OHIO PYS 2024-2027

CONDITIONALLY APPROVED

As of May 28, 2024, some content in the plan is under revision.

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CONDITIONAL APPROVAL

The following areas of this plan are still being revised.

III. b. 3. B. State Board

OVERVIEW

Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the Governor of each State must submit a Unified or Combined State Plan to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Labor that outlines a four-year strategy for the State's workforce development system. The publicly-funded workforce development system is a national network of Federal, State, regional, and local agencies and organizations that provide a range of employment, education, training, and related services and supports to help all job-seekers secure good jobs while providing businesses with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy. States must have approved Unified or Combined State Plans in place to receive funding for core programs. WIOA reforms planning requirements, previously governed by the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA), to foster better alignment of Federal investments in job training, to integrate service delivery across programs and improve efficiency in service delivery, and to ensure that the workforce system is job-driven and matches employers with skilled individuals. One of WIOA's principal areas of reform is to require States to plan across core programs and include this planning process in the Unified or Combined State Plans. This reform promotes a shared understanding of the workforce needs within each State and fosters development of more comprehensive and integrated approaches, such as career pathways and sector strategies, for addressing the needs of businesses and workers. Successful implementation of many of these approaches called for within WIOA requires robust relationships across programs. WIOA requires States and local areas to enhance coordination and partnerships with local entities and supportive service agencies for strengthened service delivery, including through Unified or Combined State Plans.

OPTIONS FOR SUBMITTING A STATE PLAN

A State has two options for submitting a State Plan— a Unified State Plan or a Combined State Plan. At a minimum, a State must submit a Unified State Plan that meets the requirements described in this document and outlines a four-year strategy for the core programs. The six core programs are—

- the Adult program (Title I of WIOA),
- the Dislocated Worker program (Title I),
- the Youth program (Title I),
- the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act program (Title II), and
- the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program (authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III),
- the Vocational Rehabilitation program (authorized under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by Title IV).

Alternatively, a State may submit a Combined State Plan that meets the requirements described in this document and outlines a four-year strategy for WIOA's core programs plus one or more of the Combined State Plan partner programs. When a State includes a Combined State Plan partner program in its Combined State Plan, it need not submit a separate plan or application for that particular program. If included, Combined State Plan partner programs are subject to the "common planning elements" (Sections II-IV of this document) where specified, as well as the program-specific requirements for that program where such planning requirements exist separately for the program. The Combined State Plan partner programs are—

- Career and technical education programs authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, as amended by the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V) (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.)
- Employment and Training programs under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (programs authorized under section 6(d)(4) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(d)(4)))
- Work programs authorized under section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(o))
- Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers programs (Activities authorized under chapter 2 of title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2271 et seq.))
- Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program (programs authorized under 38, U.S.C. 4100 et. seq.)
- Unemployment Insurance programs (programs authorized under State unemployment compensation laws in accordance with applicable Federal law)
- Senior Community Service Employment program (programs authorized under title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056 et seq.))
- Employment and training activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Community Services Block Grant (Employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.)) [1]

[1] States that elect to include employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.) under a Combined State Plan would submit all other required elements of a complete CSBG State Plan directly to the Federal agency that administers the program. Similarly, States that elect to include employment and training activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development that are included would submit all other required elements of a complete State Plan for those programs directly to the Federal agency that administers the program.

HOW STATE PLAN REQUIREMENTS ARE ORGANIZED

The major content areas of the Unified or Combined State Plan include strategic and operational planning elements. WIOA separates the strategic and operational elements to facilitate cross-program strategic planning.

- The **Strategic Planning Elements** section includes analyses of the State's economic conditions, workforce characteristics, and workforce development activities. These analyses drive the required vision and goals for the State's workforce development system and alignment strategies for workforce development programs to support economic growth.
- The **Operational Planning Elements** section identifies the State's efforts to support the State's strategic vision and goals as identified in the Strategic Planning Elements section. This section ensures that the State has the necessary infrastructure, policies, and activities to meet its strategic goals, implement its alignment strategy, and support ongoing program development and coordination. Operational planning elements include:
    - State Strategy Implementation,
    - State Operating Systems and Policies,
    - Assurances,
    - Program-Specific Requirements for the Core Programs, and
    - Program-Specific Requirements for the Combined State Plan partner programs. (These requirements are available in a separate supplemental document, Supplement to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Unified and Combined State Plan Requirements. The Departments are not seeking comments on these particular requirements).

When responding to Unified or Combined State Plan requirements, States must identify specific strategies for coordinating programs and services for target populations.[2] States must develop strategies that look beyond strategies for the general population and develop approaches that also address the needs of target populations. Use of links to external websites and documents is permitted within the State Plan narrative submission, if such links remain active and adhere to Section 508 accessibility requirements.

Paperwork Reduction Act: The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA) provides that an agency may not conduct, and no person is required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. Public reporting burden for this information collection is estimated to be 86 hours per state; including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Responding to this collection is required to obtain or retain the Federal grant benefit. In addition, responses to this information collection are public, and the agencies offer no assurances of confidentiality. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Workforce Investment, and reference OMB control number 1205-0522. Note: Please do not return the completed plan to this address.

[2] Target populations include individuals with barriers to employment, as defined in WIOA Sec. 3, as well as veterans, unemployed workers, and youth.

I. WIOA STATE PLAN TYPE AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A. WIOA STATE PLAN TYPE

Unified or Combined State Plan. Select whether the State is submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan. At a minimum, a State must submit a Unified State Plan that covers the six core programs.

Unified State Plan. This plan includes the Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Wagner-Peyser Act, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, and Vocational Rehabilitation programs.

Combined State Plan. This plan includes the Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Wagner-Peyser Act, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, and Vocational Rehabilitation programs, as well as one or more of the optional Combined State Plan partner programs identified below.

This is a combined plan

COMBINED PLAN PARTNER PROGRAM(S)

Indicate which Combined Plan partner program(s) the state is electing to include in the plan.

Career and technical education programs authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, as amended by the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V) (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.)

Yes

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.)

No

Employment and Training programs under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (programs authorized under section 6(d)(4) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(d)(4)))

No

Work programs authorized under section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(o))

No

Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers programs (activities authorized under chapter 2 of title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2271 et seq.))

No

Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program (programs authorized under 38, U.S.C. 4100 et. seq.)

Yes

Unemployment Insurance programs (programs authorized under State unemployment compensation laws in accordance with applicable Federal law)

No

Senior Community Service Employment program (programs authorized under title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056 et seq.))

Yes

Employment and training activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development

No

Community Services Block Grant (Employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.))

No

B. PLAN INTRODUCTION OR EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Unified or Combined State Plan may include an introduction or executive summary. This element is optional.

Governor Mike DeWine is committed to pursuing bold policies and initiatives that will transform Ohio into a 21st century economy. He knows that we must prepare Ohioans to fill jobs that are in-demand and in growing industries.

He appointed Lt. Governor Jon Husted to lead the Governor's Office of Workforce Transformation (OWT) to identify new initiatives, ensure strategic alignment, and reduce duplication in the State's workforce programs. In addition, he established InnovateOhio which utilizes technology to improve government services, reduce costs, and spur a culture of innovation. He introduced the Children Services Transformation Advisory Council that is developing recommendations on making reforms and improvements to the Foster Care System, including education and training services for youth aging out of the system. He implemented RecoveryOhio to build recovery-friendly communities that support and promote health and wellness, ensuring Ohioans can live long, productive lives. He continued the Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives to encourage organizations to seek public funding for their charitable services and the Common Sense Initiative to reform Ohio's regulatory policies to help make the State a better place to do business.

