

# WIOA State Plan for the State of Utah

## Utah's Vision

A strong economy depends on a world-class workforce. Utah will continue to enhance and expand collaborative efforts with employers, educational institutions and government agencies through business development and partnership in key sectors and occupations to make this happen.

Through its implementation of WIOA, Utah will increase access to and opportunities for the employment, education, training and support services that individuals—particularly those with barriers to employment—need to succeed in the workforce.

## Partners

The role of the core partners is to ensure that employment and training services are coordinated and complementary, and that job seekers can acquire the skills and credentials that meet employer needs.

Core partners include:

- Adult and Dislocated Worker Program
- Youth, Wagner-Peyser Act programs
- Adult Education and Family Literacy Act programs
- Vocational Rehabilitation programs

Under WIOA, partners that are jointly responsible for workforce and economic development, educational and other human-resource programs collaborate to create a seamless, customer-focused one-stop delivery system. The required partners must collaborate and align their services to enhance access for job seekers and businesses.

Required partners include:

- Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)
- Veterans job counseling, training and placement services
- Career and Technical Education (CTE)
- Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)
- Community Services Block Grant employment and training activities
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) employment and training programs
- Unemployment Compensation programs
- Programs authorized under the Social Security Act Title IV, Part A (TANF)
- Job Corps
- National Farmworkers Jobs program
- Indian Training Education Center

## Statewide Input

Utah's State Workforce Development Board (SWDB) led the development of Utah's Unified Plan. The SWDB created workgroups assigned to craft required sections of Utah's plan and to work together to ensure the vision and goals established by the Governance Committee provided the base for the strategies, activities and services outlined in the plan. Input was solicited from government agencies, nonprofit organizations, local government, employers and elected officials. Utah's plan was presented at six town hall meetings throughout the state, and available online for public comment. As a result of the extensive collaboration and effort that went into developing Utah's

four year plan, the workforce system partners have continued to work closely together focusing on the activities and goals outlined in the plan.

### **Strategic Plan**

Utah's plan includes strategies to achieve its vision and goals. The foundation of Utah's plan is built upon utilizing data, partnerships and its resources to implement strategies that support operations in providing services to individuals and employers. Utah is committed to changing and/or adjusting its strategies as needed to meet the state's workforce needs. Utah's workforce partners have received annual updates about Utah's economic conditions which have largely continued on trends consistent with the initial analysis used to develop Utah's plan.

Workforce development activities include:

- Identifying targeted industry sectors and occupations; aligning programs and services to support them; and ensure involvement from business and education partners
- Setting collaborative performance goals, sharing information/data and working together to resolve problems and address any gaps
- Collaborating and coordinating on training, marketing and feedback
- Utilizing existing committees, workgroups and programs while working to align and share resources when it is appropriate
- Holding regular SWDB and committee meetings as required by Utah's plan

### **Economic Analysis: Economic, Workforce, and Workforce Development Activities Analysis**

Utah's strategic plan and vision are based on analysis of the state's current economy and workforce. This analysis served as the basis for developing data-driven goals for preparing Utah's workforce as well as strategies for aligning, coordinating and integrating programs to support economic growth. Utah identified four major economic areas within the state: the Wasatch Front (Utah's principle urban area), the Bear River Area, the Eastern Region and the Central/Southwestern Area. The latter three have enough distance or dissimilarity from Utah's urban core to warrant their own regional identifications.

Since 83 percent of the state's employment is embodied in the Wasatch Front, the overall state profile serves as a proxy for the profile of that urban core. Select urban variables may be isolated for further discussion.

#### **Utah's Economic Performance**

In 2017, the Utah economy is roughly eight years beyond the Great Recession's employment low point. Utah's labor market has recovered and is growing robustly. While a few lingering effects remain, like lagging labor force participation, they are limited and decrease with each year of employment rebound.

Utah has enjoyed strong, above-average employment growth since 2012. This has helped the state to re-employ much of the large unemployed labor pool created by the Great Recession, and to also absorb Utah's high number of new labor force entrants each year. This stands in contrast to many other states' post-recession performance. Utah unemployment, at 3.0 percent, is at its lowest level since 2007. The strong economy and available jobs have also lead to strong labor in-migration over the past two years. Overall, the Utah economy is humming along at a pace reminiscent of its pre-recession performance, and it would take a significant national economic setback to knock the Utah economy off its current trajectory. With this in mind, it is not anticipated that the Utah WIOA economic plan will need much if any revision.

Most of the state's geographic areas are contributing to Utah's economic gains. The 80-mile Wasatch Front corridor, from Ogden to Payson, accounts for 83 percent of all Utah employment. The metropolitan areas are leading Utah's strong job growth. (see Figure 1 at: <http://jobs.utah.gov/wioa/wioaplan2016graphs.pdf>). The non-metropolitan areas follow the lead of the metropolitan area. Yet too often the non-metropolitan areas, due to a less diversified economic base, are subject to the ebbs and flows of a particular industrial segment, such as oil and gas activity or tourism. Currently, those industries are doing well in the non-metropolitan areas and are allowing the non-metropolitan areas to share in the state's overall prosperity.

There is much national talk about the stress that is to come upon the labor market when the baby boom generation retires en masse. This is a valid concern at the national level but not an issue in Utah. The U.S. labor force is dominated by 45-to-60-year-old workers. In contrast, 25-to-40-year-old workers dominate the Utah labor force (see Figure 2 at: <http://jobs.utah.gov/wioa/wioaplan2016graphs.pdf> ). In Utah, it is likely that every baby boomer will be replaced by two young workers (see Figure 3 at: <http://jobs.utah.gov/wioa/wioaplan2016graphs.pdf> ). This is not to say that some particular industries will not be impacted, but overall, the Utah economy should be able to weather the loss of the baby boom generation quite well.

### **Gender Profile and Part-Time Employment**

Males account for 58 percent of Utah's labor force. Of all available working-age males, 79 percent are active in the labor force. That is more than at the national level where only 69 percent of males are active. This is a function of Utah having the youngest labor force in the nation (the young are more active than the old). The state's female labor-force participation largely mirrors the national average of 57 percent.

Part-time employment is a key segment in the Utah labor market. Utah has a higher percentage of its jobs as part time than seen across the nation as a whole. Roughly one-quarter of all Utah jobs are part time (see Figure 3 at: <http://jobs.utah.gov/wioa/wioaplan2016graphs.pdf> ). Part-time employment is often portrayed as negative, with the portrayal implying that part-time employment is a shortfall—an unwanted consequence of an economy that is not strong enough to produce more full-time employment or is trying to get by on the cheap. But what if part-time employment was welcomed and wanted by the labor force? Would it then be a negative, or might it instead be an economic strength?

Around 35 percent of all Utah female workers work part time (see Figure 4 at: <http://jobs.utah.gov/wioa/wioaplan2016graphs.pdf> ). Yet when these part-time female workers are asked how many would rather be working full time, less than 10 percent responded in the affirmative. One concludes that part-time employment is a work-life balance issue for many Utahns and therefore is an economic asset.

Males and females are not distributed equally across the state's various industry groups.

### **Economic Outlook**

Currently the national economy is on a sound footing and is providing a foundation upon which Utah can continue to operate within a favorable economic environment. Yet there are winds of change that may emerge in 2018 that makes one recognize a national recession is eventually on the horizon. Many economic pundits are basing this on the calendar alone as the current national economic recovery is the second longest in history and will be the longest by 2019. But that alone will not bring about a recession, as recessions come to fruition through economic imbalances. But given the length of this recovery and the historic patterns of the economy, a national recession in the next few years is highly probable. A repeat of the Great Recession though is highly unlikely. The next recession, as one pundit has opined, will be a normal "garden variety" recession. If that is the case, Utah may override this anticipated setback with minimal disturbance. This is based upon

Utah's past history. There have been several former "garden variety" national recessions where Utah's economy slowed but still continued to add jobs. Unemployment may rise a bit, but not to any stressful level. The demands put upon the Utah economy for more jobs by ever expanding population growth require a strong national recession to mitigate this effect.

Utah's current strong labor market plays favorably for workers who might otherwise look to the state for economic support. As the labor pool has tightened and employers widen their search for labor resources, disadvantaged workers and those needing economic assistance morph into a more attractive labor resource. Opportunities for state agency clientele generally should continue to be bright throughout 2018. The horizon becomes cloudier as one looks toward 2019 and beyond as the economy is anticipated to weaken.

### **Existing Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations**

The vast majority of industries in Utah have strong existing demand. Utah's overall employment growth rate is just under 3.0 percent (long-term average) and has been higher than that across the prior three years. This high level of sustained employment growth comes from the contribution of many industries. Therefore, existing demand is broad across many industries and by extension many occupations.

Utah's overall economy is very diverse, with its industry employment distribution mirroring the national industry employment distribution. This industry diversity fuels a diverse industry demand and helps to keep an economy buoyant and balanced during times of recession.

Utah's employment base has grown by 10 percent across the past three years. It is a smaller undertaking to make a list of industries that have subpar, stagnant or declining employment profiles than a list of robust industries.

Mining and government administration stand out as two major industries with a less than favorable outlook. Mining is subject to variable swings of the commodity markets. Oil is currently level but is not anticipating any significant gains. Coal mining, given its current stigma in the global environment debate, does not have a favorable future. Though mining is less than 1 percent of Utah's employment base, there are several rural Utah economies where mining is a dominant force.

Consistent strong population growth is the driving factor behind Utah's average annual long-term growth rate of 3.0 percent. Therefore, industries directly sensitive to population growth are always listed as existing industry demand, particularly education and healthcare. Those industries were the only two to not lose employment during the Great Recession. Construction is another industry sensitive to population growth, but unlike the two just mentioned, construction is more vulnerable to the economy's ebbs and flows, thus more cyclical. Currently, construction is in a strong phase.

Outside of the previously mentioned mining and government administration, wholesale trade has the weakest three-year job growth at 5 percent. All remaining industry sectors are growing faster than that. Additional industry growth areas worth noting are professional and business services, financial activities, and the hospitality industry.

With such a wide industry demand comes an equally broad occupational outlook. Occupations supporting education and healthcare are always in demand in Utah. Occupations supporting Utah's favored cluster industries, like information technology or life sciences are also in high demand. These include computer systems design and analysis, network and database administration, web design, engineering, mathematical sciences, and other similar high-education, high-end professional occupations.

The manufacturing industry has grown as well. Another area of particular need is in some of the production-type, middle skill areas like machinist, welders, tool and die makers, etc. This is signaled by both higher-than-average advertised wages on new job orders for these occupations, and also by the aggressive injection of particular businesses to sponsor cooperative programs within the local

high schools and technical colleges to customize training programs toward these generally blue-collar occupations.

These are some of the occupations where an advanced skill set is the common theme and require some training and investment by both the business community and individuals. But with a Utah unemployment rate in the low 3.0-percent range, even occupations accepting a lesser skill set are offering ample job opportunities in Utah.

### **Emerging Industry Sectors and Occupation**

Even though nearly all industrial sectors grow regularly from year to year, ten year industry projections do bring forth both major and specific industry groups that stand out for greater-than-average expansion. They are presented in Figure 15 at this link:  
<http://jobs.utah.gov/sites/default/wioa/wioaplan2016graphs.pdf>.

The industries of particularly fast growth are labeled as Specific Industry, and one can also see from the Major Industry parent that there are particular major industry groups that will grow aggressively—in particular healthcare, and professional and technical services. “Emerging”, we have identified, is when an industry projects to increase its share of total employment by a factor of 10 percentage points across the next ten years.

At the same link, in Figure 16, the same criterion is employed. Using this criterion created a long list, therefore it was shortened to include only an increase of 20 percent or greater.

A broad category of occupational mix that will be in high demand and sometimes short labor supply is STEM occupations. A good, comprehensive list of STEM occupations can be found on the O\*Net website at the following link: <https://www.onetonline.org/find/stem?t=0&g=Go>

Utah has developed tools to help students, educators and others interested in career evaluation. These range from the Wage and Occupational Openings Data (WOOD) tool to the Occupational Explorer profile to the newly developed for WIOA purposes and user interactive Occupational Comparisons Dashboard tool. These can be accessed at this link: <http://jobs.utah.gov/wi/occi.html>

### **Employers’ Employment Needs**

One of the most important occupational groupings to not just Utah but any state economy are the STEM-based occupations. Their common theme is the need for high levels of education, high intellect, robust and dynamic thinking and problem solving, good management and organization skills, proficiency in the mathematics and science disciplines, superior communication skills with clear and detailed expression, and proficiency to detail. These are skills and abilities that take years of training and economic resources to obtain. These are the skills and occupations that put an economy on the leading edge of innovation, growth, relevance, and opportunity.

Given the robust level of consistent growth in Utah industries that employ a significant portion of STEM occupations, this implies the state is generally finding the supply of labor that it needs. There is general dialogue from the employer community that it would like to have even more of this labor supply made available, which implies that the Utah job growth rate has the potential to be even higher if there was an ample labor pool of workers with STEM-based skills and proficiencies.

Yet there are lesser occupational categories (based upon wage compensation) that have their own level of need and in some cases, perceived shortages. These may largely be considered support occupations or infrastructure occupations for the greater economy. The appeal of these types of jobs is their ability to offer some living-wage compensation to people with aptitudes not built for higher education and/or the means to achieve higher education.

The desire of some job-training programs is to help people get into any occupation. Then there are other programs designed to help workers take the next step above these types of occupations, to move higher up the wage ladder with jobs that can pull a worker toward a more middle-income

existence. These are jobs that generally pay between \$30,000 and \$49,000 per year. A sampling of such occupations can be found on Figure 12 at this link:  
<http://jobs.utah.gov/sites/default/wioa/wioaplan2016graphs.pdf>

Occupational projections are produced every two years by DWS' Workforce Research and Analysis (WRA) unit along with occupational median wages. This acts as a primary tool for sorting occupations by pay, educational requirements and job outlooks. Specific targeting of various training programs or initiatives can be analyzed and supported with this traditional labor market information. This data can also be augmented with what is known as "real-time" labor market information. This entails examining the summarization of electronic job board job postings and compiling summary statistics. Help Wanted Online® (HWOL) is the real-time labor market information tool that DWS utilizes. This offers a current look into the quantity and types of jobs employers are offering.

Advertised occupations can be sorted by quantity of job ads, geographies, income levels, educational requirements, certifications, and desired skills (both hard and soft skills). Some of these variables are not available for measure from the traditional labor market information tools generally provided by either the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics or the Employment and Training Administration (ETA), so these real-time labor market tools have added value.

It is also from HWOL that Utah can get insight into the skills, credentials and licenses that Utah employers are currently asking for via job postings. These can be isolated to the job advertisements in Utah's various regions, specific industries and occupations, so Utah's recent purchase of HWOL makes it possible to provide the WIOA requirements for economic plans to include skills, credentials and licenses that workers can achieve to be successful in the Utah economy. A recent pull of said data produced a profile that can be viewed in Figures 13 and 14 at this link:  
<http://jobs.utah.gov/sites/default/wioa/wioaplan2016graphs.pdf>

The eight institutions that comprise the Utah System of Higher Education (USHE) and the Utah System of Technical Colleges' (USTC) eight technical colleges exist to serve Utah's employers, providing them with highly skilled workers. Several of USTC's eight technical colleges are experiencing dramatic growth in specialized programs that are needed within their respective service regions to serve a unique employment cluster in each region.

Composite technicians, precision painters, sheet metal mechanics, electronics mechanics, aircraft pneumdraulics equipment mechanics, aircraft mechanics, aircraft engine mechanics, and aircraft electricians are anticipated to be in high demand in northern Utah. Not only will industries need employees trained in operating machining equipment, but they also need employees who understand the software programming side of machining.

Within the construction sector, employers are requiring greater numbers of electricians, HVAC specialists, and plumbers. Within the medical field, new and emerging fields are influencing curriculum development at Utah's colleges and universities campuses. Within the medical field, employers are increasingly looking for skilled medical scribes and medical billing and coding specialists.

Utah's colleges and universities have observed increasing demand for individuals trained in the most up-to-date information technologies. Industry advisory committees are reporting that employers have asked for more students trained in cloud computing, web development and programming, app development, data mining, and data security. The need is most apparent for smaller companies that do not have the draw that larger, more recognized companies enjoy.

### **Workforce Analysis**

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the current workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment, as defined in section 3 of WIOA.\* This population must include individuals with disabilities among other groups\*\* in the State and across regions identified

by the State. This includes: Individuals with barriers to employment include 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 youths; 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; farmworkers (as defined at section 167(i) of WIOA and Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 35-14); individuals within 2 years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program; single parents (including single pregnant women); and long-term unemployed individuals. \*\* Veterans, unemployed workers, and youth, and others that the State may identify.

### **Employment and Unemployment**

Utah's 2017 employment count is 16 percent higher than its pre-recession peak employment of 2007. Utah ranks second nationally for employment growth above its pre-recession peak. (See Figure 34 <http://jobs.utah.gov/sites/default/wioa/wioaplan2016graphs.pdf>). Most states have only grown 5 percent or less while a handful of states have yet to return to their pre-recession level. However, given the high pace of internal growth within the age range of Utah's labor force, the Utah economy has not been able to thoroughly match new labor force entrants with jobs—even with employment levels 16 percent higher.

Utah's job growth has been above average for the past three years, adding around 40,000 new jobs per year. Workers sidelined by the Great Recession re-entering the labor force have supplied roughly 15,000 workers annually. There has been a natural increase in Utah's labor force age (from internal population growth) of roughly 20,000 to 25,000 per year. The combination of the two was supplying the 40,000 workers per year. Yet with current unemployment now in the low-3.0 percent range (implying a limited pool of available labor), and evidence that there are limited additional idled workers remaining to re-enter the labor force, it follows that labor in-migration has become a more active and needed component. Prior to 2015, there was little evidence of strong in-migration coming to Utah since the Great Recession. But 2016 and 2017 have emerged as strong labor in-migration years. The local labor pool is largely employed so that it alone cannot support the average to above average employment growth that Utah experienced between 2012 and 2015. Utah's continued strong employment growth of 2016 and 2017 has added this in-migration component as a key necessity. That continued flow becomes threatened when the national economy improves to such as level as to not entice people to move from their present location.

This leaves open the possibility of the Utah labor supply continuing to fuel robust job growth in the short run. But the longer the persistence of a low unemployment rate, the more sensitive the employment growth rate will become to the availability of additional labor.

This job-creation potential shortfall is further exposed by an examination of the labor force participation rate (LFPR), which is the percentage of persons age 16 and over who are either working or looking for work.

### **Analysis of Statewide Workforce**

While Utah's overall workforce and economy are generally recovering nicely from the Great Recession, there are still members of the workforce who have barriers as defined by Section 3 of WIOA.

### **Barriers to Employment: Individuals with Disabilities and Youth with Disabilities**

According to the 2013 American Community Survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau, 274,700 of the 2,878,300 individuals in the State of Utah reported having one or more disabilities. Analysis of this data shows Utah has a lower percentage (9.5 percent) than the nation as a whole (12.7 percent) of people who state they have a disability. However, Census data regarding the employment rate of individuals with disabilities in Utah (46 percent) is significantly higher than in the U.S. (39 percent). This may be due to the fact that Utah's economy has been performing better than the U.S. as a

whole. Current partnerships and initiatives in Utah among DWS, Utah State Office of Rehabilitation (USOR), the Division of Services for People with Disabilities and the Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health may also be creating further opportunity for individuals with disabilities in the state. The USOR reports serving 25,000 to 30,000 individuals with disabilities each year through their Vocational Rehabilitation Program.

Regarding youth with disabilities, The U.S. Census Bureau reports 3.6 percent of children between ages 5 through 15 (or 19,800 children) have a disability. The prevalence rate for youth between the ages of 16 through 20 is 5.6 percent (or 222,600 individuals). Additional information obtained from the Utah State Office of Education (USBE) in their 2013 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Report identifies 11.8 percent of students (ages 6 through 21) as having disabilities. The USOR also reports 28 percent of the individuals receiving vocational rehabilitation services are youth with disabilities between the ages of 14 through 24. See Figure 20 at:<http://jobs.utah.gov/wioa/wioaplan2016graphs.pdf> ) for the full table showing Individuals with Barriers to Employment.

## **Utah's Area Economies**

### **Bear River Area**

The Bear River Area comprises Box Elder, Cache and Rich counties along the state's northern border. This region comprises 5.9 percent of the state's population and 5.4 percent of its employment (see Figure 21 at: <http://jobs.utah.gov/wioa/wioaplan2016graphs.pdf> ). Its employment base has grown by 3.3 percent and 5.7 percent over one and five years, respectively, versus comparative statewide growth of 2.9 percent and 11.7 percent, respectively.

The area's employment base relies heavily on manufacturing and education. It is below average in mining, wholesale trade, information, financial activities, and professional and business services. The remaining industrial sectors show average employment shares.

The area's occupational mix springs from its industrial makeup (see Figure 23 Bear River Area Occupational Mix 2012 at: : <http://jobs.utah.gov/wioa/wioaplan2016graphs.pdf> ). The largest occupational category is office and administrative Support, but its location quotient around 1.0 indicates that this category's share of all occupational employment in the region largely mirrors the statewide average. Production occupations are well represented in the area, and with a location quotient over 2.0, production occupations are double what are seen on average across the state. This hearkens back to the large manufacturing base in this region (see Figure 22 at:<http://jobs.utah.gov/wioa/wioaplan2016graphs.pdf> ).

The region's educational makeup is much like the statewide average (see Figure 24 Bear River Educational Makeup at: : <http://jobs.utah.gov/wioa/wioaplan2016graphs.pdf> ). The percentage of the population with a high-school equivalency is slightly higher than the statewide average, and those with less than a high-school equivalency is below the statewide average.

Barring a national recession, the Bear River Area is poised to offer adequate employment opportunities across the next several years. Box Elder County's proximity to the Ogden metropolitan area will provide both employment opportunities in Ogden and growth generated from Ogden. Cache County's economy is anchored by Utah State University. Education employment and an education economy are relatively stable even through recessionary periods. Cache County's manufacturing has a sizeable base in food production, which is a more stable manufacturing segment than is the production of non-food products.

### **Eastern Region**

Utah's Eastern Region spans the Colorado border and includes Daggett, Uintah, Duchesne, Carbon, Emery, Grand and San Juan counties. This is a region that, for purposes of deeper analysis, can be

segmented into the Uintah Basin (Daggett, Duchesne and Uintah counties), Castle Country (Carbon and Emery counties), and Southeast (Grand and San Juan counties). These subregions have their own economic characteristics, and, as such, can be analyzed more deeply by DWS's WRA unit. For this analysis, however, the greater Eastern Region will be presented as a whole.

This region comprises 3.9 percent of the state's population and 3.5 percent of its employment. Its one- and five-year growth rates were 1.7 percent and 5.7 percent, respectively (see Figure 26 at: <http://jobs.utah.gov/wioa/wioaplan2016graphs.pdf> ).

The region's employment base is heavy in mining, retail trade, transportation, and construction. It is below average in wholesale trade, information, financial activities and professional and business services (see Figure 25 at: <http://jobs.utah.gov/wioa/wioaplan2016graphs.pdf> ).

The largest occupational category is construction and extraction, reflecting the region's high reliance upon mineral, oil and gas extraction and production. Transportation and material moving occupations are also closely associated with those activities, as are the installation, maintenance and repair occupations. The high location quotient for the life, physical and social science occupations stems from the numerous national parks, monuments and forest lands in the region.

The rural landscape also makes for a high location quotient in farming and forestry (see Figure 27 Eastern Region Occupational Mix 2012 at: <http://jobs.utah.gov/wioa/wioaplan2016graphs.pdf> ).

The educational makeup of the Eastern Region is decidedly different than the rest of the state.

Nearly half of the Eastern Region's populace has their highest education level of a high-school equivalency or less. The proportion of the population holding bachelor's and graduate degrees is only half the level of the statewide average (see Figure 28 Eastern Regional Educational Makeup at: <http://jobs.utah.gov/wioa/wioaplan2016graphs.pdf> ).

The economic outlook for this region is mixed over the next several years. The heavy mineral extraction areas of the Uintah Basin and Carbon and Emery counties should not experience much economic growth. The current employment losses in the Uintah Basin should cease by early 2016 and then hold flat until the price of oil rises above the \$60-and-more plateau. Coal does not have a favorable outlook over the next several years, so no employment growth of note is expected for the Carbon and Emery counties area. Only the tourism economies in Grand and San Juan counties offer the prospect of an improving employment picture over the next several years.

### **Central/Southwestern Area**

The Central/Southwestern Area comprises 10 counties, several along the Nevada border. It can be further subdivided into a five-county Central Region, composed of Sevier, Sanpete, Millard, Piute, and Wayne counties, and the five-county Southwestern Region, consisting of Beaver, Iron, Washington, Garfield, and Kane counties. As Washington County dominates that region, a further dissection can be made by isolating Washington County and then aggregating the four remaining counties.

When considered together, though, this Central/Southwestern Area comprises 9.7 percent of the state's population and 7.5 percent of its employment. Across the last year, its employment base has grown by 5.3 percent, and in the past five years it has grown 10.2 percent. Much of this growth is being driven by the St. George area.

The region's employment base is heavy in retail trade, health care, education, and leisure and hospitality (a proxy for tourism) (see Figure 29 at: <http://jobs.utah.gov/wioa/wioaplan2016graphs.pdf> ).

The region has a different profile than the rest of the state in terms of employment by gender and age (see Figure 30 at: <http://jobs.utah.gov/wioa/wioaplan2016graphs.pdf> ). Females are more numerous in the 15-to-24-year-old age group, and also the 55-to-64-year-old age group.

The largest occupational category is office and administrative support, followed by sales and related occupations. Both categories employ the most workers, but their shares of the overall economy largely mirror the statewide average. Occupational categories with high location quotients include food preparation and building cleaning and maintenance, which are areas one would expect to be proportionally high in a tourism-heavy economy. Farming and forestry also has a high regional location quotient (see Figure 31 Central/Southwestern Region Occupational Mix 2012 at: <http://jobs.utah.gov/wioa/wioaplan2016graphs.pdf> ).

The educational makeup of the Central/Southwestern Area is somewhat different than seen throughout the rest of the state (see Figure 32 Central/Southwest Educational Makeup at: <http://jobs.utah.gov/wioa/wioaplan2016graphs.pdf>). The 25-and-over population has a higher proportion of an education level of a high-school equivalency or less, compared to the statewide average. The amount of bachelor's and graduate degrees is about one-quarter below the corresponding level of the statewide average, however.

The southwestern counties of Washington and Iron should grow noticeably over the next several years, particularly Washington County. The remaining counties likely will experience employment growth close to their long-term averages, which are generally only from 1.0 to 2.0 percent per year. Washington County, on the other hand, could experience yearly growth rates of between 3.5 and 5.0 percent (or higher) for the next several years. Iron County would do well to generate 2.0 to 3.0 percent job growth.

### **Labor Market Trends**

Males account for 58 percent of Utah's labor force. Of all available working-age males, 79 percent are active in the labor force. That is more than the national level where only 69 percent of males are active. This is a function of Utah having the youngest labor force in the nation (the younger are more active than the older). The state's female labor-force participation largely mirrors the national average of 57 percent.

Part-time employment is a key segment in the Utah labor market. (Figure 3 <http://jobs.utah.gov/sites/default/wioa/wioaplan2016graphs.pdf>). Utah has a higher percentage of its jobs as part-time than seen across the nation as a whole. Roughly a quarter of all Utah jobs are part-time. Part-time employment is often portrayed as negative, implying that part-time employment is a shortfall—an unwanted consequence of an economy that is not strong enough to produce more full-time employment or is an economy that is trying to get by on the cheap. But what if part-time employment was welcomed and wanted by the labor force? Would it then be a negative, or might it instead be an economic strength?

Around 35 percent of all Utah female workers work part time (Figure 5 <http://jobs.utah.gov/sites/default/wioa/wioaplan2016graphs.pdf>). Yet when these part-time female workers are asked how many would rather be working full time, less than 10 percent responded in the affirmative. One concludes that part-time employment is a work-life balance issue for many Utahns and therefore is an economic asset.

Males and females are not distributed equally across the state's various industry groups (Figure 4 <http://jobs.utah.gov/sites/default/wioa/wioaplan2016graphs.pdf>). In some industries there is balance, like leisure and hospitality, financial activities and government administration. But in other sectors there are noticeable gender partitions. Males are predominant in the durable goods industries like natural resources (agriculture and mining), construction and manufacturing. These are industries that experienced heavy employment setbacks during the Great Recession and the reason the recession impact was very male-centric.

Industries where females make up the majority of the employment are healthcare and education. There, the ratio of females to males is nearly two-to-one. These were also the only two industries that did not lose employment during the Great Recession.

### **Labor Migration**

Utah's job growth has been above average for the past three years, adding around 40,000 new jobs per year. These jobs were filled by two groups: roughly 15,000 workers who had been sidelined by the Great Recession but reentered the labor force, and roughly 20,000 to 25,000 workers who joined Utah's labor force from internal population growth (natural increase with age) (see Figure 6 at: <http://jobs.utah.gov/wioa/wioaplan2016graphs.pdf> ). Yet with current unemployment now into the mid-3 percent range (implying a limited pool of available labor) and evidence that there are few additional idled workers wishing to reenter the labor force, it follows that labor in-migration will need to become a more active component in short order. Prior to 2015, there was little evidence of strong in-migration coming to Utah since the Great Recession.

Utah's 2015 employment count is 9.5 percent higher than the pre-Recession peak employment of 2007, ranking it third nationally for such employment growth. However, given the high pace of internal growth within the age range of Utah's labor force, the Utah economy has not been able to match new labor force entrance with jobs — even with employment levels at 9.5 percent higher — Utah ends up being a net exporter of labor, as shown in the previous Utah Worker Flows chart. This is a lingering vestige of the Great Recession.

This leaves open the possibility of the Utah labor supply continuing to fuel robust job growth in the short run. But the longer a low unemployment rate persists, the more sensitive the employment growth rate will become to the availability of additional labor.

### **Labor Force Participation**

This job-creation shortfall is further exposed by an examination of the labor force participation rate (LFPR), which is the percentage of persons ages 16 and over who are either working or looking for work.

Prior to the Great Recession, the Utah LFPR was around 72 percent for the prior 20 years. The current LFPR stands around 68.5 percent, up from a recession low of 67.3 percent (each percentage point increase represents about 20,000 people). As the working-age population increased during the recession at a faster pace than jobs could be created, workers either left the state or withdrew from the labor force (see Figure 7 at: <http://jobs.utah.gov/wioa/wioaplan2016graphs.pdf> ).

A question remains as to whether these long-term idled workers are a viable source of available labor for the state. Their skills could have atrophied, or they could be permanently discouraged from seeking work. The general labor force participation decline is found across each age cohort. This uniformity and a general lack of rebound since the recession implies that the percentage of those of labor-force age will not be as active going forward as past generations.

The small rebound of the Utah LFPR since the low point of the recession speaks to those pushed out by the business cycle, but the lack of any general increase for several years thereafter implies that a structural change has occurred—that more people of working age are finding other ways to sustain their lives than through work. So it seems rational to conclude that the labor force, while not as engaged as in the past, has settled into a level of engagement that may have to be accepted as the new normal going forward.

The data points available to measure LFPR imply that over the past seven years it is the female population that is disengaging as opposed to males. Other than the very young, the male working-

age population is rebounding in its labor force participation. This contrasts against sustained female labor force declines in the 20-to-24-year, 35-to-45-year and 55-to-65-year age groups.

### **Education and Skill Levels of the Workforce**

Industries create jobs, but people work in occupations. An occupation, like an accountant, can be found within many different industries. As DWS gives information or guidance to the state's labor force, students or educational institutions, it is occupational information that rises to the forefront. It is not uncommon to hear economy watchers note that Utah is full of low-wage jobs. In fact, all states are full of low-wage jobs.

Occupational categories with a Utah hourly wage of less than \$15/hr for comparative purposes are classified as low-wage. The percentage of all employment in each state in those occupational categories is represented in Figure 8 (<http://jobs.utah.gov/sites/default/wioa/wioaplan2016graphs.pdf>). In that profile, about two-thirds of the states have more low-wage jobs in their occupational structure than does Utah (which has 58 percent low-wage). Utah is flanked by what many may think of as high-wage states like New Jersey and California.

Low wage jobs are predominant everywhere because high-wage jobs require accomplished workers—they are positions where a certain degree of skill, training or educational investment is required. Aptitudes, motivation, opportunities, communication, and affordability all play into a worker's ability to accumulate education. Any one of these factors can work against a person's education possibilities.

Looking at Utah's educational makeup, nearly one-third of all Utahns age 25 and older have as their highest education level a high school diploma or less (Figure 9 <http://jobs.utah.gov/sites/default/wioa/wioaplan2016graphs.pdf>). Add to that some college but no degree and the percentage rises to nearly 60 percent. In the low-wage occupational chart previously mentioned (Figure 8), around 58 percent of all Utah occupations are low-wage and don't require extensive education. There is a relative match between what the labor force can offer and what the occupational mix demands.

### **Occupational Profiling**

Industries create jobs, but people work in occupations. An occupation, like an accountant, can be found within many different industries. As DWS gives information or guidance to the state's labor force, students or educational institutions, it is occupational information that rises to the forefront (see Figure 34 at: <http://jobs.utah.gov/wioa/wioaplan2016graphs.pdf> ). It is not uncommon to hear economy-watchers note that Utah is full of low-wage jobs. In fact, all states are full of low-wage jobs.

Occupational categories with a Utah hourly wage of less than \$15 per hour for comparative purposes are classified as low wage. The percentage of all employment in each state in those occupational categories is represented in the Low-Wage Occupational Employment graph (see Figure 8 at: <http://jobs.utah.gov/wioa/wioaplan2016graphs.pdf> ). In that profile, about two-thirds of the states have more low-wage jobs in their occupational structure than does Utah (which has 58 percent low-wage jobs).

Low-wage jobs are predominant everywhere because high-wage jobs require accomplished workers—they are positions where a certain degree of skill, training or educational investment is required. Aptitudes, communication, motivation, opportunities and affordability all play into a worker's ability to accumulate education. Any one of these factors can work against a person's education possibilities.

Figure 9: Utah Educational Makeup				
		Percent of 25+ population	Utah Occupational Mix as referenced upon Typical Education for Occupation Entry	Percent of Annual Utah Job Growth
	Less than 12th grade, no diploma	8.6 percent	25.4 percent	23.4 percent
	High school graduate (includes equivalency)	23.0 percent	41.5 percent	39.5 percent
	Some college, no degree	27.4 percent	7.8 percent	8.8 percent
	Associate's degree	9.9 percent	3.7 percent	4.3 percent
	Bachelor's degree	20.8 percent	17.7 percent	18.9 percent
	Graduate or professional degree	10.3 percent	3.9 percent	5.1 percent
Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; Bureau of Labor Statistics				

Looking at Utah's educational makeup, nearly one-third of all Utahns age 25 and older have as their highest education level a high school diploma or less (see Figure 9 Utah Educational Makeup at: <http://jobs.utah.gov/wioa/wioaplan2016graphs.pdf> ). Add to that some college but no degree, and the percentage rises to nearly 60 percent. In the low-wage occupational chart previously mentioned, around 58 percent of all Utah occupations are low -wage and don't require extensive education.

There is a relative match between what the labor force can offer and what the occupational mix demands (see Figure 10 at: <http://jobs.utah.gov/wioa/wioaplan2016graphs.pdf> ).

A chicken-and-an-egg question may arise in this profile. Is there a predominance of low-wage jobs because education levels are low? Or are education levels low because there are a lot of low-wage jobs that don't demand higher education? The fundamental question is, will empowering people with higher education levels facilitate more high-wage jobs, or would increasing education levels not produce more high-wage jobs but instead more highly educated people for low-wage jobs? Some combination is probably the reality. Yet this much is known—income levels are highly correlated with education. Efforts to lift education levels so high-wage jobs can blossom are worth the effort, even if all individual endeavors and programs to do such do not result in complete success.

### **Incomes and Education**

The largest segment of Utah's occupational mix pays from \$10 to \$15 per hour. This is followed by \$15 to \$20 per hour, and third is less than \$10 per hour. From there the quantities progressively diminish with each increasing segment of the hourly wage range. A high-school diploma or equivalent is generally sufficient for entry or achievability in occupations paying median wages up to \$25 per hour. Bachelor's degrees begin to play a noticeable role when median wages rise above \$20 per hour and then play a dominant role in all wage levels above \$25 per hour.

In the Occupational Employment by Hourly Wage Range (see Figure 11 at: <http://jobs.utah.gov/wioa/wioaplan2016graphs.pdf> ) the entry-level education is a measure of what the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics through employer surveys designates as entry-level education. It does not represent the education levels of current incumbents. It is quite likely that people holding various jobs have more education than the educational-attainment minimum so that people with some college education are working in jobs that at a minimum only require a high-school education.

### **Job Boards and Job Postings**

Occupational projections and occupational median wages are produced every two years by DWS's Workforce Research and Analysis (WRA). This acts as a primary tool for sorting occupations by pay, educational requirements and job outlooks. Specific targeting of various training programs or initiatives can be analyzed and supported with this traditional labor market information.

This data can also be augmented with what is known as real-time labor market information. This entails examining summarized electronic job board job postings and compiling summary statistics. Help Wanted Online® (HWOL) is the real-time labor market information tool that DWS utilizes (see Figure 12 Utah Help Wanted Online Unique Ads 120-Day Period at: <http://jobs.utah.gov/wioa/wioaplan2016graphs.pdf>). It offers a current look into the quantity and types of jobs employers are offering. Advertised occupations can be sorted by quantity of job ads, geographies, income levels, educational requirements, certifications and desired skills (both hard and soft skills). Some of these variables are not available for measure from the traditional labor market information tools generally provided by either the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics or the Employment and Training Administration (ETA), so these real-time labor market tools have added value.

Current job advertisements mirror the job-distribution demand across Utah based upon education. The HWOL is a tool that scrapes hundreds of job boards across America, from high-level corporate sites to Craigslist. A pull of the top 100 advertised jobs of unique ads posted over a recent 120-day period reveals that about 60 percent of these jobs only require a high-school diploma or less. Much of this is a reflection of high turnover in lower-paying jobs, but it does show that this class of jobs is a large part of the Utah economy.

The desire of some job-training programs is to help people just get into any occupation. Then there are other programs designed to help workers take the next step above these types of occupations, moving up the wage ladder with jobs that can pull a worker toward a more middle-income existence. These are jobs that generally pay between \$30,000 and \$49,000 per year.

It is also from HWOL that the state can get insight into the skills, credentials and licenses that Utah employers are currently asking for via job postings (see Figure 13 Utah Help Wanted Online Unique Ads 120 Period at: : <http://jobs.utah.gov/wioa/wioaplan2016graphs.pdf> ).

These can be isolated to the job advertisements in Utah's various regions, specific industries and occupations, so Utah's recent purchase of HWOL makes it possible to fulfill the WIOA requirements for economic plans to include skills, credentials and licenses that workers can achieve to be successful in the Utah economy (see Figure 14 Utah Help Wanted Online Advertised Hard and Soft Skills at: : <http://jobs.utah.gov/wioa/wioaplan2016graphs.pdf> ).

### **Skill Gaps**

Skills gaps nationwide have been a trending topic across the past ten years. Demand for jobs and specific skill sets are much easier to quantify than is the supply of qualified labor, therefore developing data about skill gaps can be difficult and oftentimes anecdotal.

The term “skill gap” is bandied about generously. A true skill gap is when a particular set of skills are required by industry and not enough workers possess those necessary skills. The necessary condition for a skills gap is that employers are offering a competitive wage yet still cannot attract enough workers. If an industry offers nationally (or even locally) competitive wages and workers still do not come forth in quantity, then that, with confidence, can be profiled as a skill gap. Too often the reality of a wage gap will be passed off as a “skill gap.”

DWS recently undertook a hard-to-fill survey, allowing employers to identify what they labeled as hard-to-fill occupations, why they considered them hard to fill, and what wages were they advertising for said occupations. Industries that hire with an eye toward workers with a STEM training or background was the targeted employer sample. Employers identified worker lack-of-skills or lack-of-candidates as their biggest hurdle for their hard-to-fill occupations. DWS then evaluated the employer’s offered wages for these occupations against local prevailing wages for said occupations. What emerged was a common theme that for many of these employers, their wage offerings were low in relation to the market. So what many of these employers viewed as a “skill gap” might instead be labeled as a “wage gap.” For this reason, we have concluded that the cry of “skills gap” must be scrutinized under the umbrella of wage compensation to cull out perceived skill gaps and to allow true skill gaps to rise to the surface.

This is not to say that skill gaps do not exist in the Utah economy. They do. This is only to say the skills-gap dialogue is often overused and must be accompanied by a wage profile to actually prove its validity. This is necessary to avoid making skills-gap action plans upon what are instead low wage distortions.

Economic theory states that if labor is in short supply businesses will offer higher wages to try and attract the necessary labor. Therefore, high wage offerings can be a viable proxy for identifying “real” skill gaps. In the DWS hard-to-fill survey, Production Occupations and Business and Financial Occupations—with larger percentages of offered wages in each occupational category’s above-median range—stood out. (Figure 17,

<http://jobs.utah.gov/sites/default/wioa/wioaplan2016graphs.pdf>). This profile presents a bit of a dilemma as industry has to be a major source for identifying where labor skill gaps are truly emerging. But this comes with the caveat that industries themselves may not have the clearest picture of its own labor market and prevailing wages, and so the source that needs to be most relied upon for skill-gap information also has the potential to overstate the problem.

The current lone areas of rural concern are the Uintah Basin and the Carbon and Emery counties area. The energy sector is important in those regions, and that sector’s current trend is downward after years of an upward swing. However, commodity cycles are notoriously volatile, and the trend can, and has changed, in short order.

When looking at these two regions, the isolation upon only a single industry speaks to a bigger picture of industrial employment diversity across the entire state. Taken as a whole, Utah is one of the nation’s most industrially diverse economies. This means that its employment distribution is spread out across major industry groups, very much resembling the nation’s industrial diversity. This speaks to a broad range of employment opportunities across many occupations and also more cushioning against economic setbacks. But when one highlights industrial diversity down to the individual county level, there are some very non-diverse areas in Utah—particularly in its rural regions.

Industrial diversity, as profiled by a Hachman Index , is measured from zero to one, with zero being no diversity and one being complete diversity (as measured against the national economy, which is looked upon as the diversity standard). The County-Level Economic Diversity chart shows the diversity measure of each county. The lower the diversity number, the more concentrated the

county's employment is in fewer and fewer industries. At the top of the scale is Salt Lake County, the state's largest, urban and, correspondingly, most industrially diverse county. At the opposite end is Duchesne County, which is the least diverse county. Most of its employment is concentrated in mining (oil and gas).

The takeaway from the diversity measure is occupational opportunities or constraints. DWS, as an agency, is charged with helping workers throughout the state who may have lost their jobs look toward other industries or occupational arenas to find reemployment. But if an area is not economically diverse, it becomes a deeper challenge to produce successful reemployment outcomes than in diverse counties. For example, since much of Duchesne County's employment is tied to the oil industry, finding new employment opportunities for displaced oil-related workers in other nearby industries is limited because the other industries (such as construction) are also ultimately dependent on the oil industry.

A region's economy has developed because comparative advantages inherent in that region have been utilized through time. Therefore, it is extremely difficult to artificially build an economy that doesn't line up with a region's profile. For example, it would be very difficult to maintain a surfboard shop in Vernal, as it lacks an ocean. So an area must work with the economic resources inherently available in that region. Therefore, most of Utah's rural counties are economically non-diverse and face deeper challenges in helping displaced or challenged workers find reemployment.

Throughout Utah the tourism industry, as a whole, employs fewer workers on a percentage basis than does the greater national economy. Yet in many of Utah's rural communities tourism is the major economic opportunity (see Figure 19 at: <http://jobs.utah.gov/wioa/wioaplan2016graphs.pdf> ). This is especially true in southern Utah, where tourism employment is three to four times higher than the national average. One hurdle to a tourism-dependent economy is that tourism is often seasonal. For example, the ski resorts in Summit County are fully operational in the winter and then operate at only half those levels during the other months. Tourism sustains many rural areas, yet it is one of the lower-paying industry sectors. It would be ideal if rural counties could economically diversify, but again, one cannot artificially create economies.

### **Utah's Economic Clusters**

Utah has identified six economic clusters that it targets for economic development. These include information technology, aerospace, life sciences, finance, energy and natural resources, and outdoor products. These are industries where Utah feels it has a comparative advantage against the greater national economy and where occupations pay above-average wages. Combined, these sectors employ about 15 percent of Utah's labor force.

### **Existing and Expanding Industry and Occupational Demands**

Utah's economic expansion of the past several years has been very diverse. Only mining, Utah's smallest industry sector, has seen employment losses. Otherwise, all industrial sectors have added jobs. This largely qualifies all existing industrial sectors as high-demand industries, which is a natural historical picture for Utah during good economic times. Utah has one of the most industrially diverse state economies in the nation. This diversity is driven largely by the composition of the urban Wasatch Front region.

Industrial diversity generally means diversified opportunities throughout the occupational arena. However, as one moves into Utah's rural regions, that industrial diversity can evaporate rapidly. Rural industrial diversification will be discussed more in a later section.

Even though nearly all industrial sectors are growing—and grow regularly from year to year—10-year industry projections bring forth both major and specific industry groups that stand out for greater-than-average expansion. They are presented in the Emerging Industries table, see Figure 15

at: <http://jobs.utah.gov/wioa/wioaplan2016graphs.pdf> (note: NAICS - North American Industry Classification System). The industries of particularly fast growth are labeled as Specific Industry. The Major Industry category shows that there are particular industry groups that will grow aggressively—in particular health care and professional and technical services. “Emerging” is when an industry increases its share of total employment by over 10 percent across the next 10 years.

If most industries are contributing to economic expansion, then the demand for most occupations is also increasing. Areas of particular need are in some of the production-type, middle-skill areas like machinists, welders, tool and die makers, etc. This is signaled by the higher-than-average advertised wages on new job orders for these occupations. Another area always demanding additional labor supply is technology.

The technology arena is also where many of the emerging occupations will develop. America continues to dominate the digital realm. The newest growth drivers include wearable devices, the “Internet of Things,” driverless cars and the ongoing digitization of nearly everything else. Utah has enough of a technology presence to rise with this tide. The technology fields develop quite rapidly, so it is difficult to point to specific occupations as the next “hot” jobs five years from now. But whatever they may be, it can be said with confidence that these jobs will require a significant background in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education. Given the speed of technological change, the task is not so much to identify the next hot jobs but instead to be prepared educationally to move into those jobs, whatever title they carry.

In the list of Emerging Occupations, the same criterion of occupations standing out for greater-than-average expansion in a 10-year industry projection is employed as in quantifying emerging occupations. Using this criterion created a long list; therefore it was shortened to include only an increase of 20 percent or greater (see Figure 16 Emerging Occupations at: <http://jobs.utah.gov/wioa/wioaplan2016graphs.pdf> ).

Utah has developed tools to help students, educators and others interested in career evaluation. These range from the Wage and Occupational Openings Data (online at: <https://jobs.utah.gov/jsp/almiswage/wage-home/> ) tool to the Occupational Explorer (online at: <https://jobs.utah.gov/jsp/wi/utalmis/gotoOccinfo.do> ) profile to the newly developed for WIOA purposes and user-interactive Occupational Comparisons Dashboard (online at: <https://jobs.utah.gov/wi/uocd/dashboard.html> ) tool.

### **Technical College Supplied Skills Anticipated to be in High Demand**

Post-secondary training and education in technical skills are an essential part of the workforce development system in Utah. Key public-sector partnerships provide technical training for these high-demand skills are the Utah System of Higher Education (USHE) and the Utah System of Technical Colleges (USTC).

Utah System of Higher Education (USHE) institutions offer Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs in all regions of the state, working closely with local business and industry leaders to develop and deliver programs specifically tailored to local workforce development needs. During the 2014-2015 academic year, CTE comprised 23 percent of the total undergraduate courses offered at USHE institutions, and it accounted for 16 percent of undergraduate degrees and certificates awarded.

