

CHAPTER 4: OPERATING SYSTEMS AND POLICIES – LOCAL COMPONENT

This chapter must provide an overview of all the operating systems and policies within the LWIA. (WIOA Sec. 121 (c)(2)(i), Governors Guidelines Section 1, and MOU Sections 5-8)

Background: Local Workforce Area 4 is comprised of 8 counties: Bureau, Carroll, Jo Daviess, LaSalle, Lee, Ogle, Putnam and Whiteside. The total population for the area is 340,099 according to the 2010 census, with the largest individual city having a population of 18,768. The local area is geographically large, covering 5,378 square miles, and is rural in nature. LWA #4 rests in two Economic Development Regions (EDRs): EDR #5 the Northern Stateline region which adds Ogle County to the Rockford-area local workforce area, and EDR #6 the Northwest region which includes the remaining 7 counties of LWA #4 and the 3 counties in the Quad City local workforce area. In both EDR #5 and EDR #6 regional plans, Healthcare, Manufacturing and Transportation/Logistics have been identified as the critical industries based on the most recent labor market and/or anecdotal information. In addition, Information Technology will be considered a subsector through all 3 industry sectors in LWA #4 local plan. However, 2 other industry sectors play into the local economy, but to a lesser extent: Agriculture and Tourism.

Though the rural nature of our 8-counties certainly brings Agriculture to the forefront, it is the legalization of medical marijuana that brought the return of ag courses and programs to one of our community colleges, Illinois Valley Community College. Furthermore, Highland Community College continues to offer its long-standing agriculture programs as part of their course offerings, and Sterling High School in the Sauk Valley Community College district just hired an ag instructor for the first time in several years. With the re-emergence of ag in the classroom, it indicates that there is or will be a re-emergence of ag in the workforce. Therefore, our area would like to be prepared for sector strategies in the agriculture field, especially in Crop and Animal Production and Farm Management. In a more direct link with the Logistics Field, on-ground workforce intelligence indicates shortages in farm implement diesel mechanics.

Tourism, including Hospitality and Entertainment, is a very visible industry in our area. Although it is not supported by high-paying jobs, it provides an excellent 1st rung on a career ladder for youth or even as transitional jobs. It is seasonal so it fits well as a summer job for many young workers, while providing them with the essential skills everyone needs in the world of work, e.g., customer service, good work habits, etc. Like agriculture, we would like to be able to develop sector strategies as time goes on, so we are including this in our local plan.

A. Provide a description of the one-stop delivery system in the local area, including the roles and resource contributions of the one-stop partners. (MOU Sections 5 and 6)

- **Identify the career services and other program services to be provided, include the location (address) at which services will be accessible including the:**
 - **Comprehensive One-Stop**
 - **Affiliated Workforce Centers**
 - **Specialized Workforce Centers**
- **Explain how the comprehensive one-stop center provides on demand access to the required career services in the most inclusive and appropriate setting and accommodations. (Governor's Guidelines, Appendix Item 4)**
- **Provide information regarding the one-stop operator and describe the methods for coordinated service delivery between operator and partners. (MOU, Section 7)**
 - **Name of the procured one-stop operator**

- *Describe the functions and scope of work of the one-stop operator*
- *Describe how the one-stop operator was procured*
- *Describe the local operator's role and responsibility for coordinating referrals among required partners. (MOU, Section 8)*

The workforce system envisioned by WIOA is quality-focused, employer-driven, customer-centered, and tailored to meet the needs of regional economies. The local one-stop delivery system in Local Workforce Area #4 serves to make this publicly-funded workforce system meet the needs of all the customers. All One-Stop Partners will provide some or all of the following Career Services, as outlined in the MOU and described below:

- a. Basic Career Services –
 - i. Basic information on eligibility,
 - ii. Outreach,
 - iii. Partner orientation workshops,
 - iv. Initial assessment,
 - v. Labor exchange services,
 - vi. Referrals,
 - vii. Labor market information,
 - viii. Information on eligible training providers,
 - ix. One-Stop performance,
 - x. Supportive services,
 - xi. Financial aid assistance, and
 - xii. UI claims
- b. Individualized Career Services-
 - i. Comprehensive assessment,
 - ii. Individual Employment Plan,
 - iii. Counseling,
 - iv. Career planning,
 - v. Short-term pre-vocational services including development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, and professional conduct for unsubsidized jobs.
 - vi. Internships and Work Experience
 - vii. Workforce preparation activities – essential skills
 - viii. Financial literacy services
 - ix. Out-of-area job search assistance and relocation assistance
 - x. English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs.

The above information is also addressed in the MOU Local Service Matrix for Comprehensive One-Stop Centers and the Local Service Matrix for Comprehensive One-Stop Centers Service Delivery Method Templates, which identifies which partner(s) will deliver each of the services, as well as how the services will be delivered in the NCI Works! One Stop Comprehensive Center (located at 1550 First Street, Ottawa, 61350) and at the Affiliate One-stop Center (located at 2323 E. Lincolnway, Sterling, 61081). Working to organize and integrate services by function rather than program will create a high quality one stop system that will truly be seamless. Comprehensive case management and journey mapping will take publicly funded workforce programs to a new level, and will help facilitate co-enrollments, as appropriate, in core

programs.

Specifically, each partner offers the following as its respective way for providing on-demand access to the required career services in the most inclusive and appropriate setting and makes necessary accommodations for individuals with disabilities, which are necessary to achieve effectiveness and physical and programmatic accessibility:

Adult Ed - IVCC

Adult Education will provide cross-training on Adult Education services for One-Stop staff. To meet the “on-demand access to required career services” at the One-Stop, Adult Education will administer a needs assessment with ADA accommodations, if necessary, through:

- The Adult Education web site (Spanish/English)
- Phone calls (Spanish/English)
- Email (Spanish/English)

Needs assessment follow-up will include:

- Intake and orientation for adult education classes
- Employment and education transition services
- ADA services
- Individual career and academic counseling
- College placement testing

Adult Education will also provide supportive services such as constitution testing, online learning, academic referrals, and assistance with HSE testing accommodations as well as coordination with other social service agencies to avoid duplication of services.

Adult Ed – SVCC

Sauk Valley Community College Adult Education partners with the Sterling affiliate one-stop center in several ways. First, the location of the Sterling center houses both BEST, In., the Title 1B provider and the IDES office which also serves as a location for an SVCC Adult Education class site. This means that we can accommodate any client seeking a GED who comes in to the center instantly. BEST staff simply walks the client to our classroom where the instructor will provide information about classes and GED requirements. The instructor can also register and provide services for the student on the premises. Secondly, once the client engages in class and passes the GED test, SVCC provides transitional support into college/certificate programs that Sauk has to offer. We work with BEST to provide the necessary information and services to make the client become a successful student.

