

STRATEGIC PLAN

2018-2020



NETLWDB STRATEGIC PLAN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Northeast Tennessee Workforce Local Workforce Development Board (NETLWDB) serves the eight counties of Carter, Greene, Hancock, Hawkins, Johnson, Sullivan, Unicoi and Washington. This eight county area, known as the Northeast Tennessee Local Workforce Development Area (NETLWDA), borders Virginia and North Carolina. The NETLWDB and its American Job Center (AJC) system is a recognized expert in the Northeast region's workforce development efforts. The NETLWDB, the Local Elected Official Consortium and all staff are dedicated to the development of a workforce system that supports business, industry, and all levels of employers and job seekers.

Mission – The Northeast Tennessee Local Workforce Development Board promotes the economic vitality of the region by providing a collaborative system that meets the talent needs of business, industry and the workforce.

Vision – Northeast Tennessee is a globally competitive region where business and industry continue to have a qualified, diverse workforce and individuals have career opportunities in a prosperous and sustainable regional economy.

The NETLWDB is a hub for gathering and disseminating information about the Local Workforce Development Area's labor market and business' employment needs. The NETLWDB and its partners are convening groups of businesses, collaborating with education and training providers, and researching, cultivating, and funding innovative solutions for workforce challenges. The NETLWDB's AJC system incorporates a streamlined workforce training and employment delivery system that seeks to increase business prosperity by supplying highly-skilled workers. The focus on business, industry and the health of our local economy will promote economic success for individuals and our communities.

The Northeast Tennessee Local Workforce Development Area's (NETLWDA) local plan was prepared in accordance with guidance published by the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development (TDLWD). The local plan serves as an action plan to develop, align, and integrate NETLWDA service delivery strategies and support the State's workforce development vision, which is to increase the competitive position of Tennessee business through the development of a high skilled workforce. The Tennessee Combined State plan gives an overview and provides background on the relationship between the State plan, regional plans and local plans. The State plan's five key objectives are directly reflected in the NETLWDA's local plan, which is designed to:

- Increase access to education, training, and employment, particularly for people with significant barriers to employment.
- Strengthen the NETLWDA's One-Stop/American Job Center system by aligning workforce investment, education, and economic development.
- Improve quality and labor market relevance of Northeast Tennessee's workforce investment, education, and economic development efforts.
- Promote continuing improvement in the structure and delivery of NETLWDA's AJC services.

- Increase economic self-sufficiency, meet employer needs, and enhance the productivity and competitiveness of the NETLWDA.

The NETLWDB Strategic Plan is presented in five distinct chapters: Operating Systems and Policies; Vision, Goals and Implementation Strategies; Performance Goals and Evaluation; Technical Requirements and Assurances, and New Planning Element (Public Assistance Recipient – Self Sufficiency Partnership).

The Operating Systems and Policies chapter provides an overview of all the operating systems and includes references to the attachments, where required polices are located. This chapter includes a description of the NETLWDB One-Stop/AJC delivery system, roles and resources contributed by the One-Stop/AJC Partners, and locations of the two comprehensive centers in Washington and Sullivan counties, and the six affiliate centers in Carter, Greene, Hancock, Hawkins, Johnson, and Unicoi counties. Each of these centers provide on demand access to multiple career services through Jobs4TN.gov. This chapter also details the role and responsibilities, the method of coordination of partners and the referral process as provided by the One Stop Operator (OSO). The NETLWDA OSO is currently provided by the sub-recipient Knoxville-Knox County Community Action Community (K-KC CAC). In addition, this chapter includes descriptions of Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth employment and training activities, and how NETLWDA will provide services to priority populations. Training services, as outlined in WIOA Sec. 134, will be provided through the use of Individual Training Accounts. The NETLWDB will ensure informed customer choice and continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system.

The Vision, Goals and Implementation Strategies section outlines how the NETLWDB will coordinate the local workforce, education and economic development activities with local activities that are carried out in the area. In developing the local plan, the Regional Planning Council met to advise and recommend action plans for the local areas. The Regional Planning Council is comprised of representatives from WIOA partners and other workforce stakeholders such as ECD. For purposes of the local planning process, NETLWDB recognized that a greater level of meaningful participation from stakeholders, community, and service population's participation was necessary. Following all applicable open meeting guidelines, NETLWDB notified all relevant regional/local stakeholders and the general public to participate in and provide feedback on the local plan. From the Local and Regional Workforce Planning Sessions, the following items of strategic importance were identified:

- Aging Workforce and Out-Migration
- Skills Gaps/Workforce Readiness/Soft Skills
- Substance Abuse/Opioid Epidemic
- Branding
- Incumbent Worker Training

This section also describes: how the NETLWDB will expand access to employment, training and education and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly those with barriers to employment; how the NETLWDA will implement initiatives such as incumbent worker training, on-the-job training programs, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies, apprenticeships, etc.; how the local board will coordinate education and workforce

development activities; and how the Board will support and work with entities carrying out the core programs.

The Performance portion of the plan includes information on the actions the NETLWDB will take toward remaining a high performing board, including projected local service levels and WIOA Common Measures. The Technical Requirements, Assurances, and Evaluation chapter includes information regarding the use of technology in the NETWLDA AJCs, physical accessibility, fiscal management, and the existing approach regarding strategies financed by the transfer of Title I workforce funds. Copies of requested policies and Agreements are located in the Attachments.

The New Partnership Element is the last portion of the plan. The NETLWDB has chosen the Public Assistance Recipient to Self-Sufficiency Element as its focus area.

Northeast Tennessee Local Workforce Development Board Strategic Plan

The Northeast Tennessee Local Workforce Development Board (NETLWDB) is the catalyst for bringing together the resources of its community, working together with its strategic partners to leverage these resources to continue its creation of a comprehensive workforce system more responsive to the needs of its priority and targeted industry sectors and those individuals looking for work. To accomplish this, the NETLWDB understands that today's workforce system is fluid and dynamic. It will continue to prioritize the available employment and training resources to ensure that the workforce development system meets the needs of area employers while preparing a skilled labor force that support the development and expansion of the targeted industry sectors. The ever-changing workforce environment demands that the NETLWDB supports targeted industry sectors with the knowledge that occupations in demand often cross-cut multiple sectors. This requires agility and responsiveness to meet the demands of our employers.

Working in partnership with strategic partners, community leaders and stakeholders, the NETLWDB will maintain an ongoing communication with the targeted industries, monitor their growth and success, and address their needs for services and critical resources. The NETLWDB will continue with its evaluation of the labor market to determine the skill gaps, gaps in training activities, and the critical demand for labor for both current and emerging needs. The NETLWDB will be the lead in identifying opportunities to expand the delivery of services and the access to available business resources and services that support growth and development. The NETLWDB is committed to strategically leveraging and integrating all workforce partner and stakeholder resources to cultivate demand driven skill attainment that meets the evolving needs of business and accelerates the upward mobility of the labor force.

A thorough understanding of the demographic, workforce and economic environments in each of the NETLWDA's eight counties is the first building block in identifying needs and service levels across the entire workforce system. Further, the NETLWDB will be the lead in conducting asset mapping assessment to take inventory of the available resources, services and program activities available to support the AJC customers and eliminate their barriers to employment. Please see the NETLWDB Workforce Intelligence attachment.

OPERATING SYSTEMS AND POLICIES

1. Description of the one-stop delivery system including the roles and resource contributions of its partners.

The NETLWDA's one-stop delivery system brings together workforce development, employment and training and educational services in a seamless customer-focused service delivery network that enhances access to all program services. This system is designed to align a wide range of education, employment, and training programs, while also providing high-quality customer service to all job seekers, workers, and businesses. The NETLWDB's AJC system design emphasizes high quality service to job seekers, workers and businesses. This design requires that all individuals that access AJC services do so in a professional welcoming environment. The AJCs strive to create opportunities for individuals at all skill and experience levels and

provide career services that motivate, support and empower. Services are integrated and delivered according to individual or business needs and not specifically according to program focus.

The NETLWDA AJC system is comprised of core and other community partnerships, both on-site and through individual community resources that provide mutual assistance. The design of our AJCs allows for services to be provided functionally rather than by individual programs. The local AJC system maintains integrated case management that utilize the Jobs4TN/VOS system. Partner accountability is maintained through the implementation of NETLWDB operational policies and through the use of common performance indicators.