Overall, Ohio has 18 state partners, including the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS), the Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE), Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD), the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce (ODEW), the Ohio Department of Aging (ODA), and others that offer nearly 200 workforce-related programs, which represent over $2B in spending. OWT serves as the lead convening entity for these agencies, promoting the alignment of their respective strategies, investments, and outcomes. Ohio will use this strong foundation of inter-agency partnerships and workforce programs to implement new and innovative strategies that will continue to grow its economy and improve the health and well-being of its citizens.

The State's existing workforce strategies support the needs of businesses, workers, students, and jobseekers. Key populations such as individuals with disabilities, individuals with low Literacy levels, older individuals, veterans, low-income individuals, ex-offenders and justice-

involved persons, youth in foster care, migrant and seasonal farmworkers, under-employed individuals, long-term unemployed individuals, and persons impacted by substance abuse are eligible for resources that help develop skills and increase career advancement opportunities.

On the economic development front, Ohio is a national leader in the surge of domestic advanced manufacturing and industrial development. Le by key investments such as Intel's commitment to create 3,000 semiconductor jobs in Central Ohio, a joint investment by Honda and LG Energy Systems to create 2,200 EV jobs in the southwest part of the state, and large investments in the air mobility and national defense industry like Joby's commitment to create 2,000 jobs in the western part of the state, Ohio's economy continues to thrive and will need a skilled technical workforce to support it. Fortunately, industries such as EVs, semiconductors, and broadband share a similar set of skill needs. Ohio's workforce efforts will take advantage of economies of scale in developing the technical skill foundations that fuel these sectors.

The announcement in January 2022 that Intel will create 3,000 semiconductor jobs in Central Ohio marked the largest economic development project in Ohio's history and added another subsector to Ohio's already diverse advanced manufacturing landscape. When the CHIPS and Science Act was passed later in 2022 and appropriated $39 billion to subsidize the construction or expansion of US semiconductor fabrication, it further cemented the importance of reshoring semiconductor manufacturing and accelerated the efforts of Intel and their supply chain in Ohio. JobsOhio, OWT, agency stakeholders, institutions of higher education, and other workforce stakeholders have launched a full-force effort to produce a workforce of technicians and engineers to support the emerging semiconductor industry in Ohio. Success in this effort is vital for national security and economic stability. While producing the technical workforce to support the semiconductor industry (concurrently with the EV industry that will demand similar skillsets) represents a challenge, Ohio is well positioned to succeed. As the 7th most populous state in the US, Ohio has the 3rd largest manufacturing workforce. The endeavor to support this workforce requires collaboration between the public and private sector. As an example, Intel is directly supporting workforce development in the state through their $50 million investment in the Ohio Semiconductor Education and Research Program (SERP). This investment will fund collaborative proposals led by the University of Cincinnati, Central State University, Columbus State Community College, Kent State University, Lorain County Community College, Ohio University and two from The Ohio State University. Altogether, these eight proposals involve more than 80 institutions of higher education across Ohio. The eight leading institutions will receive $17.7 million in funding over three years as part of Intel's $50 million commitment to Ohio higher education institutions over the next decade.

As described within this Combined State Plan, Ohio is implementing workforce strategies that will further support and expand existing efforts. These include:

- **Ohio EV Workforce Strategy.** The Ohio Office of Workforce Transformation (OWT) is partnering with the Ohio Manufacturers' Association (OMA) to supercharge Ohio's electric vehicle workforce in response to a projected 25,400 new EV-related jobs coming to Ohio by 2030. OWT and OMA, in collaboration with EV, automotive, and advanced manufacturing industry leaders across the state, developed a data-driven EV Workforce Strategy outlining how the state will retool and expand the workforce to meet this need, including driving EV industry career awareness, broadening the EV workforce talent pool, and scaling education and training. These activities will be driven by a Statewide

EV Industry Sector Partnership with Regional Implementation guided by OMA's endorsed Industry Sector Partnerships.

- **Ohio's Broadband & 5G Workforce Strategy**. In March of 2021, OWT, in partnership with other agency stakeholders, began devising the State's broadband and 5G workforce strategy to ensure Ohio has the workforce capacity necessary to support broadband expansion and the deployment of 5G technology. In September 2021, Lt. Governor Husted announced the release of the State's strategic plan, which focuses on increasing broadband industry career awareness, establishing and scaling education and training programs, and capitalizing on state and federal funding to reduce cost barriers for Ohioans to learn the necessary skills to enter this critical industry. Implementation began immediately in the fall of 2021 with pilot training programs that launched in the fall of 2021 and spring of 2022. Since the Strategy launched in 2021, Ohio has announced 11 new programs across Ohio. These programs are located at career centers, community colleges, and universities, and will prepare participants for various jobs in the telecommunications industry. Additionally, Ohio was awarded $9 million in Quality Jobs, Equity, Strategy and Training (QUEST) funding from the U.S. Department of Labor to create regional nodes, or hubs, across JobsOhio's six-region map to support the implementation of the Strategy and to provide resources to local communities so they can create the talent pipelines needed for local telecommunications employers. These nodes assume the crucial role of implementing the Strategy's initiatives on a regional scale and are comprised of a 4-year university, 2-year community college, local workforce development board, and a community action agency. Additional work continues to execute the strategy.
- **Virtual Services.** Ohio currently has a variety of virtual workforce services, including job-searching, upskilling, and career-path activities available on OhioMeansJobs.com. As part of its continuous improvement efforts, the State secured a vendor to make critical changes to this platform so that it can further improve the customer experience new features implemented in March 2021 included a redesigned, more accessible OhioMeansJobs.com website for Ohio jobseekers and employers. The redesign made it much easier to register for an account, navigate job opportunities, and apply for positions on mobile devices, all driven by user feedback and upgraded technology tools. Another update was released in June 2021 called "SkillsMatch" that matches applicants with businesses that are hiring and is supported by detailed data that extracts the job seeker's skills from their resumes and matches them with job-match recommendations based on those skills. Additionally, Ohio continues to offer statewide virtual integrated education and training classes for its Aspire Adult Education and Literacy program to reach customers seeking short-term training credentials virtually. Statewide virtual class options impact individuals who may have transportation and/or childcare barriers that prevent them from fully participating in a traditional setting. Moreover, offering virtual training classes allows individuals to attend where programs and services may not be readily available at a physical location. In addition, many Aspire classes that operate from the 231 Basic Instructional Grant continue to allow students opportunities to attend classes virtually and offer students a choice of hybrid classes as well. In

addition, there are more synchronous and asynchronous Distance Education options to support all Aspire students.

- **TopJobs.** Ohio has developed the TopJobs portal, which will be updated in early 2024. This interactive tool allows users to analyze In-Demand and Critical Jobs data to display the information that is most relevant to them, such as business category, region, educational requirements, and preferred experience. Results can be further refined to display information on median salaries, projected growth, current employment, and current openings, helping better guide their educational and career choices.

- **Aspire.** Ohio also continues to offer statewide virtual integrated education and training classes for its Aspire Adult Education and Literacy program to reach customers seeking short-term training credentials virtually. Statewide virtual class options impact individuals who may have transportation and/or childcare barriers that prevent them from fully participating in a traditional setting. Moreover, offering virtual training classes allows individuals to attend where programs and services may not be readily available at a physical location. In addition, many Aspire classes that operate from the 231 Basic Instructional Grant continue to allow students opportunities to attend classes virtually and offer students a choice of hybrid classes as well. In addition, there are more synchronous and asynchronous Distance Education options to support all Aspire students.

