



Executive Summary

The workforce development system in Ouachita Parish is a network of services, programs, and resources whose primary purpose is to develop a skilled workforce to match employer needs. This network consists of many providers, all of whom are committed to working together for the good of Ouachita Parish.

The local plan covers the next four years, presents the WIOA-aligned goals, strategies, and activities of the workforce system in Ouachita Parish. This plan is based on current and projected needs of the workforce development system, with an increased emphasis on coordination and collaboration at all levels to ensure a seamless system for employers and job seekers, including those with disabilities. The local plan identifies the education, employment, and skill needs of the workforce. This plan includes an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of services provided to address identified needs.

Workforce Development Board (WDB) realizes Ouachita is an excellent place for businesses to prosper and for individuals to live and work. In order to maintain good paying jobs, a quality workforce and superior educational institutions, Ouachita WDB seeks to maximize the resources available in our area.

Ouachita Workforce will continue to connect employers to a skilled workforce and helps individuals develop the skills needed to thrive in the workplace. The board is committed to creating workforce development strategies that promote the economic well-being of both employers and workers in Ouachita Parish. Ouachita Workforce Development Board's vision to provide a system of universal access to all of our citizens where they can receive the services needed to obtain and retain employment in order to improve their standards of living, and to provide area employers with a well-educated and trained workforce to meet the needs of the twenty-first century.

While it is difficult to make long-term projections on how exactly COVID-19 will affect the demand on future job, some considerations will influence how Ouachita's WIOA Plan moves forward:

They are as follows:

- As occupations move to remote work, we must consider how to provide technical resources and training to individuals that allow them to successfully compete for jobs.
- As we receive real-time data and industry input on high-demand occupations, they must be prepared to adjust service delivery strategies to meet the changing need.
- As colleges and training providers navigate their own response to COVID, it will be difficult for us to predict the availability of training.
- As fewer customers require UI assistance, we will need to shift their priority back to customers seeking re-employment and training services.

We are confident that we have a proactive plan and agile infrastructure necessary to collectively address the needs of Ouachita Parish.

CHAPTER 4: OPERATING SYSTEMS AND POLICIES – LOCAL COMPONENT

This chapter provides an overview of all the operating systems and policies within the Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs). LWDAs must incorporate key documents into the plan that describe the one- stop delivery system and the services provided by the workforce partners.

A. Coordination of Planning Requirements: The plan will incorporate the Memorandum of Understanding and Service Integration Action Plan and include the following statements in this chapter:

- *The Local Workforce Development Area 81 Memorandum of Understanding provides a description of the one-stop delivery system, and other information that is essential to the establishment and operation of effective local workforce development systems as required by the WIOA Rule (20 CFR Part 678.705). The Memorandum of Understanding and any subsequent modifications is incorporated by reference into this plan.*
- *The Local Workforce Development Area 81 Service Integration Action Plan provides a description of how local workforce partners will align and coordinate services as required by the State of Louisiana Integrated Service Delivery Policy (OWD 2-23.1). The Service Integration Action Plan and any subsequent modifications is incorporated by reference into this plan.*

Ouachita Workforce Development Board has one comprehensive American Job Center located at 24 Accent Drive Ste. 151, Monroe, La. Services are provided to jobseekers and employers customers. Ouachita American Job Center has utilized an integrated service delivery model for several years. All partners are expected to further promote and refine integration practices in their service delivery model. The one-stop partners fully embrace integration, both in spirit and in practice. This means the partners do not simply deliver WIOA services at the AJC, but fully incorporate services wholly into the integrated service delivery model.

All the core partners, which includes adult, dislocated, youth, Vocational Rehab, and Wagner-Peyser services are provided through the comprehensive American Job Center. Partners have signed a Memorandum of Understanding that detail their services, which they provide. The signed MOUs and the Infrastructure Funding Agreement are dated July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2023. Wagner-Peyser, dislocated workers and adult customers are co-enrolled; as well as the alignment/braiding of resources, to address the training and employment needs of system customers.

Integrated Service Delivery reduces duplicative and administrative activities that add value in favor of a positive customer experience (both employers and job seekers).

The services allow staff to provide customers higher value services including screening, assessment, skill development and skill certification related to the needs of local and regional economies and the resources of participating programs. Staff works in teams to meet the needs of customers, rather than to administer specific programs. The goal is for more people to get jobs, keep jobs, and earn better wages, and for businesses to find the talent they need to succeed and grow.

An outcome of functional teams is that staff at the American Job Center become experts in a variety of different programs and are aware of all resources available to all customers, further promoting the “no wrong door” approach for customers and better utilization of all funds available through the American Job Center and partners.

The components of Integration Service Delivery model include:

1. Co-enrollment of job seekers in WP and Adult/DW WIOA funds at minimum and braiding/directing resources to provide appropriate services, regardless of specific funding stream limitations.
2. Organizing staff and services around functions and skill sets rather than programs or agencies. Breaking down internal partner’s barriers to service provisions. Functional teams are based on industry sectors and the customer flow process.
3. Using a common set of outcome measures for all customers that drive increased performance and display enhanced successes for the American Job Center.
4. Providing a robust and adaptable menu of services that improve outcomes and actively engage employers, job seekers and partnering agencies.
5. A greater focus on skill development and certification based on labor market requirements promotion between employment and education as necessary for participants.
6. Investment and planning to promote staff professional growth and learning in cross-functional teams.
7. Using customer input (job seeker and business) for continuously improving services early and often in-service delivery models.

LWDB and local partners have agreed to work toward a functionally integrated environment at Ouachita American Job Center, and future affiliate sites. Customers benefit from triage, job Search, training and placement services in the AJC. The WIOA, in partnership with the One-Stop Operator and LWC, will lead the integrated service delivery model.

The Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA) used by WDB 81 partners contain the overall One-Stop operational budget. Workforce Development Board-81, AJC partners and the chief elected official, agrees to the shared cost of the AJC operating budget. LWDB and the partners use the

Local Funding Mechanism to allow the flexibility to fund the one stop delivery system through consensus.

B. Provide information regarding the use of technology in the one-stop delivery system, including a description of:

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

Technology plays an integral part in many aspects of the daily operation of Ouachita Workforce. Staff utilizes [Laworks.net](https://www.laworks.net) to foster the symbiotic relationship between employers and job seekers by providing a centralized location for job postings, resumes, and matching services. All staff uses the HIRE system to track case management, support services and youth activities. In addition, management uses reports from the Hire System to track real time performance issues.

The Board strives to achieve seamless delivery of services and universal access to individuals with disabilities and language barriers. We provide area employers with the most qualified labor force information. Workforce Solutions centers have expanded existing technology to enhance accessibility of services, resource rooms, and self-service options for job seekers with a wide range of visual, hearing, physical, cognitive, and other disabilities.

One-stop services are readily available and easily conveyed to all interested job seekers. The services provided to the public, such as workshops, are in simple to comprehend language, with assistive technology available if needed. One-on-One workshops are available if necessary.

- **How LWDB 81 will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system, including in remote areas, through the use of technology and other means (§679.560(b)(5)(ii)).**

The Board remains committed to using available and emerging technology to assist customers, particularly those who may be located a distance from a center and with limited transportation. Priority is on maintaining up-to-date computer hardware and software available to the public. Currently, those wishing to apply for childcare services can do so from any computer through the Board's website. We market public events through the board's website and Facebook page to further expand the virtual presence of Ouachita Workforce. In addition, staff will soon undertake a project to record all workshops so they will be available to the public at any time through the utilization of the newly designed website.

C. Describe how LWDB 81 will support the strategies identified in the Combined State Plan and work with entities carrying out core programs, including a description of (§ 679.560(b)(1)(ii)):

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

Ouachita Workforce Development Board has a good mix of diverse workforce programs that provide opportunities to individuals with barriers to get the necessary training and job search assistance to achieve success. All of the core program partners participate actively in the design of the One Stop Center activities and are representatives on the Local Workforce Development Board. Board staff and program staff are experienced and focus on individuals with barriers for placements and career pathway methodologies to carry out the mission and vision of the State and the Ouachita Workforce Development Board.

