



LOCAL WORKFORCE AREA #11
Grundy, Livingston, & Kankakee
Counties
WIOA Local Plan
2024 – 2028

CHAPTER 4: OPERATING SYSTEMS AND POLICIES – LOCAL COMPONENT

- A. **Coordination of Planning Requirements: The plan will incorporate the Memorandum of Understanding and Service Integration Action Plan.** As part of this plan, the LWIA will complete a Service Integration Self-Assessment of its progress on service integration. A copy of the documentation associated with the self-assessment process will be submitted as an appendix to this plan. Additionally, this plan must include the following statements in this chapter:
1. *The Local Workforce Innovation Area #11 Memorandum of Understanding provides a description of the one-stop delivery system, and other information that is essential to the establishment and operation of effective local workforce development systems as required by the WIOA Rule (20 CFR Part 678.705). The Memorandum of Understanding and any subsequent modifications is incorporated by reference into this plan.*
 2. *The Local Workforce Innovation Area #11 Service Integration Self-Assessment Tool provides a description of how local workforce partners will align and coordinate services as required by the State of Illinois Service Integration Policy (WIOA Policy Chapter 1, Section 13). The Service Integration Self-Assessment Tool, and any subsequent modifications, are incorporated by reference into this plan.*
 3. Property Control for Property Purchased with WIOA Funds (WIOA Policy Chapter 8, Section 3.6)
 4. Compliant and Grievance Procedures (Nondiscrimination) (WIOA Policy Chapter 8, Section 5)
- B. **Provide a copy of the following local policies and agreements:**
1. Chief Elected Official (CEO) Functions and Agreement Between Multiple Chief Elected Officials (WIOA Policy Chapter 1, Section 2). **Attached**
 2. Chief Elected Official Delegation of Authority and Acknowledgment of Financial Liability (WIOA Policy Chapter 1, Section 3). **Attached**
 3. Local Workforce Innovation Board (LWIB) Certification and Recertification Requirements (WIOA Policy Chapter 1, Section 5). **Attached Workforce Board By-laws.**
 4. One-Stop Operator Procurement (WIOA Policy Chapter 1, Section 7). **Attached**
 5. Career Planning (WIOA Policy Chapter 4, Section 2). **LWA #11 follows the states career planning policy at WIOA Policy, Chapter 4, Section 3 since state policy is very detailed on what is required for career planners. LWA #11 does not have a local policy at this time.**
 6. General Follow-Up Services (WIOA Policy Chapter 4, Section 3). **Attached**
 7. Selective Service Registration Requirements (WIOA Policy Chapter 5, Section 1.1). **Attached**
 8. Youth Eligibility (WIOA Policy Chapter 5, Section 4). **Attached**
 9. Service Priorities (WIOA Policy Chapter 5, Section 6). **Attached**
 10. Veterans' Priority of Service Requirements (WIOA Policy Chapter 5, Section 7). **Attached is service provider contract language to states Jobs for Veterans Act requirements.**
 11. Individual Training Accounts (WIOA Policy Chapter 7, Section 2.1). **Attached**
 12. On-the-Job Training (WIOA Policy Chapter 7, Section 2.2.1). **Attached but policy is outdated and needs revisions.**
 13. Incumbent Worker Training (WIOA Policy Chapter 7, Section 2.2.3). **Attached**

14. Work Experience (WEX) and Transitional Jobs (WIOA Policy Chapter 7, Section 2.5). **Attached**
15. Training Provider and Training Program Eligibility – Eligible Training Provider List (WIOA Policy Chapter 7, Section 3). **Attached**
16. Supportive Services (WIOA Policy Chapter 7, Section 4). **Attached**
17. Privacy and Security (Personally Identifiable Information) (WIOA Policy Chapter 8, Section 2.2). **Attached**
18. Property Control for Property Purchased with WIOA Funds (WIOA Policy Chapter 8, Section 3.6). **Attached**
19. Compliant and Grievance Procedures (Nondiscrimination) (WIOA Policy Chapter 8, Section 5). **Attached**

C. Describe how the use of technology and other alternative means of service delivery in the one-stop delivery system, including a description of:

1. **How the workforce centers are implementing and transitioning to an integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information system for programs carried out under WIOA (§ 679.560(b)(20)).**

The Board will work to implement any state-led initiatives to transition to a technology enabled case management system. Due to the complexity of the data systems and extensive number of them, state leadership will be necessary in order to ensure a successful information system that works for all partners.

Until such time as an integrated data system is established, the partners agree to pursue other means of sharing information relevant to the individuals and employer successful outcomes. The partners have developed an electronic referral system to help streamline the referral process. The referral system includes an electronic referral form that gets emailed to the appropriate partner. All referrals are reported on a spreadsheet that is shared with partners. Thus, the referral system has provided an updated service delivery method in our workforce area.

LWA #11 has data sharing agreements with Illinois Department of Human Services - TANF and Illinois Department of Employment Security. Notwithstanding any other provisions in this MOU, only partners who have executed a separate data sharing agreement with IDHS will have access to wage records and other confidential IDHS data. These executed data sharing agreements allow partners with such agreements to perform eligibility, employment assistance using Illinois Joblink, and performance indicators. These executed data sharing agreements are integral in the day to day function of the one stop center.

Below are specific examples of data sharing which has been implemented.

- Title II Adult Education and Perkins programs are at Kankakee Community College and share a common client database so students can move from adult education to community college credit programs seamlessly. Kankakee Community College follows Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) federal requirements to assure student information is confidential.
- Title I Workforce Services and Title III Wagner Peyser share individual resumes

to best help the individual obtain their employment goal. As part of the Workforce Services application process, an individual signs a release of information request which allows the partner to share information. In addition, IDES provides Title 1 Workforce Services partner with access to Illinois Joblink, Illinois employment system through Wagner Peyser.

- Title II Adult Education and Title I Workforce Services share reading and math test results in order to avoid the duplication of services.
- Title 1 Workforce Services have data sharing agreements with Department of Human Services & IDES in order to provide eligibility and case management services for adult, dislocated workers, and youth.
- Program Partners will be providing number of customers served and other primary performance information to the One Stop Operator in order to help develop a One Stop System dashboard which will be reported to the Workforce Board.

Due to the sensitive nature of the individual's private information we collect for our respective programs, workforce development partners agree to comply with federal and state laws/policies regarding the protection of personally identifiable information (PII) including confidentiality of PII data.

2. How the local area is using multiple methods to provide orientations for customers, including but not limited to, virtual and asynchronous orientations.

There are multiple ways methods that the workforce area provides orientations and information to our customers.

- Program information is on our respective workforce services websites for 24/7 access to individuals and employers. This information includes general information, career pathway information, local scholarship application, and job posting board.
- Workforce Services staff provide individualized orientations.
- Workforce Services staff provide group orientations
- The use of technology such as virtual meetings, i.e. Zoom or Teams to ensure those with barriers have access to services.
- Implementing outreach kiosks to be located throughout the workforce area to ensure all individuals are aware of services
- Community events: Community events are used for outreach and recruitment but also provides a way to orient the general public about workforce services
- Rapid response workshops are hosted to provide orientation on services for those affected by a massive layoff or closing.
- As part of the service integration self-assessment, front line staff training was identified as an opportunity for improvement. This is important to continue to provide best possible customer service or customer centered design.

3. How the Local Board will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system through the use of technology and other means, such as online meeting software and mobile workforce centers. (§ 679.560(b)(5)(ii)).

Due to the large geography of the local workforce area and a desire to serve all residents, the Workforce Board is committed to keeping Workforce Services Offices open in each of the Counties that make up the workforce area. Each county has its own Workforce Services office to provide the best service to individuals and employers.

The Workforce Services Office staff offers workshops and orientations to remote areas of the counties when the need arises, especially since transportation might be an issue for individuals.

In addition, many workforce services are available on the workforce services websites, Illinois WorkNet, as well as on Illinois JobLink. The workforce services offices has used technology through its websites to provide orientation and our scholarship application online. This allows jobseekers to fill everything out at any time and the information is available 24 hours a day.

The COVID pandemic did teach us to use technology. We offer both in person and virtual appointments to our customers to eliminate any transportation issues. This approach makes is more flexible in providing services to those that need them the most.

Workforce Services is also implementing kiosks throughout the workforce area. The kiosks will be stationed at different part of the county that individuals attend. For example, public libraries or Village halls. These kiosks will have access to connect to workforce services offices and provide workforce services to all areas of the county since a physical location is limited to one site. The kiosks will be monitored for usage and be moved to different locations to ensure community are using them

Workforce services offices also use social media to reach individuals to keep individuals. Each workforce services office has its own Facebook page and website to help outreach to the community. In addition, workforce services office uses Constant Contact to eblast to workforce service information to the community.

