

# Workforce Solutions South Plains PY 2017-PY 2020 Strategic Plan



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## I. Introduction




The regional workforce development system consists of the education, training, guidance and career development programs administered by state and local governmental agencies and public institutions of secondary and postsecondary education in the region. Within this system, the South Plains Workforce Development Board (hereinafter “the Board”) serves as the lead workforce entity in the region responsible for administering State and federal employment and training programs. The Board is directly responsible and accountable to the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) for the planning and oversight of all workforce training and services and the evaluation of all workforce development programs funded by the TWC through the Board for the benefit of residents of the 15-county South Plains Workforce Development Area (WDA).

The Board was certified as the Local Workforce Development Board in 1996 to administer workforce development services for the 15-county South Plains WDA Region (hereinafter “Region”) which consists of Bailey, Cochran, Crosby, Dickens, Floyd, Garza, Hale, Hockley, King, Lamb, Lubbock, Lynn, Motley, Terry and Yoakum Counties. The Board is comprised of 35 members with diverse interests and abilities who lead and oversee the workforce development system. Pursuant to Texas Government Code §2308.256, Board members are appointed by the local Chief Elected Officials and reflect the ethnic, gender and geographic diversity of the region. At least 51% of the board’s membership must be representative of the private sector. Overall, Board members represent private business; labor; local education and training providers including adult education and institutions of higher education; representatives of local educational agencies; and, representatives of governmental, economic and community development entities, vocational rehabilitation programs, and agencies administering supportive service programs.

The functions of the Board include:

- ✚ Serving as a single point of contact for local businesses to communicate their skill needs and to influence the direction of all work workforce development programs in the workforce development area;
- ✚ Developing a local plan to address the workforce development needs of the workforce development area;
- ✚ Creating local career development centers and identifying service providers;
- ✚ Being responsible and accountable for the management of all workforce development funds available to the board;
- ✚ Reviewing regional plans for workforce education to ensure that the plans address the needs of local businesses and recommending appropriate changes in the delivery of education services;
- ✚ Assuming the functions and responsibilities of local workforce development advisory boards, councils, and committees authorized by federal or state law, including private industry councils, quality workforce planning committees, job service employer committees, and local general vocational program advisory committees;
- ✚ Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the career development centers, state agencies and other contractors providing workforce training and services, and vocational

and technical education programs operated by local education agencies and institutions of higher education to ensure that performance is consistent with state and local goals and objectives;




-  Promoting cooperation and coordination among public organization, community organizations, charitable organizations, religious organizations, and private businesses providing workforce development, in a manner consistent with the nondiscrimination principles and safeguards stated in 42 U.S.C. Section 604;
-  Leading efforts to develop career pathways and promote other proven and promising practices including establishment of industry or sector partnerships; and,
-  Developing strategies for using technology to maximize the accessibility and effectiveness of the local workforce development system for employers, and workers and jobseekers.

The complete list of the functions assigned to the local Board by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014, Chapter 2, Section 107(d) can be found online at <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PLAW-113publ128/pdf/PLAW-113publ128.pdf>

Every four years, the Board engages in a strategic planning process to establish the direction and align resources to efficiently manage operations in support of the Board's mission and goals. The Board's goals are broadly aligned with the goals of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) which include increasing access to and opportunities for employment, education, training and support services for individuals with barriers to employment; promoting alignment of workforce investment, education and economic development systems in support of a comprehensive, accessible, and high-quality workforce development system; and, improving the quality of the workforce, increasing economic self-sufficiency, reducing welfare dependency, meeting employer skill requirements, and enhancing the nation's productivity and competitiveness. The Board's strategic plan is also aligned with the Texas Combined State Plan for WIOA for Program Years 2016 to 2019. The Board's plan outlines goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including youth and individuals with barriers to employment and goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on performance indicators used to evaluate program effectiveness described in WIOA Section 116(b)(2)(A).

## II. Programs and Activities Administered by the Board

TWC allocates federal funds to the 28 local boards across the State that are responsible for comprehensive strategic and operational planning, oversight and evaluation of federal and state workforce programs in their local areas. Most funds are allocated through federally mandated formulas. The Board receives approximately \$18 Million in formula funds each year to administer the following programs.

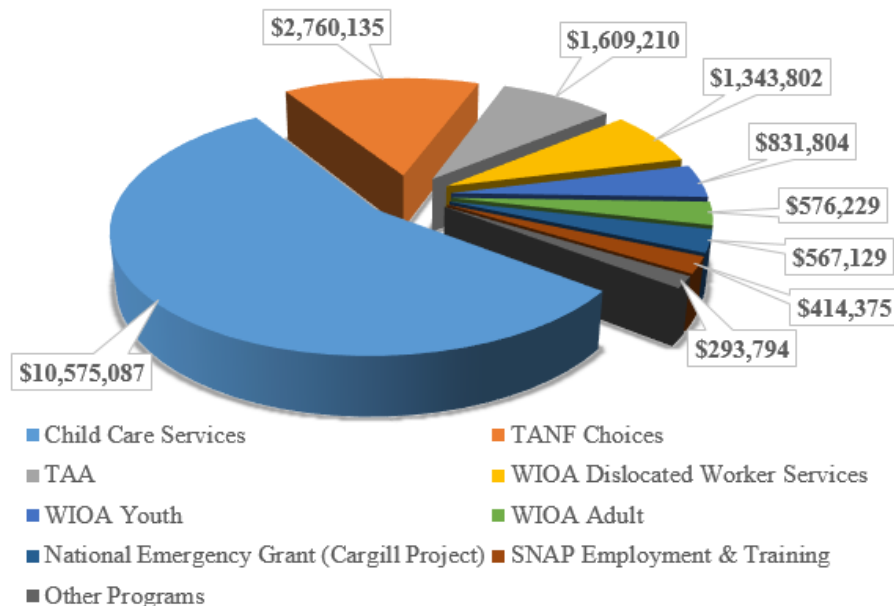
-  Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) adult, dislocated worker, and youth programs;
-  the Wagner-Peyser Employment Service program;
-  Trade Adjustment Assistance Act Program;

- ✚ Choices, the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) employment and training program;
- ✚ Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment and Training programs; and,
- ✚ Subsidized Child Care programs through Child Care Services (CCS).

Approximately half of the funds allocated to the Board are dedicated to the provision of subsidized child care services (CCS).

The Board's WIOA Program Year begins July 1 and ends June 30<sup>th</sup> of the subsequent year. During Program Year 2015 which began July 1, 2015, the Board received \$18,971,565 Million in formula and discretionary funds to administer employment and training programs as illustrated below. Discretionary funds included a National Emergency Grant received during 2013 to 2016 to provide training and reemployment services to workers dislocated due to the closure of Cargill Meat Solutions in Plainview and two High Demand Job Training Grants received during 2015 and 2016 to assist 13 area school districts with the cost of supplies and equipment for Career & Technical Education Programs.

### PY 2015 Program Expenditures



The South Plains Board is the steward of all workforce funds allocated to the South Plains Workforce Development Area and is contractually responsible for ensuring efficient & effective use of these resources. The Board contracts with the TWC to provide fiscal and programmatic administration of funded programs in the region. The Board's contract with TWC includes performance measures and targets that are negotiated annually by the parties, with targets established based on local economic conditions and other factors. The Board consistently meets or exceeds performance targets on the contracted performance measures.

### A. Contracted Performance

The Board is contractually bound to meet or exceed performance standards established by the TWC each year. The Board's contracted performance measures for the current program year include the four indicators of successful performance listed in Table 1 below. Table 1 lists the performance measure and the Board's performance as of 12/31/18.

**Table 1: PY 2017 – PY 2018 Board Contracted Performance Measures**

Indicators of Success		Performance Rolling Performance Period As of December 2016
	Target	Percent of Current Target
Claimant Reemployment within 10 weeks	55.16%	113.6%
Number of Employers Receiving Workforce Assistance	2,269	105.91%
Choices Full Work Rate – All Family	50.00%	101.22%
Average Number of Children Served Per Day – Discretionary	2,477	N/A

### B. Proposed PY 2017 Measures

The performance targets for PY 2017-18 are provided in Table 2. Based on current performance, the Board is confident in its ability to meet or exceed targets for each of the 15 WIOA performance measures by the end of the program year.

**Table 2: PY 2017-18 WIOA Performance Measures**

Indicators of Success Q=Quarter; DW-Dislocated Worker		Performance Year to Date Performance Period As of December 2018
	Current Target	Percent of Current Target
Claimant Reemployment within 10 weeks	55.16%	113.60%
Number of Employers Receiving Workforce Assistance	2,269	105.91%
Choices Full Work Rate – All Family	50.00%	101.22%
Average Number of Children Served Per Day – Discretionary	2,477	N/A
Employed/Enrolled Q2 Post Exit – All Participants	64.00%	108.94%
Employed/Enrolled Q2 to Q4 Post Exit – All Participants	80.00%	102.03%
Median Earnings Q2 - All Participants	\$4007.00	111.96%
Credential Rate – All Participants	48.00%	135.06%
Employed/Enrolled Q2 Post Exit – Adults	83.70%	106.73%
Employed/Enrolled Q2 to Q4 Post Exit – Adults	87.20	95.80%
Median Earnings Q2 - Adults	\$7,150.00	124.68%
Credential Rate – Adults	69.00%	110.15%
<b>Employed Q2 Post Exit – DW</b>	<b>89.70%</b>	<b>101.11%</b>



Employed/ Q4 Post Exit – DW	86.90%	108.31%
Median Earnings Q2 Post Exit - DW	5720.00	116.58%
Credential Rate – DW	75.80%	120.29%
Employed/Enrolled Q2 Post Exit – Youth	75.80%	116.95%
Employed/Enrolled Q4 Post Exit – Youth	77.10%	104.44%
Credential Rate – Youth	77.10%	104.17%

### III. The Board’s Vision, Mission and Goals

The South Plains Regional Workforce Board envisions a future where the region’s workforce is educated, innovative and highly skilled in areas that match the skill requirements of the region’s employers enabling businesses to become highly productive and to compete successfully in local and global markets. The Board’s mission is to meet the needs of the region’s employers for a highly skilled workforce by educating and preparing workers. Successful fulfillment of the mission will result in a better educated workforce, more competitive employers, increased employment opportunities, higher incomes, a fair rate of return on taxpayer investment. The Board’s core values of individual opportunity, service, responsibility, effectiveness and respect for the dignity of each unique individual serve as the foundation for and guide the work of the Board. Helping people, spending money wisely, being fair in decision-making, and maintaining accountability in the execution of programs and services are guiding principles.

The Board’s strategic plan for the Program Years 2017 to 2020 sets forth the goals and strategies that will serve as the roadmap to guide program operations toward achievement of our mission. Over the next four years, the Board will attain:

- ✚ **increased services to business** to nurture and preserve the region’s economic prosperity;
- ✚ **increased educational opportunities** to increase the skills levels and earning power of the region’s workforce,
- ✚ **increased services to the rural areas** to ensure equity in the provision of services to residents of all 15 counties we serve; and,
- ✚ **increased branding and awareness** to ensure that all those in need of the Board’s services are informed and empowered to access the services they need and to establish and maintain the Board’s influence as strategic leader of the region’s workforce development system.

These overarching goals are undergirded by strategies that are designed to ensure that performance goals are met and that programs and services are responsive to the needs of business, the needs of youth and to the needs of individuals with barriers to employment. Table 3 below briefly summarizes the goals, strategies and activities that the Board has adopted for implementation during PY 2017 through PY 2020. Section V provides the operational plan that describes the programs and services available in the Board area and how the Board’s resources will be allocated to support the strategies adopted for implementation throughout the period of this plan.

**Table 3: Goals Matrix**

Table 3: Goals Matrix					
Strategy	Objective	Progress made as of June 30 end of program year:			
		PY 2017	PY 2018	PY 2019	PY 2020
Goal 1: Increase Employer Services					
1. Expand access to labor market information (LMI) offered online.	Develop the capability to facilitate ‘user friendly’ access to TWC’s and other online LMI resources.	Develop website to facilitate access to LMI for employers.			
		Analyze site statistics monthly, revise and update as needed to increase responsiveness to employer needs.			
2. Collaborate with EDCs to increase employer engagement.	Partner with EDCs to disseminate information regarding funding for workforce training.	Develop a successful process for ongoing follow-up. Maintain meaningful and ongoing contact with at least 5 major employers.	Conduct ongoing follow-up. Maintain meaningful and ongoing contact with at least 10 major employers.	Conduct ongoing follow-up. Maintain meaningful and ongoing contact with at least 15 major employers.	Conduct ongoing follow-up. Maintain meaningful and ongoing contact with at least 20 major employers.
		Hold at least 5 meetings annually in partnership with 5 regional EDCs.			
Goal 2: Increase Educational Opportunities					
1. Increase participation in work-based training	a. Increase Adult/DW participation in OJT.	Contract with at least 2 employers to provide OJT. Train at least 5 OJT participants.	Contract with at least 3 employers to provide OJT. Train at least 10 OJT participants.	Contract with at least 3 employers to provide OJT. Train at least 10 OJT participants.	Contract with at least 3 employers to provide OJT. Train at least 10 OJT participants.
		Provide training to contractor staff annually on best practices.			
	b. Increase Adult/DW participation in customized training.	Contract with at least 2 employers to provide training. Train at least 5 incumbent workers.	Contract with at least 3 employers to provide training. Train at least 10 incumbent workers.	Contract with at least 5 employers to provide training. Train at least 20 incumbent workers.	Contract with at least 5 employers to provide training. Train at least 20 incumbent workers.
		Provide training to contractor staff annually on best practices.			
		Utilize 3% of WIOA Adult/DW funds for incumbent worker training.	Utilize 3% of WIOA Adult/DW funds for incumbent worker training.	Utilize 3% of WIOA Adult/DW funds for incumbent worker training.	Utilize 3% of WIOA Adult/DW funds for incumbent worker training.
2. Increase career exploration experiences for youth.	Increase the number of youth prepared to enter the workforce after high school.	Collaborate with rural high schools to hold at least 3 rural career fairs; assist high schools to secure funding.	Collaborate with rural high schools to hold at least 3 rural career fairs; assist high schools to secure funding.	Collaborate with rural high schools to hold at least 3 rural career fairs; assist high schools to secure funding.	Collaborate with rural high schools to hold at least 3 rural career fairs; assist high schools to secure funding.



Strategy	Objective	Progress made as of June 30 end of program year:			
		Continue funding and sponsorship of South Plains Career Expo.			
		Continue collaboration with EDCs to leverage funds for High Demand Job Training Grant Project to promote CTE program certifications for high school students.			
		Develop online career roadmaps to support career exploration; provide information regarding Eligible Training Providers.	Maintain and enhance career roadmaps to increase responsiveness to workforce needs.	Maintain and enhance career roadmaps to increase responsiveness to workforce needs.	Maintain and enhance career roadmaps to increase responsiveness to workforce needs.
<b>Goal 3: Increase Rural Services</b>					
<b>1. Increase access to workforce services for self-employed and sole proprietorships.</b>	a. Increase workforce assistance to self-employed workers.	Develop asset map of available state and federal resources and make available online.	Maintain website and update to increase responsiveness to needs.	Maintain website and update to increase responsiveness to needs.	Maintain website and update to increase responsiveness to needs.
		Develop webpage to disseminate information specific to needs.			
		Identify funding opportunities and acquire to fund industry-recognized certifications for self-employed workers. Establish baseline of participation.	Increase # of industry-recognized certifications earned by self-employed workers by 5%. Track progress.	Increase # of industry-recognized certifications earned by self-employed workers by 5%. Track progress.	Increase # of industry-recognized certifications earned by self-employed workers by 5%. Track progress.
	b. Collaborate with SBDC and regional Chambers of Commerce to increase access to entrepreneurship services for entrepreneurs and sole proprietorships.	Establish MOU and ongoing referral process with Rural Export Assistance Program and other state and federal programs.	Maintain relationship. Track outcomes and publish success stories.	Maintain relationship. Track outcomes and publish success stories.	Maintain relationship. Track outcomes and publish success stories.
<b>2. Increase access to Child Care Services.</b>	a. Automate processes to facilitate access to CCS for rural customers.	Develop online application and online reporting capability. Implement internal change processes. Publicize new service offering.			
		Establish a baseline of number of applications and changes reported by county.	Evaluate utilization of automated forms and assess impact on services. Report to Board with recommendations for	Evaluate utilization of automated forms and assess impact on services. Report to Board with recommendations for	Evaluate utilization of automated forms and assess impact on services. Report to Board with recommendations for

Strategy	Objective	Progress made as of June 30 end of program year:			
			improvement.	improvement.	improvement.
3. Facilitate employment opportunities for youth in rural areas.	Identify youth employment needs and increase job development efforts.	Survey youth participants to identify employment needs.	Survey youth participants to identify employment needs.	Survey youth participants to identify employment needs.	Survey youth participants to identify employment needs.
		Increase job development efforts to place youth in employment. Track participation. Establish baseline.	Increase youth in employment by 10%. Track participation.	Increase youth in employment by 10%. Track participation.	Increase youth in employment by 10%. Track participation.
Goal 4: Increase Branding and Awareness					
1. Facilitate communications with rural customers.	Develop capability to provide customer service online.	Develop website chat feature to facilitate real-time online communications. Establish baseline and performance standards.	Monitor and evaluate service provision. Revise as needed.	Monitor and evaluate service provision. Revise as needed.	Monitor and evaluate service provision. Revise as needed.
2. Raise awareness of Board’s successful outcomes.	a. Make better use of customer surveys to inform community of successful outcomes.	Conduct quarterly customer satisfaction surveys for all programs. Establish baseline for level of satisfaction.	Conduct quarterly customer satisfaction surveys for all programs. Increase level of satisfaction by at least 5% or as appropriate.	Conduct quarterly customer satisfaction surveys for all programs. Increase level of satisfaction by at least 5% or as appropriate.	Conduct quarterly customer satisfaction surveys for all programs. Increase level of satisfaction by at least 5% or as appropriate.
		Publish success stories online to raise awareness of successful outcomes.	Publish success stories online to raise awareness of successful outcomes.	Publish success stories online to raise awareness of successful outcomes.	Publish success stories online to raise awareness of successful outcomes.
	b. Develop access points in rural areas to facilitate access to workforce services.	Conduct survey of rural partners to identify at least 3 potential access points.	Conduct survey of rural partners to identify at least 1 new access point.	Conduct survey of rural partners to identify at least 1 new access point.	Conduct survey of rural partners to identify at least 1 new access point.
		Furnish support to create access points in collaboration with partner organizations.	Maintain access points.	Maintain access points.	Maintain access points.

