

# State of Iowa Unified Plan

## Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act

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**Disclaimer:** The United States Department of Labor and United States Department of Education have not yet issued final regulations implementing the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). This draft version of the Iowa Unified State Plan is based upon WIOA's statutory provisions and the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking issued by the federal agencies last year. The final implementing regulations are expected to be issued in spring of 2016. Because the Iowa WIOA Unified State Plan must comply with WIOA and its final implementing regulations, this draft version is subject to change.

**Note:** Certain data elements and figures in this draft version of Iowa's Unified State Plan will be replaced with more up-to-date figures before the final version is submitted for approval.

For ease of reference, WIOA language has been added into the document. Red, underlined text is used to denote WIOA language and guidance from USDOL and related agencies.

A copy of this draft is available at:

[www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/workforce-innovation-and-opportunity-act](http://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/workforce-innovation-and-opportunity-act)

***Please direct all questions regarding this document to:***

Iowa Workforce Development  
1000 East Grand Avenue, Des Moines, IA 50319-0209  
Phone: (515) 725-2271  
Fax: (515) 281-9641  
E-mail: [iwd.wioa@iwd.iowa.gov](mailto:iwd.wioa@iwd.iowa.gov)  
Website: <https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/>  
For deaf and hard of hearing, use Relay 711 (800) 831-1399

## Table of Contents

I. WIOA STATE PLAN TYPE .....	5
II. STRATEGIC ELEMENTS .....	5
Economic Analysis .....	5
Existing Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations.....	7
Emerging Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations.....	12
Employers’ Employment Needs .....	14
Workforce Analysis.....	20
Employment and Unemployment.....	20
Labor Market Trends.....	24
Education and Skill Levels of the Workforce.....	27
Skill Gaps .....	31
Workforce Development, Education and Training Activities Analysis .....	33
Workforce Development Activities .....	33
Strengths and Weaknesses of Workforce Development Activities.....	39
State Workforce Development Capacity.....	40
State Strategic Vision and Goals.....	44
Vision .....	44
Goals.....	44
Performance Goals.....	47
Assessment.....	51
State Strategy.....	52
State Implementation Strategies .....	55
III. OPERATIONAL PLANNING ELEMENTS .....	58
State Board Functions .....	58
Implementation of State Strategy.....	60
Core Program Activities to Implement the State’s Strategy .....	61
Alignment with Activities outside the Plan .....	65
Coordination, Alignment and Provision of Services to Individuals .....	67
Coordination, Alignment and Provision of Services to Employers.....	69
Partner Engagement with Educational Institutions .....	72
Leveraging Resources to Increase Educational Access .....	72
Improving Access to Postsecondary Credentials.....	72
Coordinating with Economic Development Strategies .....	75

State Operating Systems and Policies .....	77
State policies to support implementation of the State’s strategies .....	79
State Program and State Board Overview .....	81
State Board.....	89
Board Activities .....	91
Assessment of One-Stop Program Partner Programs .....	92
Previous Assessment Results .....	94
Distribution of Funds for Core Programs .....	98
Title I Programs Allocation Process .....	98
Title II.....	99
Direct and Equitable Access to all Eligible Providers .....	103
Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation.....	103
Program Data .....	104
Assessment of Participants’ Post-Program Success.....	109
Unemployment Insurance (UI) Wage Record Data.....	110
Priority of Service for Veterans .....	111
Accessibility of the One-Stop Delivery System.....	123
IV. COORDINATION WITH COMBINED STATE PLAN PROGRAMS .....	129
V. COMMON ASSURANCES.....	130
VI. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR CORE PROGRAMS .....	133
Regions and Local Workforce Development Areas.....	133
Designation Of Local Areas.....	134
Appeals Process Relating to Designation of Local Areas.....	137
Appeals Process Relating to Determinations for Infrastructure Funding .....	138
Youth Who Require Additional Assistance.....	142
State Definition Of “Alternative Education” .....	142
Attending School .....	143
Basic Skills Deficient .....	144
Wagner-Peyser Act Program.....	146
Meaningful Assistance .....	148
Reemployment Assistance .....	150
Wagner-Peyser Funds .....	152
Agricultural Outreach Plan (AOP).....	154
Adult Education and Literacy Programs.....	169

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## **I. WIOA STATE PLAN TYPE**

AT A MINIMUM, A STATE MUST SUBMIT A UNIFIED STATE PLAN THAT COVERS THE SIX CORE PROGRAMS.

The State of Iowa is submitting a Unified State Plan which includes the following programs: Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Wagner-Peyser Act, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, and Vocational Rehabilitation. The State of Iowa is committed to improving, aligning and integrating workforce delivery systems under Unified State Plan guidelines. Iowa's One-Stop Centers currently operate under formal agreements with a range of partners including TANF/PROMISE JOBS and rehabilitation services. Purposeful inclusion of non-required partners in planning activities is evidenced throughout Iowa's Unified State Plan and will serve as the context in which to transition to a Combined State Plan in the future. The eventual transition to a Combined State Plan has been a consideration throughout the planning process and should begin by 2020.

## **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.

Iowa began planning efforts for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA) in early 2015 with the formation of a WIOA Steering Committee. The Steering Committee was appointed by the Governor's Office in partnership with Iowa Workforce Development. The Steering Committee included representatives from the all of the Core Partner programs, the Governor's Office, Iowa Workforce Development and other Key Program staff. This group was tasked with overseeing WIOA planning efforts in Iowa. The steering committee developed a strategy to ensure effective communications, created a planning timeline, and established additional work groups. The Steering Committee reports to the State Board and provide governance for Iowa's WIOA planning and implementation efforts. The following workgroups were formed to carry out state planning efforts:

- Communication and Governance
- Statewide Services Mapping
- Performance Accountability and Data Sharing
- Financial
- Career Pathways and Industry Partnerships
- Planning, Implementation and Policy
- One-Stop Operations and System Design
- Youth Services

In addition to the workgroups, there were several special committees established to review and make recommendations regarding topics such as universal definitions, common intake and referral processes, serving populations with barriers to employment, and accessibility.

### **Economic Analysis**

THE 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.

Iowa's strengthening economy has underscored new challenges requiring swift and innovative solutions. One such challenge Iowa faces is a shortage of qualified workers to fill middle-skill jobs. Substantial

disparities exist between the number of workers able to compete for middle-skill jobs and those struggling to find low-skill jobs. In Iowa, 34% of available workers possess low-skills, while workers with middle-skills represent 32% of the workforce. Only 12% of available jobs seek workers with low skill-sets; numerous middle-skill jobs remain unfilled. In fact, 55% of jobs require at least mid-level skills – or some training beyond high school. By 2018, it is predicted that three out of five Iowa jobs (62%, up from 56%) are expected to require some training beyond high school.<sup>1</sup>

In 2015, the Governor’s Office launched Future Ready Iowa, an initiative which calls for 70% of Iowans to have education or training beyond high school by 2025. In a report conducted by the Branstad-Reynolds administration and the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce (Georgetown Center) it is estimated that Iowa will add more than 600,000 jobs to its economy by 2025.<sup>2</sup>

Iowa’s plan for achieving success centers on employer-driven policies and industry-focused solutions. Iowa’s State Workforce Development Board will utilize a variety of assessment tools to analyze current labor market conditions and to predict future trends. The Labor Market and Information Division (LMI) of Iowa Workforce Development (IWD) is tasked with collecting, analyzing, and disseminating a variety of labor market data and publications and sharing this information with the workforce delivery system for analysis of state, regional and local economic development and educational needs to provide customized reliable and timely workforce data.

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<sup>1</sup> Anthony Carnevale, *Help Wanted: Projections of Jobs and Education Requirements Through 2018* (Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, 2010). For more information, go to: <https://repository.library.georgetown.edu/bitstream/handle/10822/559030/HelpWanted.ExecutiveSummary.pdf?sequence=2>

<sup>2</sup> Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, *Iowa: Education and Workforce Trends Through 2025*(2015). For more information, go to: [http://cew.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/Iowa\\_Wrkfrce2015.pdf](http://cew.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/Iowa_Wrkfrce2015.pdf)

## Existing Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations

### EXISTING DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTORS AND OCCUPATIONS. PROVIDE AN ANALYSIS OF THE INDUSTRIES AND OCCUPATIONS FOR WHICH THERE IS EXISTING DEMAND.

Economic progress in Iowa is determined by the performance of key industries throughout the state. The industries that drive economic growth are Economic base industries, or those with global reach serving customers and markets that extend beyond local communities producing income from sources outside of Iowa. Economic base industries can also serve to substitute for products and services that would otherwise have to be imported into the state. Sheltered industries do not bring new income into the state and include restaurants, retail, state and local service providers, and local and state government. While sheltered industries are vital to Iowans, revenue from local residents and businesses drive them.

Economic base industries serve a diversity of customers in-state and out-of-state. Examples of economic base industries include manufacturing of products sold outside of Iowa, distribution industries transporting Iowa's goods, insurance and financial services that serve customers across the nation, and information technology industries that provide services to markets outside of Iowa.<sup>3</sup> Iowa depends on world markets and Iowa's export shipments of merchandise in 2014 totaled \$15.1 billion. The state's largest market was Canada, with \$4.6 billion (30.6%) of the state's total merchandise exports going to Canada. Figure 1 shows Iowa's top five export markets. A total of 3,420 companies exported from Iowa locations in 2013, of which, 2,845 were small and medium-sized enterprises with less than 500 employees. In 2013, small and medium-sized firms generated nearly one-fifth of Iowa's exports.<sup>4</sup>

Industry clusters serve as a catalyst for economic growth and include a mix of local and far-reaching goods and products which are inter-related and represent the entire supply chain and associated parts.<sup>5</sup>



<sup>3</sup> Battelle Technology Partnership Practice, *Iowa's Re-Envisioned Economic Development Roadmap* (2014). For more information, go to: <http://www.iowaeconomicdevelopment.com/Resources/battelle>

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Department of Commerce's International Trade Administration, Bureau of the Census, and Bureau of Economic Analysis (2015). For more resources please see [www.trade.gov/mas/ian](http://www.trade.gov/mas/ian).

<sup>5</sup> Businessweek.com: *The Power of Industry Clusters*. (2012). For more information, go to: <http://www.bloomberg.com/bw/articles/2012-10-22/the-power-of-industry-clusters>

Twelve distinct industry clusters were identified as driving Iowa’s economy. Iowa’s primary industry clusters are the drivers of the majority of Iowa’s top private sector businesses. Table 1 summarizes the major industry components of these clusters and typical activities.

**Table 1: Iowa’s Top 12 Industry Clusters & Associated Activities**

<b>Agriculture and Food Production</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Agricultural Production</li> <li>✓ Food Processing &amp; Products</li> <li>✓ Packaging</li> </ul>
<b>Automation &amp; Industrial Machinery</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Industrial machinery</li> <li>✓ Metalworking machinery &amp; tools</li> <li>✓ Electrical equipment</li> </ul>
<b>Avionics &amp; Communications Electronics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Search, Detection, &amp; Navigation</li> <li>✓ Instruments</li> <li>✓ Other Aerospace-related Industries</li> </ul>
<b>Biosciences</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Agricultural Feedstock &amp; Chemicals, “Agbiosciences”</li> <li>✓ Bioscience-related Distribution</li> <li>✓ Drugs &amp; Pharmaceuticals</li> <li>✓ Medical Devices &amp; Equipment</li> <li>✓ Research, Testing, &amp; Medical Labs</li> </ul>
<b>Building &amp; Construction Products</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Windows and doors (both wood and fabricated metals)</li> <li>✓ Kitchen cabinets</li> <li>✓ Furniture;</li> <li>✓ Nonmetallic mineral products including concrete, glass, stone; plastic pipes</li> </ul>
<b>Heavy Machinery</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Primary Ag &amp; Construction Machinery</li> <li>✓ Manufacturing</li> <li>✓ Vehicular Parts &amp; Components</li> <li>✓ Mobile Homes</li> </ul>
<b>Healthcare Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Outpatient Care Centers</li> <li>✓ Home Healthcare</li> <li>✓ Hospitals</li> <li>✓ Nursing Care</li> </ul>
<b>Information Services, Digital Media &amp; Technology</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Software &amp; Computer Services</li> <li>✓ Internet Services &amp; E-Commerce</li> <li>✓ Multimedia Publishing</li> </ul>
<b>Insurance &amp; Finance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Insurance</li> <li>✓ Commercial Banking</li> <li>✓ Securities, Commodities, &amp; Other Financial Investments</li> </ul>
<b>Primary Metals Manufacturing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Iron, Steel, Aluminum, Nonferrous and Foundries</li> </ul>
<b>Renewable Energy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Wind Turbines</li> <li>✓ Energy Storage</li> <li>✓ Ethanol &amp; Biofuels</li> </ul>
<b>Transportation, Distribution &amp; Logistics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Wholesale</li> <li>✓ Transportation</li> <li>✓ Warehousing &amp; Storage</li> </ul>

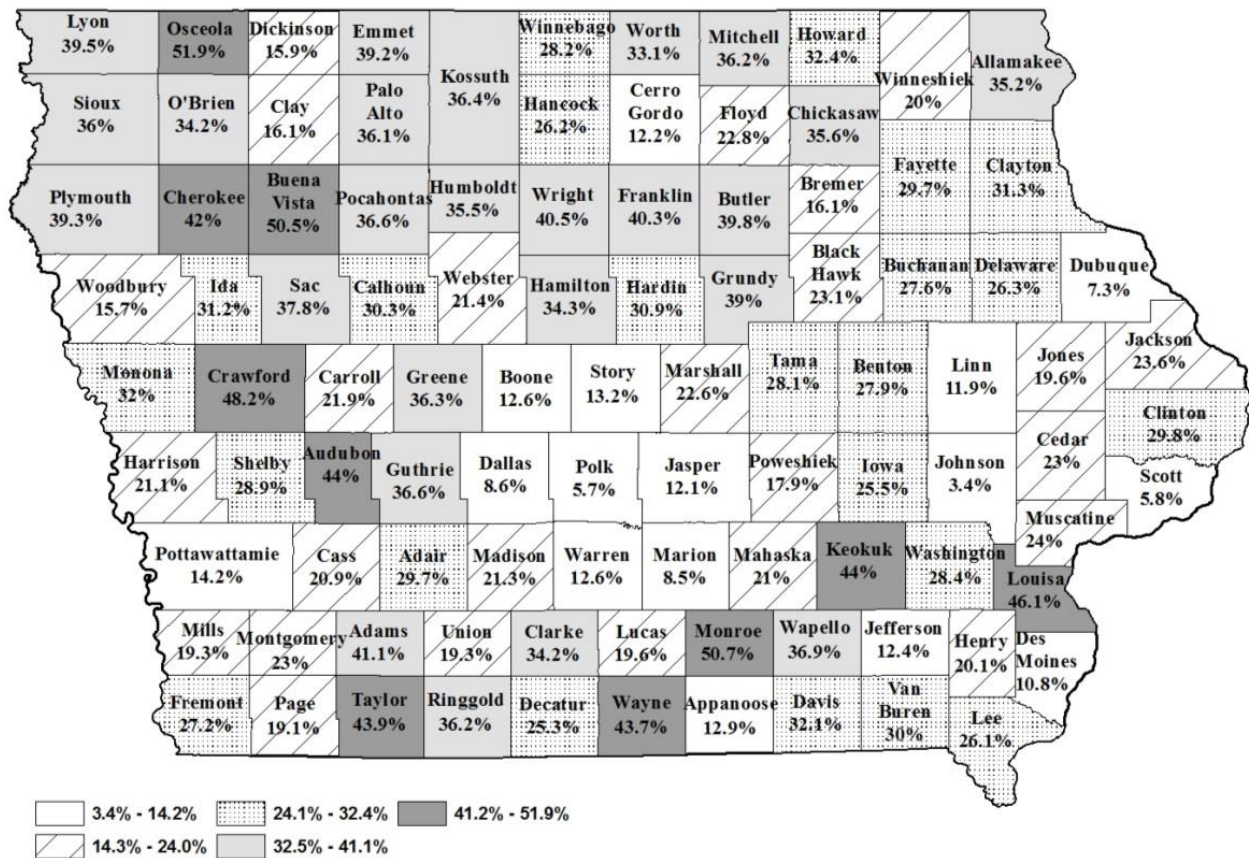
Source: Battelle Technology Partnership Practice, Iowa’s Re-Envisioned Economic Development Roadmap (2014).



## Agriculture

With over 80 percent of its land dedicated to farms, agriculture remains a very important industry in Iowa. Iowa leads the nation in the production of corn, soybeans, pork, eggs, ethanol and biodiesel. In 2014 the Iowa Ag Contribution Study was conducted to evaluate the economic significance of Iowa agriculture on the state's overall economy.<sup>6</sup> The study confirmed that Iowa agriculture is directly linked to a number of industries and ag-support activities. Based on the study, reduction or removal of any one of them would likely negatively impact the others not only locally, but across the region and state. Agriculture and ag-related industries support more than 400,000 jobs across the state, which is approximately 1 in 5 workers. Figure 2 provides the percentage of jobs derived from agriculture for each of Iowa's 99 counties.

**Figure 2: Iowa Agriculture and Ag-Related Jobs, by County 2010-2015**



Source: 2014 Iowa Ag Economic Contribution Study (2014), Decision-Innovation-Solutions

<sup>6</sup> Decision Innovation Solutions, 2014 Iowa Ag Economic Contribution Study (2014). For more information, go to: [www.Decision-Innovation.com/images/docs/2014-Iowa-Ag-Economic-Contribution-Study.pdf](http://www.Decision-Innovation.com/images/docs/2014-Iowa-Ag-Economic-Contribution-Study.pdf)

According to Iowa Secretary of Agriculture Bill Northey (December 31, 2015), 2015 was a record year for production of corn and soybeans in Iowa due to a near ideal growing season in much of the state.<sup>7</sup> While farmers produce record corn and soybean crops, prices have continued to fall as a result of Federally-driven uncertainty in the Renewable Fuel Standard, large crop production worldwide. Average statewide corn prices fell from \$3.76 to \$3.48 from Dec. 2014 to Dec. 2015 and statewide average soybean prices fell from \$9.89 to \$8.17 over the same period.

During this period there has also been a substantial drop in livestock prices. The livestock industry faced challenges as well. Fed cattle have seen the price drop from \$161 per hundred weight down to \$116. Hogs are down from \$76 to \$49 per hundred weight. Iowa's poultry producers were at the center of the Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza outbreak which resulted in the euthanizing of more than 30 million birds in Iowa during 2015. The USDA described the H5N2 Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza outbreak of 2015 as the largest animal health emergency in U.S. history.

The tighter margins seen on the farm are starting to ripple through the economy. Land prices are down 3.9 percent. There have been several announcements of layoffs at manufacturers, machinery providers, seed companies, and other businesses that serve the agriculture industry. Coupled with a softening global demand and a strong dollar there have been overall significant impacts on Iowa's economy.

Manufacturing accounts for both the largest share of output (18% of Iowa's GDP) and the highest share of employment (16%). Today, manufacturing comprises traditional manufacturing, which consists of converting raw materials into finished products for sale on the market (e.g., steel and automobile manufacturing), and advanced manufacturing, which is technology and capital-intensive and highly productive (e.g., aerospace, medical device, and pharmaceutical manufacturing). Nearly one-fourth of Iowa's manufacturing workers have skills or experience in advanced manufacturing. These are excellent precursors for an economy poised to continue to invest in sophisticated manufacturing technology, which is highly productive and pays a good premium to skilled workers.

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<sup>7</sup> 2015 Included Several Challenges For Iowa Farmers. Bill Northey. For more information, go to: <http://www.iowaagriculture.gov/press/2015Press/press12312015b.asp>

Healthcare and social assistance is the second largest industry in Iowa. It accounts for 7 percent of output and 14 percent of employment. The finance and insurance industry, retail trade, and government also employ significant numbers of Iowans and contribute substantially to the state's GDP.

**Table 2: Output & Employment, Iowa Top Industries, 2014**

	Share of GDP	Share of Employment
Manufacturing	18	16
Healthcare & Social Assistance	7	14
Finance & Insurance	11	7
Retail Trade	6	11
Government	11	3
Real Estate, Rental & Leasing	11	1
Agriculture, Forestry, Hunting	7	4

<https://www.educateiowa.gov/sites/files/ed/documents/2015-12-14%20%20Future%20Ready%20Iowa2.pdf>

Due to the impacts of these particular industry clusters on Iowa's economy, Battelle conducted a comprehensive analysis employing several economic performance measures including:

- Relative concentration of the industry cluster
- Job generation
- Relative growth of the industry cluster
- Productivity
- High-skilled jobs compared to the national average
- Average wages of the industry cluster compared to the national average
- Impacts to the local supply chain for each industry cluster

The Battelle report highlighted several key findings which impact Iowa's workforce delivery system including:<sup>8</sup>

- Nine of the 12 industry clusters represent industry specializations in Iowa based on having a significantly higher concentration of employment relative to the national average. This reflects the competitive advantages that Iowa offers these industry clusters relative to the nation and their well-established presence in Iowa.
- Eight of the 12 industry clusters have a higher level of productivity compared to that same industry cluster nationally. This suggests that it is not simply Iowa's central location that stands out for many industries and drives the strong level of industry specialization found in Iowa, but that Iowa offers a higher value-added location. Competing on high productivity is critical in today's innovation-driven, global economy. What is particularly special about the industry clusters driving Iowa's economic growth is how extensively they outpace the nation,

<sup>8</sup> Battelle Technology Partnership Practice, *Iowa's Re-Envisioned Economic Development Roadmap* (2014). For more information, go to: <http://www.iowaeconomicdevelopment.com/Resources/battelle>

while the average productivity across all private sector industries in Iowa is 90 percent of the nation.

- Eight of the 12 industry clusters generated economic multipliers of more than \$500,000 for every additional \$1 million in output they generate. Led by agriculture and food production, which has an extensive footprint across Iowa and deep supply chain, there are many industry clusters in Iowa that have substantial economic multiplier impacts on the state's economy. Interestingly, the importance of high wages comes through, as the avionics and communications electronics industry cluster, with the highest average annual wages for the industry clusters in Iowa, is also among the leaders in economic impact for the state.
- Nine of the 12 industry clusters performed better in job changes than the U.S. average for that industry cluster. This is another sign that Iowa's industry clusters are more competitive than the nation. A sobering reality is that only five of the nine industry clusters performing better than the U.S. gained jobs above the 2007 pre-recession level. The other four industries outpacing the U.S. job growth from 2007–2012, simply declined less in Iowa than across the nation.

The report also provided an overview of potential weaknesses such as the fact that Iowa currently leads the nation in only one industry cluster, Building and Construction Products. Several industry clusters in Iowa are considerably behind the U.S. average and the remaining industry clusters in Iowa are within one to two percentage points of the national average. In general, the report concluded that the industry clusters driving Iowa's economy are healthy and have positioned the state to continue its upward track toward economic improvement through strategic job growth.

### **Emerging Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations**

EMERGING DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTORS AND OCCUPATIONS. PROVIDE AN ANALYSIS OF THE INDUSTRIES AND OCCUPATIONS FOR WHICH DEMAND IS EMERGING.

Steady incremental growth describes the current occupational projections outlook. Major occupational groups expected to grow faster than the state annual average are: business and financial; computer and mathematical; community and social service; legal; arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media; healthcare practitioner; healthcare support; building and grounds maintenance; personal care; construction; installation, maintenance, and repair; transportation and material moving. The occupations expected to grow less than the state average include management; architecture and engineering; life, physical, and social science; education; protective service; food prep and serving; sales; office and administrative; and farming, fishing, and forestry jobs.<sup>9</sup> In the *2015 Workforce Needs Assessment: Iowa Analysis*, the percent of planned payroll expansion by industry is shown (Figure 3).<sup>10</sup> Office & administrative support represents one of the largest categories among average daily vacancies while the category accounts for just 4.5 percent of the planned payroll expansion positions. Production occupations, on the other hand, represent only 7.5 percent of average daily vacancies but employers

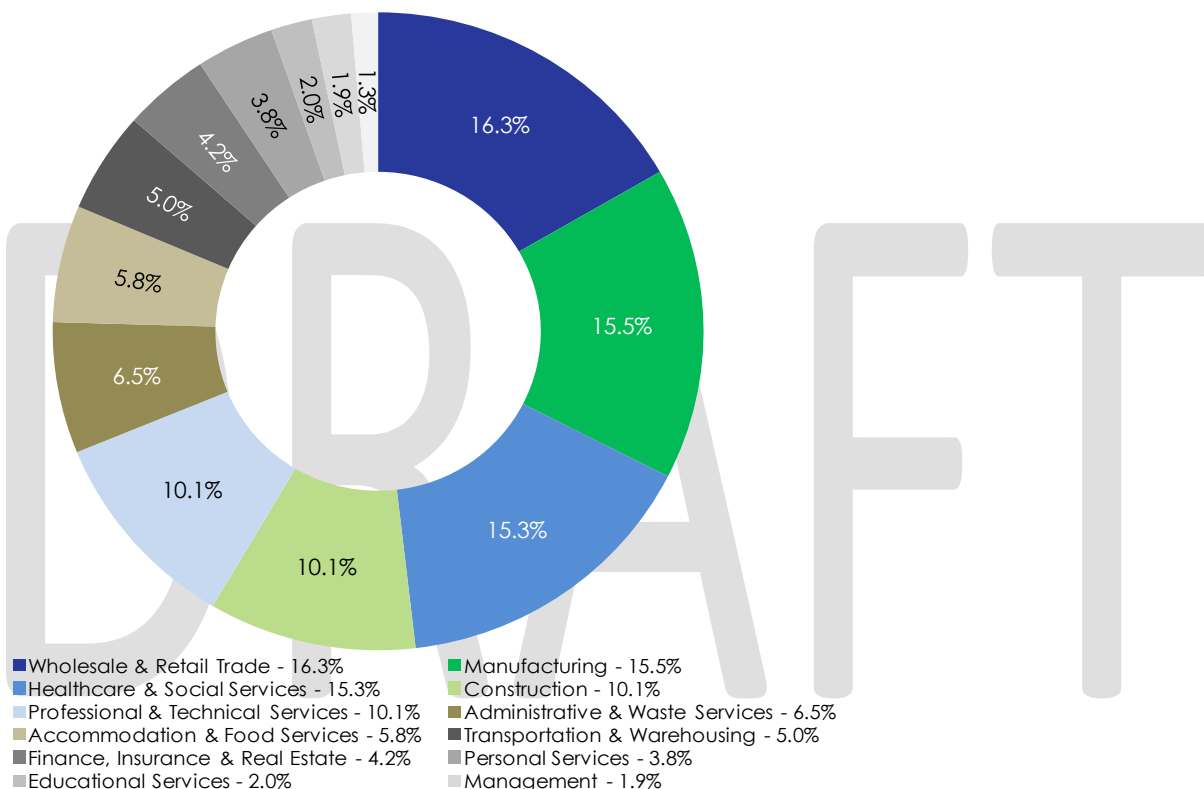
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<sup>9</sup> Iowa Career Industry Population Report (2014). For more information, go to: <http://iwin.iwd.state.us/pubs/statewide/statewidecip.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> Labor Market Information Division, Iowa Workforce Development: *Workforce Needs Assessment: Iowa Analysis* (2015). For more information, go to: [http://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/sites/search.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/files/wna\\_statewide\\_2015.pdf](http://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/sites/search.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/files/wna_statewide_2015.pdf)

planning to expand their payrolls indicated they plan on increasing payroll most frequently within this category. The occupational categories that will be most affected by expansion are: wholesale and retail trade; manufacturing; healthcare and social services; and construction. Over two-thirds (70.6%) of Iowa employers are planning to keep the size of their workforce steady while nearly a third (27.9%) of employers plan to expand their workforce. Only 1.5% plan to reduce their workforce in the near future.<sup>11</sup>

**Figure 3: Percent of Total Planned Payroll Expansion by Industry**



Source: Labor Market Information Division: Workforce Needs Assessment, Iowa Analysis, 2015

Iowa's fast-growing middle-skill occupations have an annual growth rate that is more than twice as fast as the 1.1 percent annual rate for Iowa. During 2012, it was estimated that nearly 926,000 middle-skill jobs were in Iowa and the number is projected to increase to more than 1,000,000 by the year 2022. Many of the occupations will require postsecondary and technical training.

Two of the three largest industries in Iowa – healthcare and social assistance and finance and insurance – will add the most jobs over the next 10 years (Table 3 on following page). The healthcare and social assistance industry will account for 16 percent of all job growth through 2025, while the finance and insurance industry will account for 11 percent of the job growth. Other industries that will account for a

<sup>11</sup> Labor Market Information Division, Iowa Workforce Development: Workforce Needs Assessment: Iowa Analysis (2015). For more information, go to: [http://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/sites/search.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/files/wna\\_statewide\\_2015.pdf](http://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/sites/search.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/files/wna_statewide_2015.pdf)

substantial number of new jobs are administrative and support and waste management and remediation services (23,000 jobs); government (23,000 jobs); and manufacturing (19,000 jobs).

Employment in the mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction industry will grow by 33 percent, the fastest among industries. The administrative and support and waste management and remediation services (31% growth) and management of companies and enterprises (30% growth) will also experience rapid job growth. The other industries projected to have job growth at rates above 20 percent are finance and insurance; healthcare and social assistance; construction; transportation and warehousing; and arts, entertainment, and recreation.

**Table 3. The healthcare and social assistance and finance and insurance industries will account for 68,000 new jobs in Iowa, or 27 percent of new jobs by 2025.**

Industry	Employment		Job growth	Growth rate (%)	Share of job growth (%)
	2010	2025			
Healthcare and social assistance	172,500	213,000	40,500	23	16.2
Finance and insurance	106,600	133,900	27,300	26	10.9
Administrative and support and waste management and remediation services	74,300	97,500	23,200	31	9.3
Government	203,300	226,600	23,300	11	9.3
Manufacturing	171,200	189,900	18,700	11	7.5
Accommodation and food service	97,600	116,000	18,400	19	7.4
Construction	84,500	99,700	15,200	18	6.1
Transportation and warehousing	65,200	79,500	14,300	22	5.7
Construction	58,500	71,900	13,400	23	5.4
Retail trade	176,700	189,700	13,000	7	5.2
Educational services	38,300	47,000	8,700	23	3.5
Real estate and rental and leasing	46,200	54,700	8,500	18	3.4
Other services (except public administration)	74,100	80,700	6,600	9	2.6
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	28,100	34,200	6,100	22	2.4
Wholesale trade	58,400	63,500	5,100	9	2.0
Management of companies and enterprises	11,400	14,800	3,400	30	1.4
Information	27,100	30,200	3,100	11	1.2
Utilities	5,900	6,100	200	3	0.1
Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	3,300	4,400	1,100	33	0.4
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting	88,300	86,700	-1,600	-2	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,591,400</b>	<b>1,839,900</b>	<b>248,500</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Carnevale, Smith, and Strohl, *Recovery: Job Growth and Education Requirements through 2020*, 2013.

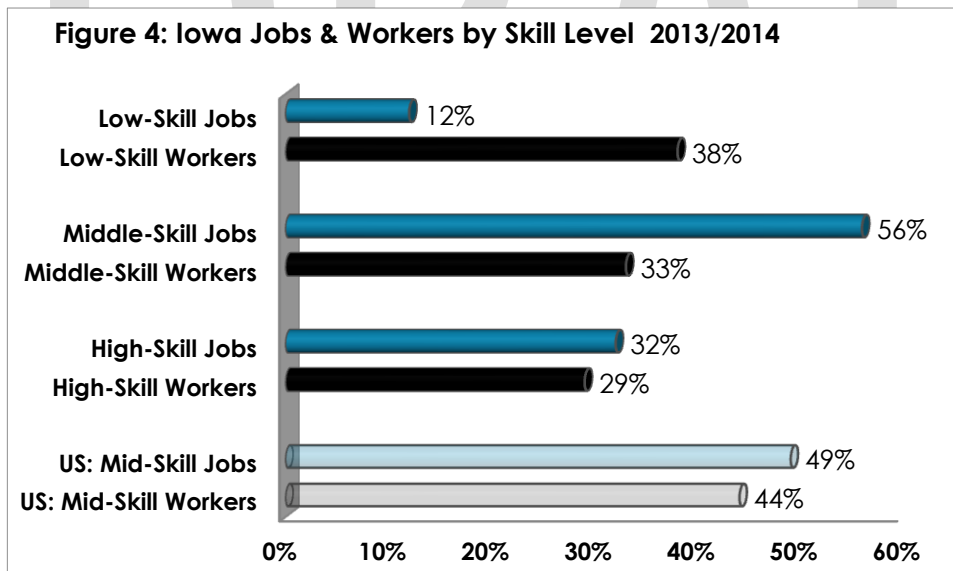
When considering the estimated employment, it is important to note that some jobs are fast-growing, but have small employment. Diagnostic medical sonographers are tied for the fastest growth rate at 4.4 percent but only have a statewide estimated 360 workers. Medical and clinical laboratory technicians have a growth rate of 2.5 percent; employment level of 1,460.

### Employers' Employment Needs

WITH REGARD TO THE INDUSTRY SECTORS AND OCCUPATIONS IDENTIFIED IN (A)(i) AND (ii), PROVIDE AN ASSESSMENT OF THE EMPLOYMENT NEEDS OF EMPLOYERS, INCLUDING A DESCRIPTION OF THE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES REQUIRED, INCLUDING CREDENTIALS AND LICENSES.

According to *Middle Skill Jobs in Iowa*,<sup>12</sup> a publication prepared by the Labor Market Information Division (LMI) of Iowa Workforce Development, a significant challenge Iowa faces is a shortage of qualified workers to fill middle-skill jobs. Substantial disparities exist between the number of workers able to compete for middle-skill jobs and those struggling to find low-skill jobs. In Iowa, 34% of available workers possess low-skills, while workers with middle-skills represent 32% of the workforce. Only 12% of available jobs seek workers with low skill-sets while numerous middle-skill jobs remain unfilled. In fact, 55% of jobs require at least mid-level skills.

Source: Iowa's Labor Force & Economic Analysis Bureau, 2015



<sup>12</sup> Labor Market Information Division, Iowa Workforce Development: *Middle Skill Jobs in Iowa* (2015). For more information, go to: <http://iwin.iwd.state.us/pubs/career/middleskilljobs.pdf>

Innovative strategies that are business-driven and increase the skills, talents, and abilities of the workforce will prepare workers to meet the demands of tomorrow's jobs. The Future Ready Iowa initiative seeks to meet this need by equipping 70% of Iowans with education and training beyond high school.

Middle-skilled occupations are those that require education, experience, or training beyond high school but typically less than a bachelor's degree. Acceptable credentials, education or experience include:

- High School Diploma + Moderate to Long-Term On-the-job Training
- High School Diploma + Apprenticeship
- Postsecondary non-degree award
- Some College, no degree
- Associate's Degree

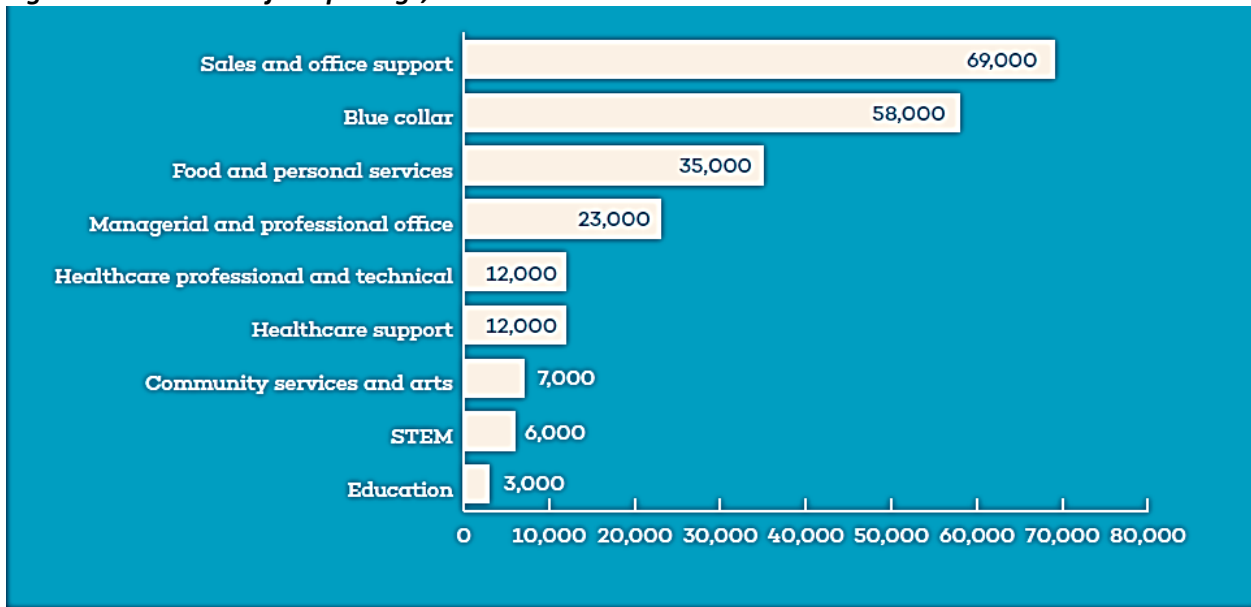
With Iowa's current shortage of middle- and high-skilled workers, it is critical that the state develop strategies that will draw workers and connect them with available middle- and high-skill jobs. Strong gains across a broad range of occupations at both the middle- and higher-skill levels in Iowa demonstrates Iowa's ability to grow middle- and high-skilled jobs and is a strong indicator of how well the economy has performed in recent years, despite the economic recession and slow economic recovery. Employer-driven policies, supports and industry-focused solutions will prepare a dynamic and Future Ready workforce to meet the challenges of the future.

Middle-skill jobs remain a fundamental element of Iowa's current and future economy. Over half of Iowa's jobs are middle-skill, the majority of which have a mean annual wage between \$30,000 and \$60,000. Occupations at the higher-end of the pay range can be found in business and financial operations; healthcare; construction and extraction; and installation, maintenance and repair.

Between 2010 and 2025, 225,000 job openings (37% of all job openings in Iowa) will be in middle-skill jobs. But the share of middle-skill job openings will be much higher in certain occupations – especially healthcare support occupations, where 67 percent of job openings will require some postsecondary education or training but not a Bachelor's degree. Many of the other middle-skill jobs in Iowa are concentrated in the construction and manufacturing sectors of the economy.



**Figure 5: Middle-skill job openings, 2010-2020**



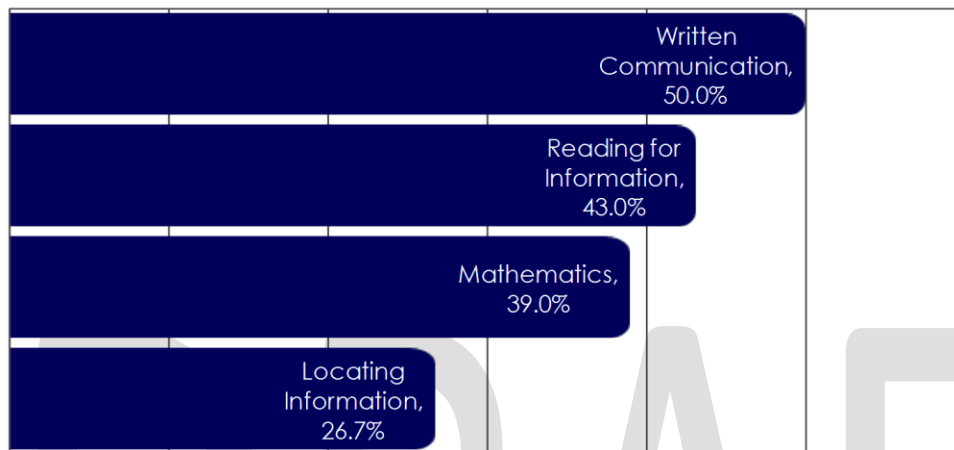
Source: Carnevale, Smith, and Strohl, *Recovery: Job Growth and Education Requirements through 2020*, 2013.

Prior to the authorization of the Workforce innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014, Iowa was taking steps to improve its workforce delivery system by developing and implementing programs that increase the capacity of the workforce to meet the needs of employers. Offering opportunities for workers to receive specialized training and to engage hands-on learning will increase workers' value and appeal to current and future employers. By broadening the range of high-quality pathways that lead to long-term career success through programs such as Registered Apprenticeships, incorporation of Career Pathways, and through an increased emphasis on Sector Partnerships, more lowans will have access to sustainable employment.

Iowa Workforce Development utilizes a variety of assessment tools to analyze current labor market conditions and to predict future trends. Surveys of 395 corporate executives from the 12 industry clusters reported significant concerns regarding workforce availability in Iowa based on the Synchronist survey for the Business Expansion and Strategic Trends (BEST) tracking effort by Iowa's economic development community. Employers in the Synchronist surveys commonly identify the following middle- and high-skilled occupations in high demand with talent shortages in the state: information technology professionals, particularly in software engineering, web development, and programming; engineers; senior management/executive level talent; welders; and CNC machinists.

Figure 6 breaks down the basic skills that employers reported are needed by applicants for open positions. Basic skills include literacy, numeracy, and the abilities to locate and read for information. More than one-fifth (20.9%) of employers in all of the sectors surveyed feel that applicants need basic skills needed for the job.

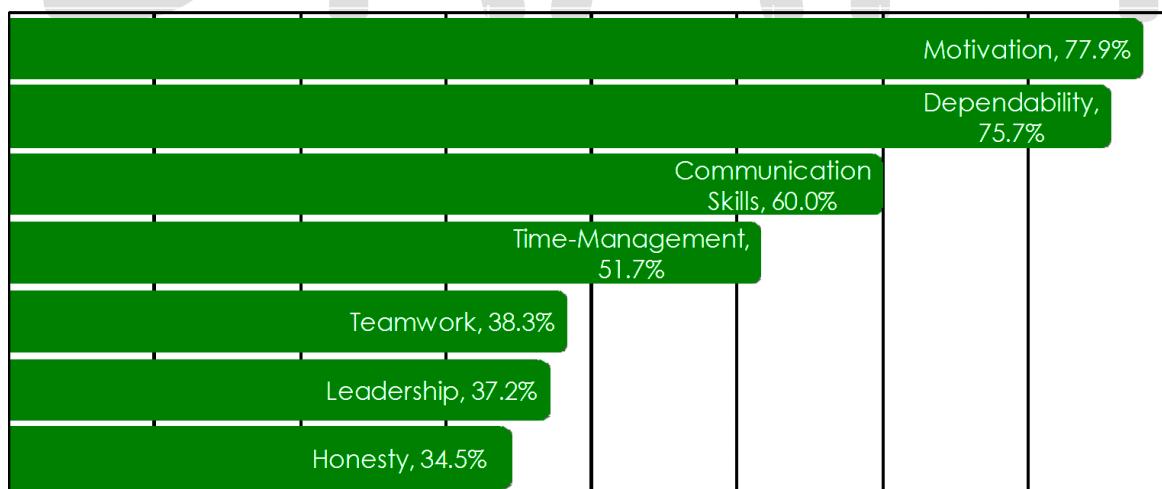
**Figure 6: Basic Skills Needed by Applicants**



Source: Labor Market Information Division, IWB, Workforce Needs Assessment: Iowa Analysis (2015)

Figure 7 provides a summary of the soft skills that employers reported were needed by applicants for open positions. Soft skills are skills associated with an individual’s habits, personality and character. Also included are interpersonal skills such as leadership, customer service and teamwork. Individuals with soft skills are well suited to working with others. Nearly one-third (29.9%) of employers in all sectors surveyed reported applicants required soft skills.

**Figure 7: Soft Skills Needed by Applicants**

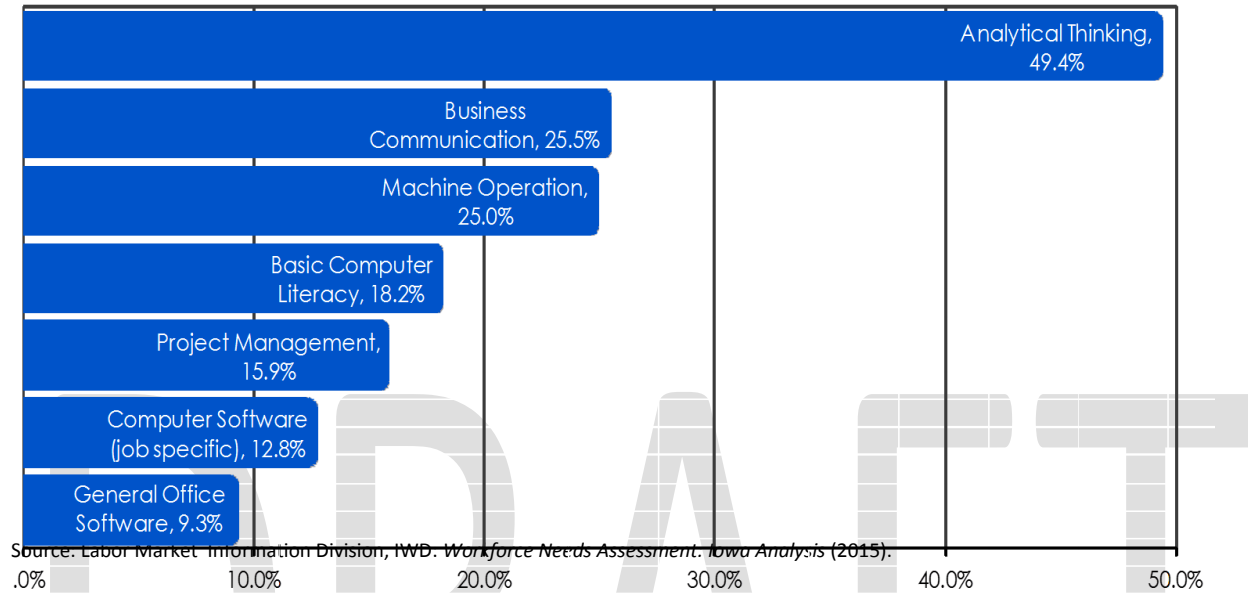


Source: Labor Market Information Division, IWB, Workforce Needs Assessment: Iowa Analysis (2015)

Figure 8 shows the occupational skills needed by applicants. Occupational skills are the technical and know-how skills that apply directly to a job. Occupational skills are often referred to as “hard skills” and

are primarily job-specific. Nearly two-fifths (37.1%) of employers surveyed believed applicants needed occupational skills for the job.

**Figure 8: Occupational Skills Needed by Applicants**



IVRS upon receipt of information concerning occupational skill needs by employers began developing strategies to create opportunities for IVRS job candidates to learn the necessary problem-solving skills to work. While this is currently in development, it is being planned for and will be addressed through a variety of methods including third party contracting for service, direct service provision by IVRS staff, and coordination with partners.

In regard to hiring processes, nearly half (46.1%) of the employers reported giving preference to applicants that had obtained certifications for the vacant positions. In addition, 38.7% of respondents indicated they give applicants with veteran status preference during the hiring process.

## 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<sup>13</sup>. THIS POPULATION MUST INCLUDE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES AMONG OTHER GROUPS<sup>14</sup> IN THE STATE AND ACROSS REGIONS IDENTIFIED BY THE STATE.

THIS INCLUDES: —

PROVIDE AN ANALYSIS OF CURRENT EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT DATA AND TRENDS IN THE STATE.

## Employment and Unemployment

Projections show that between 2010 and 2025, Iowa's economy will grow from 1.59 million jobs to 1.84 million jobs, an increase of roughly 250,000 net new jobs.<sup>38</sup> Iowa's annual job growth rate of 1.1 percent to 1.3 percent has been marginally slower than the national rate of 1.2 percent to 1.9 percent, but faster than its neighbors in the Midwest.<sup>39</sup> Iowa's pre-recession employment level was 1.66 million. So the economy first has to recover the jobs it lost in the recession before going on to add additional opportunities for unemployed workers and new entrants into the workforce. Iowa's statewide annual average unemployment rate dropped to 4.3 percent in 2014 from 4.7 percent in 2013. At the same time, the U.S. rate for unemployment also improved, dropping to 6.2 percent in 2014 from 7.4 percent in 2013. Iowa and Hawaii tied for the ninth-lowest unemployment rate in the nation. The number of unemployed persons in Iowa averaged 74,000 in 2014, down from 78,200 in 2013.

Men accounted for 60 percent of the unemployed in Iowa in 2014, compared to women who made up 40 percent. Minorities and youth continued to experience the highest rates of unemployment: Blacks or African Americans (14.1 percent), youth 16 to 19 years of age (12.0 percent), and Hispanics (8.5 percent).

Workers with less education also continued to experience a higher unemployment rate than better educated individuals: those with less than a high school diploma (10.9 percent), high school graduates with no college (5.8 percent), those with some college or associate's degree (4.6 percent), and those with a Bachelor's degree or higher (2.1 percent).

The July 2015 labor statistics show that an 11% unemployment rate for persons with disabilities while persons without disabilities had a 4.8% unemployment rate. This is a significant discrepancy that the core partners all agree must be addressed so that as the collaborative work continues, and the unemployment rate for this population declines, the outcome will demonstrate the system improvements expected with the WIOA Unified Plan.

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<sup>13</sup> 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.

<sup>14</sup> Veterans, unemployed workers, and youth, and others that the State may identify.

Unemployment insurance benefits paid and average duration continued to trend downward in the wake of the recession. The total weeks compensated for unemployment insurance decreased by 7.2 percent versus 2013. Average duration of benefits dipped to 12.9 weeks from 13.7 in 2013. These levels peaked for Iowa in 2009 when the average duration of benefits were 15.6 weeks paid and 2.6 million weeks were compensated—over twice the amount paid in 2014. Recent benefit amounts now trend near pre-recession levels.

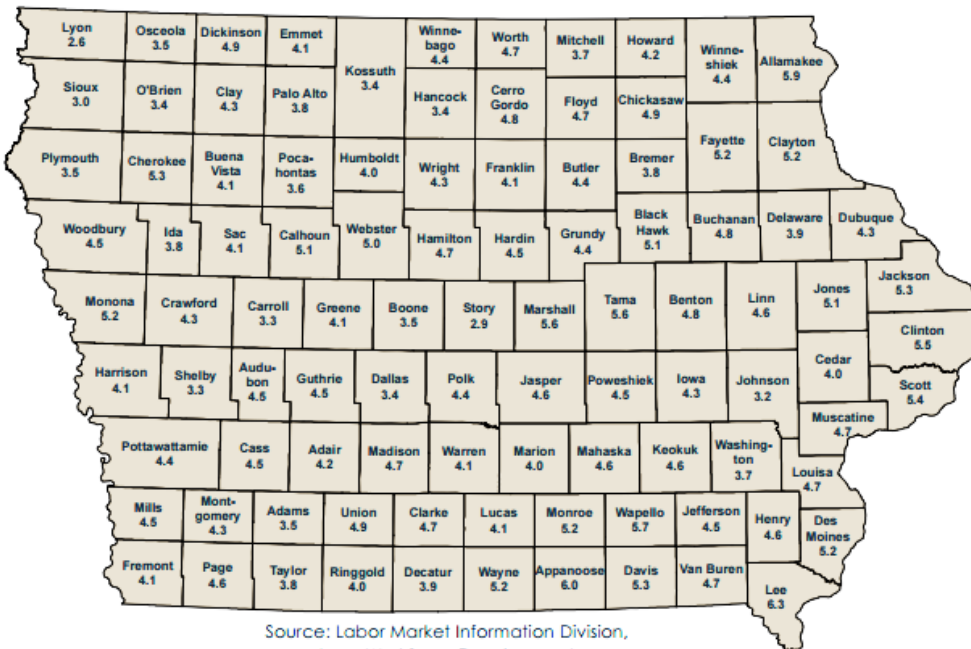
**Table 4: Iowa Employment Statistics**

Labor Force Statistics	2012	2013	2014	2015
Total Employment	1,566,100	1,560,800	1,555,500	1,644,500
Total Unemployment	81,800	72,600	63,400	60,300
Percent Unemployed	5.0	4.5	4.0	3.5
Unemployment Insurance	2012	2013	2014	2015
Weeks Compensated	1,920,298	1,536,467	1,342,482	Coming
Average Durations (Weeks)	15.3	14.2	13.5	Coming
UI Regular Benefits Paid	\$586,900,000	\$463,400,000	\$417,000,000	Coming

Source: Labor Market Information Division, Iowa Workforce Development, 2015

Iowa's long term unemployment also eased somewhat in 2014, down to 18.8 percent of total unemployment from 21.1 percent in 2013. Unemployment rates in all nine of the state's metropolitan statistical areas (MSA's) and most rural counties decreased in 2014. The Ames MSA experienced the lowest rate of the nine major labor market areas at 2.9 percent; Davenport-Moline-Rock Island MSA was the highest at 6.3 percent. Jobless rates for Iowa's 99 counties ranged from a low of 2.6 percent in Lyon to a high of 6.3 percent in Lee.

**Figure 9: Average Unemployment Rates by County, 2014**



Source: Labor Market Information Division, Iowa Workforce Development

Iowa Workforce Development (IWD) conducted the fifth annual Workforce Needs Assessment from July 2014 through October 2014. In addition to vacancy and retirement data, the survey also addressed the demand for workers and skills required in the workforce. The results of the survey were analyzed on both a statewide and regional basis. In July 2014, a total of 39,996 employers in the state were contacted either by mail or email and asked to complete the survey. By the end of the survey period (October 31, 2014), IWD had received 9,754 responses, yielding a 24.4 percent response rate.

Of the employers that responded to the survey, 2,984 (31.0%) reported having one or more current or anticipated job vacancies, while 6,643 respondents (69.0%) reported having no job vacancies. There is an average of 34,378 job vacancies per day reported by employers across Iowa. The majority of reported vacancies exist in positions that typically require some training beyond high school. Of employers that reported job vacancies, 41.3% were businesses with 10 or fewer employees, 51.2% had between 11 and 99 employees and 7.5% had 100 employees or more. While large employers only accounted for 7.5% of the survey responses, nearly half (47.2%) of the total job vacancies in the state were with large employers. During the same period of time the average ratio of unemployed persons for every vacant position was 1.7%.

Vacancy data reflects data captured between October 31, 2013 and November 30, 2014. The majority of vacancies are within the sales and related, office and administrative support; transportation and material moving; healthcare practitioner and technical; production; and food preparation and serving related occupational categories. The occupational categories are clustered using the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system. Table 5 shows reported vacancies by occupational category. Additional data was obtained from the Iowa Job Bank.

**Table 5: Current Vacancies by Occupational Category**

	<b>% of Total Vacancies</b>	<b>Average Vacancies/Day</b>
Sales & Related	11.6%	3,994
Office & Administrative Support	11.0%	3,779
Transportation & Material Moving	10.6%	3,643
Healthcare Practitioner & Technical	8.3%	2,847
Production	7.5%	2,593
Food Preparation & Serving Related	6.8%	2,333
Computer & Mathematical Science	5.5%	1,887
Building & Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance	4.9%	1,696
Management	4.8%	1,640
Installation, Maintenance & Repair	4.3%	1,480
Business & Financial Operations	3.7%	1,287
Construction & Extraction	3.6%	1,221
Healthcare Support	3.5%	1,205
Architecture & Engineering	3.0%	1,047
Community & Social Science	2.1%	720
Farming, Fishing & Forestry	2.0%	683
Education, Training & Library	1.9%	639
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports & Related	1.5%	504
Protective Service	1.1%	386
Personal Care & Service	1.1%	366
Life, Physical & Social Science	1.0%	355
Legal	0.1%	45
Military Specific	0.1%	28
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>34,378</b>

*Source: Iowa Workforce Development's Job Bank*

## Labor Market Trends

### PROVIDE AN ANALYSIS OF KEY LABOR MARKET TRENDS, INCLUDING ACROSS EXISTING INDUSTRIES AND OCCUPATIONS.

According to the Battelle Report, the Iowa economy is evolving.<sup>15</sup> There is a shift from goods-producing to service-providing industries in response to a range of factors including an aging population, automation, and technology advances. Manufacturing, the largest of the goods-producing industries, has been transformed by technology. Iowa's nonfarm employment is a mix of goods-producing and service-providing industries. Natural resources and mining, construction and manufacturing are defined as goods-producing sectors. In Iowa, the goods-producing component of the economy has lost employment due to the decline in manufacturing jobs since 2000. The goods-producing industries, which accounted for 21.5% of the state's nonfarm jobs in 2000, represented 19.0 percent of these jobs in 2014.

**Figure 10: Economic Indicators**

Indicator	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Gross Domestic Product - Iowa (\$ billions)	149.4	159.3	164.4	167.7	N/A
Exports (\$ billions)	13.3	14.6	13.9	15.1	N/A
Personal Income (\$ billions)	128.9	133.7	135.2	139.6	N/A
Per Capita Income	\$42,058	\$43,458	\$43,735	\$44,937	N/A
Construction Employment	62,400	64,600	67,800	74,400	N/A
Average Iowa Home Sales Price <sup>1</sup>	N/A	N/A	\$151,426	\$157,097	\$167,324
New Residential Housing Units Authorized	7,526	9,501	10,877	10,256	N/A
Iowa New Vehicle Registrations	123,225	133,233	141,897	142,431	147,447
<b>Labor Force Statistics:</b>					
Total Employment	1,571,400	1,565,500	1,595,400	1,630,400	N/A
Total Unemployment	91,000	82,200	78,200	74,000	N/A
Percent Unemployed	5.5	5.0	4.7	4.3	N/A
<b>Unemployment Insurance:</b>					
Weeks Compensated	1,536,467	1,342,482	1,294,587	1,201,658	
Average Duration (weeks)	14.2	13.5	13.7	12.9	
UI Regular Benefits Paid (\$ millions)	463.4	417	418.8	402.6	

Source: Iowa Workforce Development, Labor Market Information Division

#### [1. Average Iowa Home Sales Price through November, 2015](#)

Iowa's economy continued to expand through 2014, ending the year at a record level of nonfarm employment. This is the fourth consecutive year of employment gains. However, compared to surrounding states in 2014, four of the six states had higher rates of growth than Iowa's (1.3 percent). The United States as a whole had a growth rate of 1.9 percent. The gap between Iowa's rate of growth

<sup>15</sup> Source: Battelle Technology Partnership Practice, Iowa's Re-Envisioned Economic Development Roadmap (2014).



and that of the country has increasingly widened over the past four years, with the nation's rate of growth exceeding Iowa's each year.

Iowa's total employment expanded by 35,000 jobs in 2014, the second-consecutive year for growth. The state's labor force also increased, gaining 30,900 participants. These gains marked all-time highs in employment and labor force, eclipsing prior records established in 2008.

Meanwhile, the state's service-providing industries have increased their proportion of nonfarm employment from 78.5 percent in 2000 to 81.0 percent in 2014. The top three service-providing sectors from 2000-2014 (based on rate of growth) were professional and business services (+26.5 percent), education and health (+22.9 percent), and finance (+16.1 percent).

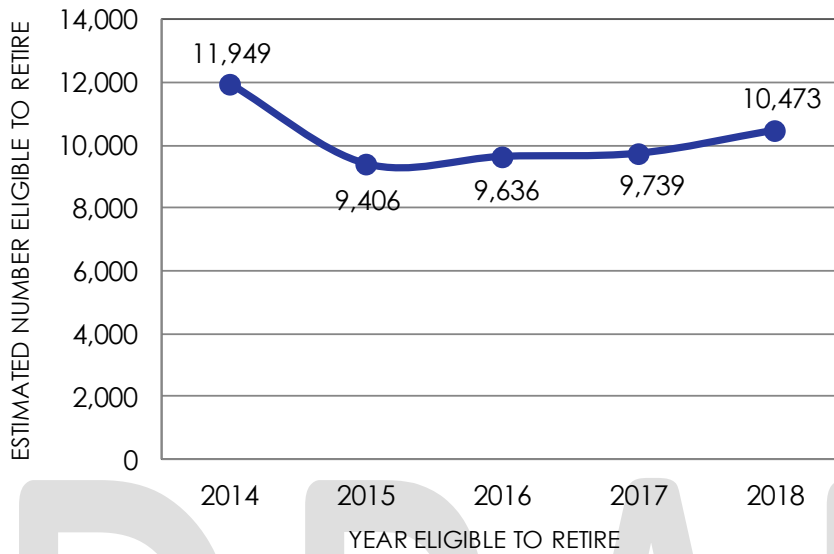
Information lost 14,800 jobs or 36.6 percent of its employment over the period. Most of the losses were concentrated in telecommunications and in book and newspaper publishing and printing. However, the sector is starting to add jobs again as new businesses emerge that provide internet publishing and broadcasting services and web search portals. Health services will continue to be one of the fastest-growing sectors in the state due to the state's aging population, which will increase the demand for these services.

Some of the newer technologies will play an important role in driving employment growth over the next decade. Included among these are the mobile internet, cloud technology, 3D printing, advanced robotics, renewable energy and next-generation genomics.

The 2014 Iowa Local Employment Dynamics data reported 80,569 individuals over the age of 64 working throughout the state. They represent approximately 5.7 percent of the total workforce. The educational services (8.8%); agriculture & mining (8.0%); arts, entertainment & recreation (7.9%); and personal services (7.9%) industries have the highest percentage of their workforce over the age of 64. There are more males than females in this portion of the workforce, with 51.1 and 48.9 percent respectively. Of those employees eligible to retire, almost all (94.2%) of them meet the current skill requirements of the positions they occupy.

While the number of retirees can be somewhat hard for employers to gauge as they look toward the future, Figure 11 presents the annual estimated number of eligible retirees through 2018. With an estimated 11,949 employees already eligible to retire within the state, many retirement-eligible employees are choosing to remain in the workforce due to their employer's retention efforts or other reasons. According to the survey, an average of 1.2 percent of the state's workforce becomes eligible for retirement each year. Future analysis of trend data will shed light on how long retirement eligible workers are remaining in the workforce.

**Figure 11: Estimate of Those Newly Eligible to Retire**



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015

The ongoing retirements of the Baby Boomers are likely to cause skill shortages since these individuals have acquired a broad base of knowledge and skills that will need to be replaced. Several of Iowa's major industries have relatively high proportions of workers in the 55 and over age category, which will require many positions to be filled. Iowa's Educational Services and Utilities sectors have the largest concentration of older workers at 30 percent. Other sectors with high proportions of older workers are:

- Δ Mining (29 percent),
- Δ Public Administration (28 percent),
- Δ Real Estate and Rental and Leasing (27 percent) and
- Δ Transportation and Warehousing (27 percent).

Replacement job openings occur as workers leave their jobs for various reasons. Baby boomer retirements are expected to be the primary source of replacement job openings through 2025.

Nationally, job openings that result from replacements will outnumber the number of newly created jobs by a 1.5 to 1 ratio. But the ratio varies by occupation; specifically, low-skill occupations have a higher ratio of job openings from replacements to new jobs compared to high-skill occupations. For example, for waitressing jobs, the ratio of job openings from replacements to job openings from new jobs is 13 to 1; for doctors, it is 1 to 1. In other words, job openings from newly created jobs are more likely to be in high-skill occupations.

In Iowa between 2010 and 2025, there will be 77,000 job openings in office and administrative support occupations and 74,000 job openings in sales occupations. Together, these occupations will account for one out of four job openings in the state. Management occupations (53,000 job openings) and production occupations (51,000 job openings) will also generate significant numbers of job openings.

The lack of job opportunities following the recession discouraged many individuals from seeking employment. In 2015, Iowa's labor force is again expected to experience strong growth following a gain

of over 30,000 workers last year (+1.8 percent). From 1990 to 2014, Iowa's labor force expanded by 253,400 workers, translating into a growth rate of 17.5 percent, or 0.7 percent annually. In contrast, the U.S. labor force grew by 23.9 percent over the same period, or close to 1.0 percent annually. Future labor force growth for both Iowa and the nation is expected to be slower as the population ages. According to the 2013 population estimates, Iowa ranks 10th in the nation based on the proportion of its population 65 and over, and 4th in the nation based on its share of population 85 and over.

Historical patterns show that labor force growth is tied to population growth and a strong economy. An area that continues to add both people and jobs is most likely to experience long-term economic prosperity. In Iowa, the metro areas have become magnets for individuals looking for higher-paying job opportunities. This trend has been apparent for some time, and is one of the factors that has decreased the supply of younger workers in many of Iowa's rural counties. For example, Dallas County, which is a part of the Des Moines metro area, leads all Iowa counties based on population and labor force growth. From 1990 to 2014, the county increased its labor force by 26,000 workers for a robust growth rate of 161.5 percent. Johnson County ranked second, adding 26,500 workers (45.9 percent). Based on numeric change, Polk County increased its labor force by the largest number—66,800 (35.2%). Conversely, 22 of Iowa's rural counties lost a sizable portion of the rural labor force over the period; Page County led the group with a 18.5 percent drop. Other significant losses occurred in Winnebago County (-17.2 percent) and Hamilton County (-15.5 percent).

Although Iowa's labor force has grown at a slow pace, the state has one of the higher labor force participation rates in the nation. In 2014, the rate was 70.4 percent compared to 62.9 percent for the U.S. The labor force participation rate is the percentage of the working age population (16-64) who are employed or unemployed.

### **Education and Skill Levels of the Workforce**

#### PROVIDE AN ANALYSIS OF THE EDUCATIONAL AND SKILL LEVELS OF THE WORKFORCE.

Data on Iowa's occupations confirm that Iowa retains a strong demand for skilled workers. Employers in all industries have a growing need for workers with training or education beyond high school. According to a 2014 report published by the Iowa College Student Aid Commission,<sup>16</sup> less than 40% percent of Iowa's adults ages 25 – 64, have at least an associate's degree while more than 60% of jobs in the state will require postsecondary credentials by 2018.<sup>17</sup> Iowa's percent of the population with a bachelor's degree or higher is 25%. Economic projections show that skills-based technological change across industries and occupations will support rising demand for postsecondary education and training.

In the American education system, the four-year Bachelor's degree is the default educational pathway. However, many good jobs pay a living wage and do not require a Bachelor's degree, but they do require some education or training beyond high school. There are 29 million such jobs in the national economy. In Iowa, there are 400,000 middle-skill jobs that pay at least \$35,000 per year; this represents 26 percent of all jobs in Iowa. Forty percent of these jobs pay more than \$50,000 annually and 14 percent pay more than \$75,000 annually.

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<sup>16</sup> Iowa College Student Aid Commission, *The Condition of Higher Education in Iowa* (2014). For more information go to: <https://www.iowacollegestudentaid.gov/content/higher-education-data-center>

<sup>17</sup> Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce (June, 2010). *Projections of Jobs and Education Requirements through 2018*.

IVRS recognizes that education is an avenue to achieve self-sufficiency and provide a competitive edge to persons with disabilities. As a result almost 36% of the IVRS caseload is actively involved in obtaining a post secondary credential or degree. (See table..... Post Secondary Education IVRS Caseload)

Middle-skill jobs will comprise 39 percent of Iowa’s employment. That 39 percent breaks down into these categories:

- Associate’s degree holders (12%)
- Certificate holders (5%)
- Workers with a professional certification or occupational license as their only credential beyond high school (5%)
- Workers who completed apprenticeships (3%)
- Workers who completed some college coursework that have market value including noncredit courses with market value, (14%)

There are five pathways to these jobs: two-year Associate’s degrees, postsecondary certificates, professional certifications and occupational licenses, apprenticeships, and employer-based training. Another pathway, in which students and trainees take a series of courses in a narrow range of occupational competencies coupled with work based learning opportunities, referred to as a career pathway.

Disparities exist in the college participation rate of low-income students compared to students from families with higher incomes. The number of students who enroll in college immediately after high school has remained stagnant for low-income students, while increasing for middle and upper- income students.<sup>18</sup> With more of Iowa’s students projected to be from low-income families in the future, programs to increase college access will become even more crucial.

Nine of Iowa’s 10 largest school districts reported increases in four-year graduation rates. Of those districts, Cedar Rapids reported the largest gain of 4.1 percent; the district’s overall four-year graduation rate is 85 percent for the Class of 2014. Iowa graduation rates are calculated with a formula established by the U.S. Department of Education.

The following chart shows a comparison of Iowa’s four-year graduation rate for the classes of 2014, 2013, 2012 and 2011:

**Iowa’s Four-Year High School Graduation Rate by Subgroup**

	All Students	IEP	Low SES	ELL	African American	Native American	Asian	Hispanic	White
<b>Class of 2014</b>	90.5%	76.4%	84.1%	83.1%	78.6%	78.3%	90.8%	81.7%	92.2%
<b>Class of 2013</b>	89.7%	72.7%	80.4%	75.7%	73.8%	83.2%	91.1%	79.5%	91.5%
<b>Class of 2012</b>	89.3%	72.7%	79.7%	73.9%	74.1%	72.7%	89.9%	77.5%	91.1%
<b>Class of 2011</b>	88.3%	69.9%	78.1%	70.0%	73.2%	79.2%	88.5%	75.2%	90.2%
<b>Difference 2013 to 2014</b>	0.8%	3.7%	3.7%	7.4%	4.8%	-4.9%	-0.3%	2.2%	0.7%

<sup>18</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey. Age and Sex. 2008-2012 5-Year Estimates.

