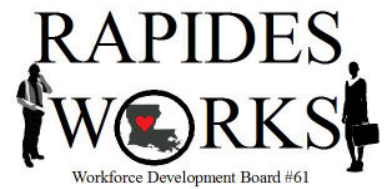


REGION SIX WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD PARTNERSHIP

Avoyelles, Catahoula, Concordia, Grant, LaSalle,
Rapides, and Winn

WIOA REGIONAL PLAN 2020-2024

TWO-YEAR MODIFICATION



Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Regional Plan for Workforce Development Boards 60 & 61

Regional Workforce Development Board Partnership Strategic Vision

The two Workforce Development Areas in Region Six share the same vision that incorporates a regional workforce development system aligned with the governor’s statewide vision to provide pathways for all Louisianans to prepare for and secure high-demand occupations that pay family-sustaining wages by creating an environment in which our businesses can grow, and our people can prosper. The Region’s Workforce Development Boards (WDB) work together to strategically invest in high growth/high wage industries, work closely with all One-Stop partners and other entities that can contribute to the development of the workforce and be proactive.

Region Six WDB Partnership is a strong advocate of the deep connection between workforce development and economic development goals for attracting, retaining, and growing business and industry. The Region Six WDB Partnership seeks to positively contribute to economic development goals through our business services strategies, recruitment processes, and strategic business programs that will benefit the businesses of the region. The Region serves to foster connections between businesses and the educational community to identify and close skills gaps in order that the current and future workforce needs of businesses are addressed.

The Region Six WDB Partnership utilizes the strength of diversity of the key stakeholders that serve on each Workforce Development Board, the broad industry and educational partnerships that extend beyond the Boards, and a strong presence in the business community to continuously identify the workforce challenges, develop innovative strategies and leverage solutions.

As partners, we have continued the development of regional initiatives aligned with the statewide vision through collaborative regional endeavors to address the changing environment as impacted by changing industries, COVID related mass lay-offs, as well as adjusting to the technological advances impacting many industry sectors. This work includes many initiatives, such as regional collaboration to provide customized training, adoption of modern technology to better connect to the community residents.

Regional Workforce Development Priorities

1. To provide relevant and value-added services to businesses and jobseekers
 2. To prepare the workforce to meet the current and future needs of businesses
 3. To serve as a center for workforce innovation
 4. To promote effective regional alignment, collaboration, and partnerships
- The Region believes that setting these overarching priorities will lead to actualizing the governor’s statewide vision of “Putting Louisiana First” by creating an environment in which our businesses can grow, and our people can prosper. Ensuring that the services provided to businesses and job seekers are relevant and value-added and will promote a healthier

business and workforce environment. Continually assessing the needs of businesses and adapting our strategies to meet those needs allowing for a workforce system that businesses require. We seek new and innovative ways for service delivery and promote effective collaboration and partnership allowing for the system to develop new best practices that can serve as a model for other areas of the state. It also provides greater chances for attaining leveraged funding through various grant opportunities.

CHAPTER 1: ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE ANALYSIS – REGIONAL COMPONENT

The Cenla Region is defined as the seven parishes that make up the 6th Regional Labor Market Area (RLMA 6): Avoyelles, Catahoula, Concordia, Grant, LaSalle, Rapides, and Winn. There were 62,400 non-farm employees in the region in 2022. While there are some notably large manufacturing firms in this MSA, the manufacturing and mining sectors are small compared to other MSAs in Louisiana.

- Some large firms add an important private sector base to this MSA. The 1,200-person **Procter & Gamble** is the largest manufacturer in the region, and nearby **PlastiPak** (nearly 300 jobs), makes the containers to hold P&G's products. Equivalent in employment size to P&G, utility company **Cleco** is headquartered in Pineville and is an important economic driver for the community. **Crest Industries** is a 700-800-person conglomerate that is engineering focused, but all has a major subsidiary manufacturing equipment for the utility industry. **Union Tank Car** (approximately 350 employees) manufactures railroad tank cars to primarily transport chemical products. Alexandria has an incredibly significant government base (23% of its employment), second only to Hammond in its dependency on this sector. **Pinecrest Support and Services Center**, which provides care for the mentally disabled and **Central State Hospital**---a facility for the mentally ill---are both located in the MSA and between them employ about 1,800 people. **Roy O. Martin** employs just over 900 at two wood processing sites a couple of miles outside of Rapides Parish to the north and south, with the headquarters located in Alexandria. The **Rapides Parish School Board** employs just under 800 people. As in most areas, Healthcare providers continue to employ an exceptionally large segment of the population. In Region 6, the largest being **Rapides Regional Medical Center** with 1150 employees and **CHRISTUS St. Frances Cabrini** employing 1600.
- **YellaWood** is spending \$22.5 million to expand its Avoyelles Parish plant and add 58 jobs to its 75-person workforce. This plant should be completed toward the end of 2023.
- In Avoyelles Parish, **Paragon Casino** spent \$100 million on a new addition.
- **Syrah Resources** has its \$176 million Phase II of its graphite facility underway in Concordia Parish. A manufacturer of natural graphite used in batteries, Syrah should complete Phase II in late 2023 and increase its employment from 25 to 102. The firm already has a definitive feasibility study underway for a Phase III that would jump its output from 11,400 tons to 45,000 tons and increase employment to 221. A final investment decision (FID) is expected in 2023.
- Rural Louisiana did not bounce back fully from the hit of the Great Recession. In the two years of 2011-12 the region added back about 5,000 jobs, still well below the pre-recession peak in 2006. There were several nice economic wins for the rural parishes over these two years, including. In Urania, **German Pellets** began construction on the world's largest wood pellets manufacturing plant (+150 jobs). **Universal Plant Services** built a \$3.9 million, 95-person welding, fabrication, and equipment overhaul and repair plant in LaSalle Parish.
- Back to 1991: the 2014-19 Decline The period from 2014 to 2019 were recession-free years at the national level, but not so for rural Louisiana. 29 parishes lost a shattering 8% of their jobs or 18,900 jobs in total. There was only one slight growth year among these six years. This decline was partly driven by problems at individual firms across these parishes. For example: • **German Pellets** plant in LaSalle Parish went into bankruptcy. **Fruit-of-the-Loom** closed its Vidalia plant (-167 jobs).

Region 6 is comprised of two (2) Workforce Development Areas - #60 and #61 that cover the geographical area of seven (7) parishes with a total population, in 2022, of 245,397, an overall reduction of 1.01% since 2020. This region is predominately rural, bordered to the north and south by rural parishes in other regions. The eastern edge of the region borders Natchez, Mississippi while the western edge borders Vernon Parish. **Table 1** represents the breakdown in parish population as well as the total for RLMA 6.

PARISH	2020 Population	2022 Population	2020-2022 Change	
AVOYELLES	39,690	38,751	-939	-1.02
CATAHOULA	8,903	8,566	-337	-1.04
CONCORDIA	18,681	18,116	-565	-1.03
GRANT	22,163	22,000	-163	-1.01
LASALLE	14,797	14,729	-68	-1.00
RAPIDES	128,748	130,030	1,282	-0.99
WINN	13,755	13,205	-550	-1.04
Total	246,737	245,397	-1,340	-1.01

Source: US Census Bureau

According to estimates made by the Federal Bureau of Economic Analysis, economic activity in the Alexandria Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) contributed 3.61% to Louisiana’s GDP in 2021, which was an increase .23% from 2019.

Table 1. Real Gross Domestic Product, by County, 2018–2021

	Real gross domestic product					Percent change from preceding period			
	Thousands of chained (2012) dollars				Rank in state	Percent change			Rank in state
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2021	2019	2020	2021	2021
Louisiana	237,298,288	237,044,596	218,421,686	221,152,704	--	-0.1	-7.9	1.3	--
Avoyelles	864,920	844,574	815,911	814,271	41	-2.4	-3.4	-0.2	40
Catahoula	165,382	175,545	175,892	173,552	62	6.1	0.2	-1.3	47
Concordia	540,639	549,545	530,619	544,685	48	1.6	-3.4	2.7	23
Grant	341,087	328,022	338,495	341,243	58	-3.8	3.2	0.8	31
LaSalle	472,357	490,676	462,233	447,934	53	3.9	-5.8	-3.1	49
Rapides	5,204,089	5,199,648	5,069,677	5,205,741	11	-0.1	-2.5	2.7	22
Winn	437,904	421,043	451,305	451,732	52	-3.9	7.2	0.1	37

Annual Contributions to GDP Change by Industry 2021

Industry	Percentage Points	
Transportation and Utilities	1.67	1.67
Utilities	1.39	1.39
Professional and Business Services	0.72	0.72
Administrative	0.7	0.7
Accommodation	0.37	0.37
Trade	0.36	0.36
Construction	0.35	0.35
Transportation and Warehousing	0.28	0.28
Wholesale Trade	0.26	0.26
<i>Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis</i>		

EXISTING DEMAND AND INDUSTRY SECTORS AND OCCUPATIONS

Provide an analysis of the industries and occupations for which there is existing demand.

The data contained in **Table 2** depict changes in employment for two-digit North American Classification System (NAICS) sectors within Region 6 in comparing two points in time: 2016 and 2026 and give some idea of the existing workforce demand for each sector. Table 2 shows that, over this ten-year period, 16 of the 20, two-digit NAICS sectors, in Region 6 saw an increase in employment. While the increase, overall, is not a sizable percentage growth, the employment projections show a steady future economic foundation in Region 6. Health Care & Social Assistance reflects a forecast 9% increase making it the second largest percentage sector increase and the largest number of jobs totaling 1,689.

In 2020, the Alexandria MSA is unlikely to face significant negative changes and may improve noticeably in Mining and other sectors, if interest and activity increase in Austin Chalk, an oil play that runs right through the Alexandria MSA. (The Louisiana Economic Outlook, 2020)

Table 2: Changes in Average Employment for Two Digit NAICS Sectors 2016-2026					
	2016	2026	Change	% of Jobs Lost	% of Jobs Gained
TOTAL EMPLOYMENT	96,893	101,795	4,902	-----	5.1%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	3,495	3,445	-50	-1.4%	
Mining	585	707	122		20.9%
Utilities	444	456	12		2.7%
Construction	4,274	4,619	345		8.1%
Manufacturing	6,246	6,227	-19	-0.3%	
Wholesale Trade	2,701	2,864	163		6%
Retail Trade	11,720	12,134	414		3.5%
Transportation & Warehousing	2,460	2,501	41		1.7%
Information	712	645	-67	-9.4%	
Finance & Insurance	2,558	2,584	26		1.0%
Real Estate, Rental, Leasing	710	771	61		8.6%
Professional & Technical Services	2,616	2,765	149		5.7%
Management of Companies & Enterprises	741	800	59		8%
Administrative & Waste Services	4,308	4,624	316		7.3%
Educational Services	8,071	8,664	593		7.3%
Health Care & Social Assistance	18,689	20,378	1,689		9%
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation	646	692	46		7.1%
Accommodation & Food Services	6,635	7,139	504		7.6%
Other Services	8,023	8,021	-2	0.0%	
Public Administration	11,259	11,759	500		4.4%
<i>Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis</i>					

Jobs lost – 138 Jobs gained – 4,902 Net change – 4,764

It should be kept in mind that the data in **Table 2** shows employment in the aggregate for each of the 20 two-digit NAICS sectors. It is always possible that some employers within a sector may be adding employees while some employers within a sector may not be hiring or even laying off employees.

The four industry drivers with occupations paying higher wages and with the greatest number of employees for the central Louisiana region have been Healthcare, Manufacturing, Construction and Administrative and Waste services. There are a large number of individuals working in the Retail Trade (NAICS 44-45). However, since the educational requirements and wage-earning potential for this sector is low, this sector was not selected as an industry driver.

The Louisiana Workforce Commission provides short-term (2 year) employment projections by industry (2-digit NAICS sectors) for Region 6 as shown in Table 3.

Under the assumption that short-term projections would more likely be an indicator of emerging trends in employment growth and the occupations associated with particular industry sectors, the short-term (2016 – 2019) projections in Table 3 contain a number of contradictions when compared with the changes in employment that appear to have actually taken place for some sectors as represented in **Table 2**.

Table 3 shows the industry subsectors expected to achieve the highest growth in the short-term (through 2019) and long-term (through 2026). Using the NAICS codes, those industry subsectors with the highest expected long-term growth are Mining (20.9%), Transportation and Warehousing (14.1%), and HealthCare and Social Assistance (9%).

Industry Sector	Employment Change 2016 – 2019	Employment Growth Rate 2016-2019	Employment Change 2016 - 2026	Employment Growth Rate 2016-2026
Agriculture, Fishing, Forestry, and Hunting	+8	.2%	-50	-1.4%
Mining	+56	9.6%	+122	20.9%
Utilities	-11	-2.5%	12	2.7%
Construction	120	2.8%	345	8.1%
Manufacturing	-560	-9.0%	-19	-2.8%
Wholesale Trade	-16	-.06%	163	6.0%
Retail Trade	-198	-1.7%	414	3.5%
Transportation and Warehousing	62	2.5%	346	14.1%
Information	-12	-1.7%	-67	-9.4%
Finance and Insurance	-3	-.1%	26	1.0%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	-25	-3.5%	61	8.6%
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	1	0.0%	149	5.7%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	-34	-4.6%	59	8.0%
Administrative and Waste Services	-359	-8.3%	316	7.3%
Educational Services	+219	2.7%	593	7.3%
Health Care and Social Assistance	799	4.3%	1,689	9.0%
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	12	1.9%	46	7.1%
Accommodation and Food Service	240	3.6%	504	7.6%
Other Services, Except Public Administration	-493	-6.1%	-2	0.0%
Government	260	2.3%	500	4.4%

Source: Louisiana Workforce Commission LMI data

Table 4 shows the top twelve (12) high-demand occupations by the number of annual openings and the star rating. The industry sectors associated with these occupations are

Healthcare & Social Assistance, Educational Services, Construction, and Finance and Insurance. Registered Nurses and Licensed Practical/Vocational Nurses continue to be high demand occupations in RLMA 6. Demand for nurses is expected to continue to increase, as this area has growing populations of senior citizens and young people, both of whom are the primary customers of health care and social assistance and retiring baby-boomers.

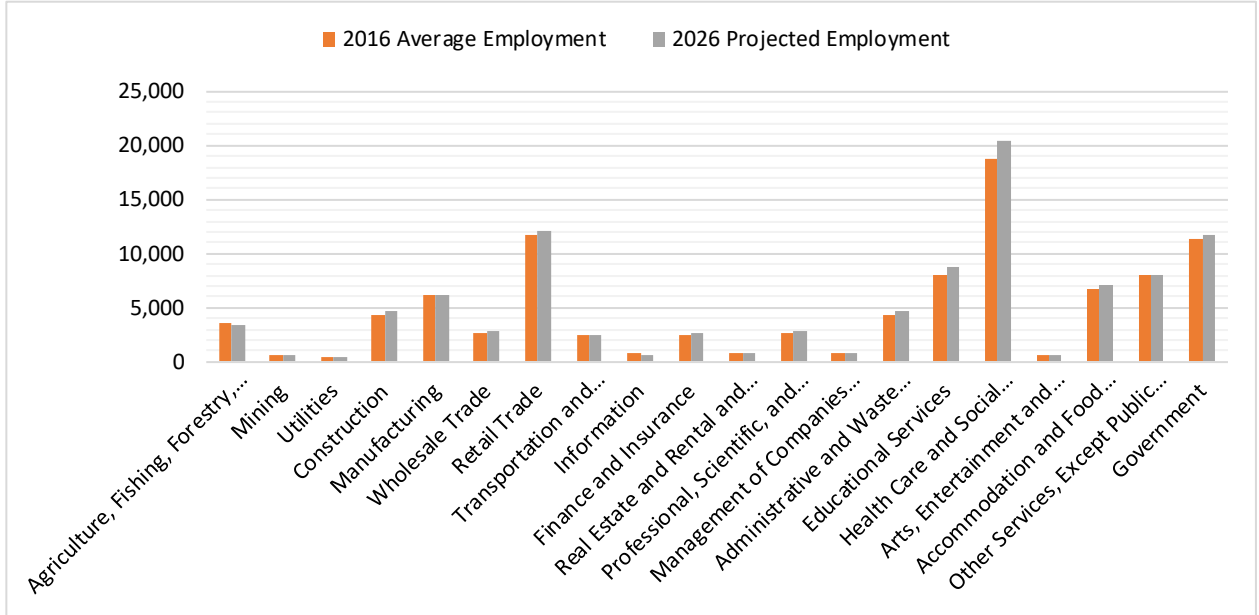
Table 4: Top 12 High Demand Occupations by Employment through 2026					
Star Rating	Occ. Code	Occupational Title	Annual Total Openings	2019 RLMA 6 Annual Average Wage	2019 State Annual Average Wage
★★★★★	29-1141	Registered Nurses	370	\$63,153	\$63,563
★★★★	25-2021	Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	120	\$42,709	\$48,307
★★★★★	11-1021	General and Operations Managers	110	\$91,931	\$115,059
★★★★★	29-2052	Pharmacy Technicians	70	\$34,441	\$32,700
★★★★★	29-2061	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	40	\$38,923	\$39,481
★★★★	13-1199	Business Operations Specialists, All Other	90	\$58,336	\$60,431
★★★★	25-2031	Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	70	\$45,044	\$51,806
★★★★★	29-1171	Nurse Practitioners	30	\$142,953	\$105,336
★★★★★	29-1123	Physical Therapists	30	\$108,980	\$159,889
★★★★★	11-3031	Financial Managers	30	\$106,946	\$129,849
★★★★	47-2152	Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	30	\$49,852	\$54,935
★★★★★	11-9111	Medical and Health Services Managers	20	\$99,861	\$100,705

Source: LWC Regional Labor Market Data (RLMA) 6, LWC – Office of Occupational Services

Targeted Industries and High Impact Industry Clusters

Figure 1 provides projections on the industries expected to experience the greatest employment growth by 2026 which corroborates the data in **Table 4**. The highest growth occupations according to these projections will be in the Health Care and Social Assistance, Educational Services and Construction industries. The aging of the baby boom generation will necessitate more people working to care for this segment of the population.

Figure 1: 2016-2026 (Long-term) Industry Projections for RMLA 6, Two-Digit NAICS



Long-term projection data also points to the industries likely to have the largest absolute employment growth over the projected period. The highest numbers in employment growth will come from Industry Sectors such as Health Care and Social Assistance, Construction, Educational Services, Mining, and other services referenced in **Table 5**.

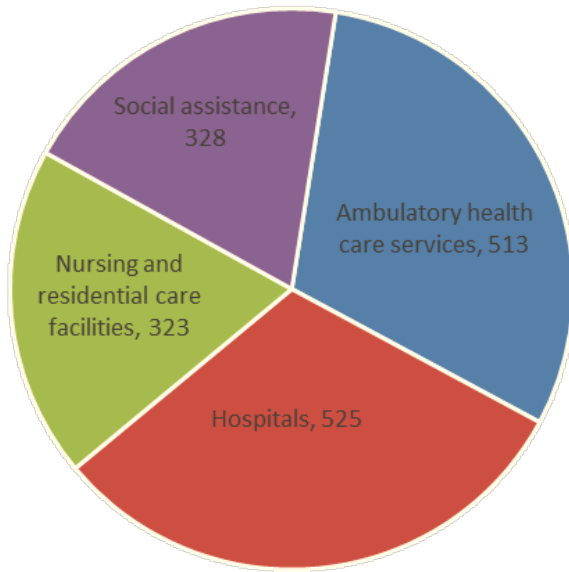
Industry Sectors	Employment Growth	Growth Percent
Healthcare and Social Assistance	1,689	9.0%
Mining	122	20.9%
Real Estate & Rental and Leasing	61	8.1%
Construction	345	8.1%
Educational Services	593	7.3%
Accommodation and Food Services	504	7.6%
Administrative and Waste Services	316	7.3%

Source: LWC Regional Labor Market Data (RLMA) 6, LWC – Office of Occupational Services

Table 6 reveals the occupations expected to have the greatest growth in percentage. The demand is also demonstrated by the assignment of stars through LWC’s Star Rating System with three, four and five stars denoting in-demand occupations.

Table 6: 2026 Occupational Projections for RMLA 6, Highest Forecasted Growth Jobs			
Star Rating	Occ. Code	Occupational Title	10 Year % Job Growth
★★★★	11-3021	Computer and Information Systems Managers	20.00%
★★★★★	11-3031	Financial Managers	13.04%
★★★★	11-3121	Human Resources Managers	16.67%
★★★★★	11-9032	Education Administrators, Elementary and Secondary School	7.41%
★★★★★	11-9111	Medical and Health Services Managers	7.69%
★★★★	11-9151	Social and Community Service Managers	9.09%
★★★★★	11-1021	General and Operations Managers	8.40%
★★★★	13-1161	Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	30.00%
★★★★★	13-2011	Accountants and Auditors	7.50%
★★★★	15-1141	Database Administrators	33.33%
★★★★★	15-1142	Network and Computer Systems Administrators	14.29%
★★★★	15-1151	Computer User Support Specialists	16.67%
★★★★	21-1021	Child, Family, and School Social Workers	20.00%
★★★★★	21-1022	Healthcare Social Workers	9.09%
★★★★	21-1094	Community Health Workers	25.00%
★★★★★	25-2021	Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	8.11%
★★★★	25-2031	Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	8.33%
★★★★	25-2051	Special Education Teachers, Preschool	10.00%
★★★★	27-3031	Public Relations Specialists	20.00%
★★★★★	29-1051	Pharmacists	7.41%
★★★★★	29-1123	Physical Therapists	16.67%
★★★★★	29-1127	Speech-Language Pathologists	9.09%
★★★★★	29-1141	Registered Nurses	11.97%
★★★★★	29-1171	Nurse Practitioners	25.00%
★★★★★	29-2052	Pharmacy Technicians	16.67%

Figure 2: Projected Employment through 2026 in the Health Care and Social Assistance Industry



Quick Facts

Fueled by the aging of the baby boomers, the Health Care and Social Assistance Industry is projected to grow by 1,689 between 2016 and 2026. This growth is broken down further into subsectors within the Ambulatory health services, Hospitals, Nursing and residential care facilities, and social assistance industries. Nearly three quarters of the projected growth is attributable to Hospital workers and Ambulatory Care Services, 61.5 percent. The number of job vacancies in this sector also shows strong demand for workers in the Health Services Sector now and in the future.

EMPLOYERS' EMPLOYMENT NEEDS

As evidenced by **Table 7**, 6.51% of the current job vacancies in Region 6 listed on the LWC's labor exchange service system, HiRE, have requirements of at least a high school diploma or equivalent (HiSET). The majority of employers are not specifying their educational needs on the job openings (78.18%). However, with the large demand in the Health Care industry, it is understood that the larger part of those positions would require at least an associate degree of a Vocational/Technical diploma/degree.

Table 7: Education Requirements of Job Vacancies, Region 6 (as of 4/23/2023)					
Rank	Education Level	# Job Openings	% of Job Openings	# of Potential Candidates	% of Potential Candidates
1	No Minimum Education Requirement	287	7.11%	0	N/A
2	Less than High School	0	N/A	394	5.69%

3	High School Diploma or Equivalent	263	6.51%	2,818	40.66%
4	1 Year of College or a Technical or Vocational School	5	0.12%	627	9.05%
5	2 Years of College or a Technical or Vocational School	0	N/A	500	7.21%
6	3 Years of College or a Technical or Vocational School	0	N/A	233	3.36%
7	Vocational School Certificate	51	1.26%	668	9.64%
8	Associate degree	138	3.42%	616	8.89%
9	Bachelor's Degree	83	2.06%	793	11.44%
10	Master's Degree	20	0.50%	236	3.41%
11	Doctorate Degree	9	0.22%	30	0.43%
12	Specialized Degree (e.g., MD, DDS)	25	0.62%	14	0.20%
13	Not Specified	3,156	78.18%	2	0.03%

Of the advertised job openings on Louisiana Workforce Commission labor exchange service, **Table 8** shows 88.67 % of employers in Region 6 are looking for candidates with 1 - 5 years of experience. Only 13.67% of the potential candidates had 1 - 5 years of experience. However, 66.42% of potential candidates had 5 - 10+ years of experience! Clearly, there are other mitigating factors (e.g., there are more available experienced workers than job/industry openings, recognized credentials, lots of experience in a declining industry / occupation) which are barriers preventing these more experienced workers from achieving employment.

Table 8 – Work Experience, Region 6				
Experience Requirements	# of Job Openings	Percentage of Job Openings	Potential Candidates	Percentage of Potential Candidates
Entry Level	411	10.18%	0	N/A
Less than 1 year	100	2.48%	1383	19.95%
1 Year to 2 Years	3,416	84.62%	282	4.07%
2 Years to 5 Years	104	2.58%	662	9.55%
5 Years to 10 Years	6	0.15%	936	13.89%
More than 10 Years	0	NA	3,641	52.53%

The top advertised certifications needed by employers in Region 6, as indicated in their job openings, are found in **Table 9**.

Table 9 – Top Advertised Job Certification, Region 6		
Advertised Certification Group	Advertised Certification Sub-Category	Job Opening Match Count
American Heart Association (AHA) CPR & First Aid Certifications	Nursing	3045
Nursing Credentials and Certifications	Nursing	2057
Commercial Driver's License (CDL)	Ground Transportation	267
Social Worker Credentials & Certification	Social and Human Services	210
National Board for Respiratory Care (NBRC)	Medical Treatment and Therapy	177
American Academy of Neurology (AAN) Designations	Medical Professional	75
American Organization for Nursing Leadership (AONL) Certification	Nursing	75
American Association of Medical Assistants (AAMA) Certifications	Medical Professional	54
American Institute of CPAs (AICPA) Certifications	Financial Specialists	51
State Licensed Counselors	Counseling	46

Table 10 clearly shows that most businesses in Region 6 are small businesses. About 98% of the employees in the region work in establishments with less than 100 employees according to the 2021 County Business Patterns from the U.S. Census Bureau. Only 7 businesses had more than 500 employees which is the Small Business Administration's official cut off for a "small business". Small businesses are vital to the entire Region 6 economy.