USHE offers an array of CTE credit and non-credit courses that prepare people for employment in current or emerging occupations that require credentials other than a baccalaureate or advanced degree. It also provides data on statewide programs, Short Term Intensive Training (STIT) and Custom Fit, where industry-specific courses are provided by USHE institutions on contract for individual companies.

USHE institutions offer three primary types of CTE credentials:

- **Associate of Applied Science Degrees**—Designed to lead students directly to employment requiring two years of preparation. The Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree includes a core set of general education courses preparing students with a solid basis in composition, computation and human relations. In some cases AAS programs can serve a dual purpose to prepare students for the workforce while serving as a pathway to a bachelor's degree.
- **Certificates of Completion**—Awarded for completion of programs that are typically one year in length and prepare students for employment. Certificates of Completion also have a general education component.
- **Certificates of Proficiency**—Short-term training programs that are less than one year in length and prepare students for specific employment skills.

The Utah System of Technical Colleges' (USTC) eight technical colleges as well as the applied technology centers at Salt Lake Community College, Snow College, and Utah State University Eastern exist to serve Utah's employers, providing them with highly skilled workers. Several campuses are experiencing dramatic growth in specialized programs that their respective service regions need in order to serve a unique employment cluster in each region.

Composite technicians, precision painters, sheet metal mechanics, electronics mechanics, aircraft pneumdraulics equipment mechanics, aircraft mechanics, aircraft engine mechanics and aircraft electricians are anticipated to be in high demand in northern Utah. Not only will industries need employees trained in operating machining equipment, but they also need employees who understand the software programming side of machining.

Within the construction sector, employers are requiring greater numbers of electricians, HVAC specialists and plumbers. Within the medical field, new and emerging fields are influencing curriculum development at USTC campuses. Employers increasingly are looking for skilled medical scribes and medical billing and coding specialists.

USTC campuses and USHE) institutions have observed increasing demand for individuals trained in the most up-to-date information technologies. Campus advisory committees are reporting that employers have asked for more students trained in cloud computing, web development and programming, app development, data mining and data security. The need is most apparent for smaller companies that do not have the draw that larger, more recognized companies enjoy.

### **Utah's Workforce Development, Education and Training Activities Analysis**

Utah's Unified Plan includes an analysis of its workforce development activities, including education and training in the state, to address the education and skill needs of the workforce as identified above and the employment needs of employers as identified above.

Utah's workforce development activities, including the education and training activities of the core programs, one-stop required partner programs and other partners

Developing a workforce prepared for current and emerging occupations is critical to the state's economic well-being. Utah's governor, state legislature and Board of Regents all have endorsed and continue to support the "66 by 2020" goal to have 66 percent of Utah's adults earn a post-secondary credential by the year 2020. In addition, the State of Utah actively supports a workforce development environment designed to meet employers' needs that is a part of every core and one-stop service delivery required in partners' plans.

Utah agencies support the Governor's Office of Economic Development's (GOED) industry clusters. As described in the Economic, Workforce, and Workforce Development Activities Analysis section, the clusters are established based on data and input from Utah employers.

The post-secondary landscape in the state includes eight institutions of higher education comprising the Utah System of Higher Education (USHE); the Utah System of Technical Colleges (USTC), with eight campuses across the state; and a number of private nonprofit and private for-profit institutions. Collectively, these institutions provide a diverse and broad array of credit and non-credit educational offerings that prepare Utah's adults to become productive and contributing members within their respective communities. The higher education system targets GOED's industry clusters and utilizes information from business committees to help guide their programming and curriculum development.

The educational offerings provided by the state's post-secondary institutions spans a vast educational landscape. Its programs prepare students for applied learning for specific occupational skills in relatively short periods of time through advanced degrees, developing some of the state's and nation's top talent in highly specialized disciplines. Additionally, these offerings affect students in secondary education (K-12) and Adult Education as they seek college and career choices, enter pathways that meet their goals, and in some cases receive assistance through WIOA funds. The Board of Regents' current strategic plan includes the following goals: affordable participation, timely completion and innovative discovery.

### **Utah System of Technical Colleges (USTC)**

The USTC system supports students and employers through its programs, including Custom Fit, which is a dynamic partnership between the USTC, its college campuses, select sister institutions across the state, and the local business community. Its mission is to provide customized employee training. USTC's mission to meet the needs of Utah's employers for technically skilled workers is accomplished by preparing certificate-seeking students for entry-level employment, providing occupational upgrade training for those currently employed and building career and technical skills for high-school students. Employers play a vital role in USTC's mission to provide market-driven technical education. Partnerships with technical colleges and local employers ensure that every program provides the most current and relevant curriculum, labs and equipment to students. Students leave job ready because of their frequent interactions with employers who know the industry and what technical skills are needed to succeed in the job market. Employers who serve on advisory committees hire USTC students and often provide internships, equipment, assistance at campus events and expertise to enhance new and current programs.

### **Utah System of Higher Education (USHE)**

The USHE is comprised of eight public colleges and universities. Each of these institutions fulfills a particular educational mission for the state. The institutions include two research universities: the University of Utah and Utah State University; one liberal arts and sciences university: Southern Utah University; three regional universities: Weber State University, Dixie State University, and Utah Valley University; and two community colleges: Snow College and Salt Lake Community College. These public institutions provide the majority of higher education programs and services within the state, including programs where students can earn certificates and associate, bachelor's and graduate degrees. These institutions serve as economic levers for the state through research, teaching and service, and they provide the majority of the state's post-secondary instruction in career and technical education (CTE). Offering CTE programs and courses throughout the state in credit and non-credit formats, USHE institutions work closely with local business and industry leaders to develop and deliver programs specifically tailored to local workforce needs. USHE institutions offer certificates and awards for high-school and post-secondary learners while maintaining employer advisory boards, employer partnerships for internships and placement, equipment or program support and more. Most USTC campuses and all USHE schools maintain career centers focused on workforce development, career advisement, internship services and

career employment. Together they prepare more than 150,000 students annually in workforce development or readiness skills.

### **Utah Adult Education**

Utah Adult Education plays an important partnership role in workforce development. Adult education empowers individuals ages 16 to 19 who are no longer attending a secondary (K-12) program of instruction as well as qualifying adults ages 20 and above to become self-sufficient by gaining the skills necessary for college, training, future employment and personal successes. Utah Adult Education assists adults to become literate and obtain the knowledge and college- and career-readiness skills necessary for employment and self-sufficiency while completing a secondary education and basic literacy instruction. Utah Adult Education is a program of instruction below the collegiate level for qualifying adults ages 16 and up comprising Adult High School Completion (AHSC/ASE) for academic levels from the 9.0-to-12.0 grade levels, Adult Basic Education (ABE) for basic literacy instruction from the 0-to-8.9 grade levels and instruction for non-native English Language Learners (ELL).

### **Utah State Board of Education (K-12)**

Public secondary education (K-12) is a vital partner in meeting the state's overall education and training objectives. Educating the children of Utah prepares them for post-secondary education and the workforce. In addition, there are programs and partner programs that directly support this transition, including:

- College and Career Awareness: Explores and prepares students for college and career pathways, focusing on jobs that are high skill and high demand as well as satisfying and financially rewarding.
- Career and Technical Education: Provides all students with a seamless education system from public education to post-secondary education, driven by a College and Career Ready Plan and using competency-based instruction that culminates in essential life skills, certified occupational skills and meaningful employment. CTE prepares students for careers that are most in demand and that are part of the economic development of the state.
- Work-Based Learning (WBL): Provides opportunities for students to learn a variety of skills through rigorous academic preparation with hands-on career development experiences. Under the guidance of adult mentors, students learn to work in teams, solve problems and meet employers' expectations.
- Career and Technical Education Pathways: Allows students to see firsthand how classroom instruction connects to the world of work and future career opportunities through a variety of WBL experiences. WBL supports the CTE Pathways initiative. WBL experiences are available in each CTE Pathway. Experiences include, but are not limited to, apprenticeships, career fairs, field studies, guest speakers, job shadows and student internships.
- International Baccalaureate (IB) program: Consists of three programs that encompass ages 3-19:
  - Primary Years Program (Ages 3-12)
  - Middle Years Program (Ages 12-16)
  - Diploma Program (Ages 16-19)

All three programs require study in a broad range of subjects, including content in cultural education, and place special emphasis in acquiring and developing language, developing skills of learning and creating opportunities for individual and collaborative planning as well as a community service component requiring action and reflection to complement the course of study.

- Advanced Placement (AP) program: Offers high-school students worldwide the opportunity to take college-level courses while attending secondary school. AP courses are invariably more rigorous than other high-school offerings.
- Concurrent Enrollment (CE) and agreements with post-secondary institutions:  
The purpose of CE is to provide a challenging college-level experience for students in their last two years of high school. Course offerings in math, science, social studies, language arts, fine arts,

humanities, world languages, career and technical programs, and education have been implemented in high schools throughout the state.

### **STEM Action Center**

The STEM Action Center is Utah's leader in promoting science, technology, engineering and math through best practices in education to ensure connection with industry and Utah's long-term economic prosperity. Their vision is to produce a STEM-competitive workforce to ensure Utah's continued economic success in the global marketplace and to catalyze student experience, community engagement and industry alignment by identifying and implementing the public- and higher-education best practices that will transform workforce development.

### **The Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED)**

GOED's activities and goals support workforce development in Utah. Their four economic development principles include to:

- Strengthen and grow existing Utah businesses, both urban and rural
- Increase innovation, entrepreneurship and investment
- Increase national and international business
- Prioritize education to develop the workforce of the future

GOED has identified six clusters to target. Each of these clusters were selected by analyzing data and gathering input from businesses. The clusters align with the industry sectors selected by the SWDB. They include:

- Aerospace and defense
- Energy and natural resources
- Financial services
- Life sciences
- Outdoor products
- Software development and information technology

### **The Utah Department of Workforce Services (DWS)**

DWS's employment exchange system supports workforce development. Whether a job seeker is in the beginning phases of choosing a career or needs a better job, DWS offers an array of online and in-house services. DWS's employment exchange system fuels Utah's economic engine by supporting the workforce with training, education and other resources. The department's top priority is to align the skills and knowledge of Utah's citizens with the needs of employers. Workforce development tools and activities include:

- Career planning
- Job readiness tools
- Job matching
- Online portal
- Business development and partnerships
- Economic data

### **State Workforce Development Board (SWDB)**

Utah's governor has created specific, attainable goals that are relevant to the economy of today and tomorrow. In doing so, he created objectives and action items to guide and challenge his cabinet.

The DWS executive director and the SWDB are taking leading roles in this call to action.

Collaboration and partnership are the keys to achieving these goals. DWS executives, agency staff and SWDB members serve on various boards, committees and workgroups that target the governor's goals. DWS also partners and contributes in the Utah Economic Summit, Rural Economic Summit and quarterly economic meetings. Beyond high-level coordination, the efforts of DWS employment counselors and workforce development specialists in meeting the needs of employers and job seekers also helps create a growing, vibrant economy.

## **Career Pathways**

Students will know how to get into a pathway for a career more easily when secondary pathway programs align with post-secondary training programs. It allows adults to see the importance of continuing their education and increasing their skill level. It also shows how careers have multiple entry and exit points and can assist with developing career goals. Many partners are working to develop and support the career pathways concept, including all levels of education, GOED, USOR and DWS.

## **Data Systems & Warehouses**

An important part of the workforce development system is collecting and reporting data to measure outcomes and performance. Utah agencies, including DWS, USOR, Adult Education, the Utah Data Alliance (UDA), USTC, and USHE, currently collect and analyze data to produce required state and federal reports. All of the partners are currently updating MOUs for data sharing.

## **Veteran's Initiatives**

Veterans receive Priority of Service (POS) as they transition from the military or any time they seek employment services from DWS to gain or improve their employment status. Veteran Employment Services supports veterans in their reintegration process as they leave the military and rejoin the civilian workforce. The Job for Veteran State Grant (JVSG), as funded by the U.S. Department of Labor/Veteran Employment and Training Services (USDOL/VETS), provides intensive services for veterans that have significant barriers to employment. DWS is also looking at strategies to reduce the duration of veterans on the unemployment rolls and to help veterans on state-provided Medicaid seek VA medical benefits. Accelerated Credentialing to Employment (ACE) helps veterans, National Guard members, reservists and spouses gain licenses and certifications for employment.

## **The Utah Defendant Offender Workforce Development (UDOWD)**

UDOWD Task Force consists of members from state, federal and local law enforcement along with nonprofit and religious organizations. Its primary goal is to assist ex-offenders in obtaining employment and learning how to become productive members of society. UDOWD contributes to workforce development by reengaging people who have been out of the workforce into productive employment in education and employment settings.

## **Employment First Initiative**

The Utah Employment First Partnership is a shared commitment among the Utah Department of Workforce Services (DWS), the Division of Services for People with Disabilities (DSPD) and the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation (USOR) to improve state-government services focused on persons with disabilities, helping them to achieve competitive, integrated and community-based employment. Utah's Employment First Initiative supports workforce development. It expects, encourages, provides, creates and rewards integrated employment in the workforce. It is the first and preferred outcome for working-age youth and adults with disabilities at minimum wage or higher. This program focuses on individuals with complex and significant disabilities for whom job placement in the past has been limited or traditionally has not occurred.

## **Choose to Work (CTW)**

CTW is a partnership between USOR and DWS. The agencies work together to meet the expanding needs of Utah employers by providing them with qualified and job-ready individuals. Choose to Work's employment specialists provide statewide job development and placement services to Utah job seekers with disabilities, offering employers a constant source of job applicants. Applicants' skills range from entry level to professional in virtually all job categories.

### **Work Success**

Finding a job is a full-time job. Work Success provides the tools needed for a successful job search. Offered by DWS, this two-to-four-week course offers individuals the opportunity to attend daily classes where they learn new skills, get support from experienced job coaches and access cutting-edge employment resources. Individuals are able to broaden peer networks. Most participants find employment in one to four weeks.

### **Talent Ready Utah (formerly known as Utah Cluster Acceleration Partnership (UCAP))**

The Talent Ready Utah grants have been UCAP program is designed to strengthen collaboration between industry, education, and economic development in order to better respond to the needs of regional and statewide high-growth, high-wage industries and occupations. It is a collaborative partnership among:

- The Department of Workforce Services
- The Utah System of Higher Education
- The Governor's Office of Economic Development
- The Utah System of Technical Colleges
- The Utah State Board of Education
- The Salt Lake Chamber
- Dell EMC
- The Governor's Education Advisor

The Talent Ready Utah grant program provides funding to public post-secondary educational institutions to develop, implement or enhance educational programs that are responsive to regional and statewide industry needs or industry trade associations located in Utah serving high-growth, high-wage industries and occupations or regional economic need. Talent Ready Utah also provides funding to public school districts, individual schools or charter schools to develop, implement or enhance career pathway programs and connect them to post-secondary institutions.

The program is intended to increase the number of individuals who earn industry-recognized credentials, develop career pathways with multiple entry and exit points for students along the post-secondary education continuum and create systemic change by establishing processes and programs that better connect education, the workforce and employers.

### **Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (SNAP)**

Utah has the advantage of integrating programs such as TANF and SNAP within the one-stop delivery system. These programs provide the great asset of access to a greater number of job seekers who can meet employers immediate workforce needs. In turn, connecting recipients of these programs with career and training services increases their employment opportunities.

Utah's SNAP program encourages outreach and engagement in career services through both self-service and mediated means. Job seekers can take an evaluation of their job preparation needs. The online system then recommends workshops from which they could benefit. These workshops can be accessed both online and in person to help identify transferrable skills, relate labor-market information, build a résumé, create well-crafted answers to interview questions, draft a marketing message, etc. Participants are taught how to use the online labor exchange system to search for employment opportunities. They also have access to an online job search log where they can track their applications, interviews and any other follow up related to their job search in one place. These programs' integration gives job seekers one access point to reconnect with the workforce more readily or increase their employability with training services that otherwise would not be as seamless for them.

### **Strengths and Weaknesses of Workforce Development Activities**

Utah has many advantages going into the implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. Its workforce development system is strong because, under the leadership of the governor and state legislature, almost all agencies, public education, adult education and higher education entities at the state and local levels strive to improve Utah's economic environment. These entities communicate and share information with one another in a variety of ways. There are many existing partnerships that are strong and collaborative.

#### **Strengths include:**

- Successful implementation of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA)
- A strong track record of the Department of Workforce Services successfully delivering integrated services statewide, including many of the core and mandatory programs under WIOA
- Established collaboration among all the core partners, including DWS, the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation (USOR) and Adult Education
- An integrated workforce system that already shares information and data among key partners such as Unemployment Insurance (UI), Wagner-Peyser and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- Online access to many services
- A high level of expertise at the operational level via the core partners' staffs, which, along with the commitment to help people, provides a strong base to further build and develop partnerships

#### **Utah foresees certain challenges in this implementation, including:**

- Establishing sufficient and stable funding sources
- Receiving timely clarification on regulations from our federal partners
- Achieving the new emphasis on transition-age youth and the 15 percent funding requirement
- Attaining the Eligible Training Provider performance data required from education and training providers
- Tackling conflicting program requirements between partners and difficulties sharing data to clearly measure outcomes and performance due to a lack of resources to develop the systems and then analyze and produce reports. Resolving the data-sharing issues will take time, but Utah should be able to overcome its obstacles. Budget and staffing constraints are a problem when the workload is higher than the current staff can manage or unfunded mandates are placed on agencies.
- Lacking diverse opportunities at the operational level to offer clients/customers in rural communities
- Helping partners understand the big picture and push past the occasional lack of understanding between them that can arise from partner staffs' high level of expertise at the operational level, although many of these issues can be resolved by training and educating partner staff and having demonstrated support from top executives

### **State Workforce Development Capacity**

Provide an analysis of the capacity of State entities to provide the workforce development activities identified in (A) above.

### **State Workforce Development Capacity**

A workgroup will be established to research the capacity of state entities to provide the workforce development activities defined in Section II(a)(b)(2)(A). This is an ongoing activity that will be incorporated into the one-stop center certification process. Recommendations will be shared with partner leaders as well as the SWDB so they can assist in improving any workforce system gaps.

### **Utah's Strategic Vision and Goals**

Utah's unified plan includes the state's strategic vision and goals for developing its workforce and meeting employer needs in order to support economic growth and economic self-sufficiency.

## **Vision**

A strong economy depends on a world-class workforce. Utah will continue to enhance and expand collaborative efforts with employers, educational institutions and government agencies through business development and partnership in key sectors and occupations to make this happen. The Utah approach is regionally oriented and requires a two-way path in communication between all partners. Through implementation of WIOA, Utah will increase access to and opportunities for the employment, education, training and support services that individuals — particularly those with barriers to employment — need to succeed in the workforce.

## **Goals: Utah's goals for achieving its vision based on the workforce analysis above**

### **Focus All-Encompassing Partnerships**

Utah will partner across the WIOA core and required partners, education, economic development, businesses, and other programs to coordinate, align strategies, leverage resources and work together to develop Utah's workforce.

Utah will strengthen its partnerships by:

- Conducting an economic assessment of statewide workforce needs, working with core and required partners to create an effective and integrated workforce system supporting strong, diverse economies throughout the state
- Leveraging state funding resources to support the promotion of key occupational clusters and industry sectors identified through economic analysis and input from employers, and utilizing these resources to support the state workforce development activities
- Identifying opportunities to align, collaborate among and connect core and required partners to better serve Utahns as well as develop strategies and recommendations to improve service

### **Focus: Employers**

Utah will involve employers directly in the workforce development system by utilizing and leveraging existing partnerships and expanding opportunities for them to participate as the state moves forward in developing new partnerships and aligning programs. This will include:

- Identifying employers' needs by collecting information through surveys and industry groupings, utilizing existing information and identifying gaps
- Reaching out to employers to help design career pathways for use in secondary education (K-12), Adult Education and post-secondary education
- Evaluating the effectiveness of existing services by creating an interactive inventory of the state-offered training programs for both workers and businesses in the state, evaluating data to determine the training's effectiveness in meeting the needs of businesses and employees, retooling the offerings accordingly and ensuring that decision-makers at all levels, public and private, have access to the information
- Working with businesses to accurately reflect position requirements and appropriately collect information in the hiring process through the labor exchange systems, primarily in an effort to improve the state's workforce development efforts and additionally for recruiting efforts in general
- Leveraging communication channels that will promote available internships, apprenticeships and on-the-job training that companies are willing to provide as well as connecting companies interested in providing these types of training opportunities with the state workforce development system
- Coordinate and collaborate in outreach and marketing to the business sector.

### **Focus: Education and Training**

Education and training partners need to continue to focus on establishing programs that meet both the current and emerging needs of employers, including an emphasis on real-life applicability of skills development. This will be done by:

- Developing a talent pipeline in targeted industry sectors
- Continuing to gather information from employers and supporting the needs of other industry sectors because identified sectors may not be representative of the entire workforce system

- Strengthening public awareness in recruiting WIOA-targeted populations, specifically those with barriers to employment, to participate in educational offerings
- Developing programs and strategies that help high-school students connect to concurrent enrollment, high school CTE, Adult Education and other partnership pathways to post-secondary CTE programs
- Identifying short-term post-secondary CTE certificate programs that link to recognized industry credentials, including a subset of certificate or degree programs (stacked and latticed credentials) to provide efficient pathways for students to achieve additional educational credentials; ensuring this is addressed by the career pathway workgroup with a focus on targeted industries/occupations; and maintaining a list of programs that is accessible to the workforce system
- Exploring opportunities to align, coordinate and collaborate among core and required partners' career pathway initiatives and developing a mechanism or strategy to share information about programs, grants, partnerships, etc. to inform partner staff, students and customers and to enable them to easily identify individual career pathways to employment

### **Focus: Workforce**

The workforce needs to possess the education and training required by employers with an eye toward continuously improving skills and experience. This will involve:

- Identifying and increasing awareness for supplementary training to increase the job-readiness skills necessary for competition in the workforce
- Leveraging core programs and required partner programs to increase awareness of the workforce skills employers are requesting
- Ensuring industry needs are met by the workforce
- Developing career pathways to support ongoing skill development

### **Focus: Populations with Barriers to Employment**

Government and community partners need to leverage resources toward strengthening the populations with barriers to employment in a way that will elevate them into the general world-class workforce of Utah. This will include:

- Enhancing partnerships with schools (K-12), Adult Education, post-secondary institutions and community services that already interact with these populations, reviewing comprehensive strategies and implementing best practices to ensure access to services, and encouraging common outreach and messaging to target populations
- Completing ongoing evaluations of performance measures with the goal of facilitating, rather than impeding, service delivery
- Setting performance expectations with the core and required partners, understanding that many individuals served have greater-than-average barriers to employment and training, and developing a cycle of continuous improvement to assess program efficacy and make real-time adjustments to outreach strategies

### **Assessment**

#### **Vision**

A strong economy depends on a world-class workforce. Utah will continue to enhance and expand collaborative efforts with employers, educational institutions and government agencies through business development and partnership in key sectors and occupations to make this happen. The Utah approach is regionally oriented and requires a two-way path in communication between all partners. Through implementation of WIOA, Utah will increase access to and opportunities for the employment, education, training and support services that individuals — particularly those with barriers to employment — need to succeed in the workforce.

The overall effectiveness of Utah's workforce development system in relation to its strategic vision will be assessed through performance measures and meeting its negotiated outcomes. Specifically the performance measures related to employment, education and training and supportive services:

*Employment after second quarter exit*

- Adults
- Dislocated workers
- Youth
- Adult Education
- Vocational Rehabilitation

*Employment after fourth quarter exit*

- Adults
- Dislocated workers
- Youth
- Adult Education
- Vocational Rehabilitation

*Median earnings second quarter after exist*

- Adults
- Dislocated workers
- Youth
- Adult Education
- Vocational Rehabilitation

*Credential attainment rate*

- Adults
- Dislocated workers
- Youth
- Adult Education
- Vocational Rehabilitation

*Measureable skills gains*

- Adults
- Dislocated workers
- Youth
- Adult Education
- Vocational Rehabilitation

*Effectiveness in serving employers*

- Adults
- Dislocated workers
- Youth
- Adult Education
- Vocational Rehabilitation

It will also be assessed in terms of the membership of the SWDB and committee members. Each committee will prepare an annual report that describes their activities and accomplishments relating to collaboration, partnering and building connections/relationships with businesses in key industries and occupations throughout the state and incorporating partner feedback and participation into their processes.

## Goals

### **Focus All-Encompassing Partnerships**

Utah will partner across the WIOA core and required partners, education, economic development, businesses, and other programs to coordinate, align strategies, leverage resources and work together to develop Utah's workforce.

Utah will strengthen its partnerships by:

1. Conducting an economic assessment of statewide workforce needs, working with core and required partners to create an effective and integrated workforce system supporting strong, diverse economies throughout the state
  - Assessed by: Completion and distribution of the data driven economic assessment of statewide workforce needs. The Operations Committee will oversee the development and completion of this annual assessment
2. Leveraging state funding resources to support the promotion of key occupational clusters and industry sectors identified through economic analysis and input from employers, and utilizing these resources to support the state workforce development activities
  - Assessed by: This is ongoing and WDB committees will include it in their annual reports describing any recommendations or steps that have been taken to leverage state funding resources to support the promotion of key occupational clusters and industry sectors identified through economic analysis and input from employers and describing how these actions support the state workforce development system. Reports will include a summary of recommendations for next steps.
3. Identifying opportunities to align, collaborate among and connect core and required partners to better serve Utahns as well as develop strategies and recommendations to improve service
  - Assessed by: Annual reports submitted by each SWDB committee describing recommendations or steps that have been taken to improve alignment, collaboration and connection among partners. During 2018 - 2020 the committees will evaluate the effectiveness of their recommendations once they have been implemented by assessing the required performance measures.

### **Focus: Employers**

Utah will involve employers directly in the workforce development system by utilizing and leveraging existing partnerships and expanding opportunities for them to participate as the state moves forward in developing new partnerships and aligning programs. This will include:

1. Identifying employers' needs by collecting information through surveys and industry groupings, utilizing existing information and identifying gaps
  - Assessed by: A workgroup will be assigned to provide a report every four years for planning purposes that contains information from sources such as Labor Market Information (LMI), Management Information System Information (MIS), and any current surveys and feedback collected by core and required partners that describe employers' current needs. The Operations Committee will oversee the development of this report.
2. Reaching out to employers to help design career pathways for use in secondary education (K-12), Adult Education and post-secondary education
  - Assessed by: The Career Pathways Committee will describe how it has accomplished this in its annual report due July 2017 and how it will continue to build and improve its connection to employers and education and training providers in development of career pathways.
3. Evaluating the effectiveness of existing services by creating an interactive inventory of the state-offered training programs for both workers and businesses in the state, evaluating data to determine

the training's effectiveness in meeting the needs of businesses and employees, retooling the offerings accordingly and ensuring that decision-makers at all levels, public and private, have access to the information

- Assessed by: Completion of the on-line Eligible Training Providers List (ETPL) and making it available to the public by 2017. SWDB committees will describe in their July 2021 annual reports how they will use these data to inform recommendations related to retooling offerings and ensuring decision makers have access to the information. The SWDB will oversee creation of a marketing plan and a method of collecting user feedback by 2021.

4. Working with businesses to accurately reflect position requirements and appropriately collect information in the hiring process through the labor exchange systems, primarily in an effort to improve the state's workforce development efforts and additionally for recruiting efforts in general

- Assessed by: Annual reports from the Department of Workforce services that includes data related to overall market share of employers utilizing UWORKS and the average retention time of job seekers who used UWORKS to secure a job.

5. Leveraging communication channels that will promote available internships, apprenticeships and on-the-job training that companies are willing to provide as well as connecting companies interested in providing these types of training opportunities with the state workforce development system

- Assessed by: Annual reports submitted by SWDB committees will describe recommendations and/or steps they are taking to promote as well as collect information on internships, work-based learning opportunities, apprenticeships, and on-the-job-training opportunities. The committees will gather information these career pathway opportunities, employer and education partners that support these efforts and an analysis of any gaps or opportunities for improvement. During 2018 - 2020 committees will assess increased job seeker/student connections to these types of opportunities, increased number of opportunities, and increased or stronger partnerships resulting from the committee's recommendations. The first report is due July 2017.

6. Coordinate and collaborate in outreach and marketing to the business sector.

- Assessed by: The SWDB will describe recommendations or steps taken to coordinate and collaborate in outreach and marketing to the business sector. The core and required partners will work toward aligning marketing and outreach activities. The recommendations will be implemented and measured using individual agency standards all partners currently have in place during 2018 - 2020.

### **Focus: Education and Training**

Education and training partners need to continue to focus on establishing programs that meet both the current and emerging needs of employers, including an emphasis on real-life applicability of skills development. This will be done by:

1. Developing a talent pipeline in targeted industry sectors

- Assessed by: Annual reports from SWDB committees will describe recommendations and steps for developing a talent pipeline in targeted industry sectors. The recommendations will be implemented during 2018 - 2020 and results will be assessed using the required performance measures and the number of openings posted in UWORKS.

2. Continuing to gather information from employers and supporting the needs of other industry sectors because identified sectors may not be representative of the entire workforce system

- Assessed by: The annual economic analysis assessment/report will identify industry trends and other industry sectors Utah should target.

3. Strengthening public awareness in recruiting WIOA-targeted populations, specifically those with barriers to employment, to participate in educational offerings

- Assessed by: Annual report from the SWDB will describe how it will coordinate public messages from partners to increase awareness in recruiting WIOA targeted populations. The recommendations will be implemented during 2018- 2020 and assessed through Utah's WIOA customer service survey and reviewing data collection to identify referral sources, trends and patterns. The Operations Committee will oversee a workgroup of core partner and education communications staff who will gather information on current practices, identify gaps and make recommendations for improvements as information is collected. This is an ongoing activity.

4. Developing programs and strategies that help high-school students (enrolled and not enrolled) connect to concurrent enrollment, high school CTE, Adult Education and other partnership pathways to post-secondary CTE programs

- Assessed by: The Career Pathway Committee will develop recommendations and steps for creating programs and strategies that help high school students connect to career pathways. The committee will collect information about current career pathway activities and identify gaps and opportunities for improvement

5. Identifying short-term post-secondary CTE certificate programs that link to recognized industry credentials, including a subset of certificate or degree programs (stacked and latticed credentials) to provide efficient pathways for students to achieve additional educational credentials; ensuring this is addressed by the career pathway workgroup with a focus on targeted industries/occupations; and maintaining a list of programs that is accessible to the workforce system

- Assessed by: The Career Pathways Committee will make recommendations and implement them during 2018 - 2020. The recommendations will be assessed on the number of programs that link to jobs in targeted industries and the number of certificates that lead to a degree program.

6. Exploring opportunities to align, coordinate and collaborate among core and required partners' career pathway initiatives and developing a mechanism or strategy to share information about programs, grants, partnerships, etc. to inform partner staff, students and customers and to enable them to easily identify individual career pathways to employment

- Assessed by: The Career Pathways Committee will gather statewide information regarding career pathway activities, identify gaps, and provide recommendations for improving alignment and coordination. The committee will maintain the list ensuring that it is updated, current and that steps toward improving communication and coordination continue. They will report this annually.

### **Focus: Workforce**

The workforce needs to possess the education and training required by employers with an eye toward continuously improving skills and experience. This will involve:

1. Identifying and increasing awareness for supplementary training to increase the job-readiness skills necessary for competition in the workforce

- Assessed by: A report will be written by DWS staff and distributed that describes the need for supplementary training to increase job-readiness skills necessary for competition in the workforce. Utah will explore performance measurement options such as the number of core partner customers who receive supplementary training and have successful job placements. The required performance measures will be used as a tool to assess the effectiveness of implemented recommendations related to this goal.

2. Leveraging core programs and required partner programs to increase awareness of the workforce skills employers are requesting

- Assessed by: Ongoing reports from the committees will describe recommendations or steps for leveraging core programs and required partner programs to increase awareness of the workforce skills identified in the report. The recommendations will be implemented on an ongoing basis. The

required performance measures will be used as a tool to assess the effectiveness of implemented recommendations related to this goal.

3. Ensuring industry needs are met by the workforce

- Assessed by: Completing and distributing a report that contains Labor Market Information (LMI), Management Information System Information (MIS), and any current surveys and feedback collected by core and required partners that describe employers' current needs. The Operations Committee will oversee the development of this report

4. Developing career pathways to support ongoing skill development

- Assessed by: The Career Pathway Committee will develop recommendations and steps for creating and/or supporting programs and strategies that help high school students connect to career pathways. The committee will collect information about current career pathway activities, identify gaps and opportunities for improvement. The recommendations will be implemented during 2018 - 2020.

**Focus: Populations with Barriers to Employment**

Government and community partners need to leverage resources toward strengthening the populations with barriers to employment in a way that will elevate them into the general world-class workforce of Utah. This will include:

1. Enhancing partnerships with schools (K-12), Adult Education, post-secondary institutions and community services that already interact with these populations, reviewing comprehensive strategies and implementing best practices to ensure access to services, and encouraging common outreach and messaging to target populations

- Assessed by: Annual reports from SWDB committees will describe recommendations and steps for enhancing partnerships that currently interact with populations with barriers to employment through reviewing comprehensive strategies, best practices, and common outreach and messaging. The recommendations will be implemented on an ongoing basis and assessed by evaluating required performance measures.

2. Completing ongoing evaluations of performance measures with the goal of facilitating, rather than impeding, service delivery

- Assessed by: SWDB committees are required to evaluate performance measures and develop recommendations that support and facilitate service delivery. Committee recommendations will be implemented during 2018-2020 and assessed through required performance measures.

3. Setting performance expectations with the core and required partners, understanding that many individuals served have greater-than-average barriers to employment and training, and developing a cycle of continuous improvement to assess program efficacy and make real-time adjustments to outreach strategies

- Assessed by: SWDB committees are required to evaluate core and required partner performance expectations and make recommendations for continuous improvement that will be implemented during 2018 - 2020 and assessed through required performance measures. This is an ongoing activity.

**Utah's Strategy to Achieve its Strategic Vision and Goals**

Utah's strategies take into account its economic, workforce, workforce development, education and training activities and analysis provided in the section above. Utah's Unified Plan includes strategies to achieve its vision and goals. The strategies are flexible to accommodate the state's economic, workforce, and workforce development, education and training activities and analysis provided in Section (a). The plan includes specific strategies to address the needs of populations described in Section (a). The foundation of Utah's plan is built upon utilizing data, partnerships, and its resources

to implement strategies that support operations to provide services to individuals and employers. Utah is committed to changing and/or adjusting its strategies as needed to meet the state's workforce needs. Utah's SWDB will establish standing committees to ensure Utah's goals and vision are met. These include Youth, Apprenticeships, Services to Individuals with Disabilities, Career Pathways, and Operations.

## **Vision**

A strong economy depends on a world-class workforce. Utah will continue to enhance and expand collaborative efforts with employers, educational institutions and government agencies through business development and partnership in key sectors and occupations to make this happen. The Utah approach is regionally oriented and requires a two-way path in communication between all partners. Through implementation of WIOA, Utah will increase access to and opportunities for the employment, education, training and support services that individuals — particularly those with barriers to employment — need to succeed in the workforce.

Utah's strategy for achieving its vision is primarily through the SWDB and its committees. Five committees have been formed with the authority to add non-board members, staff, experts, and/or form temporary workgroups to meet specific needs or accomplish specific goals. The committees create charters with goals based on Utah's Unified Plan and other workforce development needs. The committees are required to set goals, timelines and report recommendations to the full SWDB for approval. Once recommendations are approved, they will be implemented by workforce development partners.

## **Goals**

### **Focus All-Encompassing Partnerships**

Utah will partner across the WIOA core and required partners, education, economic development, businesses, and other programs to coordinate, align strategies, leverage resources and work together to develop Utah's workforce.

Utah will strengthen its partnerships by:

1. Conducting an economic assessment of statewide workforce needs, working with core and required partners to create an effective and integrated workforce system supporting strong, diverse economies throughout the state
  - Strategy: The economic assessment of statewide workforce needs will be used by the SWDB committees to ensure that their recommendations are based in Utah's workforce needs.
2. Leveraging state funding resources to support the promotion of key occupational clusters and industry sectors identified through economic analysis and input from employers, and utilizing these resources to support the state workforce development activities
  - Strategy: Each SWDB committee will make recommendations to leverage state funding resources to support the promotion of key occupational clusters and industry sectors identified through economic analysis and input from employers and describe how these actions support the state workforce development system.
3. Identifying opportunities to align, collaborate among and connect core and required partners to better serve Utahns as well as develop strategies and recommendations to improve service
  - Strategy: Each SWDB committee will make recommendations to improve alignment, collaboration, and connection among partners.

### **Focus: Employers**

Utah will involve employers directly in the workforce development system by utilizing and leveraging existing partnerships and expanding opportunities for them to participate as the state moves forward in developing new partnerships and aligning programs. This will include:

1. Identifying employers' needs by collecting information through surveys and industry groupings, utilizing existing information and identifying gaps
  - Strategy: Completing and distributing a report describing employers' current needs. The Operations Committee will oversee the development of this report.
2. Reaching out to employers to help design career pathways for use in secondary education (K-12), Adult Education and post-secondary education
  - Strategy: The Career Pathways Committee will gather information on current activities regarding career pathway projects and programs and make recommendations for replicating successful activities, sharing information and providing support when gaps are identified. This is an ongoing activity.
3. Evaluating the effectiveness of existing services by creating an interactive inventory of the state-offered training programs for both workers and businesses in the state, evaluating data to determine the training's effectiveness in meeting the needs of businesses and employees, retooling the offerings accordingly and ensuring that decision-makers at all levels, public and private, have access to the information
  - Strategy: Completion of the on-line Eligible Training Providers List and making it available to the public by 2017.
4. Working with businesses to accurately reflect position requirements and appropriately collect information in the hiring process through the labor exchange systems, primarily in an effort to improve the state's workforce development efforts and additionally for recruiting efforts in general
  - Strategy: Utah will utilize online tools to help employers write position requirements and with their hiring process. DWS staff will directly contact employers who have posted job openings on UWORKS when they see automated key "flags" that have been built into the system identifying potential issues.
5. Leveraging communication channels that will promote available internships, apprenticeships and on-the-job training that companies are willing to provide as well as connecting companies interested in providing these types of training opportunities with the state workforce development system
  - Strategy: The SWDB committees will share information about these career pathway opportunities. Partners that support these efforts will provide an ongoing information and/or analysis to help the committees identify of any gaps or opportunities for improvement.
6. Coordinate and collaborate in outreach and marketing to the business sector
  - Strategy: The Operations Committee will gather information from the core and required partners' current outreach and marketing efforts, identify gaps, best practices, etc., and make recommendations to the SWDB by January 2019

### **Focus: Education and Training**

Education and training partners need to continue to focus on establishing programs that meet both the current and emerging needs of employers, including an emphasis on real-life applicability of skills development. This will be done by:

1. Developing a talent pipeline in targeted industry sectors
  - Strategy: SWDB committees, working with partners such as GOED, , will create and/or support recommendations and steps for developing a talent pipeline in targeted industry sectors by 2017.

2. Continuing to gather information from employers and supporting the needs of other industry sectors because identified sectors may not be representative of the entire workforce system
  - Strategy: SWDB committees will gather information core and required partners have collected about employers, identify any gaps, find ways to close the gaps and use the information to make recommendations for supporting the needs of industry sectors outside targeted industry sectors. This is an ongoing activity.
3. Strengthening public awareness in recruiting WIOA-targeted populations, specifically those with barriers to employment, to participate in educational offerings
  - Strategy: The Operations Committee will gather information from core and required partners, identify gaps and make recommendations for coordinating public messages from partners to increase awareness in recruiting WIOA targeted populations. This is an ongoing activity.
4. Developing programs and strategies that help high-school students connect to concurrent enrollment, high school CTE, Adult Education and other partnership pathways to post-secondary CTE programs
  - Strategy: The Career Pathway Committee will make recommendations and steps for developing programs and strategies that help high school students connect to career pathways. The committee will collect information about current career pathway activities and assist/support partners in identifying gaps and opportunities for improvement. This is an ongoing activity
5. Identifying short-term post-secondary CTE certificate programs that link to recognized industry credentials, including a subset of certificate or degree programs (stacked and latticed credentials) to provide efficient pathways for students to achieve additional educational credentials; ensuring this is addressed by the career pathway workgroup with a focus on targeted industries/occupations; and maintaining a list of programs that is accessible to the workforce system.
  - Strategy: The Career Pathways Committee will work with and provide support for its partners to in developing a plans that support career pathway, apprenticeship, work-based learning, etc. efforts. This is an ongoing activity.
6. Exploring opportunities to align, coordinate and collaborate among core and required partners' career pathway initiatives and developing a mechanism or strategy to share information about programs, grants, partnerships, etc. to inform partner staff, students and customers and to enable them to easily identify individual career pathways to employment.
  - Strategy: The Career Pathways Committee has been creating a forum for this type of information to be shared and for partners to connect, coordinate and align. This is an ongoing activity

### **Focus: Workforce**

The workforce needs to possess the education and training required by employers with an eye toward continuously improving skills and experience. This will involve:

1. Identifying and increasing awareness for supplementary training to increase the job-readiness skills necessary for competition in the workforce.
  - Strategy: The Operations Committee will oversee a workgroup that will gather information on the current processes of the core and required partners and provide any necessary support and/or recommendations. This is an ongoing activity.
2. Leveraging core programs and required partner programs to increase awareness of the workforce skills employers are requesting.
  - Strategy: The Operations Committee will coordinate with the Career Pathways and Apprenticeships committees to gather information on the current processes of the core and required partners, identify gaps, and make recommendations

3. Ensuring industry needs are met by the workforce

- Strategy: The Operations Committee will lead the review of current assessments, reports, and other information and include recommendations in its annual report.

4. Developing career pathways to support ongoing skill development

- Strategy: The Career Pathway Committee will make recommendations and steps for developing programs and strategies that help high school students connect to career pathways. The committee will collect information about current career pathway activities and identify ways to support partners. This is an ongoing activity.

**Focus: Populations with Barriers to Employment**

Government and community partners need to leverage resources toward strengthening the populations with barriers to employment in a way that will elevate them into the general world-class workforce of Utah. This will include:

1. Enhancing partnerships with schools (K-12), Adult Education, post-secondary institutions and community services that already interact with these populations, reviewing comprehensive strategies and implementing best practices to ensure access to services, and encouraging common outreach and messaging to target populations

- Strategy: The Operations Committee will develop recommendations and steps for enhancing partnerships that currently interact with populations with barriers to employment through reviewing comprehensive strategies, best practices, and common outreach and messaging as part of its evaluation/recommendations for the one-stop center requirements.

2. Completing ongoing evaluations of performance measures with the goal of facilitating, rather than impeding, service delivery

- Strategy: The Operations Committees will make recommendations to the SWDB based on performance measures that facilitate and improve service delivery. The recommendations will be implemented and assessed through required performance measures. This will be done during the 2018 evaluation process.

3. Setting performance expectations with the core and required partners, understanding that many individuals served have greater-than-average barriers to employment and training, and developing a cycle of continuous improvement to assess program efficacy and make real-time adjustments to outreach strategies

- Strategy: The Operations Committee will oversee the evaluation of core and required partner performance expectations and make recommendations for continuous improvement that will be implemented and assessed through required performance measures. This will be done during the 2018 evaluation process.

**Strategies**

Utah's strategies take into account its economic, workforce, workforce development, education and training activities and analysis provided in the section above.

Utah's Unified Plan includes strategies to achieve its vision and goals. The strategies are flexible to accommodate the state's economic, workforce, and workforce development, education and training activities and analysis provided in Section (a). The plan includes specific strategies to address the needs of populations described in Section (a). The foundation of Utah's plan is built upon utilizing data, partnerships, and its resources to implement strategies that support operations to provide services to individuals and employers. Utah is committed to changing and/or adjusting its strategies as needed to meet the state's workforce needs. Utah's SWDB will establish standing committees to ensure Utah's goals and vision are met. These include Youth, Apprenticeships, Services to Individuals with Disabilities, Career Pathways, and Operations.

Utah's SWDB will have a Career Pathway Committee, which will have an initial meeting by Summer 2016 and meet at least quarterly thereafter. There are many career pathway activities being carried out around the state. The Career Pathway Committee will:

- Meet with partners from around the state and gather information and ideas on how these groups can align, share resources and collaborate
- Make recommendations that include the Six Key Elements of the Career Pathways Toolkit and requirements by WIOA Section 101(d)(3)(B), (D) to the SWDB regarding how the SWDB can best support a coordinated and collaborative state career pathway system
- Support Utah's sector strategies that are aligned with GOED's industry clusters
- Refer to the definitions of "career pathway" in WIOA Section 3(7) and "industry sector or occupation" in WIOA Section 3(23)

Utah's SWDB will have an Operations Committee which will meet by Summer 2016 and meet at least quarterly thereafter. Utah will utilize a variety of strategies to align the core programs, one-stop partners and other resources to achieve fully integrated customer services consistent with its strategic vision and goals. These strategies include:

- Creating workforce development activities in regard to gaps identified in the state's workforce analysis
- Setting collaborative performance goals, sharing information/data and working together to resolve problems and addressing gaps
- Collaborating and coordinating on training, marketing and feedback by utilizing existing committees, workgroups and programs while working to align and share resources when appropriate
- Holding regular SWDB and committee meetings as required by Utah's plan and clearly outlining all partners' responsibilities in the plan so they can be held accountable or adjusted as required

Utah's SWDB will have a Youth Committee. This committee provides information and assists with planning, operational, and other issues relating to the provision of services to youth. The committee will include community-based organizations with a demonstrated record of success in service-eligible youth. The committee will meet by Summer 2016 and quarterly thereafter.

Utah's SWDB will have an Apprenticeships Committee. This committee will meet by Summer 2016 and quarterly thereafter.

Utah's SWDB will have a Services to Individuals with Disabilities Committee. This committee provides information and assists with operational and other issues relating to the provision of services to individuals with disabilities. This includes providing programmatic and physical access to the services, programs and activities of the one-stop delivery system, and appropriate staff training to provide support, accommodations, and help finding employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities. This committee will meet by Summer 2016 and quarterly thereafter.

### **State Workforce Development Board Functions**

Utah began the process of creating a WIOA driven State Workforce Development Board (SWDB) during July 2015. Staff to the SWDB met with the chair of the SWDB to inform him of the vision and goals of WIOA and to talk about the opportunities the new law presented for Utah. The discussion also included changes that must be made. For example, changes were made to the Utah State Code regarding the make-up of the SWDB. These changes were made during the 2016 Utah State Legislative Session and implemented in July 2016. The chair and core partner staff presented the goals and vision of WIOA at the September 2015 SWDB meeting. All the members of the SWDB and key support staff joined committees to begin the process of discussing the content of Utah's Unified plan. Utah's plan was developed through the work of the committees from September 2015 through January 2016. The SWDB actively participated in the development, approval, and public comment process of the plan.

As Utah has been implementing its Unified plan, it has continued to provide assistance to SWDB members and committees by providing a strong structure and basis for the SWDB to function within. In addition to Guiding Principles, Statutory Requirements, application processes, etc. the SWDB has the opportunity to:

Implement innovative strategies by focusing on employer engagement, strengthening core programs, dissemination of best practices, and promoting effective use of technology to enhance service delivery.

Establish and maintain standing committees. There are two required committees including the Youth Services Committee and the Services to Individuals with Disabilities. Utah has added a Career Pathways Committee, an Operations Committee, and an Apprenticeship Committee.

Improve system alignment and connections by serving youth with disabilities, increasing connections with Unemployment Insurance (UI), and aligning of career pathways and industry and sector partnerships.

Build career pathways and industry and sector Partnerships using its influence on secondary education reform initiatives where career pathways are emerging and in leveraging business and industry groups to establish sector partnerships.

Support skills development programs through a representative of a joint labor-management partnership in the SWDB contingent to validate pre-apprenticeship and skills development bridge program offerings for entry into state-approved apprenticeship training.

Access local labor market analysis. The SWDB is responsible for completing a comprehensive analysis of the workforce in the region, including current labor market trends, educational and skill levels of the workforce in the region, including individuals with barriers to employment.

Define requirements and assessing one-stop career centers. One-Stop Career Centers (Utah's employment centers) are the public face of the workforce system. They are the central connecting point for all of the programs/services that must be coordinated and aligned to successfully meet the goals of Utah's Unified Plan.

