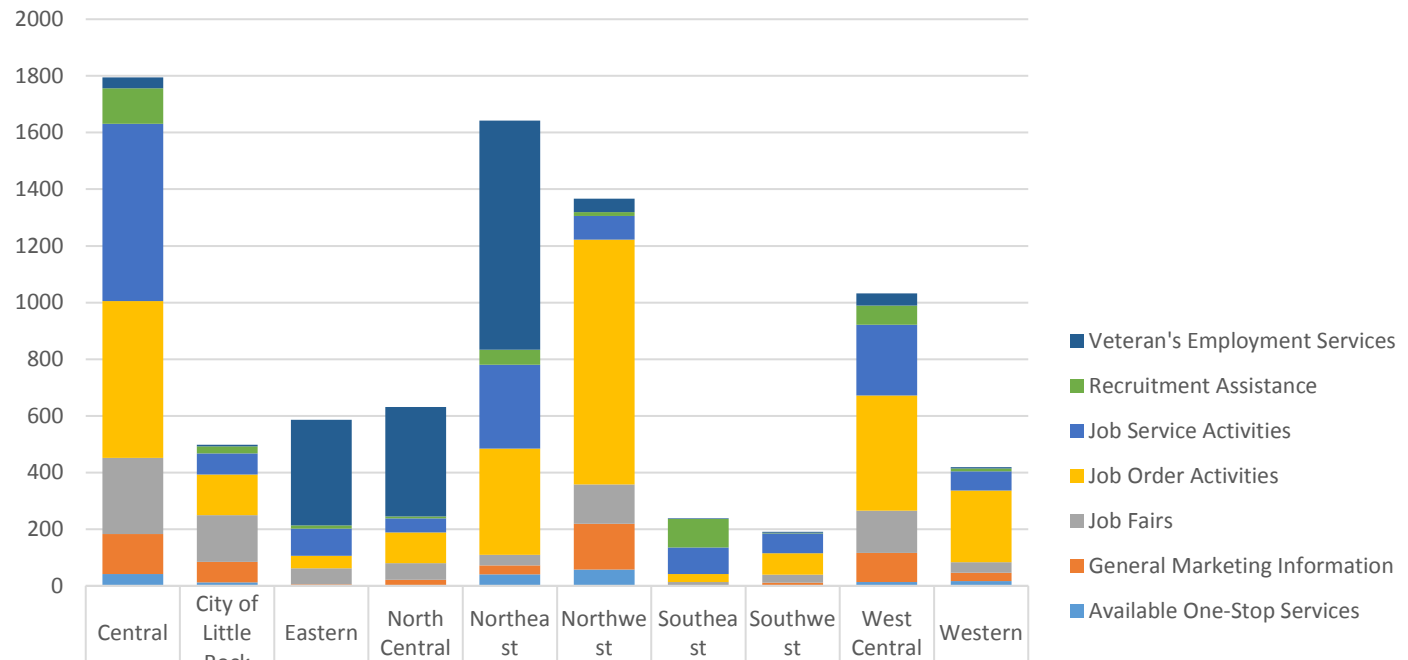
Business Services and Service Mix

Staff Administrators consider this service mix to be consistent with expectations.



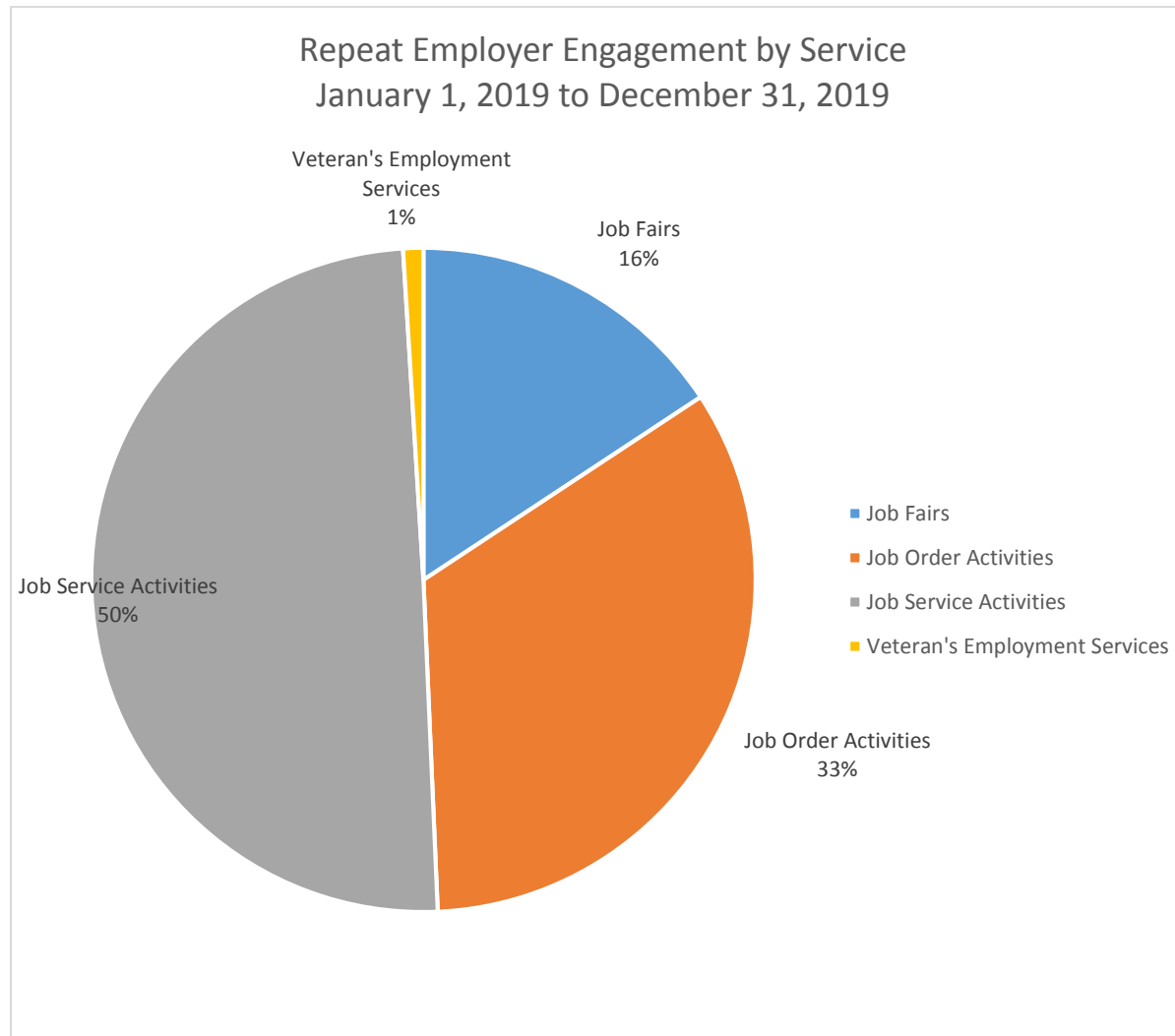
The greatest deviations are due to variance in Veteran's Employment Services and are reconcilable with the 5 part-time Local Vet Reps across the state and their locale/coverage.

Employer New Engagement Per Arkansas LWDB
January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2019



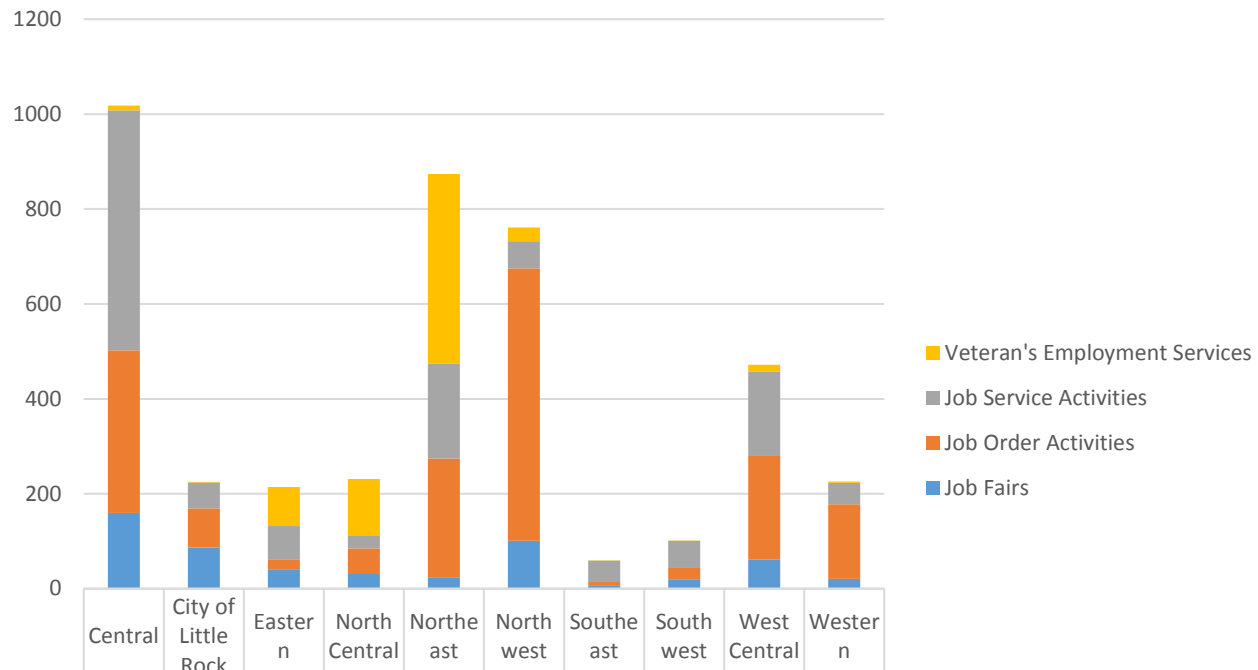
	Central	City of Little Rock	Eastern	North Central	Northeast	Northwest	Southeast	Southwest	West Central	Western
■ Veteran's Employment Services	39	6	372	386	808	48	2	3	43	4
■ Recruitment Assistance	125	24	12	7	54	13	100	3	67	11
■ Job Service Activities	626	75	96	49	295	84	94	70	250	67
■ Job Order Activities	553	143	44	109	376	864	29	76	407	254
■ Job Fairs	269	165	56	59	37	139	11	28	149	37
■ General Marketing Information	141	73	3	19	31	161	2	9	102	29
■ Available One-Stop Services	42	12	3	2	41	58		2	14	17

Staff Administrators consider this service mix to be consistent with expectations. General Marketing Information and Recruitment Assistance were below 5% during the rolling-year period. The year ending December 31, 2019 had 232 and 240 for General Marketing and Recruitment respectively, while the year ending August 31, 2019 had 322 and 301 respectively. Staff will monitor the service levels in these categories.



Staff note: Service mix is consistent with the last report.

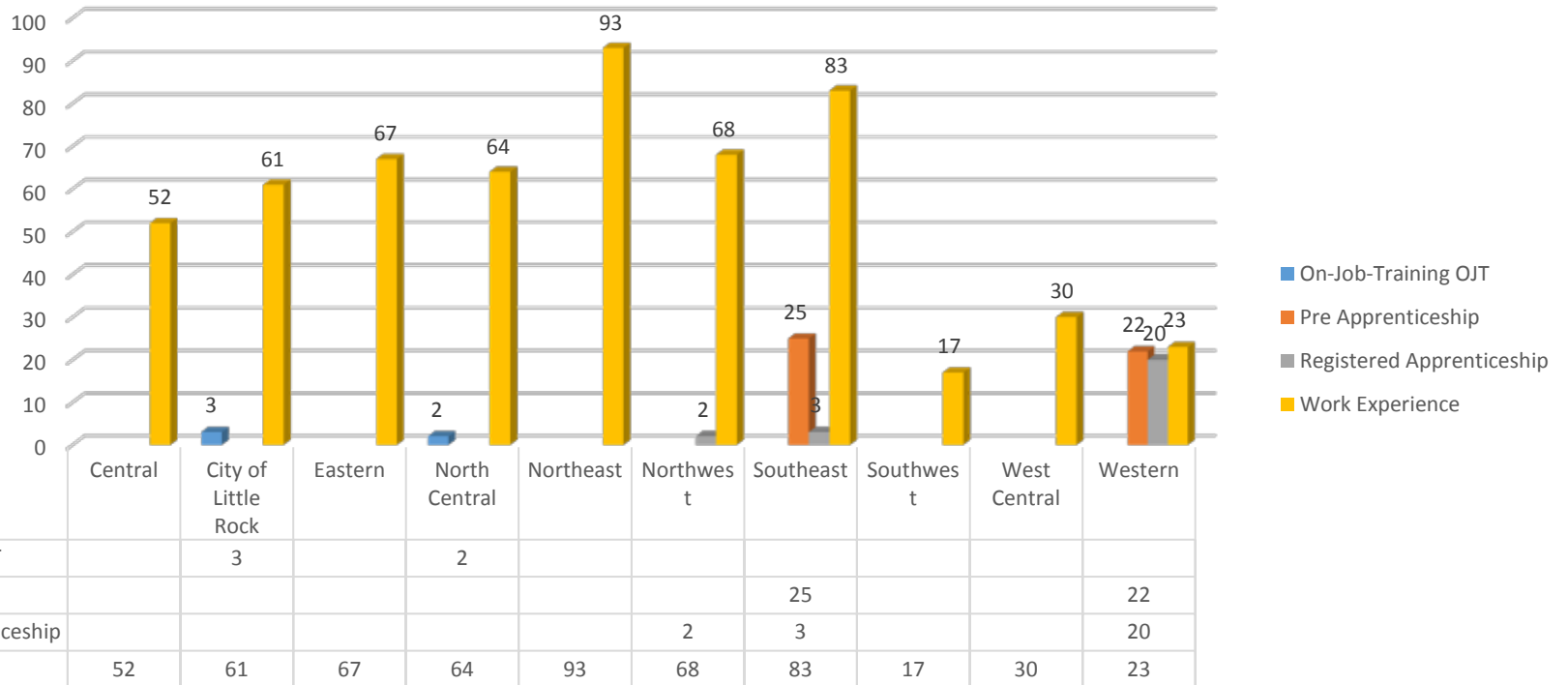
Repeat Employer Engagement per Arkansas LWDB
January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2019



	Central	City of Little Rock	Eastern	North Central	Northeast	Northwest	Southeast	Southwest	West Central	Western
■ Veteran's Employment Services	10	1	82	120	400	29	1	1	15	3
■ Job Service Activities	506	55	70	26	200	57	45	57	177	45
■ Job Order Activities	342	82	22	52	250	574	7	25	219	157
■ Job Fairs	160	87	40	33	24	101	7	19	61	21

Staff note: There is growing activity in several categories, Western seeing significant increases over the period in Pre-Apprenticeship Workforce Experience and Registered Apprenticeship: from 17, 7, and 5 to 22, 20, and 23, respectively.