Source: Iowa Department of education, <https://www.educateiowa.gov/article/2015/04/01/iowa-s-high-school-graduation-rate-tops-90-percent>

Iowa's annual dropout rate decreased in the 2013-14 school year from the year before. The 2013-14 dropout rate was 2.7 percent, a decrease of 0.1 percent from the previous year. The rate reflects the percentage of students in grades 9-12 who drop out of school during a single year. The state's 2013-14 dropout rate represents 3,932 students. The following chart shows a comparison of annual dropout rates:

### Grades 9-12 Dropout Rate by Subgroup

	All Students	IEP	Low SES	ELL	African American	Native American	Asian	Hispanic	White
<b>2013-2014</b>	2.7%	4.5%	5.3%	5.2%	7.2%	6.2%	1.6%	4.4%	2.2%
<b>2012-2013</b>	2.8%	4.4%	5.6%	5.7%	6.9%	6.7%	2.0%	5.3%	2.3%
<b>2011-2012</b>	3.2%	5.1%	6.0%	6.0%	9.0%	6.4%	2.3%	5.8%	2.6%
<b>2010-2011</b>	3.4%	5.2%	5.9%	7.2%	8.6%	9.2%	2.5%	6.4%	2.8%
<b>Difference 2013 to 2014</b>	-0.1%	0.1%	-0.3%	0.5%	0.3%	-0.5%	-0.4%	-0.9%	-0.1%

Source: Iowa Department of education, <https://www.educateiowa.gov/article/2015/04/01/iowa-s-high-school-graduation-rate-tops-90-percent>

Demographic data on children in the college pipeline indicate that Iowa's future population of high school graduates and traditional-aged college students will be fewer in number and will be increasingly more diverse.<sup>19</sup> Iowa's school-aged population has become more diverse over the past decade, and is projected continue along this path.

The Iowa Department of Education shows that minority students made up 9.7 percent of total public school enrollment in 2000-2001, but by 2012-2013, it had more than doubled to 20.2 percent. The Hispanic student population increased the most, from 3.6 percent to 9.3 percent.

Iowa's public high school graduating classes are projected to rapidly become more diverse in coming years. White, non-Hispanic students accounted for 90 percent of all graduates in 2008-2009, but that share is expected to fall seven percentage points by 2019-2020. While the percent of both black non-Hispanic and Asians/Pacific Island students are expected to increase, the most significant increases are expected from the Hispanic student population. The Hispanic share of high school graduates is projected to more than double over the same time period, accounting for nearly one in ten Iowa graduates by 2019-2020.<sup>20</sup> According to a national survey of Latinos by the Pew Hispanic Center, nearly 89 percent of Latino young adults believe that a college education is important for success in life, yet less than half that number (48%) indicate that they themselves plan to get a college degree.<sup>21</sup> The biggest reason for the gap between the high value Latinos place on education and their more modest aspirations to finish college appears to come from financial pressure to support a family. These are issues that Iowa will need to address in order to increase educational attainment in the state.

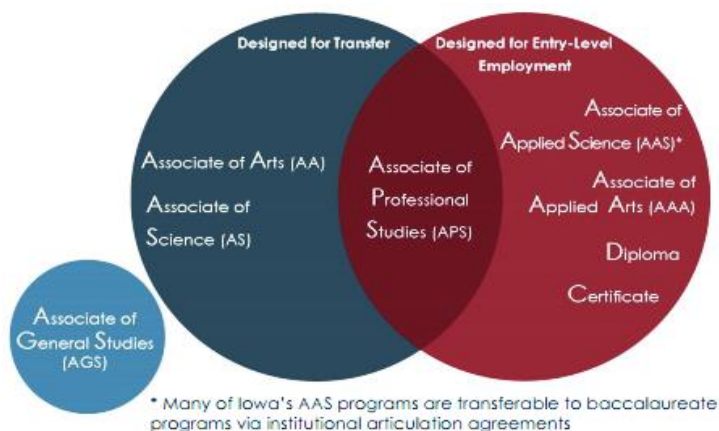
<sup>19</sup> Lipka, S (2014). Colleges, Here is Your Future, LX(19), A22-A27. For more information, go to: <http://chronicle.com/article/Demographic-Data-Let-Colleges/144101/>

<sup>20</sup> Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, (2013). Knocking at the College Door: Projections of High School Graduates - Iowa. For more information, go to: <http://www.wiche.edu/info/knocking-8th/profiles/ia.pdf>

<sup>21</sup> Lopez, M.H. 2009. Latinos and Education: Explaining the Attainment Gap. Washington, DC: Pew Hispanic Center.

Associate's degrees in Iowa are separated into six different categories. AA degrees and AAS degrees combined account for 86 percent of all Associate's degrees awarded in the state (FY2012). One year after attainment, AAS degrees have, by far, the greatest value, both in terms of adjusted median annual wage (\$30,379) and average employment percentage (93.6%).

**Figure 12: Associate Degrees**



In Iowa, the share of workers with an Associate's degree is 12 percent, slightly above the national Associate's degree attainment rate. Iowa has a distinctive focus on Associate's degrees as opposed to certificates: 70 percent of sub-baccalaureate awards in Iowa are Associate's degrees, while 30 percent are certificates. Iowa has the third highest Associate's degree share of sub-baccalaureate attainment among the states.

Associate's degree holders are more likely than high school graduates to be employed: 77 percent of Associate's degree holders are employed compared to 66 percent of high school graduates. Associate's degree holders earn 44 percent more than high school graduates, on average. Nursing and industrial technology programs offer the highest median first-year earnings to Iowa community college graduates.

Postsecondary certificates are similar to Associate's degrees in that they are awarded by education institutions after the completion of a course of study and are most commonly awarded by community colleges and for-profit colleges. The primary differences between Associate's degrees and certificates are (1) certificates require fewer courses to complete – the majority can be completed in two semesters; (2) they are relatively more common at for-profit colleges; and (3) the coursework in certificate programs features fewer general education courses and more targeted career preparation or training.

Eleven percent of workers report a certificate as their highest educational attainment, which makes them more common than Associate's or graduate degrees in the workforce. Between 2004 and 2013, the number of certificates awarded in Iowa increased from 6,000 a year to 8,000 a year, a 33 percent growth rate compared to a national growth rate of 48 percent.

Although Iowa has not utilized certificates to the extent other states have, it ranks seventh nationally in the share of certificates that provide a substantial return on investment. Three out of five certificate holders in Iowa earn at least 20 percent more than the average high school graduate, compared to half of all certificate holders who meet this threshold nationally.

In Iowa, 33 percent of workers are licensed, the highest rate of licensure among states (Nevada is second, at 31 percent). Five percent of workers in Iowa are certified, which is lower than the national average of 7 percent. Occupational licenses are government-issued credentials which legally are required before a worker can perform certain jobs. Certifications are sometimes tied to government regulations that guarantee the right to a specific job title such as a Certified Nursing Assistant. While awarded by certification bodies – such as industry groups, government agencies and professional associations – upon the satisfaction of a list of specified criteria, often including earning a passing grade on exams make workers more employable and increase their earnings.

Certification holders are more likely to be employed than workers without certifications – 81 percent of certification holders are employed, compared to 57 percent of workers without certifications. Certification holders often hold these credentials concurrently with academic degrees. Certifications are most in demand in the healthcare industry. They are also in high demand in the professional and business services, information services, and financial services industries.

Some college is always a difficult category to justify as part of a goal, but it should never be excluded. First, approximately 42 percent of the some-college workforce has at least two years of full-time college credit. Second, market value is the important criterion for deciding whether some college adds value to the individual who decides to pursue it. While we do not dispute the sheepskin effect – where named credentials are highly associated with increases in human capital and wages – national data show that one is better off with some college than no college at all, as long as the student does not incur too much debt financing his or her education. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) data estimate that an extra year of schooling increases wages by an average of 5.6 percent. Furthermore, workers with some college credit can earn 20 percent more than a high school graduate and 38 percent more than a high school dropout.

### Skill Gaps

#### DESCRIBE APPARENT 'SKILL GAPS'.

Workforce gaps can be determined by comparing the inventory of skills needed by employers through the Workforce Needs Assessment Survey and those skills held by the population of workers as presented in a Laborshed analysis. This gap can then be analyzed and the necessary training and education programs can be formalized through a Skillshed analysis.

Employers that responded to the survey were asked their perceptions on the degree to which job applicants possessed soft, basic and occupational skills. In addition, employers were asked if applicants, who may or may not possess the necessary skills for the job vacancy, were being disqualified due to the results of controlled substance testing or background checks. The results for all employers are shown below in Figure 13 (following page).

**Figure 13: Perception of Applicants**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Applicants fulfill all necessary requirements for the job	8.8%	23.5%	32.9%	28.3%	6.5%
Applicants possess the basic skills required for the job	4.1%	16.8%	32.1%	36.0%	11.0%
Applicants possess the soft skills required for the job	6.9%	23.0%	38.3%	26.0%	5.8%
Applicants possess the occupational skills required for the job	11.7%	25.4%	34.5%	22.3%	6.1%
Applicants are often disqualified due to controlled substance testing	44.7%	18.1%	27.9%	6.5%	2.8%
Applicants are often disqualified for failure to pass a background check	32.7%	20.2%	25.9%	14.3%	6.9%

Source: Labor Market Information Division, IWD: Middle Skill Jobs in Iowa (2015).

By 2018, 1.1 million jobs in Iowa, or 62 percent of the total, will require some education or training beyond high school. Iowa is expected to create 527,000 job vacancies between 2008 and 2018, both from newly created jobs and retirements from existing positions. Of these openings, 319,000 will be for individuals holding postsecondary degrees, 169,000 for high school graduates, and 39,000 for high school dropouts. Between 2008 and 2018, new jobs in Iowa requiring postsecondary credentials will grow by 101,000, while jobs for high school graduates and dropouts will increase by 57,000. Iowa ranks 22nd in the share of its jobs that will require a Bachelor’s degree by 2018, and 43<sup>rd</sup> in jobs for high school dropouts.<sup>22</sup>

**Table 6: Snapshot of Educational Demand for Total Jobs in Iowa, 2008 and 2018**

	2008	2018	% change
High School Dropouts	124,000	135,000	9%
High School Graduates	537,000	583,000	9%
Some College	378,000	414,000	10%
Associate’s	196,000	216,000	10%
Bachelor’s	316,000	349,000	10%
Graduate	109,000	122,000	12%

Source: *The Midwest Challenge, Matching Jobs with Education in the Post-Recession Economy, 2014*

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<sup>22</sup> Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce (2014). *The Midwest Challenge, Matching Jobs with Education in the Post-Recession Economy*

<sup>26</sup> Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce (2015). *Iowa: Education and Workforce Trends through 2025*.



## 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 (A)(1)(B)(III) ABOVE, AND THE EMPLOYMENT NEEDS OF EMPLOYERS, AS IDENTIFIED IN (A)(1)(A)(III) ABOVE.

The Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce (CEW) in collaboration with the Iowa Department of Education has compiled this report in support of the Iowa Governor's Office projections of long-term education goals. As part of the National Governors Association's work on Iowa's talent pipeline, the Unified State Plan builds on the information provided on industry and occupational trends to identify long-term education goals and workforce development needs. Education and training needs are based on projections of traditional industry growth, new emerging sector industries, and forecasts of occupational needs to fill those industries.<sup>26</sup> The Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce's analysis of industry and occupational requirements projects that by 2025 68 percent of jobs in Iowa will require postsecondary education or training beyond high school.

The breakdown is as follows:

- 32 percent of jobs will require a high school diploma or less. These jobs tend to be largely in blue-collar; food service; and some healthcare support occupations. Even in these categories, however, the trend is increasingly toward upskilling, especially for blue-collar production occupations in advanced manufacturing.
- 39 percent of jobs will require at least some college or an Associate's degree. These "middle-skills" jobs may require education and training beyond a high school diploma, but not a Bachelor's degree or above. These include Associate's degrees, postsecondary vocational certificates, occupational licenses and professional certifications, apprenticeship programs, and some college credits. In Iowa, the breakdown of requirements for middle-skill jobs is projected to be:
  - 12 percent Associate's degrees;
  - 5 percent postsecondary vocational certificates;
  - 5 percent occupational licenses and professional certifications;
  - 3 percent apprenticeship programs; and
  - 14 percent some college credits that have market value including noncredit courses with market value.
- 21 percent of jobs will require a Bachelor's degree.
- 8 percent of jobs will require a graduate degree.

Between 2010 and 2025, 225,000 job openings (37% of all job openings in Iowa) will be in middle-skill jobs. But the share of middle-skill job openings will be much higher in certain occupations – especially healthcare support occupations, where 67 percent of job openings will require some postsecondary education or training but not a Bachelor's degree. Many of the other middle-skill jobs in Iowa are concentrated in the construction and manufacturing sectors of the economy.

## 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 MANDATORY AND OPTIONAL ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM PARTNERS.

## ***Iowa Adult Education and Literacy***

Adult education has a rich history in Iowa of providing services that assist adults in improving their skills, achieving their educational goals, and transitioning to further education or employment. Instruction is designed for adults functioning at the lowest levels of basic skills and English language instruction to advanced levels of learning. As defined by Title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity (WIOA), Adult Education enables adults to: (1) become literate and obtain the knowledge and skills necessary for employment and self-sufficiency; (2) obtain the educational skills necessary to become full partners in the educational development of their children; and (3) complete a secondary school education.

The federally-funded adult education and literacy programs administered by the Iowa Department of Education (IDOE) Division of Community Colleges provide lifelong educational opportunities and support services to eligible participants. Programs assist adults in obtaining the knowledge and skills necessary for work, further education, family self-sufficiency, and community involvement. Iowa's adult education and literacy (AEL) programs are delivered through the state's 15 community colleges. By improving the education and skill levels of individual Iowans, the programs enhance the competitiveness of state's workforce and economy.

Through instruction in adult basic education (ABE), adult secondary education (ASE) and English as a Second Language (ESL), programs help learners to:

- gain employment or better their current employment;
- obtain a high school equivalency diploma by passing the state approved assessment;
- attain skills necessary to enter postsecondary education and training;
- exit public welfare and become self-sufficient;
- learn to speak, to read, and to write the English language;
- master basic academic skills to help their children succeed in school;
- become U.S. citizens and participate in a democratic society;
- gain self-esteem, personal confidence, and a sense of personal and civic responsibility.

Eligibility for enrollment includes persons that are at least 16 years of age and not enrolled or required to be enrolled in a secondary school under Iowa Code chapter 299.1A; and meet one of the following:

- 1) *lack sufficient mastery of basic educational skills to enable them to function effectively in society;*
- 2) *do not have a secondary school diploma or a recognized equivalent, and have not achieved an equivalent level of education; or*
- 3) *are unable to speak, read, or write the English language.*

In FY 2015, AEL program enrollment was 19,464, with an unduplicated headcount of 17,773. However, the data management system used to report for federal accounting purposes consisted of 18,321 participants. Of these students, 12,203 were eligible for, and therefore included in, federal year-end reporting based on the NRS requirements.

ABE instruction had the most enrollees in 2015 with 5,859 participants; 48 percent of the total enrollment. ESL was the second largest group of participants with 4,899 participants, while ASE represented 12 percent with 1,444 enrollees. There has been a five year average increase of 5.3 percent in ESL enrollment.

Of those that were enrolled in 2015 and federally reported, 50 percent were female and 35 percent self-identified as White. Thirty-one percent of participants identified themselves as Hispanic or Latino, 19

percent as Black or African American, and 12 percent as Asian. The remaining three categories (Native American, Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and two or more races) combine to about 3 percent of the participants.

The largest age group served by AEL programs ranged between 25-44 years of age, with 49 percent in this category. The next largest group, 19-24, accounted for 26 percent. The 45-59 age group had 1,576 participants which was slightly higher than the 16-18 age group with 1,208 participants.

Additional, optional demographic information is collected from participants in the AEL program that can assist in directing resources to target needs. The three highest status barriers to employment, as indicated upon entry into the AEL program, included the following: self-identified as unemployed (43 percent); self-identified as a single parent (9 percent); and self-identified as being low income (7 percent). It is important to note that a participant might indicate more than one status measure.

Adult Education and Literacy Population Served Identified by Barriers to Employment PY 2015*										
Region	Self Identified Barriers to Employment						Verified Barriers to Employment			Grand Total
	Displaced Homemaker	Low Income	Disability	Veteran	Single Parent	Unemployed	Corrections	Basic Skill	English Language Learners	
01	+	18%	5%	+	20%	58%	-	31%	11%	535
02	+	19%	6%	+	10%	46%	-	60%	14%	315
03	+	2%	2%	-	13%	33%	-	43%	23%	221
04	+	2%	1%	-	4%	17%	-	37%	28%	321
05	+	0%	1%	+	4%	35%	29%	53%	29%	1,280
06	-	1%	+	-	+	55%	7%	33%	44%	678
07	-	0%	+	-	-	44%	-	37%	40%	1,041
09	1%	21%	-	+	19%	48%	-	54%	16%	1,628
10	+	13%	3%	0.3%	8%	37%	11%	29%	20%	2,574
11	1%	3%	1%	0.1%	10%	47%	10%	35%	33%	5,135
12	-	+	+	-	3%	45%	-	25%	51%	1,443
13	+	3%	5%	+	15%	29%	25%	58%	12%	992
14	+	3%	3%	+	10%	69%	-	34%	12%	320
15	+	1%	8%	+	8%	53%	-	41%	21%	765
16	+	14%	5%	+	12%	35%	45%	63%	5%	1,073
	0.4%	7%	2%	0.1%	9%	43%	10%	40%	27%	18,321

\*Does allow for inclusion in multiple barriers

While individual unduplicated participation in adult education decreased by 1.3 percent, persisters and completers improved between FY15 and FY14. Individual participants that remained in the program longer than 12 hours—persisters (12,203) increased to 68.5 percent. This is a 23.9 percent increase from FY14 (55.3 percent).

To measure educational gains, AEL programs pre- and post-test participants after a minimum number of instructional hours. Without a post-test, measuring gains would be impossible. Of the FY15 persisters, 63.3 percent were post-tested (7,720) as compared to the post-testing rate of 59.0 percent in FY14. As a result of the increase in post-testing, 5,370 demonstrated an educational functioning level gain in FY15 (often reflected as a one to two grade level equivalency gain) and is considered a completer. This represents an additional 1,422 completers (36 percent increase) in FY15.

Performance reflects not only educational gains, but also the awarding of Iowa’s High School Equivalency Diploma (HSED) for eligible students passing the state identified assessment (as of January

2014 the state transitioned from using the GED® assessment to the HiSET® as a measurement of high school equivalency). In FY15, the first full reporting cycle for using the HiSET®, 1,942 diplomas were issued, a decrease of 1,466 from FY 14.

### ***Iowa Registered Apprenticeship***

The Registered Apprenticeship program is a joint initiative of State Apprenticeship Agencies and the Office of Apprenticeship, two separate entities that are housed under the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) within the U.S. Department of Labor. Registered apprenticeship programs facilitate connections among employers, employer associations, and joint labor-management partnerships – together known as sponsors – with job seekers who are interested in learning new skills through the combination of paid on-the-job training and academic instruction. Only 25 percent to 50 percent of all apprenticeships are captured by the registered program.

More than 388,000 Americans are currently obtaining postsecondary education and career skills by participating in Registered Apprenticeship programs. More than 128,000 new apprentices entered, while some 54,000 apprentices graduated from the Registered Apprenticeship system in FY 2011. Apprentices constitute just 0.3 percent of the overall civilian employment base in the United States, or three apprentices per 1,000 employed individuals. Unregistered apprenticeships – which have not been measured precisely – involve between 400,000 and 1.2 million more apprentices in informal, employer-based programs.

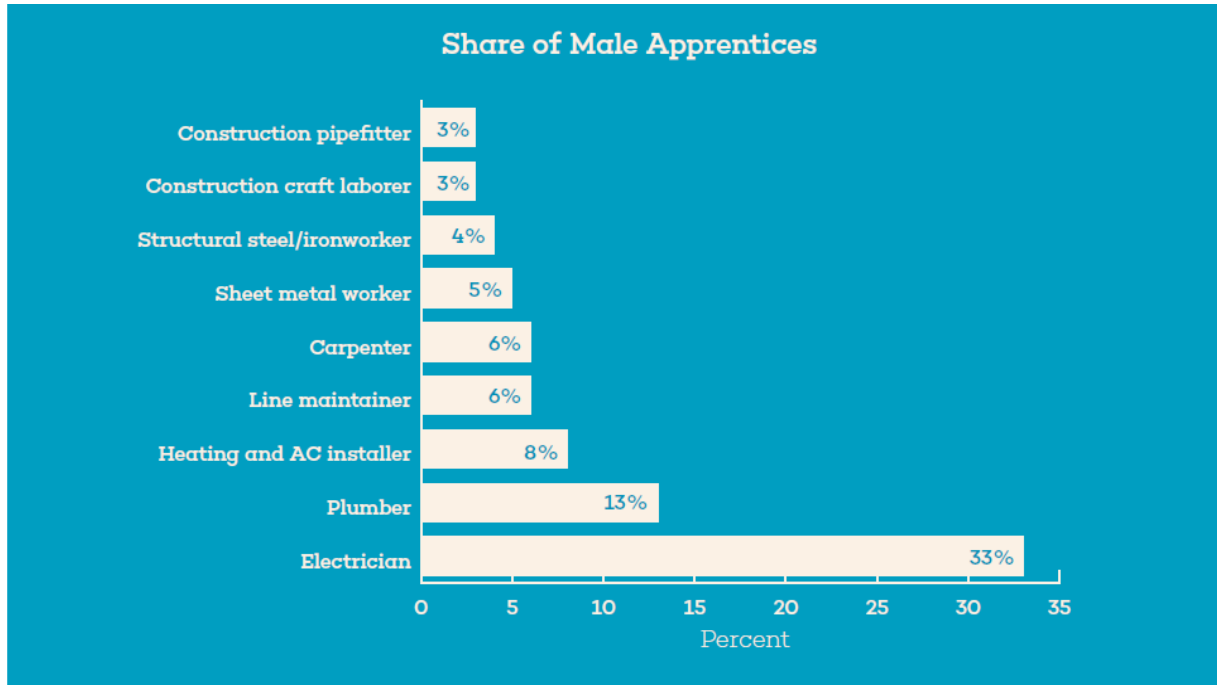
Between 2005 and 2013, nearly 11,000 individuals were registered in Iowa apprenticeship programs. More than 95 percent of participating apprentices were male. Male apprentices tend to concentrate in construction apprenticeships, in areas such as electrician (33%), plumber (13%), and HVAC installer (8%). Of the active female apprentices between 2005 and 2013, nearly 30 percent participated in cooking apprenticeship programs. Comparatively large percentages of female apprentices also participate in childcare development specialist (16%), electrician (10%), healthcare support specialist (5%), construction craft laborer (5%), and carpenter (3%) programs. The average hourly starting wage for apprentices in Iowa is \$13.02, while the average completion wage is \$23.95. This places the average earnings level of Iowa apprenticeship graduates above that of Associate's degree holders.

### ***Iowa Community Colleges – Job Training and Development Funds***

Each year, U.S. employers spend \$177 billion on formal training programs and \$413 billion on informal on-the-job training.<sup>28</sup> Employers often hire other businesses, educational institutions, or individuals to train their employees. While employers spend most of their formal training dollars on college-educated workers, they spend 25 percent of their formal training budgets on middle-skill workers and 17 percent on high school graduates.

Iowa has two programs designed to support job training and development for new employees (260E) and existing employees (260F). Together, they are an important part of the state's workforce development efforts. These programs, which are administered through the community colleges, play an essential role in enabling employees to remain current in their training and development so that the businesses they work for remain competitive. Through these public-private partnerships, employer training is provided at little or no cost. The programs are supported through bonds that are repaid using a diversion of a portion of payroll withholding tax revenue.

**Figure 14: Apprentices, by Gender, 2005-2013**



Source: Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce analysis of data from the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Apprenticeship, 2005-2013.

\*Eighteen percent of male apprentices are not included in these figures and fall into non-specified categories.

**Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services**

Table 7 highlights the success of vocational rehabilitation services resulting in improved income and increase in annual wages. This data is current as of 12/14/2015 and includes information on IVRS total caseload. On average, over 70% of job candidates served lack basic educational or occupational skills, which when accompanied by disability issues, result in substantial barriers to employment. IVRS evaluates the progress made toward self-sufficiency by comparing the income levels reported at application and what is achieved at case closure.

**Table 7: Individuals whose Wages Increased from Application/At Closure: 2012-2015 (%)**

FFY	Count Increased Annual Wages	Total Successful Closures	Percent
2012	2,009	2,162	92.92%
2013	2,024	2,185	92.63%
2014	2,046	2,205	92.79%
2015	2,180	2,321	93.93%

Table 8 represents the number of individuals who receive public support and or TANF at the time they apply for VR services. 23.85% of all individuals would be included in this category. Column B in Table 8 labeled lack of Education and or Occupational Skills reflects individuals age 21 or older who have less than a high school education level. Services are provided to both groups of individuals as well as referral to other community resources in order to meet their needs and interests. IVRS has a strong presence in

our secondary school system and this enhances the importance for all students to complete their secondary education. For those students leaving school prior to graduation, IVRS staff works to connect their job candidates with HISET providers so that these students could improve their education and their ability to pursue post-secondary training. The majority of individuals who receive services from IVRS while in or after leaving high school, have graduated from their secondary education program. This is a positive reflection of the collaboration occurring between IVRS staff and our secondary school staff, families and students.

**Table 8: Individuals with Co-Occurring Barriers to Employment, As of 12/2015**

Agency	Agency Caseload	Low Income		Lack of Education, &/or Occupational Skills	
		Barrier Count	% of Caseload	Barrier Count	% of Caseload
Burlington	549	90	16.39%	25	4.55%
Cedar Rapids	1568	464	29.59%	148	9.44%
Council Bluffs	863	271	31.40%	104	12.05%
Davenport	884	233	26.36%	84	9.50%
Dubuque	1070	180	16.82%	40	3.74%
Fort Dodge	968	249	25.72%	63	6.51%
Iowa City	929	284	30.57%	76	8.18%
Mason City	910	229	25.16%	98	10.77%
North Central	1599	350	21.89%	87	5.44%
Ottumwa	779	197	25.29%	51	6.55%
Sioux City	997	206	20.66%	16	1.60%
Waterloo	1183	227	19.19%	53	4.48%
West Central	1683	354	21.03%	76	4.52%
	<b>13982</b>	<b>3334</b>	<b>*23.85%</b>	<b>921</b>	<b>*6.72%</b>

*\*Average percentage per office*

Over the course of years the percent of individuals with disabilities who have not obtained their high school diploma prior to working with IVRS has declined. IVRS counselors are involved in Individual Education Plan Staffings at the secondary level to encourage students to remain in school and stress the importance of education and vocational training to be competitive in today's labor market. IVRS works to provide linkages for appropriate training to enhance an individual's skill sets so they can become competitive employed in an integrated work environment. Opportunities exist to strengthen these linkages with our expanding apprenticeship, Work Based Learning and STEM initiatives.

Based upon the Annual Disability Statistics Compendium, in Iowa 82.1% of Persons Without Disabilities aged 18-64 are employed. 44.8% of Persons With Disabilities aged 18-64 are employed. (2012 data), with 52% of Iowans with a disability having worked at least part-time. According to the 2012 Disability Status Report: New York, disability statistics.org, Iowa has 169,300 persons aged 21-64, with a disability. December 2015 data from the Office of Disability and Employment Policy identifies a labor force

participation rate for Persons With Disabilities nation-wide to be 19.2% and for People without Disabilities to be 68.1%. Iowa has made strides impacting these numbers and decreasing the gap. Strategies outlined in this Plan should be positive influencers in continuing this trend.

**Table 9: Percent of job candidates who were enrolled in HISET (GED) by FFY 2012-2015**

GED or HISET				
FFY	2012	2013	2014	2015
Count	33	20	20	11

Over the course of the past three fiscal years, the percentage of cases in training by category has not substantially changed. IVRS staff provide counseling and guidance with associated services while the person's with disabilities are in a college program to enhance the likelihood of success. After completion of the credential or degree program, many times, the challenge in service delivery is not obtaining the degree or credential, but comes with the employment process and obtaining actual employment. Individuals with disabilities represent one of the highest educated populations and has one of the highest unemployment rates. WIOA planning efforts create a collaborative service system focused on meeting business needs which will create opportunities and linkages for the talents and skills of the individuals we are working with. Employment supports will be provided across systems to enhance successful competitive integrated employment.

**Table 10: FFY2015 Credential Attainment**

Credential	Count Achieved	Percent
High school diploma and moderate to long-term OJT	77	1.87%
High school diploma and apprenticeship	1	0.02%
Postsecondary non-degree award	528	12.82%
Some college, no degree	923	22.41%
AA, AS, BA, BS, post graduate and professional degree	949	23.05%
All Other Education Levels	1,640	39.83%

This table reflects IVRS case closures who have received various services at the identified areas. Credential attainment and continuing to improve access to business approved programming will be a priority to increase employment results. IVRS has a number of strategies identified and detailed in the IVRS State Plan.

### **Strengths and Weaknesses of Workforce Development Activities**

PROVIDE AN ANALYSIS OF THE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES IDENTIFIED IN (A), DIRECTLY ABOVE.

In March, 2015, key stakeholders participated in a week-long Value Stream Mapping event to examine the global view of the Core WIOA and integrated mandatory employment and training agencies and programs in Iowa. Identification of alignment opportunities and best practices for employment services to lowans was a primary focus of this group. Diverse groups were involved in the Value Stream Mapping event and included the following:

- Members of Industry
- State Board Members
- Regional Workforce Board Members

- Department of Human Rights
- Department of Human Services
  - PROMISE JOBS
- Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation
- Iowa Department for the Blind
  - Business Enterprise Program
  - Vocational Rehabilitation Program
- Department of Education, Division of Community Colleges
  - Adult Education Literacy
- Iowa Workforce Development (IowaWORKS)
  - Wagner-Peyser
  - Adult and Dislocated Worker Program
  - Youth Program
  - Migrant & Seasonal Farm Worker
  - Disabled Veteran's Outreach Program
  - Trade Assistance
  - Integrated Business Services
- Community Colleges
  - GAP Program
- Iowa Department of Management
- Iowa Economic Development Authority

The Value Stream Mapping team identified strengths and weaknesses associated with the planning partners and prioritized key elements that would highly impact jobseekers. These elements were prioritized to allow for a more focused approach to planning. The team also developed a method by which to rank the level of difficulty in completing the activities needed to move identified tasks forward.

### **State Workforce Development Capacity**

PROVIDE AN ANALYSIS OF THE CAPACITY OF STATE ENTITIES TO PROVIDE THE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES IDENTIFIED IN (A), ABOVE.

Iowa is well-poised to provide workforce and talent development activities given the knowledge base of our workforce partners. With system components such as career pathway system which includes bridges and stackable credentials, Registered Apprenticeships, and On-the-Job Training programs that meet industry demands, we continue to pursue avenues for continuous improvement.

The capacity of the state talent development system to continue providing workforce development activities is dependent on continued communication among state entities, as established through the WIOA Leadership Team. Equally important is communications between state and workforce development boards to ensure a venue through which refinements can be made towards continuous improvement.

When analyzing capacity, the state must acknowledge the resolute action of our fifteen local workforce development boards (WDBs). Iowa's local WDBs and their partners have all strived to find innovative methods of serving participants and employers in their local regions. When successful, they have developed model programming that is shared throughout the state. When program design has not produced desired results, the local providers have adjusted, refined, and again, shared their lessons.



The pockets of excellence that exist around our state provide great opportunity to increase our capacity for serving those who can benefit significantly from our training and education programs.

During the 2013 legislative session, the Iowa Legislature made an historic investment in a portfolio of education, workforce development, job training and adult literacy programs designed to address Iowa’s growing shortage of skilled workers and to increase the capacity of the workforce delivery system within the state.

This \$40.3 million annual investment in worker training programs is delivered through Iowa’s fifteen community colleges and is serving an increased number of Iowans from all social and economic backgrounds to help them acquire the skills and industry recognized credentials needed for gainful employment. It is funded from the state’s gaming industry receipts. The following existing and new community college education, workforce development, job training, adult literacy programs and student financial aid programs are now being supported from this fund. All of these programs are under the administrative oversight of the Iowa Department of Education with the exception of the Kibbie Tuition Grant Program that is being administered by the Iowa College Student Aid Commission.

This fund assists Iowans from all social and economic backgrounds in acquiring the skills and industry recognized credentials needed for successful access to in-demand jobs. Education, workforce development, job training and adult literacy programs are beneficiaries of this landmark legislation which exemplifies Iowa’s ongoing commitment to innovative and job-driven solutions.

***Iowa Skilled Worker and Job Creation Fund***

Workforce Training and Economic Development Fund (260C.18A)	\$15,100,000
Adult Basic Education and Adult Literacy Programs (260C.50)	\$ 5,500,000
Pathways for Career and Employment Program (260H)	\$ 5,000,000
GAP Tuition Assistance Program (260I)	\$ 2,000,000
Work-based Learning Intermediary Network (256.40)	\$ 1,500,000
Kibbie Skilled Worker Shortage Tuition Grant Program (261.130)	\$ 5,000,000
ACE Infrastructure Fund (260G)	\$ 6,000,000
Workforce Preparation Outcome Reporting System	\$ 200,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$40,300,000</b>

***Workforce Training and Economic Development Fund (260C.18A)***

\$15,100,000 was appropriated to support this program in FY 2016.

The WTED fund was established in 2003 as part of the Grow Iowa Values Fund enabling legislation. The WTED fund has become an important source of financing for community college new program innovation, development and capacity building with a focus on career and technical education and the state’s targeted industry clusters. This is the community colleges most flexible funding source and functions like a workforce development program block grant. This program can provide supplemental funding to support the PACE, GAP and adult literacy programs as needed.

***Use of Funds***

The monies in the Workforce Training and Economic Development fund may be used to support the following community college programs:

- Accelerated Career Education Program (260G).
- Iowa Jobs Training Program (260F).
- Career Academy Programs (260C.18A, subsection 2, paragraph c).
- Career & Technical Education Programs (260C.1, subsection 2).
- In-service Training and Retraining Programs (260C.1, subsection 3).
- Training and retraining programs for targeted industries (15.343, subsection 2, para. a).
- Pathways for Academic Career and Employment Program (260H).
- Gap Tuition Assistance Program (260I).
- Entrepreneurial education, small business assistance, and business incubators.
- National Career Readiness Certificate and the skills certification system endorsed by the National Association of Manufacturers.

### ***Targeted Industry Clusters***

Priority is to be given to programs, projects and initiatives that fall within the states three targeted industry clusters. The program requires that **seventy percent** of the moneys appropriated shall be used on projects or programs in the areas of advanced manufacturing, renewable fuels and renewable energy, information technology and insurance, and life sciences which include the areas of biotechnology, health care technology, and nursing care technology.

### ***Pathways for Academic Career and Employment Program (260H)***

\$5,000,000 was appropriated to support this program in FY 2016.

This program was established in 2011 and was funded in FY 2014 for the first time to provide funding to community colleges for the development of projects in coordination with the economic development authority, the department of education, the department of workforce development, regional advisory boards, and community partners to implement a simplified, streamlined, and comprehensive process, along with customized support services, to enable eligible participants to acquire effective academic and employment training to secure gainful, quality, in-state employment. This program is closely aligned with the GAP tuition assistance program and the adult literacy program.

### ***GAP Tuition Assistance Program (260I)***

\$2,000,000 was appropriated to support this program in FY 2016.

This program was established in 2011 and first funded in FY 2013 to provide funding to community colleges for need-based tuition assistance to applicants to enable completion of non-credit, continuing education certificate training programs for in-demand occupations. This program is closely tied to the PACE career pathways program.

### ***Adult education and literacy programs (260C.50)***

\$5,500,000 was appropriated to support this program in FY 2016.

\$3,883,000 is allocated for the ABE/GED adult literacy programs delivered by Iowa's Community Colleges as provided for in new IC Section 260C.50

\$1,467,000 is allocated for ELL adult literacy programs.

\$150,000 is allocated for DE staff support and related leadership activities.

Iowa was one of only three states that did not provide funding assistance for adult literacy programs. This new state funding is supplementing the federal Department of Labor allocation. It will build on existing career pathways policy and programs by investing in adult basic education and integrated learning programs to help more low-skilled adult workers obtain postsecondary credentials and skill sets required for employment in middle skill jobs. This funding may be used to develop and deliver contextualized coursework tied to a community colleges PACE career pathway and GAP tuition assistance programs.

***Statewide Work-based Learning Intermediary Network (256.40)***

\$1,500,000 was appropriated to support this program in FY 2016.

This enabling legislation and statewide network was created in 2009 with a one-time allocation of \$900,000 from the Department of Economic Development's targeted industry program funding allocation. All fifteen community colleges established a regional intermediary network but only a few remained after the initial funding was exhausted.

The program is intended to prepare students for the workforce by connecting business and education by offering relevant, work-based learning activities to students and teachers, particularly opportunities in occupations relating to STEM or to opportunities in targeted industries identified by the EDA. The program focuses on providing students with job shadowing, internships and teacher tour learning experiences.

This program funding can be used to support work-based learning experiences for students enrolled in PACE career pathways and GAP tuition assistance programs.

***Kibbie Skilled Workforce Shortage Tuition Grant Program (261.130)***

\$5,000,000 was appropriated to the College Student Aid Commission to support this program in FY 2016.

The Kibbie Skilled Workforce Shortage Tuition Grant Program supports students enrolling in high demand career and technical education credit programs.

FY 2014 annual reports for five of these programs can be accessed at the website below:

[https://www.educateiowa.gov/Adult-Career-Community-College/publications#Iowa Skilled Workforce and Job Creation Funds](https://www.educateiowa.gov/Adult-Career-Community-College/publications#Iowa%20Skilled%20Workforce%20and%20Job%20Creation%20Funds)

## 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.
- (2) GOALS. DESCRIBE THE GOALS FOR ACHIEVING THIS VISION BASED ON THE ANALYSIS IN (A) ABOVE OF THE STATE'S ECONOMIC CONDITIONS, WORKFORCE, AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES. THIS SHOULD—
  - (A) INCLUDE GOALS FOR PREPARING AN EDUCATED AND SKILLED WORKFORCE, INCLUDING PREPARING YOUTH AND INDIVIDUALS WITH BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT<sup>23</sup> AND OTHER POPULATIONS.<sup>24</sup>
  - (B) INCLUDE GOALS FOR MEETING THE SKILLED WORKFORCE NEEDS OF EMPLOYERS.

In developing the goals and strategies of Iowa's Unified State Plan, the Governor's economic goals, Iowa's NGA Talent Pipeline Goals, and stakeholder feedback were incorporated to maximize chances of success, reduce duplication of services, and to ensure effective alignment of all of Iowa's workforce delivery systems. The model advanced by Iowa's Unified State Plan incorporates and aligns all programs, infusing priority of services into each tenet. This system will focus on intensive services for those individuals who face the biggest obstacles in securing and maintaining employment; ensuring that each agency and partner works collaboratively to remove and reduce barriers to all Iowans. The State Board will provide a governing structure and will require state Core Partners to adopt or participate, to the extent appropriate for each program, the following strategies that frame, align, and guide program coordination at the state, local, and regional levels in order to achieve the state's three goals. Furthermore, the state will provide ongoing evaluation of the system to ensure maximum and consistent effectiveness.

### Vision

Iowa's workforce delivery systems will collaborate to build a Future Ready Iowa – a pipeline of skilled workers who are prepared to meet the workforce needs of Iowa's current and emerging industries. In alignment with the National Governor's Association Talent Pipeline vision and goals, this unified plan will ensure individuals are prepared for dynamic careers through an emphasis on lifelong learning while meeting the needs of employers. Iowa's workforce delivery system will assist more Iowans to become Future Ready by attaining the "new minimum" of high-quality education, training, and work readiness by bringing together education, rehabilitation, workforce, and economic development resources and ensuring that all Iowans have access to an integrated and efficient workforce delivery system. Future Ready Iowans will be ready to meet the employment challenges of today and into the future so that ALL Iowans work in competitive, integrated employment settings.

### Goals

***Goal 1: Iowa's employers will have access to advanced, skilled, diverse and Future Ready workers.***

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<sup>23</sup> 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.

<sup>24</sup> Veterans, unemployed workers, and youth and any other populations identified by the State.

**Goal II: All Iowans will be provided access to a continuum of high quality education, training, and career opportunities in the nation.**

**Goal III: Iowa's workforce delivery system will align all programs and services in an accessible, seamless and integrated manner.**

### *Accessibility*

The State of Iowa is committed to providing programs and services in a readily accessible format and delivery method. Accessibility encompasses a variety of ideas, actions, and high-level collaboration. A range of barriers exists for a diversity of populations. System-level barriers such as exclusionary hiring practices and a lack of employer supports, to geographic hindrances and other location-based obstacles are inherent within the workforce delivery system. For instance, individuals living in Iowa's many rural communities experience higher levels of isolation, have limited access to available and affordable transportation, are not offered the same educational and training opportunities, and often lack personal and professional support networks and essential services. Adding to the mix is the job seeker's ability to gain skills due to a real or environmentally imposed restriction.

Recognizing the variety of barriers and restrictions imposed upon job seekers and workers, the State of Iowa is committed, regardless of language skills, age, location, ability, legal history, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexuality, or socio-economic background may gain access. Access may require reasonable accommodations, natural and programmatic supports, intensive services, and creative methods to address the actual or perceived impediment toward meaningful access. Any individual who is seeking services from the workforce system may receive the appropriate, reasonable, and needed accommodation or support. All goals, strategies and actions inherently infuse options for accommodations and accessibility such that all Iowan's may be provided the necessary supports to be successful in achieving their employment goal.

The following goals, strategies and action steps presume and require all core partners to provide the necessary services, support, modification or accommodation for ALL Iowan's to be successful. All entities responsible for Iowa's workforce services delivery system will work together to support and encourage a fully accessible and accommodated workforce system that achieves lasting results for ALL Iowans.

### *Sector Partnerships*

The State of Iowa will support the development of regionally based, employer-driven sector initiatives. Sector strategies address the needs of employers through a focus on the workforce needs of specific employer sectors over a specific time period. While working to address the needs of employers, the needs of workers will also be met through the creation of formal career paths to self-sustaining jobs, reduction of barriers to employment, and sustained or increased jobs. Sector partnerships bolster regional economic competitiveness by engaging economic development experts in workforce issues and aligning education, economic, and workforce delivery systems. Systemic change that achieves ongoing benefits for employers and job-seekers, a broad diversity of stakeholders must be engaged through formal, organized sector partnerships.

### *Career Pathways*

Career Pathways are components of sector strategies. Career Pathways support workers' transitions from training and education into the workforce and into an eventual self-sustaining career. Career Pathways work to increase education, training and learning opportunities for the current and future

workforce. Career Pathways help job-seekers develop personal, technical, and employability skills which prepare job-seekers for in-demand and lasting jobs. Colleges, primary and secondary schools, economic development agencies, workforce services providers, employers, labor groups and social service providers all play a vital role in the successful development of Career Pathways approaches.

A baseline survey of sector partnerships and career pathways has been completed that will form the foundation for developing career pathways moving forward.

### *Integration*

Delivering workforce services that are better aligned to meet the needs of ALL system beneficiaries is the overarching aim of Iowa's integration strategies. A fully integrated and well-aligned system response is one that prepares Iowa's employers with the skills, knowledge, and abilities necessary to grow a Future Ready workforce. A seamless and integrated workforce delivery system empowers job-seekers and workers with the skills, experiences, and opportunities to enter into and maintain self-sustaining employment.

### *Integrated Education and Training*

Integrated education and training opportunities will allow for the creation of a Future Ready workforce that prepares ALL Iowans to meet the evolving demands of tomorrow's jobs. With improved accessibility and alignment of systems, ALL Iowans will be able to participate in the education and training opportunities that support the development of the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary for rewarding careers.

Activities to support integrated education and training strategies will align with the NGA Talent Pipeline/Future Ready Initiative recommendations as well as with concepts within the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Taskforce report. A youth-focused work group will be convened by the Core Partners and key stakeholders. Individuals and small businesses will be given guidance on business enterprises, asset development, and benefits planning throughout the start-up, operations and maintenance phases of entrepreneurial pursuits.

## 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.)

Iowa Workforce Development has an internal-earnings transfer procedure, and contracts with other national agencies in order to use quarterly wage information to measure progress for state and local performance measures. Each quarter, earnings from Iowa employers are uploaded, and the state system performs the job match by way of Social Security Number matches. Iowa also has a contract with the state of Maryland's administration of the Federal Employment Data Exchange System (FEDES) and with U.S. Department of Labor's Wage Record Interchange System (WRIS) and (WRIS2), which provides earnings data for out-of-state individuals who participated in Iowa's workforce programs.

These two systems also provide information on individuals who, as a result of our services, obtain employment with the U.S. Department of Defense, U.S. Postal Service, and federal jobs, in general. All earnings data is secured through multiple, fire-walled systems, and access is granted only to individuals with a legitimate business need. By participating in the U.S. Department of Labor's Wage Record Interchange System (WRIS/WRIS2), Iowa has a more accurate picture of the effectiveness of the workforce delivery programs, and is able to report more comprehensive outcomes against performance measures.

Current measures include the following:

### *Adult and Dislocated Worker*

- Entered Employment – to increase employment as measured by entry into unsubsidized employment – measured in Quarter 1 after exit.
- Retention in Employment – to increase retention in unsubsidized employment six months after entry into employment - measured in Quarter 3 after exit.
- Average Earnings for Six Months – to increase earnings received in unsubsidized employment - measured in Quarter 3 after exit.

WIOA performance measures (set to take effect on July 1, 2016) will be based on data regarding exiting participants from the WIOA program for the previous two years (beginning July 1, 2014), unless otherwise waived by DOL.

*Employment - to increase employment, as measured by entry into unsubsidized employment (measured Quarter 2 after exit)*

*Employment Retention - to increase retention in unsubsidized employment six months after entry into employment (measured Quarter 4 after exit)*

*Median Earnings - to increase earnings received in unsubsidized employment Median is defined as the numerical value that separates the higher half from the lower half of earnings.*

*Credential Rate - to increase credentials or diplomas obtained during or immediately after program exit. Definition: Percentage of participants who obtain a recognized post-secondary credential or diploma during participation or within 1 year after program exit.*

*In-Program Skills Gain - to increase the skills obtained through education leading to a credential or employment during the program year. Definition: Percentage of participants in education leading to credential or employment during program year, achieving measurable gains. Measured in real-time.*

*Employer Services - to indicate effectiveness in serving employers.*

**Number and definitions are pending and will be effective July 1, 2016.**

WIOA performance measures will go into effect on July 1, 2016. Contractors will be required to demonstrate how their programs are able to help all enrolled youth and young adults achieve the outcomes measured by WIOA. While complete definitions of all the new WIOA measures have not yet been finalized by USDOL and final percentages of each measure have not been negotiated with the State of Iowa during this time of transition, the below outcome measures and definitions should inform program designs. Contractor targets and percentages for each measure will be negotiated with selected Respondents based on local area goals from the State.

**WIOA Youth Performance Measures**

<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Attainment of degree or certificate	Percentage of participants who obtain a recognized credential or secondary diploma during or within 1 year.
Placed in employment, education, or Training	The percentage of participants who are in employment, education, or training, 2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit.
Earnings after entry into unsubsidized employment	The median average earning of participants who are in employment in the 2 <sup>nd</sup> quarter after program exit.
In-program skills gain	Percentage of participants in education leading to a credential or employment during program year, achieving measurable skills gain.
Employer and youth satisfaction	TBD- definition and target to be negotiated at award.



## Workforce Investment Act Performance Levels

<u>Adult Measures</u>	<u>PY 2015</u>
Adult Entered Employment Rate	63.0%
Adult Employment Retention Rate	82.0%
Adult Six-months Average Earnings	\$11,700

<u>Dislocated Worker Measures</u>	<u>PY 2015</u>
Dislocated Worker Entered Employment Rate	70.0%
Dislocated Worker Employment Retention Rate	93.0%
Dislocated Worker Six-months Average Earnings	\$15,000

<u>Youth Measures</u>	<u>PY 2015</u>
Youth Placement in Employment or Education	73.0%
Youth Attainment of Degree or Certificate	65.0%
Youth Literacy and Numeracy Gains	42.0%

## Wagner-Peyser Act Performance Levels

<u>Measures</u>	<u>PY 2015</u>
Entered Employment Rate	65.0%
Employment Retention Rate	84.0%
Six-months Average Earnings	\$13,500

**Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services  
RESULTS OF RSA PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

	<i>PERFORMANCE INDICATOR</i>	<i>RSA Standard</i>	<i>2010</i>	<i>2011</i>	<i>2012</i>	<i>2013</i>	<i>2014</i>	<i>2015</i>
	Number of persons with employment outcome (status 26) for current year		2,217	2,136	2,162	2,185	2,205	2,323
	Number of persons with employment outcome (status 26) for prior year		2,264	2,217	2,136	2,162	2,185	2,205
<b>1.1</b>	<b>Change in number from prior year</b>	Equal or exceed last year	<b>-47</b>	<b>-81</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>118</b>
<b>1.2</b>	<b>Percentage of persons after receiving services with employment outcomes</b>	55.8%	<b>51.96%</b>	<b>57.95%</b>	<b>63.68%</b>	<b>62.27%</b>	<b>59.66%</b>	<b>57.36%</b>
<b>1.3</b>	<b>Percentage of persons with employment outcomes with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage</b>	72.6%	<b>98.11%</b>	<b>98.27%</b>	<b>98.29%</b>	<b>98.12%</b>	<b>98.78%</b>	<b>98.92%</b>
<b>1.4</b>	<b>Percent of competitive employment outcomes that were individuals with significant disabilities</b>	62.4%	<b>95.08%</b>	<b>94.52%</b>	<b>95.95%</b>	<b>96.74%</b>	<b>97.57%</b>	<b>98.69%</b>
	Average Hourly Rate		\$11.18	\$11.57	\$11.57	\$11.61	\$11.88	\$11.65
<b>1.5</b>	<b>VR average wage as a ratio to the state's average hourly earnings for all individuals in the state who are employed.</b>	0.52	<b>0.63</b>	<b>0.62</b>	<b>0.60</b>	<b>0.60</b>	<b>0.60</b>	<b>0.58</b>
<b>1.6</b>	<b>The difference between the percentage who report their own income as the target single source of economic support at the time they exit and the percentage who report their own income as the largest single source of support at the time they apply for VR services.</b>	53.0%	<b>63.36%</b>	<b>66.94%</b>	<b>63.34%</b>	<b>64.18%</b>	<b>61.43%</b>	<b>61.23%</b>
<b>2.1</b>	<b>The service rate for all individuals with disabilities from minority backgrounds as a ratio to the service rate for all individuals with disabilities from non-minority backgrounds</b>	0.80	<b>0.799</b>	<b>0.767</b>	<b>0.812</b>	<b>0.710</b>	<b>0.843</b>	<b>0.841</b>

## Assessment

DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL ASSESS THE OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE WORKFORCE INVESTMENT 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 core partners have developed a work group regarding performance and data, which has contributed to the development of the Participant Profile. This group will continue to meet as the partners collaborate on WIOA implementation in the years ahead. The assessment based on past performance in the primary indicators of performance set forth in WIOA section 116 will for the baseline against which the core partners will measure the effectiveness of Iowa's workforce services delivery system. The work group will eventually involve into a team that monitors the system's achievements on a periodic basis in an effort to help identify strengths and weaknesses in the system. This continuous self-assessment will be an important part in the partners' ongoing efforts to improve workforce services delivery in the state so that the system is streamlined and responsive to current and future labor-market needs.

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## 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 SECTION (A).

Core Partners and other key service providers have been designing policies around the following strategies which were developed collaboratively among the partners and other relevant stakeholders. Core Partners have been meeting on a regular basis to ensure that planning efforts are truly partner-centric and reflective of the requirements of those who are most at-need within the workforce delivery system in Iowa.

### *Strategies to Achieve Accessibility*

The Workforce System Partners will work with Iowa's employers to identify and reduce barriers to employment for ALL Iowans. The partnership will expand accessible opportunities for populations which have been traditionally underserved or underrepresented, and those who have one or more barriers to sustainable employment. The partnership will align and improve systems to ensure accessibility to ALL Iowans.

Activities to support accessibility strategies will include the ongoing identification, and proactive reduction of barriers to employment for ALL Iowans. The workforce System Partners will develop policies and implement procedures to ensure continuing and unhindered access to Iowa jobs for ALL Iowans.

### *Strategies to Support Sector Partnerships*

The Core Partners and key stakeholders will collaborate to engage employers in the continuous development of programs and initiatives that are responsive to Iowa's current and future labor-market needs and to significantly expand mature sector partnership activity throughout the state, applying demand-driven methodology.

Activities to support sector partnership strategies include working with employers to increase opportunities for all Iowans to gain the experience, skills, and credentials needed to obtain and main self-sustaining employment, closing skill gaps between Iowa's workforce and employers by expanding and supporting sector strategies for in-demand employers. Identifying and quantifying employers' education, training, and workforce needs will be a priority. Capturing those needs in a Talent Supply & Demand Dashboard to be driven by a public-private collaborative and disseminated via an accessible computer system will further support Iowa's sector partnerships.

The core partners will infuse strategies so individuals with significant barriers to employment will be integrated and achieve successful competitive employment.

### *Strategies to Support Career Pathways*

ALL Iowans will be engaged in the career pathway development process by utilizing innovative approaches in the delivery of career services and offering a variety of career pathway navigation supports to enhance transition into the workforce.

Activities to support career pathways strategies will be the development of an interagency definition of "self-sustaining employment." Workforce delivery systems will work in concert to provide workers with the skills, work-based learning opportunities, resources, accommodations and supports needed through

the systematic development of career pathways for in-demand industries. ALL Iowans will have access to the occupational and training resources and skills needed to work to their fullest potential and to secure and maintain self-sustaining employment.

### *Strategies to Support Integration*

The quality of workforce development services will be improved through the provision of consistent, integrated, and non-duplicative services across education, rehabilitation, economic and workforce activities and a focused communication strategy.

Activities to support integration strategies will involve the creation of a service delivery model which is business-driven, user-friendly, data-driven and dynamic enough to meet the evolving needs of employers. Duplication of services and gaps within the current workforce delivery system will be identified. Policies and collaborative agreements will be drafted and implemented which maximize resources that foster a unified and consistent approach to the provision of workforce delivery services.

### *Technology*

An accessible data collection effort will streamline data collection processes, increase efficiency throughout the workforce delivery system, and aid in accurate performance measurement for decision-making. The state will work to minimize the participatory burden to an accessible system through the creation and implementation of a common intake and reporting system among Core Partners and relevant agencies. A robust policy will be adopted to ease transitions within and across systems and programs using a referral process that allows for direct connection by and between key agency staff, and holds agencies accountable for assisting workers in achieving success and making it easier for job-seekers to navigate the system.

### *Policy*

The state will establish an Iowa Sector Partnership & Leadership Council that is demand-side driven to provide cross-industry, cross-employer, and cross-agency leadership in the development and support of mature sector partnerships and holistic career pathways. Furthermore, the state will engage Iowa's employment leaders in the development and delivery of workforce services across Iowa. Previously compiled career pathway work is holistic and not institutionally biased – i.e. does not include just the programming of one service provider. The state will bring a diversity of stakeholders together to review and create effective policies, programs, and opportunities for Iowa's current and future workforce. A center piece of this collaborative effort will be a policy council advising the State Board on proven and promising practices and policies that support an integrated system responsive to labor market needs.. Statewide policies will be developed that support Iowa's businesses in offering creative and non-traditional in-roads to careers that meet the needs of ALL Iowans.

Benefits and services to Iowa's job seekers, employees and employers will be maximized through the intentional braiding, integrating and seeking out of diverse funding streams. One-Stop Centers operate under an advanced training certification program to ensure all centers are accessible, operating consistently and that staff have access to the same knowledge, resources, and supports across the state that ensures:

- ✓ Professional Development
- ✓ Consistent staff training,

- ✓ Intra-agency cross training,
- ✓ Eligible Training Provider List access and training, and
- ✓ Advanced technology.

In-demand career opportunities and career pathways will be communicated to students, parents, teachers, counselors, workers and community leaders through career planning, including creation of a dashboard of career opportunities and required credentials and experience.

*Strategies to Support Integrated Education and Training*

To accomplish integrated education and training, Iowa's key workforce delivery system partners must:

- Ensure that ALL Iowans have full access and direct connection to programs that work to address essential components of reading instruction and literacy,
- Create affordable options for workers to obtain education, training, skills, including personal, soft, and basic skills, and financial literacy, necessary to secure and maintain self-sustaining employment, and
- Develop opportunities for ALL Iowans to develop entrepreneurial skills and concepts while providing opportunities for connection with Iowa business leaders.

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## State Implementation Strategies

DESCRIBE THE STRATEGIES THE STATE WILL IMPLEMENT, INCLUDING SECTOR STRATEGIES AND CAREER PATHWAYS, AS REQUIRED BY WIOA SECTION 101(b)(3)(B), (D).

The Iowa Department of Education, Division of Community Colleges convened a Sector Partnership and Career Pathway Advisory Council in June 2015 to address sector partnership and career pathway implementation for the Pathways for Academic Career and Employment (PACE) program. Enacted and funded in 2013 by the Iowa Legislature, the PACE program supports the implementation of simplified, streamlined, and comprehensive academic and training pathways which enable eligible participants to acquire the necessary skills to secure gainful, quality, in-state employment. The Council initially consisted of representatives exclusively from Iowa's 15 community colleges.

The scope of the Council was broadened following the passage of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). It was recognized that the Council was well positioned to assist with the implementation of several WIOA provisions which emphasize credential attainment through the use of sector partnerships and career pathways. To ensure more coordinated efforts related to these aspects of WIOA, membership of the Council was broadened to include representatives from several state agencies, trade unions, and non-profit organizations.

The Council may be reconfigured to take a more formal role in the implementation and achievement of objectives related to sector strategies and career pathways outlined in the WIOA Unified State Plan, potentially as a formal advisory board to the State Board of Directors. This will require a significant reconfiguration of Council membership, with greater business, industry and employer representation so that the Council is truly business-led and oriented. The Council will require broad education, workforce development, vocational rehabilitation, and economic development representation.

***To strengthen the development and ongoing implementation of Iowa's sector strategies and career pathway systems, the Iowa Sector Partnership Leadership Council will be established and modeled after the existing Sector Partnership & Career Pathway Advisory Council and will have the following attributes:***

- Planned membership includes broad education, vocational rehabilitation, workforce development, economic development and business and industry association representatives.
- The Council will:
  - Be business led and oriented;
  - Be tasked to provide state level leadership, support, policy development, coordination and guidance to regional sector partnership development;
  - Convene annual statewide workshops for regional sector partnerships from across the state to share best practices and promote statewide collaboration.
- An entity will be appointed to provide staff support to the Council and technical assistance to the regional sector partnerships through the Council.
- The Council will serve as an advisory committee to the State Board of Directors to help fulfill WIOA requirements.
- The state will designate and convene the Council no later than July 1, 2016.

***Potential Business Association Leadership Council members:***

- Iowa Partnership for Economic Progress
- Association of Business and Industry
- Technology Association of Iowa
- Master Builders of Iowa
- Iowa Hospital Association
- Iowa Energy Council
- Iowa Motor Truck Association
- Iowa Utilities Association
- Iowa Business Council
- Iowa Health Care Association
- Associated Builders and Contractors
- Associated General Contractors
- Iowa Farm Bureau

**Potential Strategic Partners:**

- K-12
- Community Colleges
- Universities
- Community Based Organizations
- Human Services Organizations
- Organized Labor
- IWD State Board
- Economic Development Organizations
- Professional Developers of Iowa
- Iowa Chamber Alliance

The Department of Education, Division of Community Colleges, is currently developing and will maintain a statewide data base of sector partnerships and career pathways in Iowa. Funding from a Department of Labor Sector Partnership NEG grant is being utilized to finance the development of this data base and web portal. An inventory of sector partnerships and career pathways conducted in October 2014 by Iowa's community colleges has been updated by the Department of Education and documented in a report, *Sector Partnerships & Career Pathway Advisory Council, Overview and Survey Findings*, issued in December 2015.

Training sessions for sector partnership facilitators will be conducted by recognized national sector partnership consultants and are being scheduled in early 2016 to develop a statewide pool of trained, professional facilitators to assist in the development of regional sector partnerships.

Funding from the 260H PACE Career Pathways annual appropriation from the Iowa Skilled Worker and Job Creation Fund will be pursued to support ongoing sector partnership and career pathway development activities in Iowa. The Department of Education, Division of Community Colleges will be responsible for staffing and supporting this effort through the Sector Partnership Leadership Council.

Amendment of Iowa Code Section 260H.7B (Regional industry sector partnerships) will be sought to establish an Iowa Sector Partnership Program during the 2016 legislative session to support the implementation of the above recommendations.



On October 9, 2015, the Sector Partnership and Career Pathway Advisory Council finalized sector partnership and career pathway definitions and operational guidelines to guide Iowa's ongoing development of regional sector partnerships and career pathways.

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### III. OPERATIONAL PLANNING ELEMENTS

THE UNIFIED STATE PLAN MUST INCLUDE AN OPERATIONAL PLANNING ELEMENTS SECTION THAT SUPPORTS THE STATE'S STRATEGY AND THE SYSTEM-WIDE VISION.

#### 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).

During WIOA implementation, the core partners have collaborated to perform the State Board's required duties and responsibilities under the Act with the help of required partner agencies. The primary method of collaboration has been work groups involving partners and stakeholders. The work and accomplishments of these groups is detailed in this plan. Moving forward, however, the State Board will need a more robust operational framework in order to fulfill its duties and responsibilities under WIOA.

Currently, Iowa's State Board does not have standing committees to assist in their efforts to formalize a structure to engage partners and stakeholders in Iowa's workforce development system. The State Board will add standing committees to ensure a higher standard of state board functioning. The standing committees will be required to hold regular meetings and to report to the State Board on a regular basis. Once established, the committees will be charged with the following tasks:

- Review and make recommendations regarding plans and reports required under WIOA
- Serve as an advocate of plans and strategies to the Board, IWD leadership, policy makers and stakeholders;
- Serve as an administrator to collect and manage workforce and talent development information on behalf of the Board;
- Review state, regional and local plans and activities as required by WIOA and provide status reports to the Board;
- Perform state workforce board functional responsibilities identified in ss. 101(d)(1) through 101(d)(12) of WIOA and provide recommendations to the Board;
- Review progress reports and provide status updates to the Board;
- Assess opportunities and recommend amendments to the Board's Strategic Plan;
- Convene and connect talent development resources to drive innovative workforce solutions that support economic development strategies;
- Consult with state, regional and local resources to champion collaborations and partnerships within the workforce system;
- Serve as convener to gather thought leaders and practitioners to perpetually evaluate talent development system(s);
- Serve as a connector of resources to other agencies, service providers, collaborators, initiatives or projects;
- Serve as a consultant to state/local workforce boards and partners regarding strategies and opportunities;
- Review talent development systems and networks and recommend innovative solutions and integration of resources;
- Recommend education and outreach strategies and campaigns to continually align resources and partners; and

- Perform other functional requirements of the state workforce board as determined by the state board or core partners.

Iowa will also attempt to update the statutory provisions governing the State Board to reflect the State’s strategic vision and goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce. This will include the creation of an operations team, tentatively consisting of representatives from the Department of Workforce Development, the Department of Education, the Economic Development Authority, Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services and Iowa Department for the Blind. The Operations Team will provide staff support to the Iowa Workforce Development Board of Directors to achieve improved alignment of the core WIOA programs and the state’s education, workforce and economic development programs. The Director of the Department of Workforce Development will designate the person to coordinate and lead the operations team. Staffing and administrative costs for the operations team shall be provided by the Department of Workforce Development, the Department of Education, the Economic Development Authority, Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services and other potential partners as deemed appropriate.

*The Operations Team will be tasked with the following:*

- ✓ Coordination and staffing of activities of the State Board.
- ✓ Facilitation and coordination of all research, reports data, analysis, and recommendations associated with the operations team and its purposes.
- ✓ Provision of regular updates to the Workforce Development Board on the status of activities of the operations team and the progress made in aligning programs pursuant to the purposes of the board.

In legislation, Iowa will also seek to create a Policy Council that will advise the State Board on proven and promising practices with respect to workforce service delivery from across the State and nation. The Policy Council will also make policy recommendations to help create a more integrated workforce development system that is responsive to current and future labor-market needs.

### ***State Workforce Development Board Structure***

The State Board was created in 1996. At its inception, the State Board consisted of nine voting members, with the following affiliations, and appointed by the Governor:

- Four members representing nonsupervisory employees<sup>25</sup>;
- Four members representing employers; and
- One member representing a non-profit organization involved in workforce development services.

To this day, the State Board’s voting membership remains structurally unchanged. It has the same makeup as it did on the day of its creation in 1996.

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<sup>25</sup> Under Iowa Code section 84A.1A(1)(a), of the members appointed by the Governor to represent nonsupervisory employees, two members must be from statewide labor organizations, one member must be from an employee representative labor management council, and one member must be a person with experience in worker training programs.

The State Board's membership also includes nonvoting members. Over the years, the legislature has added nonvoting, ex officio members. Today, the State Board's membership includes twelve nonvoting members:

- Four members of the legislature<sup>26</sup>;
- One president, or president's designee, of the University of Northern Iowa, University of Iowa, or Iowa State University, designated by the State of Iowa Board of Regents on a rotating basis;
- One representative of the largest statewide public employees' organization representing state employees;
- One president, or president's designee, of an independent Iowa college, appointed by the Iowa Association of Independent Colleges and Universities
- One superintendent, or superintendent's designee, of a community college, appointed by the Iowa Association of Community College Presidents;
- One representative of vocational rehabilitation community appointed by the State Rehabilitation Council in the Division of Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services;
- One representative of the Department of Education appointed by the State Board of Education;
- One representative of the Economic Development Authority appointed by the director; and
- One representative of the United States Department of Labor, Office of Apprenticeship.

WIOA section 101 sets forth criteria for a state board's membership structure under the Act. Under WIOA section 101(e), for purposes of complying with WIOA's state-board requirements, a state may use an "alternative entity" that:

- Was in existence on the day before the enactment of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998;
- Is substantially similar to the State board in described in WIOA sections 101(a) through 101(c); and
- Includes representatives of business in the State and representatives of labor organizations in the State.

The Iowa State Board meets the itemized criteria for qualifying as a complying alternative entity under WIOA. On June 24, 2015, Governor Branstad notified the U.S. Department of Labor that the State Board would serve as an alternative entity under WIOA section 101(e) during the original two-year assessment period.

### **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 II(C) ABOVE. THIS MUST INCLUDE A DESCRIPTION OF—

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<sup>26</sup> Under Iowa Code section 84A.1A(1)(b), the legislative members are two state senators, one appointed by the President of the Senate after consultation with the Majority Leader of the Senate, and one appointed by the Minority Leader of the Senate from their respective parties; and two state representatives, one appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives after consultation with the Majority Leader of the House of Representatives, and one appointed by the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives from their respective parties.

## **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.

### ***Adult Education***

Iowa's Adult Education and Literacy program ("Adult Education") is eager to collaborate on many levels to bring a seamless service delivery system to adult learners. Adult Education plays a critical role in Iowa's workforce development system, and more importantly to the adult learners served, by providing opportunities for them to gain the educational skills necessary to transition to and succeed in postsecondary education, job training, better employment, and to reach their full potential as family members, productive workers, and citizens.

As one of the core partners under WIOA, Adult Education plays an integral role in the workforce development system by providing access to educational services for adult learners through the one-stop delivery system. Adult Education increases opportunity in the educational and workforce development of adults as workers, parents, and citizens. While playing a critical role in adult attainment of a secondary school diploma, Adult Education assists in the transition to postsecondary education and training through the use of career pathways.

- Adult Education will provide the following critical services and activities to support adult learners with the goal of improving access to education and training opportunities, as well as to employment:  
Assist adults to become literate and obtain the knowledge and skills for employment and economic self-sufficiency;
- Support the educational and skill achievement of parents and family members to participate in the educational development of their children and improve economic opportunities for families;
- Assist immigrants and English learners in improving their English and math proficiency and understanding of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship; and
- Assist incarcerated individuals in strengthening their knowledge and skills to promote successful re-entry into society.

