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Local Workforce Development Board Plan
Program Years 2021–2024
2 Year Plan Modification

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Local Workforce Development Board Plan
Program Years 2021–2024

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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

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 the 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:

- **Workforce Industry Engagement:** Achieving ambitious workforce and economic goals will require aligning initiatives to be demand-driven in support of industry needs. WSNCT will cultivate sector partnerships, partner with economic development organizations, and share timely labor market expertise to support economic growth.

- **Career Pathways:** Achieving ambitious workforce and economic goals will require aligning initiatives to be demand-driven in support of industry needs. WSNCT will cultivate sector partnerships, partner with economic development organizations, and share timely labor market expertise to support economic growth.

- **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 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 received valuable feedback to refine our management systems and build for the future.

The year 2020 marked the 10th consecutive year WSNCT 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.

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:

- 2021 Employment
- Average Earnings Per Job
- 2021-2031% Employment Change
- Location Quotient
- 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 Office Administration Services (NAICS 5611), which is the largest industry in the list by employment at the "four-digit" NAICS level, with Activities Related to Credit Intermediation (NAICS 5223) under Finance and Insurance 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.

Although the process criteria verify the in-demand industries' average earnings per job exceed the living wage for a single working person with no kids in 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 more than $30,000 annually.

In-Demand Industries

Parent Sector	NAICS	NAICS Description	2021 Employment	2021-2031% Change	Average Annual Wages	Current Location Quotient
Manufacturing	3261	Plastics Product Manufacturing	4,776	16.7%	$70,465	1.04
	3323	Architectural and Structural Metals Manufacturing	7,500	27.3%	$65,746	2.47
	3344	Semiconductor and Other Electronic Component Manufacturing	5,993	25.6%	$123,086	2.11
Wholesale Trade	4234	Professional and Commercial Equipment and Supplies Merchant Wholesalers	6,318	29.4%	$131,838	1.18
	4236	Household Appliances and Electrical and Electronic Goods Merchant Wholesalers	5,474	31.0%	$117,871	2.04
	4237	Hardware, and Plumbing and Heating Equipment and Supplies Merchant Wholesalers	2,500	28.7%	$89,310	1.12
Finance and Insurance	5223	Activities Related to Credit Intermediation	8,216	23.5%	$116,017	3.12
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	5312	Offices of Real Estate Agents and Brokers	5,513	27.0%	$73,087	1.13
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	5611	Office Administrative Services	8,671	40.4%	$81,599	1.69
Other Services (except Public Administration)	8113	Commercial and Industrial Machinery and Equipment (except Automotive and Electronic) Repair and Maintenance	2,340	38.2%	$100,450	1.32

Source: JobsEQ

In-Demand Occupations

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

- 2021 Employment
- 2021-2031% Employment Change
- Unemployment Rate
- 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) Registered Nurses, (3) Maintenance and Repair Workers, General , (4) Accountants and Auditors, and (5)Project Management Specialists and Business Operations Specialists, All Other . These occupations vary in industry sector, skillsets, and level of education needed to enter the respective labor markets.

In-Demand Occupations

SOC	Occupation	2021 Jobs	2021 - 2031 % Change	Unemployment Rate
Health Care				
29-1141	Registered Nurses	13,047	33.9%	1.3%
31-9091	Dental Assistants	3,845	39.4%	2.8%
21-1018	Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors	1,713	53.1%	1.5%
29-2055	Surgical Technologists	562	33.7%	0.7%
29-2034	Radiologic Technologists and Technicians	1,097	35.9%	0.3%
29-1292	Dental Hygienists	1,908	39.4%	1.3%
29-1126	Respiratory Therapists	571	48.5%	0.7%
29-2057	Ophthalmic Medical Technicians	501	48.7%	1.2%
31-9092	Medical Assistants	5,368	45.9%	4.5%
31-9097	Phlebotomists	836	57.7%	1.4%
43-6013	Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	4,932	37.4%	1.9%
21-1093	Social and Human Service Assistants	1,612	43.0%	4.4%
29-2072	Medical Records Specialists	1,319	36.6%	2.4%
19-1042	Medical Scientists, Except Epidemiologists	446	39.8%	0.9%
21-1022	Healthcare Social Workers	810	37.3%	6.8%
19-3034	School Psychologists	687	25.5%	0.4%
29-1011	Chiropractors	669	41.4%	1.1%
29-1071	Physician Assistants	740	61.8%	1.1%
29-1171	Nurse Practitioners	1,410	89.1%	0.4%
29-1021	Dentists, General	1,398	35.4%	0.4%
29-1229	Physicians, All Other; and Ophthalmologists, Except Pediatric	1,212	35.7%	0.2%
Construction, Design, & Mechanical Technology				
47-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers	6,731	30.5%	2.3%
49-9052	Telecommunications Line Installers and Repairers	1,220	27.1%	2.8%
49-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Mechanics, Installers, and Repairers	4,371	32.1%	1.0%
49-3031	Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists	2,081	28.7%	3.7%
11-9021	Construction Managers	4,281	35.4%	2.8%
49-9041	Industrial Machinery Mechanics	2,819	46.9%	1.8%
49-2022	Telecommunications Equipment Installers and Repairers, Except Line Installers	1,842	29.2%	3.1%

SOC	Occupation	2021 Jobs	2021 - 2031 % Change	Unemployment Rate
13-1041	Compliance Officers	2,241	37.7%	2.0%
13-1051	Cost Estimators	1,589	25.2%	2.2%
17-2051	Civil Engineers	1,717	36.0%	2.9%
17-2141	Mechanical Engineers	1,694	32.6%	2.9%
17-2112	Industrial Engineers	2,135	41.5%	0.6%
17-2072	Electronics Engineers, Except Computer	969	36.8%	0.9%
11-9041	Architectural and Engineering Managers	1,284	30.6%	2.3%
49-9071	Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	10,698	36.0%	2.4%
49-9021	Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers	3,139	31.2%	1.9%
49-3041	Farm Equipment Mechanics and Service Technicians	326	31.3%	2.3%
Business Administration & Professional Services				
13-1082	Project Management Specialists	8,099	38.8%	1.4%
13-1199	Business Operations Specialists, All Other	7,963	37.3%	1.4%
13-2011	Accountants and Auditors	9,861	34.4%	2.6%
13-1071	Human Resources Specialists	5,105	39.9%	3.4%
13-1111	Management Analysts	6,226	42.3%	3.2%
13-1161	Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	4,869	53.7%	1.8%
15-2031	Operations Research Analysts	900	60.0%	2.3%
15-2051	Data Scientists	738	69.8%	1.8%
11-9111	Medical and Health Services Managers	2,561	63.9%	1.2%
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	29,261	39.8%	2.5%
11-3121	Human Resources Managers	1,135	39.5%	2.6%
11-2021	Marketing Managers	2,362	39.3%	3.9%
11-2022	Sales Managers	3,902	35.9%	3.5%
31-9096	Veterinary Assistants and Laboratory Animal Caretakers	793	39.6%	1.2%
43-3021	Billing and Posting Clerks	3,314	27.3%	2.4%
29-1131	Veterinarians	884	43.3%	0.3%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate (FIRE)				
41-3021	Insurance Sales Agents	5,903	38.0%	3.0%
13-2072	Loan Officers	4,153	28.0%	1.1%
43-9041	Insurance Claims and Policy Processing Clerks	2,313	30.1%	3.5%
13-2099	Financial Specialists, All Other	982	39.3%	1.9%
41-3031	Securities, Commodities, and Financial Services Sales Agents	5,223	35.6%	3.0%
11-9141	Property, Real Estate, and Community Association Managers	3,112	30.5%	1.8%
41-9022	Real Estate Sales Agents	3,928	31.2%	2.5%
13-1031	Claims Adjusters, Examiners, and Investigators	2,421	27.7%	1.9%
13-2041	Credit Analysts	887	22.2%	4.2%
13-2052	Personal Financial Advisors	3,154	36.5%	2.0%
13-2061	Financial Examiners	569	59.6%	4.5%
11-3031	Financial Managers	5,218	49.6%	1.9%
Information Technology (IT)				
15-1232	Computer User Support Specialists	6,887	40.3%	2.7%
15-1244	Network and Computer Systems Administrators	3,142	33.7%	1.3%
15-1231	Computer Network Support Specialists	1,665	35.9%	2.8%
15-1254	Web Developers	873	43.4%	2.0%
15-1255	Web and Digital Interface Designers	859	43.1%	2.0%
15-1299	Computer Occupations, All Other	3,995	36.3%	2.0%
15-1211	Computer Systems Analysts	5,659	36.7%	1.7%
15-1242	Database Administrators	981	40.5%	1.0%
15-1243	Database Architects	636	44.4%	0.9%