- **TechCred.** Since October 2019, the TechCred program has helped businesses better prepare their existing workforces for jobs in today's advanced, technology-infused economy. TechCred gives employees the ability to earn technology-focused credentials, making them more valuable and leading to improved job security and increased career advancement opportunities. Using TechCred, businesses can identify the current or prospective employees whose skills they want to improve for more advanced positions in technology-focused jobs, such as advanced manufacturing and information technology. Credentials eligible for the program must be short-term, industry-recognized, and technology-focused.

- **Innovative Workforce Incentive Program.** To inspire youth to identify paths to success through career-focused learning, the State will be providing $25 million in funding to schools to help students earn industry-recognized credentials. Of this total, $12.5 million will be used to incentivize credential attainment, $13.5 million will be used to support start-up grants that support additional program offerings, and $8 million will be used to pay for the credentialing assessments so that students do not have to pay these fees out-of-pocket.

- **Readiness Seals for High School Graduates.** Ohio recently adopted new graduation standards for the class of 2023 and beyond to ensure that every student is prepared for career and college when they graduate from high school. Students will prepare for the future by completing course requirements, demonstrating a competency in English and math, and earning new Readiness Seals in key areas that show foundational and well-rounded knowledge, skills, and competencies. These include the OhioMeansJobs Readiness Seal, a College-Ready Seal, A Military Enlistment Seal, and a seal earned by achieving an industry-recognized credential.

- **Choose Ohio First.** The Choose Ohio First Scholarship is designed to significantly strengthen Ohio's STEM workforce and increase the number of STEM teachers. Over the next two years, the state will invest $62 million its Choose Ohio First initiative. Funding will be distributed to Ohio's colleges and universities through a competitive process to provide scholarships to students in innovative academic programs. Participating universities and colleges award scholarships to students desiring a certificate, associate degree, baccalaureate degree, or graduate degree in eligible STEM fields or to students who want to become STEM teachers. Designated Choose Ohio First programs are integrated with regional economies, meet statewide educational needs, facilitate the completion of certificates, undergraduate and graduate degrees in a cost-effective manner, and recruit underrepresented STEM student groups into STEM fields. Participating institutions match state funds dollar for dollar.

- **Ohio College2Careers.** The recently passed state operating budget expanded the Ohio College2Careers program to ensure college students with disabilities have the support they need to complete their degree and/or credential, earn higher wages, and meet the demands of tomorrow's labor market. The expansion will allow OOD to increase to 32 total Counselors who will serve all state public 2- and 4-years colleges and universities including the branch campuses, as well as the 2 Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) in Ohio. OOD Ohio C2C Counselors work closely with the disability services offices on campus to ensure that students have the support they need to complete their degree and/or credential, earn higher wages and meet the demands of tomorrow's labor market. Services may include career exploration, assistive technology, placement services for internships and other work experiences, and placement and on the job supports for permanent employment upon graduation to ensure the success of students served.

- **Recovery Initiatives.** To help individuals with mental health and substance abuse disorder, the State has established the Jobs for Recovery Program. OOD Jobs for Recovery is a partnership with the Supreme Court of Ohio, RecoveryOhio, Ohio MHAS, and OOD to embed a VR Counselor and an internal Job Developer as an active member of the drug court team to help eligible individuals with employment. The program model supports the recovery of individuals served by providing rapid engagement in OOD services, timely access to job placement services, on-the-job supports and retention services, and case service funding to meet additional needs. Currently, there are 12 teams serving 13 counties and partnering with multiple dockets within each county. Now as part of the Jobs for Recovery initiative, OOD also collaborates with other specialized dockets to provide services to eligible individuals through assigned VR liaisons.

These new initiatives, along with existing programs and services, fully support the State's strategic workforce vision of an Ohio where business, training, and education are aligned to meet the needs of employers, individuals, and their communities.

II. STRATEGIC ELEMENTS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include a Strategic Planning Elements section that analyzes the State's current economic environment and identifies the State's overall vision for its workforce development system. The required elements in this section allow the State to develop data-driven goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce and to identify successful strategies for aligning workforce development programs to support economic growth. Unless otherwise noted, all Strategic Planning Elements apply to Combined State Plan partner programs included in the plan as well as to core programs. Where requirements identify the term "populations", these must include individuals with barriers to employment as defined at WIOA Section 3. This includes displaced homemakers; low-income individuals; Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians; individuals with disabilities, including youth who are individuals with disabilities; older individuals; ex-offenders; homeless individuals, or homeless children and youths; youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system; individuals who are English language learners, individuals who have low levels of literacy, and individuals facing substantial cultural barriers; farmworkers (as defined at section 167(i) of WIOA and Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 35-14); individuals within 2 years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program; single parents (including single pregnant women); and long-term unemployed individuals. Additional populations include veterans, unemployed workers, and youth, and others that the State may identify.

A. ECONOMIC, WORKFORCE, AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES ANALYSIS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the economic conditions, economic development strategies, and labor market in which the State's workforce system and programs will operate.

1. ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE ANALYSIS

A. ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the economic conditions and trends in the State, including sub-State regions and any specific economic areas identified by the State. This must include—

I. EXISTING DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTORS AND OCCUPATIONS

Provide an analysis of the industries and occupations for which there is existing demand.

II. EMERGING DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTORS AND OCCUPATIONS

Provide an analysis of the industries and occupations for which demand is emerging.

III. EMPLOYERS' EMPLOYMENT NEEDS

With regard to the industry sectors and occupations identified in (A)(i) and (ii), provide an assessment of the employment needs of employers, including a description of the knowledge, skills, and abilities required, including credentials and licenses.

i. Existing Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations. Provide an analysis of the industries and occupations for which there is existing demand.

State of Ohio has a population of 11.7 million, the 7th largest in the country. It has the 10th largest highway network and is centrally located within a day's drive of 50 percent of North America's population. Major metropolitan areas of Columbus, Cleveland, Cincinnati, and Toledo are strategically situated in the central, northeast, southwest, and northwest areas of the state. Ohio's Appalachian region includes 32 counties that sweep along the Ohio River, across the southern southeastern portions of the State, up into the Mahoning Valley

Ohio is home to many historically strong industries, such as banking and insurance, plastics and rubber manufacturing, research and development, automotive assembly, steel production, and traditional agriculture. The State's industries are also expanding to include new and developing sectors, including technology, bioscience, green energy, information, and food processing.

Ohio is quickly building a strong domestic electrification industry, and recent investments in the state, topping nearly $10 billion, signal Ohio's rise as a global hub of EV innovation and manufacturing. The Honda and LG Energy Solution battery plant in Fayette County alone is expected to create 2,200 new jobs. Ford's new EV manufacturing plant in Lorain County is expected to create an additional 1,800 jobs, and SEMCORP's new separator film facility, producing a key component in lithium-ion batteries, another 1,200 jobs, to name a few examples. Through these investments, combined with pending federal funding and bespoke demand models, it's estimated that roughly 25,400 new jobs will be created in Ohio by 2030 from EV, battery, EVSE manufacturing, EV maintenance, and EVSE installation and operations.