Table 10: Region 6 Employers by Size		
Number of Employees	LWDA 60	LWDA 61
	Number of Establishments	Number of Establishments
1-4	1187	1,520
5-9	392	682
10-19	234	471
20-49	137	306
50-99	36	83
100-249	29	51
250-499	4	14
500-999	0	4
1,000+	0	3

Source: County Business Patterns, Release date 4/27/2023.

Workforce Analysis

The Unified or Combined Regional Plan must include an analysis of the current workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment as defined in Section 3 of WIOA. This population must include individuals with disabilities among other groups in the region. This includes individuals with disabilities among other groups in the State and across the region as identified by the State. This includes –

Employment and Unemployment.

Include an analysis of current employment and unemployment data, including labor force participation rates, and trends in the Region / Local area.

Labor Market Trends

Provide an analysis of key labor market trends, including across existing industries and occupations.

Figure 3 demonstrates the median income for Region 6 households by parish. Overall, Region 6 median household income decreased by 3.8% and increased by 55.5% in 2019-2020.

Figure 3: Regional Household Median Income Distribution, Region 6 by Parish

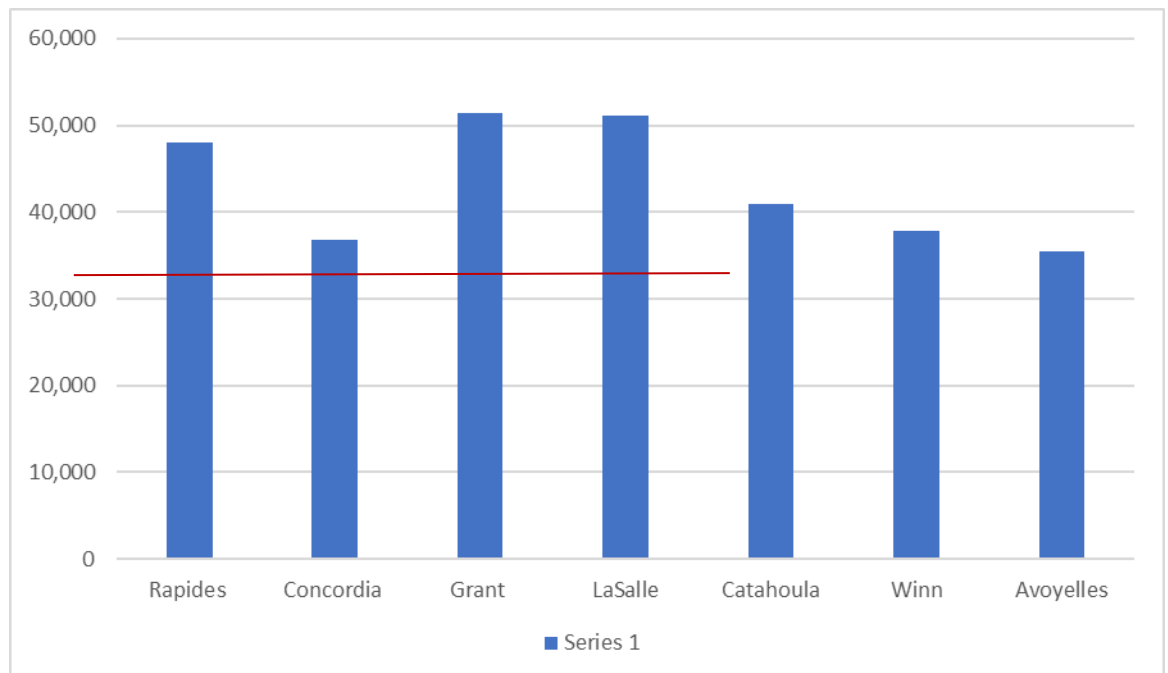
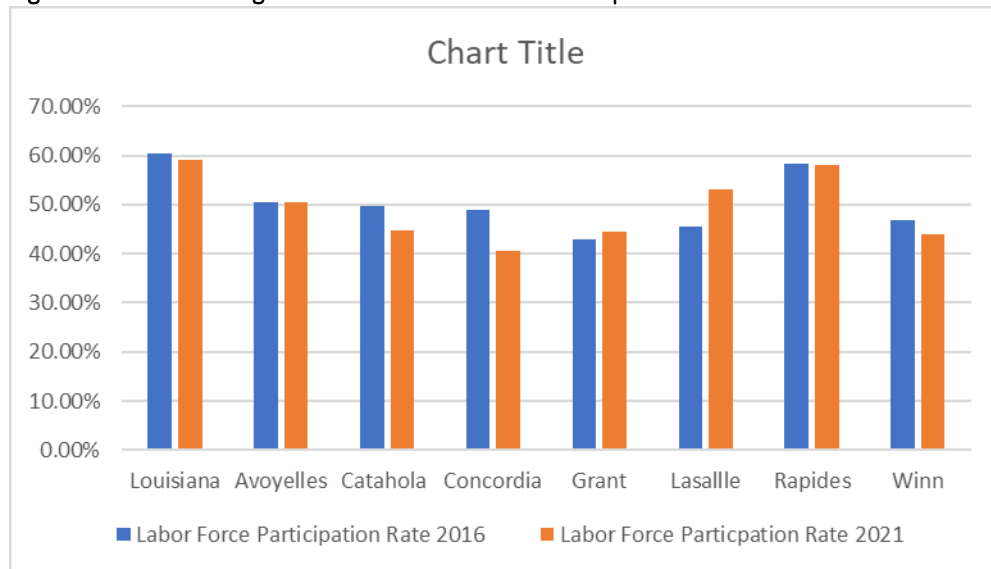


Figure 4 shows the labor force participation rates, for most Region 6 parishes have remained rather stable but still fall below Louisiana’s labor force participation rate. Region 6 has a higher population, age 65 and older (see Figure 3), which could account for the lower participation rate in comparison to the total population.

Figure 4 – State and Region 6 Parishes Labor Force Participation Rates



Source: ACS 2016-2021 5 Year Estimates S2301

Table 11 provides information on how genders are represented in the Region 6 workforce. From this study, we find that employed females and males are very closely represented in the civilian labor force in each parish. However, there are a more male unemployed than females in Region 6. **Table 11** also reflects that the unemployment rate with both genders has decreased significantly since 2016.

Table 11: Employment Status of the Civilian Labor Force by Parish					
	Labor Force	Employed		Unemployed	
		Male	Female	Male	Female
Avoyelles	16,228	8,156	8,072	654	651
Catahoula	3,066	1,377	1,391	226	72
Concordia	6,159	2,471	2,928	501	259
Grant	8,098	4,329	3,387	232	118
LaSalle	6,325	2,948	2,980	129	268
Rapides	55,347	26,050	24,951	2,179	2,167
Winn	4,969	2,604	2,112	90	163

Source: American Community Survey (ACS) 2021

According to latest study by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, females could be edging out males in the workforce since females are accepting lower paying jobs and part-time employment.

Education and Skill Levels of the Workforce

Provide an analysis of the education and skill levels of the workforce.

Table 12 highlights the educational achievements of the population of Region 6. This group includes a younger cohort, who may still be in postsecondary education. Educational attainment among 18 to 24-year-olds varies widely at the local levels, reflecting demographics, the strength of regional economies, and dominant sectors in those economies. Over 70% of this population in Region 6 has at least a high school diploma and/or some college, etc.

Table 12: Educational Attainment of the Population Aged 18 to 24 years, Region 6	
Population 18 to 24 years	# of Individuals
Less than high school graduate	2,377
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	4,145
Some college or Associate's degree	2,851
Bachelor's degree or high	1,445
<i>Source: 2017-2021 ACS 5-year Survey, S1501</i>	

Table 13 highlights the educational attainment of the population in Region 6 aged 25 years or older. This population is more likely to have left the educational system. This information reveals that over 66,976 individuals of this aged population have achieved at least a high school degree/equivalency or higher educational attainment. It also shows that over 20,000 individuals have attained their bachelor's degree in Region 6.

Table 13: Educational Attainment of the Population Aged 25 and over, Region 6	
Population 25 years and over	# of Individuals
Less than high school graduate	18,293
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	66,976
Some college or Associate's degree	33,251
Bachelor's degree	20,355
<i>Source: 2017-2021 ACS 5-year Survey, S1501</i>	

Table 14 reveals the youth drop-out rate in Region 6. Several parishes have improved the drop-out rates in grades 9-12 over a 5-year period. The youth population leaving the educational system before achieving a high school diploma, or the equivalent, will be unprepared to gain self-sufficient employment without adequate secondary and post-secondary training. However, as dropouts, they might be eligible for services provided under WIOA funding as an Out of School Youth. Youth outreach efforts continue in Region 6 to try to help ensure that these young people are prepared for the workforce and the future.

Parish	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	Difference 2016-2021
Avoyelles	34	54	18	13	7	-27
Catahoula	3	5	3	15	4	1
Concordia	17	18	28	33	15	-2
Grant	26	3	2	3	2	-24
LaSalle	0	2	1	2	1	1
Rapides	371	283	217	188	158	-218
Winn	19	16	11	10	16	-3

Source: Louisiana Dept. of Education, Louisiana Believes

Of the civilian non-institutionalized residents aged 18 to 64 years of Region 6, 16% of the population live with one or more disabilities. Residents with disabilities account for 15% of the unemployed and 8% of the employed population; 34% of those not in the labor force have at least one disability. **Table 15** highlights the populations with disabilities that are in the labor force. Disability characteristics are not mutually exclusive, meaning one individual may have multiple disabilities.

Disability Characteristic	In Labor Force				Not in Labor Force	
	Employed		Unemployed		Disability	No Disability
	Disability	No Disability	Disability	No Disability		
Avoyelles	1,900	12,813	140	944	2,486	4,270
Catahoula	144	3,279	23	190	499	1,138
Concordia	270	5,926	28	651	785	2,545
Grant	438	6,487	79	543	1,073	2,525
LaSalle	338	4,236	23	288	808	2,188
Rapides	3,364	46,584	640	3,761	8,144	14,532
Winn	321	4,160	62	249	953	1,655

Source: 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Yr, Employment Status by Disability C18120

Table 16 shows the labor force status of the veterans in Region 6 aged 18 to 64 years. Veterans in the region have a fairly high labor force participation rate, with over 65% of those aged 18 to 64 being a part of the labor force. Veterans account for 5.08% of the region’s population.

Table 16: Labor Force Status of Veterans Aged 18 to 64, Region 6	
Labor Force Status	Percent
Population	5.08%
Labor Force Participation rate	65.39%
Employed	87.09%
Unemployed	2.61%
Not in Labor Force	34.61%
<i>Source: 2021 ACS 5-year Survey, B21005</i>	

Skill Gaps

The skills gap is a complex issue, with much disagreement about causes and solutions. Here are some factors experts have identified:

- ▶ Not enough of the right graduates: For in-demand jobs in health care, engineering, computer science, and advanced manufacturing, there are not enough people being trained.
- ▶ Poor yields from automated job match programs: Some employers fill job ads with a list of ideal requirements most applicants will not meet, resulting in low match rates and few potential candidates.
- ▶ Reluctance to provide training: Many employers would prefer that job seekers and employees provide all their own training, but this is increasingly unrealistic.
- ▶ Inadequate compensation. Some organizations cannot find candidates because the pay they offer, especially for in-demand jobs, is not competitive with other employers in their area.
- ▶ The growing need for soft skills: Many new graduates, while tech-savvy, lack basic communication skills and other critical soft skills.

(Source: CareerOneStop.org/Business center)

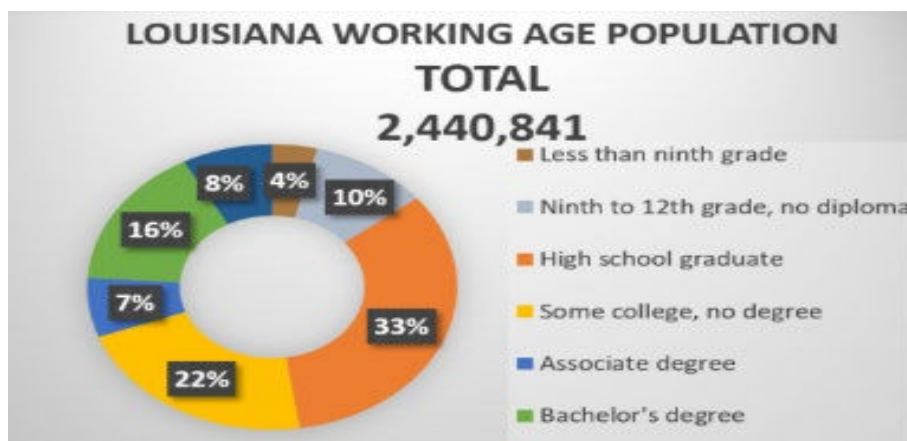
The following **Table 17** shows the number of completers from Louisiana’s public postsecondary education programs by degree level. Academic years 2014 through 2018 are included. The academic years are labeled by the year in which they begin, so 2018 is the school year beginning in June 2018 and ending in May 2019.

This is compares to the number of annual openings in Region 6 from LWC’s long-term projections, which provides an approximation of what skill levels may show gaps in the future.

Degree Level	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Annual Projected Openings
Some Postsecondary. No Degree	9,250	9,268	8,802	9,232	8,881	2,750
Associate Degree	5,788	6,183	5,800	5,662	5,961	600
Baccalaureate Degree	18,296	18,516	18,973	18,725	19,532	840
Graduate or Professional Degree	6,707	6,918	6,997	7,150	8,037	210

Source: Louisiana board of Regents Degrees and Certificates Awarded by Degree, Degree Level, Gender, Race and Citizenship. Annual Projected Openings from LWC’s Long Term Occupational Projections.

By mid-2020, approximately 53% of open jobs in Louisiana will require a career credential or college degree according to the Georgetown University Center on Education and Workforce. It will take a comprehensive approach to address the challenges the State faces in meeting this expectation. Filling these college-trained jobs will prove challenging to Louisiana’s under-educated adult population.



According to the National Center for Higher Education Management (NCHEMS), Louisiana ranks 49th in educational attainment with only 30.7% of working-aged residents, 25-64 years, earning an associate degree or higher. **Table 19** is a further breakdown, for Region

6 of degrees awarded by occupational category. The same comparison is drawn between 2017 graduates and annual projected job openings in Region 6 through 2026

Degree Category	2017 Completers	Annual Projected Openings
Medical	1,337	520
Construction	688	450
IT	237	20

Source: Louisiana board of Regents Degrees and Certificates Awarded by Degree, Degree Level, Gender, Race and Citizenship. Annual Projected Openings from LWC's Long Term Occupational Projections.

Region 6 has numerous occupations with favorable demand projections (a star rating of 3, 4 or 5) and high base year employment (employment greater than or equal to 500). **Table 20** below shows the start ratings, ten-year growth, and education levels required of each occupation.

Star Rating	Occupational Title	2021 Estimate	2023 Projection	2 Year Growth	Education
*****	Registered Nurses	2566	2656	90	Bachelor's degree
*****	First-Line Supervisors of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers	685	756	71	High school diploma or equivalent
*****	General and Operations Managers	1050	1108	58	Bachelor's degree
*****	Nurse Practitioners	226	254	28	Master's degree
*****	Construction Managers	190	215	25	Bachelor's degree
*****	Medical and Health Services Managers	313	337	24	Bachelor's degree
*****	Accountants and Auditors	470	492	22	Bachelor's degree
*****	Lawyers	234	251	17	Doctoral or professional degree
*****	Financial Managers	216	229	13	Bachelor's degree
*****	First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers	336	347	11	High school diploma or equivalent
*****	Respiratory Therapists	174	184	10	Associate degree
*****	Human Resources Specialists	205	214	9	Bachelor's degree
*****	Physical Therapists	192	201	9	Doctoral or professional degree
*****	Electrical and Electronics Repairers, Commercial and Industrial Equipment	93	101	8	Postsecondary non-degree award

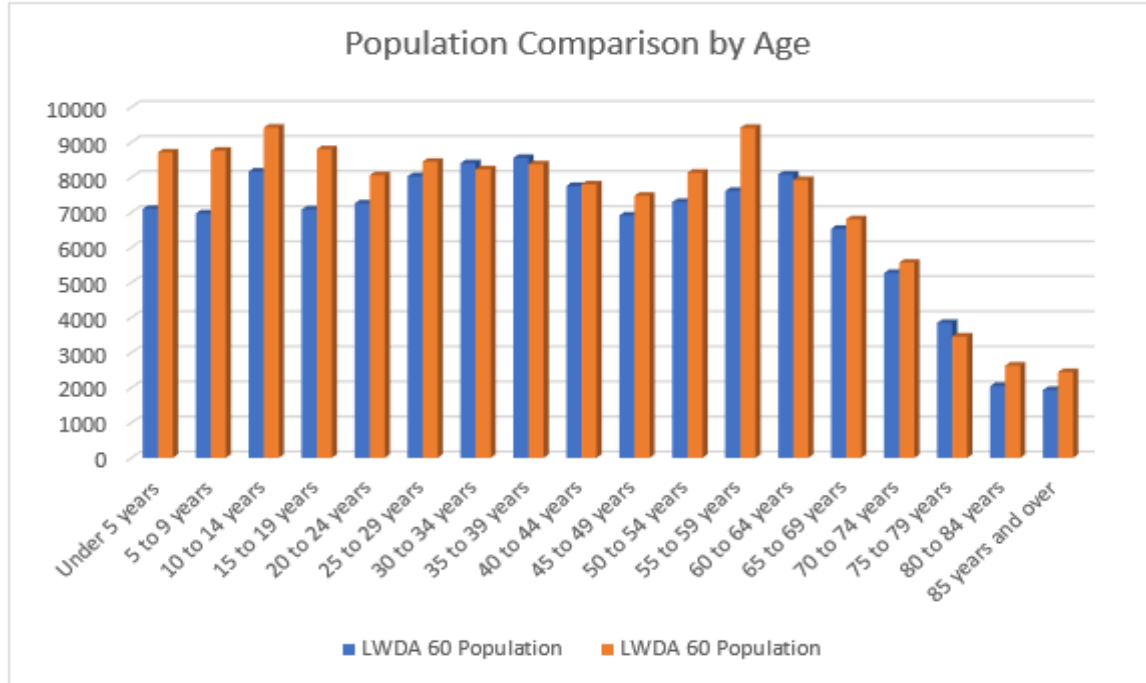
*****	Physical Therapist Assistants	73	80	7	Associate degree
*****	Sales Managers	112	118	6	Bachelor's degree
*****	Pharmacists	258	264	6	Doctoral or professional degree
*****	Management Analysts	61	66	5	Bachelor's degree
*****	Speech-Language Pathologists	58	63	5	Master's degree
*****	Occupational Therapists	89	93	4	Master's degree
*****	Industrial Production Managers	67	70	3	Bachelor's degree
*****	Civil Engineers	42	45	3	Bachelor's degree
*****	Electrical Engineers	35	37	2	Bachelor's degree
*****	Mechanical Engineers	23	25	2	Bachelor's degree
*****	Physician Assistants	27	29	2	Master's degree
*****	Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	57	59	2	Associate degree

The growth of the labor force is constrained by the growth rate of the population. As depicted in **Figure 5**, age group 55-64, is a significant part of, not only Region 6, but Louisiana’s overall population. With many in this age group moving toward retirement over the next 10 years, the Baby Boomer effect will have a significant impact on the state and region’s workforce. The workforce, however, will remain steady and will balance with the high population of age 15-24, achieving various levels of education (i.e., diplomas, certificates, college degree) and entering the workforce full-time.

As you can see in **Figure 5**, Region 6 clearly has a higher percentage of the population than the state of those in the “prime working years”, the age group between 25-34 years. LWDA 61 has a higher percentage of youth aged 5-14, persons aged 25-34, and persons aged 45-54 than the rest of the region or the state. LWDA 60 has a higher percentage of young adults aged 15-24 than the rest of the region which will account for labor force stability moving forward.

Figure 5 – Population Comparison By Age (Louisiana, Area 60 & 61)

Source: American Community Survey, 2018 Population Estimates



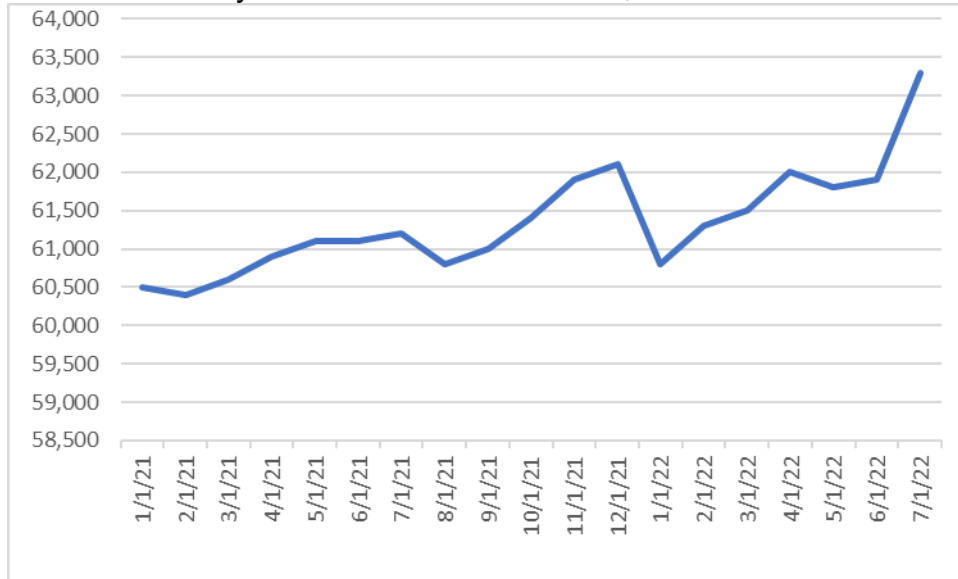
According to the ACS Demographics and Housing Estimates, 2014 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimate, Table 1 shows Region 6 is fairly equalized in race except for the Asian, Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander with a slight variation in numbers of Two or More Races. LWDA 61 has nearly 6 times the Asian population than LWDA 60. With Louisiana’s total Asian population at 96,274, Rapides parish comprises some 2.7% of that total demographic.

Table 20: Race and Hispanic Origin, 2020 Race	LWDA 60		LWDA 61	
	#	%	#	%
Total:	91,742	100.00%	98,792	100.00%
White alone	60,929	66.41%	60,593	61.33%
Black or African American alone	21,126	23.03%	29,008	29.36%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	617	0.67%	675	0.68%
Asian alone	914	1.00%	1,438	1.46%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	38	0.04%	22	0.02%
Some Other Race alone	141	0.15%	298	0.30%
Population of two or more races:	2,407	2.62%	3,316	3.36%
Hispanic or Latino	5,570	6.07%	3,442	3.48%
Source: ACS Demographics/US Census Bureau				

Employment and Unemployment

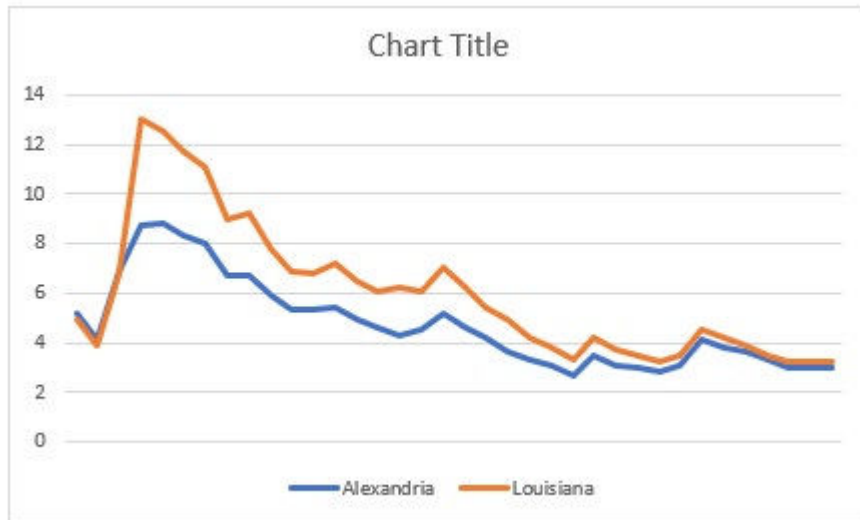
Figure 6: Total Nonfarm Employment, Not-Seasonally Adjusted, Alexandria Region (January 2021-June 2022)

The Alexandria MSA's seasonally adjusted nonfarm employment increased by 2,800 jobs between January of 2021 and June of 2022, a 4.42% increase.