NETLWDB's AJC partner roles and resources are articulated in the local Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). This MOU details the roles and responsibilities of each NETLWDA AJC partner in the creation of a seamless customer-focused service delivery network that integrates service delivery across programs. The NETLWDB's AJC system services are provided as required by the WIOA Title I Public Law 113-128. The NETLWDA umbrella MOU follows TDLWD policy guidance to ensure that all Partners clearly understand their respective roles and responsibilities related to both service delivery and financial responsibilities. The MOU includes defined sharing of Partner resources (IFA) with the overall goal to ensure efficiency system-wide. NETLWDA Partners agree to develop and continuously improve the AJC system in order to meet the needs of employers, workers, and job seekers, including those with significant barriers to employment and those participants with disabilities.

2. Identify career service provided by location (address)

The NETLWDA AJC delivery system is quality-focused, employer-driven, customer-centered, and tailored to meet the needs of our local and regional economies. These services are available through the Comprehensive and Affiliate locations. As identified in Sec. 134 (c) (2) career services may be provided in three different sets of activities: (1) basic career services that must be made available to all individuals seeking services in the AJC system; (2) individualized career services that must be made available if deemed appropriate and considered to be necessary for WIOA Title I eligible adults and dislocated workers to obtain and retain employment; and (3) follow up services available to adult and dislocated workers after unsubsidized employment is attained. In the development of the Memoranda of Understanding (MOU), each NETLWDA Partner expressly agreed to the use the prescribed TDLWD process to achieve integration of program and service goals of the WIOA within their specific programmatic regulations and guidelines.

Welcome Function (Basic Career Services). The AJC staff serving in the Welcome Function are responsible for ensuring that every new job seeker has access to Basic Career Services. Services may include eligibility determination for WIOA; outreach, intake and orientation to information for all AJC services; initial assessment; labor exchange services; provision of labor market information, access to the resource room, access and information for other programs and services; labor market employment statistic information; and ETPL performance information. The Welcome Function is a shared function between all AJC Partners located in the Comprehensive AJCs. The Welcome Function includes the entry point, resource room, self-directed activities, and staff- assisted services with few staff

members involved. Job seekers are encouraged to register in Jobs4TN.gov. Individuals are checked in via VOS greeter to determine priority of service, determine reasons for the visit, service needs, and to track customer flow.

Basic career services do not require enrollment into the WIOA program. An integral part of the NETLWDA AJCs' service delivery is the continuous cross training of all AJC staff to ensure that our system is integrated and that our workforce system experts can utilize its integrated intake system starting with the Welcome Function activities and priority of service. AJC staff provide a balance of traditional labor exchange services with the added electronic access through Jobs4TN for Labor Market Information and business services to assist local business and industry.

Skills/Career Development Function (Individualized Career Services). The NETLWDA AJC staff serving in the Skills/Career Development Function determine eligibility and outreach/intake; perform skills assessments; determine skill levels and service needs for adults and dislocated workers; provide labor exchange services; develop Individual Employment Plans; arrange for case management; identify support needs, group and/or individual counseling and mentoring, short-term pre-vocational services, internships and work experiences that are linked to career pathways. This Function arranges for and provides soft skills training, workforce preparation activities, financial literacy services, out-of-area job search assistance, English language acquisition and integrated education, and training programs. Job seekers are required to be registered in the Virtual One-Stop System (VOS) and may or may not be enrolled in Title I services, contingent upon leveraging and blending of available resources. Staff serving in Skills and/Career Development capacity also provide access to education and training to those with barriers to employment and those with disabilities. Follow-up services must be provided as appropriate for participants who are placed in unsubsidized employment after the first day of employment.

Business Services Function. The AJC staff members involved in the Business Services Function are responsible for building positive relationships with employers, identifying opportunities to address the human resource needs of employers, and designing services and products to assist employers in meeting their needs. This Function coordinates with AJC staff members and partners to actively recruit and refer qualified job candidates based on the needs of business services. The NETLWDB collaborates with the Business Services Team (BST) to identify local employer needs for on the job training, customized training, incumbent worker training, transitional jobs, etc. Business Services include, but are not limited to: business outreach and development; standard and customized recruitment and referrals for job vacancies primarily for targeted business and industry; job candidate qualification review; provision of economic, business and workforce trends; on-the-job training, and work experience; and referral to community services. Funding source-focused (Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment, Vets, etc.) job development for specific job seekers may remain with the individual partner agencies. Shared information and data agreements may be used to support access to information and to support information sharing between the partners as permitted by authorizing laws and regulations. The BST includes additional stakeholders and partners such as Economic & Community Development representatives.

The NETLWDB, in coordination with Rapid Response activities, provides certain business services to area employers in order to help them manage reductions in force. The NETLWDB may also provide other business services and strategies that meet the

workforce investment needs of area employers, in accordance with partner programs' allowable activities, statutory requirements and consistent with Federal cost principles.

The following table identifies the NETLWDA's AJC locations and career services. All NETLWDA AJC locations are open Monday – Friday from 8:00 – 4:30.

| County | Carter | Greene | Hancock | Hawkins | Johnson | Sullivan | Unicoi | Washington |
|-------------------|--|--|---|---|---|---|---|--|
| Center Type | Affiliate AJC | Affiliate AJC | Affiliate AJC | Affiliate AJC | Affiliate AJC | Comprehensive AJC | Affiliate AJC | Comprehensive AJC |
| Address | 386 Hwy 91 Elizabethton | 128 Serral Drive Greeneville | 1861 Main Street Sneedville | 3815 Hwy 66S, Suite 4 Rogersville | 222 W. Main Street Mountain City | 1140 E Center Street Kingsport | 201 E. Main Avenue Erwin | 2515 Wesley Street Johnson City |
| Function/ Partner | Welcome Function; Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth; TANF, RESEA; SNAP E&T | Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth; TANF, RESEA; SNAP E&T | Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth; SNAP E&T | Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth; SNAP E&T | Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth; SNAP E&T | Welcome Function; Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth; Title II AEFLA; Title III Wagner Peyser; Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation; TANF; Veteran; TAA/TRA; RESEA; SNAP E&T | Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth; SNAP E&T | Welcome Function; Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth; Title II AEFLA; Title III Wagner Peyser; Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation; TANF; Veteran; TAA/TRA; RESEA; SNAP E&T; Job Corps |

The Mobile AJC is used as an access point, see additional information in item 3. NETLWDA will be responsive to service needs of all eight counties to ensure that access is available to AJC services.

Each NETLWDA Partner expressly agreed to the use the prescribed TDLWD process to achieve integration of program and service goals of WIOA within their specific programmatic regulations and guidelines as part of the local MOU. The local AJC Partners have identified core, basic, and individualized career services that are detailed in the MOU Narrative Attachment.

3. Explain how the AJCs provide on demand access to the required career services in the most inclusive and appropriate setting and accommodations.

The NETLWDB actively works to increase access to and opportunities for the employment, training, and support that individuals need to succeed and advance in the labor market inclusive of those with barriers to employment. The NETLWDB strives to align workforce development, education and economic development within regional economic development strategies which meet the needs of local, regional and state employers and provides a high-quality workforce development system while ensuring that career services are provided in the most inclusive and appropriate settings and accommodations. The AJCs provide access to career services by the

collaboration and coordination of Workforce partners using the MOU as a guide. All centers provide on demand access to multiple career services through Jobs4TN.org.

Meaningful access and adaptation for customers with disabilities is ensuring that the premises, programs, and resources are fully accessible and available. Access and adaptation allows for effective and meaningful participation in AJC system supports and services. The AJC Certification process ensures that service delivery models and physical and programmatic accessibility are in accordance with WIOA Section 188 and ADA and services are available to job seekers with disabilities in terms of equality with all other persons. The NETLWDA OSO participates in technical assistance training to ensure human centered design and incorporates additional resources to assist customers with disabilities in the AJC's. In addition to assistive technologies, staff provide large print workshop materials for visually impaired customers and partner with the National Federation of the Blind to have the menu of services transcribed and printed in Braille.

