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WORKFORCE INNOVATION & OPPORTUNITY ACT (WIOA) LOCAL PLAN

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- I. **Provide an analysis of regional labor and economic conditions in the local area including:**
 - a. **Existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations; and**
 - b. **The employment needs of employers in those industry sectors and occupations**

The Northwest Workforce Development Area region consists of Ashland, Bayfield, Burnett, Douglas, Iron, Price, Rusk, Sawyer, Taylor, and Washburn counties as well as the Bad River, Red Cliff, Lac Courte Oreilles, and St. Croix tribal reservations (a very small part of the Lac Du Flambeau reservation is also included, but is technically considered part of the Northcentral WDA).

Over the next 10 years, regional job growth is expected within 40 of the 80 3-digit NAICS subsectors represented in the northwest region. On the basis of job creation, the following occupations anticipate adding the greatest number of jobs by 2026.

Personal Care Aides	320
Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	210
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	180
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	100
Carpenters	100

Occupations in the following sectors are expected to see growth and a substantial increase in employment numbers from 2016-2026: Food Preparation, Construction and Extraction, Transportation and Material Moving and Management occupations.. The number of manufacturing jobs is expected to decrease by -2.8% percent by 2026. Another notable growing sector, in terms of jobs is Education, Training, and Library Occupations, which is anticipated to grow by 5 percent, from 5,370 to 5,640 jobs during the next decade. The largest industry in the region in terms of jobs is Government, which is expected to remain mostly flat through 2025.

Hot jobs in the region include those found in Table I and Table II.

Table I: WDA7 Northwest Hot Jobs*, 2016-2026

RANK	SOC Code	Occupation	Employment 2016 ⁽¹⁾	Projected Employment 2026	Employment Change (2016-2026)	Percent Change (2016-2026)	Education ⁽⁵⁾	Annual Separations Exits ⁽²⁾	Annual Separations Transfers ⁽³⁾	Annual New Openings	Annual Total Openings ⁽⁴⁾	Median Wages ⁽⁶⁾
1	53-3032	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	2,110	2,290	180	8.50	Postsecondary non-degree award	90	140	20	250	\$43,110
2	53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	1,170	1,270	100	8.50	No formal educational credential	60	100	10	170	\$31,940
3	49-9071	Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	1,140	1,190	50	4.40	High school diploma or equivalent	50	70	10	130	\$33,480
4	47-2031	Carpenters	980	1,080	100	10.20	High school diploma or equivalent	40	60	10	110	\$42,180
8	25-2031	Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	990	1,030	40	4.00	Bachelor's degree	30	40	0	70	\$49,390
12	25-2022	Middle School Teachers, Except Special and	670	700	30	4.50	Bachelor's degree	20	30	0	50	\$54,750

		Career/Techn ical Education										
11	41-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	610	640	30	4.90	High school diploma or equivalent	20	40	0	60	\$31,940
23	41-1012	First-Line Supervisors of Non-Retail Sales Workers	190	200	10	5.30	High school diploma or equivalent	10	10	0	20	\$60,400
14	51-9111	Packaging and Filling Machine Operators and Tenders	500	530	30	6.00	High school diploma or equivalent	20	30	0	50	\$35,470
6	51-7042	Woodworking Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Except Sawing	620	660	40	6.50	High school diploma or equivalent	30	50	0	80	\$32,530
7	11-1021	General and Operations Managers	690	740	50	7.20	Bachelor's degree	20	40	10	70	\$72,700
15	13-2011	Accountants and Auditors	430	470	40	9.30	Bachelor's degree	10	30	0	40	\$60,660
20	11-9051	Food Service Managers	210	230	20	9.50	High school diploma or equivalent	10	20	0	30	\$41,550
21	53-7051	Industrial Truck and Tractor Operators	210	230	20	9.50	No formal educational credential	10	20	0	30	\$32,580

22	17-2112	Industrial Engineers	200	220	20	10.00	Bachelor's degree	10	10	0	20	\$74,340
19	49-3031	Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists	260	290	30	11.50	High school diploma or equivalent	10	20	0	30	\$43,540
13	47-4051	Highway Maintenance Workers	390	440	50	12.80	High school diploma or equivalent	20	20	10	50	\$35,490
9	47-2061	Construction Laborers	620	700	80	12.90	No formal educational credential	20	40	10	70	\$36,660
17	21-1093	Social and Human Service Assistants	310	350	40	12.90	High school diploma or equivalent	20	20	0	40	\$36,200
5	41-4012	Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical	670	760	90	13.40	High school diploma or equivalent	20	50	10	80	\$40,450
25	41-3021	Insurance Sales Agents	220	250	30	13.60	High school diploma or equivalent	10	10	0	20	\$52,000
16	33-3051	Police and Sheriff's Patrol Officers	350	400	50	14.30	High school diploma or equivalent	10	20	10	40	\$47,940

18	27-3031	Public Relations Specialists	200	230	30	15.00	Bachelor's degree	10	20	0	30	\$45,150
24	11-9151	Social and Community Service Managers	190	220	30	15.80	Bachelor's degree	10	10	0	20	\$52,970
10	47-2073	Operating Engineers and Other Construction Equipment Operators	440	520	80	18.20	High school diploma or equivalent	20	30	10	60	\$44,380

The following occupations have all the criteria to be a hot job but because of confidentiality reasons are not included in the top 25 list above: **Farmers, Ranchers, and Other Agricultural Managers (SOC code 11-9013)**

- (1) **Employment** is a count of jobs rather than people, and includes all part- and full-time nonfarm jobs. Employment also includes jobs among self-employed. Totals may not add due to suppression.
- (2) **Exits.** Workers who leave the labor force entirely.
- (3) **Transfers.** Workers who leave their occupation for a different occupation.
- (4) **Total Openings.** Includes exits, transfers and growth.
- (5) **Typical education needed for entry** is what most workers need to enter the occupation.
- (6) **Wages** estimates from the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey May 2016.

Information is derived using May 2016 OES Survey, annual data 2016 QCEW and CES data. Unpublished data from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, CPS and US Census Bureau was also used. To the extent possible, the projections take into account anticipated changes in Wisconsin's economy from 2016 to 2026. It is important to note that unanticipated events may affect the accuracy of these projections.

*Hot Jobs are high projected growth occupations that must meet the following criteria: (1) Median salary must be above the WDA median; (2) Percentage change must be greater than the WDA average; and (3) Have the most projected openings.

Source: Office of Economic Advisors, Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, June 2019

Existing Industry Sectors

Industry clusters are geographic concentrations of industries related by knowledge, skills, inputs, demand, and/or other linkages. Clusters in the Northwest Region were identified using the Desktop Economist module developed by Economic Modeling Specialists International (EMSI), using the methodology established by the Harvard Business School's U.S. Cluster Mapping Project. Industry clusters were identified with equal weighting applied to the performance metrics of earnings, growth, regional competitiveness, regional specialization and gross regional product (GRP). A total of 51 clusters were identified for the region, with 11 "top clusters", 30 "average clusters" and 10 "bottom clusters." These thresholds are determined by applying the average deviation (plus or minus 9) to the average cluster score 47. Top clusters include traditional industries such as Wood Products, Production Technology and Heavy Machinery, Local Education and Training (Schools) and Government Services (State & Local). The 30 "average clusters", represent industries scoring 38 to 56 and include some of the region's developing industries such as Local Health Services, Nonmetal Mining (sand and gravel) and Transportation and Logistics. The bottom 10 industry clusters include industries centered around hospitality, retail, personal and commercial services and media.

In-Demand and Emerging Industries

Driver industries are those that play a key role in the economic vitality of a region by supplying quality, often high-paying jobs. These industries are characterized as those industries having a location quotient (LQ) of 1.00 or greater, industries expected to experience job growth over the next 10 years and those which offer high paying jobs. The driver industries in Northwest Wisconsin include Manufacturing, Utilities, Construction, and Transportation and Warehousing. All three of these industries are anticipated to grow through 2026 and provide higher than median wages. *Emerging industries* are defined as those showing increased job growth and gaining in national competitive share, but have yet to reach a level of concentration in the region comparable to the national level. Emerging industries in northwest Wisconsin include Health Care and Social Assistance, Wholesale Trade, along with Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services. While other industries such as Crop and Animal Production and Retail Trade and Real Estate and Rental and Leasing are anticipated to grow, these industries generally provide lesser earning potential than other industries. Conversely, Professional, Scientific and Technical Services is expected to add high paying jobs in the next ten years, but has the lowest LQ (0.34) of any classified industry in the region.

2. Provide an analysis of the knowledge and skills needed to meet the employment needs of the employers in the local area, including employment needs in in-demand industry sectors and occupations

Employment Needs of Employers

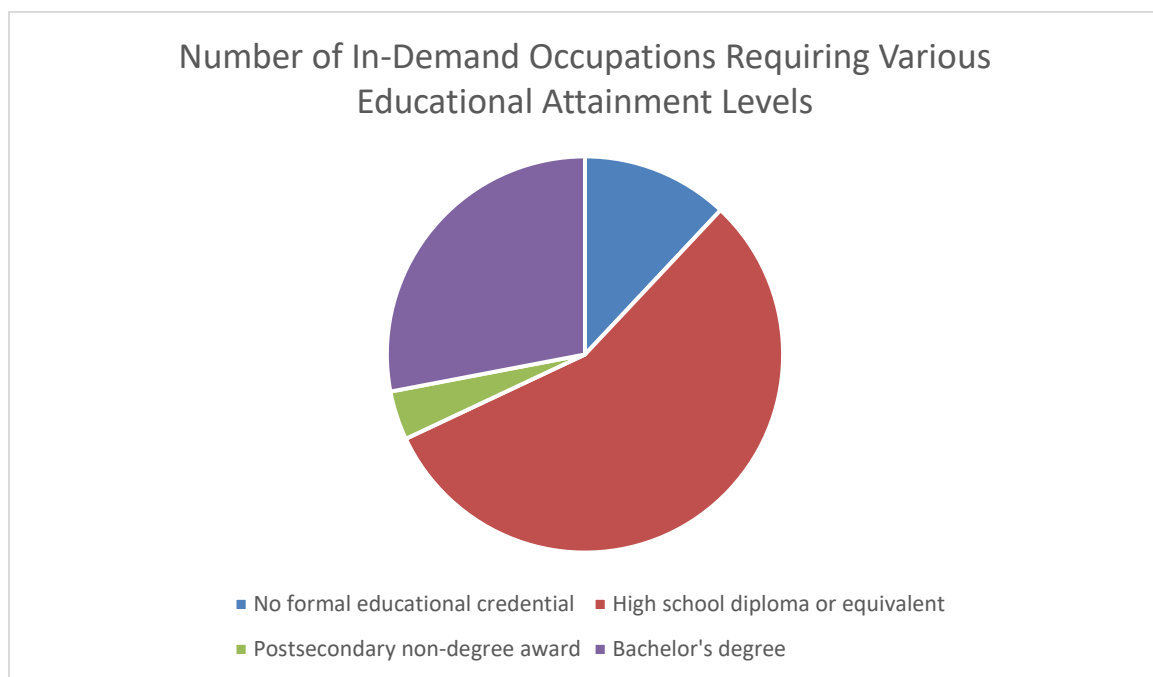
The employment needs of employers in the northwest region are nearly identical to those identified in the WIOA Combined State Plan. Many employers in the region have concerns about their inability to recruit and retain both skilled and unskilled workers. In general, businesses in the region are demanding worker skills in three general areas and they mirror those identified in the State WIOA plan:

1. Technical skills. The ability to use computers and software, debugging and technical writing. This includes proficiency in basic office and accounting applications, such as word processing and

spreadsheets, but may also include more advanced knowledge on specialized applications such as CAD, CNC and other information and communications technologies.

2. Soft skills. These personality-based skills are transferable, so they can be used in many different types of jobs and include qualities such as communication skills, decision-making, commitment, creativity, flexibility and time management.
3. Employability skills. These skills are general skills that are necessary for success in the labor market at all employment levels and in all sectors and include being on time, attendance, safety and ability to follow employer protocols and procedures.

Most of the twenty-five occupations identified as in-demand in Table I do not require more than a high school diploma or equivalent. Of the in-demand occupations listed in Table I, the educational requirements are as follows:



If we take a look at the occupations that are considered to have exponential growth over the next eight years we see many of the same occupations and industries on both Tables I & II. Looking at occupations currently in-demand and fastest growing, the region's heritage is apparent in the types of occupations topping the lists. As discussed with regards to educational attainment, the current makeup of Northwest Wisconsin's economy offers gainful employment for many whose education is ignored by the standard educational attainment measures. Construction, Hospitality, and Manufacturing often employ those who undergo less formal education and/or apprenticeships and yet are earning good wages as highly trained and skilled workers. Even Health Care and Social Assistance, aside from Registered Nurses, employs large numbers of certified or licensed workers rather than those with degrees.

Table II: WDA 7 Fastest Growing Occupations

Occupation	2018 Jobs	2026 Jobs	Change in Jobs (2018-2026)	% Change	2018 Median Hourly Earnings
Personal Care Aides	1,528	1,841	313	20%	\$11.75
Managers, All Other	1,491	1,665	174	12%	\$21.26
Registered Nurses	993	1,155	162	16%	\$32.17
Real Estate Sales Agents	1,336	1,477	141	11%	\$17.97
Retail Salespersons	2,323	2,463	140	6%	\$10.95
Construction Laborers	1,124	1,256	132	12%	\$15.75
Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	1,600	1,709	109	7%	\$10.08
Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers	642	736	94	15%	\$12.88
Farmworkers, Farm, Ranch, and Aquacultural Animals	327	409	82	25%	\$11.02
Medical Assistants	329	411	82	25%	\$16.68
Food Batchmakers	244	319	75	31%	\$16.87
General and Operations Managers	850	922	72	8%	\$36.72
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	2,523	2,593	70	3%	\$21.97
Nonfarm Animal Caretakers	557	627	70	13%	\$9.88
Personal Financial Advisors	414	481	67	16%	\$37.09
Property, Real Estate, and Community Association Managers	543	608	65	12%	\$19.78
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	1,356	1,420	64	5%	\$11.75
Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers	479	541	62	13%	\$21.16
Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	559	620	61	11%	\$24.16
Self-Enrichment Education Teachers	319	375	56	18%	\$15.62

According to the NWWIB’s sector surveys and interactions with local employers and supported by data provided by the Department of Workforce Development, many of the foundational or “soft” skills are common across in-demand occupations in the major industries; workers are expected to exhibit solid oral and written communication skills, basic computer skills, be detail-oriented, and be good at customer service. Training in these areas makes people more hireable in the eyes of employers, and more likely to find success in their chosen field.

However, no amount of soft skills will help without the occupational or “hard” skills a job demands. These of course vary from job to job even within industries, but we can consider both top-listed occupational skills as well as top certifications that the region’s top industries require.

TABLE III: Growth Industries and Hard Skill Requirements

Industry	Certifications	Occupational (Hard) Skills
<p align="center">Health Care and Social Assistance</p>	<p>Associate/Bachelor's degrees; Certified Nursing Assistant; Certified Registered Nurse; Licensed Practical Nurse; Personal Care Workers; Certified Medical Assistant; EMT</p>	<p>Accurate and Detailed Record Keeping; Administration and/or Monitoring of Medication; Record Vital Medical Information; Consult and Coordinate with Healthcare Members to Assess, Plan Implement or Evaluate Patient Care Plans, Monitor Patients Care; Prepare Patients for Examinations and Treatments; Diagnostic and Procedural Coding Software; Data Entry; Medical Terminology; Wrap and Healthcare and Home Care Coordination; Basic Life Support; Critical Care and Triage; Microsoft Office and Health Technology Software; CPR and KEG</p>
<p align="center">Manufacturing</p>	<p>CNC Credentials; Industrial Maintenance; Computer Numerical Controlled Language (CNCL); Certified Production Technician (CPT); Six Sigma; AWS Welding (NIMS); Occupational Safety & Health Administration; Associate/Bachelor's degrees</p>	<p>Equipment Maintenance; Preventative Inspections; Quality Assurance; Process Controls Instrumentation; Safety; Package and Process Material; Blueprint and Measurement Reading; Microsoft Office; Inventory Control; Continuous Improvement; Welding and Fabrication; Monitoring and Assembling; Pneumatics; Operating Heavy Equipment</p>
<p align="center">Construction</p>	<p>Trade Apprenticeship; Valid Driver's License; Operator Certification; On-the-Job Training, Project Management Professional (PMP) Certification; Associate or Bachelor's Degree</p>	<p>Building Construction; Operating Heavy Equipment; HVAC; Building Maintenance; Project Planning; Blueprint and Measurement Reading; Inventory Control; Safety; Quality Assurance; Continuous Improvement; Entrepreneurship; Electrical; Monitoring and Assembling; Carpentry</p>
<p align="center">Transportation and Warehousing</p>	<p>Valid Driver's License; CDL Class A or B; Logistics; APICS (Inventory and/or Supply Chain focuses) Certification</p>	<p>Vehicle Operating; Maintenance; Preventative Maintenance Inspections; Package, Process and Distribute and Deliver Material; Inventory Control; Microsoft Office; Quality Assurance; Operating Heavy Equipment; Safety; Continuous Improvement; Maintain Databases; Cost Control; Inventory Technology Tools; Communications</p>

		Technology; Diesel Mechanic Functioning
Hospitality and Retail	START Certification (AHLEI); Hospitality; National Retail Federation (NRF) Certification; Loss Prevention Certification; Certified Production and Inventory Management (CPIM)(APICS); Associate/Bachelor's degrees	Sales; Food Preparation; Customer Service; Cash Register; Inventory Management and Control; Asset Protection; Microsoft Office; Continuous Improvement; Maintain Database

3. Provide an analysis of the workforce in the local area, including current labor force employment (and unemployment) data, and information on labor market trends, and the educational and skill levels of the workforce in the local area, including individuals with barriers to employment.

Labor Force

The Northwest’s total labor force numbered about 87,292 in December 2019, a decrease of -1.45 percent from December 2016. This decrease is explained by the region’s stagnating population and the increasing number of residents whom are of retirement age. In direct relation to the labor force number, 82,973 residents were employed in at the end of 2019, a decrease of -1.3 percent from 2016 numbers. The number of unemployed residents in the region stood at about 4,319 with an associated unemployment rate of 4.9 percent. Though this ten-county region is geographically large, it comprises only about three percent of Wisconsin’s total workforce, ranking smallest among Wisconsin’s 11 designated WDA regions.