## IV. Economic and Workforce Analysis

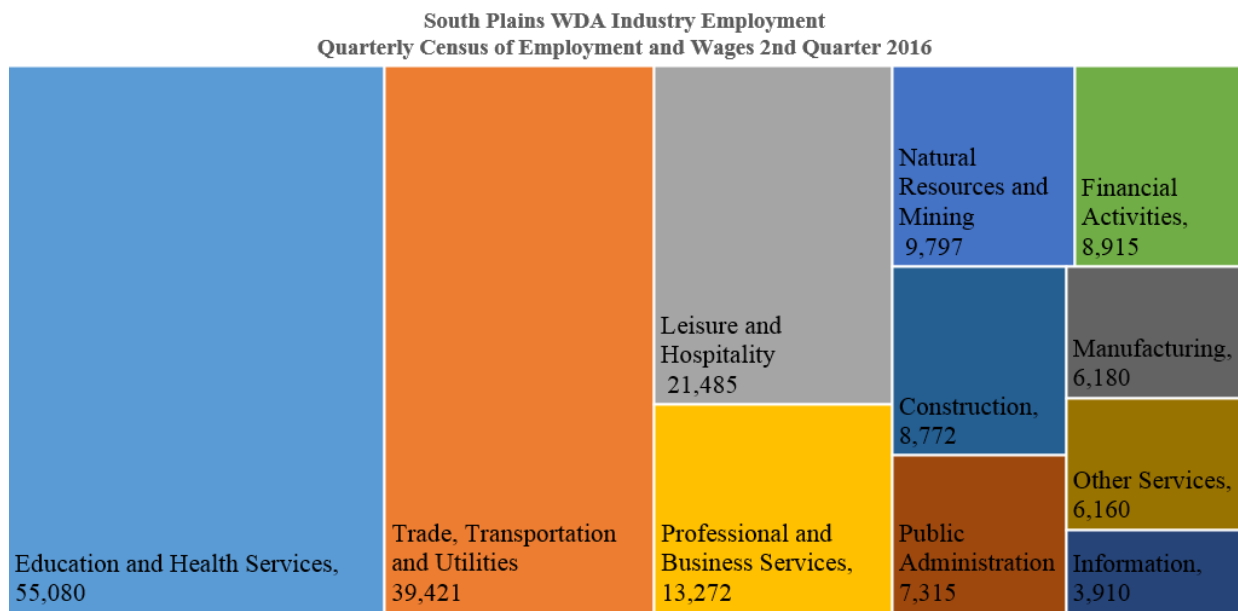
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### A. Economic Conditions

Construction, home building and strong growth in real spending are key drivers of the growth in the Lubbock MSA economy as reported by the Lubbock Economic Index (LEI) for October 2016. The LEI, maintained by Lubbock National Bank to track economic activity for the Lubbock MSA, has been tracking 11 key economic indicators related to housing, consumer spending and employment over the past two decades. According to the LEI, the Lubbock MSA economy set record highs in October in the number of new home permits issued and in the value of those permits, adjusted for inflation. The MSA also saw the first over-the-year increase in retail sales since October 2015. The LEI set a record high in October improving to 148.0 for the month up from 147.3 in September, and up 2.4% from the October 2015 LEI of 144.6.

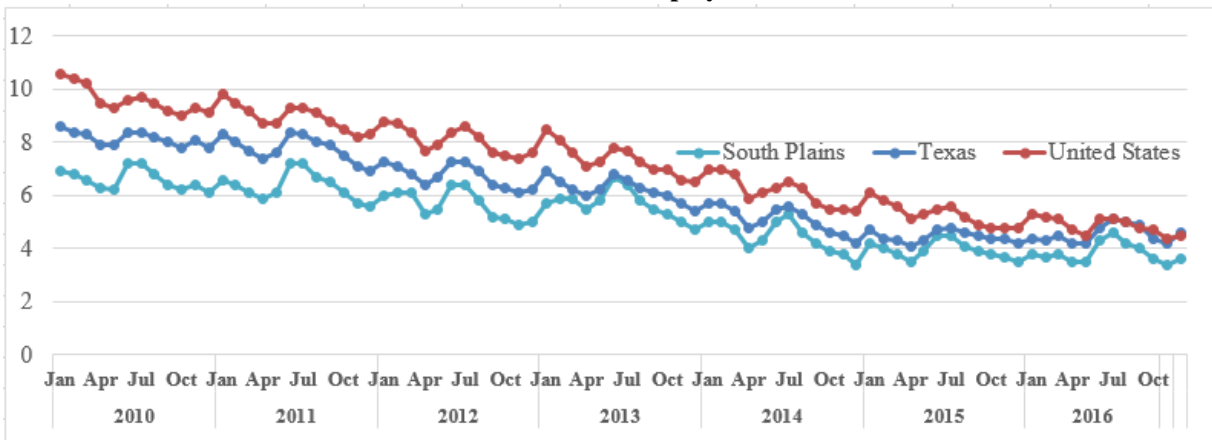
Further evidence of the strength of the Lubbock economy comes in the form of local business expansions and relocations reported by the Lubbock Economic Development Alliance (LEDA). In its 2016 Annual Report, LEDA announced that 7 firms planned capital investments in the region totaling \$161,070,000 including an investment of \$144 Million by Monsanto to build and equip a cotton seed processing facility. United Super Markets also announced plans to invest \$100 Million to renovate 7 facilities. The amount of capital investments announced in 2016 is part of an increasing trend in business investment in the region, up from \$12,383,000 in 2013, \$24,279,000 in 2014, and, \$114,667,500 in 2015. Additionally, during 2016, LEDA played a major role in brokering a \$9.9 Million capital investment to renovate and equip a facility to house the SPC Lubbock Center. Creation of the Lubbock Center will increase SPC's capacity to offer postsecondary education and training programs to residents of Lubbock and the surrounding area.

As illustrated by the chart below, the four largest industry sectors, key drivers of the region's economic growth, are Education and Health Services; Trade, Transportation and Utilities; Leisure and Hospitality; and Professional and Business Services. These four sectors employ 71.6% of the region's workforce. The four sectors added 9,975 jobs from 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2012 through 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2016. These job gains offset losses of a total of 3,659 jobs in Manufacturing (3,316), Information (285), and Natural Resources and Mining (58) that occurred during that same period. The four sectors are projected to add approximately 2,050 jobs per year, 16,400 jobs total, through the year 2024, accounting for 81% of all regional job growth projected during the period.



During the period of January 2010 through December 2016, the Region's unemployment rate ranged from a high of 7.2% to a low of 3.4%. As illustrated in the Table 4 below, the region's unemployment rate consistently ranks below the State and National unemployment rates.

**Table 4: Historical Unemployment Rates**









Source: Texas Workforce Commission Labor Market and Career Information, December 2016

As of December 2016, the CLF numbered 202,693 with 195,426 participants employed and 6,889 7,267 jobseekers actively looking for work resulting in a 3.6% unemployment rate. From November 2012 to December 2016, the civilian labor force (CLF) declined by 2.5%.

## B. Targeted Industries

The Board's Labor Market Information (LMI) Advisory Committee guides the selection of targeted industries and establishes the criteria for targeting. The Board's workforce investments fund training for the key occupations that support the industries targeted by the Board. Industries selected for targeting meet the following criteria:

-  Industries are projected to grow at a rate of over 10% at both the 3-digit and 4-digit industry levels.
-  Industries have a high Location Quotient.
-  Industries are projected to offer the greatest number of job openings due to growth and replacement need.
-  Industry represents a significant share of regional employment.
-  Industry is an emerging industry.
-  Local wisdom identified a local need based on regional economic conditions.

Based on a review of labor market information and the recommendations of the Advisory Committee, the Board targeted the following industries for WIOA expenditures for PY 2017, the period from July 1, 2017, through June 30, 2018. The 17 targeted industries are projected to add 1,065 new jobs on average per year through the year 2024. Industries are listed in Table 5 and also provided in Attachment 1.

**Table 5: PY 2017 South Plains Targeted Industries**

<b>Industry</b>	<b>Annual Average Employment 2014</b>	<b>Annual Average Employment 2024</b>	<b>Number Change 2014-2024</b>	<b>Percent Growth 2014-2024</b>	<b>Avg. Weekly Wages</b>	<b>Location Quotient</b>
Restaurants & Other Eating Places	15,060	18,000	2,940	19.5%	\$301	0.99
Elementary & Secondary Schools	12,850	14,280	1,430	11.1%	\$683	0.55
General Medical & Surgical Hospitals	9,290	11,310	2,020	21.7%	\$837	1.31
Building Equipment Contractors	3,020	3,850	830	27.5%	\$803	1.77
Warehousing & Storage	1,950	2,340	390	20.0%	\$743	2.02
Services to Buildings & Dwellings	1,810	2,150	340	18.8%	\$429	1.13
General Freight Trucking	1,790	2,120	330	18.4%	\$966	3.96
Automotive Repair & Maintenance	1,520	1,850	330	21.7%	\$612	2.37
Cattle ranching and farming	1,660	1,850	190	11.4%	\$650	27.59
Continuing Care & Assisted Living Facilities	1,250	1,840	590	47.2%	\$513	1.71
Child Day Care Services	1,450	1,760	310	21.4%	\$287	1.24
Support Activities for Crop Production	1,480	1,650	170	11.5%	\$593	8.92
Offices of Other Health Practitioners	760	1,090	330	43.4%	\$681	1.02
Nonresidential Building						

Construction	750	900	150	20.0%	\$932	0.93
Grain and Oilseed Milling	700	830	130	18.6%	\$713	8.53
Computer Systems Design & Related Services	480	650	170	35.4%	\$1,247	0.2
	55,820	66,470	10,650			

### C. Occupational Demand

Occupations projected to offer over 15 job openings per year due to growth or replacement are identified as in-demand occupations in the Board area. The 105 occupations identified as in-demand occupations are projected to offer 5,805 job openings per year through 2024 including 20,050 jobs due to growth and 38,000 jobs due to replacement need. As shown in Table 6, over 65% of job openings are projected to occur in low-skilled occupations, occupations that typically do not require education beyond a high school diploma. If projections hold, middle-skilled occupations, those requiring education beyond a high school diploma but less than a Bachelor's Degree, will comprise 22% of demand and job openings in high-skilled jobs that require a Bachelor's Degree or higher will comprise 13% of demand. A list of the occupations in demand in the Board area is included in Attachment 1.

**Table 6: Occupations Most in Demand**

<b>Typical Education Needed for Entry into Occupation</b>	<b>Number of Occupations</b>	<b>Annual Average Employment 2014</b>	<b>Annual Average Employment 2024</b>	<b>Number Change 2014-2024</b>	<b>Total Annual Average Openings</b>	<b>Average Growth Rate 2014-2024</b>
No formal educational credential	35	68,850	60,750	8,100	2,690	13.28%
High school diploma or equivalent	27	32,970	29,100	3,870	1,080	13.83%
Some college, no degree	2	4,760	4,620	140	90	4.78%
Postsecondary non-degree award	22	39,420	34,700	4,720	1,155	18.97%
Associate's degree	2	780	670	110	35	16.65%
Bachelor's degree	13	20,210	17,430	2,780	675	13.51%
Master's degree	2	1,260	1,090	170	45	14.46%
Doctoral or professional degree	2	1,300	1,140	160	35	14.02%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>169,550</b>	<b>149,500</b>	<b>20,050</b>	<b>5,805</b>	<b>14.58%</b>



### D. Targeted Occupations

The Labor Market (LMI) Advisory Committee also establishes criteria for targeting key occupations that support the targeted industries. The Board funds formal training to prepare individuals to work in these occupations through Individual Training Accounts that assist with the cost of tuition, fees, books, and other training-related costs. Occupations selected for targeting meet the following criteria:

- ✚ The occupation is a key occupation that supports at least one of the targeted industries.
- ✚ The entry-level wage is greater than the Board's Self-Sufficiency Wage (SSW) Standard.
- ✚ The occupation will add more than 100 jobs between 2014 and 2024.
- ✚ The occupation will grow at a rate of 10% or more between 2014 and 2024.
- ✚ The Bureau of Labor Statistics indicates that formal training is needed to enter the occupation.
- ✚ Local wisdom establishes a need for training funds to address skills gaps based on:
  - ✓ Employer Survey responses establish priority.
  - ✓ Occupation is an emerging occupation.

Based on a review of labor market information and the recommendations of the (LMI) Advisory Committee, the Board targeted the following occupations for WIOA expenditures for the period from July 1, 2017, through June 30, 2018. The 38 occupations are projected to offer an average of 1,765 job openings per year through the year 2024. Over 65% of job openings are projected to be middle-skilled occupations requiring education beyond a high school diploma but less than a Bachelor's Degree. The remaining 35% are high-skilled occupations that require a Bachelor's Degree or higher. The targeted occupations are listed in Table 7 and also listed in Attachment 1.

**Table 7: Targeted Occupations by Typical Education Required for Entry**

Typical Education Required for Entry	Annual Average Employment	Annual Average Employment	Average Growth Rate 2014-2024	Number Change 2014-2024	Total Annual Average Openings*	Average of Annual Wage 2015	Percent of Annual Average Job
<b>Associate's degree</b>	5,030	6,260	21.13%	1,230	240	\$47,628	13.60%
<b>Postsecondary non-degree award</b>	24,250	28,620	19.59%	4,370	910	\$36,451	51.56%
<b>Bachelor's degree</b>	21,410	23,080	11.60%	1,670	615	\$62,779	34.84%
<b>Grand Total</b>	50,690	57,960	17.23%	7,270	1,765	\$45,941	100.00%

\*Includes job openings due to growth and replacement.

Only 33% of the region's population aged 25 or over has attended college or earned an Associate's degree. Yet, projections indicate that 65% of the job openings to be available in the targeted occupations through the year 2024 will be middle-skilled jobs requiring at least this level of education. Additionally, 17 of the targeted occupations that account for almost 47% of the job openings projected per year require a State-regulated license or registration for entry into the field. The Board's strategy to meet this need for middle-skilled workers includes a focus on work-based training and initiatives to increase the number of individuals trained who earn industry-recognized credentials.

**Table 8: PY 2018 South Plains Targeted Occupations**

Target Occupation Job Title (Name)	Annual Average Employment 2016	Annual Average Employment 2026	Number Change 2016- 2026	% Growth 2016- 2026	Annual Change in Employ- ment (Growth)	Starting Salary per Hour (Entry Wage)	Top Salary per Hour (Experienced Wage)	Typical Education Needed for Entry into Occupation
<b>Computer Systems Analysts</b>	247	281	34	13.8%	1.3	\$48,700	\$79,000	Bachelor's degree
<b>Information Security Analysts</b>	71	102	31	43.7%	3.69	\$36,800	\$77,700	Bachelor's degree
<b>Software Developers, Applications</b>	286	385	99	34.6%	3.02	\$45,800	\$85,600	Bachelor's degree
<b>Software Developers, Systems Software</b>	76	94	18	23.7%	2.15	\$44,300	\$80,800	Bachelor's degree
<b>Web Developers</b>	10,128	12,098	1,970	19.5%	1.79	\$32,100	\$51,100	Associate's degree
<b>Database Administrators</b>	70	81	11	15.7%	1.47	\$44,000	\$75,500	Bachelor's degree
<b>Computer User Support Specialists</b>	888	1,090	202	22.7%	2.07	\$28,200	\$50,500	Some college, no degree
<b>Elementary School Teachers</b>	2,693	2,963	270	10.0%	0.96	\$37,000	\$49,600	Bachelor's degree
<b>Middle School</b>	1,206	1,329	123	10.2%	0.98	\$35,600	\$52,000	Bachelor's

<b>Teachers</b>								degree
<b>Secondary School Teachers</b>	2,043	2,250	207	10.1%	0.97	\$37,400	\$55,700	Bachelor's degree
<b>Respiratory Therapists</b>	213	258	45	21.1%	1.94	\$41,000	\$56,000	Associate's degree
<b>Registered Nurses</b>	4,231	4,820	589	13.9%	1.31	\$51,600	\$76,000	Bachelor's degree
<b>Medical &amp; Clinical Laboratory Technicians</b>	180	190	10	5.6%	0.54	\$27,600	\$57,100	Associate's degree
<b>Radiologic Technologists</b>	460	510	50	10.9%	1.04	\$37,500	\$55,900	Associate's degree
<b>Emergency Medical Technicians &amp; Paramedics</b>	486	518	32	6.6%	0.64	\$22,200	\$40,900	Postsecondary nondegree award
<b>Pharmacy Technicians</b>	488	578	90	18.4%	1.71	\$24,100	\$35,600	High school diploma or equivalent
<b>Licensed Practical &amp; Licensed Vocational Nurses</b>	2,098	2,449	351	16.7%	1.56	\$34,600	\$48,000	Postsecondary nondegree award
<b>Medical Records &amp; Health Information Technicians</b>	314	351	37	11.8%	1.12	\$21,400	\$40,900	Postsecondary nondegree award
<b>Dental Assistants</b>	493	618	125	25.4%	2.29	\$24,700	\$37,100	Postsecondary nondegree award

<b>Medical Assistants</b>	783	990	207	26.4%	2.37	\$22,500	\$31,500	Postsecondary nondegree award
<b>Police &amp; Sheriff's Patrol Officers</b>	1,124	1,233	109	9.7%	0.93	\$37,500	\$65,900	Postsecondary nondegree award
<b>First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation &amp; Serving Workers</b>	1,696	1,921	225	13.3%	1.25	\$20,300	\$41,600	High school diploma or equivalent
<b>Customer Service Representatives</b>	3,098	3,621	523	16.9%	1.57	\$22,500	\$36,400	High school diploma or equivalent
<b>Medical Secretaries</b>	1,442	1,741	299	20.7%	1.9	\$21,800	\$32,900	High school diploma or equivalent
<b>Secretaries &amp; Admin Assistants, Ex. Legal/Medical/Exe cutive</b>	2,996	2,915	-81	-2.7%	-0.27	\$21,900	\$36,700	High school diploma or equivalent
<b>First-Line Supervisors: Construction Trades/Extraction Workers</b>	865	986	121	14.0%	1.32	\$40,700	\$76,600	High school diploma or equivalent
<b>Electricians</b>	954	1,077	123	12.9%	1.22	\$25,700	\$49,700	High school diploma or

								equivalent
<b>Plumbers, Pipefitters, &amp; Steamfitters</b>	809	957	148	18.3%	1.69	\$29,300	\$50,200	High school diploma or equivalent
<b>Auto Service Technicians &amp; Mechanics</b>	1,165	1,266	101	8.7%	0.83	\$22,700	\$52,400	Postsecondary nondegree award
<b>Bus &amp; Truck Mechanics &amp; Diesel Engine Specialists</b>	469	528	59	12.6%	1.19	\$28,700	\$49,800	High school diploma or equivalent
<b>Farm Equipment Mechanics &amp; Service Technicians</b>	253	294	41	16.2%	1.51	\$29,000	\$51,400	High school diploma or equivalent
<b>Heating, AC, &amp; Refrigeration Mechanics &amp; Installers</b>	666	801	135	20.3%	1.86	\$32,500	\$53,100	Postsecondary nondegree award
<b>Industrial Machinery Mechanics</b>	482	538	56	11.6%	1.11	\$35,500	\$56,800	High school diploma or equivalent
<b>Maintenance &amp; Repair Workers, General</b>	2,084	2,329	245	11.8%	1.12	\$23,100	\$38,700	High school diploma or equivalent
<b>Wind Turbine Service Technicians</b>	1,651	3,446	1,795	108.7%	7.64	\$42,800	\$71,400	Postsecondary nondegree award
<b>Machinists</b>	206	207	1	0.5%	0.05	\$26,000	\$42,000	High school



								diploma or equivalent
<b>Welders, Cutters, Solderers, &amp; Brazers</b>	586	649	63	10.8%	1.03	\$28,400	\$47,100	High school diploma or equivalent
<b>Heavy &amp; Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers</b>	3,364	3,823	459	13.6%	1.29	\$26,200	\$48,500	Postsecondary nondegree award

### E. Knowledge and Skills Needed to Meet Employment Needs

The TWC Strategic Workforce Assessment Project (SWAP) Tool provides a breakdown of the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) common to the targeted occupations. The Workforce Assessment Tool identified 146 Detailed Work Activity (DWA) statements critical to the target cluster and ranks these DWAs based on the Coefficient of Specialization calculated by SWAP for each DWA in the Region. The 25 DWAs listed in Table 9 below ranked highest indicating they have both a high importance within the target cluster and are also scarce relative to the existing regional talent pool. The rest of the DWAs are also important to the target cluster but are likely already found in large numbers among the existing regional workforce.