SOC	Occupation	2021 Jobs	2021 - 2031 % Change	Unemployment Rate
15-1253	Software Developers and Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers	2,676	60.0%	1.1%
15-1212	Information Security Analysts	1,545	73.4%	0.7%
15-1241	Computer Network Architects	1,774	36.3%	1.5%
11-3021	Computer and Information Systems Managers	4,748	42.6%	1.5%
Personal Care Services				
31-9011	Massage Therapists	1,435	62.0%	4.0%
37-1012	First-Line Supervisors of Landscaping, Lawn Service, and Groundskeeping Workers	1,716	29.0%	1.2%
37-2021	Pest Control Workers	963	33.3%	2.4%
11-9179	Personal Service Managers, All Other	32	49.6%	1.9%
39-5011	Barbers	498	43.1%	5.0%
37-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Housekeeping and Janitorial Workers	1,780	30.3%	2.5%
Education/Training				
13-1151	Training and Development Specialists	2,704	41.3%	3.0%
21-1012	Educational, Guidance, and Career Counselors and Advisors	2,531	30.3%	1.7%
29-1127	Speech-Language Pathologists	1,384	48.8%	1.5%
11-9039	Education Administrators, All Other	360	42.1%	1.8%
Law, Public Safety, Corrections & Security				
23-2011	Paralegals and Legal Assistants	1,751	43.1%	3.7%
23-1011	Lawyers	4,590	36.8%	1.1%
Hospitality & Food Services				
11-9051	Food Service Managers	2,806	42.3%	4.6%
Transportation, Distribution, & Logistics				
11-3071	Transportation, Storage, and Distribution Managers	1,013	37.0%	3.1%

Source: JobsEQ

Target Occupations

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

- Typical Entry Level Education
- 2021 Employment
- Entry Hourly Earnings
- 2021-2031% Employment Change
- Unemployment Rate
- 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 13 occupations. Other occupation groups with a high number of occupations are Finance, Insurance, Real Estate (FIRE) with 12 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 82,983 jobs, with FIRE in second place at 37,862 jobs. IT (35,438 jobs), Construction (34,972 jobs), and Health Care (22,743) are the next largest occupational groups.

At the occupation level, the top five largest occupations by employment are General and Operations Managers, Registered Nurses, Accountants and Auditors, Project Management Specialists, and Business Operations Specialists. These five largest occupations' median wages range from $78,700 to $108,300 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 0.3% to 4.5%, and the projected employment growth of the occupations is an average of 40.0% over the next ten years.

Target Occupations

Occupation	SOC	Typical Entry Level Education	2021 Empl.	2021 - 2031 % Change	Ann Median Wage	Unempl. Rate
Construction, Design, & Mechanical Technology						
Telecommunications Line Installers and Repairers	49-9052	HS diploma or equivalent	1,220	27.05%	$59,200	2.81%
Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists	49-3031	HS diploma or equivalent	2,081	28.74%	$50,900	3.70%
Industrial Machinery Mechanics	49-9041	HS diploma or equivalent	2,819	46.87%	$54,300	1.82%
Telecommunications Equipment Installers and Repairers, Except Line Installers	49-2022	Postsecondary non-degree award	1,842	29.23%	$52,900	3.13%
First-Line Supervisors of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers	47-1011	HS diploma or equivalent	6,731	30.54%	$65,500	2.30%
Cost Estimators	13-1051	Bachelor's degree	1,589	25.18%	$67,400	2.17%
First-Line Supervisors of Mechanics, Installers, and Repairers	49-1011	High school diploma or equivalent	4,371	32.06%	$68,900	0.99%
Compliance Officers	13-1041	Bachelor's degree	2,241	37.75%	$72,500	1.98%
Civil Engineers	17-2051	Bachelor's degree	1,717	36.01%	$90,000	2.92%
Construction Managers	11-9021	Bachelor's degree	4,281	35.40%	$98,400	2.83%
Mechanical Engineers	17-2141	Bachelor's degree	1,694	32.62%	$100,100	2.90%
Industrial Engineers	17-2112	Bachelor's degree	2,135	41.45%	$95,300	0.61%
Electronics Engineers, Except Computer	17-2072	Bachelor's degree	969	36.84%	$120,900	0.94%
Architectural and Engineering Managers	11-9041	Bachelor's degree	1,284	30.61%	$159,000	2.31%
Business Administration & Professional Services						
Human Resources Specialists	13-1071	Bachelor's degree	5,105	39.94%	$71,600	3.37%
Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	13-1161	Bachelor's degree	4,869	53.69%	$72,800	1.78%
Accountants and Auditors	13-2011	Bachelor's degree	9,861	34.37%	$84,100	2.60%
Project Management Specialists	13-1082	Bachelor's degree	8,099	38.78%	$95,700	1.43%
Business Operations Specialists, All Other	13-1199	Bachelor's degree	7,963	37.26%	$79,000	1.40%
Operations Research Analysts	15-2031	Bachelor's degree	900	60.04%	$92,100	2.30%
Management Analysts	13-1111	Bachelor's degree	6,226	42.27%	$97,400	3.21%
Data Scientists	15-2051	Bachelor's degree	738	69.82%	$112,400	1.84%
Medical and Health Services Managers	11-9111	Bachelor's degree	2,561	63.91%	$120,800	1.24%
General and Operations Managers	11-1021	Bachelor's degree	29,261	39.82%	$108,300	2.54%
Human Resources Managers	11-3121	Bachelor's degree	1,135	39.54%	$133,800	2.61%
Sales Managers	11-2022	Bachelor's degree	3,902	35.94%	$132,200	3.45%
Marketing Managers	11-2021	Bachelor's degree	2,362	39.31%	$142,700	3.89%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate (FIRE)						
Insurance Sales Agents	41-3021	HS diploma or equivalent	5,903	37.95%	$70,500	2.97%
Loan Officers	13-2072	Bachelor's degree	4,153	28.01%	$71,900	1.11%
Insurance Claims and Policy Processing Clerks	43-9041	HS diploma or equivalent	2,313	30.08%	$47,000	3.50%
Securities, Commodities, and Financial Services Sales Agents	41-3031	Bachelor's degree	5,223	35.58%	$89,300	2.95%
Property, Real Estate, and Community Association Managers	11-9141	HS diploma or equivalent	3,112	30.47%	$75,400	1.75%
Claims Adjusters, Examiners, and Investigators	13-1031	HS diploma or equivalent	2,421	27.74%	$70,100	1.94%
Real Estate Sales Agents	41-9022	HS diploma or equivalent	3,928	31.25%	$58,200	2.52%
Credit Analysts	13-2041	Bachelor's degree	887	22.19%	$85,300	4.17%
Financial Specialists, All Other	13-2099	Bachelor's degree	982	39.34%	$68,200	1.89%