In December 2019 Northwest’s unemployment rate was down 0.2 percentage points from its December 2016 level. The number of unemployed decreased by about 4.17 percent since 2016.

* Population demographics indicate an aging labor force and a dwindling number of new entrants and youth staying in the region.

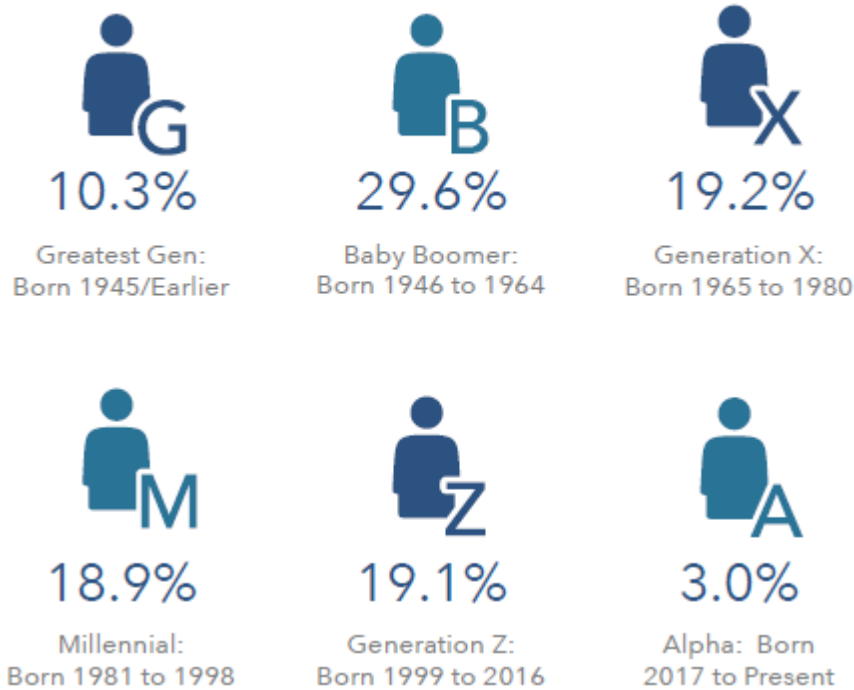
* The Northwest has a much larger share of people over 65 years of age than the rest of the State.

Recruitment and retention issues are a paramount concern to employers in northwest Wisconsin. The out-migration of youth and competition with urban areas for talent are often the primary concerns that employers voice. In turn, the NWWIB collaborates with economic development and local and regional efforts to address high-turnover and recruitment.

The figure below shows a representation of the aging demographic of our region. Over the past 10 years, between 2009 and 2019, the total population for the region dropped from 179,028 to 174,307. This three percent decline in the population in Northwest Wisconsin was influenced by migration and natural increase (births vs. deaths). Many counties throughout this portion of the state have experienced long-term sustained population loss. Price, Iron, Ashland, and Douglas Counties have experienced varying degrees of population decline over the past several decades.

Population decline has been most notable in Iron County, which lost 13.8 percent of its population between 2000 and 2010.

POPULATION BY GENERATION



Source: This infographic contains data provided by American Community Survey (ACS), Esri and Bureau of Labor Statistics

The Wisconsin Department of Administration Demographics Services Center predicts that 57 of Wisconsin’s 72 counties will have population growth between 2010 and 2040. Of the 15 counties projected to lose population, five are located in the northwest region of the state. Price County is projected to lose nearly 18 percent of its total population by the year 2040.

Counties with Greatest Percent Decline, 2010-2040				
County	Census 2010	Projected 2040	Numeric Change	Percent Change
Door	27,785	26,620	-1,165	-4.2%
Buffalo	13,587	13,000	-587	-4.3%
Wood	74,749	71,150	-3,599	-4.8%
Ashland	16,157	15,315	-842	-5.2%
Pepin	7,469	6,885	-584	-7.8%
Iron	5,916	5,420	-496	-8.4%
Bayfield	15,014	13,725	-1,289	-8.6%
Florence	4,423	4,030	-393	-8.9%
Rusk	14,755	13,310	-1,445	-9.8%
Price	14,159	11,645	-2,514	-17.8%

Source: WDOA, 12/2013

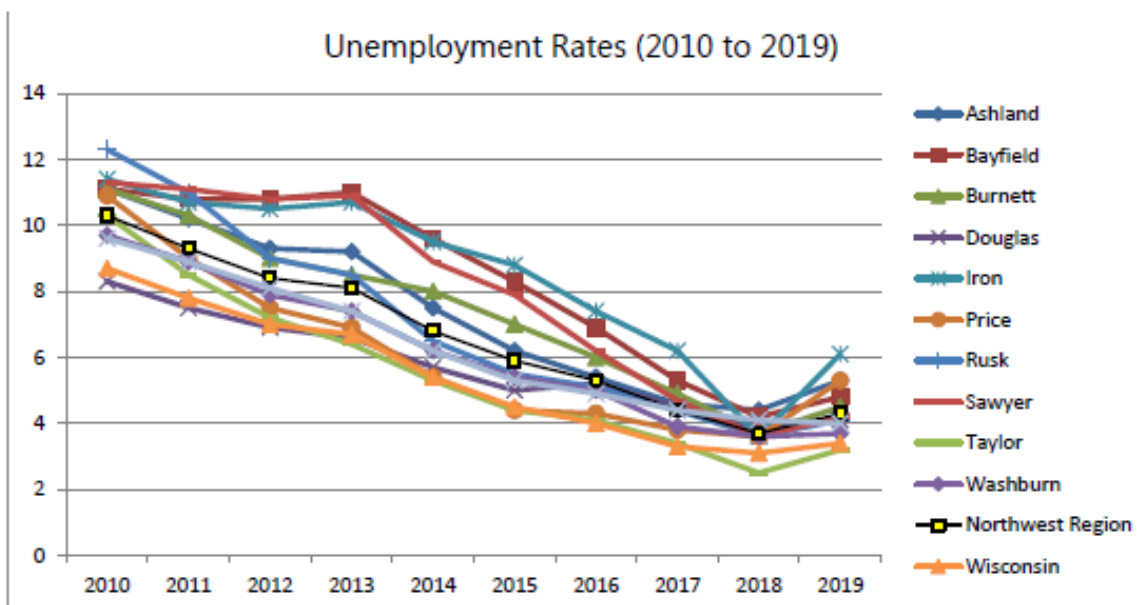
Unemployment Rates

For labor force data, the “universe” is the civilian non-institutionalized population, persons 16 years and older, who are not in jails or chronic-care hospitals. This population is divided into those who are in the labor force and those who are not. The ratio between the labor force and the civilian non-institutional population is the labor force participation rate. The labor force is composed of those with a job, the employed, and those without a job and actively looking for one. Persons without a job and not looking for one are ‘not’ considered to be in the labor force.

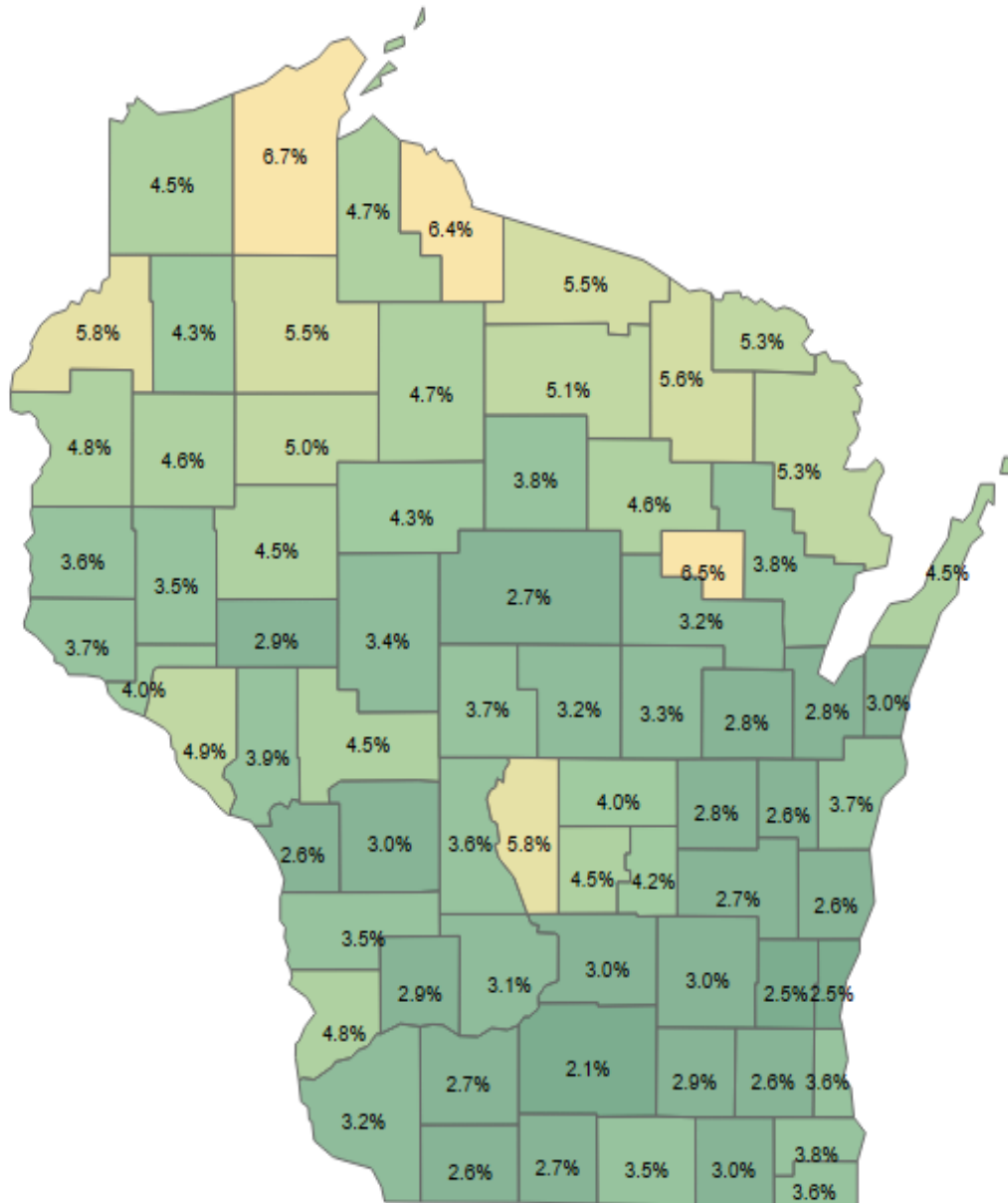
Employment

Employment is measured in several ways according to the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development. Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) are based on where a person lives and includes anybody working, including the self-employed. In other words, it measures the employed residents of a county. The primary source is the Current Population Survey (CPS) conducted each month by the Census Bureau. CPS data counts employed persons at their place of residence and counts them only once even if they hold multiple jobs. CPS data also includes those persons “with a job but not at work” who earn no wages, e.g., workers on unpaid leaves of absence; unpaid family workers employed 15 hours or more during the survey period; and a significant portion of agricultural and domestic workers, but excludes persons under age 16. The chart below reflects unemployment trends over the past nine years. The rate for the region as a whole in 2010 was 10.3 and has since dropped to a low of 4.9 in December of 2019 (not seasonally adjusted).

Nonfarm Wage and Salary Employment (NFWS) is an estimate of jobs based on the county an employer is located in. In other words, it measures jobs in the county. It does not include self-employed persons. The primary source is the Current Employment Statistics program and is derived from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), which is gathered from quarterly reports submitted by over 8 million U.S. employer establishments covered by unemployment insurance. The QCEW program counts jobs at the place of work and count separately each job held by multiple holders. NFWS data takes QCEW data and adds railroad workers, students in work study, church employees, private school workers, etc.; therefore, NFWS are always larger than QCEW figures.



Map of the Unemployment Rate (%) in December, 2019

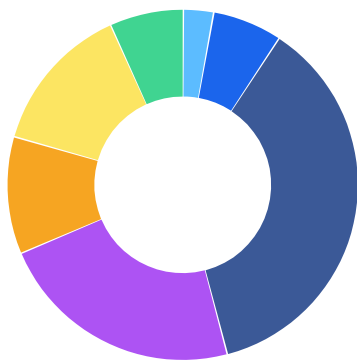


Educational Attainment

In 2018, the Northwest Wisconsin Region had approximately 128,447 people over the age of 25. Based on EMSI Data, 37 percent of this population in the region has a high school diploma, compared to about 32 percent for the State of Wisconsin. 54 percent of the region's population has some education beyond high school and of those

that have gone onto higher education, 59 percent obtained an associate degree or higher. Considering the advances in technology throughout emerging industry sectors, having at minimum a technical/associate degree is becoming more important to meet employer’s needs.

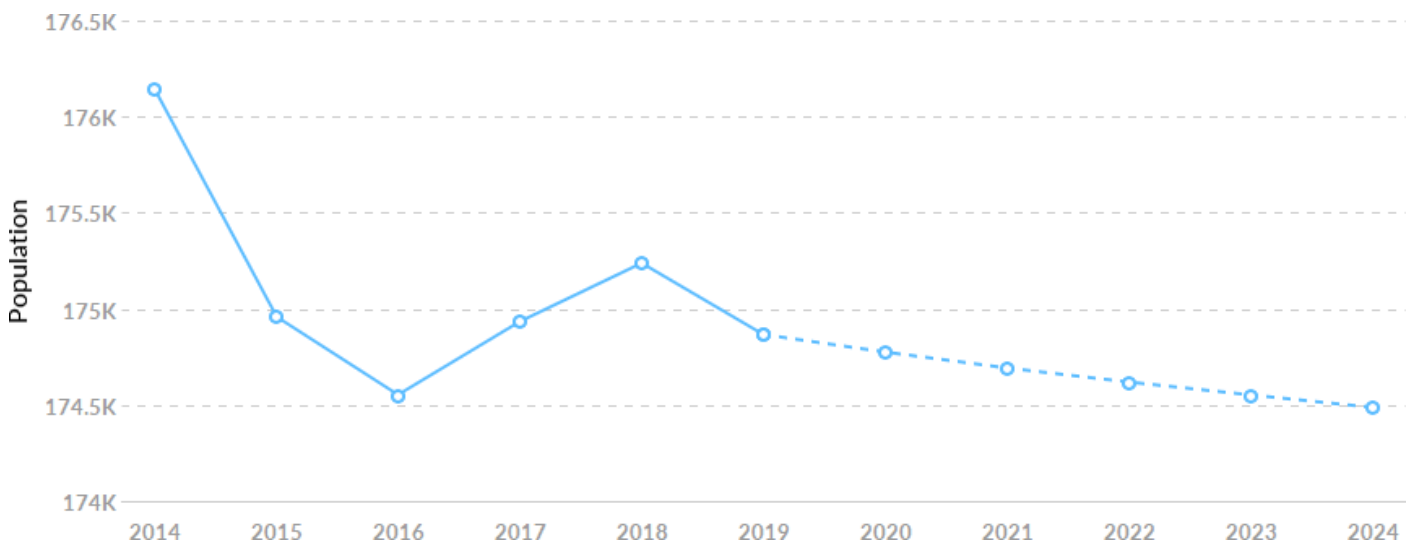
Concerning educational attainment, 14% of the selected regions' residents possess a Bachelor's Degree (5.0% below the national average), and 11% hold an Associate's Degree (3% above the national average).



	% of Population	Population
● Less Than 9th Grade	2.8%	3,562
● 9th Grade to 12th Grade	6.4%	8,244
● High School Diploma	36.6%	47,107
● Some College	22.7%	29,193
● Associate's Degree	10.8%	13,896
● Bachelor's Degree	13.8%	17,770
● Graduate Degree and Higher	6.8%	8,760

Population Trends

As of 2019 the region's population declined by 0.7% since 2014, falling by 1,276. Population is expected to decrease by 0.2% between 2019 and 2024, losing 379.



Jobs and Wages

Statewide numbers reflecting the economy in Wisconsin show that it is thriving and that unemployment rates continue to remain low. Although this is true for the most part, those of us in rural Wisconsin know that numbers reflected in a "statewide economy" don't always paint an accurate picture locally. Depending on where you stand in Wisconsin, things may look very different. As many of our rural communities continue to face challenges, we recognize the importance of regional partnerships and creative solutions. Table IV below shows average earnings per job across industries in the northwest region compared to the State of Wisconsin. Annual wages throughout the Region for 2018 were 21 percent less than the State of Wisconsin average.

Table IV: Average Annual Wage by Industry, 2018

Description	Avg. Earnings Per Job- Region	Avg. Earnings Per Job- State	% of State
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	\$41,007	\$43,397	94%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	\$81,066	\$84,127	96%
Utilities	\$114,258	\$141,754	81%
Construction	\$57,188	\$68,030	84%
Manufacturing	\$59,450	\$72,714	82%
Wholesale Trade	\$53,104	\$80,552	66%
Retail Trade	\$30,712	\$33,593	91%
Transportation and Warehousing	\$67,982	\$56,342	121%
Information	\$45,662	\$89,738	51%
Finance and Insurance	\$55,966	\$92,492	61%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	\$36,959	\$52,347	71%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	\$57,314	\$82,529	69%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	\$94,816	\$121,170	78%
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation	\$37,995	\$38,790	98%
Educational Services	\$26,406	\$44,986	59%
Health Care and Social Assistance	\$47,710	\$58,991	81%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	\$25,063	\$36,628	68%
Accommodation and Food Services	\$17,059	\$18,938	90%
Other Services (except Public Administration)	\$25,011	\$30,063	83%
Government	\$55,211	\$68,981	80%
All Industries	\$46,930	\$59,150	79%

Low wages make it difficult for job seekers to find competitive family sustaining jobs in the northwest region. Retaining workers in rural and isolated communities is a constant challenge. The NWWIB recognizes and has identified that we need to train our current workforce and upskill those with ties in the communities if we are to prosper in the region. Training incumbent workers so that they can advance in their careers is also a logical step in moving more entry-level workers into the workforce.