Carl Perkins/CTE

The Carl Perkins/CTE partner will develop a paper referral form to be available at the workNet One-Stop Center that staff can use to refer clients to CTE programs & Perkins supported services at IVCC. In addition, a contact phone number, e-mail, and Skype a Counselor will be available.

Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Program

As the primary CSBG Program for the comprehensive one-stop center, Tri-County Opportunities Council will have an Outreach Specialist working out of the one-stop one day per week. An intake application will be taken on those individuals interested in their supportive services at the one-stop on the day that the Outreach Specialist is on-site. At that time, appropriated services and/or referrals will be provided. Clients interested in supportive services at other times may contact their main office at 800/323-5434 and

ask for the CSBG department. The staff in that department will determine where the client resides and provide client information to our Outreach Specialist in the respective area. The Outreach Specialist will contact the client directly and make arrangements for an intake meeting.

Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS)

As a One Stop partner, DRS is committed to providing world class customer service to individuals accessing the One Stop Center. The agency will provide an on-site counselor at least one day per week for approximately 5 hours to work with customers with disabilities access appropriate services. In addition to meeting with his current customers for regular appointments at the center to give them exposure to all services., he will be available to meet with walk ins to discuss DRS and serve as a referral source for other community agencies appropriate for individuals with disabilities. We will be able to take referrals for the vocational rehabilitation program, complete an initial interview or forward the referral to the appropriate office. Additionally, DRS will be involved in cross training with partner agencies in hopes of better overall knowledge of various programs.

Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES)

The American Job Center's One-stop Office in Ottawa is handicap (wheelchair) accessible. When Unemployment Insurance (UI) services are needed by someone who is visibly impaired or blind, program representatives are able to help fill out claim forms. In the case of someone who is deaf, written notes are used for communication. If a sign language interpreter is needed, arrangements can be made through the Department Rehab Services and a time scheduled for the interpreter to assist the client in the office. IDES has a full-time Spanish-speaking Program Representative on-site and claim forms written in Spanish are available. There is also a language interpretation line available which allows connectivity to interrupters in 24 languages while the client is at the One-stop. Clients may also connect via telephone to our Customer Service Center (CSC) for assistance, and the CSC also has language interpretation capabilities. A Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Presentative is available on site to assist veterans with significant barriers to employment. Presently, TTY services are unavailable for clients who are hearing impaired and need to make outgoing calls to other agencies. Trade Readjustment Allowances (TRA) and Migrant Season Farmworkers (MSFW) assistance are also available within the Ottawa One-stop. Direct linkage to other IDES programs is unnecessary since all are available on-site. Direct linkage to those Partners who are not physically located within the One-stop is being established using systems that are compatible with what is available at the Partners' locations.

Title III (Wagner-Peyser/ES): IDES' Employment Services and Outreach is a labor exchange program designed to sustain economic growth by expanding employment opportunities to qualified job seekers that meet the demands of the employers. The program's objectives aim to reduce the loss of productivity by filling job openings as quickly as possible and to shorten the duration of individuals' unemployment. For job seekers who are not job ready, Employment Services, in cooperation with other workforce partners, assist clients to access training, employability development services, and other supportive services needed to realize their employment goals. Services available onsite.

IDES/Unemployment Insurance (UI): The Unemployment Insurance program, administered by IDES, is designated to contribute to the state's overall economic stability by partially protecting eligible workers against loss of income during periods of unemployment. Eligible workers who become unemployed and meet all requirements set forth in the UI Act may receive benefits for the maximum number of weeks payable under the law or until the worker finds employment or becomes otherwise ineligible. Services available onsite.

IDES/Veterans: IDES provides veterans with priority of service over all other job applicants, actively promotes and develops employment opportunities, and provides placement and vocational guidance services. Services available onsite.

IDES/Migrant Season Farmworkers (MSFW): IDES provides staff assisted services including job development, career guidance, and referral to training and supportive services for migrant and seasonal farmworkers. Services available onsite.

IDES/Trade Readjustment Allowances (TRA): IDES administers Trade Readjustment Allowances, a benefit under the TAA program, providing income support to persons who have exhausted unemployment compensation and whose jobs were affected by foreign imports. Services available onsite.

Illinois Department of Human Services, LaSalle County Family Community Resource Center Illinois Department of Human Services, LaSalle County Family Community Resource Center is located within the same building as the One-Stop. TANF staff is available all day, every day, to assist those wishing to apply for TANF benefits. In addition, customers can apply for benefits online using computers in the resource room at the One-Stop.

Illinois Migrant Council (IMC)

Unfortunately, IMC has regretfully indicated that due to budgetary constraints, it will no longer be able to provide services in LWA #4. However, all partners agree that IMC will always be welcome to at the one-stop to meet with other partner staff or an individual who may benefit from their services.

Title IB/TAA

As the Title IB and Trade Act provider in LWA #4., Business Employment Skills Team, Inc. (BEST, Inc.) has a presence in the comprehensive center with full time employees who will offer the career services (listed above) to customers. In addition, multiple offices are housed throughout the workforce area to better assist customers with either transportation issues or the convenience of a more local office setting. All have access to TTY services.

Title V/SCSEP

As of February 1, 2017, the local Title V/SCSEP providers for LWA #4 changed from Experience Works and Northwest Illinois Area Agency on Aging. The new provider is National Able Network. As their information is provided for inclusion in this local plan, it will be added accordingly.

At the time this local plan was made available for 30-day comment period, the one-stop operator had not been selected. Therefore, responses to questions related to the one-stop operator will be included at a later date.

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

- ***How the workforce centers are implementing and transitioning to an integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information system for programs carried out under WIOA (§ 679.560(b)(20)).***
- ***How the Local Board will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system, including in remote areas, through the use of technology and other means***

(§ 679.560(b)(5)(ii)).

To demonstrate their commitment to coordinate and collaborate programs and services throughout the local workforce area, all partner agencies, whether directly connected to the comprehensive one-stop center or not, actively participated in designing the local service delivery system. Furthermore, some of these agencies attended a half-day interactive discussion and training session hosted by BEST, Inc. early in the process that offered a presentation on Demand Driven Services, Sector Initiatives and Work-Based Learning in light of new expectations of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

Many of the partners have a long history of collaboration and cooperation in providing services to both individual and business customers. Currently partners share general program information with customers and make referrals to other agencies as determined appropriate. Business Service Teams have successfully existed in our area for years. However, all parties to this MOU agree that significant efforts need to be made to go beyond these basic initial services, specifically: to enhance both the referral and tracking of all customers between partner agencies; to gain an in-depth working knowledge of each other's programs and services; to build a fully-aligned career pathways system for our business and job-seeking customers that is supported through the delivery of coordinated and integrated services; and, to keep the lines of communication open in order to address rising needs and challenges that may require a fully collaborative response.