Employer Services: electronic job board, presentations to business led organizations & hold webinars to support our employers.

D. Describe how the Local Board will support the strategies identified in the WIOA State Plan and work with entities carrying out core programs, including a description of the following (§ 679.560(b)(1)(ii)):

1. Expanding access to employment, training, education and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment (§ 679.560(b)(2)(i));

The Workforce Board recognizes the importance of accessibility of programs and services to all eligible individuals, including individuals with barriers to employment. To that end, the Workforce Board works with and encourages its workforce partners to establish new opportunities to serve workforce customers. One example of this is Directors at all three Workforce Services offices are part of the local social service agency network which meets to discuss programs,

partnerships, and ways to ensure an individual's success. These meetings ensure all community stakeholders have the information about local workforce services especially individuals with barriers.

The Kankakee Workforce Services has an established partnership with Kankakee County Renewed Opportunity (KCRO). KCRO is a not-for-profit organization that works jointly with the Kankakee Sheriff's Department to reduce recidivism in Kankakee County. The goal is to reduce the barriers to reentry and the stigma surrounding returning citizens, redefining the image of returnees, and helping them become valued productive people, in order that Kankakee County would have the lowest county-wide rate of recidivism in the State of Illinois. One of the initiatives of the KCRO is workforce services goes into the county jail to provide job readiness workshops such as resume and job search assistance to returning citizens to help prepare the individuals for the workforce upon release.

In addition, Adult Education is working with the Kankakee County Sheriff's office and has provided GED services to incarcerated individuals so they can get their GED while in prison. In addition, the program is implemented not to stop at obtaining the GED. Individuals can continue their training through online community college classes provided by Kankakee Community College in order to start a new career pathway.

The Adult Education partner provides English as a Second Language classes. ESL classes' enrollment has seen an increase in the past few years. Due to the demand, the Director of Adult Education has started a Spanish speaking GED classes to remove any barriers for this population. This is the first Spanish speaking GED classes in the area so our Adult Education partner continue to be innovative to best serve individuals.

As one of one stop system partners, Department of Human Services Vocational Rehabilitation provides services to individuals with disabilities. From the service integration continuous improvement plan, the one stop operator is negotiating with local community college for the college to provide Vocational Rehabilitation front line staff near the college's special services coordinator in order to better serve individuals with disabilities while in training.

2. Scaling up the use of Integrated Education and Training models to help adults get their State of Illinois High School Diploma and work on other basic skills and English language acquisition while earning credentials and industry-recognized credentials that lead to in-demand occupations;

The Workforce Board believes in the Integrated Education & Training model to help individuals receive industry credentials in a timely manner in order to find self-sufficient employment.

One example of the support of this training model is the Workforce Board Executive Director discovered that our local individual training account (ITA) policy didn't allow for the expenditure of WIOA training funds in a bridge or integrated education training

model. The ITA policy required an individual get their GED prior to any WIOA training funds being expended. This created a barrier. As a result, the Workforce Board approved a revised ITA funding policy which allows individuals to pursue GED and industry recognized credentials at the same time in order to use WIOA training funds. This revised policy created a partnership with Adult Education & Title 1 Workforce Services. The partnership created a braided funding system with Title 1 Workforce Services funding the industry recognized credential training and Adult Education funding the adult education training. In addition to removing any funding barrier for individuals, this partnership created a support system for individual in the program. Individuals had an assigned WIOA case manager to help through the process but the individuals also had the support system of the adult education department to be successful. This ecosystem created a wraparound support system to help address and negate any barriers. This model was recognized as a leader in the state and we were asked to present at both adult education and workforce services conferences. Due to the success of existing Bridge programs, Adult Education has added new bridge programs and integrated training programs in order to meet employer needs.

English language acquisition is a program within the Adult Education Department which the workforce service system has a well-established partnership. As such, English language learners can take advantage of the braided funded system for integrated education and training models. For English language learners, additional mentors/tutors are in place to help the individuals to overcome any language barriers to ensure success.

Thus, the partnerships are in place to continue this training model and the Workforce Board has eliminated any local barriers to this training model in order to support the training.

The Workforce Board supports the IET model and this is demonstrated by approving submitted ICAPS/IET programs in order to be added to the WIOA Eligible Training Provider List. In fact, the Workforce Board in February 2024 approved the Kankakee Community College Certified Nursing Assistant ICAPS training program in order for WIOA ITA funds to be issued for WIOA eligible students.

3. How the core programs in the local area will leverage their business services to provide more holistic support to employers;

Employer services is provided through an integrated team approach. Through a no wrong front door approach, our partners work together to provide employer services. Employers contact the partner who they have built a partnership/relationship regarding workforce services. From the conversation, the partner communicates to other partners in the one stop system to help address the employer's needs. This integrated allows all workforce services to be provided to employers while maintaining the employer partnerships.

As part of the self-integration self-assessment, the one stop partners realize that integrated employer services could continue need improvement. As such, integrated employer services is one of our continuous improvement goals in order to best serve our employer customer.

4. Increasing the awareness of the services the workforce development system offers to both individuals and employers in the local area;

Below are multiple ways that locally we are increasing the awareness of the workforce development system to both individuals and employers.

- Increase in communication across one stop partners. This will increase awareness of all the programs, services, and events that are happening which means front line staff can better inform and communicate this information to both individuals and employers.
- Continue to cross train front line staff across all partners so everyone is aware of all the program and services available to individuals and employers. This way front line staff can promote all services to serve the individuals. This includes referrals from the IDES RESA program to WIOA Title 1 program, referrals to Adult Education, enrolling in Perkins programs, referrals to Vocational Rehabilitation, and other referrals to partners within the system.
- Increasing partnerships with community college and local high school districts.
- Social media: Posting & generating social media posts, campaigns ads are an effective way to spread awareness of the workforce development system.
- Marketing email blasts: At least quarterly, creating and emailing an marketing email blast which highlights upcoming events, workshops, job fairs, success stories, and how to access workforce services
- Kiosks: Locally, we are implementing kiosks throughout the workforce area. The kiosks will be situated in public libraries, community based organizations, village halls, etc. to help market the workforce system.
- Community partnerships: We are continuing to develop community partnerships to increase awareness of the workforce system. Community partnerships are key to providing services to those most in need.
- Success stories: Locally, we market our success stories so individuals are aware of our services
- Partnership with local chambers of chamber and economic development organizations to increase awareness of workforce system to employers.

5. Determining the most effective marketing methods and messages for informing college and university students about Prior Learning Assessments;

Best practices related to Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) involve providing a clear and practical description of what PLA is how it works, and its benefits. Because Prior Learning Assessment is still relatively new to higher education circles, many students still don't know what it is or perhaps have never heard of it. Because PLA involves such elements as Advanced Placement (AP), College Level Examination Program (CLEP), proficiency exams, and recognized professional licenses or certificates, one consideration is rethinking what we call PLA on our campuses. Other messages for students that warrant publicity include standards for

assessing learning; this will help students get a clear picture as to what PLA is and what is involved in that assessment process. In terms of marketing, ensuring that PLA details are easily accessible on the organization's website is an obvious but often neglected approach. Including links to the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) website is also a valuable inclusion. Mentioning PLA as part of the institution's strategic plan also brings more internal and community visibility to this process.

6. How targeted marketing will be used to reach various segments of the labor force, such as mature workers and the underemployed, who may not require extensive education or training to qualify for jobs in high demand occupations, as well as younger jobseekers that do not yet have a plan for a post-high school career;

There are various ways the local workforce area provides target marketing through our partners. IDES provides targeted marketing through email blasts, calling individuals, and personalized letters. The marketing pieces from IDES target the unemployed, long term unemployed, job seekers and others who are in the database. The outreach information sent to individuals includes upcoming job fairs, outreach events, information on the one stop system, reemployment workshops, etc. In addition to the IDES services mentioned, IDES has a system called Illinois Job Link (IJL) which can help with targeting a specific labor force targeted population. IJL registration is required for all current UI claimants. As such, the IJL system can be accessed in various ways to help outreach to targeted populations for high demand occupations.

The Job Counseling, Training, Placement Services for Veterans representative provides outreach to the Veteran's population especially disabled Veteran's regarding Workforce Services. As part of the outreach, the program has partnerships with local Veteran's organizations such as Veteran's Assistance Commission and Veterans Centers at Community Colleges to ensure all services available are available to this population.

In addition, Adult Education is a partner with our local workforce area. This partnership has provided great referrals and cross marketing amongst our programs. Geofencing is a new outreach/marketing tool that Adult Education implemented this year. Geofencing is a location-based digital marketing tool that lets organizations send messages to smartphone users in a defined geographic area. For example, adult education is targeting certain zip codes/census tracts based off demographics to outreach about Adult Education/ESL services. Thus, an individual opens Facebook within this zip code/census track Adult Education outreach information is displayed in the individuals feed. As a result of this targeted outreach, Adult Education has seen an increase in individuals inquiring about services.