Engage community systems by convening, brokering, and leveraging with business, community, education, and agency partners.

Evaluate performance measures designed to measure the effectiveness and continuous improvement of the One-Stop and Youth service delivery systems.

The SWDB led the development of Utah's Unified Plan and is guided by the vision, strategy, and goals of the plan:

### **Vision**

A strong economy depends on a world-class workforce. Utah will continue to enhance and expand collaborative efforts with employers, educational institutions and government agencies through business development and partnership in key sectors and occupations to make this happen. Through its implementation of WIOA, Utah will increase access to and opportunities for the employment, education, training and support services that individuals—particularly those with barriers to employment—need to succeed in the workforce.

### **Strategy**

- Focus on achieving the vision and goals.

- Foundation is utilizing data, partnerships and its resources to implement strategies to support operations in providing services to individuals and employers.
- Commitment to changing and/or adjusting strategies to meet the state's workforce needs.
- Workforce development activities include:
  - Identifying targeted industry sectors and occupations; aligning programs and services to support them; and ensure involvement from business and education partners
  - Setting collaborative performance goals, sharing information/data and working together to resolve problems and address any gaps
  - Collaborating and coordinating on training, marketing and feedback
  - Utilizing existing committees, workgroups and programs while working to align and share resources when it is appropriate
  - Holding regular SWDB and committee meetings as required by Utah's plan

The SWDB utilizes the agency, community, education and employer partnerships:

### **Partnerships**

Core partners ensure that employment and training services are coordinated and complementary, and that job seekers can acquire the skills and credentials that meet employer needs.

- Adult and Dislocated Worker Program
- Youth, Wagner-Peyser Act programs
- Adult Education and Family Literacy Act programs
- Vocational Rehabilitation programs

### **One-Stop Partners**

Responsible for creating a seamless, customer-focused one-stop delivery system; collaborating and aligning services to enhance access for job seekers and businesses.

- Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)
- Veterans job counseling, training and placement services
- Career and Technical Education (CTE)
- Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)
- Community Services Block Grant employment and training activities
- Unemployment Compensation programs
- Programs authorized under the Social Security Act Title IV, Part A (TANF)
- Job Corps
- National Farmworkers Jobs program
- Indian Training Education Center

### **There are clear responsibilities outlined for SWDB members:**

The SWDB members shall act in the best interests of the State and the following is expected of each member:

The SWDB meeting commitments are clearly outlined:

Attendance and Punctuality: Attend quarterly SWDB meetings and designated committee meetings. The SWDB and committee chairs shall start and conclude each meeting in a timely fashion. A minimum of five hours each quarter is the expected quarterly commitment of each member. The implementation and maintenance of the state's Unified Plan will require more hours from committee chairs and active committee members.

State Workforce Development Board Meeting Schedule: The meetings are generally held on the second Thursday of each quarter.

Committee meetings are scheduled by the committee chairs and are held as often as necessary depending on the work the committee is engaged in. The committee meetings could be held monthly for periods of time or a minimum of two quarterly meetings.

One of the two quarterly committee meetings is typically held on the day of the State Board meeting, usually between 10:00 a.m. and noon, and the board meets from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m., unless otherwise indicated. The location of the SWDB meetings is announced and meeting materials are sent to members in advance and posted on the website at <http://jobs.utah.gov/edo/statcouncil/index.html>. The SWBD Executive Committee meets at least quarterly, one month prior to the full SWBD meeting.

### **Committees**

There are five committees under the SWDB:

- Youth
- Services to Individuals with Disabilities
- Operations
- Career Pathways
- Apprenticeships

The chairs from all five committees serve on the Executive Committee

### **The SWDB committee chairs have clear expectations:**

- Attend SWDB Meetings and report on committee work
- Become familiar with the Unified Plan, specifically any sections that relates to the committee
- As a member of the Executive Committee, attend a meeting one month prior to the SWDB meetings to assist with agenda items, report on committee work, coordinate with other chairs
- Hold at least one committee meeting quarterly
- Oversee workgroups—ensure work is being done between meetings
- Utilize agency staff to answer questions and provide support to the committee
- Reach out to colleagues and associates in your organization, network and community to participate and/or provide feedback on committee work

### **The SWDB committees have clear responsibilities:**

- The committee will:
  - o Provide reports and make recommendations to the SWBD, the SWBD will approve recommendations and provide feedback to the committee.
  - o Determine whether a workgroup should be established to complete a goal. If a workgroup is created, the committee will ensure the workgroup understands the assignment(s), provide instructions and deadlines. Receive, provide feedback and approve work on assignments/recommendations
  - o Present recommendations to the SWDB

### **The SWDB members join committees and workgroups:**

Committees can create temporary work groups of experts, operations staff, employers, and/or other stakeholders to assist them in meeting their goals.

- Workgroups can be short-term or long term
- Workgroups can overlap across committees
- Workgroup members should be anyone from the public, private or nonprofit sectors as appropriate

The governor, in accordance with Section 106(d) of WIOA, retains and designates Utah as a "Single State Local Area." Utah is well situated and prepared to continue delivering integrated workforce services and will align its governance and administrative structure to set policy direction and establish realistic performance goals. The SWDB serves as the advisory body to provide guidance, oversight and evaluation to ensure programs remain fully responsive to Utah's economic

development and labor market needs. State agencies with core and required programs will continue, in a coordinated approach, to implement specific workforce development programs through the integrated services delivery systems within local areas.

In terms of section 101(d) of WIOA, the State Workforce Development Board (SWDB) will assist the Governor in the development, implementation and modification of the state plan through committees overseen by the SWDB and chaired by SWDB members that fulfill assignments related to these activities. The SWDB reviews and approves Utah's Unified State plan, including all modifications during committee meetings, full SWDB meetings, and email communications.

The SWBD leads the development and continuous improvement of the workforce development system in Utah including, through its SWDB led and core/required partner staffed committees:

- Identifying barriers and means for removing barriers to better coordinate, align, and avoid duplication among the programs and activities carried out through the system
- The development of strategies to support the use of career pathways for the purpose of providing individuals, including low-skilled adults, youth and individuals with barriers to employment (including individuals with disabilities), with workforce investment activities, education, and supportive services to enter or retain employment
- The development of strategies for providing effective outreach to and improved access for individuals and employers who could benefit from services provided through the workforce development system
- The development and expansion of strategies for meeting the needs of employers, workers, and job seekers, particularly through industry or sector partnerships related to in-demand industry sectors and occupations
- The development and continuous improvement of the one-stop delivery system, including providing assistance to one-stop operators, one-stop partners, and providers with planning and delivering services, including training services and supportive services to support effective delivery of services to workers, jobseekers, and employers
- The development of strategies to support staff training and awareness across programs supported under the workforce development system.
- The development and updating of comprehensive state adjusted levels of performance, to assess the effectiveness of the core programs in the state as required under section 116(b)
- The identification and dissemination of information on best practices, including best practices for:
  - o The effective operation of one-stop centers relating to the use of business outreach, partnerships, and service delivery strategies, including strategies for serving individuals with barriers to employment
  - o Effective training programs that respond to real-time labor market analysis, the effectively use direct assessment and prior learning assessment to measure an individual's prior knowledge, skills, competencies, and experiences, and that evaluate such skills, and competencies for adaptability, to support efficient placement into employment or career pathways
- The development and review of statewide policies affecting the coordinated provision of services through the State's one-stop delivery system described in section 121(e), including the development of policies relating to the appropriate roles and contributions of entities carrying out one-stop partner programs within the one-stop delivery system, including approaches to facilitating equitable and efficient cost allocation in such system.
- The development of strategies for technological improvements to facilitate access to, and improve the quality of, services and activities provided through the one-stop delivery system including such improvements to
  - o Enhance digital literacy skills as defined in section 202 of the Museum and Library Services Act (20U.S.C. 9101); referred to in this Act as "digital literacy skills")
  - o Accelerate the acquisition of skills and recognized postsecondary credentials by participants

- o Strengthen the professional development of providers and workforce professionals
- o Ensure such technology is accessible to individuals with disabilities and individuals residing in remote areas
- The development of strategies for aligning technology and data systems across one-stop partner programs to enhance service delivery and improve efficiencies in reporting on performance accountability measurement and reporting processes to improve coordination of services across one-stop partner programs
- The preparation of annual reports described in paragraphs (1) and (2) of section 116(d)
- The development of statewide workforce and labor market information system described in section 15€ of the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S>C/ 491-2(e)
- The development of such other policies as may promote statewide objectives for, and enhance the performance of, the workforce development system in the state

### **Core Program Activities to Implement Utah's Strategy**

Utah's core partners are funding activities to implement the state strategies. The activities will be aligned across core programs. Core partners are committed to:

- Maximizing existing infrastructure to develop a common registration and data repository. The Data and Reports workgroup that reports to the Operations Committee will explore opportunities enhancements/development related to a common registration form and data repository process.
- Utilizing a braided funding model to leverage existing resources in providing services for common customers. These efforts will be ongoing including referrals and client interventions at any point of entry (DWS, Vocational Rehabilitation or adult education), refinement of career pathways to meet the needs through stronger engagement with employers, high demand industry and post-secondary and training institutions with a focus on high risk clients. Outcomes will be reported to the Operations Committee and SWDB annually.
- Providing cross training to core and required partner staff to increase awareness of programs and services that are available with the goal of increasing co-enrollment. Utah will explore expanding case management system interfaces with core partners to identify common or mutual clients. Training will begin during May 2017 and recommendations for expanding case management system interfaces will be reported to the Operations.
- Developing requirements for the one-stop center. The Operations Committee will lead the development of requirements for the one-stop center. The committee will review current enrollment, referral and service delivery processes/activities of the core partners. The committee will identify gaps, opportunities for better alignment, and other strategies to meet the state's goals. The committee will include these recommendations as part of the one-stop requirements. The recommendations will be implemented during Spring 2017, the implementation process will include staff training, pilot testing, and a start date of July 2017. The Operations Committee will evaluate the success of the new processes by reviewing performance data collected from July 2017 through December 2017.
- Exploring opportunities for additional co-location of core program partners. The Operations Committee will lead the efforts to explore additional opportunities for co-location of core program partners and services and make recommendations to the SWDB.
- Sharing information and refining the current referral process while working toward including all core partners in a common point of entry for customers to enter a universal collection application that connects to all core partner systems with the intent of streamlining the process and eliminating duplication. A workgroup will be established to explore opportunities of expanding DWS' 360 Referral System.
- Aligning current career pathway initiatives and partners to develop them further where appropriate, placing a priority on career pathway development and initiatives for the identified six economic clusters (industry sectors) and then developing and expanding the scope to include other sectors as industry expands in Utah. Partners will work with CTE directors in education, industry and economic development to address creating and enhancing career

pathways to ensure Utah's workforce remains viable in a global market, and they will align closely with CTE providers at the secondary and post-secondary levels to assess occupational demand with educational offerings and to collaborate on developing new CTE programs. These activities will be overseen by the SWDB Career Pathways Committee. The career pathway work will begin during July 2016. Pathways (current and future) will be reviewed to better meet the most-at-risk clients ensuring that all residents of Utah's needs can be met.

### **Alignment with Activities outside the Plan**

The strategies outlined in (A) will be aligned with the programs and activities provided by required one-stop partners and other partners as appropriate, ensuring coordination of and avoiding duplication among these activities.

The Operations Committee has representation from business, the SWDB, and all core and required partners. This group is responsible for ensuring that one-stop programs and services are aligned coordinated, and non-duplicating. It is also responsible for identifying issues and making recommendations to work toward resolving them. This includes:

- o Utah System of Technical Colleges (USTC) includes Career and Technical Education (CTE)
- o Utah System of Higher Education (USHE) includes CTE
- o Adult Education
- o Utah State Board of Education (USBE) includes CTE
- o Vocational Rehabilitation
- o The Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED)
- o STEM Action Center
- o The Utah Department of Workforce Services
- o Utah State Workforce Development Board (SWDB)
- o Representation from the SWDB Career Pathways Committee
- o Veteran's and Military Initiatives
- o Utah Defendant Offender Workforce Development (UDOWD)
- o Employment First Initiative
- o Choose to Work (CTW)
- o Work Success
- Talent Ready Utah
- o Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Supplement Nutrition Assistance (SNAP)
- o Unemployment Insurance (UI)
- o Community Services Block Grant
- o Job Corps
- o National Farmworkers Jobs program
- o Senior Community Service Employment Program

The Operations Committee will:

- Lead the effort to identify improvements in referral pathways and develop processes to provide consistent and seamless services for common customers and make recommendations for implementing an agreed-upon referral process (as part of the one-stop system) by January 2017.
- Lead the effort to create plans for educating and training one-stop staff regarding partner services, referral processes, and access to services offered by core and required partners, with initial training beginning May 2017
- Have responsibility for identifying any duplication of services and/or gaps regarding services provided by core and required partners. Issues such as these will be exposed during the process of identifying requirements for the one-stop system. The committee will begin making recommendations to resolve any duplication of service issues and/or gaps by July 2017. This is an ongoing activity.

- Work closely with the apprenticeships and career pathways committees as it makes recommendations for one-stop centers and service delivery.
- Ensure there are processes for sharing information among the core partners in order to provide a more holistic experience for the customer and provide seamless service.
- Explore information-sharing technology solutions to identify common customer information, services received and performance to reduce or avoid duplicating services
- Coordinate with the Career Pathways Committee members, with all core and required partners identifying career pathway activities and ensuring common knowledge, goals and referral/access processes regarding career pathways are available and implemented.

### **Coordination, Alignment and Provision of Services to Individuals**

Partners will coordinate activities and resources to provide comprehensive, high-quality, customer-centered services, including supportive services to individuals and populations identified in Section II(a)(1)(B). The activities will conform to the statutory requirements of each program. This will occur through existing partnerships, recommendations from SWDB committees, and additional assignments sponsored by the SWDB as outlined throughout this plan.

Core and required partners serve on the Operations Committee which is charged with collecting and analyzing information to develop the one-stop requirements. Through committee work, the partners will identify and act on opportunities to enhance and coordinate activities and resources to provide comprehensive, high-quality customer centered services as well as supportive services to individuals including populations identified in section II.a.1.B of this plan. The Operations Committee is also charged with recommending training and outreach strategies that will be further developed and implemented by the partners as appropriate. Training core partner staff and marketing to targeted groups will help ensure that individuals receive the services they need. In section II(a)(1)(B) Utah has identified the following groups:

- Utah needs to increase its Labor Force Participation Rate by tapping into workers who left the labor market during the Great Recession and upscaling their skills as required by employers to meet the needs of the state.
- Disengaged females have not re-entered the labor market

USOR has partnered with the Utah State Board of Education, DWS Workforce Development Division and the Division of Services for People with Disabilities to implement “School to Work” pilots in 5 different school districts in Utah. The “School to Work” pilot teams utilize the Customized Employment process to assist students with disabilities with competitive, integrated employment prior to graduation from high school or post high school. Teams work collaboratively to serve students and blend/braid funding so that students can access services needed to become employed and independent.

USOR has presented on webinars and at conferences in collaboration with partners from DWS Workforce Development Division, Division of Services for People with Disabilities, the Utah State Board of Education, and the Divisions of Substance Abuse and Mental health in an effort to enhance and demonstrate partnerships and collaboration among agencies serving transition aged youth across the state.

### **Coordination, Alignment and Provision of Services to Employers**

Partners will coordinate activities and resources to provide comprehensive, high-quality, customer-centered services, including supportive services, to employers to meet their current and projected workforce needs. The activities will conform to the statutory requirements of each program.

The Operations Committee will coordinate with the Service to Individuals with Disabilities Committee, Career Pathways Committee and Apprenticeships Committee to create

recommendations for aligning DWS, USOR, and Adult Education and other required partner services for employers.

The Operations Committee will gather information and review partners' current employer engagement processes. They will identify gaps and explore new ways to better meet employers' workforce needs and to achieve the goals of industry partners, including:

- Ensuring all partners are aligned and coordinated in educating employers about individuals with barriers, with an emphasis on the targeted industries
- Ensuring core, required and optional one-stop partners collaborate
- Ensure core, required, and option one-stop partners are not duplicating services
- Ensure that all partners are engaging with employers and high demand industries needs are being addressed within each of the economic regions
- Explore ways all partners can leverage USOR's current coordination with employers
- Identify ways all partners can participate in promoting employer boards utilized by CTE at the secondary (K-12) and post-secondary education levels (USTC, USHE)
- Identify ways all partners can coordinate, align with and utilize DWS's workforce development specialists, labor market information and UWORKS labor exchange system to support employer needs
- Develop recommendations for a process to coordinate efforts to understand employer needs from a full workforce development system point of view, coordinating all partner efforts as well as new methods
- Develop a plan for coordinating and collaborating core partner, education partners and economic development partner outreach and marketing to employers
- Provide a report on the status of recommendations, implementation of recommendations and review of performance measures. This is an ongoing activity.
- The Operations Committee will provide these recommendations to the appropriate agencies, groups and the SWDB.

### **Partner Engagement with Educational Institutions**

Utah's strategies engage state education and training providers, including Salt Lake Community College (SLCC), Utah State University (Eastern), Snow College and USTC as partners in the workforce development system to create a job-driven education and training system.

DWS serves as a resource to its USHE and USTC partners. Designated DWS employees serve on institutional workforce advisory boards or on academic division or department employer advisory boards at every institution. Utah educational institutions rely on DWS labor market information and employer outreach efforts to inform their decisions regarding curriculum adjustments, additional programs or canceling unneeded or outdated programs based on employer needs.

Career centers exist at every USHE institution and many USTC campuses. The institutional career centers offer job posting services, workforce development training, career advisement, workplace readiness training and more. Many of these institutional programs supplement their services through collaboration with DWS. Agency colleagues may sit on center advisory boards, share updated résumé or job-search practices and curriculum materials, serve as guest speakers and frequently partner at every institution on activities from career-exploration days and high-school leadership workshops to college/community job fairs and outreach events to veterans, minorities and other under-served populations. Utah will explore ways to build stronger connections between core partner counselors and post-secondary career resource counselors/professions, including Disability Resource Centers (DRC), to ensure customers have access to all services the partners offer.

USOR and USHE will develop and maintain a cooperative agreement to guide their coordinated efforts to provide access to post-secondary education to people with disabilities. To achieve this end, the agreement will include direction for the development of local-level agreements between USOR and each institution of higher education. In these local-level agreements, USOR district offices and each institution of higher education Disability Services Office (DSO) will designate staff liaison

assignments to serve as agency representatives, organize local efforts, communicate problems and develop best practices. The USOR and DSO liaisons will meet throughout the school year to organize cross-training and ensure the established referral pathways between programs are functional and utilized. DSO staff and USOR counselors exchange information, according to applicable laws, to facilitate evaluating individual client needs, providing appropriate accommodations or auxiliary aids and engaging in educational goal planning.

Talent Ready Utah is a collaborative partnership between DWS, USHE, GOED, USTC, USBE, the Salt Lake Chamber, Dell EMC, and the Governor's Education Adviser. It provides funding to public post-secondary educational institutions to develop, implement or enhance educational programs that are responsive to industry needs or industry trade associations located in Utah that serve statewide high-growth, high-wage industries and occupations or economic need. Talent Ready Utah also provides funding to secondary education (K-12) to develop, implement or enhance career pathway programs and connect students to post-secondary institutions.

The Talent Ready Utah program is intended to increase the number of individuals who earn industry-recognized credentials, develop career pathways with multiple entry and exit points for students along the post-secondary education continuum and create systemic change by establishing processes and programs that better connect education, the workforce and employers. The program was created to address the following four opportunities and concerns:

- Increase economic cluster connectivity and educational alignment
- Respond to industry-identified skill gaps
- Enhance the role of the regional institutions in economic development
- Promote regional stewardship of grantees' contributions to workforce development

### **Partner Engagement with Other Education and Training Providers**

Utah will create a work group, reporting to the Operations Committee, that is charged with describing how the state's strategies will engage education and training providers, including training providers on the state's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) as partners in the workforce development system to create a job-driven education and training system. This includes sharing and discussing CTE state plans between state workforce and education agencies.

### **Leveraging Resources to Increase Educational Access**

Utah's strategies provide the opportunity to leverage federal, state and local investments that enhance access to workforce development programs at the USHE and USTC systems, including improving access for the rural areas of the state.

The Job Growth Fund (JGF) is a strategic revenue source that funds employer initiative programs. This revenue comes from the UI Special Administration Expense Account. JGF helps fund training, education and job-creation/retention and workforce programs. Currently it is leveraged to support the goals and vision of this plan. Utah will continue to explore ways to utilize this resource to support and continuously improve its workforce development strategies.

In the past five years, the Utah Legislature has invested approximately \$50 million in STEM education and over \$2 million has been raised from the private sector.

DWS created a STEM specialist position to enhance this partnership. It is a shared liaison position with the STEM Action Center. The position is funded 50 percent by DWS and 50 percent by the STEM Action Center, and it is modeled after the successful implementation of a liaison between the STEM Action Center and the USBE. USBE has been more effective in leveraging its resources, expanding and developing strategic partnerships, and responding proactively to meet employer needs through this shared position.

DWS, STEM Action Center and USBE are working together to map Utah's existing STEM resources, gaps and successful models to create new and expanded computing courses and programs. A network of partnerships will be developed to connect youth, underemployed and veteran customers to high-wage, high-demand STEM-related jobs through a clear pathway with multiple entry and exit points. The strategy will align with the mission, vision and goals of WIOA.

Objectives include:

- Creating a comprehensive strategy of workforce and economic alignment activities to support the growth of STEM jobs
- Connecting STEM strategies with training and development for underemployed to include intergenerational poverty (IGP) families and targeted populations
- Coordinating STEM workforce alignment activities among STEM stakeholders, including submitting grant proposals, reducing duplication of efforts, linking between STEM education (supply) and industry (demand) partners, and developing STEM career pathways
- Aligning pathways developed with WIOA, Talent Ready Utah, STEM Action Center grant awards and any other legislatively funded STEM projects

Expected outcomes include:

- A comprehensive map of STEM education programs and resources
- A defined baseline and developed strategies to increase the number of DWS-funded individuals entering STEM-related training programs and jobs
- New STEM partnerships
- The submission of coordinated grant proposals

### **Improving Access to Post-secondary Credentials**

Aligning, coordinating and establishing collaboration among the core and required partners will increase customer access and referrals to programs, leading to completion of stackable and marketable credentials as well as post-secondary opportunities. Utah's secondary, post-secondary, Adult Education, GOED and other core and required partners are working together to meet the governor's "66 by 2020" post-secondary credential initiative. The strategies outlined in this plan will enhance and support those efforts, such as coordinating data systems, working with members of the ETPL, coordinating career pathways projects and moving toward integrated service delivery.

The Apprenticeship Committee is working on improving access to registered apprenticeship programs and expanding the types of apprenticeships available to job seekers and students. The committee's top priorities include expanding awareness and expanding the types of apprenticeships available to include targeted industries. In addition, they are coordinating with the Career Pathways Committee to ensure their recommendations align with the Career Pathways Committee recommendations. This is an ongoing activity.

The Career Pathways Committee is gathering information on all career pathways and related projects in the state. The group will use the information to identify opportunities for alignment, collaboration and gaps. This information will be used to support recommendations for developing career pathways that support Utah's targeted industries. It will also include an analysis of current activities that lead to recognized postsecondary credentials and recommendations for improving pathways and closing any gaps. This is an ongoing activity.

Utah's SWDB strategies engage state education and training providers, including Salt Lake Community College (SLCC), Utah State University (Eastern), Snow College and USTC as partners in the workforce development system to create a job-driven education and training system through the work of the SWDB committees.

DWS currently serves as a resource to its USHE and USTC partners. Designated DWS employees serve on institutional workforce advisory boards or on academic division or department employer

advisory boards at every institution. Utah educational institutions rely on DWS labor market information and employer outreach efforts to inform their decisions regarding curriculum adjustments, additional programs or canceling unneeded or outdated programs based on employer needs.

Career centers exist at every USHE institution and many USTC campuses. The institutional career centers offer job posting services, workforce development training, career advisement, workplace readiness training and more. Many of these institutional programs supplement their services through collaboration with DWS. Agency colleagues may sit on center advisory boards, share updated résumé or job-search practices and curriculum materials, serve as guest speakers and frequently partner at every institution on activities from career-exploration days and high-school leadership workshops to college/community job fairs and outreach events to veterans, minorities and other under-served populations.

Through the SWDC committee work, Utah will explore and identify ways to build stronger connections between core partner counselors and post-secondary career resource counselors/professions, including Disability Resource Centers (DRC), to ensure customers have access to all services the partners offer.

Under the leadership of SWDB, USOR and USHE will develop and maintain a cooperative agreement to guide their coordinated efforts to provide access to post-secondary education to people with disabilities. To achieve this end, the agreement will include direction for the development of local-level agreements between USOR and each institution of higher education. In these local-level agreements, USOR district offices and each institution of higher education Disability Services Office (DSO) will designate staff liaison assignments to serve as agency representatives, organize local efforts, communicate problems and develop best practices. The USOR and DSO liaisons will meet throughout the school year to organize cross-training and ensure the established referral pathways between programs are functional and utilized. DSO staff and USOR counselors exchange information, according to applicable laws, to facilitate evaluating individual client needs, providing appropriate accommodations or auxiliary aids and engaging in educational goal planning.

Talent Ready Utah is a member of the Career Pathways Committee. Talent Ready Utah is a collaborative partnership between DWS, USHE, GOED, USTC, USBE, the Salt Lake Chamber, Dell EMC, and the Governor's Education Adviser. It provides funding to public post-secondary educational institutions to develop, implement or enhance educational programs that are responsive to industry needs or industry trade associations located in Utah serving statewide high-growth, high-wage industries and occupations or regional economic need. Talent Ready Utah also provides funding to secondary education (K-12) to develop, implement or enhance career pathway programs and connect students to post-secondary institutions.

The Talent Ready Utah program is intended to increase the number of individuals who earn industry-recognized credentials, develop career pathways with multiple entry and exit points for students along the post-secondary education continuum and create systemic change by establishing processes and programs that better connect education, the workforce and employers. The program was created to address the following four opportunities and concerns:

- Increase economic cluster connectivity and educational alignment
- Respond to industry-identified skill gaps
- Enhance the role of the regional institutions in economic development
- Promote regional stewardship of grantees' contributions to workforce development

The Career Pathways Committee will include in its ongoing analysis a description of the state's strategies that engage education and training providers, including training providers on the state's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) as partners in the workforce development system to create a

job-driven education and training system. This includes sharing and discussing CTE state plans between state workforce and education agencies.

The Career Pathways Committee will explore opportunities to develop strategies to increase access to postsecondary credentials working with all of Utah's workforce development partners:

- Utah System of Technical Colleges (USTC) includes Career and Technical Education (CTE)
- Utah System of Higher Education (USHE) includes CTE
- Adult Education
- Utah State Board of Education (USBE) includes CTE
- Vocational Rehabilitation
- The Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED)
- STEM Action Center
- The Utah Department of Workforce Services
- Utah State Workforce Development Board (SWDB)
- Representation from the SWDB Career Pathways Committee
- Veteran's and Military Initiatives
- Utah Defendant Offender Workforce Development (UDOWD)
- Employment First Initiative
- Choose to Work (CTW)
- Work Success
- Talent Ready Utah
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Supplement Nutrition Assistance (SNAP)
- Unemployment Insurance (UI)
- Community Services Block Grant
- Job Corps
- National Farmworkers Jobs program
- Senior Community Service Employment Program

### **Coordinating with Economic Development Strategies**

Activities defined in (A) will be coordinated with GOED and other Utah economic development organizations' activities and strategies. GOED is an active member of many of the committees, workgroups and projects described throughout this plan. They are a member of the SWDB, which ensures their participation in coordinating activities between GOED, core partners and required partners. DWS also attends the GOED board meetings to support the growth of local employers and identify connection points for partnerships

### **Utah's operating systems that support coordinated implementation of state strategies include:**

- Labor Market Information

The Workforce Research and Analysis Division (WRA) gathers data regarding the economy. Its mission is to generate accurate, timely and understandable data and analyses to provide knowledge of ever-changing workforce environments that inform sound planning and decision-making. WRA collects information describing the Utah labor market, including wages; employment projections by industry, occupation and area; cost of living; employment and unemployment; labor force characteristics; career trends; and industry trends. DWS, the SWDB and core partners utilize the workforce information collected in planning and decision-making to determine job growth areas, skill gaps, income and wage data, migration, demographics, cost of living and career-exploration opportunities. This information is critical in determining what industries and occupations to target while working with partners in business and education to ensure skills training is available.

Additionally, information collected is used to assist individuals to help them make informed career choices. DWS delivers this information to customers through the Workforce Information page of the

DWS website at <http://jobs.utah.gov/> . DWS works closely with customers, employers and partners to make the information meaningful and practical for end-users.

- **UtahFutures:** Utah's education and career planning system

UtahFutures exists as Utah's education- and career-planning system under an executive order from the governor. UtahFutures.org (at <https://utahfutures.org/> ) helps students and job seekers make education and career plans online, together with their counselors, and manage Student Education and Occupation Plans. UtahFutures is designed to support students beyond secondary education and extend resources to adults seeking adult education, higher education and career opportunities. The system provides a connection for community partners who are able to display information about their organizations, send messages and calendar events to their "followers" and publish scholarships on the system. UtahFutures is governed by a steering committee of founding partners (including USHE, USTC, USBE, GEAR UP, DWS, state libraries, GOED and Utah Education Network) and supported by an advisory board.

- **Data Collection Systems:**

- o UWORKS is DWS' integrated case management system. It is a web-based system that supports self-service customers by providing access to information and services that help them obtain employment. It tracks mediated staff services, allowing employment counselors to easily manage cases and assist customers in reaching their employment goals. This system captures funding source requirements, training-provider details and youth-provider information, allowing for program accountability and resource scheduling. The system supports both self-service and mediated job seekers and employers. Because of the different types of users supported, the system accommodates multiple system entry points, multiple levels of security and the ability to seamlessly transfer job seekers or employers from self-directed to staff-assisted. Recently DWS was awarded a Department of Labor (DOL) grant under the Workforce Innovation Fund initiative. The GenLEX project, funded by the DOL grant, is designed to mitigate the use of mediated (staff-assisted) services and make self-service labor exchange more successful; provide labor exchange services at a lower cost per participant; address the capacity and access issues with physical one-stop centers; connect job seekers and students to career pathways; and improve Common Measures outcomes and introduce outcomes that more accurately measure labor exchange services success. GenLEX partners plan to improve service delivery by enhancing technology and using it in innovative ways. The target is to improve outcomes for all employers and job seekers with emphasis on low-wage and less-skilled populations.

- o The Electronic Resource and Eligibility Product (eRep) is the system used to determine supportive service program eligibility for TANF, Food Stamps, Medicaid, etc.

- o eShare is Utah's data repository system that collects information from several systems and allows for one central location for service providers who are determining intensive/training service eligibility through UWORKS to gather required customer information.

- o eClient is an electronic imaging system used to hold and view documents for all customer types specific to eRep.

- o myCase is an Internet-based system that allows customers to ascertain the status of their case.

- o Interactive self-service and mediated-service systems called Contributions Automated Tax System (CATS) and Comprehensive Unemployment Benefits System (CUBS) are used to collect data and process all services offered by the Unemployment Insurance Division, including the collection of wage data and new hire information from employers.

- o eReports is the data reporting system DWS uses to provide detailed information about customer activities and outcomes, providing administrators, managers, front-line staff and program staff with supplemental tools to ensure performance outcome attainment. The eReports system has access to the following systems: CUBS, CATS, UWORKS, and eRep.

- o DWS Data Warehouse contains data and could house additional data used to support the strategies of the State Plan.

- o Adult education data are collected by USBE through a relational web based database called UTopia (Utah Online Performance Information for Adult Education). As students move throughout the state (currently 51 program sites with multiple sites), their data follows them in real time. All reporting elements defined by the Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education (OCTAE) to meet the needs of WIOA reporting are or will be built into the database and will be shared with and accessible by core partners through secure portals. UTopia provides adult educators and the USBE Adult Education Services staff with effective and valid data to enhance program improvements, ensuring successful student outcomes.

- o USOR utilizes the Accessible Web-based Activity and Reporting Environment (AWARE) for data collection. AWARE is a fully integrated, comprehensive case-management system. It is used by 32 other state VR Programs for documentation, caseload management, budget and expenditures, and outcome reporting. It collects client information covering the life cycle of a case: application, trial work experiences, eligibility, plan, job ready, employment and closure, and then to post-employment services and follow up. AWARE contains the new WIOA requirements for the Rehabilitation Service Administration's Case Service 9-11 Report. All data collected in AWARE is readily available for automated reporting. In addition, AWARE currently interfaces with the UWORKS case management system and will interface with UTopia to enhance collection and integration between core programs and activities.

**Utah plans to work toward ensuring that its policies support the implementation of its strategies. Workgroups with appropriate representation from the core partners and required one-stop partners have:**

- Established a system for generating a common identifier for clients across all six core programs with UWORKS
- Conducted data matches on a weekly basis to ensure accurate matching of shared customers/clients
- Recommend the expansion of data sharing among core programs to include common performance measures
- Reviewed, and aligned common performance measures

The workgroup with representation from the core and required partners will continue to make recommendations to the Operations Committee regarding Utah's process for developing guidelines for state-administered one-stop partner programs' contributions to a one-stop delivery system, including benchmarks, and its guidance to assist in determining equitable and stable methods of funding infrastructure in accordance with Section 121(h)(1)(B).

### **State Agency Organization**

Utah's Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Wagner-Peyser Act, and the Vocational Rehabilitation programs are housed with the Department of Workforce Services (DWS) and delivered through the state's current one-stop employment centers. The Utah Board of Education provides leadership and direction to the Utah State Office of Education (USBE), which has administrative authority over adult education. View organizational charts, Figure 35, at:  
<http://jobs.utah.gov/wioa/wioaplan2016graphs.pdf> .

## **UTAH STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD**

### **INTRODUCTION**

On July 22, 2014, H.R. 803 the “Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act” was signed into law. This replaces the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and amends the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, the Wagner-Peyser Act, and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This also makes changes to the State Workforce Investment Board.

This document offers a profile of the new State Workforce Development Board, the goals, duties and responsibilities for the purposes of orienting new members, educating existing members and new member recruitment.

The SWDB’s principal assets are its informed and dedicated members. We are grateful for the business, community and government leaders who volunteer their time, knowledge and expertise to Utah’s workforce development efforts.

### **GOVERNOR’S VISION AND BOARD MISSION**

The SWDB’s vision anticipates a dynamic state with a richly diversified economy that is attractive both to employers who create and sustain jobs, as well as individuals who bring knowledge and skills to those jobs. The SWDB supports its vision, mission and commitment to taxpayers through its partnership of state and local government, business, economic development, and community organizations. Based on direct partner input and data, the SWDB guides the strategic alignment of programs, resources, and services with employer needs creating a strong workforce development system for Utah.

### **GOVERNOR’S VISION FOR UTAH**

Utah will lead the nation as the best performing economy and be recognized as a premier global business destination.

### **STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD MISSION**

To strengthen Utah’s workforce development system to meet employer needs through innovative strategies that keep pace with economic change.

### **OUR COMMITMENT TO TAXPAYERS**

To provide quality, accountable and streamlined services that connect a world class workforce with employment.

### **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

The following principles guide the Board in lending support to the vision, mission and commitment to taxpayers:

1. The State SWDB understands the key current and future workforce needs of business and industry.
2. Workforce partnerships are formed between business, local government, education, community partners and economic development organizations to address and identify key needs.
3. The SWDB serves as a convener of diverse stakeholders who will actively participate and collaborate with all partners, both public and private. Solid partnerships are keys to success.
4. The SWDB will adopt a common set of key workforce development data elements, goals, measures and a continuous improvement process among the six core programs.
5. Training resources focus on programs that prepare and connect unemployed workers with high quality training to get good jobs, stay employed and meet needs of employers.
6. The SWDB, led by business, focuses a significant portion of its workload on labor market demand trends and issues, which shape the jobs of today and influence the opportunities of tomorrow.

## **STATUTORY RESPONSIBILITIES**

The SWDB oversees strategic direction for the six core partners of WIOA. SWDB members are appointed by the Governor and have the following statutory functions:

- Provide leadership in the development and expansion of strategies for meeting the needs of employers, workers, job seekers, through industry and sector partnerships related to in-demand industry sectors and occupations.
- Assist the Governor in the development, implementation and modification of the Unified State plan.
- Assist in the development of strategies to support the use of career pathways to include low-skilled adults, youth, and individual with barriers to employment, including individuals with disabilities.
- Review the statewide policies and programs and make recommendations on actions that should take place to align workforce development programs in the state with the six core programs.
- Coordinate the planning and delivery of workforce development services with the six core programs and other mandatory partners.
- Assist in the development and continuous improvement of the workforce development system and one-stop delivery system in the state.
- Designate one-stop operator (DWS is currently Utah's designated one-stop operator).
- Assist in the development and updating of comprehensive state performance accountability measures to assess the effectiveness of core programs in the state. This includes approving criteria and eligibility of training providers, as well as publishing performance outcomes on training providers.
- Develop annual report.
- Assist in the development of strategies for technological improvements to improve the quality of services and activities provided through the one-stop delivery system.
- Improve the understanding and visibility of state workforce service efforts through external and internal marketing strategies.
- Perform other responsibilities within the scope of workforce services as requested by the Legislature, the Governor or Governor's designee.

## **MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES**

The SWDB members shall act in the best interests of the State and the following is expected of each member:

- Attendance and Punctuality

Attend quarterly SWDB meetings and designated committee meetings. The SWDB and committee chairs shall start and conclude each meeting in a timely fashion. A minimum of five hours each quarter is the expected quarterly commitment of each member.

- Meeting Schedule

The meetings are generally held on the second Thursday of each quarter.

Committee meetings are typically held on the day of the SWDB meeting, usually between 10:00 a.m. and noon, and the SWDB meets from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m., unless otherwise indicated. The location of meetings is announced and meeting materials are sent to members in advance and posted on the website.

- Participation

Beyond attendance and punctuality, each member should prepare for the meetings by reviewing pre-meeting materials and contacting resources for further information and opinions, as necessary. To ensure collective effectiveness, each member should provide his/her knowledge and expertise on substantive State SWDB issues. A candid expression of ideas and opinions among colleagues as well as respect for differences and similarities will ensure success.

- Committees Participation

Each member of the SWDB should actively participate on his/her designated standing committee.

## ACCESS TO RESOURCES

Beyond preparing for and participating in SWDB activities, each member should be prepared to tap into other available resources in order to carry out the SWDB mission, including professional networks, technical supports, etc.

## COMPENSATION, PER DIEM AND EXPENSES

SWDB members who are not public members, state or local government members, or higher education members, may receive compensation, per diem and expenses at the rates established by the Division of Finance.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The SWDB exists for purposes that transcend personal, professional and corporate self-interests. Consequently, any State SWDB member who may have a conflict of interest must announce such potential conflict prior to voting on an affected issue.

### 1. Membership roster

Provide a membership roster for the State Board, including members' organizational affiliations.

#### (1) Utah State Workforce Development Board Membership List, January 2018

Representatives of Business			
Member Name	Member Organization		
Megen Ralphs, Chair	MSC Aerospace		Manufacturing
Bryan Flake	Geneva Rock Products		Construction
Bruce Rigby	Cache Valley Bank		Finance
Dave Dixon	Petersen Incorporated		Manufacturing
Deanna Hopkins	Questar Gas		Energy
Abby Osborne	Salt Lake Chamber		Business Associations
Jim Boyd	BusyBusy		Information Technology

Joey Gilbert	Associated General Contractor	Construction
Lance Lehnhof	Red Leaf Resources	Energy
Joseph Carlson	Terra Millennium Corporation	Construction
Sabrina Depenbrock	Procter & Gamble	Manufacturing
Robert Freebairn	Vivint Solar	Energy
Wally Trotter	Mountain View Hospital	Health Care
Ci Ci Compton	L-3 Communications	Technology
Jake Mellor	Jake Mellor Financial Services	Finance
Vacant		
<b>Representatives of Workforce, Education &amp; Community Based Organizations</b>		

Connie Nielsen	OPEIU - AFL - CIO	Connie Nielsen
Carl Brailsford	Utah Electrical JATC	Carl Brailsford
Dale Cox	Utah AFL - CIO	Dale Cox
David Buhler/Blair Carruth	Commissioner of Higher Education	David Buhler/Blair Carruth
Diane Lewis	Laborer's Local 295	Diane Lewis
Elizabeth Garbe	United Way of Salt Lake	Elizabeth Garbe
Gary Harter	Department of Veterans & Military Affairs	Gary Harter
Lisa Laird	Snow College	Lisa Laird
Dave Woolstenhulme	Utah System of Technical Colleges	
<b>Representatives of Government and Core Programs</b>		
Executive Director Ann Williamson/Lana Stohl	Department of Human Services	
Director, Sarah Brenna	Utah State Office of Rehabilitation	
Interim State Superintendent Sydnee Dickson	Superintendent of Public Instruction	

Executive Director Val Hale	Gov. Office of Economic Development
Representative Becky Edwards	Davis County
Executive Director, Gary Harter	Department of Veteran and Military Affairs
Commissioner Jake Mellor	Carbon County Commissioner
Deputy Director, Greg Paras	Department of Workforce Services

### **Board Activities**

Currently DWS has statute authority to serve as the administrative entity for the State Council of Workforce Services. During the 2017 Utah State Legislative session, the state code was amended to align with the changes in accordance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) found in 29 U.S.C. Section 3101 et al. DWS will retain the administrative oversight of the State Workforce Development Board (SWDB).

The governor, in accordance with Section 106(d) of WIOA, retains and designates Utah as a “Single State Local Area.” Utah is well situated and prepared to continue delivering integrated workforce services and will align its governance and administrative structure to set policy direction and establish realistic performance goals. The SWDB serves as the advisory body to provide guidance, oversight and evaluation to ensure programs remain fully responsive to Utah’s economic development and labor market needs. State agencies with core and required programs will continue, in a coordinated approach, to implement specific workforce development programs through the integrated services delivery systems within local areas.

In terms of section 101(d) of WIOA, the State Workforce Development Board (SWDB) will assist the Governor in the development, implementation and modification of the state plan through committees overseen by the SWDB and chaired by SWDB members that fulfill assignments related to these activities. The SWDB reviews and approves Utah’s Unified State plan, including all modifications during committee meetings, full SWDB meetings, and email communications.

The SWBD leads the development and continuous improvement of the workforce development system in Utah including, through its SWDB led and core/required partner staffed committees:

- Identifying barriers and means for removing barriers to better coordinate, align, and avoid duplication among the programs and activities carried out through the system

- The development of strategies to support the use of career pathways for the purpose of providing individuals, including low-skilled adults, youth and individuals with barriers to employment (including

individuals with disabilities), with workforce investment activities, education, and supportive services to enter or retain employment

- The development of strategies for providing effective outreach to and improved access for individuals and employers who could benefit from services provided through the workforce development system
- The development and expansion of strategies for meeting the needs of employers, workers, and job seekers, particularly through industry or sector partnerships related to in-demand industry sectors and occupations
- The development and continuous improvement of the one-stop delivery system, including providing assistance to one-stop operators, one-stop partners, and providers with planning and delivering services, including training services and supportive services to support effective delivery of services to workers, jobseekers, and employers
- The development of strategies to support staff training and awareness across programs supported under the workforce development system.
- The development and updating of comprehensive state adjusted levels of performance, to assess the effectiveness of the core programs in the state as required under section 116(b)
- The identification and dissemination of information on best practices, including best practices for:
  - o The effective operation of one-stop centers relating to the use of business outreach, partnerships, and service delivery strategies, including strategies for serving individuals with barriers to employment
  - o Effective training programs that respond to real-time labor market analysis, the effectively use direct assessment and prior learning assessment to measure an individual's prior knowledge, skills, competencies, and experiences, and that evaluate such skills, and competencies for adaptability, to support efficient placement into employment or career pathways
- The development and review of statewide policies affecting the coordinated provision of services through the State's one-stop delivery system described in section 121(e), including the development of:
  - o Policies relating to the appropriate roles and contributions of entities carrying out one-stop partner programs within the one-stop delivery system, including approaches to facilitating equitable and efficient cost allocation in such system
- The development of strategies for technological improvements to facilitate access to, and improve the quality of, services and activities provided through the one-stop delivery system including such improvements to
  - o Enhance digital literacy skills as defined in section 202 of the Museum and Library Services Act (20U.S.C. 9101); referred to in this Act as "digital literacy skills")
  - o Accelerate the acquisition of skills and recognized postsecondary credentials by participants
  - o Strengthen the professional development of providers and workforce professionals
  - o Ensure such technology is accessible to individuals with disabilities and individuals residing in remote areas
- The development of strategies for aligning technology and data systems across one-stop partner programs to enhance service delivery and improve efficiencies in reporting on performance

accountability measurement and reporting processes to improve coordination of services across one-stop partner programs

- The preparation of annual reports described in paragraphs (1) and (2) of section 116(d)
- The development of statewide workforce and labor market information system described in section 15€ of the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S>C/ 491-2(e)
- The development of such other policies as may promote statewide objectives for, and enhance the performance of, the workforce development system in the state

The SWBD will oversee its committees to ensure that recommendations include implementation and evaluation plans that clearly articulate specific actions, milestones and ongoing assessment.

The SWDB have support of agency staff. Agency staff from the core and required partners are available to provide support to the committees. This includes:

- Assisting with committee meetings
- Providing information
- Leading workgroups (in the temporary absence of the chair or co-chair)
- Ensuring appropriate membership on workgroups
- Recommending goals for the committee
- Reporting agency updates to the committee

The SWDB members have a clear understanding of participation requirements:

Beyond attendance and punctuality, each member should prepare for the meetings by reviewing pre-meeting materials and contacting resources for further information and opinions, as necessary.

To ensure collective effectiveness, each member should provide his/her knowledge and expertise on substantive SWDB issues. A candid expression of ideas and opinions among colleagues as well as respect for differences and similarities will ensure success.

Each member of the State Board should actively participate on his/her designated standing committee.

The SWDB members have access to resources:

Beyond preparing for and participating in State Board activities, each member should be prepared to tap into other available resources in order to carry out the State Board mission, including professional networks, technical supports, etc.

The SWDB may receive compensation, per diem, and expenses to support their activities: SWDB members who are not public members, state or local government members, or higher education members, may receive compensation, per diem and expenses at the established State of Utah rates (e.g. only the pre-approved State rate amounts will be reimbursed for hotels and meals) established by the Division of Finance.

### **Assessment of Core Programs**

Utah core programs will be assessed annually based on the state performance accountability measures described in Section 116(b) of WIOA. Assessments include the quality, effectiveness and improvement of programs. Under the leadership of the Operations Committee, a workgroup with representation from the core partners will meet to define the performance accountability measures and sources of data, and how the information will be used for improvements. Utah will utilize previous performance measures as base measurements. The committee's recommendations will require approval from the SWDB.

The Operations Committee will convene the data work group and the DWS Communications team to develop a dashboard report of all core partner performance measures to be shared with community stakeholders including the SWDB, SRC, and USBE. The dashboard will be updated with performance data quarterly as it becomes available for federal reporting. Operations and the data work group will meet as needed to review and refine the dashboard reporting procedure.