Occupation	SOC	Typical Entry Level Education	2021 Empl.	2021 - 2031 % Change	Ann Median Wage	Unempl. Rate
Personal Financial Advisors	13-2052	Bachelor's degree	3,154	36.50%	$112,700	1.97%
Financial Examiners	13-2061	Bachelor's degree	569	59.62%	$89,700	4.48%
Financial Managers	11-3031	Bachelor's degree	5,218	49.64%	$156,500	1.93%
Information Technology (IT)						
Computer User Support Specialists	15-1232	Some college, no degree	6,887	40.33%	$53,100	2.72%
Web Developers	15-1254	Bachelor's degree	873	43.44%	$82,200	2.04%
Web and Digital Interface Designers	15-1255	Bachelor's degree	859	43.13%	$90,600	2.01%
Computer Network Support Specialists	15-1231	Associate's degree	1,665	35.90%	$76,900	2.78%
Network and Computer Systems Administrators	15-1244	Bachelor's degree	3,142	33.71%	$94,400	1.26%
Computer Systems Analysts	15-1211	Bachelor's degree	5,659	36.68%	$103,800	1.69%
Computer Occupations, All Other	15-1299	Bachelor's degree	3,995	36.31%	$91,800	2.00%
Database Administrators	15-1242	Bachelor's degree	981	40.49%	$99,600	0.96%
Database Architects	15-1243	Bachelor's degree	636	44.43%	$127,000	0.95%
Software Developers and Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers	15-1253	Bachelor's degree	2,676	59.96%	$89,000	1.12%
Information Security Analysts	15-1212	Bachelor's degree	1,545	73.41%	$106,100	0.68%
Computer Network Architects	15-1241	Bachelor's degree	1,774	36.28%	$111,800	1.52%
Computer and Information Systems Managers	11-3021	Bachelor's degree	4,748	42.58%	$154,700	1.47%
Health Care						
Dental Assistants	31-9091	Postsecondary non-degree award	3,845	39.36%	$38,000	2.80%
Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors	21-1018	Bachelor's degree	1,713	53.09%	$50,600	1.52%
Surgical Technologists	29-2055	Postsecondary non-degree award	562	33.67%	$52,600	0.66%
Radiologic Technologists and Technicians	29-2034	Associate's degree	1,097	35.95%	$63,400	0.30%
Respiratory Therapists	29-1126	Associate's degree	571	48.50%	$66,100	0.74%
Registered Nurses	29-1141	Bachelor's degree	13,047	33.86%	$78,700	1.25%
Dental Hygienists	29-1292	Associate's degree	1,908	39.43%	$73,600	1.33%
Personal Care Services						
Massage Therapists	31-9011	Postsecondary non-degree award	1,435	61.99%	$44,300	4.03%
First-Line Supervisors of Landscaping, Lawn Service, and Groundskeeping Workers	37-1012	HS diploma or equivalent	1,716	28.98%	$50,600	1.18%
Pest Control Workers	37-2021	HS diploma or equivalent	963	33.30%	$39,700	2.36%
Personal Service Managers, All Other	11-9179	Bachelor's degree	32	49.64%	$74,600	1.88%
Education/Training						
Training and Development Specialists	13-1151	Bachelor's degree	2,704	41.31%	$66,000	3.02%
Hospitality & Food Services						
Food Service Managers	11-9051	HS diploma or equivalent	2,806	42.32%	$64,300	4.64%
Law, Public Safety, Corrections & Security						
Paralegals and Legal Assistants	23-2011	Associate's degree	1,751	43.10%	$58,200	3.69%
Transportation, Distribution, & Logistics						
Transportation, Storage, and Distribution Managers	11-3071	HS diploma or equivalent	1,013	36.95%	$106,400	3.11%

Source: 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 common 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 common skills by employers within our in-demand industries show that the top five skills for each industry can be summed to 15 different skills

The skill that appeared across all in-demand industries was Communication, which shows the critical attention this area needs within all training programs at all education levels. Other skills that appeared the most often behind Communication, in order from most to least often, were Management, Customer Service, Sales, and Operations. Although soft skills, as depicted by the number of times Communication appeared in the analysis, is growing in importance in the workforce, digital 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

Skill	Activities Related to Credit Intermediation (5223)	Architectural and Structural Metals Manufacturing (3323)	Commercial and Industrial Machinery and Equipment (except Automotive and Electronic) Repair and Maintenance (8113)	Hardware, and Plumbing and Heating Equipment and Supplies Merchant Wholesalers (4237)	Household Appliances and Electrical and Electronic Goods Merchant Wholesalers (4236)	Office Administrative Services (5611)	Offices of Real Estate Agents and Brokers (5312)	Plastics Product Manufacturing (3261)	Professional and Commercial Equipment and Supplies Merchant Wholesalers (4234)	Semiconductor and Other Electronic Component Manufacturing (3344)
Communications	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Management	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Customer Service			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
Sales		✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	
Operations				✓	✓		✓	✓		
Leadership	✓	✓							✓	
Problem Solving	✓	✓								✓
Detail Oriented			✓			✓				
Planning						✓				✓
Lifting Ability			✓							
Microsoft Office							✓			
Packaging And Labeling								✓		
Presentations									✓	
Self-Motivation	✓									
Troubleshooting (Problem Solving)								✓		

Source: Lightcast

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 by common skills, specialized skills, and software skills. The top 10 common skills desired between WSNCT's in-demand occupations and target occupations are exactly the same. The top 10 specialized skills and the top 10 software skills for WSNCT's in-demand occupations and target occupations are also the same, although in differing rank order.