Funding continues to be an issue. Partners have a difficult time financially supporting the infrastructure. The lack of databases among partners that interface with each other to provide needed data is lacking. Partners have agreed to meet face-to-face or virtually to discuss co-enrollments and exits until we create a more integrated database system. Co-enrollments will assist all partner agencies in leveraging resources and providing a more comprehensive menu of activities for job seekers, employers, and youth.

As a Work Ready Community (WRC), Ouachita Workforce is poised to assist business and industry to find qualified workers to fill vacates.

- **Scaling up the use of Integrated Education and Training models to help adults get their GED and work on other basic skills and English language acquisition while earning credential and industry-recognized credentials that lead to in-demand occupations;**

The Ouachita Workforce Board believes that many of the workforce system individuals will start with Adult Basic Education or English as a Second Language and build from there. The partnership with Adult Basic Education and Literacy is essential, along with the other core program partners, Adult Education and Literacy will participate in the customer flow that provides services to individuals. The design has all core partners' clients registering into the HIRE System and receiving any basic career services. The Adult Education and Literacy partner has agreed to the referral process and initial screening to identify potential services for all American Job Center jobseekers.

LWDB-81 continues to develop and refine innovative and effective models for obtaining industry recognized credentials, including integrated education and training approaches, such as, career pathways, industry or sector partnerships, including those pertaining to Registered Apprenticeship programs and opportunities. Integrated Education and Training (IET) is a service approach that provides three components simultaneously, concurrently, and contextually: (1) adult education and literacy (2) workforce preparation activities, and (3) workforce training to scale up Integrated Education and Training (IET) services to help adults.

The IET will be a part of our career pathway with a single set of learning objectives for a specific occupation or occupational cluster for the purpose of educational and career advancement which may be any one of the approved WIOA training services.

Training services may include:

- Occupational skills training, including training for nontraditional employment,

- On-the-job training (OJT)
- Registered Apprenticeship
- Workplace training combined with related instruction that may include cooperative education programs,
- Private sector training programs,
- Skill upgrading and retraining,
- Entrepreneurial training,
- Job readiness training provided in combination with other training described above,
- Adult education and literacy activities, including activities of English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs, in combination with training described above.

The Skills/Talent Development team will ensure participants are provided with Individualized Career and Training services that include information and opportunities for them to receive the skills necessary to obtain and retain employment. They provide one-on-one career counseling and coaching, which will begin with the development of the participant's Individual Employment Plan (IEP) for adults and the Integrated Service Strategy (ISS) for youth. The IEP/ISS further defines skills-based education and training opportunities, basic skills and skills-enhancing products/services, guidance in selection of education programs and training providers, need for supportive services and other related wraparound services.

Integrated education and training services of sufficient quality and intensity will be designed based on the most rigorous research available. Successful applicants are required to provide the following services/activities:

- a minimum of two career pathway programs that provide the opportunity for students to earn college credit;
- basic skills services that are concurrently integrated and contextualized with the workforce training program of study and aligned with a single set of learning objectives and specific integrated activities;
- basic skills, workforce preparation activities, workforce training, and the attainment of industry-based and/or academic credentials;
- partnerships with business and industry as well as regional economic development partners in order to meet both current and future sector needs.

Delta Community College currently has Industry-recognized credentials in Nursing Assistant, Medical Assistant, Contact Tracer, Construction Laborers, Maintenance and repair workers, Customer Service Representatives, Bookkeeping Clerks, and Forklift operator that leads to in-demand occupations.

- **Using the insights and lessons learned from successful dual credit programs to scale up similar efforts in other sectors and regions;**

Our Adult Education partner currently offer traditional dual credit hours for students enrolled in Welding, Certified Nursing Assistant, Phlebotomy, and Education to Careers. Dual credits are offered for the juniors and seniors at the local high schools.

Students from Ouachita Parish and Monroe City Schools' systems visits Louisiana Delta Community College campus and learn about an academic program that aligns with their career goals. In the spring, interested students attend a parent information session that includes presentations by departments such as student support services, financial assistance, WIOA and admissions. This is part of an overall strategy to expose students to programs, getting them comfortable in a college setting, and introducing the myriad support services offered.

Monroe Chamber holds an annual Manufacturing Day, which allow students to tour area manufacturers to get an insight into the manufacturing industry. The day includes discussions about career tracks and pathways, education and training requirements, and next steps related to college and career after high school.

Louisiana Delta Community College (LDCC) has collaborated with high schools to offer dual credit programs, which help students quickly, complete their degree and enter the workforce, while saving money along the way. In some instances, students are able to graduate high school with associate degrees, beginning their professional careers in technical fields immediately after completing high school with a dual degree.

LDCC is also working with four-year universities to ensure credits are recognized and accepted. Louisiana Delta Community College is exploring a range of non-credit programs in conjunction with businesses, which often facilitate industry-recognized credentials more quickly than traditional course timelines, especially when these are interim credentials that would normally be part of a longer college course or program. Workers retain the value from these interim steps and should easily be able to take additional credentials that can be stacked toward college degrees.

We have found that dual credit leads to positive educational outcomes for students at all levels. Dual credit courses often are viewed as more rigorous than general high school courses. They may increase the relevance of schoolwork by enabling students to access courses related to their career goals and interests, like engineering, business or marketing. Participation in dual credit programs has increase the probability of degree completion and decreeing college attrition. . Numerous studies have shown that college students with prior dual credit were more likely to persist to a second year of college and eventually complete a degree.

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

Prior Learning Assessments guidelines are being developed. Once the guidelines have been set in place, LWDB-81 will market this information to the community. The LWDB-81 will educate/training partners and front-line staff on the Prior Learning Assessment methods in the

workforce area. A copy of the marketing methods will be provided to LWC know later than July 1, 2021.

- **Investigating how targeted marketing can identify segments of the labor force, such as mature workers and the underemployed, who may not require extensive education or training to qualify for jobs in high demand occupations;**

LWDB 81 utilizes KNOE TV and local radios stations to produce a “once-a-week” spotlight labeled “Workforce Wednesdays”. This spotlight targets various populations with education information, hiring events held at the American Job Center or workshops readily available throughout the community. It airs Wednesday mornings and sends information to the community at high driving times.

Marketing to the mature worker’s population will be a priority, as well as marketing to the underemployed. LWDB 81 hosts hiring events, at the American Job Center (AJC). We utilize the Monroe Chamber’s e-newsletter to market services and programs so the business community is aware of all of the One-Stop offerings. LWDB uses Facebook and other social media platforms to promote events and educational opportunities. Lastly, calendars and flyers are produced on each specific event/training opportunity are disturbed to jobseekers and employers.

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

The LWDB 81 will continue to explore, develop, and expand career pathways with education partners that may include co-enrollment in core programs. The LWDB 81 will work to catalog existing pathways to determine what middle skilled jobs exist and target training resources for development or expansion.

Developing career pathways in the specific targeted sectors as identified in the regional plan will require stronger partnerships within the local community, such as Economic Development, Chamber of Commerce, post-secondary education and local businesses.

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

Emphasis placed on ensuring that access to training needed to enter high-demand jobs through the attainment of credentials and occupational skills training. LDCC provides more online/virtual training opportunities to obtain credentials needed to enter various career fields. The online offerings are beneficial as it provides access to those challenged by transportation, childcare, and other barriers. LWDB will continue to collaborate and evaluate these offering to ensure that the appropriate classroom training, work experiences, and credentials are provided to fill the pipeline for employers and career pathways for workers to enable employers.

LWDB 81 works with core educational, workforce partners to develop pathways that uses recognized post-secondary, and industry credentials that are portable and stackable. We work to identify components of earn and learn models that provide short term credentials that lead to employment in family-sustaining jobs and combine them with work-based learning in our targeted industry sectors. As part of a pathway, we will work to identify additional credentialed training that can lead to advancement for the individual.