A determination of each of the core partners' successes will be measured by their ability to meet or exceed their agency's targets as set with Labor, OCTAE and Rehabilitation. Annually the core partners will be expected to self-evaluate their outcomes at a state and economic service area and take measurable action(s) to improve data/service outcomes. For example, Adult Education will provide technical assistance through the evaluation of program effectiveness through monthly desk audits of program data with each of the service providers. Tri-annually or as needed program reviews will be completed. Programs are required to provide annual program reports defining their areas of success, areas of needed improvement, as well as areas of additional/increased TA support. Adult Education's annual state professional development plan is based on program statuses, outcomes and issues. Annually each of the core partners will work with the Operations Committee to create a report for the SWDB on successes and a plan defining program improvement Utah's performance accountability measures for the core programs shall consist of the primary indicators of performance for activities provided under the adult and dislocated worker programs authorized under chapter 3 of subtitle B, the program of adult education and literacy activities authorized under title II, the H. R. 803—48 employment services program authorized under sections 1 through 13 of the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.) (except that subclauses (IV) and (V) shall not apply to such program), and the program authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 720 et seq.), other than section 112 or part C of that title (29 U.S.C. 732, 741), shall consist of:

- The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program
- The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program
- The median earnings of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program
- The percentage of program participants who obtain a recognized postsecondary credential, or a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent (subject to clause (iii)), during participation in or within 1 year after exit from the program
- The percentage of program participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains toward such a credential or employment; and
- The indicators of effectiveness in serving employers established pursuant to clause (iv).
- The primary indicators of performance for the youth program authorized under chapter 2 of subtitle B shall consist of:
  - The percentage of program participants who are in education or training activities, or in unsubsidized employment, during the second quarter after exit from the program;
  - The percentage of program participants who are in education or training activities, or in unsubsidized employment, during the fourth quarter after exit from the program
  - The primary indicators of performance described in subclauses (III) through (VI) of subparagraph (A)(i)

Utah has established levels of performance for each of the corresponding primary indicators of performance described in paragraph (2) for each of the programs described in clause (ii). Performance outcomes will be discussed with the Operations Committee to ascertain improvement strategies. Performance indicators will be negotiated with each federal government agency. The final agreed upon targets will be a result of performance data, regional data, and federal agencies

recommendations. Core programs will define processes that will be used to increase/improve future state outcomes.

The programs included under clause (i) are:

- The youth program authorized under chapter 2 of subtitle B
- The adult program authorized under chapter 3 of subtitle B
- The dislocated worker program authorized under chapter 3 of subtitle B
- The program of adult education and literacy activities authorized under title II
- The employment services program authorized under sections 1 through 13 of the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.)
- The program authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 720 et seq.), other than section 112 or part C of that title (29 U.S.C. 732, 741)

Utah has identified expected levels of performance for each of the required primary indicators of performance for each of the programs described in clause (ii) for the first 2 program years covered by its plan.

Utah will reach agreement with its federal liaisons for each indicator described in clause (iii) for each of the programs described in clause (ii) for each of the first 2 program years covered by its plan. In reaching the agreement, Utah and its federal agency liaisons shall take into H. R. 803—50 account the levels identified in its plan under clause (iii) and the factors described in clause (v). The levels agreed to shall be considered to be Utah's adjusted levels of performance for its program years and shall be incorporated into Utah's plan prior to the approval of the plan.

All Utah core partners and their federal liaisons shall reach agreement, prior to the third program year covered by Utah's plan, on levels of performance for each indicator. The levels agreed to shall be considered to be Utah's adjusted levels of performance for Utah's program and shall be incorporated into its plan as a modification to the plan.

Using funds authorized under a core program and made available to carry out this section, Utah will conduct ongoing evaluations of activities carried out in the state under each of the core programs. Utah will conduct the evaluations in order to promote, establish, implement, and utilize methods for continuously improving core program activities in order to achieve high-level performance within, and high-level outcomes from the workforce development system.

The evaluations conducted shall be designed in conjunction with the SWDB and state agencies responsible for the administration of the core programs and shall include analysis of customer feedback and outcomes and process measures in the statewide workforce development system. The evaluations shall use analytical and statistical methods that are reasonably feasible, such as the use of control groups.

Utah core partners will annually prepare, submit to the State board and make available to the public (including by electronic means), reports containing the results of evaluations conducted under this subsection, to promote the efficiency and effectiveness of the workforce development system.

**Assessment of One-Stop Partner Programs. Utah's one-stop delivery system partner program services included in the plan will be assessed each year. Utah can immediately begin using partners' current performance measures.**

- Adult Education conducts monthly desk monitoring, tri-annual evaluations, and on-site monitoring. Programs prepare and submit annual program improvement plans used by state staff as a tool to evaluate program needs and levels of improvements.
- DWS has an internal Program Review Team that randomly audits operation's work. Operation Program Support provides edits and targeted support and training. The Workforce Development

Division has defined monthly outcomes goals and conducts risk assessment. Additionally, DWS undergoes an annual single state audit.

- The Unemployment Insurance Division has defined monthly outcome goals with quality checks, and its Program Services team provides targeted support and training. Assessment will occur through the State Quality Service Plan process with Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration.
- Vocational Rehabilitation conducts a tri-annual needs assessment, prepares annual district and quality assurance plans, conducts random and targeted client record reviews, and has an internal compliance officer.

### Previous Assessment Results

Below are the results of assessments of the effectiveness of the core programs during the preceding two-year period for the core partners. Utah plans to utilize its work groups and SWDB committees to adapt its strategies based on assessment results. These activities will be particularly meaningful as comprehensive one-stop centers are certified throughout the state.

Measure	2013-2014 National Average	2013-2014 Negotiated Target	2013-2014 Actual	Outcome	2014-2015 Negotiated Target	2014-2015 Actual	Outcome
ABE Beginning Literacy	44%	41%	35%	Did not meet	42%	40%	Did not meet
ABE Beginning Basic Education	46	35	29	Did not meet	38	32	Did not meet
ABE Intermediate Low	45	35	30	Did not meet	35	32	Did not meet
ABE Intermediate High	37	30	26	Did not meet	30	30	Met target
ASE/AHSC Low	40	30	29	Did not meet	47	31	Did not meet

ELL Beginning Literacy	50	40	32	Did not meet	40	34	Did not meet
ELL Beginning Low	55	41	32	Did not meet	49	34	Did not meet
ELL Beginning High	54	42	35	Did not meet	45	33	Did not meet
ELL Intermediate Low	48	38	31	Did not meet	40	30	Did not meet
ELL Intermediate High	43	30	18	Did not meet	32	14	Did not meet
ELL Advanced	25	16	4	Did not meet	20	4	Did not meet
Entered Employment	41	55	30	Did not meet	0	29	Exceeded
Retained Employment	61	85	61	Did not meet	0	64	Exceeded
Obtained Secondary Credential	73	50	44	Did not meet	50	33	Did not meet
Entered Post-Secondary or Training	30	11	7	Did not meet	20	7	Did not meet

*Note: Adult Education programs have had difficulty making targets. In 2014-2015, USBE Adult Education staff instilled programmatic changes that are hoped to increase state outcomes.*

### USOR Performance Indicator Information FFY 2014 and FFY 2015

The USOR Vocational Rehabilitation program is assessed primarily on its ability to meet or exceed the performance levels negotiated with the Rehabilitation Services Administration for each fiscal year. The most recent two-year period with complete data were Federal Fiscal Years 2014 and 2015, which are shown below.

Performance Indicator	Performance Level	FFY 2014	FFY 2015
The number of individuals exiting the VR program who achieved an employment outcome during the current performance period compared to the number of individuals who exit the VR program after achieving an employment outcome during the previous performance period	Equal or exceed previous performance period	3699	3502
Of all individuals who exit the VR program after receiving services, the percentage who are determined to have achieved an employment outcome		55.80%	52.7% 58.4%
Of all individuals determined to have achieved an employment outcome, the percentage who exit the VR program in competitive, self-, or BEP employment with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage		72.60%	100% 100%
Of all individuals who exit the VR program in competitive, self-, or BEP employment with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage, the percentage who are individuals with significant disabilities		62.40%	89% 85%
The average hourly earnings of all individuals who exit the VR program in competitive, self-, or BEP employment with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage as a ratio to the state's average hourly earnings for all individuals in the state who are employed (as derived from the BLS report "State Average Annual Pay" for the most recent available year)	0.520 (ratio)	0.584	0.592

Of all individuals who exit the VR program in competitive, self-, or BEP employment with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage, the difference between the percentage who report their own income as the largest single source of economic support at the time they exit the VR program and the percentage who report their own income as the largest single source of support at the time they apply for VR services	53.00	<b>64.35</b>	<b>65.77</b>
The service rate for all individuals with disabilities from minority backgrounds as a ratio to the service rate for all non-minority individuals with disabilities	0.80 (ratio)	<b>0.927</b>	<b>0.920</b>

#### **DWS Training Performance Outcome Measures**

Performance outcomes include the number of customers who complete an education program or who close as positive out of the total number of customers closed for that program year. Internal case reviews include the total case accuracy for cases reviewed in that program year

Performance Measure	Program Year 2014	Program Year 2015
Training Completion Outcomes: The percentage of customers who complete a training program for the indicated program year	64%	70%
Positive Enrollment Closures: The percentage of customers who close as employed or, for youth, entered post-secondary education, obtained employment, or increased in literacy/numeracy skills for the indicated program year	76.72%	87.89%
Case Review Accuracy: This is based on the accuracy of the total case when reviewed during the indicated program year	44.81%	59.31%

As the SWDB and core partners move forward to accomplish the goals outlined in Utah's Unified Plan, they will address the performance of required partners. All core partners are developing goals and priorities within the plan that meet objectives of common performance measures. In addition, supporting the strategies outlined in this plan, Utah's core partners will develop processes to provide technical assistance to operations, evaluate funding, identify areas of weakness and provide corrective intervention as needed. This is an ongoing activity will include enhancing the system, guiding policy, establishing a system for continual improvement of activities, and exploring how to manage performance assessments with required partners.

Utah will use performance data as targets. The core partners will analyze the performance data, review the one-stop system annually, meet the SWDB certification requirements, conduct customer satisfaction surveys, review accessibility and ensure continuous improvement efforts. The Operations Committee will present this analysis to the SWDB by Winter 2017 using available information.

As Utah develops a method to evaluate customer satisfaction, existing customer feedback mechanisms will be used, and continuous improvement will take into consideration the indicators of performance. Accessibility for individuals with disabilities will be evaluated, and restraints will be addressed as they arise.

## **Evaluation**

The Operations Committee will engage a workgroup in making recommendations regarding evaluations and research projects on activities under WIOA core programs. The recommendations will include how the projects will be coordinated and designed in conjunction with the SWDB and core partners, and how the projects will be coordinated with the evaluations provided for by federal liaisons under WIOA. As required and determined by the core partners, data will be made available for effectiveness analyses as defined by both Labor, Rehabilitation, and Education guidance for program improvement and compliance purposes.

The Operations Committee will convene a workgroup and prepare recommendations for the SWDB. The workgroup will establish defined outcomes with appropriate time frames, identify measurement methods, utilize data from LMI, MIS and other data resources. Topics relevant to Utah will be defined by core partners in partnership with the Operations work group. These topics will likely become apparent once SWDB recommendations are implemented and assessed. Examples of topics may include whether Utah strategies are successfully meeting the needs of key demographics, the effectiveness of implemented policies and procedures, and the impact of service delivery methods.

The SWDB committees will assess and report to the SWDB on the effectiveness of every goal in the plan and our ability to successfully meet negotiated performance levels each year. The SWDB will provide direction as needed to ensure that Utah's plan is implemented and meeting the needs of the state.

## **Distribution of Funds for Core Programs**

Utah will use the following methods and factors in distributing funds under the core programs in accordance with the provisions authorizing such distributions.

### **For Title I programs**

For Title I programs, provide a description of the written policies that establish the State's methods and factors used to distribute funds to local areas for—

#### **1. Youth activities in accordance with WIOA section 128(b)(2) or (b)(3),**

(A) Utah is a Single State Local Area, and, as such, a local distribution is not required. (i) Youth activities in accordance with WIOA Section 128(b) or (b)(3) (ii) Adult and training activities in accordance with WIOA Section 133(b)(2) or (b)(3) (iii) Dislocated worker employment and training activities in accordance with WIOA Section 133(b)(2) and based on data and weights assigned

#### **2. Adult and training activities in accordance with WIOA section 133(b)(2) or (b)(3),**

(A) Utah is a Single State Local Area, and, as such, a local distribution is not required. (i) Youth activities in accordance with WIOA Section 128(b) or (b)(3) (ii) Adult and training activities in

accordance with WIOA Section 133(b)(2) or (b)(3) (iii) Dislocated worker employment and training activities in accordance with WIOA Section 133(b)(2) and based on data and weights assigned

**3. Dislocated worker employment and training activities in accordance with WIOA section 133(b)(2) and based on data and weights assigned.**

(A) Utah is a Single State Local Area, and, as such, a local distribution is not required. (i) Youth activities in accordance with WIOA Section 128(b) or (b)(3) (ii) Adult and training activities in accordance with WIOA Section 133(b)(2) or (b)(3) (iii) Dislocated worker employment and training activities in accordance with WIOA Section 133(b)(2) and based on data and weights assigned

**For Title II:**

**Multi-year grants or contracts**

Utah's eligible agency (USBE), in the Spring of 2017, will host a competition to award competitive multiyear (defined as a minimum of two year) grants for the provision of Adult Education services. Available funds (82.5 percent, of which 10 percent will be allowed for corrections education and other institutionalized individuals) will be awarded to programs meeting USBE - Adult Education defined competition standards for the purpose of developing, implementing and improving adult education within Utah. It is proposed, as a USBE Adult Education requirement that funds, by design, will be competed and awarded regionally to meet the educational needs of those individuals most at risk within each economic service area. Regional economic and employment data along with USBE adult education data outcomes will be considered in determining the percentage of funding available to compete within each economic service area. Awards will be made based on application merit as measured on a scoring rubric. Programs considered for funding will be required to show demonstrated effectiveness. Applicants previously funded: 1.) must demonstrate successful level increases equal to or greater than the state target in 50% of functioning levels served, 2.) previous year data to support their ability to transition students to postsecondary or training programs or employment.) New potential applicants will be required to: 1.) demonstrate their record in improving the knowledge and skill levels of their students' academic success, 2.) data to demonstrate their ability to transition students to postsecondary education, skills training or employment. Applications will be evaluated on a state developed point-based scoring rubric. USBE Adult Education leadership will review the applications and determine awards. Applicants not funded will have the opportunity to appeal the USBE's decision through an appeal hearing. Following the hearing, if desired, an applicant has the right to appeal to the Secretary of Education (defined in 34 CFR 76-401) for a final decision.

Since Utah awards grants for a multiple year award period the level of second year (and perhaps subsequent year(s) levels of funding are determined on data outcomes of the "just completed year". The level of funding will be determined by the state maintained program data outcomes utilizing Utah's standardized funding formula. The funding formula will be equitability applied to all programs. State program data will be reviewed and evaluated for funding. This will include an evaluation of each awarded program's educational level advancements in meeting the State's targets in ABE 1-4 and ELL 1-4 as well as the percentage of students who have completed the program and transitioned to post-secondary or training programs. As funding is determined each program will be expected to amend/adjust their originally approved grant to include program delivery improvements as well as projected program outcomes for the new program year.

**Ensure direct and equitable access**

Utah will ensure it continues to provide direct and equitable access to all eligible providers to apply and compete for funds through a consistent public announcement for potential funding opportunity. USBE provided direct and equitable access to all eligible providers utilizing the following process (this activity was completed Spring 2017 based on guidance released by OCTAE):

**Issue a Notice of Availability:** Notification of competition will be released through the posting of legal notices in eight Utah newspapers providing for notification throughout the state. An email blast will be released at the same time to all known potential providers. In addition, notification of a competition will be posted on the USBE Adult Education website.

**Process:** A bidders' conference will be held as announced in the legal notice. All eligible parties interested in applying for funds will be required to attend. A signed attendance sheet will be completed at the time of the bidders' conference. Potential bidders will be required to submit a signed statement of intent to bid for funds to the USBE by the assigned date. Completed grant applications will be submitted to the USBE on the assigned date and time. State staff will conduct a cursory review by looking for compliance/completeness of defined basics that all applicants must complete. Any applicant whose application is found incomplete will be notified that they are ineligible to be considered for competition.

**Evaluation of Applications:** Economic area partners will read the applications for completeness and focus and then recommend to the State Workforce Development Board (SWDB) that the application be submitted to USBE Adult Education Services for consideration of funding. The USBE will assemble a panel of readers from the community to read the applications. A readers' resource packet will be utilized to assess and score the applications based on a defined scoring rubric.

Readers will be trained on the processes on a predetermined date. All applications will be read and scored a minimum of three times by independent readers. All applications will be read and scored by state staff at least three times as well. Scored applications will be ranked and weighted for funding by a predetermined date. A preliminary announcement of a pending award will be made after the competition, with the final award being announced and funded based on receipt of the state's award letter from Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education (OCTAE).

**Special Rule, state requirements added to the competition:** As a way to increase outcomes through intensity and duration, the state will require that programs receiving WIOA Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) funds offer classes for a minimum of 6-8 hours weekly. Applicants will be required to submit a calendar defining when their program is closed for any time periods greater than two weeks. Programs must demonstrate a program enrollment averaging a minimum average of 35 students monthly (total number of potential performers/10 months = average).

Programs receiving awards must incorporate professional development opportunities into their grants. Specifically, 2 percent of awarded funds must be set aside for professional development.

Personnel employed from AEFLA funds are required to participate in adult education-focused professional development training pertinent to advancing adult education. Other criteria may also be extended in an effort to increase state outcomes.

#### **Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation**

The Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program administered through the USOR is a combined VR program that serves individuals who are blind as well as individuals of all disability types. The USOR VR program is implemented statewide. USOR distributes VR program funds to 10 district offices under the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) and one district (which covers the entire state) under the Division of Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired (DSBVI). At the beginning of each budget year, USOR uses a formula allocation as the methodology to initially distribute VR program funds throughout the state to regional districts. The criteria for USOR's formula allocation is based on regional service needs and program performance accountability.

### **Program Data**

Utah is committed to working toward aligning and integrating its workforce and education data systems for the core programs, unemployment insurance programs and education through post-secondary education. A workgroup will have its initial meeting by Summer 2016 to address the following: (i) Utah's plans to make the management information systems for the core programs interoperable to maximize the efficient exchange of common data elements to support assessment and evaluation.

Utah's core partners currently share information about common customers who are served under DWS programs and services through interfaces. The core partners are exploring options for creating a common registration that feeds into a relational database. The data could then be utilized for co-enrolling, providing additional resources, reporting, and enhancing the customer's service delivery experience. Utah plans to integrate data systems to facilitate streamlined intake and service delivery to track participation across all programs included in its plan. A workgroup will be formed to research the state's ability to accomplish this and to make recommendations for moving forward. The recommendations will be presented to the SWDB for approval.

Utah will research how the SWDB can assist the governor in aligning technology and data systems across required one-stop partner programs, including unemployment insurance (UI). This will include designing and implementing common intake, data collection, etc. and describing how such alignment will improve service delivery to individuals, including unemployed individuals and employers. The workgroup will present its recommendations to the Operations Committee for approval.

Utah plans to develop and produce the reports required under Section 116, performance accountability system [WIOA Section 116(d)(2)]. Utah's core programs, the SWDB and chief elected officials will establish and operate a fiscal and management accountability information system based on guidelines established by the secretaries of labor and education. Utah will begin laying the groundwork to meet fiscal and management accountability requirements, recognizing that adjustments to meet the elements may provide opportunity or have impact on the fiscal and management accountability system.

### **Assessment of Participants' Post-Program Success**

The SWDB will oversee the assessment of Utah's ability to meet the goals set in the negotiated performance measures. The Operations Committee will evaluate the progress of participants who are exiting from core programs in entering, persisting in, and completing post-secondary education, or who are entering or remaining in employment. The core partners will share data to help identify and remediate gaps to enhance customer experience. The Operations Committee will assign a workgroup to create a report that incorporates data from all of the workforce development partners working with participants exiting programs and training/education program supported by the partners.

### **Use of UI Wage Record Data**

Utah currently uses UI Wage Record Data to evaluate performance accountability for adult, Dislocated Workers, Wagner-Peyser Act, and Vocational Rehabilitation programs. Utah will utilize one of its workgroups to explore how Adult Education can be included. UI wage records are currently used and shared with appropriate partners (covered by MOUs) as a source for workforce and labor market information consistent with federal and state law. Utah's plan to align, share and integrate data is addressed under Program Data (6)(A) above.

### **Privacy Safeguards**

Utah incorporates privacy safeguards into its workforce development system. Currently Utah conducts required annual staff training and utilizes required release/waiver forms. Utah must strictly

adhere to the state's interpretation of FERPA and follow established security processes/policies required by the Department of Technology Services for all of its systems and databases.

The following safeguards are in place for the workforce development system.

- Data is contained in a secure database maintained by the Utah Department of Workforce Services following Utah Department of Technology Services information technology (IT) standards. Data is backed up on secure servers nightly and firewalls are evaluated on an ongoing basis by IT security team. All data access is password protected. Persons accessing the database are required to update their password at least every 90 calendar days.
- Access to computer programs is only available to staff on a need to know basis, based upon employee's role with a division. Staff no longer associated with a particular role or division are denied access.
- Through contact with their counselor or DWS staff, customers have access to their records contained in the database
- Data matching is completed using a secure data transfer line and only as allowed by Federal and State law

The following safeguards are in place for adult education students:

- Data is contained in a secure database maintained by the Utah State Board of Education (USBE) following Utah Department of Technology Services (DTS) information technology (IT) standards. Student identifiable data is scrubbed from the development and training databases; data is backed up on secure servers nightly and firewalls are evaluated on an ongoing basis by IT security team. All data access is password protected. Persons accessing the database are required to update their password every 90 calendar days.
- Access by programs is only available to staff on a need to know basis meaning that not all service providers have access to the database. Staff no longer associated with a program are denied access upon termination from a program.
- Through contact with their adult education counselor, student have access to their or other student records contained in the database. Students must sign a release of record to release any of their records to DWS, the Office of Rehabilitation, other agencies, or individuals. On an as needed basis, student may ask appropriate staff to run reports specific to their education (e.g. class schedule, Student Education Occupation play, grade transcripts and testing reports).
- Data matching is completed using a secure data transfer line and only with records whereby students have given permission. Data returned for reporting purposes is only an aggregate count and not identifiable by student.

The following safeguards are in place for general education students: parents have access to their student's education records and the right to protect the student's rights to privacy by limiting the available of student records without parental consent. UT follows FERPA guidelines assuring that rights including:

- The ability to inspect and review education records relating to the student maintained by the school the student attends or has attended
- The right to challenge and require the school to amend an education record concerning the student that is inaccurate or misleading or in violation of the student's privacy rights, and
- The right to require the school to obtain written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information, subject to specific exceptions.
- Notifying parents, and students eighteen years of age or older, of the above rights.

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation (USOR) follows privacy safeguards in accordance with state and federal laws and professional ethics which require the protection of personally identifiable information specific to Vocational Rehabilitation:

- USOR maintains policies and procedures to protect the confidentiality of all personal information including photographs and list of client names.
- Personally identifiable information obtained by USOR, its employees or agents concerning individuals applying for or receiving services are not disclosed without the prior written consent of the individual or the individual's legal representative, except as required for administration of programs or services.
- All client information related to the vocational rehabilitation program is maintained by the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation in the secure AWARE case management system, in accordance with the standards established by the Utah Department of Technology Services.
- Access to the AWARE case management system is password protected. Access to the system requires pre-approval and a signed agreement completed with terms and condition defined in the AWARE Access Form. Access to information in the AWARE system is based upon employee's roles within the division.
- Data matching is completed using a secure data transfer interface and only as allowed by Federal and State law.

### **Priority of Service for Veterans**

Utah will implement and monitor the priority of service provisions for veterans in accordance with the requirements of the Jobs for Veterans Act. Currently, to ensure the provision of priority of service, all employment center employees are trained to screen and identify potential covered persons. The question "Have you or a spouse ever served in the U.S. military?" is asked of every job seeker upon initial contact. If the job seeker responds in the affirmative, the job seeker is given DWS Publication 07-107 which provides an overview of the services for which they receive priority and a description of the application for those services.

DWS monitors its priority of services for veterans by visiting a required percentage of one stop offices to ensure priority of service is being provided to veterans and their eligible spouses. DWS is audited by the U.S. Department of Labor, Veterans Education and Training Services (USDOL/VETS) annually. In addition to onsite visits, the USDOL/VETS have a "mystery shopper" visit the one-stop centers to verify that priority of service is provided to veterans and their eligible spouses.

Employment center employees provide priority of service to that job seeker as follows:

- Ensure the job seeker's registration for services reflects their status as a covered person.
- Place the job seeker at the top of a waiting list for a service with limited or restricted access; if there is no waiting list for that service, a waiting list is created with the job seeker at the top of the list.
- Provide the job seeker with the service needed if the service the job seeker is seeking from DWS is not limited or restricted, or refer the job seeker to the appropriate internal or external pathway for that service.
- Complete a job-match request, which will result in the DWS job-matching system automatically placing all qualified covered persons at the top of an employer's applicant list. This means that the covered person receives referrals to open job announcements over non-covered persons.

Recognizing the need for additional methods of identifying potential covered persons for priority of service, DWS requires all employment center staff to wear a magnetic badge on their clothing asking the question "Have you or a spouse ever served in the U.S. military?" Additionally, Publication 07-107 is available and distributed in the job connection areas of every employment center, the question "Have you or a spouse ever served in the U.S. military?" is displayed as part of a looping presentation on a television in the job connection areas of all employment centers, and small desktop posters are displayed at every intake counter in the employment centers. This provides job seekers with multiple opportunities to self-identify their covered person status or to share the information about priority of service to family members, friends or neighbors.

If the veteran is determined to have a significant barrier to employment, they are referred to the Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP). An electronic 360 referral is sent to the appropriate DVOP.

DWS monitors the provision of priority of service to covered persons by using “mystery shopper” job seekers and observing state program specialists as they visit the employment centers. “Mystery shopper” job seekers are deployed by DWS to monitor many services provided at initial points of contact with job seekers. The idea is to send someone unknown to the employment center staff to inquire after services and observe whether the staff member takes the required actions. While state program specialists are identified as such in their visits in the employment centers, they make the same observations a “mystery shopper” job seeker would and report their observations to the chief of veteran services.

DWS uses a no-wrong-door approach, as noted above, that includes services available in the community that targeted veterans can use to enhance their job search.

Native American job seekers in Utah have access to DWS services. Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists are assigned to each of the employment centers nearest to Native American reservations and have developed relationships with tribal leadership to ensure tribal member veterans are provided with intensive services as well as priority of service.

### **Accessibility of One-Stop Delivery System for Individuals with Disabilities**

Utah’s one-stop service delivery system complies with provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 with regard to the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs, services, technology and materials for individuals with disabilities. DWS’s risk manager works in coordination with State Risk Management to conduct on-site reviews of DWS’s employment centers and administrative offices. These reviews are conducted to ensure physical accessibility for DWS customers as well as employees. Reviews are conducted every three years. The Americans with Disabilities Act Checklist for Existing Facilities on the Achievable Barrier Removal Survey was used for the most recent Risk Management review. However, Risk Management is currently working with DWS and other state agencies in revising the tool. Additionally, the DWS equal opportunity officer conducts statewide employment center reviews using portions of the Section 188 checklist to ensure programmatic accessibility for DWS customers.

DWS has ADA/Section 504 policy and procedures in place and readily accessible to all DWS staff via the Intranet to assist in providing accommodations for persons with disabilities seeking, applying for, or participating in DWS programs and services. The department’s equal opportunity officer also serves as the ADA/Section 504 officer for DWS customers.

Regarding technology, all core partners’ public websites, including all applications for programs and services, are Section 508 compliant. The Utah Department of Technology Services evaluates, tests and surveys all DWS technology services to ensure compliance. USOR and USBE have technical teams who ensure compliance as well.

### **Accessibility of One-Stop Delivery Systems for English Language Learners**

Utah will ensure that each one-stop center is able to meet the needs of limited English proficient individuals, through established procedures, staff training, resources, and other materials. DWS staff in all one-stop centers currently has an established procedure and pathway to access contracted interpreter services to serve customers with limited English proficiency.

Adult Education providers provide interpretive services as needed. Necessary educational documents are available in the predominant foreign languages. Clients in need of ELL services are always referred to adult education programs that offers ELL services appropriate for the student.

Training in assisting customers who are limited English proficient (LEP) is a required, annual, web-based program. All staff, in every division are required to take the LEP training and test their learned skills upon completion.

The State of Utah has several contractors who provide interpretive and translative services. DWS utilizes two specific companies for these services, and has policy and procedures in place for staff to access an interpreter or send documents for translation. Additionally, two divisions in DWS maintain interpreter lists of staff who are qualified interpreters in specified language. Job Connection staff are encouraged to check their Center for an interpreter to initially assess the customer's needs and schedule an appointment. If a DWS interpreter is not readily available, the Connection staff will contact one of the telephonic services to assist the customer and schedule an appointment, if needed.

Accessing Interpreter Services procedure and instruction card for CTS Language Link - Interpreting IVR System and Linguistica International have been created to provide WDD staff with procedures, phone numbers, account number and unit number information for accessing interpreter services for customers.

CTS Language Link - Interpreting IVR System and Linguistica International instruction card featuring access instructions for each service on each side of the card) will be distributed to WDD staff in all offices and replaces the current ESD CTS Language Link instruction card.

WDD will have a procedure and instruction card for Accessing Interpreter Services using CTS Language Link- Interpreting IVR System and Linguistica International to provide consistent and accurate service with access and charge code information for accessing interpretive services.

## **Coordination with State Plan Programs**

Utah's SWDB will oversee the joint planning and coordination among the core programs, and with the required one-stop partner programs and other programs and activities included in Utah's Unified Plan. The specific methods are described throughout the plan. Selected workgroups have been identified, but others will be needed as the plan is implemented. Workgroups described specifically throughout the plan are listed below and will report to SWDB Committees:

### **Operations Committee Assignments:**

- A workgroup will be established to research the capacity of state entities to provide the workforce development activities defined in Section II (a)(B)(2)(A) and report to the State SWDB. This is an ongoing activity.
- Utah will utilize a variety of strategies to align the core programs, one-stop partners, and other resources to achieve fully integrated customer services consistent with its strategic vision and goals. These strategies include workforce development activities in regard to gaps identified in the State's workforce analysis. Overall strategies include setting collaborative performance goals, sharing information/data, and working together to resolve problems and address any gaps. It also includes collaborating and coordinating on training, marketing and feedback. Utilizing existing committees, workgroups, and programs while working to align and share resources when it is appropriate. Holding regular State Board and committee meetings as required by Utah's plan and clearly outlining all partners' responsibilities in the plan so they can be held accountable or adjusted as required.
- Share Information by refining current referral process while working toward the inclusion of all core partners in a common point of entry for customers to enter a universal collection application that connects to all core partner systems with the intent of streamlining the process and eliminating duplication. A workgroup has been assigned to work on the universal collection application.

- Maximize existing infrastructure to develop a common registration and data repository. A workgroup, reporting to the Operations Committee, has been exploring opportunities and implementing changes to accomplish this goal.
- A workgroup with state and local representation from core and required partners has been identifying opportunities for improvements to referral pathways and developing processes to provide consistent and seamless services for common customers.
- A workgroup with representation from the core and required partners has made recommendations to the Operations Committee regarding Utah's process for developing guidelines for State-administered one-stop partner programs' contributions to a one-stop delivery system, including benchmarks, and its guidance to assist in determining equitable and stable methods of funding infrastructure in accordance with sec. 121(h)(1)(B). An IFA was developed and approved by the SWDB, and the core and required partners. Moving forward, the IFA will become part of the One-Stop Partner MOU and it will be reviewed annually and amended as necessary.
- Utah core programs will be assessed annually based on the State performance accountability measures described in section 116(b) of WIOA. Assessments include the quality, effectiveness, and improvement of programs. A workgroup with representation from the core partners will meet to define the performance accountability measures, the sources of data, identify what will be measured, how the information will be reported and how the information will be used for improvements. Utah will utilize previous performance measures as base measurements. The workgroup's recommendations will require approval from the SWDB.
- Utah will assign a workgroup to make recommendations to the Operations Committee regarding conducting evaluations and research projects on activities under WIOA core programs. The recommendations will include how the projects will be coordinated and designed in conjunction with the SWDB and core partners and how the projects will be coordinated with the evaluations provided for by the Secretary of Labor and Secretary of Education under WIOA. As required and determined by the core partners, adult education data will be made available for effectiveness analyses as defined by both Labor and Education guidance for program improvement and compliance purposes. This is an ongoing activity.
- Utah will establish a workgroup to research how the SWDB can assist the Governor in aligning technology and data systems across required one-stop partner programs, including UI. This will include design and implementation of common intake, data collection, etc. and describe how such alignment will improve service delivery to individuals, including unemployed individuals and employers. The workgroup will present its recommendations to the Operations Committee for approval.

#### **Services to Individuals with Disabilities Committee**

- A workgroup, reporting to the Operations Committee, focused on providing aligned services to employers and exploring ways to better understand employer needs, with representation from all the core partners and required partners, as appropriate, has been established. The work group is exploring opportunities to further align, connect, and collaborate on current services provided to employers:
  - Educating employers about individuals with barriers
  - Leveraging USOR's current coordination with employers
  - Employer boards utilized by CTE at the secondary (K-12) and post-secondary education levels
  - DWS' Workforce Development Specialists, Labor Market Information, and UWORKS labor exchange system
  - Coordinating with the Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities
  - Establishing a process to coordinate efforts to understand employer needs from a full workforce development system point of view, coordinating all partner efforts as well as new methods

The workgroup will report recommendations to the SWDB for approval by Winter 2017.

- Activities defined in Section (2) Implementation of State Strategy

(A), will be coordinated with GOED and other Utah economic development organizations' activities and strategies. GOED is an active member of many of the committees, workgroups, and projects

described throughout this plan. They are a member of the SWDB which ensures their participation in coordinating activities between GOED, the Core Partners and the required partners. DWS also attends the GOED Board meetings to support the growth of local employers and identify connection points for partnerships.

### **Career Pathways Committee**

- There are many career pathway activities being carried out around the state. The Career Pathway Committee will meet with partners from around the state gathering information and ideas on how these groups can align, share resources, and collaborate. They will make recommendations, that include the Six Key Elements of Career Pathways described in the Career Pathway Toolkit and requirements of WIOA section 101(d)(3)(B), (D) to the SWDB regarding how the SWDB can best support a collaborative state career pathway system. Utah's sector strategies are aligned with GOED's industry clusters. They are incorporated throughout Utah's plan. Utah will refer to the definitions of "career pathway" in WIOA section 3(7) and "industry sector or occupation section 3(23) of WIOA.
- A workgroup will make recommendations to the State SWDB. The workgroup will be charged with describing how the State's strategies will engage education and training providers, including training providers on the State's ETPL as partners in the workforce development system to create a job-driven education and training system.

### **Program-Specific Requirements for Core Programs**

#### **Program-Specific Requirements for Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Activities under Title I-B**

##### **Regions and Local Workforce Development Areas**

Utah has been designated as a single-area state.

##### **Statewide Activities**

State policies for the statewide workforce development system can be found in the Workforce Development Division Policy Manual on the DWS website at [http://jobs.utah.gov/infosource/EmploymentBusinessManual/DWS\\_Employment\\_and\\_Business\\_Services\\_Manual.htm](http://jobs.utah.gov/infosource/EmploymentBusinessManual/DWS_Employment_and_Business_Services_Manual.htm)

Utah has plans to address the governor's set-aside funding and to utilize Rapid Response (RR) funds to respond to layoffs and plant closings, coordinating services to quickly aid companies and their affected workers. Utah is also working to implement layoff-aversion strategies to address at-risk companies and workers. In regard to the governor's set-aside funding, Utah has centralized several functions such as finance, audit, human resources, and UWORKS to create efficiencies by reducing overhead costs at the local level. The state has been able to absorb these costs allowing more funds to be used on career services and training for customers. If the full set-aside funding is restored, other activities allowable under the law will be considered.

Twenty-five percent of Dislocated Worker (DW) funds are reserved for RR activities and Additional Assistance funding to local areas. Funds provide rapid response services to as many companies and workers as possible regardless of the size of event, either through a formalized coordination with the state Dislocated Worker Unit (DWU) when layoffs impact 15 or more workers, or through a local-area response provided by local workforce development specialists (WDS) when layoffs impact less than 15 workers. Additional Assistance funds are used when local areas have a significant increase in the number of dislocated workers needing assistance due to layoffs and closure events, and the local area does not have adequate Formula funds to meet the needs.

The DWU is housed with the Workforce Development Division Program and Training (WDD) at DWS. It is part of the Career and Education Team. The team includes the state RR coordinator, DW program specialist, Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program specialist and the state program specialist over the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) and Basic Education Provider List (BEPL), ensuring coordination and the ability to design and deliver comprehensive services to dislocated workers. The DWU follows up on all WARN notifications, trade petitions and trade-certified companies to ensure prompt delivery of services.

Local WDS staff plays a key role in RR by building and maintaining relationships with employers, which is a key activity in receiving early notification from employers on planned layoff or closure events. This allows critical time to plan for and customize services to specific events and workers' needs. During layoff or closure events, local WDS staff becomes part of RR delivery by coordinating with the DWU and delivering RR services as appropriate. This includes collaborating with core and required partners to quickly reconnect affected workers with employers seeking their skill -set. A workgroup will be assigned to explore partnering and processes for short-term training solutions between DWS and the USTC system.

The DWU gathers and tracks layoff/closure data and disseminates Layoff Notification Records used by DWS management, area directors, WDS staff, UI and the Workforce Research and Analysis (WRA) team to help plan for and potentially avert layoffs or minimize the impact to workers by matching workers to available jobs, sponsoring job fairs, linking workers to job-search workshops and providing DW, TAA and other appropriate career services. RR services, along with the UI Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program, has shortened and prevented periods of unemployment of dislocated workers.

By implementing early intervention strategies, Utah's RR program creates opportunities to engage employers, community partners, economic development agencies and training providers to avert the negative impacts of layoffs by quickly moving workers from layoff to employment or training. During RR workshops, worker information is gathered to register them in UWORKS, expediting access to services. The UWORKS system identifies RR services, career services, company information and layoff/closure data; employment and training counselors use it in determining WIOA DW eligibility.

**Utah's policies and procedures to provide Rapid Responses in cases of natural disasters including coordination with FEMA and other entities.**

WDS staff works closely with DWS administration and the state DWU to provide RR services to local areas and to coordinate dislocation events, including disaster situations. Through ongoing partnerships developed with local agencies, businesses and community partners, DWU and WDS staff can respond immediately to emergency dislocations, including local-area disaster situations. Depending on the severity of the disaster, including FEMA-approved disasters, DWU and WDS staff are prepared to work independently or with first responders to conduct a preliminary assessment of the area to determine the need for funding to meet the career and training needs of individuals impacted by dislocation events, including coordinating services and providing temporary housing and other support needs of individuals displaced by such events.

The DWS executive director reports directly to the governor, ensuring coordination of necessary FEMA assistance or the need to apply for National Dislocated Worker Emergency Grant (DWEG) funds to address needs as a result of a disaster or national emergency. The DWU will assist in the development of and application for National DWEG funding, which may include funding to temporarily hire displaced individuals to provide humanitarian assistance and to clean up and repair facilities and lands. This includes career and training services to enhance the skills of the impacted individuals, better positioning them for employment after the completion of temporary employment disaster relief.

DWS ensures coordination between RR and other program services, including UI emergency disaster funds, and has an emergency plan in place to address communication and IT backup of case management systems as well as a staffing plan to address these events so critical services will not be disrupted.

**Utah provides early intervention (e.g., Rapid Response) to worker groups on whose behalf a Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) petition has been filed.**

Utah provides early intervention to worker groups on whose behalf a TAA petition has been filed [Section 134 (a)(2)(A)]. During the initial employer contact, potential Trade Act impact is determined, and the petitioning process is initiated. RR workshops are initiated at petition filing and include information regarding the Trade Act program when appropriate. When a Trade Act Certification occurs after the layoff, a RR Trade Act-specific workshop/orientation is scheduled, and workers are notified using the Trade Act impact list. Also, Trade-impacted workers receive a Trade Certification letter, which identifies what they need to do to access services, and a Trade Act benefit brochure.

## **Adult and Dislocated Worker Program Requirements**

### **Work-Based Training Models**

DWS uses work-based training models including On the Job Training (OJT), Internships, and Registered Apprenticeships. Each of these work-based training models provide participants with the opportunity to quickly develop expertise in their area of training. Also while they are improving their skills they could possibly be earning a wage. Workforce Development Specialists reach out to employers to connect interested participants with appropriate opportunities. DWS case managers and the State Office of Apprenticeship monitor the work-based learning to ensure the participant is progressing and meeting the needs of the employer. Also, employers represented on the State Board of Education and informed on the different types of work-based training.

Through Work-based learning employers tailor the training the plan with the Workforce Development and the participant's case manager. If an employer participates in an OJT, they are eligible to receive reimbursements for the wage of the participants while they are in training.

USOR develops and improves pathways providing increased alternative training models and options. Examples include OJT, work-based trainings, apprenticeships, internships, temporary work experiences, Supported Employment (SE), Supported Job-Based Training (SJBT) and Customized Employment. This allows individuals and counselors to customize a unique set of services for each individual. USOR partners with other agencies, including employers, the DWS, Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs) and the Division of Services for People with Disabilities (DSPD).

USOR has formed an oversight committee for Community Resource Provider (CRP) services that meets quarterly to provide ongoing input and suggestions regarding the provision of services, the policies around SE/SJBT, and approval of service providers. USOR also has an established process for CRP approvals and reviews to ensure quality services are provided to clients and employers.

### **Registered Apprenticeships**

An Apprenticeship Committee has been developed as part of the SWDB and will expand to include core and required partners. One of the goals is to partner with education through creating and expanding pre-apprenticeship opportunities and enhancing awareness. As these opportunities are developed further, DWS will market them to individuals.

Utah's labor exchange system allows for registered apprenticeship opportunities to be posted in UWORKS. This enhances the connection of job seekers to registered apprenticeship opportunities available and assists employers in identifying qualified candidates for openings.

DWS is coordinating with the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Apprenticeship (OA) to identify registered apprenticeship sponsors for the ETPL and is reaching out to those sponsors. In addition, DWS is collaborating with trade associations and unions to better understand the needs of employers utilizing registered apprenticeships. These relationships will connect employers, who may benefit from the structured training apprenticeships provides, to the OA with the intent of increasing opportunities for job seekers.

USOR provides its counselors with the ability to support individualized apprenticeship opportunities and to engage with employers for the purpose of developing customized apprenticeship opportunities. USOR works directly with employers and post-secondary education and coordinates with the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Apprenticeship.

### **Training Provider Eligibility Procedure**

The procedure Utah will follow for training provider eligibility, including initial and continued eligibility, and the process for including registered apprenticeship programs on the ETPL can be found on the DWS website at

[http://jobs.utah.gov/infosource/EmploymentBusinessManual/8000\\_Training\\_Programs/8700\\_Training\\_Providers/8700\\_Training\\_Providers.htm](http://jobs.utah.gov/infosource/EmploymentBusinessManual/8000_Training_Programs/8700_Training_Providers/8700_Training_Providers.htm)

Utah will implement and monitor the priority for public-assistance recipients, other low-income individuals or individuals who are deficient of basic skills in accordance with the requirements of WIOA Section 134(C)(3)(E). DWS will provide priority of service to WIOA Adult customers by focusing enrollments on customers who are either low income, recipients of public assistance, or basic-skills deficient. Basic-skills deficiency will be verified with WorkKey's assessment results or a referral from Title II Adult Education or English Language Acquisition program. Customers who do not meet these criteria will be referred to other assistance programs. In addition, current adult education assessments can be used as a measurement of basic skills. WIOA Final Regulations state that guidance on how to implement this priority will be provided. As soon as additional guidance is provided, we will continue to improve our efforts to provide priority.

Funds may be transferred between Adult and the Dislocated Worker program through written request to the program manager and must be approved by program & policy management and the finance manager before the transfer must be complete. DWS management reviews the request to determine if there are available funds to transfer, reviews the area's participant demographics, reviews obligation and expenditure levels, and then determines if there is an increased need for dislocated worker or adult funding.

### **Youth Program Requirements**

While Utah has a single SWDB, criteria have been developed to award grants for youth workforce investment activities. The state-developed criteria will include evaluating the provider's ability to engage youth in the service elements that the provider is offering; collaborating with organizations and/or community partners regarding the specific qualifications necessary in order to provide the service elements that the provider is contracted to offer; and licensing or certifying the provider and staff who will be working directly with the youth that they are serving. Criteria will also include a description of evidence-based program models or practices and the process the provider uses to collect and utilize customer feedback. This will help ensure information is provided on whether performance accountability measures are met based on primary indicators of the youth program performance.

Utah's strategies to achieve improved outcomes for out-of-school youth as described in 129(a)(1)(B) include leveraging and aligning core programs and other available resources:

- Elements discussing our efforts to target out-of-school youth at the eligibility process by enrolling more low-income out of school youth to increase the number of out-of-school youth receiving funds

and services. This creates a balance between VR's goal of serving more in-school youth by providing services to those with disabilities while in school and then transitioning over to DWS services once they are considered out of school.

- Strategies for retaining customers once they enroll, by providing effective assessment interviews that address each customer's individual goals, skills, abilities, barriers, concerns and feedback to create a career pathway for each youth that is specific to their educational and employment goals.
- Strategies for higher completion rates of secondary and post-secondary training as well as leadership development activities that help prepare youth for entering the workforce, which also includes increased opportunities for paid and unpaid work experiences that lead to more options for permanent employment.
- Assisting with skills upgrades needs and remediation, especially for those who are basic skills deficient or ELL by more engaged connection and referral to Adult Education Services, VR services for those with disabilities, and access to resources through higher education institutions as we work with those on the ETPL for specific in-demand occupational training programs.

Utah will use funds to carry out the Youth Program elements described in WIOA section 129(C) (2). Staff will assess each individual to ensure the appropriate elements are provided based on specific circumstances and to meet performance outcomes. Youth with disabilities are provided appropriate activities and support through the WIOA Youth program and also through referrals to Vocational Rehabilitation. Vocational Rehabilitation and WIOA Youth counselors work together to ensure the youth is able to meet all their needs and accomplish appropriate youth program activities.

Monitoring the use of each service provided as well as the outcome of each service element will also be completed. Utah will ensure that each of the 14 service elements are made available through in-house implementation of the service elements that are being provided by DWS, referring to outside agencies, community partners, businesses and agencies that provide the required service elements and sole sourcing to ensure that all 14 elements are available and being offered to each youth in the program. Funds will be used to provide:

- Support needed to complete secondary school education, including Adult Education, alternative high school education, packet completion or high school equivalency credential preparation. Support may include tutoring with eligible tutors to assist with both secondary and post-secondary educational completion. This will be made available through referrals, connection and follow up with the youth to ensure they are getting the access to educational assistance that they need.
- Support to assist individuals with enrolling, attending, and completing Adult Education services, and/or alternative education services. Support may include paying for high school equivalency credential practice tests, and the supplies needed to complete their educational goals. This will be made available through referral and resource connects through Utah State Board of Education as well as other providers of secondary and GED completion services.
- Paid employment opportunities for youth that have an academic and occupational component. The opportunities may include summer employment and other opportunities available throughout the school year such as internships, job shadowing, and OJT. This will be made available through employer collaboration.
- Training support to youth customers who are eligible under an ITA for tuition and required training related supplies needs. Funds will also be used to support youth customers in pre-apprenticeships, apprenticeships and custom fit trainings. This will be made available by ensuring youth are made aware of post-secondary training options through customer choice using the ETPL as well as other providers of Occupational Skills Training.
- Support individuals completing leadership development activities, including, but not limited to, job search and life skills workshops, conferences, and team building activities.
- Funding for reasonable expenses required for participation in training and employment activities. This is provided and monitored by DWS through a Training and Support Card.

- Referrals and connections to fee-for-service providers who offer mentoring to students either on a one-on-one or group basis.
- Individual counseling, family counseling, trauma counseling, substance abuse counseling and intervention, mental health counseling and medication management.
- Budgeting workshops, courses and activities.
- Entrepreneurial skills training, as a direct payment to the provider for the courses being offered to the individual.
- Career assessments to customers during appointments with staff in order to guide them through appropriate career pathways.
- Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to post-secondary education and training. Staff will assist youth with educational searches on a one-on-one basis during assessments in order to help customers determine a best fit for them in completing training.

Utah policy meets the criteria specified in WIOA Section 129(a)(1)(B)(iii)(VIII) and Section 129(a)(1)(C)(iv)(VII). According to DWS policy, customers who require additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure and hold employment will include out-of-school youth customers who are Native American, refugees or victims/witnesses to domestic violence or any other type of abuse (at any point in time in their life), or who have identified substance-abuse issues (within the last year) or an incarcerated parent. For in school youth, this will include customers who are refugees.

