WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT (WIOA)
DRAFT LOCAL PLAN
EASTERN AREA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
PROGRAM YEARS 2016-2019

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STRATEGIC PLANNING ELEMENTS

A. Economic and Workforce Analysis
   I. Economic Conditions
      Include a regional analysis of economic conditions including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations
      The United States is anticipating decreased employment opportunities through 2018 in all industries except leisure and hospitality and healthcare. Minimal change in gross receipts taxes across the East with oil and gas producing counties showing significant decreases. Lea county -1300
   II. Employment Needs of Employers
      Include a regional analysis of employment needs of employers in existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations
   III. Knowledge and Skills Needed
      Describe the knowledge and skills needed to meet the employment needs of the employers in the region, including employment needs in in-demand industry sectors and occupations
   IV. Regional Workforce Information
      Include an analysis of the regional workforce, including current labor force employment and unemployment data, information on labor market trends, and educational and skill levels of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment.

Strategic Planning

The EAWDB implementation of WIOA comes in the midst of unsettling economic conditions in the eastern area. Employment in the key Oil & Gas industry has plummeted impacting not only the high-paying jobs available in that particular industry but virtually every other sector in the region. With Oil & Gas and related components of the energy sector accounting for nineteen percent (19%) of the Gross Regional Product, the EAWDB is mindful of implementing strategies that address current in-demand occupations while planning for additional workforce opportunities as Oil & Gas production stabilizes.

Both regional specific data available as well as the US outlook are projecting decreased employment opportunities through 2018 in all industries except leisure & hospitality and healthcare. Based on this information the EAWDB has identified four key areas of employment to concentrate strategic efforts. They are Healthcare, Leisure & Hospitality, Government, and Construction & Trades. Current data indicates that most jobseekers in the eastern area possess a high school diploma or some college but lack a Bachelor’s degree. These industries provide areas of employment to a wide variety of jobseekers with opportunities for both skilled, work-ready participants and the first-time or transitional job seeker. Moreover, employment opportunities in these industries allow for advancement through identified career pathways. The EAWDB seeks to work with education, economic development, and industry partners to develop both increased awareness of existing career ladders and design of career pathways not currently used in the eastern area.
The rural nature of the area as a whole and, more specifically, the northern counties require specific targeted workforce development. Unemployment remains low in the northern counties and employers are continually challenged to find suitable employees particularly in healthcare. The EAWDB will work with industry and economic development partners to build awareness of these opportunities throughout the area and place concentrated emphasis on training in these areas.

As previously pointed out, the eastern area's available workforce is composed primarily of participants with high school diplomas or some college. With increased emphasis placed on skilled apprenticeships in WIOA, the EAWDB will be working with educational partners and employers both in the eastern area and throughout the state to facilitate increased participation in established apprenticeships, as well as, development of apprenticeships to support our efforts in Construction & Trades and, as opportunities are identified, in other areas such as Information Technology, Energy, and Manufacturing.

Government employment accounts for employment eleven percent (11%) of the Gross Regional Product and approximately eighteen percent (18%) of projected employment in the area. With positions from clerical to technical available, a wide array of training and education can prepare individuals for placement in long-term stable positions with advancement opportunities through existing career ladders. Pursuing career pathway and cluster training for this either through existing training providers or the establishment of apprenticeship opportunities is an area the board will be focusing on in the upcoming year.

In summary, long standing conditions in the eastern area adversely affecting workforce development include a significant diversity between counties including extremely rural communities dominant industry sectors i.e. Oil & Gas, and lack of degreed jobseekers. Recent challenges include collapse of key industries, significant population decreases, and overall employment decreases both state and area-wide. The EAWDB will implement targeted strategies for entry-level job seekers in areas of both demand and opportunity, help develop targeted apprenticeships that enhance employer hiring efforts and create a more work-ready population, identify and train participants seeking to obtain Bachelor Degrees in demand occupations while continuing to evaluate additional opportunities for all participants and employers in the area.

B. Analysis of Workforce Development Activities

1. Include an analysis of workforce development activities, including education and training in the region. This analysis must include the strengths and weaknesses of workforce development activities and capacity to provide workforce development activities to address the education and skills needs of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment, and the employment needs of employers.

Regional Analysis of Workforce Development Activities

The workforce connection centers’ systems are designed to provide a full range of services and assistance to job seekers. Assessment of activities and services in the region is an ongoing process. The workforce development partners in the region include but are not limited to:
DWS operated workforce programs including but not limited to: Wagner Peyser, Trade Adjustment Act, Veterans programs, Worker Opportunity Tax Credit, Unemployment Insurance, Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers;

Eight postsecondary education institutions made up of 1 four year university and 7 community colleges as well as few private institutions;

Department of Vocational Rehabilitation and School for Blind;

Adult Education and Literacy;

Carl Perkins Career Technical Education Act;

Job Corps;

Senior Community Service Employment Program;

TANF; and

WIOA adult, dislocated worker and youth programs operated by the board.

The workforce development system in the eastern area provides a wide variety of services to meet the needs of the workforce including services to individuals with disabilities and other barriers to employment. There are basic career services including:

- Initial assessment;
- Labor market information;
- Provision of information on demand sectors and occupations as well as the wages and training requirements for them;
- Job search and placement assistance;
- Provision of information regarding the availability of supportive services;
- Referrals for services and assistance of through all partner programs;
- Eligibility determination for WIOA adult, dislocated worker and youth services as well as assistance in establishing eligibility for programs of financial assistance for training not provided by WIOA; and
- Provision of information and assistance regarding filing unemployment insurance claims.

The various partner programs offer a wide array of individualized career services to targeted populations including:

- Comprehensive and specialized assessments and needs;
- Development of employment plans;
- Tutoring, basic skills training and high school equivalency testing;
- Supportive services to assist individuals in obtaining or retaining employment or participating in training services;
- Group and/or individual counseling and mentoring;
- Career planning and case management;
- Short term pre-vocational services;
- Internships and work experience;
- Workforce Preparation activities;
- Financial literacy services;
- Out of area job search assistance; and
- English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs.

Training services available in the system include:

- Career technical education programs;
- Occupational skills training programs including those specialized for individuals with disabilities;
- On the Job training to provide hands-on, earn while you learn opportunities;
- Workplace literacy programs;
- Customized training designed to increase the skills of workers in emerging technologies or processes; and
- Linkages to registered apprenticeships.

There are also a variety of services available to meet the needs of employers such as:

- Job fairs and hiring events;
- Matching qualified candidates to available jobs;
- Space for interviews and hiring;
- Pre-screening of candidates;
- Specialized assessments;
- Assistance with job postings and development of job descriptions;
- Recruiting candidates;
- Partnering with training providers and employers for customized training and reimbursement for portions of the costs associated with it;
- Workplace literacy;
- Tax credits for hiring certain categories of workers;
- Assistance with employer related tax issues; and
- On the job training to help offset extraordinary costs associated with training new employees.

The Eastern area is fortunate to have a substantial number of postsecondary training institutions. The area has seven (7) community colleges and one (1) four year university and two (2) private two year institutions. The schools offer a wide variety of training options for individuals to pursue. A strength of the postsecondary system is the availability of adult education services that provide tutoring, training and testing for high school equivalency exams. The programs are accessible to individuals with disabilities and are able to meet the needs of students with multiple barriers. Some of the facilities also offer career technical education courses that are tied to pathways and sector related training.

Another strength of the education system is that it is well positioned to provide training services to be able to develop programs quickly to meet the needs of system customers including individuals with disabilities. In fact, ENMU-Roswell has several vocational programs designed specifically for disabled individuals with varying levels impairment. The community colleges in the area are very adaptable and responsive to the needs of business when identified. They are easily able to create customized training programs to fit a specific training need. There is also a four year institution that is centrally located in the region and is able to move individuals into a higher level of education offering many baccalaureate degree plans as well as several graduate level training options.
The most significant weakness of the education system is that many of the training programs once created are not reviewed for continued relevance. Often schools create programs for emerging high growth industries that have low long term employment options such as wind energy. The result is that after a few graduating classes the employment market becomes saturated; leaving graduates no option but to pursue other training or leave the area for employment. Programs are not designed to be quickly responsive to changing needs.

A weakness of the workforce development system itself is that core programs have historically worked in a disconnected and often silo oriented manner. WIOA provides the foundational framework necessary to breakdown programmatic walls to create a system that is unified, seamless and strategic in its methods to produce well trained highly skilled individuals to meet the needs of existing and emerging industries.

**C. Strategic Vision and Goals**

I. Provide a description of the local board’s strategic vision to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency. This must include goals for preparing an educated skilled workforce, and goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on performance indicators.

II. Based on the economic and workforce analysis describe the board’s overall strategy for working with the entities that carry out the core programs and required partners to align resources available to the local area to achieve the strategic vision and goals.

**Strategic Vision and Goals**

The Eastern Area Workforce Development Board (EAWDB) strategic vision is to create a better prepared, more highly qualified workforce to support economic growth, diversity and self-sufficiency. EAWDB believes the best way to do that is by focusing on employers as the primary customer and consumer of the system. The availability of a highly skilled, well developed workforce provides an invaluable resource to employers and economic development professionals alike. The board wants to promote improvements to the environment for business and economic growth in the area by training a more highly skilled, better prepared workforce and by promoting policies that encourage entrepreneurship, apprenticeship and small employer growth.

Achieving this requires a workforce development system that aligns the system partners, education and training providers, local communities, economic and small business developers with area employers. To accomplish this, the EAWDB engaged the Chief Elected Officials (CEOs) through planning retreats and local meetings. Working with the local CEOs in the development of the local plan and its’ implementation is a critical component of success. The ongoing involvement of the eastern area CEO’s in developing partners, identifying strategic goals, and garnering local support is crucial. The American Job Center (AJC) system known as the Workforce Connection Center (WCC) in Eastern New Mexico must function as the central hub for information, resources and services to both employers and job seekers including those with barriers to employment. By integrating all partners in the system into a holistic customer centered design, job seekers will receive higher quality services that are better aligned to meet their need of opportunities for self-sufficient and stable employment. This strategy will provide for
a better customer experience, align with strategies and goals of the state plan and provide better services for employers, thereby supporting economic development and growth.

This will be achieved by working with the one stop operator and partners to functionally align staff and services to eliminate duplication and leverage resources in support of the state plan vision. Then the education and training provider programs must be developed and aligned in a manner that supports career pathways, clusters and stackable credentials. A critical component in this model is the development of work based learning opportunities such as: work experience, internships, on-the-job training (OJT), transitional jobs and registered apprenticeship programs. The work based opportunities will be included as appropriate in career pathway trainings that are tied directly to the employment sectors and clusters identified across the region.

During the PY 16 year the primary goals will be the selection of a new operator with an enhanced job description and the development and implementation of new and revised policies necessary to create the framework for building high quality partnerships; and the establishment of communication processes that allow partners to track, collaborate and communicate on co-enrolled job seekers. This year will also focus on the identification of areas of duplication of services and evaluation of operations that can be streamlined and unified across the system such as; work readiness curricula, resume development tools, and alignment of employment plans to name a few.