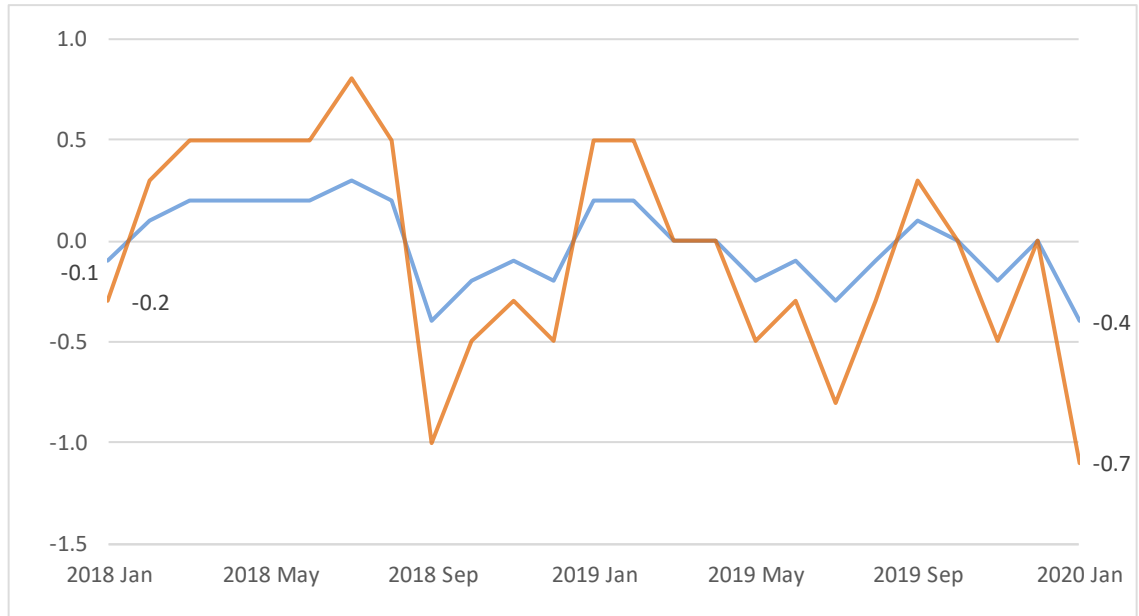
Source: FRED Economic Data-St. Louis FED

Figure 7: Not-Seasonally Adjusted, Unemployment Rate in Louisiana and Alexandria Region (January 2020-December 2022)



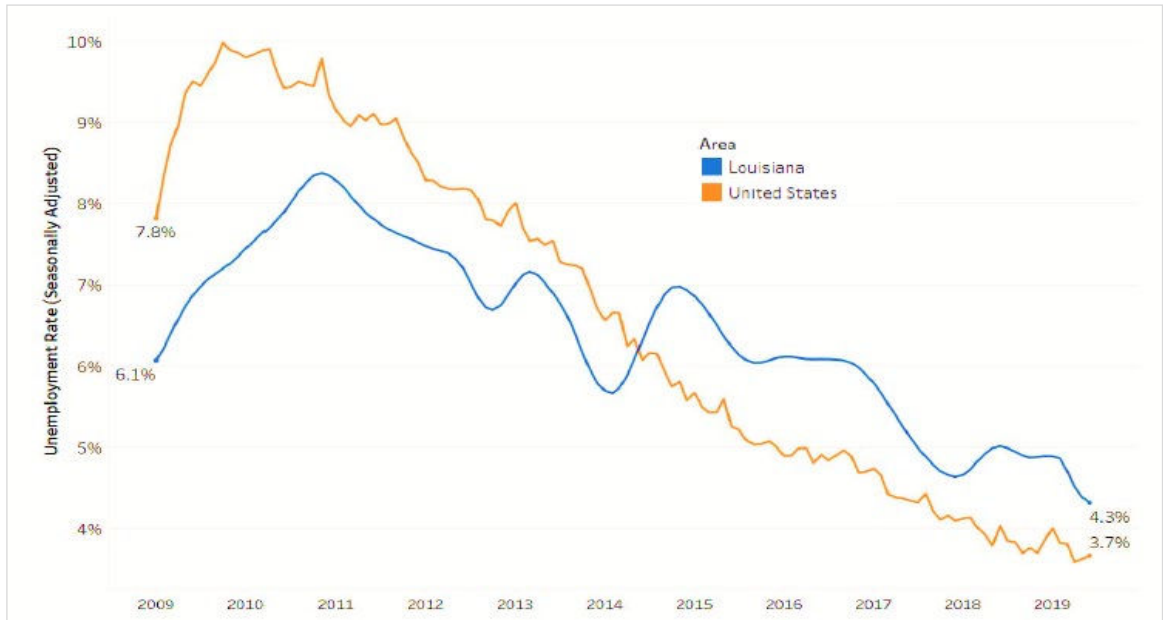
Source: FRED Economic Data-St. Louis FED

Figure 8: Over the Year Change in Total Nonfarm and Private Sector Jobs, Not-Seasonally Adjusted, Alexandria Region (January 2018 – January 2020)



Source: Labor Force data produced by the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) Program.

Figure 9: United States and Louisiana Employed to Unemployed Ratio, January 2009 to June 2019



Source: Labor Force data produced by the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) and Current Population Survey (CPS) Programs

Between January 2009 and June 2019 Louisiana's unemployment decreased from 6.1 to 4.3 percent. During this time, the number of unemployed persons decreased from 126,727 to 90,492 and the civilian labor force increased from 2,088,301 to 2,097,545.

Development and implementation of sector initiatives for in-demand industry sectors and occupations

Building Sector Partnerships

We continue to strengthen our industry sector partnership(s) through our regional / local industry by creating career pathways such as manufacturing, healthcare, and Information Technology. Our workforce partners will convene employers, foundations, and regional intuitions by recruiting based on high demand and available job markets, while also assisting with funding for training development and work-based learning. Region 6 will also convene foundations and regional intuitions by collaborating to advance workforce development.

Our established and active industry sector partnerships center around manufacturing, healthcare, and Information Technology.

Other than the active industry sector partnerships listed above, there are currently no other sector-based partnerships in Region 6.

Using LWC's "Pillar Approach," which focuses on maintaining relationships with sector and business partners, and to continue to foster an environment for ongoing and progressive training, Region 6 continues to nurture and engage our industry sector partners. These sector partnerships are vital to achieve the commitment needed to the comprehensive implementation of career pathways for jobseekers and employers in central Louisiana. Using this approach mirrors LWC's vision to span WIOA options and create opportunities to upskill employees. Our region's workforce staff work to advance these initiatives to vet and build a bridge between jobseekers and in-demand industry and business sector occupations.

Region 6 has integrated Jump Start, a statewide and regionally coordinated dual enrollment program. The Workforce Development Boards continue to provide guidance, recommendations and approval for the targeted demand occupations and training programs that would be most effective in filling regional skill gaps.

Another example of building upon the partnerships within the region includes the start of sharing staff and multiple cooperative endeavor agreements between Economic Development and the Workforce Development Boards. In one example, the partnership results in a neutral convener with additional capacity to help establish sector partnerships. The planning work done by the group is helping to lead opportunities to validate data points to add relevance, create a circle of continuous feedback from industry, identify potential sector initiatives and to grow the economy.

CHAPTER 2: STRATEGIES FOR SERVICE INTEGRATION – REGIONAL COMPONENT

Commitment to Training:

The region has continuously improved its ratio of funding spent on training and supportive services. This has been a tremendous effort to maximize the most efficient methods for delivering high quality services.

PY 2021 Training/Work Experience Expenditures

Area	ITA's	OJT's	WE	Adult \$	DW \$	Youth \$
60	113	70	69	\$685,712	\$176,229	\$233,671
61	55	1	20	\$283,743	\$8,808	502,542

Source: HiRE PY2021 Services to Individuals Report and Local Area Reporting

Individual Training Accounts continue to be specifically targeted to assist participants maximize their earning potential in a career field of their choosing. This is not an exhaustive list but is a broad sampling.

Business Administration	Human Resources	Radiology Technician
CDL Class A & B	Licensed Practical Nurse	Education
Engineering	Medical Assistant	Welding Technology
Certified Nursing Assistant	Pharmacy Technician	IBEW
Emergency Medical Technician	Information Technician 4	Registered Nurse
Machine Operator	Patient Care Technician	Forest Technology
Industrial Technology		

Employer-Based Training is an area where the region will continue to work toward increasing opportunities. In a statewide study, 92.4% of those that complete On-the-Job Training (OJT) are still retained on the job after 12 months. The region works together to ensure a seamless process for employers by employing MOU's to serve regional employers whenever necessary.

Registered Apprenticeships are a growing trend for which the region definitively sees value in promoting and supporting. Programs, such as the Electrical Apprenticeship Program, have grown in recent years. LWC has developed pre-screening tools for all existing regional and local apprenticeship initiatives to assist in expediting the review of applicants funding eligibility whenever needed.

Our Adult Education partner, Central Louisiana Technical College, works in close coordination with their respective local areas to conduct the heavy lift of closing the education gap for many of our adult citizens. Interactive kiosks have been installed in all the comprehensive centers.

Veterans and Disability Services are available by appointment to assist the Centers serving their Veteran clients, informing partner staff, and collaborating to better serve the veteran job seekers. Additionally, there are opportunities for targeted workshops and career fairs to better serve these special and unique populations and to bring awareness to businesses of the benefits of hiring special populations.

Ex-offenders are being better served through multiple initiatives, including the Re-entry Courts, Drug Courts, Day Reporting Centers, and others. There has been the rebranding of ex-offenders to Previously Incarcerated and employers as Second Chance Employers. Significant efforts have been made to identify and educate employers about the benefits of hiring this special population. Additional support for this population includes, committed WIOA funding for Transitional Jobs, career services, connection to partners providing wrap-around services. These expanded partnerships have led to WIOA staff co-location in some prisons and parole centers and creating a pathway for the build-out of the State Reentry program under the Second Chance Act. These efforts have resulted in more effective coordination with prison transitional case managers.

Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth

WIOA called for the elimination of “sequence of service” provision in Title I programs in accordance with a more integrated service delivery model across partner programs. The new model connects partners to clients at any entry point where assessment occurs. The process is further driven by co-enrollment across all active partner programs, as appropriate. The process modification allows for a more holistic approach to serving these populations offering more comprehensive, individualized, and seamless services.

Strengths and Weaknesses of Workforce Development Activities

(Highlighted sections below are in response to updates requested by LWC; 5/21/2022)

Strengths	Weaknesses
Both LWDAs have good working relationships with their required and optional partners. Both LWDAs act regionally and collaborate with each other on a frequent basis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most of the public still thinks we are the unemployment office. • Perception is the battle as most in the community do not know what we do or the services we can provide. • The lack of a consistent marketing campaign has diminished our ability to develop and keep relationships with job seekers and employers. • Limited funding for advertising and marketing the services of the American Job Centers.
Title 1 performance goals are the primary focus for our region with staff willing to meet the challenge of serving the people of our area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional training opportunities for staff • LWDAs are not always able to meet the needs of individuals with barriers, often due to employability skills or “soft skills.” For employers, these foundational skills are the key to job-readiness. • Employees/case managers are limited in finding low or no cost resources to teach/improve these essential skills.
Both LWDAs have exceptionally skilled and experienced staff that are trained to assist our customers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More cross-training within the regions and with our partners is much needed.
Both LWDAs are working to be more creative with program design and implementation to increase productivity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budgetary realities and restrictions, combined with the refocus and expansion of services under WIOA, have required our area to reassess and reconfigure staffing to ensure that there is a depth of resources and coverage available for all programs.
There are excellent institutions for post-secondary training in the region. I.e., colleges, vocational/technical, and certificate/licensing.	Most of the post-secondary institutions are located in one parish of the region and public transportation is limited to metro areas
There are a lot of experienced workers in ‘career jobs’ in Region 6.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obsolete and “mismatched” skills / education of workers vs. the needs of existing open positions and projected industry needs.
This region has a large population of youth to take over jobs as Baby Boomers retire.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elevated levels of unemployment for Region 6 youth. We also have a significant number of dropouts in the region. • Employer engagement and involvement in training a new workforce, work experiences, OJTs, etc. • Employers will be losing tremendous depth of knowledge if younger workers are not hired and do not learn from more experienced workers.
Business Services has made significant inroads into market penetration in the region	Small employers usually employ dated practices and have limited awareness of how to strategically anticipate their future workforce needs. Good temporary staff are lost due to lack of permanent employment opportunities.

Workforce programs and funding are provided by the state and federal government to help employers up skill their current workers.	Many employers continue to be unaware of these programs.
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Additional specifics regarding operations and service delivery to all the aforementioned initiatives are further detailed in the regional strategies section, as well as the local area portions of this combined regional plan.

Partner Agencies

Region Six is the largest workforce region in the state with four LWDA designations. There are currently 72 entities that account for the mandated partner agencies that work in close collaboration and coordination of direct and complimentary service delivery. There are MOU's in place with required partners and that list continues to expand as we all seek to ensure the most effective and efficient means of serving the community, in particular, special populations and the hardest to serve.

LWDA 60: Sixth Planning District

Table 23: LWDA 60 One-Stop Partners, Roles, and Resource Contributions		
PARTNERS	ROLE / RESOURCE CONTRIBUTION	FT/PT?
Louisiana Workforce Commission	<p>Wagner-Peyser Employment Services: Employment Service focuses on providing a variety of services including job search assistance, help getting a job referral, and placement assistance for job seekers.</p> <p>Unemployment Insurance services: services to help jobseekers who are experiencing unemployment to access benefits and resolve issues while assisting with job search, etc.</p> <p>Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA): Re-Employment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) Program is to help Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants return to work faster through personal case management and job matching.</p> <p>TAA: The Trade Adjustment Assistance program provides services to workers who lose their jobs or whose hours of work and wages are reduced because of international competition. TAA services, which are offered at no cost, may include training awards, job search and relocation allowances, income support and health coverage tax credits.</p> <p>Veteran services provide employment assistance and training opportunities to Veterans and other eligible individuals, mainly job assistance, job and training referral and job placement.</p>	Full-time
Louisiana Rehabilitation Services	Employment and Training Services under the Rehabilitation Act and WIOA LRS provides printed informational materials and staff, as needed, to assist in providing services to eligible customers.	Part-time
LWDA60 Workforce Operations Dept. LCAA, Inc. One Stop Operator	Adult services Dislocated Worker services Youth services	Full-time
LWDA60 Workforce Development Board	Provide oversight of the Workforce Development system and One-Stop Operator	Full-time
CSBG	Provides receptionist staff assistance and provides services through the Community Services Block Grant, including energy and housing assistance	Full-time
Dept. of Children and Family Services	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)	Part-time

Area Agency on Aging AYUDA & SCEP	Title V Senior Community Services Employment Program, provides reception staff, who is also cross trained to assist customers in accessing HiRE	Part-time
Central Louisiana Technical College	Title II Adult Education Career and Technical Education	Part-time
National Farmworker Jobs Program	Referral system in place for those customers	Part-time
Hud Employment and Training	Referral system in place for those customers	Part-time

LWDA 61: Rapides

Table 22: LWDA 61 One-Stop Partners, Roles, and Resource Contributions		
PARTNERS	ROLE / RESOURCE CONTRIBUTION	FT/PT
Louisiana Workforce Commission	<p>Wagner-Peyser Employment Services: Employment Service focuses on providing a variety of services including job search assistance, help getting a job referral, and placement assistance for job seekers.</p> <p>Unemployment Insurance services: services to help jobseekers who are experiencing unemployment to access benefits and resolve issues while assisting with job search, etc.</p> <p>Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA): Re-Employment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) Program is to help Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants return to work faster through personal case management and job matching.</p> <p>TAA: The Trade Adjustment Assistance program provides services to workers who lose their jobs or whose hours of work and wages are reduced because of international competition. TAA services, which are offered at no cost, may include training awards, job search and relocation allowances, income support and health coverage tax credits</p>	Full-time
Louisiana Rehabilitation Services	<p>Employment and Training Services under the Rehabilitation Act and WIOA Ticket to Work</p> <p>Provides comprehensive rehabilitation services that go far beyond those found in routine job training programs. LRS offers individuals with disabilities a wide range of services designed to provide them with the skills, resources, attitudes, and expectations needed to compete in the interview process, get the job, keep the job, and develop a lifetime career.</p>	Part-time
Central Louisiana Technical Community College	Title II Adult Education Career and Technical Education	Part-time
Rapides Workforce Development Board	Policies and oversight of the One-Stop Operator	Full-time
Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JCSG)	<p>Provides individualized career and training-related services to veterans and eligible persons with significant barriers to employment and to assist employers fill their workforce needs with job-seeking veterans.</p> <p>Veteran services provide employment assistance and training opportunities to Veterans and other eligible individuals, mainly job assistance, job and training referral and job placement.</p>	Full-time
Rapides Parish – Ofc. of Economic & Workforce Development	Fiscal and programmatic oversight of workforce development programs within the One-Stop Centers	Full-time
Cenla Community Action Committee, Inc.	Community Services Block Grant: provides supportive services to help low-income individuals become or remain self-sufficient. Each agency offers a range of services which can include assistance with transportation, housing, income management, energy costs, nutrition, health care, emergency food and shelter, employment, and training.	Full-time
Dept. of Children and Family Services	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)	Full-time

Rapides Parish School Board	Jump Start Initiative: Program prepares students to lead productive adult lives, with the option to continue their education and training after high school in addition to earning certifications that will create a pathway to prosperity upon graduation. PK – 12: teaching prekindergarten to grade 12 students in a school that is accessible to all or most people	Not located in Center. A community partnership.
Area Agency on Aging AYUDA & SCEP	Title V Senior Community Services Employment Program, provides reception staff, who is also cross trained to assist customers in accessing HiRE	Part-time
Job Corps	Employment and Training Services	Part-time
Hud Employment and Training	Referral system in place for those customers	Part-time

Transportation and other Supportive Services Coordination

Regional organizations that currently could provide supportive services are:

- Louisiana Rehabilitation Services/DSS
- Louisiana Department of Education
- The Salvation Army
- Trade Adjustment Assistance
- Department of Children and Family Services
- Office Veteran Affairs

Region 6 has policies and procedures that have been established to promote supportive service delivery. Supportive services are carefully coordinated locally between partners to ensure maximum availability to the community and avoidance of duplication of services. Supportive services that are available from the partners are in accordance with each partner’s mandates, regulations, local policies, and funding availability. Examples of supportive services that are available within the region include:

- Transportation assistance
- Housing assistance
- Utilities assistance
- Food security assistance
- Training assistance: books, supplies, fees, tools, uniforms
- Childcare assistance
- Needs-related payments
- Other supportive services defined by the individual need to participate in the workforce or in training.

Local workforce areas incorporate into their local policies the verification of supportive services that are available in the local area at the time of each individual request for such funded services as they are frequently subject to change due to funding availability.

Coordination of services with regional Economic Development

Economic development organizations, WOIA service providers, and businesses who are actively engaged within our region are; The Rapides Foundation, Louisiana Economic Development District, LWDB 60 and 61, Chambers of Commerce, and Community Action Agencies.

Currently, in Region 6, there are no economic development organizations, WOIA service providers, or businesses who were invited to participate and declined.

Sector strategy initiatives have been developed, by LWC, in each of the 8 Workforce Regions of the state. LWC has industry coordinators and business consultants currently on staff and assigned to each region. Their primary roles are to engage business and industry to identify short- and long-term workforce needs and assist local workforce boards (business consultants) and One-Stop Centers (industry coordinators) with developing goals, objectives, and strategies to address these needs.

CHAPTER 3: VISION, GOALS, AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES – REGIONAL

COMPONENT

Regional Strategic Vision and Goals

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include the region's strategic \for developing its workforce and meeting employer needs in order to support economic growth and economic self-sufficiency. They must include:

(1) VISION

Describe the region's strategic vision for its workforce development system.

The only way the LWDBs that make up Region 6 and Louisiana will have a successful workforce development system is to subscribe to the same vision and goals as the Louisiana Workforce Commission. Therefore, our regional vision is:

Region 6 envisions a workforce system that will provide pathways for all people of Louisiana, including individuals receiving public assistance, the unemployed or underemployed, those deficient in basic skills, persons with disabilities, including disabled veterans, and others who have significant barriers to employment. All will have access to education, training, and supportive services needed to prepare for and secure high-demand occupations that pay family-sustaining wages.

Industries that once required their entry-level workers to have only a high school diploma are increasingly requiring that their workers also have specialized occupational skills. Sector strategies are integrated into Region 6's approach that aims to help workers obtain these skills through targeted training programs and other services developed in direct response to employer demand. Research completed by the Federal Department of Labor (dol.gov) has shown that sector strategies can increase earnings and improve job quality for the under-skilled workforce. Further, businesses that have participated in sector strategies have credited the initiatives with increasing their productivity and reducing their operating costs.

Region 6 strategic vision seeks to support job seekers and employers, alike, to create a strong, vibrant, and inclusive economy in all 7 parishes of the region. By strengthening our diverse partnership with employer groups, allied workforce efforts, and education and training providers, we work to create the necessary conditions for moving all job seekers to high quality and sustained employment.

(2) GOALS

Describe the goals for achieving this vision based on the analysis in (a) above of the regional's economic conditions, workforce, and workforce development activities. This must include -

- (A) Goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including preparing youth and individuals with barriers to employment and other populations.**
- (B) Goals for meeting the skilled workforce needs of employers.**

Goal 1: *Continue to strengthen existing and establish Career Pathways as a model for skill, credential, and degree attainment for Louisiana citizens to secure jobs that provide opportunities for economic independence and family stability. This goal will be accomplished by executing the following objectives:*

- Workforce development system partners are continuing to collaborate to develop a shared vision and strategy for industry sector-based career pathways for youth and adults.
- Engage employers and integrate sector strategy principles to ensure multiple employers, business associations and organized labor are partners in creating demand-driven career pathways.
- Increase the identification, prioritization, and leverage of workforce system partner resources.
- Strengthen the alignment of Jump Start, WorkReady U, and other viable initiatives as entry and exit points in the career pathways.
- Expand utilization of registered apprenticeships by industry sector.

Goal 2: *Expand career services and opportunities for populations facing multiple barriers to close the gap in educational attainment and economic advancement through career pathways.*

- Using regional, sector-based career pathways, link low-skill job seekers to take advantage of educational opportunities and bridge programs to obtain middle-skill jobs for those with educational barriers.
- Continue to work with local resources (i.e., Reentry Solutions, Department of Corrections) and partners to reduce recidivism in returning citizens.
- Efforts related to this goal include the provision of more work-based learning opportunities, access to in-demand industry certifications, job readiness training, and relevant skill building efforts.

Goal 3: *Increase the participation and utilization of the workforce system by employers and jobseekers.*

- Foster the improvement and expansion of employer-driven regional sector partnerships to meet occupational demands as supported by regional labor market information.
- Increase the use of labor market and educational data / technology, in coordination with local data, to inform and guide strategic workforce development decisions.
- Develop focused, regional workforce initiatives that blend partner resources (co-investment) to educate and train workers.

- Educate and resource training for workers for high-demand jobs within the workforce region.
- Increase the alignment and efficacy of formula, discretionary and competitive workforce funding to support regional and local workforce initiatives.
- Promote meaningful portable industry credentials for experienced workers.

(3) PERFORMANCE GOALS

The proposed performance goals for the region / local areas are listed in Appendix 1.

In addition to the common performance measures, Region 6 tracks business-focused metrics as well. This helps to identify standardized indicators for measuring effectiveness in serving employers. The primary source of information for this measure is data recorded in the MIS system of the Louisiana Workforce Commission, HiRE. Services to employers are both automatically recorded by HiRE *and* manually entered into HiRE by One-Stop Center staff.

(4) ASSESSMENT

Describe how the Region will assess the overall effectiveness of the workforce development system in LWDA 60 & 61 relation to the strategic vision and goals stated above and how it will use the results of this assessment and other feedback to make continuous or quality improvements.

In Region 6, our LWDB's focus is on the identification of opportunities met and those opportunities for improvement. We are fortunate in having a highly qualified staff with demonstrated performance in the provision of multi-level assistance to employers and jobseekers.

Quarterly review and assessment of WIOA programs is conducted to ensure consistency of service, fiscal responsibility with participant success being our focus. This monitoring is conducted to ensure the One-Stop Career Centers are using program funds responsibly, as well as assuring policies and procedures are adhered to by all customer service office staff.

The results of the participant WIOA expenditure reviews are documented and compiled in a written report identifying deficiencies and recommendations for improvement. Upon review and result compilations, the report is distributed to the director and program supervisor. Corrective action is requested on a case-by-case basis. This assessment and review enable customer_service staff to measure performance at the case manager level and where improvement might be needed.

Feedback, to our case managers, through this assessment process provides an opportunity for a greater emphasis on customer-focused and effective case management. In providing guidance, support and motivation to customers that seek training, employment, and career advancement, staff take a holistic case management approach that utilizes multiple techniques to address and provide solutions for a variety of barriers and assessed needs of their customers.

While our region enjoys many strengths, we also recognize the importance of implementing continuous improvement efforts that adjust to changing market conditions, as well as the needs of individual job seekers and employers. Therefore, LWDB Directors actively participate in the evaluation and analysis of opportunities for successes.

(c) REGIONAL STRATEGY

The Combined Regional Plan must include the region's strategies to achieve its strategic vision and goals. These strategies must consider the region's economic, workforce, and workforce development, education, and training activities and analysis provided in Section (a) above. Include discussion of specific strategies to address the needs of populations provided in Section (a).

- (1) Describe the strategies Region 6 will implement, including industry or sector partnerships related to in-demand industry sectors and occupations and career pathways, as required by WIOA section 101(d)(3)(B), (D). "Career pathway" is defined at WIOA section 3(7) and includes registered apprenticeship. "In-demand industry sector or occupation" is defined at WIOA section 3(23).**
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Building Sector Partnerships

We continue to strengthen our industry sector partnership(s) through our regional / local industry by creating career pathways such as manufacturing, healthcare, and Information Technology.

Using LWC's "Pillar Approach," which focuses on maintaining relationships with sector and business partners to continue to foster an environment for ongoing and progressive training, Region 6 continues to nurture and engage our industry sector partners. These sector partnerships are vital to achieve the commitment needed to the comprehensive implementation of career pathways for jobseekers and employers in central Louisiana. Using this approach mirrors LWC's vision to span WIOA options and create opportunities to upskill employees. Our region's workforce staff work to advance these initiatives to vet and build a bridge between jobseekers and in-demand industry and business sector occupations.

Central Louisiana is fortunate to have had strong leadership from economic development agencies, secondary and postsecondary education, workforce development, and industry in the creation of regional career pathways through the DOE's Jump Start program. This regional Jump Start team has aligned education with the needs of employers and created opportunities for secondary youth to achieve a credential and gain employment immediately upon graduation. The Education Subcommittees of the regional Workforce Development Boards are working with Jump Start to ensure career pathways and educational requirements stay on track with current and future needs.

Regional Business Service Team Framework

A regional Business Service Team within Region 6 consists of the following programs and provides a sector-based approach to a partnership between the LWC, LWDBs, core programs and other partners in the region:

- Wagner-Peyser
- Veterans / LVER
- Adult / Dislocated Worker / youth programs
- Louisiana Rehabilitation Services
- Incumbent Worker Training Program
- Rapid Response
- Other stakeholders and optional community resources

(2) Strategies used to align the core programs, and Combined Plan partner programs included in this Plan, required and optional one-stop partner programs, and any other resources available to achieve fully integrated customer services consistent with the strategic vision and goals described above. Also describe strategies to strengthen workforce development activities regarding weaknesses identified in section II.

The LWDB 60 and 61 intends to continue efforts toward expanded coordination of service delivery with all partner agencies throughout each year. The goal is to modify and improve partner and local agreements regarding support of the one stop delivery system, identify the service strengths of each agency, and develop an improved inter-agency referral process and co-enrollment linkages across systems through on-going meetings leading to the development and implementation of a comprehensive Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The MOU's with each partner will be updated according to changes and modifications to services.

