

LWA #11: Grundy, Kankakee, & Livingston Counties WIOA Local Plan

CHAPTER 4: OPERATING SYSTEMS AND POLICIES – LOCAL COMPONENT

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

- The Local Workforce Innovation Area #11 Memorandum of Understanding provides a description of the one-stop delivery system, and other information that is essential to the establishment and operation of effective local workforce development systems as required by the WIOA Rule (20 CFR Part 678.705). The Memorandum of Understanding and any subsequent modifications is incorporated by reference into this plan
- The Local Workforce Innovation Area #11 Service Integration Action Plan provides a description of how local workforce partners will align and coordinate services as required by the State of Illinois Service Integration Policy (WIOA Policy Chapter 1, Section 13). Information from the initial Service Integration Action Plan is included below. Any subsequent modifications are incorporated by reference into this plan.

LWA #11 Service Integration Plan

Function/Goal: Customer-Centered Design. Customer input drives service design for job seekers, employers, and system customers.

Tasks:

1. Create a FAQ about programs so we partners can answer general questions about one another.
2. Create One-stop customer pledge (Center Expectations)—global One-stop perspective.

Function/Goal: Staff. Cross-training on program information occurs among staff. Communication is consistent, comprehensive, and timely.

Tasks:

1. Offer more front line staff training
2. Rotate training sites. Ask non-participants to host to encourage engagement among partners.

Function/Goal: Intake & Assessment: Common intake/information sharing, including outreach

Tasks:

1. FAQ list that is staff-focused (already covered above).
2. Modify the one stop sign in sheet to further break it out by service to have a better breakdown, better information for decision making amongst partners

Function/Goal: Services: Services delivered by function and timely and coordinated access for customers.

Tasks:

1. Develop partner schedule for their time at the One-stop to have a coordinated, collaborative strategy.
 - a. Create Business Services and client organization charts by function and reevaluate the referral process (including the form) currently in use.

Function/Goal: Career Pathways: Strategies drive service delivery and collaboration efforts among partners

Tasks:

1. Share workforce data more frequently with our partners to continue bridge-building between education, workforce, IDES, TANF, and Vocational Rehabilitation.

Function/Goals: Information: Sharing information and current and timely labor market information drives services.

Tasks:

1. Comparable social media component for disseminating information for outreach to other demographics and for other partner info.
2. Create a single piece for marketing outreach.

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

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

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

Until such time as an integrated data system is established, the partners agree to pursue other means of sharing information relevant to the individuals and employer successful outcomes. The partner referral form has a release of information signature line in order for partner organizations to share assessment results such as reading/math test and individual employment goals in order to avoid duplication of services. In addition, partners will share the number of customers served and program performance to assure that all common primary performance indicators are achieved. One Stop System data across all partners will be shared quarterly with the Workforce Board.

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

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

- Title II Adult Education and Perkins programs are at Kankakee Community College

and share a common client database so students can move from adult education to community college credit programs seamlessly. Kankakee Community College follows Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) federal requirements to assure student information is confidential.

- Title I Workforce Services and Title III Wagner Peyser share individual resumes to best help the individual obtain their employment goal. As part of the Workforce Services application process, an individual signs a release of information request which allows the partner to share information. In addition, IDES provides Title 1 Workforce Services partner with access to Illinois Joblink, Illinois employment system through Wagner Peyser.
- Title II Adult Education and Title I Workforce Services share reading and math test results in order to avoid the duplication of services.
- Title 1 Workforce Services have data sharing agreements with Department of Human Services & IDES in order to provide eligibility and case management services for adult, dislocated workers, and youth.
- Partners will be providing number of customers served and other primary performance information to the One Stop Operator in order to help develop a One Stop System dashboard which will be reported to the Workforce Board.

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

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

Due to the large geography of the local workforce area and a desire to serve all residents with need, the Workforce Board is committed to keeping Workforce Services Offices open in each of the Counties that make up the workforce area. Each county has its own Workforce Services office to provide the best service to individuals. The Workforce Services Office staff offers workshops and orientations to remote areas of the counties when the need arises, especially since transportation might be an issue for individuals. In addition, many workforce services are available on the system's website, Illinois WorkNet, as well as on Illinois JobLink. Workforce services offices also use social media to reach individuals to keep individuals. Each workforce services office has its own Facebook page and website to help outreach to the community. In addition, workforce services office uses Constant Contact to eblast to workforce service information to the community. Below is the data from July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2019 which reflects the strength in using technology to providing workforce services.

i. Livingston Workforce Services

1. monthly workshop schedule posted in newspaper/radio along with multiple news briefs
2. 5 press releases published in local area newspaper
3. Facebook:

- a. Increased the number of followers by 400 in one year.
- b. Total followers on Facebook is 1,100
4. posted 25 success stories to IL Worknet
5. Online job board receives an average of 400 views per week which has tripled since last year. (July 1, 2017 – Jun 30, 2018)

ii. Grundy Workforce Services

1. Four Quarterly eblast newsletters via Constance Contact
 - a. Qtr 1: 11% open rate = 388 viewers
 - b. Qtr 2: 10% open rate = 367 viewers
 - c. Qtr 3: 12% open rate = 436 viewers
 - d. Qtr 4: 11% open rate = 391 viewers
2. 15 success stories published on quarterly newsletters, web site, and Facebook
3. Grundy Workforce Services submits quarterly newsletters to the high school counselors.
4. 44 eblasts via Constant Contact: job fairs/recruiting events, workshops,
5. Facebook:
 - a. Reached 610 friends
 - b. 270 posts —advertising includes sharing on group sites such as “Jobs in Grundy County” and “People Helping People”
6. Job board/website

a. Homepage:	9,955 page views
b. Success stories page:	420 page views
c. Job board:	9,996
d. Job posting form:	1,135

iii. Kankakee Workforce Services

1. Facebook
 - a. Total followers. 1861 follows.
 - b. 55 shares for single job posting
2. Constant Contact eblasts
 - a. Distributed Monthly: 17% open rate with an 8% click rate.
3. Website
 - a. 4,256 for the default/home page

- **Describe how lessons learned about remote delivery of services during the COVID-19 National Health Emergency will be adopted into operations over the next two years.**

The COVID-19 pandemic quickly had the workforce system changing the way we do business. All partners had to pivot to better use of technology instead of in person to provide services. Below are a few examples on how technology was used during the COVID-19 pandemic and what we will continue for the next two years.