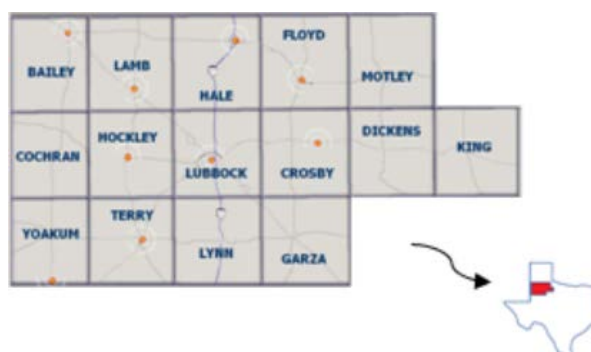
Rank	Table 9: Detailed Work Activity
1	Prepare technical, managerial, financial, or informational reports
2	Maintain records, reports, files, listings, or logs
3	Provide customer service
4	Maintain licenses, certifications, qualifications, and knowledge currency through continuing education activities
5	Direct activities of workers or staff
6	Perform safety inspections
7	Respond to concerns from workers, parents, or students
8	Order supplies, materials, or equipment
9	Exchange ideas and information with others
10	Consult with colleagues or experts regarding specific issues
11	Negotiate business, sales, rental, or lease contracts
12	Attend academic, business, or other conferences and events
13	Purchase supplies, materials, or equipment
14	Maintain production or work records
15	Process payroll documents, records, or checks
16	Conduct business, legal, market or managerial research
17	Conduct staff meetings
18	Develop operational budgets
19	Conduct regularly set (e.g., quarterly, annually, etc.) reviews of progress, production, or sales
20	Control organizational, product, or material inventory
21	Ensure correct grammar, punctuation, or spelling in written communication
22	Discharge workers to meet employment needs
23	Compile data for financial reports
24	Manage material resources to optimize use of manpower, tools, materials, and equipment
25	Promote high quality and performance standards

The KSAs common to the targeted occupations are listed in Table 10 below along with the frequency with which they appear in the list of DWAs indicating that these are the prime characteristics that employers are seeking in the workforce to fill occupations targeted by the Board.

<b>Table 10: Knowledge Skills and Abilities in High Demand</b>					
Prime Knowledge	Frequency	Prime Skills	Frequency	Prime Abilities	Frequency
Education and Training	33	Critical Thinking	17	Oral Expression	36
Administration and Management	27	Writing	13	Inductive Reasoning	18
Clerical	13	Management of Personnel Resources	11	Written Expression	17
Mechanical	13	Complex Problem Solving	11	Problem Sensitivity	16
Personnel and Human Resources	10	Speaking	10	Information Ordering	15
Customer and Personal Service	9	Coordination	9	Deductive Reasoning	14
Economics and Accounting	8	Learning Strategies	7	Manual Dexterity	10
Sales and Marketing	7	Reading Comprehension	6	Written Comprehension	7
Production and Processing	5	Instructing	6	Mathematical Reasoning	2
Communications and Media	4	Management of Financial Resources	5	Near Vision	2
English Language	3	Judgment and Decision Making	5	Oral Comprehension	2
Computers and Electronics	2	Repairing	4	Originality	2
Food Production	2	Operation and Control	4	Arm-Hand Steadiness	1
Law and Government	2	Negotiation	4	Category Flexibility	1
Medicine and Dentistry	2	Monitoring	4	Finger Dexterity	1
Public Safety and Security	2	Management of Material Resources	4	Number Facility	1
Engineering and Technology	1	Active Listening	4	Wrist-Finger Speed	1
Mathematics	1	Service Orientation	3		
Psychology	1	Quality Control Analysis	3		
Therapy and Counseling	1	Mathematics	3		
		Equipment Maintenance	3		
		Social Perceptiveness	2		
		Operations and Control	2		
		Active Learning	2		
		Troubleshooting	1		
		Persuasion	1		
		Installation	1		
		Equipment Selection	1		

## F. The South Plains Population – Workforce Analysis

The South Plains region shown in the graphic below includes residents of the Lubbock Metropolitan Statistical Area which includes Lubbock, Crosby and Lynn Counties. The region includes 12 surrounding rural and sparsely populated counties: Bailey, Cochran, Dickens, Lamb, Hale, Hockley, Floyd, Garza, Motley, King, Terry, and Yoakum. The region encompasses 13,618 square miles and has a population density of 30.23 residents per square mile as compared to the State average of 95.92 residents per square mile as of 2010. The Board maintains six full-service career centers located in Bailey, Hale, Lamb, Levelland, Lubbock, and Terry Counties.



The population of the South Plains region grew by 4.54% between 2010 and 2015, increasing from 411,659 to 430,348 persons.<sup>1</sup> In comparison, the State grew at a rate of 9.24% percent during the same period. The majority of the region's growth occurred in Lubbock (7.21%) and Yoakum Counties (9.49%). Eight of the region's rural counties experienced decreases, with some sizeable populations decreasing by as much as 8.8% from 2010 to 2015 as shown in Table 4 continuing a trend of decreases as high as 17% in five of the region's most populous rural counties from 2000 to 2010.

Projections published by the Texas State Demographer indicate that the population of South Plains rural counties is expected to rebound and grow significantly during this decade through 2020. Based on the .5 projection scenario which projects continued growth based on 2000-2010 trends in migration but at reduced levels, the South Plains Region's population is projected to grow at a rate of 4.95% by the year 2020 as shown in Table 5 as compared to the State's projected growth rate of 4.89% during that same period.

**Table 11: South Plains Regional Population Growth**

County	Population				
	2010 Census	2015 Estimates	Change 2010 to 2015	Projections 2020	Change 2015 to 2020
Bailey	7,165	7,112	-0.74%	8,088	13.72%
Cochran	3,127	3,053	-2.37%	3,503	14.74%
Crosby	6,059	5,999	-0.99%	6,774	12.92%
Dickens	2,444	2,232	-8.67%	2,477	10.98%
Floyd	6,446	5,881	-8.77%	6,806	15.73%
Garza	6,461	6,529	1.05%	6,944	6.36%
Hale	36,273	35,371	-2.49%	39,596	11.94%
Hockley	22,935	23,600	2.90%	24,968	5.80%

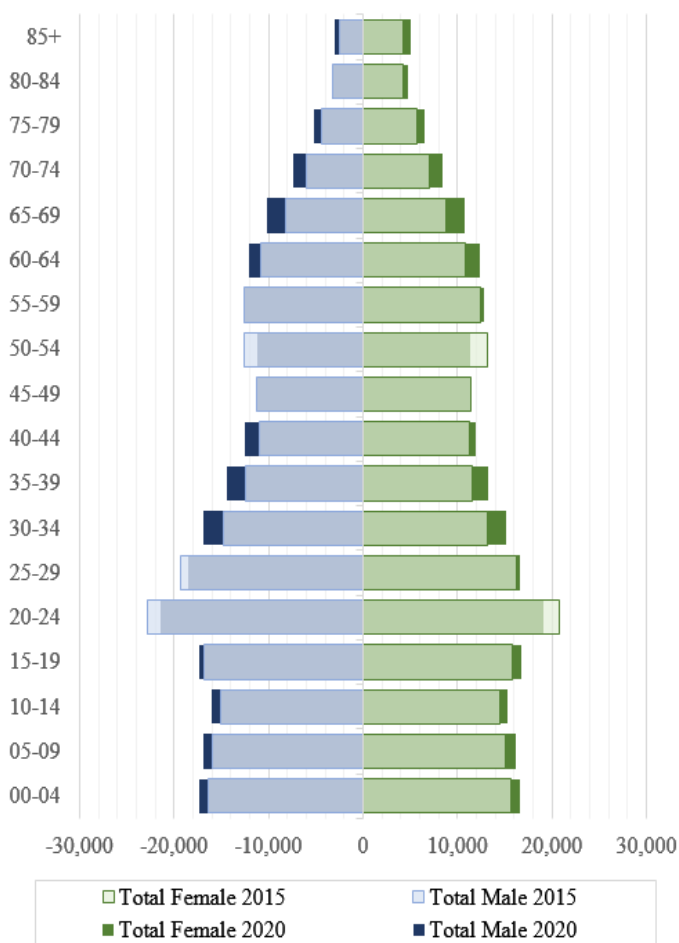
<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau 2015 Population Estimates Program and ACS

King	286	294	2.80%	300	2.04%
Lamb	13,977	13,225	-5.38%	14,879	12.51%
Lubbock	278,831	298,941	7.21%	306,938	2.68%
Lynn	5,915	5,943	0.47%	6,364	7.08%
Motley	1,210	1,104	-8.76%	1,222	10.69%
Terry	12,651	12,437	-1.69%	13,586	9.24%
Yoakum	7,879	8,627	9.49%	9,191	6.54%
Total Region	411,659	430,348	4.54%	451,636	4.95%
Texas	25,145,561	27,469,114	9.24%	28,813,282	4.89%

The chart to the right illustrates the age structure and composition and projected growth of the Region's population through 2020.<sup>2</sup> The relatively larger population in the 20 to 24 year-old age group reflects the presence of three major four-year universities, including Texas Tech University where enrollment for the Fall 2016 semester was at an all-time high of 36,561 students enrolled.<sup>3</sup> This number exceeded the enrollment forecast issued by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in January 2015.<sup>4</sup>

While the majority of these college students will leave the region after completion of their studies, the region strives to retain this talent as it contributes significantly to the region's innovative capacity. A major challenge for the next four years is to develop the quality and quantity of jobs that would enable the region to retain a large share of students in this age group after they complete school.

South Plains Region Population by Age Group



<sup>2</sup> Texas Demographer, 2015 Populations Estimates and 2020 Population Projections for the South Plains Region COG.

<sup>3</sup> Texas Tech University, <http://today.ttu.edu/posts/2016/09/enrollment>. Last accessed December 20, 2016.

<sup>4</sup> Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, "Enrollment Forecast 2015-2020", January 2015. Last accessed January 22, 2017.

The percentage of the South Plains population between the ages of 25 to 44 is 25.7% per 2015 population estimates as compared to the State's percentage of 27.7% in that age group. A larger population in this age group is preferable since this group contains the greatest share of the labor force. Decreases over time in this group can be an indication that people are moving out of an area they consider to be a poor labor market. The percentage of the South Plains population in this age group has grown from 25.1% to 25.7% and is projected to grow to 26.4% through 2020.

Currently, the percentage of South Plains residents who are 65 years of age and over is estimated to be 12.7% which is higher than the State average of 11.7%.<sup>5</sup> The Region will continue to experience increases in the number of older workers. Small rural counties in particular will be challenged to maintain current production capacity as older workers retire and leave the workforce.<sup>6</sup>

**Table 12: Age Characteristics of the South Plains Population**

<b>County</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Median Age</b>	<b>Age Dependency Ratio</b>
<b>Bailey</b>	7,126	34.9	84.8
<b>Cochran</b>	2,993	34.9	75.6
<b>Crosby</b>	6,007	38.2	83.5
<b>Dickens</b>	2,281	43.1	74.9
<b>Floyd</b>	6,178	37.3	84.9
<b>Garza</b>	6,410	39.4	38.9
<b>Hale</b>	35,504	32.5	68.2
<b>Hockley</b>	23,322	32.8	67
<b>King</b>	267	46.2	45.9
<b>Lamb</b>	13,742	36.1	81.6
<b>Lubbock</b>	290,782	30.6	55.5
<b>Lynn</b>	5,764	37.4	74.9
<b>Motley</b>	1,071	44.3	77.6
<b>Terry</b>	12,687	34.3	69.3
<b>Yoakum</b>	8,213	34.1	77.9
<b>Lubbock MSA</b>	302,553	30.9	56.3
<b>Texas</b>		34.1	60.7

<sup>5</sup> Texas Demographic Center Population Estimates Program 2015.

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Census ACS 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table S101, "Age and Sex".



Much of the region's population growth will come from domestic migration. The region welcomes an estimated 41,348 newcomers to the region while losing 30,014 residents for an estimated net migration of 11,424 new residents each year.<sup>7</sup>

**Table 13: Householder Net Migration Flows**

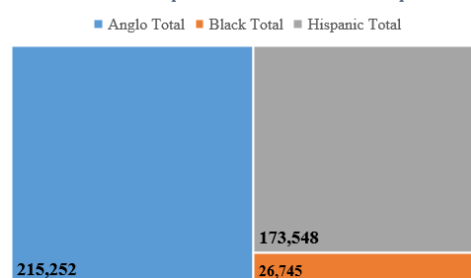
<b>County</b>	<b>Population (1 yr and over):</b>	<b>Movers from a different state:</b>	<b>Movers to a different state:</b>	<b>Movers from a different county, same state:</b>	<b>Movers to a different county, same state:</b>	<b>Movers from abroad:</b>	<b>Estimated Net migration</b>
<b>Bailey</b>	7,001	83	(292)	428	(374)	20	(135)
<b>Lamb</b>	13,645	431	(94)	813	(990)	105	265
<b>Hale</b>	35,378	631	(373)	3,725	(3,195)	100	888
<b>Floyd</b>	6,163	4	(81)	326	(742)	8	(485)
<b>Cochran</b>	3,000	12	(17)	133	(70)	15	73
<b>Hockley</b>	22,831	443	(108)	2,274	(2,035)	163	737
<b>Lubbock</b>	283,223	5,972	(4,581)	20,001	(13,627)	1,367	9,132
<b>Crosby</b>	5,958	30	(34)	450	(493)	9	(38)
<b>Dickens</b>	2,315	12	(59)	242	(238)	22	(21)
<b>Yoakum</b>	7,941	49	(137)	223	(467)	142	(190)
<b>Terry</b>	12,621	300	(3)	975	(920)	58	410
<b>Lynn</b>	5,772	75	-	345	(255)	5	170
<b>Garza</b>	6,317	664	(84)	487	(537)	174	704
<b>Motley</b>	1,152	39	(153)	83	(55)	-	(86)

## G. Racial/Ethnic Distribution

Diversity is our Region's greatest source of innovation potential. Our diverse, multicultural society with many different views and skills represented is a major advantage. The racial composition of the region's population is illustrated in the chart to the right.<sup>8</sup>

According to 2015 estimates, 40.3% of the population is Hispanic (of any race). According to projections by the Texas State Demographer, the Hispanic population is fast becoming the majority ethnic group and is projected to comprise over 50% of the South Plains population by the year 2040.

Racial/Ethnic Composition of the South Plains Population



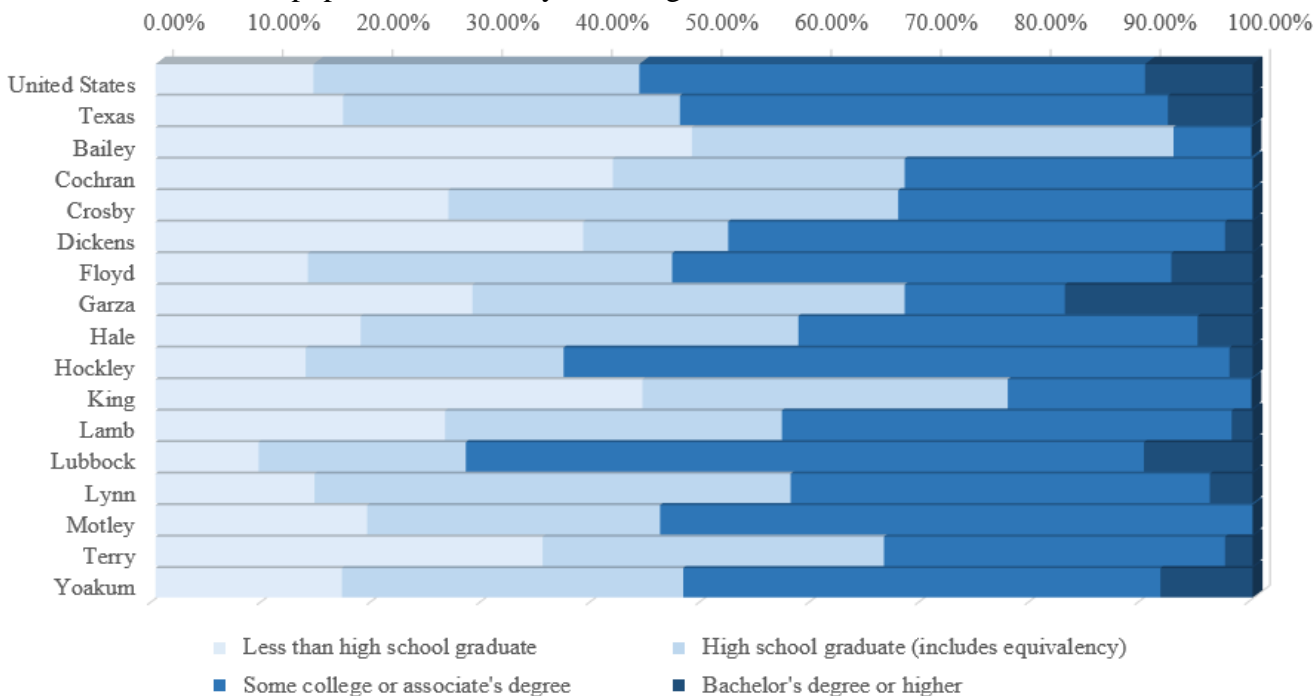
<sup>7</sup> U.S. Census ACS 2010-2014 5-Year Estimates, "Householder Net Migration Flows".

<sup>8</sup> Texas Demographer Population Estimates 2015.

<http://txsdc.utsa.edu/Data/TPEPP/Estimates/Report?id=03baf4dae8c64a6c877a7c02bda0be60>. Last accessed 1/9/17.

## H. Educational Attainment

The number of youth between 18 and 24 years of age who have not earned a high school diploma is over twice the national average in six of the rural counties in the Region.<sup>9</sup> Educational attainment rates for the population over 25 years of age is illustrated in the chart below.

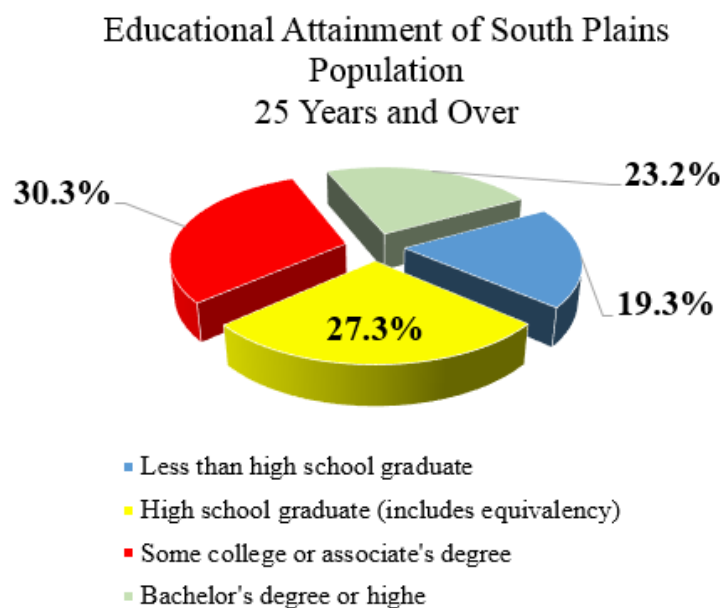


As the chart above illustrates, almost half of the region's youth in the 18 to 24 age group have some postsecondary education. Our challenge is to encourage youth to earn an industry-recognized certification, progress to an Associate's or higher degree and then continue learning throughout their lifespan. The Board collaborates with educational providers to facilitate a return to postsecondary education for youth who are in need of training to become self-sufficient.

Approximately 54% of the population over 25 years of age has some college or a degree as shown in Table 14. The educational attainment levels of the population 25 years and over is illustrated in the chart below.