The State of Ohio has also been catalyzing developments in its broadband and 5G infrastructure, pursuing an aggressive expansion strategy supplemented by substantial investment. Over $1 billion has been secured, combining both state and federal funding, to drive forward this critical network augmentation for the future of connectivity in Ohio. A significant portion of funding comes from the Broadband Equity Access and Deployment ("BEAD") program which accounts for $793 million of the overall investment. This injection of capital is earmarked to solve enduring connectivity issues, extend the reach of high-speed, wireless communications technologies to underserved rural areas, and improve the quality of life and economic prospects of Ohio's residents. Moreover, it will further propel Ohio's digital transformation journey, reinforcing the state's status as an influential digital hub thereby attracting innovative industries and creating numerous employment opportunities within the technology sector. These investments are projected to generate 2,500 direct construction jobs related to the expansion of broadband. Additionally, 5G in Ohio is expected to create approximately 107,000 new jobs in the state, with approximately 26,000 of these jobs directly tied to the network deployment of 5G. In combination, these factors should facilitate economic stability and ensure a brighter outlook for Ohioans through increased employment opportunities and the cultivation of an innovative and technology-driven workforce.

To ensure the State accurately identifies In-Demand industry sectors and occupations, the OWT, the Governor's Executive Workforce Board (GEWB), and JobsOhio gather, analyze, and consider information from the following sources:

- **Labor Market Information**. Labor Market Information (LMI) about occupational wages, projected annual job openings, and projected job growth forms the initial basis of

the analysis. Biennial occupational employment forecasts are developed from industry employment forecasts, providing an across-the-board assessment of employer jobs needs.

- **Economic Drivers**. The following industry clusters and business functions have been identified by JobsOhio as critical to Ohio's economy and are closely analyzed for existing workforce needs: Aerospace and Aviation; Automotive; Financial Services; BioHealth; Advanced Manufacturing; Energy and Chemicals; Food and Agribusiness; Information Technology; and Logistics and Distribution.

- **In-Demand Jobs Survey**. In July 2021, OWT launched the In-Demand Jobs Survey that was open to all registered Ohio businesses. The 2021 survey saw a 13 percent increase in employer participation from 2019. This innovative online tool allows employers to provide direct, real-time data about their existing and emerging workforce needs, including the number of current and projected job openings along with related education, skill, and certification requirements. The culmination of this economic analysis results in Ohio's In-Demand Jobs List. To be included, sectors and occupations must have greater than average projected job openings or growth, along with median wages equal to or greater than 80 percent of Ohio's median wage. Overall, the In-Demand Jobs List fosters cross-agency workforce alignment, prioritizes training investments and curricula development, and improves career planning services.

- **TopJobs Portal.** The TopJobs portal found at topjobs.ohio.gov includes the current In-Demand Jobs List. This interactive tool allows users to view and sort occupations by business category, region, educational requirements, and preferred experience. Results can be further refined to display information on median salaries, projected growth, current employment, and current openings, thus providing users with critical information on emerging sectors and industries with significant development.

Ohio's unemployment rate was stable during 2022. The year started and ended at 4.1% (seasonally adjusted), with declines to 3.9% and increases to 4.2% during the year. County annual average unemployment rates ranged from 2.7% in Mercer County to 6.4% in Monroe County. All but one county saw a decline in its annual unemployment rate. Monthly initial claims for unemployment benefits (not seasonally adjusted) ranged from 62,312 in March 2022 to 28,412 in October. More workers under the age of 45 filed initial claims in 2022 compared to 2021. Labor demand, as indicated by online job ads, increased in 2022 over 2021. On average, there were almost 35,000 more jobs ads per month in 2022 than in 2021. Registered nurses and heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers were the two most heavily advertised occupations. Ohio's annual average nonfarm employment for 2022 was 5,529,300, an increase of 141,600 or 2.6% over 2021. Total private employment increased by 132,700 over 2021, to 4,763,800, a 2.9% increase. Goods-producing and private service-providing employment both increased in 2022. The leisure and hospitality sector saw the largest increase, gaining 34,900 jobs over 2021. Only federal government employment had a decline in employment, losing 200 jobs over 2021. All the state's metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) saw increases in annual total nonfarm and total private employment from 2021 to 2022. The Columbus MSA saw the largest increases, gaining 4.0% for total private employment and 3.5% for total nonfarm employment

As shown in **Figure 1. Top 10 Occupations with the Greatest Anticipated Growth on the In-Demand Jobs List, December 2019,** the Healthcare and Social Assistance sector occupations of

Registered Nurses; Medical Assistants; and Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses account for 42.9 percent (2,685 of 6,263) of growth.

Figure 1. Top 10 Occupations with the Greatest Growth on the In-Demand Jobs List, February 2022 (2021 List)

Occupation Title	Starting Wage	Median Wage	Education Level	On-the-Job Training	Relevant Work Experience	Growth
Home Health Aides[4] (Direct Support Professional)	-	$23,046	High school diploma or equivalent	Short-term on-the-job training	None	1,725
Personal and Home Care Aides[4] (Direct Support Professional)	-	$23,046	High school diploma or equivalent	Short-term on-the-job training	None	1,487
Acute Care Nurses	$58,600	$67,580	Bachelor's degree	None	None	1,225
Advanced Practice Psychiatric Nurses	$58,600	$67,580	Bachelor's degree	None	None	1,225
Clinical Nurse Specialists	$58,600	$67,580	Bachelor's degree	None	None	1,225
Critical Care Nurses	$58,600	$67,580	Bachelor's degree	None	None	1,225
Nurse Anesthetists	$151,970	$174,600	Master's degree	None	None	1,225
Registered Nurses	$58,600	$67,580	Bachelor's degree	None	None	1,225
Software Developers, Applications[4]	-	$91,270	Bachelor's degree	None	None	696
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	$26,560	$31,350	Less than high school	Short-term on-the-job training	None	600

Figure 2. Online Job Postings by Top 10 Job Functions, January – October 2023 identifies the most frequent online job advertisements on OhioMeansJobs.com sorted by job function. A job function is a grouping of related occupations.

As shown, Medical/Health occupations account for 19.7 percent (112,301 of 568,850), Sales/Business Development occupations account for 13.0 percent (73,846 of 568,850) and Hospitality/Service occupations account for 7.8 percent (44,105 of 568,850).

Figure 2. Online Job Postings by Top 10 Industries, Janaury – October 2023

Job Function	Ads
Medical/Health	112,301
Sales/Business Development	73,846
Hospitality/Services	44,105
Information Technology	41,806
Operations/Logistics	41,227
Administration/Clerical	39,110
Engineering/Quality Assurance	29,207
Education/Training	28,819
Finance/Accounting	27,157
Maintenance/Repair	26,310
Manufacturing/Resources	22,741
Facilities/Construction	15,092
Social Services	12,516
Creative/Talent	10,836
Marketing/PR	9,815
Science/R&D	8,861
Executive Management	7,946
Human Resources	7,729
Security	7,546
Legal	1,603
Missing Occupation Information	277

Source: OhioMeansJobs.com

ii. Emerging Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations. Provide an analysis of the industries and occupations for which demand is emerging.

The Bureau of Labor Market Information within the ODJFS forecasts long-term employment and identifies emerging industries and occupations using a combination of data from a variety of sources, including business surveys and economic analyses.

As shown in **Figure 3. Ohio Employment Projections Report by Major Industry, 2020-2030,** there is expected to be significant job growth in Arts, Entertainment and Recreation (27.2%), Accommodation and Food Services (15.9%), Transportation and Warehousing (11.9%), Mining (11.2%), and Health Care and Social Assistance (10.7%).