D. Provide information regarding the local coordination strategies with state (including the Combined State Plan), regional and local partners to enhance services and avoid duplication of activities, including a description of:

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

The MOU between: LWDB-81, Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth and the partners clarifies and defines the roles of each program, and specifies the ways each program contributes to the delivery of Career Services in the AJCC. In order to assist with ongoing coordination and communication, regular meetings are held between line staff and partners programs to discuss and coordinate service delivery on an ongoing basis, and to prevent unintended duplication of services.

The partners meet on a bi-weekly basis to coordinate services, eliminate duplication and improve program services for the adult, dislocated worker and youth employment and training activities under WIOA.

Some examples includes: The Adult Education partner manage the assessment process and provide high school equivalency training and testing to reduce duplication of services.

Housing and Urban Development (HUD) offers Job Readiness Workshops with their Family Self-Sufficient Workshop at the center to help remove barriers to employment.

The core collaborates program (Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Adult Education and Literacy, Wagner-Peyser, and Vocational Rehabilitation) work together to effectively serve job seekers and employers. Although each program has defined activities and responsibilities by law, they work to leverage services and reduce duplication.

WIOA 81 provides career planning and case management services to adults, dislocated workers and youth in the local area. WIOA provides tuition assistance for vocational classroom training for eligible individuals. In addition, earn and learn programs such as on-the-job and incumbent worker training are available. Employers are provided assistance with pre-employment screening as well as skills assessment of potential candidates. Supportive services are available for eligible individuals to attend training.

- **Adult education and literacy activities under WIOA Title II. This description must include how LWDB will carry out the review of local**

applications submitted under Title II consistent with WIOA Secs. 107(d)(11)(A) and (B)(i) and WIOA Sec. 232 (§ 679.560(b)(12)).

The United States Department of Education's Office of Career, Technical, and Adult education outlines the following goals under WIOA Title II:

- Assist adults to become literate and obtain the knowledge and skills for employment and economic self-sufficiency.
- Support the educational and skill achievement of parents and family members to participate in the educational development of their children and improve economic opportunities for families;
- Assist immigrants and English learners in improving their English and math proficiency and understanding of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship; and
- Assist incarcerated individuals in strengthening their knowledge and skills to promote successful re-reentry into society.

The goals of LWDB 81 are delivery of service such as adult education and literacy activities. Section 203(2) of WIOA further adds three new activities to the definition of "adult education and literacy activities": Integrated English literacy and civics education, workforce preparation activities, and integrated education and training.

Adult Education coordinates with the One-Stop system to increase basic skills of adults and youth who need marketable skills for employment. Coordinating services through the One-Stop system ensures LWIB 81 that the adult education services provided aligns with the local plan. Along with the other Core Program Partners, Adult Education and Literacy in Ouachita Parish will participate in the customer flow that provides for serving to individuals.

The LWDB-81 will carry out the review of local applications/RFPs submitted under Title II and the Board will ensure that the review process was consistent with WIOA requirements.

The process is as follows:

- Prior to submission, the WDB will be notified of the review process.
- A LWDB-81 Proposal Review Training will be held via live webinar where LWDB members will be provided with an overview of the proposals, instructions on how to review proposals, and how to use the proposal review. LWDB-81 members will have an opportunity to ask questions during the webinar.
- Any LWDB members with potential conflicts of interest should recuse themselves from the review process.
- All applications deemed eligible will be sorted by their DA and packaged for hardcopy or electronic transmittal to the Board Chair.

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

Wagner-Peyser will be co-located full-time in the comprehensive American Job Center and share in the facility costs. Along with the other Core Program Partners, Wagner-Peyser has agreed to the customer flow to serve clients in LWDB 81.

The design has all Core Program Partners clients registering in the LAWWORKS database and receive orientation as well as receiving any basic career services. Wagner-Peyser has also agreed to the referral process and initial screening to identify potential services for all Center clients. Wagner-Peyser, along with partner staff, will continue to provide resource room coverage, and basic career service workshops open to all workforce system clients. Wagner-Peyser will coordinate with LWDB 81 to ensure employers served according to a customer model and that partners are not duplicating efforts.

In addition, Wagner-Peyser staff will assist with the intake process by assessing the client's needs, assisting with UI claims, and registering them in the HIRE system for the claimant to begin job searching. Staff will also provide Labor Market Information to educate clients on the current employment outlook and determine if further training will be necessary to enhance employment opportunities. Depending on the needs of the clients, they are directed to work-readiness workshops, referred to partner agencies, and/or supportive services.

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

Vocational Rehabilitation and other Core Program Partners share information specific to their target populations and discuss appropriate co-enrollment standards in order to leverage services to best serve clients.

The Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) administers Vocational Rehabilitation Service activities under WIOA Title IV. LWC maintains Workforce Development Board representation and participates in policy and program discussion. WIOA Title I maintains all assistive technology/equipment at the comprehensive one-stop center, with Vocational Rehabilitation staff providing guidance related to the type of equipment that would be suitable for the needs of those seeking services at the one-stop. Additional collaborative efforts were identified through the MOU negotiation process for 2020, and duplication of services is addressed as well.

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

Represented from secondary and post-secondary education programs are on the local board. Louisiana Delta Community College provides the funding for adult education. Staff of these entities are also actively engaged in WIOA activities, representing Carl Perkins V, Adult Education, Continuing Education and Business Services. The Adult Education partner provides a variety of services, which are free to eligible clients. They provide the HISET and English as a Second Language classes in the local area. Secondary and post-secondary providers offer workplace skills training, career exploration services and basic skills instruction. LDCC participate as a provider of Title 1 services as well, serving youth in the local area. The Pathway programs in manufacturing, healthcare and hospitality provides learning along with industry recognized credentials lead into postsecondary and/or entry-level employment.

Educational institutions and economic development agencies are active in assisting with program design concepts. WIOA services aligns with other post-secondary opportunities in the local area and there is no duplication of services.

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

Core Program Partners, along with educational institutions and economic development representatives, assist in the creation and support of sector partnerships for the identified existing and emerging industries and occupations. The sector partnerships will incorporate career pathways into its responsibilities in terms of creating a flow of the career path options, analysis of the needs and expectations of business customers, analysis of the existing skills and knowledge of the talent pipeline, and work with education representatives to tap into existing training or create new credentialing or certification options.

Delta Community College represents the Carl Perkins V program in the local area. Delta Community College is an active member of the One-Stop partner group. Partners help job-seekers bridge the gap between adult education and post-secondary education. Perkins review and assist with existing and emerging in-demand industries and occupations that LWDB 81 has identified regarding business development and the building of a talent pipeline to meet business needs and expectations.

CTE under Perkins provides students with the academic and technical skills, knowledge and training necessary to succeed in future careers and to become lifelong learners. CTE program information is available for area residents at the one-stop center, including information concerning career pathways and industry stackable credentials. To best serve the client all partners coordinate services, which includes assistance with college tuition, help with obtaining a HiSET, textbook assistance, help with transportation or childcare or other assistance needed in order to succeed in a career pathway and obtain employment. Ultimately, aligning resources across all partners to eliminate duplication.

The Board will continue to align services in the one-stop center such as investments in workforce, education, and economic development through partnerships and collaboration with more entities representing each of these fields. This will ensure job seekers and workers receive the highest quality career services, education, training, and supportive services in order to obtain and retain in-demand employment.

- **Provide a copy of the local supportive service policies and describe how LWDB 81 will coordinate the provision of transportation and other appropriate supportive services in the local area (§ 679.560(b)(10)) and**

include information on the supportive services by each local program as appropriate.

A copy of the most recent Supportive Service policy found in Attachment 1. This policy may be updated based on actual utilization and unmet needs expressed by system customers.

LWDB 81 will coordinate the provision of transportation and other appropriate supportive services in the local area by assuring that each partner is aware of available resources and provide customer referrals to appropriate services. There is a priority, for which funds are used. For instance, childcare assistance is available through Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). WIOA may pay for childcare if funding is not available under DCFS.

