

**LACKAWANNA COUNTY
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD**

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREA NE 055



**TRANSITIONAL LOCAL PLAN
JULY 1, 2016 → JUNE 30, 2017**

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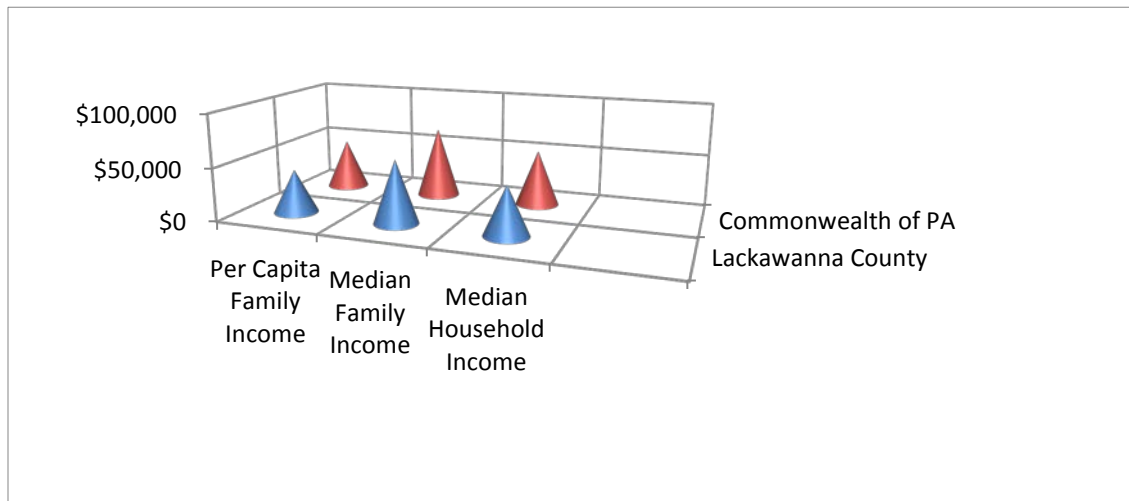
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Section 1: Workforce and Economic Analysis

Section 1.1: Provide an analysis of the economic conditions, including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations; and the employment needs of employers in those industry sectors and occupations.

Lackawanna County sits in the far Northeast corner of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania bordered by Luzerne, Monroe, Susquehanna, Wayne, and Wyoming counties. Predominantly urban in nature with two city centers (Scranton and Carbondale), there are many small towns and boroughs as well as pockets of rural landscape across the 465 square mile¹ land area. As of April, 2016, the total population was 212,719 with a civilian labor force totaling 107,500 and a current unemployment rate (seasonally adjusted as of March, 2016) of 5.9%². The Per Capita Personal Income is \$41,187. Median Household Income (2014 adjusted dollars) is \$46,056, and Median Family Income (2014 adjusted dollars) is \$59,733³.

In comparing Lackawanna County’s per capita personal income, median household income, and median family income with that of the Commonwealth of PA, it is apparent that the local area lags somewhat behind which substantiates an historical pattern and can also be attributed to the fact that business regrowth has been sluggish.



The recession of 2008-2010 brought downsizings and closings, most notably, across the local manufacturing and health care sectors, which resulted in the displacement of hundreds of skilled, semi-skilled, and non-skilled workers that, in turn, escalated the local unemployment

¹ U.S. Census Bureau

² PA Department of Labor and Industry (L & I), Center for Workforce Information & Analysis (CWIA)

³ PA Dept. of L & I, CWIA

rate to record highs where it remained for 5+ years. Hovering for many months at over 9%, the local economy struggled but is now recovering. The influx of new jobs was slow and the reluctance of local businesses/companies to expand their workforces resulted in higher than average numbers of long-term unemployed workers across the major sectors.

As said, Lackawanna County's economy is slowly improving, however, relatively weak compared to the U.S. and Pennsylvania overall as well as select regions of the Commonwealth including the Southeast, West, Central, and Southcentral.

Local Plan Data for Lackawanna County⁴ indicates that Healthcare and Logistics represented 3 of the top 5 growing industries by employment volume change, 2Q 2014 to 2Q 2015 (preliminary).

1. Warehousing and Storage
2. Residential Mental Health Facilities
3. Restaurants and Other Eating Places
4. Home Health Care Services
5. Department Stores

Again, using CWIA Local Plan Data, the healthcare industry once again emerges as the most prevalent source of employment, as evidenced by the fastest growing industries by employment volume change in Lackawanna County WDA (2012-22):

1. Restaurants & Other Eating Places
2. General Medical & Surgical Hospitals
3. Employment Services
4. Nursing Care Facilities
5. Outpatient Care Centers

Further, the following top 10 current employers in Lackawanna County by employment in Q3 of 2015⁵ verifies that the current industry base centers around the health care, government, banking and education sectors:

Allied Services Foundation
State Government
Community Medical Center
Scranton School District
Lackawanna County
The University of Scranton
TMG Health Inc.
Bank of America Na
Scranton Hospital Company LLC
Federal Government

⁴ PA Center for Workforce Information and Analysis (CWIA)

⁵ Lackawanna County Profile, April 2016

In comparing the current employment base with projected emerging industries, it can be deduced that health care is the major industry in the County with the most growth potential. Following is an ever growing warehousing sector followed by consumer goods/retail field. Government, education and banking are projected to remain stable. Finally, manufacturing trends are on the upswing. Within Lackawanna County, manufacturers support 9.79% of total employment (9,514 jobs) and provide an average wage that is 16.49% higher than the overall average county wage (\$44,820 vs. \$38,477). Annually, county manufacturers infuse \$426.4 million into the local economy in the form of worker salaries, a level only surpassed by the healthcare/social services industry. Manufacturing employment within Lackawanna County grew during each of the last three (3) years, and three (3) of the top 10 Lackawanna County 2016 High Priority Occupations, when rank-ordered by entry level salary, are within manufacturing. Given the significance of manufacturing to the current economy, and the anticipated growth of this sector in the years ahead, focused strategies that include upgraded outreach to this sector for the implementation of new-hire OJT contracting as well as facilitation of linkages to Industry Partnerships and customized training options will be implemented to facilitate the continued expansion of the manufacturing community. A continue strong linkage with the Northeast PA Industrial Resource Center (NEPIRC) [NEPIRC Executive Director sits as an active member of the Lackawanna County WDB] will set the stage in the design and implementation of such strategies.

Finally, according to The Conference Board Help Wanted On-Line TM, between March, 2015, and March, 2016, the number of online job postings in Lackawanna County *decreased* by 14.1% compared to a .5% increase for Pennsylvania overall. What can be deduced by these figures is that Lackawanna County is, indeed, well on its way to solvency following the recent recession but that jobs are somewhat scarcer than across the Commonwealth.

Occupations

The Local Plan Data indicates the Fastest Growing Occupations in Lackawanna County WDA (2012-22) are as follows:

Occupational Title	Employment Change (Volume)	Occupational Title	Employment Change (Percent)	Occupational Title	Total Openings
Registered Nurses	580	Medical Secretaries	39.3%	Retail Salespersons	150
Combined Food Prep/Serving Workers	480	Computer Systems Analysts	28.9%	Cashiers	141
Home Health Aides	320	Paralegals & Legal Assistants	27.6%	Combined Food Prep/Serving Workers	136
Laborers & Material Movers	310	Home Health Aides	26.5%	Registered Nurses	106
Personal Care Aides	310	Personal Care Aides	25.8%	Laborers & Material Movers	101

Employer Needs

Job postings are a relatively good indication of employer workforce needs.

According to the Local Plan Data, the top 10 Help Wanted On Line Job Postings **by Industry**, November 2015 are:

1. All Other Miscellaneous Ambulatory Health Care Services
2. Home Health Care Services
3. Temporary Help Services
4. All Other Outpatient Care Centers
5. Department Stores (except Discount Department Stores)
6. General Freight Trucking, Long-Distance, Truckload
7. General Medical and Surgical Hospitals
8. Colleges, Universities, and Professional Schools
9. Employment Placement Agencies
10. Commercial Banking

According to the Local Plan Data, the top 10 Help Wanted On-Line Job Postings **by Occupation**, November 2015:

1. Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers
2. Registered Nurses
3. Customer Service Representatives
4. Retail Salespersons
5. First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers
6. Nursing Assistants
7. Home Health Aides
8. Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses
9. First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers
10. Cashiers

The job postings (by industry and occupation) and the fastest growing industries and occupations point to likely hiring in the healthcare, transportation/logistics, retail, education, and employment services fields in Lackawanna County.

Section 1.2: Provide an analysis of the knowledge and skills required to meet the employment needs of the employers in the local area, including employment requirements for in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

Supporting the concept that a demand-driven workforce significantly promotes an area's long-term growth potential, it is recognized that local business must be guiding the development of initiatives and providing the specifications for re-alignment of local educational opportunities for in-demand jobs. The Lackawanna County Workforce Development Board has been strategically teamed with the Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce who, for many years, has spearheaded initiatives, to accomplish this goal. Past initiatives have included the following:



Development of an integrated partnership. Partners: Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce, Lackawanna County WIB, Local Educational Institutions (Johnson College, Lackawanna College, Luzerne County Community College, Marywood University, Penn Start University), & Local Business & Industry (Tobyhanna Army Depot, Cinram Manufacturing, Community Medical Center, Gentex Manufacturing, Moses Taylor Hospital, Mercy Health System Partners, Lackawanna Ambulance, Kemper-a Unitrin Business, Prudential Financial)

- Outcomes:
1. Developed Electronics Technician Training Program supporting Tobyhanna Army Depot that, ultimately, produced over 200 jobs;
 2. Completed a local survey of local health care providers with 31 organizations responding and the identification of 1266 projected openings;
 3. Supported an RN re-entry program with 13 graduates now back engaged in nursing field;
 4. Provided linkages with economic development initiatives engaging technical and start-up businesses.

Those initiatives served as a catalyst for industry participation in the design of training curriculums specifically targeting projected needs. As appropriate, and to spur direct industry involvement, meetings were held not only at the Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce but also, as appropriate, on-site at industry locations which allowed for increased management participation and tours of facilities by partner staff, thus, increasing the awareness of actual operations and company needs.

Building on expertise gained and through utilization of information received following a comprehensive regional survey of business and industry entitled the regarding actual employment needs conducted by *Northeast Pennsylvania Regional Skills Gap Analysis* that was prepared by NC3T (National Center for Career and Technical Colleges) under the Northeast PA Jobs 1st Initiative, the local area is poised to address identified needs. From that analysis, the following can be garnered:

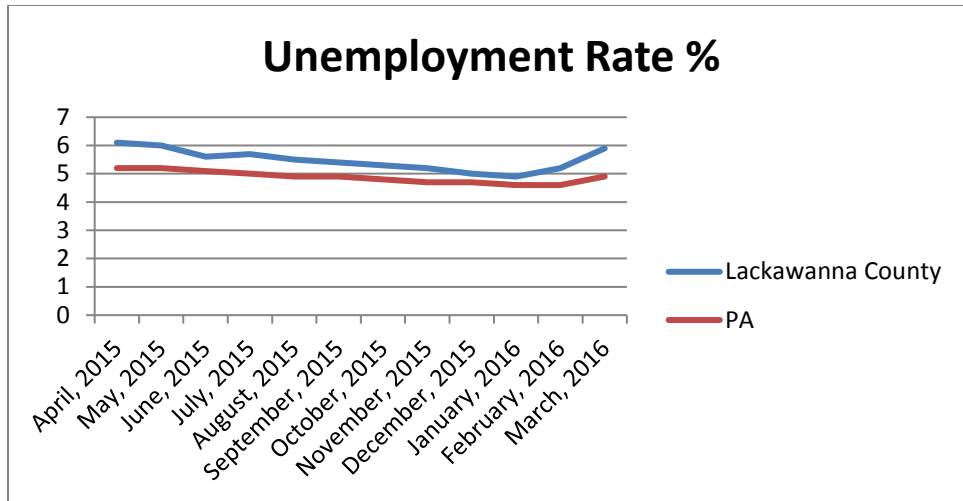
Active Listening	Giving full attention to what other people are saying, taking time to understand the points being made, asking questions as appropriate, and not interrupting at inappropriate times.
Complex Problem Solving	Identifying complex problems and reviewing related information to develop and evaluate options and implement solutions.
Coordination	Adjusting actions in relation to other actions.
Critical Thinking	Using logic and reasoning to identify the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions, conclusions, or approaches to problems.
Equipment Maintenance	Performing routine maintenance on equipment and determining when and what kind of maintenance is needed.
Judgment and Decision Making	Considering the relative costs and benefits of potential actions to choose the most appropriate one.
Management of Personnel Resources	Motivating, developing, and directing people as they work identifying the best people for the job.
Mathematics	Using mathematics to solve problems.
Monitoring	Monitoring/Assessing performance of yourself, other individuals, or organizations to make improvements or take corrective action.
Negotiation	Bringing others together and trying to reconcile differences.
Operation & Control	Controlling operations of equipment or systems.
Operations Monitoring	Watching gauges, dials, or other indicators to make sure a machine is working properly.
Persuasion	Persuading others to change their minds or behavior.
Reading	Understanding written sentences and paragraphs in work related

Comprehension	documents.
Repairing	Repairing machines or systems using needed tools.
Science	Using scientific rules and methods to solve problems.
Service Orientation	Actively looking for ways to help people.
Social Perceptiveness	Being aware of others' reactions and understanding why they react as they do.
Speaking	Talking to others to convey information effectively.
Time Management	Managing one's own time and the time of others.
Troubleshooting	Determining causes of operating errors and deciding what to do about it.
Writing	Communicating effectively in writing as appropriate for the needs of the audience.