At the same time, there is a projected decrease in employment in Utilities (-7.3%) and Retail Trade (-3.5%). To prepare for these shifts, a cross-agency workforce team is proactively identifying the new and emerging skill sets that will be required for a long-term talent pipeline. As automation and technology become more common in the workplace, Ohio will promote and expand education and training opportunities that enable individuals to successfully transition into new jobs and careers within their current employment sectors.

Figure 3. Ohio 2020-2030 Long-Term Employment Projections by Major Industry

Ohio Employment Projections Report by Major Industry, 2020-2030

Industry	2020 Annual Employment	2030 Projected Employment	Change in Employment 2020-2030	Percent Change 2020-2030
Total	**5,567,009**	**5,824,265**	**257,256**	**4.6%**
Goods-Producing Industries	**978,485**	**991,766**	**13,281**	**1.4%**
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	97,782	102,571	4,789	4.9%
Mining	9,019	10,025	1,006	11.2%
Construction	218,719	228,780	10,061	4.6%
Manufacturing	652,965	650,390	-2,575	-0.4%
Service-Providing Industries	**4,315,133**	**4,572,390**	**257,257**	**6.0%**
Wholesale Trade	225,643	227,604	1,961	0.9%
Retail Trade	532,066	513,604	-18,462	-3.5%
Transportation and Warehousing	229,146	256,297	27,151	11.9%
Utilities	18,425	17,085	-1,340	-7.3%
Information	63,857	64,101	244	0.4%
Finance and Insurance	240,961	243,485	2,524	1.1%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	62,229	63,943	1,714	2.8%
Professional and Technical Services	262,081	280,093	18,012	6.9%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	138,081	145,820	7,739	5.6%
Administrative and Waste Services	297,168	312,263	15,095	5.1%
Educational Services	415,068	439,911	24,843	6.0%
Health Care and Social Assistance	813,811	900,474	86,663	10.7%
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	61,826	78,656	16,830	27.2%
Accommodation and Food Services	404,259	468,477	64,218	15.9%
Other Services (Except Government)	205,681	217,156	11,475	5.6%
Government	344,831	343,421	-1,410	-0.4%
Self-Employed and Unpaid Family Workers	**273,391**	**260,109**	**-13,282**	**-4.9%**

Source: Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, Bureau of Labor Market Information, December 2022.

Figure 4. Ohio Occupational Employment Projections by Occupational Group, 2020-2030
This figureshows increases in Healthcare Support Occupations (14.5%), Personal Care and Service Occupations (10.7%), Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations (13.2%), Personal Care and Service Occupations (10.7%), Community and Social Service Occupations (9.9%), Computer and Mathematical Occupations (8.7%), and Transportation and Material Moving Occupations (8.7%).

Declines were seen in Office and Administrative Support Occupations (-4.4%), Sales and Related Occupations (-3.3%), and Production Operations (-2.0%). Ohio is using data from JobsOhio to anticipate changes to the industry and proactively train workers to work alongside new technologies. It will identify the education and skill sets that will be required as a result of automation.

Figure 4. Ohio Occupational Employment Projections by Occupational Group, 2020-2030

Ohio Occupational Employment Projections by Occupational Group, 2020-2030

Occupational Title	Employment 2020 Annual	Employment 2030 Projected	Change in Employment 2020-2030	Change in Employment Percent	Annual Openings Growth	Annual Openings Exits	Annual Openings Transfers	Annual Openings Total
Total, All Occupations	5,567,009	5,824,265	257,256	4.6%	25,726	243,077	372,428	641,231
Management Occupations	340,876	365,212	24,336	7.1%	2,434	11,323	17,707	31,464
Business and Financial Operations Occupations	334,640	353,607	18,967	5.7%	1,897	9,021	20,137	31,055
Computer and Mathematical Occupations	171,126	185,949	14,823	8.7%	1,482	3,698	8,810	13,990
Architecture and Engineering Occupations	92,374	97,503	5,129	5.6%	513	2,222	4,437	7,172
Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	41,492	44,113	2,621	6.3%	262	903	2,940	4,105
Community and Social Service Occupations	104,187	114,526	10,339	9.9%	1,034	3,769	6,989	11,792
Legal Occupations	38,999	41,372	2,373	6.1%	237	1,110	1,585	2,932
Education, Training, and Library Occupations	301,227	325,555	24,328	8.1%	2,433	12,180	14,054	28,667
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	82,243	87,035	4,792	5.8%	479	3,333	5,391	9,203
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	374,761	403,904	29,143	7.8%	2,914	9,984	11,759	24,657
Healthcare Support Occupations	229,958	263,259	33,301	14.5%	3,330	14,428	15,250	33,008
Protective Service Occupations	107,975	111,274	3,299	3.1%	330	5,122	6,926	12,378
Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	429,256	485,853	56,597	13.2%	5,660	35,039	46,688	87,387
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	172,921	176,584	3,663	2.1%	366	9,863	12,823	23,052
Personal Care and Service Occupations	124,074	137,400	13,326	10.7%	1,333	8,185	10,111	19,629
Sales and Related Occupations	488,481	472,263	-16,218	-3.3%	-1,622	24,287	37,837	60,502
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	706,653	675,825	-30,828	-4.4%	-3,083	32,786	42,941	72,644
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	15,664	16,161	497	3.2%	50	664	1,805	2,519
Construction and Extraction Occupations	205,151	215,617	10,466	5.1%	1,047	6,252	14,357	21,656
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	218,593	230,543	11,950	5.5%	1,195	7,083	14,131	22,409
Production Occupations	478,706	468,981	-9,725	-2.0%	-972	17,480	33,617	50,125
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	507,652	551,729	44,077	8.7%	4,408	24,343	42,132	70,883

Source: Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, Bureau of Labor Market Information, December 2022.

Source: ODJFS-BLMI, January 2021

iii. Employers' Employment Needs. With regard to the industry sectors and occupations identified in (A)(i) and (ii), provide an assessment of the employment needs of employers, including a description of the knowledge, skills, and abilities required, including credentials and licenses.

The table below uses a Burning Glass analysis of over 1.3 million job postings to compile the knowledge, skills and abilities required for the occupations shown in **Figure 5. Top 10 Occupations with the Greatest Growth on the In-Demand Jobs List, December 2019.** The data represents insights drawn from job postings over the last 12 months within the state of Ohio.