Per Capita Personal Income

Per capita personal income (PCPI) is widely used and accepted as an indicator of economic well-being of residents of an area. Personal income is the sum of net earnings, other labor income, proprietor's income,

NW Region	11.2%	11.6%	10.1%	8.9%	14.6%	11.3%	8.8%	8.6%	10.8%	11%
State	11.2%	11.5%	10.3%	10.7%	10.2%	12.9%	10.8%	9.7%	10.8%	10.2%

Source: UW-Madison Institute for Research on Poverty, Wisconsin Poverty Reports

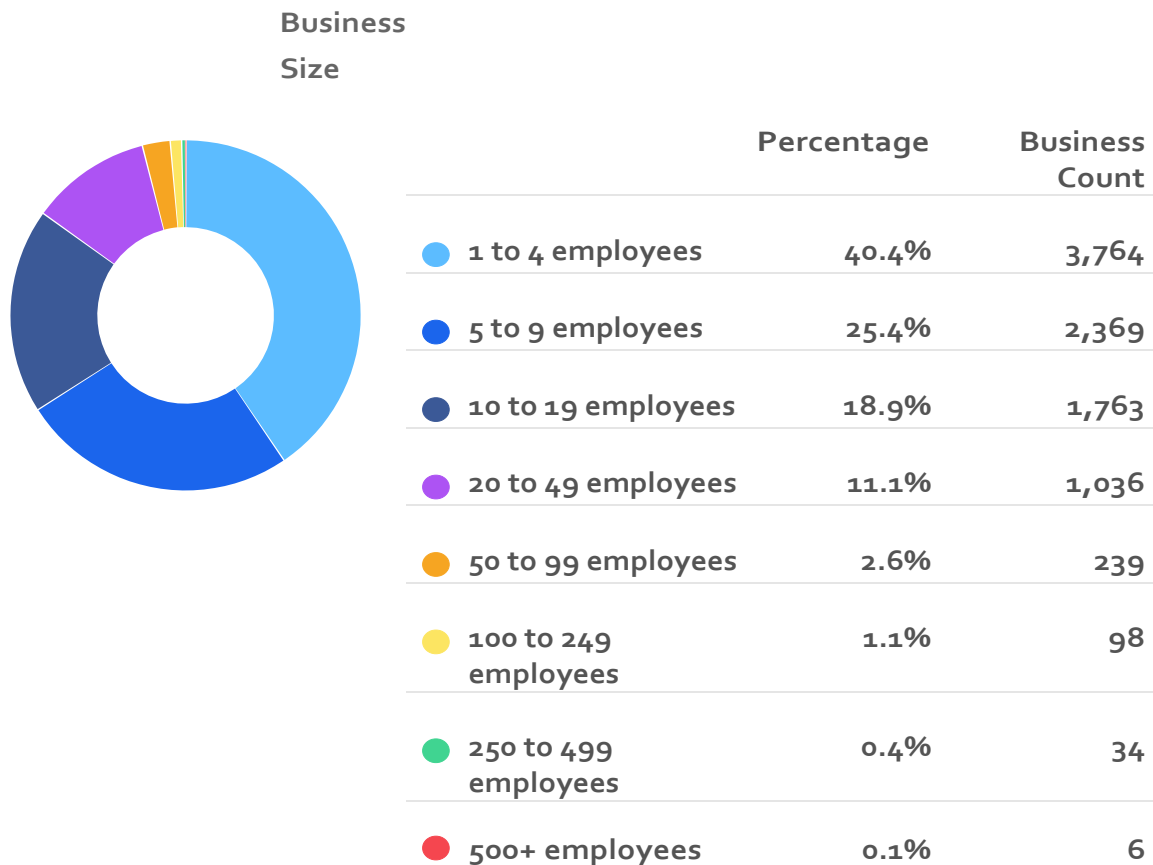
Jobseekers

The workforce in Northwest Wisconsin is constantly adjusting to the ebbs and flows of seasonal and structural changes. Depending on the time of the year, there are roughly 90,000 employed residents in Northwest Wisconsin - more in the summer months, fewer during the winter.

The Northwest Wisconsin WDA covers one-fifth of the state's geography, yet the workforce is only two percent of the employed residents in the State of Wisconsin. The large geography and the area's natural resource lend themselves to diverse employment opportunities that range from wood production to oil refining (unique in the state) to tourism to environmental protection.

Northwest WDA was the only WDA that had a negative natural increase. In other words, **NW is the only WDA that had more deaths than births**, which shows the age of the population

Jobseekers needs include; guidance on training and education needed for existing employment opportunities, development of resumes and cover letters, evaluation of skills, job experience and abilities to match to new job openings, practice of interviewing techniques, help in on-line employment application submissions, help in exploring potential new career paths, financial literacy training, and financial assistance for training to upgrade skills



BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT

In July of 2014, President Obama signed the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the first update to the nation's core workforce training programs in the 16 years since the passage of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). The WIOA recognizes the need for a new approach and reauthorizes the nation's employment, training, adult education, and vocational rehabilitation programs created under WIA. WIOA improves connections to employment and training opportunities that lead to economic prosperity for workers and their families. It strengthens existing workforce development and adult education programs that can benefit adults and youth with barriers to economic success. The Northwest Wisconsin Workforce Investment Board (NWWIB) local plan outlines strategies to assist individuals with barriers to employment in the region.

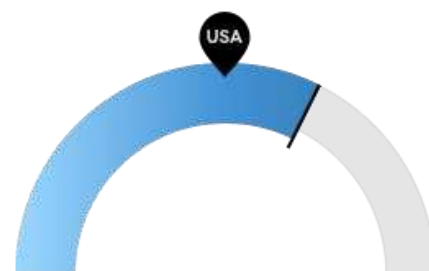
Key population sectors with barriers to employment

Disabled Workers

There are an estimated 13,079 disabled people in the Northwest WDA labor force. Disabled individuals account for about 12 percent of the region's total labor force. Approximately 51 percent (6,705) of disabled individuals do not work and 27 percent (3,568) work less than full-time. Providing opportunities for disabled workers can strengthen the broader regional workforce. Studies consistently demonstrate that workers with a disability have average or better attendance, lower turnover, average or better job performance, and average or better safety records than their non-disabled counterparts.

Veterans

The region's veteran labor force is estimated (WI DWD) to include 6,615 individuals. Of this total, 65 percent are estimated to be employed. Many federal and state resources exist to assist veterans in transitioning to a civilian career. Veterans who are disabled or who served on active duty during certain periods or campaigns are entitled to preference over non-veterans both in federal hiring and in retention during reductions in force. In Wisconsin, veterans are also entitled to additional preference points when competing for state jobs. Veterans with a service-connected disability (SCD) of at least 30 percent may be hired for permanent, entry-level positions with the state on a noncompetitive basis.



Veterans

Northwest Wisconsin has 15,346 veterans. The national average for an area this size is 10,190.

Youth Workers

One of the clear demographic challenges in northwest Wisconsin is youth retention and recruitment. The pool of eligible youth workers in the northwest region in 2016 was 17,232 individuals (ACS, 2014). The labor force participation rate for this cohort is approximately 63 percent.

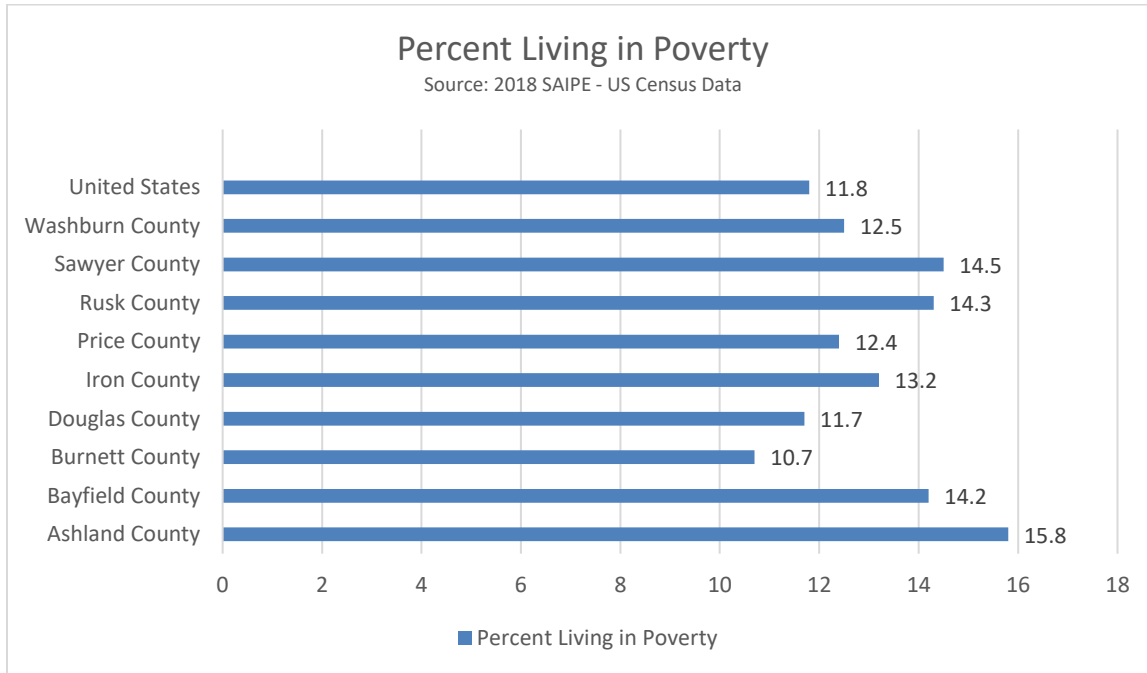
Low Income Workers

Low wage workers potentially face many difficult barriers to employment, including:

- High transportation costs and limited transit access
- Lack of appropriate education, training and experience

- Lack of access to affordable child care
- Discrimination against workers with a criminal record
- Lack of English proficiency for immigrant workers

Burnett and Douglas Counties are the only two who do not exceed the national average of 11.8 percent of the population living in poverty.

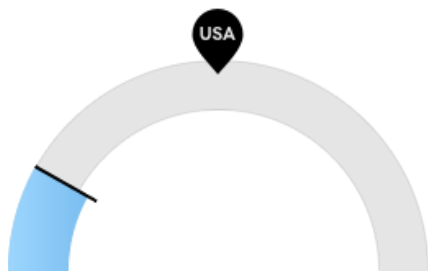


Language Barriers

Proficiency in the English language can constitute a barrier to employment. According to the 2010 US Census, there were 3,633 (2.6 percent) individuals in the northwest region who spoke a language other than English at home.

Minority Status

Access to employment has always been an obstruction to the economic prosperity of minority populations. The largest minority population in the region includes American Indians or Alaska Natives (AIAN), which accounts for 4.9 percent of the region’s total population. Demographic projections show the AIAN population increasing by 17% by 2026. The African American and Asian populations comprise a combined total of .08 percent of the region’s total population. According to the 2014 American Community Survey, 2,779 individuals (34.3 percent) within the AIAN population were living below the poverty level. The NWWIB strives to work specifically with the Native American population on training and skills development opportunities. The tribes and the NWWIB would like to know the unemployment rates specific to our Native American population on a real time basis and any



Racial Diversity

Racial diversity is low in Northwest Wisconsin. The national average for an area this size is 69,428 racially diverse people, while there are 17,950 here.

assistance that the state can provide to obtain such information would be appreciated.

Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

	Bad River Reservation, WI; Bad River Reservation and Off-Reservation Trust Land, WI	Lac Courte Oreilles Reservation, WI; Lac Courte Oreilles Reservation and Off-Reservation Trust Land, WI	Red Cliff Reservation, WI; Red Cliff Reservation and Off-Reservation Trust Land, WI	St. Croix Reservation, WI; St. Croix Reservation and Off-Reservation Trust Land, WI
	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate
Total:	1,027	2,240	796	394
In labor force:	649	1,339	529	251
In Armed Forces	0	5	0	0
Civilian:	600	1,229	500	236
Employed	528	1,011	450	199
Unemployed	121	323	79	52
Not in labor force	378	901	267	143
Unemployment Rate	18.6%	24.1%	14.9%	20.7%

Institutionalized Population

The institutionalized population includes persons residing in institutional group quarters such as adult correctional facilities, juvenile facilities, skilled-nursing facilities, and other medical institutional facilities. The institutionalized population of the northwest region is 2,145 individuals (2010 US Census) or 1.2 percent of the region's total population. These individuals may be ineligible, unable or unlikely to participate in the labor force.

4. Provide an analysis of the workforce development activities (including education and training) in the local area, including an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of such services, and the capacity to provide such services, to address the identified education and skill needs of the workforce and the employment needs of employers in the local area.

There is a strong system in place in Northwest Wisconsin to provide workforce development services amongst WIOA partners.

Strengths include:

- Current education and training service provisions have been designed and implemented in conjunction using labor market information and are designed to meet customer needs.
- Short-term and industry recognized credentials as part of in-demand career pathways are emphasized.

- In March of 2019 the NWWIB adopted a new strategic framework that fosters innovation, builds community partnerships, and integrates a family-centered approach across traditional functional areas. The Board has implemented the 2Gen/ Family-Centered Employment (FCE) approach to improve services provided to families with children. This commitment to serve families holistically requires continued coordination across all workforce partners and agencies as well as education and human service programs.
- Job seekers have access to current labor market information relating to growing and emerging industries.
- Local businesses are engaged to identify industry needs and education is consulted to develop customized training to address needs.
- Customers are counseled on an individual basis to assess work readiness, identify barriers and develop plans of action inclusive of education and training services.
- Customers are engaged at first point of entry; customers are oriented to Job Center services that are inclusive of education and training services.
- Customers requiring more intense service are provided the opportunity to work individually with a Career Planner or partner staff in a holistic approach in addressing barriers of employment and the provision of resources, including training opportunities, to meet job seeker needs.
- Individual Employment Plans are developed with customers so that they are able to move strategically along a career pathway.
- Consistent with the WIOA emphasis on employer engagement and input on training program design, we have made great strides with engagement of businesses in planning and development of short-term training programs that focus on currently needed skill sets and that can result in post-training hiring commitments.

Areas for improvement include:

- WIOA also allows for more focus and emphasis on combining focused skills training with work-based learning that enables individuals to not only receive hands-on experience but that also allows them to earn while they learn
- Consistent with the Council on Workforce Investment's goal of using data to drive decisions, the WDB will enhance its analysis of training placement results, graduation rates and LMI information to focus more sharply on sector approaches that produce both short and long term employment outcomes, including better information on which training providers produce the best trained graduates.

If we explore the most common of workforce activities using the most general of title we define them and explore strengths and weaknesses below.

Basic Career Services (aka Resources)

The Basic services communicate employer expectations and career opportunities through available resources and workshops. These services are delivered in both virtual, self-guided experiences, and across partner locations. Staff are focused on outstanding customer service, assessment delivery, and communicating employer and career pathway information; service delivery is at a responsive pace and offered in a welcoming environment. Customers engage in an initial conversation with staff to understand their needs, identify help they may need looking for employment, gain an overview of workforce services, and general information on local employer demand such as available hot jobs and upcoming skills training. The bulk of these services are delivered through the Resource Rooms

and are self-help and informational in nature. Workshops in a virtual and/or informational format are offered daily at the Job Centers at this Basic Career Services level. Outcomes for this service include speed of service (wait times), conversions to individualized service, and customer experience.

Analysis of Basic Career Services

Basic career services are a valuable offering as they allow for self-service and, informational customer driven services to the one-stop system for customers who may not be able to benefit from a deeper level of investment from our Career and Training service offerings. They allow the One-Stop system to provide service to the community and job seekers entering the offices and virtually accessing these offerings to obtain the short-term help that they need to access job, career, and education information. Basic career services also allow employers to have a steady stream of skilled job seekers ready for opportunities they may have listed on Job Center of Wisconsin. Strengths of the Basic level of services is the connection to partners and community resources, as well as the outstanding customer service provided by WIOA partners. The weaknesses in Basic career services are few but important. While they do allow for us to screen for motivated customers that should be able to benefit from deeper level of investment through Individualized Coaching and Training services it often presents a predicament in the fact that many motivated customers bypass our system altogether by accessing virtual basic services without ever stepping foot inside our One-Stop system. To address this, we will rely on referral paths with our partners and innovative value added marketing campaigns.

Individualized Career and Coaching Services (aka Coaching and Career Advising)

Customers seeking career assistance are assigned to a Career Planner, serving as a case manager and career coach. These services are delivered from a client-centric perspective, rooted in a deep understanding of regional employer demand, and hone in on the industry specific skill analysis, career path exploration, upskilling, and job matching. All Career Planners, regardless of funding stream, work one-on-one with customers, beginning with the delivery and interpretation of an assessment, as well as the development of an Individualized Employment Plan, following the customer throughout their interactions with One-Stop services in one on one coaching sessions, and into placement and follow-up. There are two main categories of work with the customer: Group Services and Individual Coaching. Career Planners assign online instructional and/or pre-vocational services, and refer employer ready customers to job orders in Job Center of Wisconsin. They may also set up pre-vocational training services, such as referral to Adult Basic Education, and/or a paid internship (aka, Work Experience). Certain workshops are offered at the Individualized Career Services level by referral. These workshops go beyond Basic and informational and require experienced staff to facilitate skills development validated by skill demonstration. Only customers at the Individualized level with an assigned Career Planner can attend Individualized level workshops. Outcomes for this service include days to employment, case load size target, coaching sessions with customers, and common measure performance.

Analysis of Individualized Career and Coaching Services

Individualized Career services often are our most robust offering as they allow our One-Stop System to invest in job seekers through individual and group coaching, assessment of skills, including making them aware of their transferrable skills, mock interviewing, etc. All of these service offerings provide the job seeker and employers a tangible benefit of making them ready for employment and a career. At the core of these services are two strengths: Career Planner and Business Service Team members' understanding of regional employer intelligence and demand and the strong relationships Career Planners develop with their customers. There are two challenges to these services though: often, job

seekers need significant assistance in overcoming barriers and many of these barriers are not areas for which we can provide direct services, resulting in referrals to our partners. To address this, we are working to seamlessly connect the system with partners who have experience and expertise in addressing specific barriers. The second challenge is access to Professional Development opportunities. The One-Stop Operator will initiate Professional Development sessions that focus on creative interventions with enhanced employer demand information paired with career pathway materials.

Work Based Learning and Training.