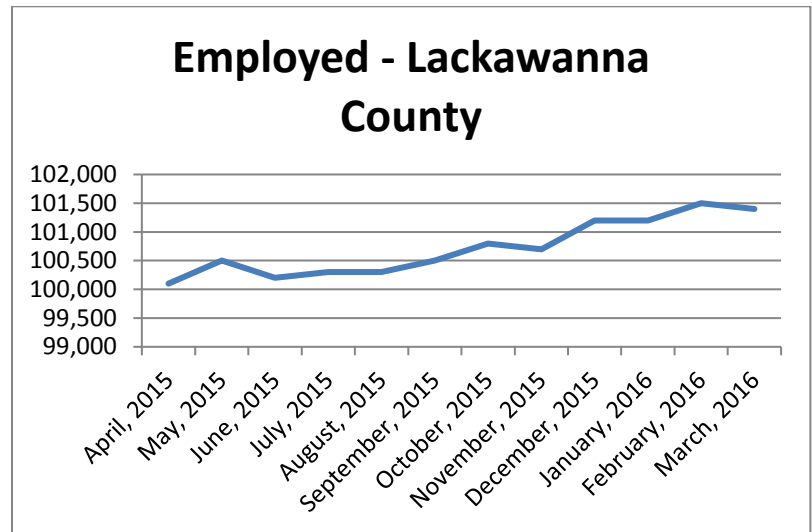
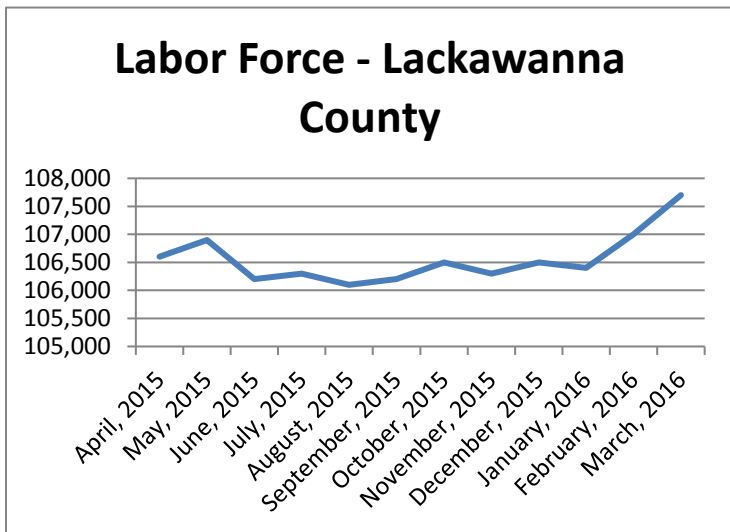
Local and regional initiatives such as this are vital to sustained economic growth and support the strategies of Pennsylvania's Combined State Plan. As plainly can be seen, the systems are structurally sound to produce results to support the needs of local business and industry. But, to ensure long-range success, business and industry must "remain at the table," providing industry-driven information on current and emerging job numbers and qualifications, fluctuating conditions or labor changes as they become predictable, retooling needs, infrastructure demands, projected expansion information, etc. As more information is provided on local market needs, not only can curriculums of study be revamped or initiated, but proper matching of the local pool of talent will then facilitate the most effective job referrals and placements, thus, eliminating time and frustration of the employer base. This in turn should promote the provision of family sustaining wages for job seekers.

Section 1.3: Provide an analysis of the local workforce, including current labor force (and unemployment) data, and information on labor market trends, and the educational and skill levels of the workforce in the region, including individuals with barriers to employment.

As can be seen by the chart below, Lackawanna County's unemployment rate has fluctuated only slightly over the past 12-month period. Consistently dropping slowly over the 9-month period beginning in April, 2015, a slight rise began in January of this year. This is attributable to more people returning to the workforce (March's labor force statistics have increased to a record high), thus, the labor pool is now larger because those individuals not looking for work were not part of the labor pool.



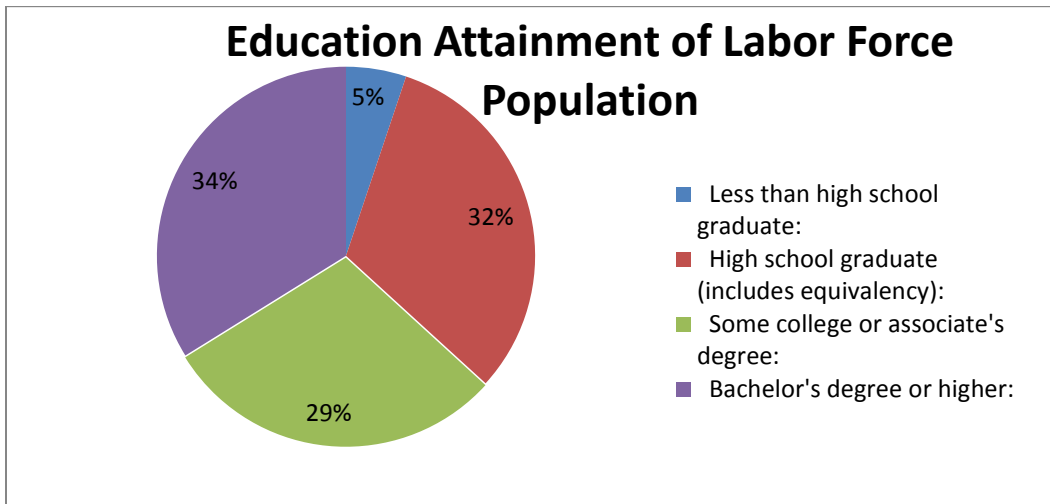
Following 5+ years of a lethargic economy, regrowth in Lackawanna County is fluctuating, but rebounding. This is evidenced in a review of the labor force and employment numbers over the past year period. As is pictured in the following charts, the number of people calculated in the local labor force in comparison with the actual number of those individuals that are employed follows the same pattern. Where the labor force numbers spike, so do the numbers of individuals that are filling jobs which, in turn, promotes a healthy economy.



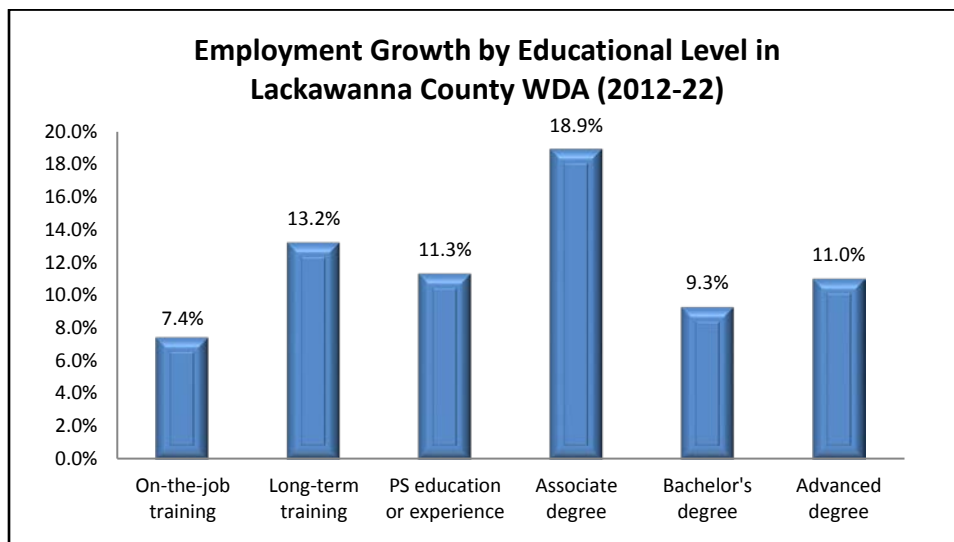
Education and Skill Level

Another important factor for consideration in a thorough review of an economic climate is the education and skill level of the current workforce which will, in turn, dictate the types of training and educational opportunities that must be made available to ensure a sizeable pipeline of workers to sustain economic growth.

Available statistics⁶ demonstrate that approximately 1/3 of Lackawanna County’s labor force has a Bachelor’s degree or higher.



In correlation, the type and numbers of jobs that are available in the local area tend to lean more to a skilled and semi-skilled workforce. Analyzing the information below, predictions indicate that the highest job growth will be supported by individuals with an Associate degree followed by occupational skilled training and life-long learning.



A concern that then comes to light is the brain drain of Bachelor-degreed or higher individuals migrating out of the County due to somewhat of a lack of applicable positions. A strong economy must be supported by a wide variety of types of job openings to sustain its workers. An inward migration of business and industry is needed to engage those exiting four year colleges and universities to not only reduce quality out-migration but also to encourage the return of those who have left for better positions.

⁶ Local Plan data, CWIA

Taking into consideration the local trends outlined in Section 1.1, the prevalent jobs, both currently as well as projected, fall, primarily within the health care, warehousing and logistics, and service occupational fields. Across all occupational clusters, there are a myriad of positions ranging from entry to executive levels. In most cases, those individuals with barriers to employment will enter the job market at the lower to intermediate level. For Lackawanna County, data⁷ provides the following:

- 21,094 of 16+ year olds live below the poverty level
- 7,826 of the total population speaks English less than “very well”
- 29,568 of 16+ year olds have a disability

These statistics represent significant barriers faced by potential workers; however, they do not preclude motivated individuals from migrating career ladders within specific industries.

Here is where the one-stop system exhibits its usefulness within the workforce arena. Those job seekers or underemployed in need of services or training to begin or continue their upward migration on the ladder to success, which then promotes receipt of both self and/or family sustaining wages, must just visit the local PA CareerLink® Center for access to assistance in reaching their goals. The collaboration of one-stop partners and leveraging of community resources enhances this process.

Section 1.4: Provide an analysis and description of workforce development activities, including type and availability of education, training and employment activities. Include analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of such services, and the capacity to provide such services, in order to address the education and skill needs of the workforce and the employment needs of the employers in the region.

With the inception of the new Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) in July, 2015, the Lackawanna County Workforce Area began an era of implementation of new policies and practices aligned to the new legislation. First and foremost, collaboration among partner entities is driving a re-design of structural process to ensure that the local workforce system is universally accessible, customer-centered, and that applicant training is job-driven.

As a comprehensive one-stop center, the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County serves as the vehicle for community access to a myriad of education, training and employment activities. Collaboration among partner entities ensures a cohesive approach for the delivery of services. Customers entering an inviting, open-concept atmosphere are greeted by a well-informed and friendly receptionist who directs new visitors to a triage area staffed by WIOA and Wagner-Peyser merit staff. This initial contact is provided in a confidential setting to allow for an uninhibited flow of personal information. This contact/interview is driven by the customer to allow for the identification of their immediate employment and/or training needs. Additionally, at this time, they are then provided with a full menu of available services.

⁷ Local Plan Data, CWIA

From there, the customer is afforded a variety of universal services that may include, but is not necessarily limited to: usage of the Career Resource Center (computer-access for job searching including JobGatewaySM); career-specific workshops (provision of labor market information and career decision-making for targeted industries); universal employment workshops (i.e., resume' preparation, interviewing techniques, cover letter writing, marketing oneself); State Civil Service information (note: the PA CareerLink[®] Lackawanna County is a Civil Service Testing site); a financial aid workshop that provides technical assistance in the preparation of Free Applications for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA); entrepreneurial information sessions; and, lastly, an orientation to WIOA workshop for those customers in need of training to enhance employment opportunities.

WIOA-funded training is accessible following eligibility determination which is completed on site by a dedicated WIOA Registration Specialist. This person conducts a confidential interview to ascertain the customer's eligibility based on WIOA standards and assembles the pertinent qualifying documents for data validation.

Once determined eligible, the customer is scheduled for computerized assessment in the areas of reading, applied mathematics, and locating information (local area uses WIN/Workkeys) to determine appropriate avenues for educational placement. Should an individual fall short of required levels on initial testing, as determined by industry standards, access is provided to on-line coursework (remediation/tutoring) to allow for probable improvement of skills prior to re-testing. Should a customer be determined to be basic skilled deficient or in need of more enhanced developmental services, that person is referred to appropriate community adult literacy and, possibly, English-language providers.

Following the assessment process, each customer is assigned a personal Customer Management Specialist who provides assistance in the development of an Individual Employment Plan (IEP) which charts the progression of activities enroute to the ultimate goal of employment. This plan can include a variety of one or more of the following activities:

- Individual Training Accounts

As required, the local area utilizes the Statewide Eligibility Training Provider List (ETPL) for approval of any Individual Training Accounts (ITAs). Local training providers must follow a Statewide eligibility determination process for inclusion on this list. Most local educational/training providers are aware of the process having provided services for many years but any new training entity or newly appointed staff at traditional providers receive one-on-one instruction from WIOA management staff and any viable training provider will be forwarded all applicable information as requested. All providers are informed of the local WDB's performance standards and demand-occupation requirements to enable inclusion on the List. Once a course of study is approved, it becomes a viable option of provision of an ITA. The Lackawanna County ITA policy is included with this Plan as **ATTACHMENT B**.

This process supports improvement of education and training options directly and in-directly related to the fluctuating needs of business and industry as commonly supported by the ETPL.

The ties to the educational community (both educational institutions of higher learning as well as technical training providers) have long been strong and productive.

- Work-Based Training

Implementation of WIOA legislation expanded the type of activities that are considered work-based in nature:

- On-The-Job Training (OJT) has long been a viable option for customers, both from the job seeker as well as employer perspective. As an alternative to the traditional classroom training route, OJT provides an incentive for hire of qualified applicants and reduces the financial cost for an employer during a contracted training phase. Designed to identify gaps in skill sets, it allows for specific employer –driven training to fill the gaps, thus, enabling the employer to augment their workforce. OJT contracting may also serve to eliminate trepidation on the part of the employer who is considering expanding his/her workforce. OJT is marketed through the BST during phone contacts and site visits, during informational sessions at the PA CareerLink®, in pamphlets and brochures, at networking events and job fairs, and on the PA CareerLink® website.

- Work Experience (primarily available for the out-of-school youth population up to 24 years of age) provides an opportunity for those young adults with little or no work history to gain vocational as well as soft skills in an actual worksite setting. Placements occur at both not-for-profit as well as private sites for up to 35 hours per week at a wage of \$8.00 per hour. (This increased above the current State minimum wage was approved by the local Board at its March, 2016 Quarterly meeting).

- Apprenticeships - strong linkages are maintained with representatives of labor organizations to support various apprenticeship opportunities and a listing is available at the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County. Also, apprenticeship and trade opportunities are strongly promoted in PA CareerLink® workshops and outreach ventures. The local Center provides contact information to prospective trainees on local application submission processes.

The Lackawanna County WDB is also a partner in a Community-Based Grant that was recently awarded to the Luzerne/Schuylkill Workforce Board that will provide pre-apprenticeship classes in the upcoming program year to young adults across a 12-County region in Northeastern PA. This project is designed to provide hands-on experience in apprenticeship occupations.