Future workforce development goals include:

- Improve the matching of job seekers to compatible long term employment that will meet their needs through employer involvement, higher levels of engagement and staff development;
- Implementation of a referral model that streamlines processes and services amongst partners not co-located in the WCCs;
- Increase the number of partners physically located in the WCCs wherever possible;
- Establishment of training programs centered on career pathway models with heavy employer involvement;
- Improve collaboration and team work for co-enrolled customers;
- Development of performance expectations for each office aside from the federal performance indicators;
- Development of a performance rubric designed to evaluate the quality of services provided in the centers;
- Implementation of monitoring criteria to evaluate the effectiveness of the system and changes in it when made;
- Work with core partners to facilitate the development of career pathways as a strategy to assist individuals with barriers to employment including those with disabilities to complete the education and training they need to obtain industry recognized credentials and to meet the skills needs of businesses and employers throughout the area;
- Promote the integration of adult education with occupational education and training that increase an individual’s ability to transition to postsecondary education and obtain employment;
- Provide education, training and case management services that effectively use technology, including distance learning, social media, telephone, instant messaging and video meetings or chat; and
• Work with registered apprenticeship to connect to proven models that provide workers with career pathways and opportunities to learn while they earn.

Strategies for working with core programs and partners to align resources and achieve the strategic vision and goals

The completion of the above reference goals will result in a workforce system that is designed and aligned to provide a full range of services and assistance to job seekers and employers alike. To achieve this, all system partners must be working and operating toward the same end goal of a highly skilled workforce trained that meets the needs of employers. The board plans to utilize the operator role to convene meetings with all core partners in each WCC community with the end result being development of cooperative operational agreements. The agreements will be developed as attachments to the MOU and will detail: alignment of services; referral and co-enrollment processes; targeted training pathways and clusters for the local community; and processes for revision and updating of agreements.

The board’s operator will also work with core partners in each WCC location to facilitate maximization of co-location in the centers on a full or part time basis. Options could include desk sharing between part time partners; aligning partner workshops being provided in the community to the extent reasonable; standardizing of tools such as assessments utilized in the system to minimize the number of redundant activities a co-enrolled job seeker must complete. Alignment of job development and business outreach staff services across the partners is also an important component. Core partners will work collaboratively to identify major areas of service delivery overlap, parallel documentation requirements and service duplication. This is necessary in order to: provide simplified access to seamlessly integrated services, streamline paperwork into a unified structure to the extent possible, and create a customer flow in the offices as well as the workforce development system that provides access to services offered by all partners.

The WCCs, operator, employers, and training providers will work jointly to align training strategies across the core partners into career clusters and pathways directly tied to economic growth and economic activities across the region. The targeted clusters and pathways will be reviewed annually in order to respond to changing economic and employment conditions, changes in the workforce, and new and emerging industries. As previously discussed in the board’s goals, part of this process must include the identification of career pathway trainings that are already available and working with training providers to develop training where gaps have been identified then combining those with work based learning opportunities.

OPERATIONAL ELEMENTS
A. Local Workforce System Structure
   I. Describe the geographical workforce development area, including the LWDA’s major communities, major employers, training and educational institutions, population, diversity of the population and relevant growth trends.
II. Provide a full board roster including the group each member represents (Attachment B.) Include a list of all standing committees, along with a description of the purpose of each committee.

III. Provide a description of the workforce development system in the local area that identifies the programs that are included in the system; demonstrating regional alignment with economic, workforce and workforce development analysis. Include a list of one stop centers in the local area (ATTACHMENT C) including address and phone numbers. Indicate the one-stop center for each site and whether it’s a comprehensive or satellite center. Include a list of the partners physically located at each center and the services provided by the partners.

IV. Describe how the LWDB will support the Strategies identified in the state plan and work with entities carrying out core programs and other workforce development programs including Carl Perkins CTE to support service alignment.

**EAWDB Area Information**

The EAWDB service area is comprised of twelve counties encompassing over 44,000 square miles which equates to 36.4% of the area of the state. The population centers of the area vary widely. Lea County is the largest of the 12 with a population of over 71,000. Harding County is the smallest with a population of less than 700. The total population of the area is 367,375 according to 2015 census data. Below is a chart that reflects population comparisons by county from 2010 to 2015.

**Population Comparison from 2010 to 2015 by county**

![Population Comparison Chart]

Source: [http://www.census.gov/quickfacts](http://www.census.gov/quickfacts)
New Mexico as a whole reflects a 13% population increase from 2010 to 2015 while the Eastern area is only showing approximately 3%. Many of the communities are seeing a significant outflow of their labor force and talent. Of the 12 Eastern counties, 6 had a negative growth rate and the remaining six fell well below the state’s average with the highest growth area being Lea County at just over 10%. The Lea county growth was mostly attributable to oil field and energy jobs in the county. Due to lower oil prices the county has now lost over 2,500 jobs resulting in a 5.7% decrease in available jobs.

The chart below depicts the change represented in actual numbers of individuals and clearly indicates the level at which counties are losing their talent and human resources.

Source: [http://www.census.gov/quickfacts](http://www.census.gov/quickfacts)
The table below reflects some of the relevant demographic information on the area’s population:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic identifier</th>
<th>Eastern Area Approximate Numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># of people 25 or older with a HSD or higher</td>
<td>293,055</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of people 25 or older w/o a HSD</td>
<td>74,038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of individuals of Hispanic origin</td>
<td>172,626</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of veterans</td>
<td>32,808</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of people 25 or older with a bachelor’s degree</td>
<td>64,425</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of individuals 65 or older</td>
<td>52,920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of individuals with disabilities under 65</td>
<td>93,354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of people that speak a language other than English at home</td>
<td>121,126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of persons living in poverty</td>
<td>70,936</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of employer establishments</td>
<td>8,085</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: http://www.census.gov/quickfacts

The area is largely rural with an overall rate of 8.3 persons per square mile of land as compared to New Mexico’s 17 persons per square mile. Six of the twelve counties reflect a population density of less than five persons per square mile.

The EAWDB has seven Workforce Development Centers, partners in the American Job Center’s (AJC) network, located in the larger population centers. The centers are positioned in the following counties (from largest to smallest) Hobbs-Lea County; Alamogordo-Otero County; Roswell-Chaves County; Carlsbad-Eddy county; Artesia-Eddy County; Clovis-Curry County; and Ruidoso-Lincoln County. The Clovis office services the largest geographical area of seven counties and the largest population of over 91,000 for those counties. This is due to this office being the oversight location for Title I, Wagner Peyser (WP) and Unemployment Insurance (UI) service delivery to all those areas. The area is fortunate to have 8 postsecondary institutions comprised of 7 community colleges and 1 four year institution. Of the 8 schools 6 also house a Small Business Development Center.

Overall unemployment averages for the Eastern area remains in close alignment with the state’s unemployment figures of around 6.5%. While the unemployment rate in the area is substantially higher than last year the trend is indicating a decrease in the majority of the Eastern area counties. The decrease has been consistent over the last few months and also reflects increases in the numbers of employed individuals. The unemployment figures may begin to increase over the next year in Otero County as Holloman Airforce Base will be downsizing and eliminating the German Airforce contingent. This will directly relocate approximately 1,200 families from the community. This is expected to take place in July 2017. However, NM legislators have been working with the Airforce to urge relocation of multiple F 16 squadrons to Holloman to create a new Formal Training Unit (FTU) to offset the loss. An interim decision has been made to move forward with this. The number of staff to be relocated to the base is not yet known. The potential the loss of the German Air group to negatively impact the number of civilian positions on base and supporting jobs in the community still exists.
Lea and Eddy counties are heavily influenced by natural resource employment. This includes the oil and gas industry which is a primary industry in both counties, potash mining which is a large employment sector in both counties and Uranium enrichment in Lea County. Natural resource employment has seen a substantial decline over the last two years. This has resulted in unemployment rates for Lea County climbing from 3.5% to almost 10%. While that industry is showing some indication of recovery progress will likely be slow. Construction and building as well as transportation historically have represented a large number of jobs but those industries, particularly transportation, ebb and flow in alignment with the oil industry trends for those communities.

Health care and hospitality and leisure industries continue to represent a large number of consistently available jobs throughout the area. Customer service related jobs reflect the largest growth areas in terms of employment opportunity but wages remain mostly low. Due to the cyclical nature of natural resource and construction industries, the primary targeted industry in the East has always been and will continue to be healthcare as discussed and targeted in the state plan. A significant number of the board’s training dollars are directed at the health care industry in occupations such as registered nurse, occupational and physical therapy assistants, respiratory technicians, radiological technicians and nurse’s aides medical technicians as appropriate.

**Board and Committee Structure**

The Eastern Area Workforce Development Board is comprised of 21 members of whom 57% are private sector (Attachment B) with 4 standing committees. The standing committees are Operations and Finance; One Stop Delivery System; Youth Services; and Individuals with Disabilities.

_The Operations and Finance Committee_ shall act in an advisory capacity to the EAWDB in making recommendations related to fiscal oversight and budgeting, technology and automation, grants to enhance program capabilities, requests for proposals for contractors to the EAWDB, Quality Assurance oversight, and such other appropriate matters as the committee may consider.

_The One Stop Delivery System Committee_ shall act in the advisory capacity to the EAWDB in making recommendations relating to establishing the number and operating procedures of One-Stop Centers in the area including Business Services, On-the-job training, customized training and such other appropriate matters as the committee may consider.

_The Youth Services Committee_ shall act in an advisory capacity to the EAWDB in making recommendations related to:

1) Coordinating youth activities in the area;
2) Developing portions of the local plan related to eligible youth;
3) Recommending eligible youth providers subject to the approval of the local board;
4) Conducting oversight with respect to eligible providers of youth activities in the local area; and
5) Carrying out other duties as authorized by the local board.

_The Individuals with Disabilities Committee_ shall act in an advisory capacity to the EAWDB in making recommendations related to providing and coordinating services for individuals with disabilities and such other appropriate matters as the committee may consider.
**Eastern area Workforce Development System Regional Alignment with Economic Development and Core programs and the State Plan**

The EAWDB supports the focus of the state plan to foster a system of partnership, collaboration and coordination between partners. The plan also emphasizes the need to eliminate duplication and leverage resources focused on alignment with employers and meeting their needs. This focus is designed to improve economic development and growth throughout NM and each of the local workforce development areas. With funding for workforce development programs declining the EAWDB fully recognizes not only the benefits of this level of alignment but the necessity of it. The board and its operator are working with partners to identify opportunities to increase the numbers of partners co-located in the American Job Centers (AJC).

Although the system partnership has improved over the last year, with the exception of Title I, Department of Workforce Solutions (DWS) and Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) programs, the Eastern AJC system at this time is operating largely in silos with a minimum level of collaboration and coordination. In order to help overcome the stagnated partnerships and alignment problems, board staff attended the National Convening in January 2016 along with partners and representatives of the other three local boards and the state. The convening laid a foundation for a new level of collaboration to be explored and beginning in May 2016 the operator and board staff has been holding regular meetings with regional or statewide partner representatives from AEL, Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), WIOA Title I, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) Works and Wagner Peyser (WP). The function is to:

- Improve partnership;
- Increase collaboration;
- Identify challenges to co-enrollment across programs and potential solutions;
- Identify areas of duplication’
- Develop methodologies for issuing and tracking referrals; and
- To align services and documents to the maximum extent possible.