For customers needing skills development beyond the resources available at the Job Center, Career Planners recommend occupational skills training. Training happens in one of two ways, either through the typical training in a classroom or facility that offers certificate or degree-based program training (considered an Individual Training Account, or ITA) or through work-based learning skills demonstrations in an On-the-Job-Training (OJT) or Work Experience. Each Career Planner is responsible for following the customer, documenting progress, and ensuring that the customer receives the certification associated with the training. For customers who are adults, there are currently three possible programs of classroom/facility training: WIOA Adult; WIOA Dislocated Worker; and Fast Forward. Outcomes for this service include completion rates, credential rates, employment, employer experience, wage increase, and common measure performance.

Analysis of Work Based Learning and Training

Work-based learning and training is a robust way of upskilling community job seekers allowing them to obtain an increase in skills to become more marketable to employers. Both of these offerings make workforce development increasingly critical in the conversation around economic development and allow for us to create as well as sustain the recognized link between education and economy. The challenge sometimes presented by work-based learning is that employers may not be willing to take the risk of experiential learning due to workers compensation limitations and risk. We are working with employers to explore additional ways to support the process. The way that OJT is counted in terms of overall performance is also a challenge. The challenges presented by training services include the lack of a diverse set of training providers that can respond quickly to the needs of employers and work with us to develop in a short time frame a training program that is industry recognized and presents a credential that is acceptable. We continue to explore the creative attraction methods for gathering additional training providers to the region and focusing on short-term industry recognized credentials or stackable credentials. The NWWIB's industry based consortiums and other employer groups are addressing these issues by forcing different conversations with training providers which highlight their mode of delivery. An additional challenge is the employers' discussion of skills and not credentials. We will be working to change our language to discuss skills and how a credential is a tool for verifying skill demonstration.

Recruitment and Referral to Employment

We provide employers with recruitment services. All One-Stop staff have responsibilities in the recruitment process for skilled workers to meet employer demand:

- The Business Services Team: bring employer demand and employer intelligence back to the system. Responsibilities include posting job orders to Job Center of Wisconsin and understanding employer screening practices, as well as gathering additional needed information to find candidates. Career Planners and partner staff actively review job orders in Job Center of Wisconsin and available job listings across the region from a multitude of sources. Additionally,

they screen qualified candidates that are a potential match for an open and available job order, seeking a potential enrollment and placement.

- The Career Planner and WIOA Partners team: meet employer demand by locating and creating skilled workers for employers. Career Planners actively review job orders in Job Center of Wisconsin. Through increased awareness of available jobs and the skills necessary, matches are made with both customers for future enrollment and customers on existing caseloads. Outcomes for this service include job order management, business services actively managed in Job Center of Wisconsin Business, employer engagement penetration rates by industry, employment, employer experience, and common measure performance.

Analysis of Recruitment and Referral to Employment

The strength of our recruitment and referral to employment is that it provides an opportunity for us to take a proactive step in meeting the needs of employers through skilled workers. There are significant efforts that we have built around this process which have allowed us to respond in business time to the needs of the employers. The challenge presented in this is that while we have access to a fair pool of employer ready customers, many of our customers that make it into the Individualized (“enrolled”) career services level are often those that need more investment and are not always ready. In other words, it takes time to get them ready and this time does challenge our system to respond to business needs in business time.

Placement and Follow-up

Placement is the ultimate goal for all of our programs. However, placement is not enough; we work with our customers to ensure that the placement is a sustainable placement. Once the customer is placed into unsubsidized employment and has a planned exit to employment, it is vital that One-Stop partners maintain quarterly contact to ensure that he or she is receiving any necessary job retention assistance or services. Career Services staff document and ensure that the participant successfully meets their planned outcome goals and successful outcomes on the WIOA performance measures. Career Planners, when appropriate, provide limited services necessary to help prevent job loss or enter employment. Outcomes for this service include exit screen completion, employment, employer experience, and common measure performance.

Analysis of Placement and Follow-up

The strength of our efforts to assist customers in obtaining employment and following up with them rest in our ability to develop a rapport with them quickly and help them at a rapid pace so that they are in a place to provide for themselves and their families and meet the employer’s needs. The key addition of *families* to that previous sentence reiterates the importance placed on Family Centered Employment initiatives. Follow up services that are offered after placement allow for us to ensure that the customer retains their position and if possible grows and advances through ongoing coaching and encouragement. The challenges presented by the placement process specifically rest with the significantly complicated process by which our staff and our system obtains performance calculations and common measure success. Another challenge present in both placement and follow up is the reality that customers do not always notify us that they have obtained employment or respond to follow-up contact attempts after placement.

5. Describe the local WDB's strategic vision and goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including individuals with barriers to employment), including goals relating to the performance

accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance described in WIOA Section 116(b)(2)(A) to support economic growth and economic self-sufficiency.

Our Mission

The Northwest Wisconsin Workforce Investment Board will create, and continue to improve, an innovative and quality strategic direction for the regional workforce development system.

Our Vision

Northwest Wisconsin will have a system that employers, workers, job seekers, and taxpayers will value as the system of choice for their workforce development needs

The Board approved the new 2020-2024 strategic plan, including vision and goals, in December of 2019 Stakeholder insights and the employment and vacancy data points identified in the planning process identify key challenges the region is experiencing in workforce development – these same challenges have existed since our previous strategic plan developed in 2016.

- a. Increasing difficulty recruiting the skills or talent needed
- b. A declining but still high regional employment rate
- c. An increase in the duration of unemployment
- d. An increase in the number of unemployed low-income residents
- e. A high unemployment rate for youth
- f. Changing employment trends, in terms of in-demand industries and top employers
- g. Rampant retirements and an aging workforce will present future challenges

NWWIB's leadership took these challenges into consideration in creating the strategic plan, and in outlining its six key goals, listed below. NWWIB recognizes the need to continue its approach of connecting job seekers with employment in our region's top industries and in serving our top employers more directly. It also recognizes the need to serve those struggling the hardest to maintain connections to employment: the long-term unemployed as well as those with the most limited educational levels and barriers to success and the least amount of access to services and resources

2020 – 2024 NWWIB Strategic Objectives

1. Establish a customer-centric system that promotes collaboration, access, and measureable outcomes.
2. All targeted sectors have a robust and demand-driven action plan. Increase overall services to the businesses in the region.
3. Incorporate technology and applied technological solutions to increase collaboration and innovation as well as the development of entrepreneurs.
4. Develop messaging and strategic partnerships to advance the initiatives and priorities of the NWWIB.

5. Build capacity to support implementation of the board's priorities and while implementing continuous improvement strategies.

In order to ensure the above issues are addressed, each will be assigned to the appropriate NWWIB sub-committee or tasks force, which will then be responsible for developing the specific implementation strategies necessary to meet the goals/activities and will track performance. The Strategic Plan Map on the next page provides an at-a-glance view of our priorities and objectives. Additionally, in order to operationalize the State of Wisconsin PY20-23 WIOA Combined State Plan, each Strategic Objective and its Key Strategic Activities aligns directly to the DWD / WIOA State Plan Vision, Goals, and Strategies - **alignment indicated in superscript on the Strategic Plan Map.*

1. Access: Establish a customer-centric focus to increase coordination, effectiveness, and access to workforce development programs.
2. Alignment: Engage partner staff to increase system alignment
3. Accountability: Facilitate meaningful outcomes through alignment of governance, accountability, and metrics
4. Effectively Connect Employers and Skills Workers
5. Increasing Access to Career Pathways
6. Expand Opportunities for Work-Based Learning and Credential Attainment
7. Increased Collaboration and Program Alignment
8. Use Technology Solutions that Increase Collaboration and Innovation

Mission

The Northwest Wisconsin Workforce Investment Board will create, and continue to improve, an innovative and quality strategic direction for the regional workforce development system.

Overarching Principle

Access to employment with adequate pay is critical for families' stability and livelihood. Children who grow up in poverty tend to do worse in school, have poorer health outcomes, and do worse in the labor market as adults than children who do not (Sherman and Mitchell 2017). The absence of work is associated with high poverty rates for households, although nearly 20 percent of households in poverty in 2015 were working (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2017). These data demonstrate the importance of helping parents access good jobs that pay family-sustaining wages. Such jobs increasingly require education beyond high school, suggesting the need to help people access not only jobs but education and training as well. The public workforce system helps job seekers access training and jobs and can contribute to the economic stability of children, yet we know little about how the system meets families' needs.

Strategic Objectives

Establish a customer-centric system that promotes collaboration, access, and measureable outcomes	All targeted sectors have a robust and demand-driven action plan. Increase overall services to the businesses in the region	Incorporate technology and applied technological solutions to increase collaboration and innovation as well as the development of entrepreneurs	Develop messaging and strategic partnerships to advance the initiatives and priorities of the NWWIB	Build capacity to support implementation of the board's priorities and while implementing continuous improvement strategies
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Key Strategic Activities

<p>Continue and enhance the work the NWWIB is doing to increase access to child care^{1,2,7}</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve image of child care as an occupation • Work with Governor's Council on Workforce Investment to develop a credential for basic required coursework for early childhood education^{5,8} • Assist entrepreneurs and communities in the development of child care sites⁷ • Promote enrollment in Wisconsin Shares for eligible families^{1,7} 	<p>Develop and facilitate specific programming for the re-entry population based on employer identified needs^{1,4,5,6}</p>	<p>Support telecommute initiatives and shared work space efforts throughout the region^{4,8}</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantify the regional demand for telecommuting and shared workspace³ 	<p>Develop educational messaging about the "benefits cliff". Align with partners who can assist in our efforts^{2,3}</p>	<p>Collect existing data on employer needs and identify any gaps in the data³</p>	
	<p>Operate or partner on career camps for targeted sectors^{2,4,5,6}</p>		<p>Align any new initiatives with targeted partners and strategic organizations^{2,7,8}</p>	<p>Measure What Matters. The NWWIB will identify the metrics and objectives and key results that define success^{2,3}</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key indicators should reach beyond WIOA performance measures³ • Develop ROI methodology on service provision, programs, Job Center visits, etc.³ 	
	<p>Explore ways to increase in-school youth programming and career pipelines. (waivers, CESA partnerships, additional resources)^{5,6}</p>		<p>Explore transportation solutions (Uber, Lyft) that can be applied to consumer services to reduce programmatic costs⁸</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruit a workforce to serve as transportation providers in order to build a more robust rural travel network⁸ 	<p>Update the marketing and outreach plan to reflect the new strategic priorities</p>	<p>Aggressively pursue opportunities to increase revenue that supports NWWIB strategic priorities¹</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share a grant writer position with a strategic partner^{7,8}
	<p>Work with Labor partners to develop industry exploration cohorts that focus on females, minorities and other non-traditional populations^{2,4,5,6,7}</p>		<p>Promote entrepreneurial programming and entrepreneur development⁷</p>	<p>Create targeted outreach lists and efforts to focus messaging</p>	<p>Ensure that regional stakeholders and legislators are informed of workforce programming and efforts^{2,7}</p>
<p>Educate communities and employers about the value and important of training programs focused on re-entry^{2,4,6,7}</p>	<p>DRAFT DWD / WIOA State Plan Vision, Goals, and Strategies - alignment indicated in superscript</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Access: Establish a customer-centric focus to increase coordination, effectiveness, and access to workforce development programs. 2. Alignment: Engage partner staff to increase system alignment 3. Accountability: Facilitate meaningful outcomes through alignment of governance, accountability, and metrics 4. Effectively Connect Employers and Skills Workers 5. Increasing Access to Career Pathways 6. Expand Opportunities for Work-Based Learning and Credential Attainment 7. Increased Collaboration and Program Alignment 8. Use Technology Solutions that Increase Collaboration and Innovation 			<p>Utilize technology to measure outcomes and identify historical trends as well as upcoming systemic changes or trends^{3,8}</p>	
<p>Increase collaboration and connections through Youth Apprenticeship^{2,5,6}</p>					
<p>Collaborate with technical colleges to increase the number of entry-level career pathways opportunities. This includes the short-term credentialed academies^{1,2,3,4,5,6}</p>					

6. Describe the strategies and services that will be utilized to facilitate engagement of employers, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations, in workforce development programs. Specifically:

a. What outreach activities are planned to increase business engagement in your local area?

The strategies and services the Northwest Wisconsin Workforce Investment Board will use to facilitate employer engagement and deliver career services are derived from WDA 7's already strong partnerships with local and regional economic development entities, chambers of commerce, industry associations, education –K-12 and post-secondary systems- local and state government entities and non-profits. In addition, the Northwest Wisconsin Workforce Investment Board actively participates in sector partnerships convened under the auspices of the NWWIB or Wisconsin Workforce Development Association. This partnership is significant because all NWWIB sector partnerships are regional rather than area specific.

Over the last four years the outreach and marketing efforts have not only been conducted by the NWWIB but also inclusive of partner organizations like CEP, TANF, technical colleges, DVR and the regional economic development organization (REDO). The collaboration of multiple organizations all working with the business community has helped streamline and leverage the limited resources available as well as present a cohesive framework for the local business community needing qualified and talented job candidates. The following are a few of the outreach and marketing activities that will continue in collaboration with the partners:

- Participation in employer roundtables to talk about our business services and talent pool. Meeting frequency varies by location and they are attended by small and large businesses and provide a great opportunity for business education.
- Targeted outreach to businesses based on available talent identified in the local and statewide talent pool.
- Job Fairs- multiple employer events can be general, industry specific or targeted to a specific job seeker category.
- Customized short-term training resulting in a credential or stackable industry credential that is in response to employer or sector identified needs.
- Information sessions- businesses present information about their current hiring needs, their culture, hiring process etc.

b. How will the Business Services Team be utilized for this purpose?

The Business Services Team representatives actively participate in the statewide Business Services work groups, including leadership roles within the WWDA- Statewide Business Services Group, for the purpose of streamlining services offered regionally to employers, tracking employer service delivery, aligning business/industry outreach efforts with other partners and professional development, including data tracking systems and training with labor force data. This ongoing effort

has aided workforce areas to work together more effectively assisting sector partnerships and individual employers. Regionally, the Business Services Team conducts business outreach by networking to develop new business relationships within the targeted sectors, identifying new opportunities within in-demand occupations and working closely with partner business services teams to develop a common message and service portfolio on which the business community can rely. Additionally, they will work closely with the employment services and talent pool teams to identify specific job seeker qualifications, skills and occupations to target local businesses that may be good matches.

c. How will the members (particularly business members) of the local WDB and Youth Council/committee support these efforts?

Northwest Wisconsin Workforce Investment Board membership reflects its commitment to serving its key industry clusters; this ensures that its outreach activities are well aligned with key sectors. NWWIB members are always kept abreast of local initiatives and are strongly encouraged to help “spread the word” to other members of their business community regarding programs available through NWWIB and their partners. Additionally, the NWWIB and the Youth Committee have identified the key sector partnerships for in-demand occupations as mentioned previously, and are involved through task forces specific to initiatives and/or the measurement of the progress and the results of services and initiatives. The most effective efforts that can impact success are those that help communicate to other businesses in their sector or community the opportunities or services available through the workforce system.

d. How will sector partnerships be utilized for this purpose?

The Northwest Wisconsin Workforce Investment Board is facilitating the information and guidance for sectors to develop apprenticeship opportunities, increasing sector employer cooperation around critical occupational training, as well as bringing in private sector resources and efforts to supplement the workforce development system’s funding in training. Strategic Objective #2 in the 2020 Strategic Plan is: All targeted sectors have a robust and demand-driven action plan. Increase overall services to the businesses in the region. This will allow the NWWIB to re-engage our sector partners and explore ways to get those members involved in the work that is part of the new plan. The Healthcare Sector has provided several opportunities for collaboration and workforce system exposure to previously untapped employers. The Hospitality / Retail Sector has developed significantly due to the efforts around short-term industry recognized credentials and work will continue for the next several years. Advanced Manufacturing sector efforts are just beginning and shaping up differently than other sectors. Each business within this sector is facing unique challenges to finding and retaining skilled workers however, the awareness of the industry and services the workforce system provides is gaining momentum. Further focus on this sector will increase outreach opportunities and enhance the available services business services teams can provide.

e. What are the goals and objectives for these activities?

NWWIB has done extensive work to align the partners and career services teams with the business services team. The data gathered in the past few years has led to more targeted outreach efforts in the business community to better meet the needs of the job seeker community and talent pool members. Concurrently the career services teams use labor market data to inform and guide job seekers. As part of the Family Centered Employment initiatives we are exploring a common intake form that explores the barriers the job seeker faces and ways to gather data related to those

barriers. The hope is that we will have a much better picture of the reality of the barriers our customers face rather than just subjective guess work. Overall, the primary goal is to ensure that the local business community has access to talented and qualified job candidates while preparing, developing and guiding job seekers appropriately to be the best fit for those open positions. These efforts must happen in unison with education providers, including K-12, higher education, adult basic education providers and vocational education institutions. The partnerships already established support these efforts however further enhancement will be necessary. NWWIB is committed to the strengthening of these partnerships.

7. Discuss the implementation of initiatives designed to meet the needs of employers in the local area that support the local WDB's strategy, including:

- **Work-Based Learning Programs: Explain how the local area will utilize and promote incumbent worker training programs, on-the-job training programs, customized training programs, internships, or other activities during the planning period.**

It is the goal of NWWIB to be responsive to the needs (both stated and unstated) of WDA 7 employers; to be inclusive of both small and large employer needs; and to actively promote development of a stronger workforce in in-demand industries. NWWIB's objective with the Sector Partnership activities is to support the needs of the employers representing identified sectors. Next, the objectives with the other activities is to establish an awareness about the options in work-based learning available to employers. Additionally, another goal is to increase the number of opportunities available in work-based learning through local employers for WDA 7 residents through efforts with the Academic and Career Planning and Inspire/Xello platform that we are currently administering. NWWIB sets a goal of fifteen on-the-job training contracts each year through the WIOA Title I program and receives a report on a monthly basis from the service provider as to progress toward meeting this goal.

A Key Strategic Activity of our strategic plan is to Work with Labor partners to develop industry exploration cohorts that focus on females, minorities and other non-traditional populations. The NWWIB will -promote and implement customized training programs that focus on short-term credentials that allow for job seekers to enter into a career pathway which still being able to work as they progress. Customized training that reflects in-demand occupations and key sectors will be a high priority during this planning period.