Finally, three members of local labor organizations actively participate as members of the Lackawanna County WDB.

- Job Shadowing and Internships will be coordinated based on such criteria as the customer's interests and abilities, linkages to higher education programs, feasibility of scheduling, goal compatibility, employment expectations, etc.

Over the course of the past several years, it has also come to light that individuals that are computer illiterate face a severe barrier to both employment and education opportunities. Further, retention of employment also becomes extremely difficult without this skill. To this end, the local area provides on-site, instructor-led training (Microsoft Office package) in a structured setting. Customarily, these classes are conducted 15 hours per week over a pre-determined 4-week schedule.

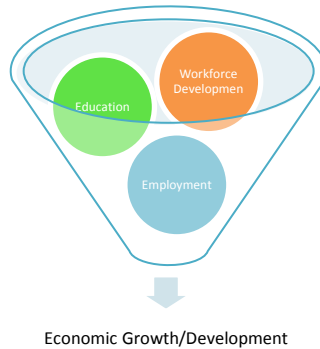
The PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County serves over 40,000 customers in any given year period providing universal career services. Over 700 persons receive direct employment and training funding via WIOA, TRADE, National Emergency Grants (NEGs), Community-Based grants, foundation awards, and Department of Human Services grants. Processes are in place. The system is working; however, areas of weakness to be strengthened include increased usage of OJT; amplified services for at-risk youth/drop-outs; expanded apprenticeship connections; a re-design of operational handbooks to mirror any upcoming structural changes; and augmented staff training opportunities.

Section 2: Strategic Vision and Goals

Section 2.1: Describe local board's strategic vision and goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment). Include goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on priority indicators of performance described in section 116(b)(2)(A) in order to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency.

The Lackawanna County Workforce Development Board (WDB), building on a successful operational and philosophical structure under the former Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and having weathered a significant local economic downturn during the recession of 2008-2010, the Lackawanna County WDB is now aggressively focused on supporting both local and regional economies through training, retraining, and the education of a future workforce. To accomplish this goal, it is recognized that workers, regardless of age or experience, must possess skills identifiable and in-line with the ever-fluctuating needs of business and industry. A needs-driven economy promotes current as well as future growth within and across all industrial sectors. Realizing that on-going planning efforts must engage a myriad of partners to ensure successful outcomes, the Lackawanna County WDB stands poised to develop, implement, and sustain comprehensive workforce initiatives; facilitate alignment of educational curriculums; communicate and integrate in regional projects; maintain/increase linkages within targeted industry sectors; and serve as a resource catalyst for economic re-growth.

For comprehensive provision of services, the system model does not change. It remains an integrated and collaborative effort among the primary stakeholders in a socioeconomic environment striving to promote economic prosperity among its citizens. The education of a workforce (skilled/trained) coupled with initiatives directly supporting the current needs of business and industry translates into economic growth.



In that concept, the Lackawanna County WDB has established the following **Vision**: *To serve as a conduit for information and communication among stakeholders, promoting economic growth through strategic investment and leveraging of resources to increase career advancement opportunities and the competitive advantage of businesses in Lackawanna County and all of Northeastern Pennsylvania and to promote the **Mission** of a comprehensive and structurally sound workforce development system through human capital development, capacity building, and operational effectiveness.*

As the Lackawanna County WDB approached the initial year of WIOA implementation, and in a concerted effort to ensure a smooth transitional period, the local Board, in January of 2015, began the development of a transitional *Strategic Plan of Action: A Blue-Print of Strategic Initiatives to Ensure a Competent, Qualified, Skilled Workforce Supporting Economic growth in Lackawanna and Surrounding Counties in Alignment with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act* as a basis for goal-setting and internal organization. First and foremost, the implications of the recession (in looking back 5 years to 2011), over 3,000 individuals (documented cases) were dislocated from employment. In considering the number and types of dislocations/closings, overarching goals of the local area became 1) to assist local economic development entities in the recruitment of new business and industry to the area as well as 2) to facilitate initiatives aimed at stabilization of the current employer base. The basic strategy to accomplish these tasks are as follows:

OVERARCHING GOALS	
Recruitment of New Business/Industry	Stabilization of Current Employer Base
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in meetings with prospective businesses/industry. • Provide current labor market information/data. • Identify a pool of workers based on specific industry needs through Americas Job Center locations. • Provide assessment/pre-hire testing of applicants. • Provide On-The-Job Training dollars to support new hires. • Provide facility usage for recruitment and interviewing purposes. • Assist in providing linkages to local educational facilities offering industry-specific training options. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in meetings with local business leaders to discuss potential growth patterns. • Facilitate/participate in discussions regarding educational curriculum development to support current/projected needs. • Provide linkages to the Strategic Early Warning Network (SEWN) • Identify a pipeline of potential workers supporting an industry-specific skilled workforce. • Address development of career pathways supporting advancement/upgrade or current workforce.

These objectives are not new. They have been priorities for the past 15 years and have resulted in many successful ventures that have produced qualified, skilled workers in need both locally as well as regionally. However, as the needs of business and industry fluctuate, the local area must be equipped to adapt (quickly) to changes in workforce needs to sustain an energetic economy. Driven by its business representatives, the Lackawanna County WDB is primed to serve as a catalyst for economic growth and development through implementation of prior best practices as well as newly designed/developed initiatives. This will be accomplished by strategic implementation of the overarching goals listed above combined with systemic goals as furthered outlined:

GOAL	STRATEGY
To be recognized by the business and industry community as a valuable resource for the provision of workforce information, data, assistance, and guidance.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Increase outreach to business and industry through expanded employer contacts and site-visits; 2) Improve material for dissemination; 3) Expand the current BST newsletter; and 4) Encourage participation of not only current internal members but external entities as well.
Continued and enhanced collaboration with NE PA Alliance and PREP.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Ensure continued attendance at all NE PA Alliance/PREP meetings; 2) Ensure collaboration in any regional economic development linkages; 3) Provide continued assistance in grant writing of regional project initiatives; and 4) Provide a mutual exchange of local labor market data.
Strategic linkage with the Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce, Lackawanna County Department of Planning and Economic Development, and City of Scranton Office of Economic and Community Development (OECD) .	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Ensure a minimum representation of two members from the above agencies/entities on the Board at any given time; 2) Continue collaboration in outreach initiatives such as, but not necessarily limited to, on-site

	<p>visits to business and industry, provision of current workforce-related data, and dissemination of information detailing One-Stop services;</p> <p>3) Continue representation by the WDB Executive Director on area Boards and Committees;</p> <p>4) Collaborate in the development of business-education initiatives supporting career pipeline development, career awareness/ladders, school-to-work projects, identified industry-related specific needs, etc.</p>
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Section 2.2: Describe how the local board’s vision and goals align with and/or supports the governor’s vision and goals for the commonwealth’s workforce development system.

The Commonwealth of PA has outlined a vision with a rigorous plan of action to make changes to enhance the current workforce system. The Commonwealth’s goals surrounding career pathways models, addressing significant worker pipelines and incumbent worker upgrading, increased opportunities for youth, engagement of both local as well as regional employer bases, and data sharing will be replicated locally based on current practices and the development of new and innovative methods of service provision. To that end, the Lackawanna County Workforce Area proposes the following:

- increased integration into both secondary and post-secondary institutions to ensure heightened awareness of career pathways based on the types of current/fluctuating industry trends. This, in turn, will afford individuals, including those with disabilities, the opportunity to pursue employment in fields (from entry-level to highly-skilled positions) that are prevalent in the local market as well as to promote the attainment of self/family-sustaining wages;
- solicitation of alternate forms of funding/support (i.e., H1B Make-It-In-America grants, Industry Partnership Awards, foundation grants, Union support) that will allow for the provision of training opportunities to industries in need of advanced training for their incumbent workers as well as new hires (addressing pipeline issues) to promote industry growth and competition across a global market;
- a reconfiguration of the overall youth structure that allows for implementation of enhanced work-based training opportunities supporting skill attainment, work-based training, career awareness, structured peer-to-peer as well peer-to-authority interaction, increased pre-apprenticeship/apprenticeship opportunities, and GED/literacy instruction;
- continued engagement of employers through industry-sector initiatives in high-demand occupational areas (conducted quarterly with industry speakers; a job fair; a career and education fair; industry-specific informational workshops; and panels of previously-trained workers within the targeted cluster providing invaluable insight into job

acquisition. Also, heightened outreach by the local Business Services Team (BST) as well as a continued strong collaboration with both the local Chambers of Commerce and other economic development entities; and

- utilize any/all data provided by the Commonwealth of PA as well as such organization as NEPA Alliance, the Institute for Public Policy & Economic Development, the PA State Data Center, etc., to ensure knowledge of current/fluctuating trends that, in turn, provides a basis for program design and development, employer outreach, systemic stability, and concentrated productivity.

The Lackawanna County Workforce Development Area’s vision, broadly interpreted, facilitates a movement for enhanced collaboration and coordination among all key community partners, overarching both economic and workforce development, to include the education community, community-based organizations, the public welfare system, veteran’s organizations, the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR), literacy providers, and other youth providers of services (YMCA, Boys & Girls Club, and Lackawanna County Department of Human Services including children and youth services).

Furthermore, to accomplish the mission strategies, the following must occur:

Human Capital Development:	Providing industry-related, skill-specific training to job seekers and incumbent workers to ensure that the supply and demand for workers, both locally as well as regionally, meets current needs as well as emerging expectations.
Capacity Building:	Demonstrating capabilities to ensure growth of worker pipelines for current as well as emerging sectors (both identified as well as anticipated) through education and training of adult, unemployed workers and youth.
Operational Effectiveness:	Conducting year-round, internal monitoring of policies, processes, service providers, fiscal integrity, transparency, procurement, performance, and expenditures to ensure overall compliance with mandated functions, thus, promoting continuous improvement.

Section 2.3: Eliminated by PA Department of Labor & Industry

Section 2.4: Describe how the local board’s goals relate to the achievement of federal performance accountability measures.

Federal performance accountability measures have always served as the benchmark for rating a local area's attainment of goals, not only within mandated measurable categories but in providing a broad picture of the overall operation of a local program. The overarching goal of the Lackawanna County WDB is to enable a well-rounded menu of services that promotes job acquisition, retention of positions, and the receipt of self/family-sustaining wages upon program exit for all customers (Adult, DW, Youth). Further, the attainment of credentials as well as measurable skill gains serves to increase the parameters for reaching the measures. Moreover, the creation of a skilled workforce that strategically meets the current as well as emerging needs of local (and, perhaps, regional) business and industry is then well positioned to sustain and augment economic growth and development.

The Lackawanna County WDB has always endeavored to meet and/or exceed all mandated performance measures. But this is not enough. Attainment of the measures allows for a usage of a baseline of programmatic data for assessment of current operational practices which, in turn, forms a basis for continuous improvement. As stated in Section 2.2, to accomplish human capital development, capacity building, and operational effectiveness across the local program as a whole, the WDB must have the capability to meet negotiated performance levels.

Section 3: Local Area Partnerships and Investment Strategies

Section 3.1: Taking into account the analysis described in Appendix B – Section 1, describe the local board's strategy to work with the entities that carry out the core programs to align resources available to the local area, in order to achieve the strategic vision and goals described in element 2.1. This analysis should include:

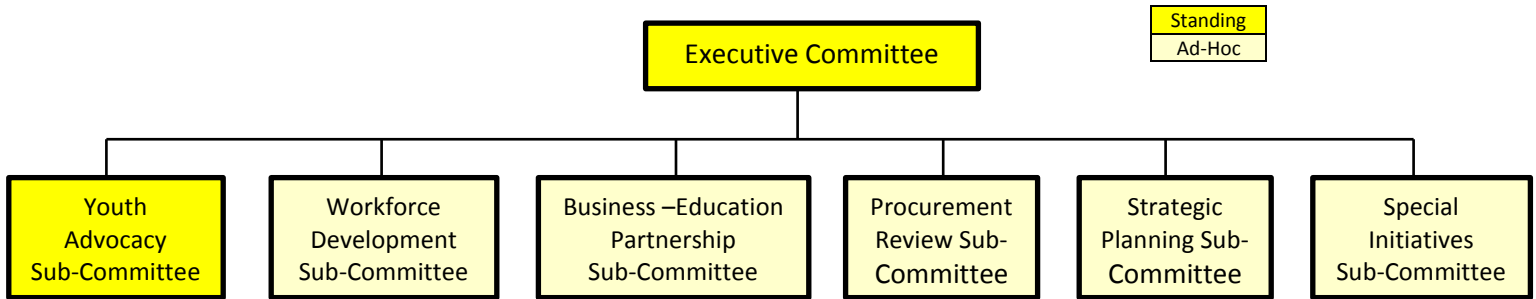
A. A descriptive overview of the local workforce development system; include key stakeholders and entities associated with administrative and programmatic /service delivery functions. Examples include elected officials, advocacy groups, local workforce development board and committee structure, fiscal agent, operator(s), required program partners, and major contractors providing Adult/Dislocated Worker/Youth program elements. Describe respective roles and functional relationships to one another;

B. A list of all local PA CareerLink® centers; include address, phone numbers, and hours of operation; and

C. An attached organizational chart that depicts a clear separation of duties between the local board and programmatic/service delivery entities.