(See Supportive Services Policy - Attachment 1)

The LWDB 81 depends on many local community-based organizations to assist with supportive services. A resource guide is available to help identify resources that may help a specific need of a participant. The United Way's 211.org is a very comprehensive resource that the front line staff also utilize to assist clients with locating various services. The Board has established a supportive services policy that provides transportation, childcare, and other services on a case-by-case basis if the assistance is required so the participant will be able to participate in education, training, or work-based activities. WIOA supportive services are the final resort if the participant is unable to receive assistance through their personal network or community-based service agencies.

E. Provide a description of how the local area will provide adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities including:

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

The needs of adult and dislocated job seekers are highly individualized based on their career objectives, educational attainment, barriers to employment, and transferrable skills. Job seekers require a range of services including basic academic remediation, work readiness skills training, information about local employment, career planning, skills assessment, job search assistance, supportive services such as transportation or child/dependent care support, short or longer-term training, and/or formal education to achieve their goals.

LWDA-81 is focusing on developing programs specific to the long-term unemployed; providing workforce services to support small business growth and entrepreneurship; targeting training more specifically on the needs of large employers and industry clusters; and prioritizing partnerships to enhance services to special populations, such as individuals with disabilities.

LWC provided Ouachita Workforce Board a Disaster Dislocated Worker Grant (DDWG) due to COVID-19. LWDB-81 will provide disaster-relief and humanitarian assistance employment, as well as employment and training services. LWDB will use these funds to help minimize the employment and economic impact due to COVID-19 pandemic. These funds will provide employment, training and supportive services to eligible individuals. Examples of employment and training activities: Clean-up and recovery efforts including demolition, repair, renovation and reconstruction of damaged and destroyed structures, facilities and lands located in Ouachita Parish. Recovery jobs will include sanitation workers, laborer leaders, laborers, sanitation managers, social and human services assistants, community health and outreach workers, warehouse workers, frontline supervisors etc.

The DDWG Supportive services will include personal protective equipment, transportation assistance, work-attire, assistance with books, fees and other necessary items for participant enrolled in training.

WIOA 81 intends to enhance services to adults and dislocated workers overall to this population with particularly acute need through its work to broaden the network of referral partners, and focus on the development of sector-specific strategies and career pathways.

WIOA 81 uses the TABE assessment for individuals interested in training for their basics skills level. The Interest Inventory Assessment, are completed in laworks.net. Skills assessments identify appropriate occupation training.

The local area provides adults and dislocated workers with vocational/educational training through Individual Training Accounts (ITAs). LWDB 81 offers work-based learning which includes OJT and work experience. Training options focuses around the demand occupations in the local area. Individual training accounts focused on demand sectors. Within the local area, adult education offers programs in the key industry sectors providing a career pathway to post-secondary education or employment. We coordinate on a regional basis with our local community college and universities to meet the needs of job seekers.

LWDB is working along with LWC to implement the Registered Apprenticeship program. LWDB will administer the Registered Apprenticeship to improve the workforce system, as well as to support the emphasis on career pathways. LWDB 81 is in support with LWC that "...the critical balance between serving individuals and employers in a manner that will produce strategies that in the long run are good for both."

A description of how LWDB 81 will coordinate workforce development activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities (§ 679.560(b)(7)).

In the unfortunate event that a dislocation occurs in LWDA 81, WIOA team coordinates and supports the rapid response activities. LHRDI provide Rapid Response services to companies and workers impacted by business closures and/or layoff. These services include initial meetings with the employer, workshops for impacted workers and provision of job search and training services.

Local area staff works in conjunctions with LHRDI Rapid Response coordinate to assist in the transit to training and reemployment.

LHRDI staff meet with the employer upon notice of the closure or layoff. WIOA services explained during this meeting to the employer. The employer supplies specific information on timelines for loss of employment and assistance in coordinating times and locations for workshops for the impacted workers. This same team provide workshops for individuals who are losing their job. Information on topics such as unemployment insurance benefits, job search assistance, availability of training funds and other community services to help them manage during their time of unemployment. The individuals that attend the workshop are encouraged to access services on-line and to come to the One-Stop for a more in-depth assessment of their employment and training needs.

All Rapid Responses, irrespective of the size of the dislocation event and whether it is a WARN or non-WARN situation, involve (1) an initial business consultation, which is employer focused, and (2) an information session, which is employee focused. LWC works collaboratively with local workforce system partners, the Division of Unemployment Insurance, and other relevant stakeholders to ensure effective, customer-centric Rapid Response provision.

F. Provide a description of how the local area will provide youth activities including:

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

Youth activities are coordinated with the Youth Committee of the Workforce Development Board. The Committee reviews and selects eligible providers for final approval by the Board and meets regularly during the program year to review and assess performance against negotiated goals.

Assessment, guidance and counseling, and work-based learning activities are at the forefront of LWDB 81 high-impact program priorities for Youth. Youth has access to occupational training in accordance with state and local policies.

LWDB 81 has moved toward an emphasis on serving older, out-of-school youth who can benefit from occupational training and/or exposure to employment through Work Based Learning opportunities. The spotlight on disconnected youth has highlighted the importance in connecting this group in particular to the workforce as early as possible.

LWDB 81 assesses the activities of the Youth Program. The Youth Program in the LWDA 81 has almost exclusively focused on out-of-school youth and it has been determined that the focus will remain on strengthening and increasing service delivery to out-of-school youth (16-24 years old) with barriers to employment. There will be an increase in outreach and utilization of more innovative and creative approaches to outreaching to disconnected youth.

Ouachita's Title I Youth Program collaborates closely with Adult Education and Department of Juvenile Justice and often co-enroll and leverage resources to service youth. LWDB 81 has partnered with Ouachita Parish Housing to pilot a program for youth who are aging out of foster

care. LWDB 81 is currently work with ARCO, an agency that specialize in serving youth with disabilities. LWDB 81 will continue to recruit and engage partnerships to serve more youth with disabilities. There is a strong partnership with LRS through co-enrollments and leveraging of services. LWDB 81 and the Youth Committee realize that the youth are the future.

LWDB 81 is working in partnership with Delta Community College to capture out-of-school youth in need of a high school education. Primary objectives are for the out-of-school youth to complete requirements for a high school diploma or a HiSET certificate, be placed in an entry-level job leading to a career and/or pursuing a postsecondary education. Classes are three times per week for as long as it takes to complete the program targets.

Participants complete the 20 core competencies using JAG's National Out-of-School Curriculum Modules. The online modules provide an option to blend online and activity-based classroom delivery. Participants will receive credit toward graduation by enrolling in an accredited course. Graduates receive twelve months of follow-up. The follow up period will help with their needs, including: employer marketing, job development and placement, employer and graduate follow-up contact, etc. Eligible participants in the JAG Program shall be 16-22 years of age and must face at least two designated barriers to success that include economic, academic, personal, environmental, or work related barriers.

Ouachita Workforce Board has a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement (CEA) to engage Out-of-School Youth (OSY) with the Ouachita Parish and Monroe City School Boards to provide opportunities and services for former students who become out of school youth. The School board will seek parental consent or the consent of the student (if the student is over the age of eighteen), to arrange a pre-counseling session between the student, the student's parents and Ouachita Workforce Board. When students exit either school systems, they receive a flyer providing WIOA services.

The HiSET program includes the elements that are critical to providing out-of-school youth and adults with the best opportunity to demonstrate their high school-level proficiency and their readiness for higher education or the workplace.

Ouachita Workforce is working with the Jump Start initiative. Jump Start is Louisiana's innovative career and technical education (CTE) program. Jump Start prepares students to lead productive adult lives capable of continuing their education after high school while earning certifications in high-wage career sectors. Students are required to attain industry-promulgated, industry-valued credentials in order to graduate with a Career Diploma. Jumpstart 2.0 is an elective path for students pursuing a university-preparatory diploma.