The NETLWDA OSO plans and schedules the Mobile American Job Center for local community events and outreach opportunities such as recruitment and hiring events. NETLWDA OSO has been proactive in providing technical assistance training to ensure human centered design and has incorporated additional resources to assist individuals with disabilities and English language learners in the AJC's. For example, staff have provided large print workshop materials for visually impaired customers and have converted the AJC menu of services to Spanish for non-English speaking customers. These types of activities and staff training ensure meaningful access to all customers by incorporating the principles of, for example, flexible space usage; the use of pictorial, written, verbal, and tactile modes to present information for customers with disabilities and English language learners; and providing recommendations to the NETLWDB for necessary accommodations and adequate space for the use of assistive devices and adaptive technologies.

4. Provide OSO information and describe the methods for coordinated service delivery between OSO and Partners.

The NETLWDB One Stop Operator's (OSO) primary role is to coordinate multiple AJC Partners and service providers throughout the eight counties to assure functional alignment of services and management of operational resources. The OSO assists with the implementation of and fulfillment of the Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with NETLWDA Partners. The OSO is responsible for processes to ensure that all individuals receive appropriate, timely, and effective Career Service and performs continuous improvement activities to achieve high level service quality and exceptional customer service. The NETLWDB's OSO acts as liaison between the NETLWDB (Executive Director) and the AJC system and for marketing AJC services in coordination with NETLWDB and its Staff. The OSO is responsible for meeting common operational needs (e.g. training, technical assistance, additional resources, etc.) and for facilitating the sharing of data, as appropriate.

The OSO participates in all regional and local partner meetings to ensure an integrated customer flow and provides reports to the NETLWDB staff and Board. The OSO reports on integration of systems and alignment activities at partner meetings and upon request from the NETLWDB. The OSO facilitates regular AJC partner staff meetings, worked with partner leadership to determine appropriate staff assignments and reports, and collaborated with all

partners to re-design customer flow and intake processes to ensure efficiency and to enhance customer experience in each AJC. All partner staff meetings include training on partner services to ensure that all staff are familiar with partner programs, increasing staff expertise and efficiency. The OSO developed an Initial Assessment system and an AJC Welcome Packet that includes all partner information. Staff have also implemented a Welcome Function manual outlining processes for excellent customer service. The NETLWDA OSO will not perform any of the functions that might be an actual or perceived conflict of interest (§ 678.620(b)).

5. Provide name of the One-Stop Operator and describe procurement.

The NETLWDA OSO is currently provided by the sub-recipient Knoxville-Knox County Community Action Community (K-KC CAC).

In compliance with Training and Employment Guidance Letter WIOA No. 15-16, in accordance with 20 CFR 678.635(b), the Uniform Guidance sections governing procurement, and TDLWD policies and/or guidance memoranda including: One Stop Operator and Career Service Provider, One Stop System Design, One Stop Operator and Career Service Provider Contracts, and One Stop Certification, NETLWDB and its fiscal agent, AB&T, observed the process for competitive selection of OSO and Title I Career Service Provider by Request for Proposal (RFP). NETLWDB/AB&T uses requests for competitive proposals, as described in 2 CFR 200.320(d). The RFP process consists of the phases and steps, which may take place concurrently with others, that are designed to ensure that the competitive procurement process is conducted in an open and transparent manner.

NETLWDB/AB&T strives to ensure use of fair selection procedures to promote competition. The factors used to evaluate proposals/bids are applied and tabulated in an objective manner. NETLWDB follows TDLWD guidance in TEGl 15-16, Competitive Selection of One-Stop Operator, Section 8.B.v.a. Sunshine Provision, in regards to transparency and responsibility. Additional information may be found in the issued and advertised RFP.

OSO functions and scope of work are found in Item 7 of the [MOU Narrative Attachment](#).

6. Describe the OSO's role and responsibility for coordinating referrals

The NETLWDA One-Stop Operator's role and responsibility in coordinating referrals among required Partners is to facilitate cross training of staff on Partner programs. The OSO staff oversees the locally developed method of tracking referrals among Partners to ensure that referrals are appropriate and that all individuals receive timely and effective Career Services and maintains the locally developed referral tracking system to achieve high level service quality and exceptional customer service.

7. Describe the local referral process including partners, methods, roles and tracking

To the extent possible per program/service regulations, referrals incorporate Customer Centered Design service philosophies and use direct linkages to ensure appropriate and timely Partner referrals. Entering a referral to a Partner service in a specific Partner database, such as Jobs4TN, alone does not constitute a trackable referral that allows for feedback. The following are the roles related to referrals:

- Front line staff are cross trained in the Partner programs so that appropriate referrals can be made at the first point of contact. Staff may make additional referrals to Partners programs as needs are identified through the assessment process.
- Partner program leadership members meet on a regular basis to assess the number and quality of referrals that are being received. All staff will be informed of updates and upgrades to the referral process through email notification, staff training and any other appropriate means developed in the local area.
- An electronic Partner Referral Form is utilized by all Partners. Directions for use and links to the form are available to staff online.
- The Partner organization receiving the referral will make a good faith effort to contact the customer within 3 business days of date on the referral. The receiving organization agrees to make a good faith effort to schedule an appointment with the customer within 10 business days of date on the referral form and confirm such with the referring organization via email.

Referrals do not imply automatic eligibility; the result of the referral is dependent on eligibility determination by each Partner based on their unique program guidelines and fund availability.

8. Arrangements to assure that individuals with barriers to employment, including individuals with disabilities, can access available services.

The NETLWDB's AJCs and partners provide jobseekers, including individuals with barriers to employment, such as individuals with disabilities, with the skills and credentials necessary to secure and advance in employment with self-sustaining wages. The term "individual with barrier to employment" means one or more of the following populations: displaced homemakers, low-income individuals, Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians, individuals with disabilities, including youth who are individuals with disabilities, older individuals, ex-offenders, homeless individuals, or homeless children and youth, youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system, individuals who are English language learners, individuals who have low levels of literacy, and individuals facing substantial cultural barriers, eligible migrant and seasonal farmworkers, individuals within 2 years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act, single parents, including pregnant single women, long-term unemployed individuals, and such other groups as the Governor determines to have barriers to employment (WIOA Sec. 3(24)). See WIOA Populations with Barriers and Proposed Solutions attachment

Moving forward, the NETLWDB and its partners will work to promote existing programs that have proven to be successful and to also develop deeper connection with area services. The NETLWDB will work with the AJCs to design and implement a strategy to secure transitional jobs for individuals facing barriers to employment such as ex-offenders, individuals who are chronically unemployed, or those who have inconsistent or no work history. These services will also be combined with comprehensive employment and supportive services so that individuals can establish a work history, demonstrate success in the workplace and develop the skills that lead to entry into and retention in unsubsidized employment.

The NETLWDB promotes AJC accessibility for all job seekers and program services. All NETLWDB AJCs are fully compliant with accessibility requirements for individuals with disabilities. This includes, but is not limited to, ensuring assistive technology and materials are

in place and front-line staff members are trained in the use of this technology. In addition, the NETLWDA partners located within the AJCs ascribe to the principles of universal design of the facility, materials, service delivery and technology whenever and wherever possible and practical. Physical accessibility for people with disabilities was implemented and upgraded with the assistance of Tennessee Department Human Services (DHS) - Vocational Rehabilitation Program. The NETLWDA AJC system, in conjunction with other community disability services, strives to achieve greater educational and employment opportunities for people with disabilities. These partnerships and collaboration will assist in utilizing leveraged resources and funding from multiple resources. NETLWDA AJC staff will actively participate in professional development including, but not limited to, all disability awareness/sensitivity training to better understand how to provide quality employment services for this targeted population. Outreach and education will also be increased throughout the AJCs.

