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Local Workforce Development Board Plan Program Years 2021–2024

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Table of Contents

Introduction **1**

Instructions for Completing the Board Plan Template **1**

Part 1: Board Vision and Strategies **1**

A. Vision and Goals 1

B. Board Strategies 3

C. High-Performing Board 5

Part 2: Economic and Workforce Analysis **6**

A. Regional Economic and Employment Needs Analysis 6

B. Knowledge and Skills Analysis 20

C. Labor Force Analysis and Trends 23

D. Workforce Development Analysis 29

Part 3: Core Programs **34**

B. Core Programs—Expand Access, Facilitate Development, and Improve Access 39

Part 4: One-Stop Service Delivery **41**

A. One-Stop Service Delivery System 41

B. Cooperative Agreements 44

C. Employer Engagement, Economic Development, and Unemployment Insurance Program Coordination 44

D. Coordination of Wagner-Peyser Services 47

E. Integrated, Technology-Enabled Intake and Case Management 48

Part 5: Workforce Investment Activities **48**
A. Economic Development and Entrepreneurial/Microenterprise Activities 48
B. Rapid Response Activity Coordination 49
C. Youth Activities and Services 50
D. Coordination with Secondary and Postsecondary Education Programs 52
E. Child Care and Early Learning 52
F. Transportation and Other Support Services 53
G. Coordination of Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) 54
Part 6: Adult, Dislocated Workers, and Youth Services **55**
A. Adult and Dislocated Worker Employment and Training 55
B. Priority to Recipients of Public Assistance and Low-Income Individuals 57
Part 7: Fiscal Agent, Grants, and Contracts **58**
A. Fiscal Agent 58
B. Sub-Grants and Contracts 59
Part 8: Performance **60**
A. Board Performance Targets 60
Part 9: Training and Services **61**
A. Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) 61
B. ITA Limitations 61
Part 10: Apprenticeship **62**
A. Registered Apprenticeship Programs 62
B. ApprenticeshipTexas 62
Part 11: Public Comment **63**
Appendix: Texas Workforce Investment Council Requirements **64**
Local Workforce Development Board Strategic Planning **64**
Focus on Employers 64
Engage in Partnerships 65
Align System Elements 67
Improve and Integrate Programs 67

Introduction

Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) §108 (20 Code of Federal Regulations §679.500–580), each Local Workforce Development Board (Board) is required to develop and submit to the state a comprehensive four-year plan (Board Plan) that identifies and describes policies and procedures as well as local activities that are in line with the State Plan. This Board Plan must be developed openly and be available to the public for comment for at least 15 days, but no more than 30 days, particularly to members of the business and educational communities as well as various other labor organizations. Along with submission of the Board Plan to the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), the Board must submit all public comments of disagreement with the plan to TWC.

At the end of the first two-year period, the appropriate chief elected officials (CEOs) and the Board will review the local plan and prepare and submit modifications to reflect changes in the labor market and economic conditions, factors affecting the implementation of the plan, changes in financing, changes to the structure of the Board, and/or the need to revise strategies to meet local performance goals.

Instructions for Completing the Board Plan Template

Answer each part and section separately and do not combine sections. If the same response is used for multiple sections, please repeat the response. For example, do not state "See Section 2.B." as the response.

When developing the Board Plan, use the checklist and elements provided in Attachment 2 to ensure that the questions are thoroughly addressed.

Do not provide separate additional attachments.

For example: If it is important that additional data, map, or some other attachment, appendix, or additional content be submitted with your plan, please attach it to the plan and reference the attachment in the appropriate places in the plan.

Part 1: Board Vision and Strategies

The strategic elements of the Local Workforce Development Board Planning Guidelines (Guidelines) are as follows:

A. Vision and Goals

(WIOA §108(b)(1)(E); 20 CFR §679.560(a)(5))

Boards must include a description of the Board's strategic vision to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency. The description must include:

- **goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including early education services, and services for youth and individuals with barriers to employment; and**

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The mission of Workforce Solutions for North Central Texas (WSNCT) is "to advance business driven solutions that promote economic growth, opportunity, and a skilled workforce," leading to our vision of being "the recognized leader in building tomorrow's workforce." Every building block of our organization is constructed upon our values:

- **Inclusion**
  Leverage our collective genius.
  We value diversity and believe inclusion drives innovation and connects us closer to the communities we serve. We are building a culture where difference is valued and respected.

- **Community**
  We're in this together.
  We create positive opportunities by collaborating with our partners to transform the social and economic vitality of those we serve.

- **Leadership**
  Courage to shape a better future.
  We lead by example because everyone has ability to pursue excellence and make a positive impact.

- **Trust**
  Operate with integrity and respect.
  We say what we mean, keep our promises and stay open minded to new ideas.

The North Central Texas Workforce Development Board is the governing body for the North Central Texas Workforce Development Area (WDA), providing mission-based leadership and strategic governance. The Board has identified the following key priorities in support of preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including early education services, and services for youth and individuals with barriers to employment:

- **Community Partnerships:** Achieving ambitious workforce and economic goals will require cross-sector partnerships that create innovative solutions for workers and break down silos between organizations. WSNCT will cultivate partnerships at both strategic and operational levels in order to build awareness of programs, share information, and leverage public and private resources to meet goals.

- **Career Exploration:** Opportunities to broaden career awareness and exploration can better connect youth and adults to in-demand jobs as well as fulfill the needs of employers. WSNCT will support career exploration opportunities that equip workers with the skills and knowledge required for success in a rapidly changing and digitally driven economy.

- **Child Care Quality:** Improving the quality of child care in the 14-county North Central Texas Workforce Development Area is critical to preparing children for school and supporting their parents in their own learning and development. WSNCT believes that high-quality child care leads to greater school readiness, long-term educational attainment, and 2-generation economic prosperity.

- goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on performance indicators described in WIOA §116(b)(2)(A).

Performance improvement continues to be a priority for WSNCT. Our workforce system incorporates strategies and processes which closely monitor service delivery and performance (including the mandated performance measures) to identify areas needing improvement. We deploy a systematic approach to review data/performance indicators, provide program oversight and technical assistance, as well as monitor activities based on elements outlined in our Quality Assurance risk assessment.

B. Board Strategies

(WIOA §108(b)(1)(F); 20 CFR §679.560(a)(6))

Boards must include a description of the Board's strategy to work with the entities carrying out the core programs and with the required partners to align resources available to the local workforce development area (workforce area) to achieve the vision and goals.

The Board administers and provides oversight to a competitively procured Workforce Subrecipient that is responsible for direct service delivery of core programs and the coordination of related, and possibly co-located, programs not administered by the Board. Services provided by the Subrecipient include service delivery strategies to employers and career seekers who are able to access a continuum of services through 12 workforce centers located throughout the WDA. Our Workforce Subrecipient is capable of delivering fully integrated and leveraged workforce services, including WIOA Adult, Youth and Dislocated Worker services, TANF/Choices, Non-Custodial Parent Choices (NCP Choices), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAP E&T), Child Care Assistance, Employer Services, Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Veteran Services, and Trade Adjustment Assistance.

WSNCT ensures that multiple levels of services are offered to employers and career seekers, and Wagner-Peyser Employment Services (ES) is among the services available. In 2003, the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) implemented the Texas Model for the delivery of ES services. Under the Texas Model, TWC maintains administrative responsibility while the Workforce Subrecipient has responsibility for day-to-day guidance of state ES staff. The Workforce Subrecipient shares responsibility for directing daily work assignments, assigning individual performance goals, coordinating hiring, initiating disciplinary action and evaluating staff performance. All direction and guidance given to ES employees is consistent with the provisions of state and federal laws, rules and regulations governing the administration and delivery of the ES program. TWC provides technical support and quality assurance to the WSNCT Workforce Subrecipient through local Integrated Service Area Managers. The WSNCT Workforce Subrecipient coordinates with ES staff to provide universal access to job search and placement assistance, job referrals, labor market information and an array of other services to both career seekers and employers.

WSNCT recognizes the correlation between economic development, employment opportunity and sustainability. WSNCT actively engages with the regional economic developers to devise and implement strategies that meet the specific skill demands of local employers and equipping career seekers with the necessary skill sets to meet that demand. Our primary objective is to enhance and sustain economic vitality and employment opportunities in our region. WSNCT's regional partnerships allow us to develop, implement, and refine programs and services that more closely align with the employment and skills

training needs of the North Central Texas region. We will maintain our strategic alliances with workforce/economic development organizations to keep pace with the evolving economy, identify job growth, and develop a well-trained and prepared workforce to meet local employer needs.

The development and expansion of apprenticeship programs is embedded into one of the Board's key priorities and will remain a focus for WSNCT going forward. The Apprenticeship Navigator and WSNCT staff will continue to support the development of new Registered Apprenticeship (RA) programs as well as the expansion of existing RA programs through targeted industry outreach supported by labor market data, roundtable collaborations with community partners and stakeholders, and employer needs. Through engaging with employers, gathering local wisdom and analyzing labor market data, WSNCT will identify where training gaps and common industry needs exist and position the Board to address specific employer needs. WSNCT will develop employer consortiums where occupational skill sets and training overlap. In addition to employer engagement, WSNCT has partnerships with community and technical colleges, economic development organizations, and a solid relationship with the regional Department of Labor Registered Apprenticeship representatives. These collaborations will continue to help employers navigate through the apprenticeship development journey.

WSNCT continues to expand integration and co-location efforts with Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS) to enable WSNCT and VRS to leverage resources and better serve our shared customers. WSNCT became one of the first Board areas to fully integrate VRS into a workforce center, and additional integrations have been completed throughout our North Central Texas region.

Recognizing that English can be critical to a participant's success in the job market, WSNCT actively partners with Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) providers to offer instruction and remediation, including English as a Second Language (ESL), as a part of a participant's service continuum. Integration of AEL with the service delivery system is vital to the deployment of WIOA. In support of AEL grant recipients providing activities that promote student success in career and higher education goals, the AEL/Workforce Regional Coalition (Regional Coalition) was implemented to ensure integration of services within the 14-county WSNCT area. The objectives of the Regional Coalition are to resolve shared transitional issues, address local concerns and needs, share information and best practices, and explore systems and services for continuous improvement in order to close strategic and operational gaps. The Regional Coalition has the authority and responsibility to carry out the following functions:

- Develop strategies for system improvements,
- Oversee, analyze, and adjust strategy implementation,
- Share best practices to assist program achievements and promote continuous improvement, and
- Track and support the achievement of state, federal and/or local performance goals and targets.

C. High-Performing Board

(WIOA §108(b)(18); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(17))

Boards must include a description of the actions the Board will take toward becoming or remaining a high-performing Board, consistent with the factors developed by the Texas Workforce Investment Council (TWIC).

Continuing our journey of excellence, WSNCT has established a culture of continuous improvement. The following are some examples of our efforts to continuously improve:

In 2020, WSNCT submitted a full, 50-page Malcolm Baldrige Criteria application with the Quality Texas Foundation. While being recognized for participating in this rigorous review, most importantly, WSNCT will receive valuable feedback to refine our management systems and build for the future.

The year 2020 marked the 10th consecutive year WSNCT has received, in partnership with North Central Texas Council of Governments, the Achievement of Excellence in Procurement® (AEP) award. The annual AEP award was established by the National Procurement Institute, Inc. (NPI) in 1995 and recognizes organizational excellence in public procurement. The criteria continue to become more robust and are designed to measure innovation, professionalism, productivity, e-procurement, and leadership attributes of the procurement organization. Applying annually ensures that we continue to raise our standard of excellence in procurement.

WSNCT continues to utilize an Enterprise Content Management (ECM) application, Laserfiche, to convert physical participant files to an electronic format to increase accessibility and reliability of participant files/documents and maintain compliance with programmatic work processes via the design and implementation of workflow automation. Also, Laserfiche is utilized to maintain compliance with our document/file retention policy. Workflow automation is designed to improve operational efficiency, reduce programmatic cycle-times and minimize opportunities for staff and participant error.

Within WSNCT's data management and analysis activities, Tableau, which is a data analysis and visualization tool, is often utilized to conduct an enhanced analysis of available data from various data repositories for planning and decision-making purposes. Data outcomes are displayed on locally developed dashboards that are customizable at the user's request. Local Tableau dashboards are typically accessible via a web-based interface to users that have access to the specified URL. WSNCT ensures that PII (Personally Identifiable Information) data elements/fields are not posted to the web-based accessible tool.

WSNCT continues to emphasize fiscal management by completing the following monthly:

- Review Subrecipient's year-to-date financial data and evaluate expenditures and trends, analyze grant level expenditures compared to established targets, address variances from target levels and discuss strategies for correction.
- Review Board level year-to-date financial data and evaluate expenditures and trends, complete various reports reflecting the Board level expenditures compared to established targets, discuss variances with the management staff and as appropriate identify strategies to address improvements and ensure Board level funding is effectively

managed.

- Review overall grant-to-date financial data and evaluate expenditures and trends, complete various reports reflecting the cumulative grant-to-date expenditures compared to established targets, discuss variances with management staff and if necessary, develop strategies for correction to ensure each grant is effectively managed.

To maintain comprehensive compliance, WSNCT performs continuous fiscal and programmatic risk-based monitoring. Staff are engaged full-time in specific compliance monitoring and follow up, including follow up review of corrective actions and implementation of improvements. Customer issues and requests for service received by WSNCT are entered into the Laserfiche application for consistent action by appropriate staff and timed follow up to ensure timely responses.

Part 2: Economic and Workforce Analysis

A. Regional Economic and Employment Needs Analysis

(WIOA §108(b)(1)(A); 20 CFR §679.560(a)(1))

Boards must include a regional analysis of the following:

- **The economic conditions, including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors, in-demand occupations, and target occupations**
- **The employment needs of employers in existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors, in-demand occupations, and target occupations**

A thorough understanding of the economic conditions and employment needs within our WSNCT service area is paramount to the deployment of initiatives that help employers and workers connect successfully. To gain an understanding of the short- and long-term needs of our region, the process criteria utilized to identify our in-demand industries, in-demand occupations, and target occupations include current employment, historical employment change, employment projected growth, and that wages are on par with the most current cost of living. The variables in the process criteria that measure current employment and wages are especially important in assessing economic conditions and guiding us toward areas of high opportunity.

Our in-demand industries highlight the areas that have shown steady and robust employment growth and that have become uniquely positioned in our region, performing above national concentration averages. The in-demand occupations and target occupations lists are created with similar parameters as those of the in-demand industries but go down a level that is more reflective of the employment needs of our employers. Each occupation list layouts the occupations that are most impactful for the sustainability of our local economy, which should be supported with a skilled talent pipeline to help employers meet needs.

In-Demand Industries

The process criteria to identify our in-demand industries measure the following:

- 2020 Employment
- Average Earnings Per Job
- 2020-2025% Employment Change
- Location Quotient
- 5-History Employment Change

The process criteria resulted in 10 in-demand industries. The in-demand industries were identified using the "four-digit" North American Industry Classification System (NAICS), but if examined through their parent NAICS categorization, Manufacturing (NAICS 31-33) emerged as the largest sector by employment with three in-demand industries. Closely behind Manufacturing was Wholesale Trade (NAICS 42), which is also represented by three in-demand industries at the "four-digit" NAICS level. Other in-demand industries were Activities Related to Credit Intermediation (NAICS 5223) under Finance and Insurance, which is the largest industry in the list by employment at the "four-digit" NAICS level, with Office Administration Services (NAICS 5611) next in terms of employment representation. Office of Real Estate Agents and Brokers (NAICS 5312) and Commercial and Industrial Machinery and Equipment (except Automotive and Electronic) Repair and Maintenance (8112) conclude the list, both showing similar 2020 employment figures.

Although the process criteria verify the in-demand industries' average earnings per job exceed the living wage for the WSNCT service area, is it noteworthy to mention that all the in-demand industries exceed the living wage threshold by a large amount. The smallest difference between our living wage and the wage paid on average per job is $40,800 annually.