Participants receive academic counseling for selecting and enrolling in a program of study at Delta Community College including degree programs and credited certifications. Participants attend workshops on career exploration, applying to college, labor market opportunities, financial aid and FAFSA. Programming is year-round with rolling admission allowing flexible enrollment for students ready to commit to their future

Outreach efforts for older out-of-school youth includes continued collaboration with partner government agencies, faith and community based organizations, community centers, juvenile justice agencies, and programs that support school drop-outs and juvenile delinquency. The Youth Program is introduced and available to older youth who come into the One-Stop Center.

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

In the previous years, LWD B81 has meet the minimum 75% of the program expenditures. We will continue to strive to meet the minimum requirement. Each month the Director reviews the expenditure reports to ensure they are in line with the budget. The LWDB 81 has chosen to use the majority of its Title I funds for out-of-school youth services ages 16 to 24, but reserves the right to use up to 10% on in-school youth for special projects approved by the Board. WIOA requires a minimum of 20% of the LWDA 81 Title I Youth funds, minus administrative costs, be on work-based learning:

- ☐ Concurrent Academic and Occupational Education
 - ☐ Summer Jobs
 - ☐ Work Experiences
 - ☐ Pre-Apprenticeship Programs
 - ☐ On-the-Job Training
 - ☐ Internships and Job Shadowing
- Program expenditures on the work based learning program element include wages as well as staffing costs, for the development and management of the work based learning experiences.

LWDB 81 20% priority spending includes:

- ☐ Youth wages including Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA) tax.
- ☐ Staffing costs for time spent identifying potential work based learning opportunities.
- ☐ Staffing costs for time spent working with employers to develop the work based learning experience.
- ☐ Staffing costs for time spent working with employers to ensure a successful work based learning experience.
- ☐ Staffing costs for time spent evaluating the work based learning experience.
- ☐ Participant work based learning orientation sessions.
- ☐ Required academic education component directly related to the workforce experience.

LWIB 81 is focusing on serving older; out-of-school youth who can benefit from occupational training and/or exposure to employment through work based learning opportunities, as the spotlight on disconnected youth has highlighted the importance in connecting this group in particular to the workforce as early as possible.

G. Provide a description of how the local area will provide services to individuals with barriers to employment¹ as outlined in the Combined State Plan:

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

LWDB work to provide services in keeping with the Combined State Plan's goal to provide employment to individuals with barriers to employment. The Board collaborates with local government and community organizations to identify resources to provide stabilized housing, childcare, domestic violence solutions, and transportation services. We will provide essential skills training to those individuals with barriers to employment.

LWDB 81 will ensure that participants under WIOA individualized career or training services shall constitute a minimum of 51% of adults served meet the priority target groups. This minimum threshold will ensure that the local one-stop is targeting adults in most need of services. Staff receive labor market information during staff training meetings with explanations.

LWDB 81 provide priority access to higher-intensity career services and training to public assistance recipients, other low-income individuals, individuals who are deficient in basic skills, individuals with barriers to employment. AJC staff, when using WIOA Adult funds to provide individualized career services, training services, or both, must give priority to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient. Priority of services are implemented under WIOA, regardless of the amount of funds available provide services in the local area.

•Describe how the local workforce area will ensure equitable access to workforce and educational services through the following actions:

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

Data compiled at the end of every year, give the LWIB a snapshot of those served in the past year.

For example, PY '19 Adults enrolled,

- 42% were male, and 57% were female
- 46% received SNAP benefits
- 49% were low income

¹ The term "individual with barrier to employment" means one or more of the following populations: displaced homemakers, low-income individuals, Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians, individuals with disabilities, including youth who are individuals with disabilities, older individuals, ex-offenders, homeless individuals, or homeless children and youths, youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system, individuals who are English language learners, individuals who have low levels of literacy, and individuals facing substantial cultural barriers, eligible migrant and seasonal farmworkers, individuals within 2 years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act, single parents, including pregnant single women, long-term unemployed individuals, and such other groups as the Governor determines to have barriers to employment (WIOA Sec. 3(24)).

- African American/Black 88.16%
- American Indian/Alaskan Native 1.20%
- Asian .50%
- White 10.13%

By receiving this information, the Executive Board review policies to make certain there are no gaps in services. During information and recruitment sessions, every effort is made to ensure access is available to all who are interested.

LWDA-81 will continue to ensure that policies and programs in the local workforce area are accessible, regardless of racial, gender, or socioeconomic background. The One-Stop Operator will provide quarterly reports to partners of the local area which will provide a detailed breakdown of clients by, race/ethnicity, education level, age, gender, basic needs, and job search needs in order to identify gaps in access to workforce and educational services. Where gaps are identified, partners will work to plan and implement solutions.

- **Developing equity goals in conjunction with the education system and prepare action plans to achieve them.**

In conjunction with the education system LWDB-81 equity goals are: 1. Develop a strong partnership to better connect Ouachita residents to self-sustaining jobs. 2. Fill gaps in workforce development resources and increase service with resources from the education system. 3. Enhance and expand the range of short-term, high-quality training programs offering skill development opportunities leading to industry recognized certifications that meet the needs of local employers.

LWDB will achieve these goals by organized and support business involvement around career pathway programs that are being driven by adult education and community colleges. Strengthen information sharing and coordination of services and resources. Coordinate resources and investments to better align with major parish wide and regional efforts targeted toward the educational and career development.

Continual improvement and monitoring of the equity goals will be the responsibility of the Board. LWDB 81 will focus on improving technology skills for all workers but especially for minorities who are behind the general population in IT skills acquisition.

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

Job fairs have proven to be an effective marketing tool for career pathways. LWDA 81 will continue collaborating with local high schools, Delta Community College, providers, and employers to promote STEM-related careers. The Board will leverage real-time labor market data from Laworks.net to promote these occupations and their high-wage earnings as well as the cost-effective training programs locally available.

LWDB 81 will collaborate with local employers to review employment and skills data to ensure a true reflection of what is in demand. When applicable, LWDA 81 will promote STEM careers through high school extracurricular activities and after school programs that specifically serve minorities and women.

Industry experts and specialists who exhibit the skills and training necessary to teach STEM-related jobs and programs will only be leveraged. LWIA 81 is committed to ensuring diverse populations receive informed career paths and will work to provide continual access for opportunity.

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

LWDB 81 will work closely with its business service team to develop knowledge-sharing practices, which employers can adopt and implement. The BST will work to recruit new or recent retirees and senior workers from partner firms to serve as mentors for adult students in training for the same or similar occupations as well as support firms in developing mentoring efforts for newly hired workers.

Board members serve as mentors to the students by participating in activities and presenting leadership development. Our Workforce Specialist serves as a job coach to those adults who are place in work-based learning activities. The Specialist help customers navigate any barriers. The workforce specialist constantly contact partners who can assist with supportive services.

The Business Services Team will leverage improved employer and industry information to target particular training as well as insight on major barriers to employment and retention.

- **Providing training to workforce program staff on data-driven approaches to Address equity gaps.**

LWC has developed LMI training as part of the service integration plan. The local staff receives regular trainings on the labor equity gaps, customer demographics and program placement outcomes and how efforts can work to bridge the gaps. The One-Stop Operator's quarterly reports provides insight into which populations served and their outcomes, which will be beneficial to identifying gaps in equity.

- **Enduring workforce services are strategically located in relation to the populations in most need.**

LWDB 81 have one comprehensive One-Stop in Ouachita Parish. LWDB 81 understands the need for ensuring workforce services are strategically located across the region so that access to services are readily available, particularly for clients who have transportation barriers. LWDB 81 comprehensive One-Stop is co-located with all the mandated partners.

In PY2021, LWDB 81 is planning to open an affiliate One-Stop that will be more centrally located, more accessible through public transportation and thus able to better and more directly serve the area's residents and businesses.