Occupation	Top 5 Skills	Top 5 Certifications
Registered Nurses	Patient Care, Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS), Treatment Planning, Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), Acute Care	Registered Nurse, Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) Certification, First Aid Cpr Aed, Basic Life Saving (BLS), American Heart Association Certification
Laborers/Freight/Stock/ Material Movers, Hand	Forklift Operation, Packaging, Scheduling, Lifting Ability, Sorting	Driver's License, Forklift Operator Certification, CDL Class A, Good Conduct, Occupational Safety and Health Administration

Occupation	Top 5 Skills	Top 5 Certifications
		Certification
Medical Secretaries	Administrative Support, Scheduling, Appointment Setting, Customer Service, Front Office	Health Unit Coordinator, First Aid Cpr Aed, Basic Life Saving (BLS), Driver's License, American Heart Association Certification
Software Developers, Applications	Java, SQL, Software Development, JavaScript, Software Engineering	Security Clearance, IT Infrastructure Library (ITIL) Certification, Driver's License, ITIL Certification, Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP)
Medical Assistants	Patient Care, Medical Assistance Scheduling, Vital Signs Measurement, Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)	Certified Medical Assistant, Phlebotomy Certification, Basic Life Saving (BLS), AAMA Certified Medical Assistant, Clinical Medical Assistant (CCMA)
Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	Marketing, Social Media, Project Management, Digital Marketing Sales	Driver's License, Project Management Certification, Chartered Property Casualty Underwriter (CPCU), Google AdWords Training, Chartered Life Underwriter (ClU)
Construction Laborers	Construction Labor, Carpentry Hand Tools, Plumbing, Repair	Driver's License, Occupational Safety and Health Administration Certification, CDL Class A, OSHA Safety 10 Hour, Forklift Operator Certification
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	Patient Care, Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), Treatment Planning, Medication Administration, Home Health	Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN), First Aid Cpr Aed, Licensed Vocational Nurse (LVN), Driver's License, Basic Life Saving (BLS)
Financial Managers	Accounting, Budgeting,	Certified Public Accountant

Occupation	Top 5 Skills	Top 5 Certifications
	Financial Reporting, Financial Statements, Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP)	(CPA), Driver's License, Licensed Attorney, Series 6, Series 7
General and Operations Managers	Communication Skills, Teamwork / Collaboration, Planning Problem Solving, Organizational Skills	Driver's License, CDL Class A, First Aid Cpr Aed, Project Management Certification, Six Sigma Certification

Figure 6. Knowledge, Skill, Ability, and Credential Information from TalentNeuron and O*NET for the Top 10 Occupations with the Greatest Growth on the In-Demand Jobs List

Using the Top Jobs Skill Report, we can analyze the knowledge, skills, abilities required, in addition to relevant credentials, for a variety of occupations. The Top Jobs Skill Report combines information from TalentNeuron's online job postings database and from and the Occupational Information Network (O*NET). The table below uses the occupations referenced in **Figure 1. Top 10 Occupations with the Greatest Growth on the In-Demand Jobs List, December 2019**

*Top Skill, Skill Type and Credential are from TalenNeuron, Abilities, Skills, and Knowledge are from O*Net.*

Occupation	Top Skill	Skill Type	Credential	Abilities	Skills	Knowledge
Acute Care Nurses	Nursing	Knowledge	Certified Registered Nurse	Problem Sensitivity	Active Listening	Medicine and Dentistry
Advanced Practice Psychiatric Nurses	Nursing	Knowledge	Certified Registered Nurse	-	-	Therapy and Counseling
Clinical Nurse Specialists	Nursing	Knowledge	Certified Registered Nurse	-	-	Medicine and Dentistry
Crtitical Care Nurses	Nursing	Knowledge	Certified Registered Nurse	-	-	Medicine and Dentistry
Home Health Aides	Caregiving	Skill	Driver's License	Oral Expression	-	-
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material	Sorting	Personal Ability	Driver's License	Multilimb Coordination	Operation and Control	English Language

Occupation	Top Skill	Skill Type	Credential	Abilities	Skills	Knowledge
Movers, Hand						
Nurse Anesthetists	Anesthesiology	Knowledge	Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist	Problem Sensitivity	Critical Thinking	Medicine and Dentistry
Personal and Home Care Aides	Caregiving	Skill	Driver's License	Oral Comprehension	-	-
Registered Nurses	Nursing	Knowledge	Certified Registered Nurse	Problem Sensitivity	-	Psychology
Software Developers, Applications	Communication	Skill	Security Clearance	-	-	-

Figure 7. Knowledge, Skill, Ability, and Credential Information from TalentNeuron and O*NET for the Top 10 Occupations with the Most Annual Openings from Ohio's 2020-2030 Occupational Employment Projections.

The following table shows the Top 10 occupations by Annual Openings from Ohio's long-term occupational employment projections 2020-2030.

*Top Skill, Skill Type and Credential are from TalenNeuron, Abilities, Skills, and Knowledge are from O*Net.*

Occupation	Top Skill	Skill Type	Credential	Abilities	Skills	Knowledge
Accountants and Auditors	Leadership	Skill	Certified Public Accountant	Oral Expression	Active Listening	Economics and Accounting
Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	Accounting	Knowledge	Driver's License	Oral Comprehension	Mathematics	Customer and Personal Service
Construction Laborers	Installing	Skill	Driver's License	Manual Dexterity	Speaking	Building and Construction
First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving	Supervision	Knowledge	Driver's License	Oral Comprehension	Monitoring	Customer and Personal Service

Occupation	Top Skill	Skill Type	Credential	Abilities	Skills	Knowledge
Workers						
First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers	Customer Service	Knowledge	Driver's License	Oral Comprehension	Active Listening	Administration and Management
Industrial Truck and Tractor Operators	Forklifts	Tools & Tech	OSHA Certification	Control Precision	Operation and Control	Mathematics
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	Preventive Maintenance	Skill	Driver's License	Near Vision	Equipment Maintenance	Mechanical
Nursing Assistants[4]	Nursing	Knowledge	Certification in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation	Oral Comprehension	-	-
Office Clerks, General	Communication	Skill	Driver's License	Oral Expression	Active Listening	Administrative
Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific	Communication	Skill	Driver's License	Oral Expression	Active Listening	Sales and Marketing

Occupational Employment Projections Dashboard: Workforce data and policy professionals can also use Ohio's Employment Projections to 2030, including the top occupations by growth, decline, and projected employment. This interactive dashboard includes projected jobs, annual openings, education requirements, and median wages. Data can be viewed for Ohio and select substate areas.

B. WORKFORCE ANALYSIS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the current workforce in the State and within various state regions. Provide key analytical conclusions in aggregate as well as

disaggregated among populations to identify potential disparities in employment and educational attainment and understand labor force conditions for items (i)-(iii) below. Populations analyzed must include individuals with barriers to employment described in the first paragraph of Section II. Analysis must include—

I. EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT

Provide an analysis of current employment and unemployment data, including labor force participation rates, and trends in the State.

II. LABOR MARKET TRENDS

Provide an analysis of key labor market trends, including across existing industries and occupations.

