

**NORTHEAST GEORGIA
AREA 9
WIOA UNIFIED
LOCAL/REGIONAL AREA PLAN**

Table of Contents

Strategic Elements, Governance and Structure:.....	4
1. Identification of the Fiscal Agent.....	4
2. Description of Strategic Planning Elements.....	4
3. Description of Strategies and Services	9
4. Regional Service Delivery	11
5. Sector Strategy Development.....	11
6. Description of the One-Stop Delivery System	14
7. Awarding Sub-grants and Contracts.....	17
8. EEO and Grievance Procedures	17
Local Boards and Plan Development:.....	19
1. Local Boards	19
2. Local Board Committees	20
3. Plan Development.....	20
Service Delivery and Training:.....	21
1. Expanding Service to Eligible Individuals.....	21
2. Description of Service to Adults and Dislocated Workers	21
3. Description of Rapid Response Services	22
4. Description of Youth Services	22
5. Implementation of Work-Based Learning Initiatives	23
6. Provision of ITAs.....	23
7. Entrepreneurial Skills Training and Microenterprise Services	24
8. Coordination with Education Programs.....	24
9. Description of Supportive Services	26
Coordination with Core Partners:	30
1. Description of the Workforce System.....	30
2. Coordination with Wagner-Peyser	31
3. Coordination with Adult Education.....	33
4. Coordination with Vocational Rehabilitation.....	37

DRAFT Northeast Georgia Workforce Development Plan 2016

Performance, ETPL and Use of Technology:38

- 1. Description of Performance Measures38
- 2. One-Stop System Performance and Assessment.....39
- 3. ETPL System39
- 4. Implementation of Technology.....41

State Initiatives and Vision: 42

- 1. State Branding..... 42
- 2. State Initiatives 42
- 3. Special Populations43
- 4. Priority of Service.....43

Attachments44

- Attachment 1: Local Workforce Development Board Member Listing44
- Attachment 2: Local Negotiated Performance 45

Strategic Elements, Governance and Structure:

1. **Identification of the Fiscal Agent** – Provide an identification of the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds described in WIOA § 107(d)(12)(B)(i)(III) as determined by the chief elected official.

The Fiscal Entity is: Northeast Georgia Regional Commission, James R. Dove, Executive Director, 305 Research Drive, Athens, GA 30605, (706) 369-5650

2. **Description of Strategic Planning Elements** – Provide a description of the strategic planning elements listed below. A complete answer will rely on a variety of data sources and employer input. Also describe how the information was gathered and what partners and employers were consulted.
 - a. Provide an analysis of the regional economic conditions including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations; and the employment needs of employers in those industry sectors and occupations. Include the listing of occupations in demand within the region and describe how the list was developed citing source data.

Information in this section was gathered from the Georgia Department of Labor, Workforce Information and Analysis, and Labor Insight/Burning Glass. Information was also gathered through discussions with Chambers of Commerce, Economic Developers, Human Resource Managers and Workforce Development Board members particularly the private sectors representatives, labor union representatives and economic development sectors. Additionally, through the last 2 years of working with Caterpillar with the OJT program and follow-up with Businesses hiring persons completing the Workplace Fundamentals courses and the non-credit credentialed CNA nurses aid training program a wealth of information has been gathered on workforce/training preparation needs. Super Sectors are Information with a growth of 24% from 2015 to 2016, Construction with a growth of 9.5% from 2015-2016, Leisure and Hospitality with a growth of 6.9% , Trade, Transportation and Utilities with a growth of 10.3% from 2015 to 2016 with the largest growth in the unclassified category with a growth of 29% from 2015 to 2016. This unclassified category provides an opportunity for the local area to research this over the next two years to determine if there is a large enough mass to warrant workforce strategies or if this is a conglomeration of a multiple of small industries which is the current belief. While Manufacturing has a growth of 1.2% from 2015 to 2016, that does represent 293 positions with new announcements being made every day as well as feedback being received from the manufacturing employers through the Manufacturing employer groups from Clarke, Elbert, Greene, Newton, Barrow, and Jackson Counties as to openings they are unable to fill. From the Burning Glass job postings Labor Insights Report for the period June 2015-May 2106, there were 5411 Tractor Trailer Truck Driver positions posted, 2455 registered nurses positions posted, 2900 retail sales/customer services positions posted. The list of in-demand occupations is attached. This was compiled utilizing data from the GDOL website: <https://explorer.gdol.ga.gov>, Georgia Labor Market Explorer Information, sorted by Occupational Outlooks for the Northeast Georgia LWDA. Staff utilized the process outlined by GDOL Workforce and Statistics and Economic Research Staff. Staff utilized the data grid for Area 9’s Occupational Projections. A comparison was made of the “annual growth rate”, “annual Openings from Growth and “education” columns to compile the in-demand occupation list for NEGA.

Northeast Georgia Workforce Development Area In-Demand Occupation List

Management Occupations

Chief Executives
General and Operations Managers
Sales, Administrative Services
Computer & Information Systems Managers
Financial, Construction, Education
Medical & Health Managers
Property, Real Estate

Business and Financial Operations Occupations

Wholesale & Retail Buyers
Purchasing Agents, Cost Estimators
Labor Relations Specialist
Logisticians
Marketing Specialists
Business Operations Specialists
Accountants, Auditors, Credit Analysts
Financial Specialists

Architecture and Engineering Occupations

Cartographers & Photogrammetrists
Civil Engineers, Computer Hardware Engineers
Electronics Engineers

Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations

Physical Scientists
Clinical, Counseling and School Psychologists
Agricultural and Food Science Technicians
Environmental Science

Community and Social Service Occupations

Substance Abuse and Behavioral Disorder Counselors
Educational, Guidance, School, Vocational, Mental
Health, Rehabilitation Counselors
Social Workers, Social Service Assistants
Community Health Workers

Legal Occupations

Paralegals and Legal Assistants

Education, Training and Library Occupations

Teachers, postsecondary
Vocational Teachers
Preschool and Kindergarten Teachers
Elementary, Middle, High School, Special Education,
Substitute, and GED Teachers
Teacher Assistants
Librarians and Technicians

Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports and Media Occupations

Fine Arts, Graphic Designers
Producers and Directors
Coaches and Scouts
Public Relations Specialists
Audio and Video Equipment Technicians
Camera Operators, Video and Motion Picture

Collectors

Farming, Fishing and Forestry

Logging Equipment Operators

Computer and Mathematical Occupations(1)

Computer Systems Analysts
Information Security Analysts
Computer Programmers
Software Developers, Applications, Systems
Web Developers
Database Administrators
Network & Computer systems Administrators
Computer User Support, Network Support
Operations Research Analysts

Healthcare and Technical Occupations(2)

Occupational Therapists
Physical Therapists
Registered Nurses
LPN
Medical and Clinical Laboratory Technicians
Dental Hygienists
Cardiovascular Technicians
Medical Sonographers
Radiologic Technologists
MRI Technologists
EMT and Paramedics
Pharmacy Technicians
Respiratory Therapy Technicians
Surgical Technicians
Veterinary Technician
Health Information Technicians

Healthcare Support Occupations(2)

Nursing Assistants (CNA, PCT)
Physical Therapist Assistants
Medical Assistants
Veterinary Assistants
Phlebotomists

Protective Services

Firefighters
Security Guards

Food Preparation and Serving Occupations

Cooks, Institution and Cafeteria

Building, Grounds, Maintenance Occupations

Housekeeping and Janitorial Supervisors
Janitors
Landscaping and Grounds Keeping Workers

Sales and Related Occupations

Retail Sales, Supervisor, Salesperson
Customer Service Representatives, Parts Salesperson
Advertising Agents
Telemarketers

Office and Administrative Support Occupations

Clerical Supervisors
Bookkeeping, Accounting, Auditing, Bill and Account

Payroll, Tellers
Office Clerks
Receptionists and Information Clerks, Dispatchers
Shipping, Receiving, and Stock Clerks

Order Fillers
Administrative Assistants, Medical Secretaries

Construction and Extraction Occupations

Construction Supervisors
Carpenters, Tile, Cement Masons
Paving, Surfacing Equipment Operators
Drywall and Insulation Workers
Electricians, Painters, Plumbers, Pipefitters

Installation, Maintenance and Repair Occupations

Electrical, Electronic Installers and Repairers
Automotive Body Repairers
Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics
Heavy Equipment Mechanics
HVAC Mechanics and Installers
Industrial Machinery Mechanics, Millwrights
Installation, Maintenance and Repair Workers
Electrical Power-Line Installers and Repairers

Transportation and Material Moving Occupations(3)

Bus Drivers
Driver/Sales Workers
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers
Light and Delivery Truck Drivers
Crane and Tower Operators
Industrial Truck and Tractor Operators
Laborers and Freight, Stock and Material Movers
Machine Feeders
Packers
Recyclable Material Collectors

Production Occupations

Production Supervisors
Assemblers
Bakers
CNC Machine Tool Operators and Programmers
Welders, Cutters, Soldering and Brazing Machine Setters
Metal, Plastic, Sawing, Woodworking Machine Operators
Grinding, Polishing, Cutters and Trimmer Operators
Inspectors, Testers Samplers, and Painters
Molders
Production Workers

The Northeast Georgia Regional Commission Workforce Development Division provides occupational skills training in Demand Occupations for industries that are stable or growing. Skills training will not be provided in declining industries. At present, occupational training is only provided for jobs and careers where hourly rates and salaries are paid. Training is not provided for careers or jobs with commissions and fees (this includes real estate, cosmetology, massage therapy and nail technicians). Additional sources of financial aid may be available through the school's Financial Aid Office.

This listing serves as a guide, and is not meant to be all-inclusive. There may be additional occupations in which demand occurs based on the job market or specific opportunities within the broad spectrum of occupations. The NEGRC WDD may provide training for a job where demand is limited, but current openings exist. Bona fide job offers, letters of pre-hire and/or three employment posted ads for that occupation may be required for training in limited demand areas.

- (1) Intermediate or higher level IT training requires previous IT related work experience.
- (2) Healthcare occupations will be considered upon completion of core classes and/or prerequisites and acceptance into the occupational specific program of study.
- (3) Requires background and Motor Vehicle Report (MVR) check.
- (4) Six Sigma and Project Management Certifications will be considered on a case-by-case basis determined by the applicants work experience and industry.

- b. Provide an analysis of 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.

The overwhelming response from all employers (from the groups listed above) is that the vast majority of their employee candidates lack the “soft skills” including punctuality and attendance, basic life problem solving and awareness of appropriate work behaviors and how to get along with supervisors and co-workers. This deficiency re-occurs throughout all the various in-demand occupations. In response to this, the local area, over the last 3 years, has worked with three of the four local technical colleges to develop and offer the Workplace Fundamentals 5 week course which has a foundation of soft skills both instruction but more importantly daily practice and demonstration of mastery. Additionally, the local area continues to work with the CNA training providers to incorporate skills identified by employers hiring CNA trainees as needed and necessary including “soft skills” and computer literacy skills.

- c. Provide an analysis of the workforce in the region, including current labor force employment, unemployment data, information on labor market trends and the educational and skill levels of the workforce in the region, including individuals with barriers to employment. List all data sources used to gather this information.