### ***Accessibility***

Adult Education will support efforts to increase enrollment and retention by urging programs to offer flexible schedules, support services and year-round programs in attractive and age-appropriate settings.

Adult Education will also leverage technology to improve teaching and learning of adults and make resources more accessible to our adult learners in rural communities. Recognizing the work and family demands of adult learners, Iowa will work to expand high-quality distance education offerings. Adult educators will enrich teaching and learning in traditional classrooms, distance education, and hybrid learning environments by identifying, using or adapting, and assessing with appropriate and high-quality open education resources. Further, recognizing that many jobs require digital literacy, Iowa's AEL program will encourage and support the integration of digital literacy skills into all adult education and literacy activities. Professional development will explicitly address the teaching and assessment of digital literacy skills integrated appropriately into instruction in all content domains. Iowa will work with

community college adult education programs to ensure that local program staff can assist all learners in maximizing access to technology and the Internet.

### ***Sector Partnerships***

Adult Education will educate students, parents, job seekers, teachers, counselors and administrators about local in-demand careers and prepare students for those careers. Adult Education will also expand awareness of and access to adult learning opportunities to qualify for local in-demand careers.

### ***Career Pathways***

Adult Education will assist in the transition to postsecondary education and training through the use of career pathways for work-relevant instruction. Career pathways will be developed to provide access to high-demand, regionally significant employment and training services for adult learners.

Adult Education will work to create stronger linkages with employers in partnership with other core programs. Iowa will encourage and support ongoing engagement with employers and workforce development system partners in the design, delivery, and evaluation of career pathways educational programs that are responsive to regional and local labor market demands. A high-quality, comprehensive career pathway system will be developed and implemented that includes multiple entry and exit points that meets learners where they are, provides education, training and support services needed for career advancement, and ensures a skilled workforce that meets Iowa's talent needs. A steering committee of state-level agencies, organizations, and employers/industries has been established to provide leadership, supportive and aligned policies, and resources for state and regional demand-driven career pathway systems that promote the quality, scale, and sustainability of career pathways. Fostering and growing true collaboration at all levels – state, regional, and local – is critical to the success of the career pathway approach.

An emphasis will be placed on work-based learning and career opportunities, such as the apprenticeships, internships, and mentoring. Work-based learning will move Iowa's workforce system to a more demand-driven system through the development of industry-based partnerships that promote the economic health and welfare of regional area businesses and workers through engagement of local employers to provide direct information on in-demand jobs, skill sets required, training program requirements, and candidate assessment factors to improve successful transition from training to long-term employment. Stimulating the development of industry clusters, based on sound labor market information data, supports the overall goal of providing Iowa employers with a highly-skilled workforce and Iowa citizens with careers providing good wages and increased opportunities.

Adult Education will continue to participate in the Career Pathways initiative sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education - *Moving Pathways Forward: Supporting Career Pathways Integration* with the goal of implementing a quality, comprehensive career pathways systems, by convening a multi-agency team and engaging business and industry leaders. Creating one system in Iowa means aligning policies and removing unintentional barriers where possible; having a shared vision and common messaging; and providing professional development and training on career pathways to have unified and consistent messaging.

Adult Education will continue to incorporate college and career readiness standards in instruction, sharing best practices and providing ongoing professional development and training for instructors, data specialists and coordinators of programs. All of Iowa's federally funded adult education programs are

instituting the federal College and Career Readiness Standards, and have already incorporated the Common Core standards in the high school diploma programs. In addition, local educational programs will continue to provide standards-based curriculum, instruction, and assessment focusing on the skills that enable learners to participate more fully within American society as citizens, workers, and family members.

### ***Integration***

By developing positive and cooperative relationships with state agencies such as Iowa Workforce Development, the Department of Health and Human Services, Iowa Vocational Rehabilitative Services, the Department for the Blind, and others, we can better serve our adult learners and job seekers through unduplicated, coordinated services. Adult Education will collaborate, connect, and create statewide work-based learning strategies, engage these key state agencies and external partners to expand collaborations and address challenges, and deliver seamless and consistent recruitment, training, placement, and retention services statewide for adult learners. By establishing common practices among core partners, we can assure that our adult learners and job seekers will have consistent quality of service, no matter where they enter the system.

Training on integration activities will be conducted with topics to include: embedding job readiness and soft-skills training in English literacy training; 21st century skills (digital literacy, financial literacy; critical thinking and reading, locating information; and life skills.

Adult Education will share and evaluate promising approaches to partnership building and instructional delivery currently being tested in AEL programs, including contextualized curriculum for all levels of instruction and integrated education and training programs.

Adult Education will deliver an integrated English literacy and civics education program in combination with integrated education and training activities. Iowa has been implementing an integrated English literacy and civics education program design that is aligned with career pathways. Career pathways increase integration of Adult Education - including English language acquisition – with workforce preparation activities, and provides a clear sequence of education and training that prepares learners for in-demand employment opportunities. This requires strong partnerships between adult education, workforce development, postsecondary education and employers. Adult Education has been and will continue to assist English language acquisition programs with establishing integrated English literacy and civics education programs through high-quality professional development and sharing of resources, research and best-practices.

### ***Integrated Education and Training***

Integrated education and training opportunities will allow for the creation of a Future Ready workforce that prepares ALL Iowans to meet the evolving demands of tomorrow's jobs. With improved accessibility and alignment of systems, ALL Iowans will be able to participate in the education and training opportunities that support the development of the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary for rewarding careers. Training will be demand-driven by creating partnerships with education and employers, building a seamless One-Stop system for both employers and job seekers, emphasizing the value of science, technology, engineering, and math education, and by investing in skilled trades training and career tech education opportunities.

***To accomplish integrated education and training, Iowa's key workforce delivery system partners must:***

- ✓ Ensure that ALL Iowans have full access and direct connection to programs that work to address essential components of reading instruction and literacy,
- ✓ Create affordable options for workers to obtain education, training, skills, including personal, soft, and basic skills, and financial literacy, necessary to secure and maintain self-sustaining employment, and
- ✓ Develop opportunities for ALL Iowans to develop entrepreneurial skills and concepts while providing opportunities for connection with Iowa business leaders.

Adult Education programs will assist adults to become literate and obtain the knowledge and skills for employment and economic self-sufficiency. Workers and job seekers will have access to basic skills instruction relevant to employment through the one-stop delivery system. Education will be provided in the context of industry-specific needs that will involve employers and be integrated with occupational skills training to achieve the best outcomes for participants. Programs will use career pathways, integrated education and training, and workforce preparation activities as hallmarks of excellent work-relevant instruction.

Modules on Integrated Education Training will be offered as a facilitated online course. The modules will take educators and agency administrators through the process of developing plans for implementing instructional models that integrate basic skills with technical or occupational skills instruction.

Activities to support integrated education and training strategies will align with the NGA Talent Pipeline/Future Ready Initiative recommendations as well as with concepts within the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Taskforce report. A youth-focused work group will be convened by the Core Partners and key stakeholders. Individuals and small businesses will be given guidance on business enterprises, asset development, and benefits planning throughout the start-up, operations and maintenance phases of entrepreneurial pursuits. Dual enrollment and integrated education and training programs will be utilized when appropriate to accelerate participant learning.

Adult education and family literacy programs will be promoted through campaigns which include, but are not limited to, initiatives including workplace programs, and career pathway development programs, by promoting research based practices and public and private sector partnerships to inform the public about adult education, literacy, and family literacy services. The One-Stop System will be used as a vehicle to identify available educational and employment services, fiscal and human resources, and other client services to help this targeted population become literate and economically self-sufficient. Innovative strategies will be promoted and replicated by creating process and policy to integrate best practices into common practice by adopting continuous improvement methodologies to streamline and maximize our business practices.



## **Alignment with Activities outside the Plan**

DESCRIBE HOW THE ACTIVITIES IDENTIFIED IN (A) WILL BE ALIGNED WITH PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES PROVIDED BY MANDATORY 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 Partners shall collaborate to develop policies, procedures, and best practices to facilitate the organization and integration of workforce services by function (rather than by program) when permitted by a program's authorizing statute and as appropriate. This will include coordinating staff communication, capacity building, and training efforts. Functional alignment includes having one-stop center staff who perform similar tasks serve on relevant functional teams (e.g. Skills Development Team, Business Services Team). Service integration shall focus 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.

The Partners strive to achieve an integrated partnership that seamlessly incorporates services of the core partners and other system partners. The Partners shall collaborate to develop and implement operational policies, procedures, and best practices that reflect an integrated system of performance, communication, and case management, and use technology to achieve integration and expanded service offerings.

The Partners will collaborate to develop policies and guidance with respect to best practices to increase and maximize access to services for individuals, particularly those with barriers to employment. State Partners will also provide assistance (technical or otherwise) to Local Partners, Boards, and staff so that they can implement policies, procedures, and practices to help increase and maximize access to workforce development services for individuals, particularly those with barriers to employment.

As part of the Value Stream Mapping event a review of processes among and between WIOA Core Partners was conducted. The team examined current alignment of systems and analyzed ways to improve system alignment.

*The issues identified by the mapping exercise included the following:*

- Reduce duplication, identify barriers to collaboration, and increase collaboration of all partners at the one-stops.
- Focus on workforce training beyond entry-level skills and achieving postsecondary awards/credentials.
- Identify barriers to participant referrals or access to appropriate service providers within the one-stop system.
- Identify integration opportunities and data sharing on assessment information among workforce partners.
- Reduce duplication of services among various partners.
- Develop knowledge of all partners regarding roles and responsibilities.

*New strategies for addressing issues identified by Value-Stream Mapping recommended:*

- Integrate one-stop services (remove duplication and increase communication among partners);

- Incorporate middle skills training and learn-and-earn models into system;
- Develop a common intake and referral process for all partners;
- Develop a system for universal assessment and sharing results among agencies;
- Provide professional development to program staff on integration within a one-stop system;
- Co-enroll common customers in appropriate educational programs;
- Develop data-sharing capability among all agencies;
- Develop a data-sharing system that contains a common eligible training provider list;
- Braid funds to better utilize resources efficiently.

The information from the mapping event was used in the development of sub committees for the plan so that those committees would develop strategies and plans on how to improve the alignment of the workforce partnership.

All subcommittees and working groups have representation from the Core Partners, and also from key stakeholders on behalf of various populations, sectors and other identified participants.

Alignment of the core programs, as well as other resources available to the State, have been infused into the vision and goals and incorporated throughout the Unified State Plan. Key Stakeholders have been identified and invited to be participants in Iowa's planning and implementation process. Many collaborative relationships in Iowa were established prior to WIOA and have strengthened during this process, while others are being reviewed for inclusion.

WIOA planning efforts have served to solidify key relationships, provide a context in which to enhance ongoing partnerships and have served as a roadmap for establishing new and innovative connections within Iowa's workforce delivery system.

## **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 MANDATORY AND OPTIONAL ONE-STOP PARTNER PROGRAMS WILL COORDINATE ACTIVITIES AND RESOURCES TO PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE, HIGH-QUALITY, CUSTOMER-CENTERED SERVICES, INCLUDING SUPPORTIVE SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS INCLUDING THOSE POPULATIONS IDENTIFIED IN SECTION II(A)(1)(B). THE ACTIVITIES DESCRIBED SHALL CONFORM TO THE STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS OF EACH PROGRAM.

Iowa's implementation strategy involves a multitude of activities and strategies which will support, strengthen and standardize collaborations among agencies. A statewide Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will be used to formally guide implementation of WIOA in Iowa. The strategies and associated activities that will be funded by the entities carrying out the respective core program activities will be identified in the MOU. The State of Iowa working with Core Partners, has developed a State MOU which will be implemented in two phases:

Phase 1 will be focused on coordination of services among partners. This phase fosters cooperation, better education, and specifies the responsibilities of the Partners under WIOA.

Phase II will be an addendum to the State MOU and will incorporate and include Phase I. Phase II will address resource sharing among the Partners with respect to workforce service delivery across the State.

The partners involved in the development of the MOU have assigned a financial management team member from each of the agencies/partners to review/address resource sharing guidance for the local regions. USDOL and other federal administrative entities are expected to provide additional guidance to the states regarding this issue in early 2016.

### **Actions and methods supporting the state's implementation efforts currently include:**

- Iowa's Unified State Plan,
- Statewide MOU,
- Policies developed in partnership with Core Partners,
- Standard Operating Procedures Manual,
- Shared monitoring criteria for One-Stop Center staff,
- State Board program review and recommendations,
- Establishment of quality assurance standards,
- Ongoing programmatic reviews by the implementation team,
- Centralized, interactive website,
- Co-enrollment of program participants and
- Shared advanced data collection system.

### **The following entities are parties to the statewide MOU:**

- Adult Education and Literacy, State of Iowa Department of Education
- Career and Technical Education, State of Iowa Department of Education
- State of Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation
- Iowa Department for the Blind
- PROMISE JOBS
- Iowa Workforce Development

The collaboration WIOA requires need not be limited to the boundaries of a Local Region, Area, or One-Stop System. Ideas must flow horizontally, both within and across Local Regions or Areas, as well as vertically between State Partners, Local Partners, Local Boards, and Local staff. The Partners will regularly engage one another and Local Partners, Boards, and Staff regarding workforce system delivery in order to develop policies, procedures, and guidance with respect to the best practices to achieve the objectives of WIOA and Future Ready Iowa.

Increased access for the most at-need workers is a primary focus of the MOU and providing excellent service to persons with barriers to employment is a top priority. Members of the following populations have been identified as being at-risk for the purposes of WIOA, however, other groups which may be based locally or regionally may also be designated as a target population at the discretion of the local or state board.

The Partners will collaborate to develop an integrated case management system that will help streamline workforce development service delivery across the state. The integrated case management system will help streamline service delivery and avoid redundancies. This will help to maximize resources so that they can be directed toward providing high-quality services to job seekers, employees, and employers that are responsive to real-time and future labor market needs.

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## **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, MANDATORY 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. THE ACTIVITIES DESCRIBED SHALL CONFORM TO THE STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS OF EACH PROGRAM.

Iowa has taken many steps to put the needs of employers and industry first. Programs provided by IVRS bring members of the workforce delivery team to connect with employers and create new solutions for employees, thereby assisting the employer in their hiring and retention of qualified workers. While generally this is done as a natural aspect and core competency of IVRS staff working with businesses and employers, IVRS has also embedded a Business Recruitment and Retention specialist in select businesses to assist them in their diversity recruitment and retention of individuals with disabilities through a contractual arrangement. IVRS has plans to expand this into every area office served where large employers need assistance in attracting and retaining individuals with disabilities.

The Business Development Specialist for IVRS, IVRS area office staff, the SBDC, and the Department of Economic Development support small business and provide technical assistance and financial support in the development and start-up of new small businesses.

Through a system of supports to businesses, IVRS tailors what is provided to meet their employment needs. Businesses and employers do not require all of the IVRS services and have indicated that 3-4 services are essential for the recruitment and retention of individuals with disabilities. These things range from providing technical assistance to HR on resources available, to help supporting their goals of retention when employees need specialized assistance. These options along with full Resource Fairs are expressed needs from employers that IVRS has provided over the years.

In an effort to better align with business needs, a focused effort is being developed to be a resource for Section 503 businesses. This will be a collaborative team effort across systems to provide resource availability to these targeted businesses to assist them with recruitment and hiring. The anticipated outcome is an increase in hiring for individuals with disabilities and improvement in the labor market participation rate for individuals with disabilities.

Of the priorities listed, IVRS already has a presence in the HealthCare industry not only through the embedded Recruitment and Retention Specialists, but also through Project Search. The next step is to work toward evolving these options into career pathways that may result in registered apprenticeships.

Iowa places a high value in supporting the development of industry partnerships and rapid entrance into the workforce through various routes. Well planned and state-supported Sector Partnerships and Career Pathways can increase the number of individuals who obtain an industry valued credential and enter into sustainable employment. The state of Iowa has worked to develop state-wide definitions of Sector Partnerships and Career Pathways which will serve to create consistency and quality across systems and throughout the state.

Registered Apprenticeship is a proven approach for preparing workers for jobs while meeting the needs of business for a highly-skilled workforce. It is an employer-driven, “learn while you earn” model that combines on-the-job training, provided by the employer that hires the apprentice, with job-related

instruction in curricula tied to the attainment of national skills standards. The model also involves progressive increases in an apprentice's skills and wages.

Registered Apprenticeship is a flexible training strategy that can be customized to meet the needs of any business. Apprentices can be new hires, dislocated workers, youth or incumbent workers, etc... who need skill upgrades to join the registered apprenticeship program.

While it is used in traditional industries such as construction and manufacturing, registered apprenticeship is also instrumental for training and development in growing industries, such as health care, information technology, transportation and logistics, agriculture, hospitality and energy.

***There are five components to typical registered apprenticeship programs. These include:***

*1. Business Involvement*

Employers are the foundation of every registered apprenticeship program. They play an active role in building the program and remain involved every step of the way. Employers frequently work together through registered apprenticeship councils, industry associations, or other partnerships to share the administrative tasks involved in maintaining registered apprenticeship programs.

*2. Structured On-the-Job Training*

Apprenticeships always include an on-the-job training (OJT) component. Apprentices receive hands-on training from an experienced mentor at the job site. OJT focuses on the skills and knowledge an apprentice must learn during the program to be fully proficient on the job. This training is based on national industry standards, customized to the needs of the particular employer.

*3. Related Instruction*

One of the unique aspects of apprenticeships is that they combine on-the-job learning with related instruction on the technical and academic competencies that apply to the job. Education partners collaborate with business to develop the curriculum, which often incorporates established national-level skill standards. The related instruction may be provided by community colleges, technical schools, or apprenticeship training schools – or by the business itself. It can be delivered at a school, online, or at the job site.

*4. Rewards for Skill Gains*

Apprentices receive wages when they begin work, and receive pay increases as they meet benchmarks for skill attainment. This helps reward and motivate apprentices as they advance through their training.

*5. Nationally-recognized Credential*

Every graduate of a Registered Apprenticeship program receives a nationally-recognized credential. This is a portable credential that signifies to employers that apprentices are fully qualified for the job.

Iowa Currently has 740 Registered Apprenticeship Sponsors. That number continues to grow. We have over 7000 Active Apprentices and that number continues to Grow. The state plans to double the number of Active Apprentices in the next 5 years.

*Developing Registered Apprenticeship Programs in the following industries is a priority in Iowa:*

- Advanced Manufacturing
- HealthCare
- IT
- Hospitality
- Agriculture
- Construction

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## **Partner Engagement with Educational Institutions**

DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE'S STRATEGIES WILL 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 A JOB-DRIVEN EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM.

Iowa's fifteen comprehensive community colleges have been an integral part of Iowa's workforce development delivery system for many years. Ten of Iowa's community colleges currently serve as their regions one-stop operator. \$40.3 million in state funding from the Iowa Skilled Worker and Job Creation Fund is delivered through Iowa's community colleges supporting a comprehensive portfolio of education, job training, workforce development and economic development programs serving a broad range of Iowans.

Iowa has a rich and well documented history of quality community college engagement. In 2008, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) identified Iowa, along with 5 other states, as having innovative initiatives in place to address workforce needs. The following measures were examined: (1) how community colleges meet the workforce training needs of communities; (2) One-Stop integration; (3) conditions that enhance or impede efforts; (4) actions that labor and education have taken to encourage linkages between community colleges and the workforce delivery system, including One-Stops.

Des Moines Area Community College, Kirkwood Community College and North Iowa Area Community College were chosen by GAO to participate in this in-depth examination and were shown to be highly integrated within the One-Stop Centers. The report can be accessed at <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d08547.pdf>.

## **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).

## **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.

Over the past four years, Iowa's community colleges and their regional partners have used the sector partnership approach to better meet the workforce needs of key industry sectors.

The Pathways for Academic Career Education Program (Iowa Code Chapter 260H) was passed by the Iowa Legislature in 2011 and funded with an annual \$5.0 million appropriation from the Iowa Skilled Worker and Job Creation Fund in 2012. The PACE program contains statutory language (260H.7B) defining a sector partnership and authorizes the use of PACE funding to develop and implement sector partnerships and career pathways. Iowa's policies are highlighted in a study issued by the National Skills Coalition in August 2015 titled "Skills in the States - Sector Partnership Policy."

A Sector Partnership and Career Pathways Advisory Council was convened in early 2015 by the Iowa Department of Education, Division of Community Colleges to develop standard definitions, performance metrics and operational guidelines for the development of sector partnerships and career pathway programs in Iowa. The Council's work was completed in September 2015 and should be credited with significantly advancing an important discussion in the State. However, the group's work was not



industry-led and sector strategy work must include key industry sector representatives to gain the necessary long-term buy-in and commitment for sustained success. After further collaboration with Iowa's employers is completed, then the long-term structure and commitment to drive sector partnerships and career pathway work will be clarified – and that structure may vary across industries.

- 1) Establish an Iowa Sector Partnership Leadership Council
  - a) Reconfigure the existing Sector Partnership & Career Pathway Advisory Council to serve in this role. There should be a state organized identified structure representative of title partners in WIOA, providing ongoing leadership and technical assistance for establishing visibility, collaboration and setting priorities as highlighted in Future Ready Iowa.
    - i) Membership should include broad education, workforce development, economic development and industry association representatives.
    - ii) Tasked to provide state level leadership, support, policy development, coordination and guidance to regional sector partnership development.
    - iii) Convene annual statewide workshops for regional sector partnerships from across the state to share best practices and promote statewide collaboration.
  - b) The Operations team would provide staff support to the Council.
  - c) The Council should serve as an advisory committee to the State Board of Directors.
- 2) Develop a statewide data base of existing sector partnerships and career pathways in Iowa.
  - a) Update the inventory of sector partnerships and career pathways conducted in October 2014 by Iowa's community colleges.
  - b) Funding from the SP NEG grant will be used to finance the development of this data base and web portal.
- 3) Facilitator Training
  - a) Conduct a training session for sector partnership facilitators to develop a statewide pool of trained, professional facilitators to assist in the development of regional sector partnerships.
  - b) Funding from the SP NEG grant will be used to finance this training session facilitated by a recognized sector partnership consultant.
- 4) Expand Statewide Work Based Learning Intermediary Network
  - a) Based on feedback from the CTE taskforce as well as WIOA efforts, seek to:
    - i) Prioritize and align funding and programmatic efforts across agencies to identify gaps and reduce duplication

ii) Remove barriers to address a wider spectrum of audience participants

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## **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 Iowa Partnership for Economic Progress (IPEP), an industry-led, CEO-level advisory board established by Governor Branstad in 2011 was charged with the task of continuously identifying and studying economic growth issues facing Iowa and recommend solutions and policy alternatives.

IPEP set out three guidelines for approaching the re-envisioning of Iowa's economic development roadmap. First, engage a broad range of economic development stakeholders from private industry, economic development and higher education to ensure broad-based input. Second, complete a comprehensive analysis of Iowa's industry clusters, development resources and economic assets. Finally, review and recommend the programs necessary for Iowa to strengthen its existing industry clusters and capitalize on opportunities for growth.

#### ***Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA)***

IEDA is charged with responsibility for coordinating four workforce training programs that deliver customized training to grow a skilled and talented workforce for Iowa business. Authorizing legislation is found in Chapters 260E, 260F, 260G and 15B of the Iowa Code. IEDA adopts administrative rules pursuant to Chapter 17A of the Iowa Administrative Procedures Act on how the programs are to be implemented. Three of the four programs, 260E, 260F and 260G-Job Credits are implemented by each of Iowa's 15 community colleges within its merged area. The 15B program is implemented by IEDA.

#### ***The Iowa Industrial New Jobs Training Program (NJTP)***

The Iowa Industrial New Jobs Training Program (NJTP or 260E) became effective July 1, 1983. The 260E is a business incentive program designed to assist with the cost of training employees in new jobs created by a business expansion or startup in Iowa. To be eligible for assistance, a business must be engaged in interstate or intrastate commerce for the purpose of manufacturing, processing or assembling products, conducting research and development, or providing services in intrastate commerce. Retail, health and professional services are excluded.

Community colleges enter into contracts, referred to as training agreements with eligible businesses to establish a single or multiple projects to provide training to employees in new jobs. To fund the cost of training, colleges borrow money from investors in the form of bond certificates. Like other bonds, revenues are pledged for repayment with interest to certificate purchasers. Certificates are repaid by diverting a portion of the Iowa withholding tax generated by the new jobs into special funds controlled by the colleges. On average, the colleges sell about \$38 million in bond certificates annually.

#### ***The Iowa Job Training Program (IJTP)***

The Iowa Job Training Program (IJTP or 260F) became effective July 1, 1985. The 260F program assists Iowa based businesses to train, develop and upscale work skills of their existing workforces to remain economically competitive. To be eligible for assistance, a business must be engaged in interstate or intrastate commerce for the purpose of manufacturing, processing or assembling products, conducting research and development, or providing services in intrastate commerce. Retail services are excluded.

Iowa Code establishes a job training fund under the control of IEDA in the Workforce Development Fund. Source of funds is \$3 million in monies appropriated by the General Assembly for the 260F program. Funds are allocated to the community colleges based on the General State Aid Formula. Colleges enter into training agreements with businesses to provide services for training. A college submits to IEDA an application on behalf of the business for approval to use the allocated amount.

### ***The Accelerated Career Education (ACE) – Job Credits***

The Accelerated Career Education Program (ACE or 260G) became effective July 1, 1999. The 260G program assists community colleges to expand current training programs or to establish new programs for occupations most needed by Iowa businesses. To participate in 260G, a business must be engaged in interstate or intrastate commerce for the purpose of manufacturing, processing or assembling products, construction, conducting research and development, or providing services in interstate or intrastate commerce. Excluded are retail, health and professional services.

Iowa Code establishes the total amount of program job credits which may be allocated statewide in any one fiscal year. The total allocated amount is not to exceed \$5.4 million. A community college enters into a program agreement with a business to establish or expand a 260G training program. Colleges submit program agreements to IEDA for their proposed use of allocated job credits. A job credit is based upon the hiring wage that the participating business would pay to an individual completing the training program. Instead of paying all withholding tax due to the State of Iowa, the business diverts a portion of the tax to the community college to fund the training program. The diverted portion is equal to the approved 260G job credit amount.

### ***Iowa Apprenticeship Training Program, Iowa Code 15B***

The Iowa Apprenticeship Training Program Act (15B) was enacted by the Iowa Legislature in 2014. The purpose of 15B is to increase the number of registered apprentices in Iowa by providing training grants to eligible apprenticeship programs. Registered apprenticeships are a proven approach to preparing workers for in-demand jobs and meeting the needs of business for a highly skilled workforce that can innovate and adapt. The program is administered by IEDA in coordination with the United States Department of Labor (DOL), Office of Apprenticeship (OA). Only apprenticeship programs registered and meeting USDOL standards, known as a sponsor, are eligible for an IEDA training grant.

An apprenticeship training fund is created as a revolving fund in the State Treasury under the control of the IEDA. \$3 million was appropriated for Fiscal Year 2015. A statutory formula is used to allocate training grants to eligible sponsors. Awarded funds may only be used towards the cost of conducting and maintaining a registered apprenticeship training program.

## State Operating Systems and Policies

THE UNIFIED [...] 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— 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.).
- (B) DATA-COLLECTION AND REPORTING PROCESSES USED FOR ALL PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING THOSE PRESENT IN ONE-STOP CENTERS.

A profile sub-committee of the data and performance workgroup has been meeting to discuss a method to share data across agencies. The Participant Profile application being developed by IWD has been determined as a viable application that can be scaled to use by the state at each of the core agencies. Several demonstrations of the application have taken place. The application is currently scheduled to go into production in May 2016 for IWD.

The Participant Profile will include the Participant Information Record Layout (PIRL) distributed by USDOL. Each partner had the opportunity to submit feedback to the USDOL in September. The PIRL was reviewed by members of each core agency. Each core partner will need to create a link to the Participant Profile. The unique PIRL Identifier will be the common shared data element used to link participants. The Participant Profile will populate each of the agency specific databases.

Next decisions for the PIRL include whether the participant, staff, or an agency batch process will complete specific data elements. Identification of allowable locations needs to be determined.

IWD secured funding for the initial project to move forward. A project plan and scope need to be developed with a clear timeframe. Sustainable costs are not included. Modifications to agency specific applications are also not included.

A comprehensive list of data elements dependent on partners will be compiled to help develop the state data sharing MOU. This state level template will focus on measures and reporting requirements to be used for regional MOUs.

The Participant Profile will store information about the participant's post-program success and Unemployment Insurance Wage record data. Reporting performance outcomes, the details of who, when, and how this information is to be shared are yet to be determined. The Participant Profile application includes identity authentication steps as a means to verify individuals and maintain privacy.

Another sub-group for Educational Training Provider has also been meeting and is working on the draft policy surrounding the ETPL process for interested, qualified training providers.

### ***Purpose of the Project***

- Implement new performance accountability measures
- Refine the Educational Training Provider application and approval process
- Develop recommendations for additional measures
- Decide on a system for use as the core partner data base registration and data reporting management system

### ***Scope of the Project***

- Review new performance measures and identify potential issues, including recording and reporting information
- Analyze current state of reporting requirements, identify gaps, efficiency opportunities needed indicators of performance
- Develop a matrix of required data and reporting requirements and coordinate with State leadership to identify additional shared performance requirements across agencies
- Develop IT scope of work guidelines for data sharing to successfully implement new data and reporting requirements, including the integration of additional program data (i.e. apprenticeship data, iJAG data, STEM credential data, etc.) into longitudinal data coordination efforts
- Make recommendations regarding effective dissemination of performance data to stakeholders, the public, workforce customers, and program managers
- Coordinate with NGA Talent Pipeline team
- Negotiate levels of performance/adjustment factors

### ***Delivery Plan***

- Provide data to be shared by Core Partners to go into MOU
- State data dictionary
- Issue List
- Sub-group for ETP will
- Sub-group for Profile will
- An intake system to collect participant data
- A reporting mechanism for reporting state performance to the feds which is viewable by all core partners

## State policies to support implementation of the State's strategies

(E.G., CO-ENROLLMENT POLICIES AND UNIVERSAL INTAKE PROCESSES).

The integrity of local direction is fortified by the guidance provided by representation of the local region's businesses, labor, educators and local elected officials – in short, the Regional Workforce Development Board. In each region, the Regional Workforce Development Board is supported by the Iowa Workforce Development Board, and Iowa state agencies, in guiding the coordinated implementation of Iowa's Integrated Service Delivery system in each of the 15 regional workforce development areas that is responsive to the job seekers, employers, Registered Apprenticeship and other partners within the communities in each region. In addition to Wagner-Peyser, Trade, Veterans, New Iowans and Workforce Innovation and opportunity Act Title 1 Adult and Dislocated Worker programs, the Iowa Integration Service Delivery model will provide services to Unemployment Insurance recipients and PROMISE JOBS participants.

The merger of multiple partners and services into a seamless delivery system in a well-integrated One-Stop Center requires planning, policy, and commitment. As a primary partner in each center, it is the policy of Iowa Workforce Development to provide a base level of core services, which in turn are complemented and enhanced by the partner services that may be of a more intensive level or involve training. In this way, integration is emphasized and duplication is minimized. This approach also promotes the maximum use of Workforce Investment Act funds for training activities. The Iowa Legislature passed House File 2699 (2008) that required Iowa Workforce Development to develop a plan by January 1, 2009 that would coordinate the workforce delivery system in a more efficient, cost-effective manner while improving services for customers; co-location and integration of all workforce and job training programs, and improves the effectiveness of the regional workforce system. This workforce delivery system is known as the Iowa Integration Delivery System.

Adoption of the Iowa Integrated Service Delivery model by the local Regional Workforce Development Board in collaboration with Iowa Workforce Development includes the development of local functional leadership whose responsibility is to manage the delivery of products and services regardless of their program source. This includes referrals made to employers, registered apprenticeship programs and other benefits that would benefit the job seeker in their search for employment. Iowa has three functional teams that deliver services in a comprehensive manner at the core and intensive level, Membership, Skill Development and Recruitment and Placement. The philosophy of Iowa's Integrated Service Delivery model applies to services provided to both job seekers, employers and future workforce participants.

Policy guidance for integrated service delivery in the One-Stop System is provided in the Iowa **WORKS** Integration Policies Guidebook (Iowa Workforce Development, February 27, 2012) and in the Iowa Workforce Investment Act Handbook.

Iowa Workforce Development Labor Market Information

### *Education & Training Outcomes Reporting*

Iowa Workforce Development (IWD) provides matching and analysis of student and program participant data to IWD's UI wage records for outcomes analysis. IWD uses UI wage record matching to evaluate workforce/education/training programs for providers that include state agencies, public, private, two-year and four-year institutions. IWD also uses the Wage Record Interchange System for analysis to capture data on students and participants who have left Iowa.

### *Student and Participant Outcome Evaluation*

- Numerous WIOA Institution Evaluation (public, private, two-year, four-year)
- Department of Education – Community College Division
  - Community College Program Outcomes – Analysis of Iowa’s community college programs
  - Pathways for Academic Career & Employment Program
  - GAP Tuition Assistance Program Evaluation
  - Perkins
  - Credit Career and Technical Education
  - WIOA Title III (ABE, ESL, & GED)
  - Trade Assistance Community College and Career Training Program
  - Gainful Employment
- Vocational Rehabilitation
  - Provide UI wage record data for evaluation
- Department of Corrections
- Department for the Blind
- PROMISE JOBS Program Analysis
- Criminal Juvenile Justice Planning
- Iowa Apprenticeship Analysis
- National Career Readiness Certificate Evaluation

### *Security*

IWD holds data sharing agreements with all parties that they provide UI data to or provide aggregate reporting using UI wage record data. When reporting, IWD will suppress data reported in any field being analyzed that contains less than three students/participants or when that information can be used to calculate individual data to ensure that an individual cannot be identified.

All confidential data files are transferred through IWD’s secured FTP site. The data is stored on IWD’s secured servers and is only accessible to authorized individuals.



## **State Program and State Board Overview**

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.

### ***Iowa Workforce Development***

Iowa Workforce Development (IWD) administers Iowa's Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, and Wagner-Peyser Act programs. IWD commits its resources to Iowa's prosperity by working to ensure the income security, productivity, safety, and health of all Iowans. The department strives to provide safe workplaces, provide a productive and economically secure workforce, provide all Iowans with access to workforce development services, and create a model workplace.

*In coordination with the Division of Labor Services and the Division of Workers' Compensation, the department is comprised of the following areas of services:*

- Administrative Services Division
- Communications Division
- Labor Market Information Division
- Operations Division
- Information Technology Division
- Appeals Division

Director Beth Townsend has general supervision over the various areas within IWD. The director prepares, administers, and controls the budget of the department and its divisions along with Michael Mauro who is the Division of Labor Commissioner and the Division of Workers' Compensation Commissioner.

### ***Administrative Services Division***

The Administrative Services Division provides a variety of services to keep the agency operating smoothly and to assist employees working in the IWD administrative offices.

*The following is a short list of administrative support functions provided:*

- employee services
- building management
- office services
- printing services
- financial reporting
- accounting
- Communications Division

The Communications division within IWD works to communicate all aspects of the agency to external and internal stakeholders quickly and effectively. It is the responsibility of the communications division to respond to all media inquiries in a timely and efficient manner.

### ***Labor Market Information Division***

Edward T. Wallace is the Deputy Director and as such provides general oversight and direction to the Labor Market Information Division.

The Labor Market Information (LMI) Division collects, analyzes and prepares a wide array of labor market data including the unemployment rate, employment levels, industry and occupational statistics, wages, projections, trends and other workforce characteristics for the State of Iowa as a whole as well as for other defined geographic areas within the State. It is the mission of the Division to produce and deliver information in a reliable and timely manner in order to inform data-driven decisions for business, career, educational programming and economic development.

### ***Operations Division***

The Operations Division provides a variety of services to businesses, workers, and the citizens of Iowa by collecting unemployment insurance taxes, maintaining the Iowa Unemployment Compensation Trust Fund, and making payments to eligible jobless workers. The Operations Division is also responsible for the delivery of various state and federally funded employment and training services.

The regional one-stop centers and offices provide a variety of services to meet the workforce and workplace needs of job seekers, dislocated workers, unemployed persons, and Iowa businesses through partnerships of state and local service providers. They provide job counseling, job training, job placement, and assistance to special needs populations.

*The division administers the Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act, which includes the following:*

- Adult
- Dislocated Worker
- Youth
- Rapid Response
- National Emergency Grants

*The division also administers worker profiling and reemployment services including:*

- Alien Labor Certification Program
- Trade Adjustment Assistance
- PROMISE JOBS
- Work Opportunity Tax Credit
- Wagner-Peyser Job Placement
- Job Insurance Benefits Navigation
- Unemployment Insurance Assistance
- Bonding
- Assistance Navigating Local Veterans Employment Opportunities
- Disabled Veterans Opportunity Program
- WorkKeys
- Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker Program

### ***Information Technology Division***

The Information Technology Division within IWD helps develop, maintain, and manage all of the necessary information technology services utilized by both IWD employees and customers using IWD's variety of services.

### ***Appeals Division***

IWD's administrative law judges working within the Appeals Division, hear and decide administrative appeals regarding unemployment insurance benefits.

### ***Division of Labor Services***

The office of the Labor Commissioner was created by the General Assembly in 1884. The Division of Labor administers a variety of services to employers, contractors, and other entities involved in creating and managing workplace safety.

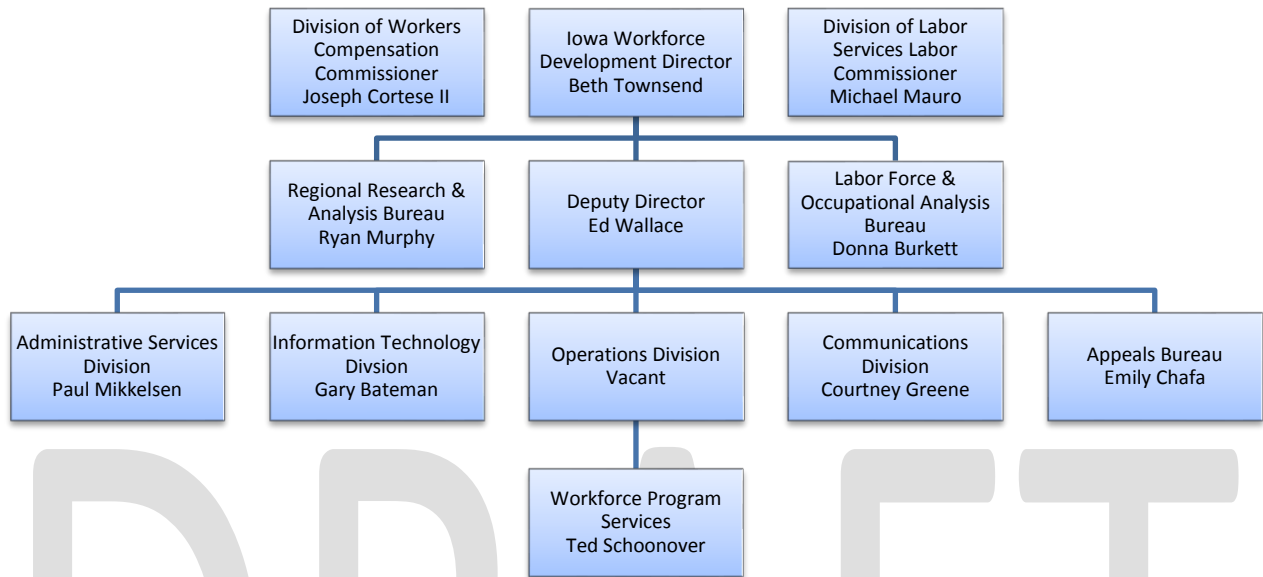
*The following services are managed by the Division of Labor:*

- Amusement Parks and Rides Inspection
- Asbestos Abatement Licensing
- Boiler Inspection
- Child Labor
- Contractor Registration
- Elevators and Escalators
- Hazardous Chemical Required Reporting
- Minimum Wage and Wage Collection
- Iowa Occupational Safety and Health Consultation and Education
- Iowa Occupational Safety and Health Enforcement
- Federal Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) Recordkeeping

### ***Division of Workers' Compensation***

The Workers' Compensation Law was enacted by the General Assembly in 1913. The law provides medical services and wage replacement benefits to workers who sustain injuries arising out of their employment. The Workers' Compensation Law is administered by the Division of Workers' Compensation Commissioner. Iowa was one of the first states to provide benefits for injuries, occupational diseases, and occupational hearing losses sustained by workers. Injuries resulting in death, permanent disability, or temporary disability must be reported to the commissioner. If a compensation agreement cannot be reached, the employee may request a hearing before a deputy commissioner that covers the judicial district where the injury occurred. Decisions are reviewed by the commissioner and may be appealed to the district court and Supreme Court.

## Iowa Workforce Development WIOA Organizational Chart



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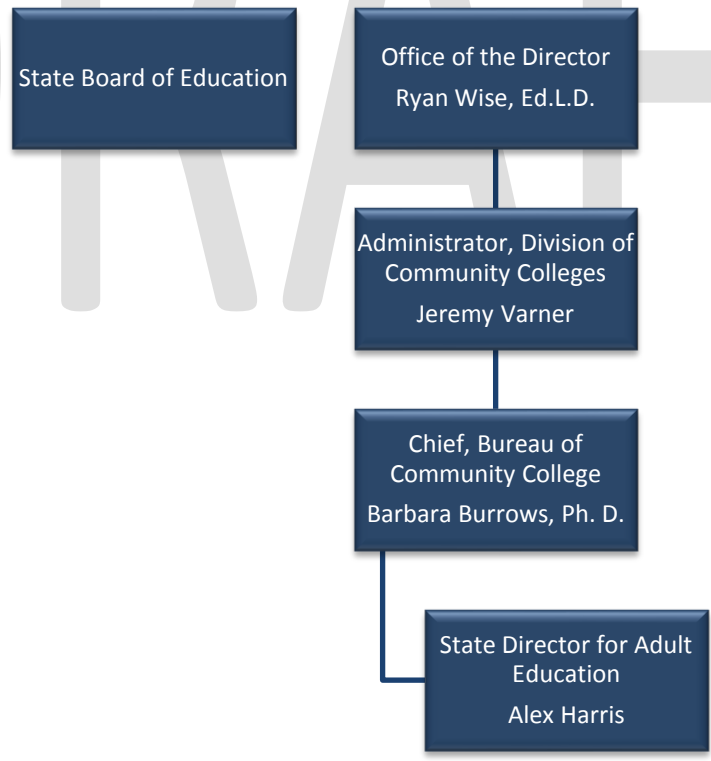
**Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program**

The Iowa Department of Education (IDOE) works with the Iowa State Board of Education to provide support, supervision, and oversight for the state education system that includes public elementary and secondary schools, nonpublic schools that receive state accreditation, area education agencies (AEAs), community colleges, and teacher preparation programs.

Iowa’s adult education and literacy programs assist adults in becoming literate and obtaining the knowledge and skills necessary for employment and self-sufficiency, assists adults who are parents in obtaining the educational skills necessary to become full partners in the educational development of their children, and assists adults in completing a secondary school education.

This chart is designed to reflect the line of authority from the authorized state official signing the state plan extension to the state director for adult education. The line of authority goes from the state director for adult education to the bureau chief of the Bureau of Adult, Career and Community College Education to the division administrator of the Division of Community Colleges to the Director and Executive Officer of the State Board of Education. The Director is the authorized State Official who has the authority to sign Iowa’s Adult Education and Literacy State Plan Extension.

**Adult Education and Literacy Organizational Chart**



### ***Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services***

The mission of the Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services is to work for and with individuals who have disabilities to achieve their employment, independence and economic goals.

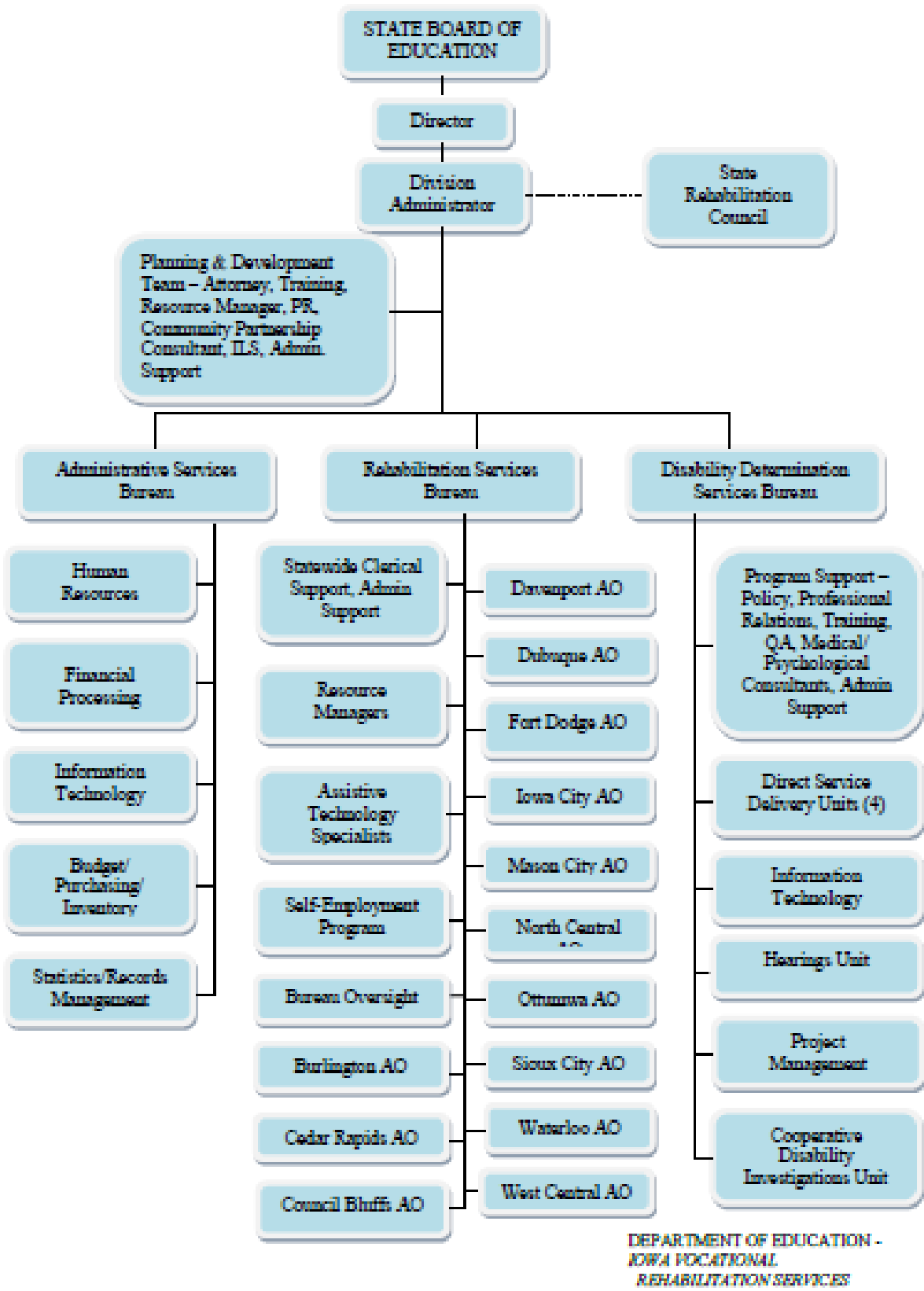
*Disability Determination Services Bureau* is responsible for determining the eligibility of Iowa residents who apply for disability benefits under the Social Security Disability Insurance and Supplemental Security Income programs.

*Rehabilitation Services Bureau* assists eligible individuals to become employed. Persons receiving vocational rehabilitation services have a wide range of disabilities. Most offices are already co-located in the One-Stop Centers across Iowa.

*Vocational Rehabilitation* is a State-Federal program. The Federal share is 78.7%; the State share is 21.3%. The Rehabilitation Services Bureau has 14 area offices and 32 service units.

*Administrative Services Bureau* provides support to the other elements of the Division through the functions of fiscal accounting, budgeting and payroll; statistical records, reporting and closed case file control; personnel management and collective bargaining administration; purchasing and property control; information systems and the physical plant management of the Jessie Parker Building.

*Office of the Administrator* is responsible for overall administration of the statewide programs. The administrator determines program scope and policies, promotes public interest and acceptance, directs budget funds, develops program plans and provides for staff development, research and evaluation. Under the umbrella of the administrator are the State Rehabilitation Council and the Community Rehabilitation Program Advisory Group.



### ***Iowa Department for the Blind***

The Iowa Department for the Blind works to educate and inform businesses, family members, service providers, advocacy groups, community and service organizations, as well as, the general public about the true capabilities of individuals who are blind or visually impaired. IDB actively seeks ongoing communication, interaction, and collaboration with all constituencies.

The Department for the Blind believes that with the right skills and opportunities a blind or visually impaired person can and should be competitively employed and live within their community of choice.

Iowa Department for the Blind collaborates with many stakeholders to provide opportunities for independence and employment throughout the state. IDB provides employment services to blind and visually impaired Iowans who are looking for a job or want to retain or advance in their current career.

Iowa is consistently ranked as one of the nation's highest in the percentage of blind and visually impaired people successfully placed, employed and remaining in jobs. Its library features one of the world's most comprehensive collections of reading materials in alternative formats (e.g., Braille and digital audio). The Department continues to utilize innovative methods and technology to provide quality services to blind and visually impaired people in Iowa.

The administrative rules define the specific standards, criteria and guidelines that govern the Department's operations. The administrative rules are based on the legislation defined in the Iowa Code. The rules are created through a process of confirmation by the Department, the public and legislative rules committees.



## **State Board**

PROVIDE A DESCRIPTION OF THE STATE BOARD, INCLUDING---  
MEMBERSHIP ROSTER. PROVIDE A MEMBERSHIP ROSTER FOR THE STATE BOARD, INCLUDING MEMBERS' ORGANIZATIONAL  
AFFILIATIONS.

### ***Iowa Workforce Development Board***

The duties of the Iowa Workforce Development Board include, but are not limited to, the following activities: the development and implementation of a 20-year comprehensive workforce development plan; the preparation of a five-year strategic plan; the development of evaluation methods; the establishment of guidelines for the awarding of grants; the review of grants awarded by Iowa Workforce Development (IWD); the recommendation of departmental usage of federal funding; and the adoption of administrative rules recommended by the director of IWD.

The Board members consists of nine voting members. The voting members represent employers, employees and a nonprofit workforce development organization. The current board chair is Andy Roberts and the vice-chair is Dee Vanderhoef .

### ***Iowa Workforce Development Board Voting Members***

#### ***Employer Representatives***

- Caroline Hicks, Swine Graphics Enterprises, LLP, Osceola
- Suzanne Kmet, Peddicord Wharton Law Firm, West Des Moines
- John Krogman, Connect-A-Dock, Inc., Atlantic
- Dee Vanderhoef, Iowa City

#### ***Employee Representatives***

- Ken Sagar, Iowa Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO, Des Moines (Statewide labor organization representative)
- Andy Roberts, Plumbers and Steamfitters Union #33, Des Moines
- Stacey Anderson, GMP International Union, Dike
- Robert Gilmore, I.U.P.A.T. District Council #61, Des Moines

#### ***Non-Profit Workforce Development Organization Representative***

- Norene Mostkoff, HCI Care Services/VNS of Iowa, West Des Moines

#### ***Ex-officio Non-voting Members***

- Gary Steinke, Iowa Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, Des Moines
- Drew Conrad, University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls
- Greg Lewis, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, Des Moines
- Steve Ovel, Kirkwood Community College, Cedar Rapids
- Greer Sisson, U. S. Department of Labor/Office of Apprenticeship, Des Moines
- Jeremy Varner, Iowa Department of Education, Des Moines
- Debi Durham, Iowa Economic Development Authority, Des Moines
- David Mitchell, Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Des Moines
- State Senator William Dotzler, Waterloo
- State Senator Jake Chapman, Adel
- State Representative Kirsten Running-Marquardt, Cedar Rapids

- State Representative Greg Forristall, Macedonia

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## Board Activities

PROVIDE A DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITIES THAT WILL ASSIST STATE BOARD MEMBERS AND STAFF IN CARRYING OUT STATE BOARD FUNCTIONS EFFECTIVELY.

(1) ASSESSMENT 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.

The WIOA performance accountability measures in Section 116 will be used to assess the effectiveness of Adult Education statewide and ensuring continuous improvement in the service delivery system. In an effort to increase awareness, accuracy, and transparency, performance reports will be published for each region. These reports allow the state and regions to track and monitor performance regularly. Programs are assessed on their fiscal management, program implementation – including enrollment and performance benchmark attainment, and data management. Additional assessment includes partnership and career pathway efforts for PY 16.

The state adult education team will target programs for technical assistance that fail to meet the state performance benchmarks. Failure to meet the performance benchmarks for two consecutive years could result in the reduction or elimination of funding.

## Assessment of One-Stop Program Partner Programs

DESCRIBE HOW OTHER ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM PARTNER PROGRAM SERVICES AND COMBINED STATE PLAN PARTNER PROGRAM INCLUDED IN THE PLAN WILL BE ASSESSED EACH YEAR.

The Partners will collaborate to develop uniform One-Stop Certification criteria that reflect the following principles:

- ✓ One-Stop Centers will provide excellent customer service to job seekers, workers, and business.
- ✓ One-Stop Centers will reflect innovative and effective service design.
- ✓ One-Stop Centers will operate with integrated management systems.
- ✓ One-Stop Centers will operate with high-quality staffing.
- ✓ One-Stop Centers will increase physical and programmatic access to workforce services for individuals with barriers to employment, including but not limited to individuals with disabilities and individuals with LEP.

The Partners will collaborate to develop policies, procedures, proven and promising practices, and templates to aid Local Boards in the One-Stop Certification process. Additional criteria will be developed by the Core partners, customer representatives, additional partners and other key stakeholders, including job-seekers. Multiple avenues will be utilized to evaluate the effectiveness of One-Stop services including:

- Development of a shared One-Stop Operations Manual
- Monitoring checklist
- Development of self-evaluation training, toolkit and ongoing guidance
- A system for obtaining client feedback which is user-friendly, streamlined and accessible
  - Surveys will be accessible in multiple formats, provided in a variety of ways, and can be submitted anonymously – at no cost or inconvenience to the client: This will be accomplished using SASE's, online submission,
- Office Peer Review tool
- Timely survey evaluation and dissemination to local programs
- Dedicated Technical Assistance (TA) personnel available for on-site and remote TA.

The One-Stop System Design Work Group is developing a set of standards to be used with all core partners in the One-Stop system. The standards framework will be used by one-stop centers/staff to assess their own performance in providing quality services to participants and employers. Additionally, the standards provide one-stop partners with a framework for what programs should be able to demonstrate. By completing a self-assessment with the certification tool, one-stop centers can identify strengths as well as areas needing improvement. This is meant to furnish the data to make informed decisions in providing professional development activities and personal exploration. This process will help to ensure well-qualified staff who are capable of meeting the diverse needs of the center's participants. Characteristics identified in the vision statement of a high quality one-stop center have been categorized into three functional areas:

- One-Stop Centers provide excellent customer service to job seekers, workers and businesses
- One-Stop Centers reflect innovative and effective service design
- One-Stop Centers operate with integrated management systems and high quality staffing.

The characteristics identified above, consistent with the purpose and authorized scope of each of the programs are designed to reflect elements that the Departments believe contribute to a high-quality

one-stop delivery system. They demonstrate the spirit and intent of WIOA, and the Departments believe they will strengthen the successful integration and implementation of partner programs in one-stop centers in Iowa.

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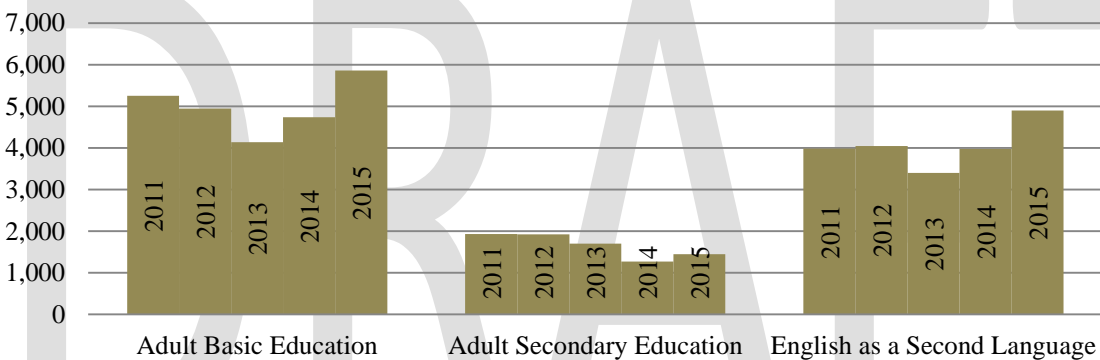
## Previous Assessment Results

PROVIDE 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.

### Previous Assessment Results

Adult education and literacy instructional programs represent a progression of basic skill attainment as defined by the NRS educational functioning levels. Assessment of the program includes the annual enrollment and state performance benchmarks. Each service provider and each level has an expected negotiated performance benchmark. ABE instruction had the most enrollees in 2015 with 5,859 participants; 48 percent of the total enrollment. ESL was the second largest group of participants with 4,899 participants, while ASE represented 12 percent with 1,444 enrollees (Figure). There has been a five year average increase of 5.3 percent in ESL enrollment.

### Adult Education and Literacy Enrollment



Of those that were enrolled in 2015 and federally reported, 50 percent were female and 35 percent self-identified as White. Thirty-one percent of participants identified themselves as Hispanic or Latino, 19 percent as Black or African American, and 12 percent as Asian. The remaining three categories (Native American, Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and two or more races) combine to about 3 percent of the participants.

The largest age group served by AEL programs ranged between 25-44 years of age, with 49 percent in this category. The next largest group, 19-24, accounted for 26 percent. The 45-59 age group had 1,576 participants which was slightly higher than the 16-18 age group with 1,208 participants.

Additional, optional demographic information is collected from participants in the AEL program that can assist program coordinators in directing resources to target needs. The three highest optional secondary status measures, as indicated upon entry into the AEL program, included the following: self-identified as receiving public assistance (892); self-identified as a single parent (958); and self-identified as being a dislocated worker (60). It is important to note that a participant might indicate more than one status measure.

### Core Outcome Measures

The five NRS core outcome measures are educational gain, high school equivalency diploma, entered employment, retained employment, and entered postsecondary education. Iowa is measured based on performance in these categories. The U.S. Department of Education negotiates a target for program effectiveness and outcomes, in part, by whether these targets are met. This section presents information on each of these targets.

### **1. Educational Gain**

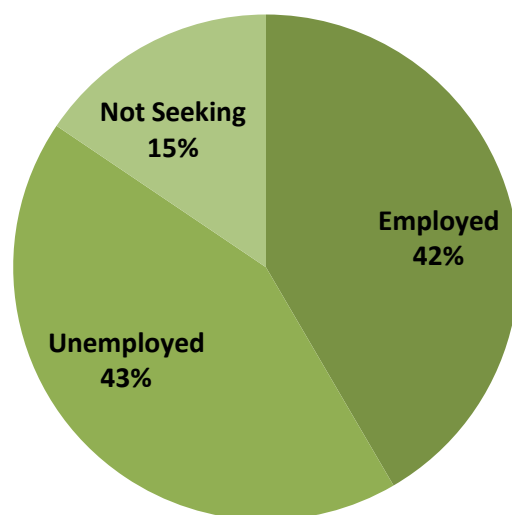
This measure represents the primary purpose of the AEL programs, which is to improve the basic literacy skills of participants. The NRS's approach to measuring educational gain is to define a set of educational functioning levels at which students are initially placed based on their abilities to perform literacy-related tasks in specific content areas. Iowa's AEL program uses the federally-approved Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) to assess all incoming students for grade-level placement. After 70-100 hours of instructional intervention (or a minimum of 40 hours), students are again assessed to determine their skill levels. If their skills have improved sufficiently to be placed one or more levels higher, an "advance" is recorded for that student. Of the 12,203 reported in NRS, 70 percent self-identified their highest level of school completed as between the 9<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Those reporting their highest level of school completed was between 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade was the second largest grouping (14 percent).

In 2015, 7,720 participants (63.3 percent of total NRS reported), persisted beyond the minimum hours of instruction and took a post-assessment. This represents an increase from 2014, in which only 55.3 percent of the 9,991 NRS reported participants persisted. Of those that persisted in 2015, 5,370 completed or advanced at least one educational functioning level in the fiscal year. Over 35 percent (1,856) of the participants advanced multiple levels.

### **2. High School Equivalency Diploma**

For many participants in adult education and literacy programs, the main goal is to achieve a high school equivalency diploma. To qualify for the federal cohort, a participant must have completed all five sub-tests (pass or fail) within the program year or have a qualified enrollment of 11th or 12th grade, and have exited from the program. Of the 12,203 participants, eleven percent (1,396) met this federal reporting (NRS) qualification. Of the 1,396 eligible, ninety five percent (1,326) had data available for matching against all recipients of high school diplomas. Of those, 82 percent (1,086) were awarded a high school equivalency and reported federally as having achieved this outcome measure. However, the Iowa Department of Education actually awarded a total of 1,942 equivalency diplomas in 2015 for all in-cohort and non-cohort participants.

## Employment Status upon Entry to Adult Education and Literacy



### 3. Entered Employment

Upon enrollment in AEL programs, participants are required to indicate employment status. Of the 12,203 participants reported in the NRS, 1,811 (13 percent) were not seeking employment. Fifty percent of the remaining enrollees self-reported as unemployed. To qualify for follow-up within this cohort to NRS, a participant must also exit the program, either by completing instruction or no longer participating. There were 3,549 participants that qualified for consideration in this cohort.

Iowa participates as a data match state by partnering with Iowa Workforce Development for employment wage information. Twenty-three percent of the cohort was not able to be matched due to missing data. However, of the 77 percent (2,733) that was matched, 934 participants (34 percent) were identified as achieving employment within one quarter of exiting the AEL program.

### 4. Retained Employment

In 2015, 5,074 of the 12,203 participants reported to the NRS in the AEL programs self-identified as employed. To qualify for follow-up within this cohort, a participant must exit the program, either by completing instruction or no longer participating. In addition to these employed participants, all participants from the “entered employment” cohort (934) were added; resulting in 3,480 participants qualified for consideration in the category. With an 83% match rate, 2153 (75 percent) participants retained their employment three quarters after their exit from the AEL program.

### 5. Entered Postsecondary Education or Training



In this measure the participant must have achieved their High School Equivalency Diploma while enrolled in AEL programs or have a secondary credential at entry, and exit the program. The participant must then enroll in a transition or postsecondary course, or a training program within the program year. In 2015, there were 2,472 participants eligible for this cohort. With an 88 percent match rate against postsecondary data, 606 (28 percent) entered postsecondary education or training.

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## **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.

### **Title I Programs Allocation Process**

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),
- (ii) ADULT AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH WIOA SECTION 133(B)(2) OR (B)(3),
- (iii) DISLOCATED WORKER EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH WIOA SECTION 133(B)(2) AND BASED ON DATA AND WEIGHTS ASSIGNED.

Eighty-five percent of the funds Iowa receives for the WIOA youth employment and training activities are allocated to the regions. Iowa allocates 70 percent of that amount using the following federally prescribed formula:

- 33 1/3% of the funds are allocated on the basis of the number of disadvantaged youth in each region compared to the total number of disadvantaged youth in the state;
- 33 1/3% of the funds are allocated on the basis of the excess number of unemployed individuals in each region compared to the total excess number of unemployed individuals in the state;
- 33 1/3% of the funds are allocated on the basis of the number of unemployed individuals in areas of substantial unemployment in each region compared to the total number of unemployed individuals in areas of substantial unemployment in the state.

The remaining 30 percent of regional allocations are based on the number of disadvantaged youth in each region as compared to the total numbers of disadvantaged youth in the state. This option is used to diminish the impact of unemployment concentrations dictated by the federal formula and focus on low-income youth.

The federal statute also requires that a “hold harmless” provision be applied to the WIOA Youth funding streams. This provision ensures that each region will receive a share of funds of at least 90% of the average share of funds received by that region in the previous two years.

#### ***Sub-state Allocation Process for the Title I Adult Program Funds***

Eighty-five percent of the funds Iowa receives for the WIOA adult employment and training activities are allocated to the regions. Iowa allocates 70 percent of that amount using the following federally prescribed formula.

- 33 1/3% of the funds are allocated on the basis of the number of disadvantaged adults in each region compared to the total number of disadvantaged adults in the state;
- 33 1/3% of the funds are allocated on the basis of the excess number of unemployed individuals in each region compared to the total excess number of unemployed individuals in the state;
- 33 1/3% of the funds are allocated on the basis of the number of unemployed individuals in areas of substantial unemployment in each region compared to the total number of unemployed individuals in areas of substantial unemployment in the state.

The remaining 30 percent is allocated in two parts: 1) one-half is based on the excess number of unemployed in each region as compared to the total excess number of unemployed individuals in the state; 2) one half is based on the number of disadvantaged adults in each region as compared to the total number of disadvantaged adults in the state. In this way, allocation credit is provided to support low-income individuals in the state.

The federal statute also requires that a “hold harmless” provision be applied to the WIOA Adult funding streams. This provision ensures that each region will receive a share of funds of at least 90% of the average share of funds received by that region in the previous two years.

### ***Sub-state Allocation Process for the Title I Dislocated Worker Program Funds***

Of the funds received by Iowa for dislocated worker employment and training activities, the state allocates 70 percent to the regions using the following data and giving equal weight to each factor:

**Insured Unemployment Data:** For the most recent calendar year, the monthly average number of individuals who were receiving unemployment insurance.

**Unemployment Concentrations Data:** Based on the most recent calendar year, regions with unemployment rates above the state average.

**Plant Closing and Mass Layoff Data:** The number of employees during the most recent calendar year that were impacted by a mass layoff or plant closing.

**Declining Industries Data:** During the most recent 24-months, the total number of jobs lost in the most recent four quarters as compared to the previous four quarters.

**Farmer-Rancher Economic Hardship Data:** During the most recent calendar year, the number of farmers/ranchers who have delinquent loans as reported by U. S. Department of Agriculture.

**Long-Term Unemployment Data:** For the most recent calendar year, the monthly average number of individuals who meet the definition of long-term unemployed. An individual is considered to be long-term unemployed if he/she was out of work for 15 weeks out of a continuous 26-week period of time.

For the dislocated worker allocation process, equal application of all six factors of the formula ensures that all possible economic and workforce elements that exist in each local area impact the allocation process. In this manner, factors that might favor or disadvantage certain areas are equally applied.

The factors and methods used in all allocation factors are discussed with State Board members as a part of the plan development process. That process also provides the opportunity for input and comment by local boards and other constituencies.

## **Title II**

### 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.

✓ 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.

Continuing agencies participated in a renewal application in 2015–16 adhering to the thirteen considerations in the WIOA, Title II: AEFLA, effective July 2014. This will be followed with a competition for 2017-2020. All eligible agencies and those grantees in good standing will be allowed to apply for funding.

The IDOE uses 82.5 percent of the state allocation for local assistance grants. Local assistance grants and contracts based on the following priorities: (1) populations with greatest need and hardest to serve, which includes adult learners who are performing below the eighth grade level, (2) populations performing at or above the eighth grade level, but who do not have a high school diploma or its equivalent, and (3) incarcerated adults or eligible adults residing in state hospitals who perform below the high school graduation level.

The IDOE uses the considerations specified in section 231(e) of WIOA to fund eligible providers. Through an RFA process, agencies must provide narrative detail to demonstrate how they will meet each consideration. The CDE monitors successful applicants through a system of reviewing online deliverables and onsite visits for the following:

**Needs Assessment:** The degree to which the provider is responsive to (A) regional needs as identified in the local plan under section 108; and (B) serving individuals in the community who are identified in such plan as most in need of adult education and literacy activities, including individuals who have low levels of literacy skills and who are English language learners.

**Individuals with Disabilities:** The degree to which the provider is able to serve eligible individuals with disabilities, including eligible individuals with learning disabilities.

**Past Effectiveness:** The degree to which the provider demonstrates past effectiveness 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.

**Alignment with One-Stop Partners:** The degree to which the eligible provider is responsive to, and 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.

**Intensity, Quality, and Instructional Practices:** The degree to which the eligible provider's program is of sufficient intensity and quality, and based on the most rigorous research available so that participants achieve substantial learning gains; and uses instructional practices that include the essential components of reading instruction.

**Research-Based Educational Practices:** The degree to which the eligible provider's activities, including reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, and English language acquisition instruction, are based on the best practices derived from the most rigorous research available and appropriate, including scientifically valid research and effective educational practice.

**Effective Use of Technology:** The degree to which 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.

**Integrated Education and Training:** The degree to which the eligible provider's activities offer 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.

**Qualified Staff:** The degree to which 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.

**Partnerships and Development of Career Pathways:** The degree to which 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 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.