9. Description of the provision of Adult and Dislocated Worker employment and training activities.

NETLWDA covers the eight counties in Northeast TN with multiple Comprehensive and Affiliate AJC locations providing Adult and Dislocated Worker services as described in WIOA Sec. 134. Adults and Dislocated Workers have access to education, training and employment services, as well as appropriate referrals to other partner services as defined in the NETLWDB's MOU. Co-enrollment with RESEA and SNAP E&T as defined by local NETLWDB policy enhances service provision and leveraging of available funding. NETLWDA WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker services are designed to be pathways to the middle class and to maintain and build in-demand employment skills. These focus on quality services for individuals with barriers to employment as defined at 20 CFR 680.600 through 660 and are designed to assist job seekers access high quality career services, education, training and the supportive services to obtain and retain self-sufficient employment. This includes matching employers with the skilled workers they need to compete in the local and global economy. These employment and training activities are targeted to:

- Enabling businesses and employers to identify and hire qualified, skilled workers and access other supports, including education and training for their current workforce;
- Providing job seekers with the skills and credentials necessary to secure and advance in employment with sustaining wages;
- Providing access and opportunities to all job seekers, including individuals with barriers to employment such as persons with disabilities, low income or disadvantaged, the homeless, the ex-offender, the basic skills deficient or limited English proficiency.

a) Formerly incarcerated partnerships to interface with the existing regional sector pathway efforts

The NETLWDB is cognizant of the barriers of formerly incarcerated individuals, especially in the current labor market and our areas's need for skilled workers in a time of low unemployment. It is imperative that this population can access a wide range of employment and training activities that support transition to higher levels of skill attainment and/or education and training, as well as meaningful employment. The NETLWDB's AJC partners are working to expand the current system design to create and expand services designed to specifically address the barriers of formerly incarcerated individuals. This system development will be designed to provide local access to life-expanding career pathways opportunities that include approaches such as dual

enrollment, peer tutoring, and transitions to re-entry services designed to facilitate post-release success and reduce recidivism. As in all AJC services, partnerships play an important role in enhancing the availability of needed services while ensuring non-duplication of community services and incorporation of additional resources to blend and leverage to support the economic success of the population. Formerly incarcerated individuals' reentry services are provided to ex-offenders recently released. Individuals in this population need jobs in order to reenter society and become self-sufficient members of their communities. Research has shown that recidivism rates are lowered if the individual is employed within 60 days of release. Therefore, rapid re-entry into the labor market will be the primary focus. Appropriate reentry workforce development services include but are not limited to:

| | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Skills assessment | Referrals |
| Job readiness workshops | Job placement |
| Job search assistance | Job retention |
| Case management | Peer group support |

Developing career pathways in a demand-driven system will require strong partnerships with the local offices of the Department of Corrections and area organizations who serve formerly incarcerated individuals. Working with businesses who have a history of working with the population will assist partners to define the specific, essential and occupational skills needed to meet their workforce needs. Alignment and integration of partner services and resources will enhance new and existing career pathway opportunities. AJC partner staff will collaborate to develop career-planning strategies for in-demand industries and occupations.

NETLWDA is also pursuing linkages with local corrections facilities to replicate evidenced based best practices. NETLWDA proposes to establish a pilot project which will focus on outreach in the Greene County Detention Center to establish a post-release referral system for incarcerated individuals to receive targeted services in that county's AJC. The Greene County Detention Center is currently partnering with a local company in a program that provides daily transportation for inmates to and from the company's facility. Inmates receive wages which are used to pay fines, court costs, restitution, etc. NETLWDA proposes to create a pre-release and post-release program for these inmates to establish relationships and referral procedures to the new Greene County AJC for intensive job search, additional training and placement services.

The NETLWDA has reached out to the faith-based Take One program operated under the leadership of the TN Department of Corrections to provide workforce development services to the individuals who participate in the program. Strategies may include actively developing job placement opportunities.

b) Description/assessment of Adult and Dislocated Worker employment and training activities

WIOA is designed to assist job seekers to access high quality career services, education, training and the supportive services to obtain and retain self-sufficient employment. This includes matching employers with the skilled workers they need to compete in the local and global economy. The NETLWDB's AJC system's Adult and Dislocated Worker employment and training activities is addressed in the MOU which identifies each of the services as well as how the services will be delivered in the American Job Center locations. Please see the MOU

Narrative attachment.

c) Board activities coordination with statewide Rapid Response activities.

The Northeast TN Local Workforce Development Board provides Rapid Response activities by following the guidance issued by the TDLWD, as described in the Rapid Response Guide and other related TDLWD directives. The NETLWDB Staff will initiate and provide Rapid Response including establishing employer contact and coordinating the Initial Meeting and employee mass meetings. § 678.435 of the WIOA Joint Final Rule provides the opportunity for the NETLWDB, in coordination with Rapid Response activities, to provide certain business services to area employers in order to help them manage reductions in force. The NETLWDB may also provide other business services and strategies that meet the workforce needs of area employers, in accordance with partner programs' allowable activities, statutory requirements and consistent with Federal cost principles.

NETLWDB/AB&T, TDLWD staff and other system partners will respond quickly to employer, employee and community needs when layoffs and/or plant closures occur. NETLWDB staff will monitor the engagement of the local AJC partners as they respond to layoff events as described in the State plan. The primary goal will be to assure that affected workers receive accurate information on and access to available employment and training activities in a timely and effective manner.

NETLWDB staff engage employers in collaboration with the NETLWDA AJC Business Service Team. The Title I Career Service Provider and other partners will be responsible for eligibility and case management of the participants referred to employers for training and/or employment. The NETLWDB/AB&T will retain direct participant funds to be paid to employers for on-the-job training, incumbent worker training, apprenticeships, customized training, etc. as part of its employer engagement/business service function and will retain funds set-a-side for special projects/initiatives.

10. Type and availability of Youth activities, description and assessment, including individuals with disabilities, and identification of successful models of such activities.

Title I Youth Services are provided through sub-recipient(s) and partner programs covering both in-school and out-of-school youth. Assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce activities in NETLWDA includes, but is not limited to:

- coordination with NETLWDA Secondary Career and Technical Education Directors;
- regional Youth Services team;
- employer and economic development, specifically in relation to accessing data and information provided through the First Tennessee Development District;
- participation in local and regional events, such as the annual Education to Employment Summit;
- support of and participation in the WorkReady Community initiative;
- conduct focus groups with various sectors;
- assess needs via initial assessment of job seekers and employers entering each AJC;
- input and guidance as provided by the NETLWDB Youth Services Committee;
- NETLWDB staff serving on economic development and relevant community boards.

The Title I Youth service provider sub-recipient for NETLWDA is the Knoxville-Knox County Community Action Committee (K-KC CAC). Pursuant to the waiver granted by the U.S. Department of Labor, NETLWDA plans to provide services to In-School Youth as well as Out-of-School Youth.

Title I Youth staff provide determinations of eligibility for assistance; orientation to the AJC and other services available through the One-Stop delivery system; assessment of skill levels; job search and placement assistance; referrals to and coordination of activities with other programs and services, including programs and services within the One-Stop delivery system; workforce and labor market employment statistics information; and provision of all appropriate fourteen (14) youth elements, including Paid Work Experience. Title I Youth staff also provide information on eligible providers of training services, supportive services or appropriate referrals to those services and assistance. Title I Youth staff, in partnership with the participant, develop an Individual Service Strategy (ISS) to identify the employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate combination of services for the participant to achieve his or her employment goals.

Title I Youth will follow the NETLWDA AJC Electronic Referral Processes to refer to and accept referrals from all AJC Partners and external community agencies that serve this population, including secondary and post-secondary education institutions. NETLWDA staff partner cross trainings help to ensure that all AJC Partners provide appropriate mutual referrals. Title I Youth services are provided as part of the two comprehensive AJCs in Johnson City and Kingsport, and through the AJC affiliate sites in Elizabethton, Erwin, Mountain City, Greeneville, Rogersville, and Sneedville. NETLWDA Title I Youth Services Model: Please see the Youth Services Model Attachment.

11. Meeting requirements of the In-School Youth including the expenditure requirement and ITA opportunities.

In order to enhance individual participant choice in his or her education and training plans and provide flexibility to service providers, Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) may be available for OSY, age 18 to 24, using WIOA Youth funds, when appropriate. The Adult and DW Training Policies and ITA Policy will apply to Youth ITAs in order to ensure that all TDLWD expenditure requirements for In-School and Out-of-School Youth are met. The approved state waivers are incorporated into the service provision for NETLWDA youth to improve job seekers and employers outcomes. NETLWDB staff, Youth Services sub-recipients and partners are currently exploring potential In-School Youth service option to best serve this population in our area.