A major deficiency revealed through these meetings was a lack of framework or infrastructure to allow partners to communicate on co-enrolled customers, schedule appointments, track referrals and share information. In response to this need, EAWDB staff has begun development of webpages for each Workforce Connection Center office and a partnership collaboration site. Each WCC webpage will include: partner event postings; hot jobs for the week; links to partner websites; the partnership collaboration site and to local Facebook and twitter pages for the office. It is the hope that local communities will begin to view the Workforce Connection Center/America’s Job Center website as their gateway for career and training services across the partner programs.

As mentioned, each office webpage includes a link to a partner collaboration site. This is a secure area that requires log in and provides the venue for partners to issue and track referrals. It also provides a location to communicate on co-enrolled customers. In testing processes for the Beta site it was identified that each partner had a separate release of information that would be required to be completed by any referred customer in order to share information and communicate with each other. The team developed a uniform release of information (exclusive of HIPA information) that has been
approved to be utilized across the programs and completed only by the referring partner program. It is then uploaded to the collaborative site for universal use by each partner serving this customer. Using one release prevents the customer from having to complete multiple releases by each partner he/she receives services from. The office websites and partner collaboration sites are anticipated to be operational by July 1, 2017.

Front line staff and site managers were included in the regional partner meetings. This has resulted in other local offices beginning to create local partnership collaboratives. The partnership collaborative meetings include: AEL, VR, TANF works program, chamber staff, post-secondary, adult, dislocated worker and youth service providers, WP, older worker’s employment programs (in Roswell only), and Job Corps (Roswell only). These meetings are being held monthly discuss expansion of partnership efforts and ways to partner.

In order to have a well-developed, collaborative, and cohesive service delivery model, cross training of partner staff across programs is necessary as discussed in the state plan. The local partner meetings began by having partners provide a brief synopsis of their programs, who they serve, services provided and basic eligibility. This established an informal method for partner cross training. The operator along with the partners is working to identify training needs. WIOA performance and Worker Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) training has already been provided across partners and UI light training is available to partners. The performance and WOTC training was provided by board staff in conjunction with NMDWS staff. Partners in attendance included AEL, DVR, WP, adult, dislocated worker and youth providers. As needs are identified the board with its operator and partners will develop a strategy to gather training materials and to provide cross training to all partners in the region. The majority of the cross training efforts are planned to take place between July and December 2017.

To further identify needs in each community, including employer needs, the board has begun scheduling meetings with all economic development personnel, chambers of commerce and Small Business Development Centers (SBDC). One of the purposes is to solicit participation as voting members on the board’s service committees. It is planned that committee assignments will be varied to ensure that critical employer driven input and information is incorporated in all the board’s projects and discussions. This aligns directly with the strategy of employer involvement in the local system through board committees and also supports the strategies outlined in the state plan for increased collaboration with business and economic development. Involving these entities will later provide the knowledge and input necessary to develop a method for measuring the impact of changes within the workforce development system for the consumers of the system.

The board, its operator and service providers have also attended meetings with secondary institutions, postsecondary and Carl Perkins recipients to review the early college program in order to facilitate discussion on better methods for dropout prevention and recovery. This group has tasked itself with identification of ways to collaborate within the system in an effort to re-engage dropout youth not only with high school but also with the early college program. The secondary system and Perkins recipients have completed a significant amount of work on career pathway and industry cluster training. The EAWDB will be working with them to identify opportunities to build on what they have done in order to expand the availability of this type of training.
B. Local Workforce Development System Alignment

I. Describe how the local board will work with entities carrying out core programs to expand access to employment, training, education and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly those with barriers to employment.

II. Describe how the local board will work with entities carrying out core programs to facilitate the development of career pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate in core programs.

III. Describe how the local board will work with entities carrying out core programs to improve access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential (including industry recognized certificates or certification, portable and stackable)

Working with Core Programs to Expand Access to Employment, Training, Education and Supportive Services for Eligible Individuals, Particularly Those with Barriers to Employment

The EAWDB through its one stop operator is working with partners to expand access to employment, training, education and supportive services available throughout the region as identified in the state plan. Priority for those services will be given to individuals with barriers to employment. The leveraging of resources across programs in an environment of decreasing funds is crucial to the future success of the partners, programs and the individuals they serve. Co-enrollment of eligible and appropriate individuals into all programs offers the broadest array of services and the highest potential for success. Provision of supportive services for individuals enrolled in partner programs is a vital component to allowing individuals to participate and fully engage in employment and training related activities provided by the partners. It is planned that WIOA supportive services will be utilized to augment supportive services provided by partner programs as appropriate.

The collaboratives are also expected to develop strategies to increase outreach to targeted populations particularly those with barriers to employment. They will also work to facilitate co-enrollment of customers through successful issuing and tracking of referrals and integrated case coordination. Outreach services are being conducted by various partners in workshops and job clubs that are being provided within the system. It is envisioned that quality cross training of partner staff will create a system where staff are knowledgeable and comfortable enough to act as a service ambassadors and promote the services of all partners in the system unilaterally. This would also minimize service duplication and promote alignment of services.

Working with Core Programs to Develop Career Pathways and Co-enrollment

The Operator and board staff have begun meeting with Carl Perkins Career and Technical Education (CTE), early college programs, secondary and postsecondary institutions. These programs have already created career pathways trainings targeted toward industry. They are utilized as part of the early college program. This program results in a high school diploma and an associate’s degree being earned simultaneously within timeframe of a traditional high school career. It is based on a model that combines academic and occupational learning into a seamless training program that results in stackable credentials. These meetings will be used to gather information and to create opportunities for building a similar alignment of services for youth and adults in the workforce development system. Future
meetings will be expanded to include additional partners to broaden the vision and to develop programs that align with targeted clusters, meet the needs of all partners, and facilitate co-enrollment of participants. The anticipated results are concurrent enrollment in the referring partner program, adult education (as appropriate), WIOA title I programs, and postsecondary that links academic and occupational learning and utilizes, where appropriate, work experience and/or internships as a component of the training. The targeted pathways will be based employment opportunities and will include input from economic development professionals and employers. By building on work already completed and customizing the programs to better meet local needs the board ensures the highest level of collaboration and cooperation possible. The programs will provide industry recognized credentials that are stackable and portable.

**Working with Core Partners to Improve Access to Programs Leading to Recognized Credentials**

The board envisions a system with a high level of partner involvement, collaboration and co-enrollment to facilitate successful training of the labor force. All approved training programs on the eligible training provider list lead to recognized credentials. Boards will work with employers and training provider to expand training opportunities and methodologies to serve the widest range of potential customers. Co-enrollment across programs provides the greatest access to these training programs. The board will work will its operator and partners to develop policy and MOUs that promotes expansion of co-enrollment to afford participants the maximum level of support available and the widest access to training.

**Adult Education and Literacy (AEL)**

The EAWDB has always enjoyed a strong working relationship with Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) programs in the area. The vision and effort outlined by them in the New Mexico combined state plan focuses on the provision of foundational education in basic literacy skills; placement and retention in employment and workplace programs; obtaining a High School Equivalency (HSE); enrollment in post-secondary education program; and English language acquisition. This vision fits seamlessly with the vision of the EAWDB to facilitate the increase of skills in order to develop a stronger workforce for its employers and to help promote and support economic development activities in the communities throughout the area.

As discussed in the state plan, the EAWDB recognizes that education is an essential component of expanding and diversifying economic development efforts resulting in growing and diversifying New Mexico’s economy. In response to these needs local AEL programs have started developing hybrid educational opportunities and increasing technology based learning opportunities for outlying rural communities. These efforts are ongoing to provide the best success based models possible for the consumer of services.

The EAWDB envisions a workforce development system that aligns fundamentally with AEL programs. Development of basic literacy skills as performed in those programs is the foundation for the development of a skilled workforce and their participation in the development of an integrated unified system is paramount. The EAWDB believes this involvement goes beyond the development of a local plan. To support this view, EAWDB has invited AEL service providers to be vote as “full voice” members in the youth, one stop services and individuals with disabilities committees of the board. Their role in
advising and guiding the board committees plays a strong role in aligning and creating strategies to serve customers throughout the Eastern area.

The EAWDB through its one stop operator and service providers will work with AEL to align and unify workshops, assessments and service strategies into a seamless system for our customers. For shared customers title one service providers will align individual employment plan (IEP) goals and objectives with educational plans established by AEL. This approach will enhance the success of the customer and partner programs. EAWDB through its one stop operator and service providers will also work to share workshops and services to eliminate duplication of efforts. Emphasis will also be placed on service providers to increase outreach and opportunities for workplace education and literacy services and integrated education and training activities designed to create educational and career advancement.

Where feasible, the EAWDB will work with Adult Education and literacy programs to support workforce career and individualized career services to be delivered at AEL locations on a mutually beneficial schedule as well as appropriate AEL services to be accessible at New Mexico Workforce Connection Centers. As discussed in the youth service delivery section of the plan, youth co-enrolled in AEL services are able to receive stipends for attendance, supportive services to assist with transportation and incentives for completion of programmatic milestones such as HSE attainment.

**New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions (NMDWS) programs**

The NMWDS as a WIOA title II partner operates many system programs including: Wagner Peyser (WP), Unemployment Insurance (UI), Veterans’ services, migrant seasonal farmworkers (MSFW), in addition to business services such as tax assistance, Worker Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC), rapid response and incumbent worker training. The services available to job seekers and employers under this single partner make them a critical component to a functionally aligned workforce development system. The EAWDB has had a long standing solid operational relationship with them. The board envisions a system where the title II staff is functionally aligned with the title I staff in a manner that focuses on staff strengths rather than program affiliation. The board through its operator will work with NMDWS to create a customer service model that places employers at the forefront of services provided.

Title I staff works hand in hand with Veteran services staff for outreach and recruitment, employment plans and training services to place veterans on a career pathway that allows them to build on existing skills and become self-sufficient. Part of this includes referrals for partner services such as in the case of a disabled veteran and working with those partners to ensure that the needs are met in the most comprehensive manner possible. Staff follows up with partners to determine the best methods for collaboration and leveraging of funds to serve them.

This same level of coordination and collaboration occurs with rapid response and layoff aversion services. When a layoff notice is received through any partner the rapid response coordinator is contacted to reach out to the employer to schedule meetings to determine how to best serve the employer and their employees. Then adult dislocated worker staff joins Wagner Peyser and unemployment insurance staff to go to the employer’s location to register individuals for basic career services, perform initial assessments and provide information on individualized career and training services that are available to them through the workforce development system.
Each office will have staff devoted to multicultural (multi partner) business outreach and services that attend regular chamber meetings, assist with matching qualified applicants to available jobs, assist employers in identifying opportunities for business partners to promote from within utilizing On The Job Training (OJT) Worker Opportunity Tax Credits (WOTC) and then work with them to fill the position vacated by the individual promoting. This business team is conceptualized to include business outreach individuals from all partner programs. When programs do not have a dedicated business staff then a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or cooperative agreement will be developed to align how outreach and placement services will be addressed in each community. This team also includes the Local Veteran Employment Representative (LVER) where available to focus on job development services to veterans. Part of the successful alignment of individuals assigned to this team will be cross training of those staff on business services available by all partners. This will allow for a better alignment of who is contacting employers to minimize various programs calling the employers.