**Flexible Schedules and Coordination with Support Services:** The degree to which 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.

**Data Collection:** The degree to which 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.

**English Language Acquisition and Civics Education:** The degree to which the eligible provider has a demonstrated need for additional English language acquisition programs and civics education programs.

The IDOE uses developed internal processes to ensure that there is direct and equitable access to the grant funds. All currently funded providers and all other identified eligible agencies receive a grant or contract application notification by e-mail. This includes all known community-based organizations, community colleges, libraries, literacy councils, public housing authorities, and any other provider that is eligible pursuant to Section 203(5). An announcement is posted on the Iowa Grants website at <https://www.iowagrants.gov/outsideStorefrontList.jsp?type=Grant>. In addition to the general distribution of the sections 225 and/or 231 application notifications, IDOE will post a notice of the availability of funding on the website maintained by <http://www.iowa.gov/>. In addition, the IDOE provides application information at conferences, workshops, and other activities attended by potential providers.

The IDOE requires all eligible providers for sections 225 and/or 231 to use the same application process. This ensures that all applications are evaluated using the same rubric and scoring criteria. Statewide leadership activities are provided through contracted service providers in compliance with state contracting requirements. The IDOE has also developed interagency agreements with the Department of Corrections to provide the appropriate and necessary services for returning citizens.

The IDOE ensures that all eligible providers have direct and equitable access to apply for grants or contracts. It also ensures that the same grant or contract announcement, application, and proposal process is used for all eligible providers through the grant management system. During the initial period of the grant submission process, any eligible agency that contacts IDOE with an interest in participating will be provided the information needed. The IDOE believes that these approaches meet the requirements specified in AEFLA and is satisfied that every effort is made to ensure direct and equitable access.

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## **Direct and Equitable Access to all Eligible Providers**

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.

## **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.

The federal vocational rehabilitation basic support state grant in Iowa is divided between the Iowa Department for the Blind and the Iowa Department of Education - Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services in the ratio of 19 percent to 81 percent. This is a historical agreement and has been in place for in excess of 40 years. The U.S. Department of Education - Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) acknowledges the 19/81 ratio between the agencies. This is apparent at the time of grant awards by RSA. The total allocation of basic support dollars to the State of Iowa are granted by RSA to the two state agencies in the ratio of 19 percent to Iowa Department for the Blind and 81% to Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services.

## Program Data

- (B) 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.
  - (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.
  - (iii) EXPLAIN HOW THE STATE BOARD WILL ASSIST THE GOVERNOR IN ALIGNING TECHNOLOGY AND DATA SYSTEMS ACROSS MANDATORY 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.
  - (iv) DESCRIBE THE STATE'S PLANS TO DEVELOP AND PRODUCE THE REPORTS REQUIRED UNDER SECTION 116, PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM. (WIOA SECTION 116(D)(2)).

### ***The Partners will collaborate to develop common performance indicators to ensure:***

- Federal investments in employment and training programs are evidence-based, labor market driven, and accountable to participants and taxpayers.
- Performance will be 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.
- Compliance with applicable federal standards.
- Compliance with applicable Partner confidentiality obligations.

Once the Partners have reached a consensus on common performance measures for monitoring workforce services delivery that are in compliance with applicable federal standards, the Partners will adopt such measures and include them as an attachment to the statewide MOU. Further, the Partners will collaborate to develop policies, procedures, guidance, and proven and promising practices with respect to the implementation and utilization of the common performance measures for monitoring workforce services in the system. A profile sub-committee of the data and performance workgroup has been meeting to discuss a method to share data across agencies. The Participant Profile application being developed by IWD has been determined as a viable application that can be scaled to use by the state at each of the core agencies. Several demonstrations of the application have taken place. The application is currently scheduled to go into production in January 2016 for IWD.

The Participant Profile will include the Participant Information Record Layout (PIRL) distributed by DOL. Each partner had the opportunity to submit feedback to the USDOL in September. The PIRL was



reviewed members of each core agency. Each core partner will need to create a link to the Participant Profile. The unique PIRL Identifier will be the common shared data element used to link participants. The Participant Profile will populate each of the agency specific databases.

Next decisions for the PIRL include whether the participant, staff, or an agency batch process will complete specific data elements. Identification of allowable locations needs determined. IWD secured funding for the initial project to move forward. A project plan and scope need to be developed with a clear timeframe. Sustainable costs are not included. Modifications to agency specific applications are also not included.

A comprehensive list of data elements dependent on partners will be compiled to help develop the state data sharing MOU. This state level template will focus on measures and reporting requirements to be used for regional MOUs. The Participant Profile will store information about the participant's post-program success and Unemployment Insurance Wage record data. Reporting performance outcomes, the details of who, when, and how this information is to be shared are yet to be determined. The Participant Profile application includes identity authentication steps as a means to verify individuals and maintain privacy.

Another sub-group for Educational Training Provider has also been meeting and is working on the draft policy surrounding the ETPL process for interested, qualified training providers.

#### *Purpose of the Project*

- Implement new performance accountability measures
- Refine the Educational Training Provider application and approval process
- Develop recommendations for additional measures
- Decide on a system for use as the core partner data base registration and data reporting management system

#### *Scope of the Project*

- Review new performance measures and identify potential issues, including recording and reporting information
- Analyze current state of reporting requirements, identify gaps, efficiency opportunities needed indicators of performance
- Develop a matrix of required data and reporting requirements and coordinate with State leadership to identify additional shared performance requirements across agencies
- Develop IT scope of work guidelines for data sharing to successfully implement new data and reporting requirements, including the integration of additional program data (i.e. apprenticeship data, iJAG data, STEM credential data, etc.) into longitudinal data coordination efforts
- Make recommendations regarding effective dissemination of performance data to stakeholders, the public, workforce customers, and program managers
- Coordinate with NGA Talent Pipeline team
- Negotiate levels of performance/adjustment factors

#### *Delivery Plan*

- Provide data to be shared by Core Partners to go into MOU

- State data dictionary
- Issue List
- Sub-group for ETP will
- Sub-group for Profile will
- An intake system to collect participant data
- A reporting mechanism for reporting state performance to the feds which is viewable by all core partners

In order to meet the requirements of WIOA for cooperation between the programs of Workforce Development, Vocational Rehabilitation, and Department of Education common portal, referred to as the “Participant Profile,” collects common demographical information and assigns a state wide Participant Individual Record Layout (PIRL) number. The profile uses OpenID to permit users to use their personal email address and password. This portal is owned by Iowa Workforce Development and is currently scheduled to receive upgrades which will make agency cross-use more efficient, reliable and secure.

The participant may create their own profile or one may be created by a staff member. The ID of the participant can be verified through DOT records or through Experian. Each individual program will have additional information specific to that program but will use common information, along with the PIRL number, from the profile.

The staff will have a dashboard with the status of each program by participant. Only the staff authorized for each program will have the ability to access details for each program.

The Department of Education (DE) posts a number of publicly available data sets on its website. The Education Statistics webpage features downloadable datasets which include data sets such enrollment figures, district assessments and teacher salary figures. In order to request additional information complete the online data request form. These requests are filled in the order they are received. Some data requests can be denied due to the complexity of the request or the type of data requested. The DE must ensure that any data release is not personally identifiable.

Education data is governed by the requirements within the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). The DE is prohibited from releasing student information that is protect or identifiable under this law. The DE will redact data to ensure privacy standard are met.

The DE's Data Governance Committee serves as a separate and specialized advisory committee that defines the project's approach to master data management. The Data Governance Committee creates its mission statement, goals and objectives, which ultimately define the data culture of the DE. The chief role of the Data Governance Committee is to identify data issues and propose recommended solutions. Since it has no policy making authority, the Data Governance Committee provides the Steering Committee with the recommendations needed to adopt policies that ensure the quality, availability, security, and usability of Iowa education data for purposes of the Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS). The group includes members that are subject matter authority regarding data processes. The Data Governance Committee identifies the business rules required to make certain data are current, consistent and accurate.

#### *Iowa's Common Data-Collection and Reporting Process*

Iowa's common data-collection and reporting processes are used for all programs and activities provided by workforce investment funds at Iowa's One-Stop Centers. Iowa's Integrated Service Delivery system uses a common job-seeker registration and enrollment process that also uses the same computer software that generates the participant data base. IWorks is Iowa's data management system.

IWorks is web-enabled, requires a secure-password access and has been customized to meet Iowa's case management and reporting system needs. Each job seeker who comes to a One-Stop Center is asked to enter their specific demographic information, which begins their registration. This partial registration information is then completed and verified by Center staff to ensure complete data entry and program enrollment.

*IWorks is the common data-collection process for the following programs:*

- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
- Wagner-Peyser Act
- Veterans Employment Training programs
- Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers
- PROMISE JOBS
- Food Assistance Employment & Training

***Iowa's State Performance Accountability System***

Iowa Workforce Development, Adult Education and Family Literacy, and Vocational Rehabilitation will adopt joint performance reporting requirements as outlined in Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Section 116 providing that State joint performance measures and reporting requirements under authority of the Secretary of Labor and Education. Joint performance measures for WIOA shall consist of six (6) customer outcomes specific to core indicators of performance and employer (customer) satisfaction by program.

Iowa Department of Education provides assessment and accountability services through a web based data system called TOPSpro (Tracking of Programs and Students) Enterprise for Title II case management and performance tracking. TOPSpro is a computerized database designed for program administrators in adult education, including statewide assessments and related accountability software to accurately measure progress, mastery of skills, and competencies needed to both complete, and advance one or more Educational Functioning Levels (EFL). It automates scoring, collects student demographic data, tracks agency and individual student performance, generates reports, and aggregates data for state and federal year-end reports. Features of the data system and relevant processes include the following:

Used for collecting information for the purposes of programmatic and annual reporting.

Each local program uses TOPSpro Enterprise (TE®) that enable local providers to have immediate access to the data for targeting instruction for continuous program improvement.

The local data are submitted monthly and annually to the IDOE for monitoring and aggregation into state and federal reports.

TE® records each student's goals on entering a class (via the TE® entry record), as well as their educational outcomes (via the TE® update record).

Assessments are designed to measure student performance through a checklist of competencies mastered. eTests are automatically loaded in TE<sup>®</sup> for reference and to drive program decisions.

Exit tests for various instructional levels are provided and certain funding streams require that these tests be administered regularly to document student progress.

The data collected consists of measurable skill gains in the following program areas: English as a Second Language (ESL), Adult Secondary Education (ASE), and Adult Basic Education (ABE).

For program year 2016-17 the IDOE intends to use the same data system to meet requirements for collecting and reporting data requirements for the WIOA performance indicators. This reporting structure is based on National Reporting System (NRS) guidelines, which are retained under WIOA. The area of change for the IDOE pertains specifically to the addition of UI wage record data as part of the reporting structure.

The data collection process begins with program staff at agencies funded by the Adult Education Family Literacy Act inputting the data at each site during the program year. Data collected from AEFLA funded agencies is aggregated at a statewide level through the web based portal. The annual data aggregation and data validation begins July 1st of each year. The purpose of the annual data aggregation and validation process is to compile state and federal year-end reports due to ED:DAEL annually, December 31st.

Performance measures include all elements in the federal NRS reports, including enrollment, attendance hours, completion of an EFL and advancement of one or more levels, separation before completion, and persistence within a level. Additional performance measures include attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and placement, retention, or completion of postsecondary education, training, or unsubsidized employment or career advancement.

Iowa's Title II has developed on-line tools to assess the enrollment rates of students enrolled in ABE, ASE and ESL respectively monthly and is publishing outcome data on attainment of equivalency diplomas.

## **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.

REQUIRED FEDERAL MEASURES

LOOK AT ENROLLMENTS AND BARRIERS

CO-ENROLLMENTS ACROSS PROGRAMS

REPORTING AROUND BARRIERS

DRAFT

## **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.)

- (A) 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.

DRAFT

## 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.

IVRS, IWD, DVOP, Department of Veterans Affairs and the VA office of Vocational Rehabilitation developed a new state training program for veterans with service connected disabilities. This allows a qualified veteran who successfully completes a state work experience program the opportunity to be directly hired into the position and by-pass merit hiring. Additionally, the state of Iowa has established policies regarding priority of service for veterans. Veterans and eligible spouses, including widows and widowers as defined in the statute and regulations, are eligible for priority of service. For the purposes of implementing priority of service, the Final Rule requires that program operators use the broad definition of veteran found in 38 U.S.C. 101(2). Under this definition, the term “veteran” means a person who served at least one day in the active military, naval, or air service, and who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable, as specified in 38 U.S.C. 101(2). Active service includes full-time Federal service in the National Guard or a Reserve component. This definition of “active service” does not include full-time duty performed strictly for training purposes (i.e., that which often is referred to as “weekend” or “annual” training), nor does it include full-time active duty performed by National Guard personnel who are mobilized by State rather than Federal authorities (State mobilizations usually occur in response to events such as natural disasters).

Proposed rule 680.650 re-affirms that veterans continue to receive priority of service in ALL DOL-funded training programs but that a “veteran must still meet each program’s eligibility criteria.” Thus for WIOA Title I Adult services, the program’s eligibility and priority considerations must be made first, and then veteran’s priority applied.

Local areas must give priority of service to participants that fall into one of the below priority categories (Proposed § 679.560(b)(21)):

### *Recipients of public assistance*

Other low-income individuals. The term “low income individuals” is defined in WIOA Law—Definitions; Section 3(36) means an individual who:

*Receives, or in the past 6 months has received, or is a member of a family that is receiving or in the past 6 months has received, assistance through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), TANF, Supplemental Security Income (SSI) under Title XVI of the Social Security Act, or state or local income-based public assistance program; or*

*Receives an income or is a member of a family receiving an income that in relation to family size, is not in excess of the current U.S.DOL 70 percent Lower Living Standard Income Level and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Poverty Guidelines or*

*Is a homeless individual, or*

*Is an individual with a disability whose own income meets the income requirements above, but who is a member of a family whose income does not meet this requirement.*

Individuals who are basic skills deficient. The term “basic skills deficient” is defined in Section 3(5) to mean a youth or adult who 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. Iowa Workforce Development(IWD) is providing guidance for making this determination by defining it as an individual who meets ANY ONE of the following:

- Lacks a high school diploma or equivalency and is not enrolled in secondary education; or
- Scores below 9.0 grade level (8.9 or below) on the TABE; CASAS or other allowable assessments as per National Reporting System (NRS) developed by the U.S. Department of Education’s Division of Adult Education and Literacy or
- Is enrolled in Title II adult education (including enrolled for ESL); or
- Has poor English language skills (and would be appropriate for ESL even if the individual isn’t enrolled at the time of WIOA entry into participation.

The career planner makes observations of deficient functioning and records those observations as justification in the data management system or as a case note.

Individuals (non-covered persons) who do not meet the above priorities may be enrolled on a case by case basis with documented managerial approval. The WIOA eligible adult must meet one or more of the following categories of an individual with a barrier to employment:

- Displaced homemakers;
- Individuals with disabilities;
- Older individuals;
- Ex-offenders;
- Eligible migrant and seasonal farm workers;
- Single parents (including single pregnant women)

Action: Regional Workforce Development Boards (RWDBs) are to ensure One-Stop Operators and service providers recruit individuals in the priority of service categories and develop and provide appropriate services to meet those populations’ needs. Local areas must establish written policies and procedures to ensure priority for the populations described in this guidance for participants served in the WIOA Adult program for eligibility determinations beginning on July 1, 2015.

Local Boards must establish criteria for providing priority to individualized career and training services with WIOA adult funds. Criteria may include other resources and funds for providing career and training-related services in the workforce area, as well as the needs of specific groups in the local workforce area and other factors the Board determines appropriate. Additionally, based on local policy, the Boards may:

- ✓ Establish a process that also gives priority to other individuals; and
- ✓ Choose to provide individualized career and training services to adults whose income is above the WIOA income guidelines requirement but below the Board-established self-sufficiency wage level.



### ***Iowa Jobs State Veterans' Program Plan***

The Jobs for Veterans' State Grants (JVSG) creates opportunities for all eligible veterans and spouses to obtain meaningful and successful careers through provision of resources and expertise that maximize employment opportunities and protect veterans' employment rights. Services provided by the Veteran Representative include comprehensive assessments, development of an Individual Employment Plan, career counseling, and referrals to other veteran and community organizations as needed. The Local Veteran Employment Representative (LVER) is a member of the business services team. The LVER promotes the hiring veterans to employers, employer associations, and business groups; facilitates employer training, plans and participates in career fairs and conducts job development with employers.

Iowa has an effective business services program across the state. There are Business Services Teams located in each of the 15 Regions who coordinate efforts with DVOP staff to contact current and prospective employers, Federal contractors and subcontractors, and others to promote Veterans –SBE, aged 18-24, and non-SBE - as excellent job candidates and employees.

In addition, partners in the one-stops are utilized to train Veterans in identifying job skills as well as the “soft skills” related to job seeking and job retention. Assessment services are used to identify the skills, knowledge, abilities and preferences of Veterans so that the best possible job match can be made initially. Career exploration services are offered so that Veterans have a good knowledge of available jobs and specific information about occupations. Veterans are offered assistance in understanding the skills needed to function in the work place, and help in understanding how job and career advancement can be accomplished with an employer.

Iowa's 9002B report for the period October 1, 2014, through December 31, 2014, showed 13,823 registered Veterans, Eligible Persons, and Transitioning Service Member job seekers. This is a 1.4% decrease from the 13,882 reported for the period ending March 31, 2014. The Veterans 200A report for the period ending December 31, 2014, shows 1,979 Veterans being served by the DVOP staff. This is a 11.7% decrease from 2,240 Veterans reported for the period ending March 31, 2014.

The number of Iowans deployed around the world as part of the Iowa Army National Guard, Iowa Air National Guard, and Army Reserve has declined dramatically, with less than 100 members currently on active duty. As these individuals re-enter the workforce, they will be served by the DVOP, if eligible, or Center staff as appropriate.

Iowa Workforce Development increased access to agency information and services through a network of “Virtual Access Points” across the state. IWD has 15 one-stops and four satellite offices, as well as numerous “Virtual Access” locations in all 99 counties that allow Iowa Veterans an opportunity to look for work, file for unemployment, take assessment tests, access community benefits and resources, and explore training opportunities on [www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov](http://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov). This website is available 24/7 on any computer with Internet access, meaning that every computer anywhere in the world can be considered one of our access points. The agency continues to maintain virtual access at all Iowa National Guard armories, a first-in-the nation partnership with the Department of Defense that has not been replicated anywhere else.

### ***Targeting Services to Veterans with Significant Barriers to Employment***

IWD Management will serve the role of educators to the one-stop operators, their partners and the Regional Workforce Development Board members. They will train and educate on:

- The identification of Veteran under Title 38 of the U.S.C;
- Criteria for the identification of needs for referral for career services;
- Veterans' preference requirements and methodologies;
- The difference between Priority of Service and Veterans' Preference, and;
- Veterans' integration policy as determined by Agency leadership.

Partners such as WIOA partners, PROMISE JOBS/TANF, Trade Act, and Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services will also identify Veteran customers at their points of contact, which may or may not be collocated with IWD Veteran staff at the one-stop. Those Veteran customers identified as having a significant barrier to employment as defined by USDOL, VETS, or age 18-24, will be referred to the DVOP for additional services. Veterans will be co-enrolled with PROMISE JOBS if they are receiving Family Investment Program (TANF) assistance and subject to the terms of a Family Investment Agreement (FIA), WIOA, or Trade Act if they are a dislocated worker. Veteran program management monitors case records monthly and quarterly report data to ensure compliance, address issues, quantify progress, and celebrate success with DVOP staff.

The state will ensure adherence to the legislative requirements for Veteran's staff. This includes, but is not limited to, employing only Veterans to fill the DVOP positions with a preference towards hiring disabled Veterans. Each of these staff is trained in their new roles and responsibilities under the Jobs for Veterans Act of 2002. The DVOP, and local Wagner-Peyser management, work closely with all partners to ensure the mandatory WIOA partners provide Veteran's priority of service.

Iowa has focused staff resources on the utilization of DVOP Specialists, rather than LVERs, for a number of years. We believe it is a better investment of funds to ensure case (service) management is offered to SBE Veterans and those aged 18-24 in accordance with VPLs 01-14, 03-14 and 04-14. All non-Vet staff is assigned to serve Veterans without an SBE, and we expect our non-JVSG funded BSRs to promote Veterans to our business customers. Iowa also elected to eliminate the Veterans Program Coordinator position, and now has a fulltime program manager to provide oversight, monitoring and training. This individual, while not funded by JVSG, is a former DVOP and retired USMC Gunnery Sergeant. With the deployment of Iowa Governor Terry Branstad's "Home Base Iowa" initiative to encourage military personnel to make our state their home, we plan to hire one LVER to conduct outreach to employers to assist Veterans in gaining employment, including conducting seminars, job search workshops, and facilitating employment, training and placement services. This is not an additional position; we have reduced by one the number of DVOPs on staff. We intend to hire a disabled Veteran for this position to ensure this person would be eligible to also work as a DVOP.

Once identified either by self-assessment, core service staff, or partner staff, that the individual is a Veteran who is eligible for and could benefit from DVOP services, that staff would refer the Veteran job seeker to the DVOP with all application materials. In offices without a full time DVOP, local management will be responsible for ensuring there is an efficient means of referral that ensures no Veteran eligible for and requiring career services goes without the appropriate service.

The DVOP will facilitate career services by working with the eligible Veteran to develop a written action plan to resolve barriers to employment (i.e. DVOP will refer for appointment with local county Veteran affairs to resolve financial issues and Veteran will follow through by making appointment and going to receive services).

Iowa has instituted an Integrated System of service that includes all of the partners in the Workforce Center, "All Means All." The system consists of a Membership Team, Skills Development Team and Business Services Team. All DVOP Specialists will be assigned to the Skills Development Team, as this complies with their roles and responsibilities under Title 38. As a member of the Skills Development Team, they will be referred any Veteran their coworkers have identified as eligible for DVOP services because of age (18-24) or who has a significant barrier to employment and needs career services. While working in Skills, they will assist only Veterans who meet the criteria outlined in VPLs 01-14, 03-14 and 04-14; all other Veterans will be served by the non-JVSG staff.

The Business Service Representative(s) (BSR) will increase employer awareness of the employability of Veterans to include providing them with information related to agencies such as the State of Iowa or Department of Veterans Affairs Vocational Rehabilitation, Job Accommodation Network (JAN), or other referrals to assist employers making reasonable accommodations for Veterans with disabilities.

The DVOP will locate, build and maintain good working relationships with Federal agencies (VA), state agencies (Health & Welfare, Education), community based organizations, Veterans and others that may be able to provide services to eligible Veterans age 18-24 or with a significant barrier to employment.

The DVOP staff has built and maintained a good working relationship with many Federal, State and community based organizations and agencies and with Veterans and others that may be able to provide services to Veterans.

The DVOP staff in Iowa has maintained an excellent working relationship with their local VA VR & E staff. The procedure followed in serving Chapter 31 Vets is in accordance with VA/DOL Technical Assistance Guide (TAG) dated December 2008.

Iowa has established the position of Intensive Services Coordinator (ISC) who is out stationed on a part-time basis at the VR&E Regional office. The position is filled by a DVOP specialist.

DVOPs receive referrals from the VR&E counselor through the ISC and are at that time informed of the Veteran's employment goal, barriers to employment and any other significant information.

Upon referral, the DVOP immediately conducts an interview to further assess the Veteran's situation. The DVOP will develop a mutually agreed upon, individualized case management plan to assist the Veteran while in receipt of employment services.

The DVOP will provide resume assistance, interviewing techniques, job leads and establish job development referrals with employers. The DVOP will also make referrals to assist with any special needs the Veteran may have. The DVOP maintains a minimum of weekly contact with the Chapter 31 Veteran and each month submits the results of the month's activities to the VR&E counselor and the ISC.

Iowa Workforce Development has partnered with the state DOL/ETA Office of Apprenticeship and hosts the following web site: <http://www.iowaworkforce.org/apprenticeship/>. This web site has been recognized as the premier Apprenticeship web portal in the nation. DVOP staff routinely use this site to place Veterans in training.

The Iowa Department of Education works closely with the DVOP Specialists to disseminate information on Chapter 31 GI Bill programs, the Troops to Teachers program and various other educational programs to provide educational opportunities for our Veterans.

DVOP staff work closely with TANF – Employment and Training program (Referred to in Iowa as PROMISE JOBS) to provide job placement and referral assistance to Veterans who are TANF cash recipients. (Referred to in Iowa as the Family Investment Program).

Though Iowa has no active duty military installations or medical facilities in the state, DVOP staff maintains a close working relationship with the Iowa National Guard. This provides a strong linkage and referral system between all returning National Guard Veterans and the one-stop center.

Outreach by the Business Services Team consists of utilizing public information systems and educating other service providers and organizations to inform Veterans and encourage their participation in services available through the one-stop center. It also involves locating eligible Veterans by contacting community based organizations, education facilities and other places for the purpose of developing job opportunities, and training programs outside the One-stop.

Iowa Workforce Development maintains a Veterans Benefits and Services book that lists Federal, State, and Local Veteran benefits and services. Several agencies have partnered in contributing to this book, to include USDOL Office of Apprenticeship, Iowa Department of Education, both state and county Department of Veteran Affairs and others. This book is very well received and serves to both inform Veterans and to provide them with the knowledge to access Veteran services provided IWD. This book is distributed to partners, agencies and civic organizations across the state by the DVOPs, Division Administrator, Iowa National Guard, Iowa Department of Veteran's Affairs, ESGR personnel and volunteers, and USDOL VETS staff. IWD pays all costs associated with the publication of this book with non-JVSG funds; the August 2014 edition is the seventh printing.

Iowa is committed to providing its citizens with opportunities to enhance their skills and employability. Governor Terry Branstad's Skilled Iowa initiative began in June 2012, and offers Iowans – and all Veterans – an opportunity to upgrade and improve their skill sets. One of the initiative's goals is to help Iowans attain a National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) so they can get hired or promoted, and to fill the "middle skills gap."

IWD provides all residents, and all Veterans regardless of residence, no-cost access to both Career Ready 101 and the NCRC tests. Career Ready 101 can prepare the test taker to take the NCRC, or help them improve their score afterwards. It also provides assistance with resume development, financial management, and other soft skills. The NCRC is a portable, nationally recognized credential that demonstrates to employers a person's skill level in three areas: reading for information, locating information, and applied mathematics. Certificates can be earned at the Bronze, Silver, Gold or Platinum level; over 158,000 tests have been administered since the start of Skilled Iowa, resulting in almost 45,000 certificates. Almost 13,000 Iowa businesses have also joined the Skilled Iowa initiative as member businesses, and have agreed to list an NCRC preference on their job postings. DVOPs have been directed to make sure all Veterans enrolled in case management are informed of the benefit of earning an NCRC, and have the opportunity to take the test. To date, 3,079 Veterans have earned certificates – 355 Bronze, 1,795 Silver, 905 Gold, and 24 Platinum.

The Skilled Iowa initiative also offers Iowans – with Veterans having priority – an opportunity to upgrade their skills through an unpaid internship program. The initiative’s first internship trained a Veteran at a central Iowa business. The business ultimately hired the Veteran for a fulltime position. Over 500 internships have been offered, and 58% resulted in an offer of employment to the participant. Those numbers include 59 Veterans who participated in an internship, 48 who completed the activity, and 24 (or 50%) who were offered employment. For more information about Skilled Iowa, go to [www.skillediowa.org](http://www.skillediowa.org).

Another initiative of Iowa Governor Branstad is “Home Base Iowa,” which was signed into law on Memorial Day, 2014. This legislation provides the following benefits to Iowa Veterans, as well as Transitioning Service Members looking to make this state their home:

- Fully exempts military pensions from state income tax, and includes surviving spouses in this exemption;
- Special license plate fees waived for those eligible for veteran-related specialty plates (Bronze Star, Disabled Veteran, Ex POW, Gold Star, Iowa National Guard, Legion of Merit, Medal of Honor, Pearl Harbor Veteran, Purple Heart, Retired by branch, Air Force Cross Medal, Airman’s Medal, Navy Cross, Service Cross Medal, Navy/Marine Corps Medal, Soldier’s Medal, Silver Star Medal, Veteran;)
- Allows private employers to give preference in hiring and promotion to veterans and surviving spouses of military personnel who died either while on active duty, or as a result of such service;
- Increases funding and eligibility for Military Homeownership Assistance Program;
- Requires licensing boards to adopt rules giving credit for military training and experience, as well as draft proposals allowing license reciprocity for military spouses; and
- Higher education institutions must set academic credit standards for military experience.

Another component of Home Base Iowa is member businesses and communities. The Home Base Iowa Communities initiative designates communities as centers of opportunity for military veterans and further highlights Iowa’s statewide commitment to welcoming veterans to the state. Standards to become a Home Base Iowa community include:

- Ten percent of the businesses in the community agree to pledge to hire a specific number of veterans, post their jobs with IWD, and become a member of Skilled Iowa;
- The community develops its own welcome/incentive package for veterans;
- The community prominently displays the Home Base Iowa Community designation; and
- The community obtains a resolution of support from the appropriate local governing body.

Iowa currently has 36 Home Base Iowa communities. For more information, see [www.homebaseiowa.org](http://www.homebaseiowa.org). This website also provides information on job opportunities in Iowa through the .jobs microsite for Veterans, veteran-friendly employers and communities, resources for veterans, Home Base Iowa employers, and more.

Iowa was also the first state to partner with Hilton Worldwide to offer no-cost accommodations to military personnel. The Hilton Honors hotel stays can be used to pursue job opportunities in any industry – and can be used to support job interviews, skills training, housing searches for newly employed Iowans, and other job-seeking activities within the continental United States, Alaska and Hawaii. Iowa is making points available to Veterans, Transitioning Service Members, Spouse, National

Guard and Reserve members, and anyone meeting the Wagner-Peyser definition of a Veteran. Case management is not a requirement. Iowa is currently the largest user of this benefit.

An Air Force Lieutenant Colonel was the first Home Base Iowa hire and the first recipient of Hilton Honors benefits. A native of Maine, the LTC is an Air Force Academy graduate completing 20 years of service to our country this summer. His distinguished career included service as an F-16 pilot, fighter squadron commander, and senior analyst. His last assignment was at the Pentagon as the deputy division chief for operations force management. He has over 2,817 total flying hours, as well as two Distinguished Flying Crosses for service in Serbia and Iraq. He moved to Iowa in 2014 with his wife – an Iowa native - and family to start his civilian career in Des Moines.

### ***Priority of Service***

Iowa Workforce Development will provide all qualified Veterans with priority of service.

In order to maximize and provide priority of services to Veterans, Veterans will be able to register at all Iowa Workforce Development Center locations. Registration is also available on-line 24/7 through [www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov](http://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov), or any of the regional websites. Iowa complies with final regulations which state recipients of USDOL funds for qualified job training programs are subject to the priority of service regulations, and are required by law to provide priority of service to Veterans and eligible spouses. If the SBE eligible Veteran's needs cannot be met at the point of intake (as determined by core service staff) or if the eligible Veteran requests, they will be referred to the DVOP or appropriate service provider for assistance.

The Iowa Director for Veterans Employment and Training (DVET) and/or his designee (ADVET), has a standing invitation to address district management at their monthly meeting to describe expectations of the Jobs for Veterans Act, and to review program performance. The state has followed-up by requiring that each SWA describe in their local customer service plan how they will ensure priority of service is provided in their programs. IWD Management staff will consult with local partners on how to implement priority of service, and will be monitoring compliance with the established procedure.

Each region submits their plan for providing priority of service to Veterans. Each plan is reviewed by the state liaisons to the local Workforce Development Board (WIB). The state liaisons work with the DVET to develop expectations that can be enforced locally. Priority of service is monitored in the following manner:

- Local management staff audits job orders and other services;
- Local management will take corrective action on Veteran customer complaints; and
- Local office management conducts a random review of initial Veteran applications for proper qualification, quality of service provided, and to ensure that the appropriate service was provided.

Corrective action, in the form of continuing education and positive feedback is provided by the DVOP. If problems persist, local management, the Division Administrator and the DVET will be consulted.

Veterans will be made aware of their priority of service entitlement and about the services provided by DVOP staff to SBE eligible Veterans, not only through outreach activities as described previously, but through an information and self-assessment pamphlet available both in paper form and on the web. The pamphlet will describe for the Veteran the various services they may receive, their priority of

service, and will provide a simple mechanism for the Veteran (and staff) to determine if career services are needed. It is expected that this method will help avoid oversight of Veterans in need of special services. In addition, large colorful posters featuring local Veterans were developed with non-JVSG funds and distributed to all IWD and partner locations asking, "Are You the Spouse of a Veteran?" and explaining priority of service for those individuals.

A recent rewrite and update of the Workforce Investment Act handbook for Iowa goes into great detail about priority of service for all USDOL funded employment and training programs, and how it is monitored by policy oversight staff. See below for language from that document, which will be revised as needed for WIOA:

"The Jobs for Veterans Act (PL 107-288) provides an emphasis on serving veterans by establishing a priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses in all employment and training programs funded by the Department of Labor, including Wagner-Peyser, WIOA and other job training programs offered through competitive grants. Priority of Service is the right of an eligible "Covered Person" to be given priority of service over an eligible non-covered person for the receipt of employment, training and placement services, notwithstanding other provisions of the law.

"Covered Persons take precedence over non-covered persons in obtaining services and shall receive access to services and resources earlier in time than a non-covered person. If services or resources are limited, the Covered Person receives access instead of or before the non-covered person. Procedures or policies that restrict a veteran's access to WIOA or WP services, even if such restrictions are intended to provide the veteran with specialized services, are contrary to the priority of service requirements.

"20 CFR Part 1010 and 38 U.S.C. 4215, Section 4215(a)(1) defines "Covered Persons" to mean veterans and the spouses "of any of the following:

- a. any veteran who died of a service-connected disability;
- b. any member of the Armed Forces serving on active duty who, at the time of application for the priority, is listed in one or more of the following categories and has been so listed for a total of more than 90 days:
  - i. Missing in action;
  - ii. Captured in the line of duty by a hostile force; or
  - iii. Forcibly detained or interned in the line of duty by a foreign government or power; or
- c. Any veteran who has a total disability resulting from a service-connected disability, as evaluated by the Department of Veterans Affairs or any veteran who died while such a disability was in existence."

"Covered Persons must have served at least one day in the active military, naval or air service, and were discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable as specified in 38 U.S.C 101(2). Active service includes full-time Federal service in the National Guard or a Reserve component. It does not include full-time duty performed strictly for training purposes, nor does it include full-time active duty performed by National Guard personnel mobilized by the State rather than federal authorities.

"Spouses of military personnel killed in the line of duty do not currently qualify for priority of service.

“As defined in USC 101, the term “surviving spouse” means a person of the opposite sex who was the wife or husband of a veteran at the time of the veteran’s death, and who lived with the veteran continuously from the date of marriage to the date of the veteran’s death (except where there was a separation which was due to the misconduct of, or procured by, the veteran without the fault of the spouse) and who has not remarried or (in cases not involving remarriage) has not since the death of the veteran, and after September 19, 1962, lived with another person and held himself or herself out openly to the public to be the spouse of such other person.

“The Jobs for Veterans Act provides priority service only to veterans or eligible spouses who meet the program’s eligibility requirements.

“In the WIOA Adult program, the law requires that priority for intensive and training services be given to public assistance recipients and low-income individuals when funds are limited after all eligible veterans are served.

“To be served in the Dislocated Worker program, a participant must meet the eligibility criteria to qualify as a dislocated worker and then, if the participant is a veteran or eligible spouse, he or she must be given priority over dislocated workers who are non-veterans. A basic dislocated worker eligibility requirement is that the worker is terminated or laid off. The Department of Labor has established policy that being discharged from the military under conditions other than dishonorable satisfies the termination requirement. The separating military personnel must also satisfy the other criteria for dislocated worker eligibility, including the requirements that the individual is eligible for or has exhausted unemployment compensation and is unlikely to return to a previous industry or occupation.

“A military spouse who leaves a job to follow his or her spouse can be served with dislocated worker formula grant funds in certain circumstances. When the spouse is unable to continue an employment relationship because of the service member’s permanent change of military station, or the military spouse loses employment as a result of the spouse’s discharge from the military, then the cessation of employment can be considered to meet the termination requirement of the WIOA definition of dislocated worker.

“The military spouse also must satisfy the other criteria for dislocated worker eligibility, including the requirement that the spouse is eligible for or has exhausted unemployment compensation and is unlikely to return to a previous industry or occupation. In Iowa, military spouses impacted by a service member’s duty reassignment or discharge may be eligible for unemployment and should be referred to Unemployment Insurance (UI). Under these circumstances, military spouses have been determined to be unlikely to return to a previous industry or occupation.

“Additionally, a military spouse also may qualify to be served as a dislocated worker if he or she meets the eligibility criteria for a displaced homemaker.

“Surviving spouses of veterans and military service members may also be served with WIOA funds. If a surviving spouse qualifies as a dislocated worker or displaced homemaker, he or she could be served under the Dislocated Worker program. If a surviving spouse does not meet those requirements, he or she could be eligible to be served under the Adult program. In either program, a surviving spouse of a veteran as defined above may receive priority of service if he or she qualifies under the Jobs for Veterans Act.

Local staff and JVSG-funded personnel will also employ:

Iowa Unified State Plan, Draft 2, v: January 14, 2016



- Community outreach to where Veterans may be located and contact materials may be left.
- Contact signs placed in local offices, partners and at outreach locations.
- Identification of SBE Veterans and other eligible persons at all points of entry by local offices, partners, Virtual Access Points and at outreach locations.

To ensure that local staff is aware of their responsibilities to provide priority of service, Veteran staff and management will train local non-vet staff and service delivery partners to enhance their knowledge of Veterans' employment and training needs. As well, the state has, and will continue to issue, field information memos to clarify these responsibilities. All such memos have been reviewed by the DVET.

Priority for referrals to job listings will be assured by searching the files of active job seekers and allowing all eligible Veterans an opportunity to apply before non-Veterans. A similar process will be employed when considering referrals to workshops and other activities covered under the Wagner-Peyser Act.

At the minimum, the services that will be available to the Veteran within the one-stop center and through other service providers will include the following. Iowa has elected to give Veterans priority for all center services, regardless of funding source:

- Registration as a job seeker for job matching;
- Referral to jobs and job development;
- Career and skills assessment;
- Case management;
- Referral and follow-up with VSO's and CBO's;
- Referral to training and apprenticeship opportunities
- Job seeking skills workshops;
- Resume and cover letter building software;
- Services through Veterans Voc. Rehab;
- Services through the Veterans Administration including OJT and work incentive programs;
- Support services for homeless Veterans.

The process employed by the state to monitor and assess the success of the state plan includes a quarterly review of Vets 200 and 9002 reports. These reports will be reviewed in person with the DVET, and Division Administrator to identify strengths and weaknesses.

The Division Administrator, Program Manager, and DVET developed new performance measures in addition to the Veterans 200 reports in response to our philosophy of ensuring the DVOP is working with eligible Veterans whose goal is employment:

- *Fulltime DVOPs are expected to case manage a minimum of 40 eligible Veterans at all times; part-time staff has a goal of at least 20. The Division Administrator may grant exceptions on an individual basis. Progress towards these goals is monitored monthly, and shared with regional management. Staff are not meeting expectations are coached, counseled, provided additional training as appropriate, and if necessary, given a work directive with specific timelines for required improvement. If none of those actions provide the desired results, discipline can result.*
- *A case management analysis tool numerically evaluates the quality of the case management. All DVOP staff is trained on the use of this tool to better assess the quality of case management, and to provide consistency of services statewide. This tool also provides management a guide to*

*measure staff progress towards established goals. All field managers will also be trained on the use of this tool to better understand the role of their staff, and to monitor performance and reporting.*

- *Evaluate the percentage of eligible Veterans being case (service) managed who enter employment.*

### **Performance Incentive Awards**

The Performance Incentive Award Program will be in accordance with VPL 02-07. The total amount of the funds available for performance awards and incentives will be one percent of the total award for Veterans programs. The Performance Awards and Incentives program will recognize those regions that excel in providing services to Veterans. Regions selected for awards will have demonstrated their excellence of service to Veterans or in support of Veterans programs. Awards will not be distributed in cash. The value of the awards will be significant enough to encourage regions to develop better approaches to delivering services to Veterans. The focus of the awards will be on improving the services to Veterans and strategies for the delivery of services, but not to the exclusion of non-Veterans.

The presentation of the awards will be in a venue that will highlight services to Veterans. The Director of Iowa Workforce Development has made a commitment to present the awards at the annual Veterans Conference during the third quarter of each year. Making the presentations in this manner will again emphasize Iowa's effort to improve services and highlight the contribution staff makes to improve the lives of Veterans across Iowa.

## Accessibility of the One-Stop Delivery System

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. (THIS OPERATIONAL PLANNING ELEMENT APPLIES TO CORE PROGRAMS.)

The State of Iowa is committed to providing programs and services in a readily accessible format and delivery method to any individual who is seeking services from the workforce system. Accessibility as referenced throughout this plan refers to the direct and indirect ideas, actions, philosophies and physical and emotional supports used by an individual or employer to support employment for ALL Iowans.

The Partners have legal obligations under federal and state antidiscrimination laws when providing workforce services. Federal and state antidiscrimination laws prohibit discrimination in the provision of services on the basis of an individual's race, color, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, religion, age, or disability. Meeting the Partners' legal obligations under federal and state antidiscrimination laws must be a focus when the Partners develop and implement policies, procedures, guidance, and proven and promising practices with respect to increasing and maximizing access to workforce services and when assessing the physical and programmatic access of One-Stop Centers, physical office spaces, websites, etc.

Individuals with disabilities constitute a population that has traditionally been underserved or unserved by the workforce development system. The Partners recognize that state and federal antidiscrimination laws impose legal obligations with respect to workforce services delivery to individuals with disabilities. Further, WIOA singles out individuals with disabilities as a group with a barrier to employment that the Partners must target for increased and maximized access to workforce services. As such the Partners will develop policies, procedures, guidance, and proven and promising practices to create maximized physical and programmatic access and opportunity for individuals with disabilities. Implementation of policies, procedures, guidance, and proven and promising practices to increase and maximize physical and programmatic access for individuals with disabilities must be an element of One-Stop Certification that is strictly applied.

In developing the Unified State Plan, Iowa has incorporated several measures which will assist in ensuring that ALL Iowans have equal opportunities within the workforce delivery system and throughout the workforce. Iowa has worked very closely with and has relied upon the expertise provided by the Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services (IVRS). As a Core partner, IVRS has provided ongoing technical assistance and support regarding development of policies, procedures, and system design and evaluation protocols to ensure that ALL Iowans have full and welcoming access. Additionally, key IWD staff and WIOA work group implementers have participated in LEAD Center Webinars regarding serving persons with disabilities under WIOA and have infused the promising practices and policies throughout the vision and goals and the entirety of the Unified State Plan.

The Section 188 Disability Reference Guide created in partnership between the LEAD Technical Assistance Center, the Civil Rights Center and DOL, ETA is being used as a foundation for system design

in regard to ensuring ALL Iowans have equally and supported access to services throughout Iowa.<sup>27</sup> The One-Stop Operations and System Design Group is developing effective policies, plans and procedures that will be incorporated into the One-Stop Center operations.

In utilizing the reference guide as a foundation on which to design supportive policies, it is important to note that until such time as the Department of Labor announces new regulations pursuant to WIOA Section 188, the current Section 188 regulations cited herein are used. Section 188 regulatory requirements are organized into three Sections:

- Providing Universal Access to Programs and Activities
- Ensuring Equal Opportunity
  - Obligation to Ensure Equal Opportunity for Individuals with Disabilities
- Implementing Universal Access and Equal Opportunity through the following:
  - Designation of Qualified Equal Opportunity Officer
  - Notice and Communication
  - Assurances
  - Data and Information Collection, Analysis and Maintenance
  - Monitoring For Compliance
  - Complaint Processing Procedures
  - Corrective Actions/Sanctions

### ***Universal Access***

The state of Iowa will take appropriate steps to ensure that universal access is provided to ALL WIOA Title I-financially assisted programs and activities. Reasonable efforts (including advertisement, recruitment, outreach, and targeting) to include participation of individuals with disabilities in One-Stop Centers and related programs will be put in place as policies are approved and such policies will be implemented within established timeframes.

Iowa's One-Stop Centers will work to meet the needs of their customers by ensuring universal access to their programs and activities for all eligible individuals. Universal access includes performance of the following functions:

- Understanding local needs;
- Marketing and outreach;
- Involving community groups and schools;
- Effecting collaboration, including partnerships and linkages;
- Staff training;
- Intake, registration and orientation;
- Assessments and screenings; and

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<sup>27</sup> Promising practices in achieving universal access and equal opportunity: a section 188 disability reference guide. Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) with assistance of its LEAD Technical Assistance Center at the National Disability Institute, the Civil Rights Center and the Employment and Training Administration at the US Department of Labor, (2015).

- Service delivery.

### ***Ensuring Equal Opportunity***

WIOA must prohibit discrimination in the registration for and the provision of aid, benefits, services or training, including career, training, and support services, on the basis of disability, including the specific discriminatory actions listed in 29 CFR 37.7.

### ***Provide Reasonable Accommodation for Individuals With Disabilities***

The recipient must provide reasonable accommodation for individuals with disabilities regarding application and registration for and the provision of aid, benefits, services or training, including career services (which include WIOA's core and intensive services), training, and support services to qualified individuals with disabilities, unless providing the accommodation would cause undue hardship. [29 CFR 37.8; see also 29 CFR 32.13]

### ***Provide Reasonable Modifications of Policies, Practices, and Procedures***

The recipient must provide reasonable modifications regarding its policies, practices, and procedures for the registration for and provision of career, training, and support services to individuals with disabilities, unless making the modifications would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program, or activity. [29 CFR 37.8]

### ***Administer Programs and Activities in the Most Integrated Setting Appropriate***

The recipient must administer its programs and activities in the most integrated setting appropriate to the needs of qualified individuals with disabilities [29 CFR 37.7(d)]. The recipient must not provide different, segregated, or separate aid, benefits, services, or training to individuals with disabilities or any class of individuals with disabilities unless such action is necessary to provide qualified individuals with disabilities with aid, benefits, services, or training that are as effective as those provided to others [29 CFR 37.7(a)(4)]. The recipient must permit individuals with disabilities the opportunity to participate in WIOA Title I-financially assisted programs and activities despite the existence of permissibly separate or different programs or activities.

### ***Effectively Communicate with Individuals with Disabilities***

The recipient must take steps to ensure that communications with individuals with disabilities are as effective as communications with others. [29 CFR 37.9 and .29(b). See also Section 188 Guidance, 65 FR at 51986]. The recipient must furnish appropriate auxiliary aids and services where necessary to afford individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in, and enjoy the benefits of, a WIOA Title I-financially assisted program or activity. The recipient must give primary consideration to the requests of the individual with a disability when determining what type of auxiliary aid or service is appropriate. [29 CFR 37.9(b)]. Where a recipient communicates by telephone with beneficiaries and others, the recipient must use telecommunication devices for individuals with hearing impairments (TDDs/TTYs) or equally effective communication systems, such as telephone relay services. [29 CFR 37.9(c)]. The recipient must ensure that interested individuals, including individuals with visual and hearing impairments, can obtain information as to the existence or location of accessible services, activities, and facilities. [29 CFR 37.9(d)] The recipient must provide appropriate signage at the primary entrances to its inaccessible facilities, directing users to a location at which they can obtain information about accessible facilities. [29 CFR 37.9(e)].

### ***Provide Programmatic, Architectural, and Technology Accessibility For Individuals With Disabilities***

The recipient must operate each program or activity so that the program or activity, when viewed in its entirety, is readily accessible to individuals with disabilities. [29 CFR 32.27(a) and 29 CFR 37.3(b).] The recipient may comply with this obligation through such means as redesign of equipment, reassignment of classes or other services to accessible buildings, assignment of aides to beneficiaries, home visits, delivery of services at alternative accessible sites, alteration of existing facilities and construction of new facilities in conformance with standards for new construction, or any other method that results in making its program or activity accessible to individuals with disabilities. In choosing among available methods, the recipient must give priority to those methods that offer programs and activities to individuals with disabilities in the most integrated setting appropriate. [29 CFR 32.27(c)]. Each facility or part of a facility constructed by, on behalf of, or for the use of a recipient must be designed and constructed in such a manner that the facility or part of the facility is readily accessible to and usable by qualified individuals with disabilities. [29 CFR 32.28(a)]. Each facility or part of a facility which is altered by, on behalf of, or for the use of a recipient in a manner that affects or could affect the usability of the facility or part of the facility must be altered in such a manner that the altered portion of the facility is readily accessible to and usable by qualified individuals with disabilities. [29 CFR 32.28(b)]. The design, construction, or alteration of facilities must meet the most current standards for physical accessibility prescribed by the General Services Administration under the Architectural Barriers Act or the recipient must adopt alternative standards when it is clearly evident that equivalent or greater access to the facility or part of the facility is thereby provided. [29 CFR 32.28(c)].

### ***Employment Practices***

Ensure Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination – The recipient may not discriminate in its employment practices on the ground of disability, or on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex, including pregnancy, sexual identity, being a victim of sexual violence, national origin, age, or political affiliation or belief. All employee selection procedures must comply with the Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures. [29 CFR 37.10(b)].

Provide Reasonable Accommodation for Individuals with Disabilities 34 29 CFR part 32, subparts B and C and Appendix A, which implement the requirements of Section 504 pertaining to employment practices and employment-related training, program accessibility, and reasonable accommodations, are incorporated into 29 CFR part 37 by reference. Therefore, recipients must comply with the requirements set forth in those regulations, in addition to the specific requirements listed in 29 CFR 37.10. [See 29 CFR 37.3(b) and 10(d)] In addition, recipients covered by Titles I and II of the ADA, including employers and programs that engaged in employment placement and referrals or employment training, should be aware of obligations imposed by those Titles. [29 CFR 37.10(e); see also 29 CFR part 1630 and 28 CFR part 35].

The recipient must provide reasonable accommodation for individuals with disabilities unless providing such accommodation would cause an undue hardship for the recipient. [29 CFR 37.8, 37.10(b); 29 CFR 32.13]. Provide for and Adhere to a Schedule to Evaluate Job Qualifications to Ensure That the Qualifications Do Not Discriminate on the Basis of Disability. The recipient must establish a regular review of the qualifications it uses for employment and training to ensure that standards, tests or other selection criteria do not screen out or tend to screen out individuals with disabilities on the basis of their disabilities, unless the standards, tests or other selection criteria, as used, are job-related for the position in question and consistent with business necessity and safe performance. [29 CFR 37.10(d) and 29 CFR 32.14].

For employment and employment-related training, the recipient must select and administer employment and training tests that, when administered to an individual with a disability that impairs sensory, manual, or speaking skills, accurately reflect the skills, aptitude, or other factors that the test purports to measure, rather than reflecting the impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills of the individual. [29 CFR 37.10(d) and 29 CFR 32.14].

Limit Pre-employment/Employment Medical Inquiries/Confidentiality and comply with all over relevant and applicable provisions.

### ***Assurances***

Each application for WIOA Title I financial assistance must include the specific assurance not to discriminate on the basis of disability under Section 188 of WIOA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and to comply with 29 CFR Part 37.

The recipient's responsibilities to ensure effective communications pursuant to 29 CFR 37.9 are set out under 29 CFR Part 32, as provided in 29 CFR 37.20. [29 CFR 37.20-.22; see also Section 188 Guidance, 65 FR at 51986].

### ***Data and Information Collection, Analysis, and Maintenance***

The recipient must comply with the requirements of 29 CFR 37.37 through 37.41 related to data and information collection and maintenance. Each grant applicant and recipient must promptly notify the Director of the Civil Rights Center when any administrative enforcement actions or lawsuits are filed against it alleging discrimination on the basis of disability, as well as information about any civil rights compliance review or complaint investigation by any other federal agency that resulted in a finding of noncompliance. [29 CFR 37.38] Note: 29 CFR 37.38 also requires grant applicants and recipients to notify the Director of the Civil Rights Center when administrative enforcement actions or lawsuits are filed against it alleging discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, political affiliation or belief, and for beneficiaries only, citizenship (on the basis of an individual's status as a citizen or national of the U.S., or as an individual lawfully authorized to work in the U.S.), or participation in a WIOA Title I-financially assisted program or activity.

### ***Monitoring For Compliance***

The Equal Opportunity (EO) Officer must monitor and investigate the recipient's activities and the activities of the entities that receive WIOA Title I financial assistance from the recipient, to make sure that the recipient and its sub-recipients are not violating their nondiscrimination and equal opportunity obligations. [29 CFR 37.25(b); see also 37.7(e)]

Note that the required assurance goes beyond discrimination on the basis of disability, and also covers discrimination on a variety of other bases under Section 188, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended. [29 CFR 37.20(a)(1)] Note also that this assurance to comply with these nondiscrimination and equal opportunity laws is judicially enforceable [29 CFR 37.20(a)(1)] and is incorporated into any arrangement where Federal financial assistance is made available under Title I of WIOA, whether there is a physical agreement or not. [29 CFR 37.20(a)(2)].

The recipient must conduct a self-evaluation in accordance with 29 CFR 32.6(c) (i.e., evaluate current policies and practices and their effects on individuals with disabilities and take remedial steps to

eliminate the effects of any discrimination, and consult with interested parties such as individuals with disabilities and organizations representing individuals with disabilities).

***Complaint Processing Procedures***

The EO Officer must develop and publish the recipient's procedures for processing discrimination complaints and make sure that those procedures are followed. [29 CFR37.25(d); 37.70-37.80 Examples of promising practices related to complaint processing procedures are included in Part I of the Reference Guide.

***Corrective Actions/Sanctions***

The EO Officer, after monitoring and investigating the recipient's activities and the activities of the entities that receive WIOA Title I financial assistance from the recipient, must take corrective action to ensure that the recipient and its subrecipients are not violating their nondiscrimination and equal opportunity obligations. [29 CFR 37.25(b); see also 37.7(e)]

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#### **IV. COORDINATION WITH COMBINED STATE PLAN PROGRAMS**

This section is not required for Unified State Plans.

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## **V. COMMON ASSURANCES**

WIOA § 102(b)(2)(E)

### ***State Conflict of Interest Policy***

The state has established a policy that identifies circumstances that may present a conflict of interest for a state or local workforce development board member. The policy requires board members to disclose when they have an actual or possible conflict of interest to the board upon which they serve. The policy sets forth board procedures to resolve any actual or potential conflict of interest involving a board member.

### **Policy Regarding Public Access to Board Meetings and Information**

The state has established a policy providing to the public, including individuals with disabilities, access to state and local workforce board meetings. The policy sets forth mandatory policies and practices with respect to the posting of board membership and minutes online and making it otherwise accessible to members of the public, including individuals with disabilities.

### ***Review of and Comment on USP***

The development of this plan was a collaborative effort with input from stakeholders. Foremost among them were the lead state agencies charged with the administrative of core programs. The lead state agencies with responsibility for the administration of core programs contributed to the drafting this plan. The lead state agencies have specifically reviewed, commented on, and approved appropriate operational planning elements of this plan, as evinced by their inclusion as signatories to the plan.

The state posted a draft version of this plan online for public comment. It also sent notice to representatives of local boards, chief elected officials, business groups, labor organizations, institutions of higher education, other primary stakeholders, and the general public. This plan is currently available to the public online and accessible by other means upon request.

### ***Fiscal Control and Accounting Procedures***

Pursuant to this plan, the state shall establish and operate a fiscal and management accountability information system based on guidelines established by the federal Secretary of Labor and Secretary of Education. The state fiscal and management accountability information system shall promote efficient collection and use of fiscal and management information for reporting and monitoring the use of funds authorized under the core programs. The state fiscal and management accountability information shall ensure the proper disbursement of, and accounting for, funds paid to the state through allotments made for the adult, dislocated worker, and youth programs. The state fiscal and management accountability information shall be used in preparing performance reports.

### ***Compliance with Uniform Administrative Requirements***

Under this plan, the state shall take action to secure compliance with the uniform administrative requirements of WIOA. The state shall establish policies and procedures for annual onsite monitoring of local regions to ensure compliance with the uniform administrative requirements. This includes annual monitoring of local regions to ensure compliance with applicable uniform administrative requirements for grants and agreements as promulgated in circulars or rules of the federal Office of Management and

Budget. The state shall establish policies and procedures to ensure that procurement transactions under title I of WIOA between local boards and units of state or local government shall be conducted only on a cost-reimbursable basis.

### ***Equal Opportunity and Federal Financial Assistance***

Programs and activities funded or otherwise financially assisted in whole or in part under WIOA are considered to be programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance for the purpose of applying the following laws:

*The prohibition against discrimination on the basis of age under the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1975 (42 U.S.C. § 6101 et seq.)*

*The prohibition against discrimination on the basis of disability under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. § 794)*

*The prohibition against discrimination on the basis of sex under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 920 U.S.C. § 1681 et seq.)*

*The prohibition against discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. § 2000d et seq.)*

### ***Prohibition of discrimination regarding participation, benefits, and employment***

No individual shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, subjected to discrimination under, or denied employment in the administration of or in connection with, any such program or activity because of race, color, religion, sex (except as otherwise permitted under title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972), national origin, age, disability, or political affiliation or belief.

### ***Prohibition on Assistance for Facilities for Sectarian Instruction or Religious Worship***

Participants shall not be employed under this subchapter to carry out the construction, operation, or maintenance of any part of any facility that is used or to be used for sectarian instruction or as a place for religious worship (except with respect to the maintenance of a facility that is not primarily or inherently devoted to sectarian instruction or religious worship, in a case in which the organization operating the facility is part of a program or activity providing services to participants).

### ***Prohibition on Discrimination on Basis of Participant Status***

No person may discriminate against an individual who is a participant in a program or activity that receives funds under WIOA, with respect to the terms and conditions affecting, or rights provided to, the individual, solely because of the status of the individual as a participant.

### ***Prohibition on Discrimination against Certain Noncitizens***

Participation in programs and activities or receiving funds under WIOA shall be available to citizens and nationals of the United States, lawfully admitted permanent resident aliens, refugees, asylees, and parolees, and other immigrants authorized by the Attorney General to work in the United States.

### ***Prohibition on Discrimination in Employment and Public Accommodation***

All accommodations and employers must comply with the prohibition against discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, creed, disability, sexual orientation, and gender identity under the Iowa Civil Rights Act of 1965, as amended (Iowa Code § 216).

***Authorized Use of Federal Funds for Core Programs***

Under this plan, the federal funds received to carry out WIOA core programs must be expended only for those authorized activities under the core programs. Federal funds received to carry out core programs must not be expended for any other purpose.

***Compliance with WIOA Title II Requirements***

Under this plan, the Department of Education shall expend the funds appropriated to carry out Title II of WIOA only in a manner consistent with fiscal requirements under WIOA section 241(a) regarding supplement and not supplant provisions. With respect to Title II of WIOA, the Department of Education shall ensure that there is at least one eligible provider serving each local area.

***State Share of Costs to Carry Out Performance Evaluation System***

Under this plan, the state board shall determine an appropriate share of the costs of carrying out the performance evaluation system under WIOA section 116 to be paid by the state. The state shall pay its share for carrying out the performance evaluation system, as determined by the state board, from funds made available through each of the WIOA core programs.

## **VI. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR CORE PROGRAMS**

### ADULT, DISLOCATED WORKER, AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES UNDER TITLE I-B.

#### **Regions and Local Workforce Development Areas**

In 1999, the Regional Advisory Boards assumed the responsibilities of the Regional Workforce Development Boards under the federal Workforce Investment Act signed into law in August, 1998.

Regional Workforce Development Boards by area include:

#### ***Region 1***

Counties include: Allamakee, Chickasaw, Clayton, Delaware, Dubuque, Fayette, Howard and Winneshiek

#### ***Region 2***

Counties include: Cerro Gordo, Floyd, Franklin, Hancock, Mitchell, Winnebago and Worth

#### ***Regions' 3/4***

Counties include: Buena Vista, Clay, Dickinson, Emmet, Kossuth, Lyon, Palo Alto, O'Brien, Osceola and Sioux

#### ***Region 5***

Counties include: Calhoun, Hamilton, Humboldt, Pocahontas, Webster and Wright

#### ***Region 6***

Counties include: Hardin, Marshall, Poweshiek and Tama

#### ***Region 7***

Counties include: Black Hawk, Bremer, Buchanan, Butler and Grundy

#### ***Region 8***

Counties include: Audubon, Carroll, Crawford, Greene, Guthrie and Sac

#### ***Region 9***

Counties include: Clinton, Jackson, Muscatine and Scott

#### ***Region 10***

Counties include: Benton, Cedar, Iowa, Johnson, Jones, Linn and Washington

#### ***Region 11***

Counties include: Boone, Dallas, Jasper, Madison, Marion, Polk, Story and Warren

#### ***Region 12***

Iowa Unified State Plan, Draft 2, v: January 14, 2016

Counties include: Cherokee, Ida, Monona, Plymouth and Woodbury

**Region 13**

Counties include: Cass, Fremont, Harrison, Mills, Page, Pottawattamie and Shelby

**Region 14**

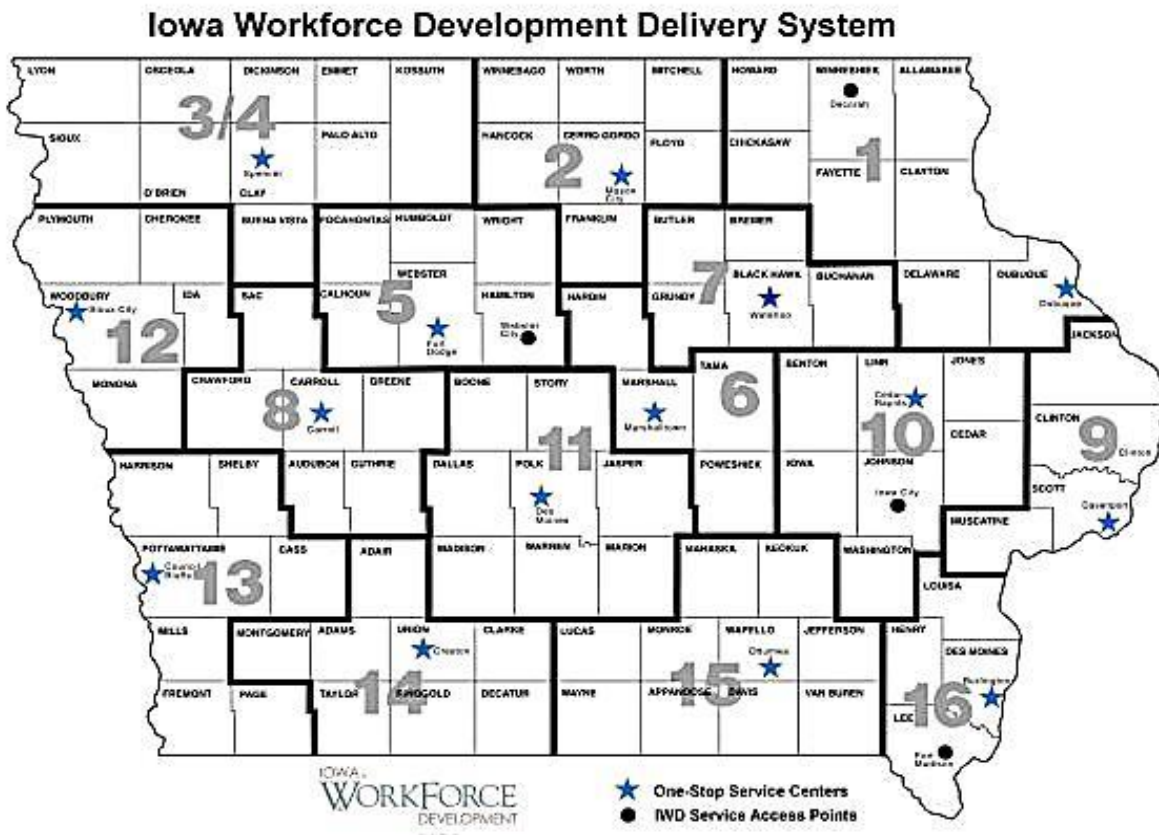
Counties include: Adair, Adams, Clark, Decatur, Montgomery, Ringgold, Taylor and Union

**Region 15**

Counties include: Appanoose, Davis, Jefferson, Keokuk, Lucas, Mahaska, Monroe, Wapello, Wayne and Van Buren

**Region 16**

Counties include: Des Moines, Henry, Lee and Louisa



**Designation Of 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.

***Regional Boards***

877—6.2(84A,PL105-220) Number of boards. The governor, in consultation with chief elected officials, shall appoint a regional advisory board in each workforce development region of the state.

***Duties***

877—6.7(84A,PL105-220) Duties. The board shall perform the following duties and other functions as necessary and proper to carry out its responsibilities. 6.7(1) Conduct a needs assessment to identify the workforce development needs of the region. 6.7(2) Recommend to the state workforce development board and the department of workforce development awards of grants and contracts administered by the department in the region. 6.7(3) Monitor the performance of grants and contracts awarded in the region. 6.7(4) File an annual report with the department as required by Iowa Code section 84A.1B. 6.7(5) Recommend to the state workforce development board and department of workforce development the services to be delivered in the region. 6.7(6) Fulfill the responsibilities of a local Workforce Development Board as required by the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, subsequent amendments and all related regulations. 6.7(7) Enter into an agreement with the region's chief elected officials board to delineate their respective duties related to administration of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998.

At the May 21, 2015 meeting, the State Board adopted procedures as their recommendation to the Governor as the procedures for the designation of local areas and to direct IWD to immediately notify each local area of those procedures. The local boards were instructed to submit their initial designation decision to Director Beth Townsend by September 4. Regions 3/4, 8 and 11 had asked for recertification of their WIOA compliant boards and had submitted nominations to fill their board vacancies. Region 16 requested to change their board structure to conform to the new WIOA board configuration requirements and submitted nominations to fill their board vacancies.

Regions' 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14 and 15 have formally requested grandfathering their non-compliant board structures forward and have submitted nominations to fill their board vacancies. All of the local board nominations have been approved or are pending approval by the Governor. IWD is in receipt of the formal letters of request and documentation required for the local board certification process from all fifteen local CEO and RWIB board chairs that the RWIB's have been constituted according to the required WIOA procedures.

***Designation of Local Board Members***

At the State Board's May 21, 2015 meeting, the State Board adopted procedures as their recommendation to the Governor as the procedures for the designation of local board members and to direct IWD to immediately notify each local area CEO and RWIB chair of those procedures. The local boards were instructed to submit their initial designation decision to Director Beth Townsend by September 30.

All fifteen regions submitted their formal requests to continue their existing service delivery area boundaries by that date. IWD has received the required documentation and board minutes supporting those requests. IWD has determined that twelve local areas have performed successfully and sustained fiscal integrity for the two years preceding the enactment of WIOA.

The state had three local areas that did not meet the performed successfully requirement in that they failed the same performance goal two years in row. Those were regions 2, 5 and 11. In all those cases the failure was attributable to a change in either management or the contracted service provider. None of these areas failed all of the performance measures. They failed the same one, two years in a row. In Region 11, they switched providers because they failed the one year and then in the transition, they failed the second year. This is to be expected since performance indicators are based on a long period of time. Based on the corrective actions taken by these three areas. The State Board approved the initial designation of local area requests received by all fifteen local boards and submitted those requests to the Governor, which was considered and approved.

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## Appeals Process Relating to Designation of Local Areas

At the May 21, 2015 meeting, the State Board adopted procedures as their recommendation to the Governor as the procedures for the designation of local areas and to direct IWD to immediately notify each local area of those procedures:

### 1. Designation of New local areas:

- a. At any time, the Chief Elected Official (CEO) and Regional Workforce Development Board from any unit of general local government or combination of units may submit a request for designation as a workforce development area. The State Board must determine if the new local area meets the Governor's policy criteria. The request will include:
  - i. To what extent the new local area is consistent with local labor market areas;
  - ii. To what extent the new local area has a common economic development area;
  - iii. A description of federal and non-federal resources available in the new local area, including appropriate education and training institutions to administer activities under the Youth, Adult and Dislocated Worker formula programs under WIOA;
  - iv. Memorandum(s) of understanding between the CEO(s) of the new local area and local service providers, as described in the WIOA, section 121 (b), demonstrating commitment to integration and alignment of resources and services.
  - v. Consideration of comments received through a public comment process. The public comment period must provide at least 60 days for public comment prior to designation of the local workforce development area and provide an opportunity for representatives of interested business, education, and labor organizations to have input into the development of the formation of the local area.
- b. A recommendation, including the reason and conclusion, for approval or denial as a new local area will be made by the State Board (SWIB) to the Governor. The SWIB may consult with any other stakeholders prior to issuing their recommendation. The decision of the Governor will be final and sent to the Chief Elected Official for the New Local Area.
- c. Appeal:
  - i. An appeal must be filed to the SWIB at the address in (b) of this section within 30 days of the date of the letter from the Governor.
  - ii. The SWIB will provide an opportunity for the CEO at their next public meeting to present their request for designation as a new area.

