



Hugh McDonald
SECRETARY OF COMMERCE

Charisse Childers, Ph.D.
DIRECTOR
DIVISION OF WORKFORCE SERVICES

September 22, 2023

The Honorable Daniel Rogers, Mayor of Paris
Chief Elected Official
Paris City Hall, 100 North Express
Paris, AR 72855

RE: PY' 22-23 WIOA Regional and Local Plan Modifications

Dear Mayor Rogers:

Title I, Chapter 2, Section 108 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) established the requirements that each Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) shall develop and submit to the Governor a comprehensive four-year plan, in partnership with the chief elected officials of the local area. The local plan shall support the strategy described in the State plan in accordance with section 102(b)(1)(E), and otherwise be consistent with the State plan.

Section 108 (a) further states, at the end of the first 2-year period of the 4- year local plan, each local board shall review the local plan and the local board, in partnership with the chief elected official, shall prepare and submit modifications to the local plan to reflect changes in labor market and economic conditions or in other factors affecting the implementation of the local plan.

On behalf of Governor Sarah Huckabee Sanders, please accept this letter as an official written approval of the PY' 23-24 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Local Plan modification submitted by the Western Arkansas Workforce Development Board, effective July 15, 2023. This approval is contingent upon the completion of any outstanding requirements or documentation specified by the Arkansas Workforce Development Board and Arkansas Division of Workforce Services in their review process.

To ensure that final approval of the modified plan meets all requirements and guidelines, we kindly request that any outstanding documentation or revisions be submitted to wioa@arkansas.gov by noon on September 29, 2023.

We appreciate the collaborative effort in developing this modification to the WIOA Local Plan. The proposed changes are expected to enhance our local workforce development initiatives and align with the evolving needs of our community.

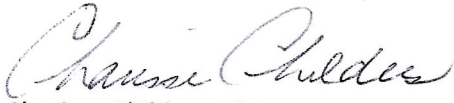
We look forward to continuing our partnership with the Western Arkansas Workforce Development Board to implement these planned improvements and foster economic growth and employment opportunities within the state of Arkansas.

Please do not hesitate to contact Eddie Thomas, ADWS Assistant Director at eddie.thomas@arkansas.gov should you require any further information or clarification regarding the modification or the approval process.

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Thank you for your continued support in our shared mission to empower our local workforce.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Charisse Childers".

Charisse Childers, Ph.D.
Director

cc: Mr. John Craig, Board Chair
Western Arkansas Workforce Development Board

Ms. Sasha Grist, Executive Director
Western Arkansas Planning and Development District

State of Arkansas
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
Review of Local Plans

Reviewer's Name	ADWS Monitoring Unit and Policy Advisors; Beverly Lovett, Nathan Winter (ARS)
Reviewer's Organization	Arkansas Division of Workforce Services; Arkansas Rehabilitation Services
Date(s) of Review	August 25, 2023
Local Area Name	Western Arkansas Local Workforce Development Area

Local Plan Comments

Plan Section	Comments (If no comments, insert No Comments)
Section 1: <u>Workforce and Economic Analysis</u> 1.1 Labor Market and Economic Conditions 1.1 Significant Changes in Local Economic Conditions	No Comment
1.3 Analysis of labor market trends and the educational and skills levels of the workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The narrative for Section 1.3 does not include details on the educational and skill levels of the workforce in the region, including individuals with barriers to employment.
1.4 Analysis of workforce development activities including strengths and weaknesses, capacity to provide services to address the education and skill needs of the workforce and the employment needs of the workforce and employment needs of employers in the region	No Comment
Section 2: <u>Strategic Vision and Goals</u> 2.1 The Need to Revise Strategies to Meet Local Performance Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Page 15: The narrative does not include goals relating to performance accountability measures in order to support regional economic growth and self-sufficiency.
Section 3: <u>Local Area Partnerships and Investment Strategies</u> 3.1 A. Changes to the Local Workforce Development Board Structure	3.1 A. Were there any changes to the local workforce development board? If so, include those changes in this section of the local plan modification. 3.1 A. This section requires that all required program partners be listed. Please list all required partners.

3.10 Changes in the Financing Available to Support WIOA Title I and Partner Provided Services	3.10 Does the local board have any “new” financing available to support WIOA Title I and Partner provided services? If so, include the changes in this section of the local plan modification.
<u>COVID Recovery, Readiness, Diversity, and Inclusion</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ADWS Policy Number: WIOA 1-B 4.7 requires the local plan to include a section for <u>COVID Recovery, Readiness, Diversity, and Inclusion</u>. Please include this section in the local plan modification.

Additional Comments:

- Page 44
 - A review of Section 6: Plan Assurances (6.27) revealed the Western Arkansas Planning and Development District altered ADWS’ original policy language in this Section. It must be clearly understood that the language contained in the Plan Assurances Section is part of ADWS Policy and **CANNOT** be revised, modified, or changed by a local board without written consent of ADWS. The language in 6.27 **in the Plan Assurances Chart for the Western Arkansas Local Plan must read as outlined in ADWS Policy Number: WIOA I-B 4.7 as stated below:**
 - *“The local board has a written policy and procedures for awarding Individual Training Accounts to eligible adults, dislocated workers, and youth receiving WIOA Title I training services, including dollar and/or duration limit(s), limits on the number of times an individual may modify an ITA, and how ITAs will be obligated and authorized”.*
 - Also, as stated in ADWS Policy Number: WIOA I-B 4.7, **Section 6** is required to provide COVID Recovery, Readiness, Diversity, and Inclusion responses. **Section 7** is now Plan Assurances and must be revised and completed as instructed.
- Section 5.4 – The local area’s negotiated performance goals were update for PY18-PY19. The PY2022 negotiated and actual goals were not included in the local plan.
- The plan is organized and easy to read based the requirements in the plan’s template.