Online services to jobseekers, including resume writing guide, unemployment filing, and WIOA application, and a calendar of events for upcoming workshops are available on the website. Partners of LWDB 81 are exploring options to enhance their website and social media in order to have a unified online presence.

H. Provide a description of training policies and activities in the local area, including:

- **How local areas will meet the annual Training Expenditure Requirement (OWD-4-14);**

The LWDB is following current guidance that mandates that 20% of adult and dislocated worker funds from Title I funding be to direct training. LWDB 81 is working to deploy new strategies including enhancing collaboration with the local community college, apprenticeship programs, and other initiatives to ensure that we meet this requirement by providing high value training services for eligible individuals. Workforce Development Board Director's reports expenditure data to the board on a regular basis. Program staff receive a notice if adjustments or modifications are required to meet annual goals.

Local emphasis is placed on collaborating more closely with employers in key industry sectors and working with the Monroe Chamber and other business groups. The collaboration will help support individual to make informed customer choice in the selection of funding occupational training. These activities may also result in the identification of training gaps, which addresses the class-sized projects. LWDB 81 also has invested in on-the-job training programs, which reimburses employers for wages during a new employee's training period.

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

Work-based learning strategies are essential for young people to acquire work experience, as well as for adults who have limited or outdated work experience. Ouachita Workforce Development Board is required to spend at least 20 % of their contract funding on work-based learning, and youth customers are being linked to work-based learning opportunities based on an employer needs and commitment, and interest among job seekers.

PY19 performance outcomes for work-based learning activities, including work experiences, internships, and on-the-job training, are detailed in this plan. On-the-job (OJT) training is marketed to employers with the understanding that a customized training plan will address their hiring needs; this approach has been successful and will continue. Job-ready candidates interview for placement, and matched with employers that seek specific skill-sets. **LWDB 81 has developed strategies around specialized work-based training for priority populations, especially at a time when unemployment is significantly low.**

LWDB's strategies will be:

1. To engage and motivate students in learning by connecting classroom work to students' personal and career interests
2. To reinforce and improve academic learning (as defined by the content of core academic classes)
3. To engage students in new modes of thought (e.g., higher-order critical thinking and Problem solving) or social learning and communities of practice
4. Develop students' career/technical skills as a mean to learning
5. To advance students' social and emotional development toward adulthood, including their identity formation and their sense of self-value
6. Expand students' social networks and access to opportunities
7. Enhance students' general workplace competencies, such as communication, teamwork and project planning
8. To enable career exploration through the scope of exposure at the worksite
9. Enhance students' understanding of particular careers through depth of experience

WIOA work with the Ouachita Parish Sheriff's Office to implement work-based learning for those currently incarcerated who released date is within six months. Trainings are held in the Ouachita Parish Correctional Center. We are in the process for the business service staff to visit the correctional facility to inform individuals to learn about their workforce needs and to build a relationship. Upon completing training, these individuals will be able to schedule a meeting with employers once released for a chance to be hired.

Our Workforce system places high value on not only preparing clients for the workforce through training and work based learning, but also through providing essential training to help ensure that clients are fully prepared to enter employment opportunities.

- **Provide a copy of the local Individual Training Account Policy and describe how training services outlined in WIOA Sec. 134 will be provided through the use of individual training accounts, including, if contracts for training services will be used, how the use of such contracts will be coordinated with the use of individual training accounts under that chapter, and how LWDB 81 will ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs regardless of how the training services are to be provided (§ 679.560(b)(18));**

LWDB 81 will primarily utilize Individual Training Accounts to assist job seekers with training; however, the LWDB 81 may elect to provide contracted training services for specific industry, sector partnerships, or career pathways per the supply and demand of the local area. One such use, for example, could be an innovative transitional job-training program with demonstrated capacity to serve participants with multiple barriers to employment. Informed consumer choice ensure using the State's eligible training provider list, which is available to all participants seeking training, as well as all stakeholders.

Prior to establishing an ITA, the Individual and Case Manager will navigate and leverage all available resources to make a determination that the individual is unable to obtain grant

assistance from other sources. Individual Training Accounts established with eligible training providers after a participant completes an extensive scholarship application process. The scholarship application process begins the individual's employment plan. It requires that the individual plan for success in school and the career pathway as demonstrated by completing an extensive assessment process.

Individual Training Accounts (ITA) issued pursuant to Ouachita Workforce Development policies, which describes all requirements including all training, are in demand occupations and provided by institutions on the Eligible Training Provider List. The ITA procedures ensure the trainee explores training provider options and state on their application why they have chosen the specific training provider. The local board use the state procedures for identifying and determining the eligibility of training providers and their programs to receive WIOA Title I individual training accounts.

(See ITA Policy - Attachment 2)

- **Provide a copy of the local training provider approval policy and procedures. Describe how LWDB 81 will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system and that the providers will meet the employment needs of local employers, workers and jobseekers.**

LWDB 81 is following LWC OWD's Policy 2-13.3: WIOA Training Provider and Training Program Eligibility to recommend providers for inclusion on the statewide eligible training provider list. The Board adopted LWC policy which ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system and that the providers will meet the employment needs of local employers, workers, and jobseekers.

LWDB staff monitors outcomes of eligible providers by using reports from LWC. Service providers are to be of the highest quality. Contracting decisions is on meeting the needs of the job seekers and employers, as well as cost and quality of service considerations. Board staff will conduct oversight and monitoring of service providers at least annually. The Workforce Board receive the monitoring results.

(See Training Provider Policy - Attachment 3)

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

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

The flexibility of WIOA to transfer funds is beneficial and allows LWDB 81 to meet the needs of the community. LWDB will make decisions to transfer dislocated worker funds based on local needs.

Recently, LWDB 81 has seen more low-income individual, especially during the COVID-19. The Board may elect to transfer funds between these two funding streams as allowable. The staff will review utilization for adult and dislocated worker-training funds expenditures monthly. The Board will send a written request to LWC seeking to transfer 50% between dislocated and the adult funding streams.

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

Local funds are used whenever a company meet the layoff aversion criteria for incumbent worker training. For example, the business services team may meet with an employer and learn that they have current employees who would benefit from the use of incumbent worker funds. Board policy allows up to 20% of adult and dislocated workers funds for incumbent worker activities.

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

Transitional jobs are to demonstrate work habits and attitudes. Potential targets for opportunity would be job seekers who have significant barriers and limited to no work experience. LWDB 81 will engage partners in the development of strategies, frameworks, and models to ensure successful implementation of work-and-learn experiences. The Board recognizes that it has the ability to invest up to 10 % of adult and dislocated worker funding to transitional jobs.

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

LWDB 81 will utilize Pay for Performance contracts when there are an insufficient number of eligible training providers. The determination process will include a public comment period for interested providers of at least 30 days. The board will evaluate contracts to make sure contracts are achieving or exceeding expected goals.

A type of performance based contract that a local WDB can be entered with eligible service providers to serve targeted populations for Adult/Dislocated Worker Training Services ² and Youth Activities. ³

Limitations

- No more than 10% of the total Adult and Dislocated Worker annual allocation will be reserved for the implementation of WIOA Pay-for-Performance contract strategies for Adult and Dislocated Worker training services and 10% of the Youth annual allocation for youth activities.

Cost – plus a percentage contract is not authorized.

CHAPTER 5: PERFORMANCE GOALS AND EVALUATION – LOCAL COMPONENT

The plan must include information on the actions LWDB 81 will take toward becoming or remaining a high performing board, consistent with the factors developed by the State Board (WIOA Sec. 101(d)(6)) and (§ 679.560(b)(17)).

A. Provide information regarding the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and chief elected official consistent with WIOA Sec. 116(c), to be used to measure the performance of the local area and to be used by LWDB 81 for measuring the performance of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), eligible providers under WIOA Title I Subtitle B and the one-stop delivery system (core and required partners as applicable) in the local area (§ 679.560(b)(16)).

- **WIOA Performance Measures**

Performance accountability and data reporting will be aligned to promote the workforce development system that creates a best-in-class regional system, responsive to business and industry.