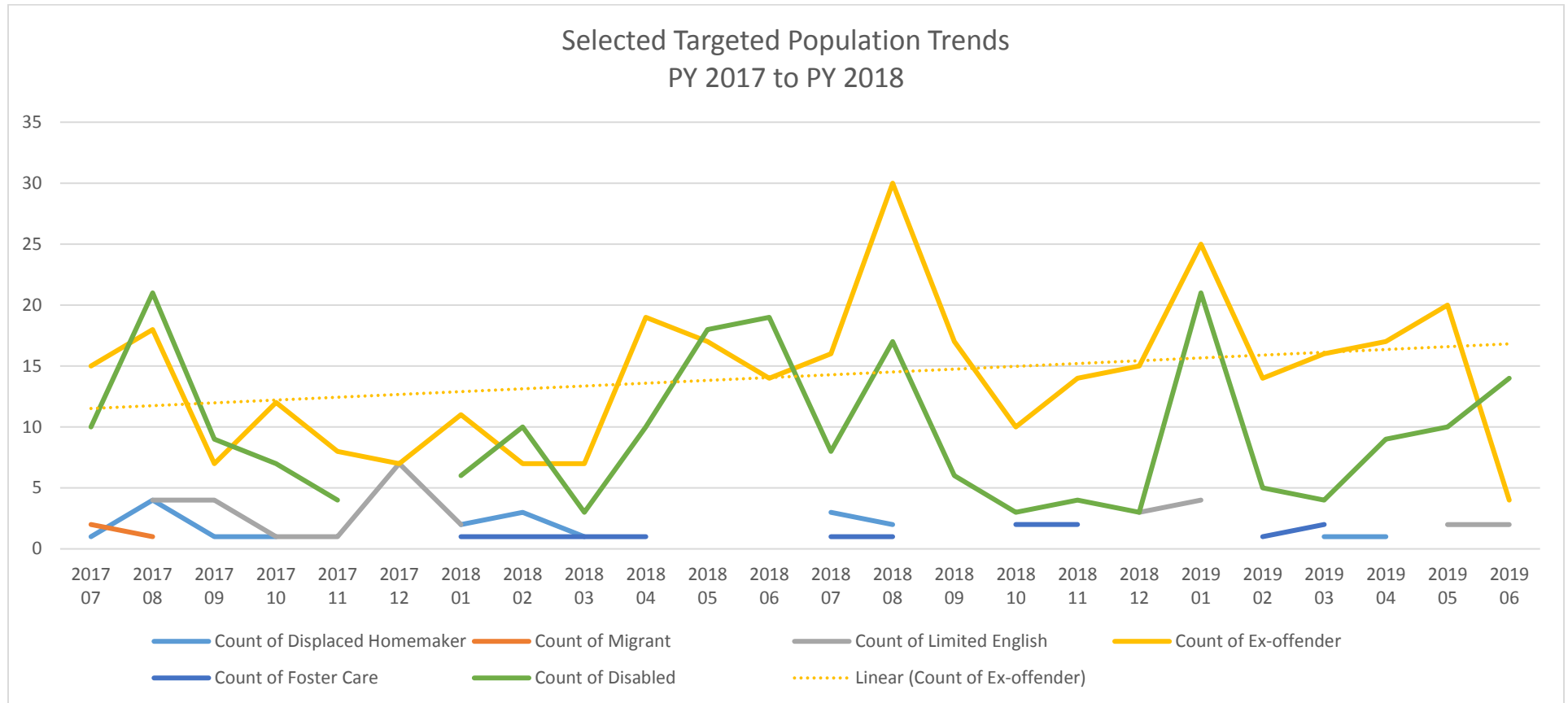
Work Based Learning January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2019



Selected Targeted Populations



Same report as last Quarter, will be recalculated after year-end.





WIOA Reports- Service Groups represent categories of services on a summary level; services at 5% or less removed.

Excluded- Less than 5%

Dropout Prevention

Financial Literacy

Individual Employment Plan Development

Job Referrals

Job Search

Workforce Preparation

On-Job-Training OJT

Pre Apprenticeship

Referrals and Partner Coordination

Registered Apprenticeship

Transition Services

Work Readiness/ Pre-Employment

New acceptations for period ending December 31, 2019- General Marketing information and Recruitment Services

ES Reports- Service Groups represent categories of services on a summary level; services at 5% or less removed.

Excluded- Less than 5%

Career Services

Workforce Preparation

Individual Employment Plan Development

Follow-Up Services

Training Placement

Supportive Services

Federal bonding Assistance

Work Readiness/ Pre-Employment

Job Search

Work Experience

**For Consideration of the
Arkansas Workforce Development Board**

January 21, 2020

AGENDA ITEM 6 - ACTION: PY18 Arkansas WIOA Annual Report

INFORMATION/RATIONALE: One of the functions of the Arkansas Workforce Development Board, under 20 CFR § 679.130, is to assist the Governor with Preparation of the annual reports described in paragraphs (1) and (2) of WIOA sec. 116(d).

RECOMMENDATION: The attached information was presented to the Strategic Planning Committee and the Program Performance and Evaluation Committee on January 7, 2020. The Strategic Planning Committee recommends the approval of the PY18 Arkansas Annual Report as presented by Staff.

ARKANSAS WORKFORCE
INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY
ACT (WIOA) TITLE I AND TITLE III
ANNUAL STATEWIDE
PERFORMANCE REPORT
PROGRAM YEAR 2018

ARKANSAS DIVISION OF WORKFORCE SERVICES

From the Director

As the newly-appointed Director of the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services (ADWS), I have the honor of presenting our Program Year 2018 annual report. It is designed to give readers a closer look at our programs, highlight the year's accomplishments, and demonstrate two of the agency's core values: transparency and results.

Although I did not assume leadership of ADWS until July 1, 2019, I am very familiar with the WIOA Programs as the former Director of the Arkansas Department of Career Education. Additionally, I have served on the Arkansas Workforce Development Board since 2016. I am extremely proud of the successes we have seen, the progress we have made, and the challenges we have overcome. Under the guidance of Governor Asa Hutchinson, ADWS has become the state's lead workforce development agency. I would like to thank and commend my staff, the lifeblood of ADWS, for their hard work, dedication, and service to our state. Without them, ADWS would not be the agency it is today.

These are exciting times for Arkansas: total employment is up, the unemployment rate consistently outpaces that of the nation, and thousands of jobs were added in the past year. The economy in our state is growing, and as it continues to expand, ADWS will be there to carry the momentum forward.

Education and workforce development opportunities are critical to a strong economy. To aid in meeting these demands, ADWS will continue to collaborate with its partners and work closely with employers and job seekers to develop initiatives and offer effective programs and services to enrich the economic growth of Arkansas.

Together we are preparing today's workforce for tomorrow's careers.

Sincerely,



Charisse Childers Ph.D
Director

CONTENTS

I.	Introduction	4
II.	Overview of Arkansas' Workforce Development System.....	4
III.	The Arkansas Division of Workforce Services.....	4
IV.	State and Local Roles.....	6
V.	WIOA Title I and Title III Programs.....	6
VI.	Arkansas Workforce Centers	8
VII.	WIOA Discretionary Grants.....	9
VIII.	Arkansas Labor Market	11
IX.	State's Strategic Vision and Goals Progress.....	11
X.	Sector Strategies and Career Pathways.....	12
XI.	Business Engagement	13
XII.	Waivers	13
XIII.	Evaluations.....	14
XIV.	Customer Satisfaction	15
XV.	WIOA Title II – Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program	16
XVI.	WIOA Title IV – Vocational Rehabilitation Program	16
XVII.	Statewide Activities.....	18
XVIII.	Statewide Performance Report Results.....	18
XIX.	Statewide Performance Report - Effectiveness in Serving Employers	22
XX.	Organizational Chart.....	24

APPENDIX

WIOA Title II and IV Performance.....	26
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I. Introduction

Last year, 107,706 Arkansas residents accessed the state's workforce system for assistance in acquiring or retaining employment. They came from a wide array of demographics, characteristics, backgrounds and experiences: low-income, single parents, migrant and seasonal workers, single parents struggling to support themselves, workers displaced by a changing economy and veterans returning from active duty. Many needed help connecting to unemployment benefits and assistance in determining next career steps. Others needed more basic, individualized or training services to overcome barriers to meaningful employment. Two of the primary funding sources for these basic, individualized services is the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I and Wagner-Peyser Title III programs. This report provides an in-depth look at the impact those funds have had in Arkansas in Program Year 2018, July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019.

II. Overview of Arkansas' Workforce Development System

Arkansas' workforce development system is a coordinated and collaborative network of services, programs and investments with a shared goal of improving the skills of the state's workforce. In order to meet the challenge of the 21st century global economy, the public workforce system works in partnership with businesses, educators, organized labor and community leaders to foster economic development and high-growth opportunities in regional economies. This network further helps potential job candidates, particularly low-income youth, adults and displaced workers, overcome obstacles to successful employment. These services are coordinated through Arkansas Workforce Centers, the state's one-stop delivery system. Primary funding for Arkansas Workforce Center operations and many of the basic and individualized services is provided by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title I and the Wagner-Peyser Act of 1933. Other formula-based and competitive federal, state and local resources and services that support our workforce system include Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), veteran services, USDOL National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG), Trade Adjustment Assistance, Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Assistance and other partner program funds.

At the heart of the public workforce system, these Arkansas Workforce Centers are made up of one-stop career centers, affiliate, and connection sites. Arkansas Workforce Centers are the primary access point to qualified workers, as well as to a multitude of resources for businesses and job seekers. These Centers serve thousands of individuals who are seeking employment, changing jobs, reentering the workforce or learning new skills. This makes them the ideal venue for workforce solutions for job seekers and businesses alike.

At our Workforce Centers throughout the state, individuals can open a claim for unemployment insurance, find job openings, receive other job search assistance and attend workshops that can improve employability. Qualified individuals can find assistance with specific training in high demand occupations. Businesses can get help with workforce needs including recruitment, screening, employee training, layoff aversion, and employee retention.

III. The Arkansas Division of Workforce Services

The Arkansas Division of Workforce Services began its legacy around 1940 as the Arkansas Employment Security Division of the state Department of Labor. In 1941, Act 391 created a

network of public employment offices. With that, a fund for the disbursement of benefits to be paid out during periods of unemployment was put in place, as well as a board of review to hear claims and appeals for unemployment benefits. The division underwent no great changes until Act 100 of 1991. This raised it to a department-level agency and made it the Arkansas Employment Security Department.

In 2007, Act 551 created the Department of Workforce Services Training Trust Fund for the operating expenses of the Unemployment Insurance program. Thus, the name of the agency was changed to the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services. Throughout its history, the agency's mission remained essentially the same: to provide employment related services that enhance the economic stability of Arkansas.

In 2019, Arkansas Governor Asa Hutchinson signed the Transformation and Efficiencies Act of 2019 into law, cutting the number of cabinet-level agencies from 42 to 15. This piece of state legislation went into effect on July 1, 2019 and reflects a reorganization of the workforce partner agencies in Arkansas. Specifically, the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services became the Division of Workforce Services and incorporated the former Arkansas Rehabilitation Services, Division of Services for the Blind, and Adult Education Services. This report incorporates these changes and includes the following new acronyms:

- ADWS – Arkansas Division of Workforce Services
- DSB – Division of Services for the Blind
- ARS – Arkansas Division of Workforce Services – Arkansas Rehabilitation Services
- AES – Arkansas Division of Workforce Services – Adult Education Services

Since ADWS is a state agency, it does not earn a profit and does not measure success by business growth and expansion. The size of the agency's budget and the staffing levels are adapted to best meet the needs of the state and its customers while balancing the requirements of stakeholders. The agency is unique from other state agencies in that it is 99 percent federally funded with taxpayer dollars. Even though the agency is almost entirely funded with federal money, the Arkansas Legislature appropriates the agency's funds and has the authority to pass legislation affecting agency programs and services on a state level. As a result, ADWS must adhere to both state and federal laws and regulations.

Our success is measured by our ability to cushion the impact of economic downturns and bring economic stability to the state by meeting the needs of employers and job seekers. As a proud partner of the American Job Centers, ADWS and the Arkansas Workforce Centers offer a variety of services to assist both groups.

WIOA Roundtable

In PY2018, ADWS focused on revamping the WIOA Roundtable and its subcommittees. The WIOA Roundtable consists of senior-level representatives from partner agencies including the Arkansas Department of Career Education, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services, and the Arkansas Department of Human Services-Division of Services for the Blind. The goal of the WIOA Roundtable is for partners to coordinate their efforts to improve the state's workforce development delivery system. Moving forward, the Governor's Transformation and Efficiencies Act of 2019 will only strengthen this group's cohesion and effectiveness.

IV. State and Local Roles

The Arkansas Workforce Development Board (State Board) assists the Governor in overseeing the state's workforce development system. The core business of the State Board is to coordinate state policy and state strategic planning for the workforce development system, evaluate results and facilitate demonstration projects that test innovations and ideas. ADWS serves as the state's WIOA Title I grant recipient. These WIOA responsibilities include stewardship of the funds, oversight and monitoring activities, issuing statewide policy, management of grants and contracts and allocation of the WIOA Title I funds to the local area Workforce Development Boards (Local Boards) for the delivery of services within an integrated service delivery system. ADWS also fulfills an operational role within the workforce system through providing services funded under the Wagner-Peyser, Trade Adjustment Assistance, Jobs for Veterans Services Grants, and Temporary Assistance for Needy Family (TANF) programs.

The Local Boards are the local conveners and managers of the workforce system through which WIOA programs are accessed. They are the strategic visionaries for local implementation of WIOA funds. There are ten (10) Local Boards in Arkansas and each is private industry led and locally focused. Local Board members are appointed by Chief Elected Officials (CEOs), and certified by the Governor. CEOs are the local area WIOA Title I grant recipients. CEOs direct their Local Boards' staff to administer the funds and oversee the area's Workforce Centers to most effectively respond to the local economy and needs of local citizens. Local Boards convene with regional partners and stakeholders to assess skill gaps, identify emerging and future employment possibilities and collaborate with economic developers and other partners to develop the region's workforce development plan.

V. WIOA Title I and Title III Programs

WIOA Title I Youth Program

Who is served: Youth must be between 14 and 24 years old, low income (WIOA allows for a 5% exclusion) and meet other criteria described in the WIOA, such as a need for additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure and hold employment.

Participation: Approximately 1,000 young people were served by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Youth Program between July 1, 2018 and June 30, 2019.

Program description: The program prepares low-income youth ages 14 through 24 for success in school and the world of work. Eligible youth may receive counseling, tutoring, job training, mentoring or work experience. Other service options include summer employment, study skills training and instruction in obtaining a GED or equivalent.

WIOA Title I Adult Program

Who is served: Specific eligibility guidelines are described in the WIOA. Basic services are available to all adults with minimal eligibility requirements. Basic, individualized or training services are authorized for unemployed individuals unable to find jobs. In some cases, these services are available to employed workers who need more help to reach self-sufficiency.

Participation: Approximately 1,400 participants received career services and 1,200 participants received training services by the WIOA Adult Training Services Program between July 1, 2018 and June 30, 2019.

Program description: The program prepares individuals 18 years and older for participation in the labor force by providing basic services and access to job training and other services. Services are coordinated through the state's workforce center system. Basic services include skill assessment, labor market information; consumer reports on training programs and job search and placement assistance. Individualized and training include more intensive assessments, work experiences and occupational skills training. Priority is given to veterans and eligible spouses as well as those individuals with barriers to employment.

WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker Program

Who is served: Specific eligibility guidelines are described in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Dislocated workers are people who lost jobs due to plant closures, company downsizing or some other significant change in market conditions. In most cases, eligible workers are unlikely to return to their occupations because those jobs are no longer economically viable, and they must be eligible for (or have exhausted) unemployment compensation. Other conditions can lead to eligibility for services, such as separating military service members and eligible spouses of military service members, being self-employed but not working as a result of general economic conditions or being a displaced home maker.

Participation: Approximately 330 participants received career services and 250 received training services through the WIOA Dislocated Worker Career Program between July 1, 2018 and June 30, 2019.

Program description: The program tailors employment and training services to meet dislocated workers' needs, establishes early intervention for workers and firms facing substantial layoffs and fosters labor, management and community partnerships with government to address worker dislocation. Dislocated workers are also eligible for basic services including skill assessment, labor market information, training program consumer reports and job search and placement assistance. Individualized and training include more intensive assessments, work experiences and occupational skills training.

WIOA Title III Wagner-Peyser Program

Who is served: Specific eligibility guidelines are described in the WIOA. Career services are available to anyone who is legally entitled to work in the United States no matter one's age or employment status. Through Title III, basic and individualized career services are offered. A veteran or his or her eligible spouse has a priority to receive such services.

Participation: 85,500 participants were served under Wagner-Peyser between July 1, 2018 and June 30, 2019.