At the MOU March 17, 2016 Meeting, partners agreed that the first task to be undertaken would be to enhance the referral and tracking system between agencies, not only at the comprehensive center but throughout the entire workforce system for the 8-county area. They decided that during PY '16, they would work on an on-line directory that would include contact information and preferred method of referral (e.g., on-line, phone, etc.) that would allow us to make and track referrals, including a mechanism for following up. Until that is developed, however, a very simple spreadsheet directory **could** be utilized.

Other options are currently being explored for implementing an integrated local workforce system: the use of a 211-like hotline with a unique phone number for each partner and an answering machine to make sure no calls are missed and appropriate referrals, tracking, and other basic career services could be done; Skype with video capability which would provide a face-to-face virtual meeting and can be offered by all partners at this time except for DHS (though they are looking into the possibility); and, the development of a one-stop center website, or minimally webpage, with links to each partner's individual website, that will list all programs and services available at the comprehensive one-stop center and the affiliate one-stop center. The website/webpage is being designed as a class-project at IVCC, and will begin with the core partners.

Future projects that will simplify and expedite the referral process include, to the extent possible, the development of a common Release of Information form and in our "dream one-stop", a common intake form. Partners present at this meeting acknowledge that both forms will probably require the support and involvement of state-level directors. Because the completion of this goal is really beyond the partners' control, no expected date of completion has been set.

Acknowledging that a functionally-aligned system depends upon all partners having an in-depth working knowledge of the programs and services that make up the business and career services system, partners intend to have appropriate staff cross-trained in the more essential elements of other partner programs. These elements include: program eligibility, services offered to both job seekers and businesses as well as

how those services will contribute to career pathways and sector strategy initiatives, a designated point of contact for each agency, and any prohibitions and/or restrictions that apply to a specific program.

Finally, the key to carrying out our vision on an on-going basis will be continuous communication. Agency managers and designated staff in both the comprehensive and affiliate one-stop centers will meet on a monthly basis for the purpose of sharing general information; discussing issues or challenges that might arise, especially during the first year of this MOU; jointly developing policies and procedures related to journey mapping for individuals or businesses; serving as the vehicle for cross-training staff, with each agency "spotlighted" at one meeting; and providing the opportunity to our business service team members to share information on the local business environment. Not only will this be an effective way for everyone to stay on track with our MOU goals, but it will also be a great opportunity for our staff members to get together, get to know one another on a more personal basis, and foster personal and professional relationships. Timing of the first meeting will be determined at an appropriate time, but as soon as possible. Partner agencies that are not directly connected to the one-stops, but are an integral part of the local workforce system across the 8 counties will be encouraged to attend these meetings.

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

- ***Expanding access to employment, training, education and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment (§ 679.560(b)(2)(i));***
- ***Facilitating the development of career pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs (§ 679.560(b)(2)(ii)); and***
- ***Improving access to activities leading to a recognized post-secondary credential (including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable) (§ 679.560(b)(2)(iii)).***

Developing career pathways in a demand-driven system will require strong partnerships with local businesses who will define the specific essential and occupational skills needed to meet their workforce needs. Through alignment and integration of partner services and resources, new and existing career pathway opportunities will be made available to our students, job seekers and workers, including those facing multiple barriers to employment. A "journey-mapping" strategy will serve as the linkage connecting career pathways with in-demand industries and occupations, and providing access to activities leading to a recognized post-secondary credential (including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable). Community college post-secondary training programs that will offer opportunities for career pathways to job seekers in the manufacturing sector include IVCC's Certified Production Technician Program and their recently approved AAS in Engineering Technology Program; SVCC's Multi-Craft Program; and, Highland's Maintenance Tech program. All of these programs provide a gateway to licensed or degreed programs in the manufacturing sector. Likewise, healthcare bridge programs serve as the first step for job seekers pursuing careers in the healthcare field.

The monthly meetings with local workforce system staff will serve as the vehicle for expanding access to employment, training, education and supportive services for all customers of the system, including those with barriers to employment. Again, staff will gather to share information on programs and services, and discuss best care scenarios for all customers, and in particular those who may be co-enrolled. To show the importance all partners place on an integrated service system, BEST, Inc. on behalf of NCI Works, applied for and received a grant to conduct a Process Mapping study, designed to produce a more effective and

efficient seamless local system. This project will be completed by June 30, 2017, and implemented during PY '17.

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

In general, all partners will coordinate strategies to enhance services and avoid duplication of services through the monthly meetings described earlier in this plan, and through the reporting mechanism set up by NCI Works through its Committee structure. These Committees have been charged with oversight and reporting responsibilities specifically designed to enhance coordination and avoid duplication. Specifically:

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

BEST, Inc., the provider of the Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth employment and training activities under WIOA, will be housed at both the Comprehensive One-Stop Center and the Affiliate One-Stop Center, so the 13 Career Services will be offered onsite for individuals who are eligible for their services. (More detailed information is addressed in the MOU Local Service Matrix for Comprehensive One-Stop Centers and the Local Service Matrix for Comprehensive One-Stop Centers Service Delivery Method Templates, which identifies which partner(s) will deliver each of the services, as well as how the services will be delivered.) As the local workforce board, NCI Works will be responsible for monitoring all of these activities through its committees. The Executive Committee is assigned the responsibility of reviewing the local plan to assure the alignment of Core Partner programs and services. The Oversight Committee is responsible for overseeing all Core Partners' performance reports as well as establishing continuous improvement goals for local workforce system. Finally, the general description of the One-Stop Partner Committee is to provide guidance and oversight for the one-stop system and partners.

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

Adult Ed and workforce agency staff will hold partner orientations to avoid duplicating services, and will maintain communication on co-enrolled students.

NCI Works will carry out its coordination duties under WIOA Title II in much the same way as under other WIOA Titles. As previously stated, the Executive Committee is assigned the responsibility of reviewing the local plan to assure the alignment of Core Partner programs and services, and the Oversight Committee is responsible for establishing continuous improvement goals for local workforce system

Providers of workforce investment activities under title I of WIOA, adult education and literacy activities under title II of WIOA, and career and technical education (as defined in section 3 of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2302)) will be asked to submit a joint report to the Executive Committee briefly describing how their activities serve as a complement to one another and avoid duplication of services. If the Committee determines there

are gaps and/or overlaps in services, the providers will be asked to revise their current plans and re-submit to the full NCI Works board at its next meeting.