Utah's definition, as defined by law, for not attending school as defined in WIOA Section 129(a)(1)(B)(i) and Section 129(a)(1)(C)(iv)(VII) is as follows: Out-of-school youth means a student 16 years of age or older who has not graduated from high school and is no longer enrolled in a K-12 program of instruction. There is not a specific definition in state law for attending school.

Utah's definition of basic skills deficiency is having less than a 9th-grade level of English reading, writing or mathematical skills based on results of an approved assessment.

DWS is the entity responsible for the disbursal of grant funds, as determined by the governor.

Utah will use funds to carry out the youth program elements described in WIOA section 129 (C). Staff will assess each individual to ensure the appropriate elements are provided based on specific circumstances and to meet performance outcomes. Youth with disabilities are provided appropriate activities and support through the WIOA Youth program and also through referrals to Vocational Rehabilitation. Vocational Rehabilitation and WIOA Youth counselors work together to ensure the youth is able to meet all their needs and accomplish appropriate youth program activities.

DWS does and will continue to procure for youth services in accordance with federal and state guidance. DWS does not currently have any contracted providers and will not have any potential contracted providers until after the procurement process is established once the final WIOA regulations are provided.

The roles and resource contributions of the one-stop partner are outlined in the One-Stop Partners MOU, the Infrastructure Funding Agreement, and the Common Client Information Exchange and System Access Agreement.

Utah does not award sub-grants and contracts for title I activities.

Utah's State Workforce Development Board (SWDB) Executive Committee reviewed all of the grant applications after they had been scored by agency staff from DWS and USBE. The Executive Committee made recommendations regarding relevant elements of the grant to the full SWDB for its approval. USBE accepted the SWDB recommendations and incorporated them into the grant review process.

## **Waiver Requests**

### **Request for Waiver - Providing ITAs to In-School WIOA Youth Participants**

Utah requests a waiver on the requirement of providing Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) to only Out of School youth ages 18-24 enrolled in the WIA/WIOA Youth program.

As per current WIOA Regulations: 681.550:

"In order to enhance individual participant choice in their education and training plans and provide flexibility to service providers, the Department allows WIOA ITAs for out of school youth, ages 18-24 using WIOA youth funds when appropriate."

While this allows flexibility for serving out-of-school youth through post-secondary training, it does not give Utah the flexibility to continue to serve those youth customers enrolled as in-school who are preparing to graduate and extend their educational goals into post-secondary opportunities.

As of February 4, 2016, Utah has 563 in-school youth customers and 513 out-of-school youth customers enrolled in the WIA/WIOA program. While the number of in-school youth will continue to decline as the goal to spend 75 percent of WIOA funds increases the number of out of school youth enrolled, DWS must continue to serve youth customers enrolled as an in-school youth and actively participating in educational activities past high school. Since July 1, 2015, DWS has enrolled 128 new in-school WIOA youth customers, and of those, 47 are customers are still enrolled in secondary education. Once those customers graduate, they will need continued support through post-secondary educational activities in order to obtain the certificates needed to find employment.

If DWS is going to offer an adequate supply of workers to in-demand industry and occupations, it cannot include only those who are determined to be out of school as part of that supply. Utah needs a waiver to support those with post-secondary educational goals past high school. In-school youth deserve the same opportunities for support as those being served as out-of-school youth, and it would be a disservice to those in-school customers to not support them past their high school diploma or its equivalent. Although it has been recommended to close the enrollment of those in-school youth who graduate and then re-enroll them as an out of school youth for the purpose of assisting them with an ITA after age 18, this poses a risk that the customer may no longer be eligible under the new barrier requirements. It also prevents DWS from serving youth customers who graduate early (at 16 or 17 years of age) under an ITA, even if they are enrolled as an out of school youth once they earn their diploma.

Having to procure for Occupational Skills Training services for in-school youth would also create an unnecessary and undue burden on those providers who have already submitted the required information to be on Utah's Eligible Training Provider List. Because state schools and effective providers of post-secondary training have already been identified through the ETPL, having an additional process for procured providers for those in-school youth customers would create a duplication of effort for those providers that would not occur if those in-school youth wishing to access post-secondary training have access to the ETPL through an ITA. It has been difficult to encourage training providers to participate on the ETPL and the State has gone to great lengths to provide technical support and encouragement. This duplication and additional burden for providers could limit provider participation on the ETPL and in turn limit options for customer choice.

Because Utah already has an Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) in place and an electronic way to pay providers for educational services offered, both in-school and out of school youth will be served adequately under this waiver.

Waiver Plan:

The waiver request format follows WIOA Regulations section 681.550

Statutory regulations to be waived: WIOA section 681.550

Waiver goals and measurable programmatic outcomes, if the waiver is granted:

- Continue to serve the in-school youth already enrolled past high school completion through post-secondary training under an ITA

Continue to encourage education providers to remain current on the ETPL and provide technical assistance where needed to gather performance data that will help both in and out of school youth to receive services.

Make a gradual shift toward enrolling more out of school youth and using those funds to support other activities, such as work experiences, leadership development activities, and mentoring, along with training activities under ITAs

- Continue to monitor training completions and outcomes for both in and out of school youth to meet the federal requirements for training completions and job placements for youth.

Through allowing both in-school and out-of-school youth to use Individual Training accounts to access training services it opens up more training programs for the youth to select from as they will now be able to use the ETPL approved programs. By opening up the training program opportunities youth will be able to better connect to training programs that match their interest, support their learning style and better prepare them for employment and work-based learning. Youth who are able to complete occupational skills or adult education programs more easily may be more prepared to enter the job market and be a qualified employee. By serving in-school and out-school youth with the same policy and procedures allows for a continuity of services for all youth. All youth will be eligible to receive training services, connection to work-based learning and then employment and job search support. To better connect youth to work-based learning, they will be able to use the ETPL and find registered apprenticeships and also more easily find academic components that give them the credentials and support to be successful at an Internship or On-the-Job training placement.

Describe any individuals affected by the waiver:

- The effect of this waiver would be positive for both in-school and out of school youth customers who are enrolled, as both groups would be supported with WIOA funding while completing post-secondary training activities.

The effect of this waiver would also be positive for education providers on the ETPL as they will not be required to go through procurement in addition to the requirements of being on the ETPL. This will hopefully encourage providers to continue to be on the ETPL.

This waiver will be able to affect disadvantaged populations and youth with barriers to employment through ensuring both in-school and out-of-school youth are able to receive all of the youth program services, receive a continuity of services without disruption and have access to more training providers and programs. Both in-school and out-of school youth may have significant barriers to employment and have had previous hardships that could impact their ability to be successful. It is important for these youth to be able to not only receive support but to be able to customize their services to match their interests and abilities. Without this waiver in-school youth would be restricted to select training programs where they are less prone to be successful and find suitable employment. Also without this waiver, in-school youth who would like to receive an ITA would have to be closed and enrolled as an out-of-school youth. This disrupts continuity of services and could potentially stop services that could greatly benefit a population who may be disadvantaged and have barriers to employment.

Describe the process used to:

- a. Monitor the progress in implementing the waiver:

- Continue to review in-school enrollments and those accessing post-secondary education through an ITA to assess whether the waiver continues to be necessary.

- Review financial reports quarterly to ensure out of school youth expenditures are continuing to exceed the in-school expenditures in order to meet the goal of spending 75 percent of funds on out of school youth.

Biannual monitoring of providers available to youth on the ETPL to ensure there are options to foster customer choice.

- Make adjustments as necessary based on the number of in-school youth accessing ITAs and the amount of funds being spent on out of school youth.

b. Provide notice to any Local Board affected by the waiver: Consistent with the general waiver request, the state will adhere to the publication requirements to ensure the broadest participation possible, including appropriate partners and interested parties such as labor, community based partners, and the SWDB.

c. Provide any Local Board affected by the waiver with an opportunity to comment on the request: Utah is a single state and therefore no local board would be affected.

d. Ensure meaningful public comment, including comment by business and organized labor, on the waiver: DWS provides access to the waiver in order for businesses, organized labor, and the community to have an opportunity to make public comment on the waiver for a period of 30 days.

The outcomes of this waiver will be reflected through the common performance measures, specifically credential attainment, measurable skill gain attainment and employment rates.

Utah is prepared to provide the most recent data available about the outcomes of the existing waiver.

## **Program-Specific Requirements for Wagner-Peyser Program (Employment Services)**

### **Employment Service Professional Staff Development**

Utah will utilize professional development activities for employment service staff to ensure staff is able to provide high-quality services to both job seekers and employers. DWS accomplishes this through:

- New and Incumbent Employee Training: A comprehensive core training for all new staff that utilizes a combination of in-person training and multimedia, including skills review assessment, follow-up activities and focused, targeted one-on-one support. In addition to core training, staff receives program-specific training and Just-in-Time training supporting implementation of policy, procedures and needed skills. Employees register and complete skills reviews for ~~all~~ trainings in DWS's Career Management System.
- Professional Development: Incumbent staff receive skills-based training, resource information, best-practice exchange and professional development opportunities.

Utah provides training and awareness across core programs regarding the Unemployment Insurance Program (UI) by providing a comprehensive core training for all staff utilizing a combination of in-person and multi-media training, including skills review assessment, follow up activities and targeted one-on-one support. This training includes how to efficiently assist claimants with their UI claim filing and how to refer to UI staff for adjudication. Staff have access to UI law and policy manuals through our internal system, and UI changes are communicated or trained through a monthly training process. UI has many resource guides and lists that can be found on the DWS website. These are available to help individuals and those working in other programs to be aware of the UI guidelines. Integration between UWORKS and CUBS (the computer program used by UI) facilitates awareness.

Staff are trained to ask individuals who are in the one-stop centers if they were recently employed and the nature of their separation from employment. By asking this question staff are able to determine if applying for UI is appropriate and assist them in the process. They also have been trained on how to access trained UI staff to resolve and handle UI issues. One option is access to the UI Help Desk that is dedicated to supporting one-stop center staff who may call or email and receive immediate help with unemployment issues for specific cases or escalated situations. Another option is educating customers about the online chat feature available through the UI IVR system where customers can be immediately assisted during business hours.

Utah will provide information and meaningful assistance to individuals requesting assistance filing a claim for unemployment compensation through one-stop centers. Whether an individual contacts UI from home or from the one-stop center, they deserve the highest level of customer service. To ensure this level of service, UI has implemented an enhanced interactive voice response (IVR) system that provides:

- Claim status: Claimants accessing IVR are provided with their claim status at the beginning of their call, which helps resolve basic question calls and results in lower hold times
- The option for callbacks: When wait times are elevated, individuals have the option to choose a call back rather than waiting on the phone for a representative to become available.
- More effective direction for calls: Claimants and employers are directed to the same IVR tree with the distinction between benefits questions and contributions questions made at the beginning of the system, which decreases the number of misdirected calls
- More effective direction for online chats: Claimants and employers will be provided with portals to our online chat system at multiple places throughout the UI webpage, and the system is configured to direct them to the team that can assist them.
- Help Desk assistance: Individuals accessing services through the one-stop employment centers also have the option of contacting the UI division through the IVR system or online chat feature. UI also offers a Help Desk for staff at the employment center. An employment counselor can call a direct number for the UI Help Desk and be connected with a claims taker in less than 30 seconds to handle escalated situations.

#### **Utah's strategy for providing reemployment assistance to UI claimants and other unemployed individuals involves:**

- Staff support
  - o Employment centers operate throughout Utah. A primary goal of the one-stop delivery system is to serve as the anchor for a statewide workforce development system that effectively responds to the needs of employers, job seekers and the community. The one-stop system provides a comprehensive employment exchange network serving as the connecting point for employers and job seekers. An employment center provides direct services or referrals for services through partner agencies to meet customers' needs. Employment centers develop and maintain strong relationships with partner agencies in order to maintain efficiency and avoid duplication of services.
  - o DWS provides core curriculum and training to ensure that all employment center staff understand and adhere to federal, state and DWS policy and procedures. Employment center staff can readily access all policy and procedures online, or they can contact state and service-area program specialists to ask questions or obtain policy and procedure clarifications. In addition, supervisors play a very important role in training staff on policy, procedures and local pathways.
  - o DWS staff focus on the same overall goal of helping people obtain the services and support needed to find employment, regardless of which of the four key business processes they are responsible for: eligibility, employment exchange, employment counseling or unemployment insurance. Outcome targets ensure DWS achieves its goal of developing the workforce.
  - o DWS information technology and online services staff continually evaluates the DWS website's usability and functionality to ensure all users are able to navigate this site.

- Unemployed individuals

- o Individuals can access DWS services by visiting employment centers or by using DWS online services, which are accessible 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The website allows customers to enter resumes, search for job openings, learn about careers, access economic information, apply for training services, file for unemployment insurance benefits and find links to other useful resources. Additionally, customers may apply online for financial services, food stamps, child care, medical and other supportive service benefits.

- o DWS customers throughout the state can access the same level of service regardless of their location. DWS employment centers have a common appearance and feel, including signage. However, areas have flexibility in establishing pathways. Resources and local needs drive those pathways.

- o The Work Readiness Evaluation (WRE) was developed to help both job seekers and staff members have a focused approach for job preparation activities. WRE consists of evaluating a job seeker in specific areas: job-search techniques, resume, master application, interviewing skills and professional image. Based on this evaluation, staff members can educate and provide resources to assist the job seeker to become well versed in the best practices in each of those areas. Ensuring quality and consistency is important, so validation criteria in each area provide the seeker and staff member with specific goals to work toward.

- Claimants, qualified or not, receive a resource document from the department after they have filed for benefits. This is included with the Notice of Monetary Determination and is available online at <https://jobs.utah.gov/ui/home> When a claimant files, they receive real-time labor market information regarding their selected occupation and available local job postings.

- Claimants who do not qualify for a work-search deferral are required to register for work within 10 business days of filing an initial or additional/reopened claim. The registration process involves creating a profile on Utah's labor-exchange system, completing an online assessment and taking anywhere from zero to five online workshops based on the outcome of the assessment. The online workshops cover topics such as networking, online job search, resumes and interviewing. More than 70 percent of UI claimants are referred to complete at least one of these workshops. Over 30% of claimants voluntarily complete more workshops than required.

- The UI division also partners with WDD to offer targeted in-person workshops through our Reemployment Support System (RSS). Claimants are referred in two ways. Workshop presenters select claimants who are identified as most likely to exhaust UI benefits RESEA counselors refer specific claimants to attend. Claimants who fail to report as scheduled without good cause are automatically denied UI benefits. This program is offered statewide, with an average of 710 individuals referred each month. RESEA referrals constitute approximately 13 percent of this number.

- Employment counselors in WDD also conduct targeted outreach to UI claimants who self-identify as veterans and to UI claimants who have only four weeks remaining on their claim. This is one more tool to connect UI claimants with resources available through our one-stop centers across the state. UI is collaborating with WDD to develop measurable outcomes for these outreach initiatives.

- Employers

- o Employers are able to access DWS services online 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Employers can enter job orders, search for qualified job seekers, access economic and wage information, report and pay quarterly taxes, enter New Hire Registry information and link to Utah's

business websites in order to find useful information about starting and operating a successful business.

o The information DWS provides to job seekers and all of the components of the WRE are continually reviewed with employers. This ensures DWS is effectively preparing job seekers to meet employer needs. Employers have responded positively and noted that applicants who have been assisted through this process are better prepared for interviews with a higher quality resume and professionalism than other candidates who have not utilized this process.

#### RESEA

One of the ways the state is providing reemployment assistance to UI claimants is through the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program. The RESEA program is a statewide program with support of UI claimants in 23 locations across the state. The RESEA program is entering its sixth year as an annual grant program. During the most recent grant period of April to December 2015, the RESEA counselors have met with over 4,000 claimants for initial appointments and almost 2,000 for follow-up appointments. Claimants are chosen for the program based on a profiling score compiled when they first file for benefits, which identifies those "most likely to exhaust."

The initial appointments typically last two hours, during which time the counselors:

- o Review labor-market information specific to the customer's needs
- o Ensure that registration with the state jobs bank is completed
- o Provide an orientation to the one-stop services
- o Create an individualized reemployment plan
- o Review and assist with a job-ready résumé by appointment completion
- o Complete the Work Readiness Evaluation in UWORKS
- o Provide resources based on the individual customer's needs, including a referral to training programs as appropriate
- o Refer customers to or schedule them for a variety of workshops
- o Assist with tools for networking and train on online resources
- o Provide mock interviews
- o Provide job referrals

In addition to the RESEA program, UI maintains a robust connection to labor-exchange services with our one-stop employment centers.

#### **Utah will use Wagner-Peyser funds to support UI claimants and the communication between W-P and UI as appropriate, including the following:**

Coordination of and provision of labor-exchange services for UI claimants as required by the Wagner-Peyser Act: On the DWS website, claimants can sign into their accounts and see the status of their unemployment claim. The same page contains a link to search for work, where they can enter keywords to search for jobs. They are able to set parameters as to what county they want to search in and also how many miles from a certain ZIP code. In addition, a labor-market link shows the wages of different occupations and the type of degree needed for those occupations. They are also able to inquire about how many job openings are available in Utah each year for a particular occupation.

Registration of UI claimants with Utah's employment service: Individuals that do not qualify for a work-search deferral are required to register for work within 10 days of filing an initial or additional/reopened claim. The registration process involves completing a profile on our labor-exchange system, completing an online assessment, and completing anywhere from zero to five online workshops based on the outcome of the assessment.

Administration of the work test for Utah's unemployment compensation system: Individuals who do not qualify for a work-search deferral are required to register for work within 10 days of filing an initial or additional/reopened claim. The registration process involves completing a profile on UWORKS, completing an online assessment, and completing anywhere from zero to five online workshops based on the outcome of the assessment. They are required to search for work and make at least four job contacts per week. An eligibility team randomly reviews the work-search contacts to ensure claimants are making a proper work search and create eligibility issues if they are not meeting the work-search requirements. These issues could result in a denial of benefits. The UI division also partners with WDD to offer targeted in-person workshops through RSS. Workshop presenters select groups of individuals, and RESEA counselors refer individuals to attend.

Counselors in WDD conduct targeted outreach to UI claimants who self-identify as veterans and to UI claimants who have only four weeks remaining on their claim. This is one more tool to connect UI claimants with resources available through our employment centers across the state.

Provision of referrals to and application assistance for training and education programs and resources: On <http://jobs.utah.gov>, individuals can find information on training resources, eligible training providers, DWS-funded training programs and alternative funding. They can also apply for training services online or in person at a local DWS office and may be referred to training programs during the course of a RESEA appointment.

DWS provides information and workshops focused primarily on "How to get the job you want," which expands beyond traditional resume and interview skills development into: (1) articulating how an individual's skills align with job requirements, and (2) capitalizing on non-professional experiences to demonstrate leadership, organization, time management, communication skills, etc.

## **Agricultural Outreach Plan (AOP)**

### **Assessment of Need**

The Utah agriculture industry continues to trend upward year over year. There are three industry subsectors of crop production, animal production, and agricultural support activities that reflect this growth.

The crop production subsector showed an increase in average covered employment of 5.4 percent, from 2,082 in 2015 to 2,195 in 2016. Increased employment was seen with the addition of a year-round operating tomato processing plant and farm in Mona, Utah. This subsector paid \$58,237,371 in covered wages in 2016, up 8.3 percent from 2015.

The animal production subsector is the best performing subsector within the agricultural industry regarding monthly wage and average employment. A large percentage of Utah land is federally owned and available to lease for livestock range rather than crop production, supporting the success of this subsector. Covered employment has been stagnant in the last few years with a slight decrease of workforce from 2,600 workers paid \$81,006,085 in covered wages in 2015 to 2,583 workers paid \$82,954,309.

Finally, the agriculture support activity subsector continues into its 10th year of growth increases. Though the smallest of the three subsectors, covered employment grew from 518 in 2015 to 565 in 2016, an increase of 9.1 percent, and covered wages were \$19,811,292 in 2016, showing an increase of 11.1 percent.

The Utah Department of Agriculture reported the top five labor intensive crops are sweet cherries, peppers, peaches, apples, and cherry tomatoes. The United States Department of Agriculture reports that the top five agricultural commodities for Utah in 2016 were cattle and calves, dairy

products, hay, hogs, and greenhouse/nursery. The top five Utah agricultural exports for 2016 were other plant products, other animal products, dairy products, pork, and feeds and fodder. The top five agricultural counties as of 2012 were Beaver County, Utah County, Millard County, Box Elder County and Sanpete County.

Employment has been the general need of both the employer and the farmworker. There have been reports of a labor shortage in areas such as the orchard sector. This has been shown in the decrease of available labor supply and migrant and seasonal farmworkers (MSFWs) as Utah closes in on a natural rate of unemployment in the lower-3 percent range. The employment needs of current job seekers are predicated through the seasonality of farm work. Once a typical position's season comes to a conclusion, the labor force moves through word of mouth to the next available position. The ebbs and flows of the labor force through these seasons have caused the aforementioned labor shortages in some areas.

On the Federal PY2017 Q3PY ETA 9002A, DWS reported 375 bona fide MSFWs in the State of Utah, with 136 job orders posted and 690 referrals made on those positions. Department of Workforce Services' system shows the number of Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers at 34 during peak season and 16 during low season. The majority of the MSFWs hail from Mexico and Peru, with Honduras, Guatemala and Thailand as secondary countries. The languages spoken by this population are predominately English and Spanish; Thai, Burmese and Chinese are secondary languages. The workers that fit the WIOA definition for MSFW are predominantly migrant with a presence in Utah for seasonal work. The peak times are September thru February and March thru June. Other farmworkers captured by the USDA's census of agriculture are domestic workers.

## **Outreach Activities**

### **Contacting farmworkers who are not being reached by the normal intake activities conducted by the employment service offices.**

The Utah SWA has many ways to contact farmworkers who are not being reached by the normal intake activities conducted by the employment service offices. As mentioned above, DWS conducts outreach activities through two avenues: through a partnership with the Utah Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker Coalition activities and through the efforts of DWS housing inspectors for the H-2A Foreign Labor Certification Program.

### **Providing technical assistance to outreach workers.**

The Coalition annually conducts three types of outreach events: farmworker appreciation days, farmworker appreciation dinners and outreach activities. Coalition members are invited to participate in each of the outreach events and can assist by posting and distributing marketing materials and helping on-site staff with the event.

### **Increasing outreach worker training and awareness across core programs including the Unemployment Insurance (UI) program and the training on identification of UI eligibility issues.**

DWS has increased participation efforts by being actively involved in farmworker appreciation days and dinners. DWS service areas included active involvement within their service area plans to include the Coalition Outreach Events Calendar, a commitment of bilingual DWS staff to attend and participate in the events, and State Monitor Advocate (SMA) attendance to each event to host a booth and educate participants on the services offered by DWS up to and including the Unemployment Insurance (UI) program and the training on UI eligibility.

Outreach activities are conducted regularly to contact potential MSFW job seekers through participation in other MSFW service provider events as well as throughout the travels for H2A housing inspections, as most H2A employers share federal land leases with those employers that employ MSFWs

**Providing State merit staff outreach workers professional development activities to ensure they are able to provide high quality services to both jobseekers and employers.**

DWS provides state merit staff outreach workers with many opportunities for professional development. Internally there are trainings as frequently as quarterly or bi-annually on new and innovative ways to work with all job seekers and employers served by the department. From system enhancements to new services offered, these trainings keep staff on the cutting edge of service provisions to the populations affected by DWS. Additionally, the department offers the yearly regional and national conferences that offer great opportunities for networking, learning vehicles for merit staff and relationship building with community and federal partners.

**Coordinating outreach efforts with NFJP grantees as well as with public and private community service agencies and MSFW groups.**

The SMA and the manager of FTT, Utah's WIOA Title 1 Section 167 provider, meet monthly either in person or via telephone to coordinate services provided to employers and farmworkers. With regard to coordinating with community partners in both the public and private sectors, the MSFW coalition meets monthly. Within these meetings, needs and issues are identified in the agricultural community, fostering the leveraging of resources to meet the needs of stakeholders and the conversation of further recruiting additional partners to the coalition.

**Services provided to farmworkers and agricultural employers through the one-stop delivery system.**

**One-Stop Delivery**

Through the one-stop delivery system, Utah is able to provide employment, training and recruiting services to farmworkers and agricultural employers.

Utah is able to provide the full range of employment and training services to the agricultural community, both farmworkers and agricultural employers, through the one-stop delivery system.

DWS offers a myriad of career services to all job seekers, including MSFWs, such as work-readiness activities, résumé preparation and printing, access to email accounts, employment exchange activities, review and referrals to job orders, workshops and career counseling. MSFWs who are unable to obtain employment through core services are referred to an employment counselor for career services that include assessments, employment plans and career counseling. As Weber and Utah counties have the highest populations of MSFWs, Futures Through Training and DWS have collaborated in an effort to streamline services and coordinate funds to best serve customers with training. Services are reviewed quarterly, and reports are prepared by the Utah Monitor Advocate at the state and economic service area levels to ensure that services provided to MSFWs are "qualitatively equivalent and quantitatively proportionate" compared to non-MSFW job seekers.

DWS is also committed to offering translation and interpreter services to non-English-speaking customers. DWS maintains a list of its employees who speak foreign languages and has a contract secured with an interpretation provider.

**Marketing the employment service complaint system to farmworkers and other farmworker advocacy groups.**

Throughout calendar year 2017 and moving forward, DWS and its community partners in agriculture have focused on creating a more robust marketing strategy. Recognizing the need to have a place where farmworkers and employers could visit that is contextualized, integrated and grounded in philosophy that pertains directly to them, the coalition created a dot-com website instead of a dot-gov. Additionally, with the advent of social media becoming a common vehicle for information and communication in the farmworker community, the coalition also created a Facebook page.

The website <https://getutahfarmjobs.com> provides a direct, live view of DWS's dot-gov website through the window of a dot-com. Through the use of a discrete marketing strategy, farmworkers can view available jobs in agriculture, apply for services offered in the one-stop center, obtain locations of the one-stop centers and directly access the ESS complaint system. Employers have the same access to post jobs and view and contact applicants that are registered for work. The website also offers information on each of the participating members of the coalition, what they provide to the agriculture community, and links to their individual websites and contact information. Lastly, though written in English, this website can be translated into over 50 different languages, including Spanish and Thai, the primary languages spoken by Utah's farmworkers.

The Utah Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Coalition Facebook page is established as a community organization where interested parties can "like" to subscribe to updates in their Facebook feeds. This provides a dynamic landing page that includes information on upcoming events with the coalition and where members will be during outreach, links to key websites and information, and direct marketing of the services offered by the coalition. Though still in its infancy, Facebook is proving to be a viable marketing arena that DWS and FTT need to break into to gain access and awareness in the MSFW community.

In partnership with DWS, the Mexican consulate has created wallet cards clearly outlining farmworker labor and legal rights.. These cards are given out at each outreach opportunity along with education and training on how and when to use them. The SMA ensures that the correct posters are visible in areas of employment and that the farmworkers have a working knowledge of them.

#### **Marketing the Agricultural Recruitment System to agricultural employers and how it intends to improve such publicity.**

Agricultural employers are provided the same level of service as other employers, including public job recruitments listings, labor market information, interview space at local employment centers and assistance from local workforce development specialists.

For those agricultural employers who are unable to fill their labor needs through the recruitment of United States citizens and other eligible non-citizens, DWS is the H2A contractor. As such, DWS assists H2A employers with employee recruitment and in meeting the H2A program requirements. Utah's SMA handles this H2A recruitment. With a working knowledge of the various foreign labor certification programs and the Agricultural Recruitment System provided by DOL, the SMA can provide optimal solutions to employers to sufficiently meet their labor demand.

#### **Other Requirements**

DWS has an agreement with its NFJP grantee Futures Through Training through Utah's one-stop MOU. Collaboration has increased in the past four years based on this very agreement. DWS's Management Information Systems (MIS) department exchanges wage information with FTT in order to validate employment data for NFJP participants. As mentioned above, collaboration occurs weekly between the SMA and NFJP grantee and monthly during coalition meetings with community partners. As issues are identified in coalition meetings and other areas of outreach that cannot be addressed by the participants at the table, it is determined who has the resources available to handle said issues, thus creating new partnerships.

#### **Review and Public Comment**

In developing the AOP, the SWA must solicit information and suggestions from NFJP grantees, other appropriate MSFW groups, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations, and other interested organizations. In addition, at least 45 calendar days before submitting its final AOP, the

SWA must provide a proposed plan to NFJP grantees, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations, and other organizations expressing an interest and allow at least 30 days for review and comment. The SWA must: 1) Consider any comments received in formulating its final proposed AOP; 2) Inform all commenting parties in writing whether their comments have been incorporated and, if not, the reasons therefore; and 3) Transmit the comments and recommendations received and its responses with the submission of the AOP. The AOP must include a statement confirming NFJP grantees, other appropriate MSFW groups, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations and other interested employer organizations have been given an opportunity to comment on the AOP. Include the list of organizations from which information and suggestions were solicited, any comments received, and responses to those comments.

The Utah SWA has provided a copy of this final proposed AOP for review and public comment to all of the MSFW coalition members and its community partners, with those agencies listed below:

- Futures Through Training (Utah's NFJP Grantee)
- The Mexican Consulate
- Association for Utah Community Health
- Utah's Migrant Community Health
- Jordan School District
- Centro De La Familia of Utah
- Utah Legal Services
- Pregnancy Risk Line; Mother To Baby Utah
- Community Health Centers of Utah
- Utah Farm Bureau
- AgAbility of Utah

All of the above agencies are active community members in the Utah Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Coalition and MSFW outreach efforts. During public comment time period, no comments were received by the department.

### **Data Assessment**

Across the previous four years, Utah has consistently met three of five Equity Ratio Indicators on its quarterly ETA 9002 report. Those indicators are "Referred to Jobs," "Referred to Support Service," and "Career Guidance." The other indicators that were not met are based solely on traffic flow into the one-stop centers; the data is biased toward non-MSFW job seekers being the main visitors to the local offices. The population density of MSFWs in the State of Utah is concentrated, and travel to a one-stop center is not feasible for a day's travel. Therefore, staff-assisted services and job development, both of which are the equity indicators usually missed, are provided in the field during outreach and/or through DWS's online self-service system, should MSFWs decide to register as job seekers.

### **Assessment of progress**

Assessment of Progress: The previous AOP outlined the following goals: revamp the self-service registration piece for MSFWs in order to more accurately capture the population of those actively seeking employment, including a validation piece by adding a pop-up box to the MSFW question requesting most recent employer and dates of employment to verify the individual is a bona fide MSFW per the NFJP definitions; and fill at least one percent of the agricultural job orders placed with the SWA.

Bear in mind that in order to record a formal placement on a job order and/or opening, DWS must post that position, refer a job seeker with the MSFW demarcation to that position, and have the employer formally notify the agency that they hired the referred individual. Consequently, the incompleteness of this process potentially yields fewer placements. The Department has increased efforts to work with employers in considering referrals made by DWS and following up on the

potential placement of those individuals. As a result, DWS was able to average at least a 40 percent placement rate quarter over quarter.

Before making changes to the self-service registration within DWS's labor exchange, Utah was ranked top 14 in the MSFW population, labeling it as a significant state. During that time it was reported that there were 1,755 MSFWs actively looking for employment. It was found that there was no clarification or definition around the three questions in place on the seeker self-registration page. With a clearly defined question in place, a 12-month expiration date on the registration, and a validation measure in the back end, DWS was able to accurately report 118 MSFWs actively looking for employment on its last 9002A LEARS report.

#### **State Monitor Advocate**

The Utah Monitor Advocate, as an employee of DWS, was responsible for the compilation of this 2015 Utah Agricultural Outreach Plan. Consequently, this Outreach Plan has been reviewed and approved by the Monitor Advocate. DWS will afford all coalition members the opportunity to review and comment on this plan as required during the 30-day comment period of the Unified State Plan.

### **Program-Specific Requirements for Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Programs**

#### **Aligning of Content Standards**

Utah will, by July 1, 2016, align adult education content standards with the state-adopted challenging academic content standards adopted under Section 1111(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended [20 U.S.C. 6311(b)(1)]. The Utah State Office of Education, Adult Education Department is governed by Board Rule R-277-733 - Adult Education which can be viewed online at <http://www.rules.utah.gov/publicat/code/r277/r277-733.htm#T4> and Board Rule R277- 735 Corrections Education, which is online at <http://www.rules.utah.gov/publicat/code/r277/r277-735.htm>.

Adult Education Board Rules require adult education programs offering Adult Basic Education (ABE) and Adult High School Completion (AHSC) curriculum to follow Utah Core Standards infused with OCTAE-developed College and Career Readiness Standards as the basis for instruction leading to an Adult Education Secondary Diploma. Staff teaching courses leading to an Adult Education Secondary Diploma must be licensed as defined in Board Rule R277-733-4-I-J. Adult education programs are monitored on a rotation schedule whereby curricula are reviewed regularly by the monitoring team for compliance.

Adult Education-funded community-based organizations (CBO) offering English language instruction to non-native learners are required to ensure that curricula is aligned to OCATE College and Career Readiness Standards at a minimum in Language Arts and Math. CBOs are to employ Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)-certified instructors. Persons with a K-12 English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) endorsement may be considered for employment to provide ELL services. Non-licensed persons may teach under the supervision of licensed staff as defined under Board Rule R277-733-4-J-L. Instructors employed in school district adult education programs are required to follow the hiring practices of the local school district.

#### **Local Activities**

Utah will fund eligible providers to establish or operate programs that provide adult education and literacy activities. Adult Education AEFLA funds will be completed by Spring 2017. Grants will be awarded July 1, 2017, based on a competitive application process following the 13 guidance points outlined in section 231(e). By design, as a Utah State Office of Education (USBE) state requirement, it is intended that funds will be competed regionally to meet the educational needs of those most at risk within each economic area. Sub-state economic and employment data will be considered in determining the percentage of funding available to compete within each area. Program awards will

be made on the basis of the program's application merit as measured on a scoring rubric. The final decision for funding rests with the USBE Adult Education leadership.

### **Adult Education and Literacy Activities (Section 203 of WIOA)**

The Utah State Board of Education - Student Advocacy Services Adult Education Services awards funds to qualified adult education programs based on the focus of grant applications defining the program's ability to meet the needs of the adult learner, who is 16 years of age or older and out of school, through literacy activities, including adult education, basic literacy, workplace adult education literacy activities, family literacy activities, English language activities, integration of English literacy and civics education, workforce preparation and/or integrated education and training. Program awards will be made on the basis of application merit as measured on a scoring rubric. Programs will compete for WIOA AEFLA awards to provide instruction to English Language Learners (ELL) for non-native speakers (note: the scope of ELL services will be increased to include basic English literacy as well as instruction and guidance that leads the ELL student to attain a high-school diploma or its equivalent and transition to post-secondary and training programs or employment), Adult Basic Education (ABE) literacy services, and Adult Secondary Education/Adult High School Completion (ASE/AHSC) services to qualified individuals as defined in Title II of the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act. All programs are expected to infuse civics education within the context of offered coursework. Instruction provided should be contextualized and designed to focus on career opportunities defined within the regions.

Programs will be expected to:

- Define how workforce preparation is incorporated within their curriculum
- Define the strategies/processes utilized to actively collaborate and transition adult education "completer students" to post-secondary and career training programs or to employment that will lead to a meaningful and self-sustaining career
- Ensure that students are afforded career pathways and appropriate services through collaboration and coordination of referrals between DWS and rehabilitation service providers

New Language: Utah will fund eligible providers to establish or operate programs that provide adult education and literacy activities. Adult Education AEFLA funds will be competed by Spring 2017. Grants will be awarded July 1, 2017, based on a competitive application process following the 13 guidance points outlined in section 231(e). By design, as a Utah State Office Board of Education (USBE) state requirement, it is intended that funds will be competed regionally to meet the educational needs of those most at risk within each economic area. Sub-state economic and employment data will be considered in determining the percentage of funding available to compete within each area. Program awards will be made on the basis of the application merit as measured on a scoring rubric. The USBE Adult Education leadership will review the applications and determine awards. Programs not funded will have the opportunity to appeal the USBE's decision through the appeal hearing. Following the hearing an applicant may appeal to the Secretary of Education (defined in 34 CFR 76-401) for a final decision. Adult Education and Literacy Activities (Section 203 of WIOA) The Utah State Board of Education - Student Advocacy Services Adult Education Services awards funds to qualified adult education programs based on the focus of grant applications defining the program's ability to meet the needs of the adult learner, who is 16 years of age or older and out of school, through literacy activities, including adult education, basic literacy, workplace adult education literacy activities, family literacy activities, English language activities, integration of English literacy and civics education, workforce preparation and/or integrated education and training. Applicants awards will be made on the basis of application merit as measured on a scoring rubric. Programs will compete for WIOA AEFLA awards to provide instruction to English Language Learners (ELL) for non-native speakers (note: the scope of ELL services will be increased to include basic English literacy as well as instruction and guidance that leads the ELL student to attain a high-school diploma or its equivalent and transition to post-secondary and training programs or employment), Adult Basic Education (ABE) literacy services, and Adult Secondary Education/Adult High School Completion (ASE/AHSC) services to qualified individuals as defined in Title II of the

Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act. All programs are expected to infuse civics education within the context of offered coursework. Instruction provided should be contextualized and designed to focus on career opportunities defined within the regions. Funded Programs will be expected to: • Define how workforce preparation is incorporated within their curriculum • Define the strategies/processes utilized to actively collaborate and transition adult education “completer students” to post-secondary and career training programs or to employment that will lead to a meaningful and self-sustaining career • Ensure that students are afforded career pathways and appropriate services through collaboration and coordination of referrals between DWS and rehabilitation service providers.

**New Language: Special Rule** Each eligible agency awarded a grant or contract under this section shall not use any funds for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are under the age of 16 and are enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under State law, except that such agency may use such funds for such purpose if such programs, services, or activities are related to family literacy activities. In providing family literacy activities under this title, an eligible provider shall attempt to coordinate with programs and services that are not assisted under this title prior to using funds for adult education and literacy activities under this title for activities other than activities for eligible individuals. In addition to the above Utah will make available funds to concurrently blend adult education and literacy activities into strong partnerships with the other partners through increasing the integration of instruction into regional high demand occupations that are identified by DWS. As appropriate, programs will partner directly with their local training or post-secondary institution to encourage student transition through the use of transition coaches or counselors. Applicants that are funded are expected to infuse Utah's College and Career Readiness Standards into instruction. Utah has spent the past two years in establishing transition plans and bridges for students to access post-secondary and training programs. This activity will be strengthened by providing direct funding to applicants to integrate workforce preparation activities into all adult education, literacy and English language instructional activities. For the ELL population, a strong emphasis on English literacy and civics instruction will include concurrent and contextualized workforce preparation activities in combination with support from DWS to ensure successful integrated education and training offerings that may be available through Title I funding. Additionally, the application process will give greater emphasis and awarding of funds (funding rubric) to programs who define how they will infuse English language acquisition, basic education or high school completion into career pathway implementation by direct partnerships with DWS and Vocational Rehabilitation to deliver instruction concurrently in partnership with local employers) or in a pilot location that involves one or more partner programs focused on providing family literacy or workplace learning to improve parent English or basic literacy skills through educational partnerships. If an applicant applies for funding to provide Family Literacy they would be expected to not work in isolation but to work in partnership with a local Head Start or early education partnership in addition to DWS ensuring that the adults are able to meet their educational and employment needs. Funded applicants can no longer offer services that are splintered and in silos but rather services must be infused in a career pathway defined for each student. Applicants may also receive priority funding for identifying at least one high demand employment opportunity within their region and defining how they will provide adult education services (basic skills, ELL and civics education and high school completion services, workforce preparation activities) meeting the needs of the employer and the local community to increase the skill levels of the employee.

### **Special Rule**

Each eligible agency awarding a grant or contract under this section shall not use any funds made available under this title for adult education and literacy activities for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are under the age of 16 and are enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under State law, except that such agency

may use such funds for such purpose if such programs, services, or activities are related to family literacy activities. In providing family literacy activities under this title, an eligible provider shall attempt to coordinate with programs and services that are not assisted under this title prior to using funds for adult education and literacy activities under this title for activities other than activities for eligible individuals.

### **Corrections Education and Other Education of Institutionalized Individuals**

Utah will establish and operate programs under Section 225 of WIOA for corrections education and education for other institutionalized individuals. Priority of service will be given to individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participating in the program. Funds (10 percent of the allowable 82.5 percent) will be part of the competed for funding opportunities in Spring 2017.

Utah will award the base amount allowed under WIOA through a competitive process to school-district educational providers responsible for educational services to state offenders in correctional facilities and jails housed in their district boundaries as well as to other agencies responsible for education services to persons in other institutional settings. Grant awards will be awarded on the basis of application merit as measured on a USBE-defined scoring rubric. The final decision will rest with the USBE Student Advocacy Services Adult Education leadership. Adult education programs will be funded based on the focus of grant applications defining the program's ability to meet the needs of the adult learner 16 years of age or older by providing literacy activities, including adult education (including high-school completion), basic literacy, special education services to qualified youth, integration of English literacy and civics education, workforce preparation or integrated education and training. Programs awarded funds will be expected to infuse civics education within the context of offered coursework.

Correctional education programs applying for funding must define how funding will be used to meet the educational needs of offenders who are within five years of leaving an institution. Instruction provided should be contextualized and designed to focus on the transition of reentering society. Programs will be expected to define how workforce preparation is incorporated within the curriculum as well as the strategies/processes actively being utilized to transition the adult education "completer student" to post-secondary and career-training programs or to employment within the institutions and that, upon reentry, will lead to a meaningful employment and a self-sustaining career.

Adult Education corrections programs awarded funding shall actively engage with Department of Corrections staff and programming officers to ensure offenders who have been or are involved in education and are scheduled for release are actively engaged in ASCENT (Achieving Success through Collaborative Engagement and Navigated Transition) services at release and at post-release. Adult Education correction program staff members are expected to partner with the Department of Corrections, DWS and Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) in the ASCENT initiative, as defined by the Utah Defendant Offender Workforce Development Task Force (UDOWD) vision for transition and release processes designed to reduce offender recidivism. UDOWD focuses on employment for released offenders and has been recognized nationally for its impact on reducing recidivism through effective collaboration of federal, state, community and business/employment partners. Adult Education state leadership staff will actively be a part of UDOWD coordination and collaboration efforts and initiatives. Adult Education should have a representative serving on UDOWD by Fall 2016.

The ASCENT program, based on the Transition from Prison to Community (TPC) model of the National Institute of Corrections (NIC), brings federal, state, local, advocacy and faith-based agencies and organizations together to improve transitional and reentry services for offenders leaving the prison and/or jail systems. The ASCENT program supports current prison reform and evidence-based judicial system improvements in Utah. The overarching goals of ASCENT are for "all criminal justice involved clients /offenders, county, state or federal from intake through release to

remain arrest free over the long haul, and to become competent and self-sufficient members of their community." The ASCENT model assists jurisdictions in making systematic changes, including reductions in recidivism and victimization, as well as enhanced public safety and improved community life. The Adult Education correction program staff members will collaborate with transitional specialists located in the prisons and/or jails that focus on release and re-entry issues for offenders.

The Department of Corrections, DWS, VR and Adult Education will have identified staff members on each of four ASCENT committees:

- Community Support and Reintegration Reform
- Treatment and Victim Assistance
- Education and Employment
- Housing and Transportation

Staff members from each of the core partners are now being selected for the four targeted ASCENT committees and should be fully engaged by the end of January 2016.

New Language: Utah will establish and operate programs under Section 225 of WIOA for corrections education and education for other institutionalized individuals. Priority of service will be given to individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participating in the program. Funds (10 percent of the allowable 82.5 percent) will be competed for funding opportunities in Spring 2017 with funds being awarded by July 1, 2017. . Eligible providers of demonstrated effectiveness will have direct and equitable access to apply for Corrections Education and Other Education of Institutionalized Individuals grants to provide educational services in correctional facilities, county jails or other institutional settings. Utah will compete the funds using the same grant application and application process being used for section 231 funds. Adult Education AEFLA funds will be competed Spring 2017. Grants will be awarded July 1, 2017, based on a competitive application process following the 13 guidance points outlined in section 231(e). Grant awards will be awarded on the basis of application merit as measured on a USBE defined scoring rubric. The final decision will rest with the USBE Student Advocacy Services Adult Education leadership. Applicants will be funded based on the focus of grant applications defining the program's ability to meet the needs of the adult learner 16 years of age or older by providing literacy activities, including adult education (including high-school completion), basic literacy, special education services to qualified youth, integration of English literacy and civics education, workforce preparation or integrated education and training. Programs awarded funds will be expected to infuse civics education within the context of offered coursework. Applicants applying for funding must define how funding will be used to meet the educational needs of offenders who are within five years of leaving an institution. Awarded funds are to be used to increase the number of incarcerated adults improving their basic skills, completing a secondary school credential, entering post-secondary education and training, or entering or retaining employment. Educational services offered may be provided by peer tutors who work under the direction of an adult educator. Instruction provided should be contextualized and designed to focus on the transition of reentering society. Programs will be expected to define how provided educational services will improve the offender's likelihood of successful reentry. This may include partnerships with post-secondary or training institutions so that they are co-teaching industry trades or certification programs within the facilities that DWS defines as marketable once the offender paroles; how adult education will partner with Corrections and access/partner with the pre-release team (ASCENT see below) ensuring the offender has a defined career pathway and resources once paroled. Adult Education corrections programs applicants awarded funding shall actively engage with Department of Corrections staff and programming officers to ensure offenders who have been or are involved in education and are scheduled for release are actively engaged in ASCENT (Achieving Success through Collaborative Engagement and Navigated Transition) services at release and at post-release. Adult Education correction program staff members are expected to partner with the Department of Corrections, DWS and Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) in the ASCENT

initiative, as defined by the Utah Defendant Offender Workforce Development Task Force (UDOWD) vision for transition and release processes designed to reduce offender recidivism. UDOWD focuses on employment for released offenders and has been recognized nationally for its impact on reducing recidivism through effective collaboration of federal, state, community and business/employment partners. Adult Education state leadership staff will actively be a part of UDOWD coordination and collaboration efforts and initiatives. The ASCENT program, based on the Transition from Prison to Community (TPC) model of the National Institute of Corrections (NIC), brings federal, state, local, advocacy and faith-based agencies and organizations together to improve transitional and reentry services for offenders leaving the prison and/or jail systems. The ASCENT program supports current prison reform and evidence-based judicial system improvements in Utah. The overarching goals of ASCENT are for “all criminal justice involved clients /offenders, county, state or federal from intake through release to remain arrest free over the long haul, and to become competent and self-sufficient members of their community.” The ASCENT model assists jurisdictions in making systematic changes, including reductions in recidivism and victimization, as well as enhanced public safety and improved community life. The Adult Education correction program staff members will collaborate with transitional specialists located in the prisons and/or jails that focus on release and re-entry issues for offenders. The Department of Corrections, DWS, VR and Adult Education will have identified staff members on each of four ASCENT committees: • Community Support and Reintegration Reform • Treatment and Victim Assistance • Education and Employment • Housing and Transportation Staff members from each of the core partners have been selected for the four targeted ASCENT committees.

### **Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education Program**

Utah will establish and operate Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education programs under Section 243 of WIOA for English language learners (ELL) who are qualified adults, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries.

The Adult Education programs awarded funds by Utah will be expected to serve qualified students by:

- Incorporating an understanding of the American system of government, freedom, and the responsibilities of citizenship within ELL curriculum and instruction
- Preparing qualified ELL students to transition to employment and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency through partnerships with DWS, Vocational Rehabilitation, post-secondary and training programs
- Providing ELL services that include general career-readiness instruction related to employment and occupations
- Defining processes that will be implemented with partner agencies (DWS and Rehabilitation) to ensure that integrated education is focused on high-demand industry needs in the local economic area

New Language: (d) Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education Program Utah will establish and operate Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education programs under Section 243 of WIOA for English language learners (ELL) who are qualified adults, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries. Utah is requiring all eligible providers for sections 225, 231 and 243 to follow the same grant application process. Doing so ensures that all eligible providers have direct and equitable access to apply for grants. This process also ensures that the same grant announcement, application, and grant process is used by all potential applicants. The Adult

Education programs awarded funds by Utah will be expected to serve qualified students by:

- Incorporating an understanding of the American system of government, freedom, and the responsibilities of citizenship within ELL curriculum and instruction

- Preparing qualified ELL students to transition to employment and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency through partnerships with DWS, Vocational Rehabilitation, post-secondary and training programs
- Providing ELL services that include general career-readiness instruction related to employment and occupations
- Defining processes that will be implemented with partner agencies (DWS and Rehabilitation) to ensure that integrated education is focused on high-demand industry needs in the local economic area.