Goals and Outcomes from reducing the percentage of expenditures for Out-of-School youth (OSY) from seventy-five percent (75%) to fifty percent (50%):

- Consider local demographic needs and direct resources to youth populations determined to have the highest need for NETLWDA.
- Prevent at risk ISY from dropping from school and from increasing the number of out-of-school youth in NETLWDA.
- Determine how best to meet the educational and training needs of youth, regardless of school status, and specific to the population, geographical location, and economic and employment conditions throughout NETLWDA.
- Increase outreach to ISY while maintaining a focus on serving OSY in order to help

develop a larger pool of young people qualified and prepared to meet the current and future needs of employers in NETLWDA.

Goals and Outcomes in providing Individualized Training Accounts (ITAs) to at-risk in-school-youth (ISY):

- Increase the number of at-risk youth receiving ITAs in work-based programs especially pre-apprenticeship programs;
- Promote sufficient pre-apprenticeship programs that youth can access;
- Positive impact on all youth to attend pre-apprenticeship or any of the work-based services needed to close the gap in talent shortage, while providing hands on experience for youth;
- Creates a pipeline of well-educated skilled workers entering the workforce to strengthen the State's overall economy.

TDLWD and NETLWDB are responsible for monitoring ITAs, pre-apprenticeship and other services provided to at-risk youth utilizing on site and desk top reviews. This Board oversight will ensure that work-based training programs are high-quality and meeting industry needs in conjunction with the TN Department of Education (Tennessee Pathways).

12. Services to priority populations as outlined in the State Plan and how priority will be given consistent with WIOA.

All AJC core program entities, partner agencies, and staff have been trained on the WIOA Veterans Priority of Service requirements as well as the WIOA Priority of Service requirements. The information needed to evaluate and determine an individual's priority of service are collected on the initial WIOA programmatic pre-screening tools utilized in all NETLWDA AJC locations. Individuals and program applicants are not required to validate priority of service until eligibility determination is made. It is not expected that non-priority service participants must give up their place to an individual who is in a priority of service category and just starting a career and/or training service. The monitoring of priority of service populations is carried out by NETLWDB staff as well as under the auspices of the TDLWD WIOA Monitoring Guide and the PAR monitoring group. Please see the Services to Priority Populations and Veterans Priority of Service Policy attachments.

13. Local Board determination of priority populations, service provision and other state requirements.

The NETLWDB priority populations are determined by following the guidance of the TDLWD. WIOA priority populations include recipients of public assistance, other low income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient according to the priority of service requirements in WIOA Section 134(c)(3)(E) for the WIOA Adult program. Within the basic skills deficient category, particular priority is placed on individuals whose English language proficiency is limited. Veterans and Eligible Spouses receive priority under all WIOA programs. To expand access to those from other target populations, such as from the re-entry, homeless, former and current foster youth, and limited-English proficient populations, NETLWDA AJC works with community-based organizations that specialize in services to these priority populations such as the Tri-Cities Military Council (services to veterans and spouses and dependents of veterans), Youth Villages (foster children and young adults aging out of the foster care system), and the Day Reporting Center (reentry/justice involved individuals). The NETLWDB will facilitate asset mapping to enhance outreach and coordination of area services. Braiding and leveraging all

available resources will ensure a wide range of services without duplication.

14. Training services provided through ITA/contracts and coordination of funding.

An Individual Training Account (ITA) is the mechanism by which payment for occupational training service is made. Training services authorized under the WIOA Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) are provided through the use of ITAs. All participants funded with an ITA develop Individual Employment Plans (IEPs) with goals and objectives related to their selected training, and subsequent employment goals.

The NETLWDB's ITA system encourages and promotes career pathways that lead to self-sufficiency. Participants determined eligible and suitable are issued an ITA for training programs included on the Eligible Training Provider List as defined in NETLWDB policy. Training services may be provided if Career Service Provider (CSP) staff determine, after an interview, evaluation, assessment, and career planning, that the individual:

- Is unlikely or unable to obtain or retain employment, that leads to economic self-sufficiency or wages comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment through career services alone;
- Is in need of training services to obtain or retain employment that leads to self-sufficiency or wages comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment, through career services alone; and
- Has skills and qualifications to successfully participate in the selected program of training service;
- Selects a program of training that is directly linked to employment.

All training must lead to an industry recognized certification, credential, or degree upon completion. The NETLWDB has developed an ITA policy that addresses the use of ITAs and the importance of customer choice. Under WIOA, training is not an entitlement.

15. Individual Training Account Policy

Please see attached NETLWDB Individual Training Account Policy

16. Describe informed customer choice in the selection of training programs regardless of how the training services are to be provided.

As required by 20 C.F.R. 680.340, the State, in partnership with the NETLWDB, must identify providers of training services that are qualified to receive WIOA funds to train adults and dislocated workers. The WIOA system emphasizes informed consumer choice, job-driven training, provider performance, and continuous improvement. All training services, whether under ITAs or under contract, must be provided in a manner that maximizes informed consumer choice in selecting an eligible provider. The quality and selection of providers and programs of training services is vital to achieving these core principles. The Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), contains consumer information, including cost and performance information for each of the providers, so that participants can make informed choices. The LWDB, through the OSO, is responsible for ensuring that all American Job Center (AJC) staff members have access to the ETPL and are knowledgeable about utilizing the ETPL. The State and NETLWDB work together to ensure that qualified providers offering a wide variety of job-driven training programs are available while ensuring the accountability, quality, and labor-market relevance of programs of training services. Please refer to the attached NETLWDB ITA and ETPL policies.

17. Board continuous improvement of eligible providers of services and that providers meet the employment needs of local employer, worker and jobseeker.

The NETLWDB ensures service providers achieve program quality and outcomes that meet the objectives of federal, state and local programs by providing technical assistance and guidance, as needed; regularly monitoring; comparing results with federal and state standards and requiring corrective actions when necessary; following up to ascertain that corrective actions are completed; and documenting progress through regular reporting. Service provider contracts include the required outcomes and quality standards required by the NETLWDB. To ensure the performance, effectiveness and continuous improvement of the NETLWDB's service providers, its AJC delivery system and fiscal responsibilities, the NETLWDB uses an oversight, monitoring, and system performance improvement evaluation process which include, but are not limited to:

- ✓ Periodic on-site monitoring visit to ensure programmatic and statutory compliance of all funded programs
- ✓ Ongoing review and assessments of service providers' performances
- ✓ Periodic independent monitoring for programmatic and fiscal compliance by a qualified certified public accounting firm
- ✓ Ongoing assessment of labor and economic data and trends

This system improvement process serves as a tool for the NETLWDB AJCs, its partners and its service providers to provide feedback to the NETLWDB to allow for the implementation of improvement measures or take corrective action in a timely manner. NETLWDB Staff implements system improvement as a regular and systematic review of program activities, administrative systems and management practices to determine appropriateness, effectiveness, and compliance with the terms of the contract, regulations/guidelines and LWDB policies and procedures. These reviews may include technical assistance, the issuance of recommendations for corrective action in their monitoring report(s) and for follow-up on the recommendations to ensure that corrective action has been taken properly and expeditiously. The NETLWDB's monitoring reports may also identify technological and best practices strategies that align with the State and are in accordance to section 101 of WIOA. While these activities/services are required to fulfill the NETLWDB's mandated oversight responsibilities, they also provide a means to respond to labor market, economic and demographic conditions and trends in the area.

In consultation with the NETLWDB's Staff, the OSO ensures continuous improvement at each AJC location as well as the system as a whole through the utilization of TDLWD's defined AJC Certification process. AJC Certification criteria includes a documented review of how well each AJC and the system as a whole:

- ✓ Integrates available services for businesses and participants;
- ✓ Meets the workforce development needs of employers and participants;
- ✓ Operates in a cost-efficient manner;
- ✓ Coordinates services among core and recommended one stop partner programs;
- ✓ Provides maximum access to partner program services;
- ✓ Ensures equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities to participate in or benefit from center and system services;

- ✓ Takes into account job seeker feedback; and
- ✓ Supports the achievement of the negotiated local levels of performance for the performance indicators.

Performance monitoring is conducted to validate actual program performance against performance standards as established in the contract. The results of the review are used to assess progress toward goals and objectives, to identify existing or emerging problems and to trigger explanations, corrective actions and/or contract actions, as appropriate.

An independent certified public accounting firm conducts periodic programmatic, procurement and fiscal monitoring using federal and state monitoring instruments, which outline both programmatic and fiscal compliance and quality improvement factors. Monitoring reports identify findings and observations and recommendations are generated at the completion of each monitoring visit.