Program description: The Wagner-Peyser Act of 1933 established a nationwide system of public employment offices, known as the Employment Service. The Employment Service seeks to improve the functioning of the nation's labor markets by bringing together individuals seeking employment with employers seeking workers. The Wagner-Peyser Act was amended in 1998 to make the Employment Service part of the one-stop delivery system under the Workforce

Investment Act. In 2014, the Wagner-Peyser Act was amended again under Title III of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

The Employment Service under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act builds upon the previous workforce reforms, requires colocation of the Employment Service offices into the nearly 2,500 American Job Centers nationwide, and aligns performance accountability indicators with other federal workforce programs. Basic services include skill assessment, labor market information; consumer reports on training programs and job search and placement assistance. Individualized services include career and vocational counseling.

VI. Arkansas Workforce Centers

The Arkansas Workforce Centers are the gateways to job services and workforce development programs in our state.

With 33 Arkansas Workforce Centers located strategically throughout the state, representatives are available to help employers and job seekers find the best resources and services to meet their needs.

The Arkansas Workforce Centers represent Arkansas' version of the American Job Centers. They are designed to provide universal access to an integrated array of services so that workers, job seekers, and businesses can find the services they need in one stop, and frequently under one roof.

All Arkansas Workforce Centers offer a consistent line of resources for employers and job seekers. However, the full menu of services may vary from center to center, as each site can tailor the additional services it offers to meet the specific needs of employers and job seekers in their community.

At the Arkansas Workforce Centers, customers receive services on three levels:

1. Self-service in the resource rooms
2. Intensive services and career counseling
3. Training and skill-building for those who qualify

Customers can search and apply for jobs online in the AWC resource rooms. These rooms are equipped with computer stations, Internet, printers, copiers, fax machines, phones, and staff to assist as needed. With an Arkansas JobLink account, job seekers can search for employment opportunities, apply for jobs, and post their resume, skills, and other credentials to a profile viewable by employers.

In PY2018, there were 108,114 staff-assisted participant registrations in the Arkansas JobLink system.

Workforce specialists assist individuals who require or request personal assistance and intensive services. In one-on-one meetings, staff interview and assess clients to determine specific needs and eligibility for programs. Workforce specialists also provide career counseling and work with job seekers to develop customized employment plans

based on their current skill sets, professional experience, employment history, cost of living, and personal goals.

In PY2018, there were 50,918 referrals made by Workforce Center staff in the Arkansas JobLink System.

VII. WIOA Discretionary Grants

Discretionary Grants

Since 2010, ADWS has been awarded a total of over \$40 million in discretionary grants funding.

Discretionary grants provide economic support for workforce development initiatives and relief funds for temporary employment, clean-up efforts, and infrastructure repairs when natural disasters strike.

During the Program Year, efforts have been focused on building partnerships with stakeholders and employers across the state to expand and diversify registered apprenticeship programs (and the number of apprentices) in Arkansas. As an example, ADWS has initiated the launching of a series of *Employers Growing Talent Through Apprenticeship – Employer Forums* to increase awareness and interest of the proven registered apprenticeship model as a workforce development solution. These collective efforts have contributed to unprecedented growth in both the number of apprentices and registered apprenticeship programs over the last year. This expansion has been facilitated through the following grants: ApprenticeshipUSA State Accelerator, Arkansas Apprenticeship Pathway Initiative (AAPI), and Arkansas Expands Apprenticeship (AREA).

ApprenticeshipUSA State Accelerator Grant

The ApprenticeshipUSA State Accelerator grant has a period of performance that started on June 1st, 2016 and concluded on November 30, 2018. The Accelerator grant is a planning grant intended to provide support for governors and their states as they build upon existing strategies to expand and diversify registered apprenticeship. These strategies include convening key industry representatives, state agency leaders, community college representatives and other stakeholders to form strategic partnerships, and elevate apprenticeship as a workforce solution in both traditional apprenticeship industries (i.e., construction trades) and non-traditional apprenticeship industries (i.e., information technology, healthcare, advanced manufacturing, business services, transportation, etc.).

The final deliverable of the Accelerator grant resulted in the development of the *State Plan for Registered Apprenticeship Expansion and Diversification* (<https://www.dws.arkansas.gov/news-info/apprenticeship-news/>). The State Plan includes a series of recommendations that together offer a strategic alignment of resources and communications efforts to maximize registered apprenticeship expansion efforts within the state.

Arkansas Apprenticeship Pathway Initiative

Registered apprenticeship offers a career pathway for job seekers to learn a skill and earn good wages while earning a marketable credential from the U.S. Department of Labor. Apprentices are considered employees from day one of the program; they receive paid training and progressive increases in wage as they demonstrate skills gain.

The AAPI grant is expanding registered apprenticeship opportunities in the traditional registered apprenticeship construction trades, as well as in the non-traditional registered apprenticeship industry sectors, such as information technology and advanced manufacturing.

Collaborative work efforts under the AAPI grant has pioneered non-traditional (i.e., outside the construction trades) registered apprenticeship programs in Arkansas, introducing software developer and cybersecurity apprenticeships working with the Arkansas Center for Data Sciences and partnering employers as well as industrial maintenance, culinary, and nursing related apprenticeships. The AAPI grant is scheduled to end September 30, 2020.

Arkansas Expands Apprenticeship

The AREA grant was the last of the three USDOL ApprenticeshipUSA Initiative Grants awarded to ADWS. This grant award is offering the opportunity to leverage funding to expand Arkansas' capacity to collaborate with employers and start new apprenticeship programs across diverse industries and communities. AREA registered apprenticeship training programs are available across all industry sectors where employer demand drives the expansion of existing programs or the development of new programs. The AREA grant is scheduled to end on October 31, 2020.

Re-Employment Systems Integration

Arkansas strives to promote and support a talent development system that offers employers, individuals, and communities the opportunity to achieve and sustain economic prosperity. This project's purpose is to build on the relationship between the ADWS and its WIOA Partners in the design & development of a secure, integrated common intake & case management system that is a citizen-focused service delivery model that enhances the access to programs & services for all of our customers.

ADWS and our WIOA partners have implemented a Business Service Teams Solution in Arkansas's workforce centers, that will enable us to coordinate, manage, and record the services being provided to business' to meet the spirit of the WIOA law, to avoid multiple contacts to business by leveraging the communication tools available in Salesforce, and to establish additional data for reporting the new business metrics.

Disaster National Dislocated Worker Grant– AR-29 (Storms occurring between July 1, 2018 and June 30, 2019)

In June of 2017, the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency declared storm impacted counties within the northwest and north central regions as federal disaster areas. ADWS received a total award of \$2,060,000 to fund temporary employment and recovery assistance for storm debris removal and repairs. Disaster NDWG AR-29 has an end date of June 30, 2019.

Arkansas PROMISE

Arkansas PROMISE is part of a program sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education and the Social Security Administration to help youth receiving disability benefits, and their families, improve their educational and employment outcomes. This project is being implemented in 11 states. In Arkansas, the program is administered by the Department of Education and the University of Arkansas, in partnership with several other state agencies and private organizations. PROMISE provides services to youth and their families, including intensive case management, two paid competitive work experiences, education and employment training, and support for youth and families, benefits counseling, and health and wellness training. Arkansas PROMISE has an end date of September 30, 2018.

VIII. Arkansas Labor Market

The 2019 Arkansas Labor Market and Economic Report, released in Summer 2019, projected information for industry and occupational trends covering the years 2018 to 2020.

Arkansas increased in population in 2018 by 10,828 from 2017; and added a total of 46,099 new residents from 2014 to 2018. Of Arkansas's 10 Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs), Northwest Arkansas continues to see the largest increase in population, adding 36,160 in 2018. The Eastern, North Central, Southeast, and Southwest Arkansas LWDAs continued to see decreasing populations in 2018.

Between 2017 and 2018 the state's labor force decreased by 2,769 and employment decreased by 2,975. Labor force and employment were mixed across LWDAs. The State's unemployment rate remained at 3.7% in 2018, but that is a drop of two and three-tenths percentage points since 2014. The unemployment rate dropped in 2018, ending the month of July at 3.4%. The unemployment rate decreased across all LWDAs in 2018 and through July 2019. The Northwest Arkansas LWDA unemployment rate fell below state levels through July 2019.

Short-term employment projections for 2018-2020 continue to see an increase in the Arkansas job market with 38,742 jobs, equivalent to a 2.75% rise in employment. Good-producing Industries are estimated to see a net gain of 9,066 jobs; while the Services-Producing Industries are forecast to increase employment by 26,480. Arkansas's self-employed ranks are estimated to experience a net gain of 2,823, an increase of 2.25%.

Jobs requiring a high school diploma or equivalent are estimated to add more jobs than any other education level with 15,511 jobs between 2018 and 2020. Occupations requiring a Bachelor's degree are expected to grow by 7,851.

IX. State's Strategic Vision and Goals Progress

In Arkansas, the Arkansas Workforce Development Board is responsible for ensuring that the vision and goals for the state's workforce development system are being met. Consequently, the Board has assigned this duty to its Strategic Planning Committee. Upon its inception, the Strategic Planning Committee developed a Strategic Action Plan grid that contained the ongoing strategic goals for the State, complete with milestones and completion dates. At each of its quarterly meetings, the Strategic Planning Committee reviews an updated Action Plan that provides a "report card" towards achieving these goals. Some of this Committee's strategic goals and progress made towards achieving them are listed below:

Strategic Planning Committee Action Plan Results

- The development, implementation, and modification of the state workforce development plan. PY2016-2019 Completed. PY2020-2023 Ongoing.
- The review of statewide policies, of statewide programs, and of recommendations on actions that should be taken by the state to align workforce development programs in the state in a manner that supports a comprehensive and streamlined workforce

development system in the state, including the review and provision of comments on the state plan, if applicable, for programs and activities of one-stop partners that are not core programs. Continuous.

- The development and continuous improvement of the workforce development system in the state, including the identification of barriers and means for removing barriers to better coordinate, align, and avoid duplication among the programs and activities carried out through the system. Continuous and Update provided at each Committee Meeting.
- The development of strategies to support the use of career pathways for the purpose of providing individuals, including low-skilled adults, youth, and individuals with barriers to employment (including individuals with disabilities), with workforce investment activities, education, and supportive services to enter or retain employment. Continuous and Update provided at each Committee Meeting.
- The development of strategies for providing effective outreach to and improved access for individuals and employers who could benefit from services provided through the workforce development system. Continuous and Update provided at each Committee Meeting.
- The development and expansion of strategies for meeting the needs of employers, workers, and jobseekers, particularly through industry or sector partnerships related to in-demand industry sectors and occupations. Continuous and updates provided at each Committee Meeting.
- The identification of regions, including planning regions, after consultation with local boards and chief elected officials. Completed.
- The development of strategies to support staff training and awareness across programs supported under the workforce development system. Continuous via bi-annual Statewide WIOA Partner Meeting;
- The development and review of statewide policies affecting the coordinated provision of services through the state's one-stop delivery system. Initial policy manual developed, but ongoing review and identification of new policy needs ongoing.
- The development of strategies for technological improvements to facilitate access to, and improve the quality of, services and activities provided through the one-stop delivery system. Initial project approved and ongoing, with quarterly progress reports.
- Strengthen the professional development of providers and workforce professionals; and Ensure such technology is accessible to individuals with disabilities and individuals residing in remote areas. Ongoing.
- The development of allocation formulas for the distribution of funds for employment and training activities for adults, and youth workforce investment activities, to local areas. Approved, but reviewed annually.

X. Sector Strategies and Career Pathways

Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), economic development entities are partners in the workforce system. While economic development efforts are centered on recruiting new businesses and helping existing ones expand in a region, workforce development partners assist with the expansion and retention activities of existing businesses.

This entails sector strategies for training, skill upgrading, work-based learning (including apprenticeship), on-the-job training, work experience, incumbent worker training, and customized training.

Sector Strategies and Industry Initiatives

Industry focus groups and sector initiatives (also called sector partnerships or sector strategies) are regional, employer-driven partnerships of industry leaders, education and training consortia, and other stakeholders that focus on the workforce needs of key industries in a regional labor market.

ADWS has previously released guidance and funding availability opportunities to Local Workforce Development Boards to encourage the development and implementation of sector strategies planning efforts on a regional basis. To date, these previous efforts have achieved limited successes. Therefore, ADWS is currently evaluating “best practice” models (e.g., Colorado), technical assistance resources, and various other strategies to incentivize broad-based adoption of sector strategies planning efforts on an ongoing basis across all Local Workforce Development Boards.

Career Pathway Strategies

ADWS, in collaboration with Arkansas Research Center, has developed a Career Pathways report to demonstrate demand within occupations based on Job Posting data (source- EMSI) to wages based on LMI. The reports are grouped by the Career Cluster and Career Pathway associated with each occupation, and presented per Local Area. This information will be provided to Local Areas and updated at least annually.

XI. Business Engagement

During the Program Year, Arkansas continued its efforts in expanding the services available to the State’s businesses through the Workforce Center System. These efforts included further solidifying the roles and responsibilities of Local Workforce Development Area Business Services Teams as well as engagement with WIOA core partners. Several of the LWDA’s are in the early stages of their business services development, implementation and outreach efforts. ADWS has taken the lead in establishing and convening the WIOA Roundtable – Business Engagement Committee that includes representation across partner programs. This Committee has conducted a statewide business services workshop to communicate the menu of services that are offered through the various partner programs. This workshop provided attendees with an overall awareness of available programs in order to better serve clients.

Additionally, the committee members (including a broader group of WIOA core partner representatives) have been active in the development and implementation of Salesforce. Salesforce is a customer relations management tool that will assist business services teams to track and report business engagement activities across partner programs. The Salesforce system will allow business services staff to begin recording actual business engagement activity leading to improved tracking and reporting. A long- term goal for Salesforce is to integrate the sharing and usage of data within the system with economic development and other state agency partners.

XII. Waivers

The State of Arkansas has not requested any waivers.

XIII. Evaluations

While Arkansas has not yet completed an evaluation, efforts in PY2018 to enter into a contract with the University of Arkansas – Fayetteville to complete a workforce system evaluation. This evaluation will employ the most rigorous analytical and statistical methods that are reasonably feasible, such as the use of control groups (20 CFR § 682.220) as appropriate, and includes:

- A. Local Integration Study- Sample Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title I or Title III participants for 3 Local Workforce Development Areas. This part of the evaluation will focus on two primary areas: 1. Co-enrollment and Co-funding of REQUIRED WIOA Partners and 2. Leveraging of Local Resources available in the Local Workforce Development Area.
 1. Sample Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title I and Title III participants for 3 Local Workforce Development Areas-to determine if, based on the participants information in the Case File, the participant might have been eligible to receive services under the required partners listed in 20 CFR § 678.400.
 2. For each local area selected, interview leadership to identify partner programs and non-profits that collaborate with the Workforce Centers beyond the list of required partners above. For all partners, required in number 1 and other partners identified in 2, report whether there exists:
 - Memorandums of Understanding between the programs/entities
 - Referral Procedures
 - Training for partners regarding the services provided or alternative print materials to assist in collaboration OR
 - An alternative method to refer clients between the partners effectively
 3. Identify and report entities in the selected local areas that provide services to the following targeted populations:

• Displaced Homemaker	• Basic Skill Deficient
• Low Income	• Ex-Offender
• Limited English Proficiency	• Single Parent
• Migrant Worker	• TANF Recipient
• Disabled	• SNAP Recipient
• Veteran	• SSDI Recipient
• Older Worker	• UI Claimant
• Out of School Youth	• Long-Term Unemployed
• Foster Youth	
 4. For all programs and services identified in steps 1, 2, and 3, report whether sampled participants were: referred to or co-enrolled in other programs or services.
- B. In the Comprehensive Centers for the 3 Local Areas selected for sampling, report case studies on effectiveness of identifying and closing Skill-Gaps

Interview staff for examples of:

- i. Skills-gap identification on either the occupation level, based on demand, or the skill-level based on interaction with an employer.
 - ii. Determine the services that were provided to address the skills-gap
 - iii. Provide an assessment of the effectiveness of the services provided in closing the skills-gap, if possible.
- C. Review a sample of Arkansas Workforce Centers against the State's certification policy and applicable laws/regulations for four comprehensive centers and two affiliate centers. Each of the six centers selected should be located in different Local Workforce Development Areas and may be selected from Local Workforce Development Areas that overlap the 3 selected above
- D. Conduct a statewide customer service survey for business customers of WIOA Title I and Title III receiving services over the most recent 12 months available.
- E. Provide evaluation status reports on a monthly basis on overall project goals. These reports will be issued at the end of February, March, April, May, June, and July of 2020.
- F. Provide a preliminary evaluation report by August 15, 2020.
- G. Provide a final evaluation, with results, best practices, and recommendations by September 30, 2020.

