

KANSAS LOCAL AREA II

**WORKFORCE INNOVATION
& OPPORTUNITY ACT (WIOA)
LOCAL PLAN**

June 15, 2016

CONTENTS

PART I

I.	WIOA LOCAL PLAN TYPE	4
II.	STRATEGIC ELEMENTS	4
a.	Economic, Workforce & Workforce Development Activities Analysis	4
1.	Economic & Workforce Analysis	4
2.	Workforce Development, Education & Training Activities Analysis	15
b.	Local Area Strategic Vision & Goals	23
1.	Vision	23
2.	Goals	23
3.	Performance Goal Philosophy	24
4.	System Assessment Philosophy	24
c.	Local Area Strategy	25
III.	OPERATIONAL PLANNING ELEMENTS	27
a.	Local Strategy Implementation	27
1.	Local Workforce Development Board Functions	27
2.	Implementation of Local Area Strategy	28
a.	Core Program Activities	28
b.	Alignment with Outside Activities	35
c.	Provision of Services to Individuals	35
d.	Provision of Services to Employers	36
e.	Partner Engagement with Educational Institutions	40
f.	Leveraging Resources to Increase Educational Access	41
g.	Improving Access to Post-Secondary Credentials	42
h.	Coordinating with Economic Development Strategies	43
i.	Coordinating with Unemployment Insurance Strategies	43
b.	Local Operating Systems & Policies	44
1.	Operating Systems/Data Collection/Reporting	44
2.	Data Integration/Co-Enrollment/Universal Intake	45
3.	Local Board Overview	45
4.	Program Data	46
5.	Priority of Service for Veterans	48
6.	One-Stop System Accessibility	49
IV.	COORDINATION OF COMBINED STATE PLAN PROGRAMS	50

PART II

I.	SPECIFIC LOCAL AREA PROCEDURES, POLICIES & PRACTICES	51
a.	Workforce Center Organization	51
b.	Workforce Center Service Delivery	52
c.	Employer Engagement & Service Delivery	53
d.	Specific Work-Based Strategies to Serve both Individuals & Employers	54
II.	ENGAGEMENT OF LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD & CHIEF ELECTED OFFICIALS BOARD	56
a.	Local Area Board & Chief Elected Officials Training	56
b.	Local Area Board & Chief Elected Officials Communication	57

III. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT 57

a. High-Performing Boards 57

b. State Board Training Expenditure Monitoring 58

c. Continuous Improvement of Eligible Service Providers 58

d. Integrated Intake & Case Management Systems 59

Attachment A ó KS LAII CEOB Roster

Attachment B – KS LAII LWDB Roster

Attachment C ó KS LAII CEOB Agreement

Attachment D ó KS LAII CEOB Bylaws

Attachment E ó KS LAII LWDB Bylaws

Attachment F – KS LAII Workforce Center Functional Management Organizational Chart

Attachment G ó Completed MOUs

Attachment H ó Pending MOUs (awaiting partner agreement and signatures)

PART ONE

I. WIOA LOCAL PLAN TYPE

The Local Area Plan must include descriptions of how the Local Workforce Development Board will assure local integration of each these programs into WIOA Adult, Youth and Dislocated Worker Program service delivery, as required throughout these instructions.

The plan includes the WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Programs; Wagner-Peyser Act Program, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program; Vocational Rehabilitation Program, Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program and Trade Adjustment for Workers.

II. STRATEGIC ELEMENTS

(a) ECONOMIC, WORKFORCE & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ANALYSIS

(1) ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE ANALYSIS

Economic Analysis. The Local Area Plan must include an analysis of the economic conditions and trends in the Local Area, including specific economic areas identified by the Local Board. This includes:

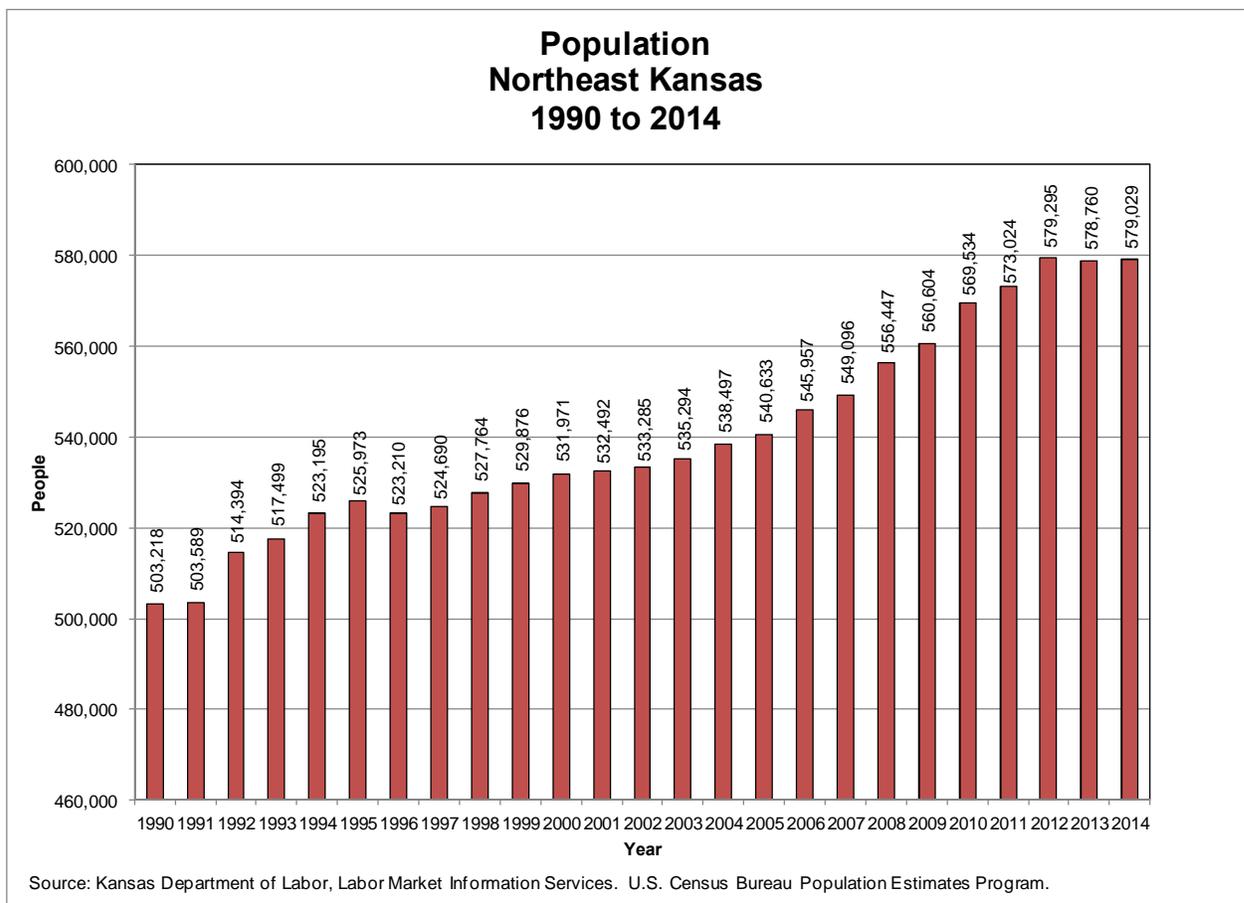
- *Existing Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations. Provide an analysis of the industries and occupations for which there is existing demand.*
- *Emerging Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations. Provide an analysis of the industries and occupations for which demand is emerging.*
- *Employers' Employment 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.*

Workforce Analysis. The Local Area Plan must include an analysis of the current workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment, as defined in section 3 of WIOA¹. This population must include individuals with disabilities among other groups² in the Local Area. This includes:

- *Employment and Unemployment. Provide an analysis of current employment and unemployment data and trends in the Local Area.*
- *Labor Market Trends. Provide an analysis of key labor market trends, including across existing industries and occupations.*
- *Education and Skill Levels of the Workforce. Provide an analysis of the educational and skill levels of the workforce in the Local Area.*
- *Describe apparent 'skill gaps' in the Local Area as evidenced by the regional Job Vacancy Survey and Local Area business intelligence.*

Northeast Kansas-Local Area II-(LAI) is a 17 county region which contains a mix of urban and rural landscapes. In 2014, the three counties with the largest population (Shawnee, Douglas, and Riley) made up 63.9 percent of the total LAII population. This percentage has increased from 1990 when the three largest counties made up just 61.8 percent of the total population. These three counties make up all or at least a majority of the three metropolitan statistical areas (MSA) in Northeast Kansas. These are Topeka, Lawrence, and Manhattan.

The chart below shows the annual population of Northeast Kansas as measured by the Population Estimates Program at the U.S. Census Bureau from 1990 to 2014. Population growth over the 24 year period averaged 0.6 percent. This growth rate is similar to the statewide area which grew at an average annual rate of 0.7 percent over the 24 year period. In the last two years population growth in Northeast Kansas came to a virtual standstill, while this has not been the case in the statewide area. In 2013 and 2014, the statewide area grew at the rate of 0.3 percent.



The impact of this stalled population growth can already be seen in the size of the labor force in Northeast Kansas. The number of people in the labor force in Northeast Kansas peaked in 2009 at 303,556, in 2014 that number fell to 299,406 people. If population growth continues to stagnate and the current trend in declining statewide labor force participation continues, further decline in the labor force is likely.

Continued decline in the labor force in Northeast Kansas means initially there will be fewer workers competing for a growing number of jobs. This will result in a low unemployment rate and increased competition among employers to hire workers and maintain adequate staffing levels. If employers decide to compete for workers there may be upward pressure on wages. In some cases, employers may decide to relocate to an area where more labor is available.

Existing Demand

In the second quarter of 2015, the labor market information services (LMIS) division of the Kansas Department of Labor conducted a survey of businesses in Northeast Kansas. Data collected includes type and number of job openings (vacancies), full-time or part-time, education required, as well as wages and benefits offered.

There were a total of 8,200 job vacancies reported in 2015 for Northeast Kansas. This is a slight decline from the number of vacancies reported in 2014 (8,391). Of the vacancies reported in 2015, 63.0 percent were permanent, full time positions, an improvement from 2014 where 53.3 percent of vacancies were permanent full time. The job vacancy rate in 2015 was 3.2 percent indicating there were 3.2 vacancies for every 100 positions. This was in line with 2014 at 3.3 percent. The 2015 vacancy rate for Northeast Kansas was slightly lower than the statewide job vacancy rate of 3.4 percent.

There were four industry sectors that reported more than 1,000 vacancies. These were Leisure and Hospitality (1,761 vacancies), Trade, Transportation and Utilities (1,463 vacancies), Education and Health Services (1,242 vacancies) and Professional and Business Services (1,042 vacancies). These four industry sectors also had the highest number of vacancies at the statewide level. The industry sectors in Northeast Kansas with the highest job vacancy rate were Leisure and Hospitality (6.9 percent), Other Services (5.0 percent), and Professional and Business Services (4.4 percent). The Other Services industry sector includes repair and maintenance shops, and personal services establishments. 48.6 percent of the Other Services vacancies were in two occupations: laundry and dry cleaning workers and cashiers.

As mentioned previously, job vacancies are also reported by occupation. The 25 occupations with the highest number of vacancies are shown below. Also included are the job vacancy rate and a breakdown of permanent full-time, permanent part-time, temporary full-time, and temporary part-time.

Top 25 Occupations With Most Vacancies						
Second Quarter, 2015						
Occupational Title (Ordered by Number of Vacancies)	Number of Vacancies	Number of Vacancies*				Job Vacancy Rate
		Permanent Full-Time	Permanent Part-Time	Temporary Full-Time	Temporary Part-Time	
Cashiers	732	148	584	0	0	9.2%
Customer Service Representatives	651	595	55	1	0	14.9%
Registered Nurses	347	326	19	0	1	6.6%
Nursing Assistants	322	287	35	0	0	7.2%
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	287	150	103	35	0	8.0%
Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	281	112	170	0	0	14.8%
Cooks, Restaurant	264	0	264	0	0	11.1%
Retail Salespersons	262	97	163	1	1	3.7%
Light Truck or Delivery Services Drivers	206	53	51	103	0	16.0%
Accountants and Auditors	180	121	2	0	58	8.5%
Carpenters	177	177	0	0	0	12.8%
Hosts and Hostesses, Restaurant, Lounge, and Coffee Shop	175	0	175	0	0	23.5%
Food Preparation Workers	163	162	1	0	0	6.9%
Cooks, Fast Food	157	0	157	0	0	7.7%
Laundry and Dry-Cleaning Workers	136	135	1	0	0	37.2%
Cooks, Institution and Cafeteria	119	115	4	0	0	7.9%
Waiters and Waitresses	118	0	118	0	0	2.5%
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	110	41	63	6	0	2.2%
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	107	87	13	4	3	2.9%
Property, Real Estate, and Community Association Managers	105	105	0	0	0	32.3%
Mechanical Drafters	101	50	50	0	0	47.8%
Tire Repairers and Changers	99	99	0	0	0	26.8%
Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, and Weighers	98	97	0	1	0	9.6%
Paving, Surfacing, and Tamping Equipment Operators	97	97	0	0	0	31.5%
Construction Laborers	94	94	0	0	0	6.2%

* Sum of all permanent and temporary jobs may not equal the total number of vacancies due to rounding.

Source: Kansas Department of Labor, Labor Market Information Services (LMIS). Job Vacancy Survey (JVS).

Several of the occupations in the top 25 list for Northeast Kansas match those on the statewide list. However, there are six occupations that show up on the Northeast Kansas top 25 list that do not show up in even the top 50 statewide list. These are Laundry and Dry-Cleaning Workers; Property, Real Estate, and Community Association Managers; Mechanical Drafters; Tire Repairers and Changers; Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, and Weighers; and Paving, Surfacing, and Tamping Equipment Operators. Demand for these occupations is uniquely high in Northeast Kansas compared to the statewide area.

Emerging Demand

Each year the Kansas Department of Labor completes a high demand occupation list for the statewide and local areas. The list of high demand occupations combines the number of projected job openings with the number of current job openings to rank occupations by demand from Kansas employers. Occupations are ranked by the number of job openings at the current time (job vacancy survey), in the next two years (short-term projections program), and in the next ten years (long-term projections program). The high demand occupation list is weighted more heavily on projection data than current openings.

Top 25 High Demand Occupations					
Northeast Kansas (Local Area II)					
2015					
SOC Title	JVS ¹	ST ²	LT ³	Total Score	Typical education needed for entry
Accountants and Auditors	10	10	10	30	Bachelor's degree
Registered Nurses	10	10	10	30	Associates degree
Nursing Assistants	10	10	10	30	Postsecondary non-degree award
Cashiers	10	10	10	30	Less than high school
Retail Salespersons	10	10	10	30	Less than high school
Customer Service Representatives	10	10	10	30	High school diploma or equivalent
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	10	10	10	30	Postsecondary non-degree award
Cooks, Restaurant	10	9	10	29	Less than high school
Hosts and Hostesses, Restaurant, Lounge, and Coffee Shop	10	10	9	29	Less than high school
Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	10	9	10	29	Less than high school
Waiters and Waitresses	9	10	10	29	Less than high school
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	9	10	10	29	Less than high school
Construction Laborers	9	10	10	29	Less than high school
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	9	10	10	29	High school diploma or equivalent
Food Preparation Workers	10	9	9	28	Less than high school
Carpenters	10	9	9	28	High school diploma or equivalent
Teacher Assistants	8	10	10	28	Some college, no degree
Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	7	10	10	27	Bachelor's degree
First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	7	10	10	27	High school diploma or equivalent
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	9	8	9	26	Postsecondary non-degree award
Cooks, Institution and Cafeteria	9	8	9	26	Less than high school
Tellers	7	9	10	26	High school diploma or equivalent
Personal Care Aides	6	10	10	26	Less than high school
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	6	10	10	26	High school diploma or equivalent
Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing	6	10	10	26	High school diploma or equivalent

Source: Kansas Department of Labor, Labor Market Information Services (LMIS).
1. Job Vacancy Survey Score is based off of the 2015 Kansas Job Vacancy Survey.
2. Short-term Projections Score is based off of the 2014-2016 round of projection data.
3. Long-term Projection Score is based off of the 2012-2022 round of projection data.