The 2010 population of the 12 county region, according to the 2010 Census, was 574,047 with a 2015 Census estimate of 603,546 for an overall projected population growth of 5.1%. Projected population growth for 2025 is a 59.5% growth to a population of 915,593. The source for the population numbers was the US Census Bureau, Population Division. The number in the labor force in 2014 was 276,436 and in 2015 was 278,440 an increase of .7%. The number of employed persons in 2014 was 257,681 and 262,819 in 2015 an increase of 2%. The unemployment rate for the region was 5.6% in 2015 compared to 6.8% in 2014. The source of the labor force, employment and unemployment numbers was the Georgia Department of Labor and US Bureau of Labor Statistics. The 12 county public school systems graduated 5727 students in 2015 per Governor’s Office of Student Achievement of Georgia. The 2010 Decennial Census of the US Census Bureau indicates that 32.3% of the 18-65+ workers have at least a high school diploma, 23.5% have some college, 5.6% 2 year college graduate and 12.2% 4 year college graduate. There are 18.8% of the 18-65+ labor force who do not possess a GED/ High School diploma or higher.

- d. Provide an analysis of the workforce development activities (including education and training) in the region, including an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses and capacity of such services to address the identified education and skill needs of the workforce, and the employment needs of employers in the region.

There are a number of local initiatives throughout the 12 counties working somewhat independently to address workforce needs. Each of the local technical colleges have employer program of study advisory committees to provide input on employer needs to assist them in developing programs. A number of Chambers of Commerce in the region

have a workforce/education committee. The Georgia Department of Labor has Employer Committees for each office which provide information on workforce needs. The public school systems have employers engaged in the development of their course offerings particularly in the area of occupational specific course offerings. Great Promise Partnership working with “at-risk” youth is active in 4 of the counties in the region with plans to expand. There are currently 4 Career Academies in the region with plans for at least 2 additional ones underway. The greatest weakness of the workforce development activities in the region is that there is no single point of awareness of what each entity is doing. The strength of the system is that typically when awareness occurs, there is a great likelihood for those to work together: Great Promise Partnership, Athens Land Trust, Clarke County School District and the LWDA. The weakness of the system is that with all of these “separate” but “well-intentioned” efforts it is possible that there could be, without intent, duplication of effort. Reliance on the traditional education and workforce preparation system might not position the local area to be as responsive to employers employment needs. However, working with non-traditional systems including the non-credit instructional programming or charter school systems is proving to be a part of a solution to address employer needs at various levels of need and employee qualifications.

- e. Provide a description of the local board’s strategic vision and goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment), including goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance in order to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency.

The local board’s goals are:

- Create a unified workforce system connecting the services and opportunities available through a multitude of partners in the region
- Assisting employers in meeting their employment needs
- Expand the number of employer and job seekers utilizing services of the public workforce development system

The local workforce area has a history of meeting and exceeding the performance accountability measures under both the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The local area will continue its efforts to that end including the continuation of its follow-up services strategy which entails each WIOA training funded participant being contacted via phone, text or email within the 1st 2 weeks after they exit the program. This allows time for targeted job search assistance to be provided in the event they indicate they are not employed. In an effort to assist our core program partners, the local area will share our follow-up strategies as well as other strategies to assist them in transitioning to this type of performance accountability measurement.

- f. Taking into account the analyses described in sections “2. a-e” (above), provide a strategy to coordinate core programs to align resources available to the local area to achieve the strategic vision and goals.

The local area will continue its MEGA meetings which provides a structured setting to discuss issues of concern both at the overall program level as well as the individual client level. One of the lessons learned is that behind and at the foundation of every system are individual people. Some of the efforts may be most impactful at the system level, but some may be most impactful at the individual level.

The local area will continue its follow-up services strategy which entails each WIOA training funded participant being contacted via phone, text or email within the 1st 2 weeks after they exit the program. This allows time for targeted job search assistance to be provided in the event they indicate they are not employed. In an effort to assist our core program partners, the local area will share our follow-up strategies as well as other strategies to assist them in transitioning to this type of performance accountability measurement.

The local area will continue to look for ways to put in place data connectivity, whether it be an integrated data system or at the very least the ability for partners to have look-up capability to create greater efficiency in providing customer services.

3. **Description of Strategies and Services** – Provide a description of the strategies and services that will be used in the local area in order to accomplish the items listed below.
 - a. How will the area engage employers in workforce development programs, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations?

The local area works with the Georgia Department of Labor’s Employer Committees in Athens and Covington receiving input from those groups as to areas of demand sectors and occupations as well as input into the training needed for persons to be job ready. There are 12 private sector representatives (one from each county) on the board and they provide input on employment needs both in their communities as well as their sector. The local area also works with representatives from the technical colleges in the area incorporating input from the employer advisory committees for the various programs of study offered at the colleges, into the development of programs and curricula. This is particularly true in the development of credential offering non-credit programs offered through the technical colleges which allows more flexibility in the training start date than the traditional semester credit training programs.

- b. How will the area support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area? Discuss the area’s workforce services to businesses and how business and organized labor representatives on the Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) contributed to the development of these strategies. Provide a listing of business services available through the area(s) such as employer workshops and assessment and screening of potential employees.

As a part of the LWDB meetings, there is typically a time provided for all members (business and organized labor representatives) to provide information on events and new companies locating in and expansions taking place in their communities. This feedback resulted in the development and offering of the Workplace Fundamentals 5 week course which couples instruction in “soft skills” with the occupational area of manufacturing. Additionally, graduates of this course, after being hired may choose to continue their education through HOPE Grant or HOPE Scholarship programming.

The LWDA coordinates and participates in any employer activities offered through our Wagner Peyser partner, Georgia Department of Labor Athens Career Center and Covington Career Centers. Business services provided to employers include:

- Provide space for employers to interview candidates
 - Screen job postings for qualified candidates
 - Conduct workshops for interviewing and resume preparation (Caterpillar workshop) to prepare candidates to better align with employer expectations
 - Conduct job and career fairs
 - Provide Labor Market Information to assist employers in recruiting and retaining employees
 - Customized Recruitment – Provide employers with information on readily available labor pool as well as training programs in the area to augment readily available labor pool.
 - Provide businesses with information on TOPPSTEP (The Offender Parolee Probationer State Training Employment Program) job candidates and the federal bonding program for job candidates.
 - Provide businesses with information on the WOTC tax credit program.
- c. How will the area better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development? Additionally, identify economic development partners and describe the involvement of the economic development community in developing strategies.

The local area staff are involved with multiple chambers of commerce either as chamber members, chamber workforce committee members, members of career academy advisory boards, members of joint development authorities, members of technical college advisory committees, county interagency committees which include economic development representatives and related groups. There are also chamber executives serving on the workforce development board. Through these connections, members of economic development organizations provide input into the types of training needed and what that training needs to include as well as when hiring cycles will occur for both newly recruited businesses as well as existing businesses.

- d. How will the area strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs?

The local workforce area has a long standing relationship with the local Department of Labor Career Center staff which has been fostered through the local area's MEGA Meetings, comprised of the area's one stop partners, which have been held typically at least quarterly since 2003. This include representatives from GDOL including those with oversight of unemployment insurance programs, DFCS, Vocational Rehabilitation, Athens Technical College providing information from the credit, adult education and economic development divisions, ACTION Inc, the CSBG organization, Athens Housing Authority and the WIA/WIOA Title 1. As a part of this effort, LWDA staff have access to staff operating the UI system on an accessible basis. There is a very open line of communication at multiple staff levels not just at the director levels.

4. **Regional Service Delivery** – (Only applies to regions that encompass two or more local areas) Describe how the region will address the items listed below.

Single Area Region so this section does not apply to NEGA Area 9 plan.

- a. Describe the plans for the establishment of regional service delivery strategies, including the use of cooperative service delivery agreements (if applicable).
 - b. Describe the plans for coordination of administrative cost arrangements including the pooling of funds for administrative costs (if applicable).
5. **Sector Strategy Development** – Provide a description of the current regional sector strategy development for in-demand industry sectors.
- a. Describe the partners that are participating in the sector strategy development.

Participants in initial sector strategy training:

- i. Carol Cofer – Workforce Development Director, NEGRC
- ii. Stephanie Benson – V.P for Adult Education, Athens Technical College
- iii. LeeRoy Martin – Training Manager, Caterpillar, Athens GA
- iv. Rosa Turner – Special Projects Coordinator, Goodwill Industries
- v. Lori Chafin – Career Center Manager, GA Dept. of Labor, Athens GA
- vi. Dixie Morris – Rehabilitation Unit Manager, Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency, Athens GA
- vii. Lisa Ransom Gautreaux – Chief Executive Officer, Action Inc., Athens GA

Convener:

Tony Thompson – Subject Matter Expert, Director Business & Industry Services, Athens Technical College (Retired)

- b. Describe the meetings that have taken place and the strategy by which partners will continue to be engaged.
 - i. Thompson conducted one-on-one meetings with the individuals listed in the previous section in order to understand the types of services provided by their

areas. These individuals are committed to providing their services in support of the sector strategy being developed and implemented in Region 5.

- ii. Meetings will be scheduled with industry leaders in Region 5 to provide them with an understanding of sector strategy development opportunities and to foster their interest and program participation in strategy development.
 - iii. Periodic meetings are planned with an Industry Network which will serve as an advisory group for the sector. The purpose of the meetings will be to identify changes in the educational or preparation needs of job seekers, identify gaps in skill development resources in the region, and make recommendations and plans to address identified gaps in order to better serve the region's manufacturing needs.
- c. Describe the research and the data that was used to identify the sector that was chosen for the sectors strategies training.

Research data reviewed included the following:

- i. Data provided by Examination Management Services, Inc. (EMSI) Q4 2015 Data Set
- ii. Current industry overview data provided by the Georgia Department of Economic Development
- iii. Georgia Area Labor Profile for 2015 - Region 5

The information was used to identify the percentages of persons in Region 5 employed in each job sector. The following three sectors were chosen for sector development. These areas represent almost 40 percent of all of the regional sector areas and should provide the most impact for the region.

1. **Manufacturing**: 25,159 persons employed or 13.3% of total employment
2. **Transportation**: 24,684 persons employed or 13.0% of total employment
3. **Health Care**: 19,795 persons employed or 10.4% of total employment

Manufacturing has been identified as the initial sector to be addressed by the LWDA in consultation with the above entities.

- d. Provide a completed outline of the sector strategy for the previously identified sector that includes the following details:

Plans are to initially communicate, gather support, and involve the region's larger manufacturing employers.

Manufacturing Sector Strategy

- 1) Identify the primary manufacturers across all counties in Region 5
- 2) Communicate the purpose and benefits of sector development to the manufacturers
- 3) Engage manufacturers and gather their support
- 4) Establish an Industry Network to serve as an advisory group for Region 5 sector development
- 5) Jointly identify current gaps in the skills and education of job seekers who are applying for manufacturing jobs in Region 5

6) Utilize current educational resources and/or develop programs as needed to fill education and skill gaps

i. Participating employers;

The following companies have been identified as potential manufacturing partners in the NEGRC service area. They represent a wide range of manufactured products. NEGRC will communicate with these companies during August 2016 to gain their interest and commitment to participating in the **Manufacturing Sector** strategy development and resulting educational activities.