If the decision of the Governor and SWIB does not result in designation, the CEO may request review by the Secretary of Labor. The Secretary may require that the area be designated as a workforce development area, if the Secretary determines that the entity was not accorded procedural rights under

the State appeals process or if the area meets the initial designation requirements at WIOA sec. 106(b)(2).

### **Appeals Process Relating to Determinations for Infrastructure Funding**

#### 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 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. 28
- (2) DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE FUNDS TO CARRY OUT YOUTH PROGRAM ELEMENTS DESCRIBED IN WIOA SECTION 129(C)(2). 29

With respect to youth workforce investment activities authorized in section 129, the criteria to be used by local boards in awarding grants for youth workforce investment activities and a plan for how the local boards will take into consideration the ability of the providers to meet performance accountability measures for the youth program are as follows:

In 2012 Iowa embarked on a service delivery model process that ensures services are integrated at the front line level and unified at the management level including core partners within the One-Stop. By refocusing the local regions' performance assessment from individual program performance measures to universal outcome measures, service seamless, efficient integration can be further enhanced regionally with the core and required partners.

Joint collection measures will be easier to manage and more clearly understood by Regional Workforce Development Boards (RWDB), businesses, and workforce investment system partners.

As the Grant Recipient for the funding under the Act, the Workforce Development Board will be governed by the procurement policy as developed in accordance with Federal, State and local policies and approved by Iowa Workforce Development and the State Board. Iowa Workforce Development is the administrative/fiscal agent for this WDB and in this capacity administers and oversees all phases of the WDB's operations. The WDB has the responsibility to provide policy guidelines for the workforce region.

Requests for proposals (RFPs) shall be publicized and identify all evaluation factors and their relative importance for youth workforce investment activities. Any response to publicized requests for proposals shall be honored to the maximum extent practical. The WDB Director shall develop a method for conducting technical evaluations of the proposals received and for selecting contractors. WDB staff will review all proposals that meet the submission requirements and may submit summary reports of all proposals received to the Workforce Development Board as directed by the WDB. The WDB may review summary reports of all proposals received and select the agency or the service provider that it deems best able to operate the program efficiently and effectively, with price and other factors considered. After evaluation and recommendation of the RFPs by the Regional WDB staff, the Workforce

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<sup>28</sup> Sec. 102(b)(2)(D)(i)(V)

<sup>29</sup> Sec. 102(b)(2)(D)(i)(I)

Development Board will make the final selection of service providers. The Regional Workforce Development Board will have final authority for selection of service providers.

Final selections for funding will primarily be based on, yet not limited to, effectiveness, demonstrated performance, fiscal accountability, cost/price analysis, staffing, potential for meeting performance standards/goals, program operation and coordination, quality of training especially in addressing competency deficiencies of clients, participant characteristics, past performance of the bidder, non-duplication of services, and funding.

A selection committee consisting of appointed WDB members, WDB Chairman, and WDB staff shall review competitive proposals. This task may also be assigned to an existing WDB committee (i.e. Youth Council or RFP Proposal Review Committee). The committee shall submit a recommendation to the full WDB for their review and final approval. The State Operations Team shall provide training, guidance, and/or technical assistance on an as needed basis to the selection committee. This shall include a comprehensive review of all proposals received by WDB staff.

The evaluation process will be divided into five major steps:

1. General review of the proposals;
2. Evaluation of the bidder's qualifications;
3. Appraisal of the technical aspects of each proposal;
4. Assessment of the cost aspects of each proposal and
5. Positive review of demonstrated performance, effectiveness, potential for meeting performance goals, costs, and quality of training.

Final selections will primarily be based on, yet not limited to, effectiveness, demonstrated performance, potential for meeting performance goals, costs, quality of training, participant characteristics, past workforce development experience and performance of the bidder and non-duplication of services.

### **Youth Program Elements**

- ✓ Tutoring, study skills training, instruction, and evidence-based dropout prevention and recovery strategies that lead to completion of the requirements for a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent (including a recognized certificate of attendance or similar document for individuals with disabilities) or for a recognized postsecondary credential (RBS) (SEC)
- ✓ Alternative secondary school services, or dropout recovery services, as appropriate (SEC)
- ✓ Experiential Learning—Paid and unpaid work experiences that have as a component, academic and occupational education, which may include—
- ✓ Summer employment opportunities and other employment opportunities available throughout the school year (WEP)
- ✓ Pre-apprenticeship programs (PRE)
- ✓ Internships and job shadowing (INT), (SHW)
- ✓ On-the-job training opportunities (OJT)
- ✓ Institutional/Occupational skill training, which shall include priority consideration for training programs that lead to recognized postsecondary credentials that are aligned with in demand industry sectors or occupations in the local area involved, if determined by the local board (OJT), (IST), (CUS), (APP), (ENT)
- ✓ Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster (PRE), (APP), (IST)
- ✓ Leadership development opportunities, which may include community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social and civic behaviors, as appropriate (LDS)
- ✓ Supportive services
- ✓ Adult mentoring for the period of participation and a subsequent period, for a total of not less than 12 months (MEN)
- ✓ Follow-up services for not less than 12 months after the completion of participation, as appropriate (PPS)
- ✓ Comprehensive guidance and counseling, which may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling and referral, as appropriate (G&C)
- ✓ Financial literacy education (FIN)
- ✓ Entrepreneurial skills training (ENT)
- ✓ Services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area, such as career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration services (JSP)
- ✓ Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and
- ✓ Training (WEP), (MEN), etc.; (SEC-when leads to credential)

The state plans to carry out these activities by assisting young people who are disconnected, disengaged and lack self-sufficiency by engaging them in employment, education and training that will support them in succeeding in the labor market and transition into successful adulthood.

According to CLASP, 5 million youth between the ages of 16-24 are out of school and are not working. This population of “out-of-school” youth includes; but it not limited to: high school dropouts, high school graduates who not looking for work and youth who may be homeless, incarcerated, parenting or

exiting from foster care without a stable place to live. The WIOA Youth Program will focus its efforts on serving eligible young people in these target groups and other youth who are identified as the most in need.

Participants and career planners' work together to determine which elements are provided based on the objective assessment and individual service strategy. This process assists participants to obtain a focus to begin to develop competencies for the world of work. This includes identification of skills, needed skills, work-readiness, advanced training, career pathways, etc.

Goal setting and progression towards meeting those goals is another important component for participants. Identification of appropriate career pathways goals, career/employment goals and education/academic goals assists participants to formulate an action plan and make gains towards their career goals. Participants who are identified as basic skills deficient will have a goal of improving their skills in reading or math as applicable.

A variety of activities and services are available for youth to upgrade their skills through education and training or workforce activity. Experiential learning activities are considered the most important program activities offered. These activities assist participants to gain exposure to the world of work while learning valuable skills and personal attributes that will assist them in future work opportunities. Career exploration is possibly the most important element of an experiential learning activity as it assists young people in making more informed decisions regarding their future. Experiential learning activities include: job shadow, work experience, internships, on-the-job training and pre-apprenticeship.

Many young people need supportive services to ensure they can participate, or continue to participate in a WIOA activity or partner activity. Career planners will assess need and availability of funds outlined in their local service plan when offering support services.

Program participation concludes when a participant has met their goals and achievement objectives, has been determined to be self-sufficient and is no longer in need of additional services. Continued contact by the career planner is in place for 12 months, in addition, participants are encouraged to utilize one-stop and partner services for future needs.

## Youth Who Require Additional Assistance

PROVIDE THE LANGUAGE CONTAINED IN THE STATE POLICY FOR “REQUIRES ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE TO COMPLETE AND EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM, OR TO SECURE AND HOLD EMPLOYMENT” CRITERION SPECIFIED IN WIOA SECTIONS 129(A)(1)(B)(III)(VIII) AND 129(A)(1)(C)(IV)(VII).

For youth who require additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure and hold employment, additional assistance may be defined to include:

1. Migrant Youth
2. Incarcerated Parent
3. Behavior Problems at School
4. Family Literacy Problems
5. Domestic Violence
6. Substance Abuse
7. Chronic Health Conditions
8. One or more grade levels below appropriate for age
9. Cultural barriers that may be a hindrance to employment
10. American Indian, Alaska Native or Native Hawaiian
11. Refugee
12. Locally defined “additional assistance”

Under WIOA, local areas may define additional criterion for a youth who “requires additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure and hold employment” however under WIOA local areas may no longer define local barriers.

### State Definition Of “Alternative Education”.

Iowa Code and Iowa Administrative Code define alternative education language in the following ways:

*281--Iowa Administrative Code 12.2(256)*

**"Alternative program"** means a class or environment established within the regular educational program and designed to accommodate specific student educational needs such as, but not limited to, work-related training; reading, mathematics or science skills; communication skills; social skills; physical skills; employability skills; study skills; or life skills.

**"Alternative school"** means an environment established apart from the regular educational program and that includes policies and rules, staff, and resources designed to accommodate student needs and to provide a comprehensive education consistent with the student learning goals and content standards established by the school district or by the school districts participating in a consortium. Students attend by choice.

*Iowa Code section 280.19A Alternative Options Education Programs – Disclosure of Records.* By January 15, 1995, each school district shall adopt a plan to provide alternative options education programs to students who are either at-risk of dropping out or have dropped out. An alternative options education program may be provided in a district, through a sharing agreement with a school in a contiguous district, or through an area-wide program available at the community college serving the merged area where the school district is located. Each area education agency shall provide assistance in establishing a plan to provide alternative education options to students attending a public school in a district served by the agency. Each area education agency shall provide assistance in establishing a plan

to provide alternative education options to students attending a public school in a district served by the agency.

*Iowa Code section 282.19 Child Living in Foster Care Facility*

A child who is living in a licensed child foster care facility as defined in section 237.1, or in a facility that provides residential treatment as "facility" is defined in section 125.2, which is located in a school district other than the school district in which the child resided before receiving foster care may enroll in and attend an accredited school in the school district in which the child is living. The instructional costs for students who do not require special education shall be paid as provided in section 282.31, subsection 1, paragraph "b" or for students who require special education shall be paid as provided in section 282.31, subsections 2 or 3.

**Alternative School:** A structured curriculum established apart from a regular educational program which can be located inside or outside of the public or non-public school system. Designed to accommodate student needs and provides a comprehensive education consistent with the student learning goals and content standards established by the school district or by the school districts participating in a consortium. Instruction can include, but is not limited to: work-related training; reading, mathematics or science skills; communication skills; social skills; physical skills; employability skills; study skills; life skills; High School Equivalency Diploma (HSED) preparation or high school diploma.

**Attending School**

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.

**Iowa Code Sections 299.1A. 299.4. Compulsory Attendance Age**

A child who has reached the age of six and is under sixteen years of age by September 15 is of compulsory attendance age. However, if a child enrolled in a school district or accredited nonpublic school reaches the age of sixteen on or after September 15, the child remains of compulsory age until the end of the regular school calendar.

**281—23.5(260C) Student Eligibility**

A person seeking to enroll in an adult education and literacy program shall be at least 16 years of age and not enrolled or required to be enrolled in a secondary school under Iowa Code section 299.1A and shall meet one of the following eligibility requirements:

1. Lacks sufficient mastery of basic educational skills to enable the person to function effectively in society, demonstrated by a score of Adult Secondary Education (Low) or lower in at least one modality;
2. Does not have a secondary school diploma or a recognized equivalent; or
3. Is unable to speak, read, or write the English language.

**Not attending school:**

When an individual is—

- no longer attending, or registered to attend, any school and has not received a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent;
- not attending, or registered to attend, any school and has either graduated from high school or has an equivalent diploma; or
- attending a program through: Adult Education and Literacy, YouthBuild or Job Corps

**Attending school:**

When an individual is attending classes or is registered to begin classes at—

- a public or nonpublic educational institution offering any grade kindergarten through twelve;
- homeschooled students;
- alternative school program; or
- within an institution providing post-secondary instruction which uses in its name the term "college", "academy", "institute", "university" or a similar term to imply that the person is primarily engaged in education

**Basic Skills Deficient**

IF UTILIZING THE PORTION OF THE BASIC SKILLS DEFICIENT DEFINITION CONTAINED IN WIOA SECTION 3(5)(B), INCLUDE THE SPECIFIC STATE DEFINITION.

***Basic Skills Deficient:***

- ✓ An individual who—
- ✓ Is a youth that has English reading, writing, or computing skills at or below the 8th grade level (below 9.0 grade level) on a generally accepted standardized test;
- ✓ A youth or adult that 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;
- ✓ Lacks a high school diploma or equivalency and is not enrolled in secondary education; or
- ✓ Is enrolled in Title II Adult Education (including enrolled for ESL).



## 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 career and training services to individuals who are low income, public assistance recipients or basic skills deficient;
- 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;
- 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 Development Board members;
- 4) The state established written policy and procedures to ensure local Workforce Development Boards are certified by the governor every two years in accordance with WIOA section 107(c)(2);
- 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;
- 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;
- 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);
- 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;
- 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;
- 10) Priority of service for covered persons is provided for each of the title I programs; and
- 11) The state agrees to report on the impact and outcomes of its approved waivers in its WIOA annual report.
- 12) 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);

## **Wagner-Peyser Act Program**

### EMPLOYMENT SERVICE PROFESSIONAL STAFF DEVELOPMENT.

- (1) DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL UTILIZE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES FOR EMPLOYMENT SERVICE STAFF TO ENSURE STAFF IS ABLE TO PROVIDE HIGH QUALITY SERVICES TO BOTH JOBSEEKERS AND EMPLOYERS.
- (2) DESCRIBE STRATEGIES DEVELOPED TO SUPPORT TRAINING AND AWARENESS ACROSS CORE PROGRAMS AND THE UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE PROGRAM AND THE TRAINING PROVIDED FOR EMPLOYMENT SERVICES AND WIOA STAFF ON IDENTIFICATION OF UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE (UI) ELIGIBILITY ISSUES.

### **Professional Staff Development**

Training and staff development will be fundamental to the successful implementation of Iowa's Unified State Plan. Per the statewide Memorandum of Understanding, the partners will collaborate to develop uniform One-Stop Certification criteria that reflect the following principles:

1. One-Stop Centers will provide excellent customer service to job seekers, workers, and business.
2. One-Stop Centers will reflect innovative and effective service design.
3. One-Stop Centers will operate with integrated management systems.
4. One-Stop Centers will operate with high-quality staffing.
5. One-Stop Centers will increase physical and programmatic access to workforce services for individuals with barriers to employment, including but not limited to individuals with disabilities and individuals with LEP.

The Partners will collaborate to develop policies, procedures, proven and promising practices, and templates to aid Local Boards in the One-Stop Certification process. One-Stop Center Local Staff must be routinely trained and keenly aware of how particular functions support and contribute to the One-Stop Center and One-Stop System.

### ***The Partners will collaborate to develop:***

1. Policies, procedures, guidance, and proven and promising practices to ensure that One-Stop Center Local Staff are cross-trained, as appropriate, to increase staff capacity, expertise, and efficiency.
2. A Skills Development Team to help train One-Stop Center Local Staff as part of an ongoing learning process that will develop the knowledge, skills, and motivation necessary to provide superior service to workers and job seekers, including those individuals with disabilities and individuals with LEP, that is responsive labor-market needs.

### ***Continuous Quality Improvement Model***

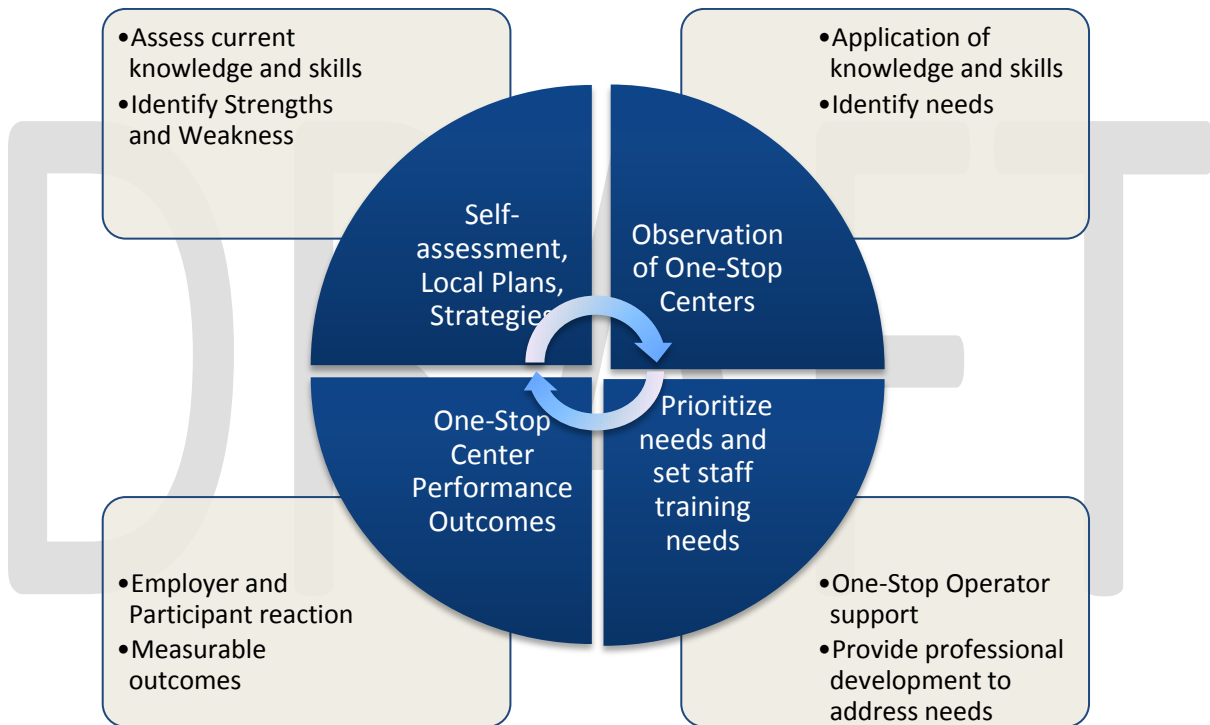
The Continuous Quality Improvement Model has been identified as a tool for use in guiding staff development and center activities to ensure staff is providing high quality services to both jobseekers and employers. This method is consistent with the purpose and authorized scope of each of the programs, and will be used as a guide in developing and implementing effective staff development strategies. A framework of standards has been adopted to be used by one-centers and one-center staff to assess their own performance in providing quality services to participants. Also, the standards provide one-stop operators with a framework for what programs should know and be able to demonstrate. By completing a self-assessment with the certification tool, one-stop centers can identify their strengths, as well as areas needing improvement. This is meant to furnish the data to make informed decisions in providing professional development activities and personal exploration. This process will help to ensure

well-qualified staff who are capable of meeting the diverse needs of the center’s participants. The results may be used to complete a professional development plan that staff may submits to the one-stop center operator.

**The standards framework consists of three components:**

1. Standards that are broad descriptors of knowledge, skills, and abilities related to effective adult education instruction;
2. Indicators that are sample concepts for implementing a standard; and
3. Examples of practices, which are some samples that demonstrates application of a standard.

***Continuous Quality Improvement Model as Applied to the One-Stop Center***



## Meaningful Assistance

EXPLAIN HOW THE STATE WILL PROVIDE INFORMATION AND MEANINGFUL ASSISTANCE TO INDIVIDUALS REQUESTING ASSISTANCE IN FILING A CLAIM FOR UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION THROUGH ONE-STOP CENTERS, AS REQUIRED BY WIOA AS A CAREER SERVICE.

The Partners recognize that the State's workforce services must meet the needs of job seekers, workers, and businesses in order to help develop thriving communities where all citizens succeed and businesses prosper. A cornerstone of achieving this goal is to provide excellent customer service to job seekers. The following is taken directly from the statewide MOU:

The Partners agree that State and Local One-Stop System offices, including but not limited to One-Stop Centers, must:

- Reflect a welcoming environment to all customer groups who are served by the State and Local One-Stop Systems.
- 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.
- Improve the skills of job-seeker and worker customers. The State and Local One-Stop Systems must create opportunities for individuals at all skill levels and levels of experience by providing customers, including individuals with disabilities and individuals with LEP, 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.
- Provide career services that motivate, support and empower customers, including individuals with disabilities and individuals with LEP, to make informed decisions based on local and regional economic demand and effectively attain their personal employment and education goals.
- Value skill development by assessing and creating opportunities for improving each individual's basic, occupational, and employability skills.

WIOA was passed in part to increase access to our workforce services. A particular focus for increased access is individuals with barriers to employment, a group that includes members of the following populations:

- Individuals with disabilities, including but not limited to individuals with vision loss
- Displaced homemakers
- Low-income individuals
- Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians
- Individuals age 55 and older
- Returning citizens
- Homeless individuals
- Youth who are in or have aged out of the foster system
- Individuals with LEP
- Individuals who have low levels of literacy
- Individuals facing substantial cultural barriers
- Eligible migrant and seasonal farmworkers

- Single parents, including single pregnant women
- Long-term unemployed individuals
- Individuals within two years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act

Table 5 provides information on many of Iowa’s identified populations with barriers to employment.

**Table VV: Population Characteristics**

Population Characteristics	Iowa
<b>Population, July 1, 2015</b>	<b>3,123,899</b>
Persons under 18 years, %	23.9
Persons 65 years and over, %	15.8
Female persons, %	50.5
White alone, %	92.1
Black or African American alone, %	3.4
American Indian & Alaska Native alone, %	0.5
Asian alone, %	2.2
Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander alone, %	0.1
Two or More Races, %	1.7
Hispanic or Latino, %	5.6
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino, %	87.1
Veterans, 2010-2014	219,006
Foreign born persons, %, 2010-2014	4.7
Language other than English spoken at home	7.4
High school graduate or higher, age 25 years+, %	91.3
Bachelor's degree or higher, age 25 years+, %	26.4
With a disability, under age 65 years, %, 2010-2014	7.7
Persons without health insurance, <65 years, %	7.2
Persons in poverty, %	12.2

QuickFacts data are derived from: Population Estimates, American Community Survey, Census of Population and Housing, Current Population Survey, Small Area Health Insurance Estimates, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates, State and County Housing Unit Estimates, County Business Patterns, Nonemployer Statistics, Economic Census, Survey of Business Owners, Building Permits.

The Partners agree that increased access to the State’s workforce services—particularly for individuals with barriers to employment—must be a priority as they work together to deliver workforce services under WIOA. This necessarily includes outreach to individuals with barriers to employment. To achieve the priority of increased access for individuals with barriers to employment, the Partners will leverage the expert knowledge of its membership and collaborate to maximize access to workforce services for individuals, particularly those with barriers to employment.

The Partners will collaborate to develop policies, procedures, guidance, and proven and promising practices to increase and maximize access to services for individuals, particularly those with barriers to employment. State Partners will also provide assistance (technical or otherwise) to Local Partners, Local Boards, and Local Staff to increase and maximize access to workforce services for individuals, particularly those with barriers to employment.

## **Reemployment Assistance**

### DESCRIBE THE STATE'S STRATEGY FOR PROVIDING REEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE TO UI CLAIMANTS AND OTHER UNEMPLOYED INDIVIDUALS.

The Adult training program is designed to prepare adults for participation in the labor force by increasing their occupational and educational skills, resulting in improved attainment of self-sustaining employment. Low-income adults who have limited skills, lack work experience, and face other barriers to economic success are primary beneficiaries of this program.

The Dislocated Workers program provides retraining and re-employment services to individuals who have been dislocated from their jobs, and to displaced homemakers. Job seekers have access to computerized resource centers for career exploration, resume preparation, skills assessment and testing, job search, on-line work registration, and on-line unemployment insurance claims filing. Job seekers also have access to a variety of skill building workshops, job search assistance curriculum and individualized career services.

The Program Year 2014 (PY14) Dislocated Worker Entered Employment rate was 69.1%. The target rate for program year 2014 was 70% - within the minimum target rate of 80% of the negotiated goal of 56%. Dislocated Worker Entered Employment accounts for individuals who were not employed at date of participation, the percent employed in the 1st quarter after exit quarter.

Promoting Independence & Self-Sufficiency through Employment, Job Opportunities, and Basic Skills (PROMISE JOBS) targets Family Investment Program (FIP) participants and provides employment & training services that include supportive services to address barriers to employment and work readiness services to increase opportunities for employment outcomes. This includes overarching activities such as education, certification, training, job search assistance, and employment.

Iowa's Rapid Response targets workers who are displaced due to a lack of work through no fault of their own from firms hurt by foreign trade, as certified by the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) – Office of Trade Adjustment Assistance (OTAA). Rapid Response is a proactive, business-focused, and flexible strategy designed for two major purposes:

1. Assisting growing companies access an available pool of skilled workers from other companies that are downsizing or who have been trained in the skills Iowa companies need to be competitive and
2. Responding to layoffs and plant closings by quickly coordinating services and providing immediate aid to companies and their affected workers.

Trade Act Assistance targets workers who are displaced due to a lack of work through no fault of their own from firms hurt by foreign trade, as certified by the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL). This federally funded employment and training program provides benefits to individuals displaced from their jobs due to foreign competition and jobs that are lost because the work activity was either moved out of the U.S. or as a direct result of foreign imports. IWD staff conduct informational meetings for the

workers of the closing organizations and coordinate registered apprenticeship efforts and the classroom training benefit which involves individual class schedules, tuition payment, and student reimbursements for travel, childcare, books, and other approved costs.

National Dislocated Worker Grants target Dislocated Workers. Iowa currently has two National Emergency Grants (NEG) for Dislocated Workers. The Iowa Jobs Driven NEG provides Registered Apprenticeship Training for Iowa's top in-demand occupations. The Sector Partnership NEG provides support for the development and coordination of sector partnerships in regions impacted by the Avian Flu epidemic by targeting three in-demand sectors. The three primary sectors which are targeted include: advanced manufacturing, healthcare & transportation and logistics.

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## Wagner-Peyser Funds

DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE W-P FUNDS TO SUPPORT UI CLAIMANTS, AND THE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN W-P AND UI, AS APPROPRIATE INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING:

- (1) COORDINATION OF AND PROVISION OF LABOR EXCHANGE SERVICES FOR UI CLAIMANTS AS REQUIRED BY THE WAGNER-PEYSER ACT;.
- (2) REGISTRATION OF UI CLAIMANTS WITH THE STATE'S EMPLOYMENT SERVICE IF REQUIRED BY STATE LAW;
- (3) ADMINISTRATION OF THE WORK TEST FOR THE STATE UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION SYSTEM, INCLUDING MAKING ELIGIBILITY ASSESSMENTS (FOR REFERRAL TO UI ADJUDICATION, IF NEEDED), AND PROVIDING JOB FINDING AND PLACEMENT SERVICES FOR UI CLAIMANTS; AND
- (4) PROVISION OF REFERRALS TO AND APPLICATION ASSISTANCE FOR TRAINING AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES.

The Partners will work together to achieve an integrated partnership that seamlessly incorporates the services provided by Partner Programs. The Partners will collaborate to develop and implement operational policies, procedures, guidance, and proven and promising practices that reflect an integrated system of performance, communication, and case management, and use technology to achieve integration and expanded service offerings.

The Partners will collaborate to develop policies, procedures, guidance, and proven and promising practices to facilitate the organization and integration of workforce services by function (rather than by program) when permitted by a program's authorizing statute and as appropriate. This will include coordinating staff communication, capacity building, and training efforts. Functional alignment includes having One-Stop Center Local Staff that perform similar tasks serve on relevant functional teams (e.g. Skills Development Team, Business Services Team). Service integration will focus on serving all customers seamlessly (including individuals with barriers to employment) by providing a full range of services staffed by cross-functional teams, consistent with the purpose, scope, and requirements of each Partner Program.

The Partners will develop policies, procedures, guidance, and proven and promising practices to help Local Staff:

- Facilitate engagement of employers, including smaller employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations, in workforce services programs.
- 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.
- Identify and develop a clear understanding of industry skill needs, identifying appropriate strategies for assisting employers, and coordinating business services activities across programs, as appropriate, in order to support area employers and industry sectors most effectively.
- Incorporate an integrated and aligned business services strategy among Partners to present a unified voice for the One-Stop Center in its communications with employers.
- Use the forthcoming performance measure(s) on effectiveness in serving employers to support continuous improvement of these services.
- Engage employers to develop sector partnerships that are responsive to labor-market needs.
- Incorporate employer input when developing innovative training opportunities that are responsive to labor-market needs.



- Develop a Business Services Team to conduct the outreach detailed in this section and develop and implement the initiatives listed in the statewide MOU in each Local Region. The Business Services Team must consist of, at a minimum, one Local Staff member from each of Iowa Workforce Development, Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services, and Adult Education and Literacy, Iowa Department of Education.

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## Agricultural Outreach Plan (AOP)

EACH STATE AGENCY MUST DEVELOP AN AOP EVERY FOUR YEARS AS PART OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN REQUIRED UNDER SECTIONS 102 OR 103 OF WIOA. THE AOP MUST INCLUDE—

- (3) ASSESSMENT OF NEED.
  - (A) PROVIDE AN ASSESSMENT OF THE UNIQUE NEEDS OF FARMWORKERS IN THE AREA BASED ON PAST AND PROJECTED AGRICULTURAL AND FARMWORKER ACTIVITY IN THE STATE. SUCH NEEDS MAY INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO: EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING, AND HOUSING.
  - (B) PROVIDE AN ASSESSMENT OF AVAILABLE RESOURCES FOR OUTREACH AND WHETHER THE STATE BELIEVES SUCH RESOURCES ARE SUFFICIENT. IF THE STATE BELIEVES THE RESOURCES ARE INSUFFICIENT, PROVIDE A DESCRIPTION OF WHAT WOULD HELP AND WHAT THE STATE WOULD DO WITH THE ADDITIONAL RESOURCES.
- (4) OUTREACH ACTIVITIES.
  - (A) DESCRIBE THE STATE AGENCY'S PROPOSED OUTREACH ACTIVITIES INCLUDING STRATEGIES ON HOW TO CONTACT FARMWORKERS WHO ARE NOT BEING REACHED BY THE NORMAL INTAKE ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED BY THE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE OFFICES.
  - (B) THE PLAN FOR THE PROPOSED OUTREACH ACTIVITIES MUST INCLUDE:
    - (i) THE GOALS FOR THE NUMBER OF FARMWORKERS WHO WILL BE CONTACTED EACH PROGRAM YEAR BY W-P STAFF.
    - (ii) THE NUMBER OF FARMWORKERS WHO WILL BE CONTACTED EACH PROGRAM YEAR BY OTHER AGENCIES UNDER COOPERATIVE ARRANGEMENTS. THESE NUMERICAL GOALS MUST BE BASED ON THE NUMBER OF FARMWORKERS ESTIMATED TO BE IN THE STATE IN THE COMING YEAR, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE VARYING CONCENTRATION OF FARMWORKERS DURING THE SEASONS IN EACH GEOGRAPHIC AREA, THE RANGE OF SERVICES NEEDED IN EACH AREA AND THE NUMBER OF W-P AND/OR COOPERATING AGENCY STAFF WHO WILL CONDUCT OUTREACH.<sup>30</sup>
    - (iii) THE STATE'S PLANS TO CONDUCT OUTREACH TO AS MANY FARM WORKERS AS POSSIBLE.
    - (iv) THE NUMBER OF OUTREACH WORKERS DEDICATED TO OUTREACH TO FARMWORKERS BY SERVICE AREAS.
- (5) THE STATE'S STRATEGY FOR:
  - (A) COORDINATING OUTREACH EFFORTS WITH WIOA TITLE 1 SECTION 167 GRANTEES AS WELL AS WITH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE COMMUNITY SERVICE AGENCIES AND MSFW GROUPS.
  - (B) EXPLAINING TO FARMWORKERS THE SERVICES AVAILABLE AT THE LOCAL ONE-STOP CENTERS.
  - (C) MARKETING THE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE COMPLAINT SYSTEM TO FARMWORKERS AND OTHER FARMWORKER ADVOCACY GROUPS.
  - (D) PROVIDING FARM WORKERS WITH A BASIC SUMMARY OF FARMWORKER RIGHTS, INCLUDING THEIR RIGHTS WITH RESPECT TO THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT.
  - (E) URGING THOSE FARM WORKERS WHO HAVE BEEN REACHED THROUGH THE STATE'S OUTREACH EFFORTS TO GO TO THE LOCAL ONE-STOP CENTER TO OBTAIN THE FULL RANGE OF EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING SERVICES.
- (6) SERVICES PROVIDED TO FARMWORKERS AND AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS THROUGH THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM. DESCRIBE THE ACTIVITIES PLANNED FOR PROVIDING THE FULL RANGE OF EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING SERVICES TO THE AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITY, BOTH FARMWORKERS AND AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS, THROUGH THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM.

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<sup>30</sup> The numerical goals that must be included in the agricultural outreach plan are in reference only to the proposed outreach activities and are not negotiated performance targets.

(7) OTHER REQUIREMENTS.

- (A) STATE MONITOR ADVOCATE. THE PLAN MUST CONTAIN A STATEMENT THAT INDICATES THAT THE STATE MONITOR ADVOCATE HAS BEEN AFFORDED THE OPPORTUNITY TO REVIEW AND APPROVE THE AOP.
- (B) REVIEW AND PUBLIC COMMENT. THE PLAN MUST PROVIDE INFORMATION INDICATING THAT WIOA SECTION 167 NATIONAL FARMWORKER JOBS PROGRAM ( NFJP) GRANTEES, OTHER APPROPRIATE FARMWORKER GROUPS, PUBLIC AGENCIES, AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYER ORGANIZATIONS AND OTHER INTERESTED EMPLOYER ORGANIZATIONS, HAVE BEEN GIVEN AN OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT ON THE STATE AOP. INCLUDE THE LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS FROM WHICH INFORMATION AND SUGGESTIONS WERE SOLICITED, ANY COMMENTS RECEIVED, AND RESPONSES TO THOSE COMMENTS.
- (C) ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS. THE PLAN MUST INCLUDE AN EXPLANATION OF WHAT WAS ACHIEVED BASED ON THE PREVIOUS AOP, WHAT WAS NOT ACHIEVED AND AN EXPLANATION AS TO WHY THE STATE BELIEVES THE GOALS WERE NOT ACHIEVED, AND HOW THE STATE INTENDS TO REMEDY THE GAPS OF ACHIEVEMENT IN THE COMING YEAR.

**Introduction**

The Agricultural Outreach Plan (AOP) describes plans for providing services to the agricultural community in Iowa, both for agricultural employers and Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFW), as described under sections 102 or 103 of the Workforce Investment Opportunity Act (WIOA) and Title 1 section 167 grantees.

This plan sets policies, and objectives in providing Wagner-Peyser services to the agricultural community, specifically migrant and seasonal farm workers. Iowa Workforce Development provides these services through the local One-Stop Centers and Workforce Systems in each of the 15 Service Delivery Regions, ensuring that migrant and seasonal farm workers receive the full range of employment, training, and educational services on a basis, which is qualitatively equivalent and quantitatively proportionate to services provided to non-MSFWs.

***Iowa's farm labor workforce is made of:***

- Seasonal Farm Worker – individuals who during the prior 12 months at least 25 full or partial days performing farm work, earned at least half of their income from farm work, and did not do farm work year-round for the same employer.
- Migrant Farm Worker – seasonal Farm Workers who travel to perform farm work and who are unable to return to their permanent residence the same day.
- Migrant Food Processors – Seasonal Farm Workers who travel to perform farm work in food processing (as classified in the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) for food processing), and are unable to return to their permanent residence the same day.
- Intrastate Migrant Farm Workers – farm workers who follow migrant stream within our state. These workers usually migrate throughout Iowa's significant areas/counties of agricultural production. For example, these farm workers will migrate from northeastern counties to southeastern counties. From North central counties to northwestern counties and so forth.
- Interstate Migrant Farm Workers - individuals who follow migrant stream within our state but that are coming from other states. Most of these farm workers migrate from Texas, Georgia, Wisconsin, Michigan, Florida, Colorado and New Mexico.

- Foreign Labor Certified Farm Workers – individuals with temporary H2A visas authorizing them to work in the United States on a seasonal basis for a pre-determined employer under specific terms and conditions.

This plan provides guidance on Iowa's strategy for meeting program compliance requirements to adequately serve this targeted population through assessment of need, outreach activities, and strategies to providing workforce services to MSFWs and Agriculture employers.

### ***Assessment of Need: Unique Needs of Farm Workers in Iowa***

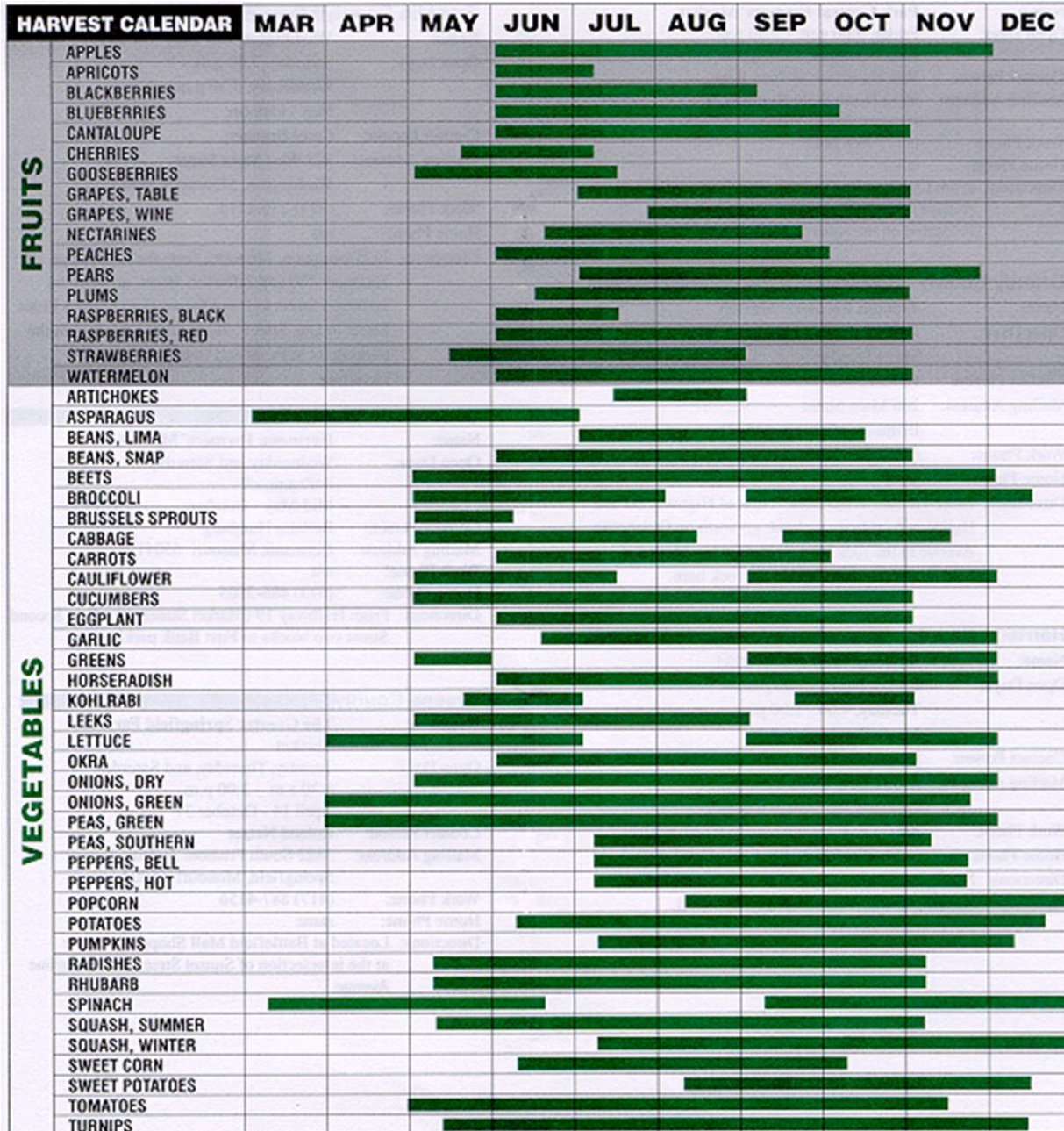
Iowa's employment in Agriculture is inherently difficult to obtain exact employment figures, specifically in crop production because it is characterized by seasonal spikes in the demand for farm labor that are often very short in duration, some are two weeks while others can be for one or more months. According to Iowa's Labor Market Information (LMI) Division, the 2014 base employment projections in the Agriculture Production industry was 103,341. The projection for the first quarter of 2015 is 102,682. These figures may or may not incorporate Migrant or Seasonal Farm Workers due to the mobility of this targeted population. It is estimated there are over 88,500 farms growing or producing agricultural products. The most current Census of Agriculture – 2012 data noted approximately 27,906 Iowa farms hired employees with 6,635 being employed through Farm Labor Contractors (FLCs).

Iowa's Outreach Specialists (OS) estimate there were approximately 10,600 farm workers in Iowa during the state fiscal year (July 2014-June 2015). This figure could include workers being double counted as several remain in the state and migrate from work site to work site during the peak season (May-November) before returning to their home residence. These figures are obtained through direct contacts with workers, communication with Ag employers and FLCs.

Reaching out to farm workers, Iowa's Outreach Specialists and State Monitor Advocate (SMA) noted several needs for assistance among workers coming to Iowa. They include: obtaining and completing high school (or equivalent credential), post secondary certifications, housing, food, transportation, childcare, healthcare, small business start up, and employment opportunities between seasonal opportunities. Iowa's Ag employers need assistance in locating more workers to fill seasonal opportunities in transportation and farm machinery operation, assistance to address language barriers specifically related to workplace safety, diversity in the workplace, and additional information on the regulations related to hiring MSFWs and H2As.

Despite Iowa's weather climate, the state has a year round Agricultural industry sector that includes vegetable, fruit, corn, soy beans, eggs, dairy, hay, flowers, hogs, and cattle. In addition, workers are also employed in occupations that assist with farm duties, operation of farm equipment, transportation, and tending to animals. Table 1 represents the harvest calendar for many of the products grown in Iowa. As the calendar shows, Iowa has a "peak season" and a "slower" season December-April. The winter months the focus tends to shift more toward the greenhouse and nursery commodities where winter fruits, winter vegetables, and flowers are produced along with tending to animals and field preparation.

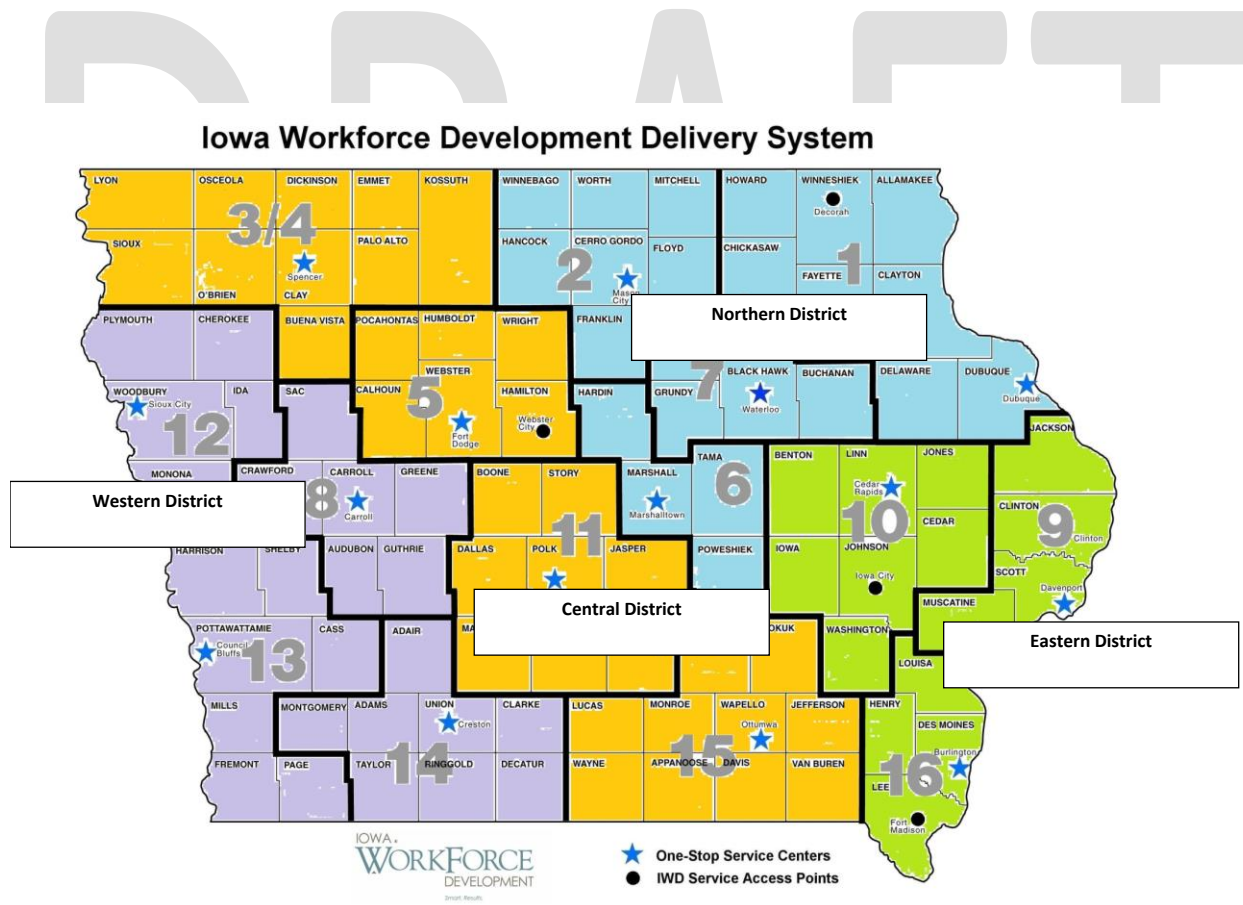
The peak season creates the greatest employment opportunities for MSFWs, where Agriculture based



employers have traditionally employed large numbers of seasonal and migrant farm workers. All 99

Iowa counties are impacted by the Agricultural Production industry with the greatest concentration during the peak season located in several counties in each of Iowa's Workforce Service Delivery Districts.

FIGUREXXX provides a graphic of how Iowa has divided the state into four districts with an assigned full-time MSFW Outreach Specialist (OS) for each district. Each of the OS are fluent in written and oral Spanish and English and able to relate to the needs of the workers who may not be aware of community resources available to them. Their primary responsibility is to spend time in the service areas contacting, explaining, and encouraging farm workers to use the services and resources available in the One-Stop Center. In addition, they are to work on establishing relationships with employers, FLCs, and local community advocacy groups to assist in the varying needs of the farm workers and Ag employers. They are also responsible for conducting the housing inspections for the H2A program for employers located in their areas which in some respects can be a first contact and outreach regarding the program. Each OS has access to a team of workers assisting with business services and job seeker services in each of the One-Stop locations in their assigned district.



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Iowa has one full-time State Monitor Advocate who conducts monitoring visits to the local offices, compiles data for reporting purposes and to determine best practices to enhance the service delivery to the workers and Ag employers, conducts field visits and checks in partnership with the assigned OS to

view the working and living conditions of the farm workers. This position works with the employers and community partners to promote the MSFW program and service offerings to workers and employers in addition to serving as the backup to the H2A program.

The Central District has the greatest concentration of Agricultural Production opportunities in Buena Vista, Clay, Jefferson, Keokuk, Madison, Mahaska, O'Brien, and Warren counties. The Eastern District has the greatest concentration located in Des Moines, Henry, Iowa, Louisa, Muscatine and Washington counties. The Northern District has the greatest concentration located in Allamakee, Clayton, Fayette, Marshall, Poweshiek, and Tama counties. The Western District has the greatest concentration located in Adams, Cass, Crawford, Montgomery, Page, and Sac counties.

### ***Past Agricultural Activity***

According to Iowa's Labor Market Information Division, the 2012 base employment in the Agriculture Production was 102,120. When comparing the 2012 data to current data figures for 2014/2015, the employment has not significantly changed over the course of two years. The minor fluctuations could be based on commodity productions specifically those centered on corn and soybean. During PY2014, Outreach staff met with approximately 410 Ag employers and over 4,000 farm workers to discuss workforce services. This is a small fraction of the over 10,600 estimated MSFWs currently working in the state. There are approximately 25 FLCs being utilized by Ag employers consistently who supply the majority of farm workers during the fluctuating agricultural seasons. This has remained relatively consistent from year to year. The remaining employers act as the hiring agent or seek the assistance of temporary employment agencies to supply the seasonal workforce. There was increased interest in hiring seasonal farm workers from Iowa organic farmers during the last plan year to accommodate their increased production which put a slight strain on the available workforce.

Iowa's H2A program generated 1,145 job openings resulting in over 100 housing inspection requests. During PY2014 over 100 potential workers from Iowa's job bank were referred to the job openings. These numbers could be greater; however, it is difficult to accommodate these employers' needs when they have crews already selected prior to coming to Iowa.

### ***Projected Agricultural Activity***

Employers stated during the previous fiscal year they are noticing a decline in the number of farm workers willing to migrate for seasonal opportunities. One of several reasons for the decline in available workers are the younger populations are not as interested in migrating long distances as their previous generations were. Many are opting to stay closer to their permanent residence in southern states where climates allow for more opportunities for year round farming. Older generations are leaving the employment realm and being supported by their younger generations who are not entering the farming industry at the levels their parents and previous generations once did. As a result of the shortage of available migrant and season workers who are current US Citizens. Some employers are turning to employment through the H2A Visa program to fill the void. Based on conversations conducted with employers who are exploring the H2A employment option, it is anticipated there will be increases in the requests in the coming years from Iowa's current level of 84 during fiscal year 2015.

The calendar of harvest remains the same for the upcoming year thus a need for seasonal and migrant workers will exist to meet the planting, growing and harvesting of Iowa's agricultural products. It is projected that the need will be as great if not exceed the PY2014 opportunities in Iowa. Current

projections when meeting with Ag employers put the need at least at 11,400. Many of these opportunities will be filled through FLCs.

### ***Available Resources for Outreach***

Iowa's Outreach Specialists will continue to reach out to agriculture employers employing migrant and seasonal workers and meeting with workers to present workforce services. OS will utilize the Workforce System resources to reach out to those workers who do not have the means to visit a local One-Stop center in order to receive workforce services. Resources the OS currently have access to include: database on Ag employers and FLCs; local One-Stop center staff meetings; Iowa's Labor Exchange system, IWorks; partnership opportunities with National Farmworker Jobs Program grantee, Proteus and the Iowa Department of Education MSFW Youth Education program; community resource connections; and H2A job placement request.

#### *Active Database of Ag Employers and FLC's.*

Each OS is responsible for updating Iowa's employer/FLC statewide database. This tool provides information on the current and projected hiring needs of Ag employers and FLCs in order to better assist those workers seeking opportunities with employers needing a workforce.

#### *Attend One-Stop Center Staff Meeting*

OS staff attend local staff meetings in the offices that reside within the Service Delivery District each are assigned. These are information sharing events of resources available at One-Stop locations and workforce system partners. This information is shared with the farm workers and Ag employers. Each OS has access to calendar of events related to Job Fairs, workshop offerings, credentialing opportunities, and other center workforce offerings. OS staff keep One-stop center staff informed on farm worker and Ag employer needs in order for center staff to assist during peak season events and to ensure appropriate referrals to supportive services are provided.

#### *Labor Exchange System, IWorks*

OS staff utilize the labor exchange system to create worker profiles to provide targeted service information and employment offerings, make referrals to supportive service entities, and identify credentialing opportunities for farm workers. OS will also update employer profiles to keep One-Stop Business Service staff are aware of contacts made and services being provided to reduce duplication of efforts.

#### *Partnership Opportunities with NFJP Grantee and Iowa Department of Education*

OS staff have established partnerships with the NFJP grantee, Proteus and frequently conduct co-outreach activities; keep communication open to ensure invitations to all On-boarding events are represented by both entities, and regularly attend outreach meetings that include several local community and agency representatives. Over the past fiscal year, OS partnered with the Iowa Department of Education to locate students in primary and secondary education levels who may be traveling with their families. The initiative is to keep students from losing education coursework and credits which may prolong or prevent them from obtaining their high school diploma or equivalent. OS staff conducted co-outreach efforts with the recruitment coordinators to further encourage educational credentialing specifically related to basic education.



### *Community Resource Connections*

Each of the OS has a database of local community resource connections in their assigned areas. These local advocacy groups, charity organizations, faith based organizations and other entities provide assistance with supportive services to farm workers when they arrive, during their stay, and help them prepare for departure. Many migrant farm workers arrive in Iowa without the basic essentials such as transportation, food, weather appropriate clothing, and little if any family connections. For those farm workers desiring to make Iowa their permanent residence, the community resources assist with locating housing, schooling for children while the OS will work with partners in the One-Stop Centers to identify long-term employment opportunities.

### *H2A Requests*

Several Ag employers utilize the H2A Foreign Labor Certification process to bring farm workers to Iowa to assist with the farm work related employment opportunities. The OS will conduct the pre-employment housing inspections to ensure workers arriving have safe living arrangements. Iowa is in the process of creating a Housing Handbook for employers who provide housing to the migrant farm workers they contract with who perform seasonal farm work duties. Most FLCs utilizing the H2A program have a diverse mix of H2A Visa workers, migrant workers from other states, and current seasonal workers currently residing in Iowa. Regardless of where the farm workers' primary residence is, the OS provide information on worker rights and the complaint system.

### *Outreach Activities*

#### *Proposed Strategies*

Iowa Workforce Development serves the agricultural community through its outreach program designed to contact MSFWs who are not being reached by normal intake activities conducted at the local Workforce Services sites.

Through a targeted approach, Iowa OS have increased their focus on referrals of farm workers to Workforce Services provided at the local One-Stop locations. OS are actively working with Ag employers to identify permanent employment opportunities and encourage employers to consider employing workers they have hired on a seasonal basis who desire to make Iowa their permanent home.

Iowa plans to continue to strengthen cooperative partnerships with our National Farmworker Jobs Program grantee, Proteus and the Iowa Department of Education to conduct outreach activities to enhance the service offerings to MSFWs.

The Agricultural Outreach strategies in many ways mirror Iowa's Unified State Plan strategies:

### *Accessibility*

OS will meet with farm workers in locations where they gather, work, reside, or attend community events. OS will make referrals to appropriate community resources, are fluent in both written and oral Spanish/English to be able to accurately communicate available resources to assist them in their employment needs, and OS have access to print and electronic resources to discuss workforce services.

MSFWs have multiple barriers to gaining permanent employment. Many are accustomed to migrating from region to region, state to state, nation to nation based on the planting, growing, harvesting

seasons of agriculture products and consider this a way of life. OS will continue to partner with the Iowa Department of Education to identify youth to assist with educational needs and partner with the National Farmworkers Job Placement grantee, Proteus, to identify adult farm workers desiring to increase credentialing. In addition, OS will make referrals to assist with social service support needs, and work with Workforce System partners to address additional identified barriers.

#### *Sector Partnerships & Career Pathways*

OS will continue to engage Ag employers to identify and address hiring needs of seasonal and permanent positions. Recent examples include Strategies that will be further developed include engaging Ag employers in partnership with WIOA, Wagner-Peyser, and local advocacy group partners to increase the use of MSFWs as a pool of available labor for permanent employment opportunities specifically in transportation which is a high-demand, high-wage occupation in many areas of the state. Utilizing local WIOA staff and NFJP grantee staff to assist in certificate training for truck driving, some Ag employers are even covering the cost of coursework then hiring the MSFW on a permanent basis. The MSFW program in Iowa plans to increase these types of collaborative efforts with Ag employers in all areas of the state. Each of the OS will continue to work with Ag employers in their Districts to identify skill demands in order to bridge the connection to a diverse workforce population.

#### *Integration*

Iowa operates under an Integrated Service Delivery model to ensure all customers are afforded a comprehensive blend of services designed to jointly place them into full-time, non-seasonal employment or upgraded agricultural employment. The One-Stop centers are heavily engaged in a number of job services activities including the recruitment efforts of domestic workers to H-2A vacancies by utilizing resources available that are group focused or individual, in printed and electronic format, and are presented in a variety of service delivery formats:

Sending IWorks letters (emails) that enable site staff to create and send formatted letters/e-mails to job seekers who are registered in IWorks including job offers, job opportunities, and targeted recruitment letters/e-mails;

Performing various recruitment activities, including outreach, to find and refer qualified domestic workers in order to fill H-2A job openings; and

Assisting with resume searches and site staff mediated services that encourage agricultural employers to publish their job openings using the agency's Employment Exchange system to fill their job openings locally, and/or through the H-2A program if necessary.

#### *Integrated Education and Training*

Many of the MSFWs are in need of obtaining basic education credentialing or short-term certification to move to permanent employment. Their primary barriers are time, since many work the fields from sun-up to sun-down and language to better learn and comprehend information presented. For many, English is not their primary language. There are some MSFWs traveling to Iowa or around the state desiring to enter into business on their own, in farming or other industry sectors. OS will continue to make referrals to local community resources, and workforce system partners to empower farm workers in developing entrepreneurial skills

## **Outreach Goals**

### *Job Development Contacts:*

In order to provide adequate services to workers, the OS staff and SMA shall continue to focus on increasing job development contacts and ensure worker safety by conducting field checks.

### *Employer Engagement:*

Iowa's MSFW program will work to develop strategies to further engage Ag employers' interest in the MSFW program and utilize this employment pipeline to assist in meeting their hiring needs.

### *Supportive Services:*

Increase community connections to supportive services.

### *Trainings:*

Make appropriate referrals to occupational trainings and workforce system partners to increase worker skills.

## **Tools to Conduct Outreach**

Iowa Workforce Development recognizes the importance of the agricultural industry in Iowa and has devoted resources to meet the labor needs of agricultural employers and migrant and seasonal farm workers. Funding for agricultural services comes from Wagner-Peyser and Foreign Labor Certification funds granted to the states annually based on a formula. The Foreign Labor Certification funds are provided by the U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration to Iowa to process foreign labor application requests, conduct housing inspections, conduct agricultural wage and prevailing practice surveys, and collect agricultural crop and labor information.

Iowa Workforce Development has an electronic database of job orders and other workforce services that are accessible through our website which can be accessed by visiting a One-Stop center, utilizing virtual access points across the state, and other mobile devices. Iowa is working to update our website, virtual access points, and mobile device software to include both English and Spanish translation.

OS offer printed brochures in Spanish and English outlining the program services offered at the local One-Stop office to both employer and workers; provide presentations to community partners, employers, and workers on the MSPA worker protections and safety guidelines; make job referrals to workers through email; follow up service inquiries could take place via phone call, mail, email or in-person meetings.

## **Strategies to Provide Services**

### **Coordinating Outreach Efforts**

Iowa's MSFW Outreach Specialists coordinate outreach efforts to farm workers, Ag employers and community advocacy groups through coordinated efforts between the National Farmworker Jobs Program grantee, Proteus; the Iowa Department of Education, Title 1 program; Iowa State University

Extension and Outreach Economic and Community Development program; IowaWORKS Business Outreach Specialists, and WIOA program managers.

This MSFW statewide team is focused on increasing the outreach efforts of each entity as we have common and shared target populations seeking workforce, training, education, and community resources. As a result of this coordination of efforts, this group of state program managers meet at least quarterly to identify methods and resources to assist our shared target population group with the services offered and reduce duplication of services provided.

Each partner has a peak season that may vary or coincide with each other which increases our efforts to ensure adequate referrals and penetration in order to identify farmworkers and Ag businesses in need of specific services. Iowa will continue to conduct co-outreach efforts with our Workforce System partners and increase identification of additional partners as the needs of farmworkers and Ag employers change.

### ***Explanation of Services Through Workforce System***

Outreach Specialists and Workforce System outreach team members will provide agricultural employers information on the services available to them including:

- Assistance to generate IWorks emails that enable each site staff to create and send formatted emails to job seekers who are registered in IWorks including job offers,

- Job opportunities, and targeted recruitment trainings;

- Perform recruitment activities to find and refer qualified migrant and seasonal farm workers in order to fill the labor needs of agricultural employers;

- Providing information about the benefits of becoming a Skilled Iowa employer and the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC).

- Assist with resume searches and on-site-staff mediated services that encourage agricultural employers to publish and fill their job openings using IWorks;

- Provide labor market information with such data as supply and demand, salaries, training requirements, new and emerging occupations, and industry growth;

- Provide Rapid Response services due to plant closure or mass layoffs. These services are offered to workers at the employer's job site and include information on assistance that can be provided at the One-Stop Center.

- A more personalized employer service approach;

- Faster assistance with pre-occupancy inspections for those agricultural employers requesting participation in the inter/intra state recruitment system and/or H2A Foreign Labor Certification;

- Assistance with targeted recruitment, best practices to locate farm workers pools;

- Assistance to Farm Labor Contractors to meet U.S. Department of Labor complaints and regulations;

Workshops tailored to agricultural employers' need;

Information on business tax credits available to employers hiring workers meeting defined targeted population groups with barriers to employment;

Assistance with internet websites links;

Assistance with informal, timely, and appropriate resolutions of complaints and apparent violations;

Assistance with information on employment training programs;

Assistance with information on basic education, literacy, and limited English language services to workers, workers families, and employers;

Assistance with new approaches on agricultural ventures in areas not previously identified as agriculturally active, such as immigrants' and refugees' agricultural backgrounds, co-farm tenants, farmland rentals and the incorporation of new produce that these immigrants used to harvest in their own countries.

OS and Workforce System business services teams provide services to employers on an individual, as needed basis to address their hiring and employment needs. These services are in addition to the IWorks electronic job listing system.

#### ***Complaint Procedures and Notification***

Each One-stop center prominently displays the complaint poster provided by ETA. The State Monitor Advocate and Program Manager conduct training sessions with Workforce System partners to keep the staff abreast on the complaint process. The Complaint System is a topic of discussion with the MSFW Statewide Team to identify methods to reach out to employers and farmworkers to increase awareness.

During farmworker On-Boarding and Orientation events, OS and Legal Aid groups provide materials outlining the Complaint System process and conduct Question & Answer sessions about the Complaint System. During field visits, Ag employer focus group meetings and Farm Labor Contractor meetings, OS explain the process of the complaint system and how it affects employers and areas where informal resolutions can be identified.

#### ***Farmworker Rights***

OS provide the Wage and Hour Division "Farmworker Rights" pocket reference guide printed in both English and Spanish to agricultural workers they make contact with during formal and informal meetings. OS also provide Migrant and Seasonal Protection Act (MSPA) fact sheets and posters for employers to display where workers congregate during working hours. This will be one of the first items the State Monitor Advocate looks for when conducting Field Visits and Checks. The OS will provide their contact information along with the SMA's when conducting outreach to farmworkers so they have an immediate means of reaching out for assistance.

#### ***Urging Workers to One-Stop Center***

During On-boarding and Orientation events, when meeting with workers at community events or where they reside, OS urge farmworkers to take advantage of the services at the One-Stop Centers. OS, One-Stop Business Service Representatives, Proteus, employers and community advocacy groups are reaching out to the Iowa Department of Transportation's Regional Transit Authorities to coordinate transportation services to farmworkers needing to get to a One-Stop for workforce services and community referrals. This has been a pilot project in northwest Iowa with plans to replicate best practices across the state.

For those not able to get to a One-Stop Center, OS are encouraging farmworkers to utilize our services via electronic technology means such as virtual access points, mobile devices, web-based services and based on demands of workers and employers some services can be provided at off-site locations.

### ***Other Requirements***

State Monitor Advocate Review and Comment - coming

Public Comment - coming

### ***Assessment of Progress***

#### *Successes*

In the prior Agricultural Outreach Plan, Iowa set the minimum required target of five (5) contacts per outreach day, we exceed that goal by averaging nine (9) contacts per outreach day. This can be attributed to Iowa's continued partnership with Proteus, the Department of Education, and Iowa State University's Community Outreach program and the MSFW Outreach Specialists' focus on contacting workers.

OS through conversations with advocacy groups, Workforce System partners, farmworkers, and employers were able to better estimate the number of farmworkers in Iowa by nearly 50%. This is a result of establishing consistent and effective communication and relationship building which was a primary focus during the previous plan year.

Iowa increased registration of MSFWs in the Employment Exchange system by 50%. This can be attributed to the efforts of the OS who collected demographic information at On-boarding and Orientation events, Iowa's virtual access points, and mobile technology devices. As a result of the increased registration, Iowa was able to increase the coaching/career guidance services offered to MSFWs.

#### *Areas for Improvement*

Iowa did not meet or exceed the targets for the number of MSFWs referred to jobs, referred to supportive services, referred to occupational trainings, the number of job development contacts or the required number of field checks during the prior plan year.

Iowa experienced considerable vacancies in Outreach and State Monitor Advocate positions which reduced the level of services being offered. This had a great impact on referrals to supportive services, referrals to training opportunities, and field checks. In addition, many of the Migrant workers traveling to Iowa do not desire assistance of workforce services in our state as they are here for the season work

opportunities only and will be returning to their primary state of residence once the opportunities for season employment have ended.

*Remedies*

Iowa needs to be fully staffed with four (4) Outreach staff and one (1) State Monitor Advocate in order to meet the demands of the workers and employers. Moving to a District Service Delivery approach for Outreach coverage should assist in reducing the coverage area for each Outreach staff so they can provide for greater service delivery and reduce the amount of time traveling.

Continuing to increase our communication, coordination, and utilization of our Workforce System partners will provide additional staff support when conducting outreach activities to workers and employers. Iowa will increase our focus on workers who currently reside in Iowa and provide increased efforts to move this pool of worker into more permanent and self-sustaining employment opportunities.

DRAFT

## **Wagner-Peyser Assurances**

The State Plan must include assurances that:

- 1) The Wagner-Peyser Employment Service is co-located with one-stop centers or a plan and timeline has been developed to comply with this requirement within a reasonable amount of time. (sec 121(e)(3));
- 2) The State agency is complying with the requirements under 20 CFR 653.111 (State agency staffing requirements) if the State has significant MSFW one-stop centers;
- 3) 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; and
- 4) State agency merit-based public employees provide Wagner-Peyser Act-funded labor exchange activities in accordance with Department of Labor regulations.

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## Adult Education and Literacy Programs

THE STATE PLAN MUST INCLUDE A DESCRIPTION OF THE FOLLOWING AS IT PERTAINS TO ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY PROGRAMS UNDER TITLE II, THE ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT (AEFLA).

(A) ALIGNING OF CONTENT STANDARDS. DESCRIBE HOW THE ELIGIBLE AGENCY WILL, BY JULY 1, 2016, ALIGN ITS CONTENT STANDARDS FOR ADULT EDUCATION WITH STATE-ADOPTED CHALLENGING ACADEMIC CONTENT STANDARDS, AS ADOPTED UNDER SECTION 1111(B)(1) OF THE ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION ACT OF 1965, AS AMENDED (20 U.S.C. 6311(B)(1)).

Adult education programs offer a student-centered approach, in which instructors help participants set and achieve learning goals. Iowa adult education and literacy programs facilitates student progress by incorporating college and career readiness standards in instruction, sharing best practices and providing ongoing professional development and training for instructors, data specialists and coordinators of programs. Local programs measure educational levels and progress using standardized assessment tools and by following the assessment policy guidelines disseminated to programs annually. Providers record gains using the Tops Enterprise (TE®) online reporting system. The state and local providers use the data to analyze program performance.

All of Iowa's federally funded adult education programs are instituting the federal College and Career Readiness Standards, and have already incorporated the Common Core standards in the high school diploma programs as per Iowa's administrative rule 23.7(1) adopted January 14, 2015:

*b. The development and dissemination of instructional and programmatic practices based on the most rigorous and scientifically valid research available; and*

*c. Appropriate reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, English language acquisition, distance education, and staff training practices aligned with content standards for adult education*

In addition, local educational programs will continue to provide standards-based curriculum, instruction, and assessment focusing on the skills that enable learners to participate more fully within American society as citizens, workers, and family members. Funds will be released to eligible AEFLA programs to support professional development efforts in continued implementation of standards based instruction for 2016-2017.

## Local Activities

DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL, USING THE CONSIDERATIONS SPECIFIED IN SECTION

231(E) OF WIOA, FUND EACH ELIGIBLE PROVIDER TO ESTABLISH OR OPERATE PROGRAMS THAT PROVIDE ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING PROGRAMS THAT PROVIDE SUCH ACTIVITIES CONCURRENTLY. THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN MUST INCLUDE AT A MINIMUM THE SCOPE, CONTENT, AND ORGANIZATION OF LOCAL ACTIVITIES.