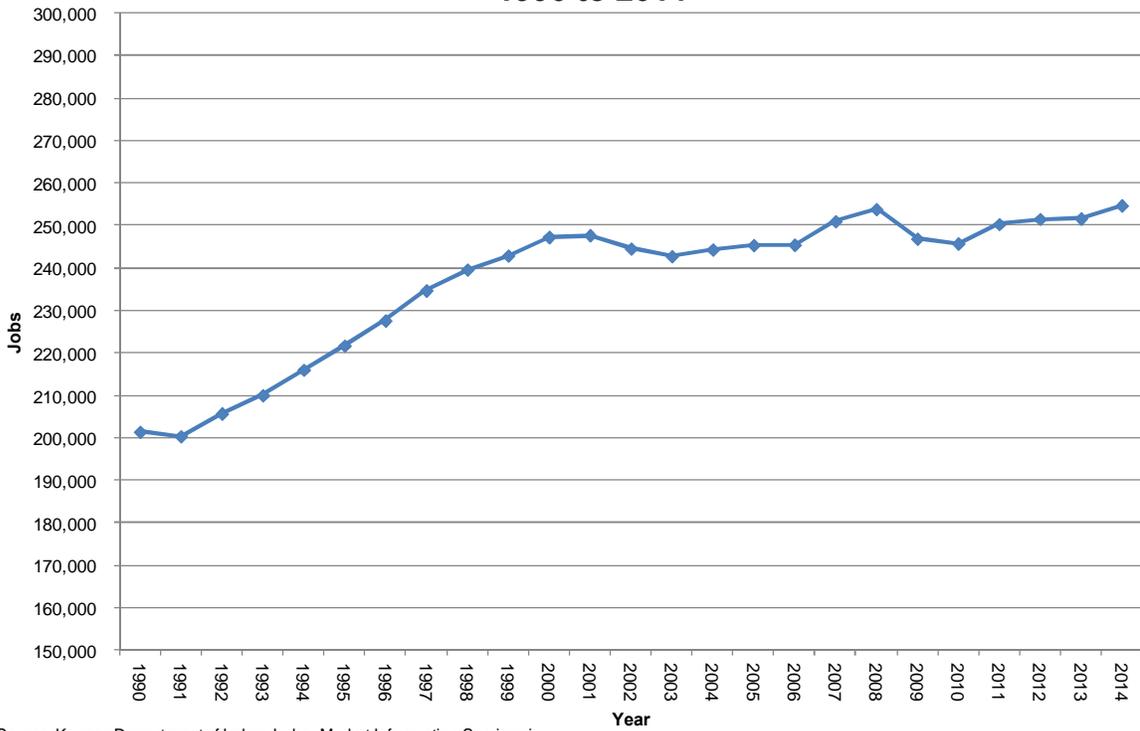
There are nine occupations that rank in the top 25 list for high demand that do not rank as highly in current openings reported by the job vacancy survey. These are Maintenance and Repair Workers, General; Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses; Teacher Assistants; Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education; Tellers; First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers; Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing; First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers; and Personal Care Aides. These occupations ranked 26, 28, 30, 34, 36, 37, 45, 48, and 49 on the list of current job vacancies. This is an indication of emerging demand for these occupations.

Employer Needs

Employment and Unemployment

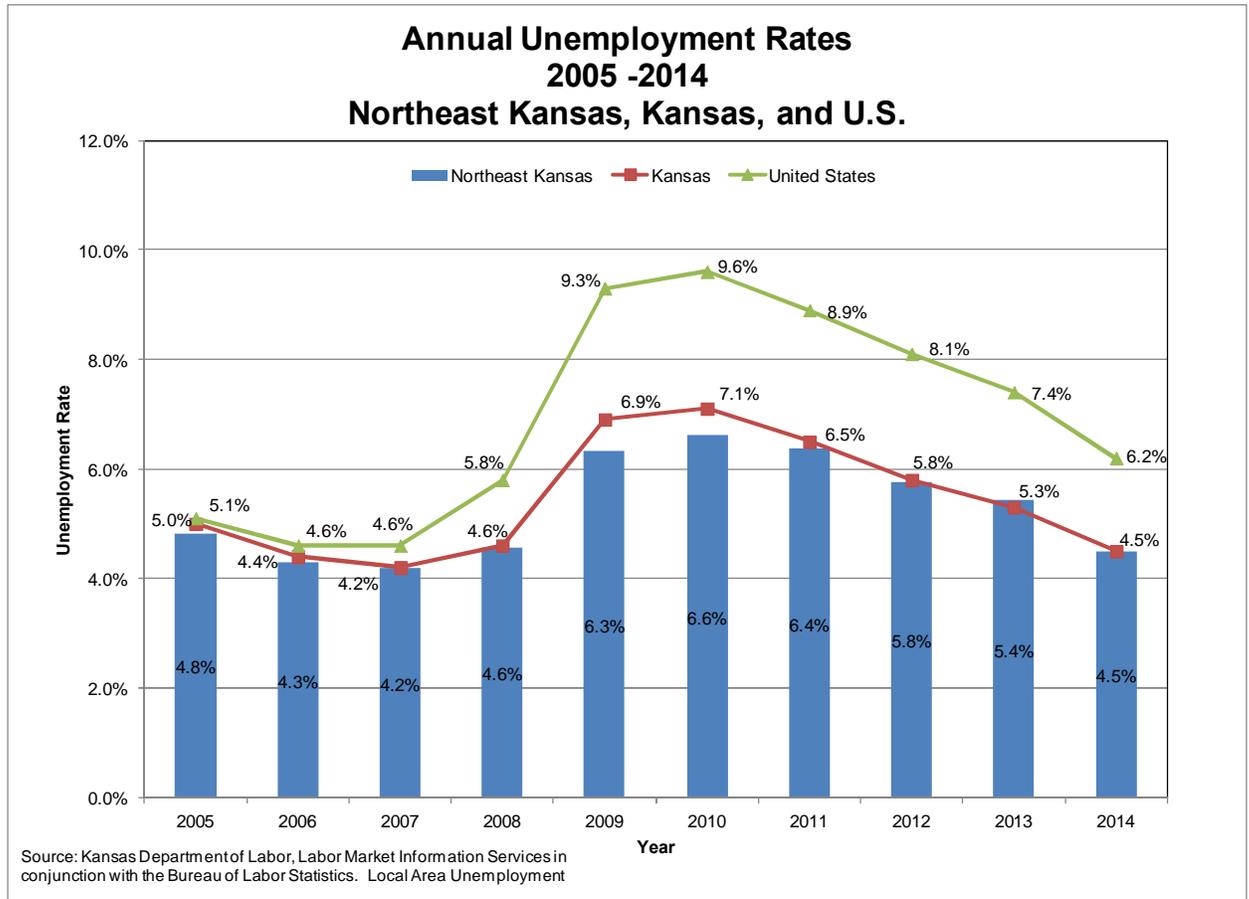
Looking at job growth historically, the number of jobs in Northeast Kansas grew at a faster pace during the 1990s than the area has experienced since that time. The number of jobs grew at an average annual rate of over 2 percent from 1990 to 2000. This rate slowed to 0.2 percent per year during the following time period, 2000 to 2014. One factor contributing to slower growth in the most recent time period was the occurrence of two periods of economic contraction in the national economy; these recessions took place from March 2001 to November 2001 and from December 2007 to June 2009. During and following the 2007-2009 recession, Northeast Kansas lost more than 8,000 jobs or 3.2 percent. Looking ahead, job growth in Northeast Kansas is projected to grow at the average rate of 1.0 percent per year. This is approximately 2,900 new jobs, on average each year.

Total Number of Jobs Northeast Kansas (Local Area II) 1990 to 2014



Source: Kansas Department of Labor, Labor Market Information Services in conjunction with the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Employment Projections

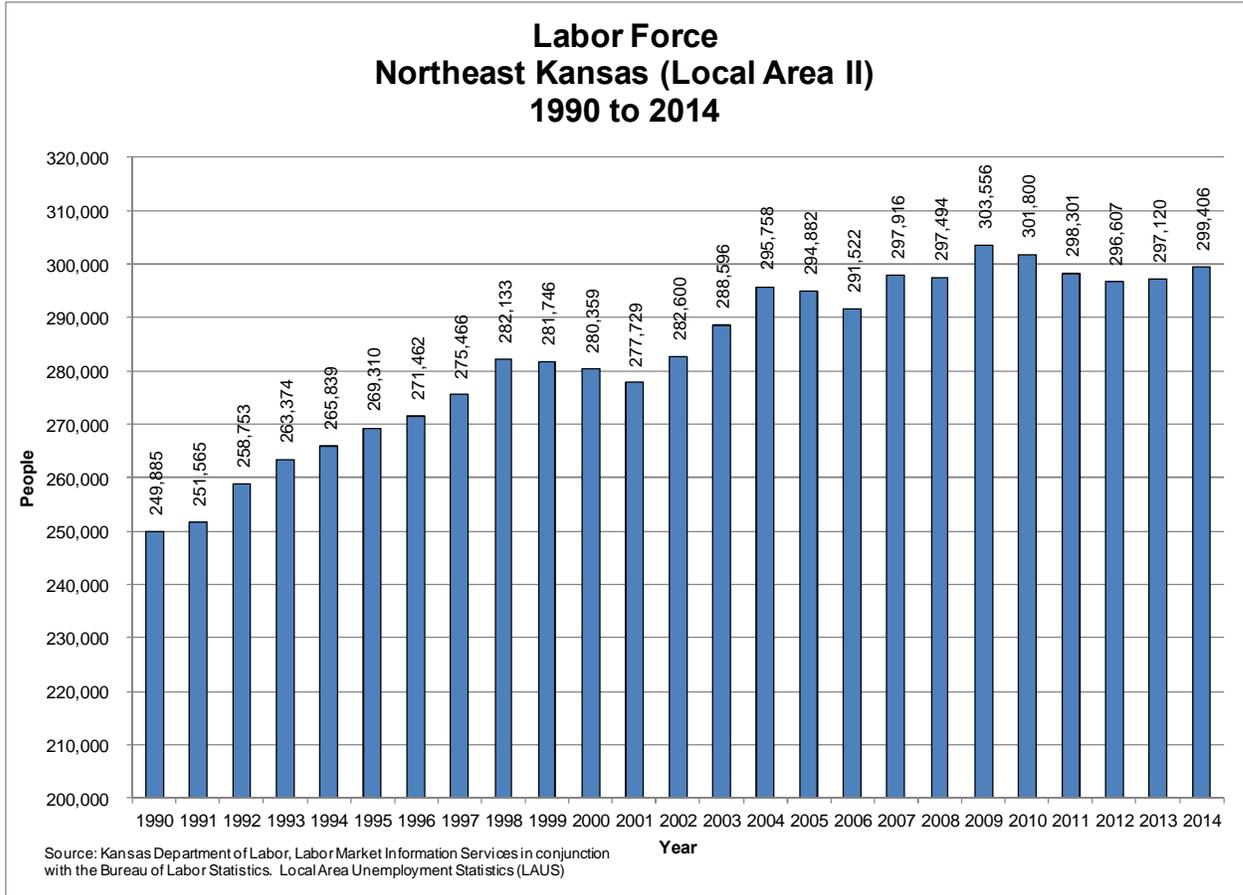
The unemployment rate in Northeast Kansas fell to 4.5 percent in 2014 from 5.4 percent in 2013. See chart below. Due to the 2007-2009 recession, the unemployment rate rose as high as 6.6 percent. This occurred in 2010. Although this was high for Northeast Kansas it was below the statewide average of 7.1 percent and well below the national average of 9.6 percent.



Employers in LAII continue to report a need for workers who demonstrate strong job readiness and soft skills on the job. The workforce system in our area has and will continue to play a role offering this kind of training through our partner services and Workforce Center (WFC) service offerings. Employers in the production and healthcare industries also report a need for employees who are willing to work differing schedules and shifts to accommodate their business needs. We will continue our current practice of engaging in employer roundtables and work groups on these issues to enhance the design and implementation of services for customers and to offer assistance in convening community partners to address employer challenges.

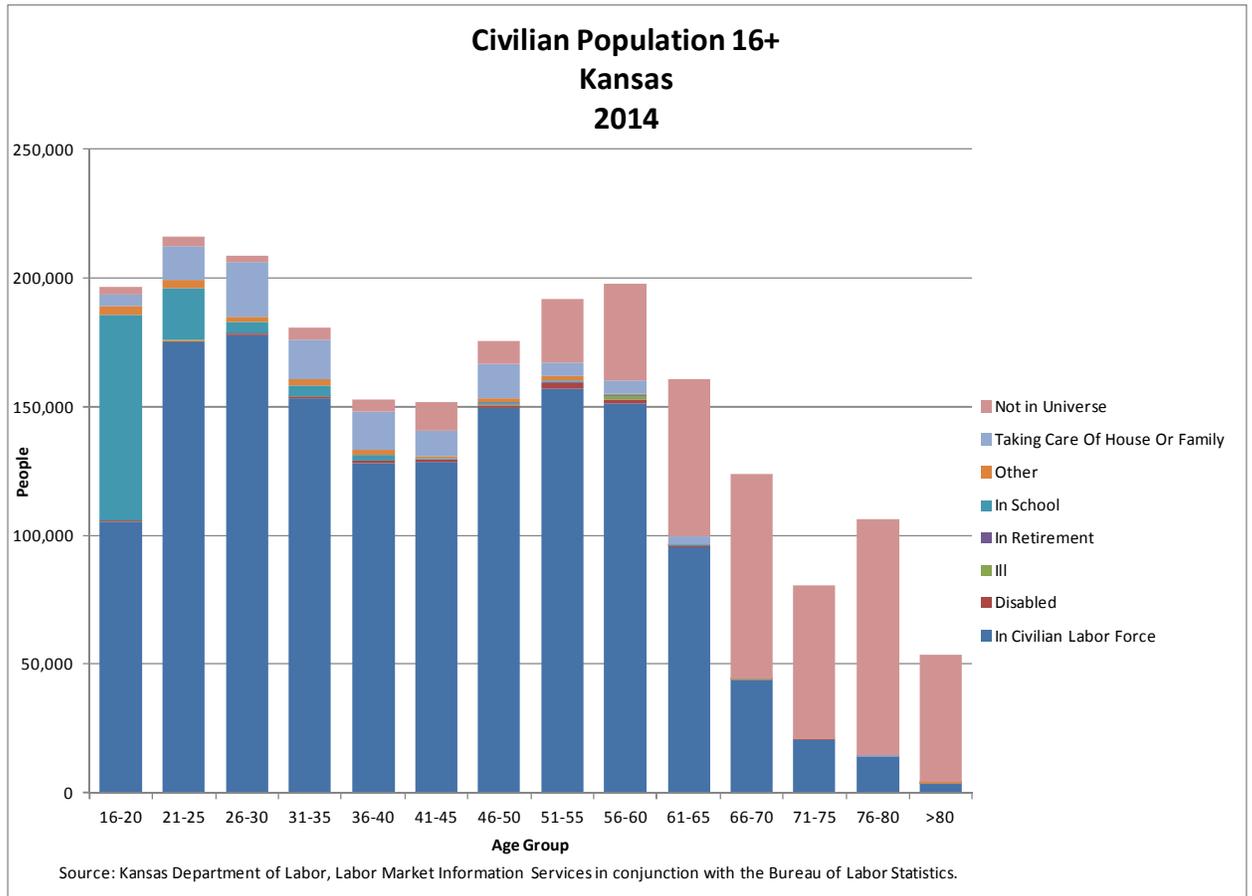
Labor Market Trends

Northeast Kansas experiences many of the same trends as the statewide area. The trend with the most impact will likely be the changing size and demographics of the labor force. The chart below shows the size of the labor force from 1990 to 2014. The labor force is made up of all the people working (employed) and all those who are not working but would like to be working (unemployed). These two groups make up the available labor pool in Northeast Kansas. In Northeast Kansas as well as the state there has been a notable slowdown in labor force growth. Looking at the chart from 2004 to 2014 the labor force gained a mere 3,648 people. This is an average annual growth rate of 0.1 percent.