<b>Table 14: Educational Attainment Population Over 25 Years of Age</b>	<b>Number</b>
<b>Less than high school graduate</b>	48,655
<b>High school graduate (includes equivalency)</b>	68,680
<b>Some college or associate's degree</b>	76,245
<b>Bachelor's degree or higher</b>	58,352
<b>Total Population Over 25 Years of Age</b>	251,932

<sup>9</sup> American Community Survey, Table S1501, 5-year estimates for the period 2011 to 2015.



## I. Regional Labor Force

While the Lubbock regional economy is thriving, not all counties in the region and not all residents of the South Plains share equitably in the region's prosperity. Per capita Income levels across the South Plains range from \$30,269 in King County, a county with a population of 267 to a low of \$17,007 in Bailey County with a population of 7,112 residents as shown in Table 15. The region's median wage for all jobs is \$14.31 which is 86.15% of the State median wage of \$16.61.

**Table 15: Per Capita Income by County**

County	Per Capita Income (PCI)	Percent of Texas PCI
Texas	\$26,999	100.00%
Lubbock MSA	\$24,372	90.27%
Bailey County, Texas	\$17,007	62.99%
Cochran County, Texas	\$18,968	70.25%
Crosby County, Texas	\$18,692	69.23%
Dickens County, Texas	\$20,659	76.52%
Floyd County, Texas	\$22,195	82.21%
Garza County, Texas	\$18,125	67.13%
Hale County, Texas	\$17,910	66.34%
Hockley County, Texas	\$22,609	83.74%
King County, Texas	\$30,269	112.11%
Lamb County, Texas	\$20,863	77.27%

Lubbock County, Texas	\$24,510	90.78%
Lynn County, Texas	\$23,341	86.45%
Motley County, Texas	\$20,322	75.27%
Terry County, Texas	\$21,705	80.39%
Yoakum County, Texas	\$23,125	85.65%

**Table 16: Regional Wage Levels**

Mean Wage	Entry Wage	Experienced Wage	PCT 50 Median Wage
\$18.93	\$8.91	\$23.94	\$14.31
\$39,379.00	\$18,539.00	\$49,798.00	\$29,759.00

The Board establishes a Self-sufficiency Wage Standard, revised annually, to determine whether individuals who are employed are receiving self-sufficiency wages in the local workforce development area or are in need of Career and Training Services. The Self-sufficiency Wage Standard is based on family size or number of persons in the household (PHH). The Board's Priority of Service policy allows expenditures of up to 25% of funding on training services for individuals with household income higher than the low-income level (approximately 70% of the poverty level) but less than the Self-sufficiency Wage Standard.

<b>Table 17: Self-sufficiency Wage Standard</b>			
<b>Family Size</b>	<b>1 PHH</b>	<b>2 PHH</b>	<b>3 or more PHH</b>
<b>Income</b>	<b>\$27,264</b>	<b>\$44,713</b>	<b>\$54,885</b>

The percentage of persons in poverty within the 15 counties in the region is as high as 23.5% as shown in Table 18 below. None of the counties in the region qualify as high-poverty areas for purposes of determining eligibility for youth programs under WIOA. However, closer review reveals that there are 21 census tracts in Lubbock County alone with poverty rates ranging from 28 to 89%. An estimated 29,342 residents of Lubbock County, including 8,500 children and youth under the age of 18, reside within these 21 census tracts.

**Table 18: Regional Poverty Levels by County**

	Population for whom Poverty Status is Determined	Population Determined to be in Poverty Status	Poverty Rate (percent per capita)
<b>Bailey</b>	6,954	1,319	19.0%
<b>Cochran</b>	2,948	591	20.0%
<b>Crosby</b>	5,921	1,358	22.9%
<b>Dickens</b>	2,077	417	20.1%

<b>Floyd</b>	6,126	1,375	22.4%
<b>Garza</b>	4,148	432	10.4%
<b>Hale</b>	32,816	7,548	23.0%
<b>Hockley</b>	22,569	3,297	14.6%
<b>King</b>	267	19	7.1%
<b>Lamb</b>	13,498	3,173	23.5%
<b>Lubbock</b>	278,842	54,155	19.4%
<b>Lynn</b>	5,726	1,106	19.3%
<b>Motley</b>	1,069	181	16.9%
<b>Terry</b>	11,492	1,756	15.3%
<b>Yoakum</b>	8,202	979	11.9%

Table 19 provides a profile of the South Plains labor force. The percentage of workers 30 years of age or over who have less than a high school diploma is 13.1% while 21.7% have a high school diploma or equivalent and no college. The majority of workers, 64.3%, earn \$3,333 or less per month.

**Table 19: South Plains Labor Force Profile**

All Primary Jobs		
Age	Number	Percent
Age 29 or Younger	45,111	26
Age 30 to 54	91,489	52.8
Age 55 or older	36,658	21.2
	173,258	
Race		
White Alone	155,213	89.6
Black or African American Alone	11,412	6.6
American Indian or Alaska Native Alone	1,715	1.0
Asian Alone	2,947	1.7
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander Alone	250	0.1
Two or more Race Groups	1,721	1.0
	173,258	
Ethnicity		
Not Hispanic or Latino	112,775	65.1
Hispanic or Latino	60,483	34.9
	173,258	
Educational Attainment		
Less than High School	22,771	13.1
High School or Equivalent, No College	37,675	21.7
Some College or Associate Degree	43,103	24.9

Bachelor's Degree or Advanced Degree	24,598	14.2
Educational Attainment not Available	45,111	26
(Workers aged 29 or younger)	173,258	
Gender		
Male	86,115	49.7
Female	87,143	50.3
Earnings		
\$1,250 per month or less	40,887	23.6
\$1,251 to \$3,333 per month	70,518	40.7
More than \$3,333 per month	61,853	35.7
	173,258	
Source: On the Map Longitudinal Employer and Household Dynamics. (UI Wage Records, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, and Census Bureau Data 2014). Excludes Uniformed Military, Self-Employed Workers, Informally Employed Workers.		

The South Plains labor force includes 27,955 nonemployers, including self-employed workers and sole proprietorships, that add an estimated \$1.37 Billion to the regional economy annually.<sup>10</sup> The Board's strategies for increasing services to rural areas include strategies designed to connect with nonemployers and inform them about available workforce services as well as strategies designed to promote entrepreneurship.

**Table 20: South Plains Nonemployers**

County	Establishments	Receipts (\$1,000)
Bailey	374	\$23,587
Cochran	170	\$6,545
Crosby	387	\$13,534
Dickens	143	\$3,619
Floyd	346	\$10,118
Garza	366	\$19,724
Hale	2,095	\$88,670
Hockley	1,330	\$61,284
Lamb	735	\$28,750
Lubbock	20,487	\$1,055,222
Lynn	338	\$12,895
Motley	112	\$3,891

<sup>10</sup> U.S. Census Bureau 2014 Nonemployer Statistics, <https://censtats.census.gov/cgi-bin/nonemployer/noncomp.pl>. Last accessed January 22, 2017.

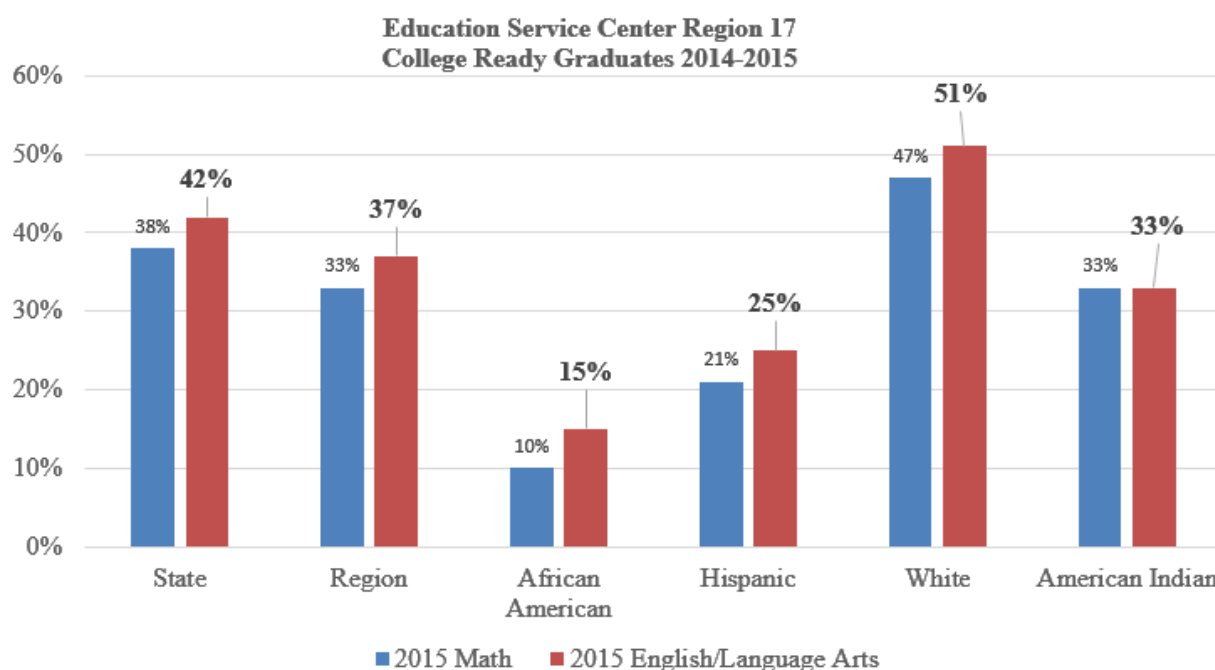


<b>Terry</b>	622	\$27,375
<b>Yoakum</b>	490	\$23,621
<b>Total</b>	27,995	\$1,378,835

#### J. Available Employment, Training and Educational Services

Education is critical to our region's ability to innovate. The South Plains is home to four nationally-recognized 4-year universities including Texas Tech University and Texas Tech Health Sciences Center, Lubbock Christian University and Wayland Baptist University. South Plains College, the region's 2-year public community college, located in Levelland, Texas, serves the Lubbock and surrounding communities. The Board's Eligible Training Providers - providers who are eligible to receive workforce funds for providing occupational skills training to program participants approved for training services - includes 15 providers offering 83 programs.

The percentage of college-ready high school graduates by ethnic group is shown in the chart below.<sup>11</sup> In the 2014-2015 school year, 37% of high school graduates were considered college ready as compared to 42% of the population statewide.



The Higher Education Coordinating Board report indicates a decline in the percentage of high school graduates who pursue university degrees<sup>12</sup> after graduation in the High Plains Region. The High Plains Region, which includes the South Plains and Panhandle Workforce Development Areas, experienced a decline from 2000 to 2015 in the number of high school

<sup>11</sup> Texas Education Agency, Academic Excellence Indicator System 2014-2015 Region Performance Report, Education Service Center Region 17.

<sup>12</sup> Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, High School to College linkages, 2010.

graduates who enroll in universities and an increase in the number of graduates who enroll in two-year colleges after high school.

**Table 21: Texas Public High School Graduates, 2000, 2013 and 2015**  
**Percent Enrolling in Public Higher Education the Following Fall**

High School Graduates			Percent University			Percent Two-Year			Percent All		
2000	2013	2015	2000	2013	2015	2000	2013	2015	2000	2013	2015
9,311	9,350	9,576	20.6%	18.4%	19.1%	23.9%	28.6%	28.2%	44.4%	47.1%	47.3%

Through the efforts of the region's four-year universities, South Plains Community College, and other training providers, significant strides have been made in raising the educational levels of the region's population over the past two years. Over 14,000 certificates and degrees were awarded to students in the High Plains Region – which includes the Panhandle and South Plains Board Areas – during 2015.<sup>13</sup>

Table 22: Certificates and Degrees Awarded in High Plains Region 2015		Number
Certificates		1,705
Associate Degrees		2,005
Bachelor's Degrees		7,743
Master's Degrees		2,350
Doctoral Degrees		385
Total Awards		14,188

<sup>13</sup> Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, Degrees Awarded by Program Areas/High and Low Demand", [http://www.txhighereddata.org/reports/performance/regions/default.cfm?report\\_yr=2016](http://www.txhighereddata.org/reports/performance/regions/default.cfm?report_yr=2016). Last accessed January 22, 2017.

## Analysis of Workforce Development Activities

### Career Center Services

Workforce Solutions ensures that workforce education and training programs are available to support customer needs for career preparation and advancement. Career services, training services, and support services are individualized and made available to facilitate success for each participant.

During PY 2018, 10,985 customers were served in workforce services. Of those, 124 participated in occupational skills training. Employment and training services were provided to individuals with barriers to employment as shown in the table below.

<b>Barrier to Employment</b>	<b>Total Number</b>	<b>Percent of Total Served</b>
School Dropout	1,094	24.81%
Disabled	103	2.34%
Offender	723	16.39%
Deficient in Basic Literacy	561	12.72%
Lacks Significant Work History	654	14.83%
Homeless	52	1.18%
Displaced Homemaker	15	.34%
Pregnant or Parenting Youth	93	2.11%
Foster Youth	6	.14%
Basic Skills Deficient	202	4.58%

Source: TWIST Management Summary Report PY 2015

Services provided to assist individuals with barriers to employment include the provision of labor market information, job search assistance, work readiness workshops, career planning, leadership development workshops, support services, and development of Individual Employment Plans. Employment services were provided to 12,409 job seekers from January 2016 to December 2016. A total of 8,570 job seekers were placed in employment. Individuals in need of work experience may be placed in subsidized employment. Funding is provided through Individual Training Accounts to cover the cost of tuition, books, and other training-related costs to enable individuals in need of training to attend occupational skills training.

During PY 2017 through 2020, as described in Goal 2, Strategy 1, the Board has committed to increase participation in work-based training and enroll at least 90 individuals in on-the-job training, customized training, or incumbent worker training. Also during the period of this plan, the Board will increase access to services by enhancing the website to include a chat feature and online Child Care Services application form. Customers will also be able to locate child care providers using an interactive map feature and will be able to gather information on certified Eligible Training Provider programs including information on provider performance outcomes. See strategies included under Goals 2, 3, and 4.

In addition to services provided to individuals, services are available through the Career Center to assist employers with their hiring and training needs. Some services are provided at no charge. BSU staff routinely provide Rapid Response Services to assist employers who are laying off all or part of their workforce. Staff assist employers with screening, recruiting and posting job orders in the automated labor exchange system, WorkinTexas.com. The BSU also provides services at cost to support employer needs. Employers can rent meeting space to hold hiring events. The Business Services Unit provided workforce assistance to 1,867 employers during the period August 2015 through July 2016. Extensive training was provided to Board staff in December 2015 to develop a new capability for outreaching and engaging industry and community partners. In 2016, the Board hired an employer engagement specialist dedicated to the goal of promoting employer participation in workforce services.


The Board's Business Services Unit (BSU) staff meet regularly with regional Economic Development Corporation (EDC) partners to promote services to employers. In 2016, 8 informational sessions sponsored by EDCs were held at locations throughout the region to provide information on grant funds available for incumbent worker training. Goal 1, Strategy 2, of the Board's strategic plan includes plans to partner with EDCs to disseminate information and collaborate on workforce training projects with the goal of developing meaningful, ongoing relationships with at least 50 employers by PY 2020. The BSU will also work with Chambers of Commerce and other stakeholders to increase access to services for sole proprietorships.

To increase access to services for rural customers, the Board purchased a bus in 2016 to serve as a mobile career center that will serve outlying areas on a rotating basis. The mobile career center is equipped with 7 computer stations and internet to serve jobseekers.






The Board applies for discretionary grants to supplement available grant funds. In 2016, the Board received a DOL National Dislocated Worker Grant in the amount of approximately \$570,000 to increase services to workers dislocated from the Oil and Gas Industry. The funds will be used to assist workers dislocated from the industry to retrain for a new career. Also in 2016, the Board received a \$30,000 grant in recognition for an exemplary Industry Sector Outreach Project. The funds will be used to assist employers with the costs of training their existing workforce. The Board also received a grant of \$75,000 in recognition of an exemplary Child Care Services Quality Initiative. Funds will be used for capacity building and program improvement.

### **Regional Collaboration to Leverage Resources**



In addition to services offered through the Workforce Solutions Career Centers, the Board collaborates with training providers, employers and employer organizations to leverage resources and increase and enhance training and employment opportunities available to our customers. Examples of the collaborations with workforce development partners include:

-  The Workforce Solutions South Plains CEO chairs the Community Workforce Partnership (CWP). The CWP membership includes the Lubbock Economic Development Alliance, Lubbock Chamber of Commerce, Region 17, South Plains College and Career and Technology Coordinators representing several school districts.

In 2017, the Board is expanding to include the Director of Academic Engagement for Texas Tech University. The CEO also chairs the Lubbock ISD Career and Technology Advisory Committee and serves on the South Plains College (SPC) Byron Martin Advisory Committee that has spearheaded the development of the new SPC Lubbock Center campus. Through these relationships, the Board plays a strong role in the development of secondary and postsecondary educational initiatives in the region.

-  During PY 2015, the Board collaborated with employers to upgrade the skills of their incumbent workforce through the Local Innovation Partnership Grant. Thirty-eight production workers received industry-recognized certifications in food safety, lean manufacturing, and in healthcare environmental Services. Successful outcomes for the participating employers include increased business productivity and competitiveness and worker retention. The Board received an Industry Sector Outreach Grant award of \$30,000 from the Texas Workforce Commission in the Fall of 2016 in recognition of this quality training initiative – bringing additional funding to the region to assist employers with the cost of training their current workforce.
-  The Board collaborates with the Lubbock Chamber of Commerce to facilitate the Lubbock Chamber University. Five Chamber U seminars are offered per year and are attended by an average of 70 employer representatives. Topics that have been offered include: DOL Overtime Changes; Marketing on a Shoestring Budget; Millennial Retention; Characteristics of an Excellent Team; I-9 Form Changes; and, “Is Your Business in Compliance.”
-  Three major job fairs, including two regionwide fairs and the Red, White and You Job Fair (to promote the hiring of veterans) are held annually to assist employers with their hiring needs. On average, 80 employers participate in each event. The October 2016 South Plains Job Fair was a collaboration between Workforce Solutions South Plains, South Plains College, Texas Tech University Career Center, Lubbock Economic Development Alliance, Lubbock Avalanche Journal, Giles W. Dalby Correctional Facility, and Convergys.
-  The Board collaborates with employers to support apprenticeships. In collaboration with Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center and the West Texas Area Health Education Center, the Board facilitated the creation of an apprenticeship program to train Community Health Workers. The apprenticeship is registered through the Department of Labor and is also certified as an eligible training provider to serve WIOA participants. The apprenticeship will support the skill needs of regional hospitals and clinics.
-  The Board has received three High Demand Job Training Grants to assist local high schools to expand or create Career and Technology Education Programs. The grants leveraged funds contributed by the Lubbock Economic Development Alliance and Plainview/Hale County Economic Development Corporation. Through this initiative, over \$550,000 has been contributed to 22 high schools. CTE Programs funded offer students the opportunity to earn industry-recognized certifications in high demand occupations including American Welding Society SENSE Student Certification,

ServSafe, certified nurse aide (CNA), AutoCAD, precision metalworking, Cisco networking, Briggs and Stratton motor repair, Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) Student Certification, Microsoft Office, and Web and Mobile Design Specialist.

-  The Board sponsors the annual South Plains Career Expo to provide an opportunity for youth to explore career options. Over 4,000 students attended the event held in October 2018 and had the opportunity to explore exhibits and hands-on interactive displays from business and educational sponsors. During PY 2017 through PY 2020, the Board will increase access to employment and training services by collaborating with rural high schools and providing funds to facilitate at least 3 rural career fairs.
-  Each year, the Board sponsors an annual Youth Job Fair in June to provide an opportunity for youth to obtain summer employment. An estimated 600 youth attended the job fair in 2016 and approximately 60 students obtained employment.