XIV. Customer Satisfaction

While Arkansas has not implemented a customer satisfaction survey process for WIOA participants, we intend to collect and utilize customer feedback to assist in improving services to better meet the needs of job seeker. The feedback received from customers will be summarized in annual performance report narratives and utilized in the One-Stop certification process.

In addition to the customer service surveys included in our Evaluation Contract that is described above, we will also initiate the following for upcoming years.

DATA COLLECTION

To collect feedback, Arkansas will develop a customer satisfaction survey for job seekers through SurveyMonkey or QUIA. A link to each survey will be emailed to Arkansas Job Link customer accounts accordingly. Initially, this job seeker survey will be sent to WIOA Title I and Title III (Wagner-Peyser) exiters each quarter of the Program Year during the months of July, October, January, and April.

The job seeker survey will be sent from the WIOA@arkansas.gov account and will include the corresponding SurveyMonkey or QUIA survey link.

RESULTS

In addition to annual performance reports and One-Stop certification, results data will be used throughout the program year to improve services to better meet the needs of businesses and

job seekers. Responses and data will be exported from SurveyMonkey or QUIA by the ADWS on a quarterly basis.

The summary data for the survey will be filtered by date to show the proper reporting periods, exported as a customized read-only link, and sent to the ADWS Senior Leadership.

Overall results filtered by date and Arkansas Workforce Center location will be exported as read-only links and sent all applicable Arkansas Workforce Center Managers.

Managers will share the information with their entire staff and use it to improve service delivery performance.

Both summary data and individual Workforce Center data will be presented to the Arkansas Workforce Development Board.

XV. WIOA Title II – Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program

The Arkansas Division of Workforce Services - Adult Education Section provides Adult Basic Education (ABE), Adult Secondary Education (ASE), and English Second Language (ESL) services to all eligible adult education and literacy programs in Arkansas. Using the thirteen considerations, eligible programs will be funded as stated in “Distribution of Funds for Core Programs” using the previously stated competitive processes. Eligible provider’s activities include reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, and English language acquisition instruction delivered by the eligible provider, will be based on the best practices derived from the most rigorous research available and appropriate, including scientifically valid research and effective educational practice. In addition, adult education and literacy providers work collaboratively with other agencies to enhance services.

For example, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services use federal funding to provide services to individuals with disabilities. The Arkansas Division of Workforce Services provide funds to those individuals seeking to enter or retain employment or receive specialized training after completing basic skills acquisition through Arkansas Adult Education.

All providers receiving state and/or federal funding from the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services, Adult Education Section will be required to provide the following services in year one: adult education and literacy activities which include, English language acquisition, integrated English literacy and civics education, workplace education, workforce preparation activities or integrated education and training. Details of these activities will be provided in each program’s proposal.

XVI. WIOA Title IV – Vocational Rehabilitation Program

The Designated State Agency for General Vocational Rehabilitation in Arkansas is the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services - Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS). Title IV of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Similarly, the Division of Services for the Blind is the designated State Agency to provide services for rehabilitation and social services to blind and severely visually impaired persons age 14 and above in Arkansas.

ARS

The Arkansas Division of Workforce Services - Arkansas Rehabilitation Services 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 (StatsRRTC[1]) indicated the employment rate for people with disabilities was 33.9 percent when compared to 79.1 percent for people without disabilities.

The Arkansas State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) is a key partner with Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS) in the administration of the State's Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Program. The Arkansas SRC is a citizen advisory council, appointed by the Governor, to provide guidance to ARS to help individuals with disabilities, including individuals with the most significant disabilities, to obtain, maintain and regain competitive integrated employment, promote full inclusion and integration into society, and to maximize independence and economic self-sufficiency. Its membership helps ARS to develop and operationalize the VR State Plan, develop and operationalize ARS' state goals and priorities, shape and review policy, engage in strategic planning, evaluate the effectiveness of the VR Program, analyze consumer satisfaction and provide guidance, including development and review of cooperative agreements.

DSB

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 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.

The DSB Director and the senior leadership of DSB provide oversight and coordination within the constraints of state and federal laws to fulfill its mission through the following goals:

Please note that under the Governor's Transition Plan, the yet to be appointed Secretary of Commerce will have transitional authority regarding the state director of the Arkansas vocational rehabilitation program as well as the Commissioner of Arkansas Rehabilitation

- Employment - To assist Arkansans who are blind or visually impaired to secure or maintain employment and consistent with their skills, abilities, and interests.
- Rehabilitation - To assist Arkansans who are blind or visually impaired to live as independently as possible through the development of skills, accommodations, or adaptations that are necessary to perform all activities of daily living.
- Prevention of Blindness - To assist in preventing blindness stabilizing vision, and, where possible, restoring vision.

- Field Services personnel provide the local level coordination and facilitation of all general vocational rehabilitation services for individuals with blind or visual impairment issues. This includes, but is not limited to, vocational rehabilitation counseling, vocational case management, eligibility determination, individual employment plan development, transition services, and job placement.
- Business and Technology personnel provide assistance to educate consumers to develop management and business ownership within the Vending Facility Program (VFP). The Vending Facility Program Services are available to eligible blind persons who are interested in and have the necessary skills to manage snack bars

Through the Governor’s Executive Order 10-17, 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.

XVII. Statewide Activities

National Apprenticeship Week Starts November 12

Gov. Asa Hutchinson along with leaders of Registered Apprenticeship, Department of Labor, Department of Workforce Services, and Department of Career Education to proclaim Nov. 12-16 Apprenticeship Week in Arkansas.

The week-long event highlights the benefits of apprenticeship in preparing a highly-skilled workforce to meet the talent needs of employers across diverse industries.



XVIII. Statewide Performance Report Results

Table Narrative

The following data tables make up the final portion of Arkansas’s *WIOA Title I and Title III Annual Report*. A few notes may help with interpretation. Federal deadlines and the need for prompt reporting mean that the year-long periods used for some measures are not the same year-long periods used for others. Finally, since these are outcome measures, they concentrate on participants who have left WIOA programs and do not include those who are still participating.

Federal employment rates second quarter after exit and median earnings measures are calculated for participants who exited between July 2017 and June 2018. Federal employment rates four quarters after exit are calculated for participants who exited between July 2017 and

December 2017. Median earnings second quarter after exit are calculated for participants who exited between July 2017 and June 2018.

As the charts below indicate, Arkansas met or exceeded the 90% threshold in all performance measures.

Moreover, Arkansas experienced increases in services provided to the WIOA-defined *Populations with Barriers to Employment*. Between Program Year 2017 and Program Year 2018, Arkansas the following increases:

- Exhausting TANF within 2 years - increased from 123 to 1,338
- Ex-Offenders – increased from 1,202 to 1,573
- Homeless – increased from 537 to 693
- Low-Income – increased from 11,816 to 18,971
- Individuals with Disabilities (incl. Youth) – increased from 1,657 to 2,846
- Youth in foster care or aged out of system – increased from 25 to 73

The Employment Rate Q4 experienced increases as well, including:

- Individuals with Disabilities – increased from 50.74% to 56.97%
- Youth in foster care or aged out of system – increased from 75.00% to 81.82%
- Ex-Offenders – increased from 60.78% to 63.86%

Finally, Median Earnings increased for the following populations:

- Displaced Homemakers - \$3,338.29 to \$4,187.37
- English Language Learners - \$4,173.42 to \$4,491.00
- Migrant/Seasonal Farmworkers - \$4,026.97 to \$5,323.37
- Individuals with Disabilities - \$3,646.19 to \$4,942.62
- Youth in foster care or aged out of system - \$2,997.15 to \$3,592.26

The actual performance tables for WIOA Titles I & III are listed on the next page.

ADULTS												
	Total Participants Served (Cohort Period: 07/01/2018 - 06/30/2019)	Total Participants Exited (Cohort Period: 04/01/2018 - 03/31/2019)		Employment Rate (Q2) (Cohort Period: 07/01/2017 - 06/30/2018)		Employment Rate (Q4) (Cohort Period: 01/01/2017 - 12/31/2017)		Median Earnings (Cohort Period: 07/01/2017 - 06/30/2018)	Credential Rate (Cohort Period: 01/01/2017 - 12/31/2017)		Measurable Skill Gains (Cohort Period: 07/01/2018 - 06/30/2019)	
				Rate	Rate	Earnings	Rate	Rate				
Total Statewide	1365	834	Target		91.10%	85.80%	\$6,281.00	74.20%	NA			
			Actual	Num.	724	775	\$6,161.65	661	801			
				Denom.	854	922		84.78%		84.06%	\$6,161.65	818

DISLOCATED WORKERS												
	Total Participants Served (Cohort Period: 07/01/2018 - 06/30/2019)	Total Participants Exited (Cohort Period: 04/01/2018 - 03/31/2019)		Employment Rate (Q2) (Cohort Period: 07/01/2017 - 06/30/2018)		Employment Rate (Q4) (Cohort Period: 01/01/2017 - 12/31/2017)		Median Earnings (Cohort Period: 07/01/2017 - 06/30/2018)	Credential Rate (Cohort Period: 01/01/2017 - 12/31/2017)		Measurable Skill Gains (Cohort Period: 07/01/2018 - 06/30/2019)	
				Rate	Rate	Earnings	Rate	Rate				
Total Statewide	327	226	Target		91.00%	85.50%	\$7,000.00	76.10%	NA			
			Actual	Numerator	237	214	\$6,396.00	149	212			
				Denominator	268	239		88.43%		89.54%	\$6,396.00	189

YOUTH											
	Total Participants Served (Cohort Period: 07/01/2018 - 06/30/2019)	Total Participants Exited (Cohort Period: 04/01/2018 - 03/31/2019)	Placement Rate (Q2) (Cohort Period: 07/01/2017 - 06/30/2018)		Placement Rate (Q4) (Cohort Period: 01/01/2017 - 12/31/2017)		Median Earnings (Cohort Period: 07/01/2017 - 06/30/2018)	Credential Rate (Cohort Period: 01/01/2017 - 12/31/2017)		Measurable Skill Gains (Cohort Period: 07/01/2018 - 06/30/2019)	
				Rate		Rate	Earnings		Rate		Rate
			Target		75.00%		78.10%	NA		75.00%	
Total Statewide	<u>998</u>	<u>593</u>	Actual	Numerator	<u>438</u>		<u>476</u>	<u>\$3,127.68</u>		<u>256</u>	<u>318</u>
				Denominator	<u>548</u>	79.93%	<u>592</u>		80.41%	<u>375</u>	

WAGNER-PEYSER											
	Total Participants Served (Cohort Period: 07/01/2018 - 06/30/2019)	Total Participants Exited (Cohort Period: 04/01/2018 - 03/31/2019)	Employment Rate (Q2) (Cohort Period: 07/01/2017 - 06/30/2018)		Employment Rate (Q4) (Cohort Period: 01/01/2017 - 12/31/2017)		Median Earnings (Cohort Period: 07/01/2017 - 06/30/2018)	Credential Rate (Cohort Period: 01/01/2017 - 12/31/2017)		Measurable Skill Gains (Cohort Period: 07/01/2018 - 06/30/2019)	
				Rate		Rate	Earnings		Rate		Rate
			Target		73.40%		74.50%	\$4,750.00		NA	
Total Statewide	<u>105,016</u>	<u>102,234</u>	Actual	Numerator	<u>75,723</u>		<u>73,505</u>	<u>\$5,136.93</u>		NA	NA
				Denominator	<u>104,727</u>	72.31%	<u>102,206</u>		71.92%	NA	

XIX. Statewide Performance Report - Effectiveness in Serving Employers

WIOA implemented a pilot performance measure to determine the effectiveness in serving employers. States were requested to select two of the three DOL pilot measures and could include additional state-defined employer measures. The state of Arkansas has chosen for the pilot period to report on the following for the *Effectiveness in Serving Employer* performance indicator:

- Retention with the Same Employer
- Employer Penetration.

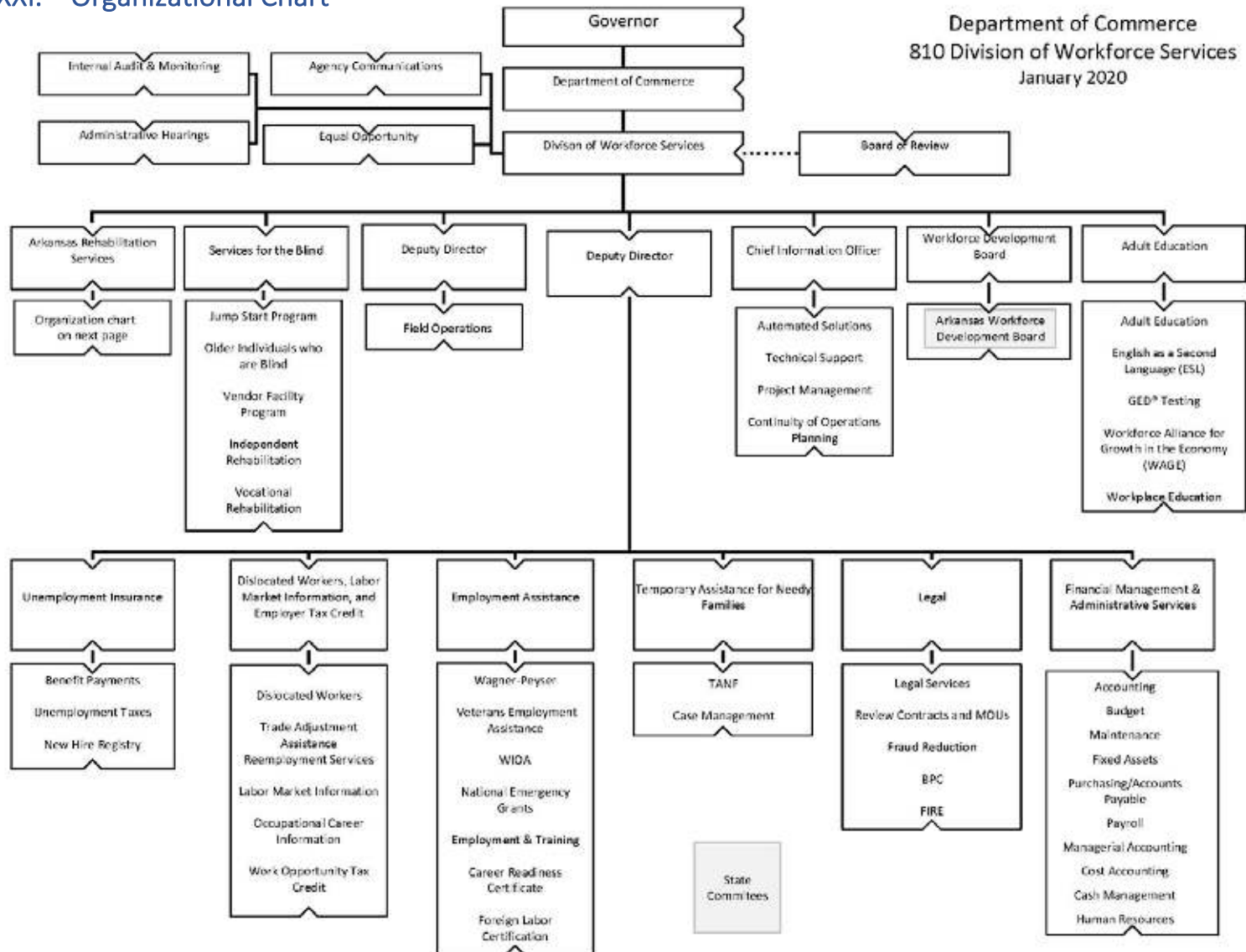
The first chart details the specific services provider to Employers, by service type, during the program year.