	In-Demand Industries					
Parent Sector	NAICS	NAICS Description	2020 Empl....	2020 - 2025 % Change	Avg. Earnings Per Job	2019 Location Quotient
Manufacturing	3261	Plastics Product Manufacturing	4537	10%	$69,456	1.08
	3323	Architectural and Structural Metals Manufacturing	6823	11%	$73,785	2.43
	3344	Semiconductor and Other Electronic Component Manufacturing	7302	16%	$129,500	2.70
Wholesale Trade	4234	Professional and Commercial Equipment and Supplies Merchant Wholesalers	5678	14%	$108,484	1.15
	4236	Household Appliances and Electrical and Electronic Goods Merchant Wholesalers	4692	15%	$129,067	1.83
	4237	Hardware, and Plumbing and Heating Equipment and Supplies Merchant Wholesalers	2183	21%	$96,137	1.05
Finance and Insurance	5223	Activities Related to Credit Intermediation	8241	31%	$121,376	3.58
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	5312	Offices of Real Estate Agents and Brokers	2522	17%	$64,956	1.02
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	5611	Office Administrative Services	6182	22%	$99,652	1.61
Other Services (except Public Administration)	8113	Commercial and Industrial Machinery and Equipment (except Automotive and Electronic) Repair and Maintenance	2508	34%	$102,531	1.52

Source: Emsi & JobsEQ

In-Demand Occupations

The process criteria to identify our in-demand industries measure the following:

- 2020 Employment
- 2020-2025% Employment Change
- Unemployment Rate

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- 5-History Employment Change

The primary of purpose of the process criteria launched to determine in-demand occupations was to find those occupations that have a large numeral presence, and therefore a large impact, in our economy. Additionally, these occupations were identified because of their economic resilience, as measured by the unemployment rate, and strong historical and projected growth. All the in-demand occupations have had an impactful growth in the past five years within our service area, and their growth in the next five years is expected to exceed the current median growth of all the occupations that make up our local economy.

The in-demand occupations can be grouped into 10 occupational groups. The occupation groups with biggest number of occupations are (1) Health Care, (2) Construction, Design, & Mechanical Technology, (3) Business Administration & Professional Services, (4) Finance, Insurance, Real Estate (FIRE), and lastly (5) Information Technology (IT). These five occupation groups have at least 11 occupations.

At the occupation level, the largest occupations by current employment are diverse. The largest occupations, sorted from largest to smallest employment size, are (1) General and Operations Managers, (2) Software Developers and Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers, (3) Registered Nurses, (4) Project Management Specialists and Business Operations Specialists, All Other, and (5) Maintenance and Repair Workers, General. These occupations vary in industry sector, skillsets, and level of education needed to enter the respective labor markets.

In-Demand Occupations

Occupation	SOC	2020 Jobs	2020 - 2025 % Change	Unemployment Rate	5-Year History Total Employment Change
Health Care					
Chiropractors	29-1011	362	27.7%	1.3%	181
Clinical, Counseling, and School Psychologists	19-3031	740	17.0%	1.8%	135
Dental Assistants	31-9091	3,619	19.2%	3.0%	599
Dental Hygienists	29-1292	1,810	21.2%	0.9%	378
Dentists, General	29-1021	1,031	20.0%	0.9%	195
Healthcare Social Workers	21-1022	758	18.1%	1.7%	109
Medical Assistants	31-9092	5,097	19.5%	2.7%	982
Medical Dosimetrists, Medical Records Specialists, and Health Technologists	29-2098	1,834	16.9%	2.8%	432
Medical Scientists, Except Epidemiologists	19-1042	310	23.0%	2.8%	115
Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	43-6013	6,632	15.5%	3.8%	1074
Nurse Practitioners	29-1171	1,050	23.6%	1.6%	311
Ophthalmic Medical Technicians	29-2057	561	15.1%	3.5%	169
Phlebotomists	31-9097	580	24.0%	2.4%	155
Physician Assistants	29-1071	638	25.2%	1.4%	141
Physicians, All Other; and Ophthalmologists, Except Pediatric	29-1228	1,770	16.3%	0.8%	418
Radiologic Technologists and Technicians	29-2034	797	16.6%	1.4%	138
Registered Nurses	29-1141	13,513	15.2%	1.7%	2008
Respiratory Therapists	29-1126	696	17.2%	1.3%	108
Social and Human Service Assistants	21-1093	1,329	17.2%	3.8%	145

Occupation	SOC	2020 Jobs	2020 - 2025 % Change	Unemployment Rate	5-Year History Total Employment Change
Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors	21-1018	946	26.6%	2.0%	243
Surgical Technologists	29-2055	495	14.9%	3.4%	100
Construction, Design, & Mechanical Technology					
Architectural and Engineering Managers	11-9041	1,006	14.1%	2.0%	152
Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists	49-3031	1,818	13.7%	4.2%	188
Civil Engineers	17-2051	1,452	16.1%	1.6%	378
Compliance Officers	13-1041	1,785	15.0%	1.0%	586
Construction Managers	11-9021	2,771	14.0%	2.5%	391
Cost Estimators	13-1051	1,643	15.0%	2.6%	236
Electronics Engineers, Except Computer	17-2072	1,190	14.3%	2.7%	270
Farm Equipment Mechanics and Service Technicians	49-3041	246	22.6%	3.1%	102
First-Line Supervisors of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers	47-1011	5,103	13.7%	4.3%	445
First-Line Supervisors of Mechanics, Installers, and Repairers	49-1011	3,175	14.0%	3.2%	516
Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers	49-9021	1,932	21.0%	3.4%	761
Industrial Engineers	17-2112	1,858	16.0%	2.3%	411
Industrial Machinery Mechanics	49-9041	2,408	20.7%	3.3%	745
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	49-9071	10,222	14.6%	3.6%	1548
Mechanical Engineers	17-2141	1,449	13.7%	2.5%	300
Telecommunications Equipment Installers and Repairers, Except Line	49-2022	1,913	16.4%	2.7%	706
Telecommunications Line Installers and Repairers	49-9052	1,482	14.8%	3.1%	268

Occupation	SOC	2020 Jobs	2020 - 2025 % Change	Unemployment Rate	5-Year History Total Employment Change
Business Administration & Professional Services					
Accountants and Auditors	13-2011	9,392	13.9%	2.1%	1,405
Billing and Posting Clerks	43-3021	3,728	15.0%	2.7%	182
Data Scientists and Mathematical Science Occupations, All Other	15-2098	206	16.0%	2.2%	100
General and Operations Managers	11-1021	17,618	14.7%	2.6%	4,133
Human Resources Managers	11-3121	912	16.2%	3.2%	320
Human Resources Specialists	13-1071	4,121	13.8%	3.0%	1,064
Management Analysts	13-1111	3,848	19.7%	3.5%	910
Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	13-1161	3,533	23.6%	3.3%	1,219
Marketing Managers	11-2021	1,549	17.4%	3.5%	465
Medical and Health Services Managers	11-9111	2,514	17.4%	1.6%	495
Operations Research Analysts	15-2031	1,047	24.3%	1.9%	283
Project Management Specialists and Business Operations Specialists, All	13-1198	10,288	14.9%	3.3%	2,278
Sales Managers	11-2022	2,927	14.1%	3.3%	540
Veterinarians	29-1131	524	18.2%	1.2%	169
Veterinary Assistants and Laboratory Animal Caretakers	31-9096	1,027	14.9%	3.0%	155
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate (FIRE)					
Claims Adjusters, Examiners, and Investigators	13-1031	1,469	15.1%	2.6%	130
Credit Analysts	13-2041	992	15.1%	2.4%	210
Financial and Investment Analysts, Financial Risk Specialists, and Financial	13-2098	4,126	16.2%	2.0%	875
Financial Examiners	13-2061	619	18.2%	2.8%	262

Occupation	SOC	2020 Jobs	2020 - 2025 % Change	Unemployment Rate	5-Year History Total Employment Change
Financial Managers	11-3031	4,397	22.2%	1.9%	1,057
Insurance Claims and Policy Processing Clerks	43-9041	2,466	18.9%	3.4%	328
Insurance Sales Agents	41-3021	5,933	20.0%	3.0%	687
Loan Officers	13-2072	2,641	15.2%	2.2%	518
Personal Financial Advisors	13-2052	922	29.0%	0.7%	453
Property, Real Estate, and Community Association Managers	11-9141	1,426	18.0%	3.0%	812
Real Estate Sales Agents	41-9022	1,530	17.1%	3.1%	556
Securities, Commodities, and Financial Services Sales Agents	41-3031	4,058	19.7%	2.4%	1,406
Information Technology (IT)					
Computer and Information Systems Managers	11-3021	3,104	19.9%	2.1%	867
Computer Network Architects	15-1241	1,538	15.5%	1.1%	342
Computer Network Support Specialists	15-1231	1,551	17.3%	3.7%	464
Computer Occupations, All Other	15-1299	3,119	16.6%	2.8%	863
Computer Systems Analysts	15-1211	5,403	18.2%	2.0%	1,278
Computer User Support Specialists	15-1232	6,868	16.3%	3.8%	1,580
Database Administrators and Architects	15-1245	1,307	16.0%	1.8%	204
Information Security Analysts	15-1212	1,287	28.1%	3.3%	395
Network and Computer Systems Administrators	15-1244	3,453	14.7%	3.3%	567
Software Developers and Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers	15-1256	14,557	21.5%	2.0%	3,714
Web Developers and Digital Interface Designers	15-1257	1,076	18.6%	3.1%	410

Occupation	SOC	2020 Jobs	2020 - 2025 % Change	Unemployment Rate	5-Year History Total Employment Change
Personal Care Services					
Barbers	39-5011	420	19.4%	3.9%	213
First-Line Supervisors of Housekeeping and Janitorial Workers	37-1011	914	19.0%	3.9%	254
First-Line Supervisors of Landscaping, Lawn Service, and Groundskeeping	37-1012	671	18.1%	3.6%	175
Massage Therapists	31-9011	854	32.2%	2.9%	296
Personal Service Managers, All Other; Entertainment and Recreation	11-9198	2,437	16.5%	2.1%	1476
Pest Control Workers	37-2021	1,028	16.6%	3.6%	474
Education/Training					
Education Administrators, Postsecondary	11-9033	813	24.9%	2.7%	233
Educational, Guidance, and Career Counselors and Advisors	21-1012	2,466	15.1%	2.4%	291
Speech-Language Pathologists	29-1127	1,882	18.8%	1.4%	155
Training and Development Specialists	13-1151	2,381	16.7%	2.5%	578
Law, Public Safety, Corrections & Security					
Lawyers	23-1011	2,758	19.1%	1.1%	473
Paralegals and Legal Assistants	23-2011	1,395	21.5%	2.7%	755
Hospitality & Food Services					
Food Service Managers	11-9051	1,642	17.3%	2.3%	377
Transportation, Distribution, & Logistics					
Transportation, Storage, and Distribution Managers	11-3071	968	14.1%	2.5%	207
Electro-Mechanical and Mechatronics Technologists and Technicians	17-3024	218	9.2%	3.0%	13

Source: Emsi & JobsEQ

Target Occupations

The process criteria to identify our in-demand industries measure the following:

- Typical Entry Level Education
- 2020 Employment
- Entry Hourly Earnings
- 2020 - 2025% Employment Change
- Unemployment Rate
- 5-History Employment Change

The target occupations, like the in-demand occupations, shed light on the employment needs of employers. However, the target occupations' process criteria go several steps further and measure educational attainment requirements and that wages meet our region's living wage. The target occupations show that our region's employment opportunities are diverse, an indicator of resiliency against unpredictable economic downturns, and that key areas of innovation continue to grow.

Of the 10 occupation groups into which the list can be divided, Construction, Design, and Mechanical Technology, which is represented by 14 occupations, is the largest grouping. The second largest group is Business Administration & Professional Services with 12 occupations. Other occupation groups with a high number of occupations are Finance, Insurance, Real Estate (FIRE) with 10 occupations; and Information Technology (IT), composed of 13 occupations. Additionally, Health Care is represented with seven occupations. After this group, there is a steep drop off in the size of occupation groups.

Although it is important to recognize the makeup and diversity of the target occupations list, analyzing the size of each occupation group in terms of current employment also provides valuable insights. The group with the largest employment presence in our region is Business Administration & Professional Services at 57,954 jobs, with IT in a close second place at 43,264 jobs. After Administration & Professional Services and IT, the number of jobs per occupation group decreases significantly, but those occupation groups still have a large presence and are an important part of our economy. The next group tier includes FIRE with 30,578 jobs, Construction at 29,052 jobs, and Health Care, which is represented in the list with 21,876 jobs.

At the occupation level, the top five largest occupations by employment are General and Operations Managers, Software Developers and Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers, Registered Nurses, Project Management Specialists and Business Operations Specialists, All Other, and Accountants and Auditors. These five largest occupations' median wages range from $73,300 to $103,900 per year.

Other indicators that should be noted are the unemployment rate and projected employment growth. All the target occupations have a low unemployment rate, ranging from 0.07% to 4.3%, and the projected employment growth of the occupations is an average of 17.6% and 3,352 jobs in the next five years.

Target Occupations

Occupation	SOC	Typical Entry Level Education	2020 Empl.	2020 - 2025 % Change	Ann Median Wage	Unempl. Rate
Construction, Design, & Mechanical Technology						
Telecommunications Line Installers and Repairers	49-9052	High school diploma or	1,482	14.8%	$43,600	3.1%
Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists	49-3031	High school diploma or	1,818	13.7%	$49,300	4.2%
Industrial Machinery Mechanics	49-9041	High school diploma or	2,408	20.7%	$49,700	3.3%
Telecommunications Equipment Installers and Repairers, Except Line	49-2022	Postsecondary nondegree award	1,913	16.4%	$56,800	2.7%
First-Line Supervisors of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers	47-1011	High school diploma or	5,103	13.7%	$57,800	4.3%
Cost Estimators	13-1051	Bachelor's degree	1,643	15.0%	$61,700	2.6%
First-Line Supervisors of Mechanics, Installers, and Repairers	49-1011	High school diploma or	3,175	14.0%	$68,000	3.2%
Compliance Officers	13-1041	Bachelor's degree	1,785	15.0%	$70,200	1.0%
Civil Engineers	17-2051	Bachelor's degree	1,452	16.1%	$81,400	1.6%
Construction Managers	11-9021	Bachelor's degree	2,771	14.0%	$90,900	2.5%
Mechanical Engineers	17-2141	Bachelor's degree	1,449	13.7%	$91,700	2.5%
Industrial Engineers	17-2112	Bachelor's degree	1,858	16.0%	$93,100	2.3%
Electronics Engineers, Except Computer	17-2072	Bachelor's degree	1,190	14.3%	$117,100	2.7%
Architectural and Engineering Managers	11-9041	Bachelor's degree	1,006	14.1%	$150,100	2.0%
Business Administration & Professional Services						
Human Resources Specialists	13-1071	Bachelor's degree	4,121	13.8%	$60,700	3.0%
Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	13-1161	Bachelor's degree	3,533	23.6%	$68,400	3.3%
Accountants and Auditors	13-2011	Bachelor's degree	9,392	13.9%	$73,300	2.1%
Project Management Specialists and Business Operations Specialists, All Other	13-1198	Bachelor's degree	10,288	14.9%	$76,900	3.3%
Operations Research Analysts	15-2031	Bachelor's degree	1,047	24.3%	$82,400	1.9%
Management Analysts	13-1111	Bachelor's degree	3,848	19.7%	$83,100	3.5%

Occupation	SOC	Typical Entry Level Education	2020 Empl.	2020 - 2025 % Change	Ann Median Wage	Unempl. Rate
Data Scientists and Mathematical Science Occupations, All Other	15-2098	Bachelor's degree	206	16.0%	$91,200	2.2%
Medical and Health Services Managers	11-9111	Bachelor's degree	2,514	17.4%	$94,800	1.6%
General and Operations Managers	11-1021	Bachelor's degree	17,618	14.7%	$103,900	2.6%
Human Resources Managers	11-3121	Bachelor's degree	912	16.2%	$120,700	3.2%
Sales Managers	11-2022	Bachelor's degree	2,927	14.1%	$127,700	3.3%
Marketing Managers	11-2021	Bachelor's degree	1,549	17.4%	$128,800	3.5%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate (FIRE)						
Insurance Sales Agents	41-3021	High school diploma or	5,933	20.0%	$66,300	3.0%
Loan Officers	13-2072	Bachelor's degree	2,641	15.2%	$70,700	2.2%
Insurance Claims and Policy Processing Clerks	43-9041	High school diploma or	2,466	18.9%	$38,200	3.4%
Securities, Commodities, and Financial Services Sales Agents	41-3031	Bachelor's degree	4,058	19.7%	$56,300	2.4%
Property, Real Estate, and Community Association Managers	11-9141	High school diploma or	1,426	18.0%	$63,200	3.0%
Claims Adjusters, Examiners, and Investigators	13-1031	High school diploma or	1,469	15.1%	$66,200	2.6%
Real Estate Sales Agents	41-9022	High school diploma or	1,530	17.1%	$66,300	3.1%
Credit Analysts	13-2041	Bachelor's degree	992	15.1%	$68,800	2.4%
Financial and Investment Analysts, Financial Risk Specialists, and Financial	13-2098	Bachelor's degree	4,126	16.2%	$76,900	2.0%
Personal Financial Advisors	13-2052	Bachelor's degree	922	29.0%	$79,100	0.7%
Financial Examiners	13-2061	Bachelor's degree	619	18.2%	$83,500	2.8%
Financial Managers	11-3031	Bachelor's degree	4,397	22.2%	$136,200	1.9%
Information Technology (IT)						
Computer User Support Specialists	15-1232	Some college, no degree	6868	16.3%	$46,600	3.8%
Web Developers and Digital Interface Designers	15-1257	Associate's degree	1,076	18.6%	$70,000	3.1%
Computer Network Support Specialists	15-1231	Associate's degree	1,551	17.3%	$73,100	3.7%