The goals for the Title I programs are set through the use of a statistical adjustment model. These procedures are in place and the partners consult with their respective state agency contacts and meet to discuss the implications of the performance measures and required targets for service delivery and integration. The Core Partners work cooperatively to report performance outcomes across all programs to advance the goals of improving access and success for all customers. However, currently there is no universal or shared system for partners to communicate performance to customers.

LWDB 81 is measured annually by performance benchmarks that monitor local and statewide outcomes associated with WIOA Programs and services. The Board annually meets or exceeds it-negotiated levels of performance and will strive to achieve designation as a high-performing board. The PY19 Performance Outcomes, as accepted by Louisiana Workforce Commission.

Performance levels for PY 20 has been negotiate as follow:

Annual Performance for PY 20

[illegible]

Below are the performance levels from PY 2019. LWIA 81 met or exceeded these levels

Annual Performance for PY19			
WIOA INDICATORS	90% of Goal	Negotiated Level	81
ADULT			
Number Served (Participants)			109
Number Exited (Participants)			89
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit	58.1%	64.5%	81.6%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit	58.0%	64.4%	86.9%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$4,410	\$4,900	\$5,248
Credential Attainment	57.9%	64.3%	74.5%
Measurable Skill Gains			70.1%
DISLOCATED WORKER			
Number Served (Participants)			22
Number Exited (Participants)			9
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit	57.9%	64.3%	85.7%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit	60.5%	67.2%	100.0%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$6,120	\$6,800	\$8,889
Credential Attainment	63.0%	70.0%	0.0%
Measurable Skill Gains			75.0%
YOUTH			
Number Served (Participants)			144
Number Exited (Participants)			74
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit	60.3%	67.0%	73.1%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit	60.3%	67.0%	71.4%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit			\$6,304
Credential Attainment	54.2%	60.2%	83.3%
Measurable Skill Gains			55.0%
WAGNER-PEYSER			
Number Served (Participants)			2,703
Number Exited (Participants)			2,349
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit	54.9%	61.0%	57.9%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit	56.4%	62.7%	62.4%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$4,230	\$4,700	\$3,738
<u>Number Served (Participants and Reportable Individuals): Individuals s</u>			
<u>Number Exited (Participants): Served Individuals who exited between</u>			
<u>04/01/2019 and 03/31/2020</u>			
<u>Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit: Rate of employment for</u>			
<u>exitors between 07/01/2018 and 06/30/2019</u>			
<u>Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit: Rate of employment for</u>			
<u>exitors between 07/01/2018 and 12/31/2018</u>			
<u>Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit: Median earnings by exitors</u>			
<u>between 07/01/2018 and 06/30/2019</u>			
<u>Credential Attainment Rate: Rate of credentials attained by exitors</u>			
<u>between 07/01/2018 and 12/31/2018</u>			
<u>Measurable Skill Gains: Rate of measurable skill gains between</u>			
<u>07/01/2019 and 06/30/2020</u>			

- **Additional State Performance Measures**

LWDB 81 will comply with the new Measurable Skill Gains for Adults and Dislocated Workers and any additional state performance measures.

B. Provide a description of the current and planned evaluation activities and how this information will be provided to LWDB 81 and program administrators as appropriate.

Each partner program evaluates the services and outcomes with board staff as part of the service integration process. After service delivery strategies are successful, they expand and replicate them for additional customers and cross-train staff on their implementation.

- **What existing service delivery strategies will be expanded based on promising return on investment?**

The role of the LWDB is to develop and promote policies, and recommends innovative workforce support for the development of an effective and cohesive workforce development system to maximize return on investment for all stakeholders.

The LWDB develops and maintains strategic and strong relationships with business organizations, the chamber of commerce, labor and trade associations, education providers, and others to build a cohesive regional workforce development system to meet the needs of employers, workers, and jobseekers.

Some of the strategies that Ouachita WDB will expand on based on return on investment for employers and job seekers include:

- Monroe Chamber of Commerce, LWDB 81 along with post-secondary schools and K-12 in the area, held a Manufacturing Day for juniors and seniors in high school. This event was a success and will continue annually with some modifications due to COVID-19.
- LWDB 81 holds hiring events on a monthly basis in the American Job Center. Various employers in all sectors are included in these events. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, the hiring events are held virtual.
- Monroe Chamber of Commerce and LWDB-81 hold an annual job fair with at least 45 employers with over 450 jobseekers in attendance.
- Local Workforce Area 81's partners provide workshops, post job openings, conduct employee screening and referral, workforce training, work-based training, tax credit information, business location advice, and various employer services.
- Other business services provided by Local Workforce Area 81 staff include free use of conference rooms for meetings and/or recruitment activities such as interviewing and taking applications/resumes.
- LWDB will expand on their marketing and outreach strategies. We promote Workforce Wednesday radio stations. This will include a list of job openings, upcoming events, supportive services and training services provided at the American Job Center.

- Transportation is more difficult to coordinate in rural Ouachita Parish. LWDB 81 will continue to collaborate with transportation providers.

- **What existing service delivery strategies will be curtailed or eliminated based on minimal return on investment?**

One-Stop Partners review service delivery strategies at the meetings. Partners agree to discontinue or revamp strategies that is not working in order to address the needs of the customers entering the American Job Center. The One-Stop operator will report to the Board at each LWIB meeting. Currently, we do not have any service delivery strategies to eliminate.

- **What new service strategies will be used to address regional educational and training needs based on promising return on investment?**

Engagement with employers will include emerging data on the return-on-investment (ROI) for employers in actively skilling-up grading employees and working in partnership with local colleges, universities, and training programs. Employers have often treated expenditures on education and training as employee benefits, not as an integral part of profitability enhancement and increased productivity. The Board will actively explore research and best practices to share with local employers.

A new strategy LWDB 81 is working to implement is Essential Skill workshop within the American Job Center. The workshop will be a “pilot” program. The goal is to provide the job seeker a “National Career Readiness Certificate”. Topics will include appearance, communication, teamwork, problem solving and critical thinking, professionalism manners, punctuality and confidence/attitude.

LWDB 81 partnership with Delta Community College and their Reboot Your Career-training program will help address regional educational and training needs. The Reboot Your Career program support workers who may be unemployed due to COVID-19. Workers are re-trained for available jobs on high wage career pathways. Also, WDB 81 will expand IT and basic computer skills training for all customers, given the presence of IT activities.

- **Prioritizing program funding based on performance and return-on investment (ROI) analysis performed by the Board.**

The LWDB has a history in working with local secondary and post-secondary partners. Post-Secondary partnerships have been ongoing for years, especially around ways to adopt and create training programs to meet the needs of employers. Special emphasis is placed on apprenticeships

and other work-based learning programs. LDCC in each parish have proven to be invaluable partners when it comes to designing programs that meet the in-demand job needs of local employers.

As short-term training continues to become a key piece of WIOA services, the work with post-secondary training institutions will continue to grow, as programs must be efficient, highly structured and targeted to the needs of employers. The Regional Plan portion of this document describes partnerships.

o What return on investment and qualitative outcome data for various education and Training programs will be collected to identify barriers to enrollments?

LWDB 81 will work to collect data that is more extensive on the industries and occupations that yields greatest success in job placement, data on wages at placement, and information on the specific occupational training programs that are resulting in placement into well-paying jobs. Louisiana Delta Community College (LDCC) in the area will collaborate with industry to ensure that educational training programs align with the needs of employers, and that students (especially area Youth) are aware of the in-demand sectors and industries in the region. The LWDB 81 intends to expand and sustain some efforts by identifying successes and challenges experienced by community college partners as well as industry partners.