Furthermore, the Executive Committee will review applications to provide adult education and literacy activities under title II for the local area to determine whether such applications are aligned and consistent with the local plan, and that all programs and services are available and accessible to all individuals, including those with disabilities.

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

LWA 4, now and previously as LWA #12 prior to consolidation, has had a long history of coordinating business services across agencies. Early on under WIA we developed an interagency Business Services Team (comprised of local economic development agencies, BEST, Inc., Division of Rehabilitative Services, Illinois Department of Employment Securities, Illinois Valley Community College, Sauk Valley Community College, and Highland Community College) and have continued this initiative under WIOA. The team meets quarterly to discuss developments across the 8 counties served. The focus of this effort is to provide a single point of contact for area employers to eliminate multiple parties knocking on their door. Title 1 staff members have been trained in the use of Illinois Job Link and utilize it to enter job orders. Information about On-the-Job Training and Incumbent Worker Training has been shared with Wagner Peyser representatives so that they can share the information with area businesses they speak to and refer interested businesses to these programs. Collaboration on job fairs/hiring events has also been a team effort under WIA and now under WIOA. The team has now sponsored 5 job fairs/hiring events across 6 of the 8 counties served (LaSalle, Putnam, Bureau, Ogle, Lee and Whiteside Counties) and has talked extensively with agencies in Carroll and Jo Daviess about the possibility of planning an event for those two remaining counties.

Recently, members from BEST, the community colleges, adult education, DRS and IDES hosted two employer forums, one for the Illinois Valley Community College district and one for the Sauk Valley Community College district, to inform employers of the employer engagement services available to them under WIOA. Local educators were also invited to attend these forums in an effort to bridge communication between our manufacturing community and the education community regarding the emerging workforce coming out of secondary education. The purpose of these joint forums is to begin a dialog between the two groups to address the challenges each is facing, and come up with appropriate responses to ensure the local manufacturing sector's workforce is adequately prepared. The intent is to then replicate the events in the rest of our area and with our other targeted sectors going forward.

Upcoming Illinois Workforce Partnership training in the area of business services and engagement will be offered to all core partners in an effort to continue to grow the collaborative efforts already in place. This training will build on what LWIA 4 has already established and bring all one-stop system partners attending to a common understand of how to move forward with a coordinated business engagement effort under WIOA.

While the initiatives listed above are real examples of how coordination has already occurred in LWA #4, partners recognize that additional steps can be taken to further ensure coordination, improving service delivery and avoiding duplication. Therefore, the following activities will be developed and implemented going forward:

- i Maximizing knowledge and cross training front line staff to be able to assist individuals with basic career services.
- ii Working with Core Partners to create a One-Stop System orientation for customers
- iii Coordinating with Wagner-Peyser staff job search workshops to not duplicate services.
- iv Industry-focused Work-Readiness Workshops, designed to replicate the culture and work environment by sector

As established in its by-laws, NCI Works will be responsible for monitoring all of these activities through its committees. The Executive Committee is assigned the responsibility of reviewing the local plan to assure the alignment of Core Partner programs and services. The Employer Engagement Committee will provide input into the development of various initiatives and projects to assure they meet employer needs. The Oversight Committee is responsible for overseeing all Core Partners' performance reports as well as establishing continuous improvement goals for local workforce system. Finally, the general description of the One-Stop Partner Committee is to provide guidance and oversight for the one-stop system and partners.

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

Similar to an in-school youth IEP appointment, all providers will be at the table to make sure we are not duplicating services but rather addressing the specific needs of individuals being served through WIOA Title I and Title IV. Many of the customers served by Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) are interested in jobs that will supplement their government benefits (SSI/SSDI, SNAP, Medicaid, subsidized housing, etc.) so it is important for all staff to be aware of the entire menu of training opportunities that is available to ensure customers are receiving training in fields which will likely result in competitive employment. This sharing of knowledge can be accomplished through cross-training and allowing front line staff to share best practices in working with individuals with disabilities and working with employers who hire individuals with disabilities.

BEST, Inc. intends to contract with an agency to develop an on-line resource mapping directory. Partners can access this directory to locate supportive services that will help meet the personal/life needs of our customers. This directory will be a useful tool to further assist Title IV staff in locating support services in close proximity to their job- seeking customers.

Finally, providers of workforce investment activities and local agencies administering plans under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 will be asked to submit a joint report to the Executive Committee briefly describing how their activities serve as a complement to one another and avoid duplication of services. If the Committee determines there are gaps and/or overlaps in services, the providers will be asked to revise their current plans and re-submit to the full NCI Works board at its next meeting.

- ***Relevant secondary and post-secondary education programs and activities with education and workforce investment activities. (§ 679.560(b)(9))***
- ***How the Local Board will support the strategy identified in the State Plan under § 676.105 and work with the entities carrying out core programs and other workforce development***

programs, including programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.) to support service alignment. (§ 679.560(b)(1)(ii))

The local community colleges have agreed to the following activities in order to coordinate strategies, enhance services and avoid duplication:

- More visible presence at the NCI Works! One Stop Comprehensive Center by Perkins/CTE related programs.
- Investigate dedicated IVCC and SVCC computers with:
 - IVCC and SVCC webpage access at start-up
 - Access to Career Cruising/Inspire
 - Online Application
 - Cooperative agreements
 - CTE Program information
 - Financial Aid Information
 - Skype a Counselor

Coordination will occur through means such as quarterly meetings and e-mail listserv, and possibly through some skype (conference calls) vs face to face meetings

The role of NCI Works to support the coordination of secondary and post-secondary educations programs and services with education and workforce activities will include things such as:

- i Acting as a convener of forums to include educators and employers in our local area and region. This will bring all the needed parties to the table to strategize local need.
- ii Ensuring that educators sit on the local board and board committees which will enhance the services to the customers at the One-Stop System. Each partner has a specialty and by working together on projects and events all customers can receive the same level of expertise and the chance of duplicated services will be lessened.
- iii Ensuring that local workforce staff sit on Advisory Committees for different community college departments. This will serve as the linkage back to NCI Works and communicate the relevant activities of the community colleges back to the workforce board.
- iv Sponsoring and/or participating in career exploration events that are held for secondary education students with partnership from workforce and post-secondary entities.

The NCI Works' Oversight Committee is charged with the responsibility of spearheading an integrated reporting system for all education and workforce development institutions. Included in the reporting by these agencies and institutions will be an accounting of how the services and activities listed above are delivered as part of an overall coordinated strategy, or set of strategies designed to prepare a work-ready, skilled workforce that meets the needs of the local business community.

- ***Other services provided in the one-stop delivery system including but not limited to the programs outlined in WIOA Sec. 121.***

All of the core and required partners have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding which

defines each partner's contribution, specifically identifying the services and method of delivery that will contribute to supporting our vision. It will also document how each partner will contribute its proportionate share of infrastructure costs for the comprehensive one-stop center.