Occupation	SOC	Typical Entry Level Education	2020 Empl.	2020 - 2025 % Change	Ann Median Wage	Unempl. Rate
Network and Computer Systems Administrators	15-1244	Bachelor's degree	3,453	14.7%	$85,700	3.3%
Computer Systems Analysts	15-1211	Bachelor's degree	5,403	18.2%	$91,400	2.0%
Computer Occupations, All Other	15-1299	Bachelor's degree	3,119	16.6%	$91,600	2.8%
Database Administrators and Architects	15-1245	Bachelor's degree	1,307	16.0%	$98,400	1.8%
Software Developers and Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers	15-1256	Bachelor's degree	14,557	21.5%	$107,600	2.0%
Information Security Analysts	15-1212	Bachelor's degree	1,287	28.1%	$108,400	3.3%
Computer Network Architects	15-1241	Bachelor's degree	1,538	15.5%	$124,000	1.1%
Computer and Information Systems Managers	11-3021	Bachelor's degree	3,104	19.9%	$149,600	2.1%
Health Care						
Dental Assistants	31-9091	Postsecondary nondegree award	3,619	19.2%	$40,800	3.0%
Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors	21-1018	Bachelor's degree	946	26.6%	$46,100	2.0%
Surgical Technologists	29-2055	Associate's degree	495	14.9%	$48,800	3.4%
Radiologic Technologists and Technicians	29-2034	Associate's degree	797	16.6%	$59,300	1.4%
Respiratory Therapists	29-1126	Associate's degree	696	17.2%	$60,600	1.3%
Registered Nurses	29-1141	Bachelor's degree	13,513	15.2%	$72,300	1.7%
Dental Hygienists	29-1292	Associate's degree	1,810	21.2%	$79,700	0.9%
Personal Care Services						
Massage Therapists	31-9011	Postsecondary nondegree award	854	32.2%	$43,800	2.9%
First-Line Supervisors of Landscaping, Lawn Service, and Groundskeeping	37-1012	High school diploma or	671	18.1%	$50,000	3.6%
Pest Control Workers	37-2021	High school diploma or	1,028	16.6%	$53,300	3.6%
Personal Service Managers, All Other; Entertainment and Recreation Managers,	11-9198	Bachelor's degree	2,437	16.5%	$121,900	2.1%
Education/Training						
Training and Development Specialists	13-1151	Bachelor's degree	2,381	16.7%	$62,500	2.5%

Occupation	SOC	Typical Entry Level Education	2020 Empl.	2020 - 2025 % Change	Ann Median Wage	Unempl. Rate
Hospitality & Food Services						
Food Service Managers	11-9051	High school diploma or	1,642	17.3%	$55,400	2.3%
Law, Public Safety, Corrections & Security						
Paralegals and Legal Assistants	23-2011	Associate's degree	1,395	21.5%	$54,100	2.7%
Transportation, Distribution, & Logistics						
Transportation, Storage, and Distribution Managers	11-3071	High school diploma or	968	14.1%	$91,800	2.5%
Electro-Mechanical and Mechatronics Technologists and Technicians	17-3024	Associate's degree	218	9.2%	$49,600	3.0%

Source: Emsi & JobsEQ

B. Knowledge and Skills Analysis

(WIOA §108(b)(1)(B); 20 CFR §679.560(a)(2))

Boards must include an analysis of the knowledge and skills needed to meet the employment needs of the employers in the region, including employment needs for in-demand industry sectors, in-demand occupations, and target occupations.

Identifying the knowledge and skills needed to meet the employment needs of our region is necessary to fill in talent gaps that could position our region for more growth and provide a bridge to better opportunities for workers open to upskilling. To capture the knowledge and skill needs of employers in our region, we reviewed the skills that have appeared the most often in online job postings during the past 12 months in our region for in-demand industries, in-demand occupations, and target occupations.

In-Demand Industries

The examination of employment needs within our in-demand industries focuses on baseline skills which are skills that are consistently requested in job postings across industries and occupations, making them a baseline qualification in the job market. The most solicited baseline skills by employers within our in-demand industries show that the top five skills for each industry can be summed to 15 different skills, and they can be categorized almost evenly into soft and technical skills.

The skill that appeared across all in-demand industries was Communication (Verbal & Written), which shows the critical attention this area needs within all training programs at all education levels. This skill appeared twice among the top five skills within two in-demand industries as indicated by the double X's in the chart below. Other skills that appeared the most often, in order from most to least often, were Building Effective Relationships, Microsoft Excel, Computer Literary, and Problem Solving. Although soft skills, as depicted by the number of times Communication (Verbal &Written) appeared in the analysis, is growing in importance in the workforce, technical skills continue to be of almost equal importance for industries that are critical for our economy to continue to operate successfully. Top 5 Skills per In-Demand Industry

In-Demand Industries

Skill	Plastics Product Manufacturing (3261)	Architectural and Structural Metals Manufacturing (3323)	Semiconductor and Other Electronic Component Manufacturing (3344)	Professional and Commercial Equipment and Supplies Merchant Wholesalers (4234)	Household Appliances and Electrical and Electronic Goods Merchant Wholesalers (4236)	Hardware, and Plumbing and Heating Equipment and Supplies Merchant Wholesalers (4237)	Activities Related to Credit Intermediation (5223)	Offices of Real Estate Agents and Brokers (5312)	Office Administrative Services (5611)	Commercial and Industrial Machinery and Equipment (except Automotive and Electronic) Repair and Maintenance (8113)
Building Effective Relationships/Teamwork/ Collaboration			X	X		X	X		XX	
Communication (Verbal & Written)	X	X	XX	X	X	X	X	X	XX	X
Computer Literacy	X	X		X					X	
Detail-Oriented						X	X	X		
English	X									
Microsoft Excel		X			X	X	X	X		
Microsoft Office		X			X			X		
Organizational Skills		X			X			X		
People Management				X						
Physical Abilities						X				X
Planning				X						
Preventive Maintenance	X									X
Problem Solving			X		X		X			X
Time Management			X							
Troubleshooting	X									X

Note: Two X's per square indicate the skill appeared twice amongst the industry's top five skills in demand.
Source: Burning Glass

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In-Demand Occupations and Target Occupations

The skills connected to our in-demand occupations and target occupations bring us one step closer to establishing initiatives that could help employers find the talent they need, and workers obtain jobs that could catapult them into self-sustainability. The skills most closely connected to in-demand occupations and target occupations were assessed utilizing skill clusters and specialized skills. Skill clusters indicate the sector where a group of related skills is needed, and specialized skills point to more granular skill categorizations as the coding language examples show on the charts on the right. The examination of both the skill cluster and specialized skill provide a way to cross reference needs and direct skill training programs to larger areas of need.

The top 10 skills that have been in most demand for in-demand occupations and target occupations are largely the same and mirror the occupational groupings of both lists. One differentiation between the two sets of skills is that the target occupation skills show one more IT skill than is shown on the in-demand occupation skills, while the latter skills set calls for Patient Care in its place.

Top 10 Skills for In-Demand Occupations

Source: Burning Glass

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Top 10 Skills for In-Demand Occupations

Source: Burning Glass

C. Labor Force Analysis and Trends

(WIOA §108(b)(1)(C); 20 CFR §679.560(a)(3))

Boards must include an analysis of the regional workforce, including current labor force employment and unemployment data, information on labor market trends, and educational and skill levels of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment.

The WSNCT region's population continues to outpace the state of Texas and nation on several important workforce readiness indicators. WSNCT's Population Annual Average Growth is 2.7%, Texas shows a growth rate of 1.6%, while the nation trails both areas at 0.7%. Our Labor Force Participation Rate is currently 68.4%, several points higher than the rates for Texas and the nation. In other indicators of prosperity in the region, such as Median Household Income and Per Capita Income, the latest demographic data show that wages in the WSNCT region are significantly higher than both Texas and the nation.

Education Attainment, which is the highest level of education an individual received, is another important dataset that is closely correlated to economic wellbeing. People with more education usually earn more money throughout their lifetimes and are less vulnerable to significant economic disruptions. Educational attainment is overall positive for WSNCT's region. Our region's largest educational attainment groupings are bachelor's degree and post-graduate degree holders. Both categories represent approximately 41% of our population ages 25-64, and the percentages per group are higher than the state and nation.

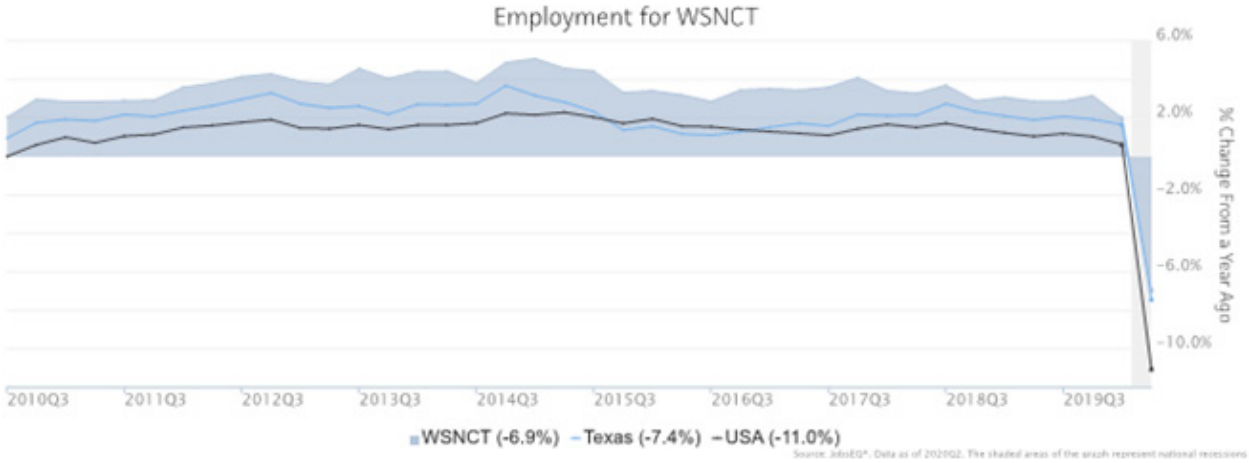
	Percent			Value		
	WSNCT	Texas	USA	WSNCT	Texas	USA
Demographics						
Population (ACS)	—	—	—	2,766,881	27,885,195	322,903,030
Male	49.3%	49.7%	49.2%	1,363,062	13,849,775	158,984,190
Female	50.7%	50.3%	50.8%	1,403,819	14,035,420	163,918,840
Median Age[2]	—	—	—	36.6	34.4	37.9
Under 18 Years	25.9%	26.2%	22.8%	715,628	7,292,686	73,553,240
18 to 24 Years	8.8%	10.0%	9.6%	243,857	2,777,150	30,903,719
25 to 34 Years	13.2%	14.7%	13.8%	364,775	4,094,297	44,567,976
35 to 44 Years	14.7%	13.5%	12.6%	405,510	3,767,582	40,763,210
45 to 54 Years	14.4%	12.6%	13.2%	397,772	3,511,040	42,589,573
55 to 64 Years	11.5%	11.1%	12.8%	318,174	3,104,626	41,286,731
65 to 74 Years	7.3%	7.2%	8.8%	201,710	2,000,715	28,535,419
75 Years, and Over	4.3%	4.8%	6.4%	119,455	1,337,099	20,703,162
Race: White	77.5%	74.3%	72.7%	2,144,878	20,720,689	234,904,818
Race: Black or African American	8.1%	12.1%	12.7%	224,740	3,365,783	40,916,113
Race: American Indian and Alaska Native	0.6%	0.5%	0.8%	15,956	136,061	2,699,073
Race: Asian	7.7%	4.7%	5.4%	212,689	1,308,257	17,574,550
Race: Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%	2,982	23,672	582,718
Race: Some Other Race	2.9%	5.7%	4.9%	81,013	1,600,234	15,789,961
Race: Two or More Races	3.1%	2.6%	3.2%	84,623	730,499	10,435,797
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	17.9%	39.2%	17.8%	495,378	10,921,556	57,517,935
Population Growth						
Population (Pop Estimates)[4]	—	—	—	3,027,876	28,995,881	328,239,523
Population Annual Average Growth[4]	2.7%	1.6%	0.7%	70,334	419,412	2,146,799
People per Square Mile	—	—	—	286.0	111.0	92.9
Economic						
Labor Force Participation Rate and Size (civilian population 16 years and over)[5]	68.4%	64.4%	63.2%	1,459,235	13,728,630	162,248,196
Prime-Age Labor Force Participation Rate and Size (civilian population 25-54)[5]	83.9%	80.4%	81.8%	978,534	9,095,705	104,136,254
Armed Forces Labor Force[5]	0.1%	0.4%	0.4%	1,527	89,701	1,028,133
Veterans, Age 18-64[5]	5.0%	5.0%	4.7%	86,178	862,771	9,398,789
Veterans Labor Force Participation Rate and Size, Age 18-64[5]	83.7%	77.8%	76.3%	72,145	671,366	7,168,168
Median Household Income[2,5]	—	—	—	$80,719	$59,570	$60,293

Per Capita Income[5]	—	—	—	$37,314	$30,143	$32,621
Mean Commute Time (minutes)[5]	—	—	—	29.7	26.4	26.6
Commute via Public Transportation[5]	0.8%	1.4%	5.0%	10,643	184,848	7,602,145
Educational Attainment, Age 25-64						
No High School Diploma	8.8%	15.7%	11.2%	130,118	2,274,547	18,885,967
High School Graduate	20.3%	24.7%	25.8%	302,251	3,571,759	43,699,272
Some College, No Degree	22.1%	22.1%	21.0%	328,389	3,193,349	35,525,113
Associate Degree	8.0%	7.5%	9.1%	118,831	1,088,717	15,389,737
Bachelor's Degree	27.3%	20.0%	20.8%	405,725	2,894,532	35,261,652
Postgraduate Degree	13.5%	10.0%	12.1%	200,917	1,454,641	20,445,749
Housing						
Total Housing Units	—	—	—	1,042,245	10,769,900	136,384,292
Median House Value (of owner-occupied units)[2]	—	—	—	$231,015	$161,700	$204,900
Homeowner Vacancy	1.2%	1.6%	1.7%	8,247	95,712	1,304,850
Rental Vacancy	6.3%	7.7%	6.0%	20,915	308,747	2,822,053
Renter-Occupied Housing Units (% of Occupied Units)	31.6%	38.1%	36.2%	303,366	3,635,275	43,285,318
Occupied Housing Units with No Vehicle Available (% of Occupied Units)[5]	3.0%	5.4%	8.7%	28,608	512,772	10,424,934
Social						
Poverty Level (of all people)[5]	8.9%	15.5%	14.1%	243,185	4,213,938	44,257,979
Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP	6.1%	12.2%	12.2%	58,667	1,167,725	14,635,287
Enrolled in Grade 12 (% of total population)	1.4%	1.5%	1.4%	39,753	405,822	4,442,295
Disconnected Youth[3,5]	2.2%	2.9%	2.6%	3,500	46,016	438,452
Children in Single Parent Families (% of all children)[5]	23.0%	34.6%	34.3%	158,775	2,402,953	23,973,249
Uninsured	12.6%	17.4%	9.4%	345,487	4,764,897	29,752,767
With a Disability, Age 18-64[5]	7.4%	9.6%	10.3%	126,940	1,618,704	20,240,504
With a Disability, Age 18-64, Labor Force Participation Rate and Size[5]	48.3%	44.3%	41.6%	61,329	717,826	8,421,018
Foreign Born	14.0%	17.0%	13.5%	387,045	4,736,692	43,539,499
Speak English Less Than Very Well (population 5 yrs and over)	7.6%	14.0%	8.5%	197,657	3,617,887	25,647,781

Source: JobsEQ
1. American Community Survey 2014-2018, unless noted otherwise
2. Median values for certain aggregate regions (such as MSAs) may be estimated as the weighted averages of the median values from the composing counties.
3. Disconnected Youth are ages 16-19 who are (1) not in school, (2) not high school graduates, and (3) either unemployed or not in the labor force.
4. Census 2019, annual average growth rate since 2009

Employment Trends

As of 2020Q2, total employment for the WSNCT region was 1,116,470 (based on a four-quarter moving average). Over the year ending 2020Q2, employment declined 6.9% in the region.



Source: JobsEQ

Unemployment Rate

The unemployment rate for the WSNCT region was 5.4% as of October 2020. The regional unemployment rate was lower than the national rate of 6.6%. One year earlier, in October 2019, the unemployment rate in the WSNCT region was 2.9%.