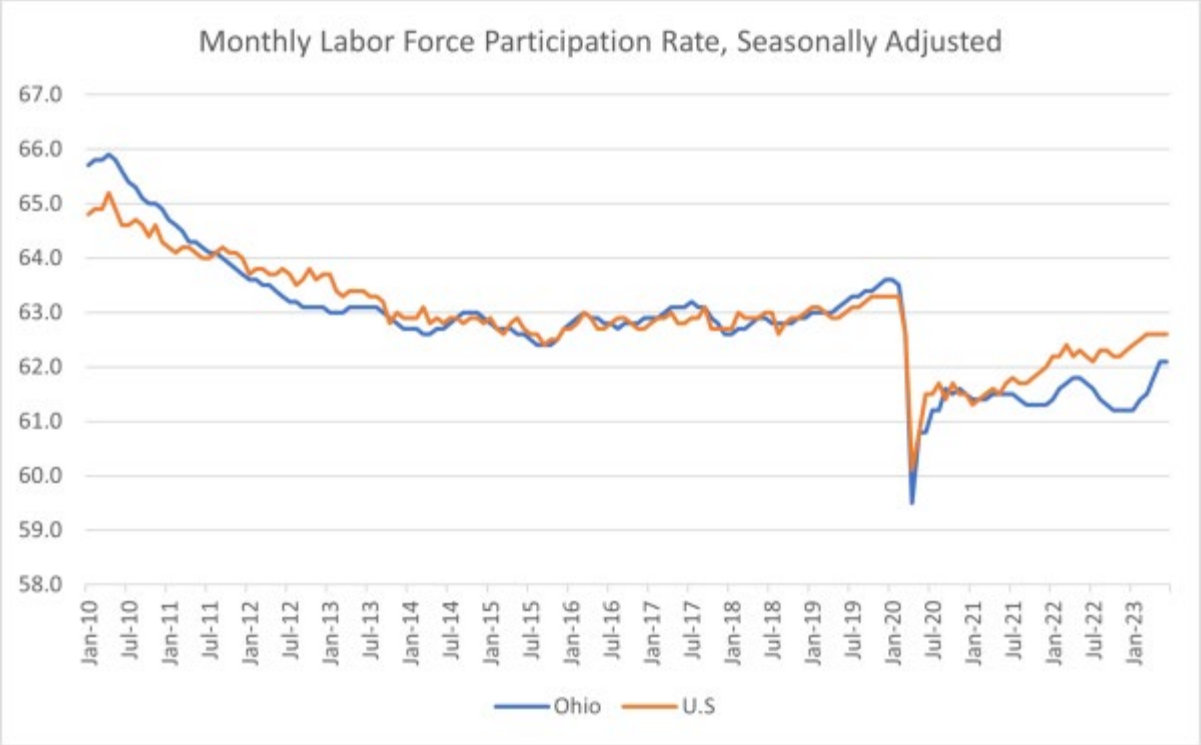
III. EDUCATION AND SKILL LEVELS OF THE WORKFORCE

Provide an analysis of the educational and skill levels of the workforce.

i. Employment and Unemployment. Provide an analysis of current employment and unemployment data, including labor force participation rates, and trends in the State.

Employment. According to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics and ODJFS-BLMI, Ohio's Labor force Estimate for June 2023 was 5,817,100. **Figure 5. Ohio and US Labor force Participation Rates, January 2010 – June 2023 (Seasonally Adjusted)** indicates that the State's participation rates have decreased over the past thirteen years from 65.7 percent in January 2010 to 62.1 percent in June 2023. This decline appears to be the result of the aging population (see **Figure 11. Labor force Age Distribution, 2020 and Projected 2030 under Key Populations later in this section)** as more and more workers move into higher age groups that tend to have lower participation rates. According to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, the overall labor force participation rate for the country has been declining since 2000, dropping sharply following the 2007-2009 recession. Although Ohio's labor force participation rate began to increase in 2019, it decreased and became more volatile during the Covid pandemic.

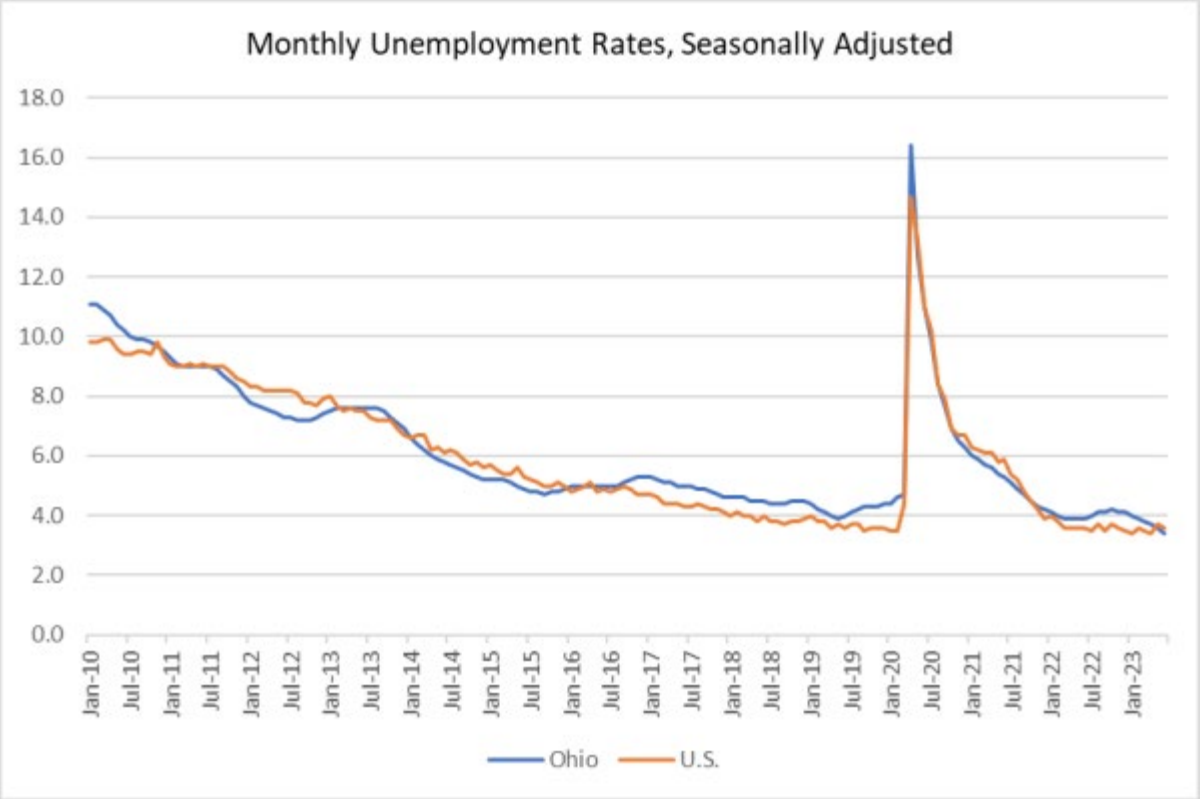
Figure 5. Ohio and US Labor Force Participation Rates, January 2010 – June 2023 (Seasonally Adjusted)



Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics, ODJFS-BLMI

Unemployment. As shown in in **Figure 6. Ohio and US Monthly Unemployment Rates, January 2010 – June 2023 (Seasonally Adjusted)**, the State's unemployment rate has steadily decreased from a high of 11.1 percent in January 2010 to 3.4 percent in June 2023.