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

Since these policies will be part of the local plan, the Board will have the opportunity to review them when the plan is presented to them at a regular meeting. In many instances, the board is actually charged with approving supportive services policies, so they will be aware of the policies that are being developed and will be able to make sure they are consistent, complementary and will help enable customers to achieve their education, training, and/or career goals. Furthermore, the Resource Mapping process will make all of this information publicly available for anyone and everyone to access.

By virtue of the fact that sometimes supportive service needs are rather immediate, or can even exceed normal amounts or policy, the Board will give authority to the One-Stop Operator to approve waivers. This has been previous policy and though it was only needed sparingly, it was advantageous to the customer who was in need.

- ***Describe the local referral process (MOU, Section 8).***
 - ***Identify the entities between who the referrals occur.***
 - ***Explain the method(s) that will be used to refer participants between programs.***
 - ***Define the roles related to referrals.***
 - ***Identify the method of tracking referrals.***
 - ***Describe specific arrangements to assure that individuals with barriers to employment, including individuals with disabilities, can access available services.***

At the MOU Meeting on March 17, 2016 partners discussed the need to create a referral process that is both two way and would allow for easy follow up. With that in mind, they agreed that the first task to be undertaken would be to enhance the current referral and tracking system between agencies, not only at the comprehensive center but throughout the entire workforce system for the 8-county area. They decided that during PY '17, they would work on an on-line directory that would include contact information and preferred method of referral (e.g., on-line, phone, etc.) that would allow us to make and track referrals, including a mechanism for following up. Until that is developed, however, a very simple spreadsheet directory will be utilized.

Future projects that will simplify and expedite the referral process include, to the extent possible, the development of a common Release of Information form and in our "dream one-stop", a common intake form. Partners present at this meeting acknowledge that both forms will probably require the support and involvement of state-level directors. Because the completion of this goal is really beyond the partners' control, no expected date of completion has been set. Also, as described above, the 211-model, use of Skype with video option and the one-stop website/webpage will further facilitate referral between partners. Finally, the Process Mapping project may reveal more effective and/or efficient roles for referrals between partners as well as tracking and reporting referrals.

In terms of the roles related to referrals, it should be recognized that every agency has its own area of expertise and wishes to eliminate areas of duplication of services. Therefore, partners see a well-defined referral process as the means to accomplish this. The same thought process applies to certain eligibility items. Cross training staff on general information with the ability to refer will result in an effective transition of customers between partners. Agency managers and designated staff in both the comprehensive and affiliate one-stop centers will meet on a monthly basis for the purpose of sharing general information; discussing issues or challenges that might arise, especially during the first year of WIOA coordination; jointly developing policies and procedures related to journey mapping for individuals or businesses; serving as the vehicle for cross-training staff, with each agency "spotlighted" at one meeting; and providing the opportunity to our business service team members to share information on the local business environment. Partner agencies that are not directly connected to the one-stops, but are an integral part of the local workforce system across the 8 counties will be encouraged to attend these meetings.

As they have done faithfully in the past, partners will follow federal guidelines in terms of assuring that individuals with barriers to employment, including individuals with disabilities, have access to all available services. Again, options such as 211-like hotline, Skype with video option and one-stop website/webpage will help assure that individuals with barriers, including disabilities, have access to services.

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

- ***A description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area. (§ 679.560(b)(6))***
- ***A description of how the Local Board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities. (§ 679.560(b)(7))***

Local Area # 4 covers eight counties with 11 offices providing adult and dislocated worker services. In addition, with the ability to work in a public location that has access to technology, staff can meet potential customers off site. In order to provide employers and workers with optimum opportunity for selection of services, all employment and training activities allowable under WIOA as well as those provided by all partner agencies will be made available in the local area. Northwest Central Illinois Works fully intends not to limit the options available to either employers or workers in order to meet their employment needs. Again, emerging and transitional workers need training in essential skills, career exploration, basic academic skills, and life skills. Incumbent workers and to some extent transitional workers would benefit from skills-upgrade training and retention services. Depending upon individual need, workers in any of the three categories could benefit from supportive service assistance, personal and employment counseling, learning how to balance work and life issues, and retention services.

Basic Career Services include internet access to job search and labor market information provided by IL workNet and Illinois Job Link, Orientation to information and services that are available from all Partnering Agencies, Program coordination and referrals, Labor exchange services, Training provider performance and cost information, Performance information for the local area as a whole,

Information on the availability of supportive services and referrals, information and assistance with UI claims, Assistance establishing eligibility for financial aid, among others.

F.

Individualized Career Services include skills and supportive service needs assessment, Eligibility for Title IB, Employment Retention services, follow-up services for Title IB customers, work experience/transitional jobs and internships.

Training services may include occupational skills training, including training for non-traditional employment; on-the-job-training; programs that combine workplace training with related instruction; skill upgrading and retraining; entrepreneurial training; customized training; occupational bridge programs; incumbent worker training, academic remediation/prevocational services.

Assessment testing and interviewing is conducted by Career Planners. Illinois workNet, ONet and individual interest tests are administered, in addition to an Individual Employment Plan and Individual Career Plan interview. Career exploration is conducted with phone calls and/or internet based searches.

The definition of “self-sufficiency” is determined by the local WIB. In LWA 4 “self-sufficiency” has been defined as 200% of the Lower Living Standard Income Level for family household income for the purpose of eligibility for program services.

Current plan to carry out Statewide Rapid Response activities works well and doesn't overwhelm the businesses with too many people from our agencies and too much information all at once. Currently, the initial on-site visits usually consists of BEST, Inc. Executive Director of Board and Programs, BEST, Inc. Business Relations Manager (BRM), occasionally a BEST, Inc. career advisor if available; the area-appropriate IDES rep; and, the Department of Commerce representative for our LWA. Workshops usually consist of BEST, Inc. Business Relations Manager (BRM), a BEST, Inc. Business Relations Representative (BRR) and Career Advisor; the area-appropriate IDES local office manager; and, the Department of Commerce representative for our LWA. If the Department of Commerce rep is unavailable, the BEST, Inc. BRM will cover his portion of the rapid response workshop; and if the BEST, Inc. BRM is unavailable, the BRR and CA cover her portion of the workshop. Information on the various types of programs and services that will assist the dislocated employees is distributed at workshops. An interest survey is completed by the laid off workers and used by staff to determine needs and appropriate course of action for the individuals.