Effectiveness in Serving Employers	
Employer Services	Establishment Count Cohort Period: 7/1/2018-6/30/2019
Employer Information and Support Services	2,809
Workforce Recruitment Assistance	5,521
Engaged in Strategic Planning/Economic Development	69
Accessing Untapped Labor Pools	119
Training Services	22
Incumbent Work Training Services	6
Rapid Response/Business Downsizing Assistance	65
Planning Layoff Response	27

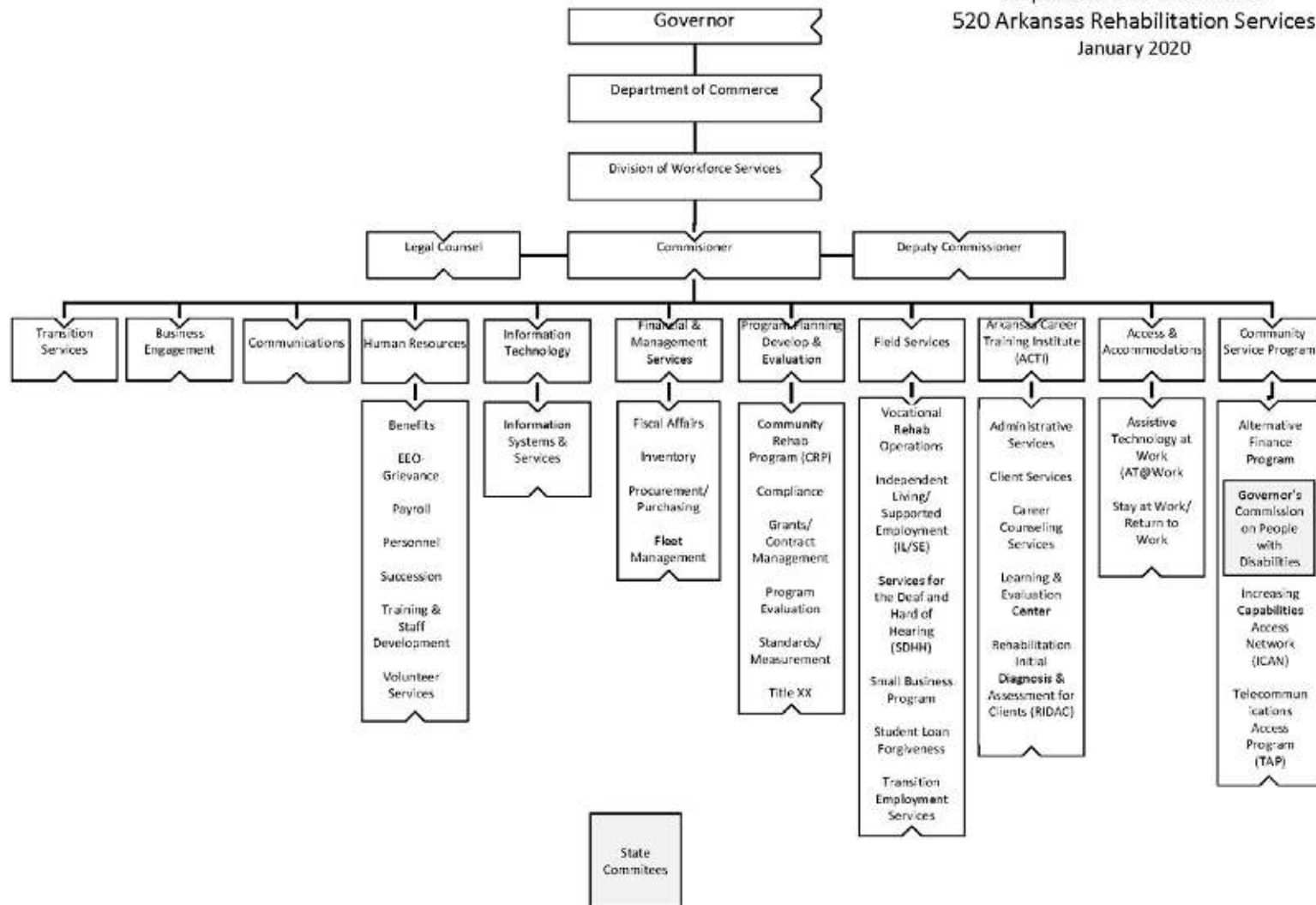
The chart below details the actual achieved performance for the two pilot measures, Retention with the Same Employer and Employer Penetration, during the program year.

Pilot Measures	Numerator/Denominator*	Rate Cohort Period: 7/1/2018-6/30/2019
Retention with Same Employer in the 2nd and 4th Quarters After Exit Rate	44.014/66,539	66.1%
Employer Penetration Rate	6,932/104,832	6.6%
Repeat Business Customers Rate	N/A	N/A
State Established Measure	N/A	N/A

XXI. Organizational Chart



Department of Commerce
 520 Arkansas Rehabilitation Services
 January 2020



**Appendix I
WIOA Title II and IV Performance
PY18-19**

Title II Adult Education PY18-19 Performance

2018-19 Performance

Measurable Skill Gains

Entering Educational Functioning Level	Total Number of Participants*	Percentage of Measurable Skill Gains Target	Percentage of Measurable Skill Gains Achieved
ABE Level 1	490	51%	38.10%
ABE Level 2	3,010	46%	40.18%
ABE Level 3	3,437	45%	46.87%
ABE Level 4	1,904	46%	58.19%
ABE Level 5	505	50%	56.64%
ABE Level 6	69	N/A	52.17%
ESL Level 1	1,238	34%	46.85%
ESL Level 2	972	41%	52.28%
ESL Level 3	497	48%	59.56%
ESL Level 4	177	50%	56.11%
ESL Level 5	111	41%	53.50%
ESL Level 6	23	22%	41.66%
Grand Total	12433	45%	48.17%

**Participant in Adult Education between July 1, 2018- June 30, 2019*

**Appendix I
WIOA Title II and IV Performance
PY18-19**

Measurable Skill Gains by Barriers to Employment

	Measurable Skill Gains (07/01/18 - 06/30/19)	
Displaced Homemakers	65	39.39%
English Language Learners, Low Levels of Literacy, Cultural Barriers	6,084	48.20%
Exhausting TANF within 2 years (Part A Title IV of the Social Security Act)	6	25.00%
Ex-offenders	764	39.39%
Homeless Individuals / runaway youth	97	40.80%
Long-term Unemployed (27 or more consecutive weeks)	274	47.90%
Low-Income Individuals	1,568	47.30%
Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers	18	50.00%
Individuals with Disabilities (incl. youth)	260	44.10%
Single Parents (Incl. single pregnant women)	403	42.60%
Youth in foster care or aged out of system	20	37.00%

Appendix I
WIOA Title II and IV Performance
PY18-19

Follow-up Measures

Primary Indicators of Performance	Number of Participants who Exited	Total POPs	Total Number of POPs Participants Achieved Outcome or Median Earnings Value for All POPs	Percentage of Participants in All POPs Achieving Outcome Target	Percentage of Participants in All POPs Achieving Outcome Achieved
Employment Second Quarter after exit* <i>(All Exited Participants excluding Corrections)</i>	9,879	9,967	4,241	N/A	42.55%
Employment Fourth Quarter after exit** <i>(All Exited Participants excluding Corrections)</i>	4,057	4,059	1,902	N/A	46.85%
Median Earnings Second Quarter after exit*	4,241	4,241	\$3,955.71	N/A	-----
Attained a Secondary School Diploma/Equivalent and Enrolled in Postsecondary Education or Training within one year of exit** <i>(Entry at ASE)</i>	1,662	1,663	198	N/A	11.90%
Attained a Secondary School Diploma/Equivalent and Employed within one year of exit** <i>(Entry at ASE)</i>	1,662	1,663	633	N/A	38.06%
Attained a Postsecondary Credential while enrolled or within one year of exit** <i>(Dual Enrollment)</i>	4	4	0	N/A	0.00%
Attained any credential (unduplicated)**	1,665	1,666	804	N/A	48.25%

*Exited 07/01/2017 - 06/30/2018

** Exited 01/01/2017 - 12/31/2017

Appendix I
WIOA Title II and IV Performance
PY18-19

Follow-up Measures by Barriers to Employment

	Employment Rate (Q2) (07/01/17 - 06/30/18)		Employment Rate (Q4) (01/01/17 - 12/31/17)		Median Earnings (07/01/17 - 06/30/18)	Credential Rate (01/01/17 - 12/31/17)	
Displaced Homemakers	48	44.43%	22	46.79%	\$2,597.00	81	4.87%
English Language Learners, Low Levels of Literacy, Cultural Barriers	4,241	42.55%	1,902	46.85%	\$3,955.71	804	48.36%
Exhausting TANF within 2 years (Part A Title IV of the Social Security Act)	0	0.00%	2	40.00%	\$0.00	2	0.24%
Ex-offenders	626	45.49%	279	46.89%	\$4,208.00	123	7.40%
Homeless Individuals / runaway youth	76	44.70%	34	46.57%	\$4,575.00	15	0.90%
Long-term Unemployed (27 or more consecutive weeks)	160	47.05%	69	46.93%	\$1,640.00	36	2.16%
Low-Income Individuals	1,046	45.15%	469	46.85%	\$3,101.00	210	12.63%
Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers	14	45.15%	6	46.14%	\$1,684.00	2	0.12%
Individuals with Disabilities (incl. youth)	168	45.15%	75	46.58%	\$2,114.00	37	2.22%
Single Parents (Incl. single pregnant women)	366	45.18%	164	46.85%	\$4,339.00	60	3.61%
Youth in foster care or aged out of system	19	44.17%	8	42.10%	\$3,191.00	5	0.30%

Appendix I
WIOA Title II and IV Performance
PY18-19

2018-19 Table 4

Entering Educational Functioning Level	Total Number of Participants	Total Attendance Hours for all participants	Total number of POPs in which Participants achieved at least one EFL gain	Total number of POPs in which a SSD was attained	Percentage of POPs with Measurable Skill Gains
ABE Level 1	490	41,705	185	4	38.10%
ABE Level 2	3,010	241,959	1,086	142	40.18%
ABE Level 3	3,437	245,007	937	704	46.87%
ABE Level 4	1,904	119,134	356	766	58.19%
ABE Level 5	505	27,780	80	210	56.64%
ABE Level 6	69	5,005	16	20	52.17%
ABE Total	9,415	680,589	2,660	1,846	47.12%
ESL Level 1	1,238	97,355	585	4	46.85%
ESL Level 2	972	92,474	513	2	52.28%
ESL Level 3	497	56,370	299	3	59.56%
ESL Level 4	177	19,235	99	2	56.11%
ESL Level 5	111	12,585	60	1	53.50%
ESL Level 6	23	3,935	10	0	41.66%
ESL Total	3018	281953.3	1566	12	51.45%
Grand Total	12433	962542.5	4226	1858	48.17%

Appendix I
WIOA Title II and IV Performance
PY18-19

2018-19 Table 5

Primary Indicators of Performance	Number of Participants who Exited	Number of Participants who Exited Achieving Outcome or Median Earnings Value	Percentage of Participants Achieving Outcome	Total Periods of Participation	Total Number of Periods of Participation in which Participants Achieved Outcome or Median Earnings Value for All Periods of Participation	Percentage of Participants in All Periods of Participation Achieving Outcome
Employment Second Quarter after exit	9,879	4,241	42.92%	9,967	4,241	42.55%
Employment Fourth Quarter after exit	4,057	1,902	46.88%	4,059	1,902	46.85%
Median Earnings Second Quarter after exit	4,241	\$3,955.71	N/A	4,241	\$3,955.71	N/A
Attained a Secondary School Diploma/Equivalent and Enrolled in Postsecondary Education or Training within one year of exit	1,662	198	11.91%	1,663	198	11.90%
Attained a Secondary School Diploma/Equivalent and Employed within one year of exit	1,662	633	38.08%	1,663	633	38.06%
Attained a Postsecondary Credential while enrolled or within one year of exit	4	0	0.00%	4	0	0.00%
Attained any credential (unduplicated)	1,665	804	48.28%	1,666	804	48.25%

Appendix I
WIOA Title II and IV Performance
PY18-19

Barriers

	Total Participants (07/01/18 - 06/30/19)	Total Participants Exited (04/01/18-03/31/19)	Employment Rate (Q2) (07/01/17 - 06/30/18)		Employment Rate (Q4) (01/01/17 - 12/31/17)		Median Earnings (07/01/17 - 06/30/18)	Credential Rate (01/01/17 - 12/31/17)		Measurable Skill Gains (07/01/18 - 06/30/19)	
Displaced Homemakers	165	108	48	44.43%	22	46.79%	\$2,597.00	81	4.87%	65	39.39%
English Language Learners, Low Levels of Literacy, Cultural Barriers	12,629	9,383	4,241	42.55%	1,902	46.85%	\$3,955.71	804	48.36%	6,084	48.20%
Exhausting TANF within 2 years (Part A Title IV of the Social Security Act)	24	13	0	0.00%	2	40.00%	\$0.00	2	0.24%	6	25.00%
Ex-offenders	1,937	1,376	626	45.49%	279	46.89%	\$4,208.00	123	7.40%	764	39.39%
Homeless Individuals / runaway youth	238	170	76	44.70%	34	46.57%	\$4,575.00	15	0.90%	97	40.80%
Long-term Unemployed (27 or more consecutive weeks)	572	340	160	47.05%	69	46.93%	\$1,640.00	36	2.16%	274	47.90%
Low-Income Individuals	3,312	2,316	1,046	45.15%	469	46.85%	\$3,101.00	210	12.63%	1,568	47.30%
Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers	36	31	14	45.15%	6	46.14%	\$1,684.00	2	0.12%	18	50.00%
Individuals with Disabilities (incl. youth)	589	372	168	45.15%	75	46.58%	\$2,114.00	37	2.22%	260	44.10%
Single Parents (Incl. single pregnant women)	946	810	366	45.18%	164	46.85%	\$4,339.00	60	3.61%	403	42.60%
Youth in foster care or aged out of system	54	43	19	44.17%	8	42.10%	\$3,191.00	5	0.30%	20	37.00%

Appendix I
WIOA Title II and IV Performance
PY18-19

Reporting Time Frames

Program Year 2018 (PY18) Annual Report July 1, 2018 -Jun 30, 2019

<i>Report Due Date</i>	<i>October 1, 2019</i>
Number Served (Participant)	7/01/18 to 6/30/19
Number Exited (Participant)	4/1/18 to 3/31/19
Employment Rate Second Quarter After Exit	7/01/17 to 6/30/18
Employment Rate Fourth Quarter After Exit	1/01/17 to 12/31/17
Median Earnings Second Quarter After Exit	7/01/17 to 6/30/18
Credential Attainment Rate	1/01/17 to 12/31/17
Measurable Skill Gains	7/01/18 to 6/30/19

Appendix I
WIOA Title II and IV Performance
PY18-19

Title IV Total Performance Measures (Rehabilitation Services including Services for the Blind)

Program and Summary Information

	Career Services	Training Services
Participants Served	12378	6750
Participants Exited	3883	1806
Funds Expended	5878522	14514987
Cost Per Participant Served	475	2150

Other Summary Information

Percent Admin Expended	N/A
Percent enrolled in more than one core program	0.0
Percent training-related employment	N/A