A. The Local Elected Officials (LEOs) [Lackawanna County Board of Commissioners] appoint the business members of the local WDB as authorized by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014. Local Chambers of Commerce, representing local businesses, business organizations and business trade associations, make nomination, by letter, to the LEOs who then make appointments as appropriate. Regional and local education agencies, institutions, unions, and organizations nominate individuals to represent community-based organizations, labor organizations, economic development agencies, etc. with final approval for appointments resting with the LEOs. Adhering to the local By-Laws established by the WDB and reviewed most recently in September, 2015, the Lackawanna County WDB must be comprised

of a minimum 51% majority representing the local business sector. Currently, the Committee structure of the local WDB is as follows:



Executive Committee	Represents the full-WDB membership in the provision of oversight and including overall system operation, WDB staff, WIOA Staff, PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County, community outreach, program development, etc. The WDB Executive Committee has the authority of the full-WDB to approve any/all actions (programmatic and fiscal) as necessary to ensure a timely deliverance of services. Any/all action taken by the Executive Committee is presented to the full Board at quarterly meetings for review, discussion, and final approval.
Youth Advocacy Sub-Committee	Provides oversight and guidance in the comprehensive deliverance of all youth services including, but not limited to, the following: authorization of release of Requests for Proposals (RFPs) to secure training/educational services; review and oversight of on-going yearly activities to ensure compliance with local plan of operation and specific funding criteria; provides guidance to Youth Operational Staff, as needed; conducts outreach to local school districts for dissemination of programmatic information and economic development initiatives. Performs any/all other youth-related duties as prescribed by the full-Board with actions reported for final approval during quarterly meetings. Membership is not limited to WDB members and may include members of the community at-large with a vested interest in youth.
Workforce Development Sub-Committee	Serves in the capacity to communicate and promote the actions and activities of the Board in alignment with local and regional economic development through support and oversight of industry-led initiatives including, but not limited: on-going formation and sustainment of Industry Partnerships; dissemination of any/all industry-specific worker training funding; leveraging of resources; outreach and communication efforts; regionalization promotion; sustainability planning; integration of business services; and long-range development. All actions taken by this Committee are reported at full-Board quarterly meetings.
Business-Education Partnership Sub-Committee	Provides directives to the development of educational initiatives to ensure alignment with changes in shifting economic and workforce climates including, but not limited to: development of industry-led curricula; on-line course accessibility; development of wide-based articulation agreements; improving the school-to-work concept within the community at-large; promotion of a variety of training options (short & long-term); and oversight of internal programs aligned with education. All actions taken by this Committee are reported at full-Board quarterly meetings.
Procurement Review Sub-Committee	Sits for the primary function of review, assessment and rating of any/all proposals received in response to an officially procured Request for Proposal (RFP) solicitation. Meetings are not regularly scheduled and called only following solicitation of RFP. All reviews and documentation (rating results) are forwarded to the Executive Committee for discussion and final approval. Any sitting member of the Youth Advocacy Sub-Committee may volunteer to sit as a member of this Sub-Committee.
Strategic Planning Sub-Committee	Provides overall guidance in the development and on-going review of a viable Strategic Plan of Action establishing both short and long-range goals solidifying the Board's objectives/goals and strategies. Meetings are not regularly scheduled and occur, primarily once per Program Year.
Special Initiatives Sub-Committee	Provides oversight and guidance in the administration and operation of any/all specific initiatives that may include such areas as specialized programs/grant awards, One-Stop programs/events, community requests for funding, etc.

At this time, the local area is contemplating a structural change to allow for enhanced transparency and a clearer separation of functional duties. It is anticipated that a Fiscal Agent change will address this issue coupled with changed procurement process for services. Discussion is on-going.

As stated, this structural change will allow the local Board to procure services for Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, EARN and other grant awards in compliance with the WIOA. At this time, it is envisioned that Requests for Proposals (RFPs) will be solicited during late May/early June, 2016, for service providers for PY 2017 (7/1/16 – 6/30/17).

Currently, the Consortium of Operators for the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County is comprised of the following: Title I Provider of Services, Wagner-Peyser, and the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation. Linkages with partner entities serve to strengthen the overall delivery of comprehensive services to the universal public.

PARTNER ENTITY	ROLES/RELATIONSHIPS
<i>Wagner-Peyser Act Services</i>	Services provided by the PA Bureau of Workforce Partnership and Organization (BWPO) and the PA Bureau of Workforce Development Administration (BWDA) that includes vocational counseling, job search assistance, job matching, JobGateway SM enrollment assistance, business services for employers, and intensive re-employment services
<i>WIOA Title I Adult/Dislocated Worker/Youth Providers</i>	A RFP will be solicited during May/June, 2016 to determine appropriate providers of WIOA Title I services for PY 2016.
<i>Programs under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973</i>	As the designated sole provider of these programs, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation staff provides services that include vocational counseling and guidance, vocational evaluation, restoration, training, job placement, and pre-employment training services for eligible and potentially eligible high school students with disabilities. OVR also provides multiple services to the business community designed to assist businesses with hiring qualified employees with disabilities.
<i>Services authorized under Title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965</i>	Administered locally by Pathstone, Inc., services are targeted to individuals over 55 years of age such as paid work experience programs, some employment training, and vocational counseling.
<i>Community Services Block Grant(CSBG) Act</i>	Services are provided through local Community Action Agency with a direct linkage to PA CareerLink® services.
<i>Adult Basic Education & Literacy</i>	Services provided through a local college as well as secondary local community-based organizations. referrals are direct from the one-stop system.
<i>Veterans Services</i>	Veterans services are provided through the PA CareerLink® system by a BWPO staff person. Services include career counseling, information and veterans benefits, and tuition for skill training.
<i>Department of Human Services</i>	Services provided through TANF and EARN which are targeted to Public Assistance recipients and include information and dissemination of welfare benefits, supportive services, counseling, supported work, and job coaching.

<i>Vocational Educational Activities under Carl D. Perkins Act</i>	A vocational /technical school provides these services which include dissemination of information relative to financial aid to attend post-secondary training and post-secondary occupational skill training.
<i>Trade Adjustment Assistance</i>	Service is provided by BWPO and includes tuition assistance for dislocated workers, rapid response to employees in the event of massive layoffs or plant closings and income subsidies to assist candidates while in training.
<i>Educational Opportunity Center (EOC)</i>	Non-profit organization providing career exploration, guidance, and assistance in financial aid form preparation.

B. Within the Lackawanna County Workforce Area, there is one comprehensive PA CareerLink® Center:

PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County
135 Franklin Avenue
Scranton, PA 18503
Phone #: 570.963.4671
Hours of Operaton: Monday through Friday; 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM

C. Due to anticipated upcoming structural changes, the Lackawanna County WDB, at this time, submits A provisional organizational chart as ATTACHMENT A.

Section 3.2: Describe the workforce development system in the local area that identifies the programs that are included in that system and how the local board will work with the entities carrying out core and other workforce development programs to support alignment to provide services, including programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, that support the strategy identified in the State plan under section 102(b)(1)(e).

The Lackawanna County Workforce Development Board, as a single-County entity, has long been integrated into the seam of the community with membership overlapping a variety of different boards and committees which, in turn, promotes a system of stability for the provision of services and eliminates duplication of effort among community providers. Stated simply, the Board endeavors to make everyone aware of “who does what” in the community and “where to go” when specific services are needed. To ensure alignment with Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) legislation and to promote acquisition of the most

qualified providers of Title I core services, as previously stated, the local Board will conduct a formal RFP process, at least by-yearly or more frequently if needed, that outlines required elements (as defined by the WIOA statutes) and application processes. The local Board currently utilizes an ad-hoc *Procurement Review Sub-Committee* for oversight of this process and allows for impartiality and transparency in the selection of providers. This action will serve to address the needs, both specifically and universally, of the Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth populations from intake and eligibility determination through establishment of Individual Employment Plans (IEP) that may or may not include training opportunities (occupational skills training or On-The-Job Training) enroute to self-sufficiency. Further, the IEP will identify the need for additional support services which can be provided through collaboration with community partners such as, but not necessarily limited to, adult education and literacy providers (Marywood University – Title II contractor; United Neighborhood Centers of NE PA) as well as vocational rehabilitation services by OVR, as previously described. These processes will, in turn, support a tactical plan for educational growth and the attainment of skills essential within a competitive job market. The Executive Director and staff to the WDB will continue to sit on community boards and provide insight into local WIOA operations and opportunities, serving as a conduit for the dissemination of WIOA operational information and, in turn, assimilating other community-based information for collaboration purposes. The Lackawanna County WDB Executive Director has for many years sat as a member of the Carl D. Perkins planning committee at the Career Technology Center (CTC) of Lackawanna County, attends semi-annual meetings, and actively participates in the Center’s events. The WDB Executive Director also sits on the *Perkins* planning committees of both Johnson College and Lackawanna College. Finally, WIOA providers of service, Wagner-Peyser, and OVR staff will leverage collective resources to promote optimum outcomes across the system.

Section 3.3: Describe how the local board, working with the entities carrying out core programs, will expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment.

The Lackawanna County WDB utilizes the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County, centrally located at 135 Franklin Avenue in downtown Scranton, PA, as the operational arm for the provision of services and coordination of activities amongst a variety of community partners and educational institutions/training providers. Selected WIOA providers of services will be based at the PA CareerLink® site to ensure a coordinated effort with not only PA Wagner-Peyser staff but with OVR, PA Department of Human Services, Lackawanna County Head Start, local training providers, Pathstone (provision of older worker services), the local EARN provider, and others to ensure a seamless, friendly, and uncomplicated process for service provision for the job-seeking customer as well as assistance for the business community. As mentioned, all of these entities are partners at the local PA CareerLink® site, thus, enabling a comprehensive mix of activities in the true “One-Stop” fashion. It must also be noted here that Lackawanna College, Johnson College, Penn State-Worthington Scranton Campus, and Marywood University maintain close ties with the PA CareerLink® as member entities, visiting the Center on a regular

basis and providing valuable materials and contact information for all of their programs of study. In an attempt to further expand connections, from a youth standpoint, WIOA staff are visiting local intermediate and secondary schools, providing career information, discussing services available following graduation, and promoting technical education. Also, linkages have been established with the Lackawanna County Department of Human Services (formerly Lackawanna County Children and Youth Services) for referral of youngsters that are foster children, those aging out of the foster care system, or are involved with the Juvenile Justice system. An additional collaboration with the Lackawanna County Department of Human Services (formerly Department of Public Welfare) provides assistance in identifying prospective customers which may, in turn, assist in the reduction of the welfare rolls. As described, all services are available to individuals with barriers to employment. Finally, solicitation of additional PA CareerLink® partners is on-going with the Educational Opportunity Center (EOC) [providing educational information and career guidance/services] slated as an incoming partner in the fall of 2016.

Section 3.4: Identify and describe (for each category below) the strategies that are and/or will be used to:

A. Facilitate engagement of employers, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations, in workforce development programs in addition to targeted sector strategies:

B. Support local workforce development system described in element 3.2 that meets the needs of businesses;

C. Better coordinate workforce development programs with economic development partners and programs.

This must include the implementation of incumbent worker training programs, on-the-job training programs, work-based learning programs, apprenticeship models, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies, career pathways initiatives utilization of effective business intermediaries and other business services and strategies that support the local board's strategy in element 31.

A. The Lackawanna County WDB has, for the past three years, sanctioned, through the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County, quarterly events that target specific industry sectors that are in-demand in the local area. These events traditionally include industry-specific “kick-off” speakers, an on-site job fair, an educational panel/fair, career-ladder discussions, and distribution of industry-related materials. These events have been extremely successful and will continue through Program Year 2016.

Systematic procedures have been implemented to address current worker needs and promote the on-going development of a trained workforce that can not only compete in today's global economy but that will significantly and specifically support both the current as well as projected

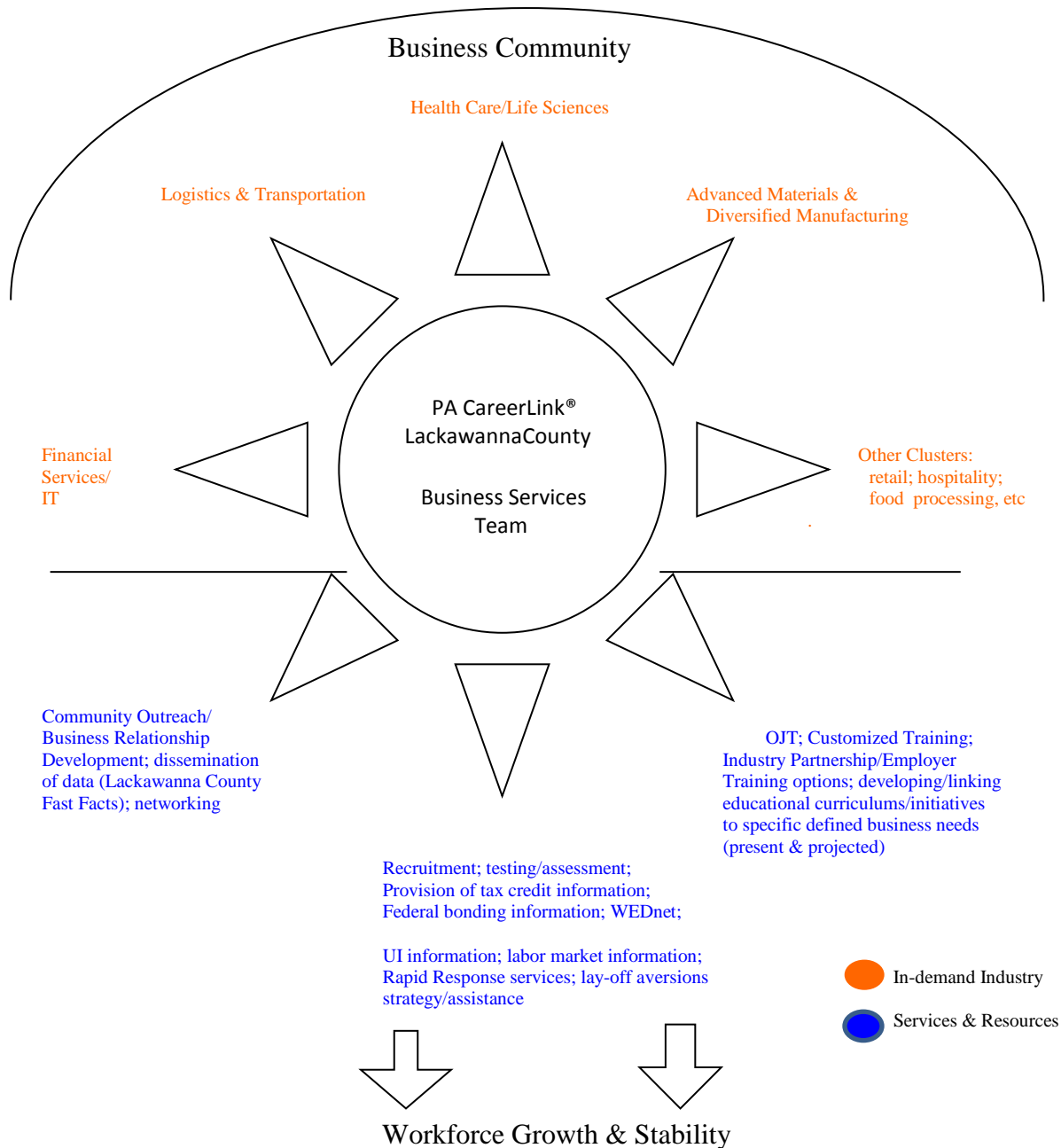
needs of the business community in Lackawanna as well as surrounding Northeastern PA counties. These procedures involve a unified team (economic and workforce development professionals) approach to outreach that allows for identification of challenges and needs of both small as well as large employers. Site visits, phone contacts, and email distributions (both employer-specific as well as universal through Constant Contact) augment employer services that includes posting jobs, applicant screenings, wage rate comparisons, research of skilled labor pools, development of job descriptions, and coordination of job fairs. Additionally, employer surveys, completed quarterly, provide a barometer of effective practices and allow for recommendations to improve delivery of services.