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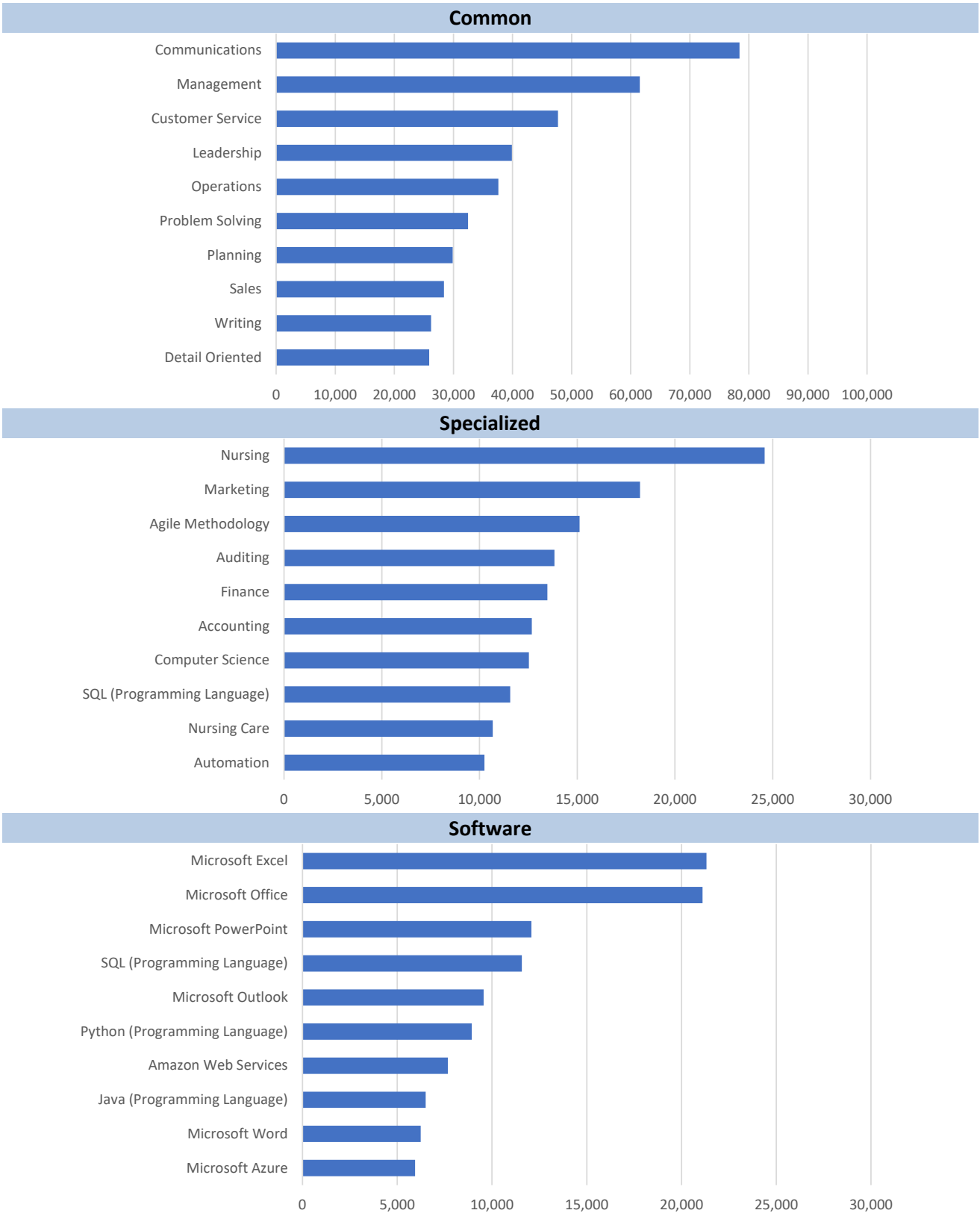
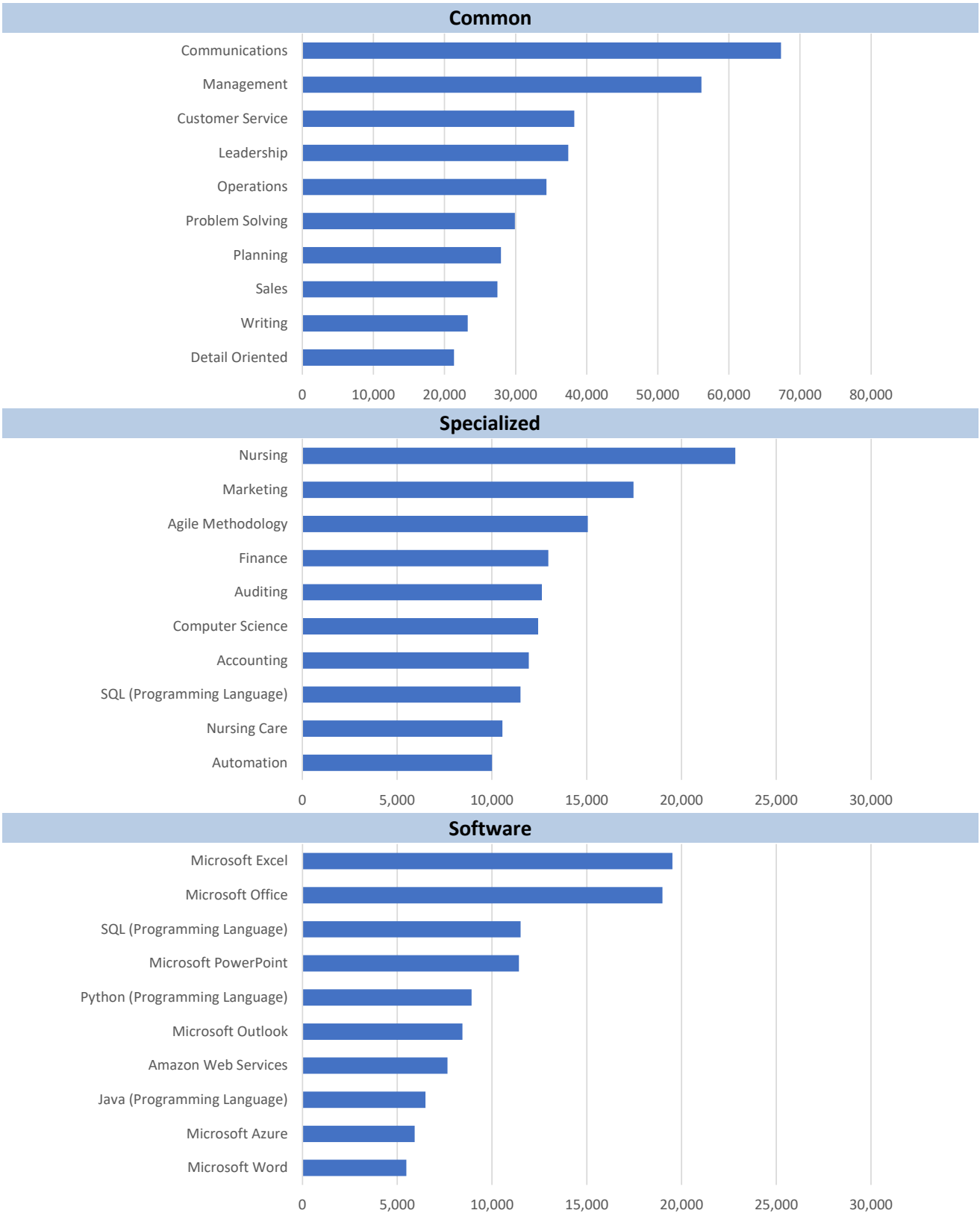
Top 10 Skills for In-Demand Occupations



Source: Lightcast

Top 10 Skills for Target Occupations



Source: Lightcast

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 from 2010 to 2020 is 2.8%, Texas shows a growth rate of 1.5%, while the nation trails both areas at 0.6%. Our Labor Force Participation Rate is currently 68.6%, 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.