- The Workforce Services Title 1 partner updated their respective workforce services websites to include interested in our services survey. Once survey was submitted a career planner would outreach to the individual to discuss

workforce services and possible refer to partner services. This survey allowed individuals to contact the workforce services offices at all dates and times. As such, some workforce services offices actually saw an increase in our services than in previous years. This technology will continue within the next two years and has been implemented into our normal operating procedures.

- During the height of the pandemic, LWA #11 had a plant closure. Through the use of technology including Zoom platform, a virtual Rapid Response event was held for the employees affected by the event. Partners including IDES, Title 1, and Employee Benefits Security Administration. Thus, rapid response services were provided to the employees through the use of technology. In addition, the Zoom presentations were recorded and the recordings were uploaded to the Workforce Services website so any employee can access the information after the event. This helped those employees who couldn't attend the event or wanted to go back and reference a presenter presentation. One of the lessons that we learned is virtual Rapid Response is a great use of technology; however, it's missing the personal touch with the ability for employees to ask questions directly to presenters after the meetings. As such, Rapid Response Services going forward should have the ability to present the information in a hybrid model with virtual presentations that can be recorded but also need an onsite in person presentation in order to connect to employees and address their individual questions.
- Technology especially the ability to use virtual platforms such as Zoom or Cisco Webex has been improvement in service provision. The ability to provide basic career services via a virtual platform allowed. In addition to providing basic career services visually, these platforms allowed us to meet our customers face-to-face to continue to provide services. This is an improvement on how we are able to provide services and will continue to use these platforms to provide services.
- In addition to program services, technology virtual platforms such as Zoom or Cisco Webex has allowed the Workforce Board to meet to provide oversight. Since moving to a virtual platform, the Workforce Board has seen a higher attendance rate at Workforce Board meetings. Going forward, technology such as Zoom or Cisco Webex will continue for Workforce Board meetings as long as the State of Illinois Open Meetings Act allows it.
- During the COVID-19 pandemic, local workforce areas added the ability to submit Title 1 eligibility paperwork, documentation, and required signatures through a secure technology software system such as DocuSign. This allowed local career planners the ability to continue to issue new ITA's, continue to provide services to current clients, collect eligibility documentation and signatures, etc. This technology will continue over the next two years for those individuals who have the computer skills to complete/submit the information. However, we will offer in person services

or a hybrid model in order to provide access to all customers.

- IDES Employment Services and Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program services transitioned from in-person to virtual. Employment Services returned to in-person in late 2021. RESEA services have continued to be accessible via phone, and additional virtual services are being explored.

There are a few lessons learned. The first lesson is there are portions of our workforce area that does not have access to high speed internet. The lack of internet was especially true for the rural portions of the workforce area. As such, this created a barrier for individuals in getting access to services.

In addition to lack of internet, another lesson learned is not everyone had the right equipment for remote delivery of services. Individuals did not have a computer or laptop and only had a smart phone. Unfortunately, a smart phone is not the best equipment for remote service delivery. As such, this created a barrier for remote service delivery.

The last lesson that was learned is there are individuals in our workforce area that are not proficient in technology. As such, they had issues using Zoom and had issues when training providers went to remote delivery of services. These individuals would take a “break” from training or individuals would not register for training until training returned to “in person”.

With these lessons learned, our workforce area has realized it’s important as a workforce system to provide a hybrid service delivery model. It’s important that our one stops are open for in person services to help all that need it but have the ability to offer remote services.

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

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

The Workforce Board recognizes the importance of accessibility of programs and services to all eligible individuals, including individuals with barriers to employment. To that end, the Workforce Board works with and encourages its workforce partners to establish new opportunities to serve workforce customers. One example of this is Directors at all three Workforce Services offices are part of the local social service agency network which meets to discuss programs, partnerships, and ways to ensure an individual’s success. These meetings ensure all community stakeholders have the information about local workforce services especially individuals with barriers.

The Director of Workforce Services in Kankakee County is a board member on the Kankakee County Renewed Opportunity (KCRO). KCRO is a not-for-profit organization that works jointly with the Kankakee Sheriff's Department to reduce recidivism in Kankakee County. Board members represent a wide variety of entities ranging from probation, circuit court, mental health and substance abuse, and workforce services. KCRO meets on a monthly basis to brainstorm, discuss, and implement ideas, programs, and services. The goal is to reduce the barriers to reentry and the stigma surrounding returning citizens, redefining the image of returnees, and helping them become valued productive people, in order that Kankakee County would have the lowest county-wide rate of recidivism in the State of Illinois. One of the initiatives of the KCRO is workforce services goes into the county jail to provide job readiness workshops such as resume and job search assistance to returning citizens to help prepare the individuals for the workforce upon release.

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

As one of one stop system partners, Department of Human Services Vocational Rehabilitation provides services to individuals with disabilities

Lastly, the service integration plan which the one stop partners have approved will help expand access. One of the service integration action items is to create a frequently asked questions for all partners so all front line staff can answer general questions about all workforce programs. This knowledge will increase referrals amongst partners to all workforce services including education, employment, and supportive services.

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

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

One example of the support of this training model is the Workforce Board Executive Director discovered that our local individual training account (ITA) policy didn't allow for the expenditure of WIOA training funds in a bridge or integrated education training model. The ITA policy required an individual get their GED prior to any WIOA training funds being expended. This created a barrier. As a result, the Workforce Board approved a revised ITA funding policy which allows individuals to pursue GED and industry recognized credentials at the same time in order to use WIOA training funds. This revised policy created a partnership with Adult Education & Title 1 Workforce Services. The partnership created a braided funding system with Title 1 Workforce Services funding the industry recognized credential training and Adult Education funding the adult education training. In addition to removing

any funding barrier for individuals, this partnership created a support system for individual in the program. Individuals had an assigned WIOA case manager to help through the process but the individuals also had the support system of the adult education department to be successful. This ecosystem created a wraparound support system to help address and negate any barriers. This model was recognized as a leader in the state and we were asked to present at both adult education and workforce services conferences. Due to the success of existing Bridge programs, Adult Education has added new bridge programs and integrated training programs in order to meet employer needs.