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## V. Operational Plan for PY 2017 through PY 2020

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The Board receives formula funds and discretionary grants to fund the administration, operation, and oversight of employment and training programs in the 15-County South Plains Region. In fulfillment of its role as lead workforce development entity in the Region, the Board designs a service delivery plan that addresses diverse customer needs; sets standards for the local workforce system; makes decisions about workforce services and funding in the local community and sets policy appropriately; and, forms a network of services to offer customers including employers and community stakeholders. Section III of this strategic plan outlined the Board's vision, mission and goals for the period from PY 2017 and PY 2020. This Section V describes the program and services provided by the Board and describes how the system will implement the strategies and activities to achieve those goals. Additionally, in this section, we demonstrate how the Board's goals, strategies and priorities are aligned with and support the Texas Workforce System Strategic Plan FY 2016 - FY 2023, the Texas Workforce Commission Strategic Plan 2015 - 2019, the Combined State Plan for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 PY 2016 - PY 2019, and the Adult Education and Literacy Strategic Plan for FY 2015 - FY 2020.

1. A description of the workforce development system in the local area that identifies the programs that are included in the system and how the Board will support the strategy identified in the State Plan and work with the entities carrying out core programs 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 WIOA Section 102(b)(1)(E).

During PY 2018, 10,985 job seekers received employment and training services, 2,403 employers received workforce assistance services, subsidized child care services were provided to an average of 2,019 children per day through local day care centers or relative providers, and 8,570 job seeker were placed in jobs.<sup>14</sup>

Available services for jobseekers include basic and individualized career services and training services customized to meet the needs of participants in the WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Programs; Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Program; Noncustodial Parent Choices (NCP/Choices) Program; Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Choices Program; Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Employment and Training (SNAP E&T) Program; and Child Care Services. NCP Choices, TANF programs services include staff assisted job search and subsidized employment and other services as applicable. SNAP program services include staff assisted job search, vocational training, non-vocational training, work experience, workfare and other services as applicable. Career counselors outreach recipients of TANF public assistance who are exempt from employment requirements on a bi-weekly basis to provide information about workforce services including staff assisted job search, support services (child care, fuel assistance, work attire) and job readiness workshops.

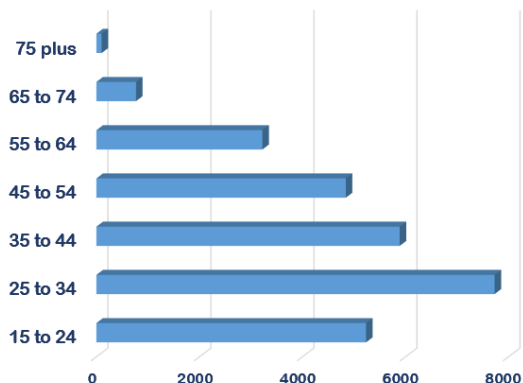
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<sup>14</sup> Texas Workforce Commission Rolling August 2016 Report.

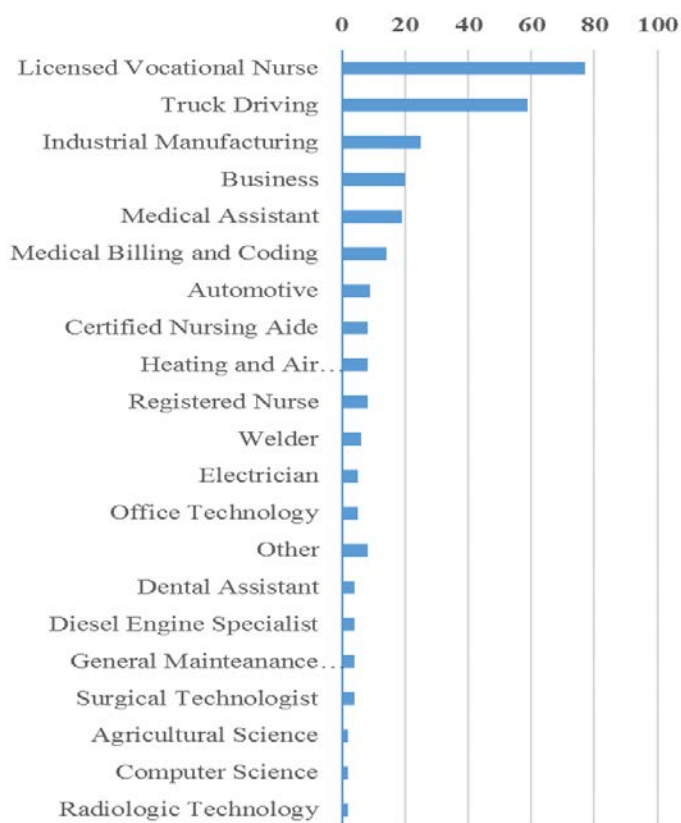


The majority of job seekers who are currently registered in the State's automated job matching system, WorkinTexas.com (WIT), are 25 to 34-years of age as shown in the chart to the right. The median level of education is 12 years. The majority of registrants are male (55%) and Hispanic (48.7). The Board assists these jobseekers to find employment by sponsoring a series of job fairs annually. Two major regional South Plains Job Fairs are held each year in collaboration with partner agencies. In addition, the Board sponsors the Hiring Red, White and You Job Fair in collaboration with the Texas Workforce Commission. On average, 80 employers attend each event to promote their job openings to jobseekers.

**WorkinTexas Jobseekers by Age Group (n=27,791)**



All jobseekers have access to the resource center which makes available computers, printers and other resources to facilitate their job search. In addition, the TWC and Board make online resources available for career planning including state and local labor market information. Jobseekers in need of individualized career services meet with a career counselor for assistance in obtaining employment or training. Program participants who are in need of training services and are determined eligible may receive assistance through a system of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs). Through ITAs, the Board funds training for jobseekers in need of assistance to obtain or retain employment in the Board's high demand occupations. In PY 2015, the Board provided case management services to 481 program participants and funded occupational/vocational training and support services for 441 jobseekers to prepare them for employment in the Board's targeted occupations. The chart to the right provides a breakdown of training by occupation for 293 program completers.



The Board assists Unemployment Insurance (UI) Claimants to access the benefits administered by the Texas Workforce Commission and assists them during their job search. One of the Board's performance measures tracks the percentage of UI claimants who are reemployed within 10 weeks. The Board had achieved 101.19% of the performance goal for PY 2016 as of



December 2016. In PY 2016, the Board was awarded a National Dislocated Worker Grant in the amount of \$571,645 to assist workers dislocated from the Oil and Gas Industry, many of whom currently receive or have exhausted UI benefits. Dislocated workers in need of retraining to upgrade their skills may be eligible for tuition assistance and support services.

The Board provides priority of service to veterans and eligible spouses of veterans in the provision of services. Priority of service is also afforded to the following categories of applicants in the provision of individualized career services and training services regardless of funding levels:

- ✚ public assistance recipients;
- ✚ other low-income adults; and
- ✚ individuals who are basic skills deficient.

Eligible veterans and eligible spouses of veterans continue to receive priority of service for all Department of Labor (DOL)-funded job training programs, which include WIOA Adult services. The Board coordinates with the Texas Veteran's Commission staff in the provision of the following employment services customized to meet the needs of the region's veterans:

- ✚ Intensive services
- ✚ Converting military occupation to civilian occupations for resume and job search
- ✚ Job matching and referrals
- ✚ Resume assistance
- ✚ Employer outreach
- ✚ Job search workshops
- ✚ Vocational guidance
- ✚ Labor market information
- ✚ Referrals to training
- ✚ Other supportive services

The Board collaborates with the regional correctional agencies to deliver workforce services to incarcerated persons and to assist in the transition to employment. A career counselor provides workforce orientations on-site at the Lubbock County Detention Center on a periodic basis. Employment counselors are informed regarding resources such as fidelity bonding that are available to employers to facilitate employment of ex-offenders. Employment Services staff provide job placement assistance to ex-offenders including providing job search workshops that support them in their job search.

The region's labor force includes approximately 14,987 individuals with disabilities. Of these, 13,267 are employed and 1,720 are seeking work.<sup>15</sup> Approximately 16,293 individuals with disabilities are not in the labor force. The Board collaborates with the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Program to help individuals with disabilities to transition from school to work and to obtain and retain employment. Other available services include career counseling, training, access to assistive devices, job placement assistance and other services necessary to facilitate the customer's employment or career goals.

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<sup>15</sup> U. S. Census Bureau, ACS 5-year estimates 2011-2015, Table C18120.

The Board also collaborates with partners to prepare the future workforce. In collaboration with the Lubbock Economic Development Alliance (LEDA) and local school districts, the Board received two grants totaling \$150,000 to help start or enhance new Career and Technology Education programs at 9 high schools. The grants leveraged contributions of public sales tax funds from LEDA totaling \$173,000. The funds were used to cover the costs of accrediting new programs and increasing capacity to enable the schools to train an increased number of students now and in the years to come. Programs funded by the grants that are newly available to students in the region include a Cisco Networking Academy and an AutoCAD Program that both offer industry-recognized certifications.

Annually, the Board hosts the South Plains Career Expo that brings together industry, education, and community to provide an opportunity for high school students to explore careers in high demand and begin to make choices about college and/or career options after high school. Over 4,000 youth from 60 area schools attend the event each year and over 80 employers and education entities set up demonstrations and exhibits to promote their industries. Employers from every major sector participate in the event.

During the period covered by this plan, the Board will continue to host the annual South Plains Career Expo to bring together industry, education, and community to prepare high school students for college and/or career success after high school. In addition, the Board will collaborate with rural school districts to fund and host at least 3 new rural career fairs per year to facilitate provision of career and labor market information to rural youth. Also, during the period of this plan, the Board will develop an online resource to assist high school students with career planning. The Board's new website will offer career roadmaps that align regional training programs subsidized by the Board with the Board's targeted occupations. Youth will have access to labor market information for each of the targeted occupations to assist them and their parents in making an informed choice regarding the careers most likely to lead to self-sufficiency and long-term economic stability.

2. A description of how the Board will work with entities carrying out core programs to expand access to employment, training, education and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment; facilitate the development of career pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs; and, improve access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential (including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable and stackable).

The Board executes Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with entities carrying out core programs including with Region 17 Education Service Center, the Adult Education and Literacy Provider (AEL), with MET, Inc., the State Community Senior Employment Program (SCSEP) and National Farmworker Program provider. AEL assists individuals in need of basic adult education services and language instruction. The Board routinely refers individuals to Region 17 AEL for GED and English as a Second Language instruction and co-enrolls individuals who can benefit from both AEL/ESL and occupational skills training. The Board works closely with our contractor and partners, such as AEL/Region 17, to ensure a clear understanding of co-enrollment and when to use it to ensure the customer benefits from services without duplication of efforts. All adults have the opportunity to receive basic career services to access information

on career pathways and information on the regional labor market. Career counselors provide outreach, intake and initial assessment of skills levels, including literacy, numeracy and English language proficiency, as well as aptitudes, abilities (including skills gaps) and support services. Career counselors work closely with the contractor and partners to support AEL program participants and assist them in earning postsecondary credentials. To facilitate program improvement, the Board monitors activities monthly on an ongoing basis to ensure performance outcomes meet or exceed state requirements.

SCSEP subsidizes training and employment services to help low-income Texans 55 or older gain the skills needed to get jobs and become financially self-sufficient. The Board collaborates with MET to identify placement opportunities for older workers and also assists in the transition of SCSEP participants from subsidized part-time employment to unsubsidized full-time employment at the appropriate time. The Board's Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Program (MSFW) staff collaborate with MET to serve the needs of the MSFW population. Outreach counselors locate workers who may be in need of counseling, testing, job training or referral services. The Board works to ensure that services provided to eligible MSFW are qualitatively equivalent and quantitatively proportionate to services provided to participants who are not classified as MSFW as required by law. Two of the region's counties, Floyd County and Bailey County, are designated MSFW counties due to a relatively large number of farmworkers residing in the county or migrating from other areas of the State to work. During PY 2015, outreach counselors contacted over 2,610 MSFW customers to provide outreach activities in Bailey and Floyd Counties and adjacent areas in Hale, and Crosby Counties. The Board's BSU staff and outreach counselors solicit job postings from area employers in need of seasonal or temporary farm labor. ES staff and outreach counselors offer MSFWs the opportunity to apply for WIOA services to retrain for permanent, nonagricultural jobs. In alignment with the Texas Agricultural Outreach Plan, the Board will implement strategies to increase access to computers located at access points throughout the rural areas of the region and will widely publicize these resources through community organizations and churches who can refer farmworkers to these resources.

As described on page 32, the Board collaborates with the VR Program to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities. TWC VR staff were relocated into the Workforce Solutions Lubbock office in July 2018.

To improve access to activities leading to a recognized post-secondary credential and facilitate co-enrollment, the Board will offer online career roadmaps beginning in PY 2019 that provide information on training programs subsidized by the Board. The interactive roadmaps will provide information on the programs offered by Eligible Training Providers to prepare individuals to work in the targeted occupations and provide information on provider completion and placement rates to facilitate customer choice. In addition, the roadmaps will link to labor market information provided by the TWC and other state and federal sources such as the Department of Labor.

### 3. A description of the strategies for coordinating programs and services for target populations.

The Board will continue strategies that have proven successful for coordinating programs and services for target populations. The Board executes MOUs with core and optional workforce

partners to outline respective responsibilities for achieving successful outcomes for target populations including veterans, individuals with disabilities, foster youth, migrant and seasonal farmworkers, older workers, ex-offenders, and other individuals with barriers to employment. These formal relationships facilitate the referral process and enable the Board to leverage resources that other partners bring to the table in support of target populations. The Board Executive Director and Board and career center staff sit on various boards to engage with partners in the work of addressing workforce system issues. The Executive Director chairs the Community Workforce Partnership Board whose membership includes the Lubbock Economic Development Alliance, Lubbock Chamber of Commerce, Region 17, South Plains College and several school districts. The CEO also chairs the Lubbock ISD Career and Technology Advisory Committee and serves on the South Plains College (SPC) Byron Martin Advisory Committee that has spearheaded the development of the new SPC Lubbock Center campus. Board staff sit on the P-20 Council Board, the SHRM Board, the Lubbock Chamber of Commerce and Lubbock Economic Development Alliance Boards and other boards that bring major influence to bear on the region's workforce system. Through these relationships, the Board plays a strong role in the development of secondary and postsecondary educational initiatives in the region and addresses barriers to education and employment faced by target populations including populations in the rural areas of the region.

During PY 2017 through PY 2020, the Board will implement a strategy to create multiple access points throughout the region. The Board will contact libraries, county offices, and other organizations that provide complementary programs to determine the potential for co-locating an access point in their facility. Many libraries already offer resources such as computers and fax machines to assist residents without those resources at home. However, many small communities may not have the resources available to offer these capabilities. The Board will seek out opportunities to equip resource areas so that rural customers without computer access will not have to travel to one of the six career centers to conduct an online job search.

In PY 2015, the Board procured and equipped a mobile career unit that travels on a regular schedule to various communities across the region and makes computers and online access available to rural residents. The multiple access points combined with the mobile career unit visits increase accessibility to career center resources for rural customers with limited transportation options. More importantly, these access points provide additional opportunities to serve an increased number of residents and stay abreast of workforce trends and needs in the rural areas of the region.

4. A description of the strategies and services that will be used in the local area to facilitate engagement of employers in the workforce development programs, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations; to support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of business in the local area; to better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development; to strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs.

In December 2015, the Board provided intensive training to Board Administration staff to build capacity in the area of employer engagement and created an employer engagement unit in the Board administration office. Strategies adopted for PY 2017 through PY 2020 include a strategy

for increasing the number of contracts executed with employers to facilitate OJT and customized training for new and incumbent workers. Over the next four years, the Board will provide training to build the capacity of workforce center staff to broker employer contracts for on-the-job and customized training.

Additionally, the Board will collaborate with regional EDCs and make presentations on a regular schedule to promote workforce programs and engage employers in utilizing Skills Development, Skills for Small Businesses, and other TWC grant funds. During 2016, the Board successfully partnered with economic development corporations in rural areas to deliver 8 presentations on available grant funds for incumbent worker training. Over 68 employers attended the sessions and the Board received many requests for assistance. This initiative will continue and will be combined with ongoing follow-up to strengthen relationships established through the employer meetings. The goal is to hold 5 meetings each year in collaboration with 5 EDCs in the rural areas and to nurture and maintain the relationships formed.

To support employers, the Board will develop the Board website to facilitate access to labor market information (LMI) offered online by TWC and other state and federal agencies. The Board receives regular requests for labor market information from employers and will utilize the website to provide user friendly access to LMI on topics most often requested. Board staff will analyze site statistics monthly and revise and update the site as needed to increase responsiveness to employer needs.

During PY 2017 to PY 2020, the Board will implement strategies to improve services to nonemployers, sole proprietorships, and self-employed workers. The Board will implement best practices to outreach self-employed workers to facilitate access to workforce services for this population. Many self-employed workers are not eligible for UI benefits when contract employment is terminated. These workers may be eligible for employment and training services to obtain or retain employment. The Board will develop an asset map of available state and federal resources and make resources available online and seek funding to assist self-employed workers to earn industry-recognized certifications; collaborate with SBDC and regional Chambers of Commerce to increase access to entrepreneurship services for entrepreneurs and sole proprietorships; and establish an MOU and ongoing referral process with the Texas Agricultural Extension Service, the Rural Export Assistance Program and other state and federal programs that support nonemployers and other members of the contingent workforce in rural areas.

Career counselors provide many services to UI claimants including WorkInTexas registration, Rapid Reemployment Services (RRES), computers to access the UI website, resume' assistance and staff assisted job search. Other services available to jobseekers include Job Readiness Workshops and training services if eligible for WIOA Program services. Staff refer dislocated workers with the Unemployment Benefits 1-800 number in order to activate their claims and can assist them with basic UI questions. Claimants are referred to UI Field Specialists for individual assistance. Rapid Response (RR) staff assist dislocated workers after a layoff event with work searches, with instruction on how to register in WorkinTexas and with training opportunities available to them. Staff also provide labor market information to assist them with similar or better job opportunities and with salary information. Rapid Response (RR) staff also assist



employers who are downsizing or closing their businesses for economic reasons. The RR team consists of the UI Field Specialist, WIOA representative from Career Center and the Board's RR Coordinator.

5. An explanation of how the Board will coordinate local workforce investment activities with regional economic development activities that are carried out in the local area and how the Board will promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services:

As stated above, the Board will pursue strategies to increase services to nonemployers and sole proprietorships. The Board will collaborate with SBDC and regional Chambers of Commerce to increase access to entrepreneurship services for entrepreneurs and sole proprietorships and establish an ongoing referral process with the Texas Agricultural Extension Service, the Rural Export Assistance Program and other state and federal programs that provide entrepreneurial training and support.

The Board collaborated with the Lubbock Chamber in 2016 in support of their efforts to create a local YEA Program. YEA is the Youth Entrepreneurship Academy promoted by the U. S. Chamber of Commerce and offers entrepreneurship training to in-school youth, facilitating partnerships between the youth and employers and investors. Youth participating in WIOA may be referred to YEA! as a component of their WIOA program service plan. The Board is currently collaborating with the AEL provider to see if their existing entrepreneurial training program can be made available to all GED participants in the coming year. Currently, the program is limited to ESL students only. Based on availability of funding, WIOA may assist with tuition, fees, books, uniforms and tools required for a training course to help promote entrepreneurship. ISY/OSY are referred to the Small Business Administration (SBA) for assistance with the basics needed to starting and operating a small business.

The Board collaborates with the Lubbock Economic Development Alliance (LEDA), the Lubbock EDC, to leverage funding for the High Demand Job Training Grant. The Board has received two grants totaling \$150,000 and has been awarded a third grant in the amount of \$100,000 to support CTE programs that prepare students for careers in the region's high-demand occupations.