Region 6 workforce teams are working diligently to create a strong integrated network with key agencies and community partners to expand accessibility and wrap-around services for individuals with barriers seeking employment. In developing deeper connections with partnership programs that support these individuals will further promote and simplify efforts to match employment programming more closely to each person in need.

Regions 6 aims to empower and coach our most vulnerable community members and customers through an integrated, cumulative, and agile services continuum, moving from initial engagement through job retention, unique to every person, and resulting in long-term employment that fulfills an individual's passion, meets financial needs, embodies skill development, and supports well-being.

III. OPERATIONAL PLANNING ELEMENTS

The Combined Regional Plan must include an Operational Planning Elements section that supports the region's strategy and the vision described in Section III(c) above. Unless otherwise noted, all Operational Planning Elements apply to Combined Region Plan partner programs included in the plan as well as to core programs. This section must include –

a) REGIONAL / LOCAL STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

1. Describe how the local boards will implement the functions under section 101(d) of WIOA (i.e., provide a description of Board operational structures and decision-making processes to ensure such functions are carried out:

The mission of Region 6, local boards is to support the development of an employer-led, demand-driven workforce development system based on occupational forecasts in which training, education and services for jobseekers prepare the regions residents for high-wage, high-demand career opportunities. LWDBs 60 and 61 will continue to work closely with eligible training providers in central Louisiana to ensure training programs for which WIOA funds are used meet the needs of local job seekers and employers.

Region 6 boards will achieve and be successful in this mission by mirroring the vision of LWC by:

The local boards will meet no less than four times each calendar year, and all meetings comply with the Louisiana Open Meetings Law. Decisions are made by a vote of a majority of the total serving membership of the WIC. Decision-making votes shall be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order. Educational and informational portions of meetings are conducted according to the preference of the Chair. The Executive Committee of the local board is comprised of the Chair, Vice Chair, and a sample of heads or designees of agencies represented on the board. The board is composed of a majority of business members. However, local board may include representatives of agencies or entities administering programs serving the local area relating to transportation, housing, and public assistance, representatives of philanthropic organizations serving the local area, and/or other representatives as the Chief Elected Official deems appropriate.

Some of the responsibilities of the local boards include:

- Submitting a strategic plan to meet current and forecasted workforce needs to the state and report plan progress.
- Driving local policy to support the alignment of education and training with workforce demand.
- Supporting the alignment of Jump Start Pathways with statewide and regional workforce demand through the Graduation Pathway Review Panel.
- Negotiate local performance accountability measures as described in Section 116 (c) of the WIOA.
- Coordinate activities with education and training providers in the local area in accordance with WIOA.
- Designate or certify the One-Stop Operator, Youth Provider(s), and other providers of services in accordance with WIOA.
- Develop a budget for the activities of the local board in the local area, consistent with the local plan and the duties of the local board under the WIOA.
- Assess annually the physical and programmatic accessibility for individuals with disabilities of the One-Stop Center in the local area.
- Establish and maintain a comprehensive American Job Center in the local workforce development area of Rapides Parish to provide the services identified in 20 CFR 678.305

a. Career services

- b. Access to training services
- c. Access to employment and training activities
- d. Access to programs and activities carried out by one-stop partners
- e. Workforce and labor market information

LWDB 61 will utilize program evaluation criteria (at least a 30% completion rate, at least a 50% employment rate, and at least an \$10 wage rate) as well as the in-demand occupations (i.e., Star Rating System) to determine the programs that should be WIOA approved for the current year. We will follow the LWC Policy, OWD 11-08.1 – Certification Process for Eligible Providers of Training Services, to ensure that training providers offering high quality training services for existing and emerging industries are included on the Statewide Eligible Training Provider list thereby presenting our customer with the best choices for training.

LWDB 60 coordinates and collaborates with eligible training providers to ensure that services are addressing the needs of our employer community. The coordination includes planned meetings to discuss new employer workforce needs (which will include the LWD Board meetings, of which training providers and industry leaders are represented.) Additional meetings will be hosted by LWDB 60 as determined necessary by labor market changes. These meetings, along with Board meetings, may address systematic adjustments needed by one or more partners to ensure employer and jobseeker customers are fully served, both efficiently and effectively.

To collaborate with eligible providers, the Board will utilize the LWC program evaluation criteria (at least a 30% completion rate, at least a 50% employment rate, and at least an \$10 wage rate), as well as the in-demand occupations (i.e. Star Rating System) to determine the programs that should be WIOA approved for the current year. We will follow the LWC Policy, OWD 11-08.1 – Certification Process for Eligible Providers of Training Services, to ensure that training providers offering high quality training services for existing and emerging industries are included on the Statewide Eligible Training Provider list thereby presenting our customer with the best choices for training.

LWDB 60 will continue to assess the needs of our employer community, identifying employee gaps, to ensure this information is communicated to our training providers of services and jobseekers. To ensure we have a complete picture of employment needs, we will rely on data collected by LWC's Occupational Forecasts, our 4 parish economic development organizations and Central Louisiana Economic Development Alliance. We will also collect information on employment needs from local chambers of commerce and other local business organizations. This information will be synthesized and shared with our service providers for training development purposes. Where necessary, training service providers will be encouraged to develop special employer-based, employer-led training to address specific shortages.

Employer needs will also be shared throughout our WIOA offices, to ensure that jobseekers understand the skills and talents required by local and regional employers. For the skills gaps identified, we will work with our training providers to validate the need and develop low-cost avenues for sharing that information with jobseekers. This information will also be shared with

less skilled workforce members, to ensure they are afforded opportunities to increase their skills, thus increasing their income.

LWDB 61 engages in regular and consistent communication to assess the needs of business customers and ensure that service delivery is efficient. The Industry Coordinator and Business Services Team maintain regular communication with businesses, industry leaders, and governmental agencies in the Rapides Parish.

In LWDA 61, many of the services provided through the one-stop delivery system are available through our online labor exchange services, HiRE, at www.laworks.net. This online system provides a complete set of employment tools for jobseekers in Louisiana. Jobseekers and employers access jobs, resumes, education, training, and labor market information. Once a jobseeker or employer access HiRE, the system will provide guidance on how to register, identify their skill sets, create a resume(s), and utilize the job search features to look for a job, communicate with employers through message center, and apply for jobs. Labor market information is also available, as is information on occupations and training programs. Additionally, we use social media, Facebook, and Constant Contact, to provide a broad and aggressive communication avenue for job center events and services.

LWDA 60 will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system utilizing several methodologies. First, local employers will be encouraged to utilize the HiRE system to post job orders. LWDA 60 staff will help with training, as needed. This step will ensure that jobseekers have access to local employment opportunities.

As all our parishes are rural, and many of the jobseekers are low-income, we will make every effort to reduce transportation barriers to access. Therefore, we will rely on technology and our community partners to bring the services to jobseekers in remote areas. LaSalle Community Action Association offices will serve as available resources for jobseekers in remote areas, as staff have basic training on accessing the HiRE site. LCAA offices will also be available to assist in providing necessary eligibility documents to WIOA office staff in different communities (via fax and email), thus preventing jobseekers in remote areas from expending funds to travel 10 – 25 miles to a LWDA 60 office to deliver paperwork.

LWDA 60 will also utilize social media to connect jobseekers with opportunities. A Facebook account has been developed to advertise regional and local new job announcements, publicize notices for jobs that prove difficult to fill, and advertise job fairs in the local and regional area. We currently have a Facebook page to help connect jobseekers to employment opportunities. This will also be an avenue to publicize activities at the workforce offices. In both instances, jobseekers will be encouraged to connect with LWDA's account, and to share information with others.

Our Region 6 boards are committed to establishing innovative ways to meet the needs of our employers with limited funding and resources. Forward thinking will create opportunities for local board, directors, and staff to reshape and expand workforce systems, policies, and practices that are grounded in research and experience to improve the education and employability of low-income people and people with barriers to employment. To bring these opportunities to fruition, local boards will utilize the opportunities available through WIOA

guidance. These improvements and changes will not happen automatically. WIOA directives are evolving each year and continue to establish new activities and requirements and codifies federal guidance and regulations that already exist. These changes create an opportunity to leverage systemic change across the currently disconnected education and training systems. Our One-Stop System of working with our AJC Partners ensures elimination of duplication of services therefore utilizing limited funding while maximizing effectiveness.

The LWDA 61 is completely focused on complying with Section 188 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) which prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in several areas, including employment. As it relates to employment, Title I of the ADA protects the rights of both employees and job seekers. The ADA also establishes requirements for telecommunications relay services. The LWDB 61 staff aid with programs and activities in a manner that makes services readily accessible to qualified individuals with disabilities. Our goals are to ensure staff and program personnel have the education, training, and experience (skill, ability, and knowledge) to perform assigned duties regarding nondiscrimination and quality of opportunity for persons with disabilities. LWDA 61 works closely with program partners, with the major of these being Louisiana Rehabilitation Services, made up of government agencies, community organizations, and private sector employers, to reach our area's job seekers with disabilities.

The Board believes these actions help ensure that communications with individuals with disabilities are as effective and equal to communications with non-disabled individuals. The Rapides One-Stop has assistive technology items in the One-Stop Center to assist individuals with disabilities to access a computer for the same services available to those without disabilities. The One-Stop staff has been trained to operate the assistive technology. The Rapides One-Stop meets basic ADA requirements for operation.

LWDA 60 recognizes the importance of full compliance with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as well as other applicable state rules. As part of our compliance verification, our designated EEO officer will conduct an annual review of physical and programmatic accessibility of our facilities, programs, and services. The review of facilities will be conducted using the ADA compliance checklist for facilities. All partners in the one-stop will be required to comply with all components of the checklist. This will ensure that Centers are fully accessible to all, and this review is submitted to the LWC's compliance officer.

Within our centers, we ensure that program staff possesses the skills and knowledge to provide assistance to differently abled individuals. This includes specific knowledge of the operation of each Center's assistive technology specifically designed for the visually and hearing impaired that includes access to the Language Line, DRAGON, and JAWS software.

(2) Implementation of Regional Strategy.

Describe how the lead State agency with responsibility for the administration of each core program or a Combined State Plan partner program included in this plan will implement the State's Strategies identified in II(c) above. This must include a description of—

(A) Core Program Activities to Implement Region 6 Strategy. Describe the activities the entities carrying out the respective core programs will implement the Region's strategies. Also, describe how such activities will be aligned across the core programs and combined.

Regional Plan partner programs included in this plan and among the entities administering the programs, including using co-enrollment and other strategies, as appropriate.

Our local board is committed to working to minimize overhead costs and streamline services for our community. Supporting LWC's to refocus on employment, training and education, and vocational rehabilitation programs, Region 6, LWDA 61 One-Stop Center and each affiliate One-Stop Center, through a combined infrastructure, strengthens the ability to provide seamless delivery and access to services in the following four (4) ways as defined by LWC's state plan.

- Increasing the focus on serving the most vulnerable workers (with limited skills, lack of work experience, and other barriers to economic success) through more focused profiling and assessment processes.
 - Researching education and training options to help participants' access good jobs to start/advance their careers.
 - Providing targeted, managed, and appropriate levels of supportive services to disadvantaged and unemployed adults and youth while they receive training and effective employment-based activities.
 - Supporting the alignment of planning and accountability policies across core programs to support more unified approaches to serving employers and jobseekers (those who are low-income, low-skilled individuals).
-
- **Implementation:** As a minimum, the following details required in WIOA must be crafted into a cost allocation and operation agreement for each of these Comprehensive One-Stop Centers and although they will be specific to the individual LWDA, they must contain detail on the following as a minimum:
 - Who will be physically present in the center – full or part-time?
 - When not physically present center staff will be required to supply support, i.e., provide customer guidance when using an online tool, etc.?
 - What services will be offered, and how do those services support a Career Pathway?
 - Defined interface with partner programs to provide seamless services.
 - Method of supervision and guidance provided to staff.
 - Defined administrative or other support required to be successful.
 - Facility costs.
 - Operational delivery, how services are delivered, by whom and when.

Cross-Program Strategies

As part of the region's approach to further integrate a stronger cross-program strategy that meets the needs of the various populations and sub populations, we seek opportunities to enhance services to best serve those individuals. Some of these strategies include:

- Priority of service has been set for adult training funds to serve low income individuals
- An integral partner in work/training requirements of SNAP and TANF recipients.
- Region-wide assistance and coordination to serve the ex-offender special population
- Strong commitment to serve youth in various summer youth training and employment programs that co-mingled and leverage local and federal funds
- Region-wide comprehensive re-employment efforts for those that are receiving unemployment insurance and have been profiled as likely to exhaust benefits.
- Support for all State initiatives to strengthen services to persons with disabilities and Veterans. Veterans' reps are fully integrated into the one-stop operations.
- Proactive regional approach to Rapid Response efforts, including intensive services for the workers impacted by lay-offs, providing joint orientations, joint coordination of specialized recruitment events, etc.
- Improved Adult Education collaboration and workforce coordination with the eleven entities engaged in those activities, as further detailed above

Cross-regional Stakeholder Partnerships:

- Expanded partnerships include numerous industry associations, such as Home Builder Association, Louisiana Restaurant Association, New Orleans Society for Human Resource Management, Northshore Society for Human Resource Management, and, to name a few.
- Improved economic development organization collaborations, including New Orleans Business Alliance, Regional Planning Commission, Greater New Orleans, Inc., St. Tammany Corporation, JEDCO, to name a few.
- Expanded relationships with the Louisiana Small Business Development Center, Greater New Orleans Data Center, and the Literacy Alliance.

Leveraging and Aligning Resources

In times of competing demands upon limited resources, not only is leveraging resources vital to success and sustainability, so are efforts to increase the flow of resources to the region. The region has developed a systematic approach to applying for grants that will benefit the region. We will continue to seek out opportunities to leverage financial resources of stakeholder partners, such as the contracts to share in the cost of data access with the Regional Planning Commission and Greater New Orleans, Inc., and numerous co-location efforts. All funding opportunities that are

aligned with and that promote regional goals and activities continue to be heavily investigated. Additionally, concepts for self-generated revenue continue to be explored to off-set future budgetary funding cuts and shortfalls.

The region also supports efforts being made by the Louisiana Workforce Commission to assist in facilitating the shared financial resources for mandated One-Stop Partners as it related to service delivery. Additionally, the region supports moving funds from TAA and IWTP to the local areas to serve businesses and jobseekers more directly as a pilot program.

Leveraging resources extends to the sharing of regional administrative and program costs, such as the development of a regional outreach piece. The region continues to share in the costs and management of regional projects where necessary and will begin to explore additional opportunities for sharing administrative and program costs in areas where most appropriate via an exploratory committee.

Regional Policy Alignment

Region Six continues to embrace the commitment toward policy alignment to streamline the workforce development system to better serve businesses and jobseekers, where appropriate. This approach supports a regionally based, integrated, employer-driven workforce development model that will ensure faster, more comprehensive, and more effective systematic and substantive transformation that supports the Governor's vision.

Some examples of policy alignment efforts include discussions of Regional processes for:

- On-the-Job Training processes and employer contracts
- Funding caps for Individual Training Accounts (ITA)
- Applying for and supporting local, regional, and partner grant applications
- Rapid Response efforts
- Regional Career Fair events
- Shared Professional development.

The region can advance policy alignment efforts because of the ongoing and productive joint planning and communication that, under normal circumstances, is regularly held between the WDB Directors in the region.

Conclusion of Regional Portion

The Workforce Development Board Partnership continues to exhibit a unique strength and ability to be responsive and proactive to the changing economic times of the eight parishes that are represented in Region 6. The four Boards will not only continue to strive for excellence individually, but also serve as an incubator for workforce development innovation. We look forward to overcoming challenges and advancing the region to serve as a model for the State and in the nation.



Attachments:

Region Six– Local Workforce Development Area Plans

LWDA 60 Six Planning District Local Plan & Attachments

LWDA 61: Rapides Local Plan & Attachments

LWDA 60 LOCAL PLAN (chapters 4-6)

CHAPTER 4

OPERATING SYSTEMS AND POLICIES

Coordination of Planning Requirements

LWDA 60 developed a comprehensive Memorandum of Understanding with our Workforce Development partners to define the parameters within which education, workforce, economic development, and other Partner programs and entities operating in the Local Workforce Development Area create a seamless, customer-focused American Job Center network that aligns service delivery across the board and enhances access to program services. By realizing one-stop opportunities together, partners are able to build community-benefiting bridges, rather than silos of programmatic isolation. These partnerships will reduce administrative burden and costs and increase customer access and performance outcomes.

LWDB 60's Memorandum of Understanding provides a description of the One-Stop delivery system's roles and resource contributions 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)

Local Workforce Development Board 60's 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.

Technology in the One-Stop

In LWDA 60, many of the services provided through the one-stop delivery system are available through our online labor exchange services, HiRE, at www.laworks.net. This online system provides a complete set of employment tools for jobseekers in Louisiana. Jobseekers and employers access jobs, resumes, education, training and labor market information. Once a jobseeker or employer access HiRE, the system will provide guidance on how to register, identify their skill sets, create a resume(s), and utilize the job search features to look for a job, communicate with employers through message center, and apply for jobs. Labor market information is also available, as is information on occupations and training programs. Additionally, we use social media, Facebook, and Constant Contact, to provide a broad and aggressive communication avenue for job center events and services.

LWDA 60 utilizes tools such as HiRE to be as accessible as possible and provide services to those located in rural or remote areas. HiRE can be utilized via smart phone or public computer with many services offered remotely.

Local Board's Support of Strategies Identified in the Combined State Plan

Region 6 workforce teams are working diligently to create a strong integrated network with key agencies and community partners to expand accessibility and wrap-around services for individuals with barriers seeking employment. In developing deeper connections with partnership programs that support these individuals will further promote and simplify efforts to match employment programming more closely to each person in need.

LWDA 60 will participate in on-going cross training opportunities with our partners. LWDA 60 is also currently working with the One-Stop Operator to strengthen our collaboration and facilitate the resource training within our mandated and optional partner network. Cross training our partners and the staff of all WIOA core programs will help our people to develop innovative service delivery practices to include co-enrollment of participants, ensuring the needs of the job seeker is met. We look forward expanding knowledge and access to services, clarifying community awareness of our programs and services and discovering ways to enhance our partnerships for the benefit of the community.

Regions 6 aims to empower and coach our most vulnerable community members and customers through an integrated, cumulative and agile services continuum, moving from initial engagement through job retention, unique to every person, and resulting in long-term employment that fulfills an individual's passion, meets financial needs, embodies skill development, and supports well-being.

LWDA 60 utilizes the Integrated Education and Training models by helping adults obtain their HiSET and other basic skills such as English Language acquisition, while earning industry recognized credentials leading to in demand occupations. LWDA 60 collaborates with Central Louisiana Technical Community College (CLTCC) in the provision of adult education and literacy activities.

Regions 6 focuses on development of career pathways that align with the skill needs of industries. Career pathways align and integrate education (including Adult Basic Education and English Language Learners), job training, counseling and support services to create accelerated pathways that enable low-skilled adults and youth to obtain a secondary school diploma (or recognized equivalent) and a postsecondary education credential, leading to employment in in-demand occupations.

Dual Credit Program, or Dual Enrollment is the simultaneous enrollment of a student at both high school and college, allowing the student to received credits at each. Students may enroll in college courses at local technical, community, and/or four year colleges. The course can be taught by either a college instructor or an approved high school teacher. The program is beneficial as it allows students to reduce college costs, complete education sooner, and allows for a smoother transition into college. The dual credit program allows for certificate and degree attainment for underserved populations.

LWDA 60 encourages participants to speak with their training provider about utilizing their prior learning through a “Prior Learning Assessment” to gain credits towards their degree, reducing completion time. Prior learning could include professional certifications or military credit.

Maintaining relationships and communication with our local postsecondary educators encourages their involvement in the development of career pathways, both to facilitate strong institutional connections among career pathways stakeholders in the workforce and education fields, and to ensure that pathways provide meaningful access for individuals and especially those who are still acquiring basic skills or have barriers to further their education and obtain gainful employment.

Effective outreach, by our professional workforce staff, with our region’s educational institutions provide opportunities for our education partners to collaborate with workforce system partners to establish effective referrals, co-enrollment, and a handoff processes for participants, thereby increasing the participant’s chances of success.

LWDA 60 recognizes that the demand for *portable and stackable credentials* is emerging as the focus is on providing equitable access to postsecondary education and training and for increasing postsecondary credential attainment successes. If we, in Region 6, are to meet the skill needs of employers and provide workers with those skills required for higher levels of employment and earnings, more individuals must obtain postsecondary credentials. Emphasis is be placed on work-based learning strategies that align with business needs in Region 6. With support to LWCs focus on Registered Apprenticeships, in particular those representing “in demand” occupations, as a way to address middle skill jobs, local boards will mirror the goal of engaging in screening and assessment for current registered programs.

Local Coordination Strategies to Enhance Service Delivery

The local board collaborates with the state, regional, and local partners to ensure strategy coordination to enhance services and avoid duplication of activities.

Adult

Region 6 operates its Adult training program to identify workers who currently need, or will need, higher levels of education to fare better in the labor market, to reduce incidences and shorten durations of unemployment, while supporting higher earnings and job stability.

Adults, other than “true” dislocated workers, who come to our One-Stops typically have lost or quit a job, recently moved into the area, or did not qualify for unemployment, and are usually looking for high-wage, in-demand occupations. Unfortunately, these adults are rarely qualified to fill those occupations. These adults are usually in need of post-secondary education, generally resulting in a degree or industry-recognized credential in order to qualify for these high-wage, in-demand occupations. Many individuals need assistance to overcome barriers to employment such as, low-income individuals, older individuals, ex-offenders, youth in or aged out of foster

care system, single parents (including single pregnant women), long-term underemployed, individuals with disabilities, including youth who are individuals with disabilities, displaced homemakers, homeless individuals, English language learners, etc.

Emphasis shall be placed on work-based learning strategies that align with business needs in Region 6. With LWCs focus on Registered Apprenticeships as a way to address middle skill jobs, local boards will mirror the goal of engaging in screening and assessment for current registered programs.

Adult basic education (ABE) programs that are linked to employment or postsecondary education can help low-skilled adult learners advance along a career path and improve their employment and earnings. Region 6 One-stop centers will continue to [assist](#) job seekers with accessing employment, education, training, and support services they need to meet employers' requirements and succeed in our labor market. LWDA 60 Priority of Service Policy ensures this initiative is implemented by defining members of priority groups for with various barriers to success.

Region 6's goal to fulfill the Title 1, Priority of Service requirement, is to leverage all available funding streams and partnerships with priority access to higher-intensity career services and training adults with various barriers to employment. Based on our LWC's Priority of Service policy, 51% of those adults receiving training assistance must fall into the following criteria:

Veterans that are:

- Public assistance recipient, or
- Low-income, or
- Deficient in basic skills

Non-veterans that are:

- Public assistance recipient, or
- Low-income, or
- Deficient in Basic skills

The remaining 49% of the adults receiving training assistance may fall into these criteria:

Veterans who are not:

- Public assistance recipients, or
- Low-income, or
- Deficient in Basic Skills

Non-Veterans who are not:

- Public assistance recipients, or
- Low-income, or

- Deficient in Basic Skills

To ensure the proper priority of service is provided, LWDB 60 reports to LWC:

- 1) the number of individuals with barriers to employment served by each core program, with specific breakdowns by subpopulation and 2) the number of individuals with barriers to employment that are served by the Adult and Dislocated Worker program, with specific breakdowns by subpopulation, race ethnicity, gender and age.

Dislocated Worker

The staff in the regional One-Stops utilize the LWC's OWD 2.3 Integrated Service Delivery Model to assess the needs of dislocated work, their barriers to employment, which career services would best assist the individual and the necessary follow up after the services have been provided.

Layoffs are immensely challenging for workers and employers. The Region 6 Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) while already focused on providing programs and services that grow employers and workers alike – closing major skills gaps to employment are committed to work with other partners (training and supportive service providers) to assist both. For dislocated workers seeking suitable new employment, local offices will work as quickly as possible in helping them to overcome difficult barriers that include but are not limited to; transferring specialized skills to another occupation, age or length of work experience, and the lack of jobs with the earnings level comparable to their previous position.

When a plant shut down or large-scale layoff occurs, direct services to those affected workers are focused to help them find suitable new employment and get back to work as quickly as possible. Staff at the One-Stop Centers begin to implement the services formulated to offer dislocated workers a variety of resources prior to, during and after the layoff occurred.

The ultimate goal is to provide this population with improved services and access to education, training and other workforce services. To do this, as with the Adult Program Dislocated Worker services are specific to the individual's needs. While working with a case manager, they develop an Individualized Employment Plan (IEP) that includes: career planning and counseling, job search and placement, approved training, and other needed support services.

Youth

Because there is no single specific system designed to meet the specific development needs of In and Out-of-School Youth (16 to 24), Region 6 LWDB's with its core partners, and partner programs are committed to targeting resources for this population. This Youth population could be served as part of the Adult workforce system; however, doing so would inevitably result in some developmental needs going unmet. The Region 6 Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) through aggressive outreach will work to identify at-risk Youth by developing specific interventions within their Youth Programs.

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Region 6 Board’s policies follow LWC’s OWD 2-21 Youth Program Operations which includes that not less than 20% of the youth funds allocated to our Boards be used to provide in-school and out-of-school youth with work experiences such as summer employment as well as through the calendar year, pre-apprenticeship, internship, job shadowing, and on-the-job training.

The Boards in Region 6 are fully committed with the local school boards in Cooperative Endeavor Agreements to Engage Out-of-School Youth. These agreements provide an opportunity for the student who has dropped out to connect with Youth Services available to assist them in preparing them for the world of work. Workforce Professionals must have the consent of the student’s parents (no consent is required if the student is over the age of 18). The goal of the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement is to enroll dropouts as out-of-school youth and assist the youth in gaining their high school equivalency and employment. The youth service delivery model supports the implementation of Career Pathways that encourages post-secondary education.

Ultimately, the focus is on serving the most vulnerable workers – including low-income youth facing barriers to employment with limited skills and work experience. Region 6 LWDBs are committed to directing eligible youth participants to development, education, and support resources to help prepare youth for successful employment.