Iowa's adult education and literacy programs assist adults in becoming literate and obtaining the knowledge and skills necessary for employment and self-sufficiency, assists adults who are parents in obtaining the educational skills necessary to become full partners in the educational development of their children, and assists adults in completing a secondary school education.

Adult education and literacy programs provide direct and comprehensive services to enrolled adult students. Every provider operates one or more sites in the community college area to meet the unique learning needs of its residents in all 99 counties.

Pursuant to Title II of the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act, eligible students are those individuals who:

- have attained 16 years of age;
- are not enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under state law; and who:
  - lack sufficient mastery of basic educational skills to enable the individual to function effectively in society;
  - do not have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, or have not achieved an equivalent level of education; or
  - are unable to speak, read or write the English language.

The Iowa AEL program requires that all persons be granted equal access to its programs, facilities, and services without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, disability, or sexual orientation. It does not discriminate in:

- Admission to its programs, services, or activities,
- Access to their locations,
- Treatment of individuals with disabilities, or
- Any aspect of their operations.

Core services consist of all levels of basic academic skills instruction for students who meet the eligibility requirements for enrollment; High School Equivalency preparation; English Language Acquisition (ELA); and workforce preparation activities. Adult basic education assists adults in improving educational attainment levels and successfully entering employment and continuing education. The instruction is integrated with 21st century skills, which includes digital literacy, critical thinking and employability skills. Pursuant to administrative rule Adult Education and Literacy 23.2(2) *Program components*, all eligible providers shall maintain the ability to provide the following adult education and literacy services as deemed appropriate by the community or needs of the students:

*(1) Adult basic education;*

*(2) Programs for adults of limited English proficiency;*

- (3) Adult secondary education, including programs leading to the achievement of a high school equivalency certificate or high school diploma;*
- (4) Instructional services provided by qualified instructors as defined in subrule 23.6(1) to improve student proficiencies necessary to function effectively in adult life, including accessing further education, employment-related training, or employment;*
- (5) Assessment and guidance services adhering to the state's assessment policy; and*
- (6) Programs and services stipulated by current and subsequent federal and state adult education legislation.*

*b. Institutions shall effectively use technology, services, and delivery systems, including distance education, in a manner sufficient to increase the amount and quality of student learning and performance.*

*c. Institutions shall ensure a student acquires the skills needed to transition to and complete postsecondary education and training programs and obtain and advance in employment leading to economic self-sufficiency.*

### **Adult Basic Education**

The goal of the Adult Basic Education (ABE) program is to improve students' basic skills in language arts and mathematics. A model ABE program provides comprehensive services to meet the diverse educational needs of students and prepare them to transition to secondary education and job preparation classes.

ABE programs include literacy (reading and writing) and computational skills necessary for functioning at levels comparable to students in the first through eighth grade. Courses may be remedial for students or they may provide educational opportunities for students who speak, but do not read English. These programs are standards-based and are designed to teach the academic skills necessary for success, and to help students become more productive community members. These programs are also designed to help students develop job readiness skills, find employment, advance on the job, or enter adult secondary education classes.

### **English Language Acquisition**

Within the English Language Acquisition program, students are placed in appropriate skill-level classes through assessments of general language proficiency. There are six levels of instruction:

beginning literacy, beginning low, beginning high, intermediate low, intermediate high, and advanced. The assessments for progressing from one level to another measure both general language proficiency and specific standards mastered. The key objectives for adult education English language acquisition are to:

- Provide stress-free and comfortable learning environments in order to reduce anxiety that interferes with obtaining language fluency
- Integrate language acquisition with relevant life experiences stressing the importance of critical thinking, problem solving, and self-sufficiency
- Use proficiency standards for assessing the major accomplishments of the students
- Develop students' receptive English language skills of listening and reading comprehension
- Develop students' productive English language skills of speaking and writing
- Provide students with the ability to use English that is accurate and appropriate in a variety of academic and social settings
- Provide students with English language and citizenship instruction necessary to successfully complete the citizenship application and interview process

#### **Adult Secondary Education**

The primary goal of the Adult Secondary Education (ASE) programs is to provide a curriculum that enables adults to attain a Iowa high school equivalency diploma. The ASE programs are performance oriented and deliver instruction through processes that facilitate, measure, and certify learning outcomes. Programs are conducted within flexible time limits, are relevant to the practical needs of adults, and teach the skills and knowledge necessary for self-sufficiency and employment.

#### **Integrated Education and Training**

Integrated Education and Training (IET) is defined as an education model that “combines occupational skills training with adult education services to increase the educational and career advancement of participants. In programs that deliver IET, adults participate in both occupational skills training and adult education services at the same time.”

Through the adult education professional development leadership contractor, modules on IET are offered as a facilitated online course. The modules take educators and agency administrators through the process of developing plans for implementing one of four instructional models. These models integrate basic skills (i.e. ELA or ABE) with technical or occupational skills instruction.

Specific objectives for the IET are 1) analyze and cite reasons for implementing IET models after reviewing various resources; 2) define key terms and components of IET models; 3) assess the degree of readiness to implement an IET model; and 4) identify which IET models are best suited for the students and identify next steps to begin to implement them. Finally, effective implementation of a comprehensive IET model requires well-planned and integrated coordination of the program structure, student support services, and classroom activities. The IET training modules provided below are several options for agencies to choose the best method to meet their adult students' needs.

1. **Co-Teaching:** The co-teaching model involves skills instruction in a particular in demand sector along with basic language instruction, delivered in an integrated fashion. Team teaching and co-teaching are the main strategies used to deliver the curriculum. The language and basic skills instructor deliver literacy and language education while the

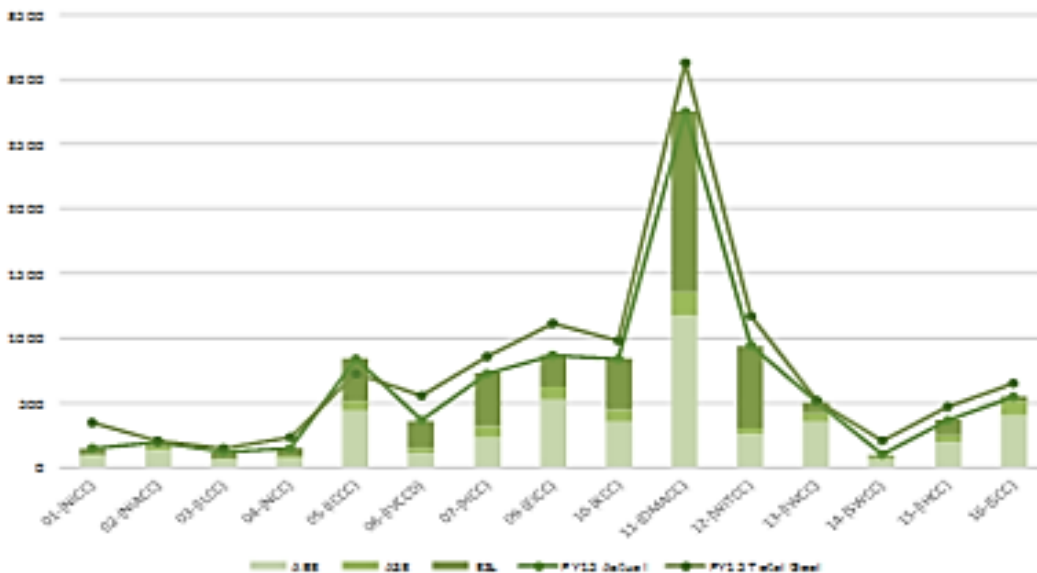
technical instructor teaches the related certificate or credentialing skills. After completion of the class, students are better prepared to transition to a related advanced class or employment through a career pathway.

2. **Alternating Teaching:** In alternating teaching, students enroll in two different, but coordinated courses. For example, students interested in healthcare careers might also attend a basic skills class. This class may incorporate important components of jobs, such as customer service and patient care, etc., along with basic language or reading skills. After attending the basic skills class, students go to a technology class to learn the digital literacy skills necessary to be successful in the workforce.

The IDOE will promote participation in adult education and family literacy programs through campaigns which include, but are not limited to, initiatives including workplace programs, and career pathway development programs, by promoting research based practices and public and private sector partnerships to inform the public about adult education, literacy, and family literacy services. The One-Stop System will be used as a vehicle to identify available educational and employment services, fiscal and human resources, and other client services to help this targeted population become literate and economically self-sufficient. The key objectives for core services to promote accountability and transparency in investing in adult education and aligning performance accountability (enrollment, level gains, and core outcomes) to guide strategy development, and drive continuous quality improvement are as follows:

Iowa's Adult Education and Literacy program supports efforts to increase enrollment and retention by urging programs to offer flexible schedules, support services and year-round programs in attractive and age-appropriate settings. For program year 2014, a state goal to serve five percent of the total state population without a high school degree, 18 years and older, was started. This represents a 12 percent increase in enrollment in adult education and literacy programs since last year. In addition Iowa is actively raising public awareness of adult education with an initial statewide campaign.

**PROGRAM YEAR 15 ENROLLMENT PROGRESS**  
**JULY 1, 2014 - MARCH 16, 2015**



Iowa launched a branding campaign to promote public awareness of the effectiveness of adult education. This effort has provided support in the transition to the new state's assessment for awarding the high school equivalency diploma, effective January 2014. This statewide effort has been aimed at increasing access to services and connecting participants as quickly as possible to programs.

Providers have been piloting and demonstrating innovative instructional methodologies, from individual to group activities, to meet the diverse needs of adult learners. Adult education programs offer a student-centered approach, in which instructors help participants set and achieve learning goals. Iowa adult education and literacy programs facilitates student progress by incorporating college and career readiness standards in instruction, sharing best practices and providing ongoing professional development and training for instructors, data specialists and coordinators of programs. Local programs measure educational levels and progress using standardized assessment tools and by following the assessment policy guidelines disseminated to programs annually. Providers record gains using the Tops Enterprise (TE®) online reporting system. The state and local providers use the data to analyze program performance.

In addition, through the introduction of STAR (Student Achievement in Reading), managed enrollment has been encouraged in each program to better direct explicit instruction in adult education and literacy classrooms. This approach supports the best practice model through student and instructor survey as well as program performance. Additional programs will be able to onboard this approach once a cadre of state certified trainers are established in Iowa. This shift in classroom management requires a transition period and continual adjustments. Programs are excited about the results in the urban areas but continue to struggle with rural implementation.

The state benchmarks for each educational functioning level (EFL) remains the focus for local programs with performance based funding and a targeted post test rate of 55 percent for each program and each level of students served. This data is reviewed monthly during the coordinator webinar. Training from the state data specialist has made it possible for each program to review local data program wide as well as classroom specific.

Iowa adult education and literacy programs help to ensure that adults have the skills needed to compete in the knowledge-based economy. This is in keeping with increasing economic opportunity and raising the standard of living in Iowa. Iowa's adult education and literacy programs have been associated with community colleges since 1968 and work together to facilitate adult learners' transition to postsecondary education. Pilots have been conducted and will be expanded to partner with credit and non-credit courses to encourage the transition of adult learners to a career pathway. The pilots are designed to increase the number of adult learners earning transferrable credit, marketable credential, and, or entering postsecondary education.

Workplace education programs, defined as literacy services that are offered for the purpose of improving the productivity of the workforce through the improvement of literacy skills, represent a growing trend in Iowa's adult education and literacy programs. In today's economy, employees must continually upgrade their skills to remain competitive. In addition to strong reading, math and communication skills, employees need skills in solving problems, adapting to rapid change and working in teams. Adult Education and Literacy Activities (Section 203 of WIOA)

Onsite workplace education allows workers to apply basic academic concepts to everyday job tasks, resulting in a better trained, more productive workforce. Local programs have been working with

employers to identify skills employees need to be successful in their jobs and design a course of basic skills instruction around these needs. Instructors integrate examples and tools from the work environment to make learning relevant to the participant.

### **Adult Education and Literacy Activities**

#### Workforce Training Activities

Iowa adult education and literacy provides ongoing professional development for adult education and literacy programs on how to integrate job readiness skills into the basic curriculum and incorporate real-world examples from a variety of work settings into academic instruction. Training has included the World Education course, "Integrating Career Awareness at Every Level". Iowa's focus has been to ensure that this integration occurs for English as a Second Language participants as well as with those preparing for High School Equivalency testing. Sessions during our summer conference were dedicated to this topic. The development of the Adult Education and Literacy Plus Pathway pilot will include these elements for each functioning level in addition to workforce training specific to the designated career pathway.

#### High School Equivalency Diploma (HSED)

Iowa's adult education and literacy's high school equivalency preparation activities are focused on assisting adults in the completion of a high school credential. Community colleges and correctional institutions, throughout the state of Iowa, operate 61 HSED testing centers. Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2014, Iowa awarded 3,408 equivalency diplomas.

#### English as a Second Language (ESL)

The total immigrant population in Iowa remains relatively small but increased by 2.5 percent over the past five years. In 2014, ESL services represented 47 percent of the total population served. As part of core services, English literacy services assist adults in becoming literate and obtaining the knowledge and skills necessary for employment and self-sufficiency, assist adults who are parents in obtaining the educational skills necessary to become full partners in the educational development of their children, and assist adults in completing a secondary school education.

All of the funded adult education and literacy programs in Iowa provided ESL services, defined as a program of instruction designed to help individuals of limited English proficiency achieve competence in the English language. ESL classes are offered in a diverse cross section of Iowa counties, from urban areas that have an influx of immigrants from many nations to agricultural counties that have experienced a growth in their ESL population.

Iowa's adult education and literacy programs also makes available, as needed, opportunities for English literacy/civics programs. These programs incorporate English literacy and civics education for immigrants and other students with limited English proficiency to participate effectively in the education, work and civic opportunities of this country. The programs include one or more aspects of civics education and may incorporate distance learning strategies and video services. EL/Civics programs comply with the National Reporting System (NRS) Performance Indicators.

#### Planned Integrated Activities

Collaboration, coordination, and cooperation have been the mainstays of the program from the beginning including: 1) mutual referrals, 2) assessment, 3) tracking client goals and progress, and 4) decisions regarding the planned delivery of services to the client. There has always been strong collaboration with federal employment training programs to help adults prepare for the workforce and

become self-sufficient. Adult education and literacy programs, in their local communities, seek out working agreements with Iowa Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Iowa Department of Human Services, Iowa Department of Workforce Development, adult and juvenile court officials, and other service agencies.

With the increased awareness of the need for a workforce to be able to function in a highly technical environment, more emphasis is being placed on education. The adult education and literacy program has responded to this focus by supplying their services either in business and industry or in the classroom. The program is ready and able to provide:

- Assessment
- Instruction in basic academic skills
- English literacy programs
- Workplace literacy
- Job seeking and retention skills, and
- Communication skills.

(C) CORRECTIONS EDUCATION AND OTHER EDUCATION OF INSTITUTIONALIZED INDIVIDUALS. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL ESTABLISH AND OPERATE PROGRAMS UNDER SECTION 225 OF WIOA FOR CORRECTIONS EDUCATION AND EDUCATION OF OTHER INSTITUTIONALIZED INDIVIDUALS, INCLUDING HOW IT WILL FUND, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF TITLE II SUBTITLE C, ANY OF THE FOLLOWING ACADEMIC PROGRAMS FOR:

ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY ACTIVITIES;

SPECIAL EDUCATION, AS DETERMINED BY THE ELIGIBLE AGENCY;

SECONDARY SCHOOL CREDIT;

INTEGRATED EDUCATION AND TRAINING;

CAREER PATHWAYS;

CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT;

PEER TUTORING; AND

TRANSITION TO RE-ENTRY INITIATIVES AND OTHER POST RELEASE SERVICES WITH THE GOAL OF REDUCING RECIDIVISM.

EACH ELIGIBLE AGENCY USING FUNDS PROVIDED UNDER PROGRAMS FOR CORRECTIONS EDUCATION AND OTHER INSTITUTIONALIZED INDIVIDUALS TO CARRY OUT A PROGRAM FOR CRIMINAL OFFENDERS WITHIN A CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION MUST GIVE PRIORITY TO SERVING INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE LIKELY TO LEAVE THE CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION WITHIN 5 YEARS OF PARTICIPATION IN THE PROGRAM.

The Iowa Department of Corrections has been an excellent partner with Iowa's adult education and literacy programs. One of the Departments' major objectives is to provide educational and career and technical training to these incarcerated youth and adults. Priority shall be given to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program. Hopefully, when they return to society, each will have earned a high school equivalency and/or gained knowledge and skills that will enable them to become productive and responsible members of society. The IDOE will continue to work collaboratively with the Department of Corrections (DOC) in aligning their curriculum and student performance standards, data accountability system, and teacher training with the state-administered Adult Education and Family Literacy Program. The IDOE will continue to encourage and support the delivery of academic programs for basic and functional literacy, workforce readiness skills, high school completion, special education, and family literacy programs to this targeted population.

#### C.1 TYPES OF PROGRAMS



Iowa's adult education and literacy program employs innovative approaches to increase the education levels and self-sufficiency of inmates, while reducing the recidivism rate in Iowa. Corrections programs enrolled 653 participants in Iowa's information management system in PY 2014. Data sharing agreements have been reached and training provided to include all eligible adult education participants in future reporting. This information will be used by both the Department of Education and the Department of Corrections to improve services offered in correctional education programs, to streamline services and to maximize benefits.

Iowa's approach to corrections education enrolls inmates through state correctional institutions and through local correctional facilities. Effective through an MOU and the use of shared state leadership funds, all correctional programs are held accountable to the NRS core indicators (except Employment Placement and Employment Retention) and Iowa's Assessment Policy. Additional funds can be allocated to the correctional programs; however, applications are monitored to assure expenditures comply with the expenditure cap.

Programs will provide adult education instruction at all levels of basic academic skills, for students who meet the eligibility requirements for enrollment. The basic skills instruction for correctional facilities may also integrate life skills, employability skills and computer literacy skills to help inmates acquire necessary abilities to become and remain self-sufficient after leaving prison.

#### **Local Corrections Education**

Adult education and literacy providers with full-service local jails are required to provide adult education at those facilities. Of the fifteen programs this only impact one third of the funded programs. Iowa's adult education and literacy funding formula allows for the enrollment numbers to be used to increase the funding for these programs.

#### **State Correctional Institutions**

Iowa's adult education and literacy services are contracted through the Department of Corrections with five community colleges to provide adult education programs for adult students in nine state institutions. No additional funds from AEFLA are currently being used to supplement the U.S. Department of Correction's adult basic education budget. The Iowa Department of Corrections agreement in partnership with the community colleges and Iowa Department of Education adult education and literacy team establishes the level of staff, curriculum and program standards to be offered in each of the nine state facilities. Funding is provided to assist inmates in acquiring the basic skills and competencies necessary to move from an institutional setting into the workforce and community.

#### **C.2 PRIORITY**

Iowa's adult education and literacy program gives priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave correctional institutions within five years of participation in adult education programs. Students in correctional settings must lack sufficient mastery of basic educational skills, or have not obtained a high school diploma or its equivalent.

(D) INTEGRATED ENGLISH LITERACY AND CIVICS EDUCATION PROGRAM. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL ESTABLISH AND OPERATE INTEGRATED ENGLISH LITERACY AND CIVICS EDUCATION PROGRAMS UNDER SECTION 243 OF WIOA, FOR

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS WHO ARE ADULTS, INCLUDING PROFESSIONALS WITH DEGREES AND CREDENTIALS IN THEIR NATIVE COUNTRIES.

DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL FUND, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF TITLE II, SUBTITLE C, AN INTEGRATED ENGLISH LITERACY AND CIVICS EDUCATION PROGRAM AND HOW THE FUNDS WILL BE USED FOR THE PROGRAM.

DESCRIBE HOW THE INTEGRATED ENGLISH LITERACY AND CIVICS EDUCATION PROGRAM WILL BE DELIVERED IN COMBINATION WITH INTEGRATED EDUCATION AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES.

DESCRIBE HOW THE PROGRAM IS DESIGNED TO (1) PREPARE ADULTS WHO ARE ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS FOR, AND PLACE SUCH ADULTS IN, UNSUBSIDIZED EMPLOYMENT IN IN-DEMAND INDUSTRIES AND OCCUPATIONS THAT LEAD TO ECONOMIC SELF-SUFFICIENCY AND (2) INTEGRATE WITH THE LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM AND ITS FUNCTIONS TO CARRY OUT THE ACTIVITIES OF THE PROGRAM.

IOWA WILL COMPETE FOR EL/CIVICS FUNDS BY JULY 1, 2017. REFER TO SECTION 6.0 PROCEDURES FOR FUNDING ELIGIBLE PROVIDERS FOR ADDITIONAL DETAILS. THIS WILL ALLOW THE STATE TIME TO ESTABLISH THE PRINCIPLES FOR INTEGRATING ENGLISH LITERACY AND CIVICS EDUCATION WITH THE WORKFORCE PREPARATION ACTIVITIES AND WORKFORCE TRAINING THAT WIOA ALLOWS. THROUGH INTEGRATION, CO-ENROLLMENT AND CREDENTIAL ATTAINMENT WILL BE TARGETED OUTCOMES FOR THE ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE POPULATION SERVED.

#### D.1 APPLICATION

The English literacy/civics grant expands services to a rapidly growing immigrant population. As funds permit, programs with a demonstrated need for EL/civics services for their ESL students will be funded to offer targeted EL/civics instruction. The local programs will focus on the four federal priorities – citizenship, naturalization, civic participation and U.S. history and government.

Applications will be accepted through the lowagrants system and include detailed budget, assurances, description of services offered, strategies to address continuous quality improvement, and benchmark attainment. In addition, linkages to labor market demands, career pathway systems and the workforce system will need to be established and clearly defined. Similar to the adult education and literacy grant, the review will be scored and awarded. Funding allocation will follow the pattern of the adult education and literacy funds.

The application process will fit into a larger accountability framework. Program monitoring and evaluation will ensure local programs are meeting performance measures and complying with Iowa's adult education code (Education Department 281-Chapter 23 effective January 14, 2015) and policies, while affording programs the opportunity for self-assessment. This integrated accountability system will give programs the chance to maximize performance and become more competitive when seeking funding.

The IDOE's adult education and literacy team has implemented the following steps to assure that the provisions specified for direct and equitable access are satisfactorily addressed:

local providers must provide assurance in the local application that all students, faculty and other program beneficiaries have equal access to all educational services provided by the provider;

- all local providers must provide special accommodations to meet the special needs of students, faculty or other program beneficiaries; and
- site monitoring with local providers to ensure that all programs are providing the necessary accommodations to meet the special needs of students, faculty and other program beneficiaries.

## D.2 ALLOCATION OF FUNDS

Section 222 (a) of AEFLA requires the state to use not less than 82.5 percent of the grant funds to award grants and contracts. The current funding formula is as follows:

(1) Ninety percent (90 percent) of the funds available shall be allocated based on needs: institutional grant; target limited English proficiency population; and number of enrolled students served.

(2) Ten percent (10 percent) of the funds available shall be allocated based on performance. This year will bring a stronger focus for the state of Iowa on federal benchmarks and core measures. Iowa will be basing the allocation on program year 2013's outcomes and each eligible provider's contribution to the targeted percentages.

The integrated English literacy and civics (EL/Civics) allocation will be based on a funding formula similar to the AEFLA state grant allocation. By incorporating a performance-based funding focus for EL/Civics; Iowa is encouraging local programs to maintain accountability of students served by the grant. The need based element of the funding formula will include EL/Civics enrollment, target EL/Civics population, and an institutional grant for each eligible provider. As time is spent reviewing the process of creating a competitive grant application for EL/Civics, the method for funding will also be reviewed by a committee to determine if performance funding is a viable option. The state AEL staff could recommend a prescribed allocation based on a cost per student with estimated enrollment numbers. Additional funds could be drawn down based on benchmark attainment. This incentive funding with a base allotment could help to ensure new programs follow the assessment policy guidelines with timely data submissions.

Allocation amounts are generated as soon as the amount of available federal funds is known. Annual funding of adult education is subject to availability of funds from the federal government. The IDOE requires each applicant to provide at least 25 percent of eligible matching funds, cash or in-kind, to be used in providing activities allowable under the Title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA). A delay in the receipt of the federal allocation for Iowa may delay the issuance of a contract. These funds are not an entitlement to the eligible provider, but belong to the communities. These funds are to supplement and not supplant the state funds released for the purpose of adult basic education first funded in program year 2014.

## D.4 PROCESS

Adult education eligible providers for the continuation grant will submit local plan extensions through the grant management system, lowagrants. The applications are based on standard procedures and

instructions. Included in the extension are budget, needs assessment, program description, evaluation, staff qualifications, instruction schedules, and assurances.

All eligible applications submitted by the due date are considered and evaluated. Teams comprised of Iowa adult education and literacy team and outside readers (if available) assess the quality of proposals using uniform, standardized evaluation methods.

Once chosen, if all requirements are addressed satisfactorily, then notification from the IDOE will be sent to the contact person. All funded grants will need to provide a detailed budget, needs assessment, program description, evaluation, staff qualifications, instruction schedules, and assurances.

During the review process, Iowa's adult education and literacy applications shall be considered based on the following:

- The degree to which the eligible provider will establish measurable goals for participant outcomes.
- The past effectiveness of an eligible provider in improving the literacy skills of adults and families and the success in meeting or exceeding performance measures, especially with respect to those with the lowest levels of literacy.
- The commitment to serve individuals who are most in need of literacy services.
- Whether or not the program is of sufficient intensity and duration for participants to achieve substantial learning gains and uses instructional practices that research has proven to be effective in teaching individuals to read (such as phonemic awareness, systematic phonics, fluency and reading comprehension).
- Whether the activities are built on a strong foundation of research and effective educational practice.
- Whether the activities effectively employ advances in technology, as appropriate, including computers.
- Whether the activities provide learning in real life context to ensure that an individual has the skills needed to compete in the workplace and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.
- Whether the activities are staffed by well-trained instructors, counselors and administrators that meet the minimum qualifications specified in the IAC 281:23 and access to high quality professional development, including through electronic means.
- Whether the activities coordinate with other available resources in the community, such as establishing strong links with elementary and secondary schools, postsecondary educational institutions, One-Stop Centers, job training programs, and social service agencies.
- Whether the activities offer flexible schedules and support services (such as childcare and transportation) that are necessary to enable individuals to attend and complete programs.
- The maintenance of a high-quality information management system that has the capacity to report participant outcomes and to monitor performance against the eligible agency performance measures.
- Whether the local communities have a demonstrated need for additional English literacy programs.
- Whether assurances are provided to maintain a high-quality information management system as approved by the state, TopsPro Enterprise (TE®), which has the capacity to report participant

outcomes and to monitor program performance against the established benchmarks by adhering to the assessment policy.

- Whether there is collaboration with the One-Stop Centers, and a description of any cooperative agreement (MOU) that the eligible provider has with other agencies for the delivery of adult education and literacy activities that detail any cost sharing agreement.
- Strategies to fulfill one-stop partner responsibilities as described in section 121(b)(1)(A).

#### D.5 ACTIVITIES

Training on integration activities will be conducted during this transition period. Topics will include embedding job readiness and soft-skills training in English literacy training, 21st century skills (digital literacy, financial literacy, critical thinking, and reading and locating information), and life skills (healthcare literacy). Workshops centered around designing coherent units of instruction using one to three lead standards will help to develop the building blocks of the curriculum across the program. Study circles or peer groups will be utilized to refine the lessons and to build additional levels. The model curricula will be responsive to the needs of the participant while still leading to a successful transition to employment or additional training. Therefore, counseling and support services will be an integral part of the process.

(E) State Leadership. Describe how the State will use the funds to carry out the required State Leadership activities under section 223 of WIOA.

Describe how the State will use the funds to carry out permissible State Leadership Activities under section 223 of WIOA, if applicable.

Iowa's adult education and literacy team provides activities such as the operation of professional development programs; the provision of technology assistance, including staff training; program improvement and support; alignment studies with standards and competencies, especially curricula incorporating 21st century skills, workplace readiness activities and phonemic awareness; coordination with other agencies to increase enrollment and successful completion in adult education programs; and linkages with postsecondary institutions.

#### E.1 DESCRIPTION OF NEW REQUIRED ACTIVITIES

Iowa's adult education and literacy team is committed to seamless transition to the required state leadership activities and has identified a number of areas in which services were already being provided through technical assistance or through targeted training. During PY 2016 exploration and expansion for each required activity will be done to ensure the best return on investment for high quality professional development opportunities for funded programs.

#### E.2 ALIGNMENT WITH CORE PROGRAMS AND ONE-STOP PARTNERS INCLUDING THE DEVELOPMENT OF CAREER PATHWAYS (SEC. 223(a)(1)(A))

Alignment studies will need to be initiated at the state level. Identified best practices can be disseminated to local programs with additional conditions in the local application to describe strategies for integration and collaboration. Several working groups have been formed to address the implementation of WIOA and alignment, the removal of duplication and the addressing of gaps has been identified as a high priority in the ranking of recommendations from the Lean mapping event, conducted to capture current practices and project future directions.

State leadership funds were made available in PY 2014 to pilot an Integration Study between an adult education and literacy provider and the local core programs and one-stop center. These funds were made competitive and awarded to a program that was co-located with the one-stop center. Agendas and minutes of the discussions have been shared to capture topic issues, common definitions and strategies to address cross-training of staff.

Iowa was awarded a three-year technical assistance grant, called Moving Pathways Forward: Supporting Career Pathways Integration. This initiative will be customizing technical assistance for participating states in developing and advancing their career pathways systems. The initiative seeks to align previous federal and state investments with current state career pathways efforts. Iowa has received access to resources, tools, and guidance which has supported the identification of specific career pathways need areas. As a result a state advisory board for career pathways and sector boards has been formed to guide further discussion and development of unified definitions, an approval process and performance measures for evaluating effectiveness.

### E.3 ESTABLISHMENT AND OPERATION OF HIGH QUALITY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS (SEC. 223(a)(1)(B))

The dissemination of standards and handbooks has helped in establishing high quality professional development. By incorporating those standards into the grant and the use of professional development standards when applying for state leadership funds at the local level, expectations have become embedded. The evidence-based practices in the STAR reading program and the implementation of standards based instruction through the framework of Standards in Action, along with the use of study circles and peer reviewing have provided local programs examples of required expectation. The adopted Iowa Administrative Code 281:23.7 defines the responsibility of the programs, their requirements and the standards.

### E.4 PROVIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE—DEVELOPMENT AND DISSEMINATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL AND PROGRAMMATIC PRACTICES; ROLE AS A ONE-STOP PARTNER; AND ASSISTANCE IN THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY. (SEC. 223(a)(1)(C)(i-iii))

Currently, communities of practice exist to help disseminate information to providers. Evidence-based instruction in writing, reading, and math has been driven by a cadre of trainers (STAR, numeracy academy and former CASAS writing trainers). In addition, trainers involved with the Center for Adult English Language Acquisition (CAELA) have been able to offer specialized ESL and speaking training and develop strategies to address multi-level instruction. Training in these core subject areas has focused on the lead standards approach, promoted by education expert Dr. Robert Marzano and others, which offers instructors a method for translating standards into curriculum by utilizing three interrelated action steps: identify lead standards; design coherent units of instruction; and conduct lesson studies. Adopting the lead-standards approach brings about greater coherence, provides focus, and ensures that standards are covered in a logical and effective manner.

Surveys have been conducted to establish a baseline of current practices and levels of integration for the one-stop centers. Based on this information, guiding documents will be developed and disseminated to assist eligible funded programs in their roles and responsibilities associated with partnering with the one-stop centers. Trainings will accompany these documents to assist with implementation and help address barriers to ensure seamlessly deliver for the participant.

Online professional development courses make it possible for Iowa's adult education and literacy team to provide information without disrupting local programs' service for adults. Improved consistency of instruction and reduced travel costs for trainers and participants are also important considerations for implementing distance learning. Online courses can be accessed at the convenience of the educator, thereby enabling new instructors to begin learning about their roles and responsibilities immediately. Iowa's adult education and literacy team is continually developing a repository for lesson plans and expanding online professional development courses in adult education. A dynamic PD calendar enables local programs to submit online additional professional development opportunities offered in various regions of the state.

#### E.5 DESCRIPTION OF PERMISSIBLE ACTIVITIES

Additional activities supported by state leadership funds are evaluated against the following criteria:

- statewide implementation, adoption, and diffusion into adult literacy instructional strategies, methodologies and curriculum infusion;
- programs' participation on state leadership committee;
- programs' alignment of professional development to Iowa's Adult Education and Literacy Professional Development Standards <http://bit.ly/IowaDepartmentofEducation>;
- alignment with Iowa Administrative Code (IAC):281.23;
- Implementation of standards based instruction: lead standards approach; designing coherent units of instruction; conducting lesson studies; participating in peer groups; and engaging in classroom observations for continuous quality improvement;
- long-term improvement in program outcomes measured by the state and local program's ability to continually meet the state negotiated benchmark levels; and
- adult learner assistance to effectively meet personal and program literacy goals.

The professional development committee, which consists of local program coordinators, adult education and literacy instructors and state staff, is designed to prioritize and coordinate state level staff development activities. This program year will see a number of changes to professional development as teacher effectiveness strategies are reviewed by the committee. Policy on professional development will help establish adult education and literacy expectations in the state. Professional Development standards will assist programs in providing state approved targeted training that is aimed at improving quality instruction to adult learners. The main targets for Instructional System improvements include:

- Develop and disseminate guidance, documents, and models to align state policy with the qualification of staff and implement instructional standards for classroom management and high quality instructional practices;
- Expand the use of the STAR reading program with each funded program implementing the evidence based strategies in reading instruction; and
- Develop a method of tracking instructor professional development plans that support continuous quality improvement.

- (F) Assessing Quality. Describe how the eligible agency will assess the quality of providers of adult education and literacy activities under title II and take actions to improve such quality, including providing the activities described in section 223(a)(1)(B) of WIOA.

As appropriate, Iowa's adult education and literacy team will visit programs to establish rapport and discuss program management, performance data, professional development needs and program

compliance. Such visits may also follow specific trainings to ensure concepts are being applied in the classroom. Performance data and monitoring visits alert staff to programs that need assistance. In the technical assistance model, staff visit programs that have been identified with a need to develop program improvement strategies. With guidance from Iowa's adult education and literacy team, the local program establishes an improvement plan. The Iowa adult education and literacy team monitors performance closely and makes follow-up visits to ensure improvement plans are implemented. One third of the programs are monitored with site visits annually and the remaining programs receive a "desktop" monitoring. The monitoring tool addresses data collection, instructional practice, benchmark gains, curriculum and lesson plan development, assessment practices, and fiscal management. Additional elements for site visits include classroom observations and student surveys. All monitoring results in a detailed compliance letter which documents findings, recommendations and commendations based on practice and implementation of policy.

## F.1 ANNUAL EVALUATIONS

As part of the Program Monitoring (PM) system, the Iowa Adult Education and Literacy team has developed an instrument tracking the criteria outlined in the WIOA Title II legislation for running an effective and high quality program. The PM process also evaluates fiscal and legal areas of responsibility.

Each local program implemented under the provisions of the act will be evaluated by using formative and summative methods, monitored, and reviewed by the IDOE adult education and literacy team from the Bureau of Community Colleges. Monitoring tools include five sections:

- Financial Monitoring
- Program Management Monitoring
- Data Integrity and Implementation Monitoring
- Teacher Quality Monitoring
- Classroom Observation; and
- Student survey

One third of the programs have an on-site audit conducted requiring formative and summative performance data, copies of program and fiscal policies, and interviews with staff and students to verify compliance with all federal/state mandates and requirements. The remaining 80 percent of the program have a desktop audit which includes Financial, Program Management, and Data Integrity Monitoring. As Iowa has benefited from a state monitoring review conducted February 11-14, 2013 increased attention to data monitoring has been incorporated to ensure local program compliance with AEFLA (Sec. 212).

In addition for on-going assessment purposes:

1. The Iowa AEL requires all agencies to submit ongoing data that reflect student participation levels and progress along with monthly attendance
2. The CDE conducts an annual comprehensive qualitative program survey. This survey is required of all participating agencies and involves practitioner focus groups and interviews of both teachers and students. The results provide recommendations for state level planning and development activities, identify best practices and emerging needs, and help



- focus professional development and training to ensure effective instructional programs for targeted populations in.
3. The Iowa AEL presently incorporates the Core Performance data matching system to track student outcomes in the areas of obtaining or retaining employment, as well as transitioning to postsecondary education or training. Under WIOA, the IDOE in collaboration with the IWD will create an accountability system to track and report the employment follow up required in the new legislation.

In addition to the monitoring tool, the PY16 Iowa Assessment Policy has established the following data requirements:

- Monthly entry of hours of instruction;
- Monthly exiting of students absent from the program for 90 days with no scheduled services;
- Assignment of a college issued identification number;
- Uniform procedures for the collection of student social security number; and
- Monthly review of data integrity reports to implement strategies for program improvement.

Monitoring reports are being tied to continuous improvement plans with required corrective action plans for any findings. The reports highlight the commendations for best practices and recommendations for improvement or initiatives that demonstrate promise.

Through the grant management system, lowagrants, the state adult education and literacy team conducts ongoing desktop expenditure compliance review. This review includes the invoice records, verification of expenditures and a determination of compliance with allowable costs. In addition, there is a mid-year status update form that all adult education and literacy programs submit documenting progress and performance based on their local application.

**ADULT BASIC EDUCATION AND LITERACY PROGRAMS CERTIFICATIONS AND ASSURANCES**

<b>States must provide written and signed certifications that:</b>	
1.	The plan is submitted by the State agency that is eligible to submit the plan;
2.	The State agency has authority under State law to perform the functions of the State under the program;
3.	The State legally may carry out each provision of the plan;
4.	All provisions of the plan are consistent with State law;
5.	A State officer, specified by title in the certification, has authority under State law to receive, hold, and disburse Federal funds made available under the plan;
6.	The State officer who is submitting the plan, specified by the title in the certification, has authority to submit the plan;
7.	The agency that is submitting the plan has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan; and
8.	The plan is the basis for State operation and administration of the program;
<b>The State Plan must include assurances that:</b>	
1.	The eligible agency will expend funds appropriated to carry out title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) only in a manner consistent with fiscal requirements under section 241(a) of WIOA (regarding supplement and not supplant provisions);
2.	The eligible agency will ensure that there is at least one eligible provider serving each local area, as defined in section 3(32) of WIOA;
3.	The eligible agency will not use any funds made available under title II of WIOA for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are not “eligible individuals” within the meaning of section 203(4) of WIOA, unless it is providing programs, services or activities related to family literacy activities, as defined in section 203(9) of WIOA; and
4.	Using funds made available under title II of WIOA to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution, the eligible agency will give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program.

1. [SF424B - Assurances – Non-Construction Programs](http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html)  
(<http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>)
2. [Grants.gov - Certification Regarding Lobbying](http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html)  
(<http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>)

3. [SF LLL Form – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities \(required, only if applicable\)](http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html)  
(<http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>)

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- 4) All provisions of the plan are consistent with State law;
- 5) A State officer, specified by title in the certification, has authority under State law to receive, hold, and disburse Federal funds made available under the plan;
- 6) The State officer who is submitting the plan, specified by the title in the certification, has authority to submit the plan;
- 7) The agency that is submitting the plan has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan; and
- 8) The plan is the basis for State operation and administration of the program;
- 9) The State Plan must include assurances that:
  - The eligible agency will expend funds appropriated to carry out title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) only in a manner consistent with fiscal requirements under section 241(a) of WIOA (regarding supplement and not supplant provisions);
  - The eligible agency will ensure that there is at least one eligible provider serving each local area, as defined in section 3(32) of WIOA;
  - The eligible agency will not use any funds made available under title II of WIOA for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are not “eligible individuals” within the meaning of section 203(4) of WIOA, unless it is providing programs, services or activities related to family literacy activities, as defined in section 203(9) of WIOA; and
  - Using funds made available under title II of WIOA to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution, the eligible agency will give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program.

1. SF424B - ASSURANCES – NON-CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMS

([HTTP://WWW2.ED.GOV/FUND/GRANT/APPLY/APPFORMS/APPFORMS.HTML](http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html))

2. GRANTS.GOV - CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING

([HTTP://WWW2.ED.GOV/FUND/GRANT/APPLY/APPFORMS/APPFORMS.HTML](http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html))

3. SF LLL FORM – DISCLOSURE OF LOBBYING ACTIVITIES (REQUIRED, ONLY IF APPLICABLE)

([HTTP://WWW2.ED.GOV/FUND/GRANT/APPLY/APPFORMS/APPFORMS.HTML](http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html))

## VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

THE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (VR) SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN 31 MUST INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING DESCRIPTIONS AND ESTIMATES, AS REQUIRED BY SECTION 101(A) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973, AS AMENDED BY WIOA:

- (a) INPUT OF STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL. ALL AGENCIES, EXCEPT FOR THOSE THAT ARE INDEPENDENT CONSUMER-CONTROLLED COMMISSIONS, MUST DESCRIBE THE FOLLOWING:
- (1) INPUT PROVIDED BY THE STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL, INCLUDING INPUT AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN, RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE COUNCIL'S REPORT, THE REVIEW AND ANALYSIS OF CONSUMER SATISFACTION, AND OTHER COUNCIL REPORTS THAT MAY HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED AS PART OF THE COUNCIL'S FUNCTIONS;
  - (2) THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S RESPONSE TO THE COUNCIL'S INPUT AND RECOMMENDATIONS; AND
  - (3) THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S EXPLANATIONS FOR REJECTING ANY OF THE COUNCIL'S INPUT OR RECOMMENDATIONS.

The State Rehabilitation Council is a working advisory board providing guidance, direction and recommendations to Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services (IVRS). Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services (IVRS) and the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) met four times in 2015. These dates were February 3rd, May 12th, August 4th and November 10th.

IVRS provided the following information to SRC members at each meeting:

- Administrative Report
- Financial Overview
- Rehabilitation Services Update
- State Plan and Independent Living Update
- Legal Update
- The Iowa Client Assistance Program (ICAP) report

SRC members are also provided detailed updates related to IVRS progress on state plan goals, objectives and strategies. The current SRC structure consists of three sub-committees which include Outreach, Finance and Planning and Evaluation.

Additional activities and/or information shared by IVRS with SRC members included:

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act – WIOA; Community Conversations; Services to Special Populations; Satisfaction surveys; Community Rehabilitation Provider Rate structure; Collaborative initiatives; Employment First; Disability Employment Initiative; Employer's Disability Resource Network; Making the Grade; Ticket To Work/Partnership Plus; Value Stream Mapping; Veterans; Transition Alliance Programs; National Disability Employment Awareness Month; Skills Training opportunities; Project Search; Walgreens Retail Employees with Disabilities Initiative (REDI) and Memorandum of Agreement signed between IVRS and the Iowa Department of Human Services which outlines roles and responsibilities in serving youth under age 24 whom require supported employment services.

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<sup>31</sup> Sec. 102(b)(2)(D)(iii) of WIOA

### **SRC Policy Recommendations:**

IVRS Administration continues to update SRC members with changes proposed under WIOA legislation. IVRS has and will solicit input and request a vote from the SRC prior to policy changes. IVRS is represented on the statewide steering committee discussing the implementation of WIOA in Iowa, and has been a contributor in writing the unified state plan.

In June 2015, the State Rehabilitation Council was provided information on the proposed rules and the impact this may have on policy changes. During that meeting the SRC agreed to the possible policy revisions related to: the continuum of services model; serving the potentially eligible, transition components, and pre-employment transition services; compliance processes with section 511; the infusion of the competitive integrated employment language; changes to the IPE timeframes; and job-driven employer development. They also agreed that certain provisions should not be adopted until the regulations are published to ensure that the policy conforms to those provisions as well as avoiding unintended consequences.

IVRS and the SRC agreed that no action would be taken on serving individuals at risk of losing their job for placement directly into service. Only job candidates that had been placed into employment and require post-employment services would be served in this capacity. At this time individuals who are at risk of losing their job and who have never been served by IVRS must go through the eligibility process and go on a waiting list if they do not meet the priority of service category being served. This may change once the regulations are authorized. Another policy that they determined should not be developed was the 4-year follow along for supported employment. It was determined that this should remain the responsibility of the long term funding sources and currently IVRS has an agreement with the Department of Human Services that this is their responsibility.

The SRC and IVRS discussed the implications to employers and IVRS related to provisions of the Dream Act. It was agreed that individuals who have permission to participate in training and work in the United States due to approval by the Dream Act, may receive services and achieve placement by the date of the expiration on their approval. This is consistent with IVRS policy and RSA regulations that states there is no durational requirement for residency and the individual simply must be available and able to work. If the individual obtains permission to remain in the United States after the expiration date the individual and IVRS may amend the IPE beyond the expiration date.

In November, 2015, the Unified Plan components were discussed, along with the results of the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment at the SRC meeting. Input regarding the proposals by IVRS was sought from and provided by the SRC. During the meeting the SRC discussed the results of the comprehensive statewide needs assessment and the implications for policy related to the key components of the WIOA. The following summarizes the recommendations as a result of the CSNA:

1. **Potentially eligible students** – it was recommended and IVRS agreed that the pre-employment transition services that would be provided to students with disabilities on the caseload would also enhance the skill sets of students who are potentially eligible. In addition, IVRS will primarily serve those who are potentially eligible by meeting with whole groups of students, but would serve individual potentially eligible students if their class schedule does not allow them to participate in classes.

2. **Iowa Workforce Development Integration** – it was recommended and IVRS agreed that IVRS would have staff involved in and supportive of the instructional classes, service teams, and business services so that individuals may gain access and that the workforce programs and services will provide the appropriate accommodations. The Continuum of Services model as it related to integration with the workforce partners was also discussed and approved.
3. **Competitive Integrated Employment** – it was recommended and agreed to by IVRS that the policy related to competitive integrated employment demonstrate a strong emphasis on progressive employment and creating customized employment opportunities for the most significantly disabled youth.
4. **Job-driven model of training** – it was recommended that the Unified Plan should emphasize the job-driven model of training through an informed choice process that respects the unique choices of individuals with disabilities. Discussions on the implementation of STEM professions will continue after the Rehabilitation Services Bureau develops the Comprehensive System of Continuum of Services Model.
5. **Employer Relations** – it was recommended by the SRC and IVRS agreed that the Unified Plan should reflect the participation of IVRS on sector partnerships, as well as the fact that IVRS staff must still work to provide placement opportunities to individuals based on job matches and the more intensive service needs required by the job candidates.

#### **Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment and SRC Operations:**

1. **Community Conversations:** As part of the requirement for public meetings and input, IVRS held Community Conversations in 25 areas of the State of Iowa over the course of the past year, since congress passed the WIOA. SRC members were invited to participate, but only the CAP representative and the CRP representative actually attended the meetings in their areas. The intent of these conversations was to solicit information from an array of diversified stakeholders about ways to enhance service and expand employment opportunities for job candidates of IVRS. The Community Conversations were well attended by local communities with not only service providers and job candidates in attendance, but almost every meeting had members of the business community providing input and ideas. At the June and November 2015 meetings, the SRC considered the information, the suggested strategies the conversations produced, and determined the initiatives and actions infused into the unified plan were appropriate. Information gleaned from the community conversations will be considered by SRC in monitoring the progress of the IVRS state plan.
2. **Services to Special Populations:** Progress on state plans goals are shared by IVRS at each SRC meeting. There is a current goal to “improve outreach and rehabilitation rates for individuals who are unserved and underserved such as individuals who are age 55 and older, and students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing.” IVRS continues to work with the Iowa Department on Aging and Skilled Older Worker program to increase referrals and employment outcomes between both agencies. A lack of funding has stalled the proposed project between the Iowa School for the Deaf and the Iowa Department of Education (DE). IVRS continues to provide input and explore options with DE and internal staff with a goal of improving outcomes for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing populations. IVRS maintains a Cooperative Agreement with the Iowa School for the Deaf in efforts to better serve this targeted population. IVRS worked with the Iowa School for the Deaf in developing a transition process that coordinates services and supports for

students who are deaf as they progress through school and transition into post-secondary options upon graduation. The Iowa Client Assistant Program, which is also represented on the State Rehabilitation Council, developed a short five minute video for IVRS focused at providing outreach to the Deaf community to help create awareness and understanding of VR and the services available.

3. Satisfaction surveys: Satisfaction data continues to be analyzed by SRC members, and as part of a SRC directive, was expanded to solicit information from current cases of individuals receiving services from IVRS. Survey results are shared at regular SRC meetings and reviewed monthly by IVRS management. Last December, a proposal was made by Dr. Darlene Groomes (Professor of Rehabilitation Counseling at Oakland University, Michigan and a former VR counselor) to work with Iowa as one of seven states participating in her research project. Dr. Groomes followed up with face-to-face meetings with IVRS staff and SRC members - and called-in to two SRC meetings to provide an initial review of data. Dr. Groomes spoke to the group about process improvement and how customer satisfaction surveys fit into program evaluation. The survey has three indicators that states have found are important in VR. Her survey, developed in 2012-2013, digs deeper into satisfaction with services. She will be looking at specific quality indicators and employing new techniques to improve services. The survey will run in Iowa for a year. IVRS, during implementation, provided feedback to Dr. Groomes and revisions have occurred in the survey process. IVRS has also taken data from the third quarter and provided training to VR field staff based on seven questions where there was a 25 percent or more gap between the responses of successful and unsuccessful case closures. The training related to continued support for the agency's use of Motivational Interviewing and potential impact on these targeted questions.
4. Collaborative initiatives: IVRS Administrator David Mitchell continued his efforts to solicit feedback from SRC members to explore opportunities to expand or develop partnerships. Progress made by IVRS in various initiatives was reported at each SRC meeting. These have included collaborative efforts established between IVRS and the following entities; the Veteran's Administration, the Employers Disability Resource Network, Manpower (Project Ability), Disability Rights Iowa, Social Security Administration (Ticket-To-Work, Partnership Plus), Project Search, Benefits Planning, the Iowa Association of Community Providers, Iowa's Workforce Development, the Iowa School for the Deaf, Office of Disability and Employment Policy (ODEP) Employment First, the Iowa Coalition for Integrated Employment, Iowa Department of Human Services (including Money Follows the Person and Iowa Medicaid Enterprise), the Iowa Rehabilitation Association, APSE (Association of Persons Supporting Employment First), Developmental Disabilities Council, the State Employment Leadership Network (SELN), Unity Point Diversity Initiative and Walgreens Retail Employees with Disabilities Initiative (REDI).
5. Value Stream Mapping: Additionally, several SRC members participated in a week-long event hosted by the Department of Management referred to as "Value Stream Mapping" (VSM). This involved a process of looking at efficiencies, inefficiencies and duplication within current systems. This process helped determine what Iowa needed to better align systems to ensure employment services are as seamless as possible for shared customers.



6. **Employer Engagement:** The SRC asked for clarification on IVRS responsibilities for developing business relationships within our current system. The IVRS Business Consultant attended a SRC meeting to discuss the IVRS role in working with employers to recruit, train and diversify their workforce. Shared training has been arranged between IVRS with other entities (including Workforce/DEI, Manpower, ICIE, APSE, EDRN and SHRM). IVRS continues to have an expectation for all field staff to be involved in business development. The SRC took a lead role in organizing a series of three webinars and on-site training activities focused specifically at business partnerships. These were available state-wide and highlighted October Disability Awareness activities.
7. **Third Party Cooperative Agreements:** Third party cooperative agreements have been included as part of the ongoing communication between IVRS and the SRC, specific to the sustainability model. The SRC is aware of increased expenditures as IVRS continues to expand third party cooperative agreements.
8. **Legislative Reception:** SRC members hosted their annual Legislative Reception at the State Capitol to provide education and updates and thank legislators for their support of IVRS. Coordinated efforts have occurred between SRC and IVRS to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the National Disability Employment Awareness Month and the Iowa Job Honors program.
9. **SRC Updates:** Staff and partners of IVRS have been asked to share information at SRC meetings. Guest speakers this year have ranged from a representative from Disability Rights Iowa who reviewed mandates under Olmstead and Iowa efforts towards integration; a professor from Drake University who discussed “What Makes an Employer a Good Partner?”; the ICAP who provided an overview of Value Stream Mapping and conversations about accessibility; and Motivational Interviewing by IVRS staff.

SRC members have been provided an overview of IVRS policy, procedures, fiscal reports, agency updates and operational information through the year. Quality assurance plans and performance measures for IVRS staff were reviewed, along with appeal information. SRC meetings were revised four years ago to allow for public comment prior to subsequent agenda items. The public comments that have been presented in the past have been limited to one particular case situation involving the Independent Living Program. IVRS was upheld in this decision through a District Court decision, occurring December of 2014. Copies of all IVRS reports and SRC discussion materials are included on the IVRS website with a link to the SRC

- (b) REQUEST FOR WAIVER OF STATEWIDENESS. WHEN REQUESTING A WAIVER OF THE STATEWIDENESS REQUIREMENT, THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT MUST IDENTIFY THE TYPES OF SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED BY THE PROGRAM ON A NON-STATEWIDE BASIS. THE WAIVER REQUEST MUST ALSO INCLUDE WRITTEN ASSURANCES THAT:
- (1) A LOCAL PUBLIC AGENCY WILL PROVIDE THE NON-FEDERAL SHARE OF COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE WAIVER REQUEST;
  - (2) THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WILL APPROVE EACH PROPOSED SERVICE BEFORE IT IS PUT INTO EFFECT; AND
  - (3) REQUIREMENTS OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN WILL APPLY TO THE SERVICES APPROVED UNDER THE WAIVER.

**Waiver Continuations and New Requests:**

IVRS has a number of third party cooperative agreements with school districts. The Third Party Cooperative Arrangement verifies that project funds provided from the school district are certified as non-federal dollars. IVRS continues to review and approve all services under this arrangement for purposes of maintaining administrative control for program and fiscal responsibilities of the Third Party Cooperative Arrangement. IVRS also certifies that the order of selection policy is applied to individuals receiving services under the agreements and all provisions of applicant status apply as appropriate. All intensive services provided are under an approved IPE and authorized by the responsible IVRS counselor. Effective with the passage of WIOA and the development of policy, potentially eligible students will be able to benefit from the pre-employment transition services in these agreements.

- 1) Project Search: IVRS requests a continuation of the waiver of statewideness for Project Search which had been approved by RSA in the FY2014 state plan. The opportunity to expand Project Search continues to be explored by IVRS with interested parties outside of the Des Moines school district. Additional locations beyond Des Moines (the originating site for Project Search approved under the waiver) currently include Ames and Waterloo, IA. As part of the approval process, IVRS completed an analysis to confirm that Project Search services provided under the TPCA were not currently provided by the school district to students with disabilities. Project Search primarily serves the most significantly disabled and IVRS promotes this as an opportunity for students to achieve competitive integrated employment instead of moving into extended employment.

Before involvement in Project Search, IVRS provides a comprehensive assessment for eligibility and employment planning. All IVRS services are available to eligible participants. These services are enhanced and complimented through Project Search and their comprehensive efforts at providing specific on-the-job community support, necessary to complete rotational community work experiences in the hospital setting for nine months. This support is done in conjunction with the development of work readiness skills occurring in an integrated classroom setting at the work-site along with specific work and academic competencies based upon individually chosen job sites. The key components of the Project Search model involve an extensive period of training and career exploration, innovative adaptations, long-term coaching, and continuous feedback from teachers, job coaches, and employer.

IVRS developed the Project Search Third Party Cooperative Arrangement (TPCA) which served to contribute to increased employment outcomes for eligible VR high school students from the Des Moines School District with the most significant disabilities, with a focus on those whose diagnosis consisted primarily of Intellectual Developmental Disability. The School District committed to using non-federal share dollars for the Project. This is currently the only Project Search of its kind in the State of Iowa, although additional projects are being considered. The Waterloo area is investigating the possibility of a Project Search as well.

According to one of its founders, "The Project Search model yields excellent employment outcomes by providing framework for public and private entities to collaborate and deliver services in a coordinated and productive manner. This collaboration allows for total workplace immersion, which facilitates a seamless combination of classroom instruction, career exploration, and relevant job-

skills training. Project Search is cost-effective and self-sustainable because it leverages the existing funding streams and expertise of partnering organizations in education, vocational rehabilitation, developmental disabilities services, and other agencies.”

Service outcomes include participating youth obtain training necessary to gain marketable skills that will enable them to secure competitive employment. This goal is achieved by offering participating youth real-life work experience combined with training in employability and independent living skills to help make successful transition from school to productive adult life. Independent living and social/life skills are addressed to ensure compatibility and fit for work readiness and daily living activities. IVRS also partners with six other Project Search programs across the State of Iowa. Project Search is a career pathway on the job training program for the most significantly disabled student and provides training in STEM related careers when it is part of a high school program. Collaborative efforts include referral, service provision and funding. These occupational skill training programs have demonstrated effectiveness in bridging the gap through providing work place immersion with education/employment supports for individuals with the most significant barriers to employment. IVRS is monitoring data outcomes and will be sharing that with our community providers as part of our Quality Assurance Process.

2. Transition Alliance Program: The Transition Alliance Program (TAP) which RSA approved in 1997 under a Waiver of Statewideness continues to be explored in other areas of the Iowa. TAP is jointly funded by a school district and IVRS. Each TAP provides enhanced transitional services to eligible IVRS clients who require year-round support up to age 25. All TAP contracts include information related to Order of Selection/IVRS Wait List, and outline non-federal provisions and match dollars accordingly. TAP Outcomes are included on page 31. IVRS confirms that the requirements of the VR services portion of our Unified State Plan will apply to the services under the waiver. IVRS also certifies that the order of selection policy is applied to individuals receiving Project Search, Making the Grade, and TAP services under this waiver.

(c) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH AGENCIES NOT CARRYING OUT ACTIVITIES UNDER THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM. DESCRIBE INTERAGENCY COOPERATION WITH AND UTILIZATION OF THE SERVICES AND FACILITIES OF AGENCIES AND PROGRAMS THAT ARE NOT CARRYING OUT ACTIVITIES THROUGH THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM WITH RESPECT TO:

- (1) FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL AGENCIES AND PROGRAMS;
- (2) STATE PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT UNDER SECTION 4 OF THE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 1998;
- (3) PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT BY THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE;
- (4) NONEDUCATIONAL AGENCIES SERVING OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH; AND
- (5) STATE USE CONTRACTING PROGRAMS.

IVRS has been involved in cooperative relationships with many Federal, state and local agencies and programs for many years. Those include:

1. Veterans Administration – IVRS has a long standing agreement with the VA which was updated in FFY14. This agreement spells out the referral process, which agency will be responsible for which services, the inclusion of each other’s employees in staff development activities, and the identification of key liaison individuals.
2. Department of Human Services – This is a general agreement between DHS and IVRS which allows and encourages interaction between the two agencies around individuals with whom we both work. It relates to referrals, joint planning, office space, shared funding and related activities. An IVRS staff person is a required member of the Iowa Mental Health Planning Council, a group that represents a cross-section of constituencies and interest groups. Over 50% of its members must be consumers, family members, advocates, and others who are not state employees or providers. The duties of the council are to advocate for adults with a serious mental illness and children with a serious emotional disorder and to monitor, review, and evaluate the allocation and adequacy of mental health services within the State.
3. Governance Group -- Leaders of eight departments developed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) to support collaborative service design to increase employment outcomes for individuals with the most significant disabilities. The eight agencies are Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation, Iowa Department for the Blind, Iowa Workforce Development, Iowa Department of Human Rights/Division for Persons with Disabilities, Iowa Department of Human Services, Iowa Department of Education, the Iowa Department of the Aging and Iowa Governor’s Developmental Disabilities Council. The Partners agree to support all their local offices in adopting the MOA Objective and Strategies to increase employment outcomes for Iowans with disabilities through state and local collaboration, maximizing resources and minimizing duplication in the support for competitive, community integrated employment outcomes.
4. The Employer Disability Resource Network (EDRN) - is a collaborative group of state, federal and private partners working together to identify, develop and mobilize resources, supports and services that add value to Iowa businesses hiring persons with disabilities. EDRN Partners include Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services; Iowa Department for the Blind; Deaf Services; Division of Persons with Disabilities; Veterans Administration; Social Security Administration; Iowa Workforce Development; U.S. Small Business Administration/SCORE; Goodwill Industries of Central Iowa. EDRN provides Iowa employer’s access to qualified applicants, enhances the available labor market by combining on-the-job training, internships and classroom experiences for high-demand occupations and serves as a resource for up-to-date information about disability employment issues for the business community.
5. Youth Leadership Forum, College Leadership Forum, – Along with several other state agencies IVRS has participated in efforts to provide Summer leadership development opportunities for 40 high school or college students with disabilities since 1999.

6. University of Iowa - IVRS also has an agreement with the University of Iowa Program for Assistive Technology and Easter Seals Iowa Assistive Technology Center. This outlines responsibilities for personnel providing rehabilitation and independent living services to persons with disabilities with the support of assistive technology and assistive technology services. It establishes parameters for how we provide assistive technology devices and services authorized with a minimum of expense or duplication of effort. IVRS also has an agreement with the University of Iowa and Drake University related to the professional preparation program in Rehabilitation Counseling. IVRS agrees to provide practicums and internships, and advertise openings with the university in order to recruit new talent into IVRS.
7. Developmental Disabilities Council - IVRS has a team member serve on the Iowa Developmental Disabilities Council. The DD Council's focus is to arm those who are affected by disability with the information, skills and confidence to stand up and take action; to offer solutions, and be a driving force for the change they want to see.
8. Iowa Transportation Council - IVRS also as a team member serve on the Iowa Transportation Coordination Council. Chaired by staff from the Iowa Department of Transportation's Office of Public Transit, the ITCC meets every other month discussing such issues as mobility management, accessibility of transportation in Iowa, State Transit Assistance Special Project Proposal applications pertaining to coordination, and the encouragement of state and local agencies' involvement in the passenger transportation planning process. Having grown considerably from the three original member state departments, the ITCC now boasts membership from statewide organizations, state departments, and federal groups.

(d) COORDINATION WITH EDUCATION OFFICIALS. DESCRIBE:

- (1) THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S PLANS, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES FOR COORDINATION WITH EDUCATION OFFICIALS TO FACILITATE THE TRANSITION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES FROM SCHOOL TO THE RECEIPT OF VR SERVICES, INCLUDING PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES, AS WELL AS PROCEDURES FOR THE TIMELY DEVELOPMENT AND APPROVAL OF INDIVIDUALIZED PLANS FOR EMPLOYMENT FOR THE STUDENTS.
- (2) INFORMATION ON THE FORMAL INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT WITH THE STATE EDUCATIONAL AGENCY WITH RESPECT TO:
  - (A) CONSULTATION AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO ASSIST EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES IN PLANNING FOR THE TRANSITION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES FROM SCHOOL TO POST-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING VR SERVICES;
  - (B) TRANSITION PLANNING BY PERSONNEL OF THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AND EDUCATIONAL AGENCY THAT FACILITATES THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THEIR INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS;
  - (C) ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES, INCLUDING FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES, OF EACH AGENCY, INCLUDING PROVISIONS FOR DETERMINING STATE LEAD AGENCIES AND QUALIFIED PERSONNEL RESPONSIBLE FOR TRANSITION SERVICES;
  - (D) PROCEDURES FOR OUTREACH TO AND IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES WHO NEED TRANSITION SERVICES.

Local Education Agencies (LEA) – This is the formal term for local school districts. IVRS has developed arrangements with local school districts regarding referrals, seeing clients in the school, participating in

IEP staffing's, provision of pre-employment transition services, serving eligible students/youth as well as potentially eligible students, and various other activities In Iowa, every high school has an IVRS counselor formally assigned to serve that school. Counselors can provide consultation that includes information and referral assistance, to benefit clients who are eligible but awaiting services from IVRS.

IVRS has a written agreement with the community colleges which calls for IVRS staff to be housed on campus and have ready access to students and faculty. In a few settings, staff are provided space to use when they regularly visit the campus, since they do not have permanent office space available. In many community colleges space has been allocated for a Rehabilitation Associate or a Counselor and they are members of the disability resources on campus. In one instance, the IVRS area office is located on a community college campus. IVRS recognizes that these agreements need to be updated and will work to achieve this over the course of the next few months.

Specific staff are assigned to each of the three Regents Universities in Iowa. Staff have ready access to students, faculty and administration in these settings. There is an Agreement between IVRS and the Iowa Board of Regents.

The agreement between Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services and the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education outlines shared responsibilities between IVRS and the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education to prepare youth with disabilities for successful competitive, integrated community employment.

IVRS and the Iowa Department of Education have developed a Memorandum of Agreement that expands beyond the previous agreement and provides greater direction and support to the local IEP teams. This agreement will continue to describe roles and responsibilities and will also describe financial obligations as well as a process to address section 511 effective July 1, 2016.

Iowa also has a team member serve on the Special Education Advisory Board, which discusses outcomes and policies related to students and youth in transition. The purpose of IVRS involvement is to connect with schools for transition, provide guidance on policy development and strategies for student outcomes, while also providing information that impacts the most significantly disabled students/youth as it pertains to Section 511 of WIOA.

IVRS and the Iowa Department of Education are currently working on a shared data dashboard that will assist both IVRS and local high school districts to better understand the level of collaboration occurring between the two. This dashboard will outline the number of potentially eligible students on an Individual Employment Plan and compare that to the number of students who have been referred to IVRS. It will also outline outcome data such as students participating in post-secondary training, employment outcomes, hours worked, and hourly wages for students connected to IVRS. Also outlined on the dashboard will be Indicator 14 data collected by the Department of Education so that a comparison can be made between the outcomes of IVRS participants and those not connected to IVRS. This dashboard will help identify schools that are succeeding and schools that need improvement in their collaboration with IVRS. This will allow the two programs to target these schools for development of practices that will assist in successful outcomes for students with disabilities.

IVRS is currently serving on an Iowa Department of Education Statewide Planning team that is exploring how to better serve all students in schools. Part of the planning focuses on parent engagement with Iowa Unified State Plan, Draft 2, v: January 14, 2016

both the high schools and IVRS. Through this team, IVRS is hoping to identify strategies to better engage parents through resources such as Parent Educator Networks and ASK Resources. IVRS is also looking at developing a website for parents to encourage engagement. IVRS is also involved with ASK Resources and the Special Education Directors in developing webinars and trainings for parents as it pertains to Section 511.

Collaboration Transition Protocol (CTP) is a process that was developed by IVRS, the Iowa Department of Education, and the Area Education Agencies (AEA) throughout Iowa. In 2015, the CTP process was redesigned and re-named (Collaborative Outcomes for Students) to move the focus away from IVRS eligibility and toward improving collaboration at the local level throughout the state to achieve outcomes. While IVRS has demonstrated through the CTP that students were linked with IVRS and determined eligible with 100% accuracy, the outcomes in terms of employment were disappointing (status 30s were significant). The process is changing from being offered to select schools to being available to all high school districts in Iowa. The new process will allow expanded local control over the plans on how to improve collaboration between these three agencies and achieve outcomes for students. A Steering Team was developed to review both qualitative and quantitative data to determine which school districts are struggling with collaboration and student outcomes. Based on their findings, a recommendation will be made to local teams consisting of: the IVRS Supervisor, IVRS Resource Manager, AEA representative, and local school district administrator. Teams will review the information and develop a plan of action to improve collaboration to provide better outcomes for students with disabilities. By moving decisions to local planning teams, better plans and better services for students with disabilities is anticipated.

IVRS will serve the potentially eligible student as defined by the legislation similar to the integration and continuum of service model described under the heading of Continuum of Services for Students and Youth with Disabilities. The various pre-employment transition services will be provided to students who are potentially eligible, who are in the cooperative agreement projects, and who are on the IVRS waiting list for services. This new model will, as it is infused into our system, ensure that only those individuals who require intensive services are determined eligible and receive IVRS intensive services. During the past 4 years IVRS has recruited students as early as the sophomore year into the caseload, since the only way to provide pre-employment transition services was if the individual was eligible for services and off the waiting list. Through the Quality Assurance Process, there have been a few cases that were recruited as first semester sophomores, determined eligible within 60 days, but at their second semester junior year or senior year of school have been staffed out and no longer demonstrate the academic discrepancy originally observed at eligibility. With this new model, IVRS can provide the Pre-Employment Transition (PETS) services to potentially eligible students, not only to positively impact their lives but also as an assessment time to give the student ample opportunity to mature and grow. In this manner, IVRS will then only recruit those students into the caseload when it is clear from the PETS experiences that the student requires more intensive services to be successful and will need IVRS assistance to prepare for, obtain, maintain, or advance in employment. This is a new thought and structure for IVRS staff and will take time for them to fully understand and implement the new model with fidelity.