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

- ***A description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce investment activities in the local area, including activities for youth who are individuals with disabilities, which must include an identification of successful models of such activities. (§ 679.560(b)(8))***
- ***A description of how local areas will meet the requirement that a minimum of 75 percent of the youth expenditures be for out-of-school youth.***

Local workforce investment activities for youth are as follows:

- The 14 elements required to be offered to WIOA-eligible youth per TEGL 23-14 will be provided either through BEST, Inc. staff or the providers who contract for youth services. In some cases, these elements will be delivered directly by the provider or BEST, Inc. or as a referral to an appropriate agency. Depending upon the nature of the activity, some of them may be work-based activities.
- RFP for service providers are let out each year for either a new proposal or a one-year renewal if the provider is meeting performance and other criteria established for renewal option. LWA #4, and LWA #12 before the merger, has successfully awarded contacts to projects that provide either GED/HSE instruction and/or credit recovery. Some of these projects may also include WBL activities.
- Past participation in summer programs, Department of Natural Resource summer program, joint Trade Union Project with BEST, Inc., Community Gardens Summer Project through Special DCEO grant, job shadowing, industry tours that are also models of past work based learning
- A model to use for individuals with disabilities would be DRS model of the IEP appointments with in-school youth. All services provider that could possibly benefit a youth in the future would be part of the IEP process, in other words, journey mapping the youth's life from start to employment and follow up.
- Using technology to stay connected. Facebook, Twitter and now a cellular phone for texting.
- Currently have a youth coordinator whose main focus is on developing youth activities such as our Work in the Real World, Career/Life Preparation Project, and also being a representative on the youth committee
- Partnering with Adult Education to possibly co-enroll for work based learning and working with Division of Rehabilitation Services for transition services for older youth

NOTE: It is a matter of record that attempts to procure youth services through a competitive process as required by the Act have fallen short of expectations in the past. In spite of this, the NCI Works Youth Committee believes it has met the intent of the law through due diligence and good faith efforts. However, should the Youth Committee ever determine that there are an inadequate or insufficient number of responses to the RFPs/RFAQs let out, NCI Works retains the right to make sure any and/or all of the 14 elements are provided in whatever way it deems appropriate in order to carry out its responsibility under the Act. This may include offering any of the allowable activities through the Business Employment Skills Team, Inc., the local grant sub-recipient; mainstreaming youth in community college programs; or continuing attempts to award grants/contracts on a competitive basis through either traditional or non-traditional methods. It is the feeling of the NCI Works Youth Committee that pursuing this course of action is in the best interest of the local youth and that it is preferable to running the risk that their needs go unmet. Regardless of the method utilized for procuring the programs/services under these circumstances, approval by NCI Works would be required through the annual plan process. At a minimum, RFPs will be let out and approved on an annual basis according to the following schedule: RFP mailing in February, returned back to BEST, Inc. in March, rated and presented at the April Youth Committee meeting for conditional approval (contingent on allocation and negotiation). Approvals will be presented at the May NCI Works meeting for conditional approval (contingent on allocation and negotiation).

Should the Youth Committee and/or NCI Works deem it necessary to let out additional RFPs, a similar time frame will be implemented.

For the past several years, our local area has been moving to an increased level of services to out-of-school youth by awarding contracts to youth providers. With focus on work based learning, we are attracting the older out-of-school youth for work-based learning activities such as, work experience, internships and On-The-Job Training. Therefore, based on past experience, we are confident we will meet or exceed the 75% out-of-school expenditure rate.

H. Provide a description of how the local area will provide services to priority populations as outlined in the Unified Plan:

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

WIOA requires that the Title IB Workforce program gives priority to individuals receiving public assistance or other low income (meeting 70 % of the lower living standard) individuals who are basic skills deficient. As the provider of these activities, BEST, Inc. ensures compliance with this priority. However, in the event that none of those priority group are remaining and funds are available, income eligibility will be based on 200% of the lower living standard. BEST, Inc. will also comply with the State of Illinois' Veterans priority.

- **Describe how the Local Board will determine priority populations and how to best serve them, along with any other state requirements.**

NCI Works has established a Targeted Population standing committee to address the needs of individuals with multiple barriers to employment, specifically individuals with disabilities, returning citizens and veterans. Both NCI Works members and non-board members have been recruited to serve on this committee. Needs of these targeted groups will be identified and appropriate initiatives/responses will be developed as part of the first year plan. It should be noted that even though these three population groups have been identified for targeted services, a coordinated response will be developed for other groups that often face multiple barriers to employment such as drop-outs and migrant and seasonal farm workers to assure their personal and professional goals are met as well. Currently, the Targeted Population Committee is identifying the challenges and barriers each of the five priority populations faces during their job search activities, and will determine the common issues that emerge. The next steps will be to develop strategies, initiatives, etc. to at least minimize the challenges, and at best eliminate them.

One very specific example of NCI Works' commitment to serving the priority populations is a recent OJT policy it passed. Under WIA, employers who entered into an OJT agreement with the Title IB provider, in our case BEST, Inc., could have been reimbursed up to 50% of the wages of the trainee for a certain period of time. Under WIOA, the reimbursement amount was increased to up to 75% if certain criteria were met. NCI Works passed a policy to increase the reimbursement amount up to the 75% maximum level, with the stipulation that the additional 25% would be allowed incrementally based on four criteria, one of which was that the entire 25% could be allowed if the employer hired an individual from one of the

priority population groups. This action is intended to provide further incentive to an employer to hire from among the priority populations groups

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

- **How local areas will meet the requirement that a minimum of 40 percent of expenditures be for direct training costs;**
- **How local areas will encourage the use of work-based learning strategies, including the local area goals for specific work-based learning activities and proposed outcomes related to these activities;**

LWA 4, and LWA 12 before the consolidation of the two areas, had always met or exceeded the 40% direct training expenditure requirement, so no significant policy or strategic changes are needed. However, with an even more emphasis on Work-Based Learning activities under WIOA, BEST, Inc. intends to transition toward increasing numbers of OJTs, Adult and Dislocated Worker Work Experience/Internships, Customized Training and Incumbent Worker Training over the course of the next four years. As we continue to market these activities and solicit testimonials from businesses that have utilized them, we anticipate seeing a steady rise in the numbers during this period of time with the initial local plan. This of course also assumes no major economic downturns in our area.

Prior to the merger with LWA #4, BEST, Inc., Illinois Valley Community College, Manpower, Inc. and some members of the local manufacturing community joined efforts in a customized training program, 'Tech Reach', to address the lack of qualified candidates for openings in the participating manufacturing companies. Each partner had a specific role in this training program and though the results were mixed, the groundwork has been laid to replicate this effort in any of the targeted industries. With the expanded partnerships under WIOA, we believe that this type of customized training program would fit well into the demand-driven strategy for launching job seekers on their chosen career paths for all customers.