Per LWC’s State Plan (title 20 CFR Section 681.400), Local boards must identify youth service providers based on criteria set forth in current state plan. Focusing our recruitment strategies to encourage participation in WIOA program(s), our mission is to encourage and empower our youth with decision making capabilities to include:

- Finding a career path that fits their interests and lifestyle
- Gain work experience (paid and unpaid)
- Learn about employment internship opportunities and on-the-job training
- Develop leadership skills
- Explore community leadership and mentoring opportunities
- Obtain a high school diploma or equivalency
- Enroll in postsecondary education
- Complete vocational training or college
- Earn cash incentives
- Obtain employment with their chosen career path.

LWDA 60 Workforce Operations Department (WOD) does not procure youth services but provides them in-house or by referral to the appropriate agency. Decisions to refer are based on personalized case management and upon intake and assessment of individual needs of the participant. The following table illustrates the Fourteen Youth Program Services available to participants enrolled in WIOA and the process by which each service would be provided or referred to eligible participants. Utilizing comprehensive training programs provided through agencies such as Success Training Institute (STI), the WOD staff will provide many of the 14 elements in house through intensive case management.

Fourteen Youth Program Services available through WIOA		
	Program Element	Service Provided
1	Tutoring / Study Skills Training	This element is provided by WOD youth staff by using the either the Workkeys Curriculum and/or the STI curriculum that meets and supports this element through helping individuals build the essential career-relevant skills needed for learning, personal development and effective job performance. Referral(s) to an outside agency, depending on specific needs of the participant, like Literacy programs.
2	Alternative Secondary School Services or Dropout Recovery	This element will be provided by the WOD staff utilizing STI curriculum which supports this element through video courses, end of course exams, etc. WOD staff maintain partnerships and referral process to and from organizations such as the Rapides Parish School Board. Coordination with alternative school(s) and credit recovery programs such as The Rapides Alternative Positive Program for Students (RAPPS). Also, co-located in the One-Stop is Central LA Technical College (CLTCC) providing adult education through the WorkReady U program services and opportunities for secondary education include; HiSET, Secondary Credential Preparation, Basic Skills Remediation and English as a second language.
3	Work Experiences	This element is provided in-house by the WOD staff providing training and providing help in resume creation, job applications, work ethics, etc. Staff, in collaboration with area partners and employers, develop paid and/or unpaid work experience positions for eligible youth participants throughout each program year that could include but not limited to; summer employment, pre-apprenticeship programs, internships and job shadowing, or On-the-Job training. STI curriculum may be offered in support of this element.
4	Occupational Skills Training	This element is provided by the WOD staff utilizing the ETPL and through referral to an eligible training provider to enroll youth for training for accredited postsecondary and occupational accredited programs for demand occupations. Tuition/fees and supportive services may be provided to eligible participants. Also, STI curriculum may be utilized to support this element to provide virtual training to eligible youth participants.
5	Career Pathways	This element is provided by the WOD staff in partnership with the Rapides Parish School Board's Jumpstart Initiative, and by participating in regional events such as: youth job fairs, the Orchard Foundation's events and projects. Also, staff use STI curriculum to administer and support this element. STI provides training and workforce preparation courses such as: Positive Mindset, Dress for Success, and Time Management and other mandatory and optional classes. WOD staff, through comprehensive case management and assessment, provide an effective approach to the development of a skilled workforce through the organization of education, training, and other services to meet the particular needs of an individual in a manner that accelerates the educational and career advancement of the individual to the extent practicable.
6	Leadership Development	This element is provided by the WOD staff using the STI curriculum that meets and supports this element. STI curriculum contains in-depth training courses that encourage responsibility, confidence, employability, self-determination, and other positive social behaviors that aid in Leadership Development.
7	Supportive Services	This element is provided in-house by WOD staff utilizing WIOA Youth program funds when the youth participant is unable to obtain financial assistance for services. Some of the supportive services provided to eligible participants include; Tuition assistance, school supplies, books, work and interview clothes, transportation assistance, rent, food, utilities, etc. WOD staff will administer this element and offer STI courses that support this element that include but not limited to;

		Proactive Thinking, Establishing Lasting Partnerships, Connecting with Communities, Requesting and Seeking Assistance.
8	Adult Mentoring	This element is provided in-house by WOD staff to include structured activities where the youth case manager offers guidance, support, and encouragement to help develop the competence and character of the youth participant. STI curriculum meets and supports this element via National Online Mentorship Programs where youth are connected to Adult Mentors and courses on topics that include: Mentorship, Cultivating Relationships, Transparency, Establishing Trust, Communication, and more. This element is provided by youth staff until services are no longer needed.
9	Follow-up Services	This element is provided in-house by WOD staff for not less than 12 months after completion of participation and may include the following program elements: vocational guidance, employment services, and supportive services such as; assisting with Pell Grants, completing FAFSA application, job searches and matching, etc.
10	Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling	This element is provided in-house by WOD youth workforce professionals or by referral to an outside agency per the needs of the participant. STI course curriculum, which supports this element, will be used to enhance the learning experience of the participant. STI offers Workforce Readiness Courses including; Interviewing skills, Job Retention and Personal Maintenance. Case management may include referrals to external agencies providing low-fee or no-fee, specialized counseling that could include drug and alcohol abuse treatment.
11	Financial Literacy	Financial Literacy is provided in-house by WOD staff, utilizing STI curriculum courses that include Financial literacy classes, budget, checking and saving accounts, managing spending and debt, etc. Referral(s) could be made to an outside agency per the needs of the participant. In-school youth (ISY) are required to take financial management courses in order to graduate. However; ISY may be referred to JAG through our local school board.
12	Entrepreneurial Skills Training	This element is provided in-house by WOD staff through STI curriculum to deliver and/or support this element. Referrals to employers who will provide job shadowing in demand jobs that align with the participants skills and capabilities. Entrepreneurial skills training could also include workshops and referral to small business services.
13	Provision of Labor Market and Career Awareness Information	Labor Market Information is provided by WOD youth staff on an individual basis, utilizing LMI resources available at www.laworks.net .
14	Post-Secondary Preparation Activities	Activities that aid or help to prepare youth participants for and to transition to postsecondary education and training is provided in-house by WOD staff. The staff assists youth participants with program elements could include; postsecondary transition, budgeting assistance, housing search assistance, assistance completing school applications, program area of study, Pell grants, and the FAFSA. In support of this training, WOD staff might also offer coursework through the STI curriculum.

Adult education and literacy activities under WIOA Title II

LCTCS currently operates Louisiana's Comprehensive Adult Education System, WorkReady (WRU) and partners through co-enrollment with the Louisiana Workforce Commission's Business and Career Solutions Centers, offering services at nearly 200 Adult Education instructional sites around Louisiana. In Region 6, the Central Louisiana Technical Community College (CLTCC) assumed the responsibility of providing the academic instruction and education services to improve the public's ability to:

- Read, write and speak English and perform mathematics or other activities necessary for the attainment of a second school diploma or its recognized equivalent;
- Transition to postsecondary education and training, and
- Obtain Employment.

There are sixteen (16) HISET locations, seven (7) in LWDA 60 and nine (9) in LWDA 61, to service the needs in the seven (7) parishes of Region 6. WIOA requires the alignment of workforce, education and economic development systems to support access to high-quality, comprehensive and accessible workforce services for all individuals, including those with significant barriers to employment. Adult Education and Literacy (Title II) is identified as one of four required core partners in WIOA and the common goal is to ensure the delivery of quality education services for adult learners and access to a comprehensive workforce development system.

LCTCS installed a technology link (kiosk) in the comprehensive centers in Region 6 that provide customers with more accessibility to Adult Education services and information.

Wagner-Peyser

WIOA eliminates stand-alone Wagner-Peyser Employment Services. These services are provided alongside partner programs within one-stop center. Therefore, unemployment insurance claimants, priority population, and all other clients receive the same services which include: job training, labor exchange, career counseling and labor market intelligence. UI claimants also receive eligibility assessments and referrals to an array of educational resources and training through the Wagner-Peyser Employment Service program.

The Employment Service focuses on providing a variety of employment related labor exchange services including but not limited to job search assistance, job referral, and placement assistance for job seekers, re-employment services to unemployment insurance claimants, and recruitment services to employers with job openings. Services are delivered in one of three modes including self-service, facilitated self-help services and staff assisted service delivery approaches. Depending on the needs of the labor market other services such as job seeker assessment of skill levels, abilities and aptitudes, career guidance when appropriate, job search workshop and referral to training may be available.

Job seekers who are Veterans receive priority referral to jobs and training as well as special employment services and assistance. In addition, the system provides specialized attention and service to individuals with disabilities, migrant and seasonal farmworkers, ex-offenders, youth, minorities and older workers.

Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) provides services to help persons with disabilities obtain the job skills and other resources they need to get a job, keep a job, and develop a career. LRS operates under an Order of Selection criteria, Categories I-V, where Category I is most severe and Category V is the least severe. When funding is not sufficient to serve all individuals, those with the most severe disabilities receive priority of service through LRS. LRS is currently serving Categories I-IV. Those assessed with less than the most severe disabilities (Category V) are referred to the One-Stop Center in the region for assistance. The LRS Program Coordinator for rehabilitation technology provides consultation to staff in the comprehensive centers, instructs staff on usage of assistive technology and accessibility issues.

Optional One-Stop Delivery System Partners

The following is a brief description of the methods and procedures for each program and how these tie together for participants needing multi-tiered program service delivery.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

The Louisiana Department of Children and Families Services (DCFS) provides cash assistance and supportive services to needy families meeting specific financial criteria and provide services necessary to accomplish the goals and purposes of Section 401 of the Social Security Act (42 USC 601).

- Provide assistance to needy families so that children may be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives.
- End dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work and marriage.
- Prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancy.
- Encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.

LWC partnered with DCFS in 2014 to assist Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients in developing high-demand job skills and move toward self-sufficiency and end the dependence on governmental benefits.

Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)

The Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program is available to workers who lose their jobs or experience reduced hours or income as a result of increased foreign trade activity. The TAA Program offers a variety of benefits and services to eligible workers, including income support, a tax credit to help pay the costs of health insurance, and a wage subsidy to workers 50 years of age and older. Trade services are considered an integral part of the One-Stop Center's service delivery and may involve any and all partners based on the particular needs of individual clients. As such, trade-affected workers may be eligible for:

- Training services.
- Job-search allowances.
- Relocation allowances.
- Re-employment services.
- Funded training.
- On-the-job training.

Like the dislocated worker program, TAA-funded training helps trade-impacted workers obtain the skills necessary to gain suitable employment. TAA will pay tuition, course fees, books and required supplies and equipment, transportation and other items or services deemed necessary for completion of an approved occupational skills training program, including Registered Apprenticeship programs.

LWC staff provides case management services, career guidance and labor market information to assist TAA eligible participants in making appropriate training and career decisions. Trade-affected workers may be eligible for training services, job search allowances, relocation allowances, re-employment services, funded training, and on-the-job training. While enrolled in training, TAA eligible participants are also co-enrolled with WIOA and eligible for WIOA supportive services.

Louisiana Department of Child & Family Services: DCFS is a key partner with LWDA 60, particularly in ensuring that there is no duplication of supportive and training services and/or funding to recipients who are participants.

Co-enrollment is encouraged and facilitated through the comprehensive intake process. Participants referred to the program, through DCFS, must complete a comprehensive assessment and develop an individualized employment plan with a case manager, at a personalized one on one appointment. Subsequently, at the one on one appointment, the case manager will complete a WIOA pre-enrollment shall be created in HiRE.

Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG)

LWC's Jobs for Veterans State Grant-funded activities are co-located within the Rapides One-Stop. JVSG staff, the Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP), provides employment, training and placement services to veterans and eligible persons according to need, and significant barriers to employment. Through this grant, the advantages of hiring veterans are promoted to employers, employer associations, and business groups.

There are almost 9,000 veterans in Region 6, which is close to 5.6% of the total civilian regional population aged 18 and older. The region also has a Veterans Representative, LVER and / or DVOP, who will act as an advocate for veteran hiring to the employer community. JVSG staff referred to as Local veteran Employment Representative (LVER) and Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialist are essential parts of and fully integrated into the workforce development network. The veterans' program is operating a fully functional re-entry program. The state has requested 1% of its annual allocation for each year's JVSG grant as performance incentive awards for eligible staff. Services are provided to veterans and eligible persons by JVSG staff members according to the needs of the veteran, any significant barrier to employment they may possess and the roles and responsibilities of JVSG personnel. The basic objective of the awards program is to create an awareness and continuous level of interest in the importance of priority of service for veterans and an environment that engenders continuous improvement in serving veterans across the spectrum of service.

Unemployment Insurance Programs (UI)

LWDA 60's One-Stop staff provides telephone and internet access to UI Claimants who need to reach the LWC UI Division

When it comes to partnering with unemployment programs, the One-Stop Centers plays a vital role. The local and LWC staff assist dislocated workers on programs such as RESEA (Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment) that target services to those likely to be unemployed for extended periods of time. The State's RESEA program is designed to provide intensive reemployment assistance to individuals who are receiving unemployment benefits and are determined likely to exhaust their benefits before becoming reemployed and transitioning veterans receiving Unemployment Compensation for Ex-Service members. These reemployment services result in shorter claim durations and fewer erroneous payments.

Utilizing the guidance from LWC, Region 6 local workforce development board have worked to develop strategies to strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and the UI program. Aligning multi-program services and collaborating with workforce partners are critical for this service integration.

Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)

It is the intent of the Boards to continue with the excellent collaboration that currently exists between the Title V program and the other One-Stop system partners. The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) is a community service and work-based training program for older workers. Authorized by the Older Americans Act, the program provides subsidized, service-based training for low-income persons 55 or older who are unemployed and have poor employment prospects. Participants have access to both SCSEP services and other employment assistance through One-Stop Centers. Older workers' value lies in their attention to detail, emphasis on customer service, and the technical skills and experience they bring from various professions including medical, engineering and manufacturing fields. Employers will be encouraged to recognize the value older workers bring to the workplace including responsibility, loyalty, dedication and their ability to mentor younger employees. Two SCSEP grantees are operating in Region 6, The National Association of Hispanic Elderly and Institute for Indian Development Inc., servicing the older workers in our region.

Job Corps

Job Corps is a **free** education and training program that helps young people learn a career, earn a high school diploma or HiSET, and find and keep a good job. For eligible young people at least 16 years of age that qualify as low income, Job Corps provides the all-around skills needed to succeed in a career and in life. Job Corps has a satellite office in Alexandria that is co-located within the LWDB 60's comprehensive center.

Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)

The mission of the Cenla Community Action Committee, Inc. (CenlaCAC), funded through the Community Service Block Grant (CSBG), is to serve, train, advocate, and collaborate for low-income residents to reduce poverty and promote economic stability in Rapides Parish. Programs vary depending on the locally assessed needs and circumstances of each community, but generally include emergency rental/mortgage assistance, emergency shelter, emergency utility assistance, free income tax assistance, job training, food pantries, clothing and hygiene closet, infant diapering and adult incontinence services, medical prescriptions, credit counseling, income management, first-time homebuyer education, high school equivalency testing, parenting education, fatherhood initiatives, re-entering citizens and health services. The programs and services of the CSBG Unit and Community Action Agencies are a major component of the Louisiana Workforce continuum of services. CenlaCAC has four (4) satellite offices; one of which is co-located within the LWDB 60's comprehensive center since August 2019.

Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education

The Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V) was signed into law July 31, 2018. This Act, which became Public Law 115-224, reauthorizes the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (Perkins IV). Perkins V makes changes that

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will affect the implementation of Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs and administrative process. Louisiana's Perkins V State Perkins Plan was approved by the secretary of Education on June 12, 2020.

The Louisiana Community and Technical College System institutions are planning cooperatively through Perkins V and WIOA planning to provide workforce skills training and integrated work-based training to meet regional employer and economic development needs. State partners ~~will~~ continue to work with local and regional workforce development boards and partners to define and build pathways appropriate to the region

Supportive Services

Supportive service needs will be determined as a function of the enrollment and assessment process for each participant.

LWDB 60's policy is to provide supportive services to eligible participants should the need arise with the provision that participants are unable to obtain financial assistance for those services at any other community partner/agency. If it is determined that lack of transportation or other needs are a barrier to a participant completing a training program / securing licensure, as long as funds are available, assistance will be provided to the participant with proper documentation placed both in the participant HiRE account through case notes and in the participant files.

LWDA 60 board has developed policies to ensure that there is no duplication of services, and that financial assistance is resourced through other partner and community agencies providing such services prior to expending WIOA funds.

See Attachment 1 **WDBA 60 Policy #12 Issue 10** (Supportive Services – Adult and Dislocated Workers)

See Attachment 2 **WDBA 60 Policy #14 Issue 8** (Youth Supportive Services)

WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Services

Area 60 coordinates both employment and training services mandated by the WIOA so that job seekers skills and credentials meet employers' needs. Customers receive services based on their individual needs. Every effort possible is made to provide information, access, and opportunity to clients, using services and cohort groups, based on availability of activities and funding.

Business and Career Solutions in conjunction with Wagner-Peyser and Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act. AREA 60 provides a coordinated and integrated service approach to our customers, thus avoiding duplication and streamlining costs. The goal is to provide all job seekers with a focused career path toward self-sufficiency.

Workforce Professionals assists clients with developing the skills needed to obtain employment that leads to self-sufficiency. Area 60 provides assistance with job search/job placement, interviewing skills, and resume development. Area 60 also creates the individualized employment plans and conducts assessments to determine if skills up-grade training is needed to obtain self-sufficiency.

Our Workforce Professionals, as well as the Regional Business Service Coordinator, actively recruit and refer job seekers who meet the specified qualifications of employer job openings.

The Business Services Coordinator work within the region to develop and execute workforce development strategies that meet the employment and training needs of the regions' employers to increase the access rate in the community. Business Services Coordinator works directly with employers to identify employer needs, propose solutions to training gaps and to promote the services and programs available at the Area 60 Career Centers. The Business Service Coordinator analyzes industry, employer and labor market data and researches the best policies, procedures and programs in order to develop recommendations for appropriate business solutions.

Area 60 works closely with partners to ensure service delivery is as seamless as possible. The career center has a resource area that includes a bulletin board for posting job openings, computer access for job seekers, and other relevant information of upcoming job fairs and events, as the central core of career center operations. Customers requiring assistance accessing services have knowledgeable staff available to provide assistance with using the internet, job search software, and resume development programs. All center staff are trained to recognize customer needs for facilitated self-help and direct customers to career services as required. Those customers requiring more intensive services have access to career aptitude/interest assessments and career counseling services. Job seekers have access to job listings and on-line resume services.

Efforts to achieve improved performance and increased customer satisfaction have resulted in a thorough cross training and integration of center staff. This method lends itself to enhanced performance, with additional resources, talents and options, and allows the operation to constantly evolve and respond to the needs of job seeker and business customers. It also helps to support customer satisfaction and accountability through common performance measures and to respond to an ever-changing labor market.

The AREA 60 Business and Career Solutions Center endeavors to offer multifaceted services in a system that advocates customer choice. It is the intent of Area 60 and its partners to provide a progressive delivery system of workforce development services, contained within a single point of contact and in a customer-friendly, accessible environment. All One Stop Career Center partners share this vision.

The services provided by WIOA Adult, WIOA Dislocated Workers, WIOA Youth, Wagner-Peyser, Veterans, Rapid Response, and TAA are available at the AREA 60 Business and Career Solutions Center and are coordinated, with focus on quality services to meet employer

demand, customer choice and decision making, by cross-trained staff. Additionally, the local One Stop partners with the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) to provide re-employment services to individuals receiving Unemployment Insurance (U.I.). The LWC has staff assigned at the local One Stop to assist with engaging and addressing the employment needs of U.I. participants. Participants in need of upgrading skills or job placement assistance are connected to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) services and training programs.

Intake and Case Management Information System

The Area 60 Business and Career Solutions Center currently operates using an integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information system called HiRE (Helping Individuals Reach Employment). HiRE is administered and maintained by the Louisiana Workforce Commission and can be accessed at www.louisianaworks.net. HiRE is a comprehensive workforce development program that provides integrated services via the internet for individuals, employers, training providers, workforce staff, and One Stop partners.

Once an individual is registered, HiRE tracks every service provided. The system reports services delivered from any location, whether the customer is at home, or working with staff. Services are tracked and measured by individual, event, location, and staff member. HiRE tracks the services provided to both employers and job seekers.

The software's advanced case management functionality allows staff to automatically review and determine program eligibility, conduct common intake and program enrollment, record detailed case notes, assign multiple cases, complete Individual Employment Plans (IEPs), assist Veterans, provide referrals, track placement and outcomes, and conduct timely follow-ups.

Employment and Training Activities

Area 60 offers an array of employment and training services designed to eliminate barriers and to allow participants to achieve a self-sustaining wage. Each participant is assessed and triaged to determine their level of job readiness.

Individuals are assisted and provided a roadmap to success. Based on the initial assessment, the individual is registered as either an Adult or Dislocated Worker. A comprehensive assessment, individual employment plan, career planning and counseling are then provided which determine the appropriate employment and training services. These services can include:

- O*Net - Tool used for career exploration
- Alison - Online tool that provides free courses and certificates in a variety of topics
- Individual Training Account – Occupational skills training programs that leads to certifications for eligible participants
- On-the-Job Training - Participants gain additional skills and training while employed

- Work Experience - Individuals with little to no work experience are placed in subsidized employment. This service is provided to individuals with multiple barriers including ex-offenders and individuals with disabilities.
- Customized Job Fairs - Job Fairs that are customized to meet an identified need
- Resume Workshop
- Planning Your Job Search Workshop
- Interviewing Skills Workshop
- Financial Literacy Workshop

Employer Services

Employer Services are a critical component of WIOA basic career service delivery, providing direct value to employers, employer associations, or other such organizations. The Area 60 Business and Career Solutions Centers is responsive to the demands of the employers in the local labor market, including small business, while coordinating with other partners within the workforce system who also provide employer and business engagement services. With high quality and tailored services, the goal is that employers will turn to the Area 60 career center for assistance with their hiring needs.

While there are many types of businesses in the region, the career center operator is charged with identifying employers in target industries and occupations. Target companies are those with a significant number of jobs in the region. Region 60 has identified the following three priority industry sectors based on regional labor market demand:

- i. Advanced Manufacturing
- ii. Healthcare
- iii. Information Technology

Additional companies and industries are also served based on human resource needs.

The local Board is focused on ensuring that Area 60 provides an employer-driven service delivery system that meets the needs of employers. The main component of employer services is linking employers to and/or retaining a skilled workforce. The AREA 60 Business and Career Solutions Center provides customized business services that may include the following services and activities:

- Customized Recruiting and Screening Services
 - Advertising job openings;
 - Providing customized recruitments;
 - Customized screening of applicants;
 - Providing job profiling;
 - Offering job matching;
 - Providing access to space;
 - Conducting job fairs;

- Access to Training Services
 - On-the-Job Training;
 - Customized training;

- Employer Professional Development Services
 - Educating businesses on various training models available throughout the region.
 - Providing retention services, including working with employers to design strategies and provide support that helps employees stay on the job or advance after placement.
 - Facilitating, monitoring, and measuring coordination between one stop centers and large employment efforts region-wide, including job fairs; and
 - Developing and implementing an employer satisfaction surveys to measure system-wide coordination for employers.

Additionally, the Board is focused on assisting small businesses with growth and development.

Registered Apprenticeships

The Board recognizes apprenticeship programs as an important component of our talent development strategies. Registered Apprenticeship Programs have a documented success rate connecting job seekers to high paying jobs. Referrals to apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs are routinely integrated into the career guidance and career exploration services offered through the local career center.

Most registered apprenticeship programs are in the electrical trade occupations, which are high-demand occupations within the Central Louisiana region. The local board is committed to working to provide more apprenticeship opportunities to job seekers.

Rapid Response

For the purpose of reconnecting dislocated workers to employment quickly, the Board will offer professional and timely support to the state's Rapid Response activities. The Board will coordinate with the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC), and other agencies to ensure employees affected by a lay-off due to company closure or downsizing have the resources needed to immediately reconnect to the labor market. The Rapid Response Team will include representatives from the LWC Rapid Response Unit, Area 60 Business and Career Solutions Centers, and the LWC Unemployment Insurance Unit (via staff person, pamphlet, or brochures).

The Board's goal is to bring the services directly to the affected employees before their separation date by:

- Meeting with employers' representatives to plan rapid response activities;
- Offering on site orientations, job readiness workshops, and job matching /referral services; and
- Ensuring that once the lay-off occurs, the dislocated worker continues to obtain services, as needed, through the Area 60 Business and Career Solutions Centers.

Youth Workforce Activities, Eligibility and Assessment

LWDA 60 provides youth workforce activities to youth, aged 14-24, in-school and out-of-school in Rapides Parish. It is the policy of the LWDB to spend at least 75% of youth funds on out-of-school youth and at least 20% of youth funds on work experiences, including summer employment and pre-apprenticeship programs. An excellent example of a successful model is LWDA 60's Youth Summer Work Experience program, engaging dozens of local employers, providing work experience opportunities for our area's youth. Another successful model is Partners in Literacy through Volunteers of America. They provide literacy training for individuals scoring less than 6th grade on the TABE assessment.

The following is an example of program activities provided to or offered to the eligible youth participant/applicant in Region 6:

- Provide an assessment of academic levels, skill levels and occupational skills, prior work experience, employability, interests and aptitudes.
- Develop service strategies for each participant that directly links to one or more of the established performance indicators.
- Provide:
 - Activities leading to the attainment of a secondary school diploma or recognized equivalent.
 - Preparation for postsecondary educational/training opportunities.
 - Preparation for unsubsidized employment opportunities.
 - Effective connections to employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations.
 - Develop Pay-for-Performance contract strategy for which no more than 10% of the local allocation may be used.

In order to support the attainment of a secondary school diploma or recognized equivalent, entry into postsecondary education, and career readiness for participants, the program will provide The Fourteen Elements.

LWC's Combined State Plan (Ref. LA State Plan, Page 126) states "As outlined in OWD Policy 2-21 "Youth Program Operations" LWDBs must establish and review annually a policy addressing their criteria for youth "Requiring Additional Assistance".

LWDA 60 policy supports an integrated vision for servicing the youth in Rapides Parish using a model strategy that leverages community relationships and referrals with other federal, state, local and community resources to support both in-school and out-of-school youth to include those youth who Require Additional Assistance and resources in order to be successful.