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

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

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

Through the community college system, our local workforce area has dual credit programs with the majority of high schools and local career centers in the local workforce area. Community colleges, high schools, and career centers meet frequently to strategize and implement the best strategies including dual credit programs to ensure the future success of the student. Kankakee Community College in Kankakee County and Joliet Junior College in Grundy County are part of the Northern Illinois Workforce Coalition (NIWC) which is a regional consortium comprised of community colleges and workforce professionals to discuss best practices and create strategies to work as a region. Thus, NIWC would provide the opportunity to discuss and implement dual credit as a regional approach.

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

Best practices related to Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) involve providing a clear and practical description of what PLA is how it works, and its benefits. Because Prior Learning Assessment is still relatively new to higher education circles, many students still don't know what it is or perhaps have never heard of it. Because PLA involves such elements as Advanced Placement (AP), College Level Examination Program (CLEP), proficiency exams, and recognized professional licenses or certificates, one consideration is rethinking what we call PLA on our campuses. Other messages for students that warrant publicity include standards for assessing learning; this will help students get a clear picture as to what PLA is and what is involved in that assessment process. In terms of marketing, ensuring that PLA details are easily accessible on the organization's website is an obvious but often neglected approach. Including links to the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) website is also a valuable inclusion. Mentioning PLA as part of the institution's strategic plan also brings more

internal and community visibility to this process.

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

There are various ways the local workforce area provides target marketing through our partners. IDES provides targeted marketing through email blasts, calling individuals, and personalized letters. The marketing pieces from IDES target the unemployed, long term unemployed, job seekers and others who are in the database. The outreach information sent to individuals includes upcoming job fairs, outreach events, information on the one stop system, reemployment workshops, etc.

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

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

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

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

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

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

- As part of a regional initiative, the Workforce Board developed high demand industry based brochures that reflects demand occupations and include information on career pathways for the industry. These industry and demand occupation

brochures are easy to understand the career pathway of occupations in the industry, training, job openings and wage information. These brochures are used by all workforce service offices but also workforce partners in the community including one stop partners. In addition, the Workforce Board Executive Director made presentations to area high school guidance counselors and community college advisors who use the information with their students. These brochures are easily accessible to the community via Workforce Board website.

- Local community colleges including Kankakee Community College, Joliet Junior College, and Heartland Community College support career pathways. This support is evidenced by the career pathway programs offered by the colleges in the following industries: Manufacturing, Healthcare, Utilities/Renewable Energy and Transportation/Distribution/Logistics, as well as in IT. The community colleges offer a number of certificates and degree programs and are updated based off employer needs.
- An unregistered apprenticeship was developed and implemented with local healthcare employer, community college, and workforce services. This partnership helps the employees achieve the next career path within the employer. The employees are in nonclinical positions such as dietary and providing the training needed to become Certified Nursing Assistants. This career pathway was developed based off employer need. The unregistered apprenticeship model allows the employee to work three days and attend training two days. This model supports a cohort system and provides the wrap around services needed to ensure the success of the employee. To date, there has been 100% of the employees passing and moving up to the next career path.
- Career pathways are supported by the registered apprenticeship model. Currently, an employer and community college developed and implemented a Registered Industrial Maintenance program. This program takes current employees who are interested in industrial maintenance and provides a clear earn and learn model to the new career pathway.
- Adult Education has successful bridge and IET programs as mentioned on previous sections. These programs are co-enrolled in adult education, workforce services, Perkins programs, and other partner programs based off the individual's needs.
- Adult Education has an innovative application process which is the first in the state. An individual interested in services fills out an online application through the community college website. This online application was developed to duplicate the community college application process and adds workforce services questions to determine appropriate partner referrals. At the end of completing the application, an individual has the ability to sign up adult education orientation sessions. The application is used for co-enrolling into partner programs. However, the biggest advantage is individuals have already completed the community college application process. Thus, an individual can immediately continue on in their career pathway without any additional paperwork and barriers. This technology

based system is more customer centered focused, expands co-enrollment, and supports career pathways especially through Perkins programs.

- Career pathways start with career awareness. As such, the Workforce Board has implemented a program called Graduate & Get Paid. This program focuses on graduating high school seniors who are not attending a four university to provide information on local employment/education opportunities by providing employer tours to discuss career opportunities including training needed and career pathways within the employer. This program was expanded to guidance counselors and educators called Educator Graduate & Get Paid. The purpose was to inform and educate high school educators about local career opportunities since they have direct contact with students. Both programs were a collaboration of economic development, workforce services, high schools, chamber of commerce, and career centers. The response from students and educators was amazement and appreciation due to the fact they were not aware of what was happening in the community. All participants (individuals & educators) learned a lot from the program.
- **Improving access to activities leading to a recognized post-secondary credential (including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable) (§ 679.560(b)(2)(iii)).**

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

Local community colleges through credit and noncredit departments have improved the opportunities by offering multiple certificate options within training programs/career pathways. The ability to offer stackable credentials provides individuals the opportunity to achieve the credentials to obtain employment but continue in the career path by offering the next stackable credential to advance in the career pathway. A great example of this is the Certified Production Technician (CPT). An individual can obtain the industry recognized credential of CPT to have the skills necessary for entry level manufacturing. However, the CPT program leads to multiple career pathways with additional training such as machine tool or industrial maintenance.

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

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

the advantages of this model to improve the workforce.

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

- **Use insights and lessons learned from the COVID-19 National Health Emergency regarding the identification and service delivery to targeted populations affected by the pandemic**

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the data reflects the highest population affected was those individuals with high school diploma or less with approximately 60% receiving unemployment insurance. Using this insight and unemployment claims by zip code, Workforce Services offices targeted outreach to communities that were hardest hit by the pandemic. In addition, our social media and outreach was targeted to help with high school diploma or less to help them get the training needed for reemployment.