County	Company	City
Barrow	Chateau Elan	Braselton
Barrow	Manville Johns Corp	Winder
Clarke	Baldor Electric Co.	Athens
Clarke	Bensons	Bogart
Clarke	Burton & Burton	Bogart
Clarke	Carrier Transicold	Athens
Clarke	Caterpillar	Bogart
Clarke	CertainTeed	Athens
Clarke	Evergreen Packaging	Athens
Clarke	Illinois ToolWorks	Bogart
Clarke	Merial Limited	Athens
Clarke	Power Partners	Athens
Elbert	Pilgrim's Pride	Elberton
Greene	Standridge Color Corp.	Greensboro
Jackson	Gruma Corporation	Pendergrass
Jackson	Shiloh Industries	Pendergrass
Jackson	TD Automotive 1000	Pendergrass
Jasper	Nicolon Corp	Pendergrass
Jasper	Royal TenCate	Pendergrass
Morgan	Flambeau Inc.	Madison
Morgan	Georgia Pacific LLC	Madison
Newton	Clarion Metals Corp.	Covington
Newton	CR Bard	Covington
Newton	Fibervisions Mfg. Corp.	Covington
Newton	Guardian Automotive	Covington
Newton	Nisshinbo	Covington
Newton	Pactikv LLC.	Covington
Newton	SGD North America	Covington
Newton	SKC Inc. 1000	Covington
Newton	SPG International	Covington
Walton	Elite Storage Solutions	Monroe
Walton	Hitachi	Monroe
Walton	Solo Cup	Social Circle
Walton	Standridge Color Corp	Social Circle
Walton	Tomco2 Systems	Loganville

ii. Target occupations;

Region 5 manufacturing companies cover a broad spectrum of industry types. The following is a listing of the major manufacturing occupations represented by the companies identified as potential partners.

- Transportation equipment and Machinery manufacturing
- Electrical equipment manufacturing
- Metal Fabrication
- Chemical manufacturing
- Paper Products manufacturing
- Food manufacturing

iii. Training programs

The Region's Industry Network will be established and meet periodically with the focus of determining industry needs. New and/or enhanced training programs that are needed to fill current gaps will be determined by the Industry Network and participating employers. Needed programs will be prioritized and developed utilizing available educational resources.

Some of the training programs currently available in Region 5 which are supportive of the **Manufacturing Sector** include:

- GED Preparation
- Technical College Certification Programs
 - Machine Tool/CNC Machinist
 - Welding
 - Electrical
 - Electronics
- Workforce Fundamentals Program - NEGRC
- "Bridge to Success" – Athens Technical College
- Accelerating Opportunity Program – Athens Technical College

iv. Target Populations.

Adult & Dislocated Workers
Out of School Youth (16-24)

- e. Describe the plans for future strategy development for future sectors. If applicable, discuss the next sectors to be targeted.

Region 5 plans to develop and support initial strategies in the area of **Manufacturing**. Analysis of data shows that the two subsequent areas that should be pursued are the **Transportation/Logistics** and **Health Care** sectors. The development of these sectors will follow a plan similar to what has been outlined for **Manufacturing**.

6. **Description of the One-Stop Delivery System** – Provide a description of the one-stop delivery system in the local area that includes the items detailed below.
- a. Provide a description of how the local board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system and ensure that such providers meet the employment needs of local employers, workers and jobseekers.

The LWDA is continuously reviewing placement outcomes of the training providers. If a provider wishes to begin training new trainees, they must have at least a 50% placement rate of previous trainees placed before new trainees may begin. This ensures that immediate placement outcomes are being reviewed rather than waiting until the subsequent eligibility process takes place at the state level on an annual basis.

- b. Provide a description of 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 through other means.

The local area utilizes the 2 computer mobile units to provide access where needed or appropriate. In most instances, arrangements are made with technical colleges (Elbert, Barrow, Jackson, Morgan) for access to space so that access to services is available. Additionally, customers have access in the Covington DOL Career Center, Greene County Athens Technical College satellite campus. With this access, it limits a customer's drive to maximum drive to approximately 25 miles. This availability to access to the one-stop system, is actually greater than the access to actual training available in the region through providers on the ETPL.

- c. Provide a description of how entities within the one-stop delivery system, including one-stop operators and the one-stop partners, will comply with WIOA § 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. This should include the provision of staff training and support and addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities.

The regional office of the Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency is located in the local area's comprehensive one-stop facility located in Athens Ga. This facility meets all of the physical accessibility requirements of Section 188. Additionally, the local area is one of two pilots in the USDOL Disability Employment Initiative Grant. Participation in this grant enhances the local area's access to persons with disabilities as well as strengthens the already existing relationship between the local area staff and vocational rehabilitation staff. The local area has completed the Section 188 self-assessment tool to identify and address any items which would present a barrier to persons with disabilities.

- d. Provide a comprehensive description of the roles and resource contributions of the one-stop partners.
 - Georgia Department of Labor Athens Career Center is the host physical location of the one stop. They provide access to all the Wagner Peyser funded services both job seeker and employer, all UI services, labor market information, TOPPSTEP (ex-offender services) and veterans services. They

have approximately 15 staff located in the facility. As persons enter the one-stop facility Wagner Peyser staff refer customers to WIOA funded training services if such referral is deemed appropriate.

- Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency- The one stop center is the physical location of the 15 vocational rehabilitation staff assigned to the Northeast Georgia service area. These staff provide access to all services available to persons with disabilities who are seeking employment.
 - Job Corps Recruitment staff are located at the one-stop full-time.
 - WIOA Title I-Adult and Dislocated Worker Services- Staff are at the comprehensive one-stop on a scheduled basis. There are 2-4 staff there on a rotating basis utilizing space designated for them.
 - CSBG, ACTION, Inc. is not physically located at the one-stop. Access is available through electronic and telephonic means.
 - Title V Senior Adult is linked in two ways. There is an Experience Works staff person housed at the one-stop who provides information to senior adults on services available. The local area also has an MOU with the Title V provider for the region Athens Community Council on Aging which provides for sharing of information and cross referral.
 - HUD Employment and Training Program Provider-Athens Housing Authority. Access to services provided through the Athens Housing Authority are provided through electronic and telephonic means. The Director of Housing Authority's Resident Services is an ex-officio member of the Workforce Development Board and a member of the WDB's Youth Committee.
 - Athens Technical College-Access to information on all training programs is provided via telephonic and electronic means. This involves all aspects of programming at the technical college, credit, non-credit and GED.
- e. Identify the current One-Stop Operator in the local area(s) and describe how the region/local area is preparing for the competitive process for operator selection. Describe how market research, requests for information and conducting a cost and price analysis are being conducted as part of that preparation.

The current operator is a consortium comprised of Georgia Department of Labor, Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency, Georgia Department of Family and Children Services Region V, Athens Technical College and the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission in its role as the WIA/WIOA Title I Grant Recipient. The physical operator is the Georgia Department of Labor Athens Career Center. This location is large and updated, several meeting rooms of varying sizes, sufficient parking, on the bus line.

Based on discussions which took place in accordance with guidance provided by GDEcD WFD, 4 of the current members of the consortium indicated that they were not intending to bid seeking designation as the area's one stop operator. The Georgia Department of Labor indicated that it was considering bidding to serve as the one-stop operator.

DRAFT Northeast Georgia Workforce Development Plan 2016

The planning for the competitive bid for the one-stop operator will begin in October-November with RFP development. This process will be conducted utilizing the process and information provided by GDEcD WFD. Plans are to issue an RPF by January 2017, with review and selection completed by May 2017.

7. **Awarding Sub-grants and Contracts** – Provide a description of the competitive process to be used to award the sub-grants and contracts in the local area for activities carried out under this Title I.

The local area has comprehensive Procurement Policies which have been reviewed as part of the annual Program Review Process. A summarization of the process is that the Board receives recommendations from the appropriate committee regarding the issuance of an RFP in keeping with the program design strategy. Responses to proposals are reviewed by staff and the appropriate WDB committee. The WDB Committee completes the proposal rating sheets and presents recommendations to the full youth Committee for funding consideration. The Youth Committee’s recommendations are presented to the WDB for final funding consideration and action.

8. **EEO and Grievance Procedures** – Briefly describe local procedures and staffing to address grievances and complaint resolution.

GENERAL POLICY

Individuals applying for or receiving services through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Program paid for by the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission (NEGRC) and/or the Northeast Georgia Workforce Investment Board (NEGWIB) will be treated fairly. If any individual, group, or organization has a complaint, the problem should first be discussed informally between those involved before a grievance is filed. Grievances/complaints should be filed in accordance with the written procedures established by the Workforce Development Division of the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission. **If you believe you have been harmed by the violation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, you have the right to file a grievance.**

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY

NEGRC adheres to the following United States law: "No individual shall be excluded from participation, denied the benefits of, subjected to discrimination under, or denied employment in the administration of or in connection with any such program because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or political affiliation, belief or citizenship/status as a lawfully admitted immigrant authorized to work in the United States." References include: The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 P. L. 113-128; USDOL Regulations Implementation of the Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014; Final rule (29 CFR Part 38.36); USDOL, Employment and Training Division, Workforce Innovation and opportunity Act; Final Rules (20CFR Part 652 et al.).

COMPLAINTS OF DISCRIMINATION

The NEGRC is prohibited from, and does not engage in, discriminating against all individuals in the United States on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, sex, disability, political affiliation, or belief and against beneficiaries on the basis of either citizenship/status as a lawfully admitted immigrant authorized to work in the United States or participation in any WIOA Title I financially assisted program or activity.

The complainant has the right to be represented in the complaint process by an attorney or other representative. If you think that you have been subjected to discrimination under a WIOA funded program or activity, you may file a complaint within 180 days from the date of the alleged violation with the **Northeast Georgia Regional Commission, WIOA Equal Opportunity Officer, Workforce Development Division, 305 Research Drive, Athens, Ga. 30605, (706) 369-5703, TDD: 1-800-255-0056. OR**

DRAFT Northeast Georgia Workforce Development Plan 2016

Complaints may also be filed with the **David Dietrichs, Deputy Counsel, Georgia Department of Economic Development (GDEcD), Workforce Division, 75 Fifth Street, NW, Suite 845, Atlanta, GA 30308, 404-962-4140, TDD: 1-800-255-0056. OR**

A complaint may be filed directly with the **Director, Civil Rights Center (DCR) U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Room N-4123, Washington, DC 20210**. Furthermore, the USDOL Civil Rights Center provides a complaint form which should be utilized, if sending a discrimination-based complaint, and can be found at this website: <http://www.dol.gov/oasam/programs/crc/exchange-enforce-complaints.htm>.

If the complainant chooses to file the discrimination complaint with NEGRC or GDEcD, then the NEGRC or GDEcD has 90 days to resolve the complaint and issue a written Notice of Final Action. Options for resolving the complaint must include alternative dispute resolution, at the complainant's choice. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the resolution of his/her complaint at NEGRC or the State level, the complainant may file a new complaint with the Civil Rights Center (CRC) within 30 days on which the complainant receives the Notice of Final Action. If GDEcD or NEGRC fail to issue the Notice within 90 days of the date on which the complaint was filed, the complainant may file a new complaint with NEGRC within 30 days of the expiration of the 90-day period. NEGRC will offer full cooperation with any local, state or federal investigation in accordance with the aforementioned proceedings, or with any criminal investigation.

COMPLAINTS OF FRAUD, ABUSE OR OTHER ALLEGED CRIMINAL ACTIVITY: In cases of suspected fraud, abuse or other alleged criminal activity, you should direct your concerns to the Office of Inspector General, U.S. Department of Labor, at 1-866-435-7644. There is no charge for this call.