Another way, we outreach to individuals is through social media and our workforce services website. As stated previously, our social media numbers continue to increase and there is an increased traffic to our workforce services websites.

Locally, we continue to review our outreach strategy in order to ensure an efficient use of resources and return on investment.

7. Facilitating the development of career pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs (§ 679.560(b)(2)(ii)); and

The Workforce Board supports career pathways and supports co-enrollment in order to fully support an individual's employment/training goals. Below are a few examples showing support.

- As part of a regional initiative, the Workforce Board developed high demand industry based brochures that reflects demand occupations and include information on career pathways for the industry. These industry and demand occupation brochures are easy to understand the career pathway of occupations in the industry, training, job openings and wage information. These brochures are used by all workforce service offices but also workforce partners in the community including one stop partners. In addition, the Workforce Board Executive Director made presentations to area high school guidance counselors and community college advisors who use the information with their students. These brochures are easily accessible to the community via Workforce Board website.
- Local community colleges including Kankakee Community College, Joliet Junior College, and Heartland Community College support career pathways. This support is evidenced by the career pathway programs offered by the colleges in the following industries: Manufacturing, Healthcare, Utilities/Renewable Energy and Transportation/Distribution/Logistics, as well as in IT. The community colleges offer a number of certificates and degree programs and are updated based off employer needs.
- An unregistered apprenticeship was developed and implemented with local healthcare employer, community college, and workforce services. This partnership helps the employees achieve the next career path within the employer. The employees are in nonclinical positions such as dietary and providing the training needed to become Certified Nursing Assistants. This career pathway was developed based off employer need. The unregistered apprenticeship model allows the employee to work three days and attend training two days. This model supports a cohort system and provides the wrap around services needed to ensure the success of the employee. To date, there has been 100% of the employees passing and moving up to the next career path.
- Career pathways are supported by the registered apprenticeship model. Currently, an employer and community college developed and implemented a Registered Industrial Maintenance program. This program takes current employees who are interested in industrial maintenance and provides a clear earn and learn model to the new career pathway.
- Adult Education has successful bridge and IET programs as mentioned on previous sections. These programs are co-enrolled in adult education, workforce services, Perkins programs, and other partner programs based off the

individual's needs.

- Adult Education has an innovative application process which is the first in the state. An individual interested in services fills out an online application through the community college website. This online application was developed to duplicate the community college application process and adds workforce services questions to determine appropriate partner referrals. At the end of completing the application, an individual has the ability to sign up adult education orientation sessions. The application is used for co-enrolling into partner programs. However, the biggest advantage is individuals have already completed the community college application process. Thus, an individual can immediately continue on in their career pathway without any additional paperwork and barriers. This technology based system is more customer centered focused, expands co-enrollment, and supports career pathways especially through Perkins programs.
- Career pathways start with career awareness. As such, the Workforce Board has implemented a program called Graduate & Get Paid. This program focuses on graduating high school seniors who are not attending a four university to provide information on local employment/education opportunities by providing employer tours to discuss career opportunities including training needed and career pathways within the employer. This program was expanded to guidance counselors and educators called Educator Graduate & Get Paid. The purpose was to inform and educate high school educators about local career opportunities since they have direct contact with students. Both programs were a collaboration of economic development, workforce services, high schools, chamber of commerce, and career centers. The response from students and educators was amazement and appreciation due to the fact they were not aware of what was happening in the community. All participants (individuals & educators) learned a lot from the program.

8. Improving access to activities leading to a recognized post-secondary credential (including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable) (§ 679.560(b)(2)(iii)).

The local education system is improving access to credentials. Local high school districts partner with the local career centers. The career centers provide education in demands occupations which lead to industry recognized credentials. For example, the nursing assistant program leads to CNA license prior to graduation from high school. In addition, high schools have partnered with local community colleges to offer dual credit programs. These dual credit programs provide an opportunity to earn college credit which improves access to post-secondary programs.

Local community colleges through credit and noncredit departments have improved the opportunities by offering multiple certificate options within training programs/career pathways. The ability to offer stackable credentials provides individuals the opportunity to achieve the credentials to obtain employment but

continue in the career path by offering the next stackable credential to advance in the career pathway. A great example of this is the Certified Production Technician (CPT). An individual can obtain the industry recognized credential of CPT to have the skills necessary for entry level manufacturing. However, the CPT program leads to multiple career pathways with additional training such as machine tool or industrial maintenance.

As stated previously, adult education programs provide Bridge and IET programs. These programs lead to the completion of GED/HSE and industry credential at the same time in order for individuals to become employed.

Locally, earn and learn model of apprenticeships has been discussed and developed on a small scale for employers. The local workforce area continues to discuss the employers the advantages of this model to improve the workforce.

The one stop partner system is an asset in improving access to industry recognized credentials by educating front line staff of all the partner resources and career pathways. This front line staff education is one of our local service integration action steps. By providing the training, staff will have understanding of partner resources including fiscal to help achieve an individual's goals including removing financial training cost barriers. A great example of this is our Vocational Rehabilitation partner provides 100% funding to the community college system.

E. Describe how local strategies will be coordinated with state (including the Illinois' WIOA State Plan), regional and local partners to enhance services and avoid duplication of activities, including a description of the following:

The local and regional were developed with the express goal of aligning with both the State's Unified Plan. LWA #11 will work with local and regional partners to ensure the strategies align with the priorities of the state plan. A current example of this regional collaboration is the regional business service team. The Northeast Region is bringing together the local integrated business services team in the region in order to better coordinate services as outlined in the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board Integrated Business Services strategy.

LWA #11 is a member and regular participant in Workforce Partners of Metropolitan Chicago, which leads regional coordination of WIOA efforts, including grant applications and administration and labor market information.

As part of the local planning process, the local one stop system completed a service integration self-assessment. This self-assessment covered customer center design goals, partner staff goals, intake and assessment goals, service goals, career pathways goals, and evaluation goals. The purpose of the self-assessment was to improve customer service of the system by building upon our partnerships for a service integrated service delivery to enhance customer center approach. From the self-assessment, the one stop system has created a continuous improvement plan to improve the system to achieve the no wrong door approach to access the services of all

partners in the workforce system.

1. Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth employment and training activities under WIOA Title I (§ 679.560(b)(6)).

Workforce Board Director and Workforce Services Program Director participate in the activities of the Workforce Partners of Metropolitan Chicago, which leads regional coordination of WIOA efforts. One of the current regional strategies is implemented a Regional Business Services across the region and partners.

Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth employment and training activities are provided at the workforce services offices. These services may include assessment, career counseling, job search assistance, individual employment planning, supportive services and training opportunities through Individual Training Accounts (ITAs), On-the-Job Training (OJT), Apprenticeship, or other work-based learning options. As part of the one stop system, workforce services fully coordinate with partner programs in order to avoid duplication of services and to ensure the success of the individual.

In addition to serving job seekers, Title 1 Workforce Services provides services to employers through our Business Services Teams. The Business Services Teams are made up of Title 1 Workforce Services, Title III Wagner Peyser, Community College Career Services Department and Workforce Board Director. This partnership ensures the employer is best served by providing the wide array of workforce services available through all the partnering agencies through a single point of contact.

2. Adult education and literacy activities under WIOA Title II. This description must include how the Local Board will carry out the review of local applications submitted under Title II consistent with WIOA Secs. 107(d)(11)(A) and (B)(i) and WIOA Sec. 232 (§ 679.560(b)(12)).

Adult Education is a core partner at all Workforce Services Offices, including our access offices and our One Stop center. Each Workforce Services Office has partnered with their respective Adult Education provider in order to coordinate services and refer individuals between programs. Referral between WIOA Title 1 Workforce Services and Adult Education is seamless for the individuals. In addition, Kankakee Community College Director of Adult Education is a local Workforce Board member and participates in policy and coordination discussions. Since Kankakee Workforce Services Office is the One Stop for the workforce area, Kankakee Community College Director of Adult Education is a member of the One Stop Operator and a core partner which helps collaborate and align resources. The partner collaboration is demonstrated by a successful IET programs in the Manufacturing and Healthcare Sectors. These IET programs were created with a partnership between the Core partners. The partners referred appropriate individuals, Title 1 Workforce Services provided funding for the post-secondary classes, and adult education provided contextualized GED classes. The individuals in the program received both an industry recognized credential, GED attainment and the skills necessary to enter the workforce. This program is just one example of partner collaboration.