The EAWDB has always targeted services to veteran’s and with the number of individuals returning from abroad this is more important than ever. With 2015 census data reflecting close to 33,000 veterans in the Eastern area there is a population with solid foundational skills necessary to be successful employees. Veterans with significant barriers to employment can be referred to title I staff for training and if needed the Disabled Veteran’s Outreach Program can be the lead for case management with WIOA employment plans aligning with the goals of the Veteran program goals. This collaborative approach to case management will facilitate a better opportunity for positive performance outcomes for both programs.

**Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR)**
The New Mexico Department of Vocation Rehabilitation (DVR) is the entity tasked with providing services to individuals with disabilities that have a substantial impediment(s) to employment. The primary service provided to participants by them is vocational guidance and counseling. Those services are provided by vocational rehabilitation counselors that are specially trained to work with this population to identify the most appropriate services and vocations for participants in order for them to enter the workforce. The EAWDB staff and its operator have been meeting with DVR regional staff for the last several months as part of the Customer Centered Design Challenge (CCDC) to identify methods for tracking referrals, streamlining of paperwork and assessments, basic case management for co-enrolled customers, eliminating duplication, issuing and tracking of referrals and outcomes. Future discussions will revolve around improving customer service and outcomes, promoting collaboration of local office staff, and identifying additional methods to partner. All of these are geared toward developing a model that provides the best customer experience possible to the participants enrolled in workforce development activities.

As also discussed in the DVR portion of the state plan they are working on a project to increase accessibility to services in the Northeastern portion of the state. The project is identified to target six counties in Northeastern NM. Three of those counties; Guadalupe, Union, and Harding counties are in the Eastern area. EAWDB staff and its operator will work with our DVR partner to identify methods and strategies to piggy back on this project to increase and improve the availability of partner services in those rural areas as well. The vision is to widely expand the technological footprint in the rural communities to allow for virtual and long distance services during times when face to face service delivery is not possible.
The board and its operators and service providers will work with DVR to identify opportunities for colocation of staff in the offices. This work will continue and will also include the leveraging of resources to provide services such as work readiness, resume development, workshops and job clubs. The board will seek agreements with the VR contracted job development group to align business services and minimize the number of programs contacting employers. Business services can be provided collaboratively as appropriate allowing for placement of individuals utilizing OJT and WOTC to assist employers in offsetting the cost and risk of hiring individuals who have had barriers to employment.

Further coordination and collaboration will occur to identify methods and opportunities for co-enrollment in WP and WIOA adult or dislocated worker services. As previously identified DVR staff is best trained to best work with this population to address barriers and provide vocational guidance. Even so, co-enrollment into Wagner Peyser and WIOA adult services provides access to additional services that augment services received through vocational rehabilitation and prevent duplication of effort on the part of DVR staff. In cases where co-enrollment is deemed appropriate to the needs of the customer the DVR vocational counselor will provide the lead case management and be the primary point of contact for services to that customer. The operator will work with DVR partners to establish a process that allows partner programs to coordinate and align their respective employment plans and goals to the vocational rehabilitation goals.

The board will work with DVR to request training be provided to local office staff on provision of services to individuals with disabilities including disability awareness training. As additional specific cross training needs are identified the operator will work to locate training materials and facilitate the forum and mechanisms for delivery of training. Then the training will be made available to all partners working in the local community to serve this population.

**Carl Perkins Career and Technical Education Act**

The board and its operator will work with Carl Perkins Career and Technical Education Act (CTE) recipients in the area to identify appropriate Perkins funded activities that support entry and advancement into the career pathways appropriate in the region. Further work will be pursued to work with them and postsecondary to pursue development of additional career pathways that align with the board’s strategic plan and to help build a bridge between CTE, economic developers and businesses throughout the area.

Many of the CTE grants in the area are in the secondary schools. Since services to in school youth under WIOA are limited, youth providers will work with those CTE recipients in an effort to link them with other organizations in the community serving youth able to augment services and provide co-enrollment opportunities for youth as appropriate.

**Working with Core Programs to Improve Access to Activities Leading to Credentials, Including Industry Recognized, Portable and Stackable**

The EAWDB and its operator will utilize information obtained from regional economic projections, historical business data, chambers and economic developers to identify common skills and competencies necessary to provide high quality training leading to a sustainable wage. The EAWDB will then work closely with core programs and postsecondary institutions to build recognized sector certifications for various skills levels that are relevant and transferrable across employers in similar
industries within the sector. This will pave the way for certificates and credentials that are portable and stackable with higher level credentials becoming more highly skilled and specialized.

As previously discussed local partner planning meetings facilitated by the board’s operator are occurring and are anticipated to result in the establishment of solid career pathways based on economic analysis and projected growth industries. After meeting with employers of the targeted industries work will begin with the partners and postsecondary institutions to begin the process of developing the pathway trainings in a manner that leads to stackable credential based on the varying levels of skills development in each segment of the training. Postsecondary will be encouraged to offer those programs in an environment that caters to working individuals either through delivery methods such as online or through non-traditional scheduling models. The objective is to develop the trainings in a manner that provides for the most portable credentials possible to allow for diverse employment options for candidates completing training. This model also generates an earn while you learn environment once the first level credential is achieved.

As co-enrollment across partner programs increases wider access to training and support for the upcoming workforce will also increase. The service options provided to training candidates expand exponentially in a well-developed, non-duplicative, seamless service delivery environment that promotes co-enrollment and collaboration with core partners to meet program objectives. Once developed partners can then focus on encouraging their customers to participate and enroll in those programs. This will afford partner participants, both unique and co-enrolled, maximum customer choice, information on the most beneficial training options and the highest opportunity for long term sustainable employment.

C. Local Strategy Implementation

I. Describe the strategies and services that will be used in the local area to facilitate engagement of employers in the workforce development programs, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

II. Describe strategies and services that will be used in the local area to support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area.

III. Describe the strategies and services that will be used in the local area to better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development.

IV. Describe the strategies and services that will be used in the local area to strengthen linkages between the one stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs.

V. Describe how the local board will coordinate local workforce investment activities with regional economic development activities that are carried out in the local area and how the local board will promote entrepreneurial skills training and small business services.

VI. Describe how the local board will develop and implement training across systems for all core partners to ensure a unified approach to service delivery including vocational rehabilitation.
Local Employer Engagement

The private sector driven board and its CEOs are very cognizant of the diversity of the constituency it serves. Employer engagement will help align programs with employer needs to improve the potential for job seekers to obtain steady secure jobs in career pathways that lead to stackable credentials and self-sufficiency and create the foundation necessary for a vibrant diverse local economy. As such, offering the highest level of customer service to all its customers is of primary importance. The board vision places employers as the primary customer of the system. Therefore board views it role to job seekers as ensuring to the fullest extent possible, that individuals are trained to be able to succeed both now and the future in the current and emerging workforce in the area. This is why chambers, economic developers and small business development professionals are being asked to join the board’s committees to serve as advisors to the establishment a strong workforce development system.

Strategies to Meet the Needs of Employers

The engagement of chambers and economic developers in the board’s committees along with the private sector members of the board creates a network of expanded access of employers to engage in the establishment of industry recognized credentials. It is the intent to establish the criteria for the credentials in a manner that allows for the most portability of the credentials possible. For example employers in the construction industry will be convened to identify the universally beneficial skills that apply across the industry such as reading a tape measure, reading blueprints and drawings, converting scale to actuals etc. Then training can be developed for the basic entry level skills necessary with progressively more intensive training for each credential level until the credentials reach skills specific for plumbing, electrical, carpentry and HVAC. Every effort will be made to work with the apprenticeship council to align the trainings with their curriculum to create a system of cross credit to expand the availability of available apprenticeship training in the region. This type of strategy will be utilized for the additional career pathways identified in section 1 of the plan.

Strategies and Services to Better Coordinate Workforce Development Programs and Economic Development

The Eastern area is fortunate to have experienced a strong working relationship with many partners in our communities. While it has been good the EAWDB fully recognizes the opportunities WIOA has afforded to improve the alignment, coordination and collaboration within the workforce development system. A major determiner of success is how well the workforce system is training for employer needs in our region. Working strongly and unilaterally with economic development and chambers of commerce organizations in each community will greatly increase the impact of the work done to build the system. With the WCC offices at the center of the community acting as a resource for partners and employers alike the EAWDB envisions a workforce development system that is truly driven by the employers.

One stop system managers and staff regularly attend meetings with chambers and economic developers in their communities. The economic development seat on the EAWDB is crucial to assisting the board and operator with the coordination and alignment of strategies to serving employer needs. The board is taking action to include chambers of commerce and economic developers in the communities in the one stop operations committee of the board. This strategy will be utilized to help reach out and increase
coordination efforts. This will help ensure the best possible alignment with the chambers, economic developers and employers across the region. It will also engage the employment community through feedback and surveys in the enhancement of services to employers.

Services and Strategies to Strengthen Linkages to UI Programs

Unemployment services in New Mexico are largely provided virtually with applications and recertification handled via the online system or through the call center. As outlined previously with regard to rapid response, WIOA adult and dislocated worker staff work with the rapid response coordinator and Wagner Peyser staff to assist with registration and enrollment of new claimants. Unemployment Insurance staff works to identify individuals that are likely to exhaust benefits and refer them for Re-employment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA). This is intended to have claimants that are most likely to exhaust benefits come to the WCC offices and meet with staff to determine service needs most likely to re-engage them in employment. This can include resume development, assistance with job search, provision of labor market information and other basic career services. Information is provided in the workshop on training and services available through the dislocated worker program. The EAWDB and its operator will work to ensure the availability information regarding services available across partner programs as well as the eligibility requirements for the services. Utilizing the previously discussed referral site, referrals to partner services will be issued and the results tracked. Having unemployed individuals co-enrolled across partner programs will result in the highest level of service possible to identify transitional employment opportunities and support options to assist individuals while seeking employment, skills upgrading or training services.

Coordination of Workforce Investment Activities with Regional Economic Development Activities and Promotion of Entrepreneurial Skills Training and Small Business Services

The board views the input of economic development as crucial to the successful creation of a workforce trained to meet the needs of emerging industry. As such, the EAWD Board composition includes the president of economic development from Chaves County. This individual is part of the one stop services committee and has facilitated the meetings with local economic developers, chambers and small business development personnel from across the region. The board is seeking partnership with all those engaged in establishment and recruitment of new business and in identifying and meeting their needs.

Their input is also an integral part of establishment of the appropriate career pathway focuses for the various communities throughout the region. The chambers will be able to facilitate input from the local employers to identify industry recognized credentials and skills gaps in the existing and emerging workforce.

The EAWDB, its staff and operator will work to be the liaison between employers and training providers to drive the workforce development system in the east. In the development of career pathways and ladders every effort will be made to identify opportunities for entrepreneurship and include the small business development staff in the establishment of a model that incorporates that expertise and training into the training.
Development and Implementation of Training across Core Partners to Ensure a Unified Approach to Service Delivery

A high level training has already been developed by DWS for unemployment insurance that is available to all partners. The training is called UI light. DWS has offered the use of their in house training unit to develop similar trainings for partner programs to make them available online for all partners. Additionally, as discussed throughout the plan the operator will work with partners to identify needs for staff development and training and assist with the identification or development of training materials designed to meet that need.