COMPLAINTS AGAINST PUBLIC SCHOOLS: If the complaint is not resolved and it involves public schools of the State of Georgia, the grievance procedure will comply with both WIOA and OCGA 20-2-1160.

ALL OTHER COMPLAINTS (VIOLATIONS OF THE ACT OR REGULATIONS): All other complaints must be filed within twelve (12) months after the act in question by submitting a written request for a hearing to: Work Force Development Division, Northeast Georgia Regional Commission, 305 Research Drive, Athens, Georgia 30606, ATTN: WIOA Equal Opportunity Officer.

Complaints filed with NEGRC must contain the following:

1. The full name, telephone number (if any), and address of the person making the complaint
2. The full name and address of the person or organization against whom the complaint is made
3. A clear but brief statement of the facts including the date(s) that the alleged violation occurred
4. Relief requested
5. Complainant's signature and date.

A complaint will be considered to have been filed when NEGRC receives from the complainant a written statement, including information specified above which contains sufficient facts and arguments to evaluate the complaint.

Upon receipt of the complaint, the NEGRC WIOA Equal Opportunity Officer will initiate efforts with the complainant and others involved to bringing resolution as soon as possible. This will include a meeting of all parties with the hope of reaching a mutually satisfactory resolution. If the complaint has not been resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant within thirty (30) days, the NEGRC WIAO Equal Opportunity Officer will arrange appointment of a hearing officer to conduct a hearing for settlement of the complaint to be held within 60 days of grievance filing.

In the event NEGRC arranges a hearing for settlement of the complaint, the complainant(s) will be given a written notice of the date, hour, place of the hearing, a statement of the authority and jurisdiction under which the hearing is to be held, a reference to the particular section of the Act, regulations, subgrant or other contract under the act involved, a notice to all parties of the specific charges involved, a statement of the right of both parties to be represented by legal counsel, an indication of the right of each party to present evidence both written and through witness and a statement of the right of each party to cross-examination. Hearing officers who are independent of the NEGRC and who have been approved by all concerned parties will be responsible for conducting the hearing.

Hearings on any grievance/complaint filed shall be conducted within thirty (30) days of failed informal resolution. Written decisions shall be rendered not later than sixty (60) days after the filing. Attempts at informal resolution may proceed during the 30-day period between the filing and hearing of the grievance/complaint and prior to the rendering of a decision on the grievance/complaint.

If the complainant(s) does not receive a written decision from the Hearing Officer within sixty (60) days of the filing of the grievance/complaint, or receives a decision unsatisfactory to the complainant(s), the complainant(s) then has/have a right to request a review by the state using the WIOA complaint information Form found at <http://www.georgia.org/competitive-advantage/workforce-division/technical-assistant/>.

DRAFT Northeast Georgia Workforce Development Plan 2016

David Dietrichs, Deputy Counsel
Georgia Department of Economic Development, Workforce Division
75 Fifth Street, NW Suite 845
Atlanta, GA 30308
Phone: 404-962-4005
Fax: 404-876-1181

The Deputy Commissioner shall act as the Governor's authorized representative. Either an information resolution or a hearing will take place within 60 calendar days of the filing. If the State does not respond within 60 days, or either party wants to appeal the decision, WIOA allows for a formal appeal to be sent by certified mail, return receipt requested to **Secretary, U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20210. Attention: ASET – (202) 693-3015.** A copy of the appeal must be simultaneously provided to the appropriate ETA Regional Administrator and the opposing party.

The request for review shall be filed within ten (10) days of receipt of the adverse decision or fifteen (15) days from the date on which the complainant(s) shall have received a decision. The Governor will conduct a review of the grievance and issue a written decision within thirty (30) days from the date of receipt of the review request. The decision rendered by the Governor will be final.

Federal appeals must be made within 60 calendar days of the receipt of the local or State decision. Department of Labor will make a final decision no later than 120 days after receiving a formal appeal. Department of Labor will only investigate grievances and complaints arising through the established procedures. WIOA does not allow for federal intervention until and unless the proper, formal procedure has been followed.

No applicant, participant, employee, service provider or training provider will be intimidated, threatened, coerced or discriminated against because they have made a complaint, testified, assisted or participated in any manner in an investigation, proceeding or hearing.

Local Boards and Plan Development:

1. **Local Boards** – Provide a description of the local board that includes the components listed below.
 - a. Describe how local board members are identified and appointed. Include a description of how the nomination process occurs for adult education and labor representatives. (Proposed § 679.320(g))

Private sector member nominations are solicited from the general purpose business organization in the location that will be represented. These nominations are forwarded to the Local Elected Official representing that jurisdiction for concurrence. Upon concurrence, the nomination is forwarded to the CLEO for consideration for appointment to the Board. Nominations were solicited for organized labor representatives with representatives in the region. Nominations received were forwarded to the CLEO for consideration for appointment to the Board. The local area had 2 representatives who also operated apprenticeship programs.

- b. Describe the area's new member orientation process for board members.

The local area has an orientation power point that it provides to new members. Additionally, typically every other year, there is a board retreat where additional information is shared with Board members.

- c. Describe how the local board will coordinate workforce development activities carried out in the local area with regional economic development activities carried out in the region (in which the local area is located or planning region).

The local area has a relationship with the Georgia Department of Labor's Regional Coordinator and that position is invited to participate in the local area's MEGA meetings which take place quarterly. The local area, through its MEGA meeting, provides interaction and a two way interaction with the Georgia Department of Labor's Business Services Unit facilitating the flow of employer needs both ways. The local area director is an associate member of the Joint Development Authority of Northeast Georgia as is the GDEcD's Regional Coordinator and workforce development will be coordinated via that position as well.

- d. Describe how local board members are kept engaged and informed.

The board meets 5-6 times per year, January, March, May, August, October. Information regarding the meeting notices, minutes of the meeting, other training opportunities (i.e. SETA or NAWB) are communicated either at a board meeting or through electronic method. Board members receive the monthly NEGRC newsletter which provides information on all programs of the NEGRC including workforce development activities. Board members also are afforded an opportunity as a part of the Board meeting to share information of workforce development related activities in their community.

2. **Local Board Committees** – Provide a description of board committees and their functions.

Executive Committee- Acts on behalf of the board if action is needed between board meetings or if a quorum is not present at the WDB meeting.

Youth Committee-Provides input to the WDB regarding youth programming and program design, youth RPF and youth funding recommendations.

AdHoc Committees-Established by the Chair as Needed.

3. **Plan Development** – Provide a description of the process by which the plan was developed including the participation of core partners, providers, board members and other community entities. Also describe the process used by the local board to provide a 30 day comment period prior to the submission of the plan including an opportunity for public comment, including comment by representatives of businesses and comment by representatives of labor organizations, representative of education and input into the development of the local plan.

The transition to WIOA and its associated unified plan development was discussed at the MEGA meetings throughout 2015 and 2016. Core partners and other one stop partners were a part of these briefings and discussions. The plan format was distributed to the core partners in April 2016 upon receipt by the LWDA from GDEcD WFD. Core partners met in June 2016 to review the plan format and determine who would write which sections. The local workforce board was briefed beginning at meetings in 2015 and continued in 2016 on the transition as well as the requirements for the development of a unified plan of the core partners. The plan format was distributed to the WDB at its August meeting.

The plan was posted on the NEGRC website 30 days prior to submission to GDEcD WFD as well as a public notice being posted in the legal organ of Athens-Clarke County notifying the public of the plan being posted on the website as well as its availability for review during regular office hours during the 30 day comment period.

Service Delivery and Training:

1. **Expanding Service to Eligible Individuals** – Provide a description of how the local board, working with the entities carrying out core programs, will expand access to employment, training, education and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment. Include how the local board will facilitate the development of career pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs, and how it will improve access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential, academic or industry-recognized.

The local area has been working with the core programs extensively for over 20 years. This has been reinforced by the local area's MEGA meetings, of the one-stop partners including the core programs, which have been taking place in an official capacity since 2003. The local area has a history of working with persons with barriers and co-enrolling persons. The local area is a pilot for the USDOL Disability Employment Initiative grant serving persons with disabilities. It is anticipated that participation in this initiative will increase the number of persons with barriers/disabilities that are served as well as co-enrollment. At a minimum, it will ensure that persons will receive a more integrated and well-rounded array of services. One of the efforts that has been underway to increase the number of recognized credentials is to work with training providers to review their program design and build in incremental industry related credential attainment versus waiting until the attainment of the ultimate credential, i.e. diploma or associate degree. This effort will be continued and expanded.

2. **Description of Service to Adults and Dislocated Workers** – Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area.

The local area has provided an array of services for the adult and dislocated worker customers including:

- Basic Labor Market Information
- Information on types of training and availability of that training in the region or elsewhere.
- Admission Requirements for that training
- Referral to the specific training provider
- Intake, Assessment and Eligibility Determination for WIOA funded services
- Assistance with training primarily through the Individual Training Account (ITA)
- Referral to other services as needed
- Assistance with Support Services (Day Care and Transportation) while in training

- Assistance with Preparation for the Job Search by providing access to interviewing and resume preparation activities
- Follow-up assistance

The local area has ITA agreements with 9 technical colleges, 15 colleges and universities and 20 proprietary schools in a effort to maximize customer choice for the adult and dislocated worker. The local area continues to develop new agreements with qualified training providers who provide training in demand occupations in an effort to meet customer choice as well as employer need.

3. **Description of Rapid Response Services** – Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate workforce development activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities.

The local area has designated Kim Meadows, Career Advisor Program Manager, to serve as the designated point of contact for Rapid Response activities. Ms. Meadows interacts with the designated representative from GDEcD WFD upon notification of an event. She coordinates activities with both the impacted employer/employees as well as the appropriate partner agencies including the Georgia Department of Labor as well as other appropriate partners. Activities include meeting with the employer to determine the scope of the event, providing the employer with the array of services available to impacted employees including filing for unemployment, working with GDOL to have job fair(s) for impacted employees, as well as retraining assistance available for impacted employees.

4. **Description of Youth Services** – Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce development activities in the local area, including activities for youth with disabilities. This description and assessment shall include an identification of successful models of such youth workforce development activities.

The local area has a long history in providing quality youth services. This is an array of in-school youth services with these being available in each of the 12 counties focusing on the 10 elements of WIA and now the 14 elements of WIOA. There is 1 competitively bid provider, ACTION, Inc. the area's CSBG provider, who delivers this throughout the 12 counties. At one time, this program served over 250 young people each year. However, due to the federal funding shift to at least 75% of youth funds being spent on out of school youth, these numbers have been reduced to 125-150 youth. Work-based learning in the form of post high school career interest summer work experience is an integral part of the in-school program. Outcomes from this activity have typically been an 80%-88% high school graduation rate.

The out-of-school youth served have historically been in 2 activities. The first is GED preparation for the high school dropout. Paxen Inc has served as the competitively bid provider for over 6 years and was the sole reason the local area has met and exceeded the Literacy/Numeracy Performance measure. With the transition to WIOA, there were 3 additional providers who responded to the most recently issued Request for

Proposals and were selected for funding by the WDB. Athens Technical College, Georgia Piedmont Technical College and ACTION, Inc. providing service to Lanier Technical College students as well as Foothills Charter High School a non-traditional high school diploma preparation program. The foundation of the Athens Technical College, Georgia Piedmont Technical College and ACTION, Inc.'s Lanier Technical College programming is GED preparation and enrollment in a Technical Certificate of Credit occupational area concurrently. Through these 4 providers, the local area anticipates serving approximately 210 students. The 2nd out of school youth activity is targeted at those youth already possessing their GED/High School diploma. These students are served through out-of-school youth funded ITAs. The expansion of the age for out of school youth to serve 18-24 year olds has contributed to the local area's increase in number served. In the past approximately 30 youth were served through ITAs and projections for 2016 are between 60 and 100 youth.