Educational Attainment, which is the highest level of education individuals age 25 and over have completed, is another important dataset that is closely correlated to economic well-being. 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. The percentage of residents in the WSNCT region holding a bachelor's degree or more (42.4%) outpaces state (31.5%) and national levels (34.3%).

Workforce and Demographic Summary

	Percent			Value		
	WSNCT	**Texas**	**USA**	**WSNCT**	**Texas**	**USA**
Demographics						
Population (ACS)				2,941,547	28,635,442	326,569,308
Male	49.3%	49.7%	49.2%	1,450,252	14,221,720	160,818,530
Female	50.7%	50.3%	50.8%	1,491,295	14,413,722	165,750,778
Median Age[2]				36.9	34.8	38.2
Under 18 Years	25.4%	25.8%	22.4%	746,586	7,381,482	73,296,738
18 to 24 Years	8.8%	9.8%	9.3%	257,968	2,804,109	30,435,736
25 to 34 Years	13.2%	14.7%	13.9%	388,264	4,210,488	45,485,165
35 to 44 Years	14.6%	13.6%	12.7%	430,452	3,888,044	41,346,677
45 to 54 Years	14.1%	12.4%	12.7%	414,654	3,542,967	41,540,736
55 to 64 Years	11.8%	11.2%	12.9%	346,506	3,214,983	42,101,439
65 to 74 Years	7.6%	7.6%	9.4%	222,345	2,166,863	30,547,950
75 Years and Over	4.6%	5.0%	6.7%	134,772	1,426,506	21,814,867
Race: White	74.2%	69.2%	70.4%	2,181,204	19,805,623	229,960,813
Race: Black or African American	8.5%	12.1%	12.6%	249,898	3,464,424	41,227,384
Race: American Indian and Alaska Native	0.5%	0.5%	0.8%	15,889	137,921	2,688,614
Race: Asian	8.4%	4.9%	5.6%	248,335	1,415,664	18,421,637

	Percent			Value		
	WSNCT	Texas	USA	WSNCT	Texas	USA
Race: Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%	3,675	25,328	611,404
Race: Some Other Race	2.9%	6.2%	5.1%	84,665	1,788,398	16,783,914
Race: Two or More Races	5.4%	7.0%	5.2%	157,881	1,998,084	16,875,542
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	18.3%	39.4%	18.2%	539,051	11,294,257	59,361,020
Population Growth						
Population (Pop Estimates)[4]				3,130,807	29,360,759	329,484,123
Population Annual Average Growth[4]	2.8%	1.5%	0.6%	75,694	411,886	2,015,698
People per Square Mile				286.0	111.0	92.9
Economic						
Labor Force Participation Rate and Size (civilian population 16 years and over)	68.6%	64.7%	63.2%	1,565,055	14,214,242	164,759,496
Prime-Age Labor Force Participation Rate and Size (civilian population 25-54)	84.2%	81.0%	82.4%	1,037,589	9,378,835	105,137,520
Armed Forces Labor Force	0.1%	0.4%	0.4%	1,536	94,824	1,143,342
Veterans, Age 18-64	4.7%	4.7%	4.5%	85,492	832,547	8,920,267
Veterans Labor Force Participation Rate and Size, Age 18-64	84.5%	78.5%	76.8%	72,258	653,740	6,853,673
Median Household Income[2]				$87,717	$63,826	$64,994
Per Capita Income				$40,046	$32,177	$35,384
Mean Commute Time (minutes)				29.8	26.6	26.9
Commute via Public Transportation	0.6%	1.3%	4.6%	9,259	166,825	7,044,886
Educational Attainment, Age 25-64						
No High School Diploma	8.3%	14.6%	10.5%	131,551	2,171,844	17,929,220
High School Graduate	20.0%	24.4%	25.4%	315,260	3,627,667	43,289,555
Some College, No Degree	21.3%	21.6%	20.5%	335,834	3,213,443	34,959,338
Associate's Degree	8.1%	7.8%	9.3%	127,467	1,163,242	15,776,790
Bachelor's Degree	28.1%	20.8%	21.6%	444,157	3,089,698	36,888,244
Postgraduate Degree	14.3%	10.7%	12.7%	225,607	1,590,588	21,630,870
Housing						
Total Housing Units				1,098,466	11,112,975	138,432,751
Median House Value (of owner-occupied units)[2]				$270,900	$187,200	$229,800
Homeowner Vacancy	1.2%	1.4%	1.4%	8,270	87,068	1,129,755
Rental Vacancy	6.7%	7.8%	5.8%	23,076	319,748	2,704,553
Renter-Occupied Housing Units (% of Occupied Units)	31.1%	37.7%	35.6%	316,133	3,737,262	43,552,843
Occupied Housing Units with No Vehicle Available (% of Occupied Units)	2.8%	5.2%	8.5%	28,751	518,950	10,344,521
Social						

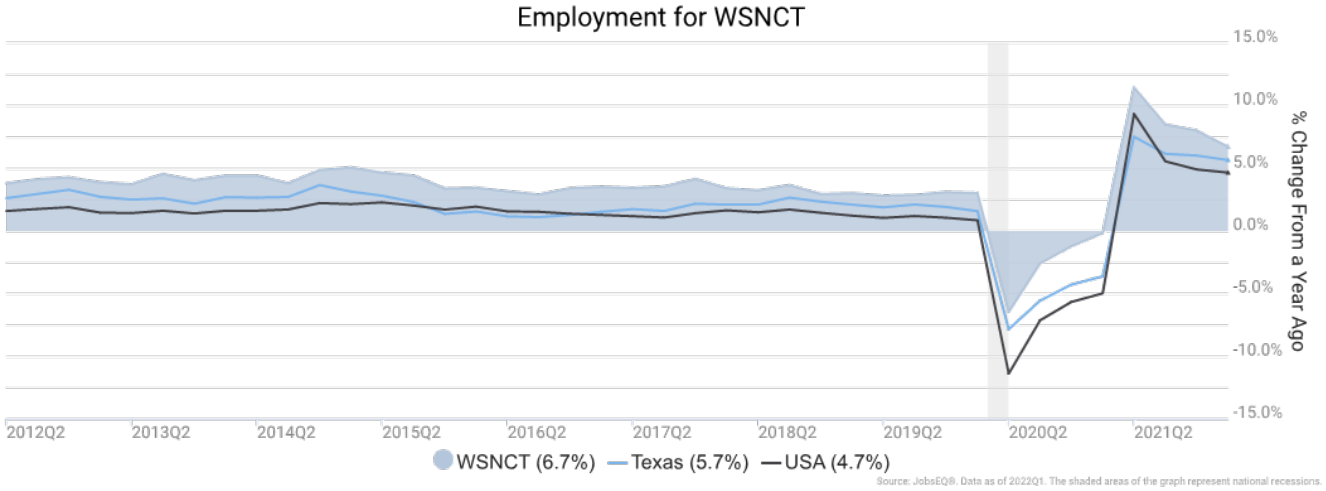
	Percent			Value		
	WSNCT	Texas	USA	WSNCT	Texas	USA
Poverty Level (of all people)	8.0%	14.2%	12.8%	231,249	3,984,260	40,910,326
Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP	5.2%	11.5%	11.4%	53,069	1,137,919	13,892,407
Enrolled in Grade 12 (% of total population)	1.4%	1.4%	1.3%	42,421	414,927	4,358,865
Disconnected Youth[3]	2.1%	2.9%	2.5%	3,557	46,974	433,164
Children in Single Parent Families (% of all children)	23.1%	34.3%	34.0%	166,075	2,407,343	23,628,508
Uninsured	12.2%	17.3%	8.7%	356,252	4,877,069	28,058,903
With a Disability, Age 18-64	7.4%	9.5%	10.3%	135,759	1,635,809	20,231,217
With a Disability, Age 18-64, Labor Force Participation Rate and Size	52.1%	46.3%	43.2%	70,743	757,894	8,740,236
Foreign Born	14.3%	16.8%	13.5%	420,798	4,822,952	44,125,628
Speak English Less Than Very Well (population 5 yrs and over)	7.6%	13.3%	8.2%	208,520	3,531,850	25,312,024