The NETLWDB also evaluates all programs on its ETPL, with the exception of Registered Apprenticeship Programs, annually to ensure that these training providers continue to meet subsequent eligibility requirements. TDLWD collected ETPL data provides the information necessary to determine program performance and requirements. Please refer to the attached NETLWDB Monitoring and ETPL policies.

18. *NETLWDB ETPL policy*. See ETPL Policy Attachment

19. *Coordination of transportation and other appropriate supportive services*.

To be successful in any of NETLWDA's programs, the accessibility of appropriate support services is vital. The NETLWDB has adopted a Support Services policy. The provision of supportive services is based on individual participant need and are leveraged in coordination to ensure non-duplication of supportive services.

Supportive services may be provided through AJC partner established contracts, memorandum of understanding and working relationships with bus lines, food banks, homeless shelters, bookstores, and Substance Abuse programs. The NETLWDB has policy and procedures in place to determine the methodology which documents individual need. Supportive services are not entitlements and must be supported by demonstration of financial need. The cost of supportive services must be reasonable and competitive in price. When multiple options are available for receiving supportive services, documentation must show a reasonable effort was made to determine and choose the lowest, competitively priced service available.

Transportation has long been identified as one of the major barriers for employment throughout the eight counties. This problem has to be tackled on both regional and local levels and must include both urban and rural communities to be successful. Public transportation is often not available. The NETLWDB will continue to actively participate in conversations around workforce transportation and will explore other transportation models and usage of technology in connecting participants to trainings and employment.

20. *NETLWDB supportive service policy*. See Support Services Policy Attachment

LOCAL PLAN – VISION, GOALS AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

21. *NETLWDB, working with the core program entities, will expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment.*

The NETLWDB's continued success in workforce development and integrated service delivery are evident in the rich local and regional partnerships that have been established and maintained for over three decades. There have been many regulatory and programmatic changes over time, but the local workforce development system of partnerships working toward a common vision has evolved to meet new demands. The NETLWDB's AJCs serve as the foundation of ensuring that all employment and training services are delivered within the framework of the skills needs of the business community in the eight county workforce development area.

The AJC partners, led by the NETLWDB's vision, are committed to their roles as leaders in local and regional economic and workforce development. The WDB is cognizant that to provide more depth and breadth in the services across the eight counties and that active partnerships are fundamental. AJC services are delivered through the comprehensive and affiliate AJC locations, partner connections and through the use of the Mobile AJC. AJC partners braid, weave and leverage services to create and cast a wider net throughout NETLWDA. This, in turn, supports Tennessee's workforce development vision and strategies.

The NETLWDB's focus on a successful workforce development system is one that supports business growth and global competitiveness, centers on the skill sets needed in the local labor market, and how workers can obtain those skills through education, training and job retention and succession with an emphasis on Career Pathways. The AJC design promotes, continual skill gains, wage progression, retention, advancement and/or rapid re-employment services and personal development activities. The local AJC system design targets the needs of the job seeker in the larger context of serving our business customer. Success is measured by the ongoing skill development and wage growth of the job seeker and by attaining the performance metric for employer engagement.

The NETLWDB is committed to working with core partners to expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services. Expansion strategies will include, but are not limited to:

- (1) Improving our outreach and awareness efforts to the community, particularly with regard to populations with barriers to employment.
- (2) Promoting the creation of additional effective electronic linkages while maintaining electronic service delivery systems that are user-friendly, effective, and accessible to individuals who reside in remote parts of the area.
- (3) Maintaining efforts to identify individuals with barriers to employment during intake.
- (4) Making sure that the participants of all core partners are made aware of the full scope of services that are available to them through the AJC system.

To measure our effectiveness in expanding access to services, the NETLWDB will analyze OSO and AJC partner reports as outlined in the MOU and sub-recipient contracts and will make

recommendations in continuing to improve access to services.

22. Board facilitation of the development of career pathways and co-enrollment and how access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential, academic or industry recognized will be improved.

Developing career pathways in a demand-driven system will require strong partnerships with organizations who serve individuals with disabilities and other populations with barriers to employment. Alignment and integration of partner services and resources will enhance new and existing career pathway opportunities for our students, job seekers and workers, including those facing multiple barriers to employment. The incorporation of career planning strategies throughout our AJC system will serve as the linkage connecting career pathways with in-demand industries and occupations. The linkage provides access to activities that leads to an industry-recognized certification that is portable and stackable.

The NETLWDB has increased attention to the integration of academic and occupational preparation to make stronger connections to high-wage, high-growth occupations in the eight counties of Northeast Tennessee. It is recognized that pathway opportunities are not limited to a postsecondary credential but are applicable to any individual at any stage of their career.

The NETLWDB facilitates engagement with groups/organizations such as Economic Development, Chambers of Commerce, CTE Directors, local small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors to identify high-wage and high-growth occupations. Alignment and integration of partner services and resources such as Career Connect, CareerQuest, Career Pathways, Incumbent Workers Training grant programs, On-the-Job Training Programs, Customized Training Programs, and Work Experience programs enhance new and existing career pathway and work-based learning opportunities for individuals, including those facing multiple barriers to employment.

Tennessee Pathways provides a strong correlation with the WIOA defined career pathways and elements. Partnering with our Tennessee Pathways Regional Coordinator enhances this initiative's seamless approach to developing long term, workforce pipelines throughout Northeast Tennessee and has been recognized as an approach to reach education goals as well as workforce development goals. NETLWDB's partnerships with local Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs of study and their incorporation of work-based learning and access to early post-secondary opportunities (dual enrollment, dual credit, AP, IT, etc.) further enhances access to academic and industry recognized credentials.

23. Implementation of IWT programs, OJTs, customized training, industry and sector strategies, apprenticeships, career pathways initiatives and utilization of effective business intermediaries along with other business services and strategies designed to meet the needs of employers in support of the business service strategy.

The NETLWDB incorporates Consolidated Business Grants including Incumbent Worker (IW) and Registered Apprenticeship training programs along with on-the-job training (OJT) programs, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies, career pathway initiatives, and other initiatives to support the Board's vision and strategic goals. The NETLWDA offers these programs to provide either occupational or educational training to employees of the local area's businesses. Training addresses skill gaps of the incumbent workers, impacts company stability, and enhances the employee retention. OJT continues to provide a bridge between employers and workers, offering a timely and cost effective solution to meet the needs of both. OJT is an

effective option for upgrading skills and ultimately retaining employment. The specific training helps the incumbent worker retain a job with changing skill requirements, or can upgrade their skill qualifying them for a different job with the employer. This improved knowledge or certification obtained from the training adds value to the company and often leads to an opportunity for advancement and/or wages increase. Please see the Business Services Attachment.

24. Coordination of education and workforce development activities with secondary and post secondary education programs and activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services and avoid duplication of services.

Coordination and the reduction of duplication of services is supported through the use of the Jobs4TN/VOS integrated state management system. AJC partner staff, where program authorizing statute permits, maintain and monitor the delivery of individualized career services in the Virtual One Stop (VOS) system. Coordination is maintained and enhanced through a trained and equipped AJC and partner staff. Staff training is an ongoing learning process providing knowledge, skills and motivation to provide superior services to include individualized career services to job seekers inclusive of the NETLWDB priority populations in an integrated, regionally focused framework of service delivery. Center staff are cross-trained, as appropriate, to increase staff capacity, expertise and efficiency as well to enrich the customer experience. Cross training drives a solid understanding of each program, sharing of staff expertise and supports all staff to better serve all customers. It is important to ensure staff are aware how their particular function supports and contributes to the overall vision of the local board, as well as its importance to the seamless delivery of individualized services. The NETLWDB committees, as well as active participation in the Regional Inter-Agency Strategic Coordination Team, supports a workforce development system that strives to develop and maintain operational policies and procedures to support staff training local practices and program integration resulting in improved coordination without duplication of services.

25. Support the State Plan service alignment strategy to work with the entities carrying out core programs and other workforce development programs, including CTE.

The NETLWDB has increased attention to the integration of academic and occupational preparation to make stronger connections to high-wage, high-growth occupations in the eight counties of Northeast TN. It is recognized that pathway opportunities are not limited to a postsecondary credential but are applicable to any individual at any stage of their career. This strategy is further discussed in question 22 of this Plan.