LWDA 60 Policy 500-02 Youth Eligibility Criteria addresses eligibility and enrollment of both in-school and out-of-school to include those youth that “Require Additional Assistance” ** in order to complete an educational component and/or secure and hold employment.

LWDA 60 Policy addresses and defines the criteria for the Ninth (9th) Youth Barrier “Requires Additional Assistance” as one or more of the following:

- Is at risk of dropping out of school (any one of the following) as documented by, but not limited to, school records or self-attestation:
 - Is in the 11th or 12th grade and has not yet passed the required standardized testing, if any.
 - at least two semester classes behind the rate required to graduate on time with their high school class as documented by a school official.
 - Has a cumulative GPA of less than 2.0.
 - Has repeated at least one secondary grade level.
 - Previously dropped out of school, but has since returned to high school or within the previous 12 months has been suspended five or more times or expelled
 - Has court/agency referrals mandating school attendance.
 - Has aged out of foster care as documented by, but not limited to, court documentation, verification from a social services agency or through self-attestation.
- Has experienced recent traumatic events, is a victim of abuse, or resides in an abusive environment, as documented by a school official or professional on official letterhead, by a written statement from a parent or through self-attestation.
- Has a significant disability which creates a significant impediment to employment, as documented by, but not limited to, a school Individual Education Plan (IEP), medical professional, receipt of Social Security Insurance (SSI) or through self-attestation.
- Has limited English Proficiency as documented by, but not limited to, the TABE test or through self-attestation.
- Poor or no employment history (Older Youth Only) as documented by, but not limited to, wage records, employment records or through self-attestation:
 - Has not had the opportunity to gain the necessary knowledge, experience and skills to find and maintain full time stable employment (for more than 13 consecutive weeks) and/or has only been able to access part-time, temporary or seasonal employment.

- Has been fired from a job within the 12 months prior to application.
- Family Barriers (anyone of the following) as documented by, but not limited to, wage records, letter from government assistance office or through self-attestation:
 - Has a family history of long-term unemployment, i.e. parents/guardians have been unemployed for seven of the past twelve months.
 - During the past two years, parents/guardians have been unable to find and maintain full time stable employment; these multiple breaks in employment may have required reliance on unemployment, food stamps or other government assistance, or Is a food stamp recipient or a member of a family receiving food stamps.
- Resides in a non-traditional family setting (anyone of the following) as documented by, but not limited to, court records or through self-attestation:
 - Member of a single-family household
 - being raised by a guardian, relative or non-parent responsible for the youth's care
 - Parent is currently in jail or in prison or has been in jail or in prison for six months of the past two years.
- Is an emancipated youth as documented by, but not limited to, court records or through self-attestation.
- Is computer illiterate as documented by self-reports, test or observation.
- Has been referred to or is being treated by an agency for a substance abuse related problem.

LWDA 60's youth workforce professionals take a collaborative approach for recruiting and identifying principal service needs of the individual participant. Recruitment strategies include utilizing and actively communicating, with organizations in our area that already work with the targeted youth population, WIOA Youth Program eligibility guidelines. Making OSY the larger part of our focus ensures that this population of youths may be offered the best opportunity for success in achieving their high school diploma or equivalency, readiness for Post-Secondary Education, or employment readiness.

Minimum expenditure rate for Out-of-school youth

Area 60 requires spending at least 75% of Boards' available funds on out-of-school youth (OSY). Quarterly spending goals for the youth program (ISY and OS) have been developed to ensure that program funds will be expended within the grant parameters. The Boards in Region 6 fully support WOA's requirements that the youth services be competitively procured and makes all the fourteen service elements available to youth.

Services to individuals with barriers to employment as outlined in the Combined State Plan

The Region's Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) working in conjunction with entities carrying out core programs place special emphasis on serving the needs of special applicant groups in order to expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly individuals with barriers to employment.

LWDA 60 coordinates with system partners, and develops strategies designed to meet the specific needs of these group. HiRE gathers information on placement and retention of special applicant groups to determine the best service strategies.

The following populations have been identified as "individuals with barriers to employment":

- Low-Income individuals (recipients receiving public assistance)
- Basic skills deficient
- Displaced homemakers
- Individuals with disabilities
- Indian, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians
- Older individuals
- Ex-offenders
- Homeless individuals- including homeless children and youth
- 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
- Migrant and seasonal farm workers
- Single parents- including pregnant women

In the event of WIOA funding limitations, LWDA 60 will give priority of Adult employment and training activities to veterans who are receiving public assistance and/or low income veterans. Next priority is given to non-veterans who are receiving public assistance and low income non-veterans.

In the event that funding is available and the Adult customer's income exceeds the defined threshold, the local board will follow guidance from the Department of Labor (TEGL 19-16).

LWDA 60 is committed to non-discrimination and equal opportunity as mandated in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Section 188. LWDA ensures equity in the provision of program services through the following activities:

Region 6 collects data on race, gender and disability status of all persons registering for services. The review of this data, combined with population and labor force statistics is conducted periodically. Labor force diversity data, provided by the Louisiana Workforce Commission is analyzed to ensure that there are no underserved populations in the region. The board will use this data to target outreach and recruitment efforts. The goal is for all residents to have access

to training resources to acquire the skills needed to obtain employment that provides family supporting wages and decreases economic disparity.

LWDA 60 will continue to work in conjunction with the local educational institutions to ensure that potential eligible youth have access to services in the career pathway of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

Staff will continue to explore mentoring program opportunities, while individually mentoring participants as they develop an IEP and throughout the program and follow-up period.

Training Policies and Activities

LWDA 60 will adhere to all federal, state, and local regulations and policies for the provisions of training activities. The local area has tracking mechanisms in place to ensure the required training expenditures outlined by the State are obtained. The local area has developed policies and procedures for the provisions of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) for WIOA adults and dislocated workers. The Individual Training Account (ITA) is the primary method for accessing training services, with the exception of work-based training. Training services are directly linked to occupations that are in-demand on Louisiana's Statewide Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). The ETPL is the primary source for access to skills training for WIOA eligible participants. The board will notify training providers in the local area of the opportunity to apply for status as an approved training provider on the statewide ETPL. The Board will advocate for entry level training that meets the needs of local employers and provides career pathway in high demand/high growth industries.

Individual Training Accounts (ITA) will pay for training services for skills in in-demand occupations (including all registered apprenticeship programs) as defined by the board from training providers on the approved ETPL. All participants must apply for PELL/Federal Student Aid (FASFA) and any other appropriate grant assistance and provide proof of application. The Pell grant funding must be applied toward the participant's tuition and education related expenses.

To maximize a customer's selection of training programs, LWDB 60 will accommodate a training contract in lieu of an individual training account for a program of study that provide a recognized, portable credential in an in-demand occupation. *We recognize that local training is not available for all in-demand occupations.* It is our LWDB policy to inform jobseekers of the eligible training providers and programs that are available locally.

LWDB 60 will utilize program evaluation criteria as well as the in-demand occupations (i.e. Star Rating System) to ensure that training providers offering high quality training services for existing and emerging industries are included on the Statewide Eligible Training Provider list thereby presenting our customer with the best choices for training.

The LWDB 60 engages in regular and consistent communication in order to assess the needs of business customers and ensure that service delivery is efficient. The Industry Coordinator and

Workforce Professionals maintain regular communication with businesses, industry leaders, and governmental agencies with our region.

In addition to classroom training, the Board offers work-based training opportunities for eligible participants. Work-based training includes on-the-job training, customized training, and incumbent worker training. These training are provided in partnership with the employers to meet their specified training needs.

See Attachment 3 **WDBA 60 Policy #15 Issue** (Managed Individual Training Accounts (ITA's))

Utilization of WIOA Title IB Funds

The local Board continuously monitors the expenditures of WIOA adult and dislocated worker funds, and has the ability to transfer funds on an as needed basis during the program year. State policy limits the maximum allowable transfer to 75 percent. The board may request a transfer of funds up to 50 percent the first year funds are made available, and may request up to an additional 25 percent the second year.

As outlined in WIOA section 134(d)(4)(A)(i), a local area may reserve up to 20 percent of their combined total of adult and dislocated worker allocations for incumbent worker training. The board must consider the following criteria under WIOA sec. 134(d)(4)(A)(ii) for an employer to be eligible to receive local incumbent worker training funds:

- The characteristics of the individuals in the program
- The relationship of the training to the competitiveness of an individual and employer; and
- Other factors the Local WDB determines appropriate, including number of employees trained, wages and benefits including post training increases, and the existence of other training opportunities provided by the employer.

Transitional Jobs

The Board ensures that transitional jobs services are available to eligible adult and dislocated workers in accordance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Transitional jobs provide time-limited subsidized work experience for individuals with barriers to employment. These jobs are designed to enable individuals to establish a work history and develop skills that lead to unsubsidized employment. Transitional jobs are administered through the Operator of the JOB1 Business and Career Solutions Center.

The local area utilizes no more than 10% of the combined WIOA adult and dislocated worker allocation for transitional jobs services.

Pay for Performance Contracts

Pay for performance contracts are outlined in WIOA Sec. 133(b)(2-3). LWDB 60 will determine when it is applicable and most beneficial to utilize WIOA funds for pay-for-performance contracts. Local workforce boards may use up to 10% of their WIOA Adult, WIOA Dislocated Worker, and WIOA Youth funds for adult training services and/or youth activities for PFP contract strategies. Where local workforce boards use PFP contract strategies, funds may be available until expended. This extended availability means that, if outcomes are not achieved as hoped, the funds may be used for another PFP purpose. States may also use funds from the Governor's Reserve to support PFP.

Incumbent Worker Training

LWDA 60 will provide Incumbent Worker Training in compliance with WIOA sec.134(d)(4). An incumbent worker must be employed, have an established employment history with the employer for six months or more, and meet the Fair Labor Standards Act requirements for an employer-employee relationship. In the event that training is being provided to a cohort of employees, not all employees in the cohort must have an established employment history with the employer for six months or more as long as the majority of the employees being trained meet the employment history requirement.

Incumbent worker training will increase the competitiveness of the employees or the employer. The training is designed to meet the requirements of the employer or group of employers and is conducted with a commitment by the employer to retain or avert the layoffs of the incumbent workers trained. The local area will reserve no more than 20% of the combined WIOA adult and dislocated worker allocation for incumbent worker training.

CHAPTER 5

Performance Goals & Evaluations

Local levels of Negotiated Performance

The LWDA 60 performance levels for PY 22-23 have been negotiated with the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC).

Quarterly performance reporting is provided to the local board and one stop operator.

LWDA 60 utilized HiRE and FutureWorks to ensure that performance measures are being met. Both of these online systems allows for monitoring to ensure performance measures are being met.

In addition to the common performance measures, Region 6 tracks business-focused metrics as well. This helps to identify standardized indicators for measuring effectiveness in serving employers. The primary source of information for this measure is data recorded in the MIS system of the Louisiana Workforce Commission, HiRE. Services to employers are both automatically recorded by HiRE *and* manually entered into HiRE by One-Stop Center staff.

The Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) programs have federal performance requirements for each funding source (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth). The federal performance requirements are known as the WIOA Common Measures. The Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) is responsible for negotiating performance goals with each local area. LWDA 60 negotiated measures are as follows:

Negotiated Performance Levels for WIOA (LWDA 60)

	PY 2022	PY 2023
WIOA Title I Adult		
Employment Rate 2nd quarter after exit	80.0%	82.0%
Employment Rate 4th quarter after exit	75.0%	77.0%
Median Earnings in the 2nd quarter after exit	\$9,500	\$7,600
Credential Attainment Rate	85.0%	83.0%
Measureable Skill Gains	80.0%	75.0%
WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker		
Employment Rate 2nd quarter after exit	80.0%	80.0%
Employment Rate 4th quarter after exit	67.0%	80.0%
Median Earnings in the 2nd quarter after exit	\$9,500	\$8,200
Credential Attainment Rate	85.0%	81.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	75.0%	72.9%

WIOA Title I Youth		
Employment Rate 2nd quarter after exit	71.0%	75.0%
Employment Rate 4th quarter after exit	75.0%	80.0%
Median Earnings in the 2nd quarter after exit	\$3,500	\$2,650
Credential Attainment Rate	55.0%	22.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	50.0%	50.0%

Current and Planned Evaluation Activities

WIOA, as we know, includes Primary Indicators of Performance in which all states are responsible for achieving targeted performance. Performance initiatives are conceptualized and developed by our Region's LWDBs and implemented by the dedicated staff members through a team-based initiative. Putting the customer at the center of service design dramatically changes the service delivery paradigm. Our region's focus, on continuous service improvement, includes some of the following delivery strategy challenges:

- How might we improve the customer experience and outcomes for our shared One-Stop Customers?
- How might we put employers in the center of our Sector Strategies and Career Pathway goals?
- How might we design services and programs for out-of-school youth that will engage them and produce great outcomes?

Our Region 6 one-stop staff are finding solutions through various methods to include:

- Placing employers and job seeker customers at the center and focus of every process and plan.
- Using a collaborative process approach to service design and implementation that includes our Partner agencies and community resources thereby creating a culture of focus on the value of the service we provide.
- Making program implementation transformative and not an exercise in 'checking the box'.
- Creative training solutions to ensure that one-stop program staff feel confident that they can find solutions to the problems faced by jobseekers and employers, in all programs

The local Board is focused on continuous improvement and the evaluation of program outcomes. Using the quarterly Rapides American Job Center Report, which outlines WIOA activities, such as enrollments, job placement and training completion rates, the Board can make informed decisions regarding which activities to invest funding in order to receive the best return on investment. WIOA trainings that result in low completion and/ or job placement rates, will be curtailed or eliminated based on minimal return on investment.

LWDA 60 uses data and demographics available in HiRE to evaluate potential barriers to enrollment, and to ensure that the participants enrolled in programs reflect the population and demographics of the individuals in Region 6. LWDA 60 will continue to work with all partners to determine the barriers that exist for residents in the area and look for cost-effective solutions. Solutions could include streamlining the registration process to limit physical appointments at the job center and providing information and applications online.

Chapter 6

Technical Requirements and Assurances

Fiscal Management

The disbursement of grant funds in LWDB 60 area is accomplished through the local grant recipient, LaSalle Parish Police Jury. The LaSalle Parish Police Jury serves as the Sixth Planning District's Consortium designated lead. The LaSalle Parish Police Jury has contracted with LaSalle Community Action Association Inc., to provide fiscal management of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funds.

The LWDB 60 determines the service delivery system protocol that will operate the One-Stops, based on LWC and USDOL rules and regulations. The LWDB 60 policy determines the service delivery system protocol that will operate the One-Stops, based on LWC and USDOL rules and regulations. The State of Louisiana's procurement policy guides the process for our RFP's that includes the Request for Proposals to provide staffing services for the one-stop centers, as well as a separate RFP to provide youth services. Each RFP will provide details on the service area, funding available, and other information. A bidder's conference is held to ensure all applicants are clear on the requirements of the application packages, necessary assurances, and process. Applications are received and reviewed by a Board Committee, based on pre-established criteria contained in the application. The One-Stop Operator and Youth Services provider are selected in accordance with state guidelines, local and the capacity to perform the required activities. The LWDB 60, in coordination with the Chief Elected Official, approves all providers, contingent upon any negotiations that will need to occur.

Attachment 4 WDBA 60 Policy #21 Issue 1 (Request for Proposal One Stop Operator Services)

Physical and Programmatic Accessibility

LWDA 60 recognizes the importance of full compliance with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as well as complying with WIOA Section 188. As part of our compliance verification, our designated EEO officer will conduct an annual review of physical and programmatic accessibility of our facilities, programs, and services. The review of facilities will be conducted using the ADA compliance checklist for facilities. All partners in the one-stop will be required to comply with all components of the checklist. This will ensure that Centers are fully accessible to all, and this review is submitted to the LWC's compliance officer. Within our centers, we ensure that program staff possesses the skills and knowledge to provide assistance differently to abled individuals. This includes specific knowledge of the operation of each Center's assistive technology specifically designed for the visually and hearing impaired that includes access to the Language Line, DRAGON, and JAWS software.

LWDB 60 realizes the importance of tailoring services for individuals with different abilities. LWDB 60 coordinates with Rehabilitation Services to ensure that eligible individuals with disabilities are provided opportunities to capitalize upon services offered by LWDA 60. LRS has the ability to provide more in [1] depth services to individuals with different abilities, and as such, co-enrollment in LRS and WIOA programs will ensure a full complement of services needed. LWDA 60 Staff have been educated in the appropriate manner of providing services to individuals with disabilities, through the Disability Employment Initiative

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(DEI). The Disability Employment Initiative has provided LWDA 60 with assistive technology that is currently available in all LWDA 60 Centers. When the services are beyond the capacity of LWDA 60 staff, or when there is a participant already serviced by them, LRS staff will meet the jobseeker in the Career Center closest to the jobseeker. This process reduces the frustration of the jobseeker, as the LRS regional office is not located in the LWDB 60 area.

Attachment 5 One Stop Operator

Plan Development and Public Comment

The LWDB 60 will provide the thirty (30) day opportunity for public comment by securing a legal notice in each of the six (6) official parish newspapers. The notices will indicate the availability of the draft document for review and how to access the document. Additionally, all interested persons will be encouraged to contact the WDB 60 Director with comments via email gstringerwib60@att.net or in writing to LWDB 60, P. O. Box 1605, Jena, LA 71342. In addition, a draft version of the regional plan will be placed on the <http://www.wdb60.com>.

These measures will allow for formal comments on the plan with modifications from the public, representatives of business and regional labor organizations, required WIOA core and partner agencies, educators, community organizations, and other interested parties.

Summary of Public Comments Received

We received no public comments that expressed disagreements with the regional/local plan. A summary of comments will be included if received during the public comment period for the Regional/Local Two-Year Modification.

Regional and Local Plan Modification Procedures

Each WBD will obtain approval from the board of directors, and if required the chief elected officials obtain required signatures. The plan is then submitted to the Governor for review and approval. Modifications over the term of this plan will be made available for public comment and brought to the local board and partners for approval.

Common Assurances

The Combined Plan must include assurances that: Required Policies for each local development area within a planning region must be included as part of the Combined Plan.

1. The Local Area has established a policy identifying circumstances that may present a conflict of interest for a Local Board or the entity or class of officials that the member represents, and procedures to resolve such conflicts.

The Local Area has complied with requirement through LWDB 60 policy and procedures. Local Board Members of LWDB 60 have signed a conflict-of-interest statement as required by law. Each year board members are required to complete ethics training.

2. The Local Area has established a policy to provide the public (including individuals with disabilities) access to meetings of Local Boards and information regarding activities of local boards, such as data on board membership and minutes.

The LWDB 60 has complied with this requirement through Article XII, Section 1 of the Sixth Planning District Consortium Local Workforce Development Board Area 60 Bylaws. Data related to activities, board meeting minutes and agendas are published on the LWDB 60 website, <http://www.wdb60.com>.

3. The Local Area has established a policy on fiscal control and fund accounting procedures that are necessary to ensure proper accounting for, funds allotted to the local area (this applies to Title I and other discretionary funds allotted to the local area).

The LWDB 60 has complied with requirement through Article VII, of the Sixth Planning District Consortium Local Workforce Development Board Area 60 Consortium Agreement.

4. The Local area has established a policy which describes action to secure compliance with uniform administrative requirements of this Act, including that the Local Area will annually monitor.

The LWDB 60 has complied with this requirement through Workforce Development Board Area 60 Policy Number 9.

5. The Local Area has a policy taking the appropriate action to be in compliance with WIOA section 188, Nondiscrimination, as applicable.

The LWDB 60 has complied with this requirement through Workforce Development Board Policy 21.

6. The Local Area has implemented a policy to ensure adult-program funds provide a priority in the delivery of career and training services and individualized career services to individuals who are low income, public assistance recipients or basic skills deficient.

LWDB 60 has complied with this requirement through Standard Operation Procedures "Service Priority" and LWDB 60 Board Policy – Priority of Service for Adults and Dislocated Workers.

7. The Federal funds received to carry out a core program will not be expended for any purpose other than for activities authorized with respect to such funds under that core program.

LWDB 60 assures that core program funding will be expended only for activities authorized under each of the respective core programs.

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8. The Local Area will not use funds received under WIOA Title I to assist, promote, or deter union organizing in accordance with WIOA section 181(b)(7).

The LWDB 60 will comply by writing a policy.

Attachment 1 **WDBA 60 Policy #12 Issue 10** (Supportive Services – Adult and Dislocated Workers)

Attachment 2 **WDBA 60 Policy #14 Issue 8** (Youth Supportive Services)

Attachment 3 **WDBA 60 Policy #15 Issue 4** (Managed Individual Training Accounts (ITA's))

Attachment 4 **WDBA 60 Policy #21 Issue 1** (Request for Proposal One Stop Operator Services)

Attachment 5 One Stop Operator

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Combined Regional Plan- Local Component



LWDA 61

Chapters 4-6

CHAPTER 4

Operating Systems and Policies

Coordination of Planning Requirements

LWDA 61 developed a comprehensive Memorandum of Understanding with our Workforce Development partners in order to define the parameters within which education, workforce, economic development, and other Partner programs and entities operating in the Local Workforce Development Area create a seamless, customer-focused American Job Center network that aligns service delivery across the board and enhances access to program services. By realizing one-stop opportunities together, partners can build community-benefiting bridges, rather than silos of programmatic isolation. These partnerships will reduce administrative burden and costs and increase customer access and performance outcomes.

LWDB 61's Memorandum of Understanding provides a description of the One-Stop delivery system's roles and resource contributions 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)

Local Workforce Development Board 61's 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.

Technology in the One-Stop

In LWDA 61, many of the services provided through the one-stop delivery system are available through our online labor exchange services, HiRE, at www.laworks.net. This online system provides a complete set of employment tools for jobseekers in Louisiana. Jobseekers and employers access jobs, create resumes, explore education opportunities, and learn about training and labor market information. Once a jobseeker or employer access HiRE, the system will provide guidance on how to register, identify their skill sets, create a resume(s), and utilize the job search features to look for a job, communicate with employers through message center, and apply for jobs. Labor market information is also available, as is information on occupations and training programs. Additionally, we use social media, Facebook, and Constant Contact, to provide a broad and aggressive communication avenue for job center events and services.

LWDA 61 utilizes tools such as HiRE to be as accessible as possible and provide services to those located in rural or remote areas. HiRE can be utilized via smart phone or public computer with many services offered remotely.

Local Board's Support of Strategies Identified in the Combined State Plan

Region 6 workforce teams are working diligently to create a strong integrated network with key agencies and community partners to expand accessibility and wrap-around services for individuals with barriers and seeking employment. In developing deeper connections with partnership programs that support these individuals, this will further promote and simplify efforts to match employment programming more closely to each person in need.

LWDA 61 will participate in on-going cross training opportunities with our partners. LWDA 61 is also currently working with the One-Stop Operator to strengthen our collaboration and facilitate the resource training within our mandated and optional partner network. Cross training our partners and the staff of all WIOA core programs will help our people to develop innovative service delivery practices to include co-enrollment of participants, ensuring the needs of the job seeker are met. We look forward to expanding knowledge and access to services, clarifying community awareness of our programs and services, and discovering ways to enhance our partnerships for the benefit of the community.

Regions 6 aims to empower and coach our most vulnerable community members and customers through an integrated, cumulative, and agile services continuum, moving from initial engagement through job retention, which is unique to every person, and resulting in long-term employment that fulfills an individual's passion, meets financial needs, embodies skill development, and supports well-being.

LWDA 61 utilizes the Integrated Education and Training models by helping adults obtain their HiSET and other basic skills such as English Language acquisition, while earning industry recognized credentials leading to in demand occupations. LWDA 61 collaborates with Central Louisiana Technical Community College (CLTCC) in the provision of adult education and literacy activities. In addition, CLTCC operates a satellite location at the Rapides One-Stop Center providing adult education during the day. CLTCC and LWDA 61 collaborate to identify candidates who would benefit from an intensive, small group environment to fast-track their attainment of a HiSET credential.

Regions 6 focuses on development of career pathways that align with the skill needs of industries. Career pathways align and integrate education (including Adult Basic Education and English Language Learners), job training, counseling, and support services to create accelerated pathways that enable low-skilled adults and youth to obtain a secondary school diploma (or recognized equivalent) and a postsecondary education credential, leading to employment in in-demand occupations.

Dual Credit Program, or Dual Enrollment, is the simultaneous enrollment of a student at both high school and college, allowing the student to receive credits at each. Students may enroll in

college courses at local technical, community, and/or four-year colleges. The course can be taught by either a college instructor or an approved high school teacher. The program is beneficial, as it allows students to reduce college costs, complete education sooner, and allows for a smoother transition into college. The dual credit program allows for certificate and degree attainment for underserved populations.

LWDA 61 encourages participants to speak with their training provider about utilizing their prior learning through a “Prior Learning Assessment” to gain credits towards their degree, reducing completion time. Prior learning could include professional certifications or military credit.

Maintaining relationships and communication with our local postsecondary educators encourages their involvement in the development of career pathways, both to facilitate strong institutional connections among career pathways stakeholders in the workforce and education fields, and to ensure that pathways provide meaningful access for individuals and especially those who are still acquiring basic skills or have barriers to further their education and obtain gainful employment.

Effective outreach by our professional workforce staff with our region’s educational institutions provide opportunities for our education partners to collaborate with workforce system partners to establish effective referrals, utilize co-enrollment, and a handoff process for participants, thereby increasing the participant’s chances of success.

LWDA 61 recognizes the that the demand for *portable and stackable credentials* is emerging as the focus is on providing equitable access to postsecondary education and training and for increasing postsecondary credential attainment successes. If we, in Region 6, are to meet the skill needs of employers and provide workers with those skills required for higher levels of employment and earnings, more individuals must obtain postsecondary credentials. Emphasis is to be placed on work-based learning strategies that align with business needs in Region 6. With support to LWCs focus on Registered Apprenticeships, those representing “in demand” occupations, as a way to address middle skill jobs, local boards will mirror the goal of engaging in screening and assessment for current registered programs.

Local Coordination Strategies to Enhance Service Delivery

The local board collaborates with the state, regional, and local partners to ensure strategy coordination to enhance services and avoid duplication of activities.