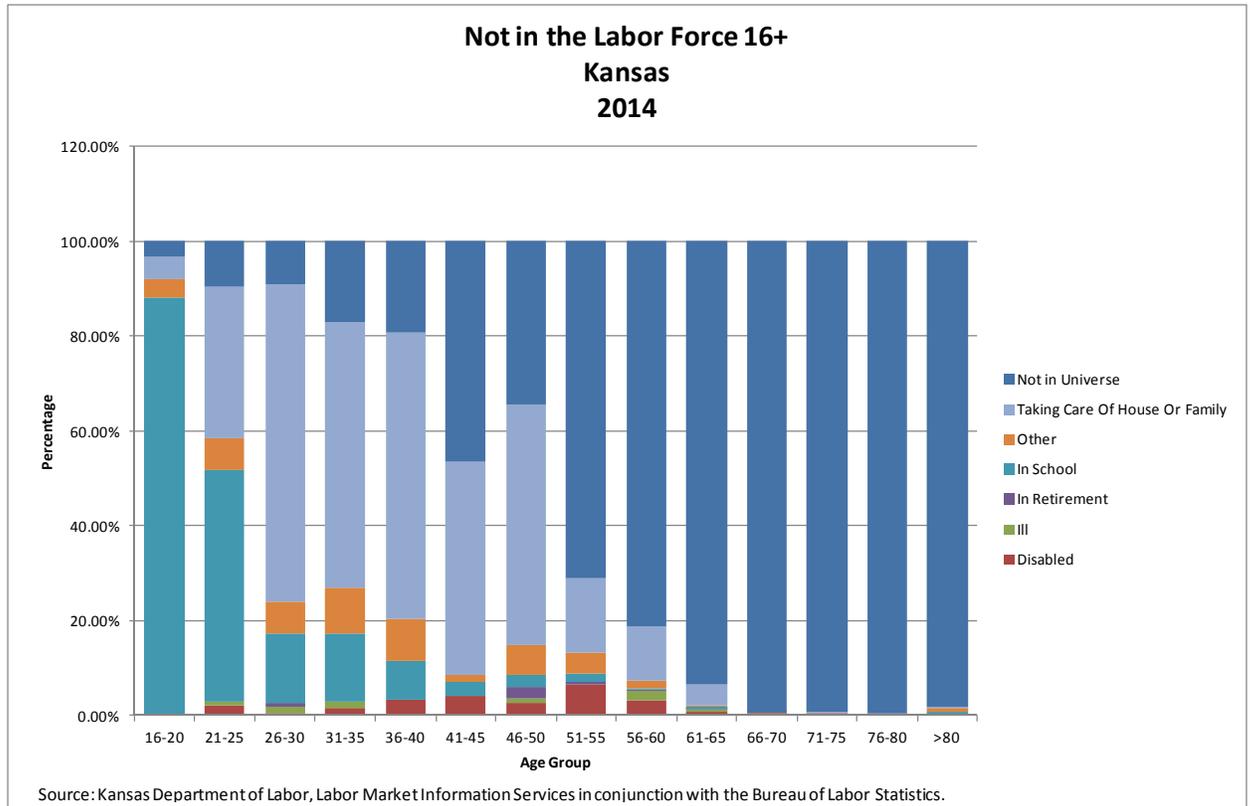


One contributing factor to the slowed growth in the labor force has been an aging population. The age of the baby boom generation was 30 to 48 years old in 1994, in 2004 it was 40 to 58, in 2014 it was 50 to 68. By 2024 it will be 60 to 78 years.

The chart below shows how the different age groups are distributed between categories from ÷in the labor force÷ to ÷not in the universe÷ based on Current Population Survey (CPS) data for Kansas in 2014. Those who are labeled as ÷not in the universe÷ are in some cases non responses, but mostly are institutionalized which includes those living in a group setting such as a retirement home, or incarceration facility. In other words these people are no longer working and likely will not be returning to work. The chart below shows how sharply the number of people ÷not in the universe÷ increases starting at age group 51-55.



The next chart focuses on those people outside of the labor force instead of all people over the age of 16. It shows the percentage of people who are classified as "not in the universe". Again starting at age group 51-55 years old, 71 percent of those people who are not in the labor force are "not in the universe".



Education and Skill Level

Northeast Kansas enjoys a more highly educated population than the statewide area and the nation according to the American Community Survey data during the period 2010 to 2014. Of the population of Northeast Kansas age 25 years and over, 31.3 percent had a bachelor's degree or higher compared to 29.3 percent at the U.S. level and 30.7 percent at the statewide level. This trend was the same for those with some college or an associate degree and high school graduates. Northeast Kansas has a higher percentage than Kansas and the nation. Northeast Kansas also registers just 7.5 percent of its population that has less than a high school education compared to the statewide average of 10.0 percent and the U.S. average of 13.6 percent.

Population by Educational Attainment 2010-2014			
	Northeast Kansas	Kansas	United States
Less than a High school diploma	7.5%	10.0%	13.6%
High school graduate, no college ¹	30.3%	27.2%	28.0%
Some college or associates degree	30.9%	32.1%	29.1%
Bachelor's degree and higher ²	31.3%	30.7%	29.3%

¹ Includes persons with a high school diploma or equivalent
² Includes persons with bachelor's, master's, professional and doctoral degrees
Note: Age group includes only 25 years and over.
Source: Kansas Department of Labor, Labor Market Information Services. U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

There are 275,072 people in the labor force in Northeast Kansas according to the American Community Survey. Of those, 18,694 or 6.8 percent reported having a disability. There are an additional 18,869 people age 18 to 64 outside of the labor force who reported having a disability. The most common disability reported in Kansas is difficulty walking or climbing stairs, followed by deaf or serious difficulty hearing and difficulty remembering or making decisions. The presence of a disability is reported by the respondent and is not indicative of the respondent receiving disability benefits.

Civilian Noninstitutionalized Population 18 to 64 years old 2010-2014 American Community Survey			
	United States	Kansas	Northeast Kansas
Total Population:	193,574,369	1,724,126	353,115
In the labor force:	148,743,241	1,385,484	275,072
Employed:	135,293,448	1,295,757	257,189
With a disability	6,632,448	74,556	15,569
No disability	128,661,000	1,221,201	241,620
Unemployed:	13,449,793	89,727	17,883
With a disability	1,486,847	12,923	3,125
No disability	11,962,946	76,804	14,758
Not in labor force:	44,831,128	338,642	78,043
With a disability	11,583,766	92,179	18,869
No disability	33,247,362	246,463	59,174

Source: Kansas Department of Labor, Labor Market Information Services in conjunction with the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey program.

Skill Gap

There is much discussion in the labor market information community regarding skills gap. The research into skills gap analysis is costly and varies considerably. Some question its reliability and usefulness. Kansas does not maintain a skills gap analysis. Employer demand for skilled workers is reflected in the current openings, short-term, and long-term demand projections described above. To identify and understand a skills gap, the state would need more information on the workforce.

(2) WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, EDUCATION & TRAINING **ACTIVITIES ANALYSIS**

The Local Area's Workforce Development Activities. Provide an analysis of the Local Area's workforce development activities, including education and training activities of the core programs, Combined State and Local Plan partner programs and mandatory and optional one-stop delivery system partners.

The Strengths and Weaknesses of Workforce Development Activities. Provide an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the local workforce development activities identified above.

Local Area Workforce Development Capacity. Provide an analysis of the capacity of Local Area entities to provide the workforce development activities identified in (A), above.

Kansas Adult Education programs provide instruction and student support services to adults who lack a high school credential or secondary level skills, or who are not proficient in English.

Adult Education programs include; four Community Colleges, Barton County Community College (Fort Riley), Cloud County Community College (Clay Center, Junction City Geary County), Highland Community College (Atchison, Hiawatha, Holton, Kickapoo Nation, Wamego, Baileyville, Marysville), Neosho County Community College (Ottawa, Lawrence); one four year college, Washburn Technical Center (Topeka); two School Districts, Manhattan USD 383, Lawrence USD 497; one Community Based Organization, Let's Help (Topeka). These eight institutions have seventeen sites where services are delivered to students. Services include Adult Basic Education (ABE), Adult Secondary Education (GED) (ASE), and English Language Acquisition (ESL). Technology is taught in several location programs and Accelerating Opportunities for Kansans (AO-K) is a part of services provided at Barton CC, Highland CC, Neosho CC and USD 497. Instruction is provided at various times which are morning, afternoon and evening; and each session is generally six to eight weeks, and new students are then introduced to a new class. All potential students are placed on a waiting list till a new class begins.

Student support services are provided for students in various areas. Transition counseling is provided at each site for students. Childcare, or childcare at a reduced rate, is provided in Atchison-Highland Community College and Washburn Technical Center. Transportation is addressed at Washburn Technical Center with bus passes from Topeka Metro, and emergency transportation issues provide students with Project Concern passes for students in Atchison, Highland CC. Co-location with the Workforce Center (WFC) in Manhattan provides support for students. Barton CC, Highland CC, and USD 497 provide mental health services through their parent institution.

The Adult Education system in LAII has many strengths:

- Adult Education has a connected and supportive state leadership.

- All of the Adult Education staff are highly trained, and many instructors are KSDE certified, or hold advance degrees; also, they are committed to student success.
- Each Adult Education Program is highly collaborative with their local community and raises additional funds for Adult Education through these collaborations.
- Adult Education has ongoing instruction for students for a minimum of 9 hours a week, with as much as 15 hours a week in several programs.
- Adult Education provides competency based instruction based on the TABE (Test of Adult Basic Education) assessment to best target individual needs.

LAI Adult Education programs also have opportunities for improvement:

- All Adult Education programs struggle to reach all potential students.
- Data sharing for students who may be enrolled in two adult education programs needs to be resolved. This affects programs that share student, in AOK, and potentially in online or hybrid courses.
- There is limited flexibility in scheduling classes since the minimum number of hours of participation is 40 hours.
- Classes based on very specific local/employer needs which result in learning are different than offering brief informational workshops; learning outcomes require more time.
- Based on group size and location, programs must determine whether to offer instruction relating to general basic skills or something which has specific workplace applications. Planning these courses to meet the needs and goals of each individual within one group is time consuming and requires each new class to be re-designed.
- Barton CC needs dedicated instructional space. Additionally, Cloud CC needs additional instructional space.

In terms of time, space and staff, generally Adult Education is prepared; but the potential of non-English speakers, and those who do not have a high school diploma, or are basic-skills deficient, if we were to meet the numbers which are reflected in census reporting, we would all be stretched far past capacity.

Student needs continue to be childcare as well as transportation and only a couple of centers are able to meet even a portion of this need.

Adult Education programs seem to be underutilized throughout the area -- especially regarding those that need basic skills to be able to maintain employment --because we meet so few of our potential population. Over the past several years enrollment has declined. Often our Adult Education services are underutilized due to lack of understanding, or perceived value of basic skills knowledge because they do not relate to very specific educational attainment such as credit hours and do not relate to a specific job opportunity.

In support of a strong workforce system that vigorously represents the employment needs of individuals with disabilities and other customers with significant barriers to employment, VR will provide services to eligible customers consistent with the Rehabilitation Act, implementing regulations for Title IV of WIOA and state policies.

To help Kansas citizens with disabilities meet their employment goals, a comprehensive array of VR services are available. Services are customized according to each person's unique needs, skills, interests, abilities and vocational goal. Services to be provided for each individual customer are specified on an Individual Plan for Employment and may include:

- Vocational assessment to help a customer identify his or her skills, abilities, interests and job goals.
- Vocational counseling and guidance.
- Physical and mental restoration services, including artificial limbs, psychotherapy and physical therapy.
- Training and education to learn new vocational skills.
- Rehabilitation technology, telecommunication aids and other adaptive devices.
- Job preparation and placement services.
- Job coaching.
- On-the-job training.
- Services to help students with disabilities get a job after finishing high school.
- Supported and customized employment for individuals who need intensive on-the-job training and ongoing support.
- Referral to other services.

The strengths of Rehabilitation Services programs in LAII are many. Counselors are trained in working with people with disabilities to obtain and maintain employment. Our counselors are specially trained to assist individuals in their barriers to employment. This is a huge strength for Rehabilitation Services. Rehabilitation Services works with the transition students from the high schools to start building relationships with students with disabilities at an early age. In year 2014, 21% of our persons served were transition youth with disabilities (21 years or younger), and 23% of our successful closures were youth with disabilities. The plan the counselor develops with the individual is unique to that person to maximize their employment potential. The plan for employment addresses the individual's strengths, barriers to employment, and vocational goal. The plan is comprehensive and flexible to address the individual's needs. In year 2014, 95% of the successful rehabilitations were individuals with significant disabilities, meaning they had multiple functional limitations in major areas of life such as mobility, communication, self-care, interpersonal skills, work tolerance, self-direction and work skills. For the past ten years, 75% of our individuals who are successfully closed report their earnings as their largest financial support. The End-Dependence initiative emphasizes the use of evidence based practices throughout the VR service delivery system.

An opportunity for improvement for Rehabilitation Services is that a stronger and more direct connection with the employer and business community is needed to increase employment options and opportunities for Kansas with disabilities. Rehabilitation Services has difficulty finding qualified

applicants for the Rehabilitation Counselor positions. This is an area of weakness due to the turnover rate that we face.

In Rehabilitation Services, order of selection is a possibility depending on if we have sufficient funds or personnel to serve all individuals who are eligible for services; therefore we could have a waiting list for services. This will have to be monitored because of new requirements to set aside pre-employment transition services and potential one-stop infrastructure costs.