Some key strategies that have shown promise, many with low investment and high ROI, which will be pursued include:

- Facilitating tours to manufacturing facilities for groups of students in high schools and expanding methods of introducing students to the opportunities and technical aspects of manufacturing. Typically, such tours have been exclusively for CTE students. LWDB 81 will explore strategies that expand tours to more employers, while supporting other methods of educating youth about the industry such as leveraging “how it’s made” videos into classrooms.
- Educating employers on the benefits of apprenticeship programs (whether formally registered or other apprenticeship-like training options that can be implemented).
- Promoting to employers a range of work-based learning and training methods in conjunction with education/training, which can incentivize workers and build career pathways.

o What are the most cost-effective approaches to taking down those barriers or helping residents overcome them?

LWDB 81 will better align and integrate partners program and services to address educational and training needs. We will:

1. Address transportation and child care issues
2. Address basic skills deficiencies by obtaining additional tutoring services
3. Help the customer with finding the appropriate partner that provide food, shelter, healthcare and other basic needs

A need for improved access to transportation. Too many workers lack reliable transportation to get to good jobs that are available. This is a problem both for individuals but also with the public transportation infrastructure.

- A need for improved access to technology including the presence of major gaps in high-bandwidth internet access within the rural area of Ouachita Parish and lack computer skills for many workers.
- The access to technology barrier to workers in terms of applying for jobs (almost all job applications are now online) as well as for succeeding workplaces in which IT and computer skills are ever more required.

CHAPTER 6: TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS AND ASSURANCES – LOCAL COMPONENT

This section includes the technical requirements and assurances that are required by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA Sec. 121 (c)(2)(iv)).

A. Fiscal Management

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

The fiscal agent for Local Workforce Area 81, Ouachita Parish, as designated by the chief elected official is Ouachita Parish Police Jury, P.O. Box 3307, Monroe, Louisiana 71210, 318-327-1340.

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

LWDB develop and approved a Request for Proposal (RFP). A legal ad placed in the local newspapers, with instructions on where to obtain and submit the RFP. After the deadline of submitting an application/grant for funds has passed, a committee involving members for the WIOA and other community members are gathered and each submission is read and scored. A recommendation is made to the Executive Committee for a vote. A recommendation is given to the LWDB for a final vote. The community members consist of individuals who do not have an interest in receiving funds.

(See Procurement Policy - Attachment 4)

B. Physical and Programmatic Accessibility

- **Describe how entities within the one-stop delivery system, including one-stop operators and the one-stop partners, will comply with WIOA Sec. 188, if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology and materials for individuals with disabilities, including providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities (§ 679.560(b)(5)(iii)).**

Section 188 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) are fulfilled through policies and procedures established by DOL and LWC. The one-stop complies with WIOA Section 188 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. The local Equal Opportunity (EO) Officer provides oversight for implementing, maintaining and monitoring WIOA Section 188 Non-discrimination and Equal Opportunity Regulations.

The EO Coordinator provides EO training to staff. Staff training includes information about how to support the needs of customers and peers with disabilities. In overseeing the one-stop - center, the operator will be responsible for working with the EO Coordinator to ensure continued compliance with applicable laws relating to programmatic and physical accessibility. Accessible computers, adjustable desks, and TTY phone are available to all staff and customers. Additionally, information is provided to staff and customers on the process to file ADA grievances.

The American Job Center Accessibility Compliance Checklist (Facility Accessibility Survey) and Contractor/Service Provider (Self-Evaluation Tool) provided by the LWC Office of Equal Opportunity Monitoring and Compliance are completed by the Equal Opportunity Officer annually to ensure that clients with disabilities have uninhibited access to services and are appropriately accommodated to meet their needs. The survey and evaluation tool address and answer the questions on whether facilities are physically and programmatically accessible for individuals with disabilities.

They are used to determine if WIOA programs and services are accessible and whether there are policies and procedures in place that address areas such as accessible parking, doors and doorways, signage, request for reasonable accommodation and auxiliary aids, wheelchair accessibility, TTY services, EO Posters, sign language interpreter services, staff acknowledgement of EO/Non-discriminatory policies and procedures.

The availability of assistive technology and other resources for individuals with disabilities is assessed as part of the survey and evaluation tool, evaluating the availability of items such as large screen monitors, trackball mouse, scanning/reading software, enlarged keyboards, web page reading software, adjustable keyboard trays, alternative formatted materials (Large print, Braille). Inventory reviewed is part of the assessment to assure the availability of the required assistive technology and alternative sources at the American Job Center.

LWDB 81 partners have updated the Memorandum of Understanding, which also addresses all ADA and WIOA Section 188 requirements for the partners. The one-stop certification process will ensure that the center is accessible by all, offering adequate parking, necessary equipment for persons with disabilities, and adequately connecting English Language Learning individuals with appropriate translation services.

The EO Coordinator also does a review of EO Compliance by WIOA Service providers in the course of monitoring reviews each year. Providers must have proper EO signage in place, and their facilities must be accessible to individuals with disabilities following ADA guidelines. The must also be able to demonstrate how they are able to provide services to people with disabilities or those who need translation or interpretation services. The EO Coordinator also reviews the availability of assistive technology at the one stop center.

Provide copies of executed cooperative agreements (as applicable) which define how all local service providers, including additional providers, will carry out the requirements for integration of and access to the entire set of services available in the local one-stop system, with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities (§679.560(b)(13)). This may include cross training of staff, technical assistance, use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration and coordination.

See Attached Cooperative Agreement

Every three years the AJC must be in compliance for re-certification standards. If the center is not in compliance, a Corrective Action plan is required and a follow-up monitoring visit. The Center must begin immediate corrective action to achieve compliance, depending on the nature of the finding. Per federal law, the local workforce board must appoint a local Equal Opportunity Officer who is responsible for ensuring local WIOA Section 188 compliance. Local Equal Opportunity Officer are responsible for informing senior staff of applicable federal regulations and ensuring all programs and activities are in compliance. Additionally, local Equal Opportunity Officers collect and resolve local grievances and complaints as needed. They also serve as liaisons with the state's Title I-B Equal Opportunity Officer and USDOL's Civil Rights Center to remain current on regulatory updates and guidance. They are then responsible for circulating new information.

C. Plan Development and Public Comment

- **Describe the process used by LWDB 81, consistent with WIOA Sec. 108(d), to provide a 30day public comment period prior to submission of the plan, including an opportunity to have input into the development of the local plan, particularly for representatives of businesses, education and labor organizations (§ 679.560(b)(19)).**

In accordance with Section 108 (d) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, on October 3, 2020 the local plan will be available for public comment for 30 days. Through a Legal Notice with the News Star. The plan was emailed to members of the Local Workforce Development Board Area 81. This membership includes representatives of business, labor and education.

- **Provide a summary of the public comments received and how the CEO, partners and LWDB 81 addressed this information in the final plan.**

Prior to submission of the Local Plan, the WDB makes copies available to the public through the Parish's Public Notice process. All Ouachita Workforce Development Board members received a copy of the plan for comments.

Members of the Board and the public, including CEO, representatives of business and labor organizations were allowed to submit comments on the proposed local plan to the Board no later than the end of the 30-day period beginning on the date on which the proposed plan was made available.

Those wishing to make comment can do so in writing to Doretha Bennett, Executive Director of Workforce Development Board 81 at 24 Accent Drive Suite 151, Monroe, Louisiana 71202. LWDB members will receive comments via email. The replies to comments and questions will be on Ouachita Parish Police Jury website.

The Board adopted the plan on November 5, 2020.

There were no public comments. Partners advised the LWDB and Chief Elected Officials of their support of the plan. The Final Plan submitted to LWC for their review and approval.

Provide information regarding the regional and local plan modification procedures.

If modification to the plan is required by Louisiana Workforce Commission LWDB will modified the plan following these procedures:

- The plan summary modification review from LWC will be forward to the LWDB for review.
- All applicable corrections from LWDB will be made to the plan.
- A Board meeting will be scheduled so the modified plan can be approved by LWDB.
- Once the modified plan is approved by the LWDB a publication Ad will be placed in newspaper and notice on website for public comments for 30-days. Any comments received we will follow the above answer about public comments.
- After the 30-days the modified plan will be finalized and submitted to LWC.