Source: JobsEQ®

1. American Community Survey 2016-2020, 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 Population Estimate for 2020, annual average growth rate since 2010.

Employment Trends

As of 2022Q1, total employment for the WSNCT region was 1,206,256 (based on a four-quarter moving average). Over the year ending 2022Q1, employment increased 6.7% in the region.

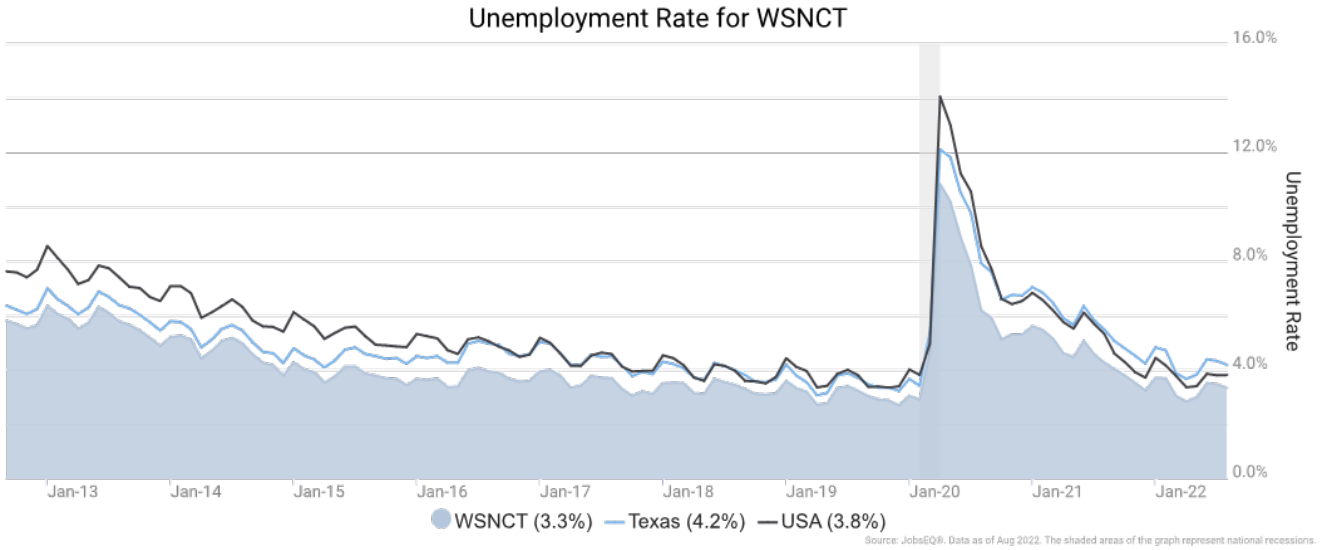


Source: JobsEQ

Notes: Employment data are derived from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and imputed where necessary. Data are updated through 2021Q4 with preliminary estimates updated to 2022Q1.

Unemployment Rate

The unemployment rate for the WSNCT region was 3.3% as of August 2022. The regional unemployment rate was lower than the national rate of 3.8%. One year earlier, in August 2021, the unemployment rate in the WSNCT region was 4.3%.



Source: JobsEQ

Notes: Unemployment rate data are from the Local Area Unemployment Statistics, provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and updated through August 2022.

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 relative to the nation (12.7%). Amongst this group are Palo Pinto County (17.8%), Navarro County (17.3%), Wise County (15.6%), Hunt County (15.1%), Somervell County (14.1%), Erath County (13.2%), and Hood County (12.8%).

		Population with Disability			
Geography	Total civilian noninstitutionalized population	Female	Male	Total Pop. With Disability	Total Pop. w/ Disability (%)
Collin County	1,003,134	36,613	32,091	68,704	6.8%
Denton County	858,176	37,817	34,955	72,772	8.5%
Ellis County	178,308	10,780	10,368	21,148	11.9%
Erath County	41,717	2,922	2,571	5,493	13.2%
Hood County	59,338	3,745	3,863	7,608	12.8%
Hunt County	95,414	6,857	7,586	14,443	15.1%
Johnson County	168,917	9,175	8,844	18,019	10.7%
Kaufman County	128,653	7,525	7,687	15,212	11.8%
Navarro County	48,671	3,708	4,727	8,435	17.3%
Palo Pinto County	28,552	2,528	2,541	5,069	17.8%
Parker County	136,985	8,444	8,350	16,794	12.3%
Rockwall County	100,490	4,167	3,663	7,830	7.8%
Somervell County	8,775	810	426	1,236	14.1%
Wise County	67,008	5,459	4,981	10,440	15.6%
WSNCT	2,924,138	140,550	132,653	273,203	9.3%
Texas	28,169,961	1,657,184	1,584,726	3,241,910	11.5%
USA	321,525,041	21,066,789	19,719,672	40,786,461	12.7%

Source: American Community Survey, 2020 5-year sample

Populations with Veteran Status

Approximately 7.3% of our WSNCT civilian population 18 years and older holds veteran status. The counties within our service region that have higher veteran population percentages relative to the nation (7.5%) are Hood County (11.8%), Parker County (10.7%), Wise County (10.2%), Hunt County (9.5%), Palo Pinto County (9.3%), Navarro County (8.4%), Ellis County (8.3%), Kaufman County (8.0%), and Rockwall County (7.8%).

		Veterans				
Geography	Civilian population 18 years and over	Female	Male	With a Disability	Total Veteran Pop.	Total Veteran Pop. (%)
Collin County	692,780	4,043	38,247	8,132	42,290	6.1%
Denton County	601,616	3,830	37,231	8,496	41,061	6.8%
Ellis County	123,271	869	9,383	2,675	10,252	8.3%
Erath County	32,738	114	2,184	706	2,298	7.0%
Hood County	44,859	413	4,897	1,744	5,310	11.8%
Hunt County	70,018	538	6,082	2,040	6,620	9.5%
Johnson County	120,596	794	7,543	2,560	8,337	6.9%
Kaufman County	85,890	639	6,262	1,841	6,901	8.0%
Navarro County	35,829	249	2,748	1,192	2,997	8.4%
Palo Pinto County	21,635	167	1,854	841	2,021	9.3%
Parker County	97,449	806	9,586	2,912	10,392	10.7%
Rockwall County	67,827	455	4,823	1,075	5,278	7.8%
Somervell County	6,728	-	474	136	474	7.0%
Wise County	48,490	443	4,479	1,517	4,922	10.2%
WSNCT	2,049,726	13,360	135,793	35,867	149,153	7.3%
Texas	20,502,823	153,502	1,320,730	414,832	1,474,232	7.2%
USA	248,322,822	1,608,197	17,003,235	5,307,392	18,611,432	7.5%

Source: American Community Survey, 2020 5-year sample

Populations that Speak Languages Other Than English

In our service area, 568,899 people speak a language other English at home, representing 22.0% of the population 5 years and older. Collin County (28.1%), Navarro County (24.2%), and Denton County (23.1%) all have a higher percentage of population 5 years and over that speak a language other than English at home, outpacing the national percentage (21.5%).