Coordination to support service alignment of core programs and other workforce development programs, including programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, occur through means such as bi-monthly NETLWDB meetings, quarterly NETLWDB committee meetings, other service alignment strategy meetings, e-mail communication, conference calls and partner cross trainings. The NETLWDB supports the coordination of secondary and post-secondary education programs and services through strategies such as:

- Acting as an information source for educators and employers in the area in an effort to bring them together to strategize local need, as occurred during the first annual Education to Employment Regional Summit on August 29, 2018.

- Ensuring that educators sit on the local board and board committees which will enhance the services to the customers at the AJC system. Utilizing the expertise of each partner ensures that consistent and high quality services are received by AJC customers and ameliorates the potential for duplication of services.
- Ensuring that local workforce staff sit on Advisory Committees for post secondary institutions, including community colleges and TCATs. This will serve as the linkage back to the NETLWDB and communicate the relevant activities back to the workforce board.
- Participating in career exploration events that are held for secondary education students with partnership from workforce and post-secondary entities, such as the annual CareerQuest.
- Working in close coordination with local and regional secondary and post-secondary institutions in order to support and help ensure the achievement of Drive to 55 goals.
- Expanding use of the Jobs4TN system by NETLWDB staff, AJC staff and required partner staff will enable real time sharing of data and information to identify trends and promote response to customers being served.
- Encouraging both job seekers and businesses to utilize the Jobs4TN/VOS system and tools which enhances the customer's experience using technology.
- Recognizing the role that the NETLWDB must play in driving this model in order to build an effective and highly efficient workforce system.

26. Identification and reasoning behind the NETLWDB's new Plan Element.

Public Assistance Recipient to Self-Sufficiency. The NETLWDB has chosen the Public Assistance Recipient to Self-Sufficiency element as its focus area. NETLWDB, through its partnership with the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) and the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program, collaborates through co-location in the American Job Centers. This collaboration is integral to the intake, initial assessment, referral, in-depth assessment and co-enrollment strategies utilized by AJC staff. The One Stop Operator (OSO) is responsible for ensuring that SNAP and TANF participants have access to all services and for coordinating community services and resources. As a result of improved communication, orientation, referral and follow up strategies, co-enrollments of public assistance recipients into Title I have increased substantively since restructuring of internal processes. Participants receive job development/job search assistance, training/education, wrap around supportive services, work experience, and Adult Education services, as appropriate. The AJC team members follow up with targeted placement strategies, including opportunity for work experience, transitional jobs and on the job training. Please see the Public Assistance Recipient to Self-Sufficiency attachment.

LOCAL PLAN - PERFORMANCE

27. The plan includes information on the actions the Local Board will take toward becoming or remaining a high performing board, consistent with the factors developed by the SWDB.

NETLWDB will continue its practices and processes that have, to date, resulted in a high-performing board that is business-led, market-responsive, results-oriented and integrated with other workforce development system partners. The NETLWDB fosters customer service excellence, seeks continuous improvement and demonstrates value by enhancing employment

opportunities for all individuals. The NETLWDB actions in remaining a high performing board include, but are not limited to:

- Analyze, recommend and support workforce development policies toward talent development, resource alignment and system effectiveness
- Assess, evaluate, and recommend changes to align policies and programs
- Continue to develop and provide oversight for the operation and continuous improvement for its AJC system
- Embrace and communicate the vision for workforce development
- Support employer-led high-quality sector partnerships
- Maintain constant communication with key stakeholders on the organization's achievements and plans
- Achieve outcomes and results through alignment with system partners and leveraging of resources
- Monitor the implementation of strategies and performance achievement
- Identify strategic sectors and catalyze partnerships with industry to meet talent and skills needs
- Support and/or assist in defining/identifying and assessing progress while building capacity of high quality partnerships
- Ensure evidence-based, data-driven discussions and regular reporting on partner aligned indicators
- Guide the system coordination and the roles and responsibilities across partners, inclusive of identifying and disseminating best practices in service delivery through a career pathways system

The NETLWDB is committed to focused and deliberate policies, practices and processes that maximize the competitiveness of the businesses and the productivity of the workforce resulting in increased economic prosperity in the NETLWDA.

28. Projected local service levels.

Projected service levels for Program Year 2018 are listed below. These service levels may be amended.

| PY 2018 Projected Service Levels | |
|---|-----|
| Adult | 310 |
| Dislocated Worker | 90 |
| Youth | 180 |

29. Negotiated performance levels to be used by the Board for measuring NETLWDA's services as well as for the fiscal agent, ETPL and the AJC system as a whole.

The NETLWDB uses the negotiated performance measures as the indicators for fiscal agent, contracted service providers, administrative entity, and contracted sub-recipient service providers. Factors such as program enrollment, active participants, measureable skills gains, credential attainments, placements, wages and retention are incorporated into the NETLWDB's strategic plan. The OSO is accountable for meeting defined AJC standards and deliverables.

The NETLWDB uses various reports from the SWDB and from the Jobs4TN system as well as required sub-recipient reporting. In addition to program reports, the effectiveness of the fiscal entity is measured through independent audits, independently agreed upon procedures, and administrative monitoring conducted by TDLWD and PAR. Quarterly meetings with the OSO, the sub-recipient service providers and partners result in real time evaluation of programmatic progress and defines future expectations. Quarterly IFA review meetings will be held to ensure compliance with the executed agreement.

30. WIOA Common Measures

The NETLWDB is committed to the WIOA vision which includes six common performance accountability measures that apply to the WIOA core programs. Attainment of Common Measures by all partners documents the positive impact and efficacy of workforce development services throughout the system in a quantifiable evidence-based manner. The six Common Performance Measures are reflected below.

| Measure: Employment 2 nd Quarter After Exit | Negotiated Level | Measure: Employment in 4 th Quarter After Exit | Negotiated Level |
|---|------------------|---|------------------|
| Adults | 83.0% | Adults | 83.0% |
| Dislocated Workers | 81.0% | Dislocated Workers | 81.0% |
| Youth (Education or Employment) | 79.0% | Youth (Education or Employment) | 75.0% |
| Wagner-Peyser / Labor Exchange | 69.5% | Wagner-Peyser / Labor Exchange | 69.0% |
| Adult Education | Baseline | Adult Education | Baseline |
| Vocational Rehabilitation | 59.0% | Vocational Rehabilitation | 54.5% |
| Measure: Median Earnings 2 nd Quarter After Exit | Negotiated Level | Measure: Effectiveness in Serving Employers | Negotiated Level |
| Adults | \$6,633 | Adults | Baseline |
| Dislocated Workers | \$6,900 | Dislocated Workers | Baseline |
| Youth (Education or Employment) | NA | Youth (Education or Employment) | Baseline |
| Wagner-Peyser / Labor Exchange | \$4,713 | Wagner-Peyser / Labor Exchange | Baseline |
| Adult Education | Baseline | Adult Education | Baseline |
| Vocational Rehabilitation | Baseline | Vocational Rehabilitation | Baseline |
| Measure: Credential Attainment Rate | Negotiated Level | Measure: Measurable Skill Gains | Negotiated Level |
| Adults | 58.0% | Adults | Baseline |
| Dislocated Workers | 68.5% | Dislocated Workers | Baseline |
| Youth | 70.0% | Youth | Baseline |
| Wagner-Peyser / Labor Exchange | NA | Wagner-Peyser / Labor Exchange | NA |
| Adult Education | Baseline | Adult Education | TBD |
| Vocational Rehabilitation | TBD | Vocational Rehabilitation | TBD |

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS, ASSURANCES, AND EVALUATION

31. Use of technology in AJC system including implementing and transitioning to an integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management for WIOA programs

The AJC model largely consists of brick and mortar resources allowing staff and technology to deliver services to job seekers and area employers. The digital age is moving the AJC model to incorporate various technologies which allow services to take place anywhere the career seeker or business has access to technology. The Tennessee AJC service delivery system, through Jobs4TN, is accessible on the internet twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week, and Zendesk is available as deployed by TDLWD. Businesses and job seekers can access

employment and training resources and information of not only the NETLWDB AJC service delivery system, but also access additional resources and information.