Employers in our region value our help most in recruiting new employees, providing OJT assistance, and sharing Labor Market Information (particularly wage comparison data) with them. The NWWIB uses a variety of initiatives in support of the regional strategy to meet the needs of business. The NWWIB currently provides OJT for new hires and OJT upgrades on a limited basis, in current and emerging growth sectors and in small businesses poised for growth. Historically OJT wages for dislocated workers and adults have averaged above the state's recommended wage.

We will continue to encourage and help businesses apply for incumbent worker training grants via Fast Forward or other mediums if the state continues to fund those opportunities. The NWWIB will continue to consider incumbent workforce OJT upgrade contracts to help low-wage adults gain the skills to improve their employment positions and earnings if the employer will give full consideration to selected referrals from the Job Centers to "back-fill" the vacated position. OJT will be an important part of our business services and work-based learning opportunities for the Job Center clients. Our sector strategies and career pathways will emphasize the promotion of apprenticeship

programs for work-based learning opportunities. In appropriate cases OJT may be used as an introductory employment and training experience to be followed with a registered apprenticeship training agreement.

- Sector Partnerships Participation: Explain how the local area will utilize the relationships built by the Business Services Team to enhance or expand participation in Sector Partnerships and expand business services efforts. Indicate specific planned objectives and measurable outcomes for PY20.**

For over 8 years, the NWWIB has developed a sector based strategy that focused on the following key industries: Healthcare, Manufacturing, Agriculture, Retail and Hospitality, Transportation, and Construction. These partnerships have been vital in identifying specific sector and employer hiring and training needs. In 2020 and beyond, NWWIB will continue to focus on these in-demand sectors and utilize them to align education and training providers around business needs to develop more relevant and real time training programs and a more qualified talent pool. NWWIB is comprised of businesses from these sectors and will continue to offer support as industry leaders by convening advisory boards, internships and other activities that support in-demand sector work.

Regional Sector Partnerships exist and the NWWIB has found that utilizing the regional or community sub-groups is more effective when working with employers. Currently there are several groups who meet across the region and one planned objective

The local Business Services Team will recruit and engage employers in the targeted sectors and occupations identified in Tables I and II. The targeted employers may have a desire to participate in Sector Partnerships and Technical College Advisory Councils related to their industries in order to advise the development of career pathways, apprenticeships, curriculum, and work based learning experiences. Employment and training opportunities will be widely promoted to job seekers throughout WDA 7 through job postings, job fairs, and customized recruitment events. Additionally, NWWIB’s WIOA Title I provider, CEP, will leverage technology and customer relationships in order to simplify the process of filling vacant positions by using job listings, social media, video conferencing and other state-of-the-art technologies to ensure fast, quality matches between employers and job seekers.

NWWIB planned outcomes for 2020-2024 are as follows:

Table VIII: Sector Partnership planned outcomes and objectives

	Healthcare	Construction	Manufacturing	Transportation	Retail and Hospitality	Early Childhood	Wood Products
Classroom Training events	0	2	2	0	4	4	1
Work-based Learning Opportunities	0	2	6	0	0	2	0
Apprenticeships	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
Incumbent Worker Trainings	0	1	2	0	1	2	1

It is important to note the work of the NWWIB in the Early Childhood Education sub-sector. Consistent with the approval in the strategic plan of Family Centered Employment (FCE) as the strategic framework the NWWIB is working with Early Childhood Education providers across the region. FCE fosters innovation, builds community partnerships, and integrates across traditional functional areas. The NWWIB adopted the 2Gen/FCE approach to improve services provided to families with children. This commitment to serve families holistically requires continued coordination across all workforce partners and agencies as well as education and human service programs. The NWWIB serves communities in Ashland, Bayfield, Burnett, Douglas, Iron, Price, Sawyer, Rusk, Taylor and Washburn counties. A new position was created that serves as the primary liaison for coordinating activities among the NWWIB staff, contractors, counties, philanthropic organizations, businesses, and non-profit organizations. This position is responsible for collaborating with many programs to develop policies, outcomes/outputs and their measures, and research and evaluation efforts. Specific objectives and outcomes exist for this effort alone including:

- Provide leadership for the NWWIB's 2Gen/FCE philosophy by championing its adoption within and beyond individual initiatives;
 - Develop of a cross-functional team and integrate supports from across the organizations;
 - Convene and facilitate a regional FCE Approach Core Team that will serve as the organizational champions of 2Gen/FCE and develop a 2Gen/FCE roadmap to guide the NWWIB's work going forward;
 - Champion adoption of a single intake tool that identifies barriers to employment;
 - Finalize the design and implement a mechanism, such as an advisory body to obtain family voice or customer feedback/input;
 - Anticipate and manage the organizational changes experienced by those affected by the 2Gen/FCE efforts (i.e. program staff, county and contractor staff, customers) ;
 - Work collaboratively with One-Stop Operator to coordinate initiatives across programmatic silos;
- **Sector Partnerships - Status and Objectives: In your local area or with partner local areas, what sector partnerships are you engaged in or do you plan to engage in during PY20? Indicate the current status of your partnerships, (active, emerging, or exploring), plus PY20 planned objectives and measurable outcomes.**

Finally, the NWWIB has set forth a formalized structure for recognizing industry sectors within its own sub-regions within the strategic plan and continues to work to meet the needs of those sectors. Active manufacturing, healthcare, wood products, and hospitality industry partnerships currently exist.

We will continue to expand sector strategies to enhance and strengthen our economic vitality. NWWIB will look to DWD and the Council on Workforce Investment per the State WIOA plan for overall guidance and support of sector partnerships. Over the next four years, we will work to ensure that education, training, and workforce systems remain responsive to the needs of the labor market by preparing students, job seekers and workers with the necessary skills and credentials. Please see Table VIII for information on planned objectives and measurable outcomes. At this time, we are not ready to specify exact short-term trainings as our sector work is responsive to employer identified needs at certain times. Additionally, the availability of resources each year will affect which activities can be carried out and when.

ACTIVE: The regional manufacturing partnerships have been established for over 3 years. NWWIB has been working with employer led initiatives in two of the sub-regions identified in the NWWIB strategic plan. The Douglas County Roundtable includes manufacturing representatives from the Superior area. The Phillips Manufacturing Group includes employers from the Price County region and is led by Northcentral Technical College. NWWIB will continue to support employer efforts to identify key occupations needed across WDA 7, including job seeker outreach, training, and employer business engagement for work-based trainings. Superior Talent programming was provided to members of the Phillips Manufacturing Group in 2018 as well as the Careers Camp program funded through Fast Forward.

ACTIVE: The Wood Industry Collaborative is a unique partnership involving two state economic development regions and the employers and stakeholder who are looking to advocate and promote business growth through advancing existing and emerging markets in order to ensure the success of northern Wisconsin's largest industry. The group completed their strategic plan, which lays out goals and strategies to raise the level of awareness of the wood industry, educate and grow the workforce, and form legislative partnerships. This collaborative effort seeks to connect the wood products industry with economic development, workforce development, and public agencies to encourage growth in investments, training, and jobs throughout the region.

ACTIVE/ ENGAGING: The Northwest Wisconsin Healthcare Network (NWHN) is a collaboration of industry, education and other community partners focused on strengthening the healthcare workforce in Northwest Wisconsin. The group formed in 2014 and in 2015 they completed the NWHN Workforce Needs Assessment. The Workforce Needs Assessment identifies factors that contribute to the region's healthcare workforce challenges, as well as community and provider strengths and resources to address member needs. The Assessment included a survey, interviews and focus groups. This work was completed as part of a HRSA Network Planning Grant to provide the framework for a three-year Network Strategic Plan that will outline strategies to address priority needs in Northwest Wisconsin. The NWHN also played a critical leadership role in the HealthCARE grant through the Department of Labor. While the group has not met recently, they are still an active partnership and members are in communication with workforce system staff often on various needs and initiatives. Talent recruitment is a huge concern and the Superior Talent programming was provided in 2017 to members of this partnership. Wisconsin Express efforts through the Area Health Education Center (AHEC) is also taking place in 2020 with members of the partnership.

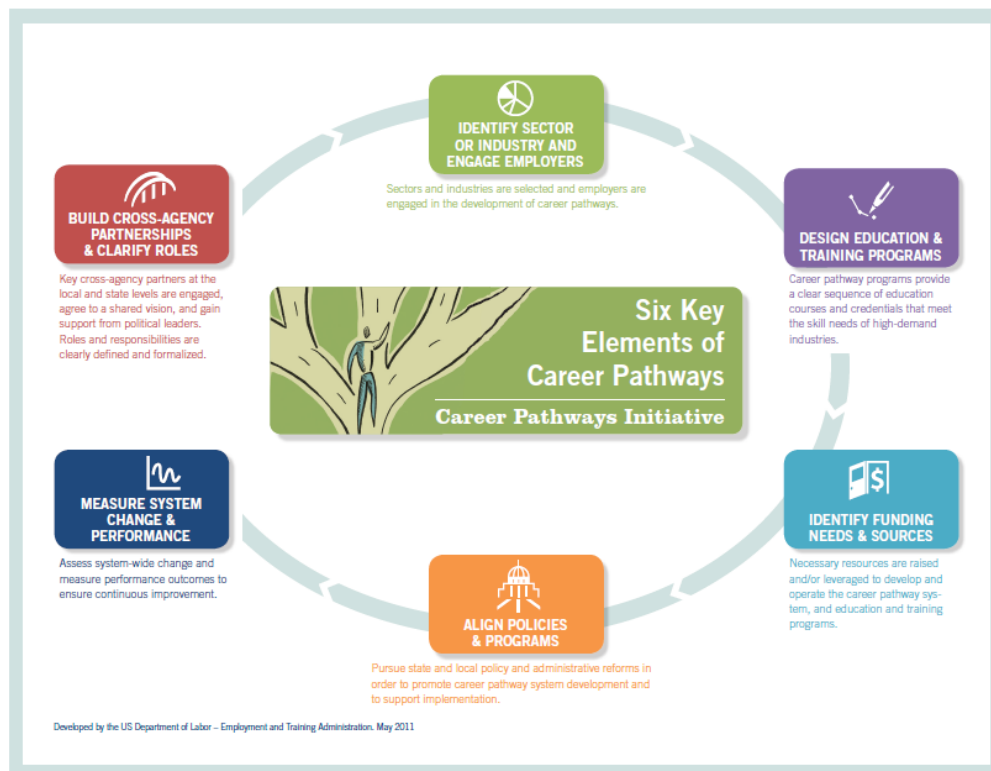
EMERGING: The Construction/Skilled Trades Training Initiative started in 2016 with a training partnerships between the NWWIB, CEP, and Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College. In 2019 the North Central States Regional Council of Carpenters Training Fund was brought into the fold as a training partner. The training programs have resulted in 26 adults and 2 youth being trained in entry level labor skills. 2020 will focus on engaging more businesses and will seek to train 10 more participants annually through classroom, work based and apprenticeship programs.

EMERGING: Retail/Hospitality will remain the largest employer in most counties in WDA 7. Additionally, this sector provides many opportunities for populations with barriers to employment. NWWIB has explored the development of career pathways in this sector and continues to explore opportunities to bring additional resources for training to the table. This is not a high wage sector, but is high growth and is critical to the economy of northern Wisconsin.

- **Career Pathways: Explain how you will utilize information gathered through your Business Services Team to provide a baseline for consideration of new or enhanced**

Sector Partnerships, and how this information will be used to inform changes to or development of Career Pathways in your local area. Indicate specific PY20 planned objectives and measurable outcomes.

During PY20, the local Business Services Team plans to provide the public with up to date information on the top industries within WDA 7 via as many outreach mediums as possible. To that end, the Business Services Team will generate and post quarterly In-Demand Industry and Industry Projections to the NWWIB website. This information is also shared with all workforce partners to determine if the in-demand training focus needs any adjustments. Not only does this provide the public current local industry information, it provides a means of comparison from one quarter to the next. This information can then be analyzed to determine whether development of additional Sectors is warranted and used to promote career pathways. A focus on stackable certificates will be used to present short term credential opportunities that then can lead to additional further educational opportunities within the career. Career Planners will also provide more extensive information to Intensive Service recipients so they are able to have a good understanding of the benefit of stackable credentials and particularly for those that align with the in-demand industry sectors in the region. The NWWIB reminds readers that the career pathways model is implemented as a *system*, not a *program*. And implementing the system means creating new methods and ways of providing existing services, not grafting additional activities onto participating agencies' service menus. Thus, this work requires a change of mindset. Developing career pathways involves a process of coordinating and connecting different parts of multiple public and private services and activities to make up a comprehensive education and training system. NWWIB continues to utilize the Department of Labor's Career Pathways model when examining changes or additions to local career pathways.



NWWIB is also involved in the Wisconsin Regional Career Pathways, made possible by the JPMorgan Chase New Skills for Youth (NSFY) grant. WDA 7 is one of four pilot regions working to deliver high-

quality career pathways in high schools that reflect the needs and vision of a regional collaborative group of employers, education, and economic and workforce development.

The regional collaboratives adopt, implement, promote, and monitor high school career pathways in high-skill, in-demand industry sectors. They act as an advisory group, on behalf of regional districts, to identify and overcome barriers that prevent students in the region from accessing the pathway.

The NSFY regional career pathway development process ensures that high schools connect to regional workforce and economic development efforts where career pathways feature high-skill, in-demand careers. These pathways are created in partnership with local workforce and economic development boards, technical colleges, and other regional stakeholders to provide school districts with a “ready-made” academic and career plan that includes:

- A sequence of courses;
- Work-based learning experiences;
- Industry-recognized certifications; and
- Opportunities to gain college credit.

Career Pathways in manufacturing, nursing, and construction were developed through the Regional Career Pathways effort.

8. Describe how the local WDB, working with the entities carrying out core programs, will expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment.

Include how the local board will:

- a. **Facilitate the development of career pathways;**
- b. **Facilitate, as appropriate, co-enrollment in core programs; and**
- c. **Improve access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential (including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable).**

Comprehensive service providers throughout the Northwest Wisconsin region will expand access to a seamless service delivery to eligible individuals through collaboration and partnership with mandated partner agencies and programs. The NWWIB conducts a bi-annual training for all workforce system staff on programming so that referrals can be made in an effective and timely manner. NWWIB will also look to the training that DWD has indicated it will develop in the State Plan to ensure that all partners have the appropriate knowledge of each of the programs to make proper referrals for customers. Co-enrollment of participants in WIOA

core and partner programs is encouraged when appropriate and beneficial to the jobseekers needs.

All core programs participate in training services to the extent allowed by federal rules and regulations. Title I supports education and training for adults, dislocated workers and youth. Title IV supports individuals with disabilities. Title II supports a diverse population with basic skills attainment and preparation for post-secondary education. Title III, which does not have funds for training services, is often the first point of contact for customers, serving as a hub in the referral process. Title IV works with individuals with disabilities and provides a wide variety of training to eligible consumers when necessary and appropriate to achieve their employment goal. Training can include: On the Job Training, Work Experiences, short-term training programs and post-secondary education, etc.

The NWWIB works closely with the Wisconsin Technical College System, the public K-12 system, and our core program contractor to support alignment and provision of services of core programs. These programs include the Adult and Dislocated Worker Program for attainment of certificates, diplomas, and two-year degrees at the local technical colleges. The NWWIB also supports the In-School and Out-of-School Youth Programs which include core programs such as: HSED, GED, Adult Basic Ed, Pre-employment workshops, and dual enrollment through the technical colleges and area's public schools. The development of career pathways in key industries of healthcare, manufacturing (including wood products), construction, education/early childhood education, and retail/hospitality will be utilized to improve the successful participation in postsecondary and vocational education activities leading to an industry recognized certificate/ certification. Under WIOA, the public workforce development system's approach to training services places a greater emphasis on work-based learning, stackable credentials, and career pathways. Short-term and portable/stackable credentials will continue to be emphasized in order to inform consumers and increase the access to entry points in key career pathways.

NWWIB's workforce development strategies will not only take a sector based approach but also a strengths-based, customer-centric approach that seeks to "meet job seekers where they are" in terms of work experience, skills and education. Through this model we will broker relationships with employers that will focus on creating a variety of entry points for entry-, mid-, and intermediate level job seekers including: work experience, transitional jobs, internships, apprenticeships and on-the-job training programs. As previously noted, Family Centered Employment will serve as a guiding principle to helping us achieve this goal and working toward a seamless delivery system that emphasizes referrals and warm hand offs amongst the partners. The NWWIB will focus on middle skilled occupations in high demand sectors, as well as on career pathways in areas such as Retail and Hospitality with entry-level opportunities for individuals just entering employment or with limited employment history.

9. Describe the strategy to work with adult education providers funded under Title II of WIOA and Vocational Rehabilitation to align resources available to the local area, to achieve the strategic vision and goals described in question 5.

NWWIB coordinates Title II workforce investment activities such as adult education and literacy services carried out in the local area by working closely with the Wisconsin Technical College System, Wisconsin Literacy Councils, public school systems and our core program contractors. English Language Learners and Individuals who need to improve their basic skills in order to enter or retain employment, enter postsecondary education or training, or obtain a High School Equivalency Diploma (HSED) or General Education Development (GED), typically utilize services provided by one of the two technical colleges or one of the literacy councils in our region. It is a basic starting point to assess and refer in order to achieve the strategic vision and goals described in question 5.

Individuals in need of services may contact a literacy council or technical college directly or be referred from any of the various partners. There are currently 7 literacy councils operating within the region. The technical colleges serve adult basic education students at their campuses, outreach centers, and four county jails. Four college locations with onsite access to adult basic education courses also house Affiliate Job Centers.

The NWWIB works with Vocational Rehabilitation services to assist mutual customers in receiving in-demand certifications via training, job coaching and development services to secure and retain employment. Resources will continue to be coordinated with each agency and identified through the MOU. The NWWIB works with two adult education providers. The One-Stop Operator and other MOUs establish the partnership and services.

Required WIOA Partners	MOU Arrangement	Partner Name
WIOA Title II – Adult Education & Literacy Program	MOU for PY19 – Will provide coordination, cross-referrals, information sharing and program access services	Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College Northcentral Technical College
Vocational Rehabilitation Act Program	MOU for PY19– Will provide coordination, cross-referrals, information sharing and program access services	Department of Workforce Development – Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

10. Describe the strategies and services that will be utilized to strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs.