5. **Implementation of Work-Based Learning Initiatives** – Provide a description of how the area will implement initiatives such as incumbent worker training programs, on-the-job training programs, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies, career pathways initiatives, utilization of effective business intermediaries and other business services and strategies designed to meet the needs of employers in the corresponding region in support of the business service strategy.

The local area has always had work-based learning through work experience as a service for in-school youth programming. The out-of-school youth providers have begun incorporating both work experience and on-the-job training into their planned program activities. Any work based learning offered will meet any and all requirements established by the GDEcD WFD as outlined in their Policies and Procedures Manual. These requirements are reviewed with the entity offering the activity to ensure adherence to established rules.

As career pathways are developed, if it is determined that work-based learning is the appropriate method to deliver/enhance training in that sector, then it will be considered for incorporation into the adult and dislocated worker training strategy.

For those students who complete ITA training, who are unable to secure employment, work-based learning as an additional support is an option.

6. **Provision of ITAs** – Provide a description of how training services in WIOA § 134 will be provided through the use of ITAs. If contracts for the training services will be used, describe how the use of such contracts will be coordinated with the use of ITAs 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.

The local area utilizes ITAs as its primary training tool for adults and dislocated workers. The Workplace Fundamentals course reference in an earlier section is an example of a short tem ITA. While the use of the Workplace Fundamentals course as a short-term non-credit delivered course culminating in the obtainment of an industry recognized credential is increasing in the region, the majority of the ITAs are in programs at

technical colleges yielding a technical certificate of credit, diploma or associate degree. Additionally, the local area does have ITA agreements in place with 20 proprietary training institutions which provide training primarily in truck driver preparation (approximately 125-175 person per year), associated medical training (CNA, medical assistants), and an array of computer related training. All ITA training providers are on the state ETPL and are providing training in an occupational area that meets the local area's in-demand occupation policy. The local area does not use contracts for the training services delivered through ITAs.

7. **Entrepreneurial Skills Training and Microenterprise Services** – Provide a description of how the area will coordinate and promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services.

The local area will coordinate with local providers including the East Athens Development Corporation and the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) located at the University of Georgia to promote both entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services.

8. **Coordination with Education Programs** – Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate education and workforce development activities carried out in the local area with relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services and avoid duplication of services.

The local area's in-school youth program design provides a natural linkage to each and every public school system in the region. There is at least 1 person in each county who has a connection to the LWDA through the ACTION, Inc. contract. Additionally, local area staff are engaged with the 4 career academies in currently operating in the region.

Local area staff are on advisory committees of the 4 technical colleges providing services in the region. Two different technical colleges are represented on the local workforce board. There are direct service providers through 3 of the 4 technical colleges which provides awareness of services being provided in an array of activities.

Since the local area has long standing agreements in place with 9 technical colleges and 15 colleges and universities, there is a point of contact in those institutions which enhances the collaboration.

Additionally, the local area is in strong collaboration with Great Promise Partnership in 4 counties in the region.

9. **Description of Supportive Services** – Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate workforce development activities carried out under this title in the local area with the provision of transportation, including public transportation, and other appropriate supportive services in the local area. Describe the coordination of transportation and other supportive services regionally, if applicable. Please include the region/local area Supportive Service Policies.

The local area will make available transportation, childcare services and emergency assistance to adults, dislocated workers, and youth participants that qualify for these supportive services. The local area will coordinate supportive services with all federal, state, and local agencies including Pell, HOPE, DFCS, UI and any other funding resources available to the participant.

Supportive Services Policy: The Georgia Workforce Investment Board approved new supportive services guidelines and expenditure caps which become **effective July 1, 2016**. The NEGRC WIOA has developed a process by which participants are determined eligible and in need of supportive services to participate in WIOA activities. Federal Law states that supportive service costs should be **NECESSARY** to enable an individual to participate in activities authorized under WIOA Title 1. Eligibility and determination of need for supportive services should be conducted by a case manager, on a case-by-case basis.

The Georgia Department of Economic Development, Workforce Division has developed a limit on total supportive service expenditures of 35% for of each LWIOA's funding streams, (i.e. adult, dislocated worker, youth), program year total allocation. Waivers for this policy will be issued by the Georgia Department of Economic Development, Workforce Division on a case by case basis.

The following policies apply for out-of-school participants enrolled in adult, youth or dislocated worker programs under the Workforce Investment Act (WIOA) which include ITA-based type training, and which are served by NEGRC WIOA. Support Services Policies for youth service programs which do not include ITA-based training are under the Youth Program Support Services Section of the Support Policy, and are for youth served by NEGWIOA youth service providers. These NEGWIOA youth service providers include both in-school and out-of-school youth.

Documentation of Eligibility and Determination of Need for Supportive Services

Supportive services are available only for WIOA eligible participants actively enrolled in ITA based training activities. Documentation of eligibility will be determined at a maximum level of 150% above the poverty level for adults and youth (NEGWIOA's priority of service plan.) Eligibility of income will be determined by completing the Family Unit Form, page 1 and the 6 Month Calculation Worksheet For Employed Persons In The Family Unit, page 2. Determination of need information will be determined by completing the Request for Supportive Services Form and the Projected Cost of Training Form. This information will be entered into the participant's case file.

Dislocated Workers will be **EXEMPT** from the maximum level of 150% above the poverty level. Income earned in the 6 month period prior to dislocation could disqualify them from receiving supportive services when the dislocated worker is no longer employed due to no fault of their own.

Determination of Need

Financial/Physical Need: There must be documentation in the participant's case file that participants are incapable of providing these services for themselves. Documentation may consist of:

- Self-attestation
- Low income verification
- Receipt of federal or state public assistance
- Receipt of UI benefits
- Lack of employment or underemployment (UI records or separation notice)
- Documentation of skill upgrading that would lead to employment in a local or state in-demand occupation
- Birth certificates of children receiving childcare
- Documentation of transportation distance to attend training (for transportation assistance, if available)

Resource Coordination: There must be documentation that supportive services are not available from other state or federal grant programs. There must be analysis of all federal/state/local resources available and how they are being coordinated. For example, an NEGWIOA analysis of need form will document the total basis of need considering UI, Pell, Hope etc., or other instances of federal/state/local resources available, to determine how resources are being coordinated.

Provision of Supportive Services

NEGWIOA will provide transportation, childcare services and emergency assistance to adult, dislocated workers, and youth participants that qualify for these supportive services.

Support Service Request Form: Each participant requesting supportive services will complete a request for support service form. The WIOA career advisor will determine the basis of need and sign off on the justification for the amount of support that is necessary and reasonable to complete WIOA activities. This justification will include a projection of the total amount anticipated of support services requested. This documentation should be collected and included in the participant's case file, VOS/Tracksource system. NEGWIOA finance will maintain records to monitor the yearly cap limitations. Yearly transportation and child care cost must be projected before training services begin.

Payments will be made directly to participants by NEGRC in the form of a check. Payments are based on class attendance and childcare forms submitted by the participant. Payments will be made bi-weekly and will depend on timely receipt of the above documentation.

Case Managers must enter in the VOS/TrackSource system the estimated **approved** supportive service cost at the beginning of a participant's service or when supportive services have been deemed necessary. Any substantial change to a participant's supportive service dollar amount, and/or the addition of a different type of supportive service will need to be updated in the VOS/TrackSource system. These costs will be approved by the Senior Planner. (Routine fluctuation in a participant's supportive services, such as training absences, holidays and/or inclement weather is exempt from this process.)

All support documentation will be maintained in the participant's physical case file (participant time sheets, etc.).

Additionally, documentation for the WIOA activity for which support is being provided must be included in the case file. Documentation should include time sheets signed by the instructor/supervisor, proving participation in training services.

Transportation

- 1) Eligible participants will receive \$8.00 per day for meals/transportation.
- 2) Participants must attend 50% of their scheduled classes each day in order to receive the \$8.00 per day support amount. If less than 50% of their scheduled classes are attended, the meals/transportation support will not be issued for that day.
- 3) To receive the meals/transportation support, a "Participants Attendance Report" form must be completed bi-weekly. This form must contain the following information:
 - Name, school attending and the training program in which they are enrolled.
 - Dates (month, day and year) must be filled in correctly in the space provided.
 - Hours scheduled and hours attended verified by the instructor(s).
 - Signature of instructor(s) verifying attendance.
 - Signature and date of the customer

Dependent Care

If dependent care is not otherwise available from DFCS, or other funding sources, NEGWIOA may assist with the cost of care for dependent children under age 5 or adult dependents with documented care needs. This is available while the participant is enrolled in ITA training activities, (excluding core and intensive services). Assistance is available when the individual is scheduled and/or commuting to training activities. Assistance may also be available for children ages 6 through 12 for after school care or during times when school is not in session. Funds from other sources, such as TANF, may be combined with WIOA funds. In those instances, WIOA funds may only be used for those expenses not covered by the other funding source. For participants receiving TANF benefits, it must be documented that the participant is not receiving dependent care benefits from TANF before providing dependent care assistance through WIOA.

- 1) For children 5 years and under - Eligible participants will receive \$10.00 per day per child for full-time care. This would include children up to age 12 during school breaks, i.e., summer or extended breaks throughout the year.
- 2) For children 6 years and older - Eligible participants will receive \$5.00 per day per child for after school care up through age 12.
- 3) For childcare assistance to be reimbursed, the childcare form must be accompanied by a "Participant Attendance Report."
- 4) Childcare will be paid only for those days attending school. The customer will be responsible for payment of childcare expenses when they are not in school.
- 5) Childcare will not be paid when breaks between quarters occur i.e., Spring break, Christmas break.
- 6) Childcare assistance will not be made for children over the age of twelve unless extenuating situations exist. A written request must be made to NEGRC explaining the circumstances.
- 7) Childcare assistance will not be paid to providers that reside at the same address as the WIA customer.
- 8) To receive childcare assistance the participant must complete a "Childcare Provider Verification Form." This form must contain the following information:
 - Name of the childcare provider, childcare providers address and phone number, customers name, school attending and effective date.
 - Name of the child(ren), their age, hours to be kept, weekly rate and daily rate.
 - Person(s) who are authorized to sign the childcare forms must print and sign their name.

DRAFT Northeast Georgia Workforce Development Plan 2016

- This form will only be completed when a new childcare provider will be used.
 - This form must be submitted to the NEGRC before any childcare payments can be issued.
- 9) To receive the childcare support, a “Childcare Invoice” must be completed bi-weekly. This form must contain the following:
- Customers name, childcare providers name, name and age of child(ren).
 - Dates (month, day and year) must be filled in correctly in the space provided.
 - Initials of the childcare provider for each child and each day that childcare were provided, for each child.
 - Amounts charged for days attended.
 - Signature and date of participant.
 - Signature and date of childcare provider.
- 10) Falsification of childcare or attendance forms may result in being terminated from the WIOA program.

Participants are encouraged to use licensed dependent care providers whenever possible. If not licensed, the service must be provided by a dependent care provider who cares for children outside of the participant’s home. Payments will be made directly to participants, based on receipts from dependent care provider.