Adult

Region 6 operates its Adult training program to identify workers who currently need, or will need, higher levels of education to fare better in the labor market, to reduce incidences and shorten durations of unemployment, while supporting higher earnings and job stability.

Adults, other than “true” dislocated workers, who come to our One-Stops typically have lost or quit a job, recently moved into the area, or did not qualify for unemployment, and are usually looking for high-wage, in-demand occupations. Unfortunately, these adults are rarely qualified to fill those occupations. These adults are usually in need of post-secondary education, resulting in a degree or industry-recognized credential in order to qualify for these high-wage, in-demand occupations. Many individuals need assistance to overcome barriers to employment such as low-income individuals, older individuals, ex-offenders, youth in or aged out of foster care system, single parents (including single pregnant women), long-term underemployed, individuals with disabilities, including youth who are individuals with disabilities, displaced homemakers, homeless individuals, English language learners, etc.

Emphasis shall be placed on work-based learning strategies that align with business needs in Region 6. With LWCs focusing on Registered Apprenticeships to address middle skill jobs, local boards will mirror the goal of engaging in screening and assessment for current registered programs.

Adult basic education (ABE) programs that are linked to employment or postsecondary education can help low-skilled adult learners advance along a career path and improve their employment and earnings. Region 6 One-stop centers will continue to assist job seekers with accessing employment, education, training, and supportive services they need to meet employers’ requirements and succeed in our labor market. LWDA 61 Priority of Service Policy (400-05) ensures this initiative is implemented by defining members of priority groups for with various barriers to success.

Region 6’s goal to fulfill Title 1, Priority of Service requirement, is to leverage all available funding streams and partnerships with priority access to higher-intensity career services and training adults with various barriers to employment. Based on our LWC’s Priority of Service policy, 51% of those adults receiving training assistance must fall into the following criteria:

Veterans that are:

- Public assistance recipient, or
- Low-income, or
- Deficient in basic skills

Non-veterans that are:

- Public assistance recipient, or
- Low-income, or
- Deficient in Basic skills

The remaining 49% of the adults receiving training assistance may fall into these criteria:

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Veterans who are not:

- Public assistance recipients, or
- Low-income, or
- Deficient in Basic Skills

Non-Veterans who are not:

- Public assistance recipients, or
- Low-income, or
- Deficient in Basic Skills

To ensure the proper priority of service is provided, LWDB 61 reports to LWC:

- 1) the number of individuals with barriers to employment served by each core program, with specific breakdowns by subpopulation and 2) the number of individuals with barriers to employment that are served by the Adult and Dislocated Worker program, with specific breakdowns by subpopulation, race ethnicity, gender, and age.

Dislocated Worker

The staff in the regional One-Stops utilize the LWC's OWD 2.3 Integrated Service Delivery Model to assess the needs of dislocated work, their barriers to employment, which career services would best assist the individual and the necessary follow up after the services have been provided.

Layoffs are immensely challenging for workers and employers. The Region 6 Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs), while already focused on providing programs and services that grow employers and workers alike – closing major skills gaps to employment are committed to work with other partners (training and supportive service providers) to assist both. For dislocated workers seeking suitable new employment, local offices will work as quickly as possible in helping them to overcome difficult barriers that include but are not limited to, transferring specialized skills to another occupation, age or length of work experience, and the lack of jobs with the earnings level comparable to their previous position.

When a plant shut down or large-scale layoff occurs, direct services to those affected workers are focused to help them find suitable new employment and get back to work as quickly as possible. Staff at the One-Stop Centers begin to implement the services formulated to offer dislocated workers a variety of resources prior to, during and after the layoff occurred.

The ultimate goal is to provide this population with improved services and access to education, training, and other workforce services. To do this, as with the adult program, Dislocated Worker services are specific to the individual's needs. While working with a case manager, they develop

an Individualized Employment Plan (IEP) that includes: career planning and counseling, job search and placement, approved training, and other needed support services.

Youth

Because there is no single specific system designed to meet the specific development needs of In and Out-of-School Youth (16 to 24), Region 6 LWDB's with its core partners and partner programs, are committed to targeting resources for this population. This Youth population could be served as part of the Adult workforce system; however, doing so would inevitably result in some developmental needs going unmet. The Region 6 Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) through aggressive outreach will work to identify at-risk Youth by developing specific interventions within their Youth Programs.

Region 6 Board's policies follow LWC's OWD 2-21 Youth Program Operations which includes that not less than 20% of the youth funds allocated to our Boards be used to provide in-school and out-of-school youth with work experiences, such as summer employment, as well as through the calendar year, pre-apprenticeship, internship, job shadowing, and on-the-job training.

The Boards in Region 6 are fully committed with the local school boards in Cooperative Endeavor Agreements to Engage Out-of-School Youth. These agreements provide an opportunity for the student who has dropped out to connect with Youth Services available to assist them in preparing them for the world of work. Workforce Professionals must have the consent of the student's parents (no consent is required if the student is over the age of 18). The goal of the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement is to enroll dropouts as out-of-school youth and assist the youth in gaining their high school equivalency and employment. The youth service delivery model supports the implementation of Career Pathways that encourages post-secondary education.

The focus is on serving the most vulnerable workers – including low-income youth facing barriers to employment with limited skills and work experience. Region 6 LWDBs are committed to directing eligible youth participants to development, education, and support resources to help prepare youth for successful employment.

Per LWC's State Plan (title 20 CFR Section 681.400), Local boards must identify youth service providers based on criteria set forth in current state plan. Focusing our recruitment strategies to encourage participation in WIOA program(s), our mission is to encourage and empower our youth with decision making capabilities to include:

- Finding a career path that fits their interests and lifestyle
- Gain work experience (paid and unpaid)
- Learn about employment internship opportunities and on-the-job training
- Develop leadership skills

- Explore community leadership and mentoring opportunities
- Obtain a high school diploma or equivalency
- Enroll in postsecondary education
- Complete vocational training or college
- Earn cash incentives
- Obtain employment with their chosen career path.

LWDA 61 Workforce Operations Department (WOD) does not procure youth services but provides them “in-house” or by referral to the appropriate agency. Decisions to refer are based on personalized case management and upon intake and assessment of individual needs of the participant. The following table illustrates the Fourteen Youth Program Services available to participants enrolled in WIOA and the process by which each service would be provided or referred to eligible participants. Utilizing comprehensive training programs provided through agencies such as Success Training Institute (STI), the WOD staff will provide many of the 14 elements in house through intensive case management.

Fourteen Youth Program Services available through WIOA		
	Program Element	Service Provided
1	Tutoring / Study Skills Training	This element is provided by WOD youth staff by using the either the Workkeys Curriculum and/or the STI curriculum that meets and supports this element through helping individuals build the essential career-relevant skills needed for learning, personal development, and effective job performance. Referral(s) to an outside agency, depending on specific needs of the participant, like Literacy programs.
2	Alternative Secondary School Services or Dropout Recovery	This element will be provided by the WOD staff utilizing STI curriculum which supports this element through video courses, end of course exams, etc. WOD staff maintain partnerships and referral process to and from organizations such as the Rapides Parish School Board. Coordination with alternative school(s) and credit recovery programs such as The Rapides Alternative Positive Program for Students (RAPPS). Also, co-located in the One-Stop is Central LA Technical College (CLTCC) providing adult education through the WorkReady U program services and opportunities for secondary education include HiSET, Secondary Credential Preparation, Basic Skills Remediation and English as a second language.

3	Work Experiences	This element is provided in-house by the WOD staff providing training and providing help in resume creation, job applications, work ethics, etc. Staff, in collaboration with area partners and employers, develop paid and/or unpaid work experience positions for eligible youth participants throughout each program year that could include but not limited to, summer employment, pre-apprenticeship programs, internships and job shadowing, or On-the-Job training. STI curriculum may be offered in support of this element.
4	Occupational Skills Training	This element is provided by the WOD staff utilizing the ETPL and through referral to an eligible training provider to enroll youth for training for accredited postsecondary and occupational accredited programs for demand occupations. Tuition/fees and supportive services may be provided to eligible participants. Also, STI curriculum may be utilized to support this element to provide virtual training to eligible youth participants.
5	Career Pathways	This element is provided by the WOD staff in partnership with the Rapides Parish School Board's Jumpstart Initiative, and by participating in regional events such as: youth job fairs, the Orchard Foundation's events, and projects. Also, staff use STI curriculum to administer and support this element. STI provides training and workforce preparation courses such as: Positive Mindset, Dress for Success, and Time Management and other mandatory and optional classes. WOD staff, through comprehensive case management and assessment, provide an effective approach to the development of a skilled workforce through the organization of education, training, and other services to meet the needs of an individual in a manner that

		accelerates the educational and career advancement of the individual to the extent practicable.
6	Leadership Development	This element is provided by the WOD staff using the STI curriculum that meets and supports this element. STI curriculum contains in-depth training courses that encourage responsibility, confidence, employability, self-determination, and other positive social behaviors that aid in Leadership Development.
7	Supportive Services	This element is provided in-house by WOD staff utilizing WIOA Youth program funds when the youth participant is unable to obtain financial assistance for services. Some of the supportive services provided to eligible participants include Tuition assistance, school supplies, books, work and interview clothes, transportation assistance, rent, food, utilities, etc. WOD staff will administer this element and offer STI courses that support this element that include but not limited to; Proactive Thinking, Establishing Lasting Partnerships, Connecting with Communities, Requesting and Seeking Assistance.
8	Adult Mentoring	This element is provided in-house by WOD staff to include structured activities where the youth case manager offers guidance, support, and encouragement to help develop the competence and character of the youth participant. STI curriculum meets and supports this element via National Online Mentorship Programs where youth are connected to Adult Mentors and courses on topics that include: Mentorship, Cultivating Relationships, Transparency, Establishing Trust, Communication, and more. This element is provided by youth staff until services are no longer needed.

9	Follow-up Services	This element is provided in-house by WOD staff for not less than 12 months after completion of participation and may include the following program elements: vocational guidance, employment services, and supportive services such as assisting with Pell Grants, completing FAFSA application, job searches and matching, etc.
10	Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling	<p>This element is provided in-house by WOD youth workforce professionals or by referral to an outside agency per the needs of the participant. STI course curriculum, which supports this element, will be used to enhance the learning experience of the participant. STI offers Workforce Readiness Courses including Interviewing skills, Job Retention and Personal Maintenance.</p> <p>Case management may include referrals to external agencies providing low-fee or no-fee, specialized counseling that could include drug and alcohol abuse treatment.</p>
11	Financial Literacy	Financial Literacy is provided in-house by WOD staff, utilizing STI curriculum courses that include Financial literacy classes, budget, checking and saving accounts, managing spending and debt, etc. Referral(s) could be made to an outside agency per the needs of the participant. In-school youth (ISY) are required to take fiscal management courses in order to graduate. However; ISY may be referred to as JAG through our local school board.

12	Entrepreneurial Skills Training	This element is provided in-house by WOD staff through STI curriculum to deliver and/or support this element. Referrals to employers who will provide job shadowing in demand jobs that align with the participants skills and capabilities. Entrepreneurial skills training could also include workshops and referral to small business services.
13	Provision of Labor Market and Career Awareness Information	Labor Market Information is provided by WOD youth staff on an individual basis, utilizing LMI resources available at www.laworks.net .
14	Post-Secondary Preparation Activities	Activities that aid or help to prepare youth participants for and to transition to postsecondary education and training is provided in-house by WOD staff. The staff assists youth participants with program elements could include postsecondary transition, budgeting assistance, housing search assistance, assistance completing school applications, program area of study, Pell grants, and the FAFSA. In support of this training, WOD staff might also offer coursework through the STI curriculum.

Adult education and literacy activities under WIOA Title II

LCTCS currently operates Louisiana’s Comprehensive Adult Education System, WorkReady (WRU) and partners through co-enrollment with the Louisiana Workforce Commission’s Business and Career Solutions Centers, offering services at nearly 200 Adult Education instructional sites around Louisiana. In Region 6, the Central Louisiana Technical Community College (CLTCC) assumed the responsibility of providing the academic instruction and education services to improve the public’s ability to:

- Read, write and speak English and perform mathematics or other activities necessary for the attainment of a second school diploma or its recognized equivalent;
- Transition to postsecondary education and training, and
- Obtain Employment.

There are sixteen (16) HISET locations, seven (7) in LWDA 61 and nine (9) in LWDA 61, to service the needs in the seven (7) parishes of Region 6. WIOA requires the alignment of workforce, education, and economic development systems to support access to high-quality, comprehensive, and accessible workforce services for all individuals, including those with significant barriers to employment. Adult Education and Literacy (Title II) is identified as one of four required core partners in WIOA, and the common goal is to ensure the delivery of quality education services for adult learners and access to a comprehensive workforce development system.

LCTCS installed a technology link (kiosk) in the comprehensive centers in Region 6 that provides customers with more accessibility to Adult Education services and information.

Wagner-Peyser

WIOA eliminates stand-alone Wagner-Peyser Employment Services. These services are provided alongside partner programs within One-Stop Center. Therefore, unemployment insurance claimants, priority population, and all other clients receive the same services which include: job training, labor exchange, career counseling and labor market intelligence. UI claimants also receive eligibility assessments and referrals to an array of educational resources and training through the Wagner-Peyser Employment Service program.

The Employment Service focuses on providing a variety of employment related labor exchange services including but not limited to job search assistance, job referral, and placement assistance for job seekers, re-employment services to unemployment insurance claimants, and recruitment services to employers with job openings. Services are delivered in one of three modes including self-service, facilitated self-help services, and staff assisted service delivery approaches. Depending on the needs of the labor market other services such as job seeker assessment of skill levels, abilities and aptitudes, career guidance when appropriate, job search workshop and referral to training may be available.

Job seekers who are Veterans receive priority referral to jobs and training as well as special employment services and assistance. In addition, the system provides specialized attention and service to individuals with disabilities, migrant and seasonal farmworkers, ex-offenders, youth, minorities, and older workers.

Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) provides services to help persons with disabilities obtain the job skills and others resources they need to get a job, keep a job, and develop a career. LRS

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operates under an Order of Selection criteria, Categories I-V, where Category I is most severe, and Category V is the least severe. When funding is not sufficient to serve all individuals, those with the most severe disabilities receive priority of service through LRS. LRS is currently serving Categories I-IV. Those assessed with less than the most severe disabilities (Category V) are referred to the One-Stop Center in the region for assistance. The LRS Program Coordinator for rehabilitation technology provides consultation to staff in the comprehensive centers, instructs staff on usage of assistive technology and accessibility issues.

Optional One-Stop Delivery System Partners

The following is a brief description of the methods and procedures for each program and how these tie together for participants needing multi-tiered program service delivery.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

The Louisiana Department of Children and Families Services (DCFS) provides cash assistance and supportive services to needy families meeting specific financial criteria and provide services necessary to accomplish the goals and purposes of Section 401 of the Social Security Act (42 USC 611).

- Provide assistance to needy families so that children may be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives.
- End dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage.
- Prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancy.
- Encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.

LWC partnered with DCFS in 2014 to assist Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients in developing high-demand job skills and move toward self-sufficiency and end the dependence on governmental benefits.

Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)

The Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program is available to workers who lose their jobs or experience reduced hours or income because of increased foreign trade activity. The TAA Program offers a variety of benefits and services to eligible workers, including income support, a tax credit to help pay the costs of health insurance, and a wage subsidy to workers 50 years of age and older. Trade services are considered an integral part of the One-Stop Center's service delivery and may involve any and all partners based on the particular needs of individual clients. As such, trade- affected workers may be eligible for:

- Training services.
- Job-search allowances.

- Relocation allowances.
- Re-employment services.
- Funded training.
- On-the-job training.

Like the dislocated worker program, TAA-funded training helps trade-impacted workers obtain the skills necessary to gain suitable employment. TAA will pay tuition, course fees, books and required supplies and equipment, transportation and other items or services deemed necessary for completion of an approved occupational skills training program, including Registered Apprenticeship programs.

LWC staff provides case management services, career guidance and labor market information to assist TAA eligible participants in making appropriate training and career decisions. Trade-affected workers may be eligible for training services, job search allowances, relocation allowances, re-employment services, funded training, and on-the-job training. While enrolled in training, TAA eligible participants are also co-enrolled with WIOA and eligible for WIOA supportive services.

Louisiana Department of Child & Family Services: DCFS is a key partner with LWDA 61, particularly in ensuring that there is no duplication of supportive and training services and/or funding to recipients who are participants.

Co-enrollment is encouraged and facilitated through the comprehensive intake process. Participants referred to the program, through DCFS, must complete a comprehensive assessment and develop an individualized employment plan with a case manager, at a personalized one-on-one appointment. Subsequently, at the one-on-one appointment, the case manager will complete a WIOA pre-enrollment shall be created in HiRE.

Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG)

LWC's Jobs for Veterans State Grant-funded activities are co-located within the Rapides One-Stop. JVSG staff, the Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP), provides employment, training and placement services to veterans and eligible persons according to need, and significant barriers to employment. Through this grant, the advantages of hiring veterans are promoted to employers, employer associations, and business groups.

There are almost 9,000 veterans in Region 6, which is close to 5.6% of the total civilian regional population aged 18 and older. The region also has a Veterans Representative, LVER and / or DVOP, who will function as an advocate for veteran hiring to the employer community. JVSG staff referred to as Local veteran Employment Representative (LVER) and Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialists are essential parts of and fully integrated into the workforce development network. The veterans' program is operating a fully functional re-entry program.

The state has requested 1% of its annual allocation for each year's JVSG grant as performance incentive awards for eligible staff. Services are provided to veterans and eligible persons by JVSG staff members according to the needs of the veteran, any significant barrier to employment they may possess and the roles and responsibilities of JVSG personnel. The basic objective of the awards program is to create an awareness and continuous level of interest in the importance of priority of service for veterans and an environment that engenders continuous improvement in serving veterans across the spectrum of service.

Unemployment Insurance Programs (UI)

LWDA 61 has a "hot line" call-in technical assistance service whereby UI claimants can reach the LWC UI Division via a dedicated phone number thereby avoiding most wait times. The Rapides One-Stop staff provides information and assistance regarding filing claims for unemployment compensation.

When it comes to partnering with unemployment programs, the One-Stop Centers play a vital role. The local and LWC staff assist dislocated workers on programs such as RESEA (Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment) that target services to those likely to be unemployed for extended periods of time. The State's RESEA program is designed to provide intensive reemployment assistance to individuals who are receiving unemployment benefits and are determined likely to exhaust their benefits before becoming reemployed and transitioning veterans receiving Unemployment Compensation for Ex-Service members. These reemployment services result in shorter claim durations and fewer erroneous payments.

Utilizing the guidance from LWC, Region 6 local workforce development board have worked to develop strategies to strengthen linkages between the One-Stop delivery system and the UI program. Aligning multi-program services and collaborating with workforce partners are critical for this service integration.

Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)

It is the intent of the Boards to continue with the excellent collaboration that currently exists between the Title V program and the other One-Stop system partners. The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) is a community service and work-based training program for older workers. Authorized by the Older Americans Act, the program provides subsidized, service-based training for low-income persons 55 or older who are unemployed and have poor employment prospects. Participants have access to both SCSEP services and other employment assistance through One-Stop Centers. Older workers' value lies in their attention to detail, emphasis on customer service, and the technical skills and experience they bring from various professions including medical, engineering and manufacturing fields. Employers will be encouraged to recognize the value older workers bring to the workplace including responsibility, loyalty, dedication, and their ability to mentor younger employees. Two SCSEP grantees are

operating in Region 6, The National Association of Hispanic Elderly and Institute for Indian Development Inc., servicing the older workers in our region.

Job Corps

Job Corps is a **free** education and training program that helps young people learn a career, earn a high school diploma or HiSET, and find and keep a decent job. For eligible young people at least 16 years of age that qualify as low income, Job Corps provides the all-around skills needed to succeed in a career and in life. Job Corps has a satellite office in Alexandria that is co-located within the LWDB 61's comprehensive center.

Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)

The mission of the Cenla Community Action Committee, Inc. (CenlaCAC), funded through the Community Service Block Grant (CSBG), is to serve, train, advocate, and collaborate for low-income residents to reduce poverty and promote economic stability in Rapides Parish. Programs vary depending on the locally assessed needs and circumstances of each community, but generally include emergency rental/mortgage assistance, emergency shelter, emergency utility assistance, free income tax assistance, job training, food pantries, clothing and hygiene closet, infant diapering and adult incontinence services, medical prescriptions, credit counseling, income management, first-time homebuyer education, high school equivalency testing, parenting education, fatherhood initiatives, re-entering citizens and health services. The programs and services of the CSBG Unit and Community Action Agencies are a major component of the Louisiana Workforce continuum of services. CenlaCAC has four (4) satellite offices; one of which is co-located within the LWDB 61's comprehensive center since August 2019.

Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education

The Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V) was signed into law July 31, 2018. This Act, which became Public Law 115-224, reauthorizes the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (Perkins IV). Perkins V makes changes that will affect the implementation of Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs and administrative process. Louisiana's Perkins V State Perkins Plan was approved by the secretary of Education on June 12, 2020.

The Louisiana Community and Technical College System institutions are planning cooperatively through Perkins V and WIOA planning to provide workforce skills training and integrated work-based training to meet regional employer and economic development needs. State partners ~~will~~ continue to work with local and regional workforce development boards and partners to define and build pathways appropriate to the region

Supportive Services

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Supportive service needs will be determined as a function of the enrollment and assessment process for each participant.

LWDB 61's policy is to provide supportive services to eligible participants should the need arise with the provision that participants are unable to obtain financial assistance for those services at any other community partner/agency. If it is determined that lack of transportation or other needs are a barrier to a participant completing a training program / securing licensure, if funds are available, assistance will be provided to the participant with proper documentation placed both in the participant HiRE account through case notes and in the participant files.

LWDA 61's board has developed policies to ensure that there is no duplication of services, and that financial assistance is resourced through other partner and community agencies providing such services prior to expending WIOA funds.

See Attachment 1 **LWDA 61 Policy #400-1** (Supportive Services – Adult and Dislocated Worker)

See Attachment 2 **LWDA 61 Policy # 500-06-01** (Supportive Services – Youth Services)

The City of Alexandria, LA (ATRANS) was established to provide the people of the cities of Alexandria and Pineville with a safe, efficient, environmentally sound, comprehensive, and cost-effective public transportation system. ATRANS ensures that the quality and level of transportation service is provided without regard to race, color, or national origin and that there is not a disparate impact on groups protected by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes and regulations.

WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Services

Area 61 coordinates both employment and training services mandated by the WIOA so that job seekers skills and credentials meet employers' needs. Customers receive services based on their individual needs. Every effort possible is made to provide information, access, and opportunity to clients, using services and cohort groups, based on availability of activities and funding.

Business and Career Solutions in conjunction with Wagner-Peyser and Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act. AREA 61 provides a coordinated and integrated service approach to our customers, thus avoiding duplication and streamlining costs. The goal is to provide all job seekers with a focused career path toward self-sufficiency.

Workforce Professionals assists clients with developing the skills needed to obtain employment that leads to self-sufficiency. Area 61 aids with job search/job placement, interviewing skills,

and resume development. Area 61 also creates individualized employment plans and conducts assessments to determine if skills up-grade training is needed to obtain self-sufficiency.

Our Workforce Professionals, as well as the Regional Business Service Coordinator, actively recruit and refer job seekers who meet the specified qualifications of employer job openings.

The Business Services Coordinator works within the region to develop and execute workforce development strategies that meet the employment and training needs of the regions' employers to increase the access rate in the community. The Business Services Coordinator collaborates directly with employers to identify employer needs, propose solutions to training gaps and to promote the services and programs available at the Area 61 Career Centers. The Business Service Coordinator analyzes industry, employer and labor market data and researches the best policies, procedures, and programs in order to develop recommendations for appropriate business solutions.

Area 61 works closely with partners to ensure service delivery is as seamless as possible. The career center has a resource area that includes a bulletin board for posting job openings, computer access for job seekers, and other relevant information of upcoming job fairs and events, as the central core of career center operations. Customers requiring assistance accessing services have knowledgeable staff available to help with using the internet, job search software, and resume development programs. All center staff are trained to recognize customer needs for facilitated self-help and direct customers to career services as required. Those customers requiring more intensive services have access to career aptitude/interest assessments and career counseling services. Job seekers have access to job listings and on-line resume services.

Efforts to achieve improved performance and increased customer satisfaction have resulted in thorough cross training and integration of center staff. This method lends itself to enhanced performance, with additional resources, talents, and options, and allows the operation to constantly evolve and respond to the needs of job seekers and business customers. It also helps to support customer satisfaction and accountability through common performance measures and to respond to an ever-changing labor market.

The AREA 61 Business and Career Solutions Center endeavors to offer multifaceted services in a system that advocates customer choice. It is the intent of Area 61 and its partners to provide a progressive delivery system of workforce development services, contained within a single point of contact and in a customer-friendly, accessible environment. All One Stop Career Center partners share this vision.

The services provided by WIOA Adult, WIOA Dislocated Workers, WIOA Youth, Wagner-Peyser, Veterans, Rapid Response, and TAA are available at the AREA 61 Business and Career Solutions Center and are coordinated, with focus on quality services to meet employer demand, customer choice and decision making, by cross-trained staff. Additionally, the local One Stop partners with the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) to provide re-employment services to individuals receiving Unemployment Insurance (U.I.). The LWC has staff assigned at the local One Stop to assist with engaging and addressing the employment needs of U.I. participants. Participants in need of upgrading skills or job placement assistance are connected to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) services and training programs.

Intake and Case Management Information System

The Area 61 Business and Career Solutions Center currently operates using an integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information system called HiRE (Helping Individuals Reach Employment). HiRE is administered and maintained by the Louisiana Workforce Commission and can be accessed at www.louisianaworks.net. HiRE is a comprehensive workforce development program that provides integrated services via the internet for individuals, employers, training providers, workforce staff, and One Stop partners.

Once an individual is registered, HiRE tracks every service provided. The system reports services delivered from any location, whether the customer is at home, or collaborating with staff. Services are tracked and measured by individual, event, location, and staff member. HiRE tracks the services provided to both employers and job seekers.