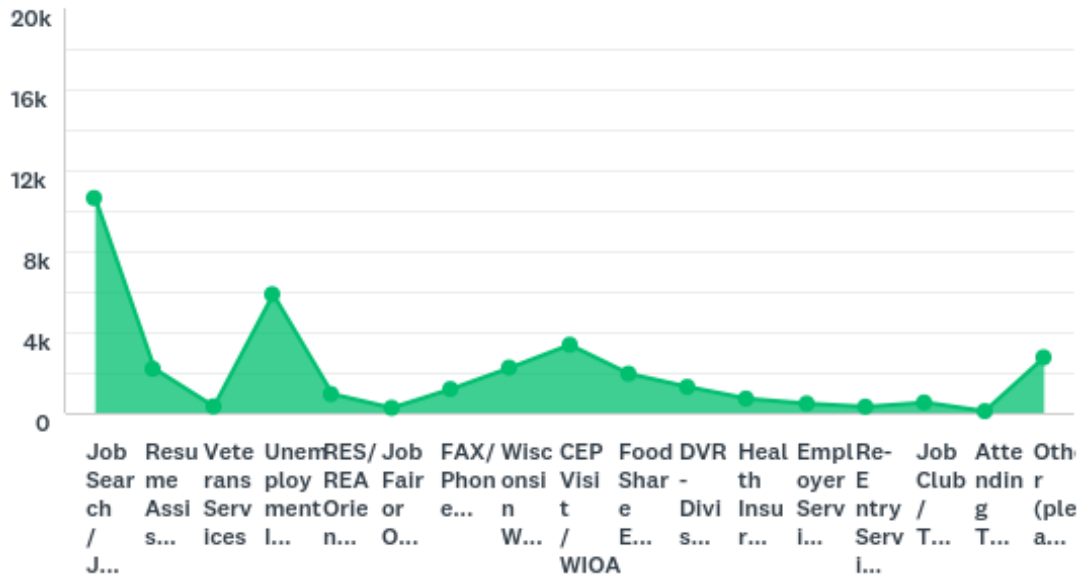
To strengthen linkages between One-Stop system and UI programs such as RESA and RRETS, we will continue to approach the staff that deliver these programs, participating customers, and any outcomes of such programs, as a central part of our Basic service offerings, integrated into our flow, and seamless within our program delivery. To that effect, the staff that coordinate these programs inside our One-Stop System are fully integrated on teams that offer customers information about training, career advising, workshops, etc. In addition, orientations for these programs often include a brief presentation from either staff or through PowerPoint about what additional services are available to these UI recipients. The bi-annual One-Stop Partner Referral training also provides an opportunity to develop better understanding of the role of unemployment insurance.

Interestingly in 2015, the NWWIB included the following statement in its WIOA Local Plan:

“Unemployment Insurance has been revised statewide to be more self-service and virtual. This will invariably cause our foot traffic to wane slightly. To counteract this we are partnering with our referral and resource networks even more closely to ensure that motivated individuals who need our assistance are sent to our offices.”

The exact opposite of this has been true. If we look at data in our region from visits to the Job Centers (comprehensive and affiliate) from January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2019 we can see that nearly 24% of all visitors who sign in are looking for assistance with unemployment insurance or are attending an RESA session. This means nearly a quarter of all Job Center visits are related to unemployment insurance needs. This is problematic when the unemployment insurance system does not have staff in any of our Job Centers nor do they contribute to the overall infrastructure costs. WIOA and other partner programs are left to shoulder the workload of inquiries and concerns about unemployment insurance.

Q11 Reason for your visit? Please check ALL that apply.



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Job Search / Job Application	37.99%	10,621
Resume Assistance	7.81%	2,184
Veterans Services	1.17%	326
Unemployment Insurance (UI) Assistance	20.98%	5,865
RES/REA Orientation (Unemployment Notice)	3.34%	933
Job Fair or On Site Employer Recruitment	0.91%	254
FAX/ Phone/ Copy Machine	4.23%	1,184
Wisconsin Works (W-2)	8.01%	2,240
CEP Visit / WIOA	12.05%	3,369
FoodShare Employment and Training (FSET- food stamps)	6.93%	1,938
DVR - Division of Vocational Rehab.	4.61%	1,289
Health Insurance Assistance	2.53%	708
Employer Service / Post a Job	1.67%	466
Re-Entry Services / Windows to Work	1.11%	310
Job Club / Trade Act Adjustment	1.85%	517
Attending Training (construction, retail, customer service, etc)	0.33%	92
Other (please specify)	9.83%	2,748
Total Respondents: 27,960		

11. Describe how the local WDB will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with economic development activities carried out in the planning region, and promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services.

The NWWIB, Executive Staff to the Board, and One-Stop Operator have a long history of working with local and regional economic development organizations to promote and support business attraction, expansion, and retention efforts. The NWWIB, Executive Staff to the Board, and One-Stop Operator staff actively participate in economic development organizations, boards, and committees and maintain memberships with local chambers of commerce. Individual NWWIB members represent the voice of private business and economic development in Northwest Wisconsin on several economic development organizations as well as other community based economic development organizations.

NWWIB is in a prime position to continue to align workforce services strategically with economic development activity as we have successfully integrated our services in with the local Regional Economic Development Organization (REDO), named Visions Northwest. Both workforce and economic development business services teams collaborate with local businesses to address needs related to capital investment, talent attraction and development, and expansion and growth. Additionally, we collaborate with local chambers, industry and trade associations in the target sectors.

Some past collaboration opportunities include the EverGrow Learning Center, a 94-child daycare center in Ashland. This partnership was with WEDC, Ashland Area Development Corporation and the City of Ashland among others. NWWIB also partners with Visions Northwest on the Inspire grant for academic and career planning and on Superior Talent – a regional talent attraction event for our in-demand industry sectors. The RISE series is hosted each year by Visions Northwest and the NWWIB and serves as a regional business and community roundtable.

Vision Northwest is invited biannually to present at the One-Stop Partner Referral training as well. This provides partners with information on a number of resources and training opportunities. NWWIB and economic development partners collaborate on programs and workshops to support the development of small businesses and provide entrepreneurs with the necessary skills and training to launch successfully. NWWIB provides staff support to the Chequamegon Bay SPARK event, which is a community-based startup pitch platform for entrepreneurs and business owners in the Chequamegon Bay area. Selected finalists will pitch their idea in front of judges and a live audience for the chance to win \$5,000 and a business start-up package. The audience has a chance to evaluate and vote for their favorite idea alongside the judges.

Additionally, NWWIB staff marketed the regional entrepreneur programs to low income customers and students visiting the region through the AHEC Wisconsin Express program. The objective is to expose more people to these opportunities and expand the possibilities of entrepreneurship leading to self-sufficiency.

The NWWIB sees the need to help job seekers make the leap to these 21st Century job opportunities and has addressed the issue of transferable skills which can be used in a career path as well as those skills which are needed for people to start their own business as either an entrepreneur, an independent contractor, or through a microenterprise effort. These transferable skills include

managing resources, project management, financial management, communication skills, and marketing skills. Several of the occupations in demand for our region require an entrepreneurial spirit and lend well to independent contracting to be successful. When we see this we work with training providers to include skill development for independent contracting work. These elements include budgeting, tax forms, forming a business, insurance, tracking and billing, etc. We often provide referrals for customers to access services of the Small Business Development Centers by allowing the local SBDC to offer workshops in offices. Staff understand what SBDC has to offer and will support customers in their development of skills needed for entrepreneurship.

12. Provide a description of the workforce development system in the local area that:

- **Identifies the programs that are included in that system.**
- **Describe the local WDBs strategies to work with the required WIOA partners to provide core service alignment and to increase awareness of career pathways and the critical role that workforce development plays in ensuring that all have access to educational and career pathways that result in meaningful employment.**

There are five permanent Job Centers / CEP, Inc. offices and two CEP, Inc. outreach locations in WDA #7. One of the Centers (Superior) is a comprehensive Job Center certified by DWD. The location is near the urban public transportation hub and offers convenient access to individuals with transportation needs. In addition to Wagner-Peyser supported staff and WIOA supported staff, there are Veterans Services staff and a regularly scheduled Vocational Rehabilitation representative staff presence in the center along with FSET and W2 staff. The CEP, Inc. offices located in Spooner, Ashland, and Park Falls are staffed by a variety of WIOA program staff, Windows-to-Work staff and FSET and W2 staff. The Phillips Job Center has a full time Wagner-Peyser staff member and other staff that use the space on an itinerant basis. Resource Room staff are cross trained to provide Wagner-Peyser services and make the appropriate referrals to various partners. Veterans' Services staff, Vocational Rehabilitation services staff and WIOA staff have regularly scheduled office hours at various outreach offices located on the Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College outreach centers in Hayward and Ladysmith. All Job Centers located on community college campuses have onsite access to adult basic skills, college curriculum and continuing education programs.

In PY20 the NWWIB will focus on maintaining and enhancing an interconnected, integrated workforce development system that includes: education and training providers, community and faith based organizations (CBO's), government agencies and businesses. The NWWIB hopes to build on current partnerships that include contracts and/or MOU's with: AHEC, Visions Northwest, Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College, CESA 12, Northcentral Technical College, Re-entry programs, Adult Education and Vocational Rehabilitation programs, and other CBO's. Collaborative efforts such as this will help ensure that residents of Northwest Wisconsin have access to educational and career pathway resources to aid in obtaining meaningful employment.

The NWWIB has adopted a Career Pathways structure aligned with the framework of the State of Wisconsin and the U.S. Department of Labor. As such the NWWIB will continue to make Career Pathways a "language of the system" in blending classroom training with work-based learning aimed at filling identified skills gaps on a sector-by-sector basis.

To live up to that commitment, the NWWIB is taking simultaneous actions to implement the structure using the six key elements of a comprehensive Career Pathways system.

Actions include:

1. Build cross-agency partnerships:
 - Major regional organizations charged with coordination of workforce development, education, and economic development now meet regularly to address roles, goals, and success measures (NorthWERD, VisionsNorthwest Regional Career Pathways/REDOs);
 - NorthWERD provides an ongoing forum to address college/career readiness for K-12, higher education success for post-secondary programs, and integration of CTE programs as valued options for students;
 - The Regional Business Services Team meets monthly to review employer demands, coordinate access to sector-based training programs, and develop information for career guidance for job seekers tied to sector needs and available programs.
2. Engage employers & conduct gap analysis:
 - NWWIB is leading efforts to create ongoing forums for employer engagement in key sectors;
 - Using the INSPIRE/ XELLO platform, employers are being recruited for hands-on participation within the Career Pathways structure, with an emphasis on work-based learning;
 - Following the creation of the 2020-2024 the NWWIB Board has charged staff and partners with a Key Strategic Issue that *“All targeted sectors have a robust and demand-driven action plan. Increase overall services to the businesses in the region.”*
3. Clarify roles & responsibilities:
 - Roles of NWWIB and other regional partners in education and economic development are being formalized;
 - The NWWIB role includes ongoing recruitment of employers for planning and actions on behalf of the broader partnership;
4. Design programs:
 - The Career Pathways Structure has been implemented in designing sector-based programs in Manufacturing, Retail, Construction and Healthcare;
5. Identify funding needs & sources:
 - NWWIB and partners lead fund development efforts for the multiple partners related to workforce development and career planning initiatives;
 - Funds development is tied to identified current needs;
6. Align policies & programs:
 - Quarterly meetings of NorthWERD, the One-Stop Operator, and other related committees to coordinate policies and procedures for multiple funding sources;
 - In partnership Regional Career Pathways and INSPIRE/XELLO, the NWWIB is aligning high school CTE programs with needs of employers and with post-secondary programs;
 - NWWIB staff are working in coordination with the DWD and other state workforce areas to develop Eligible Training Provider List processes that promote Career Pathways;

13. Describe the one-stop delivery system in the local area, in particular:

- a. Identify the locations of the comprehensive physical one-stop centers (at least one within your local area); also list the locations of your network of affiliate sites, both physical and electronically linked, such as libraries.

Name of Center	Address	Comprehensive, Affiliate, Other
Superior Job Center	1805 N 14th St #1, Superior, WI 54880	Comprehensive
Ashland CEP Office	422 3rd Street West, Suite 200 Ashland, WI 54806	Affiliate
Park Falls CEP office	City Hall, 400 South 4th Avenue Park Falls, WI 54552	Affiliate
Phillips Job Center	1408 Pine Ridge Road, Phillips, WI 54555	Affiliate
Spooner CEP Office	522 Service Road Spooner, WI 54801	Affiliate
Hayward CEP Outreach Site – WITC	15618 Windrose Lane, Suite 106 Hayward, WI 54843	Affiliate
Ladysmith CEP Outreach Site- WITC	1101 Lake Ave W # 1, Ladysmith, WI 54848	Affiliate

NWWIB is working to bring more services to communities to our region through the Libraries Activating Workforce Development Skills (LAWDS) project. LAWDS will bring together public library staff with the staff of regional Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) and Wisconsin Job Centers, to facilitate more seamless support of job-seeking patrons, business owners and entrepreneurs. This project was made possible in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

- b. Identify key strategies for integrating the core programs, as well as all required partner programs (Title I, Job Corps, Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker, Native American, Youth Build, Title II, Title IV, Title V, Trade Adjustment Assistance, Jobs for Veterans State Grants, Unemployment Compensation, Reentry Employment Opportunities, Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education, Community Services Block Grant, Department of Housing and Urban Development employment and training programs FSET, and TANF), within the local one-stop system of comprehensive and affiliate offices.

The goal continues to be to create an integrated, interconnected system of providers including community and faith based organizations, government agencies, education and training providers, as well as business. A vital element of this system will include incorporating WIOA Title I, II, III, and IV programs as well as mandated partners into the system in a streamlined manner that reduces duplication of services across programs. The NWWIB One-Stop Operator will be charged with convening all of the stakeholders and providing technical assistance, resource sharing and collaborative meetings and workshops in order to align the various partners.

- c. Describe the roles and resource contributions of each of the one-stop partners.

This information can be found in the local MOUs, which are updated annually. The MOU can be accessed at: <http://www.nwwib.com/resources>

Through this networked, interconnected, system of partners we will strive to best serve individuals in our targeted populations. Specifically the WIOA partners will provide:

Title I: Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth services will be provided. Additionally WIOA Title I will also provide career services in many of the affiliate locations.

Title II: Adult education and literacy providers will develop the skills of individuals that are basic skills deficient and need career pathways assistance in a contextualized manner. We will additionally look to these partners to assist with English Language Learners as needed.

Title III: These services will be utilized to strengthen customers' connections to the broader WIOA services and network, as well as education and training and Unemployment Insurance programs.

Title IV: The partnership with Vocational Rehabilitation will be strengthened in order to provide more support and access to services for individuals with disabilities. Vocational Rehabilitation resources will be leveraged in order to provide more support for training and employment goals as needed. The main activity to serve individuals with disabilities in WIOA is integrated employment opportunities. Integrated employment opportunities expect the same performance in a work setting of those that have disabilities with others that are not considered individuals with disabilities.

- d. Describe how the local WDB will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system, including in remote areas, through the use of technology and through other means, and other innovative strategies and initiatives to streamline and enhance services, as well as increase access.**

Since www.jobcenterofwisconsin.com is a shared job search and data management tool of both required Wagner-Peyser and WIOA staff, all the Job Center staff utilize it for intake and some case management for all customers, jobseekers and businesses. Self-registration and referral through Job Center of Wisconsin is available from anywhere in the County where there is internet access and the extensive resources available through the US Department of Labor and other sites are also able to be accessed. Each Job Center partner also has their own specific data entry systems for their programs. There is video conferencing capacity for case management or for conducting workshops for job seekers. All partners maintain a web presence and Zoom/Skype and teleconferencing is used whenever appropriate to provide services. The NWWIB also hosts a monthly podcast to provide information on innovation and programming to employers and stakeholders in remote regions as well as those living anywhere in the world.

- e. Identify the types of assessments and assessment tools that will be utilized within the one-stop delivery system and how these assessments will be coordinated across participating programs to avoid duplication of effort and multiple assessments of customers being served by more than one partner program.**

Participants will be required to complete the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) locator test. Case Managers will score the locator test and determine the correct level of the TABE survey to assess. In addition, youth will complete the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) assessment to determine level or readiness to obtain and retain employment. WIOA partners utilizes Career Cruising, a job matching assessment tool, to assess personal aptitude and career interest.

The TABE is cited above because all WDBs have reported that this is the preferred test for assessing basic skills deficiency for youth. The only tests that are used to determine basic skills deficiency are the TABE Reading test and the TABE Total Math (i.e., the average score for the Applied Math and Math Computation tests). Local Areas may administer other TABE tests to determine the full extent

of the youth's deficiencies, but only the tests referenced above are to be recorded in the designated fields in ASSET.

If any other assessment is used, it must be one of the tests that are prescribed by State WIOA Policy. Alternative tests may be used only if the youth cannot be properly assessed with the DOL-approved tools and needs an accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

WIOA allows the use of previous assessments for determining appropriate career and training services for participants. WDBs should ensure the previous assessment contains current information and is no more than six months old.

f. Describe strategies that will be utilized in the one-stop system to improve accessibility and services for limited English proficient individuals/English Language Learners

In order to help all clients better understand how to receive benefits and interact with the one-stop system, DWD has provided resources for English language learners and those with limited English proficiency. Posters and resources are provided in Job Center locations. NWWIB utilizes a Babel notice in Job Centers and with paperwork. A Babel notice is a short notice included in a document in multiple languages informing the reader that the communication contains vital information, and explaining how to access language services to have the contents of the communication provided in other languages. NWWIB utilizes providers of phone interpretation services for additional languages. Additionally, Title II ABE providers assist clients with Limited English Proficiency through classes that are conducted throughout the state to help them address their language goals. All one-stop partners will be able to refer these clients to the local ABE program for assistance.