AJC staff work with the NETLWDA partners to ensure immediate access to services and resources. AJCs are equipped with computers, phones, fax, printers and internet service which are available to facilitate the transition into employment, research training opportunities and access partner services. Individuals are encouraged to attend an Orientation which outlines the full array of services available through the AJC.

32. Provide information regarding the use of technology in the AJC delivery system, including a description of how the Local Board facilitates access to services, including in remote areas, through the use of technology and other means.

The NETLWDB staff will convene a technology team comprised of AJC partner staff, stakeholders and subject matter experts to research, design and implement strategies and services that will further facilitate access to services. Service provisions that will be reviewed include continued alignment and use of Jobs4TN as well as revamping and extending the utilization of a local AJC website. The local AJC website might incorporate additional information and services such as web-based seminars on resume instruction and practicing interviewing; toolkits; live streaming of workshops taking place in an AJC and the possibility of additional venues for technology based employer interviews. Incorporation of the Mobile AJC is described in this Plan and the executed MOU Narrative attachment.

33. Describe how AJC system partners, entities, OSO complies with WIOA Sec. 188 and ADA for physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology and materials for individuals with disabilities, including staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities.

The NETLWDA AJC system, including OSO and partners, complies with WIOA Sec. 188, and provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended, regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology and materials for individuals with disabilities, including providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities. The AJC Certification process includes documentation that all services and facilities are accessible and available to job seekers with disabilities in terms of equality with all other persons. The NETLWDA OSO participates in technical assistance training to ensure human centered design and incorporates additional resources to assist customers with disabilities in the AJC's. In addition to assistive technologies, staff provide large print workshop materials for visually impaired customers and partner with the National Federation of the Blind to have the menu of services transcribed and printed in Braille.

Compliance monitoring is conducted at the local and state level to ensure that NETLWDA programs, services, technology and materials are accessible and available at the AJCs. All local workforce system staff are trained, either as an entire staff or through their respective agencies, in the provisions of WIOA Section 188 and the ADA of 1990, as amended, so that when a customer with a disability visits the Center, all staff have the understanding and knowledge of how to accommodate the individual's needs. Requests for assistance from one or more of the partners may be solicited depending upon the type of accommodation being requested.

34. Executed cooperative agreements which define how providers and partners carry out the requirements for integration of and access to the entire set of services available in the AJC system, with respect to efforts that will

enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities.

This question is addressed in Question 3 of this Plan and in the attached MOU Narrative.

35. Fiscal Management

a. Entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds described in WIOA as determined by CLEO/Governor.

The Alliance for Business and Training (AB&T) is a 501(c)3, non-profit, public corporation. AB&T has been designated as the Fiscal Agent for disbursement of WIOA funds by the Chief Local Elected Official, through the execution of an Interlocal Agreement signed by the Mayors of each of the NETLWDA eight (8) counties. AB&T has been providing workforce services, including designation as Fiscal Agent, since 1985. As Fiscal Agent, AB&T disburses WIOA funds and provides reports on all disbursements. AB&T is audited annually by the independent accounting firm Blackburn/Childers/Steagall and undergoes annual fiscal monitoring by the TDLWD PAR unit.

b. Local procurement policies and competitive procurement processes utilized.

The Alliance for Business and Training has developed and implemented Procurement Policies which comply with the 2 CFR Part 200/Uniform Guidance and which comply with policies, guidance memos and directives issued by the TN Department of Labor and Workforce Development. These Procurement Policies have been reviewed and approved by the County Mayors and by the corporate Board of Directors for the Alliance for Business and Training. Please see the Procurement Policy attachment.

c. MPCR requirements

At its meeting on November 9, 2018, the State Workforce Board voted to retain the 40% MPCR rate for FY 2019. The requirement to attain the required MPCR level is included in the contract with the Career Service Provider (CSP) and Youth Service Provider sub-recipients. AB&T's Finance Department monitors the MPCR monthly to evaluate the status and to identify and address potential risks which may negatively impact this metric.

36. Strategic approaches regarding the transfer of Title I workforce funds including maximum amount and/or percentage that is authorized to be transferred on an annual basis.

NETLWDA evaluates expenditures and enrollment of participants by funding stream monthly. NETLWDA retains the option to redesignate up to 100% of funds between Adult and Dislocated Worker to ensure availability of resources and flexibility to meet changing customer needs.

37. Method of funds transfer between the Adult and Dislocated Worker funding streams.

AB&T Finance Department evaluates the need for redesignation of funds, identifies specific amounts and requests permission from the CLEO and NETLWDB Chair to execute the request. The request is then entered into the Grants4TN system.

38. Use of IWT funds as outlined in WIOA sec. 134(d)(4)(A)(i).

The NETLWDB has enacted a Consolidated Business Grant Policy which includes use of local formula funds for Incumbent Worker Training, up to the 20% maximum percentage of said funds. Local funds are awarded under this policy using a competitive process which specifies criteria which businesses must meet in order to receive an award under this WIOA element.

Businesses are required to maintain accurate records of the project implementation process and certify that all training provided under this section has been completed according to terms of the signed contracts. IWT 20% grants are evaluated based upon the successful completion of training, number of employees trained, beginning/ending wages, potential for employee advancement and trainee evaluations.

39. Use of funds for transitional jobs as outlined in WIOA Sec. 134(d)(5).

The NETLWDB enacted a Work Based Learning Policy which includes opportunity to provide transitional jobs to individuals with barriers to employment who are chronically unemployed or have an inconsistent work history. The NETLWDB policy restricts the implementation of this work based learning strategy to not more than 10% of local formula funds. Transitional jobs are time limited, aligned with the individual's specific needs for skill training and hands on job experience. Transitional jobs are used in combination with comprehensive employment and supportive service strategies to assist the individual in establishing a productive work history, demonstrating success in the workplace and developing skills that will lead to attainment and retention of unsubsidized employment.

40. Executed cooperative agreements regarding integration and service access within the AJC system that will enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities. Include staff cross training, technical assistance, use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration and coordination.

All cooperative agreements, including those relevant to services for individuals with disabilities, are included in the MOU Narrative Attachment.

41. Title VI training to all service providers, OSO and Board.

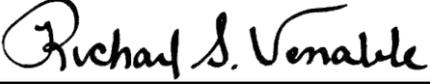
All NETLWDA sub-recipients, including Knoxville-Knox County Community Action Committee (K-KC CAC) which provides One Stop Operator, Career Services, and Youth Services and the First TN Human Resource Agency (FTHRA), which provides services under the Senior Community Service Employment Program, conduct Title VI training for staff. Staff of the Alliance for Business and Training, who serve as Fiscal Agent and staff to the NETLWDB, participate annually in Title VI training provided by an external subject matter expert. These staff are required to sign in, and a copy of the sign in sheet is placed in each employee's file as documentation of the training. This information is included in the Title VI Attachment. Title VI training for NETLWDB members will be distributed via email/electronic link to the US Department of Justice certified training. Board members will provide documentation of their completion of this training.

NEW PARTNERSHIP ELEMENT – PUBLIC ASSISTANCE RECIPIENT TO SELF-SUFFICIENCY – Please see the Public Assistance Recipient to Self-Sufficiency attachment.

SIGNATURE PAGE

This 2018-2020 WIOA Strategic Plan represents the Northeast Tennessee Local Workforce Development Board's (NETLWDB) efforts to deploy an effective and efficient workforce system infrastructure which addresses critical labor market challenges in the Northeast Tennessee Local Workforce Development Area (NETLWDA). The NETLWDA is composed of Carter, Greene, Hancock, Hawkins, Johnson, Sullivan, Unicoi and Washington Counties. The Mission of the NETLWDB is to promote the economic vitality of the region by providing a collaborative system that meets the talent needs of business, industry and the workforce. The NETLWDB Vision is to ensure that Northeast Tennessee is a globally competitive region where business and industry continue to have a qualified, diverse workforce and to ensure that individuals have career opportunities in a prosperous and sustainable regional economy.

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| <p>Northeast Tennessee Local Workforce Development Board Chair</p> <p> James "Jay" Richardson</p> <p>January 18, 2019 Date</p> |
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| <p>Chief Local Elected Official</p> <p> Richard Venable</p> <p>January 18, 2019 Date</p> |
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