Appendix I
WIOA Title II and IV Performance
PY18-19

By Participant Characteristics

Total Statewide

Total Participants Served	13674
Total Participants Exited	3958

	Target	Actual
Employment (Q2) Number		1860
Employment (Q2) Rate		56.3
Employment (Q4) Number		
Employment (Q4) Rate		
Median Earnings		5240.93
Credential Number		
Credential Rate		
Measurable Skill Gains Number		772
Measurable Skill Gains Rate		25.2

By Sex

	Female	Male
Total Participants Served	7607	6064
Total Participants Exited	2118	1838
Employment (Q2) Number	1004	856
Employment (Q2) Rate	57.1	55.3
Employment (Q4) Number		
Employment (Q4) Rate		
Median Earnings	4929.26	5511.33
Credential Number		
Credential Rate		
Measurable Skill Gains number	448	324
Measurable Skill Gains Rate	25.2	25.3

Appendix I
WIOA Title II and IV Performance
PY18-19

By Age

	Younger than 16	16 to 18	19 to 24	25 to 44	45 to 54	55 to 59	60 and Older
Total Participants Served	55	4103	3237	3364	1401	656	858
Total Participants Exited	5	830	840	1085	495	275	428
Employment (Q2) Number	3	444	388	487	229	124	185
Employment (Q2) Rate	33.3	63.2	56.2	54.8	55.2	53.4	50.4
Employment (Q4) Number							
Employment (Q4) Rate							
Median Earnings	3351.30	5496.40	4661.84	5097.70	5618.70	6345.21	4956.42
Credential Number							
Credential Rate							
Measurable Skill Gains number	22	475	172	79	19	4	1
Measurable Skill Gains Rate	71.0	30.0	21.3	16.7	15.8	11.4	6.3

By Ethnicity

	American Indian/ Alaskan Native	Asian	Black/ African American	Hispanic/ Latino	Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	White	More than One Race
Total Participants Served	226	132	4865	550	83	8529	649
Total Participants Exited	71	41	1201	184	32	2668	204
Employment (Q2) Number	29	17	506	62	10	1329	88
Employment (Q2) Rate	50.0	56.7	52.1	47.3	50.0	58.4	51.8
Employment (Q4) Number							
Employment (Q4) Rate	5550.90	3000.00	4677.74	5052.28	3000.00	5563.47	4805.26
Median Earnings							
Credential Number							
Credential Rate							
Measurable Skill Gains Number	19	10	174	38	3	577	50
Measurable Skill Gains Rate	31.1	25.6	19.0	29.7	20.0	27.6	28.2

Appendix I
WIOA Title II and IV Performance
PY18-19

By Employment Barrier

	Displaced Homemakers	English Language Learners	Exhausting TANF within 2 years	Ex-offenders	Homeless Individuals/ Runaway Youth	Long-termed Unemployed
Total Participants Served	151	686	81	359	211	6716
Total Participants Exited	48	2328	21	118	52	1686
Employment (Q2) Number	51	218	4	25	24	487
Employment (Q2) Rate	0.0	48.9	20.0	37.3	48.0	46.5
Employment (Q4) Number						
Employment (Q4) Rate						
Median Earnings	5489.86	3678.25	2449.41	2738.36	5575.18	4544.92
Credential Number						
Credential Rate						
Measurable Skill Gains Number	4	97	1	4	9	368
Measurable Skill Gains Rate	20.0	28.5	4.8	14.8	22.0	21.1

By Employment Barrier (continued)

	Low-Income Individuals	Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers	Individuals with Disabilities	Single Parents	Youth in foster care or aged out of system
Total Participants Served	5105	19	13674	931	205
Total Participants Exited	1466	9	3958	267	66
Employment (Q2) Number	486	2	1860	105	23
Employment (Q2) Rate	49.1	100.0	56.3	57.4	43.4
Employment (Q4) Number					
Employment (Q4) Rate					
Median Earnings	3517.11	4516.52	5240.93	5295.82	5859.39
Credential Number					
Credential Rate					
Measurable Skill Gains Number	180	0	772	33	6
Measurable Skill Gains Rate	19.4	0.0	25.2	22.1	16.2

Appendix I
WIOA Title II and IV Performance
PY18-19

Measurable Skill Gains

	Educational Functioning Level Gain	Secondary School Diploma or Recognized Equivalent	Secondary/ Postsecondary Transcript	Training Milestones	Skills Progression
Total Skills Gain	2	63	678	24	34
Total Opportunities for Skills Gains	2000	3000	3068	3000	3091
Measurable Skills Gains Success Rate	0.10	2.10	22.10	0.80	1.10

Title IV- Services for the Blind (only)

1. Measurable Skill Gains
 - a. State Rate for VR 25.2%
 - b. DSB Rate 54.7%
2. Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit
 - a. State VR Rate \$5240.93
 - b. DSB Rate \$6623.43
3. Employment Rate 2Q After Exit
 - a. State Rate 56.3%
 - b. DSB Rate 33%
4. Employment Rate 4Q After Exit
 - a. We have not reported on this data yet.
5. Retention with Same Employer
 - a. DSB Rate 35%

**For Consideration of the
Arkansas Workforce Development Board**

January 21, 2020

AGENDA ITEM 7 - ACTION: WIOA One-Stop Center Certification Policy Review

INFORMATION/RATIONALE: During implementation, WIOA required the State WDB, in consultation with CEOs and Local WDBs, to establish objective criteria and procedures to use when certifying its American Job Centers (20 CFR 678.800, 34 CFR 361.800, and 34 CFR 463.800). The certification process establishes a minimum level of quality and consistency of services in American Job Centers across a State.

These standards must be reviewed every two years.

RECOMMENDATION: The attached information was presented to the Strategic Planning Committee and the Program Performance and Evaluation Committee on January 7, 2020. The Strategic Planning Committee recommends the approval of the WIOA One-Stop Center Certification Policy Review as presented by Staff.



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Little Rock, AR 72203
dws.arkansas.gov

Asa Hutchinson
Governor

Daryl E. Bassett
Director

**DEPARTMENT OF WORKFORCE SERVICES
ISSUANCE NUMBER PY 17-04**

Daryl E. Bassett, Director

December 11, 2017

TO: Local Workforce Development Board Members
Local Workforce Development Board Directors
Local Elected Officials
Arkansas Workforce Center Partners

SUBJECT: Certification of Arkansas Workforce Centers

- I. **Purpose:** The purpose of this workforce system guidance is to provide instructions to local workforce development boards regarding the certification of Arkansas Workforce Centers.
- II. **General Information:** The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires the State Workforce Development Board (WDB), in consultation with Chief Elected Officials and Local Workforce Development Boards, to establish objective criteria and procedures to use when certifying its American Job Centers (20 CFR 678.800, 34 CFR 361.800, and 34 CFR 463.800), known in Arkansas as Arkansas Workforce Centers. The certification process establishes a minimum level of quality and consistency of services in Arkansas Workforce Centers across the State. The certification criteria allow States to set standard expectations for customer-focused seamless services from a network of employment, training, and related services that help individuals overcome barriers to obtaining and maintaining employment.

The State Workforce Development Board (WDB) must establish objective criteria and procedures for the Local WDBs to use in evaluating the effectiveness, physical and programmatic accessibility, and continuous improvement of Arkansas Workforce Centers. Local WDBs must follow procedures and criteria established by the State WDB and certify its workforce centers and its workforce center network at least once every three years (20 CFR 678.800, 34 CFR 361.800, and 34 CFR 463.800); this includes comprehensive, as well as affiliate centers. Local WDBs may establish additional criteria relating to service coordination achieved by the one-stop delivery system.

- III. **Action Required:** Local Workforce Development Boards and their contractors, as well as partner agencies, should distribute this policy broadly throughout the system to ensure that workforce system staff are familiar with its content and requirements.
- IV. **Inquiries:** All questions or concerns are welcome and may be submitted to the following email:
wioa@arkansas.gov

V. Attachments:

Appendix A: Application for Arkansas Workforce Center Certification

VI. Expiration Date: Ongoing



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APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATION

Organization Name:		Date:	
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Contact Person/Title:	
-----------------------	--

Phone:		Email:	
--------	--	--------	--

Site to be Certified:		Address:	
-----------------------	--	----------	--

Website:	
----------	--

Hours of Operation:	
---------------------	--

Type of Certification:

- New Certification Recertification – Date of Last Certification [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Level of Certification:

- Comprehensive Affiliate

Purpose of Certification

The goal of the certification process is to develop a world-class workforce center network that meets and exceeds the minimal requirements established by the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). It is critical to make the centers user friendly and attractive, creating a public image that is inviting to job seekers, education seekers, and employers seeking skills and talent in the local labor markets.

This document brings all the tools approved by the Arkansas Workforce Development Board (AWDB) into a single reference for Local Workforce Development Board members involved in certifying or recertifying local Arkansas Workforce Centers. It is the intent of the Arkansas WDB to provide this instrument as a guide to what is expected, not to provide the means of how it is to be accomplished. Ongoing organizing, implementation, and ensuring continuous improvement of the local certification process are the responsibility of the local WDB.

Included are minimum core standards that must be a part of the local certification/ recertification process. In a clear, concise manner this guide documents the Arkansas Workforce Centers Certification Process needed by the local WDB when conducting certification site visits. It also reviews the Quality Assurance Process to be used by the local WDB to ensure minimum standards are met and that the Arkansas Workforce Center brand name is protected. It is expected that each local workforce development area may supplement these core standards with additional locally applicable criteria and performance measures to ensure continuous improvement.

Certification is not just about a one-time designation. It is an ongoing process that keeps all parties involved and achieving at high performance levels. As such, the certification process also allows for achieving excellence standards as continuous improvement planning occurs. This certification process serves as an opportunity to continually re-examine, improve, and revise procedures to ensure that the Arkansas workforce development system is a primary asset in Arkansas's economic growth and subsequent high quality of life

Part I

Introduction

The following are core principles for building and continually improving the Arkansas Workforce Center system:

- High quality services to employers, with quality expectations defined by business and industry needs.
- High quality services to individuals, with quality expectations defined by system users.
- Single points of access for a wide array of integrated and coordinated publicly available services.
- Customers who are empowered by information and user-friendly system tools.
- A variety of access points and services that attract a broad range of system users.
- Coordination of funding sources aimed at addressing identified customer priorities.
- Reducing unnecessary duplication of services.
- Increased accountability at all levels.
- Infusion of continuous improvement methods throughout the system.
- Increased overall value of the system through new, creative partnerships.

Historical Background

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires the State Workforce Development Board (WDB), in consultation with Chief Elected Officials and Local Workforce Development Boards, to establish objective criteria and procedures to use when certifying its American Job Centers (20 CFR 678.800, 34 CFR 361.800, and 34 CFR 463.800), known in Arkansas as Arkansas Workforce Centers. The certification process establishes a minimum level of quality and consistency of services in Arkansas Workforce Centers across the State. The certification criteria allow States to set standard expectations for customer-focused seamless services from a network of employment, training, and related services that help individuals overcome barriers to obtaining and maintaining employment.

The State Workforce Development Board (WDB) must establish objective criteria and procedures for the Local WDBs to use in evaluating the effectiveness, physical and programmatic accessibility, and continuous improvement of Arkansas Workforce Centers. Local WDBs must follow procedures and criteria established by the State WDB and certify its workforce centers and its workforce center network at least once every three years (20 CFR 678.800, 34 CFR 361.800, and 34 CFR 463.800); this includes comprehensive, as well as affiliate centers. Local WDBs may establish additional criteria relating to service coordination achieved by the one-stop delivery system.

The State of Arkansas was divided into 10 local workforce development areas based on common geographic and economic factors. Each area contains at least one comprehensive service center, and may have other affiliate centers as part of local access networks connected to the comprehensive sites.

This system provides customers a single point of contact for employment, training, education, and supportive services. Under the oversight of the Arkansas Workforce Development Board, Arkansas Workforce Centers in communities throughout the State integrate multiple workforce development programs and resources, and make them available to individuals at the “street level” through a user-friendly delivery system.

It was envisioned that the local Arkansas Workforce Centers would be designed by employers for employers, to help find and train qualified workers, and assist qualified workers to find jobs in business and industry. The idea was to simplify the maze of current programs into a comprehensive, streamlined system of services for job seekers and employers, eliminating the need to visit different locations and understand multiple, complex program requirements.

A significant key to implementing the Arkansas Workforce Center system was the “no wrong door” approach to providing services that encompasses the principles of universal access, integration, co-location, collaboration, and performance as the building blocks to the system. With the “no wrong door” philosophy, when a customer approaches any Arkansas Workforce Center partner requesting assistance with employment and training needs or services in support of the customer’s job search or skill development, the customer is able to access the best mix of services from the combined menu of all partners’ resources, and gain immediate access to the appropriate next step.

The system was designed to be an open marketplace where:

- Employers define the skills and workforce levels they need.
- Job seekers are armed with information and resources to acquire and document skills they can use in the marketplace.
- Employers, through participation on workforce development boards, are able to hold the system accountable through performance standards, strategic information, and system oversight.
- The Arkansas Workforce Center brand name is widely recognized and valued.
- Public resources are targeted and coordinated toward clearly identified customer needs.

The Future

Workforce development depends heavily upon the vision and leadership of our State’s employers. The Arkansas Workforce Centers will bring about the integration of federal, State, and local workforce programs, giving employers and workers a chance to connect in real or virtual communities, and access labor market information, education, and training. Progress toward complete implementation of Arkansas’s workforce development vision is ongoing. A crucial element in this is the continued involvement of business, industry, and community leaders.

Ultimately, the workforce development system is designed to increase the employment, retention, occupational skill levels, and earnings of Arkansas's workers through universal access to career management tools and high quality service, while creating a well-trained, more competitive workforce for Arkansas's employers. As a result, these systems will improve the skills of the workforce, increase worker income with resulting increases in family self-sufficiency, reduce welfare dependency, enhance the productivity and competitiveness of the State of Arkansas, and ensure a high quality of life for all Arkansans.

Part II

The State Workforce Investment Board’s Vision, Mission, and Philosophy

Vision

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

Mission

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

Arkansas’s Talent Development System Philosophy

- We believe that there must be a pipeline of skilled workers for employers and a job for every Arkansan that wants one.
- We believe that the talent development system of Arkansas must be relevant to the labor market in order to meet the needs of employers and jobseekers, and for Arkansas to compete globally.

- We believe that every Arkansan should have opportunity and access to training and education that leads to a career with gainful employment.
- We believe innovation and partnerships centered around local economic priorities maximizes effectiveness and puts the State in the best position to address local and regional workforce needs.
- We believe Arkansas's workforce system should be a viable resource for business and industry.
- We believe that in order for the talent development system to be the preferred system, the system must be accountable, flexible, and align education and training with business and industry needs.
- We believe that in order for the talent development system to be effective, we must eliminate overlap and duplication of resources and services and streamline investment of funds.

Vision for the Arkansas Workforce Development Delivery System

The publicly funded workforce system envisioned by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) is quality focused, employer-driven, customer-centered, and tailored to meet the needs of regional economies. It is designed to increase access to, and opportunities for, the employment, education, training, and support services that individuals need to succeed in the labor market, particularly those with barriers to employment. It aligns workforce development, education, and economic development programs with regional economic development strategies to meet the needs of local and regional employers, and provides a comprehensive, accessible and high-quality workforce development system. This is accomplished by providing all customers access to high-quality workforce development centers that connect them with the full range of services available in their communities, whether they are looking to find jobs; build basic educational or occupational skills; earn a postsecondary certificate or degree; obtain guidance on how to make career choices; or are businesses and employers seeking skilled workers.

The Arkansas Workforce Development Board adopted a vision for the Arkansas Workforce Development Delivery System at their regular quarterly meeting in October 2015. This vision provides standards for a high quality workforce center including customer service, innovation and service design, and systems integration and high-quality staffing.