The Workforce Board Executive Director is a member of the Kankakee Community College Adult Planning Council so participates so provides input on policy and program discussions. In addition, the Workforce Board Executive Director reviews the submissions for Title II funding. The Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) provides the Workforce Board Executive Director the Title II proposals and the evaluation tool to review the proposals.

Adult Education lessons learned include remote services worked for certain populations but not for other populations which has been previously addressed in Chapter 4.C. As adult education moves forward, a hybrid model will be implemented to better serve individuals.

In order to avoid duplication of services, Adult Education will be the primary provider of the below services in our workforce area. As a primary provider, all individuals will be referred to adult education for the below services.

- Adult Basic Education (ABE) to build reading, writing, and math skills
- High School Equivalency (GED) classes, including those that are part of an Integrated Career and Academic Preparation System (ICAPS) model and are pursuing in-demand occupational certification
- English Language Acquisition (ELA) classes and assistance

3. Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.) services (§ 679.560(b)(11)).

Staffs from Wagner-Peyser, a Veterans Representative, and Workforce Services including adult, dislocated worker, youth and TAA are all co-located at the One Stop. This makes services to the individuals seamless. Wagner-Peyser staff refers individuals to monthly workshops hosted by Title 1 Workforce Services staff, assist individuals with Illinois Joblink, Reemployment Service and Eligibility Assessment Program (RESEA) and other programs to assist individuals with employment. At the access offices in Grundy & Livingston Counties staff is cross trained on Illinois JobLink. In addition, Wagner-Peyser staff coordinates with Workforce Services staff on employer recruitment activities at the One Stop, including hosting hiring events for employers. Wagner-Peyser staff is a key member of the local Rapid Response team.

The One Stop Operator facilitates One Stop partners meetings which the Workforce Board is a member and attends. These purposes of these meetings are to ensure coordination amongst partners, coordinate service delivery and to ensure duplication of services can be avoided.

4. Vocational rehabilitation service activities under WIOA Title IV (§ 679.560(b)(13)).

Vocational Rehabilitation representative is a Workforce Board member and participates in policy and program discussions. As a core partner, Vocational Rehabilitation is a member of the One Stop Operator which aligns services at the One Stop. Vocational Rehabilitation will provide staff part time at the One Stop to further coordinate services. During the MOU

process, core discussion was centered upon coordination of all the career services at the One Stop. The One Stop monthly workshops are open to all individuals. As a result, Vocational Rehabilitation staff is now receiving the monthly One Stop workshop schedule and is referring individuals to these workshops as appropriate.

A frontline core partner staff cross training is continually held to provide core program orientation. This training included Vocational Rehabilitation staff and services, Adult Education services, Workforce Services staff and services and Wagner-Peyser staff and services. This is the first step the core partners identified as an immediate need and will continue to develop service coordination throughout the year.

In order to avoid duplication of services, Vocational Rehabilitation will be the primary provider of the below services in our workforce area. As a primary provider, all individuals will be referred to vocational rehabilitation for the below services.

- Supported Employment including job analysis, job development and placement, and job coaching
- Planning for post-high school transition through Transition and STEP programs
- Work Incentive Planning and Assistance Program helps people who receive SSDI/SSI benefits understand how working will affect their benefits.
- Supported Employment including job analysis, job development and placement, and job coaching
- Referring individuals with disabilities interested in occupational training services

5. Relevant secondary and post-secondary education programs and activities with education and workforce investment activities (§ 679.560(b)(9)).

Kankakee Community College and Joliet Junior College are the providers of adult, dislocated worker and youth services. This partnership creates a working relationship with post-secondary institutions. Through these partnerships, the Board ensures that WIOA and post-secondary services are coordinated to avoid duplication of services and to enhance services to individuals. In addition, the Kankakee Community College President and the Joliet Junior College President are members of the Workforce Board and they participate in all policy discussions and Board business.

6. How the Local Board will support the state strategies identified under § 676.105 and work with the entities carrying out core programs and other workforce development programs, including programs of study and career pathway programs under the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.) to support service alignment and needs identified in regional or local level assessments including the Perkins Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (§ 679.560(b)(1)(ii)).

The career and technical (CTE) education under Perkins provides students with the academic and technical skills, knowledge and training necessary to succeed in future careers and to become lifelong learners. The CTE programs are offered through the

community college system. As such, CTE program information is available for area residents at our workforce services offices including information concerning career pathways and industry stackable credentials. All workforce development partners, including those funded under Carl Perkins, coordinate services in order to best serve the client, including assistance with college tuition, help with getting a GED, help with transportation or childcare or other assistance needed in order to succeed in a career pathway and obtain employment.

As a member of the One Stop Partner which meets quarterly, there is discussion regarding programs and aligning services to ensure the best service to the customer. Thus, Perkins programs in career and technical education aligns with local demand occupations to ensure there is braided funding from multiple resources including FAFSA, WIOA funds, or DHS-Vocational Rehabilitation programs. Workforce Board will support the Perkins Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment by contributing to the assessment through partnerships, providing data, and other ways necessary to ensure the career & technical programs align with demand industries, occupations, and supports local career pathways.

The Workforce Board Executive Director is a member of various partnerships such as the Adult Education Planning Council and Community College Advisory Committee. This partnership serves as a link to the community college programs and ensures the coordination of workforce development services.

7. Provide a copy of the local supportive service policies and describe how the Local Board will coordinate the provision of transportation and other appropriate supportive services in the local area (§ 679.560(b)(10)) and include information on the supportive services by each local program as appropriate.

The local Supportive Services Policy is attached. The Workforce Services Offices assist customers with obtainment of child care and transportation, as well as address special needs such as uniforms and eye glasses needed for work or training. Workforce services offices also provides bus passes for registrants to complete their training programs. When creating the local supportive services policy, the Workforce Board was cognizant of other supportive services in the area. As such, the Supportive Services policy reflects the need to coordinate supportive services with other resources.

F. Describe how the local area will provide adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities including:

1. A description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area (§ 679.560(b)(6)).

The Workforce Services Offices provide a host of employment and training activities. The resource room includes a computer lab with internet access to help local residents search for jobs and develop resumes. Other materials include books, DVDs, and brochures. In addition, the resource room provides access to a copier and fax machine for job search activities. Staff is available for assistance with cover letters and employment applications. All Workforce Services Offices have an open and visible job board. Staff is available to assist

clients with access to online services, including Illinois workNet and Illinois Joblink. The Workforce Services Offices also provide orientation sessions to WIOA services.

Workshops are provided at the One Stop. They include:

- “Get a Job”, which is a session to learn the "nuts and bolts" of job searching, including the ability to market one-self and networking.
- “Computer Literacy”, which provides basic computer instruction as well as navigational skills on how to use Windows, Microsoft Office Word, Excel, PowerPoint and the use of the Internet and personal e-mail.
- “Resume Review” a drop-in resume review session.
- “Resume Development” which includes individual resume review.
- “Financial Literacy” provided by SCSEP partner

The Grundy Workforce Services also provides the following workshops: How to Develop a Resume, Interviewing Skills, and Networking Business Cards.

The Livingston Workforce Services Office provides one-on-one job readiness career services such as registering with Illinois Joblink, resume assistance, applying for on-line jobs, career pathways information, labor market information, and other career services. In addition, the office hosts monthly workshops which include digital literacy on the job, resume development, job search, and preparing for a job interview.

The Workforce Services Offices provide assessments of skills, abilities, attitudes, and needs and the subsequent review and discussion of assessment results as the first step in identifying a career path and creating an individual employment plan. They also provide an explanation of the services and stages within the career pathway process and work with individuals on securing employment. The Workforce Services Offices provide job clubs, screened referrals, and follow-up services. All Workforce Services Offices provide Individual Training Account vouchers for those registrants in need of training, on-the-job training, and paid work experience for adults and dislocated workers. In addition, Wagner Peyser, Adult Basic Education, GED preparation and English as a Second Language (ESL) courses are provided at all Workforce Services Offices utilizing core partner programs. Individual and group instruction is provided.

2. A description of how the Local Board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities (§ 679.560(b)(7)).

Workforce Board Executive Director is the first point of contact and is the assigned staff person to coordinate with DCEO on all rapid response activities. Staff attends all rapid response meetings and coordinates closely with IDES, local community colleges and other partners as needed on all activities.

As workforce services continues to evolve, adult and dislocated worker services will continue to evolve to best serve our customers. As mentioned in previous sections, workforce services will continue in a hybrid model of service delivery. This model allows service delivery 24/7 through websites and social media. In addition, in person services are available.

Rapid Response services for dislocated workers will also continue in either a virtual, in person, or a hybrid approach depending on the business' needs and preference.