Work-based learning (WBL) activities offer a wonderful opportunity, both pre-classroom training and post classroom training, to learn about an occupation of interest prior to investing time and money only to find out that particular career will not meet a customer's professional and/or personal goals. It also allows them put into practice those skills obtained through classroom training.

Work Experience prior to classroom training offers a customer the opportunity to gain valuable information about the skills needed as well as about the workplace culture of the specific occupation. The outcome would be either validation of a course of classroom training selected or an adjustment to one's career/occupational goals. As a post-classroom training internship, a customer gains valuable work experience in a new career/occupation that should shorten the time needed in gaining unsubsidized employment.

Transitional Jobs should be offered to Adults and Dislocated Workers with either little or no work history, or prolonged unemployment. In LWA #4, this WBL is designed to serve as the first step in transitioning into or back into the workforce. For Adult customers, and in particular those customers with whom we would do joint case management with our TANF, Transitional Jobs could be the first step in a career path that would be followed by a longer work experience position, or it

could serve as an avenue of career exploration. For the dislocated worker who has exhausted his/her unemployment, it would be an avenue of career exploration into perhaps a whole new career path, but it would also serve the dual purpose of re-acclimating him/her back into the world of work after a prolonged absence. Similar to the adult customer, the dislocated worker could also transition into a full work experience. For either the adult or dislocated worker populations, a series of short term transitional jobs would be a good opportunity to “try-out” various occupations before committing to a course of study.

OJT, as stated earlier, should see a steady rise over the 4 year period of the initial local plan. In fact, we hope that by the end of year 4, with stable or improving economic conditions and the business climate as we know it today, we will see significant gains in our OJT activity, representing perhaps as much as half of our 40% direct training activities. Aggressive marketing, including the use of testimonials from employers who have hired workers through an OJT contract, will be needed. This marketing campaign will include educating our partners on assessing potential OJT opportunities for our common customers, as well as educating our customers on how to sell the program as an opportunity for a win-win situation for them and for the business.

Incumbent Worker Training is, and will continue to be, promoted and encouraged to all area businesses by BEST, Inc. Business Relations Representatives and those cooperating partners of the interagency business services team. Focus on continued training of the areas incumbent workers not only benefits the employee by giving them employable/marketable skills, but it also benefits the business by making their current workforce more effective and efficient during changes in technology and business practices.

- **Provide a copy of the local Individual Training Account Policy and describe how training services outlined in WIOA Sec. 134 will be provided through the use of individual training accounts, including, if contracts for training services will be used, how the use of such contracts will be coordinated with the use of individual training accounts under that chapter, and how the Local Board will ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs regardless of how the training services are to be provided (§ 679.560(b)(18)); and**
- **Provide a copy of the local training provider approval policy and procedures. Describe how the Local Board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system and that the providers will meet the employment needs of local employers, workers and jobseekers.**

The Individual Training Account Policies for LWA #4 is as follows:

Under WIOA, training is not entitlement. An Individual Training Account is the mechanism by which payment for training service is made. Local policy defines an ITA to include the cost of tuition, books and fees. Tools, uniforms, supplies, and supportive services are not included in the ITA. A dollar amount for an ITA is outlined in the local plan (currently \$13,000 per enrollment). A waiver of the maximum ITA dollar amount may be granted based on the following:

1. Prior customer experience with the particular provider and program.
2. Inter-agency or one-stop operator staff review committee approval.
3. Possible cost share arrangements with customer.

Duration of ITA activity is dictated by the cost limits rather than enrollment time Customers must meet several criteria in order to be eligible for an ITA:

- They must meet provisions of WIOA eligibility regulations
- They must have been interviewed, evaluated, and assumed by a career advisor and be determined to be in need of training services. They must also have the skills and qualifications needed to successfully complete the selected training program.
- They must select a program of training that is directly linked to employment opportunities in the local area as demonstrated by labor market information. If the training area is not high growth, a letter must be obtained from an employer stating that the customer will be hired upon successful completion of training or the customer must agree to re-locate to a high growth area for the type of training which is being funded in order to obtain employment after training is completed.
- The training provider must be included on the state-approved list. If another LWIA certified a provider, local staff have the right to research performance information and other relevant information and deny an ITA if: the provider has been in business less than two years, previous customers' outcomes cannot be determined or do not indicate a high probability of success
- They must be unable to obtain grant assistance from other sources or need assistance beyond what is available to pay for the cost of training. A customer must apply for federal financial aid before being granted an ITA since WIOA funds are to be utilized as "last source". Short-term training areas like truck driving and certified nurses aid are exempted from this application process due to ineligibility for federal funds because of a brief training period. If denial of funds is due to grades, this should be documented and the individual should resubmit the application when grades are sufficient. If a student is denied aid due to a previous default on a student loan or debt to a training institution, proof must be shown that a repayment plan is in place and is being fulfilled. If a Pell grant is awarded, a determination is made by the career advisor based on living expenses related to educational support to determine if the Pell monies or portion of it should be contributed toward books, tuition or fees.

J. Describe a planned or existing approach regarding which local strategies will be financed by the transfer of Title IB workforce funds, including the maximum dollar amount and/or percentage that is authorized to be transferred on an annual basis:

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

Local strategies will differ from year to year depending upon a number of factors, e.g., employer and job seeker needs, amount of our allocation, locally and regionally-designed initiatives, etc. Therefore, the strategy will be determined on a timely basis and will be done in accordance with any and all policies that govern this option at the time of the transfer.

Consideration will include:

- A determination that BEST, Inc. has a pool of eligible job seekers in one funding stream who either meet or have the potential to meet the identified needs of local employers, but does not have adequate funding in that specific account to cover the training activities.
 - An assurance that the “transfer from” account will still have adequate financial resources to meet the individual customer/job seeker needs post-transfer.
 - An assurance that the “transfer from” account will still have adequate financial resource to fund special projects and/or initiatives as identified in local/regional plans.
 - An assurance that the “transfer from” account will still have adequate financial resource to fund its current and future obligations and/or commitments.
 - An assurance that the transfer to/from complies with all state, federal and/or local policies and procedures.
- **To use funds for incumbent worker training as outlined in WIOA Sec. 134(d)(4)(A)(i).**

BEST, Inc. has used IWT strategies in the past and will certainly continue to utilize them in the future wherever and whenever deemed appropriate. We were pleased to see that WIOA allows for a more flexible use of funds for IWT opportunities that will be used to enhance the skills of current workers and as a result will enable businesses to be more competitive.