Source: JobsEQ

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Populations with Barriers to Employment

Populations with Disability While the most populous counties within our service region have the highest numbers of people with disabilities, some of the less populated counties have higher percentages of populations with disabilities. Amongst this group are Hunt County (17. 0%), Wise County (14.0%), Ellis County (12.1%), and Kaufman (11.7%).

		Population with Disability			
County	**Total civilian noninstitutionalized population**	**Female**	**Males**	**Total Pop. w/ Disability**	**Total Pop w/ Disability (%)**
Collin	1,031,410	38,139	32,977	71,116	6.9%
Denton	883,597	37,254	35,878	73,132	8.3%
Ellis	183,681	10,432	11,833	22,265	12.1%
Erath	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Hood	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Hunt	97,736	7,675	8,939	16,614	17.0%
Johnson	173,150	8,286	8,394	16,680	9.6%
Kaufman	135,139	7,092	8,675	15,767	11.7%
Navarro	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Palo Pinto	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Parker	141,194	7,479	7,760	15,239	10.8%
Rockwall	104,300	3,710	3,557	7,267	7.0%
Somervell	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Wise	69,222	5,083	4,574	9,657	14.0%
N. Central TX	**2,819,429**	**125,150**	**122,587**	**247,737**	**8.8%**

Source: 2019: ACS 1-Year Estimates

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Populations with Barriers to Employment

Approximately 7% of our WSNCT civilian population 18 years and older holds veteran status. The counties within our service region that have higher veteran population percentages are Hood (10.7%), Parker (9.8%), Palo Pinto (9.7%), Wise (9.7%), and Hunt (9.1%).

		Veterans				
County	**Civilian Pop. 18 years and over**	**Female**	**Males**	**With a Disability**	**Total Veteran Pop.**	**Total Veteran Pop. (%)**
Collin	717,266	4,056	37,862	7,837	41,918	5.8%
Denton	624,625	3,793	37,404	8,811	41,197	6.6%
Ellis	127,148	1,039	9,679	2,959	10,718	8.4%
Erath	33,090	157	2343	770	2,500	7.6%
Hood	46,012	380	4,547	6,412	4,927	10.7%
Hunt	71,605	558	5,959	2,055	6,517	9.1%
Johnson	123,422	762	7,207	2,445	7,969	6.5%
Kaufman	89,375	767	6,140	1,855	6,907	7.7%
Navarro	36,133	268	2,509	1,247	2,777	7.7%
Palo Pinto	21,854	134	1,986	916	2,120	9.7%
Parker	100,434	909	8,892	2,487	9,801	9.8%
Rockwall	70,715	526	5,250	936	5,776	8.2%
Somervell	6,863	0	476	151	476	6.9%
Wise	49,829	413	4,410	1,602	4,823	9.7%
N. Central TX	**2,118,371**	**13,762**	**134,664**	**40,483**	**148,426**	**7.0%**

Source: 2019: ACS 5-Year Estimates

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Populations with Barriers to Employment

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		Language Spoken at Home			
County	**Pop. 5 years and over**	**Speak only English**	**Speak only English (%)**	**Speak a language other than English**	**Speak a language other than English**
Collin	913,077	651,465	71.3%	261,612	28.7%
Denton	780,767	597,146	76.5%	183,621	23.5%
Ellis	162,107	132,849	82.0%	29,258	18.0%
Erath	39,266	33,081	84.2%	6,185	15.8%
Hood	55,146	49,944	90.6%	5,202	9.4%
Hunt	88,256	75,762	85.8%	12,494	14.2%
Johnson	156,197	131,479	84.2%	24,718	15.8%
Kaufman	114,926	95,271	82.9%	19,655	17.1%
Navarro	45,419	34,183	75.3%	11,236	24.7%
Palo Pinto	26,804	22,869	85.3%	3,935	14.7%
Parker	125,555	114,254	91.0%	11,301	9.0%
Rockwall	91,175	76,219	83.6%	14,956	16.4%
Somervell	8,412	7,557	89.8%	855	10.2%
Wise	62,060	52,118	84.0%	9,942	16.0%
N. Central TX	**2,669,167**	**2,074,197**	**77.7%**	**594,970**	**22.3%**

Source: 2019: ACS 5-Year Estimates

D. Workforce Development Analysis

(WIOA §108(b)(1)(D); 20 CFR §679.560(a)(4))

Boards must include an analysis of workforce development activities in the region, including education and training.

The following two tables provide background information on the state of our talent pipeline. We first focus on high school graduation rates as it is in indicator of the workforce that is

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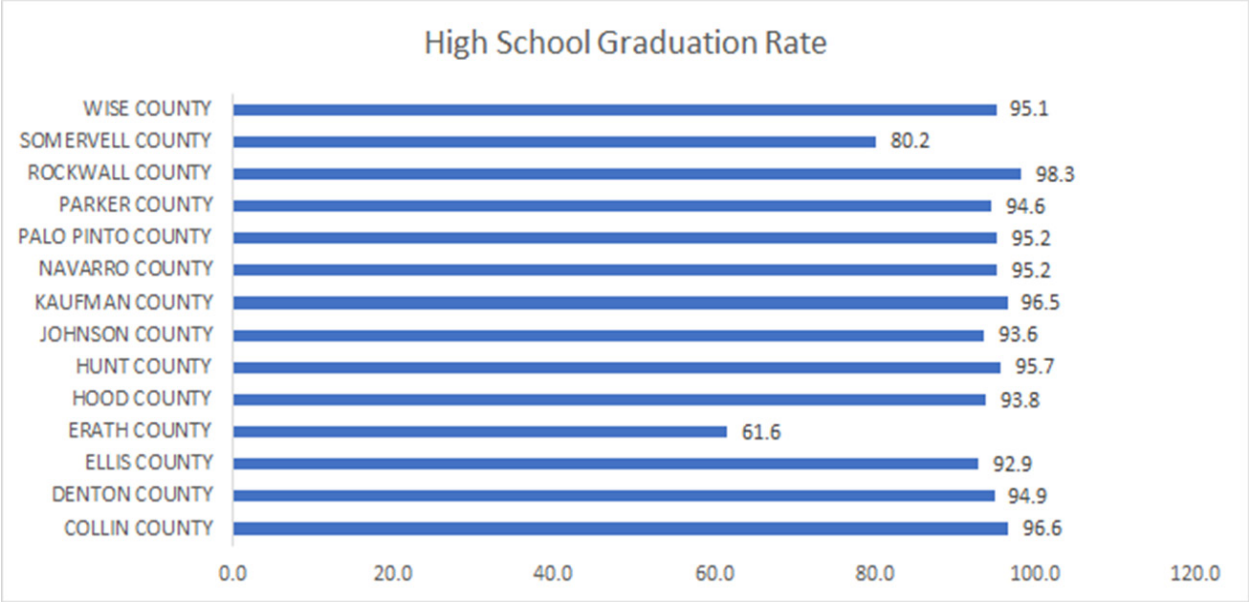
preparing to train and specialize their skillsets to obtain employment. Additionally, we focus on program completions in higher education as these numbers can be useful markers to assess workforce readiness for employers looking to expand their operations in our region or new employers looking to relocate to North Texas.

High School Graduation Rates

Of the 14 counties that make up our service area, seven counties have high school graduation rates above 95 percent, and the average graduation rate of the 14 counties is 91.7 percent.



Source: TEA, Class of 2019

Top 25 Program Completions in Higher Education in 2018

The largest program completions in higher education were the "two-digit" Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) areas of (1) Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services, (2) Liberal Arts and Sciences, General Studies and Humanities, (3) Health Professions and Related Programs, (4) Multi/Interdisciplinary Studies, and (5) Education. These five areas alone account for approximately 60% of the 2018 top 25 program completions in higher education in the WSNCT's region.

CIP Code	Description	All degrees	Award of at least 1 but less than 2 academic years	Associate's Degree	Bachelor's Degree	Postbaccalaureate certificate	Master's Degree	Post-masters certificate	Doctor's Degree
52	BUSINESS, MANAGEMENT, MARKETING, AND RELATED SUPPORT SERVICES	4,315	36	395	1,905	11	1,490	0	9
24	LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES, GENERAL STUDIES AND HUMANITIES	3,968	0	2,710	1,223	0	0	0	0
51	HEALTH PROFESSIONS AND RELATED PROGRAMS	2,930	389	753	1,170	13	726	13	167
30	MULTI/INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES	2,091	0	0	598	23	125	0	5
13	EDUCATION	1,439	0	181	10	34	1,073	0	125
50	VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS	1,124	85	105	763	10	208	0	48
42	PSYCHOLOGY	951	0	36	524	0	135	0	54
31	PARKS, RECREATION, LEISURE, AND FITNESS STUDIES	849	0	10	683	1	151	0	5
11	COMPUTER AND INFORMATION SCIENCES AND SUPPORT SERVICES	807	36	94	279	45	369	0	16
43	HOMELAND SECURITY, LAW ENFORCEMENT, FIREFIGHTING AND RELATED PROTECTIVE SERVICES	783	168	157	272	2	46	0	0
26	BIOLOGICAL AND BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES	705	0	1	618	0	69	0	17
09	COMMUNICATION, JOURNALISM, AND RELATED PROGRAMS	636	0	28	576	0	32	0	0

45	SOCIAL SCIENCES	562	0	9	453	6	81	0	17
14	ENGINEERING	498	0	15	365	5	106	0	12
25	LIBRARY SCIENCE	484	0	0	0	79	484	0	0
23	ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE/LETTERS	433	0	1	356	1	49	0	21
01	AGRICULTURE, AGRICULTURE OPERATIONS, AND RELATED SCIENCES	421	33	14	330	0	70	0	0
44	PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND SOCIAL SERVICE PROFESSIONS	380	0	0	248	0	115	0	4
39	THEOLOGY AND RELIGIOUS VOCATIONS	362	0	192	4	0	33	0	0
19	FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES/HUMAN SCIENCES	272	4	16	224	0	22	0	10
15	BUSINESS, MANAGEMENT, MARKETING, AND RELATED SUPPORT SERVICES	264	14	22	118	0	73	0	0
54	LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES, GENERAL STUDIES AND HUMANITIES	217	0	0	179	0	22	0	6
27	HEALTH PROFESSIONS AND RELATED PROGRAMS	199	0	1	154	0	37	0	7
16	MULTI/INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES	186	17	14	111	0	61	0	0
40	EDUCATION	159	0	3	97	0	46	0	13

Source: Emsi, 2018

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Early Childhood Education

WSNCT places great emphasis on improving the quality of childcare to increase school readiness, long-term education attainment and economic prosperity. WSNCT facilitates professional development, education advancement and credential training opportunities for child care providers as a part of our initiative to promote quality child care practices. WSNCT also provides grants to Texas Rising Star-credentialed child care providers for new equipment, materials and age-appropriate curriculum to ensure quality learning environments. Early childhood programs will continue to be supported through our ongoing efforts to provide tuition reimbursement, professional development, and coaching and mentoring services. WSNCT will utilize the Texas Rising Star assessment tool to determine if child care professionals have increased their knowledge and skills based on educational opportunities they have received.

Career Exploration and Education Opportunities

Career exploration is an essential step in equipping youth with the skills and knowledge required for success. Leveraging the strong, collaborative partnerships we have developed in our region with employers, community colleges, Independent School Districts (ISDs) and Education Service Centers (ESCs), WSNCT hosts interactive career exploration events for hundreds of students each year. These events enable students to explore various careers and immediately grasp what skills and educational requirements are necessary to enter occupations leading to successful, sustainable employment. Our Student HireAbility Navigators collaborate with employers, colleges, ISDs and ESCs to help them develop the right programs and processes to provide inclusive work and educational environments for students with disabilities.

Continuing Education and Skills Development

WSNCT utilizes the Target Occupations List and Eligible Training Providers List to present customers with options for training opportunities available in our area. Customized Labor Market Information (LMI) is provided to help guide participants in choosing in-demand occupations. We actively participate in collaborative groups such as the North Texas P-16 Council, North Texas Community College Consortium and Interlink to leverage resources and coordinate efforts in order to strengthen our educational partnerships. The local staff have strong relationships with our training providers and gather attendance and performance data for mutual customers as needed. Information received has a direct impact on performance.

WSNCT has developed strong partnerships with Goodwill and United Way, and has collaborated with other regional organizations that provide services to foster youth. These partnerships have allowed us to leverage resources and strengthen our cross-referral process. Goodwill offers a Digital Training platform, as well as other valuable services. WSNCT has also connected our local AEL Provider to Goodwill and United Way, resulting in a partnership to provide classroom space, shared resources, and cross referrals among those agencies. We continue to seek additional opportunities that will strengthen the resources we have available to customers.

WSNCT partners with employers and community colleges in our region to secure funding for skills development training to meet the workforce needs of employers in our area. WSNCT

has also been successful in identifying and mobilizing new Registered Apprenticeship programs in our region to help sustain the productivity and vitality of our employer community. WSNCT engages regularly with employers to gain a better of understanding of their challenges as well as specific data points to better identify and classify skill needs. Sector partnerships will be convened as a way of gathering consistent industry and occupational data while allowing for all partners in the region to work collaboratively. The development of sector partnerships will promote ongoing, inclusive discussions that will foster timely communication and alignment, resulting in impactful decision making and solution development. Sector partnerships will include community colleges and ISDs, which will enable training programs to be devised and implemented in accordance with employer need and guidance. Local wisdom and labor market data will give WSNCT a wider perspective of the regional employment picture and provide more opportunity to identify where gaps exist and can be addressed. Labor market data will also provide better direction for employer engagement and allow WSNCT to develop more effective outreach strategies.

Service Access and Effectiveness

Barriers to employment identified in the WSNCT area include the ability to access services in rural areas and lack of transportation. WSNCT has expanded our ability to provide virtual services to assist those with transportation issues and provide multiple ways to connect with local services. WSNCT requires our Subrecipient to conduct outreach to special populations and demographics as outlined in the Affirmative Outreach plan, which includes outreach methodologies, partnerships with other organizations for the outreach, and the methods used to bring awareness to the community that services are available. These efforts will be reviewed to evaluate strategies and results.

WSNCT Quality Assurance staff evaluates the effectiveness of workforce services through monitoring based on a detailed risk assessment. Board Staff works closely with the Subrecipient to identify gaps and strengthen processes, ensure program compliance and evaluate performance to ensure that customers are completing training, obtaining a credential, as well as entering and retaining employment. Board staff observes orientations and discusses service delivery strategies to identify opportunities for improvement.

Part 3: Core Programs

A. Workforce Development System

(WIOA §108(b)(2); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(1))

Boards must include a description of the workforce development system in the workforce area that identifies:

- **the programs that are included in the system; and**

It is the role of WSNCT to be a regional facilitator, connector and convener to address workforce development issues. The following programs support and align with local, state, and national strategies to address the needs of the workforce. The oversight provided

by WSNCT ensures that the services provided below are delivered in an integrated and seamless workforce system, delivered through a network of 12 workforce centers, operated and managed by a competitively procured contracted service provider.

- Choices Program—Services provided through the Choices program are designed to assist unemployed and under-employed career seekers, who are applicants for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) services or are current or former TANF recipients, in preparing for, obtaining and retaining unsubsidized employment. Co-enrollment in job training programs, subsidized employment and On-the-Job Training (OJT) are components of the program. WSNCT partners with the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) to provide referrals and integrated case management to eligible program participants and ensure work goals and program requirements are met.

- Non-Custodial Parents (NCP) Choices Program —Services provided through the NCP program are designed to assist noncustodial parents, whose children are current or former recipients of public assistance, in overcoming substantial barriers to employment and career advancement while becoming economically self-sufficient and enabled to make consistent child support payments. WSNCT partners with the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), the Office of Attorney General (OAG), and the family court county judges to provide participant referrals, supportive services and integrated case management.

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAP E&T)—Services provided through this program assists both Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWDs) and SNAP E&T General Population participants by improving their ability to obtain unsubsidized employment and reduce their dependency on public assistance. Workforce center staff provide guidance, instruction and support to assist program participants in preparing for, obtaining and retaining full-time employment. WSNCT partners with HHSC to provide referrals and integrated case management to eligible program participants and ensure work goals and program requirements are met.

- Wagner-Peyser Employment Services (ES)—In partnership with TWC, WSNCT is a part of the Texas Model and is responsible to assist employers in filling jobs by recruiting, screening and referring qualified job seekers and assist job seekers in finding employment for which they are qualified.

- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)— WIOA brings together, in strategic coordination, the core programs of skill development and requires specific accommodation for vulnerable populations
    - Employment and training services for adults
    - Employment and training services for dislocated workers
    - Employment and training services for youth

- Trade Adjustment Assistance Program (TAA)— TAA is a federal program created to reduce the damaging impact of imports felt by certain sectors of the U.S. economy.

- Rapid Response Services—Rapid response services help workers and employers deal with the effects of layoffs and plant closures, including those that result from increased competition from imports, natural disasters, and other events.

- Subsidized Child Care – Access to quality child care is a workforce issue. Child Care provides eligible parents who work, attend school or participate in job training with financial assistance.