The implementation of service delivery of Pre-Employment Transition Services to potentially eligible students creates an excellent opportunity to collaborate with secondary education professionals as well

as staff from other core programs with a vested interest in service to this demographic. However, this opportunity also creates an obstacle in that there is no common system to collect data on the provision of these services. The Iowa Department of Education owns and manages a data system called Iowa TIER. The system has the capability to house universal screening, intervention, and progress monitoring data for every student in the state. This system appears to be the most viable option available to record and collect data relevant to the delivery of PETS services. IVRS is collaborating with the Department to use this data system to record and track Pre-Employment Transition Services (PETS) provided to potentially eligible students. Benefits to using the Iowa TIER system include:

- Reduction of data-entry by IVRS Staff;
- Centralize data collection related to pre-employment transition services provided by local education agencies and IVRS while reducing duplicative data entry;
- Connect with other data in the system to evaluate the effectiveness of the IVRS and DE collaboration.

The following issues have been identified:

- The Department of Education's funding stream has been exhausted so funding sources will need to be identified for development of PETS tracking.
- LEA and IVRS staff will need to be trained on how to access the system and enter data.
- The IVRS Case Management System (IRSS) will need to be developed to include placeholders for PETS data needed for reporting purposes.
- IVRS and the Department will need to develop a batch process to import the data into IRSS.

*New strategies for addressing these issues:*

- The IRSS Priority Management Team (PMT) will identify and develop fields needed for PETS reporting.
- The IRSS Priority Management Team (PTM) will work with Department of Education IT staff to develop a batch process for data collection.
- Rehabilitation Services Bureau Management will collaborate with DE to provide training to IVRS and LEA staff.
- IVRS has currently identified an internal tracking system for PETS and this will continue until success is demonstrated from the previously described collaborative efforts.

The National Disability Rights Network estimates that as many as 50% of prisoners have mental illness or other types of disabilities. More alarmingly, the National Center on Education, Disability and Juvenile Justice claims that more than one in three youths who enter correctional facilities have previously received special education services. Early intervention is a key prevention strategy to keep individuals with disabilities from entering the penal system. Under WIOA, IVRS now has the ability to work with groups of students who are potentially eligible to provide pre-employment transition services. This change in legislation allows staff to broaden outreach in the secondary setting to help students in transition explore vocational options, engage in work-based learning opportunities, receive workplace readiness training to develop social and independent living skills, and learn how to advocate for themselves. Students who require the more intensive services of IVRS will be recruited to complete the application process. Engagement in PETS will afford students with disabilities the opportunity to identify



a vocational goal, structure their curriculum to prepare for acceptance in post-secondary training, and eventually acquire employment that meets their future financial needs. Providing an avenue for students with disabilities to attain employment in a high-paying occupation will systematically break the cycle of poverty, thus reducing the potential of incarceration as well as reducing many other identified barriers to employment such as lack of work history and/or work experience, lack of educational or occupational skills, welfare dependency, and homelessness. IVRS anticipates that working with the potentially eligible students, and encouraging the GEAR UP program (as described below, page 37) in the communities in which it is offered will also create a positive impact with fewer students lost to the correctional services.

(e) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH PRIVATE NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS. DESCRIBE THE MANNER IN WHICH THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY ESTABLISHES COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH PRIVATE NON-PROFIT VR SERVICE PROVIDERS.

IVRS develops cooperative agreements with private, non-profit entities to provide specific services under the State Plan and in the past this has related to Establishment Grants which fostered new service delivery in areas of need. The last Establishment Grants performed were in 2011. The non-profit organization agrees to provide funding that is used to match the federal allocation. Those funds are then awarded to the non-profit entity, consistent with state competitive procedures. The funds are designated for specific services as long as they are provided to eligible IVRS clients consistent with categories of the waiting list that are receiving services. IVRS monitors programs and expenditures for compliance with existing state and federal policies. If a cooperative agreement does not comply with the statewideness agreement, IVRS will obtain a waiver of statewideness. At the current time, IVRS does not manage any of these types of Agreements with Private Nonprofit Organizations.

(f) ARRANGEMENTS AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES. DESCRIBE THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY'S EFFORTS TO IDENTIFY AND MAKE ARRANGEMENTS, INCLUDING ENTERING INTO COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS, WITH OTHER STATE AGENCIES AND OTHER APPROPRIATE ENTITIES IN ORDER TO PROVIDE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES AND EXTENDED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES, AS APPLICABLE, TO INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES.

IVRS has established contractual agreements for the provision of supported employment services with approximately 60 Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs) in Iowa. Agency standards for services must be met for a contractual agreement to be developed between IVRS and a CRP. Prior to arranging for Supported Employment, the IVRS counselor must identify funding for extended services required to maintain employment after the IVRS case file is closed. IVRS has provided funding for Supported Employment Services through a shared funding arrangement with the Iowa Medicaid Enterprise System. IVRS has developed a Menu of Services which serves as an agreement between IVRS and the CRP. The focus of the Menu is on the job candidate's needs which drive the planning and service delivery process. IVRS counselors and job candidates determine which outcomes are needed in order for the job candidate to progress forward in reaching the supported employment goal as identified on the Individual Plan for Employment (IPE). There are specific categories from which the counselor and job candidate may choose one service or a combination of services that lead to supported employment placement and stabilization: - Discovery Services – Workplace Readiness Assessment - Comprehensive Vocational Evaluation - Career Exploration and Job Shadowing - Work Adjustment Training – Occupational Skill Training - Transportation Training - Job Development – Supported Job Coaching. Reports from the CRP describe the quality indicators and benchmarks that were accomplished, in

addition to other pertinent information necessary to enhance vocational success, and the job candidate's and counselor's understanding of the questions asked.

The IVRS counselor and job candidate refer their questions and service requests to the CRP, which determines if it has the capacity to provide answers and work in partnership with the counselor and the job candidate. A team meeting occurs to discuss the plan for Supported Employment services delivery. IVRS is making changes in the alignment and collaboration of service rates through participating the past four years in an Employment First Grant through the Office of Disability and Employment Policy. Strategic planning has collaboratively occurred through the Administration of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, the State Employment Leadership Network and the DOL, Disability Employment Initiative. These efforts resulted in a focus on improved alignment of services and the funding of those services to support service delivery for individuals with the most significant disabilities.

IVRS, in January of 2016, will be revising the Menu of Service to reflect alignment with hourly Medicaid Service rates and related performance measures and billable units which will develop improved accountability and connection to service outcomes. Training is planned for roll out with a January 1, 2016 implementation. Community rehabilitation providers along with a wide-variety of community input contributed to the final product. Iowa VR has been the lead agency in the Employment First initiative and worked with 30 plus community providers in receiving direct subject matter expertise with community integrated employment strategies. These efforts of provider transformation, along with Community of Practice webinars during the past two years, positively impacted customized employment service delivery as well as increased numbers of individuals with the most significant disabilities accessing competitive, community integrated employment.

As an effort to impact the outcomes of the most significantly disabled students/youth in secondary education, IVRS will modify the service contract called Making the Grade (MTG) to provide work readiness and work place learning opportunities to students who are MSD. This project will focus on providing opportunities so as to bypass extended evaluation after graduation. Further information on the MTG is found under the WIOA strategies as a result of the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment on page 32.

(g) COORDINATION WITH EMPLOYERS. DESCRIBE HOW THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WILL WORK WITH EMPLOYERS TO IDENTIFY COMPETITIVE INTEGRATED EMPLOYMENT AND CAREER EXPLORATION OPPORTUNITIES IN ORDER TO FACILITATE THE PROVISION OF:

- (1) VR SERVICES; AND
- (2) TRANSITION SERVICES, INCLUDING PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES, FOR STUDENTS AND YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES.

- The Employer Disability Resource Network (EDRN) - was designed to increase the employment of persons with disabilities by pooling agency resources and providing technical expertise to employers throughout Iowa. Members of this group include staff from IVRS, the Department for the Blind, Veteran's Administration, Small Business Administration, Division of Persons with Disabilities, Workforce Development, Community Rehabilitation Providers, Drake University, and Iowa Medicaid. Persons from high school transition age to the aging population are represented. Members of this group present to individual employers as well as employer organizations throughout the state. At present, much attention has been raised by this group to inform employers about Section 503 Rules

for Federal Contractors. Internal tools and resources have been provided to staff of IVRS to assist in educating employers about compliance with Section 503. Additionally, this group presented a conference in August, 2015, to assist in education on hiring persons from diverse backgrounds, including persons with disabilities, and the value these individuals present to the workforce. In Iowa, the unemployment rate is the lowest it has been in the last decade; therefore, business and industry are considering populations that they traditionally did not pursue in hiring. With the limited number of work-ready job candidates, the conference agenda was geared toward emphasizing the benefits to employers of hiring persons with disabilities. IVRS is striving to create these connections during this economic opportunity.

- Diversity Specialists - Another strategy that IVRS is using with business and industry is creating partnerships that embed diversity specialists in the business. Through a contract, IVRS collaborates with a business diversity specialist through sharing of service costs for IVRS eligible Job Candidates. The specialist then strives to recruit and retain individuals with disabilities in the place of employment. While only one of these arrangements currently exists, IVRS is working to expand these arrangements so that there is one diversity specialist in the geographic area of every IVRS area office.

Preliminary data shows that this is a very cost-effective way to create opportunities for individuals with disabilities. In FFY 15, there were 15 placements with Unity Point, an organization that provides medical services through the various clinics and hospitals in Des Moines. The intent of this contract is for assigned staff from Unity Point (UP) to connect job candidates of IVRS with UP department managers who do the hiring to provide assistance and opportunities for placement. UP staff complete the following: advocate with the supervisor of the employers' department unit to hire IVRS work-ready job candidates; develop employment opportunities for targeted job candidates through communication and collaboration at UP with Contractor's hiring authorities; track and ensure training of IVRS job candidates who are newly hired so they become familiar with and understand the business culture of the work unit; complete a job analysis on each job an eligible IVRS job candidate is placed into; involve the IVRS counselor in the accommodation and assistive technology discussions with the hiring manager; work with the job candidate's employment supervisor to identify a mentor on the job; discuss how the job candidate is adjusting to the new job and connecting the supervisor; and place and work only with eligible and active IVRS job candidates who have been referred under the annual contract. This provides an enhanced way to integrate the business culture into counseling and guidance and employment plan development.

- Sector Partnerships - IVRS area offices are also becoming involved and engaged in sector partnerships. The sector partnerships are locally developed workforce partners that serve specific industry sectors by providing a talent pool of eligible job candidates, as well as technical assistance to business and industry regarding their specific questions and needs. The Burlington Area Office has one IVRS employee on each sector partnership which has proven to be a systemic approach to placement. This allows the team to serve the business, and when a member of the team resigns or retires, a new member from the organization is

then placed on the partnership. In this fashion business receives services in a continuous fashion, the relationship is built with the partnership, and there is not any gap in service delivery to the business. IVRS area offices are all working with their local workforce development partnerships to become engaged and involved, or in some instances to create these partnerships where they do not exist. IVRS can be instrumental in this development because IVRS is in every county and has personal contacts in every county. This will serve as a conduit to creating and extending sector partnerships to more rural and remote areas of the State of Iowa.

- On-the-Job Training - Another service provided by IVRS is the On-the-Job (OJT) Training service. IVRS met with IWD (DOL) lawyers to learn the wage and hour rules and the Fair Labor Standards Act related to OJT services in order to revamp the IVRS service to achieve a more consistent service; to ensure the program is conducted in a manner that is consistent with legal requirements; and to ensure that the program achieves the state purpose which is “participants will be compensated while learning an occupation.” The OJT service has two distinct options:
  1. The trainee receives a stipend, but is not an employee of the company;
  2. The trainee receives a salary, and is an employee of the company.

The expected outcome of both is that the participant learns a skill that is either transportable to another company, or is retained by the training company and achieves an employment outcome. The OJT service is typically used for those individuals for whom more intensive training on the job is needed in order to be successful. Occupational Skills Training Programs

**FFY2015 Top Iowa Employers Hiring Individuals with Disabilities**

<b>Top 10 Employers</b>	
<b>Employer Name</b>	<b>Number of Hires</b>
Hy-Vee, Inc.	124
Walmart	98
McDonald's	32
Casey's General Store	25
Fareway Food Stores	24
Pizza Ranch	21
Goodwill Industries	19
Menards Inc.	17
UnityPoint Health	15
Mercy Medical Systems	12

As this data is compared with the top industry clusters in the State of Iowa it is clear there is a disconnect between those hiring individuals with disabilities and the industry clusters that are the top employers in the State of Iowa, except for health care employers listed. This comparison demonstrates that IVRS and disability service organizations will need to concentrate on creating skill development training programs that will enhance the skills of persons with disabilities so they may competitively compete for middle skill occupations.

**On-the-Job Training Results:**

	2012	2013	2014	2015
Successful Closures	56	86	52	52
Average Hourly Wages	\$9.56	\$9.40	\$9.40	\$9.19
Average Hours Worked Per Week	29	26	31	27

The above data demonstrates that the OJT service produces opportunities for those individuals who require different or new employment due to their disability.

- The Area Aging Association contracts are designed to better serve individuals that IVRS is working with who are 55+ years of age. IVRS collaborated with the Iowa Department on Aging to develop a program to hire six Employment Specialists providing full state coverage through the Area Agencies on Aging. The comprehensive statewide needs assessment completed for the last state plan had identified a need for specialized programming for this population. The SRC agreed and as a result these projects were developed. These services are available on a state-wide basis for any VR job candidate age 55 or older.

IVRS counselors are working in collaboration with AAA staff to provide wrap-around services. Employment Specialists partner with the IVRS counselor to assist in identifying job goals, resources in the communities, and businesses that are open to hiring older workers.

The AAA contract started in FFY 2014 and had 90 individuals referred to the program with seven placements. Due to this being the first year of the program, the focus involved getting individuals referred to the program. So far in the current fiscal year there have been 102 referrals made to the program, an additional 22 placements, and 8 successful closures.

- Staff Training - On October 29, 2013, IVRS invited Denise Bissonette to provide training to staff on ***30 Ways to Shine***, which is a training curriculum for individuals with disabilities to learn not only job keeping skills but also skills that assist them in being noticed and prepare for advancement in the work setting. In addition staff participated in a training provided by the Association of Providers for Supported Employment and Iowa Workforce Development on job development and employer development facilitated by Denise Bissonette. In FFY 14 six cases closed successfully received the “30 Ways to Shine” training, and since that time the case narrative records show that staff are using this work readiness training more

extensively than the data supports. While training was provided to staff on how to record this information into the case management system, ongoing analysis, training and communication will need to be infused to assure that services provided are recorded accordingly so this curriculum can be measured and evaluated.

- The Retail Employees with Disabilities Initiative (REDI) - is a program through Walgreens that provides retail skills to externs or trainees with a variety of disabilities. The program works in partnership with agencies within a community to provide job coaches who can help externs gain skills and the opportunity for future employment. Participants in the REDI program are not guaranteed employment, however, the purpose of the training is to provide externs the skills and competencies required to be successful in the retail environment. IVRS works in conjunction with Walgreens stores offering the REDI, in addition to providing funding support to CRP partners who oversee job coaching and training. Externs who successfully complete the 120-hour REDI training have the opportunity to apply for openings at Walgreens or with a neighboring business. Since the initiation of REDI in 2012, IVRS has worked with six Iowa providers (CRPs) to deliver REDI training in twelve Walgreens stores across Iowa.

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**REDI Training Results:**

	2012	2013	2014
Successful Closures	5	7	11
Average Hourly Wages	\$8.28	\$8.33	\$8.14

2015 REDI data is integrated into our Annual CRP Report Cards which are distributed in the spring of the 2016. This additional time allows for a more complete set of data/outcomes.

- Occupational Skill Training Programs - continue to be developed and coordinated per local area office needs. We are expanding communication efforts at the local IWD Regional Workforce Boards in order to ensure collaboration with existing career pathways and sector boards that will be integrated and accessible for individuals with disabilities.
- IVRS began a partnership with Manpower in 2013 to assist lowans with disabilities gain employment. Job Candidates gain exposure to positions that could turn into a permanent hire; they have access to jobs that are most plentiful in the current economy; and they are able to tap into Manpower's expertise in attracting and placing over 5 million people globally in a variety of positions through a proven intake process that identifies the best candidate match. By partnering with Manpower, our candidates also receive 24/7 online training through Manpower Training Development Centers. This is achieved through IVRS counselors completing a passport identifying barriers to employment and accommodations needed by the job candidate in order to be successful. Manpower and VR then assist the employer in providing the necessary accommodations and training required for the job candidate to be successful and meet the business's needs.

**Manpower Placement Results:**

	2012	2013	2014	2015
Referrals			115	99
Successful Placements			24 (20%)	28 (28%)

- Self-Employment is a vocational option that may be considered as part of an individual's informed choice. A program for self-employment has been developed under an agreement between Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services (IVRS) and Iowa Department for the Blind (IDB). It is available to active candidates of IVRS or IDB who are able to become self-sufficient by establishing, expanding, or acquiring a small business. IVRS employs two full-time business staff who specialize in assisting job candidates with a vocational goal of self-employment. Before investing time and money into a self-employment venture, the candidate must complete an in-depth study about the business they intend to start. The IVRS/IDB Counselors and the candidate, guided by the technical assistance of the IVRS Business Development Specialists, will outline a plan of action to help explore: an individual's qualifications and skills; the entrepreneurial idea; determination of the feasibility of the business idea; and facilitate Business Plan development should the idea

demonstrate promise. Iowa Economic Development, Iowa Small Business Development Centers, Iowa Job Centers and the Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE) are organizations that can help with preliminary exploration of business ventures, and services available through Iowa Workforce Development may also provide additional education. IVRS and IDB provide the financial assistance to start a business to their respective job candidates with matching dollars provided by the job candidate. When the candidate is served by both agencies, IVRS and IDB coordinate the services and the plan. The data below demonstrates the number of successful businesses supported that remained in business two years post the opening of the business.

**Self-Employment Program Summary:**

	2012	2013	2014	2015
Successful Closures	39	54	38	49
Average Hourly Wages	\$11.10	\$15.75	\$13.65	\$13.74
Average Hours Worked Per Week	29	31	31	29
Active ISE job candidates as of 9/30 year-end	83	137	122	107

- SRC Business Engagement - An additional example of business coordination occurred through the work of our State Rehabilitation Council. The Council facilitated for National Disability Awareness Month in 2015 a series of three educational webinars hosted with local collaboration/discussion occurring at three host sites. This created awareness around the business case and benefits of hiring people who have a disability. Approximately 80 people attended the session across the state, for each webinar.

Here’s are a few quotes from the series: Great job yesterday at our Business Education seminar! I enjoyed your presentation – it was absolutely aligned with our goal of delivering information to our businesses that is oriented to their success at broadening the employment pool and consequently their markets – *without* talking about compliance with this or that regulation. –CEO Economic Development GCVA

“I am new to the HR world, and this information has been very helpful. Please send me more.” – HR Manager, Mason City, IA

“This helped me connect the dots on how I can help candidates and employers. Accommodations don’t have to be huge costs. They can be simple ways to make the environment work for everyone.” – Recruiter, Waterloo



- IVRS also encourages and supports local office involvement with their Chamber of Commerce. This does involve approval of funding for local memberships. This is reviewed with each member registration and area offices are asked to respond to the following questions:

State if it is a New Membership or a Renewal.

Briefly explain how membership relates to your office placement blueprint. .

Explain how your office will specifically use the Chamber membership. Specify who is involved and how information will be shared.

Explain how you will know the Chamber membership is of value.

Identify costs and timeframe based on membership.

If your membership is a renewal, also briefly explain the impact of your membership from last year's involvement.

- IVRS also has two videos featured through America's Job Honor Award that highlight business partnerships and individuals who have overcome barriers to have successful employment. These videos are excellent communication tools for business talking to business and exemplify positive features of accessing VR employment services.

(h) INTERAGENCY COOPERATION. DESCRIBE HOW THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WILL COLLABORATE WITH THE STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR ADMINISTERING EACH OF THE FOLLOWING PROGRAMS TO DEVELOP OPPORTUNITIES FOR COMPETITIVE INTEGRATED EMPLOYMENT, TO THE GREATEST EXTENT PRACTICABLE:

(1) THE STATE MEDICAID PLAN UNDER TITLE XIX OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT;

(2) THE STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING SERVICES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES; AND

IVRS and the Department of Human Services (DHS) that administers the title XIX program of the Social Security Act, and who has the primary state level responsibility for overseeing the mental health services in Iowa have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding. This MOU describes the financial responsibilities and the populations that are served to maximize resources and avoid duplication. In addition, IVRS is adopting the Medicaid rates that DHS is implementing in FFY 16. Collaborative planning efforts occurred with DHS in the implementation of the Iowa Employment First Principles which resulted in approaching Iowa legislatures in a collaborative manner resulting in increased state monies being available to serve Iowans with disabilities. A MOA with the Governance Group (eight state agencies which includes the State Medicaid/Mental Health Division and the Executive Director of the Iowa Developmental Disabilities Council collaborated to support strategies to reduce duplication and maximize employment efforts with a clear focus on competitive, community integrated employment for individuals with the most significant disabilities. There has been a change in the vision with the focus and belief that all individuals can be employed with the right supports and that through progressive employment options, there is something for everyone. Specific goals, strategies and benchmarks have been achieved during the past three years, with additional strategic planning occurring to continue momentum in the future as it relates to interagency cooperation as well as involving community partners, families and education in implementing an Employment First approach.

- (3) THE STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES.
- (i) COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT; DATA SYSTEM ON PERSONNEL AND PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT. DESCRIBE THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY'S PROCEDURES AND ACTIVITIES TO ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN A COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT DESIGNED TO ENSURE AN ADEQUATE SUPPLY OF QUALIFIED STATE REHABILITATION PROFESSIONAL AND PARAPROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL FOR THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING:
- (1) DATA SYSTEM ON PERSONNEL AND PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT
- (A) QUALIFIED PERSONNEL NEEDS. DESCRIBE THE DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF A SYSTEM FOR COLLECTING AND ANALYZING ON AN ANNUAL BASIS DATA ON QUALIFIED PERSONNEL NEEDS WITH RESPECT TO:
- (i) THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL WHO ARE EMPLOYED BY THE STATE AGENCY IN THE PROVISION OF VR SERVICES IN RELATION TO THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS SERVED, BROKEN DOWN BY PERSONNEL CATEGORY;
- (ii) THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL CURRENTLY NEEDED BY THE STATE AGENCY TO PROVIDE VR SERVICES, BROKEN DOWN BY PERSONNEL CATEGORY; AND
- (iii) PROJECTIONS OF THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL, BROKEN DOWN BY PERSONNEL CATEGORY, WHO WILL BE NEEDED BY THE STATE AGENCY TO PROVIDE VR SERVICES IN 5 YEARS BASED ON PROJECTIONS OF THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS TO BE SERVED, INCLUDING INDIVIDUALS WITH SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL EXPECTED TO RETIRE OR LEAVE THE FIELD, AND OTHER RELEVANT FACTORS.
- (B) PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT. DESCRIBE THE DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF A SYSTEM FOR COLLECTING AND ANALYZING ON AN ANNUAL BASIS DATA ON PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT WITH RESPECT TO:
- (i) A LIST OF THE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE STATE THAT ARE PREPARING VR PROFESSIONALS, BY TYPE OF PROGRAM;
- (ii) THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED AT EACH OF THOSE INSTITUTIONS, BROKEN DOWN BY TYPE OF PROGRAM; AND
- (iii) THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO GRADUATED DURING THE PRIOR YEAR FROM EACH OF THOSE INSTITUTIONS WITH CERTIFICATION OR LICENSURE, OR WITH THE CREDENTIALS FOR CERTIFICATION OR LICENSURE, BROKEN DOWN BY THE PERSONNEL CATEGORY FOR WHICH THEY HAVE RECEIVED, OR HAVE THE CREDENTIALS TO RECEIVE, CERTIFICATION OR LICENSURE.

IVRS maintains a web-based case management system with resulting monthly, quarterly, and annual reports providing job candidate caseload data which, along with budget information, is used to predict resources available for service delivery. An internal budget team meets monthly and the Administrative Services Bureau Chief has developed a sustainability model that is used as a foundation for the allocation of agency financial resources. Discussions occur regarding the filling of vacancies, justification of hiring decisions, waiting list removal decisions and setting case expenditure guidelines. The Iowa Department of Administrative Services and the Iowa Department of Management reviews every hiring decision and hiring justifications are required.

The table below contains the major personnel categories and vacancies as of 10/1/15 in the Administrative Services Bureau, Rehabilitation Services Bureau and Planning and Development team. Personnel in the Disability Determination Services Bureau are not reported as they are not covered by the IVRS State Plan.

In projecting vacancies over the next five years, the numbers reflect current employees over age 55 that could choose to retire. In recent years, IVRS has hired some Rehabilitation Assistants and Rehabilitation Associates to provide caseload management support, freeing Master's level counselors to focus on their core functions of eligibility decision making, plan development, counseling and guidance and job placement. Positions are targeted to offices based on optimum caseload size as well as clients projected to come off the waiting list and move into active services.

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	Job Title	Total positions	Current vacancies	Projected vacancies over the next 5 years
1	Area Office Supervisors and other managers	20	0	14
2	Professional staff – counselors and rehab associate	116	12	47
3	Support staff including rehab assistants	58	11	29

In the State of Iowa there are two institutions of higher education that provide a post-secondary graduate degree in rehabilitation counseling: Drake University, Des Moines; and the University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa. Both programs offer a degree that allows graduates to work not only in rehabilitation counseling but also mental health counseling. In the past IVRS found that it was difficult to recruit students into IVRS because of their strong interest in mental health counseling.

The table below reflects the 2015/2016 school year:

	Institutions	Students enrolled	Students sponsored by agency and/or RSA	Graduates from the previous year
1	University of Iowa (MA) RC	23	7	13 (5 RSA)
2	Drake University-M.A. in RC	36	21	14 (13 sponsored by RSA)

**(2) PLAN FOR RECRUITMENT, PREPARATION AND RETENTION OF QUALIFIED PERSONNEL. DESCRIBE THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF A PLAN TO ADDRESS THE CURRENT AND PROJECTED NEEDS FOR QUALIFIED PERSONNEL INCLUDING, THE COORDINATION AND FACILITATION OF EFFORTS BETWEEN THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT AND INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS TO RECRUIT, PREPARE, AND RETAIN PERSONNEL WHO ARE QUALIFIED, INCLUDING PERSONNEL FROM MINORITY BACKGROUNDS AND PERSONNEL WHO ARE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.**

The agency actively works with the two Rehabilitation Counseling programs in Iowa and recruits from graduate programs in Minnesota, Illinois, and Wisconsin. During the past year, IVRS area offices supervised practicum and intern students in the Rehabilitation Counseling programs to provide them with field work exposure to the state rehabilitation agency. In an attempt to address the recruitment of individuals from minority backgrounds into the field of rehabilitation, IVRS reviewed its recruiting and

hiring practices to assure consideration of applicants from diverse backgrounds. IVRS actively attempts to recruit from a wide variety of sources including the Iowa State hiring system, Iowa Workforce Development and various community newspapers. Communication with staff continues on the importance of working with our diverse client basis from a service delivery perspective, but also from a staff recruiting basis. The screening process is equitable to all applicants. Screening is done strictly on a numeric basis and the top scoring applicants are interviewed. Applicants are selected from the top scorers. Specific consultation has occurred with our Iowa Department of Administrative Services in efforts to expand recruitment from non-traditional sources.

Currently about 6.86% of the employee pool is minority status and 14.6% are persons with disabilities. Although the State of Iowa as a whole is underutilized for Females, Minorities and Persons with Disabilities, IVRS has met or exceeded all state goals. With the addition of the Rehabilitation Associate and Rehabilitation Assistant classifications, the options for applicants from diverse populations have also increased. IVRS continues to focus on diversity growth especially in the professional classification levels and have had several meetings with the Iowa Department of Personnel to expand recruitment strategies.

The Bureau Chief of the Rehabilitation Services Bureau is on the Advisory Board for the University of Iowa. She meets with students after the board meetings to discuss employment with IVRS, the benefits, the qualities that the state agency is looking for and current trends. As a result, more students from UI have applied for jobs within the last year with IVRS. The greatest barrier currently is the Department of Administrative Services took over the screening of applications and denies students who only need to complete their internship for meeting the minimum qualifications. A change in personnel job descriptions is occurring, which will allow for competitive hiring of students who still need to complete their internship requirements. Since the Chief has been on the Advisory Board, IVRS recruited one qualified rehabilitation counselor from a diverse background. The IVRS Administrator also serves on the Drake University Rehabilitation Counseling Advisory Board and an IVRS Resource Manager is a contract faculty member. These connections facilitate access to potential students and assist in organizing field work experience to help students prepare for a career in vocational rehabilitation.

- (3) PERSONNEL STANDARDS. DESCRIBE THE STATE AGENCY'S POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF PERSONNEL STANDARDS CONSISTENT WITH SECTION 101(A)(7)(B) AND TO ENSURE THAT DESIGNATED STATE UNIT PROFESSIONAL AND PARAPROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL ARE ADEQUATELY TRAINED AND PREPARED, INCLUDING:
- (A) STANDARDS THAT ARE CONSISTENT WITH ANY NATIONAL OR STATE-APPROVED OR -RECOGNIZED CERTIFICATION, LICENSING, REGISTRATION, OR OTHER COMPARABLE REQUIREMENTS THAT APPLY TO THE PROFESSION OR DISCIPLINE IN WHICH SUCH PERSONNEL ARE PROVIDING VR SERVICES;  
AND
  - (B) THE ESTABLISHMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS, TO ENSURE THAT THE PERSONNEL HAVE A 21ST CENTURY UNDERSTANDING OF THE EVOLVING LABOR FORCE AND THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.

IVRS established personnel standards that are consistent according to state guidelines and are reviewed by the Iowa Department of Administrative Services. The academic degree standard for VR counselors remains a Master's Degree in rehabilitation counseling, counseling and guidance, or a

closely related major emphasis. Within our previous RSA In-Service training grant, if a successful candidate did not have a rehabilitation counseling degree, he/she must agree to complete such classes or Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling within a reasonable period of time from the date of hire. This placed a burden on the agency in finding qualified applicants for our rural offices. Our new policy reflects the goal of hiring Master Degree Rehabilitation Counselors or in a closely related field and removes the CRC requirements. The agency will continue to provide and support individual training for staff as identified by their individual performance plans.

State personnel standards for supervisors and resource managers in the Rehabilitation Services Bureau are similar. Rehabilitation Associates provide case-management assistance increasing the counselors' capacities to perform in their core functioning areas. The education, experience, and special requirements for Rehabilitation Associate classification include graduation from an accredited college or university with major coursework in a human services related area; or an equivalent combination of education and experience substituting full-time human service work experience for the required education (thirty semester or equivalent hours equals one year) to a maximum substitution of two years..

Two counselors who do not have master's degrees were hired between October 1978 and March 1979, and are or will be eligible to retire in the next 5 years. IVRS hired two new counselors who did not meet the qualifications for sitting for the CRC and supported those two counselors in their efforts to pick up additional coursework during the reporting period. Several factors influence the ability to hire persons with a master's degree in rehabilitation counseling or a closely related field. For some positions, the job description determines the skills needed to do the job. In the review of applicants, the agency looks not only at academic degrees held, but their ability to perform the job duties of a specific opening. Some candidates with prior experience in community rehabilitation programs, school systems, or personnel organizations have the desired skills and contacts to place individuals with disabilities into employment. In many rural areas, qualified candidates with master's degree are quite limited. In those cases, individuals with related degrees are considered for vacancies. As positions become vacant, the supervisor determines if some of the case management duties can be performed by a Rehabilitation Associate, freeing up time for the Rehabilitation Counselor to provide counseling and employer development services, as well as approving all eligibility determinations and employment plans.

IVRS Rehabilitation Counselors Rehabilitation Associates and Rehabilitation Assistants are covered by a collective bargaining agreement.

- (4) STAFF DEVELOPMENT. DESCRIBE THE STATE AGENCY'S POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND ACTIVITIES TO ENSURE THAT, CONSISTENT WITH SECTION 101(A)(7)(C) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT, ALL PERSONNEL EMPLOYED BY THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT RECEIVE APPROPRIATE AND ADEQUATE TRAINING IN TERMS OF:
- (A) A SYSTEM OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT FOR PROFESSIONALS AND PARAPROFESSIONALS WITHIN THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, PARTICULARLY WITH RESPECT TO ASSESSMENT, VOCATIONAL COUNSELING, JOB PLACEMENT, AND REHABILITATION TECHNOLOGY, INCLUDING TRAINING IMPLEMENTED IN COORDINATION WITH ENTITIES CARRYING OUT STATE PROGRAMS UNDER SECTION 4 OF THE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 1998; AND

(B) PROCEDURES FOR THE ACQUISITION AND DISSEMINATION OF SIGNIFICANT KNOWLEDGE FROM RESEARCH AND OTHER SOURCES TO DESIGNATED STATE UNIT PROFESSIONALS AND PARAPROFESSIONALS.

The agency does provide and support professional career development training which can either be provided internal or external to the agency.

IVRS is certified through the Commission on Rehabilitation Counseling Certification to provide approved continuing education hours for applicable coursework. Training activities focus on knowledge or understanding of rehabilitation topics, customer service, development and demonstration of new levels of skills, and organizational change projects that enhance the achievement of employment outcomes for persons with disabilities. IVRS staff has the opportunity to participate in workshops and seminars, concentrated training activities to improve skills in working with specific groups of individuals with disabilities, and individual or group staff development activities designed to enable staff to acquire special skills. New supervisors enroll in the Supervisory Certificate program offered through the Iowa Department of Administrative Services—Human Resources Enterprise. All supervisors attend Management Team sessions to update them on leadership and supervisory issues.

In addition to formal training, participation in leadership roles in teams that address Strategic Planning build capacity of staff at all levels to develop services that meet the needs of agency job candidates. Through these activities, they begin developing skills needed to increase capacity at the local level to improve consumer outcomes. The Rehabilitation Services Bureau leads the development of these topics based upon priority as it relates to the strategic planning needs of the Bureau.

There are ongoing opportunities for staff to indicate training needs. One section of the annual performance evaluation of all staff relates to training needs that have been identified for that individual. The individual is then given an opportunity to become involved in training to improve that performance area. Staff also request agency support to attend conferences and workshops pertaining to areas of development that are identified in annual evaluation conferences.

Current support was provided to any staff expressing interest in attending the Disability Employment Initiative Conference, the Association of Persons Supporting Employment First, the Iowa Rehabilitation Association Annual Conference, Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act Training, On With Life Brain Injury Conference, and the Ethics Series sponsored by the University of Iowa Rehabilitation Program. Over a 120 staff participated in these types of training programs during the 2015 federal fiscal year.

The annual performance evaluation system for rehabilitation counselor and rehabilitation associates is designed to ensure that a strong emphasis is placed on issues that relate to the provision of quality services to vocational rehabilitation clients, especially those with the most significant disabilities. Evaluations that mainly assess the number of individuals closed as rehabilitated have been revised to incorporate quality review results. Individualized evaluation looks at ways of emphasizing a staff member's strengths and helping them improve in their areas of need. The RSB Bureau regularly conduct training in IVRS field offices on case review standards and policy changes, many of which relate to assessment, eligibility determination, plan development, vocational counseling, job placement, and rehabilitation technology. The RSB Bureau has undertaken an innovative change to further influence professional development in future years through organizing staff structure in the assignment of

Resource Managers to regional area offices. This provides a central point of contact to support the area office supervisor in the delivery of information, training and quality assurance initiatives. Formal staff development sessions also support implementation of goals and priorities in the State Plan with respect to Cultural Diversity, coordination with Workforce partners, services to deaf and hard of hearing job candidates, retention of job candidates to successful rehabilitation, changes in the Supported Employment model and services to high school students transitioning to adult life

The agency routinely uses the latest research and pilot projects to update training programs in areas such as ADA, assistive technology, mental illness, learning disabilities, Autism, and head injury/traumatic brain injury. IVRS is the lead agency with the Employment First Initiative and staff as well as partners have access to a myriad of customized employment training webinars.

IVRS also provides training on policy, motivational interviewing, benefits planning, and when new initiatives and issues arise, training is developed and provided by the Rehabilitation Services Bureau.

IVRS management staff attended training in 2014/2015 for the Family Medical Leave Act, Interview to Hire and Discipline, Grievance and the Contract training.

(5) PERSONNEL TO ADDRESS INDIVIDUAL COMMUNICATION NEEDS. DESCRIBE HOW THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT HAS PERSONNEL OR OBTAINS THE SERVICES OF OTHER INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE ABLE TO COMMUNICATE IN APPROPRIATE MODES OF COMMUNICATION WITH OR IN THE NATIVE LANGUAGE OF APPLICANTS OR ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE LIMITED ENGLISH SPEAKING ABILITY.

IVRS contracts with interpreters to provide manual communication for individuals who are deaf when that is the preferred mode of communication. IVRS staff also contract with language interpreters when an individual speaks a language other than English. This may be done through a state agency, through a private agency, as well as the use of CTS LanguageLink, which is part of the State's Master Agreement. Collaboration continues with the Deaf Services Commission of Iowa and the Iowa School for the Deaf on suggestions to improve service delivery for this population. IVRS maintains an agreement with the Iowa Department for the Blind to convert training materials into large print or Braille format for trainees with visual impairments and learning disabilities. All training materials are provided in the preferred means of communication, including Braille, large print, disk, or closed caption. IVRS, through the work of our SRC representative and Iowa Client Assistance Program, has made available an orientation video for outreach purposes which is completed in American Sign Language.

(6) COORDINATION OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT UNDER THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT. AS APPROPRIATE, DESCRIBE THE PROCEDURES AND ACTIVITIES TO COORDINATE THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT WITH PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT UNDER THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT.

IVRS and the DE have an agreement to provide joint training for staff to receive common information and skill development pertinent to students with disabilities. This includes the Summer Institute, as well as locally IVRS staff/management and the local education agencies and area education agencies enter into conversations regarding how they will work together to support the goals of students in transition. In these discussions, planning occurs on how to develop the core competencies of staff, how to expand



on staff capacities, and what actions will achieve student outcomes. Often this does require participation locally in training and cross training of staff on language, services, etc. Information from the Community Conversations relative to the feedback from businesses was incorporated so that services from IVRS to the students are more job-driven in nature.

IVRS has a close working relationship with the bureau responsible for Special Education within the Iowa Department of Education. During the FFY 2015, 35% of the IVRS caseload was referred by the secondary school partners. IVRS counselors participate in IEP meetings and provide information and referral services to high schools in regard to students that are on waiting lists that are not being served. Pre-Employment Transition Services are being expanded to potentially eligible students as well as to those students in eligible status. IVRS and some school districts are participating in local initiatives to provide continuity in students' transition from high school to either post-secondary education or employment. In these initiatives, joint training is provided to IVRS staff and school personnel so that resources of each entity can be appropriately utilized for improved student outcomes.

IVRS staff serving secondary schools in the past completed, in partnership with the school, a Collaborative Transition Vision Analysis, which measures IVRS and school interactions. This has been modified as the feedback and analysis showed that these results were opinions and rarely supported by the facts. As a result, the State Team (Collaboration Outcomes for Students), are identifying data points through the shared dashboard that will enable districts and VR offices to evaluate the effectiveness of their services and the impact on outcomes. The results of this information will then influence the local plans, the training, and the service delivery to achieve better outcomes for students with disabilities transitioning from school to post school work or learning environments.

(j) STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT.

(1) PROVIDE AN ASSESSMENT OF THE REHABILITATION NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES RESIDING WITHIN THE STATE, PARTICULARLY THE VR SERVICES NEEDS OF THOSE:

- (A) WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING THEIR NEED FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES;
- (B) WHO ARE MINORITIES;
- (C) WHO HAVE BEEN UNSERVED OR UNDERSERVED BY THE VR PROGRAM;
- (D) WHO HAVE BEEN SERVED THROUGH OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM; AND
- (E) WHO ARE YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, INCLUDING, AS APPROPRIATE, THEIR NEED FOR PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES OR OTHER TRANSITION SERVICES.

(2) IDENTIFY THE NEED TO ESTABLISH, DEVELOP, OR IMPROVE COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE; AND

(3) INCLUDE AN ASSESSMENT OF THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES FOR TRANSITION CAREER SERVICES AND PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES, AND THE EXTENT TO WHICH SUCH SERVICES ARE COORDINATED WITH TRANSITION SERVICES PROVIDED UNDER THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT .

(k) ANNUAL ESTIMATES. DESCRIBE:

(1) THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS IN THE STATE WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES.

(2) THE NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WHO WILL RECEIVE SERVICES UNDER:

- (A) THE VR PROGRAM;

- (B) THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM; AND
- (C) EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY, IF UNDER AN ORDER OF SELECTION.
- (3) THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR VR SERVICES, BUT ARE NOT RECEIVING SUCH SERVICES DUE TO AN ORDER OF SELECTION; AND
- (4) THE COST OF SERVICES FOR THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS ESTIMATED TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES. IF UNDER AN ORDER OF SELECTION, IDENTIFY THE COST OF SERVICES FOR EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY.
- (I) STATE GOALS AND PRIORITIES. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT MUST:
  - (1) IDENTIFY IF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES WERE JOINTLY DEVELOPED AND AGREED TO BY THE STATE VR AGENCY AND THE STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL, IF THE STATE HAS A COUNCIL, AND JOINTLY AGREED TO ANY REVISIONS.
  - (2) IDENTIFY THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES IN CARRYING OUT THE VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS.
  - (3) ENSURE THAT THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES ARE BASED ON AN ANALYSIS OF THE FOLLOWING AREAS:
    - (A) THE MOST RECENT COMPREHENSIVE STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT, INCLUDING ANY UPDATES;
    - (B) THE STATE’S PERFORMANCE UNDER THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES OF SECTION 116 OF WIOA; AND
    - (C) OTHER AVAILABLE INFORMATION ON THE OPERATION AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE VR PROGRAM, INCLUDING ANY REPORTS RECEIVED FROM THE STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL AND FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM MONITORING ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED UNDER SECTION 107.

IVRS has continued to demonstrate improvement and positive impact on previous existing Standards and Indicators. We consistently review annual data results and derive strategies to impact employment outcomes. The following data table reflects these results:

	1.1 Employment change	1.2 Rehab Rate	1.3 Competitive Employment	1.4 Ration SD & MSD	1.5 Ration of Average Hourly Earnings	1.6 Change between Application and Closure	2.1 Minority ration to non- minority service rate
RSA Standard	= to or > than last year	55.80%	72.60%	62.40%	.52	53%	.80
IVRS State Total	118	57.36%	98.92%	98.69%	.58	61.23%	.841

This is the fourth consecutive year that IVRS exceeded federal employment standards. The review of this data and the strategic plan that has been in place is being revised to reflect the new opportunities provided by WIOA.

Igniting economic development with a skilled workforce and best educated student population in the nation will achieve a Future Ready Iowa that supports and facilitates Iowa Governor Branstad’s goals for state agencies:

Goal 1: The State of Iowa will create 200,000 new jobs

Goal 2: State of Iowa families will realize a 25% increase in their family incomes

Goal 3: State of Iowa youth will be afforded the best education in the nation

Goal 4: State of Iowa government costs will be reduced by 15%

Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services (IVRS) is an instrumental agency to support the vision for the State of Iowa and also achieve the goals established by Governor Branstad. Through the various services, supports, and programs, IVRS will increase the income levels of Iowa families not only through direct services to our job candidates who are eligible and have an individual plan for employment written, but also for the thousands of job seekers and youth who are seeking employment and in need of a more accessible system to support them. For the workforce development system this means creating a system that utilizes resources efficiently and aligning government programs in a manner that responds to and supports the needs of private business and develops a skilled and ready workforce.

To achieve the prosperity supported by world-class talent educated with Iowa's values and work ethic, Iowa's government is responding with the workforce development system of the future no longer constrained by the legislation of past decades. Through implementation of career pathways and infusing sector strategies across systems, IVRS is committed to serving the underserved and unserved citizenry by closing educational and employment gaps to end disparities based on disability, ethnicity, race, class, and geographic location. By expanding the use of technology, coordinating and collaborating on service delivery by aligning services and supports across systems, Iowa's government will work more efficiently and effectively. Thereby the model being advanced incorporates and aligns all systems, infusing Vocational Rehabilitation into each as an intensive service for only those individuals who are significantly and most significantly disabled, while providing guidance and expertise to the integrated system whole to serve all individuals with disabilities to better prepare a skilled workforce.

At the Governor's Job Summit on October 17, 2013, Governor Branstad and Lt. Governor Reynolds recognized the extraordinary work of businesses and job candidates with disabilities in striving to achieve a fully engaged workforce. Major employers and successful job candidates with disabilities all praised the work of creating connections with an untapped labor pool and business. Governor Branstad connected his work in focusing on the needs of business, streamlining state government, and touted the work as evidence of continuing to reform the work of government to make it better and stronger in responding to the needs of business. IVRS' job candidates and the relationship IVRS has created with key businesses in both urban and rural communities highlighted the impact that citizens with disabilities can have on their community when connected with businesses so they can be self-sufficient entrepreneurs and workers dedicated to the economic vitality of the company for which they work.

This Job Summit was an important "kick off" event to not only focus on employment for individuals with barriers, but also highlighting for business and industry the hidden talent pool they are missing out on when they fail to consider a person with a disability. This "lead-in" to the Future Ready Iowa aligned the work of IVRS with the National Governor's Association (NGA) Policy Academy on the Talent Pipeline.

The State of Iowa adopted the National Governor's Association Policy Academy vision, goals, and objectives to drive the work of the Unified State Plan, with adaptations to complement system development. This information was reviewed with the State Rehabilitation Council on August 5, 2015. The reason for adopting the NGA Policy Academy work was to align the talent pipeline so that all workforce partners and organizations focusing on creating a Future Ready workforce would operate and implement actions that would systemically impact the economic future of Iowa and the income levels of all Iowans. This focus is extremely critical to Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services (IVRS) because

individuals with disabilities historically have earned less than their non-disabled counterparts. The strategies being identified should also positively impact the labor market participation rate for individuals with disabilities. 44.8% of Iowans with disabilities between the ages of 18 and 64 years are employed. This percentage places Iowa among the top states with the highest employment rates of people with disabilities. There is tremendous opportunity to continue positively influencing the number of individuals with disabilities participating in the labor market. This plan should positively impact those numbers so we see an expanding labor market participation rate for individuals with disabilities.

IVRS incorporated into the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment specific assessment activities to better inform the State Rehabilitation Council of the work that had been done and the opportunities for future planning. The following are the strategies used in compiling sufficient information to create a road map for change:

1. Community Conversations/Public Meetings - After the authorization of the WIOA, IVRS began holding “Community Conversations” as part of the comprehensive statewide needs assessment to gain stakeholder input regarding The Agency’s implementation of WIOA as well as identify opportunities to improve the system for individuals with disabilities seeking employment. These conversations were held in 25 communities around the State of Iowa, with a diversity of stakeholders including but not limited to: business and industry managers/owners; educators; administrators in post-secondary education; community rehabilitation programs; state workforce partners; Chamber of Commerce representatives; mental health providers; department of corrections representatives; disability support staff in various industries; case managers; county funding representatives; extension offices; and individuals with disabilities. The conversations identified, from the perspective of business and industry, the important issues to engage employers; ideas to develop new or alternative programming for “Earn and Learn” opportunities; and the resources available in the communities visited. These conversations have proven essential to the development of IVRS plans for WIOA implementation related to:
  - What strategies and issues would better engage business and industry in developing strong partnerships to create opportunities for persons with disabilities?
  - What programmatic changes and implications are there to more fully integrate “earn and learn” opportunities for persons with disabilities?
  - What are the resources already available in the community that could be better aligned to achieve maximum employment opportunities?

The diversity of discussion and ideas from all involved were gathered and then follow-up meetings were held where participants worked on various content areas. There was more interest from the participants to develop engagement strategies for business and industry than any other content area. Consequently the Business Development Resource Manager for IVRS brought these individuals together by providing “Business Panels” where all organizations can learn what it is business wants and needs in their employees. Participants also learned what it is that is screening individuals out from employment with a company. In the Cedar Rapids Area Office that is co-located with Iowa Workforce Development (IWD), joint planning among the core partners impacted the content and quality of information presented in a job seeking skills workshop presented at the One-Stop. This is one example of many where the local follow-up meetings produced changes in how programming was provided, or the quality of the programming offered. As a result organizations are using this information to improve their

services and trainings for individuals with disabilities so they will be stronger candidates for jobs that are available in the Iowa economy.

IVRS following the leadership of the Department of Education will serve the potentially eligible using the Multi-tiered System of Supports. With this model it is anticipated that the majority of students under an IEP or 504 will receive the pre-employment transition services, develop their transition plan toward post-secondary living, learning and working and not require intensive services to effectively transition. Following this model, IVRS will then serve those students who require intensive services in the caseload.

The following are topics that were identified in the Community Conversations that have prompted the need for follow up in system design and application:

- Work readiness training that will enhance the confidence levels and work habits of individuals with disabilities
- Transition planning for students to develop job skills for in-demand employment that may not require advanced education
- Parent/family involvement to facilitate success
- Work experiences in integrated competitive work environments that allow students to “earn and learn”
- Businesses marketing to other businesses on the value of a diverse workforce
- Support systems developed for job candidates
- Progressive Employment opportunities developed to fill employment/skill gaps
- Partners educated on services available from each partner to avoid duplication
- Job seeking skills training re-developed with business input on necessary changes

The following are the strategies that IVRS is in the process of developing and executing according to the feedback received:

- Develop a stronger and more business focused work readiness training for job seekers
- Determine skill levels and necessary training to meet business needs
- Advance progressive employment strategies as a resource for staff
- Develop and implement business focused earn-and-learn opportunities
- Improve linkages to career pathways and business sectors

- Infuse business information and the need for “middle skill” sets when working with students and teachers in transition efforts
- Encourage increased business engagement

2. Value Stream Mapping - During the week of March 2, 2015, a collaborative venture that involved IVRS, the Department of Education Adult Education, Iowa Workforce Development, the Department of Human Services, the Department of Human Rights, Iowa Economic Development, DMIACC, NICC, a representative of Visiting Nurses, and the Pella Corporation was held to complete a Value Stream Mapping. The goal of Value Stream Mapping included a review of processes between WIOA core partners to refine procedures to better align systems. The issues identified by the mapping exercise included the following:

- Reduce duplication, identify barriers to collaboration, and increase collaboration of all partners at the one-stops.
- Focus on workforce training beyond entry-level skills and achieving postsecondary awards/credentials.
- Identify barriers to participant referrals or access to appropriate service providers within the one-stop system.
- Identify integration opportunities and data sharing on assessment information among workforce partners.
- Reduce duplication of services among various partners.
- Develop knowledge of all partners regarding roles and responsibilities.

New strategies for addressing issues identified by Value-Stream Mapping recommended:

- Integrate one-stop services (remove duplication and increase communication among partners);
- Incorporate middle skills training and learn-and-earn models into system;
- Develop a common intake and referral process for all partners;
- Develop a system for universal assessment and sharing results among agencies;
- Provide professional development to program staff on integration within a one-stop system;
- Co-enroll common customers in appropriate educational programs;
- Develop data-sharing capability among all agencies;
- Develop a data-sharing system that contains a common eligible training provider list;

- Braid funds to better utilize resources efficiently.

The information from the mapping event was used in the development of sub committees for the plan so that those committees would develop strategies and plans on how to improve the alignment of the workforce partnership.

3. Customer Satisfaction - In considering the IVRS Customer Satisfaction Survey results gathered over the course of the past few years, IVRS entered into a partnership with Dr. Groomes from Oakland University in Michigan to analyze the survey questions to assure the results to effectively measure satisfaction of services received from the Agency and enhance the SRC and IVRS' understanding of the Customer Satisfaction Survey results. During this process, Dr. Groomes met with IVRS staff around the state to gather information regarding service delivery allowing her to get an understanding of what quality looks like in terms of service delivery. She explained the process of Value Chain Analysis and helped redesign the Customer Satisfaction Survey. In the new survey the SRC asks more probing questions which will provide better analysis of customer satisfaction and allow the council to discern the impact of those results.

During FFY15, there has been an increase in survey responses that will give IVRS more accurate data to not only understand current satisfaction in service delivery but also explore ways to improve services to job candidates of IVRS. The data points in the survey show that IVRS receives positive responses on the questions in relation to quality of work with job candidates closed successfully. Those who are not closed successfully shared that IVRS is not providing the quality of work that the survey asks about. For individuals who did not have a successful outcome, IVRS is receiving responses that can assist in analyzing the current service delivery process and identify areas for improvement. IVRS is implementing Motivational Interviewing training with all staff. Eight specific customer satisfaction survey results identified a discrepancy of greater than 25% for respondents who exited VR services unsuccessful. These questions were shared with the IVRS Motivational Interview Team and strategies will be developed in efforts to change the results of the data and impact employment outcomes.

There are some concerns with the survey data that need to be refined. In some cases, the questions are worded in a way that may allow a respondent to answer with a negative response due to the fact that they did not get what they wanted, even if what they wanted was not allowed based on federal or state policies. In these cases, IVRS will need to determine if there is a better way to ask the question or if the case record should be reviewed to see if staff acted in compliance with regulations, which may have contributed to the job candidate's displeasure.

Through the process of this pilot, IVRS will be able to gain a better understanding of the quality of services that are provided through the perspective of IVRS job candidates. The goal will be to use this data to impact change at the local level so that individuals who work with IVRS see the value in our services and know that they have a voice in improving and advancing the work that IVRS provides to people with disabilities.

In conjunction with the Mapping Event, the statewide Community Conversation Meetings and follow-up meetings to implement changes at the local level, and the Customer Satisfaction

Survey data, the State Rehabilitation Council was provided sufficient information to provide guidance to IVRS on key decision points of the WIOA.

4. Continuum of Services for Students and Youth with Disabilities:

One of the Objectives in our Iowa plan is to assist all Iowa youth in their career path navigation by offering a variety of options supporting the transition from K-12 into the workforce. IVRS is developing a plan for a continuum of services which will not only focus on how students in secondary education infuse career pathway opportunities in their academic and vocational studies, but also create more awareness and immersion into STEM opportunities so as to encourage greater skill development and self- sustaining plans for employment. This continuum will create a strategic plan so that all students with disabilities find access and support necessary to achieve their post school outcomes, regardless of the severity of the disability. This continuum of services will act as a model by which communities will be assessed to determine gaps, weaknesses, and strengths of service delivery. It then will provide guidance to the RSB Management to: determine additional projects needed; occupational skills programs that should be developed with CRPs; development of Third Party Cooperative Agreements for expanded and new programs and projects; and utilize existing programs and projects by creating connections for a systems change approach to services

Upon development of this vision and plan, IVRS' cooperative agreements will be developed along with infusion of STEMS and career pathways to implement this comprehensive system. This vision and plan would then be used as part of the gap analysis process to determine: what is actively provided and producing outcomes for students; what is missing; what needs to be revised to support a continuum of services; and what structures will encourage the development of interest in STEM careers; what are best practices to encourage competitive integrated employment; and how to improve utilization of career pathways at the secondary level.

IVRS has had a long tradition of serving students with disabilities to impact their post-school working outcomes. The Transition Alliance Programs developed in 1997 have withstood the test of time. These programs are located in specific areas of the State of Iowa under collaborative agreements with specific school districts to provide what is now called "pre-employment transition services." The outcomes demonstrate strong success in relationship to employment and wages earned in comparison to, not only students with disabilities, but the students not on an IEP who move into working opportunities after graduation (data source: Indicator 13, Iowa DE.)

IVRS currently has 9 Transition Alliance Programs (TAPs) across the State of Iowa. Through these 9 TAPs, IVRS collaborates with secondary education school districts to provide expanded services to students and youth with disabilities. Of the nine TAP sites, four began after FFY 12 and one after FFY14. Data from 2012 could not be collected as the IVRS system for data collection was not accurate at the time resulting in unreliable data. 2015 data is not complete as only 3 quarters have been completed; however, data shows we have increased the number of students with disabilities who are served each year.

**a. Transition Alliance Programs (TAPs):**

	2013	2014	2015
Count of Successful Closures	36	86	64



Adv. Hours Worked per Week	38	33	35
Adv. Hourly Wage	11.06	9.27	9.69
Number of Referrals	233	245	315
Number of Active Participants	449	891	1050

For students connected to a TAP program, the team may decide that while the student has completed their coursework at the high school level they still have unmet needs related to their IEP in the areas of living, learning and working. In this situation, a student may opt to remain on their IEP to continue receiving one-on-one supports in these areas. The IEP is monitored by staff working in the TAP program and the goals are more functional in nature, or focused on real-world skills to assist them in transitioning successfully into the world of work. If a student decides he or she wants to try one or two college courses but it is uncertain as to whether or not he/she can be successful at that level, the school district may exercise the post-secondary option to assist the student. As part of the TAP, the school district funds the cost of the courses, books, tuition and any fees associated with these classes. The TAP staff monitors the student while in college and goals may be written into the IEP related to success at the college level. TAPs are then able to provide intensive services to the student to help the student be more successful in their college classes. After successful completion of one semester at college, the team reconvenes to review the student's progress. If the student has successfully passed the coursework and wishes to continue with more classes, the school exits them from their IEP and the student can apply for financial aid, request IVRS assistance, and practice budgeting skills to cover the costs of future coursework. If the student is not successful, they stay on their IEP to continue to receive supports, but the school does not fund further classes and the focus is on employability skills.

**b. Making the Grade**

IVRS has also added an after-school work program, "Making the Grade", which is a work readiness, work experience program to provide services to students with disabilities who are juniors and seniors to obtain and maintain summer and after-school paid work opportunities. Making the Grade (MTG) is a contract that IVRS just started in 2015 which is collaboration among IVRS, a local Community Rehabilitation Provider, and a local school district. There are seven sites that have been selected to participate in this contract, serving ten communities. The goal of the contract is to get paid work experience for students with disabilities while they are still in high school to prepare them for competitive, integrative employment once high school is completed. Students referred to the program are those who need assistance in getting paid work experience which may not be available to them due to their disability. Because MTG just started, CRPs are in the process of getting the referrals from the schools and IVRS so that they can begin to work on JSST and job placement. This collaborative agreement is new, and only began in the summer of 2015, so preliminary data is limited, but it is indicative of the types of strategies that IVRS employs to impact student outcomes.

As agency staff reviewed data, it was identified that the MTG might be modified in future years to enhance service delivery for those individuals with the most significant disabilities. This effort would provide work readiness and work place learning opportunities to students who are MSD with a focus to provide opportunities so as to bypass extended evaluation after graduation. While initially the MTG projects were focused on any student who was under an IVRS IPE, current feedback from the providers was that students who require more intensive, supported employment services require additional attention to facilitate community

employment instead of extended evaluation. These job candidates could be served by the current service structure for Making the Grade, but by clarifying potential outreach and service options it may enhance those job candidates being identified to participate MTG will clearly identify options for providing greater work related experiences to this most significantly disabled population with the expectation that these individuals will be employed in the community and avoid extended evaluation services after graduation.

#### **c. IVRS Staff**

IVRS has a counselor assigned to every high school and college in the State of Iowa. Years prior, the Department of Education and IVRS worked collaboratively with institutions of higher education to develop the Student Accommodation Request form. This document summarizes the information on the Individual Education Plan and identifies the accommodations the student with a disability will need in the academic setting. All of the colleges and universities accept this documentation to arrange for accommodations for classroom instruction.

#### **d. University Collaborations**

In the Memorandum of Understanding that IVRS has with the Board of Regents, the Regents universities are required to provide accommodations that allow an individual with a disability to have access to their programs, while IVRS strives to provide the necessary services and supports to achieve success. With the new integration model this will become more critical as fewer students will be participating in IVRS just to get the “VR scholarship for people with disabilities” and more of the seriously disabled will be served who also require disability-specific services to be successful.

The University of Iowa REACH Program (Realizing Educational and Career Hopes) facilitates the development of career interest and opportunities for Iowa residents with learning and cognitive disabilities through specialized coursework. REACH assists students with disabilities to access academic programs, enhance social development, and increase independent living opportunities with the ultimate goal of gainful employment outcomes. Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services has partnered and collaborated with the University of Iowa and REACH since the start of this program in 2008.

IVRS staff work with the UI REACH career staff in developing the career interests and opportunities for Iowa residents eligible for vocational rehabilitation services. Nineteen individuals eligible for IVRS were provided financial assistance to participate in REACH in FFY15. In FFY16, IVRS will continue to provide financial support for REACH, in addition to ongoing counseling, guidance, and placement assistance to these individuals.

CLASS OF	EMPLOYMENT	TYPES OF EMPLOYMENT
2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3/6 work ft or more than one pt job</li> <li>• 2/6 work pt</li> <li>• 1/6 not working but looking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clerical</li> <li>• Hospitality</li> <li>• Retail (2)</li> <li>• Lab</li> </ul>
2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6/10 work ft or more than one pt job</li> <li>• 3/10 work pt</li> <li>• 1/10 – does not reply to our requests for info – possible medical concern prohibits work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Childcare (2)</li> <li>• Hospital (2)</li> <li>• Custodial</li> <li>• Food prep or dietary aide (2)</li> <li>• Farming</li> <li>• Manufacturing</li> </ul>
2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1/3 works ft</li> <li>• 1/3 works pt</li> <li>• 1/3 continuing education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retail</li> <li>• Driver</li> <li>• Chiropractor asst</li> </ul>
2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1/3 works ft</li> <li>• 1/3 works pt</li> <li>• 1/3 not responded to rqst for info but we think is working pt possibly ft</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hospitality</li> <li>• Retail</li> <li>• Bakery</li> </ul>
2014 (overall stats attachment is thru 1/2015 – this info is what we know as of 7/2015)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1/4 works ft</li> <li>• 2/4 work pt</li> <li>• 1/4 moved out of state and we believe is still seeking employment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Childcare</li> <li>• Retail</li> <li>• Driver</li> </ul>
All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 26 total IVRS alumni thru class of 2014 – does not include recent class of 2015</li> <li>• 12/26 work ft or more than one pt job</li> <li>• 9/26 work pt</li> <li>• 2/26 seeking employment</li> <li>• 2/26 not responding to our rqst for info</li> <li>• 1/26 continuing education</li> </ul>	

**Employment 6 months Post-UI REACH: (n=19):**

Class of 2014	68%	13/19
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**Employment 1 year Post-UI REACH: (n=57)**

- ❖ 54% of UI REACH Alumni are employed 1 year Post-UI REACH
  - Includes Year 3 students of the year they graduated the 3<sup>rd</sup> year program

Class of 2010	44%	7/16
Class of 2011	67%	8/12
Class of 2012	46%	6/14
Class of 2013	67%	10/15
Class of 2014		

**Employment 2 years Post-UI REACH: (n=42)**

- ❖ 81% of UI REACH Alumni are employed 2 years Post-UI REACH
  - Includes Year 3 students of the year they graduated the 3<sup>rd</sup> year program

Class of 2010	75%	12/16
Class of 2011	83%	10/12
Class of 2012	86%	12/14
Class of 2013		
Class of 2014		

**Continued Education 6 months Post-UI REACH (n=19)**

- Includes Year 3 students of the year they graduated the 3<sup>rd</sup> year program

Class of 2014	31%	6/19
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**Continued Education 1 year Post-UI REACH (n=57)**

- ❖ 25% of UI REACH Alumni continue their education 1 year Post-UI REACH
  - Includes Year 3 students of the year they graduated the 3<sup>rd</sup> year program

Class of 2010	44%	7/16
Class of 2011	0.8%	1/12
Class of 2012	33%	4/14
Class of 2013	13%	2/15
Class of 2014		

**Continued Education 2 years Post-UI REACH (n=42)**

- ❖ 14% of UI REACH Alumni are continuing their education 2 years Post-UI REACH
  - Includes Year 3 students of the year they graduated the 3<sup>rd</sup> year program

Class of 2010	19%	3/16
Class of 2011	17%	2/12
Class of 2012	.07%	1/14
Class of 2013		
Class of 2014		

*17.6% of people with disabilities work PT or FT (US Bureau 2013)*

**Continued Education and working 6 months Post-UI REACH (n=19)**

- Includes Year 3 students of the year they graduated the 3<sup>rd</sup> year program

Class of 2014	15%	3/19
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**Class of 2014 not working: 2**

**Class of 2014 unknown: 1**

**Independent Living: (n=83)**

- ❖ 48% of UI REACH Alumni are living independently

Class of 2010	31%	6/16
Class of 2011	68%	11/16
Class of 2012	26%	4/15
Class of 2013	70%	12/17
Class of 2014	36%	7/19

6 months post UI-REACH

- ❖ Class of 2014 – 2 students are living in college dorms

*44% of Young Millennials, ages 18-24 years old are living at home*

*64% of all Millennials, ages 18-31 years old are living at home*

- ❖ *Millennial Statistic from Pew Research (2012)*

*Independent Living changed from 52% (data compiled on 7/23/14) to 48%. By adding the class of 2014, 19 more UI REACH Alums were added to the data.*

**e. Project Search Options:**

In FY15, IVRS is coordinating service delivery support to seven Project Search programs, six of which are funded as part of an Occupational Skills training program. There are specific requirements for Project Search programs, as well as ongoing supports costs, however the success of this program remains undisputed. Project Search has particular relevance under WIOA and each state’s legal obligation to create a systematic plan to help people with disabilities to get jobs. Currently, Iowans with intellectual and developmental disabilities are benefiting from seven Project Search program sites. They are located within health care facilities throughout the state, such as Unity Point and Mercy Hospitals in Des

Moines, St Luke's Hospital in Cedar Rapids, Mercy Medical Center in Mason City, Lucas Hospital in Chariton; and in other industries such as Hy-Vee stores. The IVRS continuum plan will incorporate Project Search as well as create additional programming opportunities for the most significantly disabled population.

### **Project Search Placement Results:**

IVRS has one Project Search designed on the traditional model of High School, VR, CRP and Business. This Project Search is a partnership with Mercy Medical Center, Easter Seals of Central Iowa, Des Moines Public Schools and Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services.

#### DMPS Project SEARCH

Performance Measure: Within three months of successfully completing Project SEARCH, 50% of students will obtain competitive employment.

#### FFY14:

Six of twelve students from the 2013-2014 class were placed within three months of completing Project SEARCH (50%).

#### FFY15:

Eight out of twelve students from the 2014-2015 class were placed during FFY15 (67%).

Performance Measure: Project SEARCH will achieve a 60% rehabilitation rate.

#### FFY14:

Rehabilitation Rate 67%

#### FFY15:

Rehabilitation Rate 67% (Average hours per week = 32.75; Average wages per hour = \$10.04)

Another objective of our Iowa Plan is to engage Iowa's youth in the career path development process using creative, progressive, and self-directed techniques in the delivery of career services.

#### f. Development of Pilot Projects

1. WIOA Pilots -IVRS consistently considers the use of pilot projects prior to full and comprehensive roll out of new initiatives and programs. Using pilot projects IVRS then develops new and expanded services making changes to the pilots based on the outcomes and results achieved. IVRS is currently working on a pilot project to initiate youth services, or a youth center, in the Black Hawk County area. The intent is to increase communication and collaboration between the schools, IVRS, and other core agencies under the WIOA legislation guidelines. If this pilot project is successful, this model could then be utilized statewide. The focus of the pilot project is to collaborate on providing PETS activities to students with disabilities and provide information and referral to youth with disabilities that may hear about

the youth center. IVRS staff had meetings with key partners in the local school districts and AEA as well as through the WIOA, Iowa Works, and Wagner-Peysner agencies to; discuss the WIOA legislation; provide information on Potentially Eligible and PETS; and to determine what services are available within these entities to prevent duplication of services. In addition, the meetings served as a forum to allow these other entities to educate IVRS on their needs and how best to communicate with their staff. From these meetings, IVRS has learned that the entities are most interested in having a traveling team that would travel to each school district to provide services to students with disabilities.

IWD Business Service Representatives (BSR's) provide job seeking skills training and other curriculum steered towards youth and already travel to each school in this area. The idea is that IVRS, and other core program staff will travel along with the BSR's to school districts within the region. They would coordinate with teachers during teacher planning time to determine how to provide PETS activities to groups of potentially eligible students within each school. IVRS would focus on disability and accommodations training to assure students receive information in IVRS' area of expertise. The core agencies would also focus on providing information in the other PETS areas, to assure potentially eligible students are receiving information that allows them to receive the guidance they need to successfully enter the workforce. While the traveling team is in the school, students with disabilities will have the opportunity to speak with the team about their needs, and referrals could occur with the agency appropriate for that individual's needs.