**Utah will fund, in accordance with the requirements of title II, subtitle C, Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education services.**

Utah will fund an Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program in accordance with the requirements of title II, subtitle C. Funds for this program will be competed for and distributed by Spring 2017 to qualified adult education ELL providers based on sub-state data supporting the most at-risk populations of ELL persons and the high-demand industry needs within the areas.

Utah will deliver the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program in combination with integrated education and training activities. It will be delivered as an instructional component in partnership with integrated education and training activities reinforcing the content of English literacy and civics classes, which include the history and structure of the U.S. government (i.e., the executive, legislative and judicial branches), the geographical history and current geopolitical structure of the country, the roles and responsibilities of the president, responsibilities of the White House, the U.S. legal and education systems, and how these roles and rights are carried out in the workplace and the community. These curriculum components are designed to guide students in becoming knowledgeable citizens and active community members.

English literacy and civics classes introduce students to civics-related content by providing them with opportunities to apply that knowledge in their daily work lives while building their English language and literacy skills. As English language learners gain confidence as language learners and as citizens with rights and responsibilities associated with success in the workplace and in-demand industries, they will achieve personal and professional growth and successes within the communities. Adult Education programs providing ELL services as appropriate will refer qualified adult education students to DWS and USOR for necessary services. DWS and USOR will reciprocate by referring potential students to Adult Education. Again, the intent of the English literacy and civics program will be not only to teach English to non-native speakers, assisting them in understanding civic rights and responsibilities, but also to work with partner agencies to place the learners in employment settings leading to self-sufficiency.

**State Leadership**

The Utah State Office of Education (USBE) will utilize 12.5 percent of the AEFLA allocation for state leadership activities to:

- Investigate positive practices for improving teacher quality and retention
- Develop content and models for integrated education and training career pathways
- Work with programs and partners to integrate literacy and English language instruction with occupational skill training, including promoting linkages with employers

By aligning Adult Education and literacy activities with core programs, the USBE Adult Education Services will implement the strategy in WIOA Section 102, including developing career pathways to provide access to employment and training services for individuals in adult education and literacy activities. Activities that support this alignment include:

- State and local area trainings with partner agencies where staff have the opportunity to interact and set the framework for partnerships, discussions and action in meeting the education and employment needs of customers.
- Funded programs defining how they are including College and Career Readiness Standards in career classes that are in line with local high-demand jobs as defined by economic data

- Monitoring programs for alignment of Adult Education secondary graduation standards with the Utah Core Standards in the areas of math, English and OCTAE College and Career Readiness (CCR) Standards
- Provide Adult Education program staff with trainings on components of <https://jobs.utah.gov> and <https://www.UtahFutures.org> with an emphasis on:
  - o Career pathways, including but not limited to an understanding of occupational outlook, education requirements and wages in Utah
  - o Post-secondary and technical training opportunities supporting in-demand occupations

The USBE - Adult Education Services will develop high-quality professional development opportunities to improve the instruction provided pursuant to local activities required under Section 231 (b). This will include essential sections of reading instruction as such components relate to adults and instruction relates to the specific needs of adult learners. Instruction may be provided by volunteers or by paid staff and will include disseminating information about models and promising practices related to such programs. Program-specific professional development examples:

- The USBE - Adult Education Services continues to increase training opportunities with four emphases: ELL, reading, math and career pathways with career-infused curricula
- Programs are required to set aside a percentage of their budgets (state and AEFLA) to pay for staff attendance at trainings. Volunteers are always welcomed and encouraged to participate in trainings
- As a state staff we will:
  - o Seek input from the programs as to their needs o Continue to utilize LINCS and other literacy entities as a providers for training
  - o Utilize local program staff as trainers o Host or cohost a summer institute focused on the adult teacher and learner
- Disseminate information about models and promising practices
  - o Utah will continue offering Adult Education training utilizing both national and state trainers
  - o Programs releasing staff for training will define what their expectations are as a result of training and how they will implement and maintain the training learned
  - o Training delivery options utilized include web meetings, self-paced online training, and in-person training
- Other professional development
  - o MIS (UTopia) training with partner agencies (DWS, USOR and the Department of Corrections) to assure understanding and live access to student-level data for common clients
  - o Continue developing UTopia-based reports that meet the needs of providers and partner agencies
  - o Ongoing data training and program monitoring with program directors, analyzing data, outcomes and implications for changes in academic programming at the local level with an emphasis of meeting state and federal targets o BEST Literacy and BEST Plus training for new staff as needed
  - o BEST Plus recalibration training o TABE assessment training (when the new TABE is released)

(NOTE: assessments and assessment trainings will be changed as OCTAE releases new assessments and assessment standards in support of WIOA.)

Continue training with partners to ensure that mentor/counselor approaches to understanding available resources and referral and access processes are utilized, encouraging core partner common clients to access post-secondary and career training programs and to gain a better understanding of other resources that are available for qualified adults.

Eligible providers of adult education and literacy activities receiving funding under title (3)(i) have a provision for technical assistance. This involves developing and disseminating instructional and programmatic practices based on the most rigorous or scientifically valid research available and appropriate in reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, English language acquisition programs, distance education and staff training. Programs will be required to submit a professional

development plan defining program focus, implementation, adult-learner curriculum selection processes (with an emphasis on CCR) and scheduled training. The plan will also include:

- CCR standards implementation
- Adult Education-specific focused reading and math curricula to be used and the training to support those selections
- ELL curricula based on CCR standards
- A written distance-learning (DL) plan if they are offering DL as an instructional delivery method

Programs will define their professional development needs and assure their commitment to send staff to state-announced trainings. The state will provide ongoing training related to WIOA-defined activities that are new or in need of improvement.

The role of eligible providers as one-stop partners is to provide access to employment, education and training services. Each Adult Education program will define its role with its partners and how they will meet on an ongoing basis and discuss common topics. Topics include, but are not limited to, services provided, access to services, employment trends and employment opportunities available for the common client. This can be accomplished through attending quarterly area advisory partnership meetings with representatives from core and required partners. At the meeting, members will share information about existing employment partnerships and emerging employment opportunities within the local economic areas. Members may also present information such as workforce development strategies that will be developed during a program year and how employment opportunities will be extended to adult education students.

Eligible providers will receive assistance in using technology, including for staff training and especially for improving system efficiencies.

- Program directors will utilize electronic desk monitoring tools and reports to improve program performance and state outcomes.
- Programs will define what classroom and DL software are being used in both delivery options. Student outcomes will be evaluated by USBE based on data in UTopia.
- Programs will define weaknesses and areas where state support is needed to advance their programming options to increase both efficiency and student outcomes.
- Programs will monitor and evaluate the quality of, and the improvement in, adult education and literacy activities as well as the dissemination of information about models and proven or promising practices within the state.

### **Assessing Quality--Compliance and Quality of Data**

- Programs will follow the USBE-Adult Education Assessment Policy, online at <http://www.schools.utah.gov/adulted/DOCS/Directors/Policy/TabA.aspx>, to determine the student's Education Functioning Level (EFL) and subsequent Student Education Occupation Plan (SEOP), based on level of instruction and personal education and career goals. State targets will be monitored along with academic outcomes (education-gained advancement and high-school completion) through monthly data monitoring with program directors to ensure the entry of quality and timely data into UTopia.
- State specialists will utilize state reports to ensure compliance of quality Adult Education services and data. Examples include monitoring appropriate testing and testing standards, or monitoring intensity and duration of programs and impact on outcomes.
- Programs will define what programmatic changes they will make to improve their program outcomes.
- Corrective action will be taken with programs as needed to ensure their compliance with USBE's expectations, with Adult Education Services leading toward defined outcomes.

New Language: Programs will follow the USBE-Adult Education Assessment Policy, online at <http://www.schools.utah.gov/adulted/DOCS/Directors/Policy/TabA.aspx>, to determine the student's Education Functioning Level (EFL) and subsequent Student Education Occupation Plan (SEOP), based on level of instruction and personal education and career goals. State targets will be

monitored along with academic outcomes (education-gained advancement and high-school completion) through monthly data monitoring with program directors to ensure the entry of quality and timely data into UTopia. • State specialists will utilize state policy, reports, compliance monitoring as well as monthly desk monitoring to ensure compliance of quality Adult Education services and data. Examples include monitoring appropriate testing and testing standards, or monitoring intensity and duration of programs and impact on outcomes. • Programs will define what programmatic changes they will make to improve their program outcomes. • Corrective action will be taken with programs as needed to ensure their compliance with USOE's expectations, with Adult Education Services leading toward defined outcomes. In addition to the above Utah will use State Leadership funds as needed to cross train adult education staffs to better align services between partners including common referral processes and intake processes. Utah supports statewide professional development. A directors' leadership steering team meets as needed to assist the USBE in identifying PD needs. Funded programs also have an annual opportunity to identify specific needs that are taken into consideration by USBE. Decisions are based on data as well as WIOA rules in identifying and setting PD priorities. State leadership funds will be used to focus on a variety of areas including CCR implementation, establishing bridge programs, evidenced based ELL practices, effective program management, integrated education and training as well as transition to post-secondary opportunities. The USBE will deliver technical assistance to enhance program effectiveness through program desk monitoring, program visits and the development and delivery of data reports designed to assist program directors and staffs to improve student outcomes. PD and technical assistance delivery options include: in person, web, and online ensuring that all providers are afforded information needed to develop, maintain and improve services for the adult learner. The USBE with involvement of the state directors' leadership team, will develop and disseminate teacher academy standards, initiate pilot curricula options for English language learners focused on career development and infusing CCR standards in curriculum. Utah assesses the quality of professional development in a variety of ways. The state utilizes input from programs contained in end-of year reports, desk monitoring conversations, direct program data as well as program reviews to prioritize gaps that necessitate additional professional development. In addition to the direction and input from the directors' leadership steering team the needs assessments drive the creation of an annual training plan. Participants of all workshops, conferences, presentations and web meetings will be surveyed to evaluate and provide feedback on the quality and content of the professional development event. This feedback will be used to improve future PD opportunities.

## **Program-Specific Requirements for Vocational Rehabilitation**

### **Input of State Rehabilitation Council**

**Input provided by the State Rehabilitation Council, including input and recommendations on the VR services portion of the Unified State Plan, recommendations from the Council's report, the review and analysis of consumer satisfaction, and other Council reports that may have been developed as part of the Council's functions;**

USOR maintains a State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) that meets the criteria set forth in Section 105 of the Rehabilitation Act, 34 CFR 361.17. The designated state unit jointly with the SRC develops, agrees to and reviews annually state goals and priorities and jointly submits to the commissioner annual reports of progress in accordance with the provisions of Section 101(a)(15) of the Rehabilitation Act, 34 CFR 361.29 and the Unified State Plan.

The SRC meets 10 times per year. USOR regularly consults with the State Rehabilitation Council regarding the development, implementation and revision of state policies and procedures of general applicability pertaining to the provision of vocational rehabilitation services. USOR includes in the State Plan and in any revision to the State Plan a summary of input provided by the State Rehabilitation Council, including recommendations from the annual report of the council described in Section 105(c)(5) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.17(h)(5) the review and analysis of

consumer satisfaction described in Section 105(c)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.17(h)(4), and other reports prepared by the council and the response of the designated state unit to the input and recommendations, including explanations for rejecting any input or recommendation; and transmits to the council:

- All plans, reports and other information required under 34 CFR 361 to be submitted to the commissioner
- All policies and information on all practices and procedures of general applicability provided to or used by rehabilitation personnel in carrying out this State Plan and its supplement
- Copies of due process hearing decisions issued under 34 CFR 361.57, which are transmitted in such a manner as to ensure that the identity of the participants in the hearings is kept confidential
- In November 2015 the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation provided an overview of the Unified State Plan and submitted the proposed final Goals and Priorities for the Vocational Rehabilitation and Supported Employment Program to the State Rehabilitation Council for review, discussion and input. The Council (SRC) approved the goals and priorities as presented.
- On June 29, 2016 the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation submitted the proposed amendment to the VR Section of the Unified State Plan to the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC). The amendment defined the change of the Designated State Agency (DSA) from the Utah State Board of Education to the Department of Workforce Services, effective October 1, 2016. The proposed amendment was unanimously approved by the Council (SRC).

**The Designated State unit's response to the Council's input and recommendations; and**

In addition to the review, analysis, and recommendations covered above, the SRC made recommendations covered in the VR portion of the Unified State Plan, and as required by section 101 (a) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1983, as amended by the WIOA. The following is a summary of the SRC's recommendations made from November 2015-October 2017 and the USOR's response and actions taken with regard to these recommendations:

**SRC RECOMMENDATION 1:** In October 2015, USOR Director Darin Brush discussed with the Council a second phase of an ongoing legislative audit concerning case expenditures in the VR program. That report would be released before the 2016 Legislative Session. The Council requested access to that audit report and other recent audit reports and findings.

**USOR RESPONSE 1:** Council members were provided copies of this and other audits as requested. The audits were also provided in accessible formats, including Braille, for their review. The input of the SRC was an important advisory responsibility of the Council, and members were invested in providing direction and/or guidance throughout the Legislative Session.

**SRC RECOMMENDATION 2:** Division of Rehabilitation Services Director Aaron Thompson presented to the Council on the Comprehensive Needs Assessment Plan and the addition of fourth-year statewide goals and objectives. The Council requested that the Comprehensive Needs Assessment Plan and fourth-year goals be provided electronically to members for review as soon as possible to discuss in the November 2015 meeting.

**USOR RESPONSE 2:** The USOR provided the requested information electronically and in accessible formats for Council members to review. The Council's discussion and comments were recorded in the minutes and approval was given by a majority vote to approve the Comprehensive Needs Assessment Plan and objectives as presented.

**SRC RECOMMENDATION 3:** In February 2016 the Council discussed a request to review the consumer satisfaction survey results. The summer response rates were lower than previous quarters, and there have been concerns over the costs associated with mailing, especially with the addition of a pen for survey respondents. There were concerns over whether this practice was cost prohibitive and should be discontinued. Council members asked for a breakout of the results and future discussion of their concerns.

USOR RESPONSE 3: Ongoing discussions between USOR and the Council addressed the issue and possible resolution for upcoming quarterly surveys.

SRC RECOMMENDATION 4: Following the release of the second legislative audit in May 2016, Council members discussed audit findings and case service expenditures, including duration of and cost of services. The audit showed that documentation could be stronger in justifying case expenditures and that the PELL Grant and other comparable services and benefits were not documented appropriately. The AWARE system was discussed as a means to assist with these audit issues. The SRC asked for the final audit results report as well as the legislative auditor's report at the June 2016 meeting.

USOR Response 4: The legislative auditors who completed the report presented (as requested) to the Council at the June 2016 meeting. Council members were provided with the audit findings report and had their questions answered by the auditors and USOR administration.

SRC RECOMMENDATION 5: At the May 2016 meeting the Council discussed recruitment of members and the available Council positions that need to be filled. Council member Helen Post provided a historical documents on how the nomination committee operates and recommended an addition to the by-laws of this process. USOR Staff Liaison Gordon Swensen was asked to send recruitment letters to VR offices and independent living centers for possible member recommendations to the Council.

USOR Response 5: The recruitment letters were sent electronically to the VR offices and independent living centers as requested. The submitted nominations were compiled for the Nomination Committee to continue with the interviews, selection and SRC approval process.

SRC RECOMMENDATION 6: Following a two-month strategic planning process, the SRC recommended that the minutes of meetings be shortened and summarized for easier reading, as well as roster changes being reflected in an improved format for the Council.

USOR RESPONSE 6: Liaison staff assigned to the Council made the suggested changes and the improved documents were reviewed and approved at the next Council meeting.

SRC RECOMMENDATION 7: Following a review of the VR agency Dashboard report (current data tracking, performance outcomes by district and statewide, etc.) by Assistant Director Aaron Thompson in November 2016, the Council requested that a Dashboard report be provided on a monthly basis to update the Council on current case management and performance processes.

USOR RESPONSE 7: Monthly reports have continued by Assistant Director Aaron Thompson and are distributed in advance of the meetings by the agency liaison secretary Sylvia Gines.

SRC RECOMMENDATION 8: Council members requested training and update reports from several VR programs and services throughout the year. They included presentations described in the 2016-17 Year-in-Review section of the annual report.

USOR RESPONSE 8: The USOR provided a timely response for presentations requested by the SRC and provided relevant PowerPoint presentations and other materials before the scheduled SRC meetings for review by Council members. Questions and concerns about VR programs and services were addressed in person by program specialists and assigned staff with subject matter expertise.

SRC RECOMMENDATION 9: Because of new processes for the nomination for Council membership and the approval of recommended members by the Executive Director of the Department of Workforce Services (DWS), the SRC requested that Administration develop a process for such approvals.

**USOR RESPONSE 9:** Administrative liaison staff members put together the requested process and documents (including the recommendations of Council members and related information) to facilitate the approval process at the Executive Director level.

**SRC RECOMMENDATION 10:** At the June 2017 meeting, Council members requested that USOR administrative liaison Gordon Swensen send an email statewide to VR district staff members to request nominations for the SRC. Gordon was also asked to work with the DWS Communications division on getting the Nomination Application on the SRC website and to email all Council members to assess confidentially whether they have a disability (per the federal mandate of 51 percent required membership on the SRC to be individuals with disabilities).

**USOR RESPONSE 10:** The email to VR districts and staff was completed following the meeting (as requested) and the Nomination Application has been added to the SRC page of the DWS website. A separate email requesting confidential disability information (a "yes" or "no" statement only) was sent to Council members who all responded.

### **Cooperative Agreements with Agencies Not Carrying Out Activities Under the Statewide Workforce Development System.**

Describe interagency cooperation with and utilization of the services and facilities of agencies and programs that are not carrying out activities through the statewide workforce development system with respect to:

#### **Federal, State, and local agencies and programs;**

USOR has developed and maintains cooperative agreements where necessary with federal and state agencies not carrying out activities through the statewide workforce investment system. USOR maintains cooperative agreements with DWS, USOE, Utah Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Utah Department of Community and Culture (UDCC), and GOED. As required by Utah State legislation USOR has developed a MOU and coordinated plan with DWS and DSPD (Utah's DD agency) to carry out services related to employment for persons with significant disabilities. Additional agreements exist relevant to the "Employment First" initiatives in Utah. USOR also maintains cooperative agreements with all local public education school districts, the Veterans Administration (VA), local mental health organizations, and other entities involved in workforce development services including shared projects with the Department of Health. In addition, USOR participates in the statewide workforce development system through participation on the State Workforce Development Board

#### **State programs carried out under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998;**

USOR has a collaborative relationship with the Utah Assistive Technology Program (UATP), which is a state program carried out under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998. UATP provides assistive technology devices and services to Utahns with disabilities, in addition to providing training to individuals with disabilities, families and professional service providers. Through USOR's Utah Center for Assistive Technology (UCAT) office, UATP operates its Citizens Reutilizing Assistive Technology Equipment (CReATE) Program which provides refurbished mobility devices and equipment to low-income individuals with disabilities. In addition, specific to the provision of assistive technology services, USTC serves as a statewide resource for information and technical services for people with disabilities for assistance with acquiring and using assistive technology devices. Another assistive technology resource within UCAT is the Utah Assistive Technology Team which provides assistance to adults and youths with disabilities by providing introductory training and supports on computer technology that can enhance education and employment. This includes free consultations, workshops, and information and referral services and augmentative communication device loaner-programs for students with disabilities in public schools.

#### **Programs carried out by the Under Secretary for Rural Development of the United States Department of Agriculture;**

USOR maintains a cooperative agreement with “AgrAbility”, a program carried out under the authority of the Undersecretary for Rural Development of the United States Department of Agriculture which includes a fee for service arrangement.

#### **Noneducational agencies serving out-of-school youth; and**

USOR has several cooperative agreements and collaborates with agencies that serve out-of-school youth. These partners include The Division of Services for People with Disabilities, the Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health, Community Rehabilitation Programs, the Division of Juvenile Justice and local mental health agencies. Statewide, USOR has assigned liaisons who facilitate interagency referrals, outreach and information and coordination of services to meet the needs of out-of-school youth

#### **State use contracting programs.**

The State Use Program serves to create employment opportunities and to enhance independence of people with disabilities by having departments of state government purchase commodities and services from qualified community rehabilitation programs (CRPs). Utah State law sets aside funding for contracts to be awarded to CRPs. The USOR Executive Director serves as a member of the “Purchasing from People with Disabilities Advisory Board,” which implements the State Use Program.

### **Coordination with Education Officials**

#### **DSU's plans**

The designated State unit's plans, policies, and procedures for coordination with education officials to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from school to the receipt of VR services, including pre-employment transition services, as well as procedures for the timely development and approval of individualized plans for employment for the students.

USOR has long established plans, policies, and procedures for coordination between USOR and education officials responsible for the public education of students with disabilities that are designed to facilitate the transition of the students who are individuals with disabilities from the receipt of educational services in school to the receipt of vocational rehabilitation services under the responsibility of the USOR

#### **Information on the formal interagency agreement with the State educational agency with respect to:**

##### **Consultation and technical assistance to assist educational agencies in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities, including VR services;**

USOR maintains cooperative agreements with the local school districts and public charter schools who serve secondary education students. The cooperative agreements include provisions for consultation, technical assistance, professional development, VR referrals and eligibility, and individualized goals of the local teams. USOR has assigned Transition Counselors to each local school district and charter school. The counselors meet with special educators and administrators, provide outreach to students and parents, provide VR Welcome Sessions to students, provide Job Readiness Workshops to students, attend IEP meetings, as well as cover all referrals and questions from that school.

The cooperative agreement with the USOE Department of Education program was modified in January of 2013 to provide guidance and clarify expectations on both sides. The agreement defines terms and financial responsibilities. The cooperative agreement provides for consultation and technical assistance to assist USOE and local districts in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post school activities, including vocational rehabilitation services.

##### **Transition planning by personnel of the designated State agency and educational agency that facilitates the development and implementation of their individualized education programs;**

The cooperative agreement provides for joint transition planning coordination by USOR and USOE for students with disabilities that facilitates the development and completion of their individualized education programs (IEPs) under Section 614(d) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and specifies the roles and responsibilities of each agency. It includes provisions for determining state lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services and describes procedures developed for outreach to students with disabilities during the transition planning process and identification of students with disabilities who need transition services. A representative of USOE Special Education sits on the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), and a representative from USOR sits on the Utah Special Education Advisory Panel (USEAP) providing consultation and assistance.

**Roles and responsibilities, including financial responsibilities, of each agency, including provisions for determining State lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services;**

The cooperative agreement with the USOE Department of Education program was modified in January of 2013 to provide guidance and clarify expectations on both sides. The agreement defines terms and financial responsibilities.

**Procedures for outreach to and identification of students with disabilities who need transition services.**

USOR collaborates with school personnel to identify students who may have a disability and need transition services. This includes special education teachers, administrators, 504 coordinators, school counselors, school nurses, community non-profit organizations, the Utah Parent Center and a variety of other entities to provide outreach and identification of students in need of VR transition services. USOR is represented on local school district transition councils, the statewide transition council, and the UtahFutures Advisory Committee which bridges collaborative efforts between the USOE, DWS, USOR, GOED, and Higher Education. In addition, USOR has a Transition Coordinator who has responsibility for improving the quality and consistency of transition services from USOR counselors to students and improving collaboration and coordination

**Cooperative Agreements with Private Nonprofit Organizations**

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.8(b)(3)). Describe the manner in which the designated State agency establishes cooperative agreements with private non-profit VR service providers.

USOR has the authority to enter into contracts with for-profit organizations for the purpose of providing Vocational Rehabilitation services and OJT and related programs for individuals with disabilities under Part A of Title VI of the Rehabilitation Act. USOR determines whether for-profit organizations are better qualified to provide vocational rehabilitation services than nonprofit organizations. USOR has established fee-for-service agreements with private, non-profit entities providing vocational rehabilitation services throughout Utah in accordance with the Unified State Plan. USOR maintains vendor relationships with other agencies providing Job Preparation and Placement (JPP), Supported Job Based Training (SJBT) and Support Employment (SE) service that include a fee-for-service agreement and participation in job coach training activities. USOR continues to identify and make arrangements, where appropriate, to expand the availability of Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRP) offering supported employment and extended services for individuals with the most significant disabilities, in accordance with the requirements of the state plan.

**Arrangements and Cooperative Agreements for the Provision of Supported Employment Services**

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.8(b)(4)). Describe the designated State agency's efforts to identify and make arrangements, including entering into cooperative agreements, with other State agencies and other appropriate entities in order to provide supported employment services and extended employment services, as applicable, to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities.

USOR has established a policy chapter based on the provision of Supported Employment Services. The policy is a hybrid of milestone outcome payments and hourly rates to meet the needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities. This policy chapter defines extended support agencies who qualify to provide supported employment supports as a partner with VR. These agencies include Division of Services for People with Disabilities (DSPD), Division of Services for Substance Abuse and Mental Health (DSAMH) as well as local mental health agencies, employers, private organizations, natural supports and incentives offered through Social Security or Medicaid. USOR continues to identify and partner with other supported employment entities to provide clients with informed choices, options, and qualified service providers to meet their unique needs. These efforts are coordinated by the USOR Supported Employment Coordinator. USOR has cooperative agreements with local school districts, community rehabilitation programs, and DSPD to provide Supported Employment services to individuals with the Most Significant Disabilities, including youth. Additional cooperative agreements that will extend supports for disadvantaged populations such as mental health and youth are being developed. USOR is a partner in Employment First legislation which makes employment the first and preferred option for individuals with disabilities. USOR partners with DSPD to ensure that supports are in place for individuals with intellectual disabilities, youth in post high programs, and all individuals who are MSD and need customized and/or supported employment supports. USOR and DSPD collaborate to provide supported employment services to individuals on the DSPD wait list through the provision of long term funding from the Utah State Legislature.

### **Coordination with Employers**

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.8(b)(5)). Describe how the designated State unit will work with employers to identify competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities in order to facilitate the provision of:

#### **VR services; and**

USOR has initiatives to partner with employers to identify competitive, integrated employment and career exploration opportunities that facilitate the provision of VR and Transition Services. These initiatives are primarily carried out through the USOR Business Relations and Choose to Work (CTW) Programs. The Business Relations Team was established in 2005 to strengthen the connection between employers and individuals with disabilities through a combination of outreach efforts, disability awareness training, consultation services, job fairs and workshops, business networking activities and job posting networks. The Business Relations Team:

Assists with the recruitment and referral of qualified individuals with disabilities to meet workforce demands. Through a partnership with DWS, a customized option to recruit qualified applicants with disabilities was created for job vacancies by using the key word: PWDNET. Employers are able to utilize this keyword on UWORKS allowing keyword searches by job seekers, advocates, and Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors. Employers can also send emails to "pwdnetjobs@utah.gov" with a complete job description and the job opening. These job posting are shared statewide with Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor and Employment Specialists.

Utilizes the Talent Acquisition Portal (TAP), <https://tapability.org/>, which is led by the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) and The National Employment Team (NET) in partnership with disABLEDperson, Inc. TAP includes both a national talent pool of VR clients looking for employment and a job posting system for employers looking to hire individuals with disabilities. Conduct semi-annual Employer Workshops on Hiring and Retaining Individuals with Disabilities and Career Preparation and Job Fairs. The Workshop offers Business Partners an opportunity to learn more about disability, accommodations and other disability and employment issues. The Job Fair is a targeted fair for individuals with disabilities in which PWDNET (People With Disabilities Network) business partners participate. These events provide opportunities for business to connect with job-

ready individuals with disabilities, and individuals with disabilities to explore careers. The job fairs and workshops also offer opportunities for internships and mentor experiences.

Connects with the National Employment Team (The NET) and the People with Disabilities Network (PWDNET), which provides supports and services to promote hiring people with disabilities. The Business Relations team is the primary points of contact (POC) for employers, directing them to the correct agency or organization for the appropriate services.

Provides training, workshops and consultation to business on disability awareness, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), reasonable accommodations, employment laws and other topics relating to disabilities and assistive technology.

Provides information to business on tax credits and deductions available for hiring and accommodating individuals with disabilities.

Provides training to Federal Contractors and subcontracts to improve employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities as defined by Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act. Trainings focus on disability awareness, ADA Accommodations, recruitment strategies, hiring practices, retention programs, consulting, technical assistance and support, tax credits and other incentives. The Business Relations Team, in coordination with the GCEPD and PWDNET, also focus on expanding collaboration with Federal Contracts to increase opportunities for internships, on-the-job trainings, apprenticeships and other employment and career exploration opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

Collaborating in an initiative led by the GCEPD to establish a Utah Business Leadership Network. Utah previously had a business to business mentoring model, Utah Business Employment Team (UBET), which was established in 2000. The Utah affiliate of the USBLN should be up and functioning by 2017.

#### The Choose to Work (CTW) Program:

USOR's other primary initiative for working with employers to identify competitive integrated employment opportunities and career exploration for individuals with disabilities is CTW. This is a partnership between the USOR and DWS that is designed to ensure all individuals with disabilities have equal access to workforce investment activities available to assist them in preparing for and obtaining employment through coordinated service delivery.

The core services of the CTW program are job development and job placement. Job development includes interfacing with employers for the purpose of marketing a specific job seeker to the employer, or to inform and educate the employer regarding hiring individuals from a talented pool of job seekers with disabilities. Job placement is focused on service delivery to assist a specific individual in locating job openings, preparing for the application process, and following through with the application for employment.

CTW specialists coordinate with the Business Relations Team to organize and engage in employer workshops to increase awareness regarding the hiring and job retention of individuals with disabilities. The Specialists are active participants in local area Chambers of Commerce and sit on local and community boards in order to facilitate the provision of Vocational Rehabilitation services leading to an employment outcome. CTW Specialists are actively engaged with the DWS Workforce Development Specialists as well as USOR Business Relations Team and affiliates to identify integrated employment opportunities for job seekers with disabilities.

The goals of the CTW Program are to achieve a positive enrollment outcome; the target is that 60% of Choose to Work participants should achieve job placement commensurate with their skills,

abilities, talents and barriers to employment in support of the Individualized Plan for Employment. Choose to Work Specialists develop a strategy to achieve job placement with input and collaboration from Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors.

A key elements of the Choose to Work Program is that CTW Specialists are co-located in both USOR and DWS offices. CTW Specialists adhere to the same policy standards and processes regardless of their agency affiliation. In addition, coordinated agency cross training enhances effectiveness and results in improved job placement outcomes.

**Transition services, including pre-employment transition services, for students and youth with disabilities.**

USOR utilizes the Business Relations and CTW Programs to coordinate with employers in support of transition services, including pre-employment transition services, for students and youth with disabilities. Staff meet with employers to identify and/or develop internships, on-the-job trainings, mentoring experiences and temporary work experiences for students and youth with disabilities. Students and youth with disabilities are invited to participate in career preparation workshops and job fairs. The Business Relations Teams work with Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors to provide school transition specialists and teachers with preparation packets. The material provides information on how to dress for success, interviewing, resume building, and appropriate behavior when meeting with business partners. Students can attend workshops on topics such as, "Working in Government Professions, State and Federal Hiring Initiatives," "Employer Panel," "How to Dress on a Dime and Interview Success," and "Social Security and Working." The job fairs provide students an opportunity to meet with hiring specialists to discuss employment opportunities.

The Business Relations Team works closely with the Governor's Committee for Employment of People with Disabilities to conduct Disability Mentoring Day Events for students. These events are held at a hosting business and students from local high schools are invited to attend with their teachers, advocates or parents. The hosting business offers information on their company and topics of concern to the youth. The students have an opportunity to tour the company to see the types of job opportunities available in the business.

USOR Transition Services provides a variety of services to assist transition aged youth in obtaining paid work experiences. Through the provision of Work Based Training, Summer Work Experiences, Supported Job Based Training/Supported Employment, and other Community Rehabilitation Program services, VR coordinates with employers on an individualized basis to meet both the client's and employer's needs.

The Utah Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities promotes public and private efforts to achieve equal employment opportunities for all qualified Utahans with disabilities. The Governor's Committee members include: business and industry, individuals with disabilities, state agencies, job training and placement, labor, veterans, medical professionals, health professionals, insurance, media, education and general public.

The Governor's Committee is responsible for the implementation and coordination of Disability Mentoring Day events for transition age students. These events are held at a hosting business and students from local high schools are invited to attend with their teachers, advocates or parents

**Interagency Cooperation**

Describe how the designated State unit will collaborate with the State agency responsible for administering each of the following programs to develop opportunities for competitive integrated employment, to the greatest extent practicable:

**The State Medicaid plan under title XIX of the Social Security Act;**

USOR, The Department of Health's Division of Healthcare Financing (Medicaid), and USOE will develop and maintain a cooperative working agreement to coordinate efforts to provide information and referral resources to Utahns with disabilities interested in entering or re-entering the workforce. The three aforementioned agencies will negotiate and allocate resources as necessary to support a comprehensive system of work support resources that will increase employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities in Utah.

**The State agency responsible for providing services for individuals with developmental disabilities; and**

USOR maintains a long standing cooperative agreement with the Division of Services for People with Disabilities (DSPD), which is the state agency responsible for providing services for individuals with developmental disabilities. USOR and DSPD collaborate to provide supported employment services to individuals on the DSPD wait list through the provision of long term funding from the Utah State Legislature. These funds are ongoing and available to provide long term services for individuals who have utilized VR supports, are on the DSPD wait list, and need long term supported employment services. USOR is also partnered with DSPD in Employment First legislation, which makes employment the first and preferred option of individuals with disabilities, including those with developmental disabilities.

**The State agency responsible for providing mental health services.**

USOR and the Utah Department of Human Services, Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health (DSAMH) have a longstanding partnership and collaborative relationship. There is currently a formal Partnership Agreement being finalized between the two agencies which will further enhance the communication and cooperation between USOR and DSAMH. This Partnership Agreement's goals are for both agencies to better meet the needs of clients with substance abuse and mental health disabilities and to ensure the successful completion of their vocational goals leading to gainful employment.

**Comprehensive System of Personnel Development; Data System on Personnel and Personnel Development**

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.10)). Describe the designated State agency's procedures and activities to establish and maintain a comprehensive system of personnel development designed to ensure an adequate supply of qualified State rehabilitation professional and paraprofessional personnel for the designated State unit, including the following:

**Data System on Personnel and Personnel Development**

**Qualified Personnel Needs.**

Describe the development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on qualified personnel needs with respect to:

**The number of personnel who are employed by the State agency in the provision of VR services in relation to the number of individuals served, broken down by personnel category;**

USOR has a strong commitment to employing and retaining an adequate workforce of qualified vocational rehabilitation professional and paraprofessional personnel. USOR maintains a data system for personnel needs, resources, and training. The data system is maintained by the USOR Training Coordinator and provides annual analysis of qualified personnel needs and development. USOR also coordinates with the Utah Department of Human Resources Management (DHRM) staff and our internal Financial Analyst to track and monitor information on employees including date of hire, official job classification, job functions, terminations and other information, such as offices and districts assignments.

The data system currently includes:

- 97 Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors
- 25 Counseling Supervisors(CS)

USOR served 16,536 individuals during FFY17 for a counselor/client ratio of 1:135. Also included in the VR Program database are:

- 10 District Directors
- 6 VR Coordinators
- 1 Assistant Division Director
- 1 Assistant Director
- 11 Rehabilitation Technicians
- 54 Office Specialists
- 5 Choose to Work Employment Specialists
- 2 Business Relations Specialists
- 3 Rehabilitation Program Directors

**The number of personnel currently needed by the State agency to provide VR services, broken down by personnel category; and**

At the writing of this plan USOR the number of personal currently needed to provide VR Services include:

- 100 VR Counselors
- 25 counseling supervisors
- 10 District Directors
- 6 VR Coordinators
- 5 Choose to Work Employment Specialists
- 1 Assistant Division Director
- 1 Assistant Director
- 11 Rehabilitation Technicians
- 54 Office Specialists
- 2 Business Relations Specialists
- 3 Rehabilitation Program Directors

USOR has operated under an Order of Selection three years. The counselor-to-client ratio has decreased 34 percent from FFY15 to FFY 18. However, as USOR has opened two categories and is in the process of moving clients off of the third category, an increase in the ratio is anticipated. Hiring additional counseling staff is depend on the continued trend with applicants, the total number of individual services, the ability to maintain a reasonable counselor-to-client ratio and available funding.

**Projections of the number of personnel, broken down by personnel category, who will be needed by the State agency to provide VR services in 5 years based on projections of the number of individuals to be served, including individuals with significant disabilities, the number of personnel expected to retire or leave the field, and other relevant factors.**

Projections of the number of individuals to be served, including those with significant disabilities, are based on projected increases for the general population and incidence rates for disabilities, using Utah census data and state demographics. These projections, in combination with USOR attrition and retirement rates, are used to predict personnel needs for the next five years.

In FFY 2017 USOR's annual turnover rate for Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors was 27.5%, with an overall division turnover rate of 21.7%. The turnover rate is expected to remain stable in

FFY18. USOR estimates 60 Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor vacancies over the next five years. It is estimated that at least 14 of these vacancies will be due to retirement; therefore the majority will be due to counselors leaving the agency and internal promotion into other positions. In addition, based on historical trends, but considering the recent increase in turnover, it is estimated that there might be 15 new Counseling Supervisors and 5 new District Directors over the next five years.

The table below shows the total number of staff positions, the current vacancies and projected vacancies due to retirement and attrition over the next five years:

Job Title	Total Positions	Current Vacancies	Projected Vacancies Over the Next 5 Years
VR Counselor	97	4	60
Counseling Supervisor	25	2	15
District Director	10	1	5
Rehabilitation Techs	11	1	4

#### **Personnel Development**

Describe the development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on personnel development with respect to:

**A list of the institutions of higher education in the State that are preparing VR professionals, by type of program;**

Utah has one Master's Program in the field of Vocational Rehabilitation within the state located at Utah State University. This program prepares MRC degree, CRC eligible VR counselors. The program also contains a very small doctoral program. The USOR Human Resource Developer/Trainer sit on the USU advisory council. The program emphasizes degrees given through distance education and contains mostly individuals already employed by public VR agencies across the country.

**The number of students enrolled at each of those institutions, broken down by type of program; and**

Due to the makeup of students only a small on-campus class, usually 5 or 6 students, are available each year to recruit as new hires for USOR vacancies

**The number of students who graduated during the prior year from each of those institutions with certification or licensure, or with the credentials for certification or licensure, broken down by the personnel category for which they have received, or have the credentials to receive, certification or licensure.**

In the distance program last year 6 students graduated who were employees of USOR at the time of their graduation. An additional 5 USOR employees were students taking limited classes to qualify under certain categories for the CRC (Category R for example.)

Institution	Students Enrolled	Employees sponsored by agency and/or RSA	Graduates sponsored by agency and/or RSA	Graduates from the previous year

Utah State University	42	6	7	17
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### **Plan for Recruitment, Preparation and Retention of Qualified Personnel**

Plan for Recruitment, Preparation and Retention of Qualified Personnel. USOR recruits at colleges and universities in Utah to attract undergraduates and potential graduate students. USOR uses a hiring option that allows individuals who report having a disability to skip the competitive process and be hired on a trial basis which can lead to permanent employment. USOR also builds relationships with out-of-state colleges.

USOR recruits to fill Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor positions throughout the year by participating in university and college career fairs and presenting to students in the Utah State University Rehabilitation Counselor Education (RCE) program. USOR created a recruitment brochure that details the benefits of employment and introduces potential applicants to careers in VR. USOR works with the USOE Human Resources Office to increase the distribution of recruitment announcements nationwide.

USOR staff are active in the state chapter of the National Rehabilitation Association (NRA). USOR leverages its relationship with NRA to recruit qualified professionals and develop the qualifications of agency staff through additional training, support, and career development. For example, USOR supports Utah Rehabilitation Association (URA) conferences and monthly 'brown bag training seminars' that are presented to staff, co-sponsored by the URA. These efforts are designed to recruit, prepare, and retain personnel who are qualified, including individuals from minority backgrounds and/or with disabilities.

USOR offers flexible schedules, an incentive program which gives Administrative Leave for above average performance, generous educational assistance, and a competitive starting salary to promote retention. In addition, staff have received a one-time payment/bonus for obtaining state licensure. The bonus helped offset the costs of the licensure and rewarded those who obtained it. USOR was also able to use discretionary funds given by the legislature for state fiscal year 2015 to increase salaries of those who hold state licensure by .5%. USOR is committed to finding ways to increase the salaries of those who maintain licensure.

### **Personnel Standards**

Describe the State agency's policies and procedures for the establishment and maintenance of personnel standards consistent with section 101(a)(7)(B) and 34 CFR 361.18(c) to ensure that designated State unit professional and paraprofessional personnel are adequately trained and prepared, including:

**Standards that are consistent with any national or State-approved or -recognized certification, licensing, registration, or other comparable requirements that apply to the profession or discipline in which such personnel are providing VR services; and**

USOR has established hiring preferences, policies and procedures for the establishment and maintenance of personnel standards to ensure that USOR professional and paraprofessional personnel are prepared and trained. In January, 2010 the Utah began issuing a new state licensure for Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors. This state licensure necessitated a change in USOR Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) standard to make sure that Utah VR counselors adhere to the highest standard existing in Utah.

USOR has established policy to ensure that professionals providing services are trained and prepared to meet the Utah State Licensing Requirement and provide quality, effective vocational rehabilitation services. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all Rehabilitation Counselors,

Supervising Counselors, and District Directors employed by USOR meet the CSPD standard required in law, federal regulations, and the state plan.

The USOR CSPD standard requires employees meet one of the following criteria:

- Hold a Utah State Licensure in Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling
- Meet the criteria to obtain a Utah State Licensure in Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling which includes holding a Master's degree in Rehabilitation Counseling or related field as outlined in the Utah State licensing regulations, obtaining 4000 hours of supervised experience under a Licensed Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor and having taken and passed the CRC exam (national certification exam) Employees who hold a Master's degree in an approved counseling field will be considered to have met the CSPD if they have completed the required 4000 hours of supervised work under the supervision of an LVRC and have completed and passed the CRC national exam. CSPD status is tracked for counselors, supervising counselors, and district directors. In addition, the CSPD database contains information on various area directors, administrators and program specialists such as Choose to Work staff within DRS that are expected to meet and maintain the CSPD standard.

Counselors hired since January 1, 2010 must write a CSPD plan based on the new standard and have five years from their date-of-hire to complete the requirements. Counselors who do not meet CSPD upon hire and require additional graduate level education are expected to enroll at least one graduate level class and apply for a graduate program during their probationary period (first 12 months of hire).

USOR makes every effort to recruit and hire individuals who meet the USOR's CSPD standard and supports the training of existing employees who do not meet the CSPD standard. USOR offers ongoing educational assistance for those needing additional education to meet the standard. USOR offers a pay increase for counselors who obtain national certification (CRC).

All new counselors receive a notification indicating their current CSPD standing and the requirements they must meet within their first year of hire, and subsequent five years to meet the standard. Supervisors create CSPD plans within 30 days of hire for new employees, they must track the progress of the employee, and include the requirement to meet CSPD in the counselor's performance plan and evaluation.

Each new counselor hired must complete a USOR Qualification of Personnel Standard form. For staff who meet the standard at the time of hire and those who will meet the standard within five years of hire with additional work experience and national certification (those hired with a Master's degrees in an approved counseling field), no additional documentation is required except verification of passing the CRC exam and/or verification of state licensure. For counselors who need additional education to meet the standard, sections will be added to their performance plans under the heading of Professional Development.

The Professional Development section must include a plan describing how the counselor will meet the standard, by obtaining the required Master's degree and National Certification, within five years of the date of hire. These plans are submitted to the USOR Training Coordinator with the USOR Qualification of Personnel Standard form within 30 days of hire. Minimum requirements for the first year of the plan include completing the application process for an approved graduate program and enrollment in at least one class by. Progress sufficient to meet the CSPD plan requirements will be monitored in each subsequent year. If an employee has not satisfactorily completed all activities outlined for the year of review, they will receive an

unsatisfactory rating in the Professional Development section and be placed on corrective action.

A corrective action plan will be written with short-term goals to remediate the lack of progress toward their CSPD plan. The corrective action plan will establish 3 and 6 month reviews. If the corrective action is not successful, disciplinary action will result which may include termination based upon non-compliance with USOR agency policy.

USOR assists with partial funding for graduate level education for those hired without a Master's degree in a counseling field. A graduate degree specific to Rehabilitation Counseling is preferred and considered to be directly related to the job requirements of a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor. The CORE accredited program chosen must be eligible to grant an RSA scholarship to offset the costs of tuition, fees, and books. All employees attending these programs must apply for the RSA scholarship. In the rare instance where an approved graduate program has exhausted available scholarship monies for a given semester, employees will be eligible to request full reimbursement from the USOR.

All requests for USOR educational benefits will be considered contingent upon available funding and employees will be notified of approval prior to enrollment for each semester. All related educational expenses and time required to complete any graduate program will be the responsibility of the employee.

While it is the intention of the USOR to establish and maintain funding necessary to allow all employees to meet the CSPD requirements, exceptional and unforeseen circumstances may arise that prohibit such funding. Should funding become unavailable, the employee will be allowed an adjusted time frame to accomplish the standard when such funding becomes available.

USOR establishes priorities of funding for CSPD requirements as follows:

- Priority One: Employees in a supervisory position and employees hired under the expectation of meeting the standard as indicated in their letter of hire.
- Priority Two: All other employees.

Upon completion of their Master's degree counselors will be promoted to the position of Rehabilitation Counselor II and will receive a 10% increase. Counseling staff who obtain the CRC certification will be refunded 50% of the test fee, and will receive a 5% selective salary increase to offset the costs of maintaining the certification unless they are in longevity. Individuals in longevity who obtain certification will receive a one-time bonus. Counselors must continue to maintain CRC certification or they will lose the salary increase. In addition once a counselor obtains their CRC designation and have completed the required number of hours, they can become an LVRC. If they choose to become licensed, they will receive a \$2000 professional development incentive to help maintain their licensure.

USOR instituted a hiring preference to encourage hiring staff that already meet the CSPD standard:

- Individuals who hold the Utah State Licensure for Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors.
- Individuals who meet the USOR CSPD standard but have not yet obtained state licensure.
- Individuals enrolled in a CORE accredited program to obtain a Master's degree in Rehabilitation Counseling.

- Individuals who hold a Master's degree in an approved counseling field as outlined in the state licensing law.
- Individuals who hold a Bachelor's degree in a related social service field such as counseling, psychology, social work, etc. and who have three or more years of counseling employment experience.
- Individuals who hold a Bachelor's degree in a related social service field with less than three years of counseling experience (are hired as a Rehabilitation Counselor Trainee).

Progress of the USOR staff is collected and monitored through the data system. Staff employed as Rehabilitation Counselors, Supervising Counselors, and District Directors must meet the CSPD standards and are tracked through this system.

**The establishment and maintenance of education and experience requirements, in accordance with section 101(a)(7)(B)(ii) of the Rehabilitation Act, to ensure that the personnel have a 21st century understanding of the evolving labor force and the needs of individuals with disabilities.**

USOR has established policies, procedures, and activities to ensure that all personnel employed by the designated state unit receive appropriate and adequate training in terms of staff development for professionals and paraprofessionals within the designated state unit, particularly with respect to assessment, vocational counseling, job placement, rehabilitation technology; and procedures for the acquisition and dissemination to designated state unit professionals and paraprofessionals significant knowledge from research and other sources.