Another insight that all partners has learned is that childcare is a barrier that COVID has made worse. During COVID, childcare facilities had reduced capacity so there were limited spots for children. As such, parents had to make the tough choice of leaving the labor force to care of their children since childcare was unavailable. In addition to lack of available childcare, there was an issue of children needing to quarantine due to COVID-19 exposure. This created a barrier for working parents since childcare was unavailable. As a result, individuals couldn't reenter the workforce to take care of the children. This lesson learned is still a barrier since there is still a need for affordable, quality childcare in the local workforce area. With that being said, Child Care Resource and Referral agency is a key partner for childcare referrals for childcare assistance and the Title 1 has a Supportive Services policy that can help.

Another insight learned from the pandemic is the local workforce area labor force is shrinking from pre-covid labor force numbers. The reduction is approximately 5.5% decrease. This means 4,697 individuals have left labor force in the past year per the December 2021 labor force to December 2020 labor force numbers per IDES LAUS reports. With the reduction in labor force, this is a major cause of a shortage of workforce for area employers. To address this issue and try to get individuals to return the workforce, workforce services has partnered with IDES to help target and outreach via the IDES eblast system. IDES has help outreach job fairs, workforce services, employers hiring, etc. They have been a key partner in trying to reengage the labor force.

As mentioned earlier, lack of the appropriate equipment was a barrier during COVID-19 especially for low income individuals. As a result, the Community Colleges recognized this as an issue and launched Laptop Loan programs. This program provided laptops to individuals in order to access remote training. In addition to the Community Colleges

laptop loan program, local workforce supportive services policy revised their procedures to allow the use to purchase laptops for our customers. Between these programs, laptops are available to individuals. This practice will continue in the foreseeable future.

Adult education partners realized remote services only is not the best for all their customers due to the different learning styles and barriers. As such, adult education is implementing a hybrid model in the future. This hybrid model means that adult education training could be virtual or participate in person based off the individual's assessments/needs.

IDES continued to outreach and provide services individuals identified as needing Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program services virtually through COVID and recently returned to in person services. The ability to switch to remote services allowed continuation of services for individuals needing these services.

As we continue to "return to normal" from the COVID-19 pandemic, it's important to continue to strengthen our community partnerships and outreach to new community organizations to ensure our services are within the community. For example, the Workforce Board Director and Title 1 Director learned about a newer organization in the community that serves the Hispanic partnership. Through this partnership, we are exploring ways to continue to partner with the partner to provide services to their customers.

D. Provide information regarding the local coordination strategies with state (including the Unified State Plan), regional and local partners to enhance services and avoid duplication of activities including a description of the following, noting any significant implications of the COVID-19 National Health Emergency, where applicable:

The local and regional were developed with the express goal of aligning with both the State's Unified Plan. LWA #11 will work with local and regional partners to ensure the strategies align with the priorities of the state plan. A current example of this regional collaboration is the regional business service team. The Northeast Region is bringing together the local business services team in the region to start the coordination of services as outlined in the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board Integrated Business Services strategy. The Regional Integrated Business Services Team started with Title 1 Workforce services but has expanded to include other workforce partners such as Wagner Peyser, Veteran Representative, and Vocational Rehabilitation to ensure integrated service delivery to employers.

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

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

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

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

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

COVID-19 pandemic implication is the continuation of using remote services through technology as mentioned in previously under Chapter 4.B. As we continue to move towards a post pandemic life, workforce services will continue to evolve into a hybrid model of services available. Secondly, workforce services will continue to outreach to targeted populations affected by the pandemic to provide workforce services in order for individuals to reenter the workforce/employment.

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

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

workforce. This program is just one example of partner collaboration.

The Board is waiting on guidance from Illinois Department of Commerce (DOC) and Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) before developing a process for reviewing local applications under Title II.

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

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

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

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

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Wagner Peyser services transitioned from in-person to virtual. Wagner Peyser services returned to in-person in late 2021. As Wagner Peyser services move forward they will be exploring the best way to provide services in the future, i.e via in person, via phone, direct linkage, additional virtual services, or a hybrid model.

- **Veterans Services provided by IDES**

In March 2020, the Illinois Department of Employment Security's (IDES) Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) program began enlisting the use of digital tools that facilitated remote work and day-to-day administrative operations. The use of this technology allowed for customer service provisions to take place that, due to COVID 19's impact, had been restricted. As telework and virtual event planning and implementation emerged as common practice, lessons were learned and improvements to our delivery model took place. These changes have left its mark on our day-to-day operations in the post-COVID-19 landscape.

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

Vocational Rehabilitation representative is a Workforce Board member and participates in

policy and program discussions. As a core partner, Vocational Rehabilitation is a member of the One Stop Operator which aligns services at the One Stop. Vocational Rehabilitation will provide staff part time at the One Stop to further coordinate services. During the MOU process, core discussion was centered upon coordination of all the career services at the One Stop. The One Stop monthly workshops are open to all individuals. As a result, Vocational Rehabilitation staff is now receiving the monthly One Stop workshop schedule and is referring individuals to these workshops as appropriate.

A frontline core partner staff cross training was held in May 2016 and February 2020 to provide core program orientation. This training included Vocational Rehabilitation staff and services, Adult Education services, Workforce Services staff and services and Wagner-Peyser staff and services. This is the first step the core partners identified as an immediate need and will continue to develop service coordination throughout the year.

Vocational Rehabilitation Services transitioned to providing to remote services and in person services as needed. It's important to note services never stopped being provided during the pandemic. In the future, Vocational Rehabilitation will continue to assess the best way to provide services whether it's in person, virtual, or a combination of both through a hybrid model.

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

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

Locally, Community Colleges have pivoted and flexible to provide training services during COVID. As previously stated under lessons learned in Chapter 4.C, community colleges implemented a laptop loan program to ensure in students had the tools necessary to be successful. As part of our partnerships with the Colleges, the workforce services offices were aware of the individuals who received laptops in order to avoid duplication of payment by workforce services Title 1. In addition to laptop loan program, Community Colleges learned how to implement training virtually, hybrid, and in person.

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

679.560(b)(1)(ii).