It also must be noted here that the Strategic Early Warning Network (SEWN) has proven to be a valuable partner, not only to local Workforce Development Boards but to many other economic development organizations as well, in helping companies across all industries minimize, or in some cases completely avoid, reductions in employment.

Workforce development organizations across the country are forging new relationships with a multitude of manufacturing and economic development entities to proactively work with regional employers to assess their business risks, devise risk mitigation strategies and implement those strategies in ways that are affordable, effective and sustainable before layoffs occur. The General Accounting Office (GAO) featured many such partnerships within its January 2012 Report to Congressional Committees entitled “Workforce Investment Act – Innovative Collaborations between Workforce Boards and Employers Helped Meet Local Needs”. A success story outlined in that report highlights a partnership between the California Workforce Investment Board and California’s Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) Center. Together, the Board and Center provided proactive layoff aversion services to manufacturers over a two (2) year period. Based upon U.S. Department of Commerce and voluntarily-reported participating company data, a total of 426 layoffs were avoided and 71 new jobs were created as a result of this collaborative effort. Given this success, the Lackawanna County WDB ensures exploration, development and launch of new, innovative partnerships designed to proactively work with regional employers to help them avoid layoffs and create more well-paying, sustainable regional jobs.

How these services are delivered are particular to individual PA CareerLink® centers; however, all must support the rationale that efficient and effective delivery can significantly drive economic, workforce and community development. Internal operational practices, thus, must promote collaborative initiatives and serve to coordinate broad as well as individualized-based outreach plans of action and promote a “demand-driven” product.

Structurally, the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County BST operates accordingly:



The PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County BST works extremely hard to attract and target not only new employers, but also assist and educate existing local businesses, both large and small, in such areas as fluctuating employment trends, available workforce pools, average hourly wage data, etc. Through review and analyzation of the monthly *Fast Facts* generated by the PA Center for Workforce Information and Analysis (CWIA) as well as Ad Hoc reports designed to provide local statistics, the BST can assess trends that can then, in turn, provide measurements of current services and dictate any necessary adjustments.

Listed below is a breakdown of the information gathered for full-calendar year 2015 and year-to-date information for 2016:

Calendar Year 2015					Calendar Year 2016				
Month	Self-Entered Job Orders (JO)/Staff Entered	Total # of JO Entered	New Employers	Avg JO per day	Month	Self-Entered Job Orders (JO)/Staff Entered	Total # of JO Entered	New Employers	Avg JO Per day
January	87/131	218	9	10.90	January	111/167	278	12	14.63
February	88/132	220	8	11.57	February	137.205	342	11	17.10
March	80/120	200	6	9.09	March	146/217	363	14	15.78
April	124/187	311	19	14.13					
May	1104/158	262	5	13.10					
June	94/142	236	8	10.72					
July	103/154	257	8	11.68					
August	145/218	363	11	17.28					
September	155/228	383	7	18.23					
October	132/199	331	114	15.76					
November	114/171	285	11	15.83					
December	92/138	230	14	10.45					
2015 Totals	1318/1978	3,296	120	13.22	2016 YTD Totals	394/589	983	37	15.83

Twitter, Facebook and Constant Contact supplement efforts with a distribution of information to well over 5,000 participants, professionals, and educational providers on a daily/weekly basis.

B. Core services are universal in nature, provided by all partner entities within the PA CareerLink® system that compliment outreach to the business community. Core services traditionally encompass, but are not necessarily limited to, the following: development of customer resumes´ for employer job matching (in the JobGatewaySM system); job readiness services that include career counseling, workshops, and assessments to ensure appropriate job matching; provision of labor market information by industry sector that identifies local high-demand industry openings; provision of one-on-one staff assisted services that compliments not only the job seeker but significantly improves relations with employers and reduces frustrations with usage of a complex system; and development of an Individual Employment Plan with each job seeker with the ultimate goal of successful job matching. The one-stop system of operation significantly enhances local employers´ access to an appropriate pipeline of skilled talent to meet their individualized needs. Additionally, training opportunities (provided through WIOA funding) can address skill gaps both prior to hire (new workers) as well as upgrading of the incumbent workforce (career advancement) within an industry to sustain on-going competitiveness.

As has been previously discussed herein, when a need is identified, either locally on a regional basis, the community, as a whole, efficiently and effectively implements historical practices which enables the merger of education and business in the development of new curriculums of study to support the identified need.

C. The Lackawanna County WDB has, for many years, maintained a strong and solid linkage with the Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce and the Lackawanna County Office of Economic Development, Lackawanna County's foremost economic development entities. Mr. Andrew Skrip, representing the Scranton Lackawanna Industrial Business Company (SLIBCO), the business arm of the Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce, and Mr. George Kelly, Director of the County's Economic Development Office are active members of the local Board and provide invaluable insight into the fluctuating economic climate. The WDB Executive Director sits as a member (Vice-President) of the Board of Skills in Scranton, the education arm of the local Chamber. WDB and PA CareerLink® administrative staff participates regularly in meetings with potential employers considering Lackawanna County as a home and provides data/material on workforce issues on request. This collaboration ensures that economic development partners are well informed as to the capability of the local workforce system to provide such activities as On-The-Job Training (OJT), work-based training, customized training, incumbent worker training (through WIOA, specialized grants, and industry partnerships) and, in turn, can then effectively market them to the business and industry community. Additionally, other strategies include employer engagement activities coordinated through the Governor's Action Team that affords the opportunity to showcase local workforce resources, thus, promoting enhanced business services through the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County's Business Services Team (BST). The BST actively solicits participation from local business and industry in locally-driven sector initiatives (i.e., health care, advanced manufacturing, logistics/transportation, and business/finance) conducted quarterly on-site at the PA CareerLink®. Also, as needed, local training providers come to the table to address specific needs of employers through development of industry-specific training resulting in degrees and/or credentials recognized across industry sectors. The usage of Industry Partnership (NE PA regional) funding further enhances educational opportunities for the incumbent workforce populations. The Lackawanna County Office of Economic Development, the Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce, and the Lackawanna County Workforce Development Board stand united in the provision of data, staff support, linkages to workforce training opportunities as well as WEDnet, Ben Franklin Grants, tecBridge (technology, entrepreneurship, collaboration) and other community resources to ensure a comprehensive approach to coordination of efforts. The linkages are solid. Future ventures will continue.

Section 3.5: Eliminated by PA Department of Labor & Industry

Section 3.6: Describe the workforce activities, including activities for youth with disabilities. Identify successful models and best practices for youth workforce activities relevant to the local area.

To ensure a smooth transition from WIA to WIOA in June of 2015, the Lackawanna County WDB developed a Youth Program *Transition Plan* in alignment with Training and Employment

Guidance Letter (TEGL) No. 23-14. that provides the following framework for youth program operations:

- affirms the Department of Labor’s commitment “to providing high quality services for all youth and young adults, beginning with career exploration and guidance, continued support for educational attainment, opportunities for skills training in in-demand industries and occupations (such as pre-apprenticeships or internships), and culminating with a good job along a career pathway, enrollment in post-secondary education of a registered Apprenticeship;”
- addressing the primary focus shift of Title I youth formula programs to support the educational and career success of out of school youth (OSY) by increasing dedicated OSY funding from 30% to a minimum of 75% and tracking expenditure levels throughout a Program Year’s operational period;
- assurance that no more that 10% of formula funding is dedicated to administrative costs;
- establishment of an expanded recruitment effort for re-engaging the OSY population through enhanced recruitment efforts (presentations to seniors; identifying the dropout population); canvassing local WIOA Title II education providers to determine if assistance can be provided to needy students; working closely with the local County Assistance Office to ensure identification of TANF eligible families and potential participants; maintaining linkages with the Lackawanna County Office of Children and Family Services and Juvenile Probation and Adult court system, public housing authorities; human services agencies; Job Corps representatives; disability-serving agencies; and providers of health and mental health services utilizing both print and electronic/social media; continued participation in school career fairs and presentations (see local area’s School Outreach list), etc.;
- oversight of youth activities (i.e., enabling the newly appointed WDB Youth Advocacy Sub-Committee to serve as the local Board’s standing committee providing information and assistance with planning, operational, and other issues relating to the provision of services to youth, which shall include community-based organizations with a demonstrated record of success in serving eligible youth). A member of the local board will serve as Chair of the committee.
- prioritization of work based training activities, assuring that a minimum of 20% of non-administrative formula funds address this category of service;
- assurance that the local area will strive to attain all WIOA indicators of performance;
- assure that any service provider contracts are awarded through a competitive bid process;
- assurance of continued successful service to the In-School Youth (ISY) population; and
- assurance of attainment of the 14 WIOA-identified program elements as describe, in detail, in Section 4.4 of this Plan.

It is universally recognized that most all of the WIOA Youth activities (such as OJT, work-based training, ITAs, internships, apprenticeships, job shadowing, etc.) can be adapted to serve youth with disabilities. Through a strong partnership with the OVR in the local area, accommodations are made, as needed, to enable any youth with a disability the opportunity to participate in

available activities as part of a structured training and employment plan leading to the ultimate goal of self-sufficiency. Additionally, the local Board is linked with Goodwill Industries of Northeastern Pennsylvania, currently through a Business Education Grant, which provides employability training coupled with a work experience component and job coaching. This best practice, which has been in existence for many years, affords youth with disabilities an alternate avenue within a mentored activity on a pathway to the world of work.

Another successful model, through a subcontract award to Lackawanna College in Scranton, PA, involved young women and men, members of Scranton High School's School-Aged Mother's & Father's Program, in a career "boot camp." This intense activity included electronic career researching, interviewing professionals in their occupational industry of choice, preparation of a power point in the occupation of their choice/future endeavor, and presentation of their power point to a public audience. This activity provided these young adults with barriers to employment (pregnant and/or parenting) with a glimpse of what the future can hold and the means to accomplish their goals.

Section 3.7: Describe how the local board coordinates education and workforce investment activities with relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services.

Following procedures originally implemented under the Workforce Investment Act 1998, the local Board has made significant in-roads into local secondary schools that has allowed for the dissemination of industry-specific information, career pathways discussions, distribution of systemic materials, and recruitment of potential program participants. Program staff are accompanied by industry experts during school presentations. It has been found that smaller group sessions are much more effective than large assemblies. Further, if sessions are designated for specific groups (e.g., those interested in industry-specific careers; those undecided about their future plans; those seeking summer employment), this activity is much more beneficial to the audience. Over the past two school years, well over 4000 youngster participated in career awareness activities.

One major example initiated during the current academic year is the implementation of a Health Care Academy within the Scranton School District. Scranton's healthcare sector represents one of the most vibrant areas of employment growth in Lackawanna County. Currently, dozens of employment vacancies exist within the city's four hospitals and healthcare system presents heightened opportunities for access into this active employment market. Frequently, human resource personnel at these facilities are challenged to fill vacancies due to a gap in the skill sets of applicants. The Healthcare Career Academy project seeks to identify those consistent employment vacancies; communicate related training requirements to secondary school systems; and integrate into school curricula information that can better assist students in obtaining these jobs following graduation. Developed and spearheaded by the Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce, and supported by the local WDB under its Business

Education Partnership (BEP) Grant, this initiative integrates employment information and skill requirements into the schools' curriculums. The hope is to make appropriate students more prepared to access important and often hard to fill jobs in the local hospitals.

It must also be noted that, again, utilizing BEP funds, the local Board has made great strides during the current school year into intermediate-level grades for the purpose of introducing career pathway information and age-related career projects to further enhance local schools' 339 activities. Planned activities include: career videos, guest speakers, small group activities that includes usage of career cards as prepared by CWIA, dissemination and discussion of CWIA Career Guides, painting t-shirts based on occupation choice, virtual job shadowing and field trips to local businesses and apprenticeship programs.

In addressing collaboration with post-secondary institutions in the area, many members of the local Board as well as Board and PA CareerLink® staff sit as members of these institutions workforce advisory committees to ensure collaboration of programs and functions. The education community in Lackawanna County is close-knit and has, for many years, participated in PA CareerLink® and workforce initiatives with the intention of better servicing the needs of business and industry, both stable as well as migrating/fluctuating. Again, four major higher education providers (Penn State University – Worthington Scranton Campus, Marywood University, Johnson College & Lackawanna College) are member organizations of the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County and participate regularly in Center events.

Section 3.8: Describe efforts to coordinate supportive services provided through workforce investment activities in the local area, including facilitating transportation for customers.

The Local Board developed and approved (most recently at the WDB Quarterly Meeting on June 25, 2015) a Supportive Service Policy that clearly defines the areas for provision of services. This policy, which is reviewed and approved yearly, currently includes the following:

Supportive services for youth are defined (WIOA Section §681.570) as services/assistance that are needed to enable an individual to participate in activities. These services can include but are not necessarily limited to the following:

- linkages to community services;
- transportation assistance;
- child and dependent care assistance;
- housing assistance;
- needs-related payments;
- educational testing assistance;
- reasonable accommodations for youth with disabilities;
- referrals to health care;
- assistance with uniforms or other appropriate work attire; and

- the provision of work-related tools, including such items as eye glasses and protective eye gear.