WSNCT works through MOUs or cooperative relationships to coordinate and facilitate the delivery of services in other programs. Participants in these programs have access to employment assistance through the WSNCT workforce centers.

- Unemployment Insurance (UI) – While the UI program is administered by TWC, workforce centers provide UI claimants with valuable services to assist with filing claims, participating in appeals, and access to the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program.

- Summer Earn and Learn (SEAL) – The SEAL program provides subsidized work experience placements for youth students with disabilities. The program's success relies on participation from Employers and our partnership with Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS). Students receive hands-on work experience to learn job skills for future employment.

- Year-Round Paid Work Experience - WSNCT partners with TWC Vocational Rehabilitation Services (TWC-VRS) to provide year-round paid work experience services, as a strategy for serving students with disabilities. These services are provided in support of TWC's implementation of Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) for students with disabilities, as required under Title IV of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Paid Work Experience Services include payment of the student's wages and associated costs for participants identified by local TWC VR staff in a manner consistent with the Board VR Requirements, and as described in the VR Program Requirements Manual for Services.

- Vocational Rehabilitation (VRS) Services—Comprehensive work-related services are individualized and are provided by trained Counselors in the TWC VR program. The VR Counselor's role is to facilitate independence, integration, and inclusion of people with disabilities into employment. To date Vocational Rehabilitation Services have been integrated with WSNCT in Corsicana, Granbury, Greenville, McKinney, and Waxahachie with more to follow in the upcoming years.

- Student HireAbility Navigator—The role of the Student HireAbility Navigator (Navigator) is to improve access to employment and training services and increase employment opportunities for students with disabilities who are in the early phases of preparing for transition to postsecondary education and employment. The Navigator service is a resource to support, expand, and enhance the provision of pre-employment transition services that are provided by TWC-Vocational Rehabilitation as well as by the other partners and programs. By working in capacity building and systems development, partnering and collaboration, and informing and engaging employers, the Navigator increases the likelihood of students' independence and inclusion in communities and competitive integrated workplaces, and their successful participation in postsecondary education experiences.

- Adult Education & Literacy (AEL) Program— WSNCT partners with five AEL grant recipients to deliver services within the 14-county workforce area. Basic and secondary instruction and services are provided to adults to enable them to effectively acquire

the basic educational skills necessary for literate functioning, participate in job training and retraining programs, continue education to at least the completion of secondary school, and obtain and retain employment. Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) have been established under the umbrella of "AEL-North Central Texas Workforce Regional Coalition" (Regional Coalition).

- Veteran Services—WSNCT works in partnership with the Texas Veterans Commission to ensure individuals seeking services are screened to determine if they are eligible veterans entitled to intensive services from Veterans Program staff.

- Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) - The SCSEP is a community service and work-based job training program for older Americans. The program provides training for low-income, unemployed seniors.

- **how the Board will work with the entities that facilitate core programs and other workforce development programs to support alignment to provide services, including programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, that support the strategy identified in the State Plan under WIOA §102(b)(1)(E).**

WSNCT is committed to the value that integration of programs brings to employers and career seekers. WSNCT administers integrated programs and provides oversight to a competitively procured Workforce Subrecipient who is responsible for direct service delivery of core programs and the coordination of integrated, related, and possibly co-located, programs not administered by the Board.

Services provided by the Workforce Subrecipient include service delivery strategies to employers and career seekers who are able to access a continuum of services. The Workforce Subrecipient has the capability to deliver fully integrated and leveraged workforce services to include WIOA Adult, Youth and Dislocated Worker, TANF Choices, Non-Custodial Parent Choices, SNAP Employment and Training, Child Care Assistance, Employer Services, Vocational Rehabilitation, and Trade Adjustment Assistance.

Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants are a target population. WSNCT designates a coordinator to communicate with the state on issues related to Unemployment Insurance claimants. Workforce center staff help UI claimants apply for UI and make active searches for employment. The Workforce Subrecipient provides outreach to claimants, assistance with developing an employment plan, and services to provide early intervention to claimants that link them to comprehensive services. Workforce center staff interact with claimants on a regular basis and when aware of issues that affect a claimant's eligibility for benefits, notify the state coordinator.

WSNCT continues to expand integration and co-location efforts with Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS) to enable WSNCT and VRS to leverage resources and align services to better serve our shared customers. To date, VRS has been integrated with WSNCT in Corsicana, Granbury, Greenville, McKinney, and Waxahachie, with more to follow in the upcoming years.

Recognizing that the ability to speak English can be critical to a participant's success in the job market, WSNCT actively partners with Adult Education and Literacy providers to offer instruction and remediation, including English as a Second Language (ESL), as a part of a participant's service continuum. Integration with the service delivery system is vital to the

deployment of WIOA, and WSNCT engages and supports AEL grant recipients in activities that promote student success in career and higher education goals.

Independent School Districts and Community Colleges carry out workforce development programs that support alignment of services, including programs of study and technical training authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006. In 2018, The Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V) was signed into law. This measure reauthorized the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (Perkins IV) and continued Congress' commitment in providing nearly $1.3 billion annually for career and technical education (CTE) programs for our nation's youth and adults.

WSNCT is actively involved with the North Texas P-16 Council. The North Texas Regional P-16 Council promotes communication, networking, and collaborative opportunities and embraces multiple perspectives to advance the education of all students, close gaps in student academic access and achievement, leading to educated and employable citizens.

The goal of WSNCT's continued participation, and as stated in the Council's mission, is to aide in the support of educational and community initiatives and institutions; develop collaborative relationships and resources that promote equity in the development of educated and employable citizens; engender the development of educators who support the diverse needs of communities and workplaces; expand understanding of educational, transitional, and career pathways; and widely share information and resources.

WSNCT actively engages local community colleges with quarterly check-point meetings, ensuring WSNCT is staying in touch and listening to the needs of the partner, and any opportunities they are seeking in which WSNCT may be able to assist or support. This work also included universities when applicable. As more interest grows within universities in supporting Career and Technical training, these relationships continue to grow. This work with colleges, universities, networking groups and school districts creates more opportunity to share relevant LMI that will help decision-making while these partners develop programs to prepare students for high-wage and high-demand occupations. WSNCT will continue these efforts and community outreach aiming to support the alignment of programs of study and technical programs to target industries and labor market demand within the North Central Texas region.

In addition, WSNCT plans to strengthen partnerships with colleges by building a quarterly roundtable discussion with college CTE leaders, as well as cross-sector community stakeholders. These discussions, where WSNCT will serve as an intermediary, will allow for meaningful exploration of opportunities and partnerships. Recently, WSNCT staff has worked to introduce and connect various partners for deeper discussions about the work taking place in their respective colleges and learning from one another. These conversations in early stages have allowed for informed decision making as it pertains to grant opportunities and the readiness for various initiatives. As our partners are awarded grant funding, WSNCT plans to strengthen the way we track these awards. Outcomes of this tracking will result in local workforce offices staying informed and connecting customers to opportunities at colleges within their local region, such as new training programs and scholarships become available.

WSNCT will continue to build relationships and increase the number of partnerships affecting in-school youth through CTE programs. As more ISDs become interested in CTE/Career/

College centered models for learning and preparedness, WSNCT will continue offering connections to other partners for necessary support, and/or providing data as needed. WSNCT will continue seeking out and sharing resources and skill-building opportunities for students and educators.

WSNCT will continue to engage ISDs, employers, colleges, and other training providers in identifying and developing opportunities and events that target career exploration as well as bridging the gaps within the shared vision of building a strong workforce across the region.

B. Core Programs—Expand Access, Facilitate Development, and Improve Access

(WIOA §108(b)(3); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(2))

Boards must include a description of how the Board will work with entities carrying out core programs to:

- **expand access to employment, training, education, and support services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment;**

Individuals meeting eligibility requirements for core programs are provided a comprehensive needs assessment that addresses, at a minimum, job skills, supportive services, educational skills and deficiencies, accessibility and/or accommodations, barriers to employment, and training needs.

Once needs are identified, resources that can be used to remove barriers to employment are explored, including program funding and leveraging resources through partner agencies and other community resources. Co-enrollment in core programs, when allowable and appropriate may be used to leverage funds and expand access to training, educational opportunities and supportive services.

WSNCT engages with local employers to identify skills needed and coordinates with Workforce Subrecipient staff, who provides case management to career seekers enrolled in core programs, to match skilled career seekers with quality jobs. AEL partners work with eligible customers participating in core programs to provide vocational workplace literacy.

Information regarding WIOA Individualized Career and Training services is offered at all workforce orientations. Orientation audiences include those attending Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) for UI claimants, Rapid Response events, TANF Applicants, and participants who access Supplemental and Nutritional Assistance Programs. Information is shared to inform and educate these participants about workforce services designed to assist the participant in applying for financial aid, WIOA training services, and the development of an Individual Employment Plan that may include access to training services.

- **facilitate the development of career pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs, including specific career pathways occupations that the Board currently includes on its Target Occupations List, and career pathways occupations that the Board is planning to develop; and**

WSNCT facilitates the development of career pathways and co-enrollment through the following:

- Continue to engage employers in sector strategies to obtain and identify credentials, training and skills relevant to their occupational needs.
- Leverage funding by co-enrolling individuals that are eligible for both WIOA Youth, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs to support training and career pathways.
- Continue development of WSNCT long-term relationships with career and technical education institutions that are Eligible Training Providers.
- Seek out stakeholders interested in creating apprenticeship programs.
- Create and implement relationships with CBOs, city/state, and partner agencies to provide exposure for youth to training programs and career pathways.
- Pair the attainment of postsecondary credits with work-based learning opportunities such as on-the-job training, internships and workplace tours.
- Provide labor market information and career exploration resources to educators and other education-focused stakeholders.
- Actively participate in collaborative groups such as the North Texas P-16 Council, North Texas Community College Consortium and Interlink to leverage resources and coordinate efforts.
- Support local community colleges and universities in their program development and assessment by providing labor market information and participating in their stakeholder workgroups.
- Coordinating Programs and Services for Target Populations.

- **improve access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential (including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable).**

WSNCT partners with ISDs, community colleges and training providers to improve access to activities leading to recognized postsecondary credentials and is committed to the attainment of industry recognized certifications, and portable and stackable credentials focused on our identified target industries.

Three of WSNCT's target industries are closely aligned with the Governor's six industry clusters. The manufacturing and logistics industries, including Semiconductor and Other Electronic Component Manufacturing, Professional and Commercial Equipment and Supplies Merchant Wholesalers, and Plastics Product Manufacturing, are highly prevalent in the region, and WSNCT often engages with employers within these industries. As we continue to identify skills gaps and training opportunities through apprenticeship exploration, WSNCT will further develop and maintain relationships with these employers to keep pace with industry trends and changes. Another area of focus is within the Information Technology (IT) industry. There are several IT occupations that appear on the Board's target and in-demand occupation list and can be found in several industries. WSNCT will continue to gather local wisdom through employer engagement and economic development organizations to determine what skills are needed and identify the appropriate talent development strategies to deploy, which will include apprenticeships.

Part 4: One-Stop Service Delivery

A. One-Stop Service Delivery System

(WIOA §108(b)(6); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(5))

Boards must include a description of the one-stop delivery system in the workforce area, including explanations of the following:

- **How the Board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers and how providers will meet the employment needs of local employers, workers, and job seekers**

Texas training providers are required to apply for certification with the Workforce Development Board overseeing the main location of their campuses to receive WIOA funds. Providers must meet WIOA requirements, minimum criteria set by WSNCT Board of Directors, and be certified by the Texas Workforce Commission to become eligible to train participants through the workforce system and be added to the published statewide Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL).

Part of the WIOA requirements for eligibility is Documentation of Employer Partnership. In order to meet this requirement, one of the documentations WSNCT will accept is letters from employers stating the program(s) they support on dated letterhead with contact information and signed within the last 12 months to demonstrate active partnership. A second document accepted to meet the requirement is a copy of the most recent, within the last 12 months, Program Advisory Committee meeting minutes for the program(s) that includes the roster of members, attendees and the companies they are representing.

Performance of the ETPL programs is reviewed annually when the Annual Student Data Report for each providers' programs is submitted to TWC to determine performance level percentages. Performance information for training programs listed on the statewide ETPL is available to the public on the TWC Eligible Training Provider webpage. This performance report provides information regarding completion and entered employment rates for all students exiting the approved programs. Training providers are required to submit the Annual Student Data Report every July to maintain their listing on the ETPL. The performance percentage is scheduled to be reinstated in 2021. If a training provider fails to submit the Annual Student Data Report or does not meet the established minimum performance standards once the data has been evaluated, the program/programs will be removed from the ETPL for a period of no less than two years.

WSNCT is fortunate to have a full array of qualified and competitive eligible training providers within the North Central Texas area. WSNCT actively recruits providers and programs located in the North Central region to apply for the ETPL. Currently on the statewide ETPL for the North Central Texas area are 122 programs, three community colleges, and one statewide technical college. WSNCT has also designed the WIOA Individual Training Agreement (ITA) to allow for working with eligible training providers with campuses located inside the North Central Texas area, but whose main campus is outside our jurisdiction as well as eligible training providers in neighboring board areas.

- **How the Board will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system, including to remote areas, through the use of technology and other means**

The WSNCT Workforce Development Area covers more than 10,000 square miles. Budget restraints require alternatives to brick and mortar workforce centers to adequately serve the region. Through enhanced technology and partnerships, WSNCT provides access to workforce services not otherwise available to persons in remote areas, increasing access to services for underserved populations. Customers can now use virtual online platforms to access services. This technology has become the foundation to our virtual services design to deploy virtual one-on-one case management with customers and virtual webinar sessions to provide orientations and workshops. Additionally, career seekers have access to on-line learning platforms, such as Metrix and LinkedIn Learning, to assess for skill gaps, provide training content to enhance individual skill levels, and prepare for certifications. To further support virtual access, WSNCT purchased and implemented a platform that provides the ability to host online career fairs for career seekers and employers. This new virtual environment has created a breakthrough in service delivery throughout all our programs.

WSNCT transitioned all Core programs to a paperless environment through an Enterprise Content Management (ECM) application, Laserfiche, that enables the efficient management of documents and information. The application has the ability to build steps within a business process and automatically route documents to the right person at the right time. Automated business processes within the Laserfiche environment leads to enhanced process efficiency, fewer opportunities for error, and a reduction within the specified business process cycle-time. Customer files are accessible to all staff with the designated security rights/protocols from any location. The system has the capability of capturing, routing, and approving forms within a web-based environment that can resemble the eligibility and intake process performed under WIOA. Common intake processes across multiple programs that utilize similar documents/forms can be maintained within the same electronic file, which reduces instances of duplication of effort. Additionally, the tool has the ability automatically manage the workload of WIOA case managers in accordance with workload and case assignment rules identified by workforce center management.

The Mobile Workforce Unit (MWU) is a moving extension of an operating workforce center, aiding WSNCT in bringing direct services to customers in areas where there is no traditional workforce center presence. With access to high-speed internet and 13 accessible computer workstations, career seeker customers may search for jobs, improve their resumes, and receive training wherever needed. Employer customers may have access to a mobile human resources office, and communities may provide dislocated workers immediate access to re-employment resources. The MWU has been offered to other Board areas to assist with emergency needs, functioning as a mobile location to provide affected individuals the opportunity to quickly apply for Unemployment Benefits and other disaster relief as needed. The MWU was also deployed to various ISDs for the Charting the Course events with ESC 11 partners, where students completed a Career Assessment with teachers and parents; and the MWU was deployed to high schools for TWC-VR Counselors and Transition Specialist to use to provide their Pre-ETS students with career assessments. These career assessment results could then be downloaded/emailed to themselves and their teacher for discussion. The MWU also remained open to all other students while at the high school.

- **How entities within the one-stop delivery system, including the one-stop operators and the one-stop partners, will comply with WIOA §188 (related to Non-Discrimination), if applicable, and with applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities, including providing staff training and support**

for addressing the needs of individuals who have disabilities

WSNCT has issued Policy and Standard Operating Procedures to ensure the individuals with a disability receive reasonable accommodation and universal access to services.

Annual reviews of all Workforce Center facilities are conducted utilizing a professional Registered Accessibility Specialist (RAS) who determines that each facility meets the criteria established by the latest version of the Texas Architectural Standards. The RAS prepares a final report after the review is completed and issues it to the Sr. Workforce Facilities Coordinator, who communicates any deficiencies to the appropriate WSNCT management staff and coordinates any necessary corrections to the facilities to ensure their compliance.

Annual review of WIOA 188 includes:

- Review of notices in files, publications, workforce center postings, and electronic media.
- Review of data regarding services received by persons with disability.
- Situational testing of Workforce Center staff's ability to apply expected procedures/ protocols correctly to serve individuals with disability.
- Testing of adaptive equipment and staff knowledge of availability and use of such equipment.
- Review of complaints, formal and informal, regarding alleged non-compliance with 29 CFR 38.
- Review of EO Officer training, reporting structure, and policy review.