The career and technical (CTE) education under Perkins provides students with the academic and technical skills, knowledge and training necessary to succeed in future careers and to become lifelong learners. The CTE programs are offered through the community college system. As such, CTE program information is available for area residents at our workforce services offices including information concerning career pathways and industry stackable credentials. All workforce development partners, including those funded under Carl Perkins, coordinate services in order to best serve the client, including assistance with college tuition, help with getting a GED, help with transportation or childcare or other assistance needed in order to succeed in a career pathway and obtain employment. In May 2016 and February 2020, a core partner front line staff training was help to discuss partners programs so all front line staff are aware of the services available to individuals.

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

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

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

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

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Workforce Board Executive Director continuously reviewed the Supportive Services policy with Title 1 Director to ensure that the policy was not creating any barriers or missing any relevant information in order to best support our customers. As part of the review, a revised policy was approved by the Workforce Board which increased the transportation assistance. In addition, local workforce area supportive

service procedures were changed to allow the purchase of laptops due to remote training.

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

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

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

Workshops are provided at the One Stop. They include:

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

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

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

The Workforce Services Offices provide assessments of skills, abilities, attitudes, and needs and the subsequent review and discussion of assessment results as the first step in identifying a career path and creating an individual employment plan. They also provide an explanation of the services and stages within the career pathway process and work with individuals on securing employment. The Workforce Services Offices provide job clubs, screened referrals, and follow-up services. All Workforce Services Offices provide Individual Training Account vouchers for those registrants in need of training, on-the-job training, and paid work

experience for adults and dislocated workers. In addition, Wagner Peyser, Adult Basic Education, GED preparation and English as a Second Language (ESL) courses are provided at all Workforce Services Offices utilizing core partner programs. Individual and group instruction is provided.

- **A description of how the Local Board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities (§ 679.560(b)(7)). As part of modification, describe how adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities will address the impact and recovery from the COVID 19 National Health Emergency**

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

As workforce services continues to evolve after the COVID-19 pandemic, adult and dislocated worker services will continue to evolve to best serve our customers. As mentioned in previous sections, workforce services will continue in a hybrid model of service delivery. This model allows service delivery 24/7 through websites and social media. In addition, in person services are available.

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

COVID-19 has affected adult and dislocated worker differently. By using labor market information, workforce services Title 1 will target and outreach to targeted population based off the data. In addition, our one stop partners are key in helping to outreach through such means as IDES eblasts or through Adult Education partner. Lastly, strengthening our community partnerships will help workforce services provide services most in need to address COVID-19 recovery.

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

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

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

- Tutoring and study skills training
- GED preparation and testing
- Soft skills, decision making and team work training

- Financial literacy education and entrepreneurial skills training
- Occupational skill training, internships and job shadowing opportunities
- Academic skill development
- Assessment
- Placement in subsidized and unsubsidized work experiences and summer employment opportunities directly linked to academic and occupational learning
- Supportive services such as transportation and stipends for participation in the youth program
- Extensive case management
- Comprehensive referral system
- 12 months of follow-up services
- Partner with the Grundy County Chamber of Commerce in the Certificate of Employability program. The Certificate of Employability program familiarizes students with the expectations of the workforce to help equip them for their first job. Students hear from owners and managers in the local business community who teach them skills required to work in jobs such as retail, fast food, sit-down dining and more. For instance, the students learned how to fill out an application, job expectations, appropriate workplace attire etc.
- Graduate & Get Paid program which was referenced in Chapter 4.C under career pathways bullet point
- This program is open to all youth including youth with disabilities. For additional support, program may refer youth with disabilities to Joliet Junior College Disability Services Coordinator to help youth with disabilities overcome any barriers for a successful post-secondary education. In addition, the My Future programs partners with Illinois Valley Industries, Inc. whose mission is to support individuals with intellectual, sensory, physical and developmental disabilities since 1968 in Grundy County, Illinois. Thus, eligible WIOA youth with disabilities have an individual service strategy created through the My Future program to be successful using multiple resources to ensure success.
- Approximately 18% of youth enrolled in Program Year 2019 WIOA program are youth with disabilities in Grundy County.

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

- Tutoring and study skills training.
- Secondary school offerings including high school course requirements, constitution test preparation, and various other academic requirements necessary for the participants to progress toward high school diplomas or GEDs.
- High school credit recovery and correspondence classes.
- Summer employment opportunities directly relate to the participants' career plans and education plans.

- Job readiness workshops.
 - Paid work experiences. Young Adult Program place participants at a job site and pay the first 60 days of wages. The employer then has the opportunity to permanently hire the participants.
 - Occupational skill training including Certified Nursing Assistant, Microsoft Office Specialist Certification, Certified Production Technician, Commercial Driver's License.
 - Leadership development opportunities.
 - Supportive services including transportation, school expenses, work experience expenses and child care.
 - Adult Mentoring.
 - Follow-up services.
 - Comprehensive guidance and counseling.
 - Financial Literacy workshops.
 - Entrepreneurial Skills Training.
 - Labor Market Information.
 - Preparation for youth to transition to post-secondary education and training.
 - Graduate & Get Paid program which was referenced in Chapter 4.C under career pathways bullet point
 - Youth programs partner with Junior Achievement and Jobs for American Graduates to help youth understand local career opportunities, technical skills and soft skills need for employment.
 - This program is open to all youth including youth with disabilities. For additional support, program may refer youth with disabilities to Kankakee Community College Disability Services Coordinator to help youth with disabilities with any barriers to post-secondary education. In addition, the Youth Adults Program will refer to the appropriate social service agency for that particular county. In Kankakee County, the YAPS program would refer to the DHS – Vocational Rehabilitation partner for further services. In Livingston County, the DHS – Vocational Rehabilitation office or the Futures Unlimited. Futures Unlimited is a local not for profit whose purpose is to serve individuals with a variety of physical, developmental and mental disabilities in Livingston County. Thus, eligible WIOA youth with disabilities have an individual service strategy created through the My Future program to be successful using multiple resources to ensure success.
 - Approximately 20% of youth enrolled in Program Year 2019 WIOA year are youth with disabilities in Livingston County & 6% of youth enrolled are youth with disabilities in Kankakee County.
- **A description of how local areas will meet the minimum expenditure rate for out-of-school youth.**

Prior to the implementation of WIOA, the Board made the transition to serve out of school youth. The Board implemented 70% of youth expenditures had to be spent on out of school youth. Historically, out of school youth expenditures were approximately 85%. As such, our workforce board has already transitioned to

focusing on out of school youth. When DOL approved the State of Illinois waiver to reduce out of school expenditures to 50%, the Workforce Board took action and lowered our out of school expenditures to 50%. The Workforce Board has established strategies/priorities of serving in school youth by educating them on local career opportunities, career pathways, local training opportunities, and providing paid work experience to ensure the talent pipeline for employers. Thus, our out of school youth percentage will lower from previous years but Workforce Board still maintains the 50% out of school youth expenditure rate.