According to WIOA Section §680.900, supportive services for Adults and Dislocated Workers may only be provided to individuals who are participating in career or training services, unable to obtain supportive services from other programs providing such services, and when necessary to enable participation in career and training services. These services may include:

- transportation;
- child care and dependent care;
- housing assistance; and
- needs-related payments.

Any/all services provided must be identified and defined, in detail, in the participant's *Individual Employment Plan (IEP)*. The maximum amount of WIOA funds will be based on an individual's documented need, not to exceed \$1,500, and not to extend past a participant's actual enrollment in career services or a training activity. The local Board ensures collaboration with One-Stop partners and other community service providers to ensure resource and service coordination in the local area.

Additionally, a local survey is currently underway by the University of Scranton on behalf of the Lackawanna County Office of Economic Development to determine public transportation needs across the community. Findings from this study, when completed, will be used to determine if additional supportive services are needed within the workforce system.

Section 3.9: Describe strategies to implement the operational goals of the local one-stop system, maximizing coordination of services provided by the Department's merit staff and the local board's contracted service providers in order to improve services and avoid duplication.

The PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County conducted its grand opening in April of 2001. Since that time, both WIOA/contracted staff have worked alongside the Department of Labor & Industry's merit staff to provide the best possible mix of services to both the job seeking as well as business customer. The Pa CareerLink® Lackawanna County is designed in an open floor plan configuration with integrated WIOA/merit/partner staff sitting side-by-side. Customers are served by PA CareerLink® staff with no denotation of their employing agencies. The Center's Business Services Team is comprised of both WIOA and merit staff as well as "outside" partners representing the Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce, the office of Senator John Blake, and local Mall administrators. This concept allows for the flow of information among internal staff as well as the economic development community. There has never been a discord among staff. All staff are integral in the provision of workshops, administration of services, visits to local employers, and Center events. WIOA/contracted and Wagner-Peyser staff are cohesive in their approach to service provision and support each other on any/all specific entity projects.

Wagner-Peyser merit staff assumes the role of the primary provider of career services within the PA CareerLink® operational structure. The expertise of merit staff in providing labor market information, job order matching, state and federal Civil Service information, RESEA profiling, and TRADE services augments the career information and training opportunities provided by WIOA/contracted staff to ensure a non-duplicative, comprehensive menu of services for both customer groups, job seeker and employers. The ultimate goal of the local one-stop system is to provide a customer-friendly, inviting atmosphere with trained staff to assist in all job seeking tasks, training opportunities, and, ultimately, the employment/re-employment of its job seeking customers and to provide seamless services to the business community. As stated, locally, the system is working.

Section 3.10: Describe how the local board will carry out a review of local applications submitted under WIOA Title II Adult Education and Literacy, consistent with the local plan (as described in WIOA Sec. 107(d)(11) and WIOA Sec. 232).

Coordination with local WIOA Title II Adult Education and Literacy providers has always been of high-priority within the Lackawanna County Workforce Area. Local providers attend quarterly WDB meetings and, yearly, present information regarding their services and or applications for funding. When applicable, an ad-hoc Committee of the WDB will be formed to review all WIOA Title II applications to ensure that they are consistent with this local plan. Additionally, recommendations will be made to the eligible agencies/providers to ensure alignment. It should also be noted that the Lackawanna County Literacy Coalition meets bi-monthly at the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County for coordination and collaboration of information among a variety of community partners to eliminate any duplication of effort and to provide a continuum in the provision of services.

Section 3.11: Based on the analysis described in Appendix B – Section 1, identify the targeted populations that the local board plans to focus additional effort and resources towards. In terms of the targeted populations, briefly describe the local board’s objectives, goals, and strategies.

In adherence to Workforce System Policy (WSP) No. 05-2015, as issued by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Labor & Industry on December 23, 2015, and in alignment with the WIOA, the Lackawanna County WDB ensures priority of service in the administration and distribution of WIOA Title I funding. Priority of service ensures that individuals falling into targeted groups such as public assistance recipients, other low-income individuals, individuals who are basic skills deficient, and those that are unemployed who are also low-income are given priority over other individuals for receipt of career and training services. Further, veterans and spouses of eligible veterans within these groups receive priority over non-veterans.

Due to the fact that the Lackawanna County Workforce Development Area is designated as a single-County entity, priority of service will be given first to those individuals who reside within the boundaries of Lackawanna County as verified during the eligibility determination process. No additional discretionary priorities are identified.

That said, the WIOA targeted populations encompass economically disadvantaged adults, dislocated workers, in and out-of-school youth, and underemployed incumbent workers. These groups receive the myriad of services that are thoroughly described in Section 4 of this Plan. Subcategories of these groups (i.e., homeless adults and youth, pregnant and parenting youth, individuals with disabilities, individuals involved with the adult and juvenile justice system, displaced homemakers, long-term unemployed, individuals who are basic skills deficient) will be afforded additional efforts and resources such as more intense case management/individual attention; stronger advocacy for attainment of services provided by community partners (i.e., transportation, child care, housing, clothing, glasses, food subsidies), augmented referrals to ABLE community programs, and strengthened linkages to organizations serving individuals with barriers.

By investing additional efforts and resources, the hope is to eliminate barriers, some which may be substantial, to better prepare the targeted populations to enter the workforce and retain employment, thus, meeting the local Board's goals, objectives and strategies.

Section 3.12: Eliminated by PA Department of Labor & Industry

Section 3.13: Eliminated by PA Department of Labor & Industry

Section 3.14: Briefly describe any additional funding outside of WIOA Title I and state general funds, and how such funding will be leveraged in support of the local workforce system.

Leveraging of additional funds outside of the WIOA Title I and state general funds is an important part of programmatic sustainability. WIOA funds traditionally support the specific categories of economically disadvantaged and dislocated worker populations and, in that respect, current funding levels have been sufficient. But, in many instances, this criteria limits the provision of services to those potential customers who fall just outside of the mandated parameters. To that end, the Lackawanna County WDB has previously received support from the Dollar General Foundation to provide GED and ABE classes for a universal population of customers. Community partners also provide additional support through receipt of Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) funds. The local Board continues to investigate potential avenues of outside support.

Section 4: Program Design and Evaluation

Section 4.1: Describe the one-stop delivery system in the local area including:

A. The local board's efforts to ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of service including contracted service providers and providers on the eligible training provider list, and ensure that such providers meet the employment needs of local employers, workers and jobseekers.

B. How the local board will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system in remote areas, through the use of technology, and through other means.

C. How entities within the one-stop delivery system, including one-stop operators and the one-stop partners, will comply with WIOA section 188, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities.

A. The Lackawanna County WDB has historically been closely aligned with most all eligible providers of services with continuous improvement addressed through internal monitoring procedures. Regularly, the WDB Monitor reviews ETPL course listings; visits providers; reviews course costs and invoicing procedures; interviews both participants and instructional provider staff; and reviews participant records. This oversight ensures transparency and compliance with mandated processes and facilitates dialogue where potential improvement may be needed. As has been previously discussed, if gaps in training opportunities are identified by business and industries, the local Board is instrumental in coordinating efforts for the creation of programs of study/course curriculums by local educational/training institutions that will meet both specific industry as well as job seeker needs.

To ensure quality of providers on the statewide Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), training providers must meet a list of requirements to be approved for initial eligibility, for example, training partners must be authorized by the Commonwealth to operate training programs in Pennsylvania, provide documentation that confirms financial capacity, and demonstrate compliance with the American Disabilities Act of 1990, as well as with WIOA nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions. For inclusion on the ETPL, training programs must also meet performance benchmarks related to program completion, job placement rates, median earnings, and credential attainment of their students. Furthermore, program applications must provide a variety of program-specific information, including a program description, program length, tuition/costs, prerequisites, and credentials offered to allow for customer choice in selecting from available training opportunities. To ensure alignment with the needs of employers and job seekers, all programs on the ETPL must be training in a High Priority Occupation (HPO) for the Lackawanna County Workforce Development Area, which takes into

account the projected job availability and average earnings for an occupation. As an additional method of maintaining quality of programs and ensuring continuous improvement, providers on the statewide ETPL must apply annually for programs to continue be approved for the ETPL.

B. Lackawanna County is considered, primarily, urban in nature with rural pockets. As has been stated previously, there is one comprehensive one-stop center located quite strategically in the center of the County in the downtown area of the City of Scranton. All outlying areas within the local workforce area are within a 20-mile radius of the Center. Due to the fact that enrollment into the CWDS is provided electronically, any individual may access services from local libraries, their home, or any other area with internet access. In the past, the local area has utilized community libraries for this purpose and hopes to expand such services (i.e., providing on-site, staff assisted JobGateway® instructional sessions) during the upcoming year. To augment these activities, staff are available to speak to any community organizations and/or targeted groups throughout the County on request as well as providing instruction to individuals via phone conversations. Therefore, the local WDB contends that the provision of services to all remote areas is available and effective.

C. The Consortium of Operators providing oversight to PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County, including a representative from OVR, are well aware of the provisions of WIOA Section 188 and applicable provisions of the American with Disabilities Act of 1990 regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and the provision of materials. Every three years, the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County conducts a *Non-Discrimination and Equal Opportunity Self Evaluation* of its facility and processes that includes a combined physical and program access evaluation. The most recent PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County review was conducted in December, 2013. As new guidelines are released under the WIOA, the local area will comply. The local Center provides the following amenities for persons with disabilities: TTY phone line, adaptive devices on a computer workstation including a split keyboard and rolling mouse, a video magnifier, headset, computer speakers, Zoom Text Xtra, and JAWS for Windows. Additionally, one-stop staff may utilize technology guides for using screen enlargement software, screen reading software, and windows accessibility features. Any questions regarding ADA compliance are discussed at quarterly PA CareerLink® Consortium of Operators meetings.

Section 4.2: Describe the local board’s assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area.

Through an open-door policy for all customers seeking to utilize the PA CareerLink® One-Stop system of operation, the WDB assures that all adults and dislocated workers have universal access to all core services that includes:

Service determination
Outreach, intake, orientation
Initial Assessment

In-depth assessment of skills
and service needs
Individual Employment Plan (IEP) development

Job Search	Group counseling
Employment information	Individual counseling
Performance and cost information on providers	Case management
Civil Service information	Short-term prevocational services
Support service coordination	Basic, on-site, computer instruction/classes
Labor market information	GED computer instruction
Employment-related workshops	TABE testing
Job applications	WIN/WorkKeys Testing
	ABLE/literacy referrals

Once a customer has been identified as an eligible Adult and/or Dislocated Worker under the WIOA, a variety of options are available to support the development of their employment/re-employment plans:

- ◆ Occupational Skills Training is curriculum-based instruction conducted either through a classroom setting or on-line (or mix of both) in one or more occupations identified as high priority within the local area. For inclusion on the Statewide Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), programs of study must be submitted by eligible educational institutions and other training providers and approved by the Commonwealth of PA. All approved programs must meet performance standards in the areas of program completion, attainment of credentials, job placement rates, and median earnings as well as providing program descriptions, length of time, cost, prerequisites, and outcome credentials. The ETPL is the utilized for development of Individual Training Account (ITAs). The local area currently has an ITA policy which is reviewed yearly by the Board and included here as Attachment B.
- ◆ On-The-Job Training (OJT) has long been an option for customers, both from the job seeker as well as employer perspective. As an alternative to the traditional classroom training route, this work-based training model provides an incentive for hire for the adult/dislocated worker customer and reduces the financial cost for an employer during a contracted training phase. OJT contracting may also serve to eliminate trepidation on the part of the employer who is considering expanding his workforce. OJT is marketed through the BST during phone contacts and site visits, during informational sessions at the PA CareerLink®, in pamphlets and brochures, at networking events and job fairs, and on the PA CareerLink® website. Employer reimbursement of 50% to 75% of a new hire's wage is customary and dependent on the size of the business and potential award of an industry credential.
- ◆ Customized Training, although to-date not widely requested by local employers, is a viable option that includes skill-specific training requested by an employer and designed by the company's selected training provider. Customized training is, primarily, utilized to upgrade the company's incumbent worker population. This, in turn, facilitates new hire openings which can be filled with OJT subsidies.

In addition to these options, additional training and job placement opportunities for adults and dislocated workers are available through specialized grants such as the Dislocated Worker Training-National Emergency Grant (DWT-NEG), the Job Driven(JD)-NEG, H1B Make-It-In-America (MIIA) grant , Jobs 1st Grant (coordinated through NE PA Alliance) Community-Based Grants, and Sector Partnership-NEGs. The local Board, through receipt of direct funds or collaboration with other partners, ensures the availability of expanded services.

Also, any adult/dislocated worker customer with disabilities receives priority in the provision of all activities and services as discussed.

Section 4.3: Describe how the local board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities.

The Lackawanna County WDB is fortunate to have a Statewide Rapid Response Regional Representative stationed at the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County. This individual is instrumental in organizing comprehensive rapid response services for any company filing a WARN notice or smaller dislocations/closings, upon request. For many years, the local Board has been strategically involved in all rapid response activities which includes attending meetings of dislocated workers either prior to dislocation or after; conducting information sessions on available services; providing materials to ease the transition process; providing one-on-one, individualized staff services; charting dislocated workers needs through a survey process; developing appropriate employment plans; providing GED referrals; and arranging a

Section 4.4: Provide an analysis and description of youth workforce activities, including activities for youth with disabilities. Identify successful models and best practices, for youth workforce activities relevant to the local area. *Note:* This section must include a description of the program design elements as well as how the local area will implement the 14 program elements.