The transition youth with disabilities need more opportunities to obtain employment skills and to gain work experiences through paid summer programs.

VR doesn't have the staff to serve all individuals who have a disability in the state of Kansas.

In the rural communities we have gaps in our service provider networks, therefore it limits the programs capacity to provide intensive job searching, job carving, and on-the-job support services in those communities.

LAI Workforce Centers (WFCs) are located in Junction City, Lawrence, Manhattan and Topeka with a satellite office at Ft. Riley military base. Outreach services are available to the 17 counties upon request and staffing availability.

WFCs are staffed by a partnership of agencies/organizations who provide services to job seekers and employers. The main framework of services provided through the WFCs include those offered through Wagner Peysner/Labor Exchange (WP), and Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG) operated by the Kansas Department of Commerce and the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) grant and Kansas Health Professions Opportunity Project (KHPOP) grant, operated by Heartland Works Inc. (HWI), who also serves as the One-Stop Operator. Other organizations and programs offer services through the WFC system as established by Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) as well as other less formal arrangements.

The WFC system provides universal access of labor exchange services so that workers, job seekers and businesses can find the services they need in one stop and frequently under one roof in easy-to-find locations. The Employment Service focuses on providing a variety of employment related labor exchange services including but not limited to job search assistance, job referral, and placement assistance for job seekers, re-employment services to unemployed claimants, and recruitment services to employers with job openings. Services are delivered in one of three modes: self-service, facilitated self-help services and staff assisted service delivery approaches. Depending on the needs of the labor market other services such as job seeker assessment of skill levels, abilities and aptitudes, career guidance, job search workshops and referral to training may be available.

WFC services offered to employers, in addition to referral of job seekers to available job openings, include assistance in development of job order requirements, matching job seeker experience with job requirements, skills and other attributes, assisting employers with special recruitment needs, arranging for Job Fairs and Hiring Events, assisting employers analyze hard-to-fill job orders, assisting with job restructuring and helping employers deal with layoffs.

Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) is available to laid-off workers who have lost their jobs as a result of U.S. foreign trade. The TAA Program offers a variety of benefits and services to eligible workers to include job training, income support, job search and relocation allowances; a tax credit to help pay the costs of health insurance; and a wage supplement to eligible workers 50 years of age and older (RTAA). Eligibility requirements for TAA benefits are based, in part, upon certified petitions filed with the U.S. Department of Labor for workers adversely affected by foreign trade.

The TAA Program is closely coordinated with the Dislocated Worker Program. Kansas has integrated all DVOP specialists into the American Job Center One-Stop system, by assigning one or more DVOP specialists to each WFC. LAII has assigned a DVOP specialist to the Manhattan Vet Center 40 percent of the time. A DVOP specialist is assigned 100 percent of the time to the Fort Riley Wounded Warrior Transition Unit/Battalion (WTB). Veteran job seekers receive priority referral to jobs and training as well as special employment services and assistance. We have Local Veteran Employment Representatives (LVER) and Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP).

WFC Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVER) conduct outreach to employers and engage in advocacy efforts with hiring personnel to increase employment opportunities for veterans and encourage the hiring of veterans. LVER staff advocate on behalf of veterans for employment and training opportunities with business, industry and community-based organizations. LVERs monitor job listings from Federal contractors to see that eligible Veterans get priority in referrals to these jobs; promote and monitor the participation of Veterans in Federally-funded employment and training programs.

Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists develop job and training opportunities for Veterans, with special emphasis on Veterans with service-connected disabilities. DVOP specialists provide direct services to Veterans enabling them to be competitive in the labor market. They provide outreach and offer assistance to disabled and other Veterans by promoting community and employer support for employment and training opportunities, including apprenticeship and on-the-job training.

The WFC partners are included in the intake process for JVSG DVOP services. Upon entering the WFC, veterans are met by a front desk staff member, who asks several questions to help identify veterans and their needs.

To identify and assess veterans for intensive services individuals entering the WFC are met with signage and are encouraged to identify themselves as veterans. Additionally, a front-desk representative provides an appropriate greeting, and inquires by asking, "Have you or your spouse ever served in the Military?" When a veteran is recognized, they will complete an initial intake assessment, performed by Wagner-Peyser staff, and upon determining eligibility (disabled veteran or with a SBE), he/she is immediately referred to the DVOP specialist to receive intensive services, based on the veteran's needs. Other intake processes, for example a Chapter 31 Veteran may circumvent the above intake/ referral process, based on their eligibility, predetermined by federal regulations that states JVSG will provide employment to Chapter 31 VR&E veterans. However despite their intake process, all veterans remain entitled to, and will receive, Veteran Priority of Service and subsequent staff assisted services.

In LAII Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (MFSW) are served at each of the area WFCs by the Kansas Department of Commerce staff. MSFW are provided services through funding of the Wagner-

Peyser Act in accordance with Kansas Workforce Development Policies. MSFWs have access to multiple services which include the following:

- Registration for labor exchange and other KANSASWORKS services as a staff assisted or self-service
- Explanation and use of KANSASWORKS.com
- Referral to jobs
- Job seeking assistance
- Needs assessment
- Kansas *WorkReady!* Job skills assessment
- Referral to other agencies
- Information on other employment and training activities within the LWDA
- Labor Market Information
- Tax Credit programs
- English/Spanish language translation assistance
- Information about the Job Service complaint program system, filing and processing complaints
- Customer satisfaction surveys
- Bonding program assistance
- Job ready workshops

Staff with LAII WFCs complete housing inspections for compliance on behalf of MSFWs. In addition, MSFWs can be referred to community social services such as food assistance programs, unemployment, or training assistance. Agricultural employers are provided the full array of employer resources and services available through the One-Stop system, to include job postings and labor exchange information and services.

Each WFC has a functional manager as well as the area-wide Kansas Department of Commerce regional operations manager, which oversee outreach activities by staff, led by Business Service Representatives (BSR) stationed in each office. The BSR works with local employers and WFC staff to ensure MSFW customers have access and are informed to related job openings in accordance with Kansas Workforce policy and the National Farmworkers Jobs Program.

In recent past program years (PY), LAII has served between 10-20 MSFW per PY, and expectations are for similar totals in the upcoming PYs, based upon current related employers and business.

Each LAII WFC has at least one Wagner-Peyser staff member trained to conduct pre-occupancy housing inspections for agriculture job orders for MSFW. Individuals interested in this service may contact their closest LAII WFC and ask to speak with the Workforce Services Supervisor for more information. The area-wide point of contact for the oversight and implementation of MSFW services in LAII (including outreach and recruitment) is the Regional Operations Manager currently stationed at the Topeka Workforce Center.

In addition to direct outreach with employers and MSFW customers, WFC staff routinely meet with other Area agencies, partners, community organizations, local chamber of commerce, etc., in order to make them aware of available services and job openings, and also have formal Memorandums of Understanding and referral systems in place.

LAIH has a partnership with SER/SCSEP, a workforce development program specifically designed to prepare and guide older workforce center customers. Older workers seeking one-on-one customized job search assistance or retraining are referred to WIOA staff for potential enrollment. Many job seekers 55+ years or older have expressed concerns on obtaining employment in LAIH. We offer the Job Success Workshop to address job seeking and career building endeavors - giving current trends on résumé writing, cover letters and interview tips. This workshop addresses how to help the job seeker to be better prepared in their career search.

WFC WIOA programs offer a multitude of opportunities for customized employment/training. Services target both unemployed and underemployed individuals, with special emphasis on those with barriers to employment. Adult and Dislocated Worker customers work closely with their WIOA Employment & Training Specialist (ETS) to research training opportunities, assess career interests and develop individualized employment plans. WIOA ETSs help customers connect to in-demand training programs which lead to careers with clear paths to advancement and progressive earnings. Youth customers work with competitively selected WIOA youth providers to connect to basic education and tutoring services, leadership development opportunities, guidance, counseling and mentorship experiences and paid/unpaid worksite placements.

Current WIOA training priorities in LAIH demand occupations include the following ONET job families:

- Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports & Media
- Architecture & Engineering
- Business & Financial Operations
- Community & Social Service
- Computer & Mathematical
- Construction & Extraction
- Education, Training & Library
- Healthcare Practitioners & Technical
- Healthcare Support
- Installation Maintenance & Repair
- Legal
- Life, Physical & Social Science
- Management
- Office & Administrative Support
- Production
- Transportation & Materials Moving

KHPOP training priorities focus exclusively on the healthcare industry.

As the one-stop operator and WIOA program operator, HWI provides coordination efforts for the entire WFC system. Working in concert with partners, HWI convenes community based organizations, training providers and employers to ensure customers receive high-quality career services in one location.

WFC programs in LAII possess many strengths:

- Met or exceeded the common performance measures requirements consistently throughout the implementation of WIA.
- Successfully partnered with other service providers including other state agencies, postsecondary education providers, community-based organizations and employers.
- Streamlined service delivery to more efficiently serve jobseekers and employers.
- Staff training to help staff better serve customers with barriers to employment. This includes bringing in subject matter experts and utilizing the director of training for presentation/facilitation skills for the staff.
- Leveraged outside resources to increase and improve services to jobseekers. This includes partnerships to provide outreach to counties without a brick and mortar office by providing the mobile center and partnering with other state agencies to reach jobseekers.
- Utilizing innovative and creative techniques to overcome barriers and to provide solutions to workforce development challenges in the area.
- Utilizes the KANSASWORKS data system which fulfills the reporting requirements of US DOL.
- WIOA and KHPOP case management provides individualized and comprehensive case management to connect customers to high demand training and employment.
- WIOA and KHPOP programs help those with barriers to employment transition into post-secondary education programs and partner them with employment opportunities in career paths with progressive earning potential.
- WIOA youth programs help at-risk youth with disabilities and barriers to employment connect to education, help them develop leadership skills and gain valuable work experience opportunities.

WFC programs in LAII also have several opportunities for improvement:

- Meeting the workforce needs of all industry sectors can be challenging. Continued focus on our employers and their needs and developing effective ways to recruit this information will be needed.
- Responding to individual community needs across the 17 county local area provides a geographic challenge, especially with limited staffing levels and operational budget.
- Partnerships among workforce employment and training service providers (and related organizations) across the area continue to develop and strengthen, however more work is needed to strengthen ongoing communication and strategy implementation across the partners in the system.
- Opportunities to seek additional grant funding to expand programming and infuse the system with creative and engaging customer service options.

KANSASWORKS has the capacity to better serve jobseekers and those with more barriers to employment through enhanced partnerships, targeted distribution of resources and staff training. Technology upgrades and access to multiple data systems would substantially increase capacity to serve individuals more effectively and efficiently. Capacity issues are continually changing based on annual reduction in funds, whether caused by an improved economy or cuts in federal appropriations.

WFC staff are recruited for their skills in customer service, assessment, local area job market and educational program knowledge. Our staff offer our greatest capacity to serve the job seeker and employer need in our communities. With continued investment in staff development and closer collaborative communication with partners we hope to strengthen and broaden the WFC system framework to increase the amount and quality of services offered.

(b) STRATEGIC VISION & GOALS

(1) VISION

Describe the Local Workforce Development Board's strategic vision for its workforce development system.

Our vision is to be a successful and highly regarded workforce development system supporting enterprise and improving the quality of life by meeting and exceeding employment and workforce needs in Northeast Kansas. We will accomplish this by promoting economic prosperity and the self-sufficiency of individuals and families by creating a workforce which is competitive in the global marketplace.

(2) GOALS

Describe the goals for achieving this vision based on the analysis in (a) above of the Local Area's economic conditions, workforce, and workforce development activities.

GOAL #1: Promote a workforce development system where qualified staff provide services and partnerships/services are seamless, streamlined, collaborative and comprehensive, meeting the needs of job seekers/students and employers.

GOAL #2: Serve adult and dislocated worker job seekers/students with customized assistance to promote employment, earnings progression, job retention, and credential attainment. Emphasizing target populations identified in WIOA including but not limited to unemployed/underemployed workers, veterans and individuals with barriers to employment.

GOAL #3: Serve local area employers with customized assistance to promote their economic prosperity and competitiveness.

GOAL #4: Serve disadvantaged youth with an emphasis on out-of-school youth with services to promote career exploration/guidance, support for educational attainment, opportunities for skills training in in-demand industries/occupations and additional support for leadership development and financial literacy.

(3) PERFORMANCE GOAL PHILOSOPHY

Describe the policies the Local Workforce Development Board will develop to make certain local staff and Operator staff do not use performance outcome assumptions to limit services, including credential/postsecondary training and work-based learning, to individuals otherwise eligible for those services. Provide a timeline for establishing this policy and for training local and operator staff to carry out the intent of and procedures for implementing the policy.

The workforce development system in LAII will offer an array of services through a partnership network with the overarching goal of connecting skilled job seekers with employers offering career growth opportunities. Partnerships among the organizations and agencies participating in this system will be critical to ensuring our target customer base receives the full range of services available. A team approach will be necessary to ensure all customers receive the level of service appropriate to connect them to high quality training and employment opportunities. It is imperative all staff participating in the system have the training they need to accurately assess customer needs and have the knowledge necessary to refer customers to service providers throughout the system who can best meet their need and help the customer achieve identified performance targets for success. The LAII system recognizes each customer is unique and will require a unique service plan. Connecting customers to services will be driven by the customer's ability to participate in and benefit from services. It is in the design and implementation of services where consideration of performance targets will be given. Our service structure must be comprehensive and thorough enough to help a wide range of customers transition into meaningful employment with earning potential and career advancement opportunity.

(4) SYSTEM ASSESSMENT PHILOSOPHY

Describe how the Local Board will assess the overall effectiveness of the workforce investment system in the Local Area 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.

Key to the success of the LAII workforce development system will be the ongoing monitoring and assessment of how the design, staffing and service offerings of the system is meeting the established vision and goals of the system as previously discussed. The LAII LWDB/CEOB will fulfill the oversight role for the system in LAII. System assessment will extend beyond fiscal and strategic evaluations to include operational elements such as staff training and development, service schedules and offerings, customer success stories, job seeker and employer feedback mechanisms, etc. The LAII LWDB/CEOB meetings will provide one format by which these topics will be evaluated. Additional committees or workgroups established for system assessment will be considered throughout the progression of the first five years under WIOA.

(c) LOCAL AREA STRATEGY

The Local Area Plan must include the Local Board's strategies to achieve its strategic vision and goals. These strategies must take into account the Local Area'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).

Partners will inventory current available service offerings, identify gaps and work together to increase the variety of services and tools we offer to our customers. (G#1)

Partners will conduct effective and engaging outreach, including social media strategies, to increase job seeker/student traffic within the system as appropriate. (G#2)

Partners will invest in training for high skill/high wage career paths for growing and emerging industries. (G#2)

Partners will coordinate services with local area employers, chambers of commerce and other economic development groups. (G#3)

Partners will educate and cross-train staff throughout the system to promote knowledge of existing grants and services and to facilitate appropriate referrals, ensuring customers are connected to those who can provide the best assistance for their progression along a career pathway. (G#2)

Partners will participate with the Kansas Workforce Innovation Fund (WIF) to develop and participate in staff cross training opportunities as appropriate. (G#1)

Partners will to the extent feasible utilize the WIF and Kansas Workforce Data Quality Initiative (WDQI) projects to help design/develop intake/registration systems to promote information/resource sharing and reduce duplicated effort. (G#1)

Partners will ensure customers with disabilities are afforded reasonable accommodations in all areas of services, programs, materials and resources. (G#2 & G#3)

Service design will reflect the needs of economically disadvantaged customers with barriers to employment as defined by WIOA. Partners will work with other community organizations and social service agencies to provide the wrap-around support needed for customer success in training and employment endeavors. (G#2)

Employer outreach and communication efforts will be coordinated among partner business service staff. Employer hiring events and area career fairs will be communicated to all partners to maximize job seeker participation and employer outcomes. (G#2 & G#3).