The WDA conducts an annual LEP analysis of the region which currently indicates that there is not a significant LEP population in our service delivery area. Even though the LEP analysis does not show a significant LEP population, most vital documents are translated into Spanish, with additional documents being translated to Hmong. There is also an on-demand translation service that can be utilized in minutes for most translations. Language Line translation services are available to any individual who needs the service. Individuals can request this information by indicating the language needed with an iSpeak card. LEP data is collected from every visitor to the Job Center via the Job Center Sign In Survey. The data is examined on a quarterly basis. Staff are reminded of resources and requirements at various career planner and assistant career planner meetings.

NWWIB staff frequently meet with various partners, including community action programs, tribal and technical colleges, private vocational rehabilitation entities, county cails, the Homeless Continuum of Care- Northern consortium, and many others. Marketing to various demographics has been done for specific programming such as re-entry grants and other related offerings. Northwest CEP Career Planners, Assistant Career Planners, and Youth Services Specialists maintain close contact with local youth and school district staff including teachers, counselors, and members of administration. Additionally, the Regional Managers and Career Planners maintain active relationships with service groups and attend group meetings for organizations such as Community on Transition, Anti Poverty Coalition, Domestic Violence Coordinated Community Response, and Literacy.

- g. Provide a description of how entities within the one-stop delivery system, including one-stop operators and the one-stop partners, will comply with Section 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.**

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) is a key partner in the success of our center operations. We have an active referral process between our One-Stop system partners and VR. Routinely VR staff will come to the affiliate sites and use available space. The feedback received during the Independent Living Center assessment of physical spaces as well as subsequent DWD follow-up monitoring is being addressed. NWWIB has made significant progress on addressing facility accessibility. WIOA Title I provider, CEP, and DVR have a partnership at the Crex Meadows Youth Conservation Camp that allows for the enrollment of DVR and WIOA youth in record numbers.

Currently Vocational Rehabilitation staff members have a regularly scheduled presence at three of the local area's five permanent Job Centers as well as a presence at several outreach sites. The NWWIB and the Vocational Rehabilitation administration will continue to explore possibilities of co-location as much as possible as staffing and changes in facilities permit. The One-Stop Operator Committee will include in the annual memoranda of understanding with Vocational Rehabilitation and other partners that includes a provision for the cross training of staff in proper and effective processes for providing services to clients with disabilities (biannual One-Stop Partner Referral Training). All Job Centers are required to provide auxiliary aids and accommodations to clients with disabilities upon request. Vocational Rehabilitation provide technical assistance in these and other areas in the Northwest WDA. Vocational Rehabilitation, WIOA, and Job Center business services staff will share information on how to effectively work with employers to provide employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities. Under WIOA the NWWIB will have a utilize the Strategic Directions and Executive Committees which are standing committees for oversight and discussion on providing services to clients with disabilities. These committees will develop policies and procedures related to the memorandum of understanding to enhance the coordination of Job Center services with those offered by Vocational Rehabilitation.

- Business Services that DVR has to offer:
 - Accommodations
 - Tax credits
 - Federal 503 hiring measures
 - ADA expertise

- Youth Programming:
 - Coordination with HS Youth
 - Summer-work programs
 - Soft Skills
 - Transition services
 - PETS service documentation/usage

- h. Provide a description of how the local WDB will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system and ensure that**

such providers meet the employment needs of local employers, workers, and jobseekers.

Continuous improvement starts with a series of NWWIB benchmarked goals and shared expectations. Including:

- Shared vision and strategy across all programs and services including
 - Resources, Informational Services
 - Career Advising, Skills Training, and Work based learning
 - Business Services
- WIOA Common Measures
- Performance Management Dashboards

Service provider standards and goals are written into their contract statement of work. Outcomes include: system goals and program performance. One-Stop management staff in collaboration with youth providers and Center managers discuss strengths and opportunities for improvement. Quarterly meetings with provider management review all contract and performance terms noting needed action. NWWIB, partners, and provider staff offer joint trainings, meetings, and case conferencing..

When services are provided efficiently customers can access the services they need without duplicating efforts and wasting time. Additionally, the One-Stop System has undergone continuous improvement processes to identify the best practices for career development. Regular monitoring to improve outcomes will be conducted with the NWWIB.

NWWIB will use consumer outcome data, consumer surveys, and “mystery shoppers” to ensure quality service delivery throughout the One-Stop centers. Continuous improvement is an ongoing cycle of identifying, planning, executing, and reviewing improvements to service delivery. Information gathered from consumer data outcomes, consumer satisfaction surveys, mystery shoppers, and staff brainstorming will be used to identify inefficiencies, points of consumer dissatisfaction, unmet performance measures, and staffing challenges.

The One-Stop Operator will share data collected from customer surveys and Job Center Sign In systems with the NWWIB Board and One-Stop System partners. A yearly review process will identify successes, implementation barriers, and unsuccessful strategies. The lessons learned through the review process will inform the identification process of the next cycle.

Employer engagement and satisfaction is tracked primarily for large scale events or efforts. Employer convening for sector group meetings, RIsE functions, and other similar scale events are surveyed by event.

i. Provide a description of how training services under chapter 3 of subtitle B will be provided in accordance with section 134(c)(3)(G), including, if contracts for the 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. Include any ITA limitations established by local WDB policies and how they are implemented in a manner that does not undermine WIOA's requirement that training services are provided in a manner that maximizes customer choice in the selection of an

ETP. Also describe any exceptions to ITA limitations that are provided for individual cases if included in WDB local policy.

Training services for customers identified as in need of such services, will be provided by the educational entities that are on the Eligible Training Provider list maintained by the state. Customized training contracts will be utilized and the funding for those training services will be coordinated with those that have an Individual Training Account under the WIOA program. Training and training funds will be primarily utilized only in areas identified as in-demand occupations or growth industry sectors. In the case of on-the-job training, associated opportunities are individualized with the final choice made between employer and employee, which will include the Individual Training Account. In order to ensure customer choice in training, clientele work with Career Planners in selection of providers from the ETPL.

The following section from the Field Level Operating Procedures manual describes current limitations to ITAs. These limits do not limit customer choice as they cover the cost of most career pathways and in-demand trainings and provide generous payment formulas for consumer access. Payment limits also are in line with tuition needs local post-secondary training options and many online institutions.

Cost-Based Payment Formula: (Training Cost Per School Term = Total Tuition, Books, Fees and Supplies minus Other Grants Received)

- a) Allowable payment limits: \$2,000 per semester, \$4,000 per year.
- b) A customer may receive no more than \$10,000 during his or her WIOA participation.
- c) A customer may receive WIOA funding for no more than two years, except in circumstances beyond their control (i.e.: health, school scheduling, etc.).
- d) Any registration fee (usually approximately \$30.00) is the responsibility of the customer.
- e) No individual who is in default of his/her student loan will receive WIOA funding.

In the event that circumstances arise where requests for services not in the Field Level Operating Procedures or requests to exceed funding limits, these requests are brought to Career Planner's respective Regional Manager for approval. The Regional Manager reviews requests submitted via the Professional Discretion Documentation (CEP-D form) which has been completed by the Career Planner. A discussion between Career Planner and Regional Manager occurs via phone or email prior to approval. If it is determined that it is a reasonable cost or service and the participant would not be able to continue in the WIOA program without it, the approval may be given.

- j. Describe how the local area will conduct outreach to Individuals with Barriers to Employment. Include strategies for engagement with the local WDB and Youth Council/committee to increase the awareness of the services offered to returning veterans, out-of-school youth, individuals with disabilities, long-term unemployed, and other targeted groups. What additional strategies will be utilized to reach out to these groups? What are the objectives and goals for this effort?**

In outreach to individuals with barriers to employment, Veterans and their eligible spouses receive priority of service. In addition to the priority given in all employment related services, NWWIB is fortunate to have a representative in the region from the Office of Veteran Employment Services (OVES) who can quickly address the triaged Veteran's needs. In addition, OVES has a staff member represented on the One-Stop Operator Committee. The priority of service extends to many hosted events, such as hiring events and job fairs, where Veterans are granted early admittance to the event. In 2019, DWD launched the Vets Ready Employer Initiative to highlight those employers who provide additional support, resources, and outreach as part of their organization's mission. Working collaboratively with CEP, NWWIB has been able to highlight in-demand short-term occupational training in construction and eligible re-entry participants. Within the eligibility group, NWWIB also targets via specific means to individuals age 50 and older; youth ages 18 to 24, ex-offenders/parolees and individuals with disabilities. Recruitment efforts to reach eligible job seekers include multiple methods such as targeted mailings to registered UI recipients, phone calls, job fairs, social media, etc. To maximize outreach to individuals with barriers to employment, the NWWIB will continue to collaborate and meet regularly with the One-Stop Operator and the One-Stop system leadership team to identify outreach strategies to specific populations to increase customer awareness, traffic, participation in One Stop programs and activities that lead to help maximize federal WIOA performance metrics and outcomes.

14. Provide a description of how the local WDB will coordinate education and workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services.

The NWWIB is working to coordinate services and to reduce duplication of efforts at both the strategic level (multiple partner organizations at the regional level) and at the operational level (multiple partners in delivery of career and training services in the Job Centers and at other offices of the partners). At the strategic level the NWWIB has joined forces with other regionally-focused education and economic development groups by meeting at least quarterly to coordinate efforts toward mutual outcomes, and to clarify roles of each organization to ensure that duplication of effort is minimized and the work of all of the groups is aligned to achieve maximum collective impact. The group currently consist of the NWWIB, the Northwest Wisconsin Educators for Regional Development (NorthWERD) who promotes innovation and takes action to provide more seamless opportunities for educational attainment and career preparation, Visions Northwest (the regional economic development organization) and the Adult Education Consortium (lead entity for adult education and literacy needed to enter occupational programs).

Through the engagement of the Academic Career Plans and Inspire/Xello implementation, the NWWIB staff has worked with leaders of 33 K-12 school districts and 3 colleges in the region. The NWWIB, in its role with Xello, is systematically forming new sector-based consortia of employers and working to communicate skill and certification priorities to service and training providers.

While the NWWIB and its staff work diligently to provide sector-based employer groups with information on all available education and training programs, the NWWIB will continue to play the "honest broker" role in facilitating discussions that lead to the employers' selections of providers that give them content, delivery flexibility, and overall responsiveness tied to clearly identified needs. The Board, in its agreement with the One-Stop Operator and its monitoring of implementation of that agreement, requires the development of strong partnerships with all

core partners and with additional community stakeholders, including but not limited to secondary and post-secondary institutions. In an effort to deliver impactful and coordinated services with these stakeholders, the One-Stop Operator has referral networks and has conducted ongoing biannual referral trainings to ensure that delivery of services occurs without duplicated program offerings. The One-Stop Operator is charged with leading partnership coordination meetings with all partners to coordinate programs and clarify roles and responsibilities for each entity within the WIOA framework. Coordination also occurs at the county level with partners (including all core partners, community partners, and training providers) meeting to create innovative and coordinated career pathways that eliminate duplications. In addition, staff from all core partner programs go to other partners' sites to deliver co-located services in order to reduce the need for creating duplications in career and training services.

In alignment with our efforts to build, short and long-term education and career pathway strategies with colleges and universities we also work closely with the Adult Education providers in the region. NWWIB promotes in-demand skills training for the Adult Education student, thus allowing students to not only complete their high school equivalency tests but also obtain an occupational skills certification at the same time. Because our program offerings and service delivery are all integrated this is not a stand alone program so the above outlined efforts with postsecondary institutions are done to support Adult Education funds as well.

Partnership and extensive communication goes a long way in our workforce area to prevent duplication. With so few points of entry in our system and staff who often have itinerant hours across hundreds of miles of geography in common locations, we work together well in our partnership and referral systems that have long been in place. Many of the postsecondary campuses serve as affiliate Job Center locations. Representatives from both of our technical college systems sit on the NWWIB Board of Directors and its subcommittees. Secondary education is represented on the Youth Committee.

When Request for Proposals are issued we encourage collaboration and award additional points in the evaluation for partnerships that exhibit more than three partners.

- 15. Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area; in particular identify how the local area will expand services to dislocated workers utilizing all sources of formula and discretionary funds targeted to the dislocated worker population.**

Please see the answer to Question #4 that outlines in depth the various services available to the adult and dislocated worker population.

The Regional Business Services Team currently reaches out to local employers for employment opportunities including Work Experience, OJT, and apprenticeships. Staff work with job seekers including dislocated workers to determine if education or specific certifications are needed to obtain employment. Concurrently staff evaluate if the dislocated workers are eligible for the TAA program (discretionary grant). Due to the lengthy TAA eligibility process individuals are served through DW (when applicable) to ensure access to supportive services leading to employment. All efforts are made to minimize the gaps dislocated workers may face. Due to the extensive labor market data all staff access when working with job seekers they are readily able to guide dislocated workers effectively into in-demand occupations and targeted sectors.

Additional resources are needed however to adequately serve all customers so continued evaluation of grant opportunities will be necessary.

- 16. Provide 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. Include an identification of successful models of such youth workforce investment activities. In addition, indicate how services to out-of-school youth will be expanded and enhanced to incorporate additional work-based learning opportunities.**

The in-school youth program focuses on providing services mostly at the Crex Meadows Conservation Camp where youth participate in several WIOA youth elements. The out-of-school youth programs focus more one on one or small group implementation of services. The out-of-school youth budget is 75% of the total allocation. All activities for any of the out-of-school youth program are offered year round.

Although not the only model used for the out-of-school population, CEP does offer an Out-of-School Keys to Succeed Program. This program is offered in partnership with the technical colleges. All participants of the Out-of-School Keys to Succeed program are drop outs. The focus of the Out-of-School Keys to Succeed program is Adult Education classes leading to attainment of a High School Equivalency credential. This model incorporates educational coursework in conjunction with employability competencies offered through the CEP Career Planner.

Another out-of-school youth model is the YouthBuild program offered by Title I provider Northwest CEP.

The rest of the out-of-school youth are serviced out of the Job Centers through individualized activities leading to employment or postsecondary placement. A focus of the Youth Committee and a key strategic activity in the NWWIB Strategic Plan is *Collaborate with technical colleges to increase the number of entry-level career pathways opportunities*. This includes the short-term credentialed academies. An emphasis has been placed on short-term industry recognized credentials. This priority creates an environment where dual or stackable credentials can be achieved thus shortening the length of time from basic education to careers, jobs, or higher education. We find retention and persistence increases as outcomes can be obtained simultaneously and with cohort support rather than by traditional sequential methods.

The Youth Committee and DVR will be re-examining the partnership and how to best utilize resources available to their customers with regards to school district/DVR and workforce involvement. A clear path for these youth and young adults will be identified to ensure a smooth transition from school to DVR to workforce with respect to timing and program benefits for each customer. The focus for workforce will be on those out of school youth and working with them post-DVR and school involvement to ensure retention and transition is continued into their young adult lives.

All program elements are offered to in-school and out-of-school youth.

1. Tutoring & study skills training: Referrals to partners providing educational services and the use of online tutorials. The NWWIB authorizes incentives for the participants that achieve benchmarks that

contribute to their success. The primary goal of local WIOA youth programming in WDA #7 is to ensure that in-school youth complete their high school education and receive a diploma. For out-of-school youth, who have not received their high school diploma, the primary goal is to ensure their completion of a GED/HSED.

2. Alternative secondary school services, or dropout recovery services, as appropriate: WIOA youth programs will work closely with alternative schools in the region. Alternative schools will be one source for referrals for eligible WIOA Youth participants. WIOA youth services will be designed to complement activities occurring within alternative schools. The primary goal will be for the youth to obtain their high school diploma or a GED.

3. Paid and unpaid work experiences that may have an academic and an occupational education component, may include (i) summer employment opportunities and other employment opportunities available throughout the school year; (ii) pre-apprenticeship programs; (iii) internships and job shadowing; and (iv) on-the-job training opportunities: Participants will prepare for employment opportunities through the provision of various services including, but not limited to:

- basic skill remediation;
- supervised work experiences;
- pre-employment abilities such as career planning, resume preparation, use of labor market information, completing applications, and interviewing skills attainment ;
- attainment of core employability/work maturity skills such as dependability, honesty, problem solving skills, initiative, enthusiasm, team player;
- interpersonal skills, appearance, leadership, and cultural sensitivity.

4. Occupational skill training, which shall include priority consideration for training programs that lead to recognized postsecondary credentials that are align with in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the local area.

5. Education is offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster.

6. Leadership development opportunities, which may include community service and peer-centered activities encouraging personal responsibility and other positive social and civic behaviors, as appropriate.

7. Supportive services: Supportive services will be provided through direct assistance, in-kind, or by an arrangement with other human service agencies or providers when necessary and as funds permit to provide a participant with the necessary resources to achieve their career goals. Supportive services may include, but are not limited, to childcare or transportation expenses.

8. Adult mentoring: The WIOA Youth program providers may arrange for mentors to provide the enrolled youth with guidance and advice for improving life and academic skills that lead to postsecondary education or employment.

9. Follow-up services: Follow-up services for not less than 4 quarters after program completion, will be provided as appropriate. CEP, Inc. staff will provide follow up services.

10. Comprehensive guidance and counseling: All youth programs will provide referral to comprehensive guidance and counseling, which may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling, as

appropriate. In-school programs will make the necessary connections with school guidance departments, as appropriate. Career counseling will be an integral part of youth programming and provide the basis for individual employment plans. Out of school youth will be encouraged to utilize career counseling services located within the various One-Stop centers.

11. Financial literacy education: Financial literacy education is supported by activities such as partnerships with financial institutions and to provide workshops at community locations.

12. Entrepreneurial skills training: Entrepreneurial skills training is supported by activities such as partnerships with economic development agencies and referrals to business development organizations.

13. Services that provide labor market and employment information: Information is provided in the local one-stops or on-line systems such as the Job Center of Wisconsin/Wisconsin. Information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations is available in areas, such as career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration services.

14. Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and training: Individual guidance and counseling, including career pathway discussion; assistance with applications and financial aid forms.