D. One Stop Delivery System

I. Include a description of local employers, workers and job seekers. Describe how the local board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible training providers through the system and how such providers will meet the employment needs of employers.

II. Describe 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.

III. Describe how entities within the one stop delivery system including one stop operators and the one stop partners will comply with nondiscrimination 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.

IV. Describe the specific roles and resource contributions of the one stop partners to date. Please include the process for updating cooperative agreements, resource sharing agreements and memoranda of understanding relevant to the WIOA. Please include copies (Attachment D)

V. Describe how entities within the one stop delivery system, including one stop operators and one stop partners will provide for the accessibility for English language learners.

Eastern Area Employers, Workers and Job seekers and Continuous Improvement of Eligible Training Providers

The employers in the Eastern region comprise a varied group of employment opportunities. Career clusters have been centered mainly around: healthcare; construction; government; mining; oil and gas; transportation, education; retail and hospitality; and tourism. As discussed in section B above, the decline in the natural resource industry has impacted the construction and transportation industries. As clearly depicted in the charts below largest growth cluster is health care which posted over 7,000 jobs in 2015 with the majority of those being for registered nurses.
The chart below reflects industry clusters with the highest number of job postings in 2015.

Source: NM LASER
The chart below reflects the breakdown of jobs in the healthcare industry and the number of job postings for them.

As mentioned in the employer analysis another cluster of significant growth lies in the retail and leisure sector. Since most of those jobs are entry level low skilled jobs, they provide a good outreach and recruiting location to engage employed individuals with demonstrated attachment to the workforce in a career ladder/pathway to increase their skills. Training this population for promotion also opens entry level positions for youth and adults with minimal work experience and low skills. With the establishment of pathway trainings that include industry recognized credentials for supervisors and low level management the opportunity exists to create a talent pipeline for managers with skills and credentials that cross industry clusters. This type of model is one that will be pursued by the board in the upcoming year.

The number of individuals 16 years of age or older that are engaged in the workforce only account for half of the available workforce. Of this cohort many are the job seekers that are served by partners and WCC offices. Employed workers and job seekers in the area over the age of 25 are made up largely of individuals with a high school diploma and/or some college. This group accounts for eighty percent (80%) of the available workforce. However, only seventeen and a half percent (17.5%) of those individuals possess a Bachelor’s degree. These populations present a huge pool of candidates for the board and its partners to collaboratively provide outreach activities to. Engaging that population in training pathways designed to raise skill levels that result in credentials in demand and emerging industries provides opportunities to them for entry or advancement in employment, and a ladder to self-sufficiency. This also increases the skills of the workforce which can be utilized to recruit employers to the area. The natural result of that process is economic stability and growth for the communities.

Additionally, twenty percent (20%) of the population 25 years of age or older do not possess a high school diploma. These individuals are not eligible for occupational skills training through traditional
postsecondary model. Targeted outreach to them by WCC offices and AEL programs to enroll them in AEL and WIOA supportive services could provide a mechanism to significantly increase the number of individuals with a high school diploma or equivalency certification that become eligible for college level courses and assistance. Also with the creation of training programs that link academic and occupational learning the timeframe for them to develop skills that increase earning potential can be reduced.

Training programs developed to be business driven and meet employer needs is a key element to the preparation of a highly skilled well prepared workforce. Programs must be developed in a manner that allows for responsiveness to changing needs and impart skills that are deemed vital and necessary to the industry being trained for. The EAWDB is committed to continuous improvement of training programs to create a robust system of high quality services and outcomes for job seekers and employers. Continuous improvement based systems work toward excellence, innovation and the best possible outcomes for recipients of services. It must include policies and procedures for self-evaluation. The Eastern area will use a data driven process that utilize employer surveys and federal performance indicators as its core. It will work with employers to evaluate the quality of applicants and employees hired through the system. Through its operator and Title I service providers it will work to position itself as the bridge between training and employment. This will allow the board to work with core partners and training providers to respond to changing economic and employment conditions in the area.

Facilitation of Services to Rural Communities through Technology

As part of the improved WIOA service delivery system the EAWDB, its operator, staff and service providers will explore available virtual service platforms and curriculum and work with partners on implementation strategies to deliver the services. The operator has been meeting with CEOs, libraries and other parties in rural communities to discuss and problem solve potential methods for creating better outreach and service access for outlying communities. The operator is currently working to train library staff in the administration of work keys proctoring. The local board’s one stop services committee will work with the operator, CEOs and employers to further develop these efforts and will work to increase and improve these efforts annually as part of continuous improvement.

In the short term the board will work with partners to piggy back on any efforts or opportunities to collaborate on services delivered to the more remote areas. This will make all partners more effective in reaching out to hard to serve communities, improving services available to them in a cohesive effective system. This could include virtual case management for services such as individualized career services, virtual workshops, live workshops provided periodically through partner staff and rotated across programs to minimize time constraints and travel for any one partner. It may take on the face of cost shared staff that perform specific services for individuals in all programs with barriers to employment or in the rural areas. The board will work with partners and investigate best practices throughout the country to identify strategies for use in Eastern NM.

Compliance with Nondiscrimination Regarding Physical and Programmatic Accessibility of Facilities, Programs and Services, Technology and Materials for Individuals with Disabilities, Including Staff Training

The board, its subcontractors and offices strive to meet the highest level of accessibility for facilities, programs and services for individuals with disabilities. WCC offices strive to meet all accessibility
requirements specified in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The EAWDB is responsible for implementing and monitoring compliance with nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of WIOA, ADA and other relevant laws and regulations. As part of this EAWDB and its operator will work with DVR to evaluate the centers and assist with training staff on accessibility requirements. The board will also work with the DVR partners to identify accessibility technologies available to assist individuals seeking employment and training in the centers.

**Roles and Resource Contributions of the One Stop Partners to Date, Processes for Updating Cooperative Agreements, Resource Sharing Agreements and Memoranda of Understanding Relevant to WIOA**

For the past several years WP and WIA/WIOA title I program staff have been collocated in the WC Centers. In addition other partners that are collocated in various centers in the area include: AEL, Job Corps, and Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP). Their role in the centers is to be an integrated partner in the system and customer flow of the office. Responsibilities are delineated in the office MOUs and costs are allocated across partners in the center through the office resource sharing agreements (RSAs). MOUs and RSAs are reviewed annually at a minimum or more frequently as partners move in or out of the center or add/subtract staff on a permanent basis.

Allocations to partners are based on the number of individuals per partner and total square footage of office space utilization. This percentage is allocated against costs for common areas in the center. Partners can also request a review of RSAs if staff relocates offices and the move will change the square footage distribution allocated to that staff/partner. Costs for common areas such as resource rooms, lobby areas, hallways etc., are distributed based on the percentage of program staff comprised of the total number of staff in the center.

** Provision of Accessibility for English Language Learners**

The provision of services to customers should not be limited due to language constraints. Spanish is the most prevalent non-English language spoken in New Mexico. In response to this each of the WCC offices in the Eastern area has staff available to provide translation services. In fact, individuals with bilingual skills and experience are actively recruited when vacancies arise. If at any time there is not a bilingual staff available telephonic interpreters can be offered. When translation services for languages other than Spanish, including sign language, are required interpreters and translators are contracted to provide such services on an as needed basis. Written materials and information regarding services available in the system are also available in languages other than English.

In addition to this the local area utilizes the state’s New Mexico Workforce Connection’s Online System to provide a portal to basic career services with links to the UI website. Both of these systems are available in both English and Spanish.

**E. Service Implementation**

**1. Youth**

   **I.** Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce investment activities in the local area including activities for youth with disabilities and other barriers such as homeless youth, foster and former foster youth, and expecting or parenting youth.
II. Describe how the local board is planning or working to fulfill specific youth requirements as laid out in the WIOA including:

- How the board is providing for the 14 required youth service elements;
- Approach toward meeting the 20% work experience, including the use of registered apprenticeship as a service strategy;
- Approaches toward meeting the 75% OSY minimum expenditure;
- A description of changes in the youth providers service delivery models;
- A description of any changes in outreach activities around youth; and
- Any changes in youth case management approach including the use of supportive services

The board and its youth committee recognize that investing in our youth is an investment in our future. Developmental, preventative and rehabilitative services available to them are a crucial component of that investment. Most preventative strategies occur at home, in schools and in the faith based organizations in the communities. The strategies work well for youth with solid family and support structures. Many youth that lack those support structures become disenfranchised, disadvantaged and even marginalized. For disadvantaged and disenfranchised youth access to prevention and/or intervention services can greatly determine if the individual becomes a productive member of society or is trapped in a cycle of social dependency. On the Eastern side of New Mexico workforce development services to youth and their availability vary in each local community. For example many communities are lacking direct access to: alternative high schools, homeless programs, mental health and/or substance abuse counseling; high school equivalency tutoring and/or testing; post-secondary or CTE training, transitional foster care, pregnancy/parenting or vocational rehabilitation services. With the rurality of the area and the resulting inconsistencies in available services it become imperative that the EAWDB work with partners and CEOs to bridge those gaps to provide a mechanism for access to those much needed services.

The board, its operator and youth service delivery staff are engaging in meetings with partners to identify what gaps exist in which communities and to develop a strategy to make those services available to youth in need.

The majority of youth served in the area experience multiple barriers to employment and post-secondary education. EAWDB and its service providers work diligently to identify available services in the various communities and to develop strong relationships with them. With the varied levels of service offered in the communities served by the board the contracted youth services provider is tasked with locating services or direct service delivery for all 14 WIOA program elements. With WIOAs increased focus on partnership staff works closely with partners in each community to develop and foster the most collaborative environment possible to help youth succeed. This includes working with various community organizations including faith based organizations to help bridge gaps in services such as in identifying temporary housing possibilities for homeless youth in communities that do not offer those services.

The EAWDB has long believed that a service model that emphasizes success in the workplace was paramount to future success of the youth we serve. Because of this philosophy the providers of youth
services in the East have always been required to spend a substantial portion of their budgets on direct participant services. This focus was built into the Requests for Proposal (RFPs) from the time of WIA implementation. As a result, WIOA’s requirement that 20% of youth funds be expended on work activities required very little adjustment to implement. Providers are working more diligently to align work experience activities and career exploration services. Career exploration activities focus on current labor market needs and projections in addition to the traditional interest and aptitude profiles. As part of the youths’ preparation for work experience they participate in financial literacy that includes developing a real budget while being coached to save for their future educational endeavors. Youth that are not clear on the direction they would like to take to begin their careers are provided with career exploration services often coupled with unpaid job shadowing in a variety of related jobs or organizations. Once the educational requirements of the occupation are identified case management staff work to develop a work experience site that will provide transferrable skills in the area of interest identified. The EAWDB and its youth provider are investigating various work based academic curriculum models for implementation as well to facilitate an applied academics environment to integrate work experience activities. The service provider in conjunction with the one stop operator will work to identify more opportunities for paid internships and apprenticeship training for youth 18 and older that is connected to academic and occupational learning opportunities.