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

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

- **Describe how youth activities will address the impact and recovery from the COVID-19 National Health Emergency**

As the local workforce area moves to recovery from the COVID 19 pandemic, the below activities will be provided to youth.

- Youth outreach is a priority. During this pandemic, employers have seen a shrinkage in the labor force. As a result, employers are reviewing job qualifications including the qualifications needed for positions and the wages. As a result, youth have access to jobs that they would not qualified for in the past and are starting at a higher wage. This environment has created a challenge for the workforce system because those youth wanting employment are easily able to find employment and do not need the workforce system. Thus, youth outreach is extremely important as we move forward to find the youth that need our services to ensure an equitable recovery for all youth.
- Our work place excellence series workshops will continued to be provided to youth. These workshops provide youth with information and training on job readiness skills and soft skills required in today' workforce. Topics include dependability including showing up for work, communication skills, cell phone etiquette, present ability, etc. Due to virtual learning and other COVID-19 implications, these skills are desperately needed in today's youth since job readiness or soft skills were not emphasized during the pandemic.
- Career planners will focus on the individual service strategies to ensure appropriate activities are available for youth. This includes an in depth assessment of employment goals. It's important for our local career planners to provide the in depth individual service strategy to youth to ensure youth are

aware of the opportunities and the employment goals are related to the skills, interest of the youth since COVID-19 has changed individual's work perspectives, i.e., everyone wants to work from home even though local employers have returned to in person work. .

- Work based learning will continue to be a focus as we move to the recovery phase of the pandemic. As mentioned in the first bullet point, youth are able to find employment without our assistance making a higher wage. As such, the local Workforce Board has changed its youth work based learning policy to increase the wage in order to remain competitive in the marketplace. In addition, the youth that we are serving have multiple barriers which means a work based learning activity is important to activity to provide youth with job readiness skills needed in today's workforce.

As we move forward with recovery, we will continue to monitor, asses and implement any activities to ensure youth are prepared for and are part of the post pandemic recovery process.

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

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

Our workforce area has always made a commitment to serve low-income individuals, veterans, public assistance individuals and individuals who are basic skills deficient. This is evidenced by approximately 86% of our adult registrants being low-income or basic skills deficient over the past three years. The Board has approved the below priority of service populations and will continue to make this commitment to serve this population through the priority of services policy which is attached. The Workforce Board determined the priority populations by reviewing historical special populations' data from the Title 1 Workforce Services program including analyzing if the data represented an appropriate number based on workforce area demographics. In addition, priority populations were aligned with the State's unified plan and the priority populations identified in the WIOA law.

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

1. First priority will be provided to veterans and eligible spouses who are recipients of public assistance, low-income, or individuals who are basic skills deficient;
2. Second priority will be provided to individuals who are not veterans or eligible

spouses who are recipients of public assistance, low-income, or individuals who are basic skills deficient;

3. Third priority is individuals who are employed, unemployed, or under unemployed but earning more than WIOA income guidelines but lower than Workforce Board self-sufficiency rate. Veteran's and eligible spouses receive priority over individuals who are not veterans per IL Department of Commerce WIOA Policy 15-WIOA-4.6 under this priority.

- **Describe how the local workforce areas will ensure equitable access to workforce and educational services through the following actions:**
 - **Disaggregating data by race, gender and target population to reveal where disparities and inequities exist in policies and programs.**

As part of yearly equal opportunity (EO) monitoring, the local EO officer reviews demographic data by gender, race, targeted populations and priority of service. The monitoring ensures enrolled individuals in Title 1 Workforce Services are in proportion to the demographics of the county/counties to ensure the workforce services offices are serving the entire county/counties and not just a certain demographic. After analyzing the data, the Workforce Board Executive Director reviews the data with Title 1 Workforce Services program directors to ensure outreach is targeted to the correct areas the population. Below is an example of the demographic report provided to the local workforce area by the state EO monitor for program year 2018 (July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019). This report prompted a discussion with Title 1 Workforce Services directors about low male participation rates and ways to increase it for the next program year.

In addition to the Target Population Report, local workforce area has access to additional demographic information through the IDES Unemployment to Reemployment portal. This is a newer system that local workforce areas will have access through the IDES Shared data agreement that workforce areas can use to further dive deeper into labor force data.

Demographic Report Analysis

The estimated female workforce for LWA #11 is 50.7% in Kankakee County, 50.2% in Livingston County, and 49.8% in Grundy County per Census Bureau 2019 Vintage Population Estimates. Female Adult registrants for current program year ending January 2022 account for 80.2% in Kankakee County, 80.5% in Livingston County, and 75% in Grundy County of the total Adult program. The percent of males in the Adult program is much lower than the male labor force. Good numbers for women but low participation rate for males. Thus male participation rates are low for adult program.

However, dislocated worker male participation rate across the three counties of 47% is within the respective county demographics with for dislocated worker programs.

Male participation rates for the youth program for Kankakee and Grundy County of 47.5% is within the respective county demographics. Livingston County has an opportunity to improve youth male participate rates.

In terms of registrants by race and Hispanic you should compare these groups within the workforce availability and your intake.

Within the service area in the three counties, Blacks represent about 9.67% of the total workforce. The percent of Black registrant in the Adult program for the time period July 1, 2021 through January 31, 2022 was 40.35% and within the dislocated program Black registrants accounted for 41.17% . With the Youth program Black registrants accounted for 41.18% . Black participation in the programs is on the positive side.