The publicly funded workforce system envisioned by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) is quality-focused, employer-driven, customer-centered, and tailored to meet the needs of regional economies. It is designed to increase access to, and opportunities for, the employment, education, training, and support services that individuals need to succeed in the labor market, particularly those with barriers to employment. It aligns workforce development, education, and economic development programs with regional economic development strategies to meet the needs of local and regional employers, and provide a comprehensive, accessible and high-quality workforce development system. This is accomplished by providing all customers access to high-quality workforce development centers that connect them with the full range of services available in their communities, whether they are looking to find jobs, build basic educational or occupational skills, earn a postsecondary certificate or degree, or obtain guidance on how to make career choices, or are businesses and employers seeking skilled workers.

Under WIOA, partner programs and entities that are jointly responsible for workforce and economic development, educational, and other human resource programs collaborate to create a seamless customer-

focused workforce delivery system that integrates service delivery across all programs and enhances access to the programs' services. The workforce delivery system includes six core programs (Title I adult, dislocated worker, and youth programs; Title II adult education and literacy programs; Title III Wagner-Peyser program; and Title IV vocational rehabilitation program), as well as other required and optional partners identified in WIOA. In Arkansas, these programs are administered by the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services (Titles I & III), the Arkansas Department of Career Education (Title II), Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (Title IV) and Division of Services for the Blind of the Arkansas Department of Human Services (Title IV). Through the Arkansas Workforce Center network, these partner programs and their service providers ensure that businesses and job seekers—a shared client base across the multiple programs identified above—have access to information and services that lead to positive employment outcomes. Under WIOA, workforce centers and their partners:

- Provide job seekers with the skills and credentials necessary to secure and advance in employment with family-sustaining wages.
- Provide access and opportunities to all job seekers, including individuals with barriers to employment, such as individuals with disabilities, to prepare for, obtain, retain, and advance in high-quality jobs and high-demand careers.
- Enable businesses and employers to easily identify and hire skilled workers and access other supports, including education and training for their current workforce.
- Participate in rigorous evaluations that support continuous improvement of workforce centers by identifying which strategies work better for different populations.
- Ensure that high-quality integrated data inform decisions made by policy makers, employers, and job seekers.

The management of the Arkansas workforce delivery system is the shared responsibility of States, local boards, elected officials, the core WIOA partners, other required partners, and workforce center operators. The Departments encourage all of these entities to integrate the characteristics below into their work, including developing state, regional, and local strategic plans; establishing workforce center certification criteria; examining the state, regional, and local footprint of workforce centers; conducting competitions for selecting workforce center operators; developing local Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs); updating other workforce center policies and procedures; and operating and delivering services through the Arkansas Workforce Centers.

Characteristics of a High-Quality Arkansas Workforce Center

The characteristics identified below, consistent with the purpose and authorized scope of each of the programs, are designed to reflect elements that contribute to a high-quality workforce delivery system. They demonstrate the spirit and intent of the WIOA, and they will strengthen the successful integration and implementation of partner programs in Arkansas Workforce Centers. For clarity and readability the characteristics have been grouped into three functional categories: (a) Customer Service; (b) Innovation and Service Design; and (c) Systems Integration and High-Quality Staffing.

Customer Service

Arkansas Workforce Centers provide excellent customer service to job seekers, workers and businesses. Meeting the needs of job seekers, workers and businesses is important in developing thriving communities where all citizens succeed and businesses prosper. High-quality workforce centers:

- ***Reflect a Welcoming Environment***
Reflect a welcoming environment to all customer groups who are served by the workforce centers. All workforce center staff are courteous, polite, responsive, and helpful to job seekers, businesses, and others who visit the workforce centers, either in person or by telephone or e-mail. Moreover, workforce center staff are sensitive to the unique needs of individuals with disabilities and are prepared to provide necessary accommodations.
- ***Provide Career Services that Empower***
Provide career services that motivate, support and empower customers, including individuals with disabilities, to make informed decisions based on local and regional economic demand and effectively attain their personal employment and education goals.
- ***Value Skill Development***
Value skill development by assessing and improving each individual's basic, occupational, and employability skills.
- ***Create Opportunities***
Create opportunities for individuals at all skill levels and levels of experience by providing customers, including those with disabilities, as much timely, labor market, job-driven information and choice as possible related to education and training, careers, and service delivery options, while offering customers the opportunity to receive both skill-development and job placement services.
- ***Improve Job Seeker Skills***
Improve the skills of job seeker and worker customers. Workforce centers offer access to education and training leading to industry-recognized credentials through the use of career pathways, apprenticeships, and other strategies that enable customers, including those with disabilities, to compete successfully in today's global economy. They provide businesses with access to the quantity and quality of talent they need and support upskill/backfill strategies that expand job opportunities in the community.
- ***Deliver Quality Business Services***
Develop, offer, and deliver quality business services that assist specific businesses and industry sectors in overcoming the challenges of recruiting, retaining, and developing talent for the regional economy. To support area employers and industry sectors most effectively, workforce center staff identify and have a clear understanding of industry skill needs, identify appropriate strategies for assisting employers, and coordinate business services activities across workforce center partner programs, as appropriate. This includes the incorporation of an integrated and aligned business services strategy among workforce center partners to present a unified voice for the workforce

center in its communications with employers. Additionally, workforce centers use the forthcoming performance measure(s) on effectiveness in serving employers to support continuous improvement of these services.

Innovation and Service Design

Arkansas Workforce Centers reflect innovative and effective service design.

- ***Integrate Intake Process***
Use an integrated and expert intake process for all customers entering the workforce centers. Frontline staff are highly familiar with the functions and basic eligibility requirements of each program, and can appropriately assist customers and make knowledgeable referrals to partner programs, as needed and as appropriate given the authorized scope of the program.
- ***Actively Engage Industry Sectors***
Design and implement practices that actively engage industry sectors and use economic and labor market information, sector strategies, career pathways, Registered Apprenticeships, and competency models to help drive skill-based initiatives.
- ***Use Market Driven Principles***
Balance traditional labor exchange services with strategic talent development within a regional economy. This includes use of market-driven principles and labor market information that help to define a regional economy, its demographics, its workforce and its assets and gaps in skills and resources.
- ***Use Innovative Delivery Models***
Incorporate innovative and evidence-based delivery models that improve the integration of education and training, create career pathways that lead to industry-recognized credentials, encourage work-based learning, and use state-of-the-art technology to accelerate learning and promote college and career success.
- ***Offer Virtual and Center-Based Services***
Include both virtual and center-based service delivery for job seekers, workers, and employers. Both methods of delivery support the talent needs of the regional economy, although each may better serve different customers with different levels of service needs at any given time. The workforce delivery system can expand its reach by delivering robust virtual services; and increasing the accessibility of those services through community partners, such as libraries, community and faith-based organizations, and other partners.
- ***Ensure Access to All Customers***
Ensure meaningful access to all customers. Workforce centers must be physically and programmatically accessible to all customers, including individuals with disabilities. In so doing, workforce centers use principles of universal design and human-centered design, such as flexibility in space usage; the use of pictorial, written, verbal and tactile modes to present information for customers with disabilities or limited English proficiency; providing clear lines of sight to information for seated or standing users;

providing necessary accommodations; and providing adequate space for the use of assistive devices or personal assistants. Workforce centers use assistive technology and flexible business hours to meet the range of customer needs.

Systems Integration and High-Quality Staffing

Arkansas Workforce Centers operate with integrated management systems and high-quality staffing. High-quality workforce centers:

- ***Reflect Robust Partnerships***
Reflect the establishment of robust partnerships among partners. The workforce center operator facilitates an integrated, co-located partnership that seamlessly incorporates services of the core partners and other workforce center partners.
- ***Organize Services 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 perform similar tasks serve on relevant functional teams, e.g. Skills Development Team, Business Services Team. Service integration focuses on serving 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.
- ***Use Common Performance Indicators***
Use common performance indicators to ensure that federal investments in employment and training programs are evidence-based, labor market driven, and accountable to participants and taxpayers. Center performance is transparent and accountable to the communities and regions served; data entry staff are trained and understand the importance of data validation, data collection processes, and the importance of accurate reporting.
- ***Offer Highly Trained Career Counselors***
Staff the center with highly trained career counselors, skilled in advising job seekers of their options, knowledgeable about local labor market dynamics, aware of available services inside and outside the workforce center, and skilled in developing customers' skills for employment success.
- ***Implement Integrated Policies***
Develop and implement operational policies that reflect an integrated system of performance, communication, and case management, and use technology to achieve integration and expanded service offerings.
- ***Cross-Train and Equip Center Staff***
Train and equip workforce center staff in an ongoing learning process with the knowledge, skills, and motivation to provide superior service to job seekers, including those with disabilities, and businesses in

an integrated, regionally focused framework of service delivery. Center staff are cross-trained, as appropriate, to increase staff capacity, expertise, and efficiency. Cross-training allows staff from differing programs to understand every program and to share their expertise about the needs of specific populations so that all staff can better serve all customers. Center staff are routinely trained and are keenly aware as to how their particular function supports and contributes to the overall vision of the local board.

- ***Maintain Integrated Case Management***

Develop and maintain integrated case management systems that inform customer service throughout the customer's interaction with the integrated system and allow information collected from customers at intake to be captured once. Customer information is properly secured in accordance with personally identifiable information guidelines, and facilitated as appropriate, with the necessary memoranda of understanding or other forms of confidentiality and data sharing agreements, consistent with federal and state privacy laws and regulations. Data, however, would be shared with other programs, for those programs' purposes, within the workforce system only after the informed written consent of the individual has been obtained, where required.

Part III

Role of the State Workforce Development Board for Certification

The Arkansas WDB will establish and coordinate policy for use by local workforce development boards in conducting certification and recertification of Arkansas Workforce Centers. This policy will be provided to the local workforce development areas. The Arkansas WDB will ensure that the workforce centers meet the minimum criteria to be designated as a certified Arkansas Workforce Center. The Arkansas WDB will seek to ensure that other State agencies participate fully in the workforce centers, through MOUs, resource sharing, and cost allocation. If the Arkansas WDB decides that these standards are not being met, the local WDB will be notified and a corrective action plan will be requested. If the deficiencies are not corrected in a timely manner, decertification of the center will be recommended to the Governor.

Role of the Local Workforce Development Board for Certification

It is the responsibility of the local WDB to select a One-Stop operator through methods described in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. The local WDB is also responsible for certification and recertification of the Arkansas Workforce Centers in their area. The local WDB will use the minimum criteria provided by the Arkansas WDB. The local WDB has the authority to add criteria beyond the State minimum levels. In order to ensure quality, best practices are encouraged throughout the workforce system; any additional criteria should be shared with the other areas and the State Board. The local WDB has the responsibility to monitor the Arkansas Workforce Centers to ensure compliance with the certification/recertification process. If the local WDB determines that these standards are not being met, the One-Stop operator will be notified and a corrective action plan will be requested. The local WDB has the authority to revoke certifications and/or select new operators, if standards are not met and corrective actions of the operator are not successful. The Local WDB will seek to ensure that adequate, attractive, and functional facilities are provided.

Part IV

Arkansas Certification Policy

As a Statewide system, Arkansas Workforce Centers cover metropolitan areas as well as rural areas. Therefore, different types of centers are required in order to meet our customers' needs, ensure statewide coverage, and provide easy access to services. The overall Arkansas workforce development system is a combination of a wide array of public and private resources and programs. Comprehensive Arkansas Workforce Centers are the cornerstones of information and access to these resources. The comprehensive centers are complemented by affiliate centers that provide broader access but more limited on-site service offering connections back to the comprehensive sites. Centers must:

1. Be strategically located to maximize service to employers and employees.
2. Have enough traffic to warrant operations.
3. Provide on-site services (interpreter, documents, etc.) based on demographic need.
4. Have hours of operation that are based on customer needs and are customer driven.
5. Ensure that uniform procedures are in place to implement priority of service for veterans, individuals with disabilities, English-as-a-Second Language persons, and any other priority populations identified at the federal, state or local level for job placement.
6. Ensure that priority of service for job training opportunities for veterans, individuals with disabilities, English-as-a-Second Language persons, and any other priority populations identified at the federal level is clearly implemented for all U.S. DOL programs such as employment, training, and placement services.

The minimum core standard certification criteria approved by the Arkansas WDB will be used to certify comprehensive centers, as well as affiliate centers. Consistent with the State Plan, the Local WDB will certify each local workforce center. At its discretion, the local WDB may set certification requirements and/or standards that exceed the minimum criteria established by the Arkansas WDB.

As stipulated by federal law, all Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance requirements must be met before a center is eligible to receive the Arkansas Workforce Center certification, or utilize the Arkansas Workforce Center name and logo.

Local WDBs will notify the Arkansas WDB when a certification is issued, renewed or revoked. Marketing activity utilizing the Arkansas Workforce Center name is allowed when the local WDB approves and issues a certification. If a certification is revoked, the affected center must cease using the Arkansas Workforce Center name in all marketing until the identified problems are addressed.

One-Stop Evaluation and Certification Criteria

LWDBs (or the SWDB in those cases where LWDBs are the one-stop operator) must use the *Application for Arkansas Workforce Certification* approved by the State WDB. The State WDB, in consultation with local Chief Elected Officials and LWDBs, must review and update the one-stop certification criteria every two years as part of the review and modification of the WIOA State Plan.

Local WDBs can establish additional criteria and set higher standards for service coordination than those set by the State. If they do, they must also review and update those additional criteria and standards every two years as part of the WIOA Local Plan update process. Additional criteria must be clearly identified in addenda to the *Application for Arkansas Workforce Center Certification*.

One-Stop Certification Frequency

One-stop sites will be evaluated and certified no less than once every three years. Local WDBs (or the State WDB in those cases where Local WDBs are the one-stop operator) may conduct site evaluation and certification as determined appropriate and warranted. In support of the goal of continuous improvement, each certified site will provide an annual report to the State and Local WDB detailing the progress toward reaching higher standards set forth in the certification criteria.

Certification Teams

One-stop certification teams will be established by Local WDBs (or the State WDB in those cases where Local WDBs are the one-stop operator) and are responsible for conducting independent and objective evaluations of one-stop sites and making certification recommendations to Local WDBs (or the State WDB in those cases where LWDBs are the one-stop operator).

One-stop certifications teams are comprised of Local WDB members and staff and individuals who represent local partners with specific expertise serving populations with barriers. Certification team members should be free of conflicts of interest. Certification teams may utilize experts from the state level or outside of the local area to ensure evaluations are objective. They may also utilize local experts who represent targeted populations but have no financial ties with the one-stop site.

Note: Per 20 CFR 678.800(a)(3), the State WDB, rather than local one-stop certification teams, must certify one-stop sites if Local WDBs are the one-stop operator.

Certification Determinations

One-stop certification teams will render written determinations within 30 days of conducting one-stop site evaluations. There are three possible determinations: (1) certification, (2) provisional certification with a requirement that one-stop operators provide action plans and timelines for meeting certification standards, and (3) not certified or decertified.

Provisional certifications must be accompanied by detailed description of the issues/concerns identified so one-stop operators have sufficient information around which to develop required action plans and timelines. A determination to not certify a one-stop site must be accompanied by a detailed description of the deficiencies, including an explanation as to why the certification team believed the deficiencies could not be addressed or resolved provisionally.

Appeals

Operators of comprehensive one-stop sites that are not certified may choose to appeal those determinations, in writing, to the Local WDB (or the State WDB in those cases where Local WDBs are the one-stop operator). Those

appeals will be subject to the processes and procedures outlined in locally-required dispute resolution and appeal policies (or WIOA Title I Policy 5410 in those cases where the State WDB is the certifying body).

Non-Certification

If an existing comprehensive one-stop site is ultimately not certified following a standard or “for-cause” evaluation, the Local WDB and one-stop operator must have a plan to ensure continuity of service between the time a site is not certified and a new one-stop operator is procured.