Like the work experience requirement, the youth system in the East shifted virtually seamlessly into the 75% out of school expenditure requirement. Providers in the East have recruited heavily from the adult education providers and with the expanded age range under WIOA the recruiting from this source was increased. The case management model has always been to provide services individualized to meet the needs of the youth as a whole. This philosophy has not changed however the youth council and service provider recognize that with the expanded age range under WIOA that materials and assessments utilized for employability screening and work readiness preparation need to be adjusted to be more appealing and inclusive of the older youth population served under WIOA. Materials and curricula are being investigated and reviewed for a better service to older youth.

The EAWDB youth council also operates based on the philosophy that to be successful serving youth you have to meet them where they are. So outreach efforts to youth have been occurring in places of employment that are typical for out of school youth such as fast food restaurants and truck stops. The board has also begun working more closely with the TANF works provider to identify individuals that could benefit from the program and co-enrolling them.

Supportive services are also an important component of the WIOA youth service delivery model for the EAWDB. In many communities transportation is a significant barrier to youth participating in work experience or educationally based activities such as occupational skills training or adult education services. Youth are referred to partner services to determine if additional assistance is available through partners. In many instances youth are not eligible for assistance under partner programs. In those cases assistance with transportation is provided via supportive services. This can take the form of purchased bus passes, mileage assistance if they possess a vehicle or alternative means where available. Supportive services are also utilized for youth that lack appropriate work attire and as incentives for achievement of programmatic goals such as participation in AEL classes and attainment of high school equivalency (HSE) credentials. Books have also been purchased as a support for youth engaging in home school programs with tutoring provided in house or through partner programs.
Tutoring services are provided through a number of mechanisms. Where appropriate tutoring and study skills training are coordinated through co-enrollment with AEL providers and in some cases a stipend issued for attendance and completion of goals. When this is not possible case managers may: provide direct tutoring to youth; pay a stipend to one youth to tutor another; or locate and contract with a qualified tutor. As part of this, dropout recovery is heavily emphasized. Staff makes every effort to reengage dropouts with secondary schools either through enrollment in traditional high school or through alternative schools with strategies aligned and coordinated with the case manager. There are alternative schools in the area that allow for self-paced work in workbooks with assistance available online. Assignments are submitted via the computer and completion results in a high school diploma (not an equivalent). There is also a home school high school curriculum that is available to students that functions in a similar manner. The youth can receive additional tutoring assistance as needed by case managers or system partners as appropriate. When youth will not re-engage with the secondary system they are encouraged to enroll with AEL partners.

Once youth have completed a diploma or equivalent or youth that come into the program with a diploma already in hand are encouraged to enroll in post-secondary education leading to a credential that is directly linked to career pathways in high demand occupations. While youth are attending training, staff will look for work experience possibilities or job opportunities for the youth to participate in that coincide with the program of study and career path selected by the youth. In addition to this six of the area’s community colleges also have a small business development center (SBDC). Youth interested in self-employment are referred to the SBDC for training in the development of a business plans, incorporation processes, insurance and tax training.

Like tutoring, adult mentoring services are provided through a variety of mechanisms. They receive consistent mentoring and coaching from career development staff as they work through the program goals. They also receive mentoring through community sources such as boys and girls clubs and work site supervisors. Additional mentors are identified and utilized as appropriate to the needs of each individual youth.

Each larger community has services available for pregnant or parenting youth. Youth that face this challenge are referred for parenting classes. They are also referred to temporary assistance for needy families (TANF) and to the children, youth and families division (CYFD) to apply for additional assistance. Once eligibility and benefits have been established youth case managers work to identify the gaps in meeting the needs of the youth to allow them the opportunity to participate in training and work activities. The case manager at this point assists in the role of a system navigator to help them apply for and coordinate service requirements.

Youth with significant barriers to employment are referred to partner programs with the most experience serving that population and then work to support the efforts of those programs and integrate the WIOA program elements into the plan. For example: Youth with disabilities are referred to the department of vocational rehabilitation (DVR) for assessment and eligibility determination for services. If they are eligible for services through DVR then DVR is the primary point of contact for identifying the best course of training for the youth. The WIOA case manager will then align their IEP goals with the DVR employment plan. Services provided to youth in or aging out of foster care are
coordinated with CYFD case manager. Additional adult mentors are sought to assist these youth in transitioning to the world of work and training.

Youth are encouraged to participate in leadership opportunities within their local communities. The case managers assist with locating opportunities or will help them locate opportunities to serve in the communities in an area of interest to the youth. Then staff will facilitate the placement of youth in those services. The EAWDB is also reviewing various leadership development curricula to make available within the program structure.

2. Adults and dislocated workers
   I. Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area, including services targeted toward adult populations with barriers, such as displaced homemakers, homeless adults, ex-offenders, single parents and pregnant women, and/or long term unemployed.

The WCC offices in the eastern area house staff from the WIOA adult/dislocated worker and youth programs and Wagner Peyser. As such the full range of WIOA basic and individualized career and training services are available in each of the twelve counties. Some counties are only provided services on itinerate or as needed basis as reflected in the one stop office listing in attachment. Services available to individuals include those listed in TEGL 03-15.

Basic Career services include but are not limited to:

- Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth program eligibility determination;
- Outreach, intake and orientation to information and other services available through the one stop delivery system;
- Initial Assessment of skill levels including literacy, numeracy, and English language proficiency, as well as aptitudes, abilities and supportive service needs;
- Labor exchange services;
- Provision of referrals to and coordination of activities with other programs and services including those within the one-stop delivery system, and when appropriate, other workforce development programs;
- Provision of workforce and labor market employment statistics information, including the provision of accurate information relating to local, regional and national labor market areas;
- Provision of performance information and program cost information on eligible providers of training services by program and type of providers;
- Provision of information about how the local area is performing on local performance accountability measures and any additional performance information relating to the area’s one stop delivery system;
- Provision of information relating to the availability of supportive services or assistance, and appropriate referrals to those services and assistance,
- Assistance in establishing eligibility for programs of financial aid assistance for training and education programs not provided under WIOA; and
- Provision of information and assistance regarding filing claims under UI programs.
Individualized Career Services include but are not limited to:

- Comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skill levels and service needs of adults and dislocated workers;
- Development of and individual employment plan, to identify the employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate combination of services for the participant to achieve his or her goals;
- Group and/or individualized counseling and mentoring;
- Career planning;
- Case management;
- Short-term prevocational services, including development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills and professional conduct to prepare individuals for employment or training;
- Internships and work experience linked to careers;
- Workforce preparation activities that help an individual acquire a combination of basic academic skills, critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills, and self-management skills, including competencies in utilizing resources, using information, working with others, understanding systems, and obtaining skills necessary for successful transition into and completion of postsecondary education, training or employment;
- Financial literacy services;
- Follow up services as appropriate;
- Out of area job search assistance and relocation assistance; and
- English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs.

Training services include:

- Occupational skills training linked to in demand occupations;
- On the Job Training;
- Customized training;
- Apprenticeship; and
- Entrepreneurial training.

Services specialized to targeted populations such as displaced homemakers and individuals with disabilities include targeted outreach effort and case management services designed to look at the individuals holistically to identify needs. Services are then customized to meet their needs. As mentioned in other portions of the local plan training and cross training for partner programs will be provided and requested as needs are identified. Case management training for individuals with disabilities or multiple barriers to employment will be requested to be provided with partner staff and programs that are established as subject matter experts in that area of expertise such as services to individuals with disabilities and disabled veterans.

3. Individuals with Disabilities
   I. Describe how individuals with disabilities will be served through the one-stop center system in the local area, including copies of executed cooperative agreements 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 delivery system. This includes cooperative agreements between the LWDB and the local office of a designated state agency administering programs carried out under the Rehab Act, with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities and to other individuals, such as cross training of staff, technical assistance, use and sharing of information and resources, cooperative efforts with employers, and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration and coordination, such as improving or creating referral processes, joint enrollment and case management.

As discussed throughout the local plan the board and its operator have been meeting with DVR regional staff. The board envisions a system that is highly integrated in functionality across programs. The discussions have been largely focused on collaborative and coordinated case management, co-location and co-enrollment processes. The board will work with DVR on improving the accessibility of services to individuals with disabilities in the centers including those with visual impairments or blindness. The board is working to identify opportunities for co-location and collaboration on workshops designed to improve access to employment and/or training services and increase co-enrollment between DVR, Wagner Peyser and WIOA adult, dislocated worker and youth programs.

The operator will be working on cooperative agreements in the next year that are attachments to partner MOUs that will detail processes in each office for access to the full range of services in the system. This system will be aligned to minimize or eliminate duplication where appropriate. The board will request training by DVR staff on how to best serve individuals with disabilities in the workforce system to include disability awareness and sensitivity training.

DVR staff has already attended WIOA performance training that was provided jointly by the local board and DWS. As mentioned above board staff will request training for partners on serving individuals with disabilities to ensure they receive the highest quality of services possible in the system. This type of training will be developed through coordination with DVR and other partners and will be offered by the board or its partners as needs are identified.

4. Veterans

1. Describe the board’s strategic approach to serving Veterans to improve employment outcomes for this population, including priority of service efforts.

Veterans and covered persons in the Eastern area are provided priority for all services (e.g. resource room usage and waiting to see staff for individualized career services) in the center including training in alignment with the state plan, state and federal policies and regulations. For programs in the centers with specific eligibility criteria, the covered persons must first meet all required eligibility to receive priority of service. For programs that target specific populations without specific eligibility mandates the covered persons must receive the highest priority for enrollment similar to the priority of service applied to universal access programs. The EAWDB ensures that the local area WCCs incorporates a Veterans Priority of Service standard that is in alignment with the state plan and the law.

The Disabled Veterans Outreach Program staff visit local Veterans of Foreign War (VFW) offices and the area’s two military bases to provide information to transitioning service members regarding services
available to them and their families in the WCCs. Conversations are beginning to identify methods of outreach through Eastern New Mexico University’s (ENMU) student veterans’ organization.

When vets enter the center and identify themselves as veterans, WP staff meets with them one on one to perform an initial assessment to determine if they have significant barriers to employment. If the veteran does not have significant barriers they are referred to business services and WP staff for registration, background completion and further assessment of need. Skills development and business services staff in coordination with local veteran’s employment representatives (where available) work to assist the individual with their training and employment needs. Veterans with significant barriers are referred to the Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) and/or partner entities as appropriate for assistance with the barriers and then placed in employment with assistance of business services staff. Internal measures are being established to better track the services provided and the quality of those services to veterans in the WCC system.

5. Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers
   i. Describe, as appropriate, the board’s approach to serving migrant seasonal farmworkers within its respective area to increase education and employment outcomes for this population.

The Eastern area does not have as significant a population of migrant seasonal farmworkers as some other regions in the state. When they are identified in the system services are coordinated with the Department of Workforce Solutions migrant seasonal farmworker program. DWS has fulltime outreach staff to locate the migrant workers. Coordination also occurs with the local National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) as appropriate. Training is provided to all offices through the state’s training division and state personnel on appropriate services for migrant seasonal farmworkers. If training has been determined necessary and appropriate they are referred to partners for co-enrollment and training.

6. Native Americans
   i. Describe, as appropriate, the board’s approach to serving Native Americans within its respective area to increase education and employment outcomes for this population.