The Lackawanna County WDB, local economic development officials, and constituents have, for many years, promoted the development and orchestration of an information network that thoroughly encompasses all youth organizations throughout the County. Representatives from many of these bodies sit as active members of the WDB and its Youth Advocacy Sub-Committee and provide invaluable insight into local youth issues. All are kept abreast of current systems in place or under development and concur that we must target specific pockets of “at risk” youth such as those involved with the courts for various reasons such as truancy, domestic violence situations, juvenile delinquency and children of incarcerated parents; homeless and foster care youth; migrant and seasonal farm worker youth; youth with disabilities; etc. Also targeted are those economically disadvantaged and underprivileged youth in need of guidance and supervision to learn not only social skills but job skills as well. Strategies addressing the “in-school” student are coordinated with local school districts and outreach centers such as United

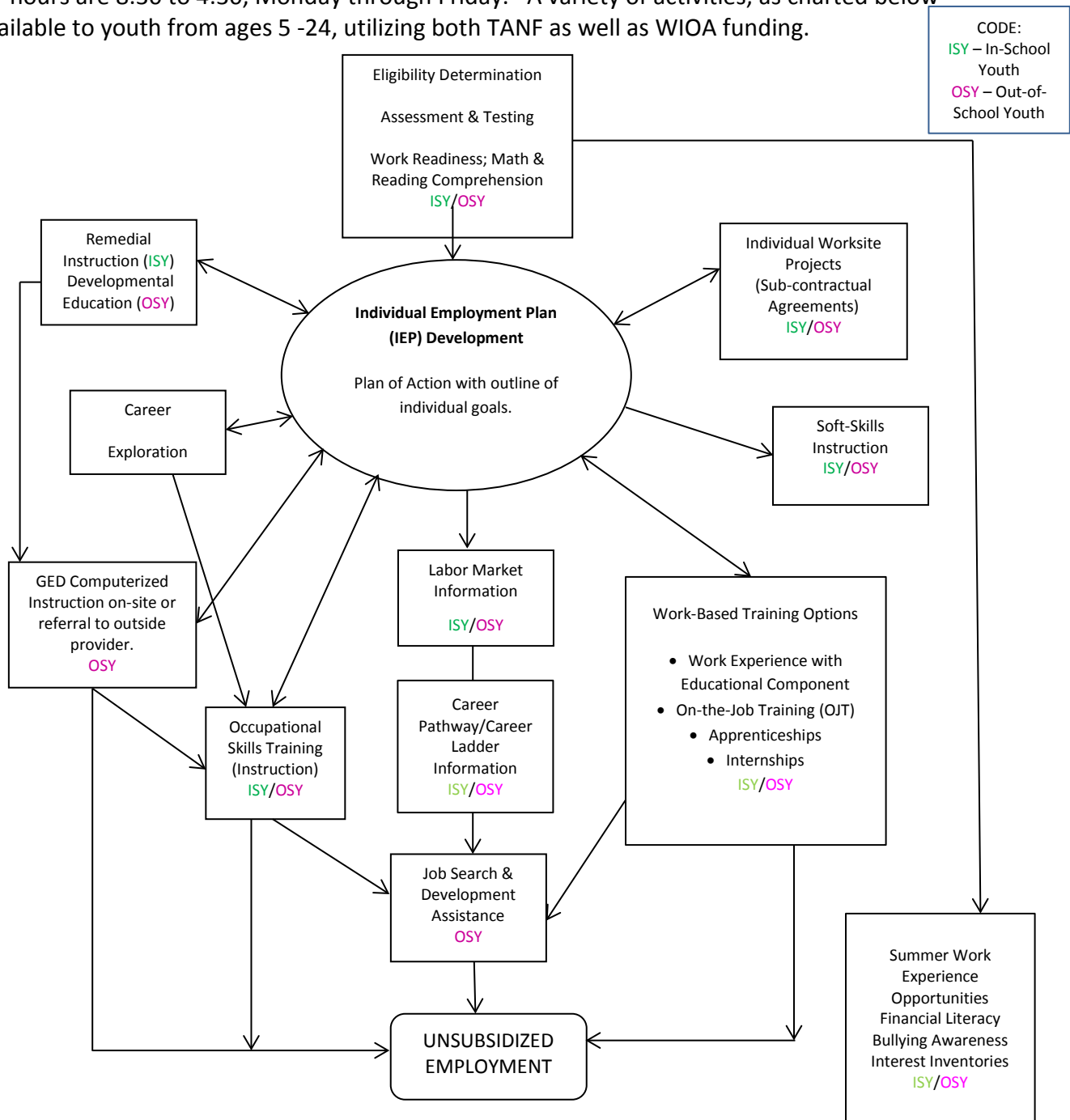
Neighborhood Centers, the local Boys and Girls Club, Project Elect (pregnant and parenting youth – both Mothers and Fathers), etc., and have, traditionally, revolved around remedial and truancy concerns but are currently broadening to include economic development issues such as local employment awareness campaigns targeting not only high schools, but the intermediate level as well. Local youth advocates strongly agree that access to a younger youth population affords the opportunity to address such pertinent issues as course scheduling for specific occupations in demand or projected to be in demand in the local area, coordination of services addressing specific needs, involvement of the PA CareerLink® in career planning efforts, attendance at local and regional education and job fairs, etc.

Recognizing that career ladders and goal-setting should begin during the intermediate and secondary school years, it must also be accepted that those youth traditionally classified as out-of-school youth, including those categorized as “disconnected”, if they can be successfully engaged and maintained, are adaptable to open options and development of employment plans. Intensive promotion of available services coupled with information on local employment opportunities including wage scales, post-secondary training opportunities, and funding availability serves to entice prospective youth job seekers (through 24 years of age). Initiatives such as school visits, dissemination of career pathways information, speaker presentations, and involvement in career fairs helps to “fill the gaps” in career-based education and promotes the investigation of future career paths. Additionally, implementation of a Business Education Partnership (BEP) Grant, afforded by the Commonwealth of PA, has allowed for much enhanced infiltration with Intermediate level students (grades 6th, 7th, and 8th) for career-related material dissemination, interactive career pathways projects, and career “fun days” in local schools.

Once per program year, or more frequently dependent on fund availability, the Lackawanna County WDB authorizes the dissemination of a Request for Proposal (RFP) for awarding of sub-contractual agreements to youth service providers throughout the local workforce area. This RFP is sent to all known local providers and is also advertised in the Scranton Times/Tribune so noting the time frame for response and the applicable criteria for submission of proposals. Once a deadline has passed, proposals are forwarded to an ad-hoc WDB Procurement Review Sub-Committee for review, raking, and recommendation for approval for funding.

Youth program staff are physically located at the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County, from where all activities emanate. The initial intake process, objective assessment, case management, the development of Individual Employment Plan (IEP), and eligibility assessments/determinations are handled on a one-on-one basis by program staff. Applicants are first provided with an overview of program opportunities and the services available, and, if interested, begin the eligibility determination process. Once economic eligibility is confirmed, computerized testing is conducted utilizing the TABE format and/or WorkKeys. Scoring is automatic and results are available for discussion with the client immediately. Taking into consideration such factors as the youth’s age, educational level, barriers, skills and abilities, and interest each participant is afforded one-on-one case management services to develop and ensure an appropriate employment plan and confirm the responsibilities involved.

The design of the local youth program format is such as to provide a myriad of opportunities to guide eligible participants in meeting their individual goals which may include attainment of educational credentials, assistance with basic literacy skills, acquisition of a HSE or GED, acquiring basic work experience, smoothly transitioning from high school to post-secondary education, learning new skills, and/or entering the work force. To this end, the following framework has been established: Most youth operations are conducted from the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County, located at 135 Franklin Avenue in downtown Scranton. Center hours are 8:30 to 4:30, Monday through Friday. A variety of activities, as charted below are available to youth from ages 5 -24, utilizing both TANF as well as WIOA funding.



Activities are developed on an individual basis based on the youngsters/young adults' skills, abilities, desires, specific program (funding stream) eligibility, transportation needs, and financial feasibility (for occupational training above and beyond local ITA limits). All services are available to any youth with disabilities. It should be noted here that the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) is a partner in the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County and has a youth OVR counselor assigned to the Center. This individual not only sits as a member of the WDB's Youth Advocacy Sub-Committee but works closely with WIOA-funded staff to ensure that youth with disabilities received the most appropriate mix of services, based on their individualized needs. This linkage also affords leveraging of resources to services to best serve those youngsters with disabilities.

In addressing the 14 essential elements specified for youth under WIOA, the implementation strategy for each element is herein defined:

Element #	Implementation Strategy
<p>1 Tutoring, study skills training, instruction and evidence-based dropout prevention and recovery strategies that lead to completion requirements for a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent (including a recognized certificate of attendance or similar document for individuals with disabilities) or for a recognized post-secondary credential.</p>	<p>The Local WDB has, for many years, solicited youth providers of service that addresses this element. During the current program year, locally approved vendors provide tutoring and academic enrichment, study skills training, career awareness, strengthening of individual self-advocacy skills, post-secondary opportunities, and individual one-on-one counseling through a mix of after-school study programs, skill-development activities coupled with remedial education, a personal growth/leadership/community service project, and a pre-apprenticeship project. In addressing drop-out initiatives, the local Board, has, for the past several years, distributed a packet of informational materials, <i>Dropout Transitions</i>, for distribution to any student having made the decision to leave school. Included is invaluable information regarding "where to go" for services, accessing GED/remedial programs, labor market data, training opportunities, etc. Each school is presented with a minimum of 5 booklets with the larger County schools receiving 10 or more with additional copies provided to any school upon request.</p>
<p>2 Alternative school services, or dropout recovery services</p>	<p>Drop-out recovery services are discussed above. This process will continue with possible enhanced distribution of information to providers of in-school youth services, the alternative schools, libraries, etc. There are 2 alternative schools: the Achievement Academy, re-locating to Dickson City, PA, for the 2016 school year, is sponsored by the Northeastern Educational Intermediate Unit (NEIU) # 19 and Lincoln-Jackson Alternative School located in South Scranton with classes conducted during regular school hours. Youth program staff makes visits to these sites at least once per school year to speak with the participants about opportunities available to them upon graduation with each student receiving a packet of information containing handouts on job searching activities (i.e., enrolling into the CWDS System, searching for jobs, resume' preparation, and interviewing skills). During these presentations, students are also encouraged to visit the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County to become familiar with activities offered and participate in the many workshops that are offered to the public at no charge. Although not specifically considered an alternative school, the Commonwealth Connections Academy is available for interested students. Finally, there are also programs available in the community (Turning Point, SOAR, & Victory Village) to assist students with special needs to attain educational and occupational goals.</p>
<p>3 Paid and unpaid work experience coupled with academic and occupational</p>	<p>Paid work experience and on-the-job training (OJT) experiences are an integral part of the current program strategy. Any participant enrolled in work experience has, included in their employment plan, an education activity that may include GED preparation; remediation; referral to local literacy programs; and/or financial literacy. A pre-</p>

<p>education which may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. summer employment and/or other employment opportunities available throughout the school year; ii. pre-apprenticeship programs; iii. internships and job shadowing; and iv. on-the-job training opportunities. 	<p>apprenticeship laborer project is currently underway through a subcontracted agreement with a local training provider, Valley Training Institute. Internships and job shadowing are implemented based on particular participant's interests and abilities. Additionally, each year the local area provides a summer work experience program which, during the upcoming of Summer of 2016, will begin in June and conclude in early September for approximately 20 WIOA youngsters and 100 TANF-eligible participants, working 30-35 hours per week, earning an \$8.00 wage.</p>
<p>4 Occupational skill training with priority consideration for training that leads to recognized post-secondary credentials that align with demand industry sectors or occupations in the local area as approved by the local Board as meeting the criteria defined in the WIOA.</p>	<p>Occupational skills training is addressed through the award of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) to eligible out-of-school youth, with amounts customarily ranging from \$2,500 up to \$5,000 maximum (current WDB-approved funding level) toward specific skills training in in-demand occupational areas at an approved training/educational facility (on ETPL). Historically, approximately 40 ITAs are awarded during each Program year.</p>
<p>5 Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster.</p>	<p>At present, students attending occupational skills training received job data/information as part of their program involvement. A much enhanced approach to the provision of labor market information has been implemented to ensure that a comprehensive package is available to all students as they matriculate through their educational endeavor. This new career decision-making component promotes a smarter, quicker, and easier job search upon completion.</p> <p>Youth participants will have the opportunity to master basic academic skills at the same time as learning career-specific technical skills. This approach aligns with recent research which found students using an integrated education and training model occurring concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation activities had better rates of program completion and persistence than a comparison group.</p>
<p>6 Leadership development opportunities, including community service and peer-centered activities that encourage responsibility and other positive social and civic behaviors.</p>	<p>Leadership development opportunities are opportunities that encourage responsibility, confidence, employability, self-determination, and other positive social behaviors such as: exposure to post-secondary educational possibilities; community and service learning possibilities; peer-centered activities, including peer mentoring and tutoring; organizational and team work training, including team leadership training; training in decision-making, including determining priorities and problem solving; citizenship training, including life skills training such as parenting and work behavior training; civic engagement activities which promote the quality of life in a community; and other leadership activities that place youth in a leadership role.</p> <p>During the current Program Year, United Neighborhood Centers of Northeastern PA (UNC) is subcontracted to conduct a <i>Leaders in Training</i> program for youth between the ages of 14 to 18 years of age, which promotes good citizenship and community involvement. Students who successfully complete the program may be placed at Project Hope, a summer camp for economically disadvantaged families, as Junior Camp Counselors to assist and facilitate the activities sponsored by the camp or enrolled in another summer work experience activity.</p>
<p>7 Supportive services.</p>	<p>Supportive services can be defined as services/assistance that are needed to enable an individual to participate in activities. The need for supportive services is determined during each participant's enrollment process and the development of their <i>Individual Employment Plan (IEP)</i>. In accordance with a WDB-approved WIOA Supportive Services Policy, supportive Services, as determined by individual need, can include but are not necessarily limited to the following:</p> <p>linkages to community services; transportation assistance; child and dependent care assistance; housing assistance; needs-related payments; educational testing assistance; reasonable accommodations for youth with disabilities; referrals to health care; assistance with uniforms or other appropriate work attire, and the provision of work-related tools,</p>