By using labor market information, workforce services Title 1 will target and outreach to targeted population based off the data. In addition, our one stop partners are key in helping to outreach through such means as IDES eblasts or through Adult Education partner. Lastly, strengthening our community partnerships will help workforce services provide services most in need.

G. Describe how the local area will provide youth activities including:

I. A description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce investment activities in the local area, including activities for youth who are individuals with disabilities, which must include an identification of successful models of such activities (§ 679.560(b)(8)).

The Joliet Junior College Workforce Development department administers the My Future youth program in Grundy County. The My Future youth program is designed to provide assistance to youth & youth with disabilities in employment and academic success through skill-building activities, connections to the workplace, and ongoing workplace mentoring and support. The program includes:

- Tutoring and study skills training
- GED preparation and testing
- Soft skills, decision making and team work training
- Financial literacy education and entrepreneurial skills training
- Occupational skill training, internships and job shadowing opportunities
- Academic skill development
- Assessment
- Placement in subsidized and unsubsidized work experiences and summer employment opportunities directly linked to academic and occupational learning
- Supportive services such as transportation and stipends for participation in the youth program
- Extensive case management
- Comprehensive referral system
- 12 months of follow-up services
- Partner with the Grundy County Chamber of Commerce in the Certificate of Employability program. The Certificate of Employability program familiarizes students with the expectations of the workforce to help equip them for their first job. Students hear from owners and managers in the local business community who teach them skills required to work in jobs such as retail, fast food, sit-down dining and more. For instance, the

students learned how to fill out an application, job expectations, appropriate workplace attire etc.

- Graduate & Get Paid program which was referenced in Chapter 4.C under career pathways bullet point
- This program is open to all youth including youth with disabilities. For additional support, program may refer youth with disabilities to Joliet Junior College Disability Services Coordinator to help youth with disabilities overcome any barriers for a successful post-secondary education. In addition, the My Future programs partners with Illinois Valley Industries, Inc. whose mission is to support individuals with intellectual, sensory, physical and developmental disabilities since 1968 in Grundy County, Illinois. Thus, eligible WIOA youth with disabilities have an individual service strategy created through the My Future program to be successful using multiple resources to ensure success.
- Approximately 28% of youth enrolled in Program Year 2021 and 24% of youth enrolled in Program Year 2022 WIOA program are youth with disabilities in Grundy County. The program has seen a 5% increase in serve youth with disabilities from program year 2019.

Kankakee Community College delivers the Young Adult Program Services (YAPS) project in Kankakee and Livingston Counties. The program is designed to provide assistance to youth & youth with disabilities in employment and academic success through skill-building activities, connections to the workplace, and ongoing workplace mentoring and support. Program elements are listed below.

- Tutoring and study skills training.
- Secondary school offerings including high school course requirements, constitution test preparation, and various other academic requirements necessary for the participants to progress toward high school diplomas or GEDs.
- High school credit recovery and correspondence classes.
- Summer employment opportunities directly relate to the participants' career plans and education plans.
- Job readiness workshops.
- Paid work experiences. Young Adult Program place participants at a job site and pay the first 60 days of wages. The employer then has the opportunity to permanently hire the participants.
- Occupational skill training including Certified Nursing Assistant, Microsoft Office Specialist Certification, Certified Production Technician, Commercial Driver's License.
- Leadership development opportunities.
- Supportive services including transportation, school expenses, work experience expenses and child care.
- Adult Mentoring.
- Follow-up services.
- Comprehensive guidance and counseling.
- Financial Literacy workshops.
- Entrepreneurial Skills Training.

- Labor Market Information.
- Preparation for youth to transition to post-secondary education and training.
- Graduate & Get Paid program which was referenced in Chapter 4.C under career pathways bullet point
- Youth programs partner with Junior Achievement and Jobs for American Graduates to help youth understand local career opportunities, technical skills and soft skills need for employment.
- This program is open to all youth including youth with disabilities. For additional support, program may refer youth with disabilities to Kankakee Community College Disability Services Coordinator to help youth with disabilities with any barriers to post-secondary education. In addition, the Youth Adults Program will refer to the appropriate social service agency for that particular county. In Kankakee County, the YAPS program would refer to the DHS – Vocational Rehabilitation partner for further services. In Livingston County, the DHS – Vocational Rehabilitation office or the Futures Unlimited. Futures Unlimited is a local not for profit whose purpose is to serve individuals with a variety of physical, developmental and mental disabilities in Livingston County. Thus, eligible WIOA youth with disabilities have an individual service strategy created through the My Future program to be successful using multiple resources to ensure success.
- Approximately 33% of youth enrolled in Program Year 2021 and 27% of youth enrolled in Program Year 2022 are youth with disabilities in Livingston County. In Kankakee County, there is 8% of youth enrolled in Program Year 2021 and 13% of youth enrolled in Program Year 2022 are youth with disabilities. In Livingston County, the program has seen a 7% increase in serve youth with disabilities from program year 2019. In Kankakee County, the program has seen a 7% increase in serve youth with disabilities from program year 2019.

2. A description of how local areas will meet the minimum expenditure rate for out-of-school youth.

Prior to the implementation of WIOA, the Board made the transition to serve out of school youth. The Board implemented 70% of youth expenditures had to be spent on out of school youth. Historically, out of school youth expenditures were approximately 85%. As such, our workforce board has already transitioned to focusing on out of school youth. When DOL approved the State of Illinois waiver to reduce out of school expenditures to 50%, the Workforce Board took action and lowered our out of school expenditures to 50%. The Workforce Board has established strategies/priorities of serving in school youth by educating them on local career opportunities, career pathways, local training opportunities, and providing paid work experience to ensure the talent pipeline for employers. Thus, our out of school youth percentage will lower from previous years but Workforce Board still maintains the 50% out of school youth expenditure rate.

The Workforce Board monitors out of school youth expenditure rates during the fiscal report at Workforce Board meetings. In addition, the Assistance Finance Director and Workforce Board monitor the out of school expenditure rate on a

monthly basis to ensure we meet the out of school expenditure rate.

Another way the Workforce Board ensures meeting this requirement is all youth procurement states youth expenditure rate including a description in proposal about the requirement and the expenditure rate is one of the evaluation criteria. In addition, all youth sub recipients have contract language reflecting the expenditure requirement.

3. The design framework for youth programs in the local area, including how the 14 program elements will be made available within that framework (§ 681.460).

The youth program design is outlined in the youth request for proposals which the Workforce Board releases to procure youth service providers. As part of the youth request for proposal, it states the fourteen (14) required program elements and asks respondents to address how each element will be provided by the organization or demonstrate the ability to make referrals if not providing the youth element.

In addition, the youth individual service strategy (ISS) lists the fourteen program elements. Thus, the fourteen youth elements are discussed with every youth during the development of the required ISS.

H. Provide a description of how the local area will provide services to individuals with barriers to employment and training⁸ as outlined in Illinois' WIOA State Plan:

1. How priority will be given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals and individuals who are basic skills deficient consistent with WIOA Sec. 134(c)(3)(E) (§ 679.560(b)(21)).

Our workforce area has always made a commitment to serve low-income individuals, veterans, public assistance individuals and individuals who are basic skills deficient. This is evidenced by approximately 81% of adult registrants being basic skills deficient and 75% of our adult registrants being low income in Program Year 2022. The Board has approved the below priority of service populations and will continue to make this commitment to serve this population through the priority of services policy which is attached. The Workforce Board determined the priority populations by reviewing historical special populations' data from the Title 1 Workforce Services program including analyzing if the data represented an appropriate number based on workforce area demographics. In addition, priority populations were aligned with the State's unified plan and the priority populations identified in the WIOA law.

Priority for career and training services funded under Tile 1 adult funds shall be given to public assistance recipients, other low-income adults; individuals who are basic skills deficient, and Veteran's covered under Veteran's Priority of Service. Thus the following sequence of priority of services will apply:

1. First priority will be provided to veterans and eligible spouses who are recipients of public assistance, low-income, or individuals who are basic skills deficient;

2. Second priority will be provided to individuals who are not veterans or eligible spouses who are recipients of public assistance, low-income, or individuals who are basic skills deficient;
3. Third priority is individuals who are employed, unemployed, or under unemployed but earning more than WIOA income guidelines but lower than Workforce Board self-sufficiency rate. Veteran's and eligible spouses receive priority over individuals who are not veterans per IL Department of Commerce WIOA Policy 15-WIOA-4.6 under this priority.

2. Provide information on local programs, policies and procedures to address and mitigate barriers to employment and training.

There are numerous ways that the local workforce system addresses and mitigate barriers which are described below.