Partners will ensure customers have equal opportunity to all available resources, programs and services through monitoring and enforcement of the non-discrimination provisions of federal, state and local laws. (G#2 & G#3)

Partners will meet on an ongoing basis to assess the system, identify strengths/opportunities, and review customer feedback. The assessment will be utilized to recommend and implement, to the extent feasible, system improvements and ensure services are relevant to employer and job seeker/student success. (G#1)

Partners will coordinate area-wide youth initiatives to maximize the availability of workforce development resources for youth most in need. (G#4)

Partners will collaborate with employers and other workforce system partners to increase opportunities for youth with disabilities to participate in paid work-based learning experiences, explore career options and develop necessary soft skills for lifelong employment success. (G#4)

Customers working with multiple partners will be served with a collaborative team approach where staff across organizations routinely communicate regarding provision of services. Communication methods will be determined at the case manager level and may include, but not be limited to email, conference call, or in-person. (G#2)

Partners will assess the need to provide services in alternative formats and on alternative schedules based upon customer need and employer demand. Service provision will include a high-tech/high-touch blended approach. (All goals)

Partners will collaborate to design and implement additional learning opportunities for staff and customers to include cross-training on current grants, programs and services to encourage appropriate referrals. Customer workshops will address soft skills and other topics as needed. (All goals)

Partners will work in collaboration with area training providers to increase capacity for in-demand occupational training, as well as designing training for target groups to include transitioning service members, economically disadvantaged individuals, laid off workers and others as appropriate. (G#2)

Partners will encourage their customers become registered with **KANSASWORKS.com** as appropriate to increase their training and employment opportunities, connecting them with WFC staff and employers. (G#2 & G#3)

Youth providers, WFC staff and partner organizations will receive regular training regarding available youth services to maximize enrollment of disadvantaged youth into WIOA funded programs. (G#4)

III. OPERATIONAL PLANNING ELEMENTS

(a) LOCAL STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

(1) Local Workforce Development Board Functions

Describe how the Local Board will implement its functions under section 107 (b)(3); (4)(A-C) and (5) of WIOA (i.e., provide a description of Local Board operational structures and decision making processes to ensure such functions are carried out).

The LAII Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) is structured as mandated by WIOA and carries out all functions as required by the WIOA legislation including, but not limited to:

- Develop and submit the local plan
- Conduct workforce research and regional labor market analysis
- Convene, broker and leverage stakeholders to the workforce system
- Engage employers
- Develop and support career pathways
- Identify, promote and disseminate information on promising practices
- Develop strategies to improve system accessibility/effectiveness through technology
- Program oversight
- Negotiate local performance measures
- Select program operators/providers
- Coordinate education and training providers
- Develop budget and administer grants
- Assess and improve accessibility for disabled customers

In addition to the above duties, the board has oversight responsibility in the following areas:

- Plan for the future
- Establish broad policies, including financial and personnel policies and procedures
- Approve grant applications
- Review/approve annual audit
- Review financial information
- Identify and proactively address emerging issues
- Interpret the organization's mission to the public
- Solicit prospective contributors
- Hire, evaluate and work with HWI Executive Director
- Establish and maintain programs and systems designed to ensure compliance with terms of contracts and grants

The LWDB is chaired by an area business leader. LWDB membership incorporates individuals with optimal decision-making authority within the categories required by the legislation. The LAII LWDB's Executive Committee consists of the LWDB Chair, LWDB Vice-Chair, LWDB Secretary and the Chair of the LAII Chief Elected Officials Board (CEOB). The LWDB has

also formed a Youth Committee which includes LWDB members, HWI staff and community member representation. The LAII LWDB considers additional standing committees if and when needed.

With LAII CEOB/LWDB direction, Heartland Works Inc. (HWI) serves as the LAII CEOB/LWDB board staff, One-Stop Operator and WIOA Program Operator.

(2) Implementation of Local Area Strategy

(A) Core Program Activities to Implement the Local Board's Strategy

Describe the activities the entities carrying out the respective local core programs will fund to implement the Local Board's strategies. Also describe how such activities will be aligned across the core programs and other Combined State Plan partner programs and among the entities providing the programs, including using co-enrollment and other strategies.

Kansas Adult Education is the first step in a career pathways system that meets the demands of the Kansas workforce for high skills and the needs of Kansas workers for high wages. In order to support better quality of life for individuals and communities and prepare adults for achieving industry-recognized credentials and college certificates, we provide high quality instruction and targeted student support services that are aligned with learner goals and are available at times and places accessible to adults with jobs and families in area two.

Adult Education programs include: five Community Colleges,

- Barton County Community College (Fort Riley),
- Cloud County Community College (Clay Center, Junction City, Geary County),
- Highland Community College (Atchison, Hiawatha, Holton, Kickapoo Nation, Wamego, Baileyville, Marysville),
- Neosho County Community College (Ottawa, Lawrence);
- Washburn Technical Center (Topeka);

Two School Districts,

- Manhattan USD 383,
- Lawrence USD 497;

One Community Based Organization,

- Let's Help (Topeka).

These eight institutions have seventeen sites where services are delivered to students. Services include Adult Basic Education (ABE), Adult Secondary Education (GED)

(ASE), and English Language Acquisition (ELA). Technology is taught in several location programs; and Accelerating Opportunities for Kansans (AOK) is a part of services provided at Barton CC, Highland CC, Neosho CC and USD 497. Instruction is provided at various times which are morning, afternoon and evening; and each session is generally six to eight weeks, and new students are then introduced to a new class. All potential students are placed on a waiting list until a new class begins.

Assessments to determine eligibility for Adult Education services are provided for students at no cost. A modest supply fee is charged to students for supplies, and all supplies are provided.

Activities will be aligned through:

- Representation on state and local Boards.
- Inter-operable data systems with the ability to communicate with partners.
- Collaborative case management and co-enrollment when possible
- Student referrals among partners

In support of a strong workforce system which vigorously represents the employment needs of individuals with disabilities and other customers with significant barriers to employment, VR will provide services to eligible customers consistent with the Rehabilitation Act, implementing regulations for Title IV of WIOA, and state policies.

To help Kansas citizens with disabilities meet their employment goals, a comprehensive array of VR services are available. Services are customized according to each person's unique needs, skills, interests, abilities, and vocational goal. Services to be provided for each individual customer are specified on an Individual Plan for Employment, and may include:

- Vocational assessment to help a customer identify his or her skills, abilities, interests and job goals.
- Vocational counseling and guidance.
- Physical and mental restoration services, including artificial limbs, psychotherapy, and physical therapy.
- Training and education to learn new vocational skills.
- Rehabilitation technology, telecommunication aids and other adaptive devices.
- Job preparation and placement services.
- Job coaching.
- On-the-job training.
- Services to help students with disabilities get a job after finishing high school.
- Supported and customized employment for individuals who need intensive on-the-job training and ongoing support.
- Referral to other services.

VR works with people with all types of physical or mental disabilities. To receive VR services, a customer must meet all three parts of the following federal eligibility requirements:

1. The customer must have a physical or mental impairment or disability; and
2. The disability must result in a substantial impediment to employment; and
3. The customer must require VR services to prepare for, secure, retain or regain employment.

The assessment services needed to determine if an individual is eligible, vocational counseling, guidance, referral, job placement, supported employment/customized employment and job coaching will be provided at no cost. VR payment for most other services will depend on whether the customer meets financial need guidelines. If comparable services or benefits are provided or paid for, in whole or part, by other federal, state or local public agencies, by health insurance, or by employee benefits, and if they are available at the time the VR customer needs them to ensure progress toward employment, then those comparable services must be used first before the expenditure of VR funds.

In addition to the specific activities funded by each Core Partner, all partners will align services through:

- Representation on the state and local boards.
- Interoperable data systems that allow computer systems to work together. (An interoperable data system for the core programs and other programs to ensure accurate and standardized collection of program and participant information.)
- Collaborative case management and coenrollment when needed by the customer. (Coenrollment occurs when customers are actively participating in services from more than one system partner. Partners will make referrals to initiate coenrollment if/when the customer could benefit from the services of another partner program, if the customer agrees, and/or if the customer so requests. Referrals will be made on an individual consumer-by-consumer basis, and not as a blanket referral throughout the workforce system.)
- Collaboration with other Core Partners on targeted outreach activities.
- Enhanced consumer referrals among Core Partners.
- Participation in evaluation and continuous improvement strategies.
- Specific strategies to strengthen communications among Core Partners.
- Collaboration among Core Partners for business outreach activities.

The Kansas Department of Commerce mission is to deliver the highest level of business development, workforce and marketing services that build a healthy and expanding Kansas economy. It provides assistance through the area WFCs to the general public who are in need of services to return to the workforce. The core programs are Wagner-Peyser, Veteran Services, Trade Adjustment Assistance and Re-Employment Services.

To help Kansas citizens meet their employment goals, a comprehensive assessment is given to customers. Services are customized to the needs of the customer according to the person's barriers, goals, experience, skills and talents. Job Candidate customers are provided with assistance from a staff member to prepare for employment which may include résumé preparation, interview preparation and many more Center resources. If the Recruitment Plan requires job candidates be tested or assessed, applicants will be scheduled for the activity prior to submitting an application.

Customer and business registrations are loaded into **KANSASWORKS**, a web-based job-matching and labor market information system. **KANSASWORKS** provides job seekers, employers, and training providers with easy-to-use tools that support a wide range of activities. As a service of the public workforce system, **KANSASWORKS** is completely free to use wherever there is Internet.

Customers can:

- Create and post a résumé or job order
- Determine eligibility for state or federally funded workforce programs
- Search for the ideal job or job candidate
- Search for the ideal training or service provider
- Research labor market information
- Attend workforce related workshops
- Participate in job fairs, career fairs and /or hiring events
- Access online assessments and typing tests
- Earn national certification through the Kansas **WORKReady!**
- Refer to partner organizations and agencies
- Inquire about Federal Bonds
- Learn about the benefits of Work Opportunity Tax Credits
- Connect to Registered Apprenticeship

As the One-Stop Operator, HWI will serve to convene and engage workforce system partners, coordinate and oversee programs/services offered through the system and determine operational structures needed for effective one-stop management.

As the WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth program operator, HWI will coordinate WIOA service provision for these customer groups. HWI will work collaboratively with Commerce in the provision of career services (basic, individualized and follow-up) through the area Workforce Centers, seeking assistance from additional system partners including, but not limited to, Adult Education Rehabilitation Services, Kansas Department of Labor, Kansas Department of Children & Families, and Kansas Department of Corrections as appropriate for the individual.

HWI will collaborate with post-secondary educational institutions such as vocational-technical schools/colleges, community colleges, state universities, proprietary schools,

other training entities approved through the Kansas Board of Regents, Registered Apprenticeship programs and local area employers on training opportunities for Adults, Dislocated Workers and Youth. Partnerships with area and statewide initiatives such as AO-K, KanTRAIN, Senate Bill 155, Workforce AID and other training opportunities will be important to this process.

Basic Career Services

- Determining eligibility for adult, dislocated worker or youth programs.
- Outreach, intake and orientation to information/services available through the one-stop system.
 - Initial skill level assessment ó literacy, numeracy, English language proficiency, aptitudes, abilities, skills gaps and supportive service needs.
 - Labor exchange services
 - Job search and placement, career counseling, including information on:
 - In-demand industry sectors/occupations
 - Nontraditional employment
 - Referrals and coordination of activities/services within the one-stop system and other workforce development programs.
 - Provision of workforce and labor market information
 - Job vacancy listings in labor market areas
 - Information on job skills necessary to obtain the vacant jobs listed
 - Local demand occupations ó earnings, skill requirements, opportunities for advancement
 - Provision of performance information and program cost information on eligible training providers.
 - Provision of how the local area is performing on local performance accountability measures.
 - Provision of information on and referrals to supportive services/assistance (child care, child support, medical/health assistance, Medicaid, CHIP, SNAP, HUD, TANF, etc.).
 - Assistance in establishing eligibility for programs of financial aid assistance for training and education programs.
 - Provision of information and assistance regarding filing claims under UI programs.

Individualized Career Services

- Comprehensive and specialized assessments (diagnostic testing, assessment tools, in-depth interviewing and evaluation to identify employment barriers and appropriate employment goals).
- Development of an individualized employment plan:
 - Employment Goals

- Achievement Objectives
- Services need to achieve goals
- Group and/or individual counseling and mentoring
- Career planning and case management
- Short-term pre-vocational services (learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, professional conduct, etc.
- Internships/Work Experiences, linked to careers.
- Workforce preparation activities (basic academic skills, critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills, self-management skills, working with others, utilizing resources, preparing for transition into and completion of PSE, training or employment.
- Financial literacy services
- Out-of-area job search and relocation assistance
- English language acquisition and integration education/training programs

Follow-up Services

Provided as appropriate placed into unsubsidized employment for up to 12 months after the first day of employment and involves counseling about the workplace. Follow-up services do not extend the date of exit in performance reporting.

Training Services

Training services will be provided when staff determine, after an interview, evaluation, assessment and career planning, the customer has met three distinct criteria:

- They are unlikely or unable to obtain or retain employment that leads to economic self-sufficiency or wages comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment through career services alone; AND
- They are in need of training services to obtain or retain employment that leads to economic self-sufficiency or wages comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment, AND
- They have the skills and qualifications to successfully participate in the selected program of training services.

Training services may include traditional classroom training activities, as well as work-based learning such as Registered Apprenticeship, On-the-Job Training, and Customized Training.

Youth Services

HWI contracts with local area youth service providers to recruit, enroll and serve WIOA eligible youth. Youth service providers are selected through a competitive Request for Proposal (RFP) process. The primary emphasis of youth services in LAII is the out-of-school youth population.

WIOA Youth Services include:

- Tutoring, study skills training, instruction and evidenced-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 post-secondary credential;
- Alternative secondary school services, or dropout recovery services, as appropriate;
- Paid and unpaid work experiences that have academic and occupational education as a component of the work experience, which may include the following types of work experience:
 - Summer employment opportunities and other employment opportunities available throughout the school year;
 - Pre-apprenticeship programs;
 - Internships and job shadowing; and
 - On-the-job training opportunities
- Occupational skill training, which includes priority consideration for training programs that lead to recognized post-secondary credentials that align with in-demand industry sectors or occupations
- Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster;
- Leadership development opportunities, including community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social and civic behaviors;
- Supportive services;
- Adult mentoring of at least 12 months that may occur both during and after program participation;
- Follow-up services for not less than 12 months after the completion of participation;
- Comprehensive guidance and counseling, which may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling, as well as referrals to counseling, as appropriate to the needs of the individual youth;
- Financial literacy education;
- Entrepreneurial skills training;
- 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; and
- Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to post-secondary education and training.