Waivers

If necessary, NEGWIOA will submit a waiver to the Grants Administrator if any of the current program years total supportive services allocation exceeds 35% in any one funding stream.

Emergency Assistance

Emergency assistance up to \$250 per individual one time assistance for special needs (i.e., housing assistance, dental/medical care, clothing, car repairs, mental health, etc.) may be provided on an individual basis. This request must be for assistance necessary to successfully continue training activities or to enable the individual to accept employment. The requests are made in writing to NEGWIOA. This assistance counts toward the \$3,000 cap on support.

Support Services are not allowed for the following:

- Rent deposits or housing deposits
- Mortgage payments
- Car payments
- Purchase of vehicles
- Fines
- Out-of-Area Job Search Assistance
- Relocation Assistance
- Needs-based payments
- On-the-Job Training Plans

Other Requirements and Policies

1. A participant continues to be eligible for support services only as long as he/she is active in the program. Failure to participate fully, without good cause, will result in termination of assistance.
2. During the assessment period individual needs are identified and a plan is developed and documented in the participant employment development plan for support provided by NEGWIOA, DFCS or other programs. To maximize the support available, NEGWIOA will

actively promote coordination with organizations to provide supportive services at no cost to the program or the participant. These services could include assistance in housing, legal problems, financial planning, dental/medical care, mental health, and other areas.

3. Customers in certificate, diploma or associate degree programs, at a minimum, must be enrolled fulltime (12 credit hours) per semester in order to be eligible for support services. If the customer takes less than 12 credit hours and continues to be eligible for supportive services the case manager must indicate the reason for the less than 12 credit hours and document this in the customer's case notes section in Tracksource. NEGRC will review the reason for the less than 12 credit hours and either approve/deny the support service.
4. No white out is to be used on support forms. For corrections, draw one line through the error, initial it, and have the appropriate person (instructor or childcare provider) initial the change.
5. Any forms that are not completed correctly and completely will be returned to the customer for correction.
6. Support forms must be submitted to the NEGRC office no later than Tuesday's mail of support processing weeks. (Customers will receive a yearly chart indicating support processing weeks.) If forms are received after Tuesday's mail, they will not be processed until the next cycle. All forms should be mailed directly to the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission, Workforce Development, 305 Research Drive, Athens, GA 30605.

Youth Program Support Services

Support Services

Because most NEGWIOA youth service programs are not ITA-based training, (though they may include it), support services have been and will be provided on an individual case-by-case or program-by-program basis, to include different kinds and different levels of support from that of ITA-based training. The eligibility and need will be established and documented by a program career advisor.

While projected program support for individuals may be customized for a youth service provider program or separate programs (typically during contract negotiations at the beginning of the year), with prior NEGWIOA approval, each instance must meet the individual participant eligibility and need requirement noted above.

Incentives

Incentives are allowable for WIOA Youth activities. Incentives should be tied to program outcomes and may include cash payments, gas cards, education and/or employment-related materials, participation, test or eligibility fees paid, uniforms or work clothing, etc. They may be provided by youth service providers with prior NEGWIOA approval.

Youth support services must be determined, tracked and documented in a similar manner as those described above with documentation in the VOS /TrackSource system (if applicable) as described in the "Documentation of Eligibility and Determination of Need for Supportive Services" section.

Coordination with Core Partners:

1. **Description of the Workforce System** – Provide a description of the workforce development system in the local area that identifies all relevant programs and how the local board will work with the entities to carry out both core and other workforce development programs to deliver well aligned services in support of the strategies identified in the state plan. This should include programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.).

The local area will continue work with:

- Georgia Department of Labor to ensure that full array of Wagner Peyser services from labor market information, job preparation workshops, job referral, Unemployment Insurance, veterans services are available. The local area will also encourage to the fullest extent possible that all job seekers utilize the resources of the Employ GA system.
- Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency to ensure that the full array of services from supported employment to job coaching to specialized assessment is utilized and that co-enrollment of customers with disabilities be facilitated where such is the appropriate action.
- Adult Learning Divisions at 4 technical colleges physically located in the region. This effort will continue the linkage between Accelerated Opportunity efforts at Athens Technical College and expand as appropriate at Lanier Technical College and Georgia Piedmont Technical College.
- Technical Colleges Economic Development Departments to ensure that division's expertise in quickly developing and delivering training to meet employers needs are met. This is ongoing with Athens Technical College and Georgia Piedmont Technical College and under development with Lanier Technical College.
- Technical Colleges Credit Programming to ensure that the high quality ITA programming which has been the trade mark of the region providing over 278 different employers with trained employees in Program Year 2014.
- Department of Family and Children Services providing linkages on support services to ensure non-duplication of services
- CSBG entity ACTION, Inc. providing additional supports to customers to assist in removing barriers that may prevent them from completing their training
- Athens Housing Authority as well as other housing authorities in the region serving as an information access point for their residents providing them access to training services as well as the resources of the mobile learning units.

2. **Coordination with Wagner-Peyser** – Provide a description of plans and strategies for, and assurances concerning, maximizing coordination of services provided by the state employment service under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29U.S.C. 49 et seq.) and services provided in the local area through the one-stop delivery system, to improve service delivery and avoid duplication of services.

The Athens Career Center provides an array of services to a diverse population of job seekers including veterans, unemployment claimants, persons with disabilities, youth, and individuals with limited English proficiency among others. The Athens Career

Center provides a seamless access point for delivering information and resources upon entering the career center or customer contact via telephone, fax, or email.

Services routinely provided to employment services job seeker customers (including UI claimants) include:

- Job search assistance, job referrals and job developments
- Automated job referral assistance
- Access to computers, job search software, Jobs TV
- Workshops on a variety of employment related topics (e.g. effective job search, online applications, resume development, interviewing skills, networking)
- Labor market information for career exploration, high demand fields, average salaries
- Access to career advisors, vocational assessments, training and education resources, financial aid options
- Self-service resources such as Employ Georgia labor exchange services, unemployment claims application, books, videos, flyers
- Individualized assistance for customers with unique needs including setting a customer service plan, scheduling one-on-one visits and workshops to develop job seeker, reviewing and modifying customer service plan as needed
- Specialized assistance for veterans including case management, job search counseling, WOTC, OJT and apprenticeships
- Specialized assistance for ex-offenders including strategic workshops, federal bonding, and WOTC
- Specialized assistance for long term unemployed and customers with employment barriers including case management, job search counseling, and WOTC

Career Center staff offer services off site to TOPPSTEP (The Offender Parolee Probationer State Training Employment Program) eligible customers. Workshops are conducted weekly at the Athens Diversion Center, Clarke County Correctional Facility and bi-monthly at the Elbert County Probation Office. Career Center staff work closely with the case managers in these facilities to develop job search and employability skills to increase secured employment.

The Career Center provides two established off site locations to reach individuals in the rural counties served by the Career Center. A location on the Athens Technical College campus in Greensboro is staffed by one full time individual Monday through Friday. All employment and unemployment services are delivered to customers at this location. There are frequent employer hiring events scheduled at this location as well. An itinerant point is also established at the Elbert County Library. Career Center staff are housed at this location twice monthly to provide employment related services to customers. The Athens Career Center houses partner agency staff on a routine basis to enhance service delivery and avoid duplicating services. The staff with dedicated use of space at the Athens Career Center include staff with: WIOA, Job Corps, GVRA, Advantage Behavioral, the Fatherhood Initiative, Athens Technical College, Jobs for Georgia Graduates.

The Career Center LVER (Local Veterans Employment Representative) the GDOL Business Services Unit's BSR (Business Services Recruiter) work closely with local Chamber offices, area employers, civic organizations, WIOA and other governing

agencies and businesses to promote hiring opportunities. These business service related relationships are aimed towards the streamlining of candidate searches and recruitment processes. The Athens Career Center staff actively participate in the coordination and implementation of large hiring events, annual career fairs and in house recruitments held at the Career Center.

The Athens Career Center has an established plan for assisting customers with limited English proficiency. The career center can utilize an agency multi lingual directory to locate GDOL staff speaking a variety language that can serve as interpreters. Interpreter resources are also available through the University of Georgia.

- 3. Coordination with Adult Education** – Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate workforce development activities carried out in the local area with the provision of adult education and literacy activities under title II in the local area, including a description of how the local board will carry out, consistent with subparagraphs (A) and (B)(i) of section 107(d)(11) and section 232 of the WIOA Law, the review of local applications submitted under title II.

Our primary goal at the One-Stop is the facilitation of access to services that result in participants reaching educational and/or career goals. Connecting individuals with Adult Education services will be accomplished through the use of technology and/or physical presence (scheduled by appointment and/or rotation basis). Kiosks are available in the One-Stop that will connect individuals with area Adult Education programs in the region including: Athens Technical College, Georgia Piedmont Technical College, Lanier Technical College and Southern Crescent Technical College.

Kiosk are self-service devices that allow clients to:

- Chat online/interact with Adult Education representatives from the four Adult Education programs in their region (provides flexibility)
- Submit their name, address, email address, phone number, etc. to schedule for GED testing, Adult Education classes, ELL classes, Bridge to Success (Out-of-School-Youth Services) program, etc. (increases seamless communication)
- Apply for orientation/schedule TABE testing date/location
- More discreetly provide information they may view as sensitive
- Check in for scheduled Webex appointments with Adult Education staff (ex. Transition Specialist for Workforce and post-secondary transitioning support)
- Check in to virtual classes on one of our college campuses (based on class schedule)
- Kiosk can also be utilized to access Adult Education distance education programs
- Printer access will be available

Adult Education classes are offered at over 20 sites in the service area. Classes are offered mornings, afternoons, and through distance education to provide after-hours access to participants that may not be available during traditional hours.

Information Resources-

Relationships will be strengthened through data sharing. Systems should be integrated for intake and outcome documentation. We will develop deeper connections through this transparency and be better equipped to support cross-program wrap around services.

Coordination with Adult Education and workforce Development activities-

Current relationships have been well established with core partners. Members of the core partners cross serve on various local interagency advisory boards and are committed to building community awareness that support common goals for community employment. Each mission of the core partners center on workforce development and we look forward to continuing our inclusive yet flexible practices to enhance partnerships for the benefit of the region.

Continuous improvement of services

Adult Education goal toward continuous improvement involves reducing the time it takes for the students to secure work placement. One way we plan to accomplish our goal is to widen access and tailor services to more work based learning opportunities. Athens Technical College is engaged in the establishment of local apprenticeship program(s) for students in the Bridge to Success out-of-School youth program. Efforts related to this goal include: exploring how apprenticeship can meet the local area needs for a skilled workforce, partnering with businesses to build program and register through the National Registry, preparing to launch the apprenticeship by marketing and outreach efforts that will result in long term employment.

Roles and resource contributions of partners-

- In-kind facilities
- Customer service and support efforts
- Data Analysis/ Career exploration services (EMSI/ Optimal Resume Access, Career Coordinator)
- Technology and infrastructural costs (computer, internet, phone,)
- Outreach and Marketing efforts
- Connecting Contacts
- Employer Engagement
- Retention and Transition efforts
- Staff Professional Development Cross-Training Opportunities

Expanding service to eligible individuals-

The target population for FY16 Adult Education services is 1,700 local residents age 16 and over, without a high school diplomas or its equivalency or a lack of English proficiency, and who have experienced barriers to education and/or employment. Adult Education services include access to free Adult Basic Education, Adult Secondary Education, English Language Acquisition, Corrections Re-entry Education, Literacy, Test Preparation, Workforce Preparation and Out-of-School Youth workforce development training programs.