		Language Spoken at Home			
Geography	**Pop. 5 years and over**	**Speak only English**	**Speak only English (%)**	**Speak a language other than English**	**Speak a language other than English (%)**
Collin County	884,492	636,345	71.90%	248,147	28.10%
Denton County	754,621	580,279	76.90%	174,342	23.10%
Ellis County	157,446	127,882	81.20%	29,564	18.80%
Erath County	39,033	32,474	83.20%	6,559	16.80%
Hood County	53,792	48,601	90.30%	5,191	9.70%
Hunt County	86,348	74,129	85.80%	12,219	14.20%
Johnson County	152,703	128,715	84.30%	23,988	15.70%
Kaufman County	110,365	91,514	82.90%	18,851	17.10%
Navarro County	45,091	34,169	75.80%	10,922	24.20%
Palo Pinto County	26,591	22,737	85.50%	3,854	14.50%
Parker County	121,809	110,842	91.00%	10,967	9.00%
Rockwall County	87,816	73,586	83.80%	14,230	16.20%
Somervell County	8,239	7,403	89.90%	836	10.10%
Wise County	60,337	51,108	84.70%	9,229	15.30%
WSNCT	2,588,683	2,019,784	78.0%	568,899	22.0%
Texas	25,886,326	16,688,818	64.50%	9,197,508	35.50%
USA	303,066,180	237,956,495	78.50%	65,109,685	21.50%

Source: American Community Survey, 2020 5-year sample

D. Workforce Development Analysis

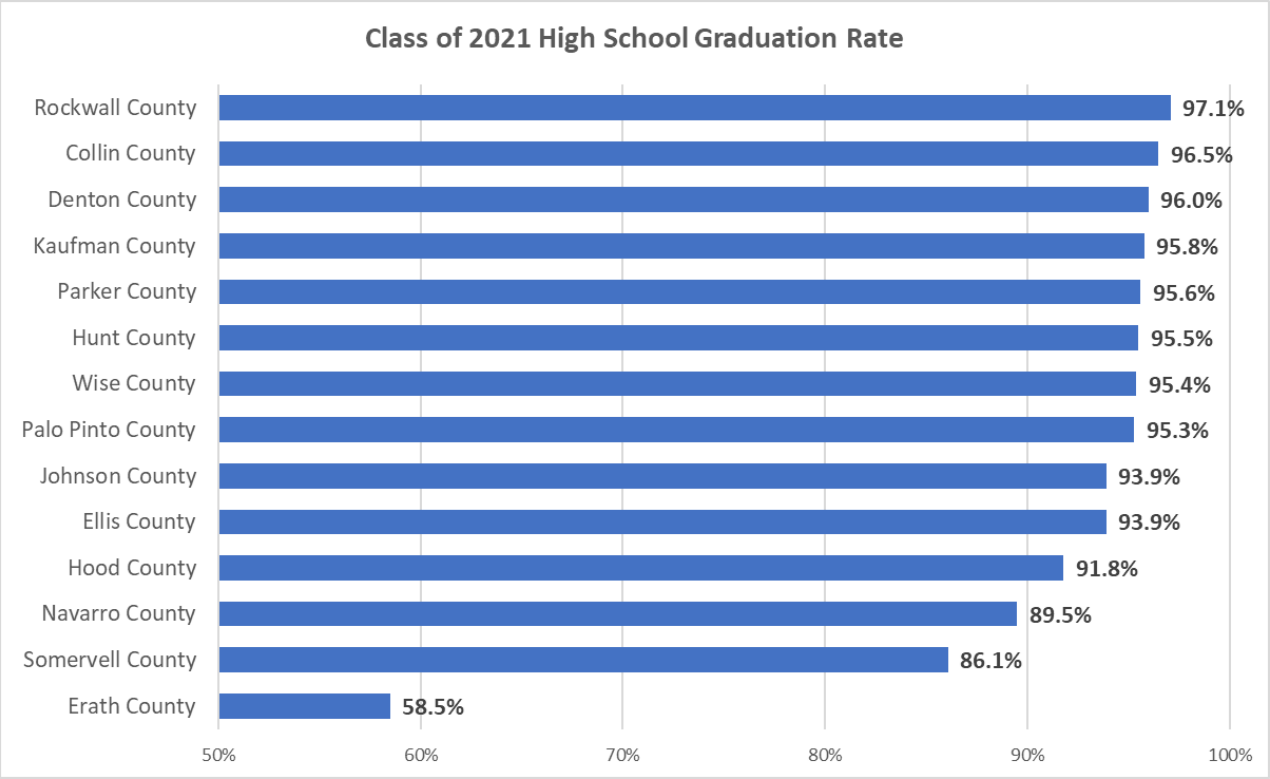
(WIOA §108(b)(1)(D); 20 CFR §679.560(a)(4))

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 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, eight counties have high school graduation rates above 95%, and the average graduation rate of the 14 counties is 91.5%.



Source: TEA, Class of 2021 Four-Year Longitudinal Graduation Rate, Texas Public Schools
Notes: A four-year longitudinal graduation rate is the percentage of students from a class of beginning ninth graders who graduate by their anticipated graduation date, or within four years of beginning ninth grade.

Top 25 Program Completions in Higher Education in 2021

The largest program completions in higher education were the "two-digit" Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) areas of (1) Liberal Arts and Sciences, General Studies and Humanities, (2) Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services, (3) Health Professions and Related Programs, (4) Multi/Interdisciplinary Studies, and (5) Education. These five areas alone account for approximately 58.6% of all 2021 program completions iin 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
24	Liberal Arts and Sciences, General Studies and Humanities	5,170	0	4,088	1,082	0	0	0	0
52	Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services	5,149	31	506	2,874	4	1,748	0	21
51	Health Professions and Related Programs	2,881	274	737	1,322	18	657	17	165
30	Multi/Interdisciplinary Studies	2,017	0	0	1,913	1	101	0	3
13	Education	1,520	0	201	176	21	989	0	154
50	Visual and Performing Arts	1,177	84	85	871	2	173	0	48
42	Psychology	1,171	0	31	933	30	166	0	41
11	Computer and Information Sciences and Support Services	1,101	106	149	664	73	263	0	25
31	Parks, Recreation, Leisure, Fitness, and Kinesiology	980	0	16	786	0	174	0	4
43	Homeland Security, Law Enforcement, Firefighting and Related Protective Services	852	138	121	663	0	68	0	0
26	Biological and Biomedical Sciences	840	0	7	775	0	42	0	16
09	Communication, Journalism, and Related Programs	832	0	45	720	8	67	0	0
45	Social Sciences	612	0	12	500	10	83	0	17
25	Library Science	544	0	0	0	171	544	0	0
14	Engineering	524	0	20	414	2	74	0	16
44	Public Administration and Social Service Professions	487	0	3	282	0	200	0	2
01	Agricultural/Animal/Plant/Veterinary Science And Related Fields	472	26	7	385	0	80	0	0
19	Family and Consumer Sciences/Human Sciences	332	4	8	240	0	70	0	14
15	Engineering/Engineering-related Technologies/Technicians	287	60	29	210	0	48	0	0
23	English Language and Literature/Letters	262	0	1	210	7	35	1	16
54	History	261	0	0	218	0	37	0	6
27	Mathematics and Statistics	224	0	0	121	15	99	0	4
39	Theology and Religious Vocations	194	0	73	85	0	31	0	5
16	Foreign Languages, Literatures, and	181	22	16	129	0	36	14	0