The LAII CEOB/LWDB oversee all workforce development activities provided through the LAII system. Core partners have representation on the LAII LWDB and are involved in area-wide strategic discussions regarding the operation of the system. Representation on the LWDB, participation in the WIOA plan

development process and continued engagement in area-wide partner meetings regarding ongoing operation and assessment of the system are all ways in which services are aligned/coordinated.

(B) Alignment with Activities outside the Local 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.

Adult Education staff will be cross-trained to be able to make successful referrals.

Rehabilitation Services staff will cross train the activities outside the plan for all partners to understand.

Commerce will cross train to all partner organizations on the services the WFC provides through our programs. Collaboration with our core partners will be paramount to the success of job seekers/students and employers.

HWI will convene core and other partner programs on an ongoing basis to assess the system, align referral methods, provide services, ensure resources are not duplicated and help drive system reform. These meetings will have the goals of increasing access, streamlining procedures, cross-training staff and providing quality customer services to our job seeker students and employers. Partner meeting frequency will be determined based upon current customer, staff and system need. Staff cross-training will be a targeted activity with varying schedules adopted as driven by staff or customer need.

(C) Coordination, Alignment and Provision of Services to Individuals

Describe how the entities carrying out the respective local core programs, Combined State Plan partner programs, and mandatory and optional one-stop partner programs will coordinate activities and resources (including Infrastructure Cost Sharing procedures) 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.

Adult Education's highly trained staff will provide educational services which will range from: basic skills instruction, English as a second language instruction, technology instruction, high school credential or secondary-level skill attainment.

Rehabilitation Services, the state's VR program in the Kansas Department for Children and Families, will provide individualized services to empower people with disabilities to achieve, retain or regain employment.

A co-location in the WFCs with all core partners would be ideal for customer-centered services. An integrated model working toward co-location, as feasible, is the current status of the workforce system in LAII.

The WIOA core partners are the foundational partners of the LAII workforce system. The key strategy to ensuring the successful coordination of strategies, services and resources is the continuation of a core partner coordination group which lives on after the conclusion of the WIOA plan submission. Initiatives the group will work on during the plan period include, but are not limited to:

- Develop and implement education and cross-training of staff
- Commit to policy and process discussions which put the customer in the center of the design process
- Communicate updates on partner initiatives which impact the system
- Identify multiple access points for job seeker/student and employer customers
- Develop referral guidelines and monitor referral process to ensure efficient flow of customers to the resources they need
- Commit to reducing duplication by sharing assessments, labor market information, customer service plans and employer outreach efforts, and participate in joint case management within parameters of individual partner confidentiality guidelines
- Review and enhance system service offerings, clearly identifying how each partner contributes to the menu of services available
- Assess available supportive services across partners to ensure those customers with barriers to employment are able to access them and that services are not duplicated across systems.
- Collaborate and participate in industry sector groups within LAII demand occupation clusters to coordinate and enhance employer engagement in the system
- Identify liaison positions at the field staff level within each partner organization who can help support the coordination of the system

Funding the workforce system is vital for the achievement of the strategies outlined in this plan. WFC infrastructure costs are shared by co-located partners. This process began in WIA and continues in WIOA. HWI will work with non-co-located partners to develop a fair and reasonable formula for contribution to the costs of the system.

(D) Coordination, Alignment and Provision of Services to Employers

Describe how the entities carrying out the respective local core programs, any Combined State Plan partner program, 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.

The creation of Pathways in Adult Education Technical programs with the input of the LWDB, will provide a high-quality service to employers which will endeavor to meet the current and projected workforce needs.

Kansas Rehabilitation Services (KRS) emphasizes employer engagement activities which market the skills and abilities that qualified workers with disabilities have to contribute to the success of Kansas business and industry. KRS will build and maintain its capacity for effective outreach and engagement with employers statewide in order to:

- Meet their workforce needs through the labor pool of qualified persons with disabilities.
- Identify competitive, integrated employment opportunities for vocational rehabilitation (VR) consumers, including such opportunities for youth and adults who are diverted from sub-minimum wage employment through Section 511 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.
- Increase opportunities for youth with disabilities to engage in paid work-based learning experiences as part of the Pre-Employment Transition Services program. Such work-based learning is intended to facilitate career exploration and development of the soft skills necessary for lifelong employment success.
- Collaborate with partners in the workforce development system on coordinated business outreach processes.
- Coordinate with Economic and Employment Services in the Department for Children and Families, which administers the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, and its employer development activities.

KRS has service provider agreements for employer development, placement and on-the-job supports with nearly 120 local providers (community rehabilitation programs, local organizations and individual providers).

In 2013, the State Rehabilitation Council of Kansas established a committee to address employer outreach and engagement. The committee initiated the "Good for Business" campaign, which highlights how hiring people with disabilities will contribute to the success of Kansas businesses through:

- Workers qualified to meet business workforce needs.
- Workers who are safe, reliable and productive, and who tend to have lower turnover rates than other employees.
- Hiring incentives.
- Supports to business in areas such as recruiting and performance coaching.

- Innovative options such as no-risk no-cost job tryouts to help determine if there is a good employment match between a VR consumer and business.

Also in the campaign, VR consumers who are successfully employed in high-wage, high-demand, and career pathway jobs are highlighted.

The State Rehabilitation Council also recommended that KRS hire an employer development and marketing specialist with the sole responsibility of meeting employer needs when hiring people with disabilities. That position was approved and hired in March 2014. The purpose of the position is to increase employer awareness about VR consumers as a qualified labor pool, and thereby increase the competitive, integrated employment outcomes achieved by Kansans with disabilities. The person in the position is also responsible for promoting the use of employment incentives and for coordinating with other national, state and local organizations to identify specific employment opportunities for Kansans with disabilities. Presentations to employer and community organizations, as well as individual contacts to businesses, are among the standard activities on an ongoing basis. The position is intended to leverage the momentum created by the Governor and the Council's committee in their focus on increasing employment of Kansans with disabilities.

Since 2014, through the employer development and marketing specialist, KRS has made contact with hundreds of employers, with various levels of engagement. Numerous employers routinely send job vacancy postings to KRS. As a result, more than 4,000 job postings have been sent to VR counselors statewide for potential matches with their consumers. At least half of these positions did not require more than a high school degree. Through these contacts there is a demonstrated high demand for health care positions.

Some innovative initiatives with employers that are underway include the following:

- A workshop with a large hospital and health services company regarding its on-line application and screening processes. Participants were able to learn about how to more effectively use the on-line application process with VR consumers and the response time expectations of companies after vacant positions are posted. Similar workshops are pending with the Veterans Administration and an aircraft manufacturer.
- A major energy company is interested in creating a training program for transition youth.
- An ironworker trade union is interested in offering its apprenticeship program to youth with disabilities.
- A pilot project is pending with a major national on-line shopping company to use a preferred vendor as a single point of contact to hire workers with

disabilities. A major hospital and a plastics manufacturing firm are also exploring similar inclusion programs.

- A national candy manufacturing company has a campaign to interest Kansas high school students in pursuing manufacturing work. They are interested in including transition-aged youth with disabilities in this initiative.
- Extensive outreach and communication are underway with federal contractors with 503 compliance requirements.

Collaboration with workforce development system Core Partners and local workforce operators, as described in the Combined Portion of this Plan, will enhance the KRS employer engagement activities. All Partners are committed to vigorously representing the employment needs of individuals with disabilities and other consumers with significant barriers to employment.

WFC Staff serving as a Business Service Representative (BSR) will be responsible for working with area employers in order to assist them with recruiting and retaining a qualified workforce.

BSRs and Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVER) in the WFCs will visit employers at their place of business to determine what kinds of assistance we can provide them regarding their workforce needs.

The LVERs will focus on helping employers understand the benefits of hiring veterans and developing job opportunities for veteran customers. They will also work closely with federal contractors, Veteran organizations and local military institutions.

The BSRs will work closely with local educational institutions, community organizations, Chambers of Commerce, and other economic development organizations to address area workforce needs.

Business Services staff will also provide assistance to employers in the WFC. This assistance will include helping employers prepare and post job openings; hosting job fairs or hiring events; recruiting qualified job candidates for job openings; screening applications; referring job applicants to the for résumé assistance and testing and assessment services; and other services as needed by businesses to fill their job openings.

When job openings are identified through a business contact, a BSR will work with the employer to develop a Recruitment Plan customized to the needs of the Employer, and enter a job posting on **KANSASWORKS.com**. The job posting will clearly identify the basic skills and hiring criteria required to meet minimum qualifications for the position. The recruitment plan will detail the application process that applicants need to follow to apply for the open position, screening criteria for applicants and strategies for recruiting

qualified candidates. Veteran Preference is given to all new job orders for the first 48 hours of posting.

When the job has been posted, staff will work with interested, qualified candidates to assist them in applying for the position. Job Candidates who need assistance with résumé preparation and application materials will be referred to the resource center team prior to submitting their application. If the Recruitment Plan requires job candidates be tested or assessed, applicants will be scheduled for the activity prior to submitting an application.

The BSR will follow up with the Business to find out who they hired for the open position/s. Unsuccessful candidates will be referred back to the resource center for additional assistance. If the Employer did not hire any of the job candidates, the BSR will meet with the business to discuss additional recruitment strategies.

The BSR, ROM and immediate supervisor will serve on advisory boards for educational institutions and meet quarterly with community partners.

The WIOA requirement for business majority membership on the LWDB ensures employers have a voice at the table regarding workforce development in their region. Board meetings offer a forum for identifying employer needs and brainstorming on system solutions. Partnerships with local area Chambers of Commerce and other economic development groups ensure WFC staff are at the table for community employer focus groups. During the planning process for the WIOA plan, partners contributing to this plan expressed commitment to ensuring business service representatives across the partners would communicate and meet regularly to develop a coordinated plan for business service across the area. The recent award of the Workforce Innovation Fund (WIF) grant to the Kansas Department of Commerce offers another avenue to engage/serve local employers. The WIF funding opportunity grants the Kansas local areas access to funding for on-the-job training services to facilitate training and hiring of individuals with barriers to employment at local area employers having difficulty hiring and retaining qualified individuals who meet their traditional hiring requirements.

(E) Partner Engagement with Educational Institutions

Describe how the Local Board's Strategies will engage local 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.

Adult Education will engage local education and training providers, including community colleges and area career and technical education schools through representation on local boards and committees. In addition, local input will be gathered through meetings with local education representatives.

The VR program supports customers to pursue postsecondary education at all levels if necessary to achieve their vocational goals. VR assists customers to access comparable benefits, such as PELL Grants, to help pay for higher education before expending VR funds. Agreements between VR and all Kansas institutions of higher education specify cost sharing responsibilities related to the provision of auxiliary aids and services.

WFCs highly support and encourage use of higher education as partners in the workforce development system. Area schools, community colleges, and training resources are able to host information sessions at our offices to reach out to the public as needed. Our staff is encouraged to meet and tour these facilities so they can speak about it to customers when appropriate. Customers who are interested in paid training are referred to our WIOA partners for funding opportunities.

The WIOA requirement for Adult Education/Literacy programs as well as higher education representation on the LWDB ensures area educational institutions have a voice at the table regarding workforce development in their region. The Kansas WIOA ETP process is another avenue by which training partners are engaged within the workforce development system in the state. WFC staff routinely outreach at local area schools to recruit students and promote center services. LAII partnerships in initiatives such as WIF, KanTRAIN, AO-K, and Workforce AID are examples of the avenues by which our area schools are engaged in the workforce development system in Northeast Kansas.

(F)Leveraging Resources to Increase Educational Access

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

Adult Education will work collaboratively to leverage resources and additional services for students and utilize all existing resources to their fullest advantage. Accelerating Opportunities for Kansans (AO-K), dual enrollment, TANF Scholarship, Pell Grant, KHPOP, HWI Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth programs and local scholarship support will all be utilized aggressively.

For Rehabilitation Services, both state and federal resources are leveraged to improve access to workforce development programs provided by educational institutions. In addition to the projects already described, Kansas has been awarded the Disability Employment Initiative grant to, in part, fund postsecondary credential training for jobseekers with disabilities. Postsecondary partners have competed for and received funding to support tuition assistance for jobseekers including offenders and other individuals with barriers to employment. Kansas WIOA Core Partners, educational institutions and other partners will continue to aggressively seek additional resources to improve access to education, postsecondary credentials and college credit.

The local WFC strategy is to connect jobseekers to our educational partners as appropriate and commit to research local market information for trends and in-demand occupations.

Job seeker/students in LAII who are seeking post-secondary training opportunities have many options to choose from. There are a variety of vocational-technical schools, community colleges, state universities and proprietary schools in the area offering training in demand occupations. Several initiatives exist which offer assistance to students in the pursuit of their educational goals such as WIOA, KHPOP, KanTRAIN, AO-K, TAA, Registered Apprenticeship, Senate Bill 155, and WIF.

(G) Improving Access to Post-Secondary Credentials

Describe how the Local Board'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.

Adult Education will continue to develop credentials which are industry-recognized certificates, licenses or certifications, and are portable and stackable through collaborative efforts with technical education in concert with local Workforce Boards.

Researching, visiting and taking a pro-active interest in our educational partners helps WFC staff to coach customers toward the appropriate educational facility to meet their needs.

The Kansas **WORKReady!** Certificate is a statewide initiative designed to certify a quality workforce, identify skill gaps, and promote economic development in Kansas. The certificate, powered by WorkKeys, a product of ACT, Inc. is a nationally recognized assessment-based credential that gives employers and job seekers a uniform measure of key workplace skills. The certificate denotes that the certificate holder

possesses the foundational skills required to achieve success in the workplace. It is a portable credential, allowing job seekers and employers to use it anywhere in the nation.

There are four levels of certification: platinum, gold, silver and bronze. To earn a Kansas **WORKReady!** Certificate, individuals undergo testing related to reading, applied math and locating information through the WorkKeys skills assessment system. The level of certificate earned depends on the recipient's scores on the WorkKeys exam. The assessment can be taken at any of LAII workforce centers. Businesses and schools utilize the **WORKReady!** tool to identify skill gaps and design customized

post-secondary training programs which help job seekers attain credentials to increase their employment opportunities.

The LAII WFC system recruits and supports a wide variety of training opportunities to improve access to postsecondary credentials. Programs which lead to employment in LAII identified demand occupations range in type of credential offered ó Certificate, License, Diploma, Associate's Degree, Bachelor's Degree, Registered Apprenticeship, etc. Training investments are prioritized into occupations which offer career pathway potential, supporting credentials which are portable and stackable to encourage job seeker students at a variety of levels to enter into training at their õbest-fitö level and move upward from there. An established career pathway in LAII is healthcare, with differing funding opportunities available at differing rungs on the career ladder. For example, an entry-level job seeker who is a high-school dropout and interested in health care could participate in AO-K to obtain their GED and a Certified Nurse Aide (C.N.A) credential. This student could then move on to either KHPOP or WIOA funding to pursue LPN and RN training. The C.N.A certificate would allow the student to work in the healthcare field while pursuing additional training to advance his or her employment opportunities and earning potential.

(H) Coordinating with Economic Development Strategies

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

The WFC BSR, LVER, Immediate Supervisors and/or ROM (Regional Operations Manager) will nurture active relationships with our local economic development organizations. The goal is to understand the community's needs and areas for growth to drive workforce forward to productive and enhanced living in Kansas.