6. A description of the one-stop delivery system in the local area, including explanations of how the Board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers and how providers will meet the employment needs of local employers, workers, and job seekers; how the Board will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system, including to remote areas, through the use of technology and other means; how entities within the one-stop delivery system, including the one-stop operators and the one-stop partners, will comply with WIOA Section 188, if applicable, and with the applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, program and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities, including providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals who have disabilities; and the roles and resource contributions of the one-stop partners.

In PY 2016, the Board updated the Eligible Training Provider (ETP) Minimum Performance Requirements and will continue to monitor performance. To remain eligible to provide workforce-funded services, providers are required to meet minimum standards. To meet the minimum standards, providers must ensure that 60% of WIOA participants successfully complete the training program and earn the required occupational credential, if applicable, and that 60% of WIOA participants are placed in employment by the second quarter after exit from the program in employment that is in the job trained for or in a related occupation. The Board will monitor outcomes on an ongoing basis and will also make performance information available online. The Board will link ETP performance outcomes to training program information provided as part of the interactive career roadmaps to be implemented during PY 2017.

In alignment with the TWIC Strategic Plan for FY 2016 through FY 2023, the Board will implement strategies to employ new, relevant technology and service delivery options to expand program and service outcomes. As part of a strategy to increase access to rural customers and promote greater awareness of workforce services, the Board will develop a website with an interactive chat feature that will be staffed by career center counselors to answer questions from the general public. Also in alignment with the TWIC Strategic Plan, the Board will implement an online application and an online change reporting form for parents in need of childcare services. The new CCS website will also include a chat feature and an interactive locator map to assist parents in locating quality child care services convenient to their home or workplace. By increasing access to quality child care, the Board supports parents in obtaining or retaining employment. The Board will also enhance the website to facilitate access to labor market information and information on Eligible Training Providers.

In PY 2017, the Board will implement a strategy to create multiple access points throughout the region. The Board will contact libraries, county offices, and other organizations that provide complementary programs to determine the potential for co-locating an access point in their facility. Many libraries already offer resources such as computers and fax machines to assist residents without those resources at home. However, many small communities may not have the resources available to offer these capabilities. The Board will seek out opportunities to equip resource areas so that rural customers without computer access will not have to travel to one of the six career centers to conduct an online job search. In PY 2015, the Board procured and equipped a mobile career unit that travels on a regular schedule to various communities across the region and makes computers and online access available to rural residents. The multiple access points combined with the mobile career unit visits increase accessibility to career center resources for rural customers with limited transportation options. More importantly, these access points provide additional opportunities to serve an increased number of residents and stay abreast of workforce trends and needs in the rural areas of the region.

Workforce Solutions South Plains offers necessary accommodations to provide job seekers with disabilities effective and quality services that include basic career services, individualized career services, follow up and support services. Technology is in place to serve the needs of individuals with visual and auditory impairments. The Board provides access to education and training to staff to ensure the needs of all customers are met and to ensure equity in the provision of services regardless of barriers to employment. Also, Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) staff will be co-

located in the one-stop center to provide counseling and support services not available through the workforce center programs. The Board employs an Equal Opportunity Officer responsible for training career center staff to ensure they are equipped to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities for employment and training services.

The Board will continue to develop resources and materials for individuals with disabilities and will annually assess the physical and programmatic accessibility of programs and services of all workforce centers operating in the local area as required by law in accordance with section 188 and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.).

7. A description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area:

The one-stop partners in Workforce Solutions South Plains career centers collaborate effectively to provide an integrated system of services. All active partners work together in a collaborative fashion and coordinate activities and services in a manner that meets the needs of one-stop customers. Partner staff participate in orientations and cross training sessions and staff meetings.

Job Corp is a partner housed in the Workforce Solutions Lubbock office on a full-time basis. Job Corp staff provide in-reach and out-reach services to youth ages 16-24. Job Corp staff have a long-term relationship with Workforce Solutions youth program staff and each serve as a point of contact for program referrals and information. Job Corp staff are an integral part of the one-stop system and participate in orientations and other one-stop activities. The Job Corp Contractors contribute towards the infrastructure cost of the Lubbock one-stop office on a monthly basis under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the South Plains Board.

Texas Veterans Commission (TVC) staff and Workforce Solutions Lubbock staff provide integrated services to veterans needing employment assistance. This relationship has been beneficial to both partners with TVC providing more intensive services to veterans and Workforce Center staff providing priority access to programs and services to veterans. These roles are well defined and it is a mutual goal to provide the highest level of services to veterans. The one-stop provides access to all universal services on a priority basis and will continue to follow federal guidance and assure only veterans in need of more intensive services are referred to DVOPS. The TVC Veterans Employment Representative coordinates employer outreach with the Business Service Unit (BSU) of the one-stop. The Veterans Employer Representative is considered to be a part of the BSU and is in the chain of communications. TVC funds are allocated to support the co-location cost of TVC staff. The TWC Local Veterans Outreach Worker is housed on a full-time basis in the Workforce Solutions Lubbock office. The one-stop will continue to expand coordination with the local worker. TWC resource funds support the co-location cost of the Local Veterans Outreach Worker.

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) staff is now integrated into the one-stop system. VR has served as an itinerant partner making monthly visits to selected one-stops. VR will become a full-time one stop partner supporting the overall infrastructure cost of the one-stop system.



Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) services are provided in rural one-stop locations in Terry County and Hockley County. The Workforce Solutions South Plains Board in partnership with AEL provides lab space with computers and software. AEL provides instructors who teach a minimum of four days per week. This partnership is governed by a Memorandum of Understanding.

Individualized career services are available to Adult and Dislocated Workers if determined to be appropriate in order for the individual to obtain or retain employment. Comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skills may include diagnostic testing and use of other assessment tools and in-depth interviewing and evaluation to identify employment barriers and appropriate employment or training goals. An individual employment plan is developed to identify the employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate combination of services for the participant to achieve his or her employment goals. Applicants for training services receive information regarding training programs offered by the State's Eligible Training Providers to prepare individuals to work in one of the Board's targeted occupations.

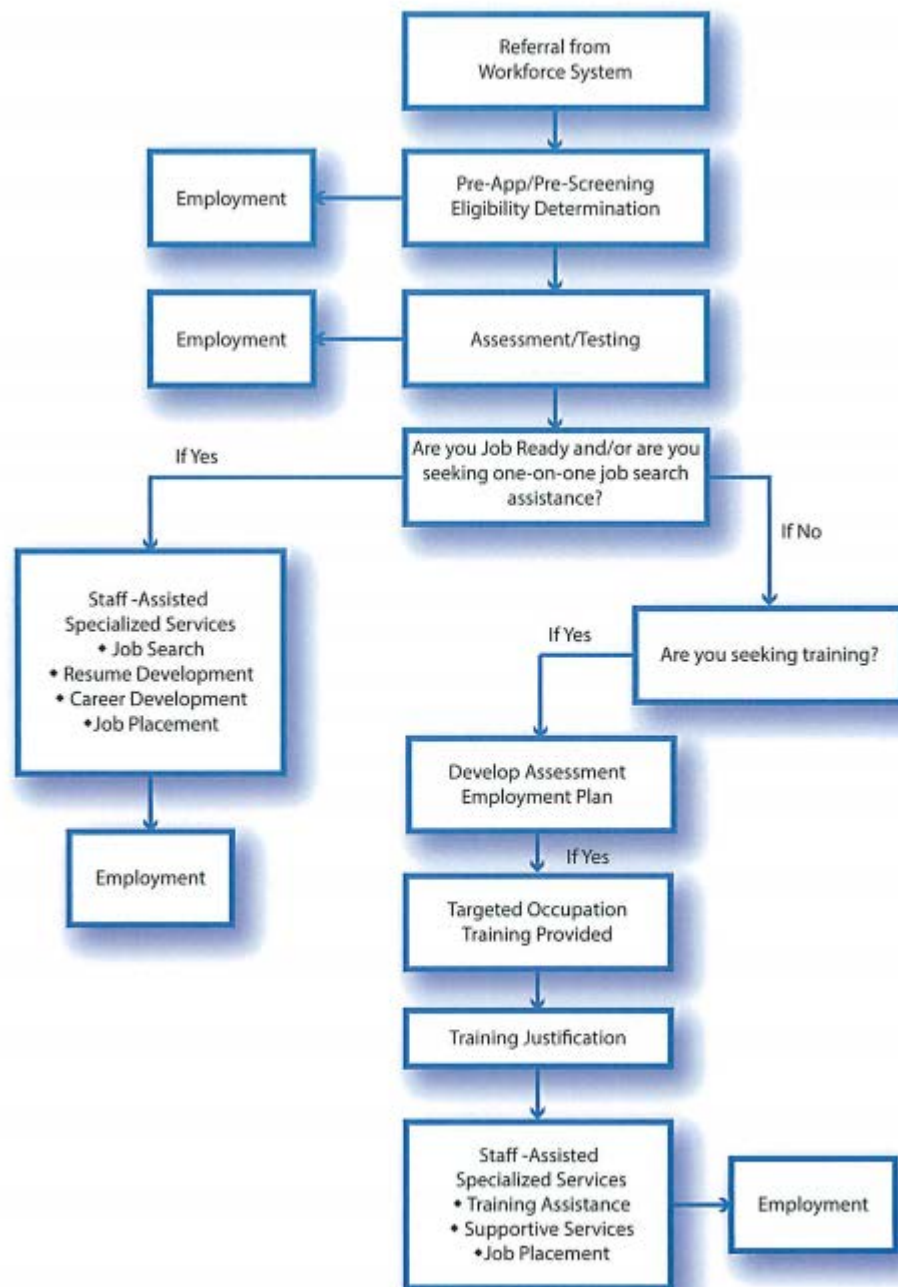
Career counselors work within the existing service delivery process to facilitate success for adults and dislocated workers. The diagrams below illustrate the Adult and Dislocated Worker customer flows and customer flows for special populations. Basic or Individualized Career Services include outreach, job search assistance and workshops, labor market information, job placement services, intake, initial and comprehensive assessments, and referrals.

Training participants approved for an Individual Training Account (ITA) can receive up to \$7,500 for employment and training services to fund training in one of the Board's targeted occupations. While actively participating in the training services, participants are eligible to receive supportive services which may include transportation costs, child care, utility payments, housing payments, etc. that will enable them to continue participation and have a successful outcome.

Reemployment services for dislocated workers include individualized career service options such as prevocational training that can assist workers with the adjustment to new work environments and short-term occupational skills training that provides industry-recognized certifications and can facilitate the transfer of existing skill sets to new industries and occupations. These services are more viable options for workers who would prefer to return to work quickly rather than engage in long-term training.

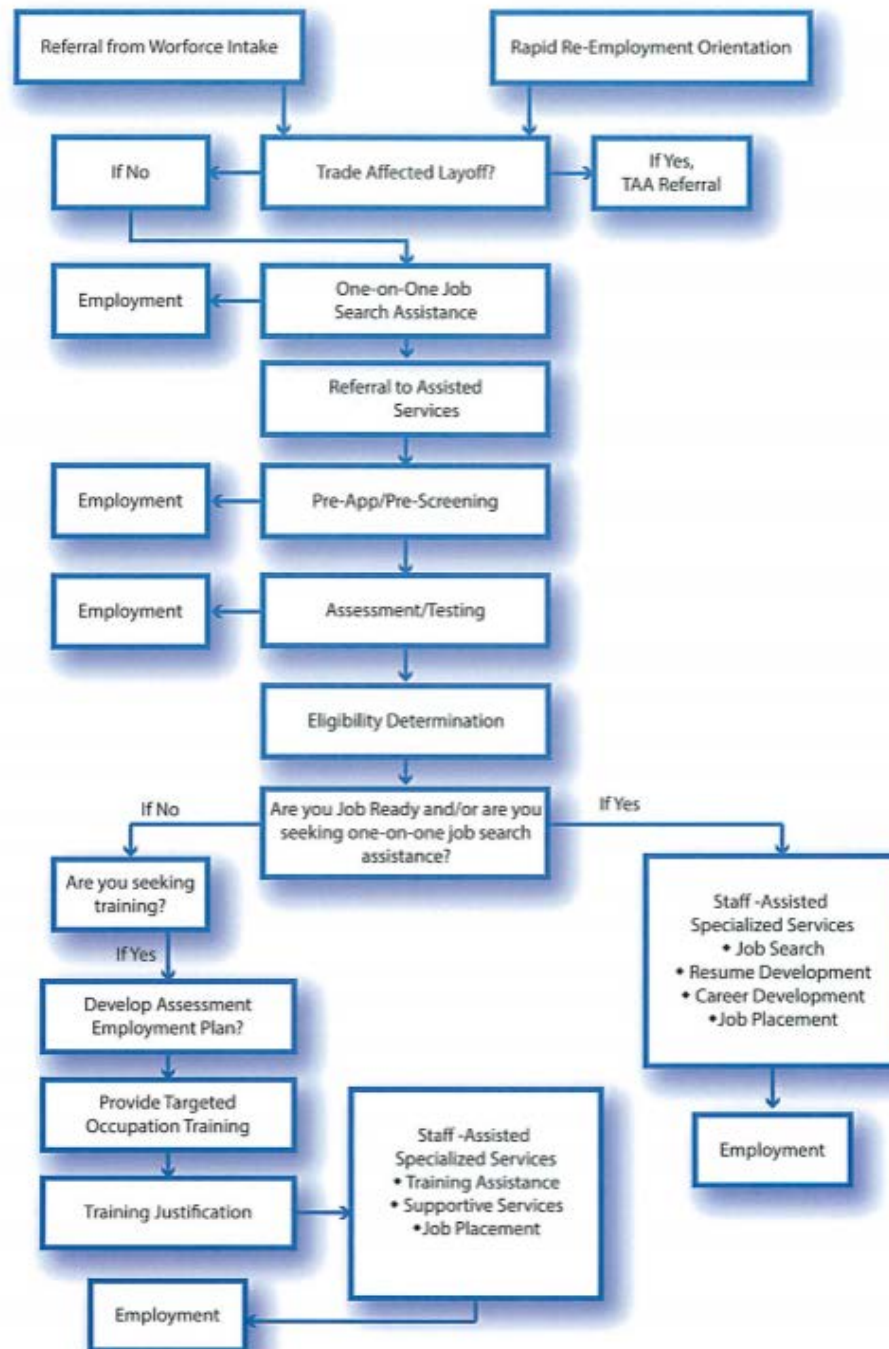
Over the next four years, the Board will increase the number of trainees who participate in work-based training, including apprenticeships, to earn industry-recognized certifications that are portable and stackable. Professional development training will be provided annually to career center and BSU staff to enable them to facilitate on-the-job training and customized training contracts. In addition, the Board will allocate 3% percent of Adult and Dislocated Worker funding to fund incumbent worker training projects each year for the next four years. The Board will develop online career roadmaps to inform jobseekers of available training programs that offer stackable credentials and align with the region's targeted occupations.

## WIOA Customer Flow



South Plains Community Action Association, Inc.

## Dislocated Worker Customer Flow

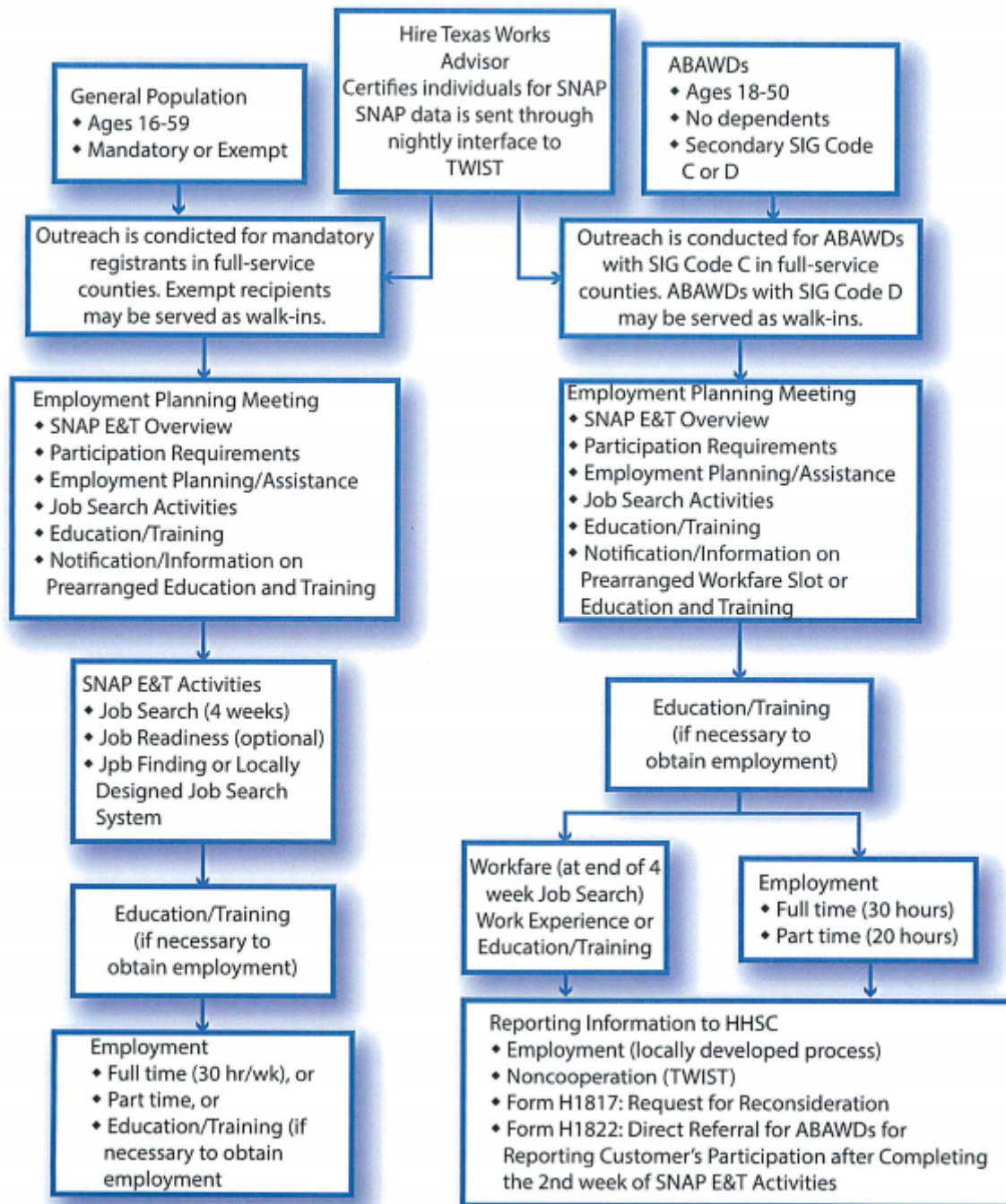


South Plains Community Action Association, Inc.