Deficits in workforce center staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disability are addressed as findings in monitoring reports conducted by the Board and are followed through resolution which includes tracking service provider procedures and staff training.

WSNCT has adopted the comprehensive 2012 Texas Architectural Standards used by Vocational Rehabilitation (formerly Department of Adult Rehabilitative Services) to not only meet, but exceed the accessibility standards under WIOA.

- **The roles and resource contributions of the one-stop partners**

According to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Guide to Texas Workforce System Operations the required partners administering programs and activities include:

- WIOA adult, dislocated worker, and youth programs;
- Wagner-Peyser Employment Service program;
- Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) program;
- Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program;
- Unemployment Insurance (UI) program;
- Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program;
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program;
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAP E&T) program;
- Subsidized child care programs;
- Apprenticeship programs (Texas Education Code, Chapter 133), if they have been certified by the US Department of labor's Office of Apprenticeship Training and meet

the state criteria established in Chapter 133 to receive state funding for the support of the apprenticeship training programs;

- Veteran employment and training programs – Local Veterans Employment Representatives Program and the Disabled Veterans Outreach Program;
- Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP);

Many of these partners are integrated into the one-stop system and coordinate with our Workforce Subrecipient. Resources from each program are leveraged to contribute to the day-to-day operations of the workforce centers. Center staff work closely with referral agencies and required partners in the workforce centers to provide services to program customers, as well as Texas Veterans Commission staff to coordinate services to Veterans. WSNCT has a strong relationship with AEL provider partners within the North Central Texas region and has established the AEL/Workforce Regional Coalition to identify and address strategic and operational gaps and strive for continuous improvement in performance for all partners. The ongoing efforts to incorporate Vocational Rehabilitation Services into our Workforce Centers are designed to create a seamless customer-focused workforce delivery system that integrates across all programs, further enhancing access for all our customers.

B. Cooperative Agreements

(WIOA §108(b)(14); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(13))

Boards must provide copies of executed cooperative agreements that explain how all local service providers, including additional providers, will carry out the requirements for integration of and access to the entire set of services available in the local one-stop delivery system. This includes cooperative agreements (as defined in WIOA §107(d)(11)) between the Board or other local entities described in §101(a)(11)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 USC 721(a)(11)(B)) and the local office of a designated state agency or designated state unit that administers programs that are carried out under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act (29 USC 720 et seq.) (other than §112 or part C of that title (29 USC 732, 741) and are subject to §121(f)) in accordance with §101(a)(11) of the Rehabilitation Act (29 USC 721(a)(11)) with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of services to individuals who have disabilities and to other individuals, such as cross training of staff, technical assistance, use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers, and other efforts.

N/A

C. Employer Engagement, Economic Development, and Unemployment Insurance Program Coordination

(WIOA §108(b)(4); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(3))

Boards must include a description of the strategies and services that will be used in the workforce area to do the following:

- **Facilitate engagement of employers in the workforce development programs, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors, in-demand occupations, and target occupations**

WSNCT initiates and conducts outreach to new and existing employers within specific target industries. The Workforce Subrecipient staff works in coordination with WSNCT to provide employers with the requested services, thus ensuring employers have the right solution at the right time. Subrecipient staff work to outreach new business in non-targeted industries, such as hospitality and retail, and also provides ongoing services for established employers of all industries in an effort to facilitate the matching of employer openings with career seekers.

Each employer is provided a customized, educated and meaningful solution to the array of services based on each employer's needs. Services include, but are not limited to:

- Job Matches for Job Openings
- Hiring Events and Target Recruitment Events
- On-The-Job Training and Subsidized Employment
- Internships and Apprenticeships
- Fidelity Bonding Program
- Rapid Response Services
- Labor Market Information
- Support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the workforce area

To better align with the needs of industry, WSNCT will further refine its business services approach. There is an opportunity to enhance employer engagement and solidify collaborative relationships in conjunction with the development of the Board strategic plan. WSNCT will gain a better understanding of regional industry needs and be positioned to impact solution development centered around improving our employers' competitiveness and increasing and diversifying career opportunities for our community. Employer engagement strategies will be refined to enhance employer relationships and obtain qualitative information that will lead to a more comprehensive approach to workforce development. In addition to addressing immediate workforce needs, WSNCT will focus on providing more in-depth customized talent development strategies. This requires WSNCT to adjust how we engage with employers and the methods we use to identify their needs. Strategies will include convening employer and partner meetings to gain insight about industry needs, one-on-one employer meetings, more frequent Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) visits with employers and EDOs, and WSNCT-facilitated employer and EDOs forums/presentations.

WSNCT will use both targeted and in-demand occupation data to engage employers in workforce development discussions. This data will aid in developing targeted and strategic employer outreach strategies and lead to more specific conversations with employers regarding their workforce needs. The goals for targeted employer engagement include the following:

- Increased employer awareness and participation in workforce development and expansion opportunities
- Develop high-value employer partnerships throughout our 14-county territory
- Enable WSNCT to deploy effective and timely workforce development programs and initiatives

WSNCT will develop and convene sector partnerships to enhance understanding of industry needs and facilitate solution development to address the expressed need(s).

These industries and occupations will be both data-driven and representative of industry demands. Industry needs will be inclusive of both workforce and non-workforce related issues, so WSNCT must additionally establish relevant community partnerships to include economic development, higher education, independent school districts, and non-profit organizations that have access to targeted populations. The sector partnerships will be employer-led, focusing on agendas and issues that are designed and raised by industry.

The information obtained will be managed in our Customer Relationship Management database, Dynamics365 (D365). Notes about specific employer interactions are documented and include information about their workforce needs and service/program interests. D365 has allowed WSNCT to create reports and contact lists for targeted outreach purposes and will continue to be utilized to enhance employer outreach and engagement methods. WSNCT staff has access to the tool, which facilitates information sharing across the departments.

- **Better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development**

The coordination of WSNCT's workforce development programs and economic development activity in our service area is one important step towards maximizing the impact of our resources as a Board. To enhance the alignment of our programs and those of economic developers, we have intentionally engaged with various economic development organizations to learn about their long-term priorities as well as their most pressing challenges. We have also participated in local government planning sessions and are members of community-based consortiums that perform work to expand the access to economic opportunities for similar populations to those that make up our customer base. Our desire is that by actively listening to these organizations' needs, we will be able to better incorporate priorities into our own strategic plan that ultimately helps their work and the employer community at large. In the future, we aim to continue our outreach to touch more geographic points of our wide-ranging and diverse service region to continue recognizing reoccurring themes with the goal of aiding our growing economy.

- **Strengthen links between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs**

WSNCT links services from at the workforce centers to services for Unemployment Insurance claims through a variety of access points. In the event of a major layoff, Rapid Response services may be coordinated with the affected employer to provide services to dislocated workers at the worksite, local center or a remote site. In the event of a business closure or reduction in force, the Mobile Workforce Unit, may be used on-site to provide immediate access to online claim filing and work registration. Individuals may also initiate contact by visiting or calling into the local workforce center.

From the moment a person becomes unemployed, the local workforce center is often the first stop for services. The workforce center maintains open access to all customers who may need to file for benefits. Workforce staff are available to assist individuals to access services through the Texas Workforce Commission's website. The website contains direct links to much needed information including how to file, when to file, ongoing eligibility requirements for receiving unemployment benefits, etc. The information contained on TWC's website is up to date, accurate, available 24 hours a day, seven days a week and is available in Spanish.

Workforce staff are available to assist customers who may not be comfortable with computers or who need extra help to file their claim. Customers may be provided with informational print outs that include clear directions to access Unemployment Information services and processes. Customers may use workforce center resources such as conference rooms to hold appeal hearings for their UI case, fax machines to submit required documentation and computers to access to their claim status. If a customer has an unmet need regarding UI information, center staff may contact a UI representative via a direct line that is not available to the general public. WSNCT staff engage claimants at the earliest point possible. Since quality job referrals come from quality registrations, workforce center staff are available to assist claimants to complete registration in the Work in Texas job matching system.

The Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program is a partnership between TWC and WSNCT. TWC uses statistical modeling to rank unemployment benefits claimants based on their likelihood to exhaust unemployment benefits. This process includes a statistical evaluation of numerous work and related factors, including but not limited to length of workforce attachment, occupational field, wage, and location.

WSNCT outreaches those claimants most likely to exhaust their benefits and connects them with reemployment services at the workforce center to help them find new employment as quickly as possible. Claimants receive an orientation and assistance developing an Individualized Employment Plan and are offered other staff-assisted services at the Workforce Center. Services available include intensive job search, educational and training opportunities, and supportive services geared to remove barriers while training for future employment. Individuals with a score below the cutoff may still be outreached and provided the same or other services, but their participation is voluntary.

D. Coordination of Wagner-Peyser Services

(WIOA §108(b)(12); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(11))

A description of plans, assurances, and strategies for maximizing coordination, improving service delivery, and avoiding duplication of Wagner-Peyser Act services and other services provided through the one-stop delivery system.

As part of the Texas Model, ES staff are embedded into the one-stop delivery model. Services provided by ES staff are a part of this integrated workforce system. All center staff duties and responsibilities are clearly outlined and are aligned with the overall roles and responsibilities of the workforce system. Staff receive comprehensive training in the integrated model and how each program/function interacts and impacts all programs in the service delivery model. Center staff are cross-trained to ensure services are provided consistently across all programs to provide efficiencies.

Centers conduct daily huddles and weekly meetings with all staff to discuss needs of employers and career seekers to avoid duplication of services. Weekly conference calls are held with management to ensure information is shared at all levels. Meetings with all staff share information regarding changes to processes, new directives, as well as challenges identified in the system. All staff coordinate and work hiring events as a team. Workforce Center Managers provide daily supervision of ES staff and their functions consistent with the supervision of all center staff. Management works with TWC Integrated Service Area Managers on HR concerns and keeps them informed of any potential issues.

E. Integrated, Technology-Enabled Intake and Case Management

(WIOA §108(b)(21); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(20))

Boards must include a description of how one-stop centers are implementing and transitioning to an integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information system for programs carried out under WIOA and by one-stop partners.

WSNCT has transitioned to a paperless environment through an Enterprise Content Management (ECM) application, Laserfiche, that enables the efficient management of documents and information. Customer files are accessible to all staff with designated security rights/protocols from any location and documents can be routed to complete intake and case management functions among and between programs. The system captures, routes, and facilitates the approval of documents through a web-based environment. Common intake processes have been fully integrated to facilitate intake and case management between programs that utilize the same or similar documents/forms and are maintained within the same electronic file. Additionally, the tool provides the ability to automatically manage the workload of case managers in accordance with workload and case assignment rules identified by workforce center management.

The WSNCT Mobile Workforce Unit (MWU) is a moving extension of an operating workforce center, aiding WSNCT in bringing direct services to customers in areas where there is no traditional workforce center presence. With access to high-speed internet and 13 accessible computer workstations, career seeker customers may search for jobs, improve their resumes, and receive training wherever needed. Employer customers may have access to a mobile human resources office, and communities may provide dislocated workers immediate access to re-employment resources

Part 5: Workforce Investment Activities

A. Economic Development and Entrepreneurial/Microenterprise Activities

(WIOA §108(b)(5); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(4))

Boards must include an explanation of how the Board will coordinate local workforce investment activities with regional economic development activities that are carried out in the workforce area and how the Board will promote entrepreneurial-skills training and microenterprise services

WSNCT has collaborated with economic development entities and other organizations that promote and support entrepreneurial activities and growth. In addition to providing continuous referrals to local small business development centers and the Small Business Administration, WSNCT staff is positioned to participate and collaborate with organizations such as Inspire Frisco - a collaboration between the City of Frisco and UNT-Frisco, - and Stoke Denton, both of which are designed to encourage entrepreneurial growth, provide mentorship, and continued education and support. WSNCT will continue to collaborate with organizations and initiatives that support the development and growth of entrepreneurship.

WSNCT provides entrepreneurial opportunities to career seekers through course offerings

available through on-line platforms via our Subrecipient. LinkedIn Learning provides a variety of courses to promote entrepreneurial-skills training.

B. Rapid Response Activity Coordination

(WIOA §108(b)(8); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(7))

Boards must include a description of how the Board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the workforce area with statewide rapid response activities described in WIOA §134(a)(2)(A).

Rapid Response services are designed to transition dislocated workers from layoff status to productive employment as quickly as possible. These services apply from the time of the initial layoff notification until the worker is reemployed or enrolled in WIOA formula funded services. This process provides the seamless transition of dislocated workers from Rapid Response services to longer-term employment or training services if appropriate.

Rapid Response services are initiated upon receipt of notification of an impending layoff or closure by the Rapid Response Team, which consists of the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) Dislocated Worker Unit, the Board Rapid Response Coordinator (BRRC), the TWC Unemployment Insurance (UI) Field Representative and the Local Rapid Response Coordinator (LRRC). Notification can occur in the following formats:

- Worker Adjustment Retraining Notification Act (WARN notice);
- A telephone call from an employer, labor union or employee at a company with an impending layoff;
- Affected workers begin using Workforce Center services and notify staff therein;
- An article in a newspaper or other publication;
- Notification from a community organization; or
- A Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Petition filed with the Department of Labor (DOL).

The layoff notification is then shared with the Rapid Response Team and contact is established with the employer within 48 hours to investigate, confirm, offer and coordinate Rapid Response services. If possible, an Onsite or Virtual Management Meeting with the employer is scheduled.

The purpose of the Management Meeting is to provide the employer with an overview of the Rapid Response program and its early intervention services and Unemployment Information. The meeting is held as soon as possible and includes attendance of designated Team members and all appropriate company personnel and union and/or bargaining unit representatives. As a member of the Rapid Response Team, the TWC UI Field Representative is part of developing the Rapid Response plan and may be assigned duties under the plan as appropriate. Rapid Response services are provided on location whenever possible. The TWC Rapid Response Coordinator provides a Rapid Response event number used to record services provided to employers and participants in TWC's TWIST and WIT databases.

A TWC UI Field Representative will brief the employer on relevant UI filing processes including mass claims, and Shared Work.

C. Youth Activities and Services

(WIOA §108(b)(9); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(8))

Boards must include a description and assessment of the type and availability of workforce investment activities for youth in the workforce area, including activities for youth with disabilities. This description must include an identification of successful models of such activities.

WSNCT serves at-risk, in-school and out-of-school youth. WSNCT provide services to youth participants who fall into the following barrier categories:

- Foster Care/Aging out of Foster Care Youth
- Youth Offenders
- Youth with Disabilities
- Basic Skills Deficient
- English Language Learner
- Parenting or Pregnant
- First Generation College Student
- Habitually Truant
- No Substantial Work Experience: no work history or unstable work experience.

Youth activities are provided by a direct case manager, called a Talent Development Specialist (TDS), who provides one-on-one intake, assessment, and individual service planning with the participant. Services are tailored to the individual participants needs with the TDS acting as an advocate for the participant's access to both in-house and local community stakeholder's services. Stakeholders include, but are not limited to, Adult Education and Literacy grantees, secondary and post-secondary schools, and local employers.

Youth with disabilities are served to enable the participant to successfully achieve employment and/or educational goals. Partnerships with experts in the field of Vocational Rehabilitation and mental health is key in successfully serving youth with disabilities. The Student HireAbility Navigator program is a part of the expansion of the Pathways to Careers Initiative (PCI) approved by the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) in 2017. WSNCT has two Student HireAbility Navigators, one at the Board and one at the Subrecipient level. Each Student HireAbility Navigator serves as a resource in the workforce area to support, expand, and enhance the provision of preemployment transition services (Pre-ETS) that are provided by VR as well as by other partners and programs in the workforce area. The primary role and responsibility of the Student HireAbility Navigator is the planning, coordination, promotion, and development of systemic and collaborative strategies that result in the provision of quality Pre-ETS for students with disabilities in the workforce area.

The WSNCT WIOA Youth Program has implemented the 14 program elements required under WIOA guidelines. All Youth TDS have resources to provide the 14 program elements listed below to provide to all eligible youth. Each element is available year-round and is geared towards preparing the youth in becoming self-sufficient in the working world. Services are specific to the individual need of the youth.

- Academic/educational enhancement skill (tutoring) provided through a system of referrals, collaboration with providers of such services, or procured through a competitive process by WSNCT.