Local area employers and chambers of commerce are represented on the LAII LWDB, ensuring our system strategies and services support and enhance local economic development initiatives. Core partners have committed to coordinating employer outreach and recruitment activities. Core partners will collaborate with area training providers to develop skills upgrade programs for individuals with barriers to employment which will further promote economic development and the competitiveness of area employers and communities.

(I) Coordinating with Unemployment Insurance Strategies

Describe how the Local Board's strategies will strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs

Unemployment Insurance (UI) and the workforce system have a close relationship and partner on the Re-Employment Services grant (RESEA). At this time, UI claimants who are identified as possibly exhausting benefits will be added to the RESEA pool and scheduled to work with a WFC team member after claiming one week of benefits. UI

customers are introduced to workforce services and followed through to employment as a successful outcome. RESEA services are critical to helping individuals connect with employment faster than those individuals who do not access WFC services. Customers receiving UI benefits who utilize WFC services and need additional services such as basic skills development, workplace accommodations, further assessments and training development will be referred to ABE and VR as appropriate.

Rapid Response services are available for WIOA dislocated workers who are, in the vast majority of the cases, also receiving UI benefits. HWI coordinates Rapid Response (RR) sessions for LAII. These sessions are conducted by WIOA staff with regular participation of Kansas Department of Labor staff and provide valuable information about the services/grants available through the WFC and an overview of the UI process. Wagner-Peyser (WP) staff are involved with the RR process by providing onsite workshops for employees facing a layoff. HWI WIOA staff gather contact information for affected employees at these RR sessions and then follow up with these individuals after the RR if they do not quickly engage in WFC services.

(b) LOCAL OPERATING SYSTEMS AND POLICIES

(1) Operating Systems/Data Collection/Reporting

The local operating systems that will support the implementation of the Local Board's strategies. This must include a description of—

- (A) Local Area operating systems that support coordinated implementation of Local Board's 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.*

WFC programs and services are tracked through the American Job Link Alliance (AJLA) Management Information System to meet all of the requirements of US Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration for data collection and reporting. AJLA's Kansas system, www.KANSASWORKS.com also provides the public with access to labor market information, connects to postsecondary training programs and performance outcomes by training program. The system provides case management tools and creates participant records. Employers may enter job posting in KANSASWORKS.com in addition to finding qualified applicants for jobs. Additional resources for local area labor market information are accessed through the Kansas Labor Information Center www.klic.dol.ks.gov hosted by the Kansas Department of Labor.

Kansas Management Information System (KMIS), utilized by Rehabilitation Services, will support implementation of the local area's strategies for an effective, efficient and outcome-oriented workforce system. KMIS is used to collect consumer demographic information, to track customer milestones as they progress through their individual plans for employment, and to compile data necessary for state and federal reports. KMIS is also the fiscal management tool through which consumer services are authorized and

paid. Data will be extracted for compilation of WIOA-required common accountability measures.

The Portal for Adult Basic Literacy Outreach (PABLO) is the student information, program accountability, and reporting system for Kansas Adult Education. The Kansas Higher Education Data System (KHEDS) supports informed decision-making through the collection, analysis and reporting of post-secondary data in Kansas. Both PABLO and KHEDS will support coordinated implementation of local strategies through the Workforce Data Quality Initiative (WDQI).

LAII will draft local policies on WIOA data information/collection/maintenance, record maintenance/retention, eligibility determination/documentation and performance accountability after the state-level versions of these policies have been published to ensure local policy operates within state parameters.

(2) Data Integration/Co-Enrollment/Universal Intake

The Local Board policies that will support the implementation of the State Board's system integration strategies (e.g., co-enrollment policies and universal intake processes).

LAII will participate in the WDQI initiative, a partnership between Kansas Department of Commerce (Commerce), Kansas Department of Labor (KDOL), Kansas Department for Children & Families (DCF) and the Kansas Board of Regents (KBOR). The primary goal of WDQI is to track customers, in all levels of education and/or workforce programs through their educational, workforce development/training and employment endeavors, evaluating the impact these services have on their employment, earnings and retention levels.

LAII will draft local policies regarding co-enrollment, cross-program intake processes, and referral processes after the state-level versions of these policies have been published to ensure our local policy operates within state parameters. LAII is in support of policies which view co-enrollment as a flexible, not mandatory strategy, utilized when the customer needs, wants and benefits from enrollment into multiple programs. During times of co-enrollment, partners will work together to reduce the burden of duplicating documentation, paperwork and data entry across partner systems on behalf of the customer.

(3) Local Board Overview

(A) Local Board. Provide a description of the Local Board, including---

(i) Membership Roster. Provide a membership roster for the Local Board, including members' organizational affiliations.

(ii) Board Activities. Provide a description of the activities that will assist Local Board members and staff in carrying out Local Board functions effectively.

(B) Chief Elected Officials Board

Membership Roster. Provide a membership roster for the Chief

Elected Officials Board, including members' governmental affiliations.

The LAII CEOB/LWDB provides operational oversight of the LAII workforce development system. The structure of the board is described in III(a)(1) above. Current rosters of both boards are located in the attachments to this plan. The board ensures the system addresses both job seeker and employer needs, convening system partners to achieve mandated program targets. The board facilitates alignment of the workforce investment, education and economic development systems in the local area, to improve the quality and relevance of those systems in meeting customer needs. The HWI leadership team provides primary staff support to the CEOB/LWDB, assisting them in their responsibilities as described in III(a)(1).

(4) Program Data

(A) Describe the policies the Local Board will establish to ensure participant data is recorded in a timely manner and the procedure for assessing the implementation of the policies.

(B) Assessment of Participants' Post-Program Success. Describe how the Local Board will 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. Local Areas may choose to set additional indicators of performance.

(C) Participant Tracking Outside of the Use of Unemployment Insurance (UI) Wage Record Data. Explain how the Local Area will track participant employment outcomes, including wages and retention, other than through the use of UI Wage Data.

(D) Privacy Safeguards. Describe the privacy safeguards incorporated in the Local Area'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.

Each partner has the responsibility to ensure their customer data is entered accurately and timely into their respective systems. Intake, enrollment, service and outcomes data, including any supporting paper documents should be stored electronically within the partner's respective system, to the extent feasible.

Leadership staff within each partner organization will ensure the data is accurate and timely by routinely reviewing the system data either when approving customer eligibility/enrollment, when approving services, during the closure of the customer's record and/or during special monitoring reviews. WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth customer files have been transitioned into fully electronic files, eliminating lag time in the data entry process. LAII will utilize the KANSASWORKS system, along with the interface available through WDQI/WIF to KDOL, KBOR, DCF systems to assess the progress of customers who are exiting from core programs to evaluate their education and employment results post-program. Data entered into the

respective partner systems will be used to generate state level reports to assess overall system progress.

The key indicators from the core programs tracked in these reports will include:

Titles IB and III ó Adult, Dislocated Workers, and Youth Workforce Services and Wagner-Peyser Labor Exchange Services

- Entered Employment
- Employment Retention
- Average Wages
- Credential Attainment
- Measurable Skill Gains
- Employer Measure
- Percentage of Funds Spent on Training

Title II ó Adult Education

- Educational Functioning Level (EFL) Learning Gains
- Credential Attainment
- GED Attainment

Title IV ó Vocational Rehabilitation

- Number of Individuals Achieving Competitive, Integrated Employment
- Average Hourly Wage
- Number of Transition Youth Achieving Competitive, Integrated Employment
- Average Hours Worked Per Week
- Percentage of Persons Employed Who Report Their Own Income As Primary Source of Support at Case Closure

WIOA performance targets for Kansas and its Local Areas have not been finalized at the time this plan was drafted. We are hopeful the performance target negotiation process fully embraces the important system guiding principle that targets will not be used to exclude otherwise eligible individuals with disabilities or significant barriers to employment from access to services. Setting targets which are appropriate within this inclusive service framework is vital to the success of the system.

WIOA's definition of an individual with barriers to employment includes individuals who are members of one or more of the following populations:

- Displaced homemakers
- Low-income individuals
- Indians, Alaska Natives and Native Hawaiians, as such terms are defined in section 166
- Individuals with disabilities, including youth who are individuals with disabilities
- Older individuals

- Ex-Offenders
- Homeless individuals (as defined in section 41403(6) of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 (42 USC. 14043e-2(6), or homeless children and youths (as defined in section 725(2) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 USC 11434a(2))
- 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 in section 167(i)
- Individuals within 2 years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 USC. 601 et seq.)
- Single parents (including single pregnant women)
- Long-term unemployed individuals
- Such other groups as the Governor involved determines

For WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker or Youth enrolled customers who do not show up as employed in post-program quarters after exit through the **KANSASWORKS** system and its interface with KDOL, LAII will pursue supplemental wage data for those customers. This process involves emailing or calling the customer to survey them about their employment and earnings status for the quarters after exit. Supplemental wage data research will be stored electronically on the customer's record.

Customer information, documentation, programs, services and outcomes tracked through **KANSASWORKS** are only accessible to staff who have a secured login to the system and viewing/editing rights to the record in question. Customer data stored in partner systems will comply with the security requirements of their independent organizations.

(5) Priority of Service for Veterans

Describe how the Local Board 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. Additionally, 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.

Priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses is mandated by law, and further defined in Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 10-09, and in Veteran Program Letter VPL 07-09. LAII staff provides priority of service to veterans and/or veteran spouses over non-covered persons for the receipt of employment, training, and placement services provided under a qualified job training program. Priority means that veterans and eligible spouses are entitled to precedence over non-covered persons for services. This means that a veteran or an eligible spouse either receives access to a service earlier in time than a non-covered person or, if the resource is limited, the veteran or eligible spouse receives access to the service instead of or before the non-covered person.

All LAII WFCs have signage posted in the lobby regarding veterans' priority. When customers enter the centers, they are asked if they are a veteran. If so, they are asked to fill out a Veteran's Self-Assessment to

determine if they need intensive services. If the veteran has a barrier to employment, they are referred to the DVOP representative (Disabled Veterans Outreach Program) for further assessment and intensive services. If the veteran does not have a barrier to employment, core services are provided by a WP Workforce Services Specialist. All veterans' representatives are trained by a nationally recognized organization, NVTI, to provide the best quality service to veterans and eligible spouses.

LAIH has incorporated further guidance regarding veterans' priority for WIOA adult funds per WIOA TEGL 3-15:

“Veterans and eligible spouses continue to receive priority of service for all DOL-funded job training programs, which include WIOA programs. However, as described in TEGL 10-09, when programs are statutorily required to provide priority for a particular group of individuals, such as the WIOA priority described above, priority must be provided in the following order:

- i. First, to veterans and eligible spouses who are also included in the groups given statutory priority for WIOA adult formula funds. This means that veterans and eligible spouses who are also recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, or individuals who are basic skills deficient would receive first priority for services provided with WIOA adult formula funds.*
- ii. Second, to non-covered persons (that is, individuals who are not veterans or eligible spouses) who are included in the groups given priority for WIOA adult formula funds.*
- iii. Third, to veterans and eligible spouses who are not included in WIOA's priority groups.*
- iv. Last, to non-covered persons outside the groups given priority under WIOA.”*

(6) One-Stop System Accessibility

*Describe how the Local 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 Local Area's one-stop center accessibility compliance policy.*

As the One-Stop Operator, HWI oversees physical and programmatic accessibility for all programs and services offered through the area Workforce Centers (WFC). HWI, will, in partnership with partner organizations and staff, monitor physical and program accessibility on a regular basis, utilizing system tools as defined/designed by the Kansas Department Commerce. Current LAII WFC locations are accessible and accessibility will remain an evaluation criteria on lease space Requests for Proposals (RFPs) in the future. Where possible, resource center materials will be offered via alternative formats. Websites utilized in the LAII system will comply with accessibility requirements. Currently, all local areas in Kansas are working with the Kansas Department of Commerce to evaluate and upgrade accessible workstations in all WFC locations across the state. HWI will continue to participate in this process to ensure WFC accessibility station hardware, software and equipment are updated as appropriate. Once stations have been upgraded, HWI will work with Commerce and Rehabilitation Services to schedule regular staff training for the equipment and for serving customers with disabilities.

IV. COORDINATION WITH COMBINED STATE PLAN PROGRAMS

Describe the methods used for joint planning of the local core programs, community-based organizations and the other programs and activities covered by the Combined State Plan.

The LAII plan was drafted with the input of key partners in the system. A plan workgroup was formed, including representation from Workforce Services, Adult Education, Rehabilitation Services and HWI as the One-Stop/WIOA Program operator. This group was formed in November 2015 and worked together through the finalization and submission of the LAII WIOA plan. Workgroup members analyzed workforce development activities in the area, identifying strengths/weaknesses/capacities. They provided input to vision, goals and strategies and provided early editing for the document prior to its release for public comment. Kansas Department of Labor provided valuable labor market information data and assisted with identifying demand occupations. The plan workgroup will continue working together after the plan is approved to further develop goals and strategies and to monitor the implementation of strategies/policies outlined in this plan. The workgroup will design customer referral processes, design/develop/implement staff cross-training/professional development opportunities and recruit customer feedback on the system.

PART TWO

I. SPECIFIC LOCAL AREA PROCEDURES, POLICIES & PRACTICES

(a) WORKFORCE CENTER ORGANIZATION

Describe each Workforce Center organization and delivery systems for the programs covered in the plan, including the organizational structure.

LAI WFCs will utilize a functional team model in the delivery of integrated Workforce Investment & Opportunity Act (WIOA) and Wagner-Peyser (WP) services. WFC staff provide services as a coordinated group. Due to the fluid nature of our work and varying staff schedules and daily commitments, the work of a WFC is loosely defined within a series of functions. Each WFC staff member will have a primary role in one of these functions, but will receive ongoing training and support to assist all functional areas when the need arises. The functional teams include the following: Welcome Team, Skills Develop/Employment Team, and Business Services Team. Heartland Works, Inc. (HWI) and Department of Commerce (DOC) supervisory staff will fill the functional team leader roles, as well as formal supervision to their respective teams. HWI & Commerce supervisors work collaboratively to functionally and directly supervise the staff and services of the LAII WFCs.

WELCOME FUNCTION ó welcoming a customer to the WFC includes, but is not limited to ó a pleasant greeting, determining the nature of their visit, assisting with orientation/registration to the Center and providing appropriate referrals to other WFC staff, partner staff and community services.

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT/EMPLOYMENT FUNCTION ó this work includes, but is not limited to - completing assessments, providing workshops, coordinating referrals to employment, completing data collection, providing on-going career search guidance and assisting with customer training opportunities, as appropriate.

BUSINESS SERVICES FUNCTION ó serving our businesses includes, but is not limited to - outreach to employers, educating employers about WFC services, coordinating the applicant management process, managing job order procedures, coordinating referrals of qualified job seekers to employers and researching HR tools/services requested by area businesses.