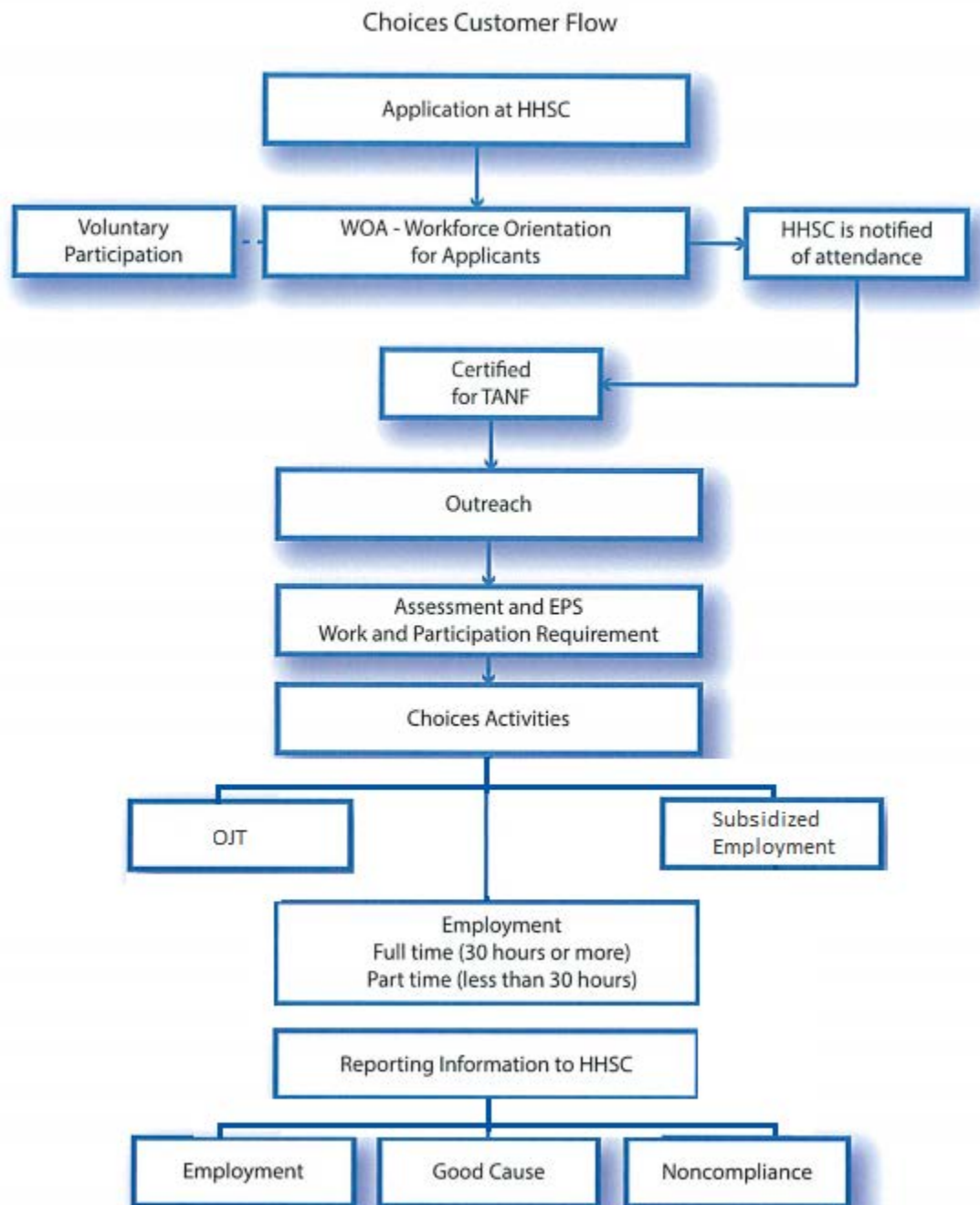




## SNAP E&amp;T Customer Flow



South Plains Community Action Association, Inc.



8. A description of how the Board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response described in WIOA Section 134(a)(2)(A).

The Board will continue to support local businesses who are reducing their workforce and/or closing their businesses by providing Rapid Response Services. This will be accomplished by organizing a team that will consist of the State's Unemployment Information Field Specialists, WIOA Career Center Representative, Business Services Representative and the Rapid Response Coordinator. This will be accomplished by setting up an orientation meeting in order to meet

with all dislocated workers. Workers will receive information on how to access UI benefits, how to register for work in WorkinTexas.com and how they will receive their payments. Career Center representatives will provide information about WIOA approved training, the application process, and basic guidelines and eligibility. Information on short-term and long-term training opportunities, on the job training, veteran's services, how to create a resume, and how to conduct required work searches is also provided to dislocated workers.

In PY 2016, the Board received a grant to serve dislocated workers who lost their job due to the economic downturn in the Oil and Gas Industry. The additional funding will be used to supplement available training funds to serve dislocated workers identified through the Board's Rapid Response services to employers in the industry who are downsizing or closing due to the economic downturn.

9. A description and assessment of the type and availability of workforce investment activities for youth in the local area, including activities for youth who have disabilities. This description must include an identification of successful models of such activities:

WIOA establishes minimum standards for delivery of workforce services to youth. Youth who are between the ages of 16 and 24 years of age receive specialized services designed to assist them in completing their high school education and pursuing secondary education. The Board's allocation of funding to serve youth must be expended in services to youth who have dropped out of high school (out-of-school youth), have completed high school but require assistance to obtain employment or training, or are attending high school but are at risk of not completing successfully (in-school youth). Please see response to Question 23 below for additional information regarding the Youth Program.

The Board has developed strategies to outreach and increase educational opportunities for eligible youth. Once basic eligibility is determined, the youth are assessed for the type or types of services needed, skill level/work experience, and their interests. TABE test is administered and may be used to assist in determining if the youth is basic skills deficient. All information is considered when developing the Individual Service Strategy (ISS). Special consideration may be given to individuals with disabilities. Workforce Solutions South Plains staff use a variety of assessment tools to gauge barrier markers, as well as tests which have been approved by the U.S. Department of Labor, which are listed below. Workforce Solutions will add new instruments as needed.

- ❖ TABE – Test for Adult Basic Education/Grade level assessment
- ❖ TABE CLAS-E to assess ABE for non-English speakers
- ❖ O-Net for the interest inventory
- ❖ Texas Career Check by the LMCI Department of TWC

10. A description of how the Board will coordinate relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities with education and workforce investment activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services:

The Board collaborates with the Lubbock Economic Development Alliance (LEDA) and leverages sales tax funds to secure funding to enhance secondary Career and Technology Education (CTE) programs. In 2015 and 2016, the Board received two High Demand Job Training (HDJT) grants totaling \$150,000 to help start or enhance new Career and Technology Education programs at 9 high schools. The grants leveraged contributions from LEDA totaling \$173,000. The funds were used to cover the costs of accrediting new programs and increasing capacity to enable the schools to train an increased number of students now and in the years to come. Programs funded by the grants that are now available to students in the region include a Cisco Networking Academy and an AutoCAD Program that both offer industry-recognized certifications. By collaborating with LEDA and the high schools, the Board leverages resources and minimizes duplication of effort. In 2016, the Board submitted an application to TWC requesting a third HDJT in the amount of \$100,000 to leverage \$100,000 in LEDA sales tax funds. If awarded, the \$200,000 will be used to fund CTE programs in 9 area high schools including high schools in Muleshoe, Denver City, Plainview, Idalou, Slaton, Shallowater and Lubbock.

The Board Executive Director is the President of the Community Workforce Partnership (CWP), a 501(c)(3) with a mission that is aligned with the mission of the workforce board. The CWP Board of Directors includes CTE Directors from area school districts, the LEDA CEO, the Lubbock Chamber CEO, the Dean of Workforce Development for SPC, and the Director of Workforce Development for the South Plains Association of Governments, the local COG. The Board meets quarterly to discuss opportunities to leverage resources and to engage partner support.

11. A description of how the Board will provide transportation, including public transportation, and other appropriate support services in the local area in coordination with WIOA Title I workforce investment activities:

Support services are provided, if needed, to program customers to address barriers to employment or participation in work-based services, basic and individualized career services and career pathways, education and training services, re-employment services, post-employment and follow-up services (i.e. job retention services for SNAP E&T), and access to child care services. Support services are subject to availability of resources and funding, and provided based on individual program guidelines. Transportation-related support services are allowable for all eligible workforce participants if they are reasonable, necessary, and directly related to program participation. Services include:

- ✚ Bus passes (issued daily, weekly, or monthly)
- ✚ Basic Cash Allowance
- ✚ Prepaid gas cards ranging from \$8 to \$18 per day depending on mileage
- ✚ Toll Road Charges
- ✚ Mileage reimbursement (personal vehicles only)
- ✚ Car pools
- ✚ Minor car repairs up to \$1,500 with prior approval.
- ✚ Taxicab services
- ✚ Contracts with private entities, such as transit providers that provide shuttle or van services



- ✚ Car insurance (except for SNAP E&T Recipients)
- ✚ Driver license fees (includes renewals)
- ✚ Vehicle inspection fees and registration fees (except for SNAP E&T Recipients)
- ✚ Purchase of tires or automobile batteries (except for SNAP E&T Exempt Recipients)

In addition, the Board's workforce services provider, South Plains Community Action Association, operates the rural transportation program and provides 'curb to curb' service for residents of the rural transit district. 'Door to Door' service is available to seniors and individuals with disabilities. The service is available to all counties in the South Plains WDA for a minimal fare and the fare can be reimbursed for eligible WIOA participants.

Childcare is a vital support services for working parents and individuals engaged in training. During the period PY 2017 through PY 2020, the Board anticipates subsidizing childcare for over 1,700 children per day on average. Care is provided by licensed childcare providers as well as self-arranged childcare providers for eligible children. Children under 13 years of age (or at Board option, 19 if child with disability) are eligible if they:

- Are a U.S. citizen or legal immigrant;
- Reside with
  - an income eligible family whose *total assets do not exceed \$1 million* OR a family that is experiencing homelessness
  - parents (or a person standing in loco parentis) who require care in order to work or attend education/training for 25 hours (single parent)/50 hours (dual parents)

Child Care Program (CCS) rules were revised during PY 2016 in response to changes in Child Care Development Fund legislation and were implemented beginning October 1, 2016. Under the new guidelines, the eligibility criteria are only applied at initial eligibility and eligibility redetermination after 12 months of care. Once certified, children are considered to be eligible and will continue to receive services for 12 months with a few exceptions.

Table 23 below provides the number of children in care per county as of January 2017.

**Table 23: CCS Children in Care Per County January 2017**

County	Number of Providers	Children in Care	Percent of Total
Bailey	1	1	0.0%
Cochran	0	0	0.0%
Crosby	4	6	0.3%
Dickens	0	0	0.0%
Floyd	3	9	0.4%
Garza	3	4	0.2%
Hale	6	85	4.1%
Hockley	14	79	3.8%

<b>King</b>	0	0	0.0%
<b>Lamb</b>	4	28	1.4%
<b>Lubbock</b>	89	1832	88.5%
<b>Lynn</b>	2	4	0.2%
<b>Motley</b>	0	0	0.0%
<b>Terry</b>	5	22	1.1%
<b>Yoakum</b>	1	1	0.0%
		<b>2,071</b>	100.0%

The TWC Workforce Center Customer Tracking System tracks the number of customers who visit career centers throughout the region by date of visit and reason for the visit. During PY 2015, approximately 92,561 customers visited the career centers. This number likely underreports actual visits by 20% based on local estimates. Table 24 below provides the number of customers by center location and reason of visit. Over 17% of the visits were parents applying for childcare CCS services, requesting information regarding childcare services or reporting changes.

**Table 24: WCCT Visits to Career Centers**

<b>Reason</b>	<b>Brownfield</b>	<b>Plainview</b>	<b>Lubbock</b>	<b>Littlefield</b>	<b>Muleshoe</b>	<b>Levelland</b>
Appointment	187	18	12,068	93	-	498
Assessment	4	20	360	7	-	36
Child Care Assistance	-	-	15,949	-	-	-
Employment Services	3,745	4,171	9,187	-	23	1,377
Resource Room	58	3,276	22,483	4,527	96	1,894
Veterans		11	91		-	
Unemployment Insurance	49	813	-	1	3	415
WIOA	2	137	482	-	2	194
Youth	-	41	39	-	1	2
Other	82	8,068	1,697	3	6	447
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,127</b>	<b>16,544</b>	<b>62,265</b>	<b>4,631</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>4,863</b>

Currently, CCS Program staff are located in the Lubbock Center only. Customers in the rural areas travel to Lubbock to visit with their CCS case manager. Alternately, they can apply and report changes through email, fax, or regular mail. The Lubbock center also maintains the Betty Anderson Resource Center that CCS providers can use to prepare teaching materials. The Child Care Services staff travel to rural areas weekly in the Frog Bus to make resource materials available to CCS providers. In PY 2017, as part of the strategies designed to increase services to

rural areas, the Board will automate the application process and enable parents to apply and report changes online. Parents will also be able to communicate with staff in real time through an interactive chat feature. This capability will shorten application processing times and avoid long waits in line to see a case manager at the Lubbock career center.

The number of visits listed as seeking ‘other services’ includes visits to receive assistance through the Non-Custodial Parent Choices Program, the TANF Choices or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. Programs services provided through the career centers include the use of the resource room for job search, staff-assisted job search, workforce orientations or requests for labor market information and other assistance. In addition to career center visits, the Board receives requests through an online contact form. During January and February 2016, the number of requests submitted through the online contact form averaged 60 contacts per month. By implementing the online chat feature, the Board anticipates being more responsive to customers requesting services. The Board can also facilitate requests for information and requests for support services in a timely manner.

12. A description of plans, assurances, and strategies for maximizing, coordinating, improving service delivery, and avoiding duplication of Wagner-Peyser Act Services and other services provided through the one-stop delivery system:

Workforce Solutions South Plains WagnerPeyser staff are fully integrated into the local one-stop system. The one-stop operator follows the Texas Model and there is not a duplication of services in service delivery. The Board follows the requirements in the Agency Board Agreement with the Texas Workforce Commission.

The Board coordinates with TWC to ensure the delivery of employment services to the universal population and to employer customers and to ensure that assessment and reemployment services are provided as required by the Wagner-Peyser Act.

13. A description of how the Board will coordinate WIOA Title I workforce investment activities with adult education and literacy activities under WIOA Title II. This description must include how the Board will carry out the review of local applications submitted under Title II consistent with WIOA Sections 107(d)(11)(A) and (B)(i) and WIOA Section 232:

In alignment with the TWIC Strategic Plan for FY 2016 through FY 2023, the Board maintains a strong partnership with the region’s Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) provider to increase access to and referrals between the workforce system and the AEL provider with the goal of improving outcomes for customers. The MOU between the Board and the Region 17 Education Service Center, the AEL Program provider, facilitates a 2-way referral system and establishes the process for conducting follow-up on referrals made to ensure contact has been established with AEL for those referred and in need of their GED. All AEL participants looking for employment are registered into WorkInTexas.com and assisted one on one at the AEL orientation or in the resource area when they visit the career center. WIOA Adult and Youth Program Managers attend monthly meetings with AEL and other partners such as Region 17, Texas Tech University/East Lubbock Promise, Learn Inc., Literacy Lubbock, South Plains College, and Lubbock Housing Authority to discuss services and programs offered by each organization and

to discuss upcoming events. Workforce Career Center staff coordinate with AEL activities in various ways including attending AEL orientations on a monthly basis to provide information on Workforce Services, to assist participants with registration in WorkInTexas.com to facilitate their job search, and to identify AEL customers who are interested in WIOA Programs. Board staff are also invited by TWC to a bi-weekly conference call with the AEL Providers to promote coordination of activities and the creation of local plans.

The Board will review local applications submitted under Title II consistent with WIOA Sections 107(d)(11)(A) and (B)(i) and WIOA Section 232:14, as requested by local applicants or by TWC. The Executive Director of Region 17 ESC is a Workforce Solutions Board member and has input into the development of workforce plans and policies.

14. Not applicable.

15. An identification of the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds described in WIOA Section 107(d)(12)(B)(i)(III), as determined by the CEOs or the Governor under WIOA Section 107(d)(12)(B)(i):

The South Plains Regional Workforce Development Board, dba Workforce Solutions South Plains, is responsible for the disbursement of grant funds as governed by the Chief Elected Officials (CEOs) of the 15 counties that comprise the South Plains Workforce Development Region.

16. A description of the competitive process that will be used to award the sub-grants and contracts for WIOA Title I activities:

The Board maintains a Board Financial Management Manual (FMM) that sets forth Board policies and procedures for procurement, award and contract administration of goods and services in support of the Board's mission. The Board has an assigned Procurement Officer who is responsible for formal procurements and most small purchase procurements for Board services. The procurement process is initiated when a requirement for goods or services is identified and the Chief Executive Officer signals that procurement is needed in order to fulfill the requirement. The Procurement Officer, with the assistance of staff responsible for the specific program area requesting the procurement, will develop and write the RFP and coordinate the procurement process to ensure compliance with the Board's FMM and applicable federal and state regulations. The final document must be reviewed by the Executive Director. Final contracting authority will be retained by the administrative staff.

All procurement transactions (regardless of whether verbal or written price quotations, sealed bids or by negotiation and without regard to dollar value) will be conducted in a manner that provides maximum, full and open competition. Procurement procedures will not restrict or eliminate competition. For Workforce/ Child care contracts, the start of the process is approximately nine months prior to the expiration of the current contract in order to have ample time for the process.

A Procurement Checklist that provides a list of steps required in the procurement process is completed as part of every procurement transaction. The steps required include:

**Needs Assessment Determination**

Once a need for services or goods is established, the Procurement Officer may begin the purchase process by developing a Request for Proposals or an Invitation to Bid.

**Procurement Method Selected**

- a. Competitive negotiation (Request for Proposals, RFP).
- b. Non-competitive negotiation (sole source).

**Procurement Authorization (CEO)**

The Chief Executive Officer signals that procurement is needed. The Board approval will be noted in the Board of Directors Board Minutes.

**Cost/Price Analysis Forms and Cost Reasonableness Determination**

A proposal cost or price analysis in connection with every procurement action on all RFP proposals is the first step of the evaluation process. The method and degree of analysis will be dependent upon the facts surrounding the particular procurement situation.

**Rating Criteria Developed – Included in the RFP document.**

The Procurement Officer, with the assistance of staff responsible for the specific program area develops a criteria summary which includes a technical review and the evaluation criteria to be used on the proposals received.

**Procurement Instrument Completed/Approved**

Prior to issuance of the document to the general public, final approval of the procurement document must be obtained from the Executive Director.

**Public Media Advertisement/Proof of Publication**

At a minimum, formal procurements are advertised in the legal notice or public notice section of the regional newspaper at least one time or posted on the Electronic State Business Daily (ESBD) website: [http://esbd.cpa.state.tx.us/bid\\_show.cfm?bidid=110832](http://esbd.cpa.state.tx.us/bid_show.cfm?bidid=110832). Procurements are posted on the Board's website as well.

**RFP/Bid Mailing List (also, proof of attempts to use HUBs).**

A list of Individuals/organizations who have requested to be informed of RFPs or IFBs will be maintained. The registered bidder's list will be updated on a regular basis and reviewed for changes once every program year. Identifying qualified small and minority (HUB'S) businesses on solicitation lists included.

**E-mail list available. Also record of undeliverable e-mail and attempts to contact.**

Using the "bidder's list," appropriate individuals and/or organizations will be identified and mailing labels which include the name and address of the individual/organization as well as a contact person, if known, will be developed for issuing Proposal Packets. (In this case, emails were conducted)

**Bidder's Conference Documentation (Including Questions and Answers)**

A Bidder's Conference shall be held when the estimated procurement cost exceeds \$100,000. The Bidder's Conference will occur at a time prior to the bidding deadline at a time and place designated in the procuring document. All proposal questions must be written and will be accepted until and during the Bidder's Conference. No questions relating to the IFB or RFP will be accepted after the Conference. After the Bidder's Conference, all questions and answers pertaining to the IFB or RFP will be distributed to those who were issued a Proposal Packet. Attendance at the Bidder's Conference will be recorded; attendance may be mandatory if determined necessary to ensure a clear understanding of the Board's requirements, particularly in the case of workforce services procurements.

**All Proposals Submitted in Response to the RFP or IFB or all Quotes Taken.**

One person will be designated to receive all proposals. It is the responsibility of this individual to date stamp and note the time of arrival on each proposal and to maintain proposals in a central location. No proposals will be accepted after the due date.