Hispanics in the workforce service area accounts for about 9.21% of the total workforce. Adult registrants represented 10.14% of the total Adult registrants; Dislocated Hispanic registrants were at 10.78% (but based only 10 Hispanic registrants). Youth registrants represented 17.06% of the total youth registrants. . These figures are in line with labor force demographic data.

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

With the implementation of three state strategic plans, the Workforce Education Strategic Plan, the Adult Education Strategic Plan, and the Perkins V CTE Plan, the state will identify strategies and goals that address early interventions, transition to postsecondary education and employment and college and career readiness.

Locally, we will work with all workforce partners to implement any state led equity strategies/goal. For example, the state's Perkins plan states local workforce boards and employers are required partners within local Perkins plans. Local Perkins recipients must complete the Local Comprehensive Needs Assessment every two years. This assessment informs how Perkins funding will be spent in a specific region or local area, guiding equity-driven decision-making. The, the Workforce Board is willing to partner and provide information with local Perkins to help develop the local needs assessment to help guide equity driven decision making.

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

As mentioned earlier, the Workforce Board implemented a program called Graduate & get paid to expose high school seniors to local careers opportunities including careers in the science, technology, engineering & math fields. The program focuses on graduating high school seniors who are not attending a four university to provide information on local employment/education opportunities by providing employer tours to discuss career opportunities including training needed and career pathways within the employer. This program was expanded to guidance counselors and educators called Educator Graduate

& Get Paid. The purpose was to inform and educate high school educators about local career opportunities since they have direct contact with students. Both programs were a collaboration of economic development, workforce services, high schools, chamber of commerce, and career centers. The response from students and educators was amazement since they were not aware of what was happening in the community and very appreciative of the program.

Working with our economic development partners, the Workforce Board created a manufacturing video which highlights careers in manufacturing including careers in the STEM. As part of the marketing outreach, the videos have been shown to area high school students, elected officials, employers, community partners and agencies. These videos help expose students and community about career opportunities.

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

Local area high schools have robotics teams. The robotic teams design, construct, program, and use robots. The team must use STEM to build the robots and critical thinking/problem solving to ensure the robots work. The robotics team competes in robotics competition. The competition is a head-to-head challenge in an alliance format. On February 2020, there were 20 teams in a local competition which shows the local high school support for the STEM program.

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

The local workforce board will explore effective mentoring programs that can be expanded to adults, particularly those who are displaced and moving to new careers.

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

As part of the service integration plan, front line staff training was identified as an opportunity for improvement. This front line staff training will help educate all workforce staff and workforce partners on programs and the targeted populations each programs serves. This training will help staff address equity gaps and identify any targeted populations which services are no being provided.

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

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

H. Provide a description of training policies and activities in the local area, including the following and any significant implications of the COVID-19 National Health Emergency, as applicable:

- **How local areas will meet the annual Training Expenditure Requirement;**

The Board allocates 50% of the WIOA budget for training activities. Training activities are split between paid work experience, on-the-job training and individual training accounts. All subcontracts and request for proposal for adult/dislocated workers programs reflect the 50% direct training requirement. In addition, the direct training expenditure is monitored by fiscal staff including Workforce Board Executive Director and reported as part of the fiscal report during Workforce Board meetings.

At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, overall expenditures were lowered due to numerous COVID-19 factors. One major factor that affected training expenditures was the switch to remote learning for post-secondary education. The online learning environment was not the right learning style for all our clients. As a result, we had current individuals in training which did not register for the next semester due to the training still being remote learning. In addition to individuals taking a “pause” from training until training returned to in person, supportive services such as transportation was affected since individuals did not travel for school. As a result of these COVID-19 factors, the training expenditure requirement was monitored very closely and all workforce service offices were heavily outreaching/recruiting to make the up the “slippage” in expenditures caused by COVID-19. In fact, the total program enrolled for program 2020 was up 93 registrants from program 2019. Due to the additional outreach and monitoring the training expenditure requirement, our workforce area has always met the training expenditure requirement.

Training expenditures have returned to “normal” with post-secondary schools returned to in person learning and supportive services being provided.

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

In the local youth programs, 20% of youth funds are allocated to paid work experience or other work-based activities. Only client wages are allowable expenses to meet the 20% requirement, not staff time. After reviewing three years of youth provider work experience percentages using only youth wages/FICA, the Board made the decision to not allow staff time since youth providers were already exceeding or very close to meeting the 20% youth work based learning requirement. On the adult and dislocated side, the local workforce area supports apprenticeships and earn/learn models. On-the-job training contracts have been successful but are small so outcomes are under development as well.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the workforce area has revised its procedures to allow staff time to be charged to be charged for work based learning as allowed by DCEO Policy. This change was needed since the youth placed at employers had many barriers and staff were spending additional time on work based learning activities than in previous years. This change in allowing staff time will be reviewed annually by the Workforce Board to ensure it's still appropriate. The Grundy Livingston Kankakee Workforce Board is committed to ensuring the 20% of work based learning requirement goes directly to youth through work based learning activities such as youth wages for a paid work experience.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Board does not currently fund transitional jobs.

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

The Board does not currently fund pay for performance contracts.

J. Describe the impact of the pandemic on the operating systems and policies within the Local Workforce Area (LWA) otherwise not already described above. Include what steps, to the extent known, that will be taken over the next two years to adapt to the impact of the pandemic regarding operating systems and policies within the local workforce area.

As previously mentioned, the workforce system was able to shift to the way we do business to virtual or remote delivery of services, in person, or a hybrid approach. It's important to note in this plan that services never stop being provided during the pandemic. All workforce partners whether its Title 1 workforce services, Title II Adult Education, Title III Wagner Peyser, Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation, CSBG, SCSEP, Perkins, etc. were able to pivot to create the policies and/or operating systems to provide services during the pandemic. As we move to "recovery", these procedures will be reviewed for opportunities to incorporate into post pandemic work in order to best serve our customers. For example, the ability to have virtual staff meetings and virtual One Stop Partner meetings will be incorporated into our processes since they are efficient since no travel involved, easy to use, and great communication tool.

K. Describe how a workforce equity lens is or will be incorporated in the operating systems and policies as part of the Local Workforce Area (LWA).