The LAII WFCs have outlined the characteristics of functional and formal supervision as follows:

Functional Supervision ó DOC supervisors will serve as primary supervisor for day-to-day work activities. The supervisors will be responsible for the following:

- Provide oversight of daily activities/team functions
- Organize and coordinate staffing schedule for team
- Direct and assign/reassign team members based upon operational needs

- Monitor and track services provided by team
- Provide coaching and feedback based upon observations and staff inquiries
- Identify and facilitate the timely resolution of questions, problems, concerns/complaints and other issues affecting or involving team
- Respond to questions/concerns of team members
- Address customer issues which involve team members or services provided by team
- Communicate any meaningful action of the above mentioned tasks timely to direct supervisor of the individual

Formal Supervision – Each WIOA and WP staff member will retain their Formal Supervisor, as identified by the respective employer upon hire. The Formal Supervisor will be responsible for the following:

- Ensure employees work in accordance with the agency's personnel policies
- Address behavior and performance concerns of employees at corrective action level based upon the agency's personnel policies
- Communicate agency policies, procedures, required activities, news etc. to Functional Supervisor in a timely manner
- Maintain staffing schedules
- Monitor and track services provided by the members of their respective teams
- Provide specific feedback and coaching to members of their respective teams

Functional and Formal Supervisors for each staff member will work closely together on the following:

- Ensure work performance is, at a minimum, falling within an acceptable level
- Identify and monitor performance goals/priority outcomes
- Conduct performance reviews and prepare staff development plans
- Coordinate staff meetings and trainings
- Communicate changes to daily activity or tasks timely
- Insure all reports or spreadsheets are shared between agencies monthly

WFC organizational charts highlighting functional management structure are attachments to this plan.

(b) WORKFORCE CENTER SERVICE DELIVERY

Describe each Workforce Center organization and delivery systems for the programs covered in the plan, including the organizational structure.

i. Describe how the Local Area Board will facilitate the development of career pathways and co-enrollment in core programs which expand access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary.

ii. Describe how the Local Area Board will ensure equal access to comprehensive services throughout the Program Year (i.e. quarterly fund expenditure limits; reserving percentage of funds for late-year training activities, etc.).

The board has expanded services for individuals with barriers to employment. More opportunities are now available through the increased partnership between ABE, VR and WFCs. Each WIOA core partner is able to access to more individuals who need help and able to better connect them to resources available throughout the system.

For WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth programs, funds are allocated to customers as they enroll and are confirmed eligible. Key training enrollment times for semester-based programs occur in August and January timeframes, with additional shorter-term training enrollments occurring on an ongoing basis. Customers served through career services are enrolled year-round, as are youth.

Career pathways will be identified as a result of our collaborative work with area employers and training providers, as coordinated by the LWDB. Co-enrollment across core programs will be a flexible, vs. a mandatory strategy and begins with a thorough assessment and understanding of what each program offers.

(c) EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT & SERVICE DELIVERY

Describe how the Local Area Board will facilitate engagement of multiple employers, including small employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations, and how it will include the entire local workforce system in the development and delivery of employer services.

- i. Describe how the Local Area Board will include Core and Required Partners in development and delivery of coordinated employer services.*
- ii. Describe how the Local Area Board will engage businesses which provide potential employment opportunities for all job seekers once barriers to employment are removed.*
- iii. Describe any policies or procedures the Local Area Board uses to ensure all employers with in- demand jobs are provided equal access employer services.*

Business Services staff of the WFCs make contact with all employers including public, private and Federal contract employers to assist in posting their employment opportunities; conducting resume searches on www.KANSASWORKS.com; making referrals to employers of qualified candidates and for job development opportunities; providing access to space available in the centers for hiring events, coordinating large career fairs for area employers, marketing their openings and hiring events/career fairs on social media and with partners and providing labor market information as requested. Staff take a consultative approach to business services, investing time to build a positive, long-term relationship with area businesses. Staff work with businesses to utilize the WORKReady! program to facilitate the hiring of skilled job seekers. In addition, WFCs offer soft skills workshops conducted on-site to promote retention of an employer's workforce.

LAI WIOA core partners contributing to this plan have committed to coordinating business services across the area. Staff responsible for business services within their respective organizations will communicate with other area business services staff regarding employer recruitment, employer contacts, hiring opportunities and other human resource needs. LAII WFC staff will distribute information regarding on-site and off-site hiring events and job fairs, employer focus groups and other business service events to area partners to foster collaboration and to ensure a wider range of job seekers are notified of available opportunities within the area. Where possible, business services staff will cross-train on business

services available across the partners and will work together to coordinate employer visits, thereby preventing duplication of service across organizations.

(c) SPECIFIC WORK-BASED STRATEGIES TO SERVE BOTH INDIVIDUALS & EMPLOYERS

Describe the policies and or procedures the Local Area Board will institute to implement work-based training.

- i. Describe Local Area Board policies and procedures for providing incumbent worker and customized training programs.*
- ii. Describe Local Area Board policies and procedures for providing On-the -Job training.*
- iii. Describe any policies or procedures the Local Area Board uses to develop career pathways with industry input which include a work-based element.*

Customized training for incumbent workers in WIOA may be developed after a thorough assessment of the employer's need for such assistance. Consideration will be given to the characteristics of the workers to be trained, the relationship of the training to the competitiveness of the workers and the employer and other factors as identified by the LWDB, which may include the number of workers participating, the wage and benefit levels of workers (at present and anticipated upon completion of training) and the existence of other training and advancement opportunities provided by the employer. Employers participating in customized training funded by WIOA shall be required to pay for the non-Federal share of the costs of providing the training. The non-Federal share shall not be less than:

- 10% for employers with 50 employees or less
- 25% for employers with 51 to 100 employees
- 50% for employers with more than 100 employees

Customized training opportunities should be directly linked to occupations in demand in the local area or have the potential of sustained demand or growth. Training should relate to the introduction of new technologies; or introduction to new production or new service procedures or upgrading to new jobs requiring additional skills. Customized training contracts should not be written with employers who have a previously exhibited pattern of failure to provide trainees with continued long-term employment.

Costs not eligible for funding with customized training include costs incurred prior to contract approval, trainee's wages (including benefits), training equipment purchases, construction or purchase of facilities or buildings, positions which dislocate or infringe on recall rights of previously dislocated workers, positions which infringe on the promotional opportunities of current employees, business relocation expenses, employment/training in sectarian activities and bonuses to an individual once he/she receives a certification.

Preference is given to customized training plans of less than 3 months, with exceptions available if deemed necessary. It is desired customized training would lead to attainment of a recognized certificate.

On-the-Job Training (OJT) as a WIOA Training Service which offers eligible customers the opportunity to receive training for permanent employment in jobs leading to the maximum development of the customer's potential and economic self-sufficiency. The purpose of OJT is to provide selected customers with specific

occupational skills to be taught by an employer at a job site. It is preferred OJT opportunities are developed for unemployed individuals, however exceptions to this preference may be given for individuals who are underemployed in another occupation/with another employer or employed in a declining occupation or facing a layoff. OJT upgrades for incumbent workers may be considered depending upon individual circumstance.

The OJT payment is not a reimbursement for employee wages. It provides a reimbursement to partially cover the employer's extraordinary costs of training, including the costs of lower productivity and additional supervision related to training an eligible customer. The value of the reimbursement is based on up to 75 percent of the trainee's hourly wage rate at the start of the OJT training. OJT contract payments are not to be presented or construed as subsidies, rebates, enticements, or kick-backs.

OJT opportunities may be recruited in the public, private non-profit or private sector and must provide skills related to one of the demand occupations identified by the LWDB and should target wage opportunities which lead to successful attainment of WIOA outcome thresholds. The OJT position may not be one which offers compensation only by commission, piece or mile rate. The employer may not have relocated from another location in the United States within the previous 120 days and laid off individuals from its original location. OJT contracts may be written for up to 6 months, based upon an assessment of the position requirements, the job seeker's current skills and abilities and the O*NET Job Zone for the occupation.

It is preferable OJT contracts be written for positions which offer 30+ hours per week of employment, with 40 hours per week being the desired target. OJT contracts must provide some benefit other than those required by law and which have a monetary value (i.e. insurance, paid leave, profit sharing, etc.). OJT contracts will not be written for temporary or seasonal positions. OJTs will not be written with employers who have a previously exhibited pattern of failure to provide trainees with continued long-term employment.

The LAII LWDB's policies regarding career pathway development for the overall LAII workforce system are currently a work in progress. The Department of Labor's Career Pathways Toolkit will be an important resource to the LWDB as they convene system partners to evaluate available pathways in comparison to employer needs. Many statewide initiatives exist which follow a career pathway model, such as AO-K, KanTRAIN, KHPOP, etc.

The LAII LWDB is in a unique position to convene employers, training providers and core partners of the workforce system to participate in career pathway building system initiatives. In LAII's career pathways systems initiative, employers will transition from a customer to a partner. Employers will serve as co-leaders and co-investors in workforce development within the career pathways framework, with the goal of increasing their pipeline of skilled workers.

Career pathway programs developed in LAII will be designed so that it's easier for job seekers to earn industry-recognized credentials. Pathway programs will be built to be flexible with multiple entry and exit points and greater capacity to start pathways on an ongoing basis. Crucial to the process will be employer identification of required work skills necessary for employment success and employer competitiveness. Programs must incorporate learning methods which work for a diverse group of learners and should

incorporate a variety of formats such as classroom training, on-the-job training, registered apprenticeships, in-person and on-line offerings etc.

II. ENGAGEMENT OF LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD & CHIEF ELECTED OFFICIALS BOARD

(a) LOCAL AREA BOARD & CHIEF ELECTED OFFICIALS TRAINING

(i) Describe the process for initial and on-going training of Local Board members regarding their roles and responsibilities.

(ii) Describe the process for initial and on-going training of Chief Elected Officials regarding their roles and responsibilities.

(iii) Describe Board Committees established for WIOA implementation.

Each new LAII Board Members (both CEOB & LWDB) receives an electronic notebook of overview and orientation to the LAII WFC system. Topics include:

HWI Overview

WIOA Overview

LAII WFC Overview

Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth Eligibility & Performance

Board Membership Appointments

Board Rosters

Board By-Laws

WIOA Excerpt 6 Local Workforce Development Boards

Current Meeting Schedule

Kansas Local Workforce Areas Map

Board members receive regular training from state-level experts during their board meetings regarding roles, responsibilities, fiscal responsibilities, customer service feedback, budget progress and program performance.

The Executive Committee of the Boards includes the officers of the LWDB and the chair of the CEOB. The LWDB has also established a WIOA Youth Committee to oversee the implementation of WIOA Youth programs in LAII. This committee is chaired by a LWDB member, and includes other LWDB membership, HWI staff and community representation. Other standing committees are considered if/when need arises.

(b) LOCAL AREA BOARD & CHIEF ELECTED OFFICIALS COMMUNICATION

Describe how staff members responsible for daily operation of the system and for implementing Local Board policy regularly communicate with both Local Area Board members and Chief Elected Officials.

HWI serves as staff to the LAII CEOB/LWDB, One-Stop Operator and WIOA Program Operator in the Local Area. The HWI leadership team holds primary responsibility for regular communication with the LAII CEOB & LWDB. The LAII CEOB & LWDB meet together four to five times a year, with additional committee meetings as needed. These meetings provide the formal mechanism for HWI leadership staff to communicate the current status of the LAII workforce system.

III. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

(a) HIGH PERFORMING BOARDS

Describe the actions the local board will take toward becoming or remaining a high-performing board, consistent with the factors developed by the State Board.

The Local Area II (LAII) WIOA plan was developed in partnership with WIOA core partners and made available for public comment during a 30-day review period, ensuring maximum input to the plan. During the planning process a core group of staff representing the partners worked together to define and align goals and strategies geared toward maintaining a comprehensive system of services created to serve job seekers/students and employers.

The LAII CEOB & LWDB have received initial orientation and further training on their WIOA roles and responsibilities, utilizing this information to begin discussions of system alignment and coordination. During the plan period, the board will examine ways to continuously monitor, assess and improve processes, services and performance across the system in LAII. This continuous improvement process will be designed within the parameters of state level continuous improvement frameworks and will involve partner participation and input, as appropriate.

As described previously, LAII is currently working with the Kansas Department of Commerce and other Local Areas to conduct an assessment of station accessibility in our Workforce Centers and will be utilizing the results of this assessment to achieve upgrades to our adaptive equipment stations. In addition, physical access to our facilities will continue to be an evaluation criteria on any Requests for Proposal (RFP) for space. Partner staff will review policies and procedures to ensure they are written in a way which promotes inclusivity for all customer groups seeking assistance.

The LAII workforce development board and staff work collaboratively with other areas to assess and improve the system statewide. Workforce development initiatives which involve multiple areas involve each area's leadership staff in the planning and coordination of those initiatives.

Workforce Centers serve as convening entities for employer groups to promote the development and achievement of sector strategies. Training services for all customer groups include classroom training

options as well as employer-based training options, including, but not limited to paid and unpaid work experience, registered apprenticeship and on-the-job training.

(b) STATE BOARD TRAINING EXPENDITURE MONITORING COMPLIANCE

Describe the strategies the Local Board will use to comply with the State Board Training Expenditure Monitoring policy.

HWI's compliance with the Commerce policy 3-28-02 Training Expenditure Monitoring is monitored by LAII's fiscal system. The HWI fiscal system tracks funds spent directly on participants for training and training purposes (i.e. support services). These items are coded separately and easily identifiable in the trial balance and expenditure reports for the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs. These items are then calculated as a percentage of total Adult and Dislocated Worker expenditures and reported to the board. It is HWI practice to budget each year a minimum of 40% of available Adult and Dislocated Worker funds specifically for direct participant expenditures. LAII has met or exceeded this target on an annual basis since its inception.

(c) CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT OF ELIGIBLE SERVICE PROVIDERS

Describe how the local board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system and ensure that such providers meet the employment needs of local employers, and workers and jobseekers.

WIOA Eligible Training Providers for Adults & Dislocated Workers are required to report their performance to the Kansas Board of Regents for the KTIP report on an annual basis. In addition, WIOA field staff who work directly with job seeker customers and training providers provide feedback to HWI leadership on a regular basis regarding the customer's experience with the training program. Operations staff utilize the **KANSASWORKS** system to pull provider reports to assess the program's performance on completions and employment.

LAII WIOA Youth Providers are evaluated on an ongoing basis with regard to enrollment levels, expenditures rates and performance measures. The LAII Youth Services Coordinator provides training for the area youth providers in all aspects of WIOA Youth program operation, including performance measures. Diploma attainment, PSE credential attainment, measurable skills increases and placement into employment or education are vital indicators to youth program success and improvement.

This focus on tracking and monitoring provider performance helps ensure our job seeker customers meet the needs of area employers as the evaluation process includes an assessment of the customer's ability to obtain and retain employment in a career path with good earning potential.

(d) PLANS FOR TRANSITION TO INTEGRATED TECHNOLOGY-ENABLED INTAKE/CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Describe how the Local system plans to develop, implement and transition to an integrated, technology enabled intake and case management information system for all programs carried out under this Act and programs carried out by other one-stop partners.

LAI is hopeful the work of the WDQI and WIF initiatives will lay the foundational groundwork to integrated case management systems. An integration of the scale required to incorporate 3 major state agencies plus local workforce development programs will require the leadership and intervention of state officials. Currently LAII has incorporated full electronic file storage for all WIOA enrolled customers (Adult, Dislocated Worker & Youth) as well as our KHPOP customers within the **KANSASWORKS** system. This storage mechanism has been in place for program year 2014 and program year 2015 and has resulted in significant cost savings and staff time management efficiencies while reducing data entry lag time into the **KANSASWORKS** system.