Consideration will include:

- A determination by BEST, Inc., with agreement by NCI Works and the local elected officials, that there are local employers who are interested in and eligible to participate in an incumbent worker training event to the benefit of their workers.
 - An assurance that the affected funding stream(s) will still have adequate financial resources to meet other individual customer/job seeker needs after IWT funding has been allocated.
 - An assurance that the affected funding stream(s) will still have adequate financial resources to fund special projects and/or initiatives as identified in local/regional plans.
 - An assurance that the affected funding stream(s) will still have adequate financial resource to fund its current and future obligations and/or commitments.
 - An assurance that the allocation of funds to this activity complies with all state, federal and/or local policies and procedures
- **To use funds for transitional jobs as outlined in WIOA Sec. 134(d)(5).**

Again the strategy to determine the use of funds for transitional jobs will depend upon customer demand/need. Furthermore, depending upon total allocation, it may be necessary to weigh the need for this activity vs other work-based learning activities.

Consideration will include:

- A determination that BEST, Inc. has a pool of eligible job seekers who would benefit from participation in this activity, as well as employers who would be willing to serve as worksites for these workers.

- An assurance that the decision to allocate funds to this activity, including the amount to be allocated, was made only after weighing all options and potential outcomes, and concluding that this action would:
 - Increase the chances of BEST, Inc.'s most in-need customers of successfully achieving their professional and personal goals by using this activity as a first step in their career paths; and,
 - Increase BEST, Inc.'s chances of meeting their performance by generating more positive outcomes.
- An assurance that allocation to this activity will still leave adequate financial resource in the affected accounts to fund special projects and/or initiatives as identified in local/regional plans.
- An assurance that allocation to this activity will still leave adequate financial resource to fund its current and future obligations and/or commitments.
- An assurance that allocation to this activity complies with all state, federal and/or local policies and procedures.

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

LWA #4 does not intend to use funds for pay for performance contracts at this time.

K. Provide a plan explaining for which region the LWIA will associate with.

At the time of this plan, the Department of Commerce has not released a policy relating to the selection of an Economic Development Region. Therefore, LEA #4 will remain in both EDRs #5 and #6.

CHAPTER 5: PERFORMANCE GOALS AND EVALUATION – LOCAL COMPONENT

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

A. Provide information regarding the projected local service levels.

N/A at this time.

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

- WIOA Common Measures
- Additional State Measures

Although PY ‘ 17 measures are not yet available, NCI works, the local board for LWIA #4, understands that in order to meet performance expectations of the one-stop delivery system, all partners must perform minimally at their respective level designated as “meeting performance goals”. It will monitor the performance of eligible providers through its Oversight Committee as described in its by-laws. Specifically, each partner will be asked to provide a brief report of performance comparing planned and actual goal outcomes on a quarterly basis. If any of the approved levels of performance are not being met, a corrective plan of action will be submitted to the committee at its next regularly-scheduled meeting.

Furthermore, the board also recognizes that meeting/exceeding partner-specific performance measures depends upon the successful performance of the eligible providers and will therefore develop a reporting system that allows for provider accountability should the local area’s performance not meet approved levels. Currently, the Oversight Committee reviews performance measures on a quarterly basis and reports their findings to the full board.

NCI Works does not intend to monitor the performance of the fiscal agent. Should additional State Measures be developed, the board will establish appropriate oversight activities accordingly.

6: TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS AND ASSURANCES – LOCAL COMPONENT

This chapter includes the technical requirements and assurances that are required by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. (WIOA Sec. 121 (c)(2)(iv) and MOU Section 9)

A. Fiscal Management

- Identify the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds described in WIOA Sec. 107(d)(12)(B)(i)(III), as determined by the chief elected official or the Governor under WIOA Sec. 107(d)(12)(B)(i). (§ 679.560(b)(14))
- Provide a copy of the local procurement policies and procedures and describe the competitive procurement process that will be used to award the subgrants and contracts for WIOA Title I activities. (§ 679.560(b)(15))
- Business Employment Skills Team, Inc. has been identified as the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds described in WIOA sec. 107(d)(12)(B)(i)(III), as determined by the chief elected officials for local workforce area #4 serving Bureau, Carroll, Jo Daviess, LaSalle, Lee, Ogle, Putnam, and Whiteside Counties under WIOA sec. 107(d)(12)(B)(i).
- A copy of the local procurement policies and procedures is attached. This includes the description of the competitive procurement process that is used to award the subgrant and contracts for WIOA title I activities.

B. Physical Accessibility

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

Local Workforce Area #4 is committed to making all services, facilities and program information accessible by complying with WIOA Section 188, applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) and all other applicable statutory and regulatory requirements. This applies to all programs, activities and services provided by or made available to potential employees, volunteers, contractors/service providers, licensees, customers and potential customers with the One Stop Delivery System.

Compliance monitoring is conducted at the local and state level to programs, services, technology and materials are accessible and available at the One Stop Center and affiliates

All local workforce system staff will be trained, either as an entire staff or through their respective agencies, in the provisions of WIOA Section 188 and the ADA of 1990 so that when a customer with a disability visits the One Stop Center, all staff will have the understanding and knowledge of how to accommodate the individual(s) needs. Requests for assistance from one or more of the partners may be solicited depending upon the type of accommodation being requested.

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

There are no cooperative agreements at this time.

C. Plan Development and Public Comment

- Describe the process used by the Local Board, consistent with WIOA Sec. 108(d), to provide a 30-day public comment period prior to submission of the plan, including an opportunity to have input into the development of the local plan, particularly for representatives of businesses, education and labor organizations. (§ 679.560(b)(19))
- Provide a summary of the public comments received and how this information was addressed by the CEO, partners and the Local Board in the final plan.
 - Provide information regarding the local plan modification procedures

Developing the local plan has truly been a partnership effort. Through a series of meetings and conference calls, processes, procedures, service delivery and other critical components of the local plan were introduced, discussed and agreed to by all partners in the local workforce system in LWA #4. As parts of the plan were written, they were sent out to partners, NCI Works (the local workforce board for LWA #4) and CEOs for comment and input.

The NCI Works' Executive Committee met on behalf of NCI Works on January 24, 2017 to approve an amended version of the PY '16 plan so we could get it out for the 30-day public comment period and will approve the final PY '17 plan at a special meeting, in April. The CEOs approved an amended version of the PY '16 plan at their February 27, 2017 meeting so we could get it out for the 30-day public comment period and will approve the final PY '17 plan at their April 24, 2017 regular meeting. The legal notice for the local plan will then be published in local newspapers, and the plan will be posted on the BEST, Inc. and NCI Works' websites. In addition, hard copies of the plan are available to the general public at the BEST, Inc. Administrative Office in Peru and in the BEST, Inc. Fiscal Office in Dixon.

The Public Comment period will end April 13, 2017.

Plan modifications will be done in accordance with state policy.