Referral processes are in place with area community based organizations, the Department of Labor, Vocational Rehabilitation, Local School Boards, and area employers to provide services that assist Adult Education students in reaching their educational and career goals. Activities are aligned and co-enrollment provides

students with wrap around services that improve retention and acquisition of certification and credentials.

Basic Skills Services-

Basic and literacy classes/ remedial activities will be provided by adult education instructors and students have access to distance education programs. Classes are offered mornings, afternoons, and through distance education to provide after-hours access to participants that may not be available during traditional hours. Individualized student educational plans are developed to help students reach their goals. Services are tailored to the individual and Adult Education instructors, volunteers, and Transition Specialist are available for ongoing guidance and support. Intake forms and TABE testing are part of the initial application process. Students are tested after 40 hours of instruction to determine educational functioning gain(s). TABE tests assess mathematics and reading comprehension and analytic reports identify areas of strength and weakness that inform individualized plans for students seeking their GED.

Youth Services

Regrettably, Georgia ranks 42nd in the nation for teens not in school and lacking a high school diploma.¹ Athens-Clarke County (ACC), with a population of 116,000, has 18,212 residents who do not possess a high school diploma (see chart below). In 2014, approximately 43 percent of students in ACC public high schools did not graduate.² This means that the county is more likely to face ongoing poverty, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.³ These statistics are not limited to Athens proper; surrounding counties continually endure low high school graduation rates and an uneducated, unemployed youth population with no opportunities for financial interdependence. For example, in Walton County, 19.6 percent of the population has no high school diploma or equivalent (see chart below).

County	Population	% without a High School Diploma or GED
Clarke	116,000	15.7%
Walton	84,000	19.6%

In traditional Adult Basic Education programs, students must earn a GED before entering the college to enroll in courses that lead to a credential. Three of the Technical Colleges in our region (Athens, Georgia Piedmont, and Lanier) were selected as pilot Accelerated Opportunity programs. The Accelerated Opportunity program allows students to enter the college and work on their GED preparation, and college credit classes simultaneously reducing the time it takes to earn a credential and secure employment. Students in the AO programs also qualify for Ability to Benefit funding

1 “Data Book: State Trends in Child Well-Being,” *Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2014*, pp 48

2 “Georgia’s High School Graduation Rate Increases Again,” *Georgia Department of Education, October 2014*, <https://www.gadoe.org/External-Affairs-and-Policy/communications/Pages/PressReleaseDetails.aspx>

3 "Education," *Community Health Needs Assessment, Athens-Clarke County, June 2013*, http://www.stmarysathens.org/pdfs/about-us/2013_CHNA_StMarys.pdf

and other support services (including transportation and childcare reimbursement) that can potentially be an obstacle to student success.

Sample pathways for our out- of -school youth programs, which combine accelerated career training and job placement with personalized educational support, are aligned with the Manufacturing Sector strategy. Sample program pathways include: Manufacturing Operations, Welding Technology, Machine Tool Technology, Commercial Truck Driving. These short-term programs incorporate team teaching and work ethic training. Our program model is based around education being offered currently with, and in the same context as, workforce preparation. Participants in Bridge to Success in Athens must attend classes eight hours each weekday, mirroring a typical work schedule. Career Pathways were selected to meet regional demand. Programs were selected by number of jobs and anticipated % increase utilizing data from Economic Modeling Specialist International (EMSI) and all programs have a sustainable wage of over \$13.00/per hour average starting wage. See chart below:

Occupation	Number of jobs 2020 (ATC service area)	% increase 2016-2020 (ATC service area)
Commercial Truck Drivers	1,554 jobs	4.3%
Machinists	481 jobs	4.6%
Manufacturing Technician	1,681 jobs	3.8%
Welding Technician	639 jobs	4.8%

Additionally each of the pathway programs have advisory boards made up of representatives from business and industries to align our programs to meet area workforce needs. This partnership with employers also increases the programs participants to secure employment after the completion of a paid internship. These internships will facilitate on-the-job training to build needed occupational skills and provide students with meaningful work experiences. All of the 14 WIOA program elements are embedded in the Bridge to Success program including follow up services for 12 months following program completion. Optimal Resume is currently used by the Adult Education Career Coordinators to connect over 265 employers with ATC program participants. This program allows us to create direct pipelines from job seekers to employers and address job seeker soft skill and technical skill gaps.

GA BEST-

All regional Adult Education programs have incorporated the Georgia BEST (Business Ethics Student Training) into their curriculum. Although each model varies, every program is designed to address soft skill gaps that employers in Georgia are looking for in competitive applicants. These skills include: Professional Image, Attendance/Punctuality, Attitude and Respect, Social Media Ethics, Discipline and Character, Oral and Written Communication Skills, Productivity and Academic Performance, Responsibility and Organization, Self-Management and Time Management, and Teamwork and Work Habits. Upon completion, students receive certification from the Georgia Department of Labor. This curriculum is designed to “prepare tomorrow’s workforce today”.

Performance Measures-

Ongoing assessment methods will be utilized to ensure performance measures are continuously met. Annual employer surveys will be distributed to all Youth Services employers to rate and compare the entry participant's skills with that of other entry level employees. Program advisory committees, made up of industry business representatives, will be utilized to seek out new internship/employment opportunities for participants. Technical Colleges also have a warranty for all graduates. If employers find that a student does not demonstrate skills needed that were covered in the program, we will retrain the program for free.

Federal/ State/local level benchmarks-

Adult Education utilizes GALIS (a web-based real time data system) that is used for data entry, collection, and reporting of program activity and outcomes. A program can track the status on established federal benchmarks and compare local, regional and state current and historical progress to meet or exceed annual benchmarks. The Office of Adult Education also engages in continuous monitoring procedures including on-site visits observations. Additionally, programs partnering to provide WIOA services must meet or exceed project goals for performance including: percentage in employment/education/training, retention in employment/education/training, earnings, credential rate, in program skills gain, etc.

4. **Coordination with Vocational Rehabilitation** – Provide a description of the cooperative agreement between the local Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation office and the local board which describes efforts made to enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities and to other individuals, cross-train staff, provide technical assistance, share information, cooperate in communicating with employers and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration and coordination.

The local Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency (GVRA) has had a long and mutually supportive relationship with the local office of Workforce Development and the other local workforce development partners in providing services to promote the self-sufficiency and independence of Georgians with disabilities. GVRA staff is co-located in the regional one-stop along with staff from the Department of Labor, Veteran's services, Job Corp, Jobs for Georgia Graduates, and Northeast Georgia Regional Commission, along with other area employment and service providers who are frequently present and accessible for information and referrals.

In addition, long-standing, mutually beneficial relationships with other strategic partners such as Advantage Behavioral Health Services, Viewpoint, Action, Inc., the Department of Family and Children's Services, the Department of Education, multiple local colleges and universities, community rehabilitation programs and other providers of soft and specific employment skills training as well as the local independent living center. These collaborative relationships will continue to be nourished and new ones developed to better meet the growing needs of employers and job seekers with disabilities.

GVRA representatives serve on the local Workforce Development Board and its Youth Committee and are actively engaged with various community organizations such as

Family Connection, Employer Committees and other county and regional organizations aimed toward meeting workforce needs and improving community economics and the well being of community members.

In addition, memoranda of understandings have been developed between GVRA and the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities and the Department of Education and various pilot projects are underway including ones with the Department of Juvenile Justice, one local housing authority and some selected local employers to provide information, training and employment services to persons with disabilities who want to work. Others MOUs and innovative projects are being developed to expand and better coordinate services to youth and out of school youth to prepare them for careers in high demand occupations in their local economies.

In addition, the local workforce area has been awarded a USDOL grant to pilot a Disability Employment Initiative process in which GVRA staff and Workforce Development staff work in conjunction to maximize access to core and intensive services and to ensure collaboration and the identification of resources and braiding of funds to better meet the needs of the individual striving to prepare for work and the businesses striving to meet its workforce needs.

GVRA offers and seeks cross training of staff whenever possible, with staff assisting in the planning of and/or participating in training offered by many local partners as well as by informal communication and sharing of information at community events, interagency meetings, symposiums, and resource fairs. These efforts will continue and be increased as we collectively plan and implement new processes and procedures to maximize collaboration among partners.

GVRA will also be increasing communication with and services to employers by reorganizing and expanding its Employment Management Department and its operations to better collaborate with other partners and workforce professionals and to optimize industry specific training and employment opportunities for job seekers with disabilities. GVRA clients will prepare for available job opportunities by engaging in training in a chosen career pathway with a concentration on soft skills as well as the career specific knowledge and skills needed to succeed in their chosen field. This will be done in collaboration with local school systems, technical colleges, community rehabilitation programs, workforce development staff and area businesses to provide a continuum of services so that job candidates are better prepared for success on the job when hired.

Performance, ETPL and Use of Technology:

1. **Description of Performance Measures** – (*WFD will issue instructions for the completion of local area performance negotiations upon receipt of federal guidance.*) Provide a description of the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and chief elected official pursuant to WIOA § 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 subtitle B and the one-stop delivery system, in the local area.

See Attachment 1

2. **One-Stop System Performance and Assessment** – Provide a listing of locally/regionally developed one-stop performance standards and describe the criteria used to develop the performance standards. Describe how the one-stop system and regional service delivery is assessed by the local board.

With the transition to WIOA and the new one stop requirements, this portion of the system is under development. In the past, the workforce board received periodic reports from the one-stop operator on the array of services provided to customers accessing services at the comprehensive one-stop site.

3. **ETPL System** – Describe the regional Eligible Training Provider System, including the elements listed below.

- a. Provide a description of the public notification to prospective providers.

Applications will be accepted by the local WDB at any time during the program year. Applications will be evaluated and reviewed by WIOA Director and WIOA Program Director.

- b. Provide a description of how the board(s) evaluates providers and proposed training programs for initial eligibility, based on (at a minimum) criteria of proven effectiveness, local employer/industry demand, accreditation and customer accessibility.

The LWDB approved the local area ETPL provider minimum performance criteria/standards at its May 2016 meeting. Applications requesting placement on the ETPL by the local area are reviewed by staff against the criteria approved by the LWDB to determine if the program meets the standards and should be forwarded to the state for consideration for inclusion on the state ETPL.

Non-responsive providers will be notified in writing that their application was non-responsive and the reason(s) for the determination.

- c. Provide a description of the formal appeals process for aggrieved ITA customers and providers of unapproved training programs.

Appeal procedures are established to provide recourse who think their proposal did not receive proper consideration. These procedures are in keeping the standards set forth by GDEcD WFD.

- d. Provide a description of the ongoing process used to update the data on the eligible providers list (exclusive of the state-conducted continued eligibility process).

The LWDA is accustomed to generating regular provider outcomes reports. These reports are shared with the LWDA staff. These reports use customer placement information, credential information and follow-up information to determine if the training area, or program is still feasible to maintain on the ETPL. If not, the data will be updated on the ETPL.

- e. Provide a description of any regional policies or agreements for ITAs or training providers.

The local area has an ITA training policy as outlined below in “g”.

- f. Provide a description of the process to track and manage all ITA activity.

Reports are provided monthly to program staff which include customers who are in an ITA, customers who are currently active, customers who are in job search, customers who have completed and customers who are receiving follow-up services. Performance outcomes are also provided on a quarterly basis.