- For adult, dislocated worker, youth funded by Title 1, there is a local supportive services policy to help address barriers to employment/training
- Kankakee Workforce Services provides services in a hybrid format which means in person or virtual in order to eliminate any transportation barriers.
- With the change in Title 1 eligibility policy documentation allowing self-attestation, it removes the barrier of documentation especially for returning citizen
- Outreach for adult education and Title 1 services is provided by Spanish speaking individual to remove and language barriers. This outreach has resulted in an increase in individuals participating in adult education and Title 1 services.
- IDES provides services to Veterans with disabilities to help them remove barriers to access employment
- Vocational Rehabilitation provides services to individuals with disabilities including providing assistance with accommodations in order for the person to be successful.
- Local community based organizations partnerships that provide LIHEAP, food banks, rental assistance, and other emergency programs in order to provide basic need services.

3. How the local workforce areas will ensure equitable access to workforce and educational services through the following actions:

a. Disaggregating data by race, gender, and target population to reveal where disparities and inequities exist in policies and programs.

As part of yearly equal opportunity (EO) monitoring, the local EO officer reviews demographic data by gender, race, targeted populations and priority of service. The monitoring ensures enrolled individuals in Title 1 Workforce Services are in proportion to the demographics of the county/counties to ensure the workforce services offices are serving the entire county/counties and not just

a certain demographic. After analyzing the data, the Workforce Board Executive Director reviews the data with Title 1 Workforce Services program directors to ensure outreach is targeted to the correct areas the population.

b. Exposing more high school students, particularly young women and minorities, to careers in science, technology, engineering and math fields.

As mentioned earlier, the Workforce Board implemented a program called Graduate & get paid to expose high school seniors to local careers opportunities including careers in the science, technology, engineering & math fields. The program focuses on graduating high school seniors who are not attending a four university to provide information on local employment/education opportunities by providing employer tours to discuss career opportunities including training needed and career pathways within the employer. This program was expanded to guidance counselors and educators. The purpose was to inform and educate high school educators about local career opportunities since they have direct contact with students. Both programs were a collaboration of economic development, workforce services, high schools, chamber of commerce, and career centers. The response from students and educators was amazement since they were not aware of what was happening in the community and very appreciative of the program.

The Greater Livingston County Economic Development Council (GLCEDC) implemented a program called Education Enhancement Program to help employers find a skilled workforce. The programs purpose is to provide area high schools with funding for the implementation of Science, Technology, Engineering, & Math (STEM) initiatives. In the past, the GLCEDC has invested nearly \$225,000 in the program. The program has helped to enhance the education of over 4,000 students throughout Livingston County. Also, the STEM program has resulted in additional opportunities for employers to share thoughts on curriculum, make classroom presentations, and offer STEM related internships.

Local area high schools have robotics teams. The robotic teams design, construct, program, and use robots. The team must use STEM to build the robots and critical thinking/problem solving to ensure the robots work. The robotics team competes in robotics competition. The competition is a head-to-head challenge in an alliance format.

LWA #11 partners with local high schools, career centers. Community Colleges, Career & Technical Education (CTE) providers, and employers to promote STEM-related careers. When applicable, LWA #11 will promote STEM careers through high school presentations, events, extracurricular activities and after-school programs that specifically serve minorities and young women. Industry experts and specialists will be leveraged to ensure STEM programs are taught by professionals who exhibit the skills and training necessary to perform STEM-related jobs.

c. Exploring how effective mentor programs can be expanded to adults, particularly those who are displaced and moving to a new career.

The local workforce board will explore effective mentoring programs that can be expanded to adults, particularly those who are displaced and moving to new careers. The local workforce board will look at existing youth mentoring programs to learn best practices including what doesn't work. For example, the Kankakee County State's Attorney has an AmeriCorps program called JUMP. This program is a juvenile mentoring program for at-risk, court-involved youth in Kankakee County with the goal of improving outcomes and reducing truancy so that the youth does not re-offend as a minor or become an adult offender. After researching the best practices including the do and don'ts to a successful mentoring program, the best practices can be implemented into Title 1 workforce services career planners monthly meetings with adult WIOA participants. Our WIOA adult career planners are currently provide monthly mentoring to our WIOA adult registrants. These monthly meetings include discussing career goals, barriers & how to overcome them, referrals for any additional assistance, coaching, and encouragement to ensure career goals are met which are often in a new career pathway.

d. Ensuring workforce services are strategically located in relation to the populations in most need.

The Workforce Services offices make strategic decisions to serve individuals in their communities with the most need or barriers. As such, workforce services are available to individuals through technology to ensure basic career services are offered throughout the community. As mentioned previously, our social media/websites number is increasing so individuals are aware of this service. Besides technology, workforce services have provided community outposts to those areas most in need. In prior years, workforce services and adult education provided services onsite in Pembroke Township since residents had multiple barriers but needed services. In addition, workforce services had a staff person in a HUD subsidized apartment complex to provide services since it was needed at the location. Currently, workforce services and adult education services are being provided at the local county jail. These programs were mentioned in Chapter 4C: expanding education/employment access to individuals with barrier. Per our past experience, workforce services including workforce partners continue to evaluate the service delivery to ensure individuals can use our services.

I. Describe how the local area will utilize a customer-centered approach to its service delivery model, including the following:

1. How a customer-centered or human-centered approach will be used over the course of this plan to improve local service delivery methods⁹.

As a one stop system, partners continue to provide customer service and think of the needs of the customer to provide the best services. As part of the one stop system service integration self-assessment, there were areas that the partners identified as ways we could improve. As such, LWA #11 created a continuous improvement plan that includes improving local service delivery. The continuous improvement plan includes improving communication, providing front line staff training, implementing customer satisfaction survey, reviewing partner assessments to evaluate for single assessment, and requesting technical assistance training on the IWIV evaluation tool.

- 2. Any efforts to provide services to customers in the spaces where they commonly visit (i.e., using a bus or other mobile solution to provide services outside of the one-stop center or having a local workforce are representative available at a public library at set times).**

Since we have three counties, the Workforce Board has made a commitment that a Workforce Services office be located in each county so individuals and employers have access to workforce services in the county which they live or work.

In addition, we are implementing kiosks throughout the counties so workforce services will be available where people attend such as libraries or village halls.

Workforce Services staff attend different community events in order to promote programs. In addition, workforce services staff provide community presentations about the workforce system to community partners and schools. For example, Workforce Board Executive Director has spoken to different high school classes about workforce services and career pathways. In addition, Workforce Board Executive Director speaks at the annual State of Kankakee County event hosted by the Kankakee Chamber of Commerce on recent accomplishments and workforce programs.

- 3. Any efforts to review and update the referral process, including creating a universal referral process, utilizing an electronic referral management system, expansion of referral pathways, etc. If there are obstacles to updating the local area's referral process, describe them here.**

The one stop system implemented an online referral system by creating a Jot referral form that gets emailed to correct partner contact. From the Jot form, an Excel spreadsheet can be created to report out the referrals including how many, how many by partner, etc. As part of the service integration self-assessment, the one stop partners identified the referral system is working but there needs improvement on the reporting of referral outcomes and closing the referrals. As such, this is part of the continuous improvement action plan that will be discussed and implemented according to the plans implementation dates.

J. Describe training activities in the local area, including the following:

- 1. How the local area will encourage the use of work-based learning strategies, including the local area goals for specific work-based learning activities and proposed outcomes related to these activities;**

In the local youth programs, all youth contracts require that 20% of youth funds are allocated to paid work experience or other work-based activities. As a workforce area, we have meet this fiscal requirement every year. On the adult and dislocated side, the local workforce area supports apprenticeships and earn/learn models. On-the-job training contracts have been successful but are small so outcomes are under development as well.

The Workforce Board supports work based learning for employees. As such, they

dedicate a portion of the annual budget to incumbent worker training in order to ensure current employees have the skills necessary to be successful.

Kankakee Community has a successful pre-apprenticeship program called Highway Construction Careers Training program. This is a 12-week training program that helps individuals find a career path into union construction apprenticeships

The local senior community service employment program engages older workers in their program to allow them to obtain work experience and necessary skills to move into unsubsidized employment

2. How local areas will provide training and professional development opportunities to staff regarding equity, access, trauma-informed care, and other topics concerning a customer-centered approach to service delivery.

For professional development opportunities, the workforce system has multiple resources. At the national level, the US Department of Labor provides professional development webinar through Workforce GPS. At the state level, DCEO is a great resource in professional development. DCEO has numerous opportunities for professional development through its Wednesday webinars and WIOA Summit especially as it related to customer centered design and equity access. In addition, the DCEO EO staff provides professional development training for local EO officers to ensure programs are inclusive. At the local level, the service integration self-assessment identified professional development as a continuous improvement action item. The partners stated the state does provide professional development through webinars and WIOA Summit but agreed these opportunities were targeted for management and not front line staff. As such, front line staff professional development training has been identified as an area to improve.