17. Provide the local area's definitions of the "requires additional assistance" eligibility criterion for:

Local criterion definition – Requires Additional Assistance (ISY)

In-School Youth will be determined as “needing additional assistance” if they possess at least one of the following characteristics:

- A. Lacks work readiness skills - The in-school youth will be considered to be under the local barrier “Lacks Work Readiness Skills” if the youth is deficient in 2 or more work readiness skills as recorded in the Youth Activities Record (previously known as ISS #8 or OCHO).
- B. One or more grade levels behind
- C. Suspended from school in the past 3 months
- D. Fired from a job in the last six calendar months
- E. Being raised by someone other than biological parent
- F. Child of a parent offender
- G. Gang affiliation
- H. Refugee/immigrant
- I. Substance abuse, current or past
- J. Resides in a household in which at least one member has a history of long-term unemployment within the previous 12 months. Long term unemployment is defined as those who are actively seeking work but have been without employment for 27 weeks or more.
- K. Resides in a county where unemployment or violent crime rates are higher than the state average. Violent crime rates will be determined using data sets from countyhealthrankings.org or <https://www.doj.state.wi.us/dles/bjia/ucr-offense-data>
- L. Victim/witness of domestic violence or other abuse
- M. Child of a veteran

Local criterion definition – Requires Additional Assistance (OSY)

Out-of-School Youth will be determined as “needing additional assistance” if they possess at least one of the following characteristics:

- A. Lacks Job Specific Skills - The out of school youth will be considered to be under the local barrier “Lacks Job Specific Skills” if the youth:
 - Has not worked for the same employer for longer than 6 months in the two years prior to eligibility determination, or
 - Has not successfully completed occupational skills training, or
 - Has not received a credential in occupational skills training.
- B. Lacks high school diploma
- C. Fired from a job in the last six calendar months
- D. Being raised by someone other than biological parent
- E. Child of a parent offender
- F. Expulsion from school
- G. Gang affiliation
- H. Refugee/immigrant
- I. Substance abuse, current or past
- J. Resides in a household in which at least one member has a history of long-term unemployment within the previous 12 months. Long term unemployment is defined as those who are actively seeking work but have been without employment for 27 weeks or more.
- K. Resides in a county where unemployment or violent crime rates are higher than the state average. Violent crime rates will be determined using data sets from countyhealthrankings.org or <https://www.doj.state.wi.us/dles/bjia/ucr-offense-data>
- L. Victim/witness of domestic violence or other abuse
- M. First generation high school graduate

Note: Even if a local area chooses to use this category as part of ISY eligibility, it is to be used sparingly. In each local workforce area, not more than 5% of newly enrolled ISY participants can be found eligible based on the "needs additional assistance" category in any given program year. There is not a similar restriction for OSY eligibility. DWD-DET holds the local WDBs responsible for tracking eligibility determinations for ISY that are based solely on this eligibility barrier and ensuring compliance with the 5% limitation. Any costs associated with serving participants who exceed the 5% limitation will be disallowed. In cases where the local WDB exceeds the 5% limitation, participants' eligibility determination dates will be placed in chronological order and only the first 5% will be covered by the limitation.

- 18. Provide a description of how the local WDB will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out under this title in the local area with the provision of adult education and literacy activities under title II in the local area, including a description of how the local WDB will carry out, consistent with subparagraphs (A) and (B)(i) of Section 107(d)(11) and Section 232, the review of local applications submitted under Title II.**

NWWIB coordinates Title II workforce investment activities such as adult education and literacy services carried out in the local area by working closely with the Wisconsin Technical College System, Wisconsin Literacy Councils, public school systems and our core program contractors. English Language Learners and Individuals who need to improve their basic skills in order to enter or retain employment, enter postsecondary education or training, or obtain a High School Equivalency

Diploma (HSED) or General Education Development (GED), typically utilize services provided by one of the two technical colleges or one of the literacy councils in our region.

Individuals in need of services may contact a literacy council or technical college directly or be referred from any of the various partners. There are currently 7 literacy councils operating within the region. The technical colleges serve adult basic education students at their campuses, outreach centers, and four county jails. Four college locations with onsite access to adult basic education courses also house Affiliate Job Centers.

To ensure coordination and collaboration with programs, Title II Basic Education and English Language Learning programs are present in the Job Center system and are a part of the One-Stop Operator Committee. Likewise, Job Center partners are included as Board members on Adult Basic Education advisory boards. This collaboration across workforce and education partners facilitates the development of career pathway bridges and career pathways to ensure that individuals with academic need have access to programs leading to employment.

Additionally, the NWWIB supports the In-School and Out-of-School Youth Programs which include core programs such as: HSED, GED, Adult Basic Education, Pre-employment classes, and dual enrollment through the technical colleges and Career and Technology Education (CTE) programs in the area's public schools.

- 19. Describe how executed cooperative agreements and MOU{s} 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 delivery system. This includes cooperative agreements [WIOA section 107{d}{11}] between the local Workforce Development Board {WDB} or other local entities [WIOA section 101{a}{11}{B} of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 {29 USC 721{a}{11}{B}}] and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, or other relevant entities [Title I of the Rehabilitation Act {29 USC 720 et seq.}], with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities and to other individuals, such as cross training of staff, technical assistance, use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers, and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration, and coordination.**

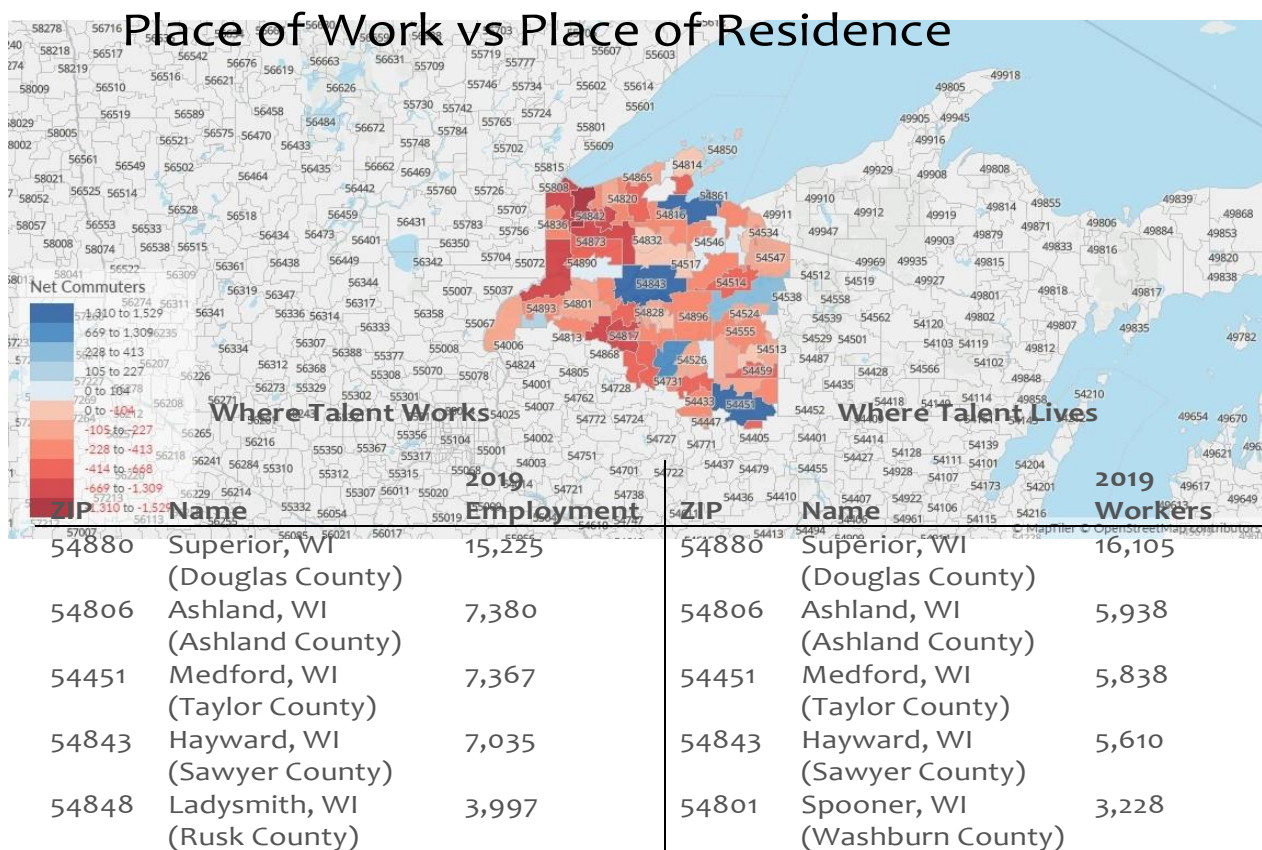
The One-Stop Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) fulfills the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act requirements to document and reach agreement among State and other required parties for negotiating cost sharing, service access, service delivery and other matters required and essential to the establishment of the local one-stop delivery system. This MOU describes the commitment of the parties to provide integrated workforce services at the Superior Comprehensive Job Center, and the Affiliate Job Centers: Ashland Job Center, Park Falls Concentrated Employment Program (CEP) Office, Spooner CEP Office, Phillips Northwest Technical College Campus Job Center, Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College-Hayward Job Center Outreach Site, and Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College-Ladysmith Outreach Site in the Northwest Wisconsin (WDA 7) Workforce Development Area.

This MOU is updated on an annual basis and One-Stop Operator on operationalizing the MOU to integrate services for both customers and businesses. Further information on the coordination and

collaboration as well as specific services can be found in the State approved MOU located at: <http://www.nwwib.com/resources>

20. Provide a description of how the local WDB will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out under this title in the local area with the provision of transportation, including public transportation, and other appropriate supportive services in the local area.

Although there are a variety of employment transportation services available in Wisconsin, options are much more limited in Northwest Wisconsin. Services such as ridesharing, vanpools/shuttles, public transit, taxis, vehicle purchase/repair programs and employer tax services may be nonexistent or underutilized in rural communities in the region. This is particularly concerning as a large percentage of the region’s residents face a commute longer than 20 miles each way every day. In 2014, 59.8% of the Northwest Wisconsin residents worked in the region and 40.2% left the 10-county region to commute to work. Additionally, in 2014, 25.6% of the region’s workforce commuted into the region from outside the NWWIB area.



(EMSI Q1 2020 Data Set, www.economicmodeling.com)

Because of the very rural nature of the region and limited access to daily public transportation, most residents are largely dependent upon the automobile to get to work. There are three primary public transit systems that provide a combination of fixed route and demand response options: the Duluth Transit Authority (DTA), Bay Area Rural Transit (BART), and Namekagon Transit. The Duluth Transit Authority serves the city of Superior with linkages to Duluth, MN. BART serves the Chequamegon

Bay Area Communities (located in Ashland and Bayfield counties) of Ashland, Bayfield, Washburn and the Bad River and Red Cliff tribal communities with regular fixed routes Monday through Friday and a more limited Saturday service. BART also routes that serve other communities in these counties, but on a more limited schedule, that limits its usefulness for commuters. Bart also serves Price County with a Monday through Friday route between Park Falls and Phillips. Bad River Transit and Red Cliff Transit provide service within their respective communities with connections to the BART System. Namekagon Transit is the primary public transit system serving Sawyer County communities with daily service in the Hayward area and Lac Courte Oreilles Reservation. Transportation to other communities to and from Hayward is limited and thus not useful for daily commuters.

Northwest CEP and other programs and agencies who provide assistance to low-income individuals who are seeking employment or enrolled in approved training as part of their employment goals, may be eligible to receive financial assistance such as mileage, gas cards, or bus passes. Programs working with the same individual coordinate with one another to prevent duplication of services.

21. Provide a description of plans and strategies for, and assurances concerning, maximizing coordination of services provided by the State employment service under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.) and services provided in the local area through the one-stop delivery system, to improve service delivery and avoid duplication of services.

Wagner-Peyser is a critical partner in our efforts in the workforce development system. The Wagner-Peyser team are oriented to all visionary goals of the DWD and the NWWIB. We strive toward an integrated and braided approach to services that reflect the NWWIB's vision, strategy, and objectives. We believe strongly in the concept of integration and are attempting to further improve the entire workforce development system. Wagner-Peyser services are provided on-site in many locations and access to the JobCenterofWisconsin is available in all comprehensive and affiliate sites. There is a seamless transition for customers between Wagner-Peyser and WIOA programs. A biannual training has been provided to staff to adequately identify the applicable services for each employment program and ensure seamless referrals. Most importantly, however, is that customers experience excellent customer service regardless of the employment program serving them. This requires great coordination amongst internal teams and communication to ensure zero duplication. Both Title I and Title III partners share access to the mandatory service reporting system, ASSET. This shared platform allows staff to review client service plans, pursue co-enrollment opportunities and work collaboratively to provide a suite of services in a non-duplicative manner.

Quarterly meetings of the One-Stop Operator Committee with WIOA Title partners (including Wagner-Peyser local staff) are held to coordinate activities and respond to the priorities of our shared customers. The partners meet to discuss customer satisfaction levels, customer needs, performance rates, scheduled events and activities, as well as service delivery coordination enhancements to incorporate technology, reduce bottlenecks and redundancies, and integrate new resources. Over the last year the region has undergone significant process improvements to develop coordinated and collaborative service delivery models between Wagner-Peyser and WIOA. Under WIOA Wagner-Peyser Job Center staff have the same performance goals as the WIOA funded staff. This encourages a teamwork atmosphere since everyone is seeking to attain the same outcomes for both jobseeker clients and for business customers. In some cases partners from other organizations in the Job Center do not use the Job Center of Wisconsin system. To the extent practical we will encourage partner staff to record services provided.

22. **Identify the administrative entity and/or fiscal agent responsible for the disbursement of Title I funds in the local area, as determined by the chief elected official or the Governor.**

The current administrative entity and fiscal agent is Northwest CEP per the current NWWIB – LEO agreement which is in effect through June 30, 2020.

23. **Describe the competitive process used to award the sub-grants and contracts in the local area for the WIOA Title I activities.**

The Youth RFP is issued every three years. NWWIB, Inc. just issued a Request for Proposal for WIOA Youth Services beginning on July 1, 2020. When an RFP is issued the responses are reviewed by a subcommittee of the NWWIB, Inc. Youth Committee. This same committee assists in the development of the RFP prior to it being released. The subcommittee uses the evaluation criteria outlined in Youth RFP to score responses. If, after scoring and reviewing the responses, the NWWIB, Inc. Youth Committee RFP Subcommittee deems that there are no viable or responsive bids then a sole-source procurement that is properly justified and documented in accordance with the Wisconsin State Procurement Manual and the Federal Procurement Regulations at 29 CFR 97.36(d)(4) may be considered.

Adult and Dislocated Worker services under Title I are not competitively procured. Because of the unique status of Northwest CEP, the CLEO may choose to award those funds directly to CEP.

24. **Provide a description of the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and chief elected official pursuant to section 16(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 subtitle B, and the one-stop delivery system, in the local area.**

WDA 07 - Northwest (55040)		
	PY20	PY21
Adult Q2 Unsubsidized Employment	77	78
Adult Q4 Unsubsidized Employment	72	73
Adult Median Earnings	\$6,200	\$6,200
Adult Credential Attainment Rate	65	65
Adult Measurable Skill Gain	36	37
Dislocated Worker Q2 Unsubsidized Employment	81	81
Dislocated Worker Q4 Unsubsidized Employment	78	78
Dislocated Worker Median Earnings	\$8,000	\$8,000
Dislocated Worker Credential Attainment Rate	64	65
Dislocated Worker Measurable Skill Gain	45	45
Youth Q2 Employment/Education	75	75
Youth Q4 Employment/Education	75	75
Youth Median Earnings	\$3,500	\$3,500

Youth Credential Attainment Rate	58	60
Youth Measurable Skill Gain	32	32

25. **Provide a description of the actions the local WDB will take toward becoming or remaining a high-performing board, including but not limited to:**

- **Local WDB Roles: Identify the role of the Local WDB and Youth Council/Committee in supporting Business Services, Sector Partnerships, Career Pathways, and Work- Based Learning. What actions will be taken to ensure that these areas are a priority for the local area? What actions and commitments will be made of the local WDB or Youth Council/Committee members (in particular those representing business) to support these initiatives?**

The role, actions and commitment of the NWWIB and its standing committees along with its collaborative partnership with other regional partners will support us in our efforts to become and remain a high-performing WDB in the following categories:

- a. Business services, sector partnerships, career pathways and work-based learning – by developing and maintaining a high-performing business engagement services. This will occur by convening, brokering and leveraging support among stakeholders, including local businesses, for workforce development activities conducted in the area. This work is enhanced by the regional business services team, the Family-Centered Employment efforts, involvement with Inspire/Xello and other means.
- b. Continue to analyze local area and regional economic conditions to be proactive in the provision of career pathway efforts. Staff of the workforce development system will benefit by being on the forefront of best and promising practices of the industry led, career pathway services. The focus on short-term industry recognized and stackable credentials will help us forge new pathways for consumers who are looking to enter an industry.
- c. As discussed throughout this document, the Board will continue to support the area and regional business community by leading efforts within the area and the region to engage with a diverse range of employers to promote business representation, develop effective linkages with employers, ensure workforce investment and opportunity activities meet the needs of employers and support economic growth in the region.
 - **Local WDB Participation: Describe how the local WDB will make businesses in the local area aware of opportunities to participate on the local WDB to ensure representation of industry sectors with the greatest labor force demand. Describe how the local WDB will maintain a minimum of at least 51% of businesses as active members and participants on the local WDB.**

The NWWIB submits to the State an updated Board roster for certification every two years. When vacancies on the Board arise the open board seat is advertised via social media, direct emails to industry and Chambers, on our website, and via news release. The state provides the ratio of private sector members that we must meet in our membership and that is reviewed every two years as part of the certification process. The NWWIB is lucky to have an engaged Board and we do not have a difficult time reaching a quorum. The sub-committees help Board members stay engaged between meetings and work on projects that they are passionate about. Board vacancies are communicated to DWD in between certification periods and new member information is provided when the seat is filled.

- 26. Describe the process used by the local WDB to provide an opportunity for public comment, including comment by representatives of businesses and representatives of labor organizations, and input into the development of the local plan, prior to submission of the plan.**

Consistent with section 108(c), the NWWIB will make the local plan available on the NWWIB website and shall provide an email address for the public to send comments. The NWWIB will also have copies available (hard or digital) for board members at the March meeting and provide hard copies to all regional Job Centers. This will enable the local plan to be shared with business members, labor organizations, and education entities and allow for their respective organizations to review and make comments. These actions will take place during the 30-day public comment period and before the local plan is submitted to the State. An additional section will be added to the bottom of the local plan which will contain the comments received during the 30-day comment period and sections that were changed due to the comment period will appear italicized in the document.