- Alternative secondary school services referrals are made as appropriate.
- Paid or unpaid work experience, and/or internships are arranged when appropriate and in accordance with the youth's Individual Service Strategy.
- Occupational skills training in target occupations as determined by the North Central Texas Board area.
- 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 behaviors offered through Workforce Subrecipient.
- Supportive services for youth program participants include referrals to community services, assistance with transportation, child care and dependent care, housing costs, referrals to medical services, uniforms or other appropriate work attire, tools, and protective gear.
- Adult mentoring opportunities through coordination with school district mentoring programs, community groups or through a nomination from youth's participants. Partnering with and referrals to existing mentor programs are pursued.
- Follow-up services, including necessary supportive services, provided for a minimum of 12 months after exit from the youth program.
- Comprehensive guidance and counseling including referral to services outside of the scope of employment and training.
- Financial Literacy - WSNCT uses the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporations (FDIC) Money Smart Program for financial literacy. This is a no cost curriculum resource that helps individuals build financial knowledge, develop financial confidence, and use banking services effectively.
- Youth participants who are interested in entrepreneurial skills training are referred to their local Small Business Administration where information is provided on how to start and manage a business.
- Labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the workforce area, such as career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration services.
- Transition to post-secondary education and training such as financial aid prep, SAT/ACT prep, student loans, school applications, scholarship applications, costs, etc.

WSNCT offers services to youth with disabilities that include a direct link to employment opportunities in the form of On-the-Job Training and Paid or Unpaid Work Experience. WSNCT partners with agencies that specifically serve disabled youth, such as MHMR and Vocational Rehabilitation, to leverage funds and services so that the youth's needs are appropriately addressed. On-the-Job training opportunities create an avenue for workforce staff to develop specific job opportunities customized to the interests and specific needs of the participant. The employer directly invests in their own workforce pipeline by developing a customized employee training plan to fit their business needs. In the Paid or Unpaid work experience model, youth are provided an opportunity to develop basic work skills as well as occupational skills under the guidance of a real-world employer. The experience gained through the development of skills, work experience, career/industry exploration, networking connections and confidence is a valuable first step in developing an occupational or education pathway.

D. Coordination with Secondary and Postsecondary Education Programs

(WIOA §108(b)(10); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(9))

Boards must include a description of how the Board will coordinate its workforce investment activities with relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services.

WSNCT's Partnership Development Coordinator collaborates with Career and Technical Education programs and other regional partners, such as Education Service Centers, and other intermediaries in support of workforce strategies to meet the ever-changing needs of the North Central Texas economy.

WSNCT has recently begun conducting a larger needs assessment to learn more about the needs of our secondary education partners. We will continue to conduct this assessment to find the gaps in services and strategies to meet the needs of our partners - learning what services are meeting their needs and where there is a lag. Once those gaps are identified, WSNCT will strategize ways in which we may be able to meet the need, through the services we offer, and/or looking outward to where our partners may have interest in working together to meet the needs. The Partnership Development Coordinator's attendance at P-16 meetings, working closely with ESCs (Region 10 & 11), and serving as a board member with Interlink also provides aide in discovering various efforts being made across the region. Having WSNCT's voice present within these various groups strengthens the connection with the communities we serve and offers our availability to partner on external initiatives. ESCs offer an additional link to strengthening relationships with ISD leaders as the ESC and WSNCT work together, aiding one another's projects and presentations, and highlighting the work that the other contributes for the community. Working with Interlink allows for WSNCT's participation at various events and initiatives and opens to door to new networks of employers and ISD personnel.

As WSNCT's presence and participation continues to grow within the regional education community, WSNCT has identified a need for a more succinct and definitive process for the approval of various partnership opportunities. WSNCT has started developing a partnership review process that will expedite the consideration and approval of partnerships, alignments, or support in various capacities.

WSNCT is strategic in how we choose to participate in partnerships and opportunities, using the Target Occupations List as an anchor of focus. The projects, events, and initiatives we build and/or support will continue to strongly be determined by whether or not they align with the TOL, as this shows the high demand and high wage occupations within the region. Utilizing the TOL in this way helps maintain relevant goals with a high chance of success within the region.

E. Child Care and Early Learning

(40 TAC §809.12 Board Plan for Child Care Services)

Each Board must include a description of how the Board is strategically managing child care and early learning within its workforce system to enhance school readiness and strengthen and support the child care industry.

WSNCT will support the child care industry by providing access to Texas Child Care tools for Texas Rising Star providers. This tool assists providers in their daily operations as well as provides strategies for them in strengthening their child care programs. We are also collaborating with four other Board areas to support child care programs during trying times. We have established a Child Care Business Support Network that will provide support to child care programs over the next year in an effort to assist child care programs in sustaining their business operations for the short- and long-term.

We will continue to support school readiness through our Texas Rising Star (TRS) program, which includes mentoring/coaching of child care professionals on developmentally appropriate practices and the TRS guidelines; providing opportunities for early childhood professionals to obtain college degrees and certifications; and providing professional development training opportunities to all child care programs.

Early Childhood coalitions will continue to be developed throughout the region, and we will continue to work with employers, industry leaders, non-profits and others to share the opportunities and struggles that child care programs face. WSNCT will convene employers and economic development entities in roundtable discussions to promote the importance of quality child care and how it relates to workforce sustainability, as well as learn about what child care challenges may exist in their communities. We will continue to share information on how child care is an economic development necessity that supports employers in hiring and retaining staff. Active employer participation in ensuring child care quality and availability can directly affect their bottom line and workforce retention, both of which are major contributors to the local economy. Economic development organizations have extensive employer networks and a commitment to growing and sustaining their local economies, thus making them high-value partners for this effort.

F. Transportation and Other Support Services

(WIOA §108(b)(11); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(10))

Boards must include a description of how the Board will provide transportation, including public transportation, and other appropriate support services in the workforce area incoordination with WIOA Title I workforce investment activities.

WSNCT covers 14 counties encompassing more than 10,000 square miles in a diverse WDA that includes rural and urban centers. Each community has community resources dedicated to the support of their citizens. Each local workforce center updates a listing of their local providers on a bi-annual basis. These community referral lists are made available to all participants at workforce orientations and any workforce center visitor. WIOA participants who have support service needs are referred to these community service providers, with workforce center staff assisting the participant through the access process.

As part of the individual assessment process, a TDS conducts a needs assessment to determine strengths and barriers to participation in workforce activities. If support service needs are identified, the TDS will provide the participant with community referral information to access local resources. In cases where community resources are not available, WIOA support services may be offered. The TDS will work with the participant directly to ensure that all local referrals are addressed, that supporting documentation is obtained and the

request is generated timely. Transportation assistance may be offered via bus or transit passes, or transportation reimbursement via a reloadable debit card.

WSNCT provides expanded access through virtual services to reduce barriers to transportation and enhance services to participants within our workforce development area.

G. Coordination of Adult Education and Literacy (AEL)

(WIOA §108(b)(13); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(12))

Boards must include a description of how the Board will coordinate WIOA Title I workforce investment activities with AEL activities under WIOA Title II. This description must include how the Board will carry out the review of local applications submitted under Title II consistent with WIOA §§107(d)(11)(A) and (B)(i) and WIOA §232.

In order to integrate Adult Education & Literacy services with workforce and training services within the WSNCT 14-county area, the AEL/Workforce Regional Coalition was formed.

The Regional Coalition is comprised of representatives from WSNCT board staff, Subrecipient staff, and five TWC contracted AEL Providers, including Weatherford ISD, Denton ISD, Navarro College, Paris Junior College, and Grayson College. Basic and secondary instruction and services provided to adults by these AEL partners enable them to effectively acquire the basic educational skills necessary for literate functioning, to participate in job training and retraining programs, to continue education to at minimum the completion of secondary school, and to obtain and retain employment.

The Regional Coalition supports the goal of increasing employment outcomes for under-skilled populations, promotes continuous improvement in the area of mutual performance, and identifies and closes strategic and operational gaps within the WSNCT service delivery area. Monthly meetings are held to discuss, plan and develop collaborative strategies to keep the local integration process moving forward. The coalition members attend TWC-lead AEL/ Workforce Business Meetings and Conferences with other workforce boards and AEL partners from around the State to glean helpful information and learn from best practices that may assist in local integration efforts.

A joint MOU established under the umbrella of the AEL-North Central Texas Workforce Regional Coalition has been established between WSNCT and our five AEL partners to address customer referrals, coordination/integration of services, and provision of program delivery and services.

<u>How the Board Will Review Local AEL Applications</u>
The Board will select a review team to individually review all applications/grant proposals received from local AEL providers. The review team will consist of one or more of the Board's members or staff members. The Board's process for reviewing AEL provider grant proposals is based upon WIOA regulation and TWC guidance.

A designated point of contact for the review team is identified and TWC notified of the contact through appropriate channels. A Nondisclosure and Conflict of Interest Statement

is completed by the point of contact and each identified reviewer on the team. All AEL provider grant proposals submitted to TWC within the designated time frame for the WSNCT board area will be submitted to the designated point of contact and reviewed by the review team to provide TWC with any recommendations related to alignment with the Board plan.

Part 6: Adult, Dislocated Workers, and Youth Services

A. Adult and Dislocated Worker Employment and Training

(WIOA §108(b)(7); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(6))

Boards must include a description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the workforce area. Boards must include a description and assessment of the type and availability of adult, dislocated worker and youth employment and training activities in the workforce area.

Boards must also include the list of assessment instruments (tools) used for adult, dislocated worker, and youth.

Adult services are provided to help career seekers who are at least 18 years old succeed in the labor market. WIOA establishes a priority in the adult program for serving low-income individuals, recipients of public assistance, and individuals lacking basic work skills. Dislocated worker services are provided to workers who have lost their job, through no fault of their own. The goal of dislocated worker services is to help these individuals obtain quality employment in in-demand industries. WSNCT provides the following services to Adults and Dislocated Workers:

Career Services - Career services for adults and dislocated workers are available in 11 of the 12 workforce centers in the WSNCT region. Basic and individualized services are provided as appropriate, and adequately resourced, and may include the following:

- Determinations of whether an individual is eligible to receive assistance
- Outreach, intake (including worker profiling), and orientation to information and other services available through the Texas workforce system;
- Initial assessment of skills levels, including literacy, numeracy, and English language proficiency, as well as aptitudes, abilities (including skills gaps), and support service needs;
- Labor exchange services, including job search and placement assistance, career coaching, information on nontraditional employment and in-demand industry sectors and occupations;
- Referrals to and coordination of activities with other programs and services, including programs and services within the WSNCT workforce system and, when appropriate, other workforce development programs;
- Workforce and labor market employment statistics information, including information relating to local, regional, and national labor market areas, including job vacancy listings in labor market areas, information on job skills necessary to obtain the vacant jobs listed, and information relating to Target Occupations and the earnings, skills requirements, and opportunities for advancement in those jobs;

- Information on eligible providers of training services;
- Information about how WSNCT is performing on local performance accountability measures, as well as any additional performance information relating to the Texas workforce system;
- Information relating to the availability of support services or assistance, and appropriate referrals to those services and assistance, including child care, child support, medical or child health assistance available through the state's Medicaid program and Children's Health Insurance Program, benefits under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), assistance through the earned income tax credit, and assistance under a state program for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and other support services and transportation provided through that program;
- Information and assistance regarding filing claims for unemployment compensation;
- Assistance in establishing eligibility for programs of financial aid assistance for training and education programs not provided under WIOA;
- Comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skills levels and service needs of adults and dislocated workers, which may include, diagnostic testing and use of other assessment tools, and in-depth interviewing and evaluation to identify employment barriers and appropriate employment goals;
- Development of an individual employment plan;
- Group or individual counseling;
- Career planning;
- Short-term prevocational services, including development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, and professional conduct services to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment or training;
- Internships and work experience;
- Workforce preparation activities;
- Financial literacy services;
- Out-of-area job search and relocation assistance;
- English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs;
- Follow-Up Services;
- Training Services;

Youth services incorporate the 14 program elements required under WIOA guidelines. All Youth TDS have resources to provide the services listed below to all eligible youth. Services are specific to the individual needs of the youth and each element is available year-round and geared towards preparing the youth in becoming self-sufficient in the working world.

- Academic/educational enhancement skill (tutoring) provided through a system of referrals, collaboration with providers of such services, or procured through a competitive process by WSNCT.
- Alternative secondary school services referrals are made as appropriate.
- Paid or unpaid work experience, and/or internships are arranged when appropriate and in accordance with the youth's Individual Service Strategy.
- Occupational skills training in target occupations as determined by the North Central Texas Board area.
- 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 behaviors offered through Workforce Subrecipient.

- Supportive services for youth program participants include referrals to community services, assistance with transportation, childcare and dependent care, housing costs, referrals to medical services, uniforms or other appropriate work attire, tools, and protective gear.
- Adult mentoring opportunities through coordination with school district mentoring programs, community groups or through a nomination from youth's participants. Partnering with and referrals to existing mentor programs are pursued.
- Follow-up services, including necessary supportive services, provided for a minimum of twelve months after exit from the youth program.
- Comprehensive guidance and counseling including referral to services outside of the scope of employment and training.
- Financial Literacy - WSNCT uses the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporations (FDIC) Money Smart Program and ResCare Roadmap to Success workshop for financial literacy. This is a no cost curriculum resource that helps individuals build financial knowledge, develop financial confidence, and use banking services effectively.
- Youth participants who are interested in entrepreneurial skills training are referred to their local Small Business Administration where information is provided on how to start and manage a business.
- Labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the workforce area, such as career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration services.
- Transition to post-secondary education and training such as financial aid prep, SAT/ACT prep, student loans, school applications, scholarship applications, costs, etc.

WSNCT offers services to youth with disabilities that include a direct link to employment opportunities in the form of On-the-Job Training and Paid or Unpaid Work Experience. WSNCT partners with agencies that specifically serve disabled youth, such as MHMR and Vocational Rehabilitation, to leverage funds and services so that the youth's needs are appropriately addressed. On-the-Job training opportunities create an avenue for workforce staff to develop specific job opportunities customized to the interests and specific needs of the participant. The employer directly invests in their own workforce pipeline by developing a customized employee training plan to fit their business needs. In the Paid or Unpaid work experience model, youth are provided an opportunity to develop basic work skills as well as occupational skills under the guidance of a real-world employer. The experience gained through the development of skills, work experience, career/industry exploration, networking connections and confidence is a valuable first step in developing an occupational or education pathway.

WSNCT provides comprehensive and specialized assessments through online assessment tools and Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE) to assist in developing individualized employment plans to support the needs of the customer.

B. Priority to Recipients of Public Assistance and Low-Income Individuals

(20 CFR §679.560(b)(21))

Boards must include the Board policy to ensure that priority for adult individualized career services and training services will be given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient, consistent with WIOA §134(c)(3)(E)

and §680.600 of the Final Regulations, as well as veterans and foster youth, according to the priority order outlined in the WIOA Guidelines for Adults, Dislocated Workers, and Youth. Boards must also include a list of any Board-established priority groups, if any.

Workforce Solutions for North Central Texas ensures that veterans and eligible spouses receive priority of service for all Department of Labor-funded job training programs, including Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. Individualized Career and Training Services must be given on a priority basis, regardless of funding levels, in the following order:

1. Eligible veterans and eligible spouses, as defined in WD Letter 25-15, who are also recipients of public assistance, low income, or basic skills deficient;
2. Non-covered persons (individuals who are not veterans or eligible spouses) who are also recipients of public assistance, low income or basic skills deficient in the following order:
    a. Foster youth and former foster youth, as defined in WD Letter 43-11, Change 2, as required by Texas Family Code §264.121
    b. Non-foster youth
3. All other eligible veterans and eligible spouses;
4. Priority populations established by the governor in the following order:
    a. All other foster youth and former foster youth, as required by Texas Labor Code §264.121
5. Non-covered individuals outside of the groups given priority under WIOA

The Board approved policy on priority of services is included as Attachment A.

Part 7: Fiscal Agent, Grants, and Contracts

A. Fiscal Agent

(WIOA §108(b)(15); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(14))

Boards must include identification of the entity responsible for the disbursal of grant funds described in WIOA §107(d)(12)(B)(i)(III), as determined by the CEOs or the governor under WIOA §107(d)(12)(B)(i).

In 1993, Texas led the nation by building a workforce development system created to improve service delivery through local control and coordination of services through integrated programs. On May 23, 1996, Governor George W. Bush certified the North Central Texas Workforce Development Area and on July 25, 1996, the Chief Elected Officials of 14-county WDA signed a partnership agreement forming the North Central Texas Workforce Development Board. The North Central Texas Council of Governments was selected to be the Board's fiscal agent, grant recipient and administrative agent. In an effort to improve branding across the state, the Board joined with its 27 partners across the state and became generally known as Workforce Solutions for North Central Texas. The Partnership Agreement remains in effect today, and WSNCT has celebrated 24 years of successful operation.

B. Sub-Grants and Contracts

(WIOA §108(b)(16); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(15))

Boards must include a description of the competitive process that will be used to award the sub-grants and contracts for WIOA Title I activities.