3. How training services outlined in WIOA Sec. 134 will be provided through the use of individual training accounts, including, if contracts for training services will be used, how the use of such contracts will be coordinated with the use of individual training accounts under that chapter, and how the Local Board will ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs regardless of how the training services are to be provided (§ 679.560(b)(18));

The local Individual Training Account Policy is attached. The Board does not execute contract training. DCEO has issued a new policy for demand occupations since the plan was approved which defines demand occupations. As such, DCEO Policy Letter 20-NOT-08 Demand Occupation Training list defines what demand occupations are and what occupations are allowed to be funded under an ITA. Customers are provided the Illinois workNet link that lists all approved training providers and programs through the scholarship intake application in order to help them make an informed choice on a training provider. Career planners also work with customers using the state's eligible training provider list in the selection of a training provider to ensure customer choice when developing the individual employment plan or individual service strategy.

4. How the Local Board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system and that the providers will meet the employment needs of local employers, workers and jobseekers; and

Attached is the local training provider approval policy. Policies and guidelines reflect the State's Training Providers Procedures. To ensure training programs meet the needs of employers/jobseeker, approved training programs must lead to occupations on DCEO Policy Letter 20-NOT-08 Demand Occupation Training list. The Workforce Board reviews the approved training programs every two years as per state policy. In addition, any changes to an approved training program are reviewed and approved by the Workforce Board.

5. How the local area tracks non-enrolling basic services provided to reportable individuals

All individuals who receive basic non enrolling career services are entered as a customer in IWDS with the corresponding services check that were provided for that day. State programs such as Illinois Job Link is also a database used to track non enrolling basic career services.

K. Describe if the local workforce board will authorize the transfer of WIOA Title IB workforce funds, including the maximum dollar amount and/or percentage that is authorized to be transferred on an annual basis:

1. To transfer funds between the adult and dislocated worker funding streams.

The Board looks at historical demand and current demand to determine the need to transfer funds. Each year, the Board looks at current needs such as current job seeker needs or possible dislocation events, current allocations, and any locally or regionally designed initiatives when deciding to transfer funds. In addition, the Board reviews to ensure any funds transferred do not affect the ability to provide services throughout the program year. The annual budget will reflect the annual transfer rate, which will be under the 50% allowable transfer under DCEO policy. The Board recognizes that the Governor may approve up to 100% transfer. The Workforce Board will continue to review the need annually and, if economic conditions dictate increased or decreased transfer rates, we will adjust accordingly

2. To use funds for incumbent worker training as outlined in WIOA Sec. 134(d)(4)(A)(i).

Incumbent worker training is an important business services initiative that is designed to benefit business and industry by assisting with existing employees' skill development and by increasing employee productivity and company growth.

The Workforce Board has an incumbent worker policy which enables the local workforce area to create a number of positive outcomes including:

1. Improving the alignment of existing workers' skills with job requirements;

2. Providing individuals access to new career opportunities within a business;
3. Encouraging the retention of existing personnel who otherwise may become dislocated because of skills deficiencies and increasing the wages of trained workers;
4. Creating new opportunities for entry-level workers through the promotion of existing workers; and supporting the overall enhancement of local and regional economic development efforts.

When the Workforce Board is reviewing budgets, the Board takes into consideration the below when determining the amount of funds to use for incumbent worker training. The Workforce Board may utilize up to 20% of Adult and Dislocated Worker funds streams for incumbent worker training.

1. Current employer need or projects that have been identified
2. Current allocations
3. Prior historical data on IWT projects, expenditures, and outcomes
4. Reviews to ensure program funds for job seekers will have sufficient funding for the upcoming year
5. Will follow all federal and state regulations

3. To use funds for transitional jobs as outlined in WIOA Sec. 134(d)(5).

The Board does not currently fund transitional jobs.

4. To use funds for pay for performance contracts as outlined in WIOA Sec. 133(b)(2-3).

The Board does not currently fund pay for performance contracts.

L. Describe how a *workforce equity lens*⁶ is or will be incorporated in the operating systems and policies as part of the Local Workforce Innovation Areas (LWIAs).

The local workforce system plays an important role in creating equitable workforce system by ensuring all jobseekers can access training and employment via an accessible, coordinated workforce system. Workforce Boards have a unique opportunity to emphasize and prioritize equity as a driving value of these systems.

The Workforce Board will promote equity using the below strategies over the upcoming years to ensure equitable access to workforce services.

1. To advance equity, workforce systems should examine institutional structures and barriers to participation that contribute to inequities across age, gender, race, ethnicity, ability, economic status, educational attainment, immigration status, industry sector, and worker classification
2. Gather and analyze data to identify gaps in service delivery and to track outcomes
3. Target workforce services to populations most in need
4. Examine policies and procedures that may contribute to inequity and modify them to make programs more accessible

5. Create or strengthen partnerships to reach more populations and leverage expertise and resources that can assist in reaching these groups

CHAPTER 5: PERFORMANCE GOALS AND EVALUATION – LOCAL COMPONENT

A. Provide information regarding the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and chief elected official consistent with WIOA Sec. 116(c), to be used to measure the performance of the local area and to be used by the Local 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 (core and required partners as applicable) in the local area (§ 679.560(b)(16)).

- 1. WIOA Performance Measures**
- 2. Additional State Performance Measures**

Below are the current WIOA performance measures for Title 1 Workforce Services. Locally, we have met or exceeded the WIOA performance measures every year. The current lack of an available workforce has created a demand for available workers. This competition has created employers increasing their wages in order to remain competitive and attract the workers to fill open positions. This has caused “concern” for our local credential performance measures since current individuals in training are applying for and being hired for quality full time positions. Thus, individuals are returning to the workforce without obtaining a credential. Locally, we continue to monitor our credential performance rates and in depth review of each file exited to ensure credential attainment. As we move forward, career planners will ensure stackable credentials are obtained so if an individual returns to the workforce than a credential is already obtained.

There are no additional state performance measures but the local workforce area will comply with any additional state measures.

LWIA #11 Performance Measure	PY24	PY25
Adult		
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter after Exit	78	78%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter after Exit	74%	74%
Median Earnings	\$9,250	\$9,250
Credential Attainment	73%	74%
Measurable Skills Gain	50.0%	50.0%
Dislocated Workers		
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter after Exit	79.5%	79.5%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter after Exit	75%	75%
Median Earnings	\$11,500	\$11,500
Credential Attainment	65%	68%
Measurable Skills Gain	68%	68%
YOUTH		

Employment/Post-Secondary Education Rate 2nd Quarter after Exit	69%	69%
Employment/Post-Secondary Education Rate 4th Quarter after Exit	69%	69%
Median Earnings	\$4,450	\$4,700
Credential Attainment	63%	64%
Measurable Skills Gain	57%	58%

B. Describe how the current and planned evaluation activities and how this information will be provided to the Local Board and program administrators as appropriate.

- 1. What existing service delivery strategies will be expanded based on promising return on investment?**
- 2. What existing service delivery strategies will be curtailed or eliminated based on minimal return on investment?**
- 3. What new service strategies will be used to address regional educational and training needs based on promising return on investment?**
 - a. What return on investment and qualitative outcome data for various education and training programs will be collected to identify barriers to enrollment?**
 - b. What are the most cost-effective approaches to taking down those barriers or helping residents overcome them?**

The Workforce Board evaluates Title 1 Workforce Services at every workforce board meeting. The Board reviews fiscal data but also program data to ensure an effective use of funds. Program data review includes reviewing number enrolled, number of new registrants, number of ITA's, exits, placement rate and pre versus post wage information. Workforce Board members evaluate the data, ask questions, and provide feedback. This process creates a discussion on existing strategies and ways to improve to get a better return on investment.

Yearly, the Workforce Board reviews the total ITA amount by training provider which is required by the state but the Workforce Board added number of clients served and cost participant. This data review ensures educational needs are in demand industries, reasonable cost per participant, and the best return on investment.

The Workforce Board reviews the WIOA performance measures as a workforce area and by sub recipient. Sub recipient contracts are reviewed on an annual basis to ensure they are meeting performance and any fiscal requirements. The Workforce Board has placed sub recipients on "probation" for failing to meet performance or fiscal requirements. During the probation year, the Workforce Board Executive Director provides technical assistance and review strategies to improve performance. If the sub recipient doesn't improve, the Workforce Board will not renew the contract which they have done in prior years.

Thus, locally the workforce board is evaluating performance & makes recommendations for improvement on a continuous basis.