- g. Provide a description of local board policy on use of statewide eligible training provider list (including financial and duration limits, out-of-area training, service to out-of-area customers, etc.).

ITA customers can only be enrolled in an approved training provider programs that are on the approved statewide Eligible Training Provider List.

1. Training must be in occupations identified in the local WIOA Plan as growth occupations or documentation of employment prospects for areas not listed in the plan should be provided. (see attached list of demand occupations)
2. Training must result in an employment wage sufficient to attain self-sufficiency without the aid of public assistance.
3. Training must be at least 12-semester hours per week to accommodate existing Unemployment Insurance requirements. Exceptions to this policy may be approved, in writing, on a case-by-case basis.
4. Programs should not exceed 104 weeks (two years). Exceptions to this policy may be approved on a case-by-case basis and requests should include evidence that financial support is available during extended training periods.
5. In general, all training programs must be within a reasonable commute of the WIOA local area that may include out-of-the-area and out-of-state training institutions. Out-of-the-area training programs that are not within commuting distance to the WIOA local area may be approved on a case-by-case basis. All approved training must be located within the contiguous United States.
6. All applicants must apply for the Pell Grant and/or HOPE Scholarship program, if eligible. Depending on the need and availability of WIOA funding, Pell funds may be combined with WIOA funds to cover total expenses.
7. WIOA funding may be provided for college level and post baccalaureate instruction only if all of the following conditions have been met:
 - a. The customer must be accepted into a certificate or diploma program, and the course of study must be occupation-specific (i.e., radiologic technician, accounting, teacher certification). No funds shall be provided for general academic programs (i.e. General Studies, Bachelors of Business Administration, Bachelors of Art, etc.).
 - b. Total course of study will take no longer than 104 weeks (2 years) to complete and be a certificate or degree program.
 - c. The customer must demonstrate that he/she has the financial resources to attend long-term training.

- 8 Continuing Education and other similar courses will be approved if the following conditions apply:
 - (a) The customer must have a specific occupational goal.
 - (b) The customer must have a work history or educational background that relates to the occupational goal.
 - (c) The customer must present evidence describing how the proposed training will increase his/her employment marketability.
- 9 ITAs may be utilized for expenses related to training, including but not limited to the following: books, tuition and fees, supplies, tools, uniforms and shoes, certification, licensing, testing fees, drug testing for entrance into training, medical requirements for training entrance, etc.
- 10 Customers accepted into a program of study on a provisional basis may receive assistance on a case-by-case basis.
- 11 ITAs will not be used for payment of late fees caused by customer error or delay. The customer will be responsible for these fees, as he/she is responsible for other fines or penalties.
- 12 Training funding limitations are as follows:
 - a. Up to **\$4000** in training costs, excluding support may be expended for each participant for the first year of training.
 - b. For training that extends beyond one year, total training costs may not exceed **\$6000**, excluding support.

If the cost of training exceeds funds limitation guidelines, career advisors should assist in developing a financial plan to cover total costs of training. Customers shall not be required to apply for or access student loans, or incur personal debt as a condition of participation.

- h. Provide a description of how registered apprenticeship programs are added to the ETPL.

Any Registered Apprenticeship program within the LWDA which are not currently on the ETPL, will be reported to the WFD for inclusion on the ETPL. Registered apprenticeship programs are exempt from initial eligibility procedures and will remain on, or be placed on the list as long as the program remains registered.

4. **Implementation of Technology** – Provide a description of the technology used to enhance customer (participant and business) experience and any additional data analytics used to enhance planning and measure outcomes beyond mandated performance measures.

The local area will utilize the Georgia Department of Labor's Employ Georgia site as part of its effort to enhance the business experience. As with any transition, there have been some challenges with the migration to this system, but it is the belief that it can ultimately position the local area to better serve the businesses' needs. Local area staff have received training on the Employ GA site and continue to work to learn the system and how it can best meet businesses' needs. The local area utilizes the internet with job seekers encouraging them to connect with various resources/training providers electronically rather than actually expending resources to drive for their initial research of what training they may be interested in. Job seeker customers are also encouraged to utilize all of the internet based tools available via the USDOL website related to career interests as well as all of the job postings available via Indeed, Monster, Career Builder,

etc. Job seekers are also encouraged to utilize the Employ GA site to assist them in their resume preparation and posting their resume for employer searches and matches.

State Initiatives and Vision:

1. **State Branding** – Provide a description for how the area will adopt and utilize the state brand.

Having received the state brand document in mid August 2016, the local area is in the process of reviewing the expectations outlined in the brand specification document and incorporating the brand requirements into all items specified in the document. It is anticipated that by March 2017 all items will have been transitioned and reflect the state brand WorkSource Georgia, Connecting Talent with Opportunity. Preliminary plans are under discussion as to the timing of the local area’s two mobile units being scheduled for new wraps. This may prove to be the “largest” and most visible piece of the rebranding for the local area as the 2 units are in use throughout the 12 county region.

2. **State Initiatives** – Describe how the area will coordinate with WFD state initiatives, including: Go Build Georgia, Operation: Workforce, WorkSmart Georgia and the High Demand Career Initiative.

The local area will coordinate with all of WFD state initiatives as they relate to the local area.

Go Build Georgia

As Go Build Georgia efforts are identified in the region, the local area will coordinate with any events taking place and can even be present (as scheduling permits) to share information on training resources available to persons who choose to pursue training in these career fields.

WorkSmart Georgia

The local area has attended two briefings on the Apprenticeship Grant that GDEcD WFD received. The local area is positioned to assist however is needed with that grant, both as it relates to Athens Technical College and Lanier Technical College, the two technical colleges in the area that are a part of that initiative. Additionally, the local area staff has participated in discussions with the Regional Apprenticeship Coordinator associated with that grant and are prepared to assist as called upon. The local area is also positioned to provide funding for WIOA eligible students for occupational areas incorporated into Apprenticeships where those courses are a part of the state ETPL.

High Demand Career Initiative

The local area participated in the original round of High Demand Career Initiative briefings. The local area also participated in a focus group providing input into the development of the upcoming HDCI sector strategy meetings and grants. The local area is already involved in the planning of the upcoming HDCI sector strategy meeting.

Disability Employment Initiative

The local area is one of two pilots in the state for the Disability Employment Initiative. As a part of that pilot the local area has hired a Disability Resource Coordinator. The purpose of this grant is to increase access of persons with disabilities to the services available through the one stop system. This is a 3 year grant.

3. **Special Populations** – Describe how the area will provide services to the special populations specified in the state plan, to include ex-offenders, veterans, at-risk youth, long-term unemployed, adult learners and individuals with disabilities. If the region has identified additional target groups, please list.

The local area has a long standing relationship with the DVOPs and LVERs in the region participating in veterans workshops and job fairs and co-enrolling customers as appropriate. The local area received a state grant to serve ex-offenders and will be working through ACTION, Inc. a community based organization and the Athens Diversion Center. It is anticipated that this initiative to prepare ex-offenders to re-enter the workforce will expand. The local area was one of 8 pilots in the state for the Accelerated Opportunities for the adult learners through Athens Technical College coupling GED instruction with occupational skills instruction with the end goal resulting in GED obtain and at a minimum, attainment of a Technical Certificate of Credit (TCC). This effort continues. As stated in number 2, local area is a pilot in the Disability Employment Initiative which seeks to provide greater access to one-stop services to persons with disabilities. Additionally, the local area has a long standing history of working for Vocational Rehabilitation to serve persons with disabilities to complete training and go to work. The local area's Business Services Consultant is also affiliated with the GVRA's High School High Tech Initiative which provides us with an opportunity for greater coordination of services. The services outlined in the Service Delivery and Training -Youth Services indicates the level of services in place for at-risk youth.

4. **Priority of Service** – Describe how the region will identify and administer the state's priority of service policy. Identify if the region will add target populations in addition to one's specified by state and federal policy.

The local area will follow the state's priority of service policy ensuring that persons who are public assistance recipients and low-income adults receive priority, as well as veterans receiving priority of service as well as referral to other appropriate services. The local area has no other target populations in addition to the ones identified by state and federal policy.

Attachments

Attachment 1: Local Workforce Development Board Member Listing

Member Name	Title	Entity	Board Category
Pam Booth	Owner	Deadwood Guitar Company	Oglethorpe Co. Private Sector
David Cagle	Marketing Representative	Plumbers, Pipefitters & Service Tech., Local Union 72	Organized Labor
Lori Chafin	Regional Operations	Department of Labor	Department of Labor/Regional
Mick Crain	H. R. Director	Leggett & Platt	Walton Co. Private Sector
Andrea Daniel	President	Athens Technical College	TCSG Educational/Regional
Linda Gantt	Madison Area Manager	Georgia Power Company	Morgan Co. Private Sector
Winston Heard	CEO/Executive Director	East Athens Development Corporation	Community Based Organization/Reg.
Bob Hughes	CEO/Executive Director	Madison/Morgan Chamber of Commerce	Economic Development/Regional
Keith Johnson	Human Resources Director	Jackson EMC	Jackson Co. Private Sector
Chris Kubas	Executive Vice President	Elberton Granite Association	Elbert Co. Private Sector
Brenda Lazarus	Senior V. P. - Human Resources	Reynolds Plantation	Greene Co. Private Sector
Howard Ledford	Dean	Lanier Technical College	Education/Regional
Lynward Lindsey	Local Manager	Georgia Power Company	Jasper Co. Private Sector
Barry Lowe	Special Representative	Plumbers, Pipefitters & Service Tech., Local Union 72	Organized Labor
Dixie Morris	Regional Director	Ga. Vocational Rehabilitation Agency	Rehabilitation Services/Regional
Jefferson Riley	CEO	THP Graphics, Inc.	Newton Co. Private Sector
Laurie Rios	Sr. Dir. Of Ed. & Comm. Programs	ACTION, INC.	Community Based Organizations
G. Michael Smith	Owner/Partner	G. Michael Smith & Associates	Madison Co. Private Sector
Joe Vogt	Plant Manager	Solvay, Inc.	Barrow Co. Private Sector
Carol Williams	Realtor	Coldwell Banker	At-Large Private Sector
Reginald Woods	Human Resources Senior Manager	University of Georgia	Education/Clarke Co. Private Sector
Geraldine Clarke	Director of Resident Services	Athens Housing Authority	Ex-officio
James R. Dove	Executive Director	NEGRC, Title V Aging & WIOA Title I	Ex-officio

Attachment 2: Local Negotiated Performance

WIOA Performance Measure	PY16 Goal	PY17 Goal
Adult Q2 Entered Employment	76.5	77.0
Adult Q4 Entered Employment	77.0	78.0
Adult Median Earnings	6,000	6,250
Adult Credential Rate	75.0	76.0
Adult In-Program Skills Gain		
DW Q2 Entered Employment	82	83
DW Q4 Entered Employment	90	91
DW Median Earnings	6,750	6,900
DW Credential Rate	80.0	81.5
DW In-Program Skills Gain		
Youth Q2 Placement in Employment or Education	76	77
Youth Q4 Placement in Employment or Education	76	77
Youth Median Earnings	4,250	4,800
Youth Credential Rate	80	81
Youth In-Program Skills Gain		
Employer Measure		

Performance negotiations for Area 09 are scheduled for September 12, 2016. When negotiations are complete, WFD will send a formal acceptance of performance targets to Area 09, which will serve as a modification to the local plan.