The board has always had a representative of the tribal council of the Mescalero Apache tribe. Organization of service delivery is coordinated with them as direct recipients of federal funds for services to Native Americans in the area. When additional services are needed Native Americans are referred to WCC office for services.

7. Individuals with low income
   i. Describe how the board will identify and work with low-income individuals, including any plans to coordinate locally with the TANF program to serve this population as well as to serve TANF exhaustees.

The area offices provide targeted outreach to Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients through collaboration with the Income Support Division’s Works program subcontractor. The Works program in some of the communities participates with WCC offices in providing joint workshops and having TANF customers attend office provided job clubs. Also as low income individuals are enrolled into the WIOA programs that are not
receiving public assistance they are referred to the income support division for eligibility and benefit
determination. TANF exhaustees and those that are becoming close to exhausting benefits are referred
to the WCC offices for eligibility determination and potential enrollment into career and training
services as appropriate.

Works staff is registering TANF clients to attend public workshops and job clubs to assist that population
with job search activities and resume development.

8. Older Individuals
   I. Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate WIOA title 1 workforce
      investment activities with the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)
      to serve the employment needs of older individuals.

The SCSEP program has had a long relationship in working with the EAWDB and the WCC offices. The
regional SCSEP coordinator is housed in the Roswell WCC. When appropriate, individuals are referred to
WIOA staff in the WCCs for assessment, screening and eligibility determination. The WCC offices also
utilize the services of older workers employed under the SCSEP in the local offices.

9. Individuals with Low literacy Levels
   I. Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate WIOA title 1 activities with
      AEL activities under WIOA title 2. Describe the joint planning processes planned or
      underway that will enhance the provision of services to individuals receiving adult
      education services, such as cross training of staff, technical assistance, sharing
      resources, sharing of information, cooperative efforts to improve or create referral
      processes, joint enrollment and case management. Include how the local area will carry
      out the review of local applications submitted under title II.

The WCC offices perform a basic skills assessment on all individuals seeking services in the centers that
are not already in possession of a recent basic skills assessment such as an accuplacer. Individuals
determined to be in needs of basic skills upgrading are referred to the AEL program for assessment. The
EAWDB, its operator and service providers have been involved over the last several months in meetings
for the issuance and tracking of referrals, coordination and collaboration of services, and co-enrollment
planning processes.

The EAWDB has invited all local AEL providers to be part of the board’s committees. The board is in the
process of seating all interested AEL providers to its committees. AEL staff is also part of the local
partner meetings that are taking place in the local communities.

These meetings are in the beginning stages and have resulted in an increase in referrals to and from and
co-enrollment with AEL programs. Staff attending meetings provide basic cross training on their
programs’ services, eligibility and performance criteria as well as basic operational parameters of the
functional structure of the programs.

Local area AEL applications will be reviewed by board staff and the board one stop services committee
then submitted for approval to the board. Feedback will be provided to the appropriate contact person
as necessary.
F. Coordination of services across programs
The EAWDB has been and will continue to meet and work with the all WIOA partner programs to establish cooperative agreements to ensure access to and improve alignment of services within the system. This includes working to have partners move into the Workforce Connection Centers on a full or part time basis. Staff in local offices has already begun the processes of informal cross training for eligibility and program services available. The EAWDB has included partner staff in performance training for the adult DW providers as well. This will be an ongoing process throughout the area for the foreseeable future.

1. Wagner Peyser
   i. Provide a description of plans, assurances, and strategies for maximizing coordination, improving service delivery and avoiding duplication of Wagner Peyser Act services and other services provided through the one-stop delivery system.

The board has implemented a functional alignment structure in the WCC offices. This process incorporates the alignment of staff in the centers based on function rather than program affiliation. As partner staffs are co-located in the centers, staff is assigned to functional teams classified as the welcome function; skills development function and the business services function as discussed in the state plan. The team assignments are made based largely on the strengths and knowledge base of the staff and to a lesser extent program regulations to the extent required.

The Welcome function is the initial point of contact within the system. It includes the initial assessment, self-directed system registration and needs identification. It incorporates the universal access functions that are predominately information related and are not personalized to a customer’s specific needs. It can also include resume review to determine potential career readiness of job seeking customers. Individuals identified as career ready are referred to the business services team for placement and job search assistance. Individuals determined to be in need of intensive career or training services are referred to the skills development team for comprehensive assessment, development of employment plans and eligibility establishment for WIOA program services.

The Business Services Function is comprised of staff dedicated and trained to serve employers. These services include: the provision of job fairs, employee recruitment and screening, assistance with WOTC paperwork, job development and identification of on the job training possibilities.

As partners are brought into cooperative agreements for each office the identification will be made on staff assignments under the partners into the functional units. This will enable the coordination of informational services, individualized case management services including training coordination, and the alignment of business services staff across partner programs.

It is anticipated that training and cross training of partners will be developed with the functional staff alignment model in mind. Staff assigned to placement activities across partner programs will be trained jointly in business services available through all programs to unify and coordinate the outreach and contact with employers. WCC offices will position themselves to be the subject matter experts in all things related to job search, resume development, interviewing skills and techniques and employment retention skills as well as funding to offset training costs and tax credits. Partner agencies can then refer work ready individuals to those staff for placement and job development services as appropriate.
In following this model most partner program staff will fall into the skills development function. The Skills Development function is comprised of the staff that are responsible for identification and provision of individualized services, skills upgrading and training needs as well as identification of and assistance with funding for those services. Job seekers that are determined through initial assessment to be in need of training or skills upgrading in order to obtain meaningful self-sufficient employment are referred to the skills development team. Staff will provide information on available training, employment opportunities, earning potential and funding assistance for training programs. Eligibility determination is performed for individuals interested in receiving individualized career services.

Co-enrolled customers will receive unified collaborative case management. The partner with the most relevant experience with the particular customer population will be the lead case management provider. Other programs will develop employment plans that fulfill their respective program requirements but also align with goals, objectives and needs established by the lead case manager. Since work readiness by definition in the majority of workforce programs triggers placement and job search activities, partner members of this team in conjunction with the board and its operator will work to establish a uniform standard for the determination of “work ready” and “career ready”. It is anticipated that weekly or bi-weekly case meetings could occur in person or virtually to discuss customers’ progress in work preparedness or training activities. Individuals that are approaching the timeframe for placement services will have resumes developed and reviewed by business services staff so that preliminary placement services can begin.

There is much work to be completed to further develop the service coordination models envisioned by the board but the work that has been completed in the last twelve months has laid a solid foundational structure to provide the best opportunity for success of the board, its partners, and the customers served.

2. Rapid Response
   I. Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities.

NMDWS has a full time rapid response coordinator that coordinates services to individuals facing layoffs or closures. The local board staff participate with rapid response activities once a WARN notice or layoff notice has been received. WP WIOA and UI perform a site visit to assist employers and employees with job search registration, UI registration and preliminary eligibility determination for career and training services. Information is provided regarding services available through the adult and dislocated worker programs as well as in the WCC offices. The rapid response activities are provided jointly across the partners.

3. Postsecondary education system
   I. Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities with education and workforce investment activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services and avoid duplication of services.

The EAWDB through its operator as previously discussed will work with secondary and postsecondary institutions including CTE recipients to identify career pathway training models that are already
developed to piggy back on work that has already been completed. The operator will meet with education partners to identify the training and pathways that are in alignment with local, regional and state economic and employment projections. The operator will then meet with employers for input on the establishment of industry recognized credentials and viability to the workforce development system.

4. Supportive Services
   I. Provide a description how the local board will coordinate WIOA title 1 Workforce activities with the provision of transportation and other appropriate supportive services in the local area.

Transportation and childcare services are coordinated across partners and service providers in the area. Customers in need of those services are referred to partner programs that provide those services to determine eligibility for services under the partner programs. When participants are determined eligible for partner assistance, WIOA programs will review the level of service available and if need exists beyond what is provided under partner programs the WIOA will supplement or augment the services. For example: TANF customers receiving child care assistance through Children Youth and Families Division (CYFD) will have benefits reviewed against the actual costs of childcare. In many cases CYFD requires single mothers to pay a small copay for child care services. If the copay would place a hardship on the customer WIOA will pay the balance through supportive services usually on a reimbursement basis.

Transportation services are coordinated the same way. Where possible bus passes are purchased to provide transportation to participants as needed. There are also provisions for mileage reimbursement in cases of personal vehicle use. Every effort is made to provide whatever assistance is necessary to allow individuals the opportunity to participate in training and employment related activities.

5. Follow-up Services
   I. Provide a description of the board’s follow-up policy and procedures for each of the targeted groups in section E.

The board is in the process of development of a follow-up services policy. It will be completed and submitted to the board for review and approval in June 2017. As required by federal regulation youth will receive follow-up services for a period of not less than twelve months. For adults and dislocated workers it is anticipated that follow-up services will be required for individuals with significant barriers to employment such as individuals with disabilities and/or individuals with poor work history at intake. If the customer is a co-enrolled participant it is anticipated that the “lead” case manager will be responsible for identifying the need for follow up services and that information will be included in the customer's employment plan.

6. Coordination of Service Priorities
   I. Describe direction given by NMDWS and LWDB to the operator to ensure priority for adult career and training services will be given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals and individuals who are basic skills deficient.

Instruction provided by NMDWS for prioritization of career and training services is included in the board’s eligibility policy in Attachment A. The Board has instructed the operator and service provider to
perform outreach activities specifically to recruit targeted populations for career and training services. Staff provides information and outreach services at AEL classes, TANF and UI workshops, rapid response activities, and materials are provided for DVOP staff to include in presentations in the Transitional Assistance Program (TAP) for transitioning service members. If there is an applicant pool established then applications for training services are ranked in order of priority as established in federal, state and local policies.

7. **Coordination of outreach**
   
   I. Describe how the local board will coordinate outreach efforts across partner programs for shared customers and target populations.

   The board through its operator will work with partner staff tasked with outreach activities to develop a uniform approach that will provide information to potential customers regarding all services available through the workforce development system and the processes for accessing them. The board will work to ensure that the process will result in the highest number of enrollments and/or co-enrollment across programs possible. It is planned that detailed information on outreach activities will be included in the local cooperative agreements developed with each office and included as an attachment to the Partner MOUs.

   NMDWS has purchased a module for the current management information system (MIS) known as the Customer Relation Management (CRM) module. This module has the capacity to track outreach efforts to employers and provide reports on outcomes of the efforts. It is anticipated that once operational partners would be able to utilize this system as well through limited access security available in the New Mexico Career Online System (NMCOS)

8. **Professional Development**

   I. Describe how professional development activities will be coordinated across partner programs staff.

   DWS staff trainers have purchased Fred Prior training. It is available to partner staff as well and can be utilized live and via the internet. UI lite training is being made available to all partners. The DWS staff onboarding training will have components available to all partners. The operator will also work with partners to identify additional training needs and board staff in conjunction with the operator will coordinate training for partner staff.