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

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

1. To advance equity, workforce systems should examine institutional structures and barriers to participation that contribute to inequities across age, gender, race, ethnicity, ability, economic

- status, educational attainment, immigration status, industry sector, and worker classification
2. Create a definition of equity to apply to goals, programs, evaluation, and more.
 3. Gather and analyze data to identify gaps in service delivery and to track outcomes
 4. Develop a goal to achieve equity in service delivery and drive action toward shared metrics of success
 5. Target workforce services to populations most in need
 6. Examine policies and procedures that may contribute to inequity and modify them to make programs more accessible
 7. Create or strengthen partnerships to reach more populations and leverage expertise and resources that can assist in reaching these groups

CHAPTER 5: PERFORMANCE GOALS AND EVALUATION – LOCAL COMPONENT

A. Provide information regarding the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and chief elected official consistent with WIOA Sec. 116(c), to be used to measure the performance of the local area and to be used by the Local Board for measuring the performance of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), eligible providers under WIOA Title I Subtitle B and the one-stop delivery system (core and required partners as applicable) in the local area (§ 679.560(b)(16)). LWA’s are required to provide updated information and analysis noting any significant impacts COVID-19 National Health Emergency and what steps will be taken to address the challenges and opportunities that are associated with performance goals and evaluation.

- **WIOA Performance Measures**
- **Additional State Performance Measures**

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

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

LWA #11 Performance Measure	PY2020	PY2021
Adult		
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter after Exit	79.0%	79.0%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter after Exit	80.0%	80.0%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter after Exit	\$7,500	\$7,500

Credential Attainment within 4 Quarters after Exit	72.0%	72.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	38.5%	38.5%
Dislocated Worker		
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter after Exit	79.0%	79.0%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter after Exit	78.0%	78.0%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter after Exit	\$7,600	\$7,600
Credential Attainment within 4 Quarters after Exit	71.0%	71.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	33.5%	33.5%
Youth		
Employment or Education Rate 2nd Quarter after Exit	68.0%	68.0%
Employment or Education Rate 4th Quarter after Exit	70.0%	70.0%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter after Exit	\$3,825	\$3,825
Credential Attainment within 4 Quarters after Exit	63.0%	63.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	31.0%	31.0%

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

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

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

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

reasonable cost per participant, and the best return on investment.

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

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

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

Due to the great response, the Workforce Board decided to expand the program so we can include more youth and schools. After careful consideration on how this could be expanded, the Workforce Board decided to expand it to high school educators since they are the ones who talk to youth every day. In the Fall of 2020, the Workforce Board partnered with the local career centers, economic development, community colleges & community foundation for a Graduate & Get Paid: Educator tour in each of our three counties. This program was funded by Community Foundation for transportation, employers provided lunch, career center provided educator contacts & Workforce Board/Economic Development outreached to employers/set the schedule. Thus, it truly was a community partnership. Every high school in each of our three counties participated in the program. The program provided employer tours with each company discussing careers from entry level to professional. At the end of the day we wrapped up with a presentation from the local career center & community college discussing local training options in order to meet the skills needed by employers. The educators loved the program & didn’t know about all the opportunities available. The Workforce Board realized this program is a valuable tool in educating youth about local careers and based

off return of investment expanded the program from one high school in each county and will continue to support it.

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

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

C. Provide a description of the current and planned evaluation activities and how this information will be provided to the local board and program administrators as appropriate.

The Workforce Board Executive Director & WIOA Accountant provides regular updates to the Local Board regarding Title 1 data, usage of funds, and a variety of updates on other relevant data and program evaluations including DCEO or DOL monitoring. In addition, Partner programs such as IDES, Adult Education, etc. have an opportunity to provide partner updates to Workforce Board Program Committee & Workforce Board meetings through the Workforce Services & Partner Updates Agenda item.

D. Describe the impact of the pandemic on the regional service strategies, including use of cooperative service delivery strategies and the connection of job seekers with employers, not covered in the above sections. Include what steps, to the extent known, that will be taken over the next two years to adapt to the impact of the pandemic in regard to the regional service strategies, including use of cooperative service delivery strategies and the connection of job seekers with employers.

Chapters 1 – 3 have all the information related to the impacts of the pandemic and the Regional Plan. The Northeast Region through the Workforce Partners of Metropolitan Chicago are committed to providing regional workforce solutions, strategies, and services to employers and job seekers. The Workforce Partners of Metropolitan Chicago is comprised of workforce board directors & program directors of the seven local workforce areas comprised of Northeast Region. Currently, the Workforce Partners of Metropolitan Chicago meets monthly to discuss regional needs and initiatives. As such, it’s through this group strategies will be addressed in the upcoming years.

E. Describe how a workforce equity lens is or will be incorporated in analysis of performance goals and evaluation activities.

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

CHAPTER 6: TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS AND ASSURANCES – LOCAL COMPONENT

A. Fiscal Management

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

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

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

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

B. Physical and Programmatic Accessibility

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

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

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

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

Physical Accessibility

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

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

Program Accessibility

Individuals will have access to career services at all three workforce service office locations. All workforce service offices are accessible physically for individual with disabilities. In addition, the resource rooms have accessible computers and accessible software programs for individuals with disabilities to use. Accommodations will be made to any individual in order to provide the career services.

Each partner program agrees not to discriminate in their employment practices or services on the basis of gender, age, race, color, creed, religion, national origin, or disability. Each partner has policies and procedures in place to address any issues and employees are communicated this policies through employee handbooks, program policies/procedures or required posters by law. The partners further assure they are currently in compliance with all applicable state and federal laws regarding these issues.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic workforce services were available virtually through social media and updates to the workforce services websites. These virtual services will continue in the future. As a result, a hybrid approach will be implemented at the workforce services offices. This hybrid approach will allow services to be available 24/7 which will expand availability of services.

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

There are no cooperative agreements at this time. The next fiscal year approved MOU will address our local service integration action plan including the action steps identified by

partners. This MOU begins July 1, 2020 and is currently being developed.

C. Plan Development and Public Comment

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

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

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

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

The above procedures were used for the plan modification 2022 public comment procedure.

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

This will be included after publication

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

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

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

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

enrolled is reviewed to ensure individuals served match county demographics.