#### **Staff Development.**

Describe the State agency's policies, procedures, and activities to ensure that, consistent with section 101(a)(7)(C) of the Rehabilitation Act, all personnel employed by the designated State unit receive appropriate and adequate training in terms of:

#### **System of staff development**

a system of staff development for professionals and paraprofessionals within the designated State unit, particularly with respect to assessment, vocational counseling, job placement, and rehabilitation technology, including training implemented in coordination with entities carrying out State programs under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998; and USOR Human Resource Development Program provides for attendance at workshops, conferences, formal course work at institutions of higher education, as well as agency developed and conducted training sessions. Training is offered in many areas with the focus this last year on WIOA related policy updates and revisions. Some training topics and events that USOR participated in include Common Performance Measures, Customized Employment, Self Care and Ethics, Job Placement, DSM 5 training, Comparable Benefits, PELL Grant, WIOA, Brain Injury Conference, Purchasing, Financial Needs Assessment, UATT conference, Career Exploration Counseling, Case Management, and American Job Center Training. USOR provides monthly in-service trainings via high definition video conferencing to offices throughout Utah, as well as by web-streaming training content. USOR has consistently exceeded the required training hours required to maintain national certification and has also provided counselors with the training hours required to maintain state licensure this past year.

#### **Acquisition and dissemination of significant knowledge**

Procedures for the acquisition and dissemination of significant knowledge from research and other sources to designated State unit professionals and paraprofessionals.

USOR established procedures for the acquisition and dissemination to ensure professionals and paraprofessionals receive significant knowledge from research and other sources in order to develop and maintain a 21<sup>st</sup> Century understanding of the evolving workforce and the needs of individuals with disabilities. These procedures include providing training opportunities, encouraging professional memberships in organizations which offer professional journals, as well as having a close

relationship with the Utah State University Rehabilitation Counselor Education program. Additionally USOR has established a cooperative relationship with the National Clearinghouse on Rehabilitation Materials at Utah State University

#### **Personnel to Address Individual Communication Needs**

Describe how the designated State unit has personnel or obtains the services of other individuals who are able to communicate in appropriate modes of communication with or in the native language of applicants or eligible individuals who have limited English speaking ability.

USOR works to ensure the availability of personnel who are able to communicate in the native language of applicants or eligible individuals who have limited English speaking ability or in appropriate modes of communication with applicants or eligible individuals. USOR has established hiring preferences for VR Counselors who have bilingual skills to meet the needs of eligible individuals with limited English speaking abilities. Additionally USOR has established a number of deaf and hard of hearing caseloads statewide that are staffed by professionals fluent in American Sign Language. Applicants are tested prior to selection for these positions and receive a pay increase for these skills. USOR can provide interpretation through staff members, through Interpretype machines, and through outside staff services purchased per state contract.

#### **Coordination of Personnel Development Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act**

As appropriate, describe the procedures and activities to coordinate the designated State unit's comprehensive system of personnel development with personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

USOR has established procedures and activities to coordinate the comprehensive system of personnel development with personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. These include maintaining the cooperative agreement between the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation with the Utah State Office of Special Education for a project of systematic transition for Utah's youth with disabilities. Individual agreements are signed with all school districts in Utah.

#### **Statewide Assessment**

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.11(a)).

##### **1. Provide an assessment of the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities residing within the State, particularly the VR services needs of those:**

###### **A. with the most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment services;**

- (1) USOR, in cooperation with the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), conducts a comprehensive statewide needs assessment of employers, education, CRPs, consumers, advocacy groups, and DWS. The latest assessment was completed in 2013. USOR contracted with the Center for Public Policy and Administration (CPPA), located at the University of Utah, to conduct this assessment and it followed the model of the last assessment. USOR is current in the process of re-engaging with CPPA to complete the new comprehensive statewide needs assessment by December 2016.

The assessment identifies needs and assesses the current VR system's capacity to meet service needs. USOR chose to replicate the design of the assessment done three years prior in part to help measure the impact of activities conducted over those three years. USOR developed goals and strategies to meet identified needs from areas of service capacity gaps and unserved/underserved populations.

USOR developed goals related to other internal assessments and areas for improvement. The needs of individuals with disabilities in Utah identified by the assessment included:

- Need for service vs. availability/capacity gaps

- o Improving self-advocacy skills
- o Obtaining life-skills training such money and time management or getting along with people
- o Finding and paying for a place to live
- Needs related to unserved/underserved populations
- o Increased outreach and service provision individuals with substance-abuse-related disabilities
- o Increased outreach and service provision to transition-aged youth and individuals with developmental disabilities
- o Increased outreach and service provision to ethnic and racial minority groups

Analysis of U.S. Census American Community Survey data shows Utah has a lower percentage (9 percent) than the nation as a whole (12 percent) of people who state they have a disability according to the 2008-2010 American Community Survey. In Utah, the proportion of males and females with disabilities is nearly equal; nationwide, however, there is a slightly smaller proportion of males with disabilities than females (0.95 to 1). According to Census data, the employment rate of individuals with disabilities in Utah (44 percent) is significantly higher than in the U.S. (36 percent).

According to USOR, the agency served 28,537 clients in 2010. This is 12 percent of Utah's disability population, using the American Community Survey definition of disability.

Looking at all USOR clients, 55 percent are male, and 45 percent are female. This is in contrast to Utah's disabled population, which is evenly split with 50 percent male and 50 percent female. A smaller percentage of Utah's population receives SSDI and SSI benefits than nationally. In 2010 approximately 2.8 percent of Utahns received SSDI compared to 4.5 percent nationally, and 1.0 percent received SSI compared to 2.6 percent nationally.

An analysis of vocational rehabilitation caseload data shows how Utah's program compares with six peer states (Colorado, Kansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma and West Virginia). In terms of types of disability, Utah has the highest percentage of psychosocial impairments and the lowest percentages of clients with visual, communicative and other mental impairments when compared with the six peer states. Among the peer states, Utah had the median "successful employment" rate in FY 2010. Sixty-seven percent of all individuals whose cases were closed in FY 2010 after receiving services were employed, which is well above the national average employment rate of 51 percent.

During the same year, Utah had the highest successful employment rate (71 percent) for transition-age clients (16-24 years of age) compared to the peer states. The Utah Vocational Rehabilitation program had the highest successful employment rate for clients with cognitive impairments (69 percent) and mental and emotional disabilities (66 percent) compared to the peer states.

Three groups of service providers were surveyed to assess their perceptions of rehabilitation needs of the individuals they serve: USOR employees (n=123), DWS employees (n=81) and employees of other community agencies serving people with disabilities (n=62). The third group, referred to as All Other Providers, included employees of Veterans Administration Vocational Rehabilitation, Deseret Industries, the Worker's Compensation Fund of Utah and the Division of Services for People with

#### Disabilities.

The providers were asked to identify groups that may be unserved or underserved by the rehabilitation system. The largest number of responses (16 percent of all responses) listed people with mental illness and substance abuse as unserved or underserved groups. Tied for second place were students in transition from high school and individuals with developmental disabilities (9 percent each). Racial and ethnic minorities were listed in fourth place with 8 percent. Individuals who

are homeless tied for fifth place with individuals who are not aware of vocational rehabilitation services at 7 percent.

When the service needs expressed by individuals coded as most significantly disabled were compared with the needs of the remaining consumers, individuals who were coded as most significantly disabled expressed higher frequency of needs in the areas of writing a résumé and preparing for a job interview; receiving job coaching; and needing a wheelchair, scooter or other mobility device. Additionally, consumers coded as most significantly disabled had lower needs for finding and paying for a place to live. The rank order of the needs list was very similar between groups.

**Who are minorities:**

An analysis comparing the responses of consumers who indicated they were from racial and ethnic minorities with responses of non-minority consumers was conducted. The percentages of minority consumers indicating "I need help" are higher than non-minorities in all 31 need areas. The higher need for services was statistically significant for this group in seven areas:

- Understanding how work will impact benefits
- Writing a résumé
- Preparing for a job interview
- Maintaining or repairing a home
- Assessing interests and abilities
- Finding and paying for a place to live
- Getting assistance with car maintenance, repairs or gasoline

Using the administrative data on race and ethnicity from USOR 9-11 data, the researchers divided the responses into two groups, Minority and Non-Minority. In the Minority group were consumers with racial categories of Black, American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander and Other, and the ethnic category of Hispanic or Latino. In the Non-Minority group were consumers with the racial category of White and the ethnic category of Non-Hispanic or Non-Latino.

**Who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program:**

Underserved in the Other group were polygamous communities, injured workers, migrant workers, immigrants, refugees and asylees with language barriers, women in the military, people with higher social economic status who could benefit from unpaid services, individuals in intermediate care facilities with intellectual disabilities, people who are non-verbal, people with autism, people with cerebral palsy, and people who are required to pay due to the financial background check. The Comprehensive Assessment of Needs survey responses (16% percent of all responses) listed people with mental illness and substance abuse as unserved or underserved groups. Tied for second place were students in transition from high school and individuals with developmental disabilities (9% percent each). Racial and ethnic minorities were listed in fourth place with 8% percent. Individuals who are homeless tied for fifth place with individuals who are "not aware of vocational rehabilitation services" at 7% percent. Next, providers ranked people with physical disabilities tied with seniors and elderly at 6% percent. Veterans and people with felony or other criminal records were tied at 4 percent. The next highest group was people with disabilities on the DSPD waiting list at 3 percent. People who are blind or have low vision, people who are deaf and hard of hearing, and people with traumatic brain injuries were tied for 12th place at 2 percent. Individuals or groups that were mentioned only one time were categorized as "Other Unserved."

**Who have been served through other components of the statewide workforce development system; and**  
Individuals served and underserved by VR services who receive services through other components of the statewide workforce development system include veterans, refugees, individuals served by DSPD, injured workers, clients of intermediate care facilities, and those who are required to pay for services due to financial background check.

**Who are youth with disabilities and students with disabilities, including, as appropriate, their need for pre-employment transition services or other transition services.**

Information was gathered through the Utah State Office of Education concerning the number of youth and students with disabilities in the State of Utah. There are approximately 74,000 students ages 3 through 21 who are receiving services under IDEA through an Individualized Education Program (IEP). This number does not reflect the number of students who may have a disability that is classified under a 504 Plan, Individualized Health Plan, or unidentified disability such as mental health or substance abuse. For purposes of the Vocational Rehabilitation Program, there are approximately 20,000 students with a disability ages 14 through 21 who are receiving services under IDEA through an IEP, also not reflecting students with disabilities who do not have an IEP. These numbers only reflect the approximate number of students with a disability who are the age of applying for and receiving services from VR while still under IDEA (ages 14 through 21). This does not reflect the number of students with disabilities who have dropped out, received diplomas, aged out of the school system, or are up to 24 years of age and no longer tied to the school system. The number of students and youth with disabilities across the State of Utah justifies a great need for transition services from Vocational Rehabilitation.

**Identify the need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs within the State; and**

USOR has established a Supported Employment Coordinator position and a fee-for-service structure to compensate entities providing supported employment services throughout Utah. In order to improve services and promote the development of quality Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs), an outcome based payment method model has been established.

USOR has created a CRP oversight committee focused on improving policy and procedure related to CRP services. The CRP committee will develop a manual outlining the functions and expectations for delivery of CRP services. The manual will include an improved process for application and review of CRPs to ensure quality service delivery. USOR also continues to identify and make agreements with core partners as well as search for additional new supported employment service providers. Through a cooperative relationship between USOR and the Division of Services for People with Disabilities (DSPD), supported employment services have been expanded to a targeted population through the provision of long-term funding from the Utah State Legislature. These funds are designated to support individuals who have previously been on a waiting list for DSPD SE funding. The USOR Supported Employment Coordinator will collaborate with CRPs and DSPD to ensure compliance with Employment First Legislation.

**Include an assessment of the needs of individuals with disabilities for transition career services and pre-employment transition services, and the extent to which such services are coordinated with transition services provided under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.**

As this is a new category, it was not included in the needs assessment for this reporting period. This requirement will be included during the next Comprehensive Statewide Needs assessment that will be completed during 2016. However, through agency programmatic assessments, USOR continues to gather information and identify goals and strategies to improve the provision of transition services, including those services provided under IDEA. Specific needs that have been identified include:

- Improving and extending VR services to transition-aged youth and students with disabilities
- Increasing agency resources and time devoted to provide transition services
- Increasing outreach and collaboration with schools
- Increasing the capacity for pre-employment transition service opportunities

**Annual Estimates**

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.11(b)). Describe:

**The number of individuals in the State who are eligible for services;**

During PY 2018, the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation estimates a total of 19,016 individuals will be eligible for services.

**The number of eligible individuals who will receive services under:**

**A. The VR Program;**

In FFY 2015 the USOR Vocational Rehabilitation Program implemented an Order of Selection (OOS) after experiencing a significant increase in the total number of clients served and not having the funding and staff levels needed to meet the service demands. USOR went from serving 20,508 clients in FFY 2007 to 29,679 in FFY 2014, which is a 44.18 percent increase.

The implementation of the Order of Selection had an immediate impact on the applicants and total individuals served. In FFY 2015, USOR served 25,746 total individuals, which is a 14.81 percent decrease from the previous year. New applicants decreased 24.43 percent from 9,655 in FFY 2014 to 7,553 in FFY 2015. New eligible individuals decreased 28.60 percent from 7,856 in FFY 2014 to 5,890 in FFY 2015.

At the start of FFY 2016, USOR began moving eligible clients off of the wait list. From November 2015 to January 2016 more than 1,800 clients in Category 1 (MSD) were removed from the wait list. After Category 1 was fully opened, USOR removed more than 5,900 clients in Category 2 (SD) from the wait list during February 2016 to June 2017. Category 2 was fully opened in late-June 2017, and USOR moved on to partially opening Category 3 (D) and removing 1,240 clients from the wait list.

As two of the three OOS categories are open, USOR's total clients served and new eligible individuals are trending upward. In FFY 2016 USOR served 13,327 clients and determined 4,119 individuals eligible for services. In FFY 2017 USOR served 16,536 clients and determined 4,433 new individuals eligible for services.

USOR estimates it will serve 19,016 clients in Performance Year (PY) 2018. This will include 4,787 new eligible individuals. USOR anticipates this level will be consistent into PY 2019.

**The Supported Employment Program; and**

USOR served 179 individuals through Supported Employment in Performance Year 2017 and estimates it will serve 200 individuals through the Supported Employment Program during Performance Year 2018.

**Each priority category, if under an order of selection;**

As defined in the Order of Selection section of this plan, the priority categories are:

- Category 1: Individuals with Most Significant Disabilities (MSD)
- Category 2: Individuals with Significant Disabilities (SD)
- Category 3: Individuals with Disabilities (D)

**The number of individuals who are eligible for VR services, but are not receiving such services due to an order of selection; and**

In November 2015 of FFY 2016 USOR opened Category 1 (MSD) and started to move eligible clients off of the Order of Selection wait list for services. By February 2016 of FFY 2016, USOR opened Category 2 (SD) and began moving clients off of the wait list until this category was fully opened in June 2017. The following month in July 2017 of FY 2017, USOR partially opened Category 3 (D) and starting moving clients off of the wait list. As of the second quarter of FY 2018, more than 1,200 Category 3 clients have been moved off the wait list. USOR intends to

continue placing eligible individuals classified in Category 3 on the wait list for services until it has the resources to fully open this category. USOR estimates 400 eligible individuals will be placed on the wait list during PY 2018.

**The cost of services for the number of individuals estimated to be eligible for services. If under an order of selection, identify the cost of services for each priority category.**

Priority Category	Number of eligible individuals	Est. Number of Individuals Successfully Employed after receiving services	Est. Number of Individuals Closed Unsuccessfully after receiving services	Time within which goals are to be achieved	Cost of Services
Category 1 (MSD)	6,466	774	620	3 to 5 Years	\$6,088,632.00
Category 2 (SD)	11,029	1,254	1,204	2 to 3 Years	\$8,725,408.00
Category 3 (D)	1,521	177	143	0 to 2 Years	\$986,664.00
Totals	19,016	2,205	1,967	n/a	\$15,800,704.00
	Priority Category	Title I or Title VI	Estimated Funds	Estimated Number to Be Served	Average Cost of Service (per Individual)
Category 1 (MSD)	Title I	\$6,088,632.00	5,566	\$941.00	
Category 2 (SD)	Title I	\$8,725,408.00	11,029	\$791.00	
Category 3 (D)	Title I	\$986,664.00	1,521	\$648.00	
MSD-Supported Employment	Title VI	\$0.00	200		
Totals	n/a	\$15,800,704.00	19,016	\$793.33	

#### **State Goals and Priorities**

The designated State unit must:

**Identify if the goals and priorities were jointly developed**

Identify if the goals and priorities were jointly developed and agreed to by the State VR agency and the State Rehabilitation Council, if the State has a Council, and jointly agreed to any revisions.

Each year, the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) and the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation (USOR) review, define and update vocational rehabilitation program goal and priorities. These goals and priorities are also related to both the most recent Statewide Comprehensive Assessment and other internal evaluations in coordination with the SRC. In keeping with the Utah's WIOA Unified State Plan timeline, the review, establishment and joint agreement of goals and priorities occurred at the November 2015 SRC meeting.

**Identify the goals and priorities in carrying out the VR and Supported Employment programs.**

The USOR and the SRC developed and agreed to the following goals and priorities to be achieved over the four year period of the Unified State Plan:

- Year One (2016-2017)
  - o Goal 1.1: Assist clients with identifying and connecting with community resources for services which support engaging in VR services
  - o Goal 1.2: Revise and improve the service-delivery model for job-placement services provided by Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs)
  - o Goal 1.3: Improve and expand VR services for transition-aged youth and students with disabilities
  - o Goal 1.4: Expand capacity for pre-employment transition service (PETS) opportunities
  - o Goal 1.5: Expand service-delivery options for persons with disabilities who require supported employment services
  - o Goal 1.6: Improve the provision, consistency and quality of statewide VR services for individuals who are blind and visually impaired
- Year Two (2017-2018)
  - o Goal 2.1: Assist clients in developing self-advocacy skills
  - o Goal 2.2: Expand career exploration and evaluation options for clients
  - o Goal 2.3: Assist clients with developing life skills such as interpersonal communication and money and time management
  - o Goal 2.4: Increase collaboration and coordination with partner community agencies whose goals, services and laws align with providing competitive integrated employment and career opportunities for persons with disabilities
- Year Three (2018-2019)
  - o Goal 3.1: Increase the number of ethnic and racial minority populations served
  - o Goal 3.2: Increase job-readiness skills in VR clients as they prepare to enter the workforce
  - o Goal 3.3: Improve coordination between USOR and employers to benefit clients in obtaining competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities
  - o Goal 3.4: Provide improved services to persons with disabilities who are experiencing segregated employment, subminimum wages or sheltered work and day-program supports in order to increase competitive integrated employment
- Year Four (2019-2020)
  - o Goal 4.1: Increase outreach and services to veterans with disabilities
  - o Goal 4.2: Improve outreach and coordination of services to individuals served with substance-abuse-related disabilities
  - o Goal 4.3: Provide improved services to ex-offenders with disabilities to increase employment and independence through increased rehabilitation rates and decreased recidivism

**Ensure that the goals and priorities are based on an analysis of the following areas:**

USOR's goals and priorities were based on an analysis of the most recent comprehensive statewide needs assessments, the state's performance under Section 116 of WIOA and consultation and feedback from the State Rehabilitation Council.

**The most recent comprehensive statewide assessment, including any updates;**

USOR developed the goals and priorities based on the most recent Comprehensive Statewide Assessment, which was completed in 2013, along with other internal evaluations and input from the SRC.

**The State's performance under the performance accountability measures of section 116 of WIOA; and**

The goals and priorities were developed to support the state's performance under Section 116 of WIOA. Specific emphasis was placed on improving opportunities to increase competitive employment outcomes, pre-employment transition services and coordinating services to employers.

**Other available information on the operation and effectiveness of the VR program, including any reports received from the State Rehabilitation Council and finding and recommendations from monitoring activities conducted under section 107.**

USOR regularly provides the SRC with updates and information regarding the operation, performance and effectiveness of the VR Program. This information is presented to provide effectiveness in evaluating the establishment of the state goals and priorities. Prior to submission and incorporation in the Unified State Plan, the goals and priorities outlined above were submitted to the SRC for comment, review and recommendation.

**Order of Selection**

Describe:

**Whether the designated State unit will implement and order of selection. If so, describe:**

**The order to be followed in selecting eligible individuals to be provided VR services**

In accordance with Section 101(a)(5)(A)(ii) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by the 2014 Workforce Innovations and Opportunities Act (WIOA), USOR has designated that individuals with disabilities will receive vocational rehabilitation services in the following order of priority:

- Category 1: Individuals with Most Significant Disabilities (MSD)
- Category 2: Individuals with Significant Disabilities (SD)
- Category 3: Individuals with Disabilities (D)

Definitions:

- Individuals with Most Significant Disabilities: Has a severe physical or mental impairment that seriously limits two or more functional capacities (such as mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction, interpersonal skills, work tolerance or work skills) in terms of an employment outcome; will require multiple (three or more) vocational rehabilitation services; and will receive those services for an extended period of time (at least six months)
- Individuals with Significant Disabilities: Has a severe physical or mental impairment that seriously limits one or more functional capacities (such as mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction, interpersonal skills, work tolerance or work skills) in terms of an employment outcome; will require multiple (three or more) vocational rehabilitation services; and will receive those services for an extended period of time (at least six months).
- Individuals with Disabilities: Has a physical or mental impairment that constitutes or results in a substantial impediment to employment; can benefit in terms of an employment outcome through the provision of vocational rehabilitation services; and will require vocational rehabilitation services to prepare for, enter, engage in or retain gainful employment.

Order of Selection Administrative Process

- When setting up the Order of Selection, USOR will take into consideration all eligible individuals and prioritize them individually.
- The Order of Selection will be implemented statewide with the same priority levels in all areas of the state.

- Prior to implementation, USOR will submit the Order of Selection plan for public review and comment. USOR will also consult with the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) regarding the decision to implement an Order of Selection and solicit input regarding the plan.

#### Order of Selection Implementation Procedures

- When the Executive Director of USOR invokes an Order of Selection to prioritize the provision of VR services, each eligible individual will be classified into one of the three priority categories. If necessary, further prioritization within a category will be done by application date.
- All applicants, including individuals in trial work exploration status (06) and eligible without IPE status (10), shall be notified in writing of the Order of Selection and their subsequent priority classification. Included in the written notification will be their right to appeal the determination of their priority classification and the availability of the Client Assistance Program (CAP).
- Services necessary to determine eligibility, including services in extended evaluation, shall not be impacted by the Order of Selection.
- Individuals who are found to be eligible but whose priority category is closed at the time of eligibility determination shall be placed in Order of Selection Delayed Status (04).
- USOR will ensure eligible clients who are not assigned to an open Order of Selection category will have access to services provided under the Information and Referral System [Section 1010(a)(5)(D) of the Act]. Information and referral services include:
  - o Providing VR information and guidance to assist the individuals to achieve employment
  - o Referring individuals appropriately to other federal and state programs, including the statewide workforce investment programs through the Department of Workforce Services, that are best suited to meet the individuals' specific employment needs

- Individuals in Order of Selection Delayed Status (04) shall be contacted at least once in the first 90 days after being placed in deferred status and periodically monitored as long as they remain in that status if they request follow up. Contact and monitoring lists will be computer generated with minimal efforts required of staff. USOR will also maintain the individual's client records to include documentation on the nature and scope of any information and referral services provided.

#### Order of Selection: Change in Priority Levels

- USOR will open and close priority categories as needed in FFY 2016 and beyond, so long as the order of the categories is maintained and the continuity of services to all individuals selected for its services is assured.
- USOR will use the individual's date of application to rank individuals within a priority category. This equitable and reasonable factor provides a method of selecting individuals from a waiting list when USOR has enough resources to serve some, but not all, individuals in that priority category.

#### **The justification for the order**

In FFY 2015 the USOR Executive Director determined resources were not available to provide vocational rehabilitation services to all eligible individuals through the program year. Consistent with state and federal laws and regulations, the Director established restrictions regarding priority categories for selecting the order in which otherwise eligible individuals will be served.

On February 25, 2015, USOR obtained approval from the Rehabilitation Services Administration to implement an Order of Selection (OOS), which went into effect on February 27, 2015, due to the lack of adequate financial and personnel resources to provide services to all eligible clients.

Factors contributing to this lack of adequate resources include:

- Limited state funds to match available federal VR funds — USOR is not in a position to accept reallocation dollars at levels from preceding years due to issues with state match requirements and legislative intent. In addition, USOR experienced an increase in the number of referrals, applications and clients served. USOR went from serving 20,584 clients in FFY 2007 to 29,679 in FFY 2014, which is a 44.18 percent increase.
- Inadequate staff coverage to meet the needs of clients — Between FFY 2007 and FFY 2014, the client-to-counselor ratio increased from 176:1 to 221:1.

- Increased expenditures — From FFY 2007 to FFY 2014, client expenditures increased approximately 49 percent due to both the increased number of clients served and increases in the cost of services such as diagnostic, medical, restoration and training services.

#### **The service and outcome goals**

USOR estimates it will serve 19,016 individuals in PY 2018 with an expected goal of 2,205 successful employment outcomes.

USOR began an Order of Selection in February 2015, and from that date until November 2015, all new applicants who were found eligible were placed on a waiting list. In November 2015, USOR opened the Category 1 (MSD) and began removing people from the waiting list within that category. By March 2016 USOR started moving people in the Category 2 (SD) off of the wait list. This category was fully opened by June 2017. The following month USOR started moving people in Category 3 (D) off of the wait list. As of January 2018 there are less than 50 people on the Order of Selection wait list. USOR closely monitors the waiting list and the rate of VR program expenditures to determine when we will fully open Category 3.

USOR estimates it will serve 19,016 clients in Performance Year (PY) 2018. This will include 4,787 new eligible individuals. USOR anticipates this level will be consistent into PY 2019.

The table projects FFY 2018 related outcomes and goals for USOR by priority category.

Priority Category	Number of Eligible individuals	Est. Number of Individuals Successfully Employed After Receiving Services	Est. Number of Individuals Closed Unsuccessfully After Receiving Services	Time Within Which Goals are to Be Achieved	Cost of Services
Category 1(MSD)	6466	744	620	3 to 5 years	\$ 6,088,632.00
Category 2(SD)	11029	1,254	11,204	2 to 3 years	\$ 8,725,408.00
Category 3(D)	1521	177	143	0 to 2 years	\$ 986,664.00
Totals	19016	2,205	1,967		\$15,800,740.00

#### **The time within which these goals may be achieved for individuals in each priority category within the order**

Since implementing the Order of Selection in FFY 2015 USOR has fully opened Category 1 (MSD) and Category 2 (SD). In FFY 2017 USOR started the process of moving individuals in

Category 3 (D) off of the wait list. To date more than 8,900 have been released from the wait list. USOR intends to continue placing eligible individuals classified in Category 3 on the wait list for services until it has the resources to fully open this category. USOR estimates 400 eligible individuals will be placed on the wait list during PY 2018.

**How individuals with the most significant disabilities are selected for services before all other individuals with disabilities**

Effective when all required approvals are in place and when management deems necessary, USOR will close all categories and place all eligible individuals not in plan on a waiting list. USOR will also place all subsequent applicants who are determined eligible for VR services on the waiting list. USOR will only provide services to eligible individuals who currently have an IPE and for whom services have been initiated. As resources become available individuals will be taken off of the waiting list in chronological order based on priority category and application date. Individuals with the Most Significant Disabilities (MSD) will be the first category served.

**If the designated State unit has elected to serve eligible individuals, regardless of any established order of selection, who require specific services or equipment to maintain employment**

For PY 2018 and PY 2019, USOR has decided it does not have the resources to service eligible individuals with disabilities outside of the current Order of Selection who have an immediate need for equipment or services to maintain employment. USOR will continue to evaluate its available resources on a regular basis to determine when this option could be implemented.

**Goals and Plans for Distribution of title VI Funds.**

**Specify the State's goals and priorities for funds received under section 603 of the Rehabilitation Act for the provision of supported employment services.**

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation (USOR) has set a goal to serve 200 individuals with Title VI funds through supported employment services during FFY 2017. During FFY 2014, USOR served 208 individuals eligible for supported employment and 180 in FFY 2015. During FFY 2015, 61 individuals eligible for supported employment services were closed as successfully employed in competitive and integrated settings. The implementation of the Order of Selection had an impact on USOR's ability to serve all clients, including those eligible for Supported Employment (SE). As USOR has opened the Priority Category 1: Individuals with the Most Significant Disabilities (MSD), USOR anticipates it will be able to increase the number of individuals receiving Title VI SE funding under Individualized Plan for Employment (IPEs). In addition, Goal 1.2 listed in this Unified Plan is specifically designed to continue to assess and improve the provision of SE and Customized Employment services provided in collaboration with Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs). USOR reserves SE funds for clients who have been determined most significantly disabled and who have secured an extended support agency for long-term SE support. USOR has partnered with the Division of Services for People with Disabilities (DSPD) and the Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health (DSAMH) to provide and transfer funding and supports for mutual clients. Though these are the primary agencies that USOR partners with for SE, there are other individual supports that may qualify as an extended support agency as provided for in USOR policy.

USOR and DSPD, in partnership with the Utah Legislature, have secured ongoing funding for the Support Work Independence (SWI) program. This program provides state-funded supported employment supports for individuals who have accessed the vocational rehabilitation program and are on the waiting list for DSPD long-term supports. When the client is working successfully and is ready to transfer to DSPD for long-term support, state funds kick in for SE while the individual remains on the waiting list for other waiver supports. USOE also partners with DSPD for long-term SE for clients who are receiving waiver services from DSPD. These individuals are provided with long-term SE as well as the other designated living supports needed.

USOR and DSAMH are partnering to provide supported employment and extended supports to individuals who are suffering from severe and persistent mental illness (SPMI). Through the support and direction of DSAMH, the local mental-health agencies partner with USOR to provide the necessary treatment and employment supports necessary for individual success. Supported employment is fairly new to the mental-health agencies; therefore, many projects are in progress across the state. USOR partners with DSAMH with the Individual Placement Services (IPS) model and the SAMHSA Grant awarded for five years to support two local mental-health agencies with training and technical assistance to provide supported employment services. USOR is providing guidance on policy, milestone payments and facility requirements in order to partner with each project and local mental-health agency.

**Describe the activities to be conducted, with funds reserved pursuant to section 603(d), for youth with the most significant disabilities, including:**

**The provision of extended services for a period not to exceed 4 years; and**

USOR has implemented service codes to reflect both adults and youth who qualify and are receiving supported employment supports. VR Counselors document the SE status of each client and provide services utilizing SE funds, and designating each individual as either an adult or youth. USOR has set aside 50% of SE funds to be used for youth with most significant disabilities ages 14-24 who are in need of supported employment supports. In order to qualify for use of these funds, the individual must be classified as someone with a most significant disability, access to an extended support agency (DSPD, DSAMH, natural supports, etc.), and be between the ages of 14-24. USOR has provided guidance for staff and partners in the Client Service Policy Manual Chapter 30, for arranging extended supports for youth and adults with most significant disabilities. When appropriate, services and funding will be negotiated and transferred to the extended support agency. As laws, agencies, and federal guidance change, USOR is committed to amending and updating policies to provide SE supports to both adults and youth as appropriate. USOR has been expanding upon and developing resources for three supported employment pathways (Individual Placement and Support, Customized Employment, and Traditional Supported Employment) which lead to long term placement services through partnership with DSPD, USOE, DSAMH, and DWS. USOR continues to partner with UATT/USTC to increase student access to any necessary and appropriate assistive technology needed for success.

USOR launched a school-to-work project, through ODEP's Employment First State Leadership Mentoring Program (EFSLMP), designed to braid funding, access partner agency supports, and provide a pathway for students with the most significant disabilities to competitive, integrated employment. USOR is partnering with SAMHSA and Local Mental Health Authorities/DSAMH to provide and expand supported employment services for youth and adults with severe and persistent mental illness, specifically with the IPS model. Through Customized Employment/Supported Employment, USOR is also providing services and supports for individuals with most significant disabilities in sheltered workshops earning sub-minimum wages, who want to participate in integrated and competitive employment and have access the community. USOR continues to develop training for internal staff and external service providers through the Supported Employment Coordinator position and a collaborative partnership with DSPD and DSAMH.

**How the State will leverage other public and private funds to increase resources for extended services and expanded supported employment opportunities for youth with the most significant disabilities**

USOR has partnered with DSPD, DSAMH to create pathways for funding, teamwork and identifying community needs in order to provide SE supports. USOR is also working diligently with Department of Workforce Services (DWS), Utah State Office of Education (USOE), programs under Department of Human Services (DHS) and Corrections to identify all agencies who serve youth (including Division of Child and Family Services, Foster and Proctor Care, Youth in Custody, Juvenile Justice

Services, etc.) Creating an atmosphere of team support and braided funding through these agencies will increase access to services for all youth, including those with most significant disabilities, and increase post-school outcomes, including employment.

### **State's Strategies**

Describe the required strategies and how the agency will use these strategies to achieve its goals and priorities, support innovation and expansion activities, and overcome any barriers to accessing the VR and the Supported Employment programs (See sections 101(a)(15)(D) and (18)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act and section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA)):

#### **The methods to be used to expand and improve services to individuals with disabilities.**

USOR has established policies to overcome identified barriers relating to equitable access to and participation of individuals with disabilities in the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Supported Employment Services Program. To increase access to services and reduce barriers to access of services for both VR and core partners, Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) have been established with state and community partners regarding shared strategies and accessing VR programs. These MOUs include, but are not limited to, USOE, local school districts and charter schools, Division of Services for People with Disabilities, community service providers, Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health, etc. These agreements outline shared visions and methods for coordinating services to be provided in order to increase access to Supported Employment services and thereby improve outcomes, reduce barriers and increase successful employment opportunities for the state's population of individuals with disabilities.

The following strategies will be required in order to achieve the goals and priorities that were outlined in Section (1) State Goals and Priorities.

- Goal 1.1: Assist clients with identifying and connecting with community resources for services which support engaging in VR services
  - o Strategy 1.1 (A): Increase counselor knowledge of resources available to clients to help them locate community resources that are needed for stability and supportive of VR services, including affordable shelter/housing, transportation, food, clothing and utilities
    - Activity A.1: Identify available resources in the community to help clients locate daily living resources
    - Activity A.2: Provide training to all counselors about available resources in their area
    - Activity A.3: Assign an agency liaison to obtain information from other agencies about available community resources, and add the information on the USOR/DRS staff website and public website

District leadership in each of the 10 District Offices created an inventory of resources within their community. Each District then created an informational worksheet that includes a list of local providers of resources with contact information. Each District then trained staff on the community resources, provided an electronic copy of the resource worksheet, and assigned liaisons to strengthen the relationships and facilitate referrals. USOR is in the process of creating an online resource with detailed descriptions of services and referral pathways for community resources.

The migration of USOR from the Utah State Board of Education to the Department of Workforce Services terminated the use of the internal staff website and prohibited expansion of the public USOR website. The Department of Workforce Services is currently building external and internal websites specific to the Vocational Rehabilitation Program. Once the new websites are available, the community resource information will be added for internal and external use.

- Goal 1.2: Revise and improve the service delivery model for job-placement services provided by Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs)

- o Strategy 1.2: USOR will form a committee with agency staff and administrative representation to review and revise the service delivery models for Supported Employment (SE), Customized Employment (CE) and Supported Job-Based Training (SJBT).

Activity A.1: Review existing practices, including seeking input from counselors and providers, as a committee

Activity A.2: Provide recommendations about changes or additions to the model to improve customer choices and successful outcomes

Activity A.3: Help revise policies as appropriate and create training for counselors and outreach to providers to explain any changes to the model

Activity A.4: Develop a CRP manual to provide clear guidance and expectations for employment specialists working with VR clients

USOR has engaged several committees in addition to resources from WINTAC to review and revise service delivery models for Supported Employment (SE), Customized Employment (CE) and Supported Job Based Training (SJBT). In addition, USOR is participating in several pilot projects to expand and improve SE and CE services in partnership with extended service providers. These pilot projects have extended the original completion date for this strategy but have proved invaluable to CE and SE expansion and innovation.

Counselors and Supervisors have been surveyed to gather recommendations for strengthening relationships with Community Rehabilitation Program Providers, amending procedures, and improving employment outcomes for clients. In addition, USOR engaged WINTAC to conduct a focus group of Community Rehabilitation Program Providers. All Community Rehabilitation Program Providers were contacted and encouraged to participate. The recommendations from the Counselor surveys and CRP focus groups are being addressed by committees comprised of Counselors, Service Providers and Community Partners.

Community Rehabilitation Program Providers received training about changes to the VR program under WIOA with emphasis on common performance measures under section 116 of WIOA.

USOR worked with a group of District Directors and Coordinators from USOR, as well as took input from Community Rehabilitation Program Providers in order to put together a draft of a CRP Manual. The review process of the drafts helped in progress towards revision of service delivery models for SJBT, SE, and CE.

USOR has not yet finalized changes to the CRP fee structure and job support model at this time. USOR is partnering with the Utah Developmental Disability agency, local Mental Health Agencies, and Customized Employment Training Centers to create new service models that address the needs of different disability populations. Each service model has unique placement strategies requiring that each be piloted and analyzed for efficacy prior to incorporation into a new service model. All pilot projects are now in at least their second year and will be incorporated in a policy revision. The CRP manual has been drafted but not yet finalized in order to incorporate the changes that will be made to the service models in policy.

- Goal 1.3: Improve and expand VR services for transition-aged youth and students with disabilities
- o Strategy 1.3 (A): Increase agency resources and time devoted to providing transition services

Activity A.1: Increase the availability of information about services through expansion of social media

Activity A.2: Expand and enhance specific agency web resources for transition-aged students and youth, including targeted information for students, parents and teachers as well as counselor liaison assignments for each school

Activity A.3: Provide additional VR Counselor liaisons to schools across the state through reallocation of staff time and responsibilities

Activity A.4: Provide targeted outreach efforts to youth in custody, homeless youth, youth in foster care, youth with mental health and co-occurring disorders, etc.

USOR created a transition liaison list which educators and families can access on the USOR website to help connect with their VR Counselor liaison. USOR increased the number of counselors assigned to schools across the state by training additional VR Counselors to provide transition services. This redistribution allows VR Counselors to allot more attention and scheduling availability to each school. USOR has added resources to the Transition page on the USOR website; links to the job readiness workshop material, a link to services for students who are potentially eligible, and the transition liaison list. USOR developed a rack card to help market the Job Readiness Workshops transition counselors perform in the schools.

USOR has assigned counselor liaisons to Juvenile Justice Services, Volunteers of America Youth, Department of Child and Family Services, and Local Mental Health Authorities to coordinate services for these populations. Most of the USOR district offices have increased the number of VR Counselors who are participating in IEP/504 meetings and providing Job Readiness Workshops in the LEAs. The Transition Coordinator presented at the Summit on youth hosted by the Division of Substance Abuse and Mental health to help with coordination of services for youth with mental health and co-occurring disorders.

USOR added new fee for service options for pre-employment transition services and developed a resource for VR Counselors so they can access information about which pre-ets services are approved.

Since USOR has increased presence in the LEAs through training more VR Counselors in transition and through providing Job Readiness Workshops, some districts have had difficulty keeping up with the demand. USOR is continually assessing resources and allocation of staff time to address the increases in demand.

o Strategy 1.3 (B): Increase outreach and collaboration with schools, i.e., special education, school administration, school counselors and 504 coordinators

Activity B.1: Increase counselor collaborative partnerships in schools through liaison meetings, IEP meetings, agency fairs, job readiness workshops, etc.

Activity B.2: Amend and maintain USOR/USOE Interagency Agreements at both the state and local levels to be more descriptive and comprehensive about the expectations on both sides

Activity B.3: Identify and develop programs serving students with disabilities to provide pre-employment transition services

USOR has increased presence in Local Education Agencies and many district offices have increased the number of school liaisons out of need. Counselors attend IEP meetings, 504 meetings, agency fairs, and facilitate job readiness workshops in the schools.

USOR continues to update and renew its Interagency Agreement with the Utah State Board of Education to include descriptions of the expectations of USOR and USBE and to incorporate changes in the partnership as outlined in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), specifically in reference to pre-employment transition services and WIOA Section 511:

Limitations of Use of Subminimum Wage. Once the Interagency Agreement is finalized, USOR and LEAs will begin to develop goals for their local level agreements.

USOR has provided training to internal staff and LEA partners on pre-employment transition services and has developed a resource guide which outlines approved fee for service and contracted

The new Interagency Agreement and Local Level agreements are not finalized. Due to changes in WIOA, USOR sent the agreement to WINTAC for review, which slowed the process. USBE also has also undergone structural and staffing changes, which has impeded the progress of the Interagency Agreement. USOR still continues to develop and foster relationships with 504 Coordinators in the LEAs. The USOR Transition and Supported Employment Coordinator spoke at the School Counselor annual meeting to provide information about USOR and how partnerships at the local level can assist students who have 504 plans in an attempt to provide outreach to this population, but partnerships can continue to be improved upon.

- Goal 1.4: Expand capacity for pre-employment transition service (PETS) opportunities
  - o Strategy 1.4 (A): Provide training and information for staff, educators, service providers and community partners in pre-employment transition services
    - Activity A.1: Provide statewide training for agency staff on policies and procedures regarding provision of pre-employment transition services
    - Activity A.2: Provide information to educators, service providers and community providers on WIOA pre-employment transition service priorities

USOR developed policy and resource guides to address pre-employment transition services and provided subsequent internal staff training. USOR has also presented on several webinars and trainings at conferences to provide information on pre-employment transition services to internal staff, educators, and community partners. USOR marketed information on the pre-ets contracted services in the Spedometer (a newsletter that is distributed to Special Education directors throughout the state).

USOR is currently working on incorporating information regarding pre-employment transition services on our website and developing a pre-ets rack card to expand our marketing efforts with the LEAs and community. USOR continues to work on strategies to improve and increase pre-ets services throughout the state.

- o Strategy 1.4 (B): Identify existing and develop new PETS programs
  - Activity B.1: Compile a list of existing service options that meet pre-employment service criteria
  - Activity B.2: Coordinate with CRPs, educators and other community service providers to develop and expand statewide PETS options

USOR has developed a list of approved fee for service pre-employment transition services and a list of services offered through the 6 pre-employment transition services contracts. These lists are available on both the internal and external website. Information about these services and how to access them is disseminated to students, community partners, and educators.

USOR developed new fee for service pre-employment transition service options for students through community outreach and training of existing providers. USOR also added new program providers through a request for proposal that resulted in 6 new contracted Pre-Employment Transition Service providers. USOR is working on developing new contracts to expand our capacity to serve students who are potentially eligible.

The contracting process has created barriers to quickly expanding pre-employment transition service options. The process adds important elements and safeguards for all contracting parties however it extends the timeline. USOR has communicated with several vendors to expand on fee for service options and contracts for pre-ets. USOR is waiting on requested modifications to proposals from vendors prior to finalization.

- Goal 1.5: Expand service delivery options for persons with disabilities who require supported employment services
  - o Strategy 1.5 (A): Increase outreach to individuals currently employed but making subminimum wages, youth at risk of entering sheltered work or segregated day programs at the time of secondary school exit, individuals at risk of being segregated in any type of subminimum wage entity, individuals leaving sheltered work and day-program settings, individuals with severe and persistent mental illness, etc.

Activity A.1: Identify sheltered work and day programs across the State of Utah that provide services to persons with disabilities

Activity A.2: Provide outreach and information to individuals who are interested in pursuing competitive integrated employment

Activity A.3: Expand opportunities for customized employment and discovery services to expand competitive integrated employment for these individuals.

USOR has provided career counseling and information and referral services as outlined in WIOA Section 511 to individuals who are currently employed in subminimum wage settings. Approximately 1300 people were met with and provided career counseling and information referral throughout the year. Meetings were also held with the employers holding 14C certificates to discuss the law and options that they had moving forward to comply with the law.

USOR is a partner in Employment First legislation and has partnered with the Division of Services for People with Disabilities and the Utah State Board of Education (and LEAs) in "school to work pilots" in 5 sites to increase competitive, integrated outcomes for students with disabilities who would normally be slated to enter a day program (non integrated setting) or subminimum wage employment setting upon graduation from high school. Community Rehabilitation Programs and USOR staff who are involved in these pilots have had the opportunity to receive training on Customized Employment..

USOR and the Division for Services for People with Disabilities partnered to provide Community Rehabilitation Programs and USOR Counselors with training on Customized Employment. Together, the two agencies engaged technical assistance programs through Griffin and Hammis and Associates and Marc Gold and Associates to train services providers. In addition USOR has partnered with Source America to expand the Pathways to Careers Initiative which will provide opportunities for further expansion of Customized Employment.

Barriers to engaging all individuals with disabilities in competitive, integrated employment has been changing attitudes and beliefs about disability and work. Outreach efforts are underway to educate parents, educators, and other community providers about the benefits of competitive integrated employment. To this end, USOR has developed an informational flyer about the Settings Rule, Employment First Initiative, and Section 511. These information flyers will be used to educate the community and will be disseminated widely.

o Strategy 1.5 (B): Increase outreach to sheltered work and day programs across the State of Utah who currently provide segregated settings with subminimum wage options for persons with disabilities

Activity B.1: Provide outreach and information regarding competitive integrated employment and vocational rehabilitation services to partner agencies that provide segregated settings with subminimum wage options for persons with disabilities

Activity B.2: Partner with agencies like Division of Services for People with Disabilities (DSPD) and State Office of Education (USOE) to provide training and professional development opportunities to community rehabilitation programs in order to provide community-based services and competitive integrated employment outcomes for the clients they serve

USOR has provided information briefings to various agencies and subminimum wage employers throughout Utah including the Utah Association of Community Services, Utah State Board of Education, and the Utah State Rehabilitation Council. USOR has leveraged its partnership with DSPD and the USBE to provide collaborative information sessions to stakeholders in the community.

USOR's 511 Coordinator provided information regarding competitive and integrated employment to agencies and employers who have been, or currently involved in subminimum wage employment. During the presentation, USOR representatives provide options for future services that the agencies and employers should consider when making changes to existing models, in order to comply with WIOA Section 511.

• Goal 1.6: Improve the provision, consistency and quality of statewide VR services for individuals who are blind and visually impaired

o Strategy 1.6 (A): Transition supervision of VR counselors currently assigned to the Division of Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired (DSBVI) to the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS)

Activity A.1: Provide training to DRS supervisors and directors to increase knowledge and understanding for the specific needs and services for individuals who are blind and visually impaired

Activity A.2: Provide targeted training to VR Counselors for the blind and visually impaired improve knowledge and application of VR program services and policies

Activity A.3: Conduct regular meetings between DRS and DSBVI staff to coordinate VR Program, Business Enterprise Program, Orientation and Mobility Training, Adjustment Training and other available services to meet the needs of individuals who are blind and visually impaired

Activity A.4: Begin to transition VR counselors who are assigned at DSBVI locations into combined DRS counseling offices as appropriate.

In coordination with the Division of Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired an on-site training was conducted for VR program directors and supervisors. This training focused on improving understanding for the specific needs of blind and visually impaired clients, along with services available through the blind center and assistive technology options. Additionally, teams of Supervisors and counselors in each district with oversight of BVI counselors has worked with the BVI TAS program, to receive tours, orientations and additional instruction in BVI services.

In addition to normal comprehensive new counselor training, each VR Counselor assigned to work with BVI clients works with BVI to receive additional specialized training in providing services to individuals who are blind or visually impaired. This training constitutes several additional days of training at DSBVI and is conducted by BVI Staff.

A BVI Counselor advisory council has been created and meets quarterly to ensure ongoing collaboration and communication, quarterly collaboration between DRS and DSBVI were established. The Council is comprised of all BVI Counselors in DRS and the DRS Assistant Division Director. The council meets as a discrete unit to identify priority business and discuss concerns and issues specific to VR BVI services. A follow up meeting occurs each quarter which includes the Council and any Directors and Supervisors of the BVI Counselors as well as representation from DRS Administration to discuss any issues of policy and insure consistency of message and application of policy.

VR BVI Counselors are now successfully integrated into the DRS supervisory structure, becoming part of district teams. VR BVI Counselors who serve clients directly at BVI facilities spend 3-4 days per week at the facility and 1-2 days per week at their assigned DRS office in order to provide clients with accessible choice in where they are served. In areas where no primary BVI facility exists the VR BVI counselors serve clients out of the main DRS office they are assigned to.

o Strategy 1.6 (B): Create a statewide committee comprised of VR Counselors for the blind and visually impaired, supervisors and agency leadership

Activity B.1: Develop a learning collaborative to assess needs, identify supports and share information to strengthen service provision to individuals who are blind and visually impaired

Activity B.2: Identify and address ongoing cross training needs for all VR counselors on services and supports for working with individuals who are blind and visually impaired.