Types of Centers

WIOA Section 121 (e)(2) states that the one-stop delivery system—

(A) at a minimum, shall make each of the programs, services, and activities described in paragraph (1) accessible at not less than 1 physical center in each local area of the State; and

(B) may also make programs, services, and activities described in paragraph (1) available—

(i) through a network of affiliated sites that can provide 1 or more of the programs, services, and activities to individuals; and

(ii) through a network of eligible one-stop partners—

(I) in which each partner provides 1 or more of the programs, services, and activities to such individuals and is accessible at an affiliated site that consists of a physical location or an electronically or technologically linked access point; and

(II) that assures individuals that information on the availability of the career services will be available regardless of where the individuals initially enter the statewide workforce development system, including information made available through an access point described in subclause (I);

(C) may have specialized centers to address special needs, such as the needs of dislocated workers, youth, or key industry sectors or clusters; and

(D) as applicable and practicable, shall make programs, services, and activities accessible to individuals through electronic means in a manner that improves efficiency, coordination, and quality in the delivery of one-stop partner services.

Comprehensive

- Accessible to the general public during regular business days, as well as physically and programmatically accessible to individuals with disabilities
- Portal site for electronic access
- Provider of **basic and individualized career services, and training services**
- **Provider of business services**
- Representation of **core** mandated partners (WIOA Titles I-IV)
- Additional related employment and training resources

Affiliate Center

- Accessible to the general public and physically and programmatically accessible to individuals with disabilities
- Portal site for electronic access
- Provider of **basic career services**

- Representation of **one** or more mandated partners
- Additional related employment and training resources
- Established working relationship as part of an integrated system of Arkansas Workforce Center sites

IV. Checklist – System Requirements

The checklists below are to be used by sites and evaluators to help determine the extent to which system requirements are met and services and programs are present. Each application will vary in its responses based upon the level of certification being requested by the site and the agreements of the local partnership to best meet the needs of the locally-determined service delivery model.

	Yes	No – Provide Plan for Compliance
Compliance with AWDB Policies		
ADA Accessibility		
Use of MIS for customer tracking		
Memorandum of Understanding with Partners		
Arkansas Workforce Center and American Job Center Brands Used Appropriately		
Wagner-Peyser Services are Co-Located		

Required Program/Partner Checklist

- In the column named “On-Site”, indicate programs/partners that are currently located on-site.
- In the column named “Off-Site Electronic Connection”, make a check mark for the programs/partners that are off-site but their basic career services are made available to customers through an electronic connection. Note: Not all customers will be able to use the electronic connection(s) without help from workforce system staff.
- For programs/partners that are off-site but an agreement is in place to provide their basic career services in another manner, check the last column and attach a narrative explaining how this is accomplished (use a separate sheet).

Required Programs/Partners	One-Site (Average Hours/Week)	Off-Site Electronic Connection	Off-Site Basic Career Services Made Available in Another Manner
WIOA Title I Adult Services			
WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker			
WIOA Title I Youth Services			
Wagner-Peyser Title III			
Adult Education and Family Literacy Title II			
Vocational Rehabilitation – Arkansas Career			

Education, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services			
Vocational Rehabilitation – Arkansas Department of Human Services, Division of Services for the Blind			
Title V – Older Americans Act/Senior Community Service Employment Program			
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families			
Career and Technical Education Programs			
Trade Adjustment Assistance			
Jobs for Veterans State Grant			
Community Services Block Grant			
Housing & Urban Development Employment and Training			
Unemployment Compensation			
Second Chance Act			

Additional Partners (not mandated)

Required Programs/Partners	One-Site (Average Hours/Week)	Off-Site Electronic Connection	Off-Site Basic Career Services Made Available in Another Manner
Ticket to Work and Self Sufficiency			
Small Business Administration			
SNAP Employment and Training			
(Please add partners are appropriate)			

Career Services Checklists

In the column named “On-Site”, check the basic career, individualized career, and training services that are currently available on-site for all job seeking customers who come into the workforce center or affiliate site.

Basic Career Services	On-Site (Mark with X)
Initial assessment of skill levels (including literacy, numeracy, and English language proficiency), aptitudes, abilities (including skills gaps), and supportive service needs	
Outreach, intake and orientation to the information and other services available through the one-stop delivery system	

Basic Career Services	On-Site (Mark with X)
Eligibility determination	
Labor exchange services, including job search and placement assistance, career counseling, provision of information on in-demand industry sectors and occupations, provision of information on nontraditional employment	
Appropriate recruitment and other business services on behalf of employers, including small employers, which may include providing information and referral to specialized business services not traditionally offered through the one-stop delivery system	
Referrals to and coordination of activities with other programs and services, including programs and services within the one-stop delivery system and other workforce development programs	
Workforce and labor market employment statistics information, including accurate information relating to local, regional, and national labor market areas, including job vacancy listings in labor market areas; information on job skills necessary to obtain the jobs; and information relating to local occupations in demand and the earnings, skill requirements, and opportunities for advancement for such occupations	
Performance information and program cost information on eligible providers of training services and eligible providers of youth workforce investment activities, providers of adult education, providers of career and technical education activities at the postsecondary level, and career and technical education activities available to school dropouts, and providers of vocational rehabilitation	
Information, in formats that are usable by and understandable to onestop center customers, regarding how the local area is performing on the local performance accountability measures and any additional performance information with respect to the onestop delivery system in the local area	
Information, in formats that are usable by & understandable to one Provision of information and assistance regarding filing claims for Assistance in establishing eligibility for programs of financial aid assistance for stop center customers, relating to the availability of supportive services or assistance, including child care, child support, medical or child health assistance benefits under the supplemental nutrition assistance program, assistance through the earned income tax credit, assistance under State program for temporary assistance for needy families, and other supportive services and transportation provided through funds made available in the local area	
Provision of information and assistance regarding filing claims for unemployment compensation	
Assistance in establishing eligibility for programs of financial aid assistance for training and education programs	
Translation Services	
Orientation to Arkansas Workforce Center Services	

Individualized Career Services	On-Site (Mark with X)
Comprehensive and specialized evaluation to Identify barriers to employment and employment goals	
Development of Individualized Employment Plan (IEP)	
Group Counseling	
Individual Counseling	
Career/ Vocational Planning	
Short-Term Preemployment/ Vocational Services	
Internships and work experiences	
Workforce preparation activities	
Financial literacy activities	
Out-of-Area Job Search and relocation assistance	
English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs	
Follow-up services	

Business Services Checklist

Check the business services that are available to employers.

Business Services	On-Site (Mark with X)
Establish and develop relationships and networks with large and small employers and their intermediaries	
Develop, convene, or implement industry or sector partnerships	

Other Business Services (not mandatory)

Customized screening and referral of qualified participants in training services to employers	On-Site (Mark with X)
Customized services to employers, employer associations, or other such organizations, on employment-related issues	
Customized recruitment events and related services for employers including targeted job fairs	
Human resource consultation services, e.g., writing/reviewing job descriptions and employee handbooks; Developing performance evaluation and personnel policies; Creating orientation sessions for new workers; Honing job interview techniques for efficiency and compliance; Analyzing employee turnover; or Explaining labor laws to help employers comply with	

wage/hour and safety/health regulations;	
Customized labor market information for specific employers, sectors, industries or clusters	
Customized assistance or referral for assistance in the development of a registered apprenticeship program	
Listing of Job Orders	
Applicant Referral	
Employer Needs Assessment	
Unemployment Insurance Access	
Access to Facilities	
Translation Services	
Developing and delivering innovative workforce investment services and strategies for area employers, e.g., career pathways, skills upgrading, skill standard development and certification for recognized postsecondary credential or other employer use, apprenticeship, and other effective initiatives for meeting the workforce investment needs of area employers and workers	
Assistance in managing reductions in force in coordination with rapid response activities and with strategies for the aversion of layoffs, and the delivery of employment and training activities to address risk factors	
Marketing of business services offered to appropriate area employers, including small and mid-sized employers	
Assisting employers with accessing local, State, and Federal tax credits	

Certification Criteria

The Certification application is one step in the ongoing pursuit of growth, quality improvement, and performance excellence. Attainment of certification provides assurance to the public that the center has achieved a high standard and consistently maintains and improves upon that standard. The following quality standards are the criteria by which Arkansas’s local Workforce Development Board’s assess and certify One-Stop Centers and Affiliates Sites.

Each site is asked to work together with leadership and staff to develop responses to the following:

- I. Rank on a scale of 1 to 5, where the site believes it is in its path toward meeting, or exceeding, the stated standard.

- 5 = achieved the standard and excelling
- 4 = significantly meeting standard with some work yet to do
- 3 = have some of the elements in place, some of the time
- 2 = making progress but long way to go
- 1 = no progress yet

These scores will be used by the Certification Team as benchmarks for the site and help point to both areas of excellence and those in need of improvement.

- II. Provide clear evidence and examples of current status and future plans with strategies and timelines to reach these standards.

Functional and Programmatic Integration
<p>It is critical for Arkansas Workforce Centers and its partners to think and act as an integrated system. Arkansas Workforce Center partners ensure that client services are aligned to common goals and the customer experience is seamless – regardless of funding streams. Each customer is mutually regarded as a shared customer, with all staff and programs operating at the site having a vested stake in that customer’s success. Integration of programs is incorporated into planning, intake, assessment, registration, and service processes, information sharing, resource decisions, actions, results, and analyses.</p>
<p>Check the box where you think the site is with regard to Functional and Programmatic integration.</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 </p>
<p>Describe your site’s approach to integrated service delivery and the use of functional teams to deliver career services to all customers.</p>
<p>Include a detailed diagram of customer flow, services available, assessment and referrals, and describe how the MIS system is used to facilitate shared customer management across partner programs. Reference it as Appendix A.</p>
<p>Please list any best practices to highlight and share for continuous improvement.</p>

Performance Accountability
<p>Results and outcomes for the public investment in Arkansas Workforce Centers are essential to the system’s relevance. The effectiveness of Arkansas Workforce Centers for employers and job seekers is evident in system performance and service delivery decisions are based on data. On an ongoing basis, customer data from one-stop partners and regional economic data is collected, analyzed, and shared with all workforce system staff and community stakeholders. Plans for improvement, enhancement, or adjustment are established and acted upon.</p>
<p>Check the box where you think the site is with regard to Performance Accountability.</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 </p>

Describe how you measure, analyze, review, and improve system performance through the use of data and information.

Describe how this data is shared with staff and stakeholders and what changes have resulted from use of data. How has data been used (examples) to improve services?

What methods are in place for staff to provide feedback? How do you incorporate staff feedback as part of continuous quality improvement? How are staff informed how their feedback was reviewed and any action taken from their feedback? What metrics are used to show improvement and success?

Please list any best practices to highlight and share for continuous improvement.

Service Provision, Universal Access, and Outreach

Improved availability, a welcoming atmosphere, inclusive settings, and high quality customer service benefit all customers. Arkansas Workforce Centers extend services and outreach not just to individuals who walk in the door, but also to those who have become disengaged in the labor force. Integrated, quality services are provided to all customers within the center and via technology through online or phone access. Principles of universal design are considered, which designs inclusive space and materials to be available to individuals regardless of their range of abilities, mobility, age, language, learning style, intelligence, or educational level.

Check the box where you think the site is with regard to Service Provision to all customers including Services, Access, and Outreach to populations with barriers.

5

4

3

2

1

Describe how the site works cooperatively with WIOA core partners to provide quality services to all customers. Describe your outreach to populations with barriers in the community and relationship with core program and community partners to effectively serve them.

Provide evidence that basic ADA requirements have been met, including processes to provide reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities.

Describe initiatives or strategies in developing universal access and provide tangible evidence of implementation or solution driven plan development. Address the following four specific areas of access:

1. Physical: Architectural or building
2. Information: all paper, printed or posted materials
3. Digital: software, web-based programs and alternatives to print
4. Communication: verbal, non-verbal access for services, phone and other

Describe your wireless internet infrastructure.

How are the needs of populations with barriers met through staff-assisted and other means?

Please list any best practices to highlight and share for continuous improvement.

Customer Satisfaction

Performance and value are ultimately judged by customers – businesses and job seekers. Customer-centered design relies upon satisfying customer needs, identifying shortcomings and responding accordingly on a timely and ongoing basis. Tools to obtain feedback are appropriate for each customer's use and take into consideration factors including literacy levels, use of technology, disability, and language.

Check the box where you think the site is with regard to Customer Satisfaction.

5

4

3

2

1

Describe how the voice of the customer is heard and how your site incorporates both job seeker and business customer feedback as part of continuous quality improvement? How are the voices of populations with barriers heard and brought to the table when designing services and facilities? How do you inform customers of how their feedback was reviewed and any action taken from their feedback? What metrics are used to show improvement and success?

Please list any best practices to highlight and share for continuous improvement.

Staff Competence and Staff Training Participation

Professional development is a key feature in order to ensure that staff are aware of the implications of recent evidence-based research and can implement the latest policies and procedures established at the local, State and Federal levels. Also of vital importance is the use of labor market information by staff to better inform customers' career and training decision-making. The investment in staff development is substantial, ongoing, and focused on cross-training with partner programs, overall skill development, and use of labor market information. Every member of the one-stop staff has the ability and authority to meet customer needs, either directly or, where appropriate, by helping the customer make the right connections to the expertise he or she seeks. Participation in one-stop-sponsored training is required.

Check the box where you think the site is with regard to Staff Competence and Staff Training Participation.

5 4 3 2 1

How are staff and leadership trained and cross-trained on an ongoing basis to stay current on programs and services? How is this tracked to ensure that all staff participate?

How do you actively engage staff of all programs – Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Wagner-Peyser, TANF, ABE, DVR, Perkins, etc. – in design of services, action planning and analysis of indicators and trends? How are all staff informed of progress towards site performance and goals?

Please list any best practices to highlight and share for continuous improvement.

Partnership

The one-stop system is built upon a foundation of partners linked together to deliver a comprehensive array of services and reach the shared outcomes of employment, education, skills gains, and earnings. All core and required one-stop partners are present at the site and invested in the development and implementation of service delivery to connect customers to resources.

Check the box where you think the site is with regard to Partnership.

5

4

3

2

1

Describe how the partnerships function at the site and the roles of each core partner from Title I – Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth, Title II - Adult Basic Education, Title III - Wagner-Peyser, and Title IV - Vocational Rehabilitation.

Describe how the partnerships function at the site with other required partners from postsecondary Career and Technical Education (Perkins Act), CSBG, HUD, Job Corps, National Farmworker Jobs Program, Re-entry programs, SCSEP, TAA, TANF, UI, VETS, and YouthBuild.

Describe how the site is linked to other partners beyond the site to ensure alignment with community and regional strategies. Please give examples of how this functions and the results for customers.

Describe how leadership works together to set the vision and goals for the site and then implements service strategies to achieve shared objectives.

Please list any best practices to highlight and share for continuous improvement.

Employer Engagement

Business is one of our primary customers and one-stop partners work collaboratively to deliver value-added services and eliminate duplication. Business services staff from all one-stop partners have a comprehensive understanding of labor market conditions, economic development activities, skill needs of the workforce and are connected to regional and local business partnership activities and sector strategies. Employers' human capital needs are communicated to and acted upon by the workforce system. Business services are coordinated to the maximum extent possible to limit duplication and streamline the employer experience.

Check the box where you think the site is with regard to Employer Engagement.

5

4

3

2

1

Describe how partners work to deliver seamless business services. How do business services staff use and share labor market information? What strategies are used to involve employers in identifying skill gaps and developing solutions to meet their workforce needs?

Describe how regional and local sector strategies are used to target services and resources to focus workforce efforts on investments and improve outcomes.

How are career pathways and training modalities such as industry-recognized credentials, apprenticeship, on-the-job training, and other work-based learning opportunities aligned with employers' needs and marketed to support talent development?

Please list any best practices to highlight and share for continuous improvement.