	including such items as eye glasses and protective eye gear. As services are administered, they are recorded in the participant personnel record accordingly.
8 Adult mentoring for at least 12 months that may occur both during and after program participation.	Historically, youth program staff mentor their participants due to their one-on-one involvement with each participant and their understanding of the individual participant's needs, concerns, issues, etc. On-going contacts by the Case Managers serve to identify issues and allow for immediate intervention. During PY 2016, the local area will solicit adult mentors from the community at-large, from other community organizations, from WDB membership, from the Youth Advocacy Sub-Committee membership, from the Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce Skills in Scranton Advisory Board. Adult mentors (other than the assigned case manager) must commit for at least 12 months and provide guidance, support, and encouragement (face-to-face once per year) to promote the development of competence and character of the mentee. Mentoring activities can be done through electronic means and may include workplace mentoring at assigned worksites.
9 Follow-up services for not less than 12 months after the completion of participation.	Follow up services are the responsibility of the Youth Program staff or contracted provider with all contacts/outcomes recorded in the participant's personnel file. Follow-up services are provided monthly to insure that all aspects of a participant's plan is being followed as per their agreement. All exited youth participants are contacted at 30, 60, and 90 day intervals; reviewed again at 6 months after exit; and, finally, at 1 year from their exit date. Follow-up contacts are made more often in situations where extenuating circumstances exist. Follow-up services for youth may include the leadership development and supportive services listed earlier; regular contact with a youth participant's employer to address work related problems that may arise; assistance securing a better paying job, career pathway development, and further education or training; work related peer support groups; adult mentoring - minimum duration of 12 months, more if deemed necessary; follow-up services must include more than only a contact attempted or made for securing documentation in order to report a performance outcome.
10 Comprehensive guidance and counseling, which may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling, as well as referrals to counseling, as appropriate based on individual needs.	The approved contracted provider will provide one-on-one comprehensive and counseling services throughout a participant's enrollment in activities as well as support after a participant exits the program. Any participant in need of out-side services (which may include drug and alcohol or abuse services) are referred to community programs, as appropriate.
11 Financial literacy training.	As previously stated in item #3, the local area has, for many years, conducted a summer work experience program. As part of this activity, Wells Fargo Bank provided a curriculum that was used for instructional purposes revolving around the basics of the banking system including such topics as: how to start saving money, opening up a checking and/or savings account, understanding wage tax deductions, debit versus credit use, spending money wisely, etc. This activity is being expanded to all work experience participants as part of their overall educational component. Additionally, workers from local banks can be encouraged to serve as speakers in classroom presentations.
12 Entrepreneurial training.	An "entrepreneurial workshop" series is under development in collaboration with the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at the University of Scranton for presentation to OSY participants as well as possible inclusion in high school visit presentations.
13 Services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area such as career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration services.	Currently, career awareness, counseling, and information is provided to all OSY participants during their enrollment in youth activities. This is handled one-on-one between the participant and their assigned case manager as well as through PA CareerLink® workshops and sector initiative projects. The in-school populations receive this as part of classroom/group presentations. The local also utilizes the CWIA High School and Middle School Guides as an additional resource for dissemination labor market and employment information.
14 Activities that help youth	Currently, this is handled through the provision of an interest inventory to all eligible participants through one-on-one discussions and provision of labor market and educational

prepare for and transition to post-secondary education and training.	services data. Case managers provide guidance based on a participant’s goals and plan of action, all of which are documented in an Individual Employment Plan. The Educational Opportunity Center will also provide financial aid workshops for transitioning students to identify funding sources.
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Section 4.5: Eliminated by PA Department of Labor & Industry

Section 4.6: Eliminated by PA Department of Labor & Industry

Section 4.7: Eliminated by PA Department of labor & Industry

Section 4.8: Describe the process utilized by the local board to ensure that training provided is linked to in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the local area, or in another area to which a participant is willing to relocate.

Any /all occupational skills training funded through the local Board will be linked to a program of study listed on the Statewide Employment and Training Provider List (ETPL). Yearly, interested training providers submit applications, by course of study, to the Commonwealth of PA for inclusion on the ETPL based on their local workforce area’s High-Priority Occupation (HPO) list which, in turn, then ensures that any training, subsequently approved, will align with in-demand industry sectors or occupations. If a participant is willing to relocate to acquire training in a demand occupation in another area (other than Lackawanna County), such participant will be awarded funding based on a realistic plan with sustainable goals.

If an occupation is not included on the current HPO list, if interested in submitting a course of study, a training provider may petition the local Board by completing the following 3-step process:

1. presenting an industry cluster analysis to identify the industry sectors that have the highest potential for growth and could benefit most from strategic workforce investment;
2. providing an occupational data analysis to create a baseline list of high-demand, higher-wage occupations within each of the industry clusters using the best available labor force data; and
3. soliciting expert in-put and regional factors to identify occupations likely to emerge based on economic development investments, new labor market trends or business demand, as well as those that are too new or regionally specific to be captured by the data.

The local Board may then petition the Commonwealth to include an occupation(s) on a local list based on one of three of the following justification criteria:

- unmet employer demand including letters from a minimum of 3 businesses that, when combined, have a total number of 20 (Lackawanna County threshold) job openings for each of the next 3 years;
- identification of a occupation which represents an entry point into a career pathway leading to other HPOs including a description of the progression from petition to occupation with specific mention of any job experience or education requirements needed to advance in the career pathway; or
- a local effort by a group of workforce development partners who have determined a need for the occupation including such information as why it is difficult to fill the position and why this is a good career for the area.

Petitions must be submitted within 30 days after the initial HPO release. Occupations successfully added by the PA Department of labor & Industry during this petition process will appear on the local HPO list for 3 years.

The local area, through utilization of this process, ensures that any/all training provided is systemically linked to in-demand sectors.

Section 4.9: Describe the process and criteria the local board will use to include a wide range of providers and opportunities through the Local Training Provider List (LTPL). *Note:* Such criteria must include the factor listed in the WSP 04-2015 in addition to any criteria established by the local board. Eligibility of a provider and/or program must be based solely on measurable factors.

Due to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's new requirement to establish a Local Training Provider List (LTPL), the Lackawanna County WDB will utilize the process and criteria outlined in the State's Workforce System Policy 04-2015 (issued December 23, 2015) to develop a local list of approved training providers that are exempt from the Statewide ETPL requirements. Understanding the goal of supporting work-based training opportunities with employers to establish training paths to employment, the local Board will facilitate the compilation of a LTPL that ensures accountability of local level training providers, the quality of the training programs to be offered, and assessment of any return on investment. This, in turn, broadens the scope of customer choice in the selection of training opportunities.

It is further understood that the development of an LTPL will assist the local Board in implementing work-based training activities that include OJT, pre-apprenticeships, internships, and registered apprenticeships or other training that is responsive to the needs of local employers.

Recognizing that information contained in WSP 04-2015 may be subject to change based on the issuance of future US Department of Labor regulations and/or guidance, the local Board assures compliance with any/all forthcoming directives.

Section 5: Compliance

Section 5.1: Describe the replicated cooperative agreements, as defined by WIOA 107(d)(11), in place between the local board and the Department of labor & Industry's Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities and to other individuals, such as cross training of staff, technical assistance, use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers, and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration, and coordination.

The Lackawanna County Board is fortunate to have six members of the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation stationed in the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County. These individuals provide valuable coordinated services ensuring that all customers, especially those with disabilities, are afforded the best mix of services based on their individual needs. Ms. Heather Nelson, District Administrator LIBVRS, represents the OVR as one of the members of the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County Consortium of Operators. OVR staff work hand-in-hand with WIOA/merit staff through a defined referral process that facilitates a flow of information and coordinated placement efforts. Additionally, an OVR Employment Facilitator sits as a member of the local Business Services Team to ensure that individuals with disabilities are represented within the business community. When employers are on-site at the Center, OVR staff is encouraged to discuss job openings and advocate for their individual clients. OVR representatives are also strategically involved in all PA CareerLink® sector events. Finally, any accommodations needed for the provision of services is readily made available.

Section 5.2: Eliminated by PA Department of Labor & Industry

Section 5.3: Describe the competitive and non-competitive processes, as well as the process for sole-sourcing, used for procuring goods and services within the local area. This includes, but is not limited to, the process used to award funds to a one-stop operator and other sub-recipients/contractors of WIOA Title I adult, dislocated worker, and youth services.

Due to possible structural changes, a Lackawanna County WDB procurement policy will be developed. At present, the local area follows the policies of the Scranton-Lackawanna Human development Agency (SLHDA), Inc. which are included as **ATTACHMENT C**. This policy details competitive processes for the procurement of goods and services. It is envisioned that the Local Board, once changes have occurred, will mirror this policy.

The local Board has developed a process for solicitation of Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for sub-recipients/contractors of WIOA Title I and TANF Youth services. This process includes dissemination of a formal RFP package, public advertising (via local newspaper, websites, and mail distribution of a listing of previous service providers), a formal Bidder's Conference, review of any/all submissions by the *Procurement Review* Sub-Committee of the WDB, charting and ranking of proposals, and final selection of providers). Copies of these proposals are included as **ATTACHMENTS D AND E** respectively. During PY 2016, the local area will procure all programmatic services utilizing a similar/enhanced process.

In most cases, the local area does not use sole sourcing; however, should this become a necessity to ensure quality service provision, an exhaustive search must be conducted with findings documented in a detailed explanation that must be attached to the Purchase Request.

For procurement of a One-Stop Operator, the local area will follow any process/procedures as dictated by Federal and/or State guidelines.

Section 5.4: Describe the local area's negotiated local levels of performance for the federal measures and their implications upon the local workforce system; attach the Completed Performance Targets Template.

The Lackawanna County Workforce Development Board has included, as **ATTACHMENT F, Appendix C: Local Area WIOA Negotiated Performance Goals**. Recognizing that negotiations between the Commonwealth and local area will follow, the Lackawanna County WDB predicts that levels will, in most cases, fall only slightly less than that of the State; however, it is predicted that a large discrepancy may occur in the Median Earnings category. In an April 14, 2016 article, published in the Scranton Times-Tribune, it was reported that "Minimum wages in Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties fall \$4,500 short of supporting a "modest but dignified" lifestyle for a single person, according to a study⁸ released today." The article continues, "The median income for Lackawanna County households is about \$45,300, nearly 15% less than the state median, the report says citing data from 2014."

Once negotiated, performance levels serve as a barometer for operational activity across a local workforce area and enable on-going reviews of the usage of public workforce dollars. Further, these measures guide future investments, improvements in systems, attainment of goals, and the overall effectiveness of local workforce initiatives.

Section 5.5: Eliminated by PA Department of Labor & Industry

Section 5.6: Describe the process used by the local board for the receipt and consideration of input into the development of the local plan in compliance with WIOA section 108(d). Describe the process to provide an opportunity for public comment prior to submission of the local plan. Be sure to address how members of the public, including representatives of business, labor organizations, and education were given an opportunity to provide comments on the local plan.

The Lackawanna County Workforce Board's/Area local plan was released for public comment on May 2, 2016. The plan, prior to its submission was forwarded to the Local Elected Officials (Lackawanna County Board of Commissioners), all Lackawanna County WDB members (which includes representatives of local unions, educational institutions, and business and industry) to solicit comments, suggestions, and areas for improvement. A 30-day public comment period was advertised in the Scranton Times/Tribune on April 29, 2016. In addition, to ensure universality for public comments, a public information session was conducted on Friday, May 13, 2016, at 10:00 AM at the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County, 135 Franklin Avenue in downtown Scranton, PA. This session was also advertised in the Scranton Time/Tribune and on PA CareerLink® website.

Due to technical difficulties, the Transitional Plan was posted on the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County's website, www.pacareerlinklackawanna.org.

Section 5.7: Prior to the date on which the local board submits a proposed local plan (i.e., no later than Thursday, June 2, 2016), the proposed local plan must be made available to members of the public through electronic and other means.

- A. Describe how the local board made the proposed local plan available for public comment.
- B. Describe how the local board collected and considered public comments for inclusion in the proposed local plan.
- C. If any comments were received that represent disagreement with the proposed local plan, include such comments within the local plan's attachments.

A. As discussed above, the proposed plan was advertised for review in the Scranton Times/Tribune on May 3, 2016, and subsequently on May 5, 2016. It is also posted on the local PA CareerLink website, www.pacareerlinklackawanna.org. In addition, a Transitional Local Plan public information session will be conducted at the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County on Friday, May 13, 2016 at 10:00 AM.

B. Comments to this Transitional Local Plan were accepted in writing (via letter and email processes) to Ms. Virginia H. Turano, WDB Executive Director, Scranton Enterprise Center, 201 Lackawanna Avenue Suite 215, Scranton, PA 18503 or to vturano@wiblackawanna.org. All comments received have been addressed in the attached *Exhibit A – Public Comments* document.

C. As stated above, all comments received have been addressed in the document listed above.

Section 5.8: List the name, organization, and contact information of the designated equal opportunity office for each PA CareerLink® center within the local area.

As previously discussed, the Lackawanna County Workforce Investment Area has only one PA CareerLink® site, located in the downtown area of Scranton, PA. The Equal Opportunity Office for the site is Ms. Catherine Gerard, PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County Site Administrator who can be contacted at 570-963-3100 ext. 3028 or through c-cgerard@pa.gov.

5.9. By checking the box adjacent to each line item, the local Board attests to ensuring the compliance components/documents are in place and effective prior to July 1, 2016.

Copies of the listed compliance components/documents are not required at this time, but may be requested during monitoring and/or auditing.

- N/A** Agreement between all counties and other local governments, if applicable, establishing the consortium of local elected officials
 - Agreement between the Chief Elected official(s) and the fiscal agent, if a fiscal agent is designated (pending)
 - Agreement between the local elected official(s) and the local Workforce Development Board (pending)
- X** One-Stop partner Agreement(s)
- X** Resource Sharing Agreement(s)
- X** Resource Sharing Agreement Budget(s)
- X** Local workforce development board policy and process that provides for nomination, appointment and removal of board members; resolutions; bylaws; code of conduct; and conflict of interest.
 - Financial management policy and process including cost allocation plan; internal controls; cash management; receipt of goods; cost reimbursement; inventory and equipment; program income; travel reimbursement; audit requirements and resolution; annual report; property management; debt collection; and allowable costs (under review due to possible internal structural change)
- X** Local procurement policy (pending revision)
 - Program management policy and process including equal opportunity for customers; supportive services; needs related payments; file management; eligibility; self-sufficiency criteria; individual training accounts; layoff assistance; priority of services; grievance for eligible training providers list; transitional jobs; stipends; and training verification/refunds (pending revision)
- X** Risk management policy and process including records retention and public access; public records requests; monitoring; grievance; incident; and disaster recovery plan
 - Human resources policy and process including employee classification; benefits; holidays and PTO; recruitment and selection; employee development; discipline; layoffs; terminations and severance; sexual harassment; and equal opportunity/non-discrimination (pending)
 - Professional services contract(s) for administrative services such as staffing and payroll, if applicable (under consideration)