A community of practice was established for the VR Counselors who specialize in serving blind and visually impaired clients. This community meets on a quarterly basis to discuss client service trends, share resources and provide peer training and guidance. This group also meets with agency leadership on a quarterly basis to provide updates and barriers to service provision. This group has identified areas of interest for training and will continue to address training needs through the community of practice.

o Strategy 1.6 (C): Increase outreach to individuals who are blind and visually impaired

Activity C.1: Establish and maintain local level VR Counselor liaisons to the Utah Schools for the Deaf and Blind

Activity C.2: Update electronic and accessible materials regarding information, services and resources for individuals who are blind and visually impaired

Activity C.3: Provide Job Readiness Workshops to students and youth who are blind and visually impaired.

VR counselors for the blind and visually impaired, along with their supervisors, developed and implemented annual community outreach plans with the goal of expanding knowledge, awareness and access to VR services for potential clients.

USOR updated their website to improve access and accessibility to information on services available through the VR Program and the Division of Services of the Blind and Visually Impaired. In addition, new marketing and outreach materials are available in electronic and braille formats.

VR Counselors for the blind and visually impaired have created modified training material for the Job Readiness Workshops and share these resources through the community of practice group.

YEAR TWO (2017-2018)

- Goal 2.1: Assist clients in developing self-advocacy skills
  - o Strategy 2.1 (A): Increase counselor skill level and access to resource materials to help them teach clients self-advocacy
    - Activity A.1: Develop pamphlet and issue brief on self-advocacy for counselors to utilize in their sessions with clients
    - Activity A.2: Conduct statewide training for counselors on understanding self-advocacy and effective self-advocacy skill building

A USOR Horizon's Committee of Rehabilitation Counselors led by the Transition and Supported Employment Coordinator was convened to develop a self-advocacy guide and staff training. The Self Advocacy Guide contains instructions on self-advocacy techniques and contact information for community agencies specializing in self-advocacy supports and services. The Committee's draft Self Advocacy Guide was shared with community partners and the State Rehabilitation Council. The draft was approved by USOR administration and the State Rehabilitation Council and submitted to the Administrative Communications Team for publishing.

The Committee used the Self Advocacy Guide to develop a mandatory state-wide training for VR Counselors. The training included a review of the Self Advocacy Guide and recommended techniques and methods VR Counselors may employ to instruct clients on self-advocacy during counseling sessions. In addition, two self-advocacy modules were added to the Job Readiness Workshops conducted by VR Counselors. The workshop materials are available to Special Educators who co-lead the workshops with VR Counselors in high schools throughout Utah.

- o Strategy 1.2 (B): Increase counselor knowledge about other available programs to help clients learn self-advocacy skills
  - Activity B.1: Partner with agencies that provide self-advocacy training, including independent living centers, Disability Law Center, Utah Parents Center, CRPs, etc.
  - Activity B.2: Disseminate information to agency staff and clients about available programs
  - Activity B.3: Evaluate opportunities to partner with other agencies to expand or adapt opportunities for vocational rehabilitation clients to learn self-advocacy skills

USOR has expanded self-advocacy services to students with disabilities by soliciting the development of new self-advocacy programs with new and existing providers. These services are accessible to eligible students with disabilities through a fee-for-service model. USOR also developed contracts with three Independent Living Centers to provide Self-Advocacy training to eligible and potentially eligible students with disabilities.

USOR participates on councils with partner agencies to coordinate self-advocacy efforts, provide cross-agency training, and educate the community. USOR leveraged its partnership with community resources to combine resources and develop resources for self-advocacy services. The Disability Law Center provides yearly training on self-advocacy services available through their agency. USOR is partnering in the Utah Parent Center's effort to deploy the SHIFT model of self advocacy and job readiness in Utah. This project is underway and will come to fruition by the beginning of 2019.

- Goal 2.2: Expand career exploration and evaluation options for clients
  - o Strategy 2.2 (A): Identify existing resources available to VR counselors and clients
    - Activity A.1: Utilize interest survey portals such as UtahFutures.org to provide clients self-directed interest assessments

Activity A.2: Engage in a pilot study of career assessment tools in VR district offices to determine which tests are cost and time effective in assisting counselors with comprehensive assessment of the client's job interests and abilities

A taskforce was created and completed a statewide review with VR Districts to determine what tools would be most useful on-site for assisting clients in evaluating their vocational interests.

Online tools including UtahFutures.org were reviewed and information and training on their application and use was provided to each DRS District. Client Computers, allowing for clients to conduct self assessment with these tools are installed and configured in each DRS office.

The taskforce completed their study and presented a recommendation for four evaluation tools (TABE, 16PF, BETA, and PICS). The taskforce then provided statewide training to all counselors on the administration of these tests. Additionally, each district was given testing materials and instructions on how to order additional testing resources as needed.

o Strategy 2.2 (B): Establish standardized internal testing and fee-for-service options for career assessment testing

Activity B.1: Conduct statewide training on basic career exploration tools with VR counselors to provide on-site testing capabilities for basic academic and interest assessments

Activity B.2: Identify and form vendor partnerships with external businesses that can provide testing-based career assessments

Community colleges, WWW.Utahfutures.org, and some DWS testing resources supplement VR Counselor onsite evaluation resources and counselors are able to utilize work strategy assessments for many clients receiving SJBT and SE services, but there are still limited options for utilization of private vendors for in-depth vocational evaluation testing.

Efforts to expand career assessment options is limited by the number of private vendors with adequate training and resources to provide specialized vocational evaluation. Some vendors have recently expressed interest in conducting a fee for service vocational evaluation and DRS is now in discussions with them, but agreements have not yet been finalized.

• Goal 2.3: Assist clients with developing life skills such as interpersonal communication, money and time management

o Strategy 2.3 (A): Expand the availability of, and counselor access to, life-skills training for clients by increasing capacity and removing any barriers to access

Activity A.1: Evaluate results from current service providers by analyzing who is using the service and if results are successful

Activity A.2: Identify additional CRPs that are able to provide services in these areas

USOR has expanded the number of providers who provide life skills services. The expansion includes new life skills providers who are Community Rehabilitation Programs, mental health clinics, and independent living centers. As new service providers were added, staff from the local VR office participated in the development of the life skills programs to ensure that each program met the client needs.

Each new CRP approved to provide services to USOR clients were instructed of the option to provide life skills and related services to VR clients. Existing CRP providers were training on life

skills options that could be authorized for, on top of basic skills that would be included in Job Development as part of the milestone service model.

Within the milestone service model for SJBT, SE, and CE “life skills” training is built into the service delivery such as job development and job placement. This often is not authorized as a stand-alone service that the CRP’s provide to the client, and therefore it is difficult to track.

o Strategy 2.3 (B): Identify additional resources that offer life-skills training

Activity B.1: Survey partners such as DWS and DSPD about possible resources

Activity B.2: Evaluate use of service category entitled “Disability Adjustment and Life Skills Restoration Services” to see if services are meeting need and/or whether resources need to be expanded

Activity B.3: Continue to approve additional vendors as appropriate

USOR resources for life skills training with its partners at DSPD and discovered that these services are provided by contractors in conjunction with other support services. DSPD delivers these services through its Day Support Providers and Community Rehabilitation Program providers. USOR partners with DSPD to provide wrap around supports for life skills development for individuals receiving supported employment services. The Workforce Development Division of the Department of Workforce Services provides employment workshops that discuss life skills related to job searching. USOR utilizes these employment workshops for clients who need minimal life skills intervention and can benefit from training conducted in a large group setting.

USOR evaluated its current providers and use of life skills as a stand-alone service and found it has expanded from use of CRP’s to include a few mental health clinics, and secondary schools. USOR is interested in increasing the availability of life skills to clients with mental health issues and students and will continue to outreach efforts to add new providers.

USOR designed a job development and placement model that includes the provision of life skills training, if necessary. Because life skills is included as part of a bundle of services for a single fee, USOR has been challenged to track when it is being utilized.

- Goal 2.4: Increase collaboration and coordination with partner community agencies whose goals, services and laws align with providing competitive integrated employment and career opportunities for persons with disabilities

o Strategy 2.4 (A): Align policies and procedures for supported employment with Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services’s new Home- and Community-Based Services (HCBS) settings rule and Utah’s Employment First Legislation

Activity A.1: USOR will provide an agency representative on strategic planning committees with agencies involved in current laws and legislation regarding persons with the most significant disabilities and decreasing acceptance of subminimum wages

Agency representative was assigned by USOR to oversee and participate in all meetings and provided services required and related to decreasing acceptance of subminimum wage jobs (WIOA 511). Career Counseling and Information Referral was provided to approximately 1300 individuals who mostly were currently in a subminimum wage position, and others who were applying for such a position. USOR representative attended meetings with other State Agencies, employers and parents to discuss the law and provide options for those individuals who were looking for an option of competitive and integrated employment. USOR and DSPD, the agency responsible for Medicaid and Medicare Services to individuals with disabilities, coordinated training of providers about the settings rule and Utah’s Employment First Legislation. USOR and DSPD coordinate policies and procedures to ensure seamless supported employment services from referral to extended supports.

Utah applied for and were awarded Employment First State Leadership and Mentoring Program (EFSLMP) resources from the Office of Disability and Employment Policy (ODEP) in 2015. The Transition and Supported Employment Coordinator was the co-lead/coordinator from 2015-2017 and therefore USOR was involved in the decision-making and implementation of the technical assistance provided by ODEP. EFSLMP resources afforded Utah the opportunity to assist agencies who provide HCBS Medicaid waiver funding to receive technical assistance in becoming more community based. As a result, some of the agencies developed (or expanded on) employment units within their agencies and became vendors with USOR to provide SE and SJBT milestones to assist clients in accessing CIE. Utah also received resources from ODEP to implement School to Work Pilots which utilized a team approach with USOR, DWS/WDD, DSPD, LEAs, and CRP partners to assist students with disabilities with competitive, integrated employment prior to graduation from high school/post high school. Although some providers received technical assistance to make the shift to more integrated settings, some have not made steps to follow through with meeting goals.

#### YEAR THREE (2018-2019)

- Goal 3.1: Increase the number of ethnic and racial minority populations served
  - o Strategy 3.1 (A): Increase outreach to and partnerships with Native American Tribes within Utah
    - Activity A.1: Ensure there is a current Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Ute Mountain Ute Tribal 121 Program and provide technical assistance, outreach and training, and ongoing coordination of client services (per the MOU)
    - Activity A.2: Coordinate a basic VR presentation to the chairs and/or chiefs of the Paiute, Navajo, Goshute, Northern Shoshone, and Ute tribes of Utah
    - Activity A.3: Schedule follow-up presentations to the tribal councils, Indian health, welfare and employment services to promote VR services for Native Americans with disabilities
    - Activity A.4: Maintain an agency liaison and local district liaisons to each Native American tribe or band to provide outreach and referral, cement relationships and remove barriers to assure that all potentially eligible individuals can access VR services
  - o Strategy 3.2 (B): Increase outreach to and improve relationships with individuals in the Asian communities
    - Activity B.1: Identify additional groups with relationships to the Asian communities in Utah
    - Activity B.2: Maintain a liaison to meet with and offer education to these groups
- Goal 3.2: Increase Job Readiness skills in VR clients as they prepare to enter the workforce
  - o Strategy 3.2 (A): Collect and provide job-readiness skill training options to clients
    - Activity A.1: Identify existing job-readiness resources and services available to clients
    - Activity A.2: Coordinate with other agencies and community partners to offer clients increased job-readiness skills training
    - Activity A.3: Expand USOR staff-provided job-readiness workshops and job clubs to clients
- Goal 3.3: Improve coordination between USOR and employers to benefit clients in obtaining competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities
  - o Strategy 3.3 (A): Expand outreach efforts to employers to ensure USOR better meets their needs while improving opportunities for VR clients
    - Activity A.1: Utilize existing relationships with the Governor's Committee for Employment of People with Disabilities, Choose to Work (CTW) and DWS to identify employer needs provide opportunities for VR Counselors to connect with community employers
    - Activity A.2: Utilize VR Business Relations Team and CTW to provide training and information to employers on the benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities
    - Activity A.3: Provide staff training on opportunities for developing and coordinating On-the-Job Training, work-based training, internships and apprenticeships to better service client and employer needs
- Goal 3.4: Provide improved services to persons with disabilities who are experiencing segregated employment, subminimum wages, or sheltered work and day-program supports in order to increase competitive integrated employment

- o Strategy 3.4 (A): USOR will provide training to staff regarding supported employment, customized employment and discovery, behavior intervention strategies, etc.

Activity A.1: USOR will provide specific training on cognitive and development disabilities as well as any other population who are most at risk for experiencing subminimum wages and sheltered work.

Activity A.2: USOR will partner with agencies to model practices and receive training from those who provide supported employment services and specialize in evidenced-based practices to increase competitive integrated employment outcomes for specific populations, including the Division of Services for People with Disabilities (DSPD), Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health (DSAMH), Utah State Office of Education (USOE), Special Education (USOE SpEd), Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRP), etc.

- o Strategy 3.4 (B): USOR will update policies and procedures to provide supported employment and customized employment to clients in order to assist them in leaving segregated employment settings and gaining competitive integrated employment in their community.

Activity B.1: USOR will update policies chapters, as needed, to better align with providing the necessary supports and services that persons with the most significant disabilities will need, to prevent segregated employment and subminimum wages.

#### YEAR FOUR (2019-2020)

- Goal 4.1: Increase outreach and services to veterans with disabilities

- o Strategy 4.1: Improve coordination of services between USOR and the Veterans Affairs (VA) to more effectively serve veterans with disabilities

Activity A.1: Review and revise current Cooperative Agreement between USOR and the Veterans Affairs

Activity A.2: Assign local liaisons to interface between USOR districts and local VA offices

Activity A.3: Coordinate services between USOR and the VA by inviting VA representatives to visit local VR offices and offer USOR staff trainings

- Goal 4.2: Improve outreach and coordination of services to individuals served with substance-abuse-related disabilities

- o Strategy 4.2 (A): Increase collaboration between outside agencies and individuals who serve individuals with substance-abuse disabilities and VR

Activity A.1: Identify current treatment centers in each region providing recovery services to individuals with substance-abuse disabilities

Activity A.2: Identify opportunities to create liaison relationships with treatment centers at the local level to enhance outreach and encourage appropriate referrals

- o Strategy 4.2 (B): Increase counselor knowledge and skills regarding serving individuals with substance-abuse disabilities

Activity B.1: Identify available training resources for counselors to increase skills in working with substance-abuse treatment issues.

Activity B.2: Provide ongoing training for VR counselors on policies and treatment models for working with individuals with substance-abuse-related disabilities

- Goal 4.3: Provide improved services to ex-offenders with disabilities to increase employment and independence through increased rehabilitation rates and decreased recidivism

- o Strategy 4.3 (A): Increase coordination of services between agencies and service providers working with ex-offender and incarcerated populations.

Activity A.1: Participate in statewide multiagency initiative "Achieving Success through Collaboration Engagement and Navigated Transition" (ASCENT)

Activity A.2: Assign staff liaisons to jails, prisons, treatment resource centers (TRCs), halfway houses and ASCENT committee

Activity A.3: Identify potential referrals from TRCs, halfway houses and other offender programs, and coordinate rehabilitation services

Activity A.4: Partner directly with Juvenile Justice Services (JJS) through assigned liaisons and a statewide point of contact to allow for effective two-way coordination of services

- o Strategy 4.3 (B): Improve training for USOR staff to improve their skill sets for working with offender populations

Activity B.1: Expand cross-training between USOR and JJS staff through increased local-level trainings and have assigned USOR personnel attend offender-focused conferences such as the annual Youth in Custody conference

Activity B.2: Provide statewide staff training on the transition process of reentry and reintegration

**How a broad range of assistive technology services and devices will be provided to individuals with disabilities at each stage of the rehabilitation process and on a statewide basis**

USOR continues to make sure that individuals with disabilities are provided appropriate assistive technology (AT). USOR and DRS continually evaluate the effectiveness of the current service and referral system and make improvements as necessary. New counselors receive presentations about AT, and counselors receive ongoing training at agency events, open houses etc. USOR also has successfully advocated many years now for one-time funds from the state legislature to provide Independent Living with money for AT because USOR believes clients who receive such technology and become more independent at home are more likely to eventually become clients of the VR system and decide to seek employment.

**The outreach procedures that will be used to identify and serve individuals with disabilities who are minorities, including those with the most significant disabilities, as well as those who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program**

Several of the goals/activities listed in the section above are specific to outreach and service to individuals who are minorities and who have been identified as unserved or underserved. Several activities are also targeted toward individuals with the most significant disabilities; in particular activities related to improving and expanding the provision of supported employment and customized employment services.

In addition, USOR maintains close relationships and partnerships with other state service agencies, including Human Services, regional Medicaid providers, and private and public mental and physical health providers to disseminate information about the USOR program and to encourage all people with disabilities who are seeking employment to apply for USOR services. USOR also maintains MOUs with schools and school districts to identify and offer services to transition-age clients in need. Additionally, USOR engages in a tri-annual Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment, which surveys statewide needs and deficits in services to all individuals with disabilities. As part of this survey, unserved and underserved populations are identified, and areas of service needs are assessed. With this information, USOR maintains an ongoing set of goals to improve outreach and services to those identified as underserved. Ongoing activities include direct-liaison relationships with local Native American tribal organizations, the Veteran's Assistance Program, and refugee and immigrant assistance programs.

**The methods to be used to improve and expand VR services for students with disabilities, including the coordination of services designed to facilitate the transition of such students from school to postsecondary life (including the receipt of VR services, postsecondary education, employment, and pre-employment transition services)**

USOR has a dedicated Transition Coordinator who has responsibilities such as improving the quality and consistency of transition services from USOR counselors to students and improving collaboration and coordination. USOR created policies and procedures for specific services for transition students with disabilities. Each district office maintains specific counselors as liaisons with local public and private schools, and specific Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) are kept with each school and school district. VR counselors service individual students by meeting with their IEP teams and in specific VR meetings with students and their parents. Also, VR is expanding provision of Job-Readiness Workshops to schools in their local areas. The Job-Readiness Workshops cover aspects of self-discovery, job-readiness, job-seeking and job-keeping skills

**If applicable, plans for establishing, developing, or improving community rehabilitation programs within the State**

USOR created a milestone payment program to streamline services and outcomes from Community Resource Providers (CRPs). USOR created a position for a statewide coordinator for Supported Employment and Customized Employment services who helps to oversee CRP activities.

Additionally, USOR has a CRP committee that meets regularly and a CRP policy manual to provide guidance and consistency in services. The results of these efforts have been a significant increase in the total number of CRPs offering services to VR customers across the state. USOR is exploring options for assisting in the establishment of transition-focused CRP services through competitive state bidding.

**Strategies to improve the performance of the State with respect to the performance accountability measures under section 116 of WIOA**

USOR will work with all core partners to develop and monitor appropriate and relevant performance indicators, including those identified under Section 116 of WIOA. These will reflect the new, improved and expanded services of USOR.

**Strategies for assisting other components of the statewide workforce development system in assisting individuals with disabilities**

In addition to the individual agency initiatives outlined in this plan, DWS and USOR maintain a cooperative agreement to assist job seekers with disabilities to obtain employment through the CTW program. This program offers a specific and targeted way for both agencies to connect clients with disabilities to employment. The CTW employment specialists from both agencies are well versed in labor-market information, job-preparation tools, accommodation resources and job-development strategies. The CTW staff work collaboratively with primary counselors from both agencies to identify the level of service needed by the job seeker, provide support available and ensure employment goals and outcomes are met. In addition, USOR employs six benefits specialists who provide assistance and consultation to Social Security beneficiaries. One of the benefits specialists is funded by DWS to serve mutual clients

**How the agency's strategies will be used to:**

**Achieve goals and priorities by the State, consistent with the comprehensive needs assessment;**

USOR will ensure that all of its goals, priorities and strategies are based on a statewide, comprehensive assessment, detailing both current and future needs. This strategy will be supported through ongoing program evaluation and customer feedback.

**Support innovation and expansion activities**

USOR will utilize client and community partner feedback to identify service gaps, which then will be used to plan and support innovation and expansion activities. USOR engages in ongoing development of new and emerging services with existing Community Rehabilitation Programs to meet the needs of its clients. USOR is in the process of completing its Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment with Utah State University. The results of this assessment will inform on future goals and strategies for innovation and expansion. In the interim, USOR is coordinating with the Workforce Innovations and Technical Assistance Center to solicit feedback from CRPs to improve job placement, supported employment and customized employment service delivery models. USOR is also developing a new round of Request for Proposals for Innovation and Expansion projects to provide new strategies and programs that will improve pre-employment transition services for students with disabilities.

**Overcome identified barriers relating to equitable access to and participation of individuals with disabilities in the State VR Services Program and the State Supported Employment Services Program.**

USOR is a partner in Employment First legislation to increase access and eliminate disparities in access to state VR Services and Supported Employment. Employment is the first and preferred option for individuals with disabilities. USOR partners with DSPD to ensure that supports are in place for individuals with intellectual disabilities, youth in post-high programs, and all individuals who are MSD and need customized or supported employment supports. USOR and DSPD collaborate to provide supported employment services to individuals on the DSPD waiting list through the provision of long-term funding from the Utah State Legislature. This partnership is a key initiative to eliminate systemic barriers to employment for individuals with disabilities. In addition, USOR continues seek out opportunities to support individuals with disabilities in competitive integrated employment. Additionally, USOR believes alignment with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services's new Home- and Community-Based Services (HCBS) settings rule will increase opportunities for competitive integrated employment opportunities. USOR will provide outreach and opportunities for individuals experiencing sheltered work or segregated day programs and sub-minimum wages to access VR services in order increase competitive integrated employment.

**Evaluation and Reports of Progress: VR and Supported Employment Goals**

**Identify the strategies that contributed to the achievement of the goals**

USOR successfully accomplished it's goals for 2016-2017 Program Year to connect clients to community resources, improve and expand transition services, increase capacity for Pre-Employment Transition Services, expand service Supported Employment service delivery options, and improve consistency and quality of services to individuals who are blind and visually impaired. To achieve these goals, USOR utilized its staff expertise, reallocated staff assignments, trained partners and providers, and leveraged community partnerships and resources. USOR developed local area community resource guides which are disseminated at eligibility and various times throughout the Vocational Rehabilitation Process. USOR increased staff knowledge of these resources by training them to access community resources to provide wrap around services and coordinate funding sources.

USOR expanded services to Students and Youth with Disabilities through development of fee-for service options for Pre-Employment Transition Services and contracts, increasing VR Counselor connections with schools, and leveraging partnerships with other agencies. By leveraging existing staff resources and increasing coordination with partner agencies, VR successfully expanded outreach services and connected more students and youth to VR services. Training was provided to service provider and partner agencies resulting in new fee for service options and six contract Pre-ETS providers. USOR has expanded Supported Employment service delivery options by increasing the variety of placement methods available to meet individual client's needs. The increase in models allows VR Counselors and client to select among a variety of models including Customized Employment, Pathways to Success Customized Employment, Individual Placement and Support, and traditional Supported Employment. These options add to the service options currently available from Community Rehabilitation Program providers.

The USOR created a community of practice to unify practice and service provision to individuals who are blind or visually impaired. The community of practice identified training needs specific to their assigned population, recommends policy changes to remediate barriers, and performs outreach. In addition, each district office develops and implements an outreach and service provision plan specific to individuals with blindness and visual impairments.

USOR successfully accomplished its goals for 2017-2018 Program Year to provide clients with self-advocacy skills, expand career exploration and evaluation services, provide clients with life skills training, and increase collaboration with partners to promote competitive integrated employment of individuals with disabilities. To achieve these goals, USOR utilized staff expertise to examine issues and develop tools and leverage partnerships with other community programs. In order to provide self-advocacy skills to clients, a USOR staff committee developed a self-advocacy guide, identified self-advocacy resources and trained all VR counselors to teach self-advocacy skills. The training has been implemented and resource guides were incorporated into Job Readiness Workshops provided by VR Counselors in the schools. Future efforts will include an informational brochure that is being finalized by the Communications Team. Another USOR staff committee examined available career assessment tools, recommended a standard menu of assessments and trained VR Counselors to utilize the recommended assessments.

USOR partnered with the Division of Services for People with Disabilities, Utah State Board of Education, Utah Department of Mental Health, and Community Rehabilitation Programs to increase life skills training options and coordinate goals for competitive integrated employment opportunities. Life Skills training is available as a stand-alone service and in conjunction with a variety of services offered through VR, DSPD, and Mental Health facilities. USOR has successfully added life skills training options from community and private mental health providers. USOR's coordination with other agencies ensures that life skills are available through all stages of the employment preparation process. This partnership has also been instrumental to USOR's efforts to promote competitive integrated employment options for individuals who are newly seeking employment under the HBCS settings rule, Utah's Employment First Initiative, and Section 511 of the Rehabilitation Act. Coordinating efforts has allowed USOR to participate in demonstration and pilot projects that increase resources and capacity to achieve successful employment outcomes.

#### **Describe the factors that impeded the achievement of the goals and priorities**

USOR has successfully achieved its overall goals for the 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 program years however organizational changes and a dearth of providers has at times impeded the process. USOR was legislatively removed from the Utah State Board of Education and placed under the Department of Workforce Services. This transition has provided USOR with many opportunities and resources but has also required additional staff training and procedural modifications that have impacted USOR's ability to meet its vigorous activity schedule to achieve goals. The deficit in community providers has impeded USORs ability to secure a stable source for career assessment services in the community. Despite efforts to cultivate resources for career assessment service providers, there has been an general disinterest from trained Rehabilitation Counselors and a deficit in qualified evaluators at existing service providers. USOR therefore simplified its assessment offerings and trained all VR Counselors to administer the assessments. USOR will continue to survey options for external providers of career assessments in the community. CRP retention of qualified Customized Employment Specialists has decelerated USOR's projected expansion efforts. USOR is addressing the retention issue by increasing training options, soliciting training resources from Source America's Pathways to Success Program, and examining employee retention factors through a Customized Employment Pilot project with DSPD.

#### **Identify the strategies that contributed to the achievement of the goals**

USOR estimated serving 200 individuals in Supported Employment in FFY 2017. USOR served 179 clients who had an active Supported Employment plan in FFY 2017.

USOR continues to maintain high quality standards for vendors providing SE services. USOR requires vendors to receive training approved by the Association of Community Rehabilitation Educators (ACRE) in order to work 1-1 with clients. Vendors must also receive 10 CEUs per year in order to receive

continuing education and remain current in best practices. In addition, vendors providing Customized Employment services must receive training in CE as well as participate in the Technical Assistance component to training. USOR and the Division of People with Disabilities have provided opportunities for Community Rehabilitation Programs to receive training in Customized Employment. USOR participates in fidelity reviews for the Individualized Placement and Support (IPS) model, which assesses partnerships with VR as well as quality services provided to clients.

USOR coordinates services with agencies with mutual goals of competitive, integrated employment and who provide extended services such as the Division of Services for People with Disabilities (DSPD) and the Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health (DSAMH) to provide a smooth transition from short-term funding through VR to extended services. USOR is committed to providing on the job supports for individuals until they reach less than 20 percent intervention from a job coach or until they reach 24 months in employment. USOR has provided training to internal staff and to partner agencies to help enforce policies and best practices.

In addition, USOR is a partner in the “School to Work” pilots which utilize a Customized Employment approach to assist students transitioning from secondary educational institutions to competitive, integrated employment prior to graduation. The “School to Work” pilots have expanded from 3 initial sites to 5 in 2017-2018 school year. USOR has liaisons assigned to every Local Education Agency so that counselors can connect students with services both internally and through information and referral to community resources.

#### **Describe the factors that impeded the achievement of the goals and priorities**

Although USOR successfully expanded Supported Employment Service delivery options, employee retention with Community Rehabilitation Program providers has impacted expansion efforts. USOR in partnership with DSPD has provided customized employment training for Community Rehabilitation Program providers as part of its Supported Employment expansion activities. USOR and DSPD are currently conducting a Customized Employment Pilot project to evaluate employee retention factors within participating Community Rehabilitation Program providers. The project will conclude at the end of 2018 after which, USOR and DSPD will use the results to inform future expansion efforts.

#### **The VR program's performance on the performance accountability indicators under section 116 of WIOA**

USOR has submitted Common Performance Measures for the first and second quarters of program year 2017. USOR will continue to submit performance data as it becomes available for post exit measures employment 2nd and 4th quarter, median wages 2nd quarter, and Credential Attainment 1 year after program exit. The data collected for performance measures in program years 2017 and 2018 will set a baseline for negotiation of program accountability measures in 2019 and 2020.

#### **How the funds reserved for innovation and expansion (I&E) activities were utilized**

Since 2016, USOR has engaged in the following innovation and expansion projects and activities: (1) Funding of the USOR Transition and Supported Employment Coordinator to increase the provision of VR services to youth with disabilities, specifically those with the most significant disabilities and expansion of transition and pre-employment transition services for students with disabilities (2) Development and Implementation of six (6) Pre-Employment Transition Services contracts to serve eligible and potentially eligible students with disabilities (3) School to Work Customized Employment Project with the Division of Services for People with Disabilities (DSPD) and three local school districts to develop competitive, integrated, and meaningful employment for students with developmental disabilities, specifically students who are at-risk of entering into sheltered work settings at sub-minimum wages once exiting high school and (4) Collaboration with Source America to increase Customized Employment services in rural and underserved areas. (5) In addition, USOR provides annual funding support for operation of the Utah State Independent Living Council. (6) Administrative support and direct

expenses for operation of the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) were also provided by USOR. These funding arrangements are consistent with 34 CFR 361.35.

### **Quality, Scope, and Extent of Supported Employment Services**

Include the following:

#### **The quality, scope, and extent of supported employment services to be provided to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities**

USOR continues to work with DSPD to identify eligible individuals based on the priorities set in the cooperative agreement to be served by these reserved funds, including:

(1) The quality, scope and extent of supported employment services provided to individuals with the most significant disabilities

Quality: USOR maintains high quality in supported employment services by establishing and applying SE program standards for USOR SE vendors. These standards prescribe minimum customer outcomes and identify program procedures that must be followed for a provider to receive funds. A newly implemented quality assurance checklist for provider reviews every two years requires certifications, continuing education requirements, consumer satisfaction, review of complaints and concerns, and an action plan for continuing services for USOR.

USOR created specific policy based on the provision of supported employment services. The main service provided under SE is job coaching. USOR requires all employment specialists to be trained and have certifications prior to providing services to SE clients. Employment specialists from providers who do not meet the minimum qualifications cannot work with VR clients. The monitoring of SE service providers is by the CRP Review Committee (Facilities Coordinator, SE Coordinator, Field Services Director). This monitoring is conducted by assessing the application of USOR program standards and outcomes. It includes a review of any complaints received and the results of surveys completed by counselors using the program for clients. The CRP Review Committee also reviews current providers and create updated, standardized expectations and a provider manual, and to provide input on milestone descriptions and payment processes.

USOR also partners with extended support agencies to train and set expectations for employment specialists in customized employment, discovery, and Individualized Placement Services (IPS). These services have been proven to meet the needs of persons with most significant disabilities (MSDs) who may need additional services and long-term supports in order to be successfully employed.

Scope: SE services are provided with Title VI, Part B funds on a fee-for-service basis (based on achievement of milestones) by SE service providers, including functional assessment of clients to perform in supported employment (supplemental to the assessment conducted by the counselor for purposes of establishing eligibility with Title I funds); life-skills training, job development, job analysis and client job matching; training by an employment specialist in job skills and behavioral expectations at the job site; training and support away from the job to ensure work performance; family support; and support to the employer to ensure client job retention. The same scope of services is provided by the extended service agency. Target populations in supported employment include persons with the most significant disabilities who qualify for ongoing support from the Division of Services for Persons with Disabilities (DSPD) or the Division of Mental Health (DMH), or individuals who have ongoing support available from other sources, including private, Social Security and/or natural supports.

Extent: SE services are provided to eligible individuals according to their needs. Services are provided for a period not to exceed 24 months unless under special circumstances a longer period to achieve job stabilization has been jointly agreed to by the individual and the VR counselor and established in the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). SE services may be provided to

students with disabilities in the school system as a part of a team with the school, extended services agency, VR, family etc.

#### **The timing of transition to extended services**

The transition of services from VR to the extended support service agency depends on the customer's needs and level of support. VR can provide long-term extended support on the job and employment specialist job coaching for up to 24 months or until the customer reaches an 80/20 level of intervention support. The 80/20 level of support is defined as needing less than 20 percent intervention by the employment specialist to successfully complete job tasks. For example, if a client is working 20 hours each week, the employment specialist would be intervening with job supports for four hours or less each week.

The VR Counselor is required to maintain communication with the Supported Employment (SE) team at least every three months. The SE team includes the VR counselor, customer, family members, extended services agency representative (i.e., support coordinator, mental-health worker, etc.), teacher (if a student), employment specialist or employer. The team will coordinate services by braiding funding to ensure the client has the support needed to be successful on the job. Once the client reaches an 80/20 level of support or 24 months (whichever comes first) and the team agrees, services and funding will be transferred to the identified extended services agency for long-term SE. For youth and students with disabilities who qualify and need supported employment services, the transition to the extended services agency will occur when the client has graduated or aged out of the school system. The adult services agencies will continue to partner, braid funding and coordinate the transition of responsibility as appropriate.

#### **Certifications**

Name of designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate    **Utah State Office of Rehabilitation**

Name of designated State agency    **Utah Department of Workforce Services**

Full Name of Authorized Representative: Sarah Brenna

Title of Authorized Representative:    **Director**

#### **States must provide written and signed certifications that:**

1. The **designated State agency or designated State unit (as appropriate) listed above** is authorized to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Rehabilitation Act), as amended by WIOA\*, and its supplement under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act.\*\* **Yes**

2. As a condition for the receipt of Federal funds under title I of the Rehabilitation Act for the provision of VR services, the **designated State agency listed above** agrees to operate and administer the State VR Services Program in accordance with the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan , the Rehabilitation Act, and all applicable regulations , policies, and procedures established by the Secretary of Education. Funds made available under section 111 of the Rehabilitation Act are used solely for the provision of VR services and the administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan;    **Yes**

3. As a condition for the receipt of Federal funds under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act for supported employment services, the designated State agency agrees to operate and administer the State Supported Employment Services Program in accordance with the supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan\* , the Rehabilitation Act, and all applicable regulations , policies, and procedures established by the Secretary of Education. Funds made available under title VI are used solely for the provision of supported employment services and the administration of the supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan;\*\* **Yes**

4. The designated State agency and/or the designated State unit has the authority under State law to perform the functions of the State regarding the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement;    **Yes**

5. The State legally may carry out each provision of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement. **Yes**
6. All provisions of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement are consistent with State law. **Yes**
7. The **Authorized Representative listed above** has the authority under State law to receive, hold, and disburse Federal funds made available under the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement; **Yes**
8. The **Authorized Representative listed above** has the authority to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and the supplement for Supported Employment services; **Yes**
9. The agency that submits the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan and its supplement. **Yes**

### **Certification 1 Footnotes**

\* Public Law 113-128.

\*\* Unless otherwise stated, "Rehabilitation Act" means the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by WIOA, signed into law on July 22, 2014.

### **Certification 2 Footnotes**

\* All references in this plan to "designated State agency" or to "the State agency" relate to the agency identified in this paragraph.

\*\* No funds under title 1 of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

\*\*\* Applicable regulations, in part, include the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 76,77,79,81, and 82; 2 CFR part 200 as adopted by 2 CFR part 3485; and the State VR Services Program regulations.

### **Certification 3 Footnotes**

\* No funds under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

\*\* Applicable regulations, in part, include the citations in \*\*\* under Certification 2 footnotes

### **Additional Comments on the Certifications from the State**

#### **Certification Regarding Lobbying — Vocational Rehabilitation**

Certification for Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

(1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension,

continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

(2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions.

(3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly. This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

#### **Statement for Loan Guarantees and Loan Insurance**

The undersigned states, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions. Submission of this statement is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required statement shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

Applicant's Organization      **Utah State Office of Rehabilitation**

Full Name of Authorized Representative:      **Sarah Brenna**

Title of Authorized Representative:      **Director**

SF LLL Form – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (only if applicable)

(<http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>). If applicable, please print, sign, and email to [MAT\\_OCTAE@ed.gov](mailto:MAT_OCTAE@ed.gov)

#### **Certification Regarding Lobbying — Supported Employment**

Certification for Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

(1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

(2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in

connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions.

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If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions. Submission of this statement is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required statement shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

Applicant's Organization      **Utah State Office of Rehabilitation**

Full Name of Authorized Representative:      **Sarah Brenna**

Title of Authorized Representative:      **Director**

SF LLL Form – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (only if applicable)  
(<http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>).

#### **Assurances**

The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate and identified in the State certifications included with this VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, through signature of the authorized individual, assures the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), that it will comply with all of the requirements of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, as set forth in sections 101(a) and 606 of the Rehabilitation Act. The individual authorized to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement makes the following assurances:

#### **The State Plan must provide assurances that:**

##### **1. Public Comment on Policies and Procedures:**

The designated State agency assures it will comply with all statutory and regulatory requirements for public participation in the VR Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, as required by section 101(a)(16)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act.

##### **2. Submission of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and Its Supplement:**

The designated State unit assures it will comply with all requirements pertaining to the submission and revisions of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement for the State Supported Employment Services program, as required by sections 101(a)(1), (22), (23),

and 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act; section 102 of WIOA in the case of the submission of a unified plan; section 103 of WIOA in the case of a submission of a Combined State Plan; 34 CFR 76.140.

**3. Administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan:**

The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures it will comply with the requirements related to:

- a. the establishment of the designated State agency and designated State unit, as required by section 101(a)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act.
- b. the establishment of either a State independent commission or State Rehabilitation Council, as required by section 101(a)(21) of the Rehabilitation Act.

The designated State agency or designated State unit, as applicable

**(B) has established a State Rehabilitation Council**

- c. consultations regarding the administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, in accordance with section 101(a)(16)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act.
- d. the financial participation by the State, or if the State so elects, by the State and local agencies, to provide the amount of the non-Federal share of the cost of carrying out the VR program in accordance with section 101(a)(3).

- e. the local administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, in accordance with section 101(a)(2)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act.

The designated State agency allows for the local administration of VR funds Yes

- f. the shared funding and administration of joint programs, in accordance with section 101(a)(2)(A)(ii) of the Rehabilitation Act.

The designated State agency allows for the shared funding and administration of joint programs: Yes

- g. statewideness and waivers of statewideness requirements, as set forth in section 101(a)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act.

Is the designated State agency requesting or maintaining a waiver of statewideness for one or more services provided under the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan? See Section 2 of this VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan. No

- h. the descriptions for cooperation, collaboration, and coordination, as required by sections 101(a)(11) and (24)(B); and 606(b) of the Rehabilitation Act.

- i. all required methods of administration, as required by section 101(a)(6) of the Rehabilitation Act .

- j. the requirements for the comprehensive system of personnel development, as set forth in section 101(a)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act.

- k. the compilation and submission to the Commissioner of statewide assessments, estimates, State goals and priorities, strategies, and progress reports, as appropriate, and as required by sections 101(a)(15), 105(c)(2), and 606(b)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act.

- l. the reservation and use of a portion of the funds allotted to the State under section 110 of the Rehabilitation Act for the development and implementation of innovative approaches to expand and improve the provision of VR services to individuals with disabilities, particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities.

- m. the submission of reports as required by section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act.

**4. Administration of the Provision of VR Services:**

The designated State agency, or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures that it will:

## 5. Program Administration for the Supported Employment Title VI Supplement:

- a. The designated State unit assures that it will include in the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan all information required by section 606 of the Rehabilitation Act.
- b. The designated State agency assures that it will submit reports in such form and in accordance with such procedures as the Commissioner may require and collects the information required by section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act separately for individuals receiving supported employment services under title I and individuals receiving supported employment services under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act.
- c. The designated state unit will coordinate activities with any other State agency that is functioning as an employment network under the Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency program under Section 1148 of the Social Security Act.

## 6. Financial Administration of the Supported Employment Program:

a. The designated State agency assures that it will expend no more than 2.5 percent of the State's allotment under title VI for administrative costs of carrying out this program; and, the designated State agency or

**agencies will provide, directly or indirectly through public or private entities, non-Federal contributions in an amount that is not less than 10 percent of the costs of carrying out supported employment services provided to youth with the most significant disabilities with the funds reserved for such purpose under section 603(d) of the Rehabilitation Act, in accordance with section 606(b)(7)(G) and (H) of the Rehabilitation Act.**

**b. The designated State agency assures that it will use funds made available under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act only to provide supported employment services to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including extended services to youth with the most significant disabilities, who are eligible to receive such services; and, that such funds are used only to supplement and not supplant the funds provided under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act, when providing supported employment services specified in the individualized plan for employment, in accordance with section 606(b)(7)(A) and (D), of the Rehabilitation Act.**

#### **7. Provision of Supported Employment Services:**

**a. The designated State agency assures that it will provide supported employment services as defined in section 7(39) of the Rehabilitation Act.**

**b. The designated State agency assures that:**

**i. the comprehensive assessment of individuals with significant disabilities conducted under section 102(b)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act and funded under title I of the Rehabilitation Act includes consideration of supported employment as an appropriate employment outcome, in accordance with the requirements of section 606(b)(7)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act**

**ii. an individualized plan for employment that meets the requirements of section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act, which is developed and updated with title I funds, in accordance with sections 102(b)(3)(F) and 606(b)(6)(C) and (E) of the Rehabilitation Act.**

#### **Additional Comments on the Assurances from the State**

## **Program-Specific Requirements For Combined State Plan Partner Programs**

States choosing to submit a Combined State Plan must provide information concerning the six core programs—the Adult Program, Dislocated Worker Program, Youth Program, Wagner-Peyser Act Program, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program, and the Vocational Rehabilitation Program—and also submit relevant information for any of the eleven partner programs it includes in its Combined State Plan. When a State includes a Combined State Plan partner program in its Combined State Plan, it need not submit a separate plan or application for that particular program.\* If included, Combined State Plan partner programs are subject to the “common planning elements” in Sections II and III of that document, where specified, as well as the program-specific requirements for that program (available on [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) for public comment). The requirements that a State must address for any of the partner programs it includes in its Combined State Plan are provided in this separate supplemental document. The Departments are not seeking comments on these program-specific requirements, which exist under separate OMB control numbers and do not represent requirements under WIOA. For further details on this overall collection, access the Federal eRulemaking Portal at <http://www.regulations.gov> by selecting Docket ID number ETA-2015-0006.

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\* States that elect to include employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.) under a Combined State Plan would submit all other required elements of a complete CSBG State Plan directly to the Federal agency that administers the program. Similarly, States that elect to include employment and training activities carried by the Department of Housing and Urban Development and programs authorized

under section 6(d)(4) and 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 that are included would submit all other required elements of a complete State Plan for those programs directly to the Federal agency that administers the program.

## Appendix 1. Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Include the State's expected levels of performance relating to the performance accountability indicators based on primary indicators of performance described in section 116(b)(2)(A) of WIOA.

### Instructions:Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each State submitting a Unified or Combined Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The State is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education on state adjusted levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

**Table 1. Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)**

Program	PY 2018 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2018 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level	PY 2019 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2019 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level
Adults	67.00		67.00	
Dislocated Workers	81.00		81.00	
Youth	70.00		70.00	
Adult Education	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Wagner-Peyser	63.00		63.00	
Vocational Rehabilitation</	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

User remarks on Table 1

### Requested Revision(s)

The state must correct the figures entered for Proposed/Expected Goals to reflect those goals originally published by the state for public comment. The state must delete any revised goals, and enter their original proposed plan goals, because the proposed goals in the plan were required to be published for public comment.

**Table 2. Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)**

Program	PY 2018 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2018 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level	PY 2019 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2019 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level
Adults	70.00		70.00	
Dislocated Workers	84.00		84.00	
Youth	65.00		65.00	
Adult Education	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Wagner-Peyser	67.00		67.00	
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

User remarks on Table 2

**Requested Revision(s)**

The state must correct the figures entered for Proposed/Expected Goals to reflect those goals originally published by the state for public comment. The state must delete any revised goals, and enter their original proposed plan goals, because the proposed goals in the plan were required to be published for public comment.

**Table 3. Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)**

Program	PY 2018 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2018 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level	PY 2019 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2019 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level
Adults	5,646.00		5,646.00	
Dislocated Workers	7,445.00		7,445.00	
Youth	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

Adult Education	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Wagner-Peyser	5,414.00		5,414.00	
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

User remarks on Table 3

**Requested Revision(s)**

The state must correct the figures entered for Proposed/Expected Goals to reflect those goals originally published by the state for public comment. The state must delete any revised goals, and enter their original proposed plan goals, because the proposed goals in the plan were required to be published for public comment.

**Table 4. Credential Attainment Rate**

Program	PY 2018 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2018 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level	PY 2019 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2019 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level
Adults	62.00		62.00	
Dislocated Workers	72.00		72.00	
Youth	56.00		56.00	
Adult Education	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Wagner-Peyser	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

User remarks on Table 4

**Requested Revision(s)**

The state must correct the figures entered for Proposed/Expected Goals to reflect those goals originally published by the state for public comment. The state must delete any revised goals, and enter their original proposed plan goals, because the proposed goals in the plan were required to be published for public comment.

**Table 5. Measureable Skill Gains**

Program	PY 2018 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2018 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level	PY 2019 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2019 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level
Adults	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Dislocated Workers	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Youth	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Adult Education	50.00	41.00	50.00	42.00
Wagner-Peyser	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

User remarks on Table 5

**Requested Revision(s)**

The state must correct the figures entered for Proposed/Expected Goals to reflect those goals originally published by the state for public comment. The state must delete any revised goals, and enter their original proposed plan goals, because the proposed goals in the plan were required to be published for public comment.

**Table 6. Effectiveness in Serving Employers**

Program	PY 2018 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2018 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level	PY 2019 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2019 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level
Adults	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

Dislocated Workers	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Youth	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Adult Education	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Wagner-Peyser	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

## Performance Analysis/ Rationale

### Employment Rate 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter After Exit

We utilized the WIOA Performance Negotiations Tool provided by the Department of Labor for WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, and Wagner Peyser to establish the range for which to look at our proposed measures. In looking at those ranges we reviewed past negotiated numbers and past actual performance outcomes. We also tried to simulate 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter data based on past WIOA participants.

### Employment Rate 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter After Exit

We utilized the WIOA Performance Negotiations Tool provided by the Department of Labor for WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, and Wagner Peyser to establish the range for which to look at our proposed measures. In looking at those ranges we reviewed past negotiated numbers and past actual performance outcomes. We also tried to simulate 4<sup>th</sup> quarter data based on past WIOA participants.

### Median Earnings 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter After Exit

We utilized the WIOA Performance Negotiations Tool provided by the Department of Labor for WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, and Wagner Peyser to establish the range for which to look at our proposed measures. In looking at those ranges we reviewed past negotiated numbers and past actual performance outcomes.

### Credential Attainment

We utilized the WIOA Performance Negotiations Tool provided by the Department of Labor for WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth to establish the range for which to look at our proposed measures. In looking at those ranges we reviewed past negotiated numbers and past actual performance outcomes.

### Economic Environment

Utah's statewide unemployment rate has held at or below 4 percent for 30 consecutive months, and job growth has been above 3 percent for 18 months. The Utah economy is performing extremely well, to the point of drawing people into the workforce. The current year's labor force count has risen by 1.6

percent and the participation rate is currently well above the national rate at 68.4 percent. Opportunities for employment are readily available for job seekers with even just minimal skills. In such an environment, those who still turn to our agency for help will have multiple barriers and typically harder to place.

And while the overall economic picture in the state is strong, some counties in the eastern region of the state have been deeply affected by low oil prices. Comparing current job counts to January 2015 shows losses ranging from 13 to 18 percent for the three most heavily affected counties. In this area, we are concentrating heavily on reemployment efforts, but find it challenging for these rural areas where the loss of jobs in oil and gas have a multiplier effect across most other economic activity in the area.