9. **Coordination of Referrals**

   I. Describe how the board will coordinate customer referrals across partner programs.

   As mentioned previously board staff, the operators and partners are working on the development and implementation of a managed referral site. This referral will allow all partners working with a customer to share information including to what partners referrals have been issued to and by whom. The site is scheduled to be operational by July 1, 2017 or earlier. The operating agreements that are planned for development will provide details regarding appropriate referral issuance.
10. Coordination with other partner programs.
   I. Describe any other services provided in the one-stops to support the local workforce development system and customers. Include any coordination plans or activities the board has with any other partner programs such as AmeriCorps, job corps, youth build, mission, graduation, innovate educate etc.

The EAWDB, its operator and subcontractors consistently work to identify community partners that are able to provide or augment services necessary to ensure the success of our participants. The offices in the past have partnered with AmeriCorps to provide work experience opportunities that provide instruction in office processes, telephone etiquette, pre-vocational and work readiness skills, filing, and clerical support functions. We will continue to pursue this partnership as it is available.

It is planned that the board’s one stop operator will work with the Job Corps program to become part of the Industry Advisory Council in order to partner and provide assistance to program graduates for placement services. This partnership would also provide information to the Roswell center on economic development efforts in the region and labor market information. The employer network associated with the council will be utilized for feedback on and development of training pathways and industry recognized credentials for the local community.

G. Fiscal and Performance Management
   I. Identify the entity responsible for the disbursal of grant funds described in WIOA sec. 107(d)(12)(B)(i)(III).

   II. Provide a detailed description of the competitive process that will be used to award the subgrants and contracts for WIOA title I activities. (Please provide a copy of the board’s procurement policy or policies, including conflict of interest provisions as a part of Attachment A.)

   III. Provide the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor (NMDWS) 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 in the local area, in Attachment E.

   IV. Describe the actions the LWDB will take toward becoming or remaining a high-performing workforce development board. Strategic Board Toolkit: https://ion.workforcegps.org/resources/2016/06/27/09/30/Strategic_Board_Toolkit_Vision

   V. 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, 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.

   VI. Boards may implement a pay-for-performance contract strategy for certain elements, for which the board may reserve and use not more than 10 percent of the
total funds allocated to the board under WIOA Section 128(b). Describe any plans the board may have to use pay-for-performance contracts to communicate performance expectations to service providers.

VII The local board grant agreements require boards to achieve or exceed a Minimum Training Expenditure Requirement of 40%. Local boards should obligate a minimum of 80% and expend a minimum of 40% of current year funding by the end of the third quarter of the program year. Please report on the local board’s expected obligation and expenditure rates for PY 2016.

VIII Describe how one-stop centers are planning to implement or transition to an integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information system for programs carried out under WIOA and by one-stop partners.

Responsibility for Disbursal of Grand Funds

The Eastern Area Workforce Development Board (EAWDB) is the entity that receives and disburses grant funds. The EAWDB is a governmental agency and instrumentality of the state of New Mexico per U.S. Internal Revenue Code. The CEO approved fiscal agent contracted by the board is Integrity Accounting.

Competitive Process

To ensure an open and transparent process, the EAWDB will adhere to the competitive process as outlined in the New Mexico procurement code 13-1-21 – 13-1-199. The EAWDB will issue Requests for Proposal for subgrant awards and contracts. Detailed steps in this process include but are not limited to:

- Preparation of the RFP including five key elements—what the offeror is to provide, mandatory and/or desirable response, parameters or restrictions, how is the response submitted, how is the response evaluated.
- Review and approval of the RFP by the EAWDB
- Public notice of the RFP
- Bidders Conference and instructions for submitting questions.
- Deadline for submittal
- Notice of Award including notification to unsuccessful bidders
- Appeals process available to unsuccessful bidders
- Compliance review, scoring and ranking of proposals
- Board and CEO approval
- Contract approval by the EAWDB
- Final negotiations

Local Performance Levels and Fiscal Performance in Grant Agreements

Performance levels negotiated with the Governor and the state are included in attachment E. Regarding the Governor’s fiscal performance measures. For several prior years, low unemployment and high local wages have resulted in fewer dislocated workers and difficulty maintaining full staffing by the contracted services providers. The board has consistently met the 80% obligation rate but has had
subcontractors that under-expended against their contract. The issues have resulted in carryover funding that has hampered efforts to meet the 80% obligated/40% expended funding measure. The EAWDB has identified strategies and instituted policies that will help meet this measure. Current efforts are underway to develop sustainable expenditures and not simply to spend available funding. These efforts are aided by the economic downturn in the eastern area and we are confident that much progress on this measure is being made.

**Becoming a High Performing Board**

While representing the largest area of the state in square miles, some members of the EAWDB must travel hundreds of miles in a single day to attend board meetings. Ensuring that their effort is not wasted but rather efficiently and strategically targeted is essential. The EAWDB and board staff have committed resources to ensure the development of a high-functioning board and focused these resources on the following efforts:

- Additional outreach to Chief Elected Officials for member nominations & and community involvement
- Participating in professional organizations i.e. National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB) for best practices and standards
- Partnering with local Chambers of Commerce and other professional organizations
- Accessing US Department of Labor resources including the Strategic Board resources at Workforce GPS.

The EAWDB will continue to evaluate additional member resources both at the local, state, and federal level to ensure that the strategic role and ongoing training of its members is optimal.

**Provision of Training Services**

The EAWDB believes training is the backbone of developing a highly skilled well trained workforce. Occupational skills training is provided through Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) in conjunction with the eligible training provider list. Eligible training providers and the success of their training programs are reviewed regularly to ensure that programs are effective in completion and employment rates of program completers. Programs and providers that are not effectively training customers are removed from the list. The eligible training provider lists includes information on occupational choices tied to the training program, pre-requisites for training and cost of training to provide the information customers need to make clear choices on the training they attend.

Other types of training such as customized and On-the-Job-Training are provided through training contracts in accordance with WIOA section 134 and CFR §679.560(b)(18).

**Pay for Performance**

The EAWDB currently does not have any pay-for-performance contracts but is evaluating the benefits of a pay-for-performance strategy. Final decisions to include such a strategy will be in accordance with WIOA rules and regulations and clearly communicated through the RFP process to all contracted service providers.
Implementation or Transition to an Integrated, Technology-Enabled Intake and Case Management Information System for WIOA Programs and Partners

The system purchased through the State Administrative Entity (SAE) is the NMCOS. This is a web-based system that provides for intake, document storage, case management and placement services. Eligibility or other pertinent documents can be uploaded directly to the system by users with access to the system. This system is currently utilized by all WCC offices with access shared with partners residing in the One-stop. This system is available to all partners through execution of an MOU with the SAE. The EAWDB through its operators will work with partners in the area and the SAE to identify and develop methods for sharing of intake and document processes that are linked to the NMCOS.

H. Definitions

I. Because the State has chosen not to define “additional assistance,” as it relates to WIOA Youth program eligibility, each local board has the responsibility for determining its own definition of this eligibility category. If the local board wishes to use this eligibility category, a local policy must be developed that specifies what conditions must be met for a youth to require “additional assistance” and what documentation is needed to demonstrate this eligibility category. In each area, not more than five percent of the in-school-youth under WIOA Section 129(3)(B) may be eligible under “individual who requires additional assistance” to complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment. If applicable, provide the definitions the board uses for “requires additional assistance” and a copy of the related local policy as a part of Attachment A. (eligibility policy)

The EAWDB providers do utilize the youth that requires additional assistance barrier on a very limited basis. The definition is included in the youth section of the area’s eligibility policy in Attachment A.

II. The state defines “basic skills deficient” for Adults and Youth as follows.

- For Adult – An individual who is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English, at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society.
- For Youth – An individual who computes or solves problems, reads, writes, or speaks English at or below the eighth grade level on a generally accepted standardized test or comparable score on a criterion-referenced test.

Please describe the process the board uses to test individuals for basic skills deficiency.

Basic skills testing for adults, dislocated workers and youth is provided as part of the assessment processes. The work keys career readiness certification adopted by the state includes three levels of career readiness, bronze silver and gold. For adults and dislocated workers that are not already attending postsecondary education, the work keys test is administered at intake. Anyone that scores below a gold level of readiness is considered to be basic skills deficient. For adults and
dislocated workers enrolled in postsecondary at the time of registration, their college entrance/placement exam is utilized. Anyone that computes or solves problem below the twelfth grade level are considered basic skills deficient.

As required in federal regulations all youth are basic skills tested within ninety days of registration. In communities where adult education services are easily accessible youth are referred to AEL for testing. The assessment type utilized is the same as for individuals enrolled in adult education and literacy programs. This can vary from program to program. Schools in the area utilize GAIN or TABE but the programs have the option to change assessment tools utilized in their programs. For youth in outlying communities the youth provider has the TABE testing materials available and youth case managers are trained to administer and score the tests.

J. Assurances

Consistent with the NM WIOA State Combined Plan, the local plan must include assurances that:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Assurance</th>
<th>Indicate Yes or No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>The LWDB obtained input into the development of the Local Plan and provided an opportunity for comment on the plan by representatives of local boards and chief elected officials, businesses, labor organizations, institutions of higher education, the entities responsible for planning or administering the core programs and other programs included in the Plan, other primary stakeholders, and the general public, and the Local Plan is available and accessible to the general public.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>The LWDB has established a policy identifying circumstances that may present a conflict of interest for a local board member, or the entity or class of officials that the member represents, and procedures to resolve such conflicts.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>The LWDB has established a policy to provide to the public (including individuals with disabilities) access to meetings of local boards and local boards, and information regarding activities of local boards, such as data on board membership and minutes.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>The LWDB has established fiscal control and fund accounting procedures necessary to ensure the proper accounting for funds paid to the local boards for adult, dislocated worker, and youth programs to carry out workforce investment activities under chapters 2 and 3 of subtitle B.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>The Federal funds received to carry out a core program will not be expended for any purpose other than for activities authorized with respect to such funds under that core program.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>Service providers have a referral process in place for directing Veterans with Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE) to DVOP services, when appropriate.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>The LWDB has implemented a policy to ensure a process is in place for referring veterans with significant barriers to employment to career services provided by the JVSG program's Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>The LWDB established procedures that set forth criteria to be used by chief elected officials for the appointment of local workforce investment board members.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>Priority of Service for covered persons is provided for each of the Title I programs; and</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
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</table>
10. The LWDB has taken appropriate action to secure compliance with the Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 2900 and WIOA 184(a)(3).

Yes

K. Attachments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attachment</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attachment A</td>
<td>Provide copies of all LWDB policies relevant to the implementation of WIOA on a flash drive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attachment B</td>
<td>Provide a full roster of local board membership, including the group each member represents. Include a list of all standing committees, along with a description of the purpose of each committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attachment C</td>
<td>Provide a list of the one-stop centers in the local area, including address and phone numbers. Indicate the one-stop operator for each site and whether it is a comprehensive or satellite center. Include a list of the one-stop partners physically located at each of the one-stop centers in the local board area, and the services provided by these partners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attachment D</td>
<td>Provide copies of any draft or completed cooperative agreements, resource sharing agreements, and memoranda of understanding relevant to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attachment E</td>
<td>Provide the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor (NMDWS) 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 in the local area, for PY 16 and PY 17.</td>
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Signatures:

John H. White  
Chief Elected Official  
2-6-17  
Date

J. D. Cooper  
Local Board Chair  
2-6-17  
Date