One example of this is the Graduate & Get Paid program for youth. The Graduate & Get Paid program is a program focuses on in school youth who are about to graduate that haven't identified as going on to post-secondary. The program provides an opportunity to expose youth to local career opportunities through employer visits. Basically, the program provides the youth the opportunity to tour different local employers and talk to the company's human resource department about how to apply for entry level positions & career pathways at the company. In the Spring 2019, we launched the program in each county with one high school. The tours toured employers in the manufacturing, healthcare, and TDL industries. The feedback from youth was amazement about what local employers did including that employers were hiring and that there were great paying jobs in the community. After the tour, we heard back from the participating high schools how the youth are talking about the program with their friends in a positive way & a few high school youth got job offers from the program. The program was a community effort with Workforce Board staff running project including employer outreach, high school providing transportation, & employers providing lunches for the participants. Thus, no WIOA funds were used in the project.

Due to the great response, the Workforce Board decided to expand the program so we can include more youth and schools. After careful consideration on how this could be expanded, the Workforce Board decided to expand it to high school educators since they are the ones who talk to youth every day. In the fall of 2023, the Workforce Board partnered with the local career centers, economic development, community colleges & community foundation for a Graduate & Get Paid: Educator tour in each of our three counties. This program was funded by Community Foundation for transportation, employers provided lunch, career center provided educator contacts & Workforce Board/Economic Development outreached to employers/set the schedule. Thus, it truly was a community partnership. Every high school in each of our three counties participated in the program. The program provided employer tours with each company discussing careers from entry level to professional. At the end of the day we wrapped up with a presentation from the local career center & community college discussing local training options in order to meet the skills needed by employers. The educators loved the program & didn't know about all the opportunities available. The Workforce Board realized this program is a valuable tool in educating youth about local careers and based off return of investment expanded the program from one high school in each county and will continue to support it.

As far as regional educational and training needs for a promising return on investment, the Workforce Partners of Metropolitan Chicago are the avenues for evaluating service strategies to ensure best use of funds and service delivery. These discussions on service delivery are part of regional discussions and as part of the region we will work to implements any identified strategies

As previously stated, the post pandemic "recovery" will include a review and evaluation of policies and procedures to ensure services are available to all customers. The ability to provide virtual services and virtual meetings has provided another "tool" in providing workforce services.

As part of the service integration self-assessment, the one stop partners recognized that customer feedback needs improvement which is one of the one stop systems continuous improvement action plans for the future. The one stop operator will be leading the leading this initiative by reviewing best practices across the state including the use of technology, visiting a high performing one stop, and requesting input for the regional one stop operator group which meets to provide professional development.

In regards to cost effective approaches to taking down barriers or helping individuals overcome them is through the established workforce services system and particularly the One Stop system. The one stop system has established partnerships with organizations to help individuals achieve their goals. As such, referrals are made to the partner that can provide the service to help the individual but it's also the most cost effective since that partner has the program funds. For example, an individual who needs their GED/HSE is referred to our Adult Education partner because adult education is their specialty and received funds to serve GED/HSE individuals. As such, our system is not looking to duplicate program services that are funded by one of partner programs which creates a streamlined cost effective system.

C. Describe how a *workforce equity lens*⁶ is or will be incorporated in the analysis of performance goals and implementation of evaluation activities.

As stated in Chapter 4, Section K, The Workforce Board will be reviewing workforce equity in the future. One of the future workforce equity lens is to develop a goal to achieve equity in service delivery and drive action toward shared metrics of success. This goal is outside of the LWA required WIOAA Performance Measures as states in Chapter 5, Section A.

CHAPTER 6: TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS AND ASSURANCES – LOCAL COMPONENT

A. Fiscal Management

1. Identify the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds described in WIOA Sec. 107(d)(12)(B)(i)(III) as determined by the chief elected official or the Governor under WIOA Sec. 107(d)(12)(B)(i) (§ 679.560(b)(14)).

Kankakee County is the grant recipient and fiscal agent for local workforce area #11. Local workforce area #11 operates under a Chief Elected Official (CEO) agreement which states that the CEOs agree on the designation of a grant recipient which is Kankakee County.

2. Provide a copy of the local procurement policies and procedures and describe the competitive procurement process that will be used to award the subgrants and contracts for WIOA Title I activities (§ 679.560(b)(15)).

The Board utilizes a request for proposals process to procure contractors for WIOA adult, dislocated worker, youth services. In addition, the Workforce Board procures the One Stop Operator. A copy of the local procurement policy is attached.

B. Physical and Programmatic Accessibility

- 1. Describe how entities within the one-stop delivery system, including one-stop operators and the one-stop partners, will comply with WIOA Sec. 188, if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) 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 with disabilities (§ 679.560(b)(5)(iii)).**

The Board is committed to providing all services, facilities and programs accessible by complying with WIOA Section 188, applicable provisions of the American Disabilities Act of 1990 and all other applicable statutory and regulation requirements. Our Workforce Services Offices and partners are committed to making reasonable accommodations to all individuals.

Board staff ensures that all sub-recipients are trained in the provisions of WIOA Section 188 in order to have the knowledge to best serve individuals with disabilities. As part of this training, all federally-funded core staff is cross trained on each other's respective federal program in order to have a true understanding of all program services so the appropriate services will be best suited for the individual. Staff training topics include providing services to all regardless of range of abilities, age, language, learning style, intelligence or education level.

All partners will cooperate in compliance monitoring that is conducted at the local and state levels to ensure that the One Stop centers, Workforce Services Offices, programs, services technology and materials are accessible and available to all.

Physical Accessibility

The One Stop Center (Kankakee Workforce Services office) is a brand new facility which was constructed in 2012. The facility is designed to support a culture of inclusiveness and in compliance with Section 188 of WIOA, the American Disabilities Act and other applicable statutory and regulatory requirements. The physical characteristics of the Center comply with the most recent ADA requirements and in compliance with 29 CFR part 37. The facility is located on a major road which is a high traffic area. The Center has its own parking lot with ten (10) accessible spaces at the front of the facility which are clearly designated and closest to the front door. In addition, the Center has its own designated public transportation system bus stop located in the parking lot of the Center which is within a reasonable walking distance to services at the Center.

The Workforce Services offices in Grundy & Livingston counties are co-located with a community college extension campus. As such, these offices follow all ADA accessibility requirements including the correct number of handicapped parking spaces, the correct signage, available ADA technology, etc.

- 2. Provide copies of executed cooperative agreements (as applicable) that define 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 system, with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities (§679.560(b)(13)). This may include cross training of staff, technical assistance, use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration and coordination.

There are no cooperative agreements at this time. The Program Year 2024 which begins July 1, 2024 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is in the approval process from all one stop partners. The MOU addresses one stop partner services including our local service integration action plan. Our Program Year 2023 is the current approved MOU. The LWA #11 service integration self-assessment created a continuous improvement plan on how the one stop system can better integrate services for a more customer centered design.

C. Plan Development and Public Comment

- 1. Describe the process used by the Local Board to provide a public comment period prior to submission of the plan, including an opportunity to have input into the development of the local plan, particularly for representatives of businesses, education and labor organizations (§ 679.560(b)(19)).**

As part of the local plan development, a draft version of the local plan was sent to local Workforce Board members and one stop partners for their input in the development of the local plan. These Workforce Board members include members from the business, education, labor organizations, economic development and core/community partners.

After input has been received from the stakeholders, the Workforce Board will post the plan at www.glkwb.com (the website of the Grundy Livingston Kankakee Workforce Board) where there will be instructions on how to comment over the 30-day public comment period.

In order to ensure public access for comment, a public notice advertising that the local plan is available for public comment will be posted in each of the workforce services offices which includes an office in Grundy, Livingston, and Kankakee Counties which is the one stop center. The Board will also post a notice in the local newspaper on the availability of the plan for review and public comment.

- 2. Provide a summary of the public comments received and how this information was addressed by the CEO, partners and the Local Board in the final plan.**

There were no public comments.

- 3. Provide information regarding the regional and local plan modification procedures.**

Local plans will be modified as needed by LWA#11. The modification procedure will follow the operating procedure for original local plan approval. This includes input from partners/stakeholders/employers/etc., publication, the 30 day public comment period, and Workforce Board/CEO approval.

D. Describe how a *workforce equity lens*⁶ is or will be incorporated in with meeting the administrative requirement of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act programs.

To ensure the local workforce area is meeting the administrative requirements of WIOA through a workforce equity lens, all subcontracts have an equal opportunity clause in their contracts. These subcontracts include youth, adult, dislocated worker, and one stop operator. In addition, the local Equal Opportunity (EO) officer reviews quarterly EO standard deviation reports which all customer serving subcontractors are required to submit to Workforce Board EO staff. In addition, EO officer provides EO training to all workforce services staff to ensure staff are providing equal access to workforce services to all customers. Lastly, the individuals enrolled is reviewed to ensure individuals served match county demographics.