Competitive Process for Award of Sub-grants and Contracts:

The competitive process used in awarding grants and contracts complies with federal procurement principles, TWC directives and the TWC Financial Manual for Grants and Contracts, which requires "full and open competition", fair and equal treatment, and "arms-length" relationships with all potential proposers. These principles are addressed in policies and procedures, which require that: (1) selection of a service provider shall be made on a competitive basis to the extent practicable; (2) the process be conducted according to strict ethical standards, including a code of conduct for Board members and staff, and a policy to guard against "real or apparent" conflicts of interest; (3) confidentiality and non-disclosure of submission information are maintained prior to the procurement decision; (4) a policy of openness and access to public records apply after the decision; and (5) fairness and objectivity are maintained in evaluation of proposals, selection, negotiations, and contract management. Positive efforts are made to utilize Historically Underutilized Businesses (HUBs) in the provision of services. These efforts allow those sources maximum feasible opportunity to compete for a contract.

The final selection is based on a system that best serves the interests of the North Central Texas Workforce Development Area. The award of a contract is made only to an entity who has demonstrated competence and qualifications, including: a satisfactory record of past performance, contractor integrity and business ethics; fiscal accountability; financial and technical resources; ability to meet the requirements of the RFP, and any applicable regulations of the Board's funding sources.

Part 8: Performance

A. Board Performance Targets

(WIOA §108(b)(17); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(16))

Boards must include a description of the local levels of performance negotiated with TWC and the CEOs consistent with WIOA §116(c), to be used to measure the performance of the area and to be used by the Board for measuring the performance of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), eligible providers under WIOA Title I subtitle B, and the one-stop delivery system in the area.

BCY21 formally contracted performance measures and available performance targets (As of January 5, 2021):

BCY21 Performance Measures	**BCY21Target**
Claimant Reemployment w/in 10 Weeks	Undetermined
# Employers receiving WF Assistance	Undetermined
Choices Full Work Rate – All Family Total	Undetermined
Avg # Children Served Per Day - Combined (Discrete Month)	7,025
Employed/Enrolled Q2 Post Exit – C&T	Undetermined
Employed/Enrolled Q2Q4 Post Exit – C&T	Undetermined
Medina Earnings Q2 Post Exit – C&T	Undetermined
Credential Rate – C&T	Undetermined
Employed Q2 Post Exit – Adult	71.40%
Employed Q4 Post Exit – Adult	70.80%
Median Earnings Q2 Post Exit - Adult	$5,300
Measurable Skills Gain - Adult	60.00%
Credential Rate - Adult	68.40%
Employed Q2 Post Exit – DW	75.30%
Employed Q4 Post Exit – DW	79.20%
Measurable Skills Gain – DW	49.00%
Median Earnings Q2 Post exit - DW	$8,100
Credential Rate - DW	71.20%
Employed/Enrolled Q2 Post Exit – Youth	69.40%
Employed/Enrolled Q4 Post Exit – Youth	73.80%
Credential Rate – Youth	46.80%
Measurable Skills Gain – Youth	45.90%
Median Earnings Q2 Post Exit – Youth	$3,400

Part 9: Training and Services

A. Individual Training Accounts (ITAs)

(WIOA §108(b)(19); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(18))

Boards must include a description of how training services outlined in WIOA §134 will be provided through the use of ITAs, including, if contracts for training services will be used, how the use of such contracts will be coordinated with the use of ITAs under that chapter, and how the Board will ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs, regardless of how the training services are to be provided.

Informed customer choice is a cornerstone of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. WSNCT provides access to training services using a process of an individual participant assessment coupled with the development of an individual employment plan to assist the career seeker in the decision to take advantage of training services.

WIOA participants are directed to labor market information to review job and industry growth, and wage information.

WIOA participants have access to a full array of qualified and competitive eligible training providers. The participants also have full access to the statewide ETP list of training providers and their performance data. Participants are encouraged to fully evaluate all training providers and program offerings to earn an industry recognized credential. WSNCT assists the participant to determine all sources of grant funding options to cover the costs of training, such as applying for PELL grants, local and state grant options, and veterans funding, if eligible. Workforce center staff works closely with participants to develop a budget to cover tuition and living expenses related to training throughout the training period. The ITA comes in the form of a voucher that allows the participant to work directly with the training provider.

WIOA training services under section 134 are offered in the form of on-the-job training placements. The Business Services Consultants work hand in hand with WIOA TDSs on behalf of the WIOA participant. The Business Consultants promote the WIOA candidates directly to employers who are in need of developing a strong workforce with customized skill sets that immediately benefit their business needs. The OJT placement is structured using the same assessment and plan development to identify the participant strengths and occupational interests. WSNCT employs the use of an OJT contract with the employer for wage reimbursement.

B. ITA Limitations

(20 CFR §663.420)

Boards may impose limits on the duration and amount of ITAs. If the state or Board chooses to do so, the limitations must be described in the Board Plan, but must not be implemented in a manner that undermines WIOA's requirement that training services are to be provided in a manner that maximizes customer choice in the selection of an Eligible Training Provider.

Exceptions to ITA limitations may be provided for individual cases and must be described in Board policies.

WSNCT has imposed a limit for ITAs of $15,000 for training services, required fees, and materials. Exceptions to the ITA funding cap are determined on a case-by-case basis with sufficient documentation and approvals.

Part 10: Apprenticeship

A. Registered Apprenticeship Programs

(WIOA §108(b)(19); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(18))

Boards must include a description of how the Board will encourage Registered Apprenticeship programs in its workforce area to register with the Eligible Training Provider System in order to receive WIOA funding.

WSNCT will continue to promote and educate on the importance and value of Registered Apprenticeships to employers and other community partners. This awareness and education will be shared through employer engagement meetings (individual and roundtable discussions) and will be promoted as a high-value talent development strategy. During these discussions, WSNCT will highlight the benefit of and encourage employers to register their program(s) on the statewide Eligible Training Providers List in order to potentially receive WIOA funding for qualified candidates. It will be positioned to employers as a means to further promote their program throughout the state, as well as potentially present an opportunity to leverage funding. This also creates involvement from the Workforce Subrecipient to educate career seekers on available apprenticeship opportunities.

B. ApprenticeshipTexas

Boards must include a description of the Board's strategy and commitment to support ApprenticeshipTexas efforts across the state, as applicable.

Registered Apprenticeship development, expansion, and awareness is a part of the WSNCT Strategic Plan, and goals will continue to be set for outreaching and educating partners on the importance of apprenticeship to workforce. The Apprenticeship Navigator and WSNCT staff will continue to support the development of new RA programs and the expansion of existing RA programs through targeted industry outreach supported by labor market data, roundtable collaborations with community partners and stakeholders, and employer needs. WSNCT was awarded an ApprenticeshipTexas Expansion Grant in September 2020 in the amount of $120,000. A portion of the grant will be used to support the training efforts and expansion of Bombardier's Aircraft Assembler Registered Apprenticeship Program. WSNCT will utilize the remaining grant funds further provide education and resources for Registered Apprenticeship and develop an education and awareness strategy for the employers to encourage the development of new programs. During these discussions, WSNCT will highlight the benefit of employers to register their program(s) on the statewide Eligible Training Providers List in order to potentially receive WIOA funding for qualified

candidates. This also creates involvement from the Workforce Subrecipient to educate career seekers on available apprenticeship opportunities.

Part 11: Public Comment

Boards must include a description of the process used by the Board, consistent with WIOA §108(d), 20 CFR §679.550(b) and §679.560(b) and (e), to:

- **make copies of the proposed local plan available to the public through electronic and other means, such as public hearings and local news media;**
- **include an opportunity for comment by members of the public, including representatives of business, labor organizations, and education;**
- **provide at least a 15-day, but no more than a 30-day period for comment on the plan before its submission to TWC, beginning on the date that the proposed plan is made available, before its submission to TWC; and**
- **submit any comments that express disagreement with the plan to TWC along with the plan.**

The Board's plan was available for public comment online, as well as in hard copy upon request. The plan was posted to the Board's website, www.dfwjobs.com, from January 22, 2021 to February 8, 2021. Ads inviting local comment were placed in ten local papers and an email soliciting comment was sent to major stakeholders such as elected officials and education partners via Constant Contact. Comments could be submitted by email and contact information was listed on the website.

Appendix: Texas Workforce Investment Council Requirements

Local Workforce Development Board Strategic Planning

The Texas Workforce Investment Council (TWIC) is charged under Texas Government Code §2308.101(5), 2308.302(a), and 2308.304(a)(b)(4), and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA) (Public Law 113–128) with recommending the plans of Local Workforce Development Boards (Boards) to the governor for consideration for approval. TWIC reviews each Board Plan to ensure that local goals and objectives are consistent with the statewide goals and objectives in the system plan, The Texas Workforce System Strategic Plan FY 2016–FY 2023, which can be found at https://gov.texas.gov/uploads/files/organization/twic/System-Strategic-Plan- Update.pdf.

Additionally, state law charges TWIC with reporting annually to the governor and to the Texas legislature on the implementation of the system's strategic plan and monitoring the operation of the state's workforce system to assess the degree to which the system is effective in achieving state and local goals and objectives. Therefore, TWIC also reviews Board Plans and plan modifications to determine each Board's progress in implementing strategies that align with the strategic plan for the Texas workforce system. Following consideration for approval at a regularly scheduled quarterly meeting, TWIC recommends the Board Plans to the governor for consideration for approval. Boards' responses to the following planning elements are reviewed by TWIC for alignment and are the basis for recommending approval.

Demonstrating Alignment with Texas' Strategic Plan for the Workforce System

The four sections below list and describe the four system goals from The Texas Workforce System Strategic Plan FY 2016–FY 2023 (2020 Update) that identify critical, high-priority system issues for the state. **For each goal, briefly describe one significant Board strategy or initiative that fulfills the intent of the goal. Also, please include the corresponding page number(s) within your plan that further details the identified strategy or initiative.**

System Goal 1 and Rationale

Focus on Employers

By accessing critical education and labor data sets, employers can better find and plan for skilled workers to meet their needs in both the immediate time frame and the future. Through greater engagement with employers, education and training providers can better design career and technical education content and delivery options that are more aligned with industry needs. Providers can make adjustments in program content to benefit employers and students, as well as address both state and regional economic needs.

System Goal 1—Local Board Response

Board response and corresponding plan page number(s):

WSNCT will utilize a consultative approach to enhance employer relationships to gather data and make informed decisions that will lead to a more comprehensive approach to workforce development. WSNCT will additionally focus on providing more in-depth customized talent development strategies that will lead to more opportunities for career seekers. Sector partnerships will be developed to further understand industry needs. This strategy will keep WSNCT engaged in ongoing conversation about emerging trends and shifts in industries in the region. The sector partnerships will be employer-led, focusing on agendas and points of discussion brought forth by industry. The participation of other community partners and stakeholders will connect employers to other resources to resolve issue that fall outside of WSNCT's purview. **(Pg # 33)**

System Goal 2 and Rationale

Engage in Partnerships

Through collaborative and transparent processes, workforce system partners focus on outcomes that improve the employability of all program participants—from across a wide spectrum of capabilities and experiences—to meet employer needs. The leveraging of partnerships to enhance system alignment and outcomes depends on trust, a culture of collaboration both within and external to the workforce system, deep working relationships, and technical capacity to communicate to share needs, data, and information. Partnerships can provide for common planning, intake, and reporting on outcomes, as well as ensuring a "no wrong door" approach to the provision of workforce programs and services.

System Goal 2—Local Board Response

Board response and corresponding plan page number(s):

WSNCT will develop and convene sector partnerships to enhance understanding of regional needs and facilitate solution development to address those expressed needs for the purpose of improving our employers' competitiveness and increasing and diversifying career opportunities for our communities. These partnerships will include representation from economic development organizations, higher education, independent school districts, and non-profit organizations that have access to targeted populations. These partnerships will align with WSNCT's key priorities to ensure that the board continues to carry out its mission and that our work is relevant and impactful.

WSNCT is developing a strong partnership review process that will expedite the consideration of and approval of partnerships, alignments, or support in various capacities. As requests from the community and education groups for partnerships come to WSNCT,

such as playing a role of support within grant opportunities, consortia, apprenticeships, etc., WSNCT has identified a need for a more succinct and definitive process for the approval of various partnership opportunities. These asks are typically handled via numerous emails to different parties and individuals, as well as informative meetings with various individuals to clarify the ask, and many follow-up emails and/or meetings. A plan is being developed to streamline and automate this process through Laserfiche in order to inform and alert selected staff and decision makers pertaining to the ask. Information will be entered into the Laserfiche system, which will send alerts that automatically include important details such as due dates and an outline of the ask through a paperless and efficient process. This process includes automated tasks and alerts for appropriate individuals to complete in a timely manner to keep the process moving along, as well as serve as a reference point with pertinent information, creating efficiency. This tool will deter the team from losing track of proposals or falling behind schedule while making strenuous efforts to inform various individuals. WSNCT will be able to efficiently inform and receive approval for partnerships or support and complete formal documents or letters recognizing the partnership approval or support in a timely manner.

The Partnership Development Coordinator will continue to build partnerships across the area with colleges and ISDs in order to deepen those relationships, share data and information, and assist on workforce programs and services. Alignment on grant opportunities from Texas Workforce Commission continues to grow. As grant opportunities such as the Jobs and Educations for Texas (JET) and the Dual Credit continue to present themselves to the state, WSNCT will continue to spread awareness of the opportunities, share information, make connections, and offer technical assistance when appropriate for applicants. WSNCT has hosted JET grant workshops and plans to continue offering this great learning opportunity for our region as well as expand these workshops to continue working with TWC staff to provide more information for the Dual Credit grant.

Sharing Labor Market Information and outreach efforts to ensure our partners can count on WSNCT for data needs will continue to grow. As the Texas Education Agency continues to emphasize the importance of educators making data-driven decisions around program offerings and opportunities, and as CTE programs continue to align to high-demand occupations and industries, WSNCT plans to continue the outreach and involvement as a resource and stakeholder for ISDs and colleges. The Partnership Development Coordinator will continue to seek out information and stay informed of opportunities for secondary and post-secondary institutions and will continue to find creative ways to assist our partners with LMI and/or partnerships. Most recently, WSNCT activated the participation within the Perkins V Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment for several partners, providing targeted LMI and participation in stakeholder meetings. Making available the local knowledge of workforce trends in the region, employer partnerships, education resources and training opportunities, as well as knowing the needs and goals of our partners, will continue to help us build our relationships within the region and become part of the solutions to align with the workforce goals across the state. **(Pg #34, 52)**

System Goal 3 and Rationale

Align System Elements

By improving transitions, aligning programs, and ensuring portability and transferability, Texas improves access and the ability of all participants to complete programs of study, earn credentials, transition to further education, and gain critical employability skills. Texas employers are better positioned to find and hire the employees they need through an enhanced education and training pipeline.

System Goal 3—Local Board Response

Board response and corresponding plan page number(s):

WSNCT has developed strong partnerships with Goodwill and United Way, and has collaborated with other regional organizations who provide services to foster youth. These partnerships have allowed us to leverage resources and make referrals to services to Goodwill for Digital Training and to United Way to provide classroom space and cross referrals among agencies. By aligning our services with these partnerships, we are able to collaborate at the local level to enhance the education and employment opportunities for the unemployed and underemployed individuals served by both parties. We continue to seek additional opportunities for alignment that enhance the wrap around services and strengthen the resources we have available to customers. **(Pg # 33)**

System Goal 4 and Rationale

Improve and Integrate Programs

Accelerate employment and improve efficiencies through shared resources that can be leveraged to create new, relevant, and innovative opportunities that serve the needs of all stakeholders. By addressing high-priority programmatic needs through an integrated strategy, decision-making at the system, partner, and participant levels is improved and system service delivery is enhanced.

The changing economic and educational landscapes provide opportunities to share relevant data through appropriate “push” mechanisms in an organized manner to key stakeholders who rely on information generated by system partners.

System Goal 4—Local Board Response

Board response and corresponding plan page number(s):

The Target Occupations List is a resource shared with partners and the community to aid informed decision making based on an analysis of data. This list also serves as an internal resource as a first step guidance point in aligning both internal and external projects to the occupations identified on the list, as it showcases relevant high-demand/high-wage occupations within the WSNCT board area. Utilizing the list in this way ensures the success of new program choices for education partners. WSNCT has shared, and continues to share, this list as encouragement for our region to recognize where growth lies, helping to create relevant goals with a high chance of success for individuals.

When contacted regarding partnerships and/or approval of grant opportunities, the TOL is always part of the decision making and conversations with external partners. WSNCT's Partnership Development Coordinator has increased presentations to colleges, ISD administrators, counselors, and teachers. During these presentations, the TOL is shared and access to other labor market data sources is explained. Through these interactions, there has been an increase in educators seeking out LMI services and TOL access by contacting WSNCT. This outreach will continue with the goal of making WSNCT an accessible resource for education partners seeking relevant data for decision making. **(Pg # 52)**

WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS
NORTH CENTRAL TEXAS
QUALIFIED CANDIDATES. BETTER JOBS. NO CHARGE.