**EPLS/Debarred Vendor List**

The Excluded Parties List Search (EPLS) includes information regarding entities debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, excluded or disqualified under the non-procurement common rule, or otherwise declared ineligible from receiving Federal contracts, certain subcontracts, and certain Federal assistance and benefits. A thorough review of applicable databases is conducted to ensure that no award is made to entities who are debarred or otherwise ineligible to receive state and federal funds.

**Completed Staff and/or Board Evaluation Forms**

An evaluation instrument will be developed and used in accordance with the RFP requirements. Responsive proposals will be evaluated and scored by either an independent team of reviewers contracted for this purpose or by an internal team of Board staff. In all cases, reviewers will all use the same standardized instrument to evaluate proposals.

**Professional References Obtained**

If necessary to engage an independent team of external reviewers, a request for qualifications (RFQ) is solicited for qualified external evaluators to evaluate proposals. At least three prospective contractors will be compared based on their ability to perform as well as their proposed cost/price. For the high scored qualified consultants to evaluate, South Plains Workforce will use a Contract for Services or a Letter of Agreement for these Consultant Contracts.

**Documentation of SPRWDB/Committee Review**

When Board approval is required, the action taken by the Board is documented in the Board Committee Meeting Minutes.

**Notice of Award/Non-Selection**

Notification to all proposers regarding contract award will be mailed after the selection of the approved proposers by the South Plains Workforce. A copy of each letter will be maintained in the procurement file. The notification letter, which will include the right to protest the decision, must be signed by the Executive Director.

**Notes and Other Documentation Concerning Debriefings/Protests/Negotiations**

Upon receipt of the notice identifying the contract award recipient a proposer who wishes to protest the decision must notify the Director in writing within fifteen (14) days of the mailing date of the notification letter. See Paragraph 23 below.

**Signature Authorities**

Part of the contract administration system.

**Subcontracts Negotiated**

If the offeror proposes to use subcontractors, the proposed subcontract must be analyzed also. The work to be performed by the subcontractor should be clearly identified, described, and justified in the cost proposal.

**Fully Executed Contract, Including Amendments/Modifications**

All South Plains Workforce Board contracts, including modifications, must be written and properly signed by the appropriate official(s), and must include any beginning and ending dates related to contract performance and payment. All modifications must be executed by both Board's Executive Director or his/her designee and the Contractor's Authorized Representative, except for unilateral modifications.



**Contract Performance Evaluation**

Contract closeout documents, records, progress reports and closeout reports (include any required contractor's self-evaluations and staff evaluations). Part of the contract administration system.

**Required Reports**

Part of the contract administration system.

**Documentation Related to Disputes, Protest and Claims**

A protester should exhaust all administrative remedies through the Board before pursuing a protest/dispute at a higher level. Offerors will be notified as soon as possible if the proposal is found to be unresponsive and will not be considered. Once the Workforce Solutions Board of Directors has agreed upon selection(s), all offerors will be notified in writing of the results within ten (10) working days of the decision.

Any unsuccessful offeror has the option to protest the procurement decision. Complaints or protests must be submitted in writing by registered mail to Director of Operations, Workforce Solutions South Plains, 1301 Broadway, Ste. 201, Lubbock, Texas 79401. A clear statement of the complaint or protest and the reason(s) or grounds must be made. Protests must be received by the Board within 14 calendar days of the mailing date of the notification of non-selection. An acknowledgment of receipt of the protest will be provided to the protestor along with specific instructions and dates for the protest process.

The protesting party is first given an opportunity for an informal review of the evaluation, ranking and selection process with the Board staff. This review is designed to allow the protesting party an opportunity to examine documentation related to the procurement, understand the reasons for their particular evaluation score, provide them with information that may allow them to prepare a more successful response in future solicitations. The objective of this informal review is to provide an opportunity for resolution and avoid, if possible, the need for a formal hearing.

If after the informal review, the protesting party is not satisfied, a formal hearing will be scheduled. Hearings shall be conducted by the Board EO Officer within thirty (30) days of the filing of a protest and decisions shall be made not later than sixty (60) days after such filing. Except for complaints alleging fraud or criminal activity, complaints shall be made within one year of the alleged occurrence. Protests not resolved to the satisfaction of the protesting party may be pursued through the Texas Workforce Commission.

Offerors not selected for award of a contract may receive a debriefing to determine the reasons for non-selection if the debriefing is requested in writing to the contact person for this procurement, and the request is made within thirty (30) days of the date the notice of non-selection is postmarked.

**General Correspondence Related to the Specific Procurement Action**

Any correspondence applicable to procurement is maintained on file as required by records management guidelines.

**Micro Purchase Process**

Procedures for procurement of goods and services costing less than \$3,000 in the aggregate may be completed without soliciting price or rate quotations if the price is determined to be reasonable based on information such as research, experience, purchases, or other information.

- The basis used to determine price reasonableness of a purchase is noted in support documentation.
- Purchases made under such procedures are distributed equitably among qualified suppliers to the extent practicable.

Actions to verify price reasonableness of goods and services that fall within the threshold will be taken if:

- the purchasing entity has information that the price is not reasonable (e.g. comparison to the previous price paid, or personal knowledge of the supply or purchase), or
- purchasing a good or service for which comparative pricing information is not readily available (e.g. purchasing a good or service that is not the same as, or similar to other goods or services that have recently been purchased on a competitive basis).

Aggregate purchases shall not be divided in order to fall within the small purchase procurement threshold (or a micro-purchase threshold) and avoid procurement requirements

**Small Purchase Process**

Small purchase procedures involve simple and informal procurement methods that are sound and appropriate for a procurement of services, supplies or other property, costing between \$3,000 and \$150,000 in the aggregate. When transacting a small purchase, the basis for placing the order with the successful bidder and the factors considered in determining the lowest and best bid must be documented by the procuring staff member and filed with all other documentation related to the transaction. The staff member must document a price or a rate quote from a least three providers. Small purchases will not require newspaper advertising.

Goods and services purchased for \$150,000 or less are subject to these small purchase procedures and conducted in accordance with the Board's procurement policies unless the policies are less restrictive than those of the FMGC. In the event of an emergency, when goods or services are so badly needed that financial loss or operational damage will occur, the Executive Director is authorized to approve emergency purchases.

17. A description of the local levels of performance negotiated with TWC and the CEOs consistent with WIOA Section 116(c), to be used to measure the performance of the local area and to be used by the Board for measuring the performance of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), eligible training providers under WIOA Title I subtitle B, and the one-stop delivery system in the local area:

The Board is contractually bound to meet or exceed performance standards established by the TWC each year. The Board's contracted performance measures for the previous and current program years include the nine indicators of successful performance listed in Table 1 in Section



II, page 4, of this plan. Table 1 lists the performance measure and the Board's performance for Program Year 2016. Effective July 1, 2017, new measures will be introduced to reflect changes in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) requirements. The Board anticipates that PY 2017 contracts will include the 15 new WIOA performance measures listed in Table 2, Section II, page 6, along with 4 measures continued from PY 2016 for other programs.

18. A description of the actions the Board will take toward becoming or remaining a high-performing board:

The Board contracts all performance targets to the one-stop operator. Board staff provide technical assistance, support, and information to the one-stop operator. Board and career center staff meet on a monthly basis to discuss all aspects of the programs' goals and performance. The Board's certified monitor analyzes and monitors program performance and outcomes. The Board will recognize high performance with incentives and when necessary take corrective action when performance goals are not being met. The Board will closely analyze and evaluate practices that are effective and those that are not. The Board will work in conjunction with the workforce services provider to ensure that the service model is designed for the success of the customer.

The Board will continue to seek out best practices and communicate with high performing boards across the state to ensure the local system continues to provide the highest level of customer service. The Board will seek out best practices across the nation and replicate successful models of service delivery when possible. The Board will utilize technology and seek ways to provide services to customers in an efficient manner. During PY 2017, the Board will develop an online CCS application and CCS change reporting capability and also begin to offer an online chat feature and interactive career roadmaps through the Board website. The Board will seek approaches to services that will create success for customers. The Board will target occupations in demand in the region and work with educational institutions and training providers to develop services that meet the needs of the customer. The Board and workforce services provider will continually evaluate program design to ensure the Board is responsive to customer needs.

19. A description of how training services outlined in WIOA Section 134 will be provided through the use of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs), including, if contracts for training services will be used, how the use of such contracts will be coordinated with the use of ITAs under that chapter, and how the Board will ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training providers, regardless of how the training services are to be provided.

Before training services are provided, career center counselors guide customers through the completion of an Individual Employment Plan. Assessments are conducted to ensure that a customer meets Math, Reading and vocational requirements applicable to a specific program before the individual is being approved for training services and referred to the training provider he or she has selected. The training program selected by the customer must be directly linked to the employment opportunities in the local areas or in another area to which the trainee is willing to locate. Occupational skills training will only be funded if the training prepares the individual to work in one of the Board's targeted occupations. Individuals will be required to apply for other sources of funding (i.e. other agencies, Pell grants, scholarships etc.) before applying and

being approved for an ITA. An ITA will be commensurate with the service provider's cost (tuition, books and fees) for the current program year. Per Board policy, an ITA is limited to a maximum of seven thousand five hundred dollars (\$7,500) and programs must be completed within three (3) years. There are no exceptions to the maximum ITA limits.

Currently, applicants for training services are provided with a list of training providers who offer training programs in their chosen occupation and who are eligible to receive workforce funding to facilitate customer choice. In PY 2019, the Board will offer interactive career roadmaps on the Board's website to inform customers of the training programs subsidized by the Board. The training programs will be linked to information on the performance, including completion and placement rates, for each of the Eligible Training Providers.

20. A description of how one-stop centers are implementing and transitioning to an integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information system for programs carried out under WIOA and by one-stop partners:

The one-stop centers will utilize technology and resources provided by the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) to integrate case management information. One-stop partners' systems integration will be aligned when allowable such as is the case with Child Care Services. WIOA case managers and CCS case managers are currently using The Workforce Information Systems of Texas and other integrated systems that enable them to provide adequate case management services.

21. The Board policy to ensure that priority for adult individual career services and training services will be given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient, consistent with WIOA Section 134(c)(3) and Section 680.600 of the Final Regulations:

Individualized career services and training services must be given on a priority basis, regardless of funding levels, to:

- public assistance recipients;
- other low-income adults; and
- individuals who are basic skills deficient.

Eligible veterans and eligible spouses of veterans continue to receive priority of service for all Department of Labor (DOL)-funded job training programs, which include WIOA Adult services. The Contractor must ensure that information is available to veterans and the public regarding veteran's priority access to services.

Priority for individualized career services and training services must be provided in the following order:

1. Eligible veterans and eligible spouses who are also recipients of public assistance, low income, or basic skills deficient.
2. Foster youth and former foster who are also recipients of public assistance, low-income, or basic skills deficient.

3. All other individuals who are recipients of public assistance, low-income, or basic skills deficient.
4. All other eligible veterans and eligible spouses.
5. All other foster youth and former foster youth.
6. Employed Individuals whose income does not exceed the Board's Self-Sufficiency Wage.

Priority access to WIOA Adult services must be provided first to eligible veterans and eligible spouses of veterans who are also recipients of public assistance, low income, or basic skills deficient. Priority must then be given to all other individuals who are recipients of public assistance, low-income, or basic skills deficient.

22. Boards may impose limits on the duration and amount of ITAs. If the state or Board chooses to do so, the limitations must be described in the Local Plan, but must not be implemented in a manner that undermines WIOA's requirement that training services are to be provided in a manner that maximizes customer choice in the selection of an Eligible Training Provider. Exceptions to ITA limitations may be provided for individual cases and must be described in Board policies.

The amount of funding provided through an Individual Training Account may not exceed seven thousand five hundred dollars (\$7,500). Additionally, the training program funded by the ITA must be completed within three (3) years. There are no exceptions to the ITA cap amount or to the three-year time-limit for training.

Currently, applicants for training services are provided with a list of training providers who offer training programs in their chosen occupation and who are eligible to receive workforce funding to facilitate customer choice. In PY 2019, the Board will offer interactive career roadmaps on the Board's website to inform customers of the training programs subsidized by the Board. The training programs will be linked to information on the performance, including completion and placement rates, for each of the Eligible Training Providers.

23. A description of the design framework for youth programs in the local area, and how the 14 program elements required in §681.460 of the Final Regulations are to be made available within that framework:

Youth Program services include the following 14 youth service elements required by WIOA Section 129(c) (2):

- ✚ Tutoring, study skills training, instruction, and evidence-based dropout prevention and recovery strategies that lead to a high school diploma or its recognized equivalent or postsecondary credential;
- ✚ Alternative secondary school services or dropout recovery services;
- ✚ Paid and unpaid work experiences that have academic and occupational education as a component, such as summer and nonseasonal employment, pre-apprenticeship programs, internships and job shadowing, and on-the-job-training, in the private for-profit or nonprofit sectors;

- ✦ Occupational skills training, which includes priority consideration for training programs that lead to recognized postsecondary credentials in in-demand industries or occupations in the local area;
- ✦ Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation;
- ✦ Leadership development opportunities, including community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social and civic behaviors;
- ✦ Support services, such as linkages to community services, assistance with transportation, child and dependent care, assistance with housing, needs-related payments, assistance with educational testing, reasonable accommodations for youth with disabilities, referrals to health care, and assistance with uniforms or other appropriate work attire and tools;
- ✦ Adult mentoring for at least 12 months;
- ✦ Follow-up services for not less than 12 months after completing participation;
- ✦ Comprehensive guidance and counseling, such as drug and alcohol abuse, as well as referrals to counseling, as appropriate;
- ✦ Financial literacy education;
- ✦ Entrepreneurial skills training;
- ✦ Services providing 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; and,
- ✦ Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and training.









The Board contracts with a Youth Program service provider through a competitive procurement process to ensure that all 14 program elements are available to WIOA youth participants. Youth Program staff determine which elements are appropriate to provide to a participant based on the participant's assessment and Individual Service Strategy (ISS). An ISS is developed for each participant to identify their short and long term goals. Case managers review the youth's identified barriers to determine how the Program, directly or through partnering agencies, can assist to remove the barriers. Over the course of participation, case managers track the progress the customer is making toward meeting his or her goals.

Youth Program staff identify appropriate services and career pathways by utilizing an objective assessment. This process includes a review of the academic and occupational skills levels and service needs. Staff also utilize this process to develop the ISS. The objective assessment includes a review of:

- ✦ Basic skills
- ✦ Occupational skills
- ✦ Work Experience
- ✦ Employability
- ✦ Interests/Aptitudes
- ✦ Support service needs
- ✦ Developmental needs

WIOA requires that at least 75% of Youth Program funding be expended on services to out-of-school youth. Expenditures on WE activities meet or exceed 20% of local youth formula funds. To meet this requirement, the Youth Program offers a summer employment program to connect youth with area employers. Business Services Unit and ES staff make contact with employers throughout the region and to identify placements for youth. These teams work in tandem with Youth Program staff to facilitate successful work experiences for program participants. Work experience (WE) is a priority as it is important for the youth to not only obtain skills but also explore careers to assist them in gaining self-sufficiency. The Board has implemented an incentive policy to encourage successful completion of work experience and training activities.

Designated staff within the Workforce division, including Youth staff, serve on a variety of Advisory Boards throughout the Community such as SHRM, DARS, local Chambers, Goodwill, the Adult Education Coalition, etc. These memberships assist in developing, and maintaining, community relationships with agency partners. Youth Program staff maintain current, active, and ongoing collaborations with entities such as:

-  Adult Education Coalition
-  Migrant Programs
-  Training Providers
-  Juvenile Probation
-  Catholic Charities
-  Buckner Children and Family Services
-  Vocational Rehabilitation
-  School District's At-Risk/Drop-Out Coordinators/ISD Officers

Youth staff maintain partnerships with agencies such as Buckner Children and Family Services and refer youth to these agencies to address specific barriers for special populations and to access services included as part of the 14 essential service elements. Buckner's serves youth aging out of foster care. The Vocational Rehabilitation Program provides services to youth with disabilities. The partner agencies collaborate with the Board to ensure that all 14 youth program elements are available to participating youth.

Youth staff utilize various tools, including the internet, networks, laptops, telephone, etc., to better assist participants in the rural communities. During PY 2019, the Board will develop an interactive online chat feature to enable communications with customers in rural areas. Laptops will be utilized to meet the technical needs of rural youth, and Youth staff will arrange to meet with participants in locations other than the workforce centers. Laptops will have Wi-Fi and be equipped with the TABE assessment in particular, so that the test will be readily available to Youth Participants on an as-needed basis.

24. A description of how the Board will encourage Registered Apprenticeship programs in its area to register with the eligible training provider system in order to receive WIOA funding:

The Board annually publishes a notice in the local newspaper inviting training providers to apply to become certified to provide the occupational skills training or postsecondary education needed to prepare individuals for the occupations targeted for WIOA expenditures in the South Plains Region. The Board also contacts apprenticeships operating in the region periodically to invite them to apply. There are 27 registered apprenticeship programs currently operating in the region and these providers will be invited to the annual Eligible Training Provider Meeting that's held in the Spring of each year. The Board's ETP Coordinator provides technical assistance to all interested providers to facilitate creation of apprenticeships. Technical assistance is also provided to apprenticeship sponsors to assist with the submission and approval of ETP program applications.

25. A description of the Board's strategy and commitment to support Apprenticeship Texas efforts across the state, as applicable.

In 2016, the Board collaborated with Texas Tech University and the West Texas Area Health Education Center to create and register an apprenticeship for Community Health Workers. The new apprenticeship program is now included on the list of ETPs. The Board also assisted the local plumbers and pipefitter's union apprenticeship (JATC) in their efforts to inform area high schools regarding awarding dual credit toward the first year of the apprenticeship to students who successfully complete the school's welding program. The Board's BSU staff is knowledgeable of apprenticeship policies and able to provide information to interested employers on how to form and register an apprenticeship as well as information on the funding available through on-the-job training contracts to subsidize wages paid to apprenticeships enrolled in registered programs. The Board also reviews applications from apprenticeship programs that apply for the State's Chapter 133 Apprenticeship Program funds and completes a Board review form certifying that the occupations are targeted by the Board for expenditures of workforce funds.

During workforce orientation sessions, career center staff provide information on apprenticeship training and funding available to assist trainees with the cost of tuition, fees, tools and books as well as support services. Apprenticeship providers listed on the Board's ETP list provide the career centers with information on their enrollment processes and application periods and this information is communicated to customers during orientations and in printed outreach materials. Participants approved for training services are provided with the list of ETP's and have the option of selecting an apprenticeship provider as their training provider.

During PY 2017 through PY 2020, the Board will continue efforts described above in support of Apprenticeship Texas goal of increasing participation in apprenticeship training.

## VI. Public Comment

The draft local plan for the South Plains Workforce Development Board Area is available for public comment at <http://workforcesouthplains.org/about/strategic-plan/>. The public, including representatives of businesses, education and training providers, and labor organizations, are invited to have input into the development of the local plan and submit comments to the Board

during the public comment period. Comments will be accepted by phone, mail, or email or through the online response form. Contact information is provided below.

Erin Rea, Director of Strategic Planning  
Workforce Solutions South Plains  
1301 Broadway, Ste. 201  
Lubbock, Texas 79401  
(806) 744-1987  
erin.rea@spworkforce.org

A notice announcing the availability of the plan on the Board's website will be published in the Lubbock AJ newspaper. The plan will be available on the Board's website: <http://workforcesouthplains.org/about/strategic-plan/>. After the comment period, the plan and the Board's response to comments received will be submitted to the Texas Workforce Commission.