2. Gear Up - is a project located in multiple counties in the State of Iowa where there are the largest proportion of students who receive a free or reduce lunch. The project focuses on those at risk with thoughts and behaviors that are correlated with poverty and works with those students to change their thought modality and create resiliency. Half of the funds from the grant project are used for scholarships for students who decide to pursue a college education. In late FFY15, IVRS became a partner in these projects to ensure that students with disabilities participate. A counselor is assigned to each project and is part of the GEAR Up team where they receive training on the counseling strategies and teaching techniques used. These counselors will then provide input to the IVRS administration on how to best export these strategies to all students with disabilities. While IVRS is in the exploration and support phase of the project, it is perhaps the first time in years a project holds promise in re-orienting individuals with disabilities toward a promising and self-sustaining future. IVRS, at the request of GEAR Up, will be involved with providing a cultural competency on disability training to their facilitators.

3. The Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) is a contract between IVRS and the Department of Human Rights to provide services to students with disabilities. Generally about 45 students are referred to the program each year to go through a week-long experience at Iowa State University where they work on job goals and experience life away from home. Students are referred to the YLF to get experience in career-planning, self-advocacy, job seeking skills training (JSST), and life skills. Each student is expected to exit YLF with a vocational goal to work on with their IVRS counselor upon returning home. IVRS' local offices are exploring the delivery of this service more locally in the summer months.

4. Post- Secondary Credential Attainment - Community colleges throughout the state often collaborate with IVRS when determining whether a student with a disability will be granted accommodations. IVRS is often an integral part of this process with IVRS staff providing guidance to job candidates on completing the request for accommodations. When a Student Accommodation Request (SAR) is not available, or more information is necessary, the college will contact IVRS to determine if more information can be obtained. In these situations, with a signed release of information, IVRS provides the eligibility face sheet to the college. This allows the college's Disability Services' staff access to not only the job candidate's limitations but also the diagnoses used to make the job candidate eligible for IVRS services. This document serves as a starting point, should the college need additional information. The diagnosis is on the IVRS Face Sheet and includes the name of the doctor that can be contacted for follow up and additional documentation.

IVRS has long tradition of encouraging job candidates with disabilities to further their education in an industry-recognized credential program area, evidenced by the number of individuals pursuing a post-secondary education across the past four federal fiscal years:

The following table demonstrates the number of job candidates actively pursuing a post-secondary credential during the preceding federal fiscal year, followed by the percentage of the active caseload participating in some form of post-secondary training at an institution of higher education.

**Individuals Pursuing Post-Secondary Credential:**

FFY 2012	FFY2013	FFY2014	FFY2015
3982 (34%)	4006 (32%)	3873 (32%)	3651 (30%)

Perhaps even more important to consider than mere attendance is credential attainment. The following table shows an analysis of the percentage of IVRS job candidates who achieved a post-secondary credential. This data was achieved by comparing the level of education at application for services to the level of education attained by case file closure. The table below shows the number of individuals who achieved a higher level of education while receiving services followed by the percentage this number represents of total cases closed during that fiscal year.

**Individuals Who Achieved an Academic Credential by Case Closure:**

FFY 2012	FFY2013	FFY2014	FFY2015
1715 of 3701 (46.3%)	1837 of 3736 (49.2%)	2094 of 3806 (55.0%)	2,157 of 4,121 (52.3%)

Significant in the discussion on preparing a Future Ready workforce is that 50% of the active IVRS caseload achieved educational attainment by the time the file was closed. At this time IVRS only collects data on certain post-secondary credentials. By FFY 17, IVRS will add additional fields into the case management system to track attendance in or attainment of additional credentials besides the common, formal college level degrees including data fields for training received that lead to industry-specific credentials as required by WIOA. This information is



important in the analysis of training that prepares individuals for middle skills jobs that do not require a post-secondary degree.

IVRS currently tracks the retention rate for job candidates in college. Each IVRS staff member assigned to a college case load is required to meet a retention rate so that job candidates who start in a program have the supports to complete the program. The table below shows the percentage of job candidates in a post-secondary training program who were retained in their program of study.

**Post-Secondary Retention:**

2012	2013	2014	2015
75%	58%	63%	59%

**Annual Estimates:**

In FFY15, IVRS determined 5,855 individuals eligible for services. IVRS anticipates being able to serve up to 13,500 in FFY16.

IVRS funded supported employment services for 242 individuals in FFY15, using both Part B Title VI funds and Part B Title I funds. Total Supported Employment expenditures were \$1,031,044 of which \$240,674 came from Part B Title VI funds. IVRS estimates that it will serve approximately 372 clients in Supported Employment during FFY16. Funding will again come from a combination of Part B Title VI funds and Part B Title I funds.

Category	Title I, Title VI funds	Estimated Funds	Estimated number to be served	Average Cost of services
MSD	Title I	\$4,451,913	4,847	\$918
SSD	Title I	\$7,775,346	8,465	\$919
OE	Title I	\$173,612	188	\$923
MSD	Title VI	\$240,674	372	

Based on current projections, we believe that approximately 13,500 individuals will receive services from IVRS in 2016. The numbers are based on the representation in the current caseload. Actual

outcomes may vary. IVRS continues to evaluate this data monthly in budget team and may see changes in outcomes. Additional information on the number of individuals served per priority level is in the chart on page 40, regarding Order of Selection.

**(m) ORDER OF SELECTION. DESCRIBE:**

- (1) THE ORDER TO BE FOLLOWED IN SELECTING ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS TO BE PROVIDED VR SERVICES.
- (2) THE JUSTIFICATION FOR THE ORDER.
- (3) THE SERVICE AND OUTCOME GOALS.
- (4) THE TIME WITHIN WHICH THESE GOALS MAY BE ACHIEVED FOR INDIVIDUALS IN EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY WITHIN THE ORDER.
- (5) HOW INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES ARE SELECTED FOR SERVICES BEFORE ALL OTHER INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES; AND

(6) IF THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT HAS ELECTED TO SERVE ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS, REGARDLESS OF ANY ESTABLISHED ORDER OF SELECTION, WHO REQUIRE SPECIFIC SERVICES OR EQUIPMENT TO MAINTAIN EMPLOYMENT.

Priority Category	Number of Individuals to be served	Estimated number of individuals who will exit with employment after receiving services	Estimated number of individuals who will exit without employment after receiving services	Time within which goals are to be achieved	Cost of Services
1	4,847	835	752	35.2 mths	\$4,519,533
2	8,465	1,456	966	44.4 mths	\$7,893,447
3	188	32	9	84.7	\$176,249

On a weekly basis, IVRS removes all individuals on the Most Significantly Disabled waiting list. As of October, 2015, IVRS had 1,159 individuals with Significant Disabilities and 609 individuals in the Others Eligible Category on the Waiting List.

Currently IVRS is not able to serve all categories on the waiting list. In May of 2012, IVRS opened the waiting list to all individuals who were MSD. At that time, IVRS staff were notified that: "Beginning today May 11, 2012 consumers that are determined to have Most Significant Disabilities will move directly into services. MSD consumers will not be placed on a waiting list. The Budget Team has decided to no longer restrict the movement of MSD consumers into services. Consumers with Significant Disabilities and Others Eligible consumers will continue to be placed on waiting lists for services."

IVRS currently releases the names of individuals for whom services could be initiated on a weekly basis. This allows IVRS to become more efficient in caseload management techniques and anticipate service provision. The budget team meets on the goals for release on a monthly basis and the Administrative Services Bureau Chief reviews this weekly taking into consideration the budget sustainability model and the Rehabilitation Services Bureau field capacity, which is gathered through discussions occurring at the Budget Team.

Vocational Rehabilitation Services is an eligibility program based on the nature and function of the individual's disability as it pertains to preparing for, obtaining maintaining, and advancing in employment. Only a qualified rehabilitation counselor or a supervisor has the authority to determine if a person is eligible for services and which priority category to which they are assigned. In order to make an accurate decision on eligibility IVRS requires receipt of medical, psychological, or psychiatric records, and statements from the individual with the disability concerning the disability impact, to provide verification of the disability and the nature and extent of the disability on the individual's ability to prepare for, obtain, maintain, or advance in employment.

Students in transition (age 21 and under) and youth in transition (age 24 and under) may provide documentation of their disability by submitting their Individual Education Plan (IEP). This document is then used by the IVRS counselor to complete the RSA Coding Rubric. IVRS staff may request a statement from the school psychologist that reports a job candidate as demonstrating a “pattern of behavior consistent with (intellectual disability, learning disability), but this is not required if the rubric is completed.

According to the Federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Title I – The Rehabilitation Act, if a state vocational rehabilitation program cannot serve all eligible individuals who apply it must develop a waiting list for services based on the significance of the disability. The following provides definitions of the waiting list categories:

- “Individual with a disability means an individual (i) Who has a physical or mental impairment as identified by the RSA Coding; (ii) Whose impairment constitutes or results in a substantial impediment to employment; and (iii) Who can benefit in terms of an employment outcome from vocational rehabilitation services.” (34 CFR 361.5(b)(28))
- An individual who meets this definition and who requires only one service for a duration of six months or less is considered as meeting the priority for services category 6, “Other’s Eligible”(OE).
- Individuals who demonstrate to have at least 2 or fewer functional limitations that are serious in nature and who require multiple services over an extended period of time are considered as meeting the priority for services category 4, “Significantly Disabled” (SD).
- Individuals who demonstrate to have at least 3 or more functional limitations that are serious in nature and who require multiple services over an extended period of time are considered as meeting the priority for services category 2, “Most Significantly Disabled” (MSD).
- Services over an extended period of time is defined as by nature and extent of the service, not due to lack of action or time delay by the VR agency or staff.

The determination of eligibility requires that a qualified rehabilitation professional employed by Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services (IVRS) perform a comprehensive analysis of the disabling conditions, impediments to employment, and justification of why the individual requires services from IVRS to be successfully employed within 60 days of application for services. When such determination cannot be made during that timeframe, an extension must be approved by the individual with a disability and when appropriate the guardian or parent. This extension must identify the specific date by when the decision will be made. The decision of eligibility should be completed within 10 working days of having received the medical information that allows for said decision to be made. The priority of service may be increased and updated at later dates as more medical information is received.

As such an eligibility justification is a process for the rehabilitation counselor to learn about the individual’s presenting disability and gain understanding of the implications. Through a process of analysis the rehabilitation counselor must consider the impact of the disabling conditions upon the person’s ability to work, and then synthesize the information to determine if the

individual can be successful with IVRS simply providing technical assistance and consultation to existing systems or if the individual requires intensive services to be successful in employment. A thorough process of developing an understanding from the individual's point of view, analyzing the information and synthesizing it in relationship to IVRS requirements and then determining the priority of service and service needs involves:

- a. gather information that describes the individual's disability and the difficulty the individual is having in gaining access to services and supports to be successful in employment;
- b. analyze the information in relationship to the individual's ability to prepare for, obtain, maintain, and advance in employment and how the individual can access services and supports that exist to more fully understand the implications of the individual's disability upon employment;
- c. consider those impediments that have been identified to determine the seriousness on the individual's ability to prepare for, obtain, maintain or advance in employment as well as the timeframe required to successfully complete services and obtain employment that could not otherwise be obtained from other organizations;
- d. determine the priority for services by examining the seriousness and evaluating if the serious impediment has implications in preparing for, obtaining, maintaining or advancing in employment and the specialized services and supports that are necessary for the individual to be successful.

There may be times when a period of Trial Work is necessary to determine if the individual can indeed achieve successful employment. Trial work allows the rehabilitation professional to deliver any of the services available to any individual who is deemed eligible, with the sole purpose of determining if the individual can benefit from services because it is not entirely clear due to the severity of the individual's disability. An individual cannot be determined as "ineligible due to disability too severe" without having first participated in a program of trial work. During a program of trial work the rehabilitation professional delivers services to explore the individual's abilities, capabilities, and capacity to perform in work situations given appropriate supports. Such experiences are of a sufficient variety and over a sufficient period of time (at most a period of four years but not less than 18 months) to determine the eligibility of the individual. In providing the trial experiences the rehabilitation professional shall provide the individual opportunities to try different employment experiences, and may include supported employment, and the opportunity to become employed in the competitive integrated work environment. Trial work is part of the assessment process for eligibility when it is deemed necessary. An individual must be seriously disabled or most seriously disabled to participate in trial work.

*"Clear and convincing evidence – means that IVRS shall have a high degree of certainty before it can conclude that an individual is incapable of benefiting from services in terms of an employment outcome. The "clear and convincing" evidence standard constitutes the highest standard used in our civil system of law and is to be individually applied on a*

*case by case basis. The term “clear” means unequivocal. For example the use of an intelligence test result alone would not constitute clear and convincing evidence. Clear and convincing evidence may include a description of assessments, situational assessments, supported employment assessments, reports from service providers who have concluded that they would be unable to meet the individual’s needs due to the severity of the individual’s disability and/or impediments. The demonstration of clear and convincing evidence must include, if appropriate, a functional assessment of skill development activities with any necessary supports in real life settings.”*

Under limited circumstances if an individual with a disability cannot take advantage of trial work experiences or if options for trial work experiences have been exhausted and IVRS cannot make the determination of eligibility then IVRS must conduct an extended evaluation to make the determination. During the extended evaluation period, IVRS services must be provided in the most integrated setting possible consistent with informed choice and the rehabilitation needs of the individual. During the extended evaluation IVRS counselors must develop a written plan for providing services to make the determination.

An individual who has a disability as determined eligible for Social Security benefits shall be considered to be an individual with a significant disability and presumed to be eligible for IVRS services, provided that individual intends to achieve an employment outcome consistent with the unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice of the individual. Individuals who are seeking homemaker and unpaid family worker (and other similar uncompensated occupations) are referred to the Independent Living Program for services. Individuals receiving social security benefits due to a disabling condition, who are seeking employment in a competitive integrated environment, are presumed to benefit in terms of an employment outcome. If after the individual is informed that the purpose of the VR program is to achieve an employment outcomes in the competitive integrated environment, and the individual completes the application process, IVRS considers that to be sufficient evidence of the individual’s intent to achieve an employment outcome and no additional demonstration on the part of the applicant is required.

Rehabilitation counselors consider the seven functional capacity areas for employment; if there are systems, organizations, laws, and supports that already exist for the individual to access for success; and the seriousness of the impediment that requires the intensive services from IVRS. The following are examples of when the impediment is considered serious but is not an all-inclusive list:

Mobility: unable to drive without modifications or specialized training; unable to ambulate without adaptive equipment or personal assistance; unable to climb one flight of stairs or walk 100 yards without pause on a permanent basis; unable to drive due to a physical impairment; unable to access public transportation due to a physical impairment.

Self-Care: Unable to live without supervision impacting one's ability to obtain or maintain employment; unable to plan activities of daily living without personal assistance or rehabilitation technology as required for employment; unable to perform activities of daily living without personal assistance or rehabilitation technology as required for employment; requires an extended period of time beyond the norm to prepare oneself for work due to physical or emotional impairments; requires assistive technology to perform essential daily living skills.

Self-Direction: unable to adjust to new work conditions, new work routines, or new work expectations without personal assistance, specialized training, or an extended transition period; unable to concentrate on the job for minimal periods of time in order to make appropriate work related decision, to problem-solve effectively on the job, and/or to complete multi-step work tasks without being easily distracted as a result of the disabling condition or medications prescribed that treat the condition; unable to make routine decision that would affect work tasks and work performance without structured intervention, personal assistance or specialized training; unable to learn from the consequences of poor decision-making on the job which results in repeated job loss for long periods of unemployment.

Work Skills: unable to learn new work tasks, learn appropriate work behaviors and skills, and/or organize work functions on the job without direct intervention or specialized training; unable to utilize previous job training and skills because of disability-related impediments and retraining that is required; will require rehabilitation technology on a permanent basis in order to perform resume job skills; requires compensatory strategies, created by a third party, such as visual cues, illustrations, color-coding, numbering in order to complete work tasks.

Work Tolerance: unable to perform sustained work activity for 2 or more hours without rest on a permanent basis beyond what is allowed for a regular work shift; requires a permanently modified work schedule or work environment for disability related needs; unable to perform job tasks that require repetitive motion without modifications to the work environment in order to maintain employment; cannot work around chemicals, dust or fumes without having a serious reaction; unable to work around environment extremes such as temperature changes, noise or visual stimuli without aggravating the disability and causes a reduction in stamina; unable to demonstrate the psychological stamina to work a full-time job due to the disability.

Interpersonal Skills: unable to establish or maintain appropriate interactions with coworkers and supervisors without specialized training and/or personal assistance; unable to establish or maintain appropriate interactions with coworker and supervisors without prescribed medication; unable to maintain current or future employment due to documented history of job loss resulting from on the job interpersonal problems; demonstrates a serious lack in

maintaining appropriate eye contact, understanding visual cues and personal work space to the point it creates discomfort on the part of the person with whom the interaction occurs.

Communication: unable to perform/understand written communications in the workplace without accommodation or interventions; unable to perform/understand oral communication in the workplace without accommodations or interventions; unable to perform functional communications required for completing job applications and participating in interviews without accommodations or interventions; unable to speak or understand individuals without accommodations or interventions; demonstrates job loss due to failure to communicate effectively, which caused misunderstandings and extreme difficulty in the work environment

The job candidate and the qualified rehabilitation professional together learn about and explore the job candidate's disability through a process of assessment, discussion, and functional evaluation. The decision is made as soon as the first documentation of priority is possible, but it may be changed to a higher priority category as additional information is received. The counselor will explain the decision to the job candidate and provide the job candidate with opportunities to provide more information. Further testing and evaluation may be done to determine the appropriate category and additional material may be provided to the counselor to be used in a reconsideration of the category placement decision. The job candidate may request mediation or appeal of the counselor's decision, and the Iowa Client Assistance Program may help with that request. IVRS' staff informs the job candidate of the timeframe by when mediation or an appeal must be requested.

When determining the priority for services the counselor must ascertain how the functional impediment impacts the job candidate in seven critical areas: mobility, work tolerance, work skills, self-direction, self-care, communication, and interpersonal skills. The manifestation of the disability must be the cause of the impediment and functional limitations and cannot be a function of environmental factors or choices made by the job candidate. The impact of the functional limitation must be manifested in different ways in order for it to be considered a separate disabling condition.

(n) GOALS AND PLANS FOR DISTRIBUTION OF TITLE VI FUNDS.

- (1) SPECIFY THE STATE'S GOALS AND PRIORITIES FOR FUNDS RECEIVED UNDER SECTION 603 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES.
- (2) DESCRIBE THE ACTIVITIES TO BE CONDUCTED, WITH FUNDS RESERVED PURSUANT TO SECTION 603(D), FOR YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING :
  - (A) THE PROVISION OF EXTENDED SERVICES FOR A PERIOD NOT TO EXCEED 4 YEARS; AND
  - (B) HOW THE STATE WILL LEVERAGE OTHER PUBLIC AND PRIVATE FUNDS TO INCREASE RESOURCES FOR EXTENDED SERVICES AND EXPANDED SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES.

IVRS estimates that 242 individuals will be served in supported employment during Fiscal Year 2016. Currently, there are 44 Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs) available to provide

services under a contract established with IVRS, in addition to over 20 that accept standardized payments derived from prior agreements. The State Unit accepted new expenditure rates that each CRP submitted to outline their costs of providing specific items on the Menu of Services. The Menu of Services items are used so that instead of having a package of services, individualized services are able to be purchased on behalf of each job candidate's needs. It is the responsibility of the counselor and job candidate to determine which of the unbundled services the job candidate requires, and which the counselor/agency may be able to provide directly. Only those that are needed and cannot be provided by the agency are purchased. Additional services were added to the Menu of Services this year that include Discovery and Customized Employment. As part of the FFY15 State Plan, IVRS completed the mandatory Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) to determine the current needs of lowans with disabilities, as well as assess the services provided by Community Rehabilitation Programs. During the prior CSNA, the roles that service providers fell under were reviewed by a consortium consisting of individuals from a variety of Iowa organizations. This group included representatives from the Department of Human Services Bureau of Long-Term Care, Policy Analyst staff from Medicaid Enterprise, sub-group members of the IVRS Community Rehabilitation Program Advisory Committee, and supporting staff from the Technical Assistance Continuing Education (TACE). This group was tasked with re-evaluating practices related to service delivery for individuals receiving Supported Employment Services (SES) in Iowa. Various changes to the original SES process were implemented to address issues such as accessibility, consistency, paperwork redundancies and a lack of understanding of various SES "systems."

IVRS will continue to fine-tune service delivery processes designed to contribute to an increase in understanding, improve relationships, and ultimately result in better outcomes for individuals receiving SES. Making this a reality will require ongoing communication and collaboration between all systems in the delivery of SES for individuals in Iowa. Refining current SES processes, coupled with enhancing both communication and collaboration from SES providers are established as primary priorities going forward. IVRS' staff are making a concerted effort to connect with current and potential partners, provide mutually-beneficial/joint training(s), and facilitate ongoing opportunities for dialogue. A continued focus is on increasing work hours and wages to enhance self-sufficiency. Flexibility is needed for job candidates with disability factors that indicate fewer hours, as well as those with the ability to increase work hours and become self-sufficient. If disability factors indicate a reduced number of hours, supported employment services are provided and before a case record is closed successfully the area office supervisor reviews the case to ensure it meets the job candidates stated goals, skills, IPE and functional capacity. Continuing goals for individuals receiving supported employment services include increasing the average number of hours worked and client wages, and decreasing dependence on public support. The State Unit recognizes that Title VI, Part B funds are only a supplement to the regular Title I funds. By the end of the first quarter of the fiscal year the State Unit typically has exhausted its Title VI, Part B dollars and is spending Title I dollars for supported employment. IVRS is making an effort to partner with various government entities including the Department of Human Services Medicaid Waiver program to ensure that adequate funding will be available to pay for supported employment. Efforts to blend and braid funds, as well as establish uniform payment systems among state partners continues to be viewed as IVRS priority areas going forward.



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- (o) STATE'S STRATEGIES. DESCRIBE THE REQUIRED STRATEGIES AND HOW THE AGENCY WILL USE THESE STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE ITS GOALS AND PRIORITIES, SUPPORT INNOVATION AND EXPANSION ACTIVITIES, AND OVERCOME ANY BARRIERS TO ACCESSING THE VR AND THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS (SEE SECTIONS 101(A)(15)(D) AND (18)(B) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT AND SECTION 427 OF THE GENERAL EDUCATION PROVISIONS ACT (GEPA)):
- (1) THE METHODS TO BE USED TO EXPAND AND IMPROVE SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.

**WIOA Unified Plan Vision, Goals and Strategies:**

*Workforce delivery systems will collaborate to build a Future Ready Iowa – a pipeline of skilled workers who are prepared to meet the workforce needs of Iowa’s current and emerging industries. In alignment with the National Governor’s Association Talent Pipeline vision and goals, this unified plan will ensure individuals are prepared for dynamic careers through an emphasis on lifelong learning while meeting the needs of employers. Future Ready Iowa will help more Iowans attain the “new minimum” of high-quality education, training, and work readiness by bringing together education, rehabilitation, workforce, and economic development resources and ensuring that all Iowans have access to an integrated and efficient workforce delivery system. Future Ready Iowans will be ready to meet the employment challenges of today and into the future so that ALL Iowans work in competitive, integrated employment settings.*

**GOAL 1: All of Iowa’s workforce will represent the continuum of a most advanced, diverse, skilled, and Future Ready workers in the nation.**

IVRS will continue to evaluate the effectiveness of and possibly expand upon the cooperative agreements, the Integration and Continuum of Services model, the service delivery structure in working with students and youth. Methods that will be used in the evaluation of progress include but are not limited to: customer satisfaction data, quality assurance data, and performance on common performance measures and key standards and indicators, and targeted outcomes and efficiencies. This information will continue to inform IVRS management about service delivery issues, performance patterns, and provide opportunities for improved data analysis. IVRS has been and continues to be an organization that focuses on results, continuous improvement, and research to improve systems and programs to achieve outcomes. Continued use of pilot projects is seen as a key to inform development and expansion of initiatives is embraced.

The implementation of new service delivery strategies with our education partners involve pre-employment transition services as well as services for the potentially eligible. These services will enhance outreach and impact service delivery. Our collaborative partnership with Iowa Medicaid will provide opportunities to align state funding and expand service delivery given limited capacity of our state partners. Our continued collaboration with our workforce partners will align service strengths for

expanded service to all lowans with IVRS focused on the supports for individuals with the most significant disabilities.

Iowa has received technical assistance support through the Office of Disability and Employment Policy for the fourth year in a row. Iowa was an original pilot project and is now recognized as a leader in the provision of Employment First practices. Their Administrator was identified as an Employment First Ambassador and has provided guidance to other states with strategies regarding the implementation of Employment First practices. The continued focus of community provider transformation efforts, the Community of Practice Webinars and continued participation with Subject Matter Experts as identified by ODEP and the Department of Labor will provide opportunities for continued expansion and improved service delivery for individuals with the most significant disabilities focused on competitive, community integrated employment.

A continued barrier for service delivery is the timely delivery of benefits planning services for individuals and families with the most significant disabilities. This is also contributed to by the lack of information that gets to families through early education and secondary school programming. Strategies are being implemented through the delivery of Pre-Employment Transition Services, IVRS benefits planning services and Employment First principles. Continued efforts need to occur in communicating work incentives, impact of work, and integrating these discussions into employment planning. These efforts have resulted in improved employment planning, better job candidate engagement, and will positively impact employment outcomes. Each of the 13 IVRS offices have assigned staff to provide benefits planning services and benefits counseling. Staff assigned to IVRS college settings are adept in using work incentives to help address a beneficiary's needs through school until the completion of their work goals.

(2) HOW A BROAD RANGE OF ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY SERVICES AND DEVICES WILL BE PROVIDED TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES AT EACH STAGE OF THE REHABILITATION PROCESS AND ON A STATEWIDE BASIS.

Unified Plan Strategy: Provide workers with the skills, work-based learning opportunities, resources, accommodations and supports needed to secure and maintain self-sustaining employment so that ALL lowans work to their fullest potential.

IVRS employs two Assistive Technology Counselor Specialists who work with the local offices in identifying assistive technology that can enhance an individual's ability to live and work. The second position was just filled in the fall of 2015 and reflected the need for additional expansion and capacity in the AT area. The following table summarizes the AT progress by FFY:

Description	FFY 2013			FFY 2014			FFY 2015		
Expenditure	# Receiv e Service s	Total Cost	St 26 & St. 28	# Receiv e Service s	Total Cost	St 26 & St. 28	# Receiv e Service s	Total Cost	St 26 & St. 28

Computers Parts	25	\$17,324.50	14/6	22	\$9943.73	13/11	21	\$10586.73	13/8
<b>Glasses</b>	19	\$3,138.01		52	\$7125	15/17	31	\$10,587	31/14
<b>Hearing Aids</b>	132	\$248,428	50/8	156	\$345,446	129/24	121	\$276,373	120/15
<b>Home Modifications</b>	11	\$76316	11/1	7	\$53,863	8/2	2	\$3285	2/2
<b>Rehabilitation Technology Devices/Services</b>	78	\$134,538	43/16	101	\$95,223	56/12	85	32,567	58/18
<b>Vehicle Modifications</b>	34	\$452,675	26/2	29	\$406,862	30/8	26	\$509,446	16/6
Grand Total	271	\$932,421	117/30	333	\$918,461	214/66	257	\$837,566	197/51

The IVRS AT staff received an increase in referrals for assistive technology evaluations from one year to the next, with a slight decline in 2015. The IVRS program demonstrated that 100% of the individuals referred were able to benefit from assistive technology as recommended to them to expand their employment opportunities.

The above data suggests that IVRS continues to expand opportunities with the use of assistive technology for the job candidates, and that the rehabilitation rate ranges from 76% to 79% depending upon the respective year. Further analysis may provide ideas to staff on how to consider services to increase outcomes for the most significantly disabled population.

Staff from the Iowa Program for Assistive Technology (IPAT) based at the University of Iowa also provides updates on assistive technology issues. The IVRS Assistive Technology Counselor Specialists are available to consult with staff when job candidates require more intensive assistive technology services. This role also includes an emphasis on developing working relationships that contribute to the referral process for individuals with disabilities to programs or activities. In addition, IVRS expectations require that this role involves a continual exploration of new and innovative technologies that become available to help in service to customers. IVRS is also able to partner with the Easter Seals of Iowa Assistive Technology Program with a specific focus on assistive technology needs of rural job candidates

**(3) THE OUTREACH PROCEDURES THAT WILL BE USED TO IDENTIFY AND SERVE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES WHO ARE MINORITIES, INCLUDING THOSE WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, AS WELL AS THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN UNSERVED OR UNDERSERVED BY THE VR PROGRAM.**

Unified Plan Strategy: Identify duplication of services and gaps within the current workforce delivery system and draft policies and collaborative agreements to maximize resources that foster a more unified and consistent approach to the provision of workforce delivery services

IVRS local managers participate on a number of boards in their areas and network with civic organizations and churches in an attempt to not only identify and serve individuals with disabilities who are minorities, but also to identify support systems to enhance and assist the individual in their rehabilitation process. IVRS has a collaborative working relationship with the Iowa School for the Deaf which focuses on services for that population. Previous goals were developed as a result of the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment and outlined strategies to increase the representation of clients with deafness and hearing loss, as well as Work Group members developing Best Practices for this population to serve as a model for the rest of the state. The Rehabilitation Services Bureau Chief served on a state policy group addressing the education and vocational needs for individuals who are deaf or had hearing loss and strategies are in place through the state to develop regional academies to move the services closer to where the job candidates live and work. Outreach to individuals with disabilities who are minorities and individuals who have been unserved or underserved relates to services to individuals with disabilities who are minorities. The IVRS caseload statistics indicate that minority representation exceeds minority representation in the population. IVRS met currently identified Standards and Indicators from RSA including the service ratio for individuals with disabilities who are minorities. This will continue to be a focus of service efforts. Opportunities will be developed to identify strategies for these groups through our service delivery for the potential eligible and pre-employment transition services.

- (4) THE METHODS TO BE USED TO IMPROVE AND EXPAND VR SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, INCLUDING THE COORDINATION OF SERVICES DESIGNED TO FACILITATE THE TRANSITION OF SUCH STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL TO POSTSECONDARY LIFE (INCLUDING THE RECEIPT OF VR SERVICES, POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, AND PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES).

**Unified Plan GOAL 2: ALL Iowa youth will be afforded the best educational and career opportunities in the nation.**

As IVRS develops implements the continuum of services model, gaps and weaknesses within the system will be identified. Together with the Department of Education and through the local planning efforts, educators and rehabilitation professionals will more effectively connect students with opportunities after high school. Infusing employer led, job-driven, models into the continuum model; and expanding upon those programs and services that produced outcomes in the past, IVRS with partners will achieve results for students and youth in transition. IVRS anticipates not only the expansion of Third Party Cooperative Agreements, but also creating more opportunities through an analysis of the current systems and needs. These new opportunities, using existing programs and services, will minimize duplication and instead better define how the systems work effectively together to achieve outcomes. The following summarizes the coordination of services for students in transition:

- Systematic analysis and development of a continuum of services model for students and youth in transition;
- Development of trainings for parents, educators, and rehabilitation professionals on effective practices;

- Development of local and state plans to maximize resources and minimize duplication;
- Coordination of services within WIOA partnerships to expand opportunities for students/youth with disabilities;
- Expansion of third party cooperative agreements to create a seamless system of services and supports;
- Development of Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with key community partnerships to infuse opportunities within existing structure and reduce/eliminate duplication;
- Infusion of current practices, programs, services, plans, etc., to create the system of continuous service delivery that achieves a seamless system of transition.

(5) IF APPLICABLE, PLANS FOR ESTABLISHING, DEVELOPING, OR IMPROVING COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE.

This is a priority of the State Rehabilitation Council and has been the driving force behind the Iowa Employment First efforts as well as the changes occurring in the IVRS Menu of Service Manual and delivery and partnership with the Iowa Department of Human Services, Iowa Medicaid System. Through the work of the Iowa Governance Group, safe data was identified that can be shared among state programs for the benefit of facilitating service delivery and a primary focus of the group was supporting employment outcomes occurring in competitive, community integrated employment settings. IVRS work with our community rehabilitation programs is essential to making this happen. We have been a collaborative partner with the Iowa Association of Community Providers and their Executive Director is a key member of the Iowa Employment First Leadership Team.

(6) STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE THE PERFORMANCE OF THE STATE WITH RESPECT TO THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA.

Unified Plan Strategy: Implement an accessible data collection effort that streamlines data collection processes, increases efficiency throughout the workforce delivery system, and aids in accurate performance measurement used in decision-making.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) requires core agencies to develop an integrated system that can be used as a common application for services across the workforce delivery system as well as a tool for common data reporting. OMB 1820-0508 outlines revisions to the RSA-911 State-Federal Program for Vocational Rehabilitation Case Service Record and OMB 1205-0NEW provides guidance related to data collection required by section 116(d) of the WIOA including 1) State Performance Report (data by entities that administer WIOA core programs, 2) Local Area Performance Report for Title I, Subtitle B programs, and Eligible Training Provider Performance Report for Title I programs. Although these new reporting requirements significantly expand the amount of data collection required by the agency, they also provide an opportunity for Iowa Workforce Development, Iowa Department of Education and Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services to move out of silos and identify ways the agencies can collaborate to provide a seamless electronic system to provide Iowa's citizens access to information about services available to them through the core programs and the ability begin the application process from any electronic device connected to the internet—even from the comforts of their own homes. First, IVRS technology staff

must assess our current data system and analyze its effectiveness is data collection, analysis, case management and reporting.

The Iowa Rehabilitation Services System (IRSS) is an internal case management system that is owned, maintained, and updated by IVRS. The original concept of IRSS was the development of an interactive, intuitive system designed to meet agency needs for case management, financial management, contract management, vendor management and reporting. After many years of development and scale-backs on the scope of the project, IRSS was put into use in October, 2008. The system that was deployed at that time was developed to meet the data collection and financial needs of the agency. Limited reports were developed and included in the initial deployment to assist with case management. Shortly following implementation, the IVRS IRSS Priority Management Team (PMT) was formed and charged with the responsibility of developing improvements to the IRSS Case Management System to meet the financial, case management and reporting needs of the agency and move the system closer to the original concept. Representatives of the Rehabilitation Services Bureau and Administrative Services Bureau, in collaboration with IT developers and project managers, develop the projects and business rules for all IRSS development.

Over the past seven years, many improvements have been made to the system, including major projects to financial processing for Disability Determination Services, and batch processing of Ticket-to-Work data and revisions to streamline data entry and make IRSS more efficient. The IRSS PMT Committee has also been assigned the task of moving the agency to a paperless case management process to meet future needs.

Considering the development timeframes for past changes to reporting requirements, the requirement changes to the RSA-911 Case Service Record Report in 2013 took several months of development and testing and extensive training with field staff. Proposed changes to the RSA-911 due to WIOA, as well as proposed data collection and retention for common performance accountability requirements will dominate IRSS development over the next several months and, as previously stated, will require much collaboration with IT staff in the other core programs. Significant changes in reporting requirements include:

- Reporting quarterly on open and closed cases rather than annually on closed cases;
- Collection of data related Pre-employment Transition Services for potentially eligible students;
- Compilation of financial data to assure Title I and Title IV expenditures meet the provisions of WIOA;
- Data collection and reporting after the date of exit;
- Development of a common application for all core WIOA programs including upload and download of common data;
- Determination of what data can be collected from other core WIOA programs through a common data dashboard and data elements that need to be added to IRSS or maintained outside of IRSS and imported through batch processes.

The IRSS PMT Committee is awaiting final reporting requirements from RSA. Implementation of the new quarterly reporting requirements is slated for FFY17. Once reporting requirements are finalized, development to meet the new requirements will be targeted for a completion date of 10/1/16.

Along with data required for federal reporting purposes, placeholders for other data that will be useful in measuring the effectiveness of the VR program will also be developed into IRSS, for instance, involvement in third-party contract programs. However, not all data used to measure the effectiveness of the program will be developed into the Iowa Rehabilitation Services (IRSS) Case Management System. Data collection sources maintained outside of IRSS include:

- Transition Alliance Program (TAP) matrixes
- Making the Grade matrixes
- Iowa TIER for PETS and other transition data
- Department of Education Data Dashboard (in development)
- Iowa Career Pathways Dashboard (in planning stage)

Another initiative underway to minimize the burden of data collection across core agencies includes development of an integrated system among the core programs. Members of the Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation IRSS Project Management Team and Information Technology Department have met with representatives in similar positions in other core programs to begin discussions on a common data collection and common application system. Preliminary discussions centered on common data already collected in the current systems as well as current development structures that can be used to move toward a common system. It was determined that the current Iowa Workforce Development system already contains the structure and code to work across systems and can be built upon to provide a common data and application system. The work of this team is in its infant stages, but the team is hopeful that a common system can be in place to meet annual reporting requirements for FFY17, and if that cannot be accomplished, the team will develop strategies to share data for individual reporting until the common system is deployed. Some of the core programs have their own development teams while others work with outside vendors so that will add some complexity to determining a target completion date for development of the system.

Iowa Workforce Development, in collaboration with other WIOA core programs including Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services, is also in the beginning stages of developing a public dashboard containing information on sector strategies and career pathways. The dashboard will provide stakeholders with the following information:

- Identification and information on high-demand jobs;
- Pathways to high-demand jobs;
- Information on training including internships and apprenticeships;
- College and career planning information;
- Information related to sector partnerships and career pathways integrating labor market information;
- Information on how to finance a chosen pathway.



The public dashboard is slated as Phase 1 development. Phase 2 includes development of an executive dashboard that can be used for analysis and as an evaluative tool by core programs. Measurements such as job placement data, job creation in high-paying jobs, increased family income, increased career counseling in secondary and post-secondary, and focus on STEM fields have been identified as target areas.

Regarding specific WIOA Performance Measures:

WIOA Performance Measures 1-3:

IVRS does not currently collect 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> quarter wage information. IVRS plans to get the wage information from IWD but it has not been built in the IVRS case management system as this is a new RSA requirement.

WIOA Performance Measure 4:

IVRS does not currently collect data regarding the effectiveness in serving employers. We are working with our State Rehabilitation Council as well as Core Partners to develop a coordinated data collection system.

WIOA Performance Measure 5:

IVRS does not currently collect data regarding the education level of program participants except at application and closure. On a quarterly basis, IVRS will be collecting as a RSA911 requirement the education level obtained throughout the participation in the program. RSA has not sent final requirements for collecting this data.

IVRS reviewed data in efforts related to identifying WIOA Performance Measures for the second and fourth quarters of future years. To do this we went backwards and reviewed data from 2014, which will serve as a baseline for employment outcome and wage data which is being collected through a project with IWD.

Performance Indicator	In Unsubsidized Employment after ? quarter after exit	Total Number of people exiting	%
% of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during second quarter after exit from program	465	912	50.99%
% of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during fourth quarter after exit from program	465	912	50.99%
The percentage of participants who obtained a recognized post-secondary credential or a secondary school diploma, or its recognized equivalent during participation in or within 1 year after exit from the program. A participant who has obtained a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent is only included in this measure if the participant is also employed or is enrolled in	275	912	30.15%

an education or training program leading to a recognized post-secondary credential within 1 year from program exit			
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(7) STRATEGIES FOR ASSISTING OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM IN ASSISTING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.

**Unified Plan GOAL 3: Iowa will improve the structure, accessibility and administration of workforce delivery systems across the state.**

On August 5, 2015, IVRS shared the changes in legislation specific to VR and presented the continuum of services model and how IVRS is an integrated and core partner with the “Iowa Works” partnership comprised of the Iowa Workforce Development and Workforce Innovation Opportunity core partners. In that meeting an overview of the legislative changes were shared with local managers from those entities along with the Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services Model designed specific to the integration of individuals with disabilities in workforce and community organizations. Together these managers came together to discuss and plan the integration and service delivery at the local level. The exciting aspect of the new legislation is how all prior disability legislations create a system of support and change. In the past, a person with a disability had no other alternatives but to receive services from IVRS because, while the ADA had been enacted, organizations still sent individuals with disabilities to “VR” because “they serve people with disabilities.” This has proven to be an unsustainable system as resources have reduced, services were duplicated, and demand has escalated. In addition, the legislation no longer segregates disability, but it is a normal aspect of life and as such all organizations must work toward full and comprehensive inclusion in the provision of services to persons with disabilities. Therefore, IVRS presented the “new” model of service delivery which allows IVRS staff to provide the expertise on how to serve individuals with disabilities, while making sure that only those individuals who truly require VR services to be successful are recruited into the caseload. Now instead of recruiting individuals early just because they “have a disability”, VR staff will use the existing legislation to assist organizations and businesses on how to meet their legal responsibilities by providing expertise to them in a manner that actually achieves a seamless system of service. (see figure below on Community Organization)

WIOA provides IVRS the opportunity to work smarter not harder; to serve those we are mandated to serve in a comprehensive manner while still giving guidance and technical expertise to those who would benefit but do not require intensive services. This continuum of service model propels “disability” into the community wide experience requiring all organizations and entities to create systems that work to achieve outcomes for all individuals. As a result, if the system and service works for people with disabilities it will work for everyone. Perhaps for the first time in disability history, disability truly becomes mainstreamed within the organizations and common experiences in the community.

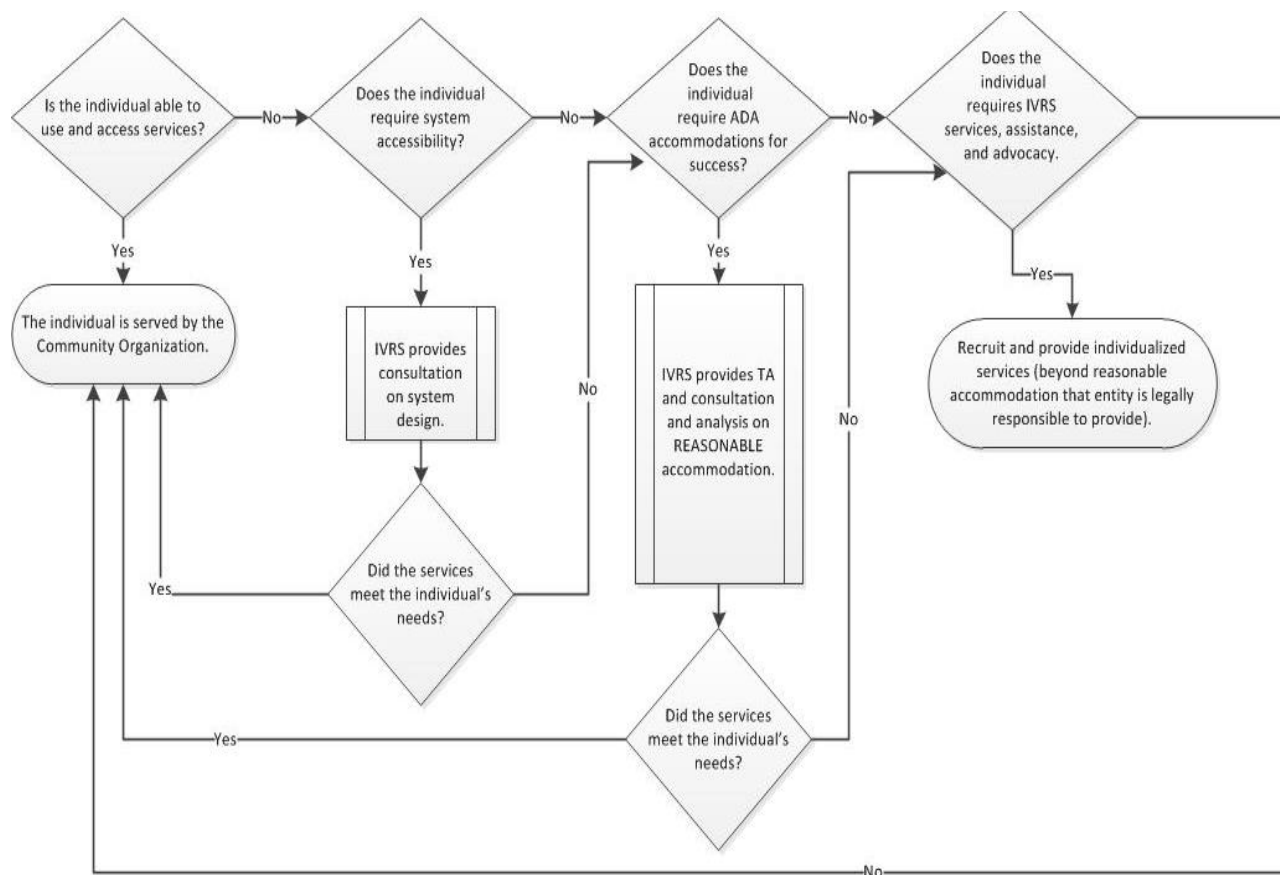
Integration in this manner, allows IVRS staff to provide guidance and technical expertise to the system and organizations so they continue to change and evolve into a sophisticated system serving all individuals. In this manner, IVRS no longer becomes the entity to which people with disabilities must go to be successful. Instead IVRS works to support an existing system, guides those systems in how they can more effectively serve people with disabilities, and creates within IVRS new services and supports that the individual cannot obtain from the existing system of service delivery.

As individuals with disabilities access all services and supports within the community as a natural aspect of living, learning and working, disability becomes part of the mainstream and is no longer segregated to specialized programming. Those individuals who still require specialized programming find a highly skilled system available to them that uses existing structures and programs in a way that enhances their success and maximizes resources without duplicating services.

All Iowans could benefit from financial support in any aspect of their life. Individuals with disabilities are no different and as such should access that support through the same channels, organizations, and resources available to every individual in the State of Iowa. However, when the disability itself results in a serious need in order to prepare for or obtain employment there may be a financial burden due to the costs associated with disability. The IVRS staff must ask themselves “what does this person require from IVRS in order to become successfully employed?” If the answer is they only require tuition assistance but they have the skills to research employment options on their own, perform a self-directed work search, and can manage the disability and do not require accommodations both in training and at work, then this individual could be successful accessing the services and supports in the community at large (i.e. IWD, FAFSA, public transit, etc.) Therefore, this individual would receive services through the community organizations and IVRS would provide the technical consultation necessary to ensure the service and system understands disability and how to make sure the person has equal access, programmatic, and physical accessibility to be successful. In this manner IVRS staff will provide the system development guidance but then provide direct services to those individuals with disabilities who require intensive services.

However, first and foremost in considering if the individual should be recruited into IVRS services is ***the impact of the disability on the individual's ability to access and navigate the services available to all individuals***. This indeed is the defining action on if the individual not only should be recruited, but requires IVRS services. Intensive service(s) needs are as broad and varied as there are disabilities and impact of disabilities on employment. The figure below is a summary on the Continuum of Services Model:

### **Integration and Continuum of Services Model**



During meetings at the local level with Iowa Workforce Managers, IVRS learned that IWD staff would find it exceedingly valuable for IVRS counseling staff to assist them in learning how to interact with people with disabilities in an accessible format. Indeed, IWD voiced a need for IVRS to provide suggestions and ideas on how to create a system that is accessible and infuses the expertise of IVRS into their programs. Further discussions with the IWD Managers included ideas on collaborative strategies in serving youth with disabilities. In some of the planning, IWD staff will accompany IVRS as we progress to develop local plans with local education agencies on more effectively serving students with disabilities that are eligible or potentially eligible. In some areas of the state, the discussions center on creating a youth center to better relate and align services specific to youth. Through this model of service delivery, IVRS' staff share their expertise in improving the workforce system so that it works for all individuals with a disability and then provides direct service to those who require more intensive services to achieve their employment outcomes.

IVRS is working toward being a fully integrated partner with the sole purpose to serve individuals with disabilities. The IVRS administrator is on the State Workforce Board, and local area office IVRS supervisors are on the Regional Workforce Boards as a result of the local plans. IVRS has opened the Ames office to the IWD staff who travel from Des Moines to Ames to provide workshops as a location to provide service to all individuals without a request for infrastructure costs.

IVRS has for a number of years paid for infrastructure costs in those centers where IVRS is co-located with other workforce partners in the One-Stop. While these costs in many instances are higher than had IVRS located in a separate office structure, the advantages to collaborate and serve

individuals with disabilities outweigh the actual increased cost of the infrastructure design. Whether IVRS is co-located or not, the workforce partnership has collaborated on cases and will strengthen this collaboration in a way so that the job seeker receives a seamless system of support.

Between May and August of 2015, IVRS and IWD engaged in four pilot implementation designs where the local offices identified application and referral strategies that provided information on complementary data-sharing opportunities. In addition these pilots stimulated discussion on how to wrap services around the mutual job seeker in order to create a more seamless system of support. This information was later discussed and provided guidance to other offices when they came together to develop joint, local plans.

(8) HOW THE AGENCY'S STRATEGIES WILL BE USED TO:

- (A) ACHIEVE GOALS AND PRIORITIES BY THE STATE, CONSISTENT WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT;
- (B) SUPPORT INNOVATION AND EXPANSION ACTIVITIES; AND
- (C) OVERCOME IDENTIFIED BARRIERS RELATING TO EQUITABLE ACCESS TO AND PARTICIPATION OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE STATE VR SERVICES PROGRAM AND THE STATE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES PROGRAM.

Service delivery efforts are based upon guidance from the State Rehabilitation Council, our State Rehabilitation Plan, Our Strategic Plan, EDRN (business feedback) and our Comprehensive Needs Assessment. Innovative strategies are consistently being addressed by our bureau management team in efforts to minimize duplication, expand service delivery options, increase capacity, while reducing costs all the while being contained in a limited budget environment. To achieve results, the IVRS team has opportunities to exercised innovation and creativity in the delivery of rehabilitation services.

IVRS will continue to participate in the Iowa Employment First efforts, which has a clear focus on helping individuals with the most significant barriers to employment access competitive, community integrated employment at the level meeting the optimum needs and interests of the Job Candidate. The Iowa Development Disabilities Council, the Disability Rights of Iowa, the Iowa Association of Community Provides and our State Rehabilitation Council are key partners focused on equitable access and participation. These efforts are closely linked to service delivery strategies with the Iowa Department of Human Services.

Throughout this plan IVRS communicated the strategies in working with various populations, partnerships, job candidates, businesses, and staff to create equitable access to individuals with disabilities. The initiatives identified, the plans in progress, and the work of the Rehabilitation Services Bureau focused on achieving outcomes for individuals with disabilities. Throughout the document it is clear that the strategies currently employed and new strategies that will be developed as a result of continued quality improvement efforts will focus on and achieve goals and priorities established by the CSNA and the Unified State Plan. Reader is referred to each of those sections as the answers to this section are explained accordingly.

(p) EVALUATION AND REPORTS OF PROGRESS: VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT GOALS. DESCRIBE:

- (1) 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:
  - (A) IDENTIFY THE STRATEGIES THAT CONTRIBUTED TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS.

- (B) DESCRIBE THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES.
- (2) AN EVALUATION OF THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM GOALS DESCRIBED IN THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SUPPLEMENT FOR THE MOST RECENT PROGRAM YEAR WERE ACHIEVED. THE EVALUATION MUST:
- (A) IDENTIFY THE STRATEGIES THAT CONTRIBUTED TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS.
- (B) DESCRIBE THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES.
- (3) THE VR PROGRAM'S PERFORMANCE ON THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY INDICATORS UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA.
- (4) HOW THE FUNDS RESERVED FOR INNOVATION AND EXPANSION (I&E) ACTIVITIES WERE UTILIZED.
- (q) QUALITY, SCOPE, AND EXTENT OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES. INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:
- (1) THE QUALITY, SCOPE, AND EXTENT OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED TO INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES.
- (2) THE TIMING OF TRANSITION TO EXTENDED SERVICES.

IVRS is a collaborative partner in the development of the Iowa Unified Plan and have staff on a variety of work groups moving towards common definitions and measures for meeting the achievement of agreed upon goals. IVRS fully expects to be able to demonstrate the ability to meet and exceed established goals and implement strategies for success. We will be using our data metrics system for analysis as well as measuring the success of a number of innovative projects that have been implemented during the last year including but not limited to:

- State Mapping Team Project
- Regional Board Career Pathway/Sector Board strategies
- PETS
- Potentially Eligible student population
- Employment Services Contract with Iowa Department of Aging
- Medicaid aligned funding agreement
- IWD pilot projects
- Making the Grade contracts
- Unity Point Contract
- Collaborative Transition Protocol changes
- Assistive Technology Specialist expansion

IVRS invested in technology in efforts to expand the effectiveness of work staff and increase capacity for service delivery. This included trial use of remote technology such as iPhones, laptops, and iPads. It also included the use of Dragon Naturally Speaking software, which provides opportunities to allocate staff positions from a central typing pool to field offices where they have an opportunity to provide increased clerical and office support. IVRS is restricted from expanding FTE positions due to limited budget capacity and meeting Department of Management guidelines. So these strategies are implemented in efforts to continue with service delivery improvement.

IVRS will improve meaningful, sustained employment for supported employment consumers and reduce the number of individuals who repeat the process due to inadequate placement or supports. Outcomes for Supported Employment services were analyzed over the past several years. Alignment with Medicaid waiver funding occurred and system consistency will be developed as this is implemented over the next year. Iowa is undergoing significant changes with managed care and this will create additional need for training and close collaboration to ensure work effectiveness. The new rate structure will allow IVRS and the Department of Human Services to collaborate with funding to assure that CRPs are adequately reimbursed for the range of services available from each agency. Implementation of new payment points and the development of Customized Employment services have occurred. Supported Employment Services with a focus on competitive, integrated employment is supported by IVRS.

Across the nation, Employment First is a declaration of both philosophy and policy stating that: Employment is the first priority and preferred outcome of people with disabilities. In 2011-13, the State of Iowa received a grant to focus on Employment First initiatives, customized employment strategies and alignment of service delivery systems, and funding for those services across state systems. IVRS was the lead agency for the subsequent Employment First Project which outlined three initial goals:

- Identify a unified cross-agency rate structure that promotes and incentivizes integrated employment,
- Identify and train community service providers and their related partner/disability service professionals in the implementation of customized employment techniques,
- Improve communication and collaboration among state departments related to Employment First principles.

EF opportunities are continuing to draw attention to Iowa and facilitate changes in our systems. Community, integrated employment is the ultimate goal for all Iowans. Iowa’s efforts have been greatly enhanced through the collaboration occurring between the Employment First Leadership Team, the Iowa Coalition for Integrated Employment and the Disability Employment Initiative.

In accordance with EF, Iowa is committed to strengthening employment services for people with disabilities, improving customer service, and breaking down artificial barriers. The adoption of EF has involved changes in both policy and service provision in Iowa. Specific focus was on changing the employment culture of Iowa with an emphasis on community integrated employment. Community Provider organizations participated in pilot efforts to transform their organizations to become high achieving employment providers. The following table represents some of the results of the Employment First State Leadership Mentoring Program efforts:

YEAR	Number of Jobs Obtained	\$/hour	Hours Worked/week	# of jobs that were Customized	# of providers reporting data
2013	14	\$7.70	14		6
2014	427	\$7.81	17.27	86	12
2015	725	\$8.31	15.93	150	18

Leaders from state programs are focused on coordinating career and employment services between state partners to support community, integrated employment options for individuals with the most severe disabilities. IVRS continues to have a primary focus on provider transformation, training, capacity building, and establishing a shared vision for community, integrated employment. The EF philosophy helped to provide a framework to build upon and establish a common purpose to unite forces in Iowa. For the past three fiscal years IVRS realized an increase in the number of individuals served through supported employment services. As a result this increase produced an increase in the number of job candidates served through the Employment First initiative and through the formal supported employment services.

The traditional model of Supported Employment Services (SES) involved upfront planning regarding identification of employers in the community at which a job candidates could find placement. That model involved more emphasis on the placement and evaluation of performance at a job site rather than actual training requirements. When considering the reason for IVRS recidivism rates, an

interdisciplinary team analyzed SES and recognized that a significant lack of formalized training impacted outcomes. As such, a paradigm shift emerged to significantly enhance training of professionals and job candidates alike. The following table shows a summary of successful outcomes for job candidates who received supported services.

**Supported Employment Service Outcomes:**

2012			2013			2014			2015		
Client Count	Avg. Wage	Total Hours	Client Count	Avg. Wage	Total Hours	Client Count	Avg. Wage	Total Hours	Client Count	Avg. Wage	Total Hours
148	\$7.79	19	150	\$7.85	18	252	\$8.12	20	333	\$8.39	19

The data above not only reflects the job candidates on the IVRS caseload who successfully achieve an employment outcome in an integrated, competitive work setting; but also those who first began their employment journey through the Employment First Initiative. The individuals who participated in the Employment First Initiative were from our most vulnerable and disabled population, many of whom had never worked in a competitive integrated environment. Some participated in progressive employment, first exploring their interests and sometimes starting with volunteer work; while others moved into an employment setting learning skills through a customized employment experience that created an opportunity of success for them. The data for 2015 reflects a significant increase that is a testament to the IVRS relationships with community rehabilitation organizations and the success of the Employment First initiative. IVRS anticipates that this service will expand and even greater numbers will be served as the integration and continuum of services model is infused.

As discussed earlier in this document, IVRS added an after-school work program, “Making the Grade”, which is a work readiness, work experience program to provide services to students with disabilities who are juniors and seniors to obtain and maintain summer and after-school paid work opportunities. Students referred to the program are those who need assistance in getting paid work experience which may not be available to them due to their disability. This collaborative agreement is new, and only began in the summer of 2015, so preliminary data is limited, but it is indicative of the types of strategies that IVRS employs to impact student outcomes.

Vendor data of D-code results is shared annually in a *Report Out* provided by IVRS to internal staff and employment service providers (CRPs). The intent of this *Report Out* is to stimulate conversations with partners, ensure consistent business practices, promote transparency for purchased services, and provide a statewide basis for comparisons. Beginning in 2014, IVRS also reported specific outcomes from the Occupational Skill Training Programs being provided by the Community Rehabilitation partners.

*Report Out* data is provided to Iowa CRPs that shows:

- The number of IVRS job candidates who received D-code services;
- The dollar amount of services IVRS purchased from CRPs;
- The number of successful employment outcomes obtained from the individuals provided a service;





ICIE includes a base consortium of representatives from the DD Council, the Iowa Department of Education, Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services, and the Department of Human Services to improve systems so that Iowa youth with disabilities have fully integrated and competitive work opportunities. The grant contracted with six demonstration projects in an educational environment, in addition to three demonstration projects in coordination with Iowa's Employment First initiative. The overall goal of ICIE has been to improve systems so that Iowa youth with developmental disabilities, including those with intellectual disabilities, have fully integrated, competitive work, regardless of where they live in the state. ICIE has been a key collaborator with innovative blending of funding to expand financial and technical assistance areas specifically related to Employment First and the delivery of supported employment services in Iowa. This is enhanced by a committed and diverse group of private, state and families of individuals with disabilities that make up the Employment First Leadership Team in Iowa.

The Disability and Employment Initiative through IWD/DOL has also been a key collaborator and partner in increasing employment outcomes. The DEI project has enhanced communication and awareness through their local projects with an Integrated Resource Team, financial literacy strategies and benefits planning.

The Rehabilitation Services Bureau (RSB) started efforts to educate parents, teachers, Department of Education Administrators and others on Section 511. These discussions actually began during the Community Conversations, where for the first time Administrators learned that their "agreements" with CRPs would need to be discontinued effective July, 2016. RSB is also working on webinars and other materials for staff and educators to focus on competitive integrated employment so they are prepared for provisions of Section 511.

IVRS has not had a specific budget line item for Innovation and Expansion monies. Programming has been developed to meet immediate needs as well as trial projects for future success. Examples of I & E activities included funding for the Travel and interpreter costs for State Rehabilitation Council members to attend meetings. Contracts with local school districts to fund Transition Alliance Projects; Contracts with the Iowa Department of Human Rights to fund the Youth Leadership (YLF) for high school students with disabilities; a Cooperative Agreement with the Iowa Department of Aging and the Area Agencies on Aging, the Making the Grade pilot projects and the Iowa School for the Deaf contract are other examples.

**ASSURANCES**

The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate and identified in the State certifications included with this VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, through signature of the authorized individual, assures the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), that it will comply with all of the requirements of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, as set forth in sections 101(a) and 606 of the Rehabilitation Act. The individual authorized to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement makes the following assurances:

<b>The State Plan must provide assurances that:</b>	
1.	<b>Public Comment on Policies and Procedures:</b> The designated State agency assures it will comply with all statutory and regulatory requirements for public participation in the VR Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, as required by section 101(a)(16)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act. <b>YES</b>
2.	<b>Submission of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and Its Supplement:</b> The designated State unit assures it will comply with all requirements pertaining to the submission and revisions of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement for the State Supported Employment Services program, as required by sections 101(a)(1), (22), (23), and 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act; section 102 of WIOA in the case of the submission of a unified plan; section 103 of WIOA in the case of a submission of a Combined State Plan; 34 CFR 76.140. <b>YES</b>
3.	<b>Administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan:</b> The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures it will comply with the requirements related to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) the establishment of the designated State agency and designated State unit, as required by section 101(a)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act.</li> <li>(b) the establishment of either a State independent commission or State Rehabilitation Council, as required by section 101(a)(21) of the Rehabilitation Act. The designated State agency or designated State unit, as applicable (Option A or B must be selected):               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(A) is an independent State commission.</li> <li>(B) has established a State Rehabilitation Council</li> </ul> </li> <li>(c) consultations regarding the administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, in accordance with section 101(a)(16)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the non-Federal share, as described in 34 CFR 361.60.</li> </ul> </li> <li>(d) the local administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, in accordance with section 101(a)(2)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act. Select yes or no, as appropriate, to identify if the designated State agency allows for the local administration of VR funds, (Yes/No)</li> <li>(e) the shared funding and administration of joint programs, in accordance with section 101(a)(2)(A)(ii) of the Rehabilitation Act. Select yes or no, as appropriate, to identify if the designated State agency allows for the shared funding and administration of joint programs, (Yes/No)</li> <li>(f) statewideness and waivers of statewideness requirements, as set forth in section</li> </ul>

	<p>101(a)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act. Is the designated State agency is requesting or maintaining a waiver of statewideness for one or more services provided under the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan? (Yes/No) See Section 2 of this VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan.</p> <p>(g) the descriptions for cooperation, collaboration, and coordination, as required by sections 101(a)(11), (24)(B), and 606(b) of the Rehabilitation Act.</p> <p>(h) all required methods of administration, as required by section 101(a)(6) of the Rehabilitation Act .</p> <p>(i) the requirements for the comprehensive system of personnel development, as set forth in section 101(a)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act.</p> <p>(j) the compilation and submission to the Commissioner of statewide assessments, estimates, State goals and priorities, strategies, and progress reports, as appropriate, and as required by sections 101(a)(15), 105(c)(2), and 606(b)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act.</p> <p>(k) the reservation and use of a portion of the funds allotted to the State under section 110 of the Rehabilitation Act for the development and implementation of innovative approaches to expand and improve the provision of VR services to individuals with disabilities, particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities.</p> <p>(l) the submission of reports as required by section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act.</p> <p><b>YES</b></p>
4.	<p><b>Administration of the Provision of VR Services:</b> The designated State agency, or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures that it will:</p> <p>(a) comply with all requirements regarding information and referral services in accordance with sections 101(a)(5)(D) and (20) of the Rehabilitation Act.</p> <p>(b) impose no duration of residence requirement as part of determining an individual's eligibility for VR services or that excludes from services under the plan any individual who is present in the State in accordance with section 101(a)(12) of the Rehabilitation Act .</p> <p>(c) provide the full range of services listed in section 103(a) of the Rehabilitation Act as appropriate, to all eligible individuals with disabilities in the State who apply for services in accordance with section 101(a)(5) of the Rehabilitation Act? (Yes/No)</p> <p>(d) comply with all required available comparable services and benefits, determined to be available to the individual in accordance with section 101(a)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act and.</p> <p>(e) comply with the requirements for the development of an individualized plan for employment in accordance with section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act .</p> <p>(f) comply with requirements regarding the provisions of informed choice for all applicants and eligible individuals in accordance with section 102(d) of the Rehabilitation Act.</p> <p>(g) provide vocational rehabilitation services to American Indians who are individuals with disabilities residing in the State, in accordance with section 101(a)(13) of the Rehabilitation Act.</p> <p>(h) comply with the requirements for the conduct of semiannual or annual review, as appropriate, for individuals employed either in an extended employment setting in a community rehabilitation program or any other employment under section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act, as required by section 101(a)(14)of the Rehabilitation Act.</p>

	(i) meet the requirements in sections 101(a)(17) and 103(b)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act if the State elects to construct, under special circumstances, facilities for community rehabilitation programs <b>YES</b>
5.	<p><b>Program Administration for the Supported Employment Title VI Supplement:</b></p> <p>(a) The designated State unit assures that it will include in the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan all information required by section 606 of the Rehabilitation Act.</p> <p>(b) The designated State agency assures that it will submit reports in such form and in accordance with such procedures as the Commissioner may require and collects the information required by section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act separately for individuals receiving supported employment services under title I and individuals receiving supported employment services under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act. <b>YES</b></p>
6.	<p>(a) <b>Financial Administration:</b> The designated State agency assures that it will expend no more than 2.5 percent of the State's allotment under title VI for administrative costs of carrying out this program; and, the designated State agency or agencies will provide, directly or indirectly through public or private entities, non-Federal contributions in an amount that is not less than 10 percent of the costs of carrying out supported employment services provided to youth with the most significant disabilities with the funds reserved for such purpose under section 603(d) of the Rehabilitation Act, in accordance with section 606(b)(7)(G) and (H) of the Rehabilitation Act.</p> <p>(b) The designated State agency assures that it will use funds made available under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act only to provide supported employment services to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including extended services to youth with the most significant disabilities, who are eligible to receive such services; and, that such funds are used only to supplement and not supplant the funds provided under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act, when providing supported employment services specified in the individualized plan for employment, in accordance with section 606(b)(7)(A) and (D), of the Rehabilitation Act. <b>YES</b></p>
7.	<p>(a) <b>Provision of Supported Employment Services:</b> The designated State agency assures that it will provide supported employment services as defined in section 7(39) of the Rehabilitation Act.</p> <p>(b) The designated State agency assures that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. the comprehensive assessment of individuals with significant disabilities conducted under section 102(b)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act and funded under title I of the Rehabilitation Act includes consideration of supported employment as an appropriate employment outcome, in accordance with the requirements of section 606(b)(7)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act</li> <li>ii. an individualized plan for employment that meets the requirements of section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act, which is developed and updated with title I funds, in accordance with sections 102(b)(3)(F) and 606(b)(6)(C) and (E) of the Rehabilitation Act. <b>YES</b></li> </ol>

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**Appendix 1: Performance Goals for the Core Programs**

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.

**Performance Goals for the Core Programs**

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. For PY 2016 / FY 2017 and PY 2017 / FY 2018 the following proposed performance measures will be evaluated for the following programs:

**Programs:**

Adults, Dislocated Workers, Youth, Wagner-Peyser / Labor Exchange, Adult Education, Rehabilitative Services

**Measures:**

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)
- Credential Attainment Rate
- Measureable Skill Gains
- Effectiveness in Serving Employers
- Combined Federal Partner Measures

- 1
- 2
- 3
- etc.

State / Governor Education and Workforce Measures

- 1
- 2
- 3
- etc.

## **Resources and Reports**

### ***Iowa's Re-Envisioned Economic Development Roadmap, December, 2014***

Prepared by: Battelle Technology Partnership Practice  
December 2014

<http://www.iowaeconomicdevelopment.com/Resources/battelle>

### ***Statewide Workforce Needs Assessment, 2015***

Prepared by: Iowa Workforce Development Labor Market and Information Division  
June 2015

<https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/labor-market-information-division>

### ***Iowa's Workforce and the Economy, 2015***

<http://iwin.iwd.state.ia.us/pubs/pubs/iowaworkforceandtheeconomy.pdf>

### ***Middle-Skill Jobs in Iowa, 2015***

<http://iwin.iwd.state.ia.us/pubs/careers/middleskilljobs.pdf>

### ***Future Ready Iowa, Executive Summary, Iowa Department of Education, 2015***

<https://www.educateiowa.gov/sites/files/ed/documents/2015-12-14%20%20Future%20Ready%20Iowa2.pdf>

### ***Government Accounting Office: Community Colleges and One-Stop Centers Collaborate to Meet 21st Century Workforce Needs, 2008***

To view the full product, go to: <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-08-547>  
For more information, contact George A. Scott at (202) 512-7215 or [scottg@gao.gov](mailto:scottg@gao.gov).

### ***Promising Practices in Achieving Universal Access And Equal Opportunity: A Section 188 Disability Reference Guide, 2015***

Employment and Training Administration at the US Department of Labor

<http://www.dol.gov/oasam/programs/crc/Section188Guide.pdf>