The software's advanced case management functionality allows staff to automatically review and determine program eligibility, conduct common intake, and program enrollment, record detailed case notes, assign multiple cases, complete Individual Employment Plans (IEPs), assist Veterans, provide referrals, track placement and outcomes, and conduct timely follow-ups.

Employment and Training Activities

Area 61 offers an array of employment and training services designed to eliminate barriers and to allow participants to achieve a self-sustaining wage. Each participant is assessed and triaged to determine their level of job readiness.

Individuals are assisted and provided with a roadmap to success. Based on the initial assessment, the individual is registered as either an Adult or Dislocated Worker. A

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comprehensive assessment, individual employment plan, career planning and counseling are then provided which determine the appropriate employment and training services. These services can include:

- O*Net - Tool used for career exploration
- Alison - Online tool that provides free courses and certificates in a variety of topics
- Individual Training Account – Occupational skills training programs that leads to certifications for eligible participants
- On-the-Job Training - Participants gain additional skills and training while employed
- Work Experience - Individuals with little to no work experience are placed in subsidized employment. This service is provided to individuals with multiple barriers including ex-offenders and individuals with disabilities.
- Customized Job Fairs - Job Fairs that are customized to meet an identified need
- Resume Workshop
- Planning Your Job Search Workshop
- Interviewing Skills Workshop
- Financial Literacy Workshop

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Employer Services

Employer Services are a critical component of WIOA basic career service delivery, providing direct value to employers, employer associations, or other such organizations. The Area 61 Business and Career Solutions Centers is responsive to the demands of the employers in the local labor market, including small business, while coordinating with other partners within the workforce system who also provide employer and business engagement services. With high quality and tailored services, the goal is that employers will turn to the Area 61 career center for assistance with their hiring needs.

While there are many types of businesses in the region, the career center operator is charged with identifying employers in target industries and occupations. Target companies are those with a considerable number of jobs in the region. Region 61 has identified the following three priority industry sectors based on regional labor market demand:

- i. Advanced Manufacturing
- ii. Healthcare
- iii. Information Technology

Additional companies and industries are also served based on human resource needs.

The local Board is focused on ensuring that Area 61 provides an employer-driven service delivery system that meets the needs of employers. The main component of employer services is linking employers to and/or retaining a skilled workforce. The AREA 61 Business and Career Solutions Center provides customized business services that may include the following services and activities:

- Customized Recruiting and Screening Services
 - o Advertising job openings;
 - o Providing customized recruitments;
 - o Customized screening of applicants;
 - o Providing job profiling;
 - o Offering job matching;
 - o Providing access to space;
 - o Conducting job fairs;

- Access to Training Services
 - o On-the-Job Training;
 - o Customized training;

- Employer Professional Development Services
 - o Educating businesses on various training models available throughout the region.
 - o Providing retention services, including working with employers to design strategies and provide support that helps employees stay on the job or advance after placement.
 - o Facilitating, monitoring, and measuring coordination between one stop centers and large employment efforts region-wide, including job fairs; and
 - o Developing and implementing employer satisfaction surveys to measure system-wide coordination for employers.

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Additionally, the Board is focused on assisting small businesses with growth and development.

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Registered Apprenticeships

The Board recognizes apprenticeship programs as a vital component of our talent development strategies. Registered Apprenticeship Programs have a documented success rate connecting job seekers to high paying jobs. Referrals to apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs are routinely integrated into the career guidance and career exploration services offered through the local career center.

Most registered apprenticeship programs are in electrical trade occupations, which are high-demand occupations within the Central Louisiana region. The local board is committed to working to provide more apprenticeship opportunities to job seekers.

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Rapid Response

For the purpose of reconnecting dislocated workers to employment quickly, the Board will offer professional and timely support to the state's Rapid Response activities. The Board will coordinate with the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC), and other agencies to ensure employees affected by a lay-off due to company closure or downsizing have the resources needed to immediately reconnect to the labor market. The Rapid Response Team will include representatives from the LWC Rapid Response Unit, Area 61 Business and Career Solutions Centers, and the LWC Unemployment Insurance Unit (via staff person, pamphlet, or brochures).

The Board's goal is to bring the services directly to the affected employees before their separation date by:

- Meeting with employers' representatives to plan rapid response activities;
- Offering on site orientations, job readiness workshops, and job matching /referral services; and
- Ensuring that once the lay-off occurs, the dislocated worker continues to obtain services, as needed, through the Area 61 Business and Career Solutions Centers.

Youth Workforce Activities, Eligibility and Assessment

LWDA 61 provides youth workforce activities to youth, aged 16-24, in-school and out-of-school in Rapides Parish. It is the policy of the LWDB to spend at least 75% of youth funds on out-of-school youth and at least 20% of youth funds on work experiences, including summer employment and pre-apprenticeship programs. An excellent example of a successful model is LWDA 61's Youth Summer Work Experience program, engaging dozens of local employers, providing work experience opportunities for our area's youth. Another successful model is Partners in Literacy through Volunteers of America. They provide literacy training for individuals scoring less than 6th grade on the TABE assessment.

The following is an example of program activities provided to or offered to the eligible youth participant/applicant in Region 6:

- Provide an assessment of academic levels, skill levels and occupational skills, prior work experience, employability, interests, and aptitudes.
- Develop service strategies for each participant that links to one or more of the established performance indicators.
- Provide:

- Activities leading to the attainment of a secondary school diploma or recognized equivalent
- Preparation for postsecondary educational/training opportunities.
- Preparation for unsubsidized employment opportunities.
- Effective connections to employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations.
- Develop Pay-for-Performance contract strategy for which no more than 10% of the local allocation may be used.

To support the attainment of a secondary school diploma or recognized equivalent, entry into postsecondary education, and career readiness for participants, the program will provide The Fourteen Elements.

LWC's Combined State Plan (Ref. LA State Plan, Page 126) states "As outlined in OWD Policy 2-21 "Youth Program Operations" LWDBs must establish and review annually a policy addressing their criteria for youth "*Requiring Additional Assistance*".

LWDA 61 policy supports an integrated vision for servicing the youth in Rapides Parish using a model strategy that leverages community relationships and referrals with other federal, state, local and community resources to support both in-school and out-of-school youth to include those youth who require additional assistance and resources in order to be successful.

LWDA 61's Policy 500-02 Youth Eligibility Criteria addresses eligibility and enrollment of both in-school and out-of-school to include those youth that "Require Additional Assistance" ** to complete an educational component and/or secure and hold employment.

LWDA 61's Policy addresses and defines the criteria for the Ninth (9th) Youth Barrier "Requires Additional Assistance" as one or more of the following:

- Is at risk of dropping out of school (any one of the following) as documented by, but not limited to, school records or self-attestation:
- Is in the 11th or 12th grade and has not yet passed the required standardized testing, if any.
- At least two semester classes behind the rate required to graduate on time with their high school class as documented by a school official.
- Has a cumulative GPA of less than 2.0.
- Has repeated at least one secondary grade level.
- Previously dropped out of school, but has since returned to high school or within the previous 12 months has been suspended five or more times or expelled
- Has court/agency referrals mandating school attendance.
- Has aged out of foster care as documented by, but not limited to, court documentation, verification from a social services agency or through self-attestation.

- Has experienced recent traumatic events, is a victim of abuse, or resides in an abusive environment, as documented by a school official or professional on official letterhead, by a written statement from a parent or through self-attestation.
- Has a significant disability which creates a significant impediment to employment, as documented by, but not limited to, a school Individual Education Plan (IEP), medical professional, and receipt of Social Security Insurance (SSI) or through self-attestation.
- Has limited English Proficiency as documented by, but not limited to, the TABE test or through self-attestation.
- Poor or no employment history (Older Youth Only) as documented by, but not limited to, wage records, employment records or through self-attestation:
- Has not had the opportunity to gain the necessary knowledge, experience, and skills to find and maintain full time stable employment (for more than 13 consecutive weeks) and/or has only been able to access part-time, temporary, or seasonal employment.
- Has been fired from a job within the 12 months prior to application.
- Family Barriers (anyone of the following) as documented by, but not limited to, wage records, letter from government assistance office or through self-attestation:
- Has a family history of long-term unemployment, i.e., parents/guardians have been unemployed for seven of the past twelve months.
- During the past two years, parents/guardians have been unable to find and maintain full time stable employment; these multiple breaks in employment may have required reliance on unemployment, food stamps or other government assistance, or is a food stamp recipient or a member of a family receiving food stamps.
- Resides in a non-traditional family setting (anyone of the following) as documented by, but not limited to, court records or through self-attestation:
 - Member of a single-family household
 - being raised by a guardian, relative or non-parent responsible for the youth's care
 - Parent is currently in jail or in prison or has been in jail or in prison for six months of the past two years.
- Is an emancipated youth as documented by, but not limited to, court records or through self-attestation?
- Is computer illiterate as documented by self-reports, test, or observation.
- Has been referred to or is being treated by an agency for a substance abuse related problem.

LWDA 61's youth workforce professionals take a collaborative approach for recruiting and identifying principal service needs of the individual participant. Recruitment strategies include utilizing and actively communicating with organizations in our area that already work with the targeted youth population, and its WIOA Youth Program eligibility guidelines. Making OSY the larger part of our focus ensures that this population of youths may be offered the best opportunity for success in achieving their

high school diploma or equivalency, readiness for Post-Secondary Education, or employment readiness.

Minimum expenditure rate for Out-of-school youth

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Area 61 requires spending at least 75% of Boards' available funds on out-of-school youth (OSY). Quarterly spending goals for the youth program (ISY and OS) have been developed to ensure that program funds will be expended within the grant parameters. The Boards in Region 6 fully support WOA's requirements that the youth services be competitively procured and make all the fourteen service elements available to youth.

Services to individuals with barriers to employment as outlined in the Combined State Plan

The Region's Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) working in conjunction with entities carrying out core programs place special emphasis on serving the needs of special applicant groups in order to expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly individuals with barriers to employment.

The Rapides American Job Center coordinates with system partners, and develops strategies designed to meet the specific needs of these group. HiRE gathers information on placement and retention of special applicant groups to determine the best service strategies.

The following populations have been identified as "individuals with barriers to employment":

- Low-Income individuals (recipients receiving public assistance)
- Basic skills deficient
- Displaced homemakers
- Individuals with disabilities
- Indian, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians
- Older individuals
- Ex-offenders
- Homeless individuals- including homeless children and youth
- 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
- Migrant and seasonal farm workers
- Single parents- including pregnant women

In the event of WIOA funding limitations, LWDA 61 will give priority of adult employment and training activities to veterans who are receiving public assistance and/or low-income veterans.

Next priority is given to non-veterans who are receiving public assistance and low-income non-veterans.

If funding is available and the adult customer's income exceeds the defined threshold, the local board will follow guidance from the Department of Labor (TEGL 19-16).

LWDA 61 is committed to non-discrimination and equal opportunity, as mandated in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Section 188. LWDA ensures equity in the provision of program services through the following activities:

Region 6 collects data on race, gender, and disability status of all persons registering for services. The review of this data, combined with population and labor force statistics is conducted periodically. Labor force diversity data, provided by the Louisiana Workforce Commission, is analyzed to ensure that there are no underserved populations in the region. The board will use this data to target outreach and recruitment efforts. The goal is for all residents to have access to training resources to acquire the skills needed to obtain employment that provides family supporting wages and decreases economic disparity.

LWDA 61 will continue to work in conjunction with the local educational institutions to ensure that potential eligible youth have access to services in the career pathway of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

Staff will continue to explore mentoring program opportunities, while individually mentoring participants as they develop an IEP and throughout the program and follow-up period.

Training Policies and Activities

LWDA 61 will adhere to all federal, state, and local regulations and policies for the provisions of training activities. The local area has tracking mechanisms in place to ensure the required training expenditures outlined by the State are obtained. The local area has developed policies and procedures for the provisions of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) for WIOA adults and dislocated workers. The Individual Training Account (ITA) is the primary method for accessing training services, except for work-based training. Training services are linked to occupations that are in-demand on Louisiana's Statewide Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). The ETPL is the primary source for access to skills training for WIOA eligible participants. The board will notify training providers in the local area of the opportunity to apply for status as an approved training provider on the statewide ETPL. The Board will advocate for entry level training that

meets the needs of local employers and provides career pathway in high demand/high growth industries.

Individual Training Accounts (ITA) will pay for training services for skills in in-demand occupations (including all registered apprenticeship programs) as defined by the board from training providers on the approved ETPL. All participants must apply for PELL/Federal Student Aid (FASFA) and any other appropriate grant assistance and provide proof of application. The Pell grant funding must be applied toward the participant's tuition and education related expenses.

To maximize a customer's selection of training programs, LWDB 61 will accommodate a training contract, in lieu of an individual training account for a program of study that provides a recognized, portable credential in an in-demand occupation. We recognize that *local training is not available for all in-demand occupations*. It is our LWDB policy to inform jobseekers of the eligible training providers and programs that are available locally.

LWDB 61 will utilize program evaluation criteria, as well as the in-demand occupations (i.e., Star Rating System) to ensure that training providers offering high quality training services for existing and emerging industries are included on the Statewide Eligible Training Provider list, thereby presenting our customer with the best choices for training.

The LWDB 61 engages in regular and consistent communication to assess the needs of business customers and ensure that service delivery is efficient. Workforce Professionals maintain regular communication with businesses, industry leaders, and governmental agencies in the Rapides Parish.

Work-Based Training

In addition to classroom training, the Board offers work-based training opportunities for eligible participants. Work-based training includes on-the-job training, customized training, and incumbent worker training. This training is provided in partnership with the employers to meet their specified training needs.

See Attachment 3 **LWDA 61 400-01** (Scholarship Training)

Utilization of WIOA Title IB Funds

The local Board continuously monitors the expenditures of WIOA adult and dislocated worker funds and can transfer funds on an as needed basis during the program year. State policy limits the maximum allowable transfer to 75 percent. The board may request a transfer of funds up to

50 percent of the first-year funds are made available and may request up to an additional 25 percent the second year.

As outlined in WIOA section 134(d)(4)(A)(i), a local area may reserve up to 20 percent of their combined total of adult and dislocated worker allocations for incumbent worker training. The board must consider the following criteria under WIOA sec. 134(d)(4)(A)(ii) for an employer to be eligible to receive local incumbent worker training funds:

- The characteristics of the individuals in the program
- The relationship of the training to the competitiveness of an individual and employer; and
- Other factors the Local WDB determines appropriate, including number of employees trained, wages and benefits including post training increases, and the existence of other training opportunities provided by the employer.

Transitional Jobs

The Board ensures that transitional jobs services are available to eligible adult and dislocated workers in accordance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Transitional jobs provide time-limited subsidized work experience for individuals with barriers to employment. These jobs are designed to enable individuals to establish a work history and develop skills that lead to unsubsidized employment. Transitional jobs are administered through the Operator of the AREA 61 Business and Career Solutions Center. The local area utilizes no more than 10% of the combined WIOA adult and dislocated worker allocation for transitional jobs services.

Pay for Performance Contracts

Pay for performance contracts is outlined in WIOA Sec. 133(b) (2-3). LWDB 60 will determine when it is applicable and most beneficial to utilize WIOA funds for pay-for-performance contracts. Local workforce boards may use up to 10% of their WIOA Adult, WIOA Dislocated Worker, and WIOA Youth funds for adult training services and/or youth activities for PFP contract strategies. Where local workforce boards use PFP contract strategies, funds may be available until expended. This extended availability means that, if outcomes are not achieved as hoped, the funds may be used for another PFP purpose. States may also use funds from the Governor's Reserve to support PFP.

Incumbent Worker Training

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LWDA 60 will provide Incumbent Worker Training in compliance with WIOA sec.134(d)(4). An incumbent worker must be employed, have an established employment history with the employer for six months or more, and meet the Fair Labor Standards Act requirements for an employer-employee relationship. In the event that training is being provided to a cohort of employees, not all employees in the cohort must have an established employment history with the employer for six months or more as long as the majority of the employees being trained meet the employment history requirement.

Incumbent worker training will increase the competitiveness of the employees or the employer. The training is designed to meet the requirements of the employer or group of employers and is conducted with a commitment by the employer to retain or avert the layoffs of the incumbent workers trained. The local area will reserve no more than 20% of the combined WIOA adult and dislocated worker allocation for incumbent worker training.

CHAPTER 5

Performance Goals & Evaluations

Local levels of Negotiated Performance

The LWDA 61 performance levels for PY 22-23 have been negotiated with the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC).

Quarterly performance reporting is provided to the local board and one stop operator.

LWDA 61 utilized HiRE and FutureWorks to ensure that performance measures are being met. Both of these online systems allow for monitoring to ensure performance measures are being met.

In addition to the common performance measures, Region 6 tracks business-focused metrics as well. This helps to identify standardized indicators for measuring effectiveness in serving employers. The primary source of information for this measure is data recorded in the MIS

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system of the Louisiana Workforce Commission, HiRE. Services to employers are both automatically recorded by HiRE *and* manually entered into HiRE by One-Stop Center staff.

The Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) programs have federal performance requirements for each funding source (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth). The federal performance requirements are known as the WIOA Common Measures. The Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) is responsible for negotiating performance goals with each local area. LWDA 61 negotiated measures are as follows:

**Negotiated Performance Levels for WIOA
Rapides Parish (LWDA 61)**

	PY 2022	PY 2023
WIOA Title I Adult		
Employment Rate 2nd quarter after exit	80.0%	80.0%
Employment Rate 4th quarter after exit	75.0%	75.0%
Median Earnings in the 2nd quarter after exit	\$9,500	\$9,500
Credential Attainment Rate	85.0%	85.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	80.0%	80.0%
WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker		
Employment Rate 2nd quarter after exit	80.0%	80.0%
Employment Rate 4th quarter after exit	67.0%	67.0%
Median Earnings in the 2nd quarter after exit	\$9,500	\$9,500
Credential Attainment Rate	85.0%	85.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	75.0%	75.0%
WIOA Title I Youth		
Employment Rate 2nd quarter after exit	71.0%	71.0%
Employment Rate 4th quarter after exit	75.0%	75.0%
Median Earnings in the 2nd quarter after exit	\$3,500	\$3,500
Credential Attainment Rate	55.0%	55.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	50.0%	50.0%

Current and Planned Evaluation Activities

WIOA, as we know, includes Primary Indicators of Performance in which all states are responsible for achieving targeted performance. Performance initiatives are conceptualized and developed by our Region's LWDBs and implemented by the dedicated staff members through a team-based initiative. Putting the customer at the center of service design dramatically changes

the service delivery paradigm. Our region's focus, on continuous service improvement, includes some of the following delivery strategy challenges:

- How might we improve the customer experience and outcomes for our shared One-Stop 1Customers?
- How might we put employers at the center of our Sector Strategies and Career Pathway goals?
- How might we design services and programs for out-of-school youth that will engage them and produce great outcomes?

Our Region 6 one-stop staff are finding solutions through various methods to include:

- Placing employers and job seeker customers at the center and focus of every process and plan.
- Using a collaborative process approach to service design and implementation that includes our Partner agencies and community resources thereby creating a culture of focus on the value of the service we provide.
- Making program implementation transformative and not an exercise in 'checking the box.'
- Creative training solutions to ensure that one-stop program staff feel confident that they can find solutions to the problems faced by jobseekers and employers, in all programs

The local Board is focused on continuous improvement and the evaluation of program outcomes. Using the quarterly Rapides American Job Center Report, which outlines WIOA activities, such as enrollments, job placement and training completion rates, the Board can make informed decisions regarding which activities to invest funding to receive the best return on investment. WIOA training that result in low completion and/ or job placement rates, will be curtailed or eliminated based on minimal return on investment.

LWDA 61 uses data and demographics available in HiRE to evaluate potential barriers to enrollment and to ensure that the participants enrolled in programs reflect the population and demographics of the individuals in Region 6. LWDA 61 will continue to work with all partners to determine the barriers that exist for residents in the area and look for cost-effective solutions. Solutions could include streamlining the registration process to limit physical appointments at the job center and providing information and applications online.

Chapter 6

Technical Requirements and Assurances

Fiscal Management

The disbursement of grant funds in LWDA 61 is managed through the Office of Economic and Workforce Development, a department within the Rapides Parish Police Jury and grant recipient. This office supplies all the fiscal services required in administering the federal funds provided through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act in compliance with WIOA section 101.

The grant recipient in LWDA 61, the Rapides Parish Police Jury, will follow the procedures outlined in the Rapides Parish Policy Jury's Policies and Procedures Manual, to announce any

Request for Proposals and for the competitive process of securing a One-Stop Center Operator and a provider of Youth Services in Rapides Parish. The LWDB 61 plans to continue the following processes:

- Determine the appropriate role of the One-Stop Operator & Youth Services
- Determine the competitive selection process
- Develop and issue competitive procurement
- Issue One-Stop Operator & Youth award / contract

See Attachment 4 **LWDA-61 800-01** – (Fiscal Policy)

Competitive Proposals are conducted with more than one source submitting an offer, and either a fixed price or cost-reimbursement type contract is awarded.

Physical and Programmatic Accessibility

The LWDA 61 is focused on complying with WIOA Section 188 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) which prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in several areas, including employment. As it relates to employment, Title I of the ADA protects the rights of both employees and job seekers. The ADA also establishes requirements for telecommunications relay services. LWDB 61's staff provides assistance with programs and activities in a manner that makes services readily accessible to qualified individuals with disabilities. Our goals are to ensure staff and program personnel have the education, training, and experience (skill, ability, and knowledge) to perform assigned duties regarding nondiscrimination and quality of opportunity for persons with disabilities. LWDA 61 works closely with program partners, with the majority of these being Louisiana Rehabilitation Services, made up of government agencies, community organizations, and private sector employers to reach our area's job seekers with disabilities. The Board believes these actions help ensure that communications with individuals with disabilities are as effective and equal to communications with non-disabled individuals. The Rapides One-Stop has assistive technology items in the One-Stop Center to assist individuals with disabilities to access a computer for the same services available to those without disabilities. The One-Stop staff has been trained to operate the assistive technology. The Rapides One-Stop meets basic ADA requirements for operation.

To date, LWDA 61, does not have a Cooperative agreement with Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS). We do have a Consortium agreement with LRS, and they are a core partner in our Memorandum of Understanding with our partners. Past staff development meetings have included presentation by LRS and a staff member from LRS is at the Rapides One-Stop a ½ day every week. Our center is accessible to our disabled citizens and meets ADA requirements. As

partners in our One-Stop system, staff work very closely with Rehabilitation Services in helping customers find employment and training which will result in their obtaining gainful employment that meets their needs and vocational choice.

Plan Development and Public Comment

The LWDB in LWDA 61 will provide the required 30-day opportunity for public comment by securing a legal notice in the Alexandria Daily Town Talk, the newspaper with the widest circulation in central Louisiana. In addition, a draft version of the regional plan will be placed on www.rppj.com with comment ability directed back to the LWDB through sneal@cenlaworks.org. We will send a courtesy copy via email to stakeholders such as the Chief Elected Official, CLEDA, WDB members, for their feedback.

These measures will allow for formal comments on the plan with modifications from the public, representatives of business and regional labor organizations, required WIOA core and partner agencies, educators, community organizations, and other interested parties.

Summary of Public Comments Received

We received no public comments that expressed disagreements with the regional/local plan. A summary of comments will be included if received during the public comment period for the Regional/Local Two-Year Modification.

Regional and Local Plan Modification Procedures

Each WBD will obtain approval from the board of directors, and if required the chief elected officials obtain required signatures. The plan is then submitted to the Governor for review and approval. Modifications over the term of this plan will be made available for public comment and brought to the local board and partners for approval.

Common Assurances

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Local Workforce Development Board 61

1. The Local Area has established a policy identifying circumstances that may present a conflict of interest for a Local Board or the entity or class of officials that the member represents, and procedures to resolve such conflicts.

Local Area 61 has complied with this requirement through Article I, Section 7 of the LWDB's Bylaws. Local Board Members of LWDA 61 have signed a conflict-of-interest statement as required by law. Each year board members are required to complete an ethics training course.

2. The Local Area has established a policy to provide the public (including individuals with disabilities) access to meetings of Local Boards and information regarding activities of local boards, such as data on board membership and minutes.

The LWDB 61 has complied with this requirement through Article IV, Section 1 of the LWDB's Bylaws. Data related to activities, board membership, minutes and agendas are published on our Board website, www.rppj.com.

3. The Local Area has established a policy on fiscal control and fund accounting procedures that are necessary to ensure proper accounting for, funds allotted to the local area (this applies to Title I and other discretionary funds allotted to the local area).

The LWDB 61 has complied with this requirement through Policy 800-01- Fiscal Policy and Procedures 800-01-01 through 800-001-05.

4. The Local area has established a policy which describes action to secure compliance with uniform administrative requirements of this Act, including that the Local Area will annually monitor.

LWDB 61 has complied with this requirement through Article III, Section 1 and 2 of the LWDB's Bylaws.

5. The Local Area has a policy taking the appropriate action to be in compliance with WIOA section 188, Nondiscrimination, as applicable.

The LWDB 61 has complied with this requirement through Article II, Section 2 of the LWDB's Bylaws and through Policy 100-04 Equal Employment Opportunity.

6. The Local Area has implemented a policy to ensure adult-program funds provide a priority in the delivery of career and training services and individualized career services to individuals who are low income, public assistance recipients or basic skills deficient.

The LWDB 61 has complied with this requirement through Policy 400-05 – Priority of Services for Adults and Dislocated Workers.

7. The Federal funds received to carry out a core program will not be expended for any purpose other than for activities authorized with respect to such funds under that core program.

The LWDB 61 assures that its core program funding will be expended only for activities authorized under each of the respective core programs.

8. The Local Area will not use funds received under WIOA Title I to assist, promote, or deter union organizing in accordance with WIOA section 181(b)(7).

The LWDB 61 will amend its Policy 800-01 – Fiscal Policy #7 Anti-Lobbying to include WIOA funds will not be used to assist, promote, or deter organization of a union.

Attachment 1 **LWDA 61 Policy #400-1** (Supportive Services – Adult and Dislocated Worker)

Attachment 2 **LWDA 61 Policy # 500-06-01** (Supportive Services – Youth Services)

Attachment 3 **LWDA 61 400-01** (Scholarship Training)

Attachment 4 **LWDA-61 800-01** – (Fiscal Policy)