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
	Linguistics								
40	Physical Sciences	151	0	1	100	0	39	0	11

Source: Lightcast, 2022

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 training opportunities for early learning programs as a part of our initiative to promote quality child care practices. WSNCT also provides grants for new equipment, materials and age-appropriate curriculum to ensure quality learning environments to early learning programs working toward Texas Rising Star certification or for certified Texas Rising Star programs working toward maintaining current certification levels or achieving a higher certification level. Early learning 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 through the ApprenticeshipTexas Expansion grants. 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. WSNCT kicked off its first sector partnership in the Infrastructure & Construction sector in September 2022. The partnership will bring together industry and community partners to better identify workforce challenges and provide a collaborative environment to devise sustainable solutions, both short and long term. The goal for WSNCT is to develop sector partnerships in prominent industries in the region and continue to create workforce development opportunities benefitting both employers and career seekers. 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 public 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 (AOP), 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.

- 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 Cleburne, Corsicana, Denton, Granbury, Greenville, McKinney, Stephenville, Terrell, Waxahachie, and Weatherford. 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 Cleburne, Corsicana, Denton, Granbury, Greenville, McKinney, Stephenville, Terrell, Waxahachie, and Weatherford.

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 that become available.

WSNCT will continue to build relationships and increase the number of partnerships affecting in-school youth through CTE programs. As more school districts become interested in College, Career, and Military (CCMR) centered models for learning and preparedness, WSNCT will continue offering connections to other partners for necessary support, and/or providing labor market data as needed. WSNCT will continue seeking out and sharing resources and skill-building opportunities for students and educators.

WSNCT will continue to engage school districts, employers, colleges, and other training providers in identifying and developing opportunities and events that target career exploration and pathways 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 and awareness 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 and awareness of 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. Additionally, WSNCT Affirmative Outreach Plan (AOP) helps promote fair and equal access to services. The AOP raises awareness regarding workforce services across the diverse populations of the region.

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. 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 **190** programs, three community colleges, one statewide technical college, as well as one university. 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 by Board staff, as well as utilizing a professional Registered Accessibility Specialist (RAS) who determines that each facility meets the criteria established by the 2012 Texas Architectural Standards. Staff and 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);
- 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 to delve further into industry sector work. There will continue to be 1:1 meetings with employers to identify and address their unique workforce needs, WSNCT is working to be more impactful in collaborating with industry to devise more impactful solutions. 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 industry 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. 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 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
- Victims of sex trafficking.

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. Youth also have the opportunity to go through an 8-week entrepreneurial training where the youth will develop critical thinking skills that will enable them to identify and evaluate opportunities, resources and skills, to develop and transform their entrepreneurial ideas. 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 to contracted providers. This tool assists providers in their daily operations as well as provides strategies for them in strengthening their child care programs. We will also be deploying staff to specifically work with child care businesses to strengthen their connections to: Business Coaching and training; Workforce Assisted services; TWC grants; assisting with expansion opportunities; providing information on Quality Rating systems and the child care scholarship program.

We will continue to support school readiness through the 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 early learning 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 in coordination 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 (AEL) 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. Quarterly 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.

How the Board Will Review Local AEL Applications

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.

BCY22 formally contracted performance measures and available performance targets (As of October 1, 2022):

BCY22 Performance Measures	**BCY22Target**
Claimant Reemployment w/in 10 Weeks	59.98%
# Employers receiving WF Assistance	9,111
Choices Full Work Rate – All Family Total	50.00%
Avg # Children Served Per Day - Combined	7,329
Employed/Enrolled Q2 Post Exit – C&T	63.30%
Employed/Enrolled Q2Q4 Post Exit – C&T	80.25%
Credential Rate – C&T	70.10%
Employed Q2 Post Exit – Adult	68.40%
Employed Q4 Post Exit – Adult	68.30
Median Earnings Q2 Post Exit - Adult	$5,000
Measurable Skills Gain - Adult	52.30%
Credential Rate - Adult	65.40%
Employed Q2 Post Exit – DW	75.30%
Employed Q4 Post Exit – DW	79.20%
Measurable Skills Gain – DW	57.00%
Median Earnings Q2 Post exit - DW	$8,600
Credential Rate - DW	71.20%
Employed/Enrolled Q2 Post Exit – Youth	66.40%

Employed/Enrolled Q4 Post Exit – Youth	70.80%
Credential Rate – Youth	43.80%
Measurable Skills Gain – Youth	35.00%
Median Earnings Q2 Post Exit – Youth	$3,200

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

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 has been awarded two ApprenticeshipTexas Expansion grants to assist in employers in developing new and expanding existing registered apprenticeship programs. WSNCT has been able to contribute to the training costs for Bombardier, Velex, and Camp Fire First Texas. Through the partnership with Bombardier, WSNCT developed a testimonial video highlighting five apprentices, commentary from Bombardier management staff, and two of the TWC Commissioners reiterating the importance of the training model and how it has benefitted the organization. Additionally, WSNCT was asked to lead a panel with Bombardier, TSTC, and DOL during the 2022 ApprenticeshipTexas Conference to further highlight the partnership. Velex will serve on a panel during the upcoming TWC Annual Conference to speak to their experience in registered apprenticeships, and WSNCT is contributing to Related Training Instruction Costs for more than 500 of their apprentices through the grant.

WSNCT will continue providing education and resources for Registered Apprenticeship through 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. In FY22, engagement efforts led to the registration of two new Registered Apprenticeship programs in our region with AMR Nextfleet and Integrity Health & Education. WSNCT additionally hosted virtual information sessions for the TWC Critical Skills and Healthcare Initiatives, which provide grant funding for employers to develop new and expand existing programs. WSNCT is also engaging with local independent school districts and community college partners with employers in pre-apprenticeship discussions, which is training that can be built into Career and Technical Education programs to give students more career exploration opportunities and build their skills to better prepare them to enter a registered apprenticeship program.

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 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 will be posted to the Board's website, www.dfwjobs.com, from December 5, 2022 to January 6, 2023. 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 # 4, 32, 44)**

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 # 4, 6, 31, 34, 35, 37, 44, 49, 51, 62)**

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 # 32)

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 # 6, 8, 13, 14, 15, 16, 31, 32, 51, 62)**