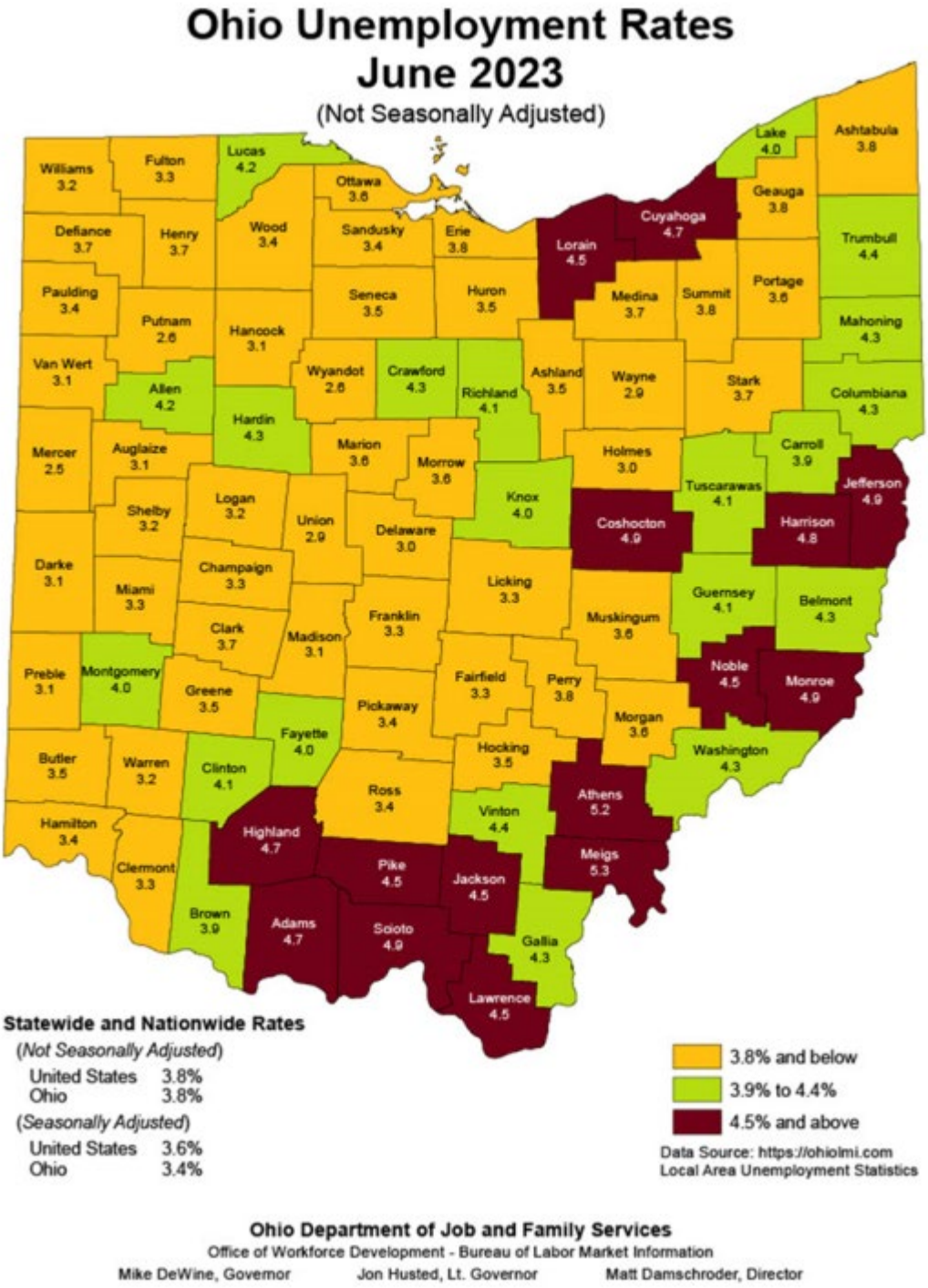
Figure 6. Ohio and US Monthly Unemployment Rates, January 2010 – June 2023 (Seasonally Adjusted)



Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics

Although the statewide unemployment rate decreased, pockets of higher unemployment remain. As shown in **Figure 7. Ohio Unemployment Rate (Not Seasonally Adjusted), June 2023**, two Appalachian Counties had unemployment rates of 5.0 percent or higher. They were Meigs (5.3 percent) and Athens (5.2 percent).

Figure 7. Ohio Unemployment Rate (Not Seasonally Adjusted), June 2023



Source: ODJFS-BLMI, June 2023

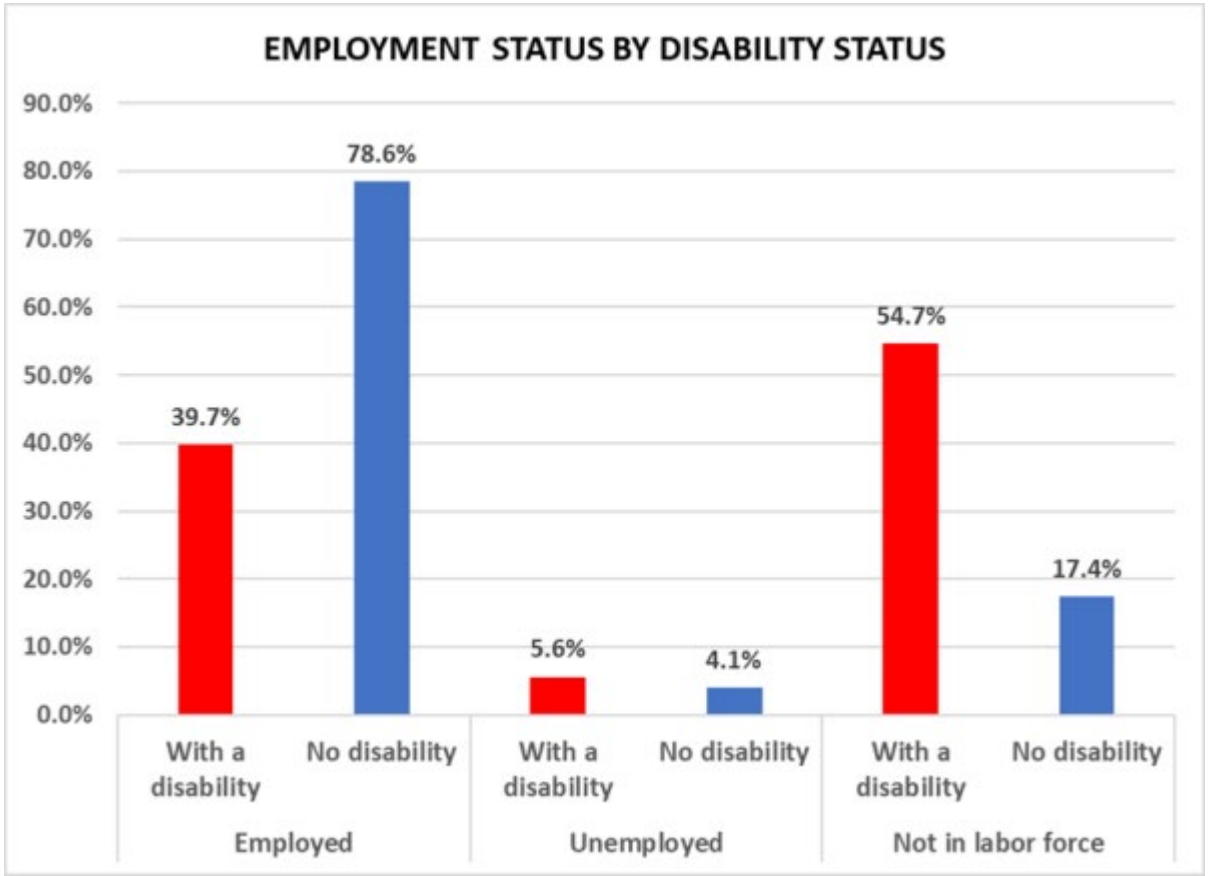
Key Populations. Ohio has implemented strategies to serve populations that may experience barriers to employment. These populations include:

- Individuals with Disabilities
- Individuals with Low Literacy Levels

- Older Individuals
- Veterans
- Low-Income Individuals
- Ex-Offenders and Justice-Involved Persons
- Youth in Foster Care
- Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers
- Under-Employed Individuals
- Long-Term Unemployed Individuals
- Persons Impacted by Substance Misuse

Individuals with Disabilities. According to US Census data, 11.8 percent (824,049 of 6,970,151) of Ohioans ages 18 to 64 report having a disability. As shown in **Figure 8. Ohio Labor Force Status by Disability Status, 2021**, 54.7% percent of individuals with disabilities were not in the workforce as compared to 17.4% percent of those without disabilities. The rate of unemployment for individuals with disabilities was 1.5 percentage points higher than persons without (5.6 percent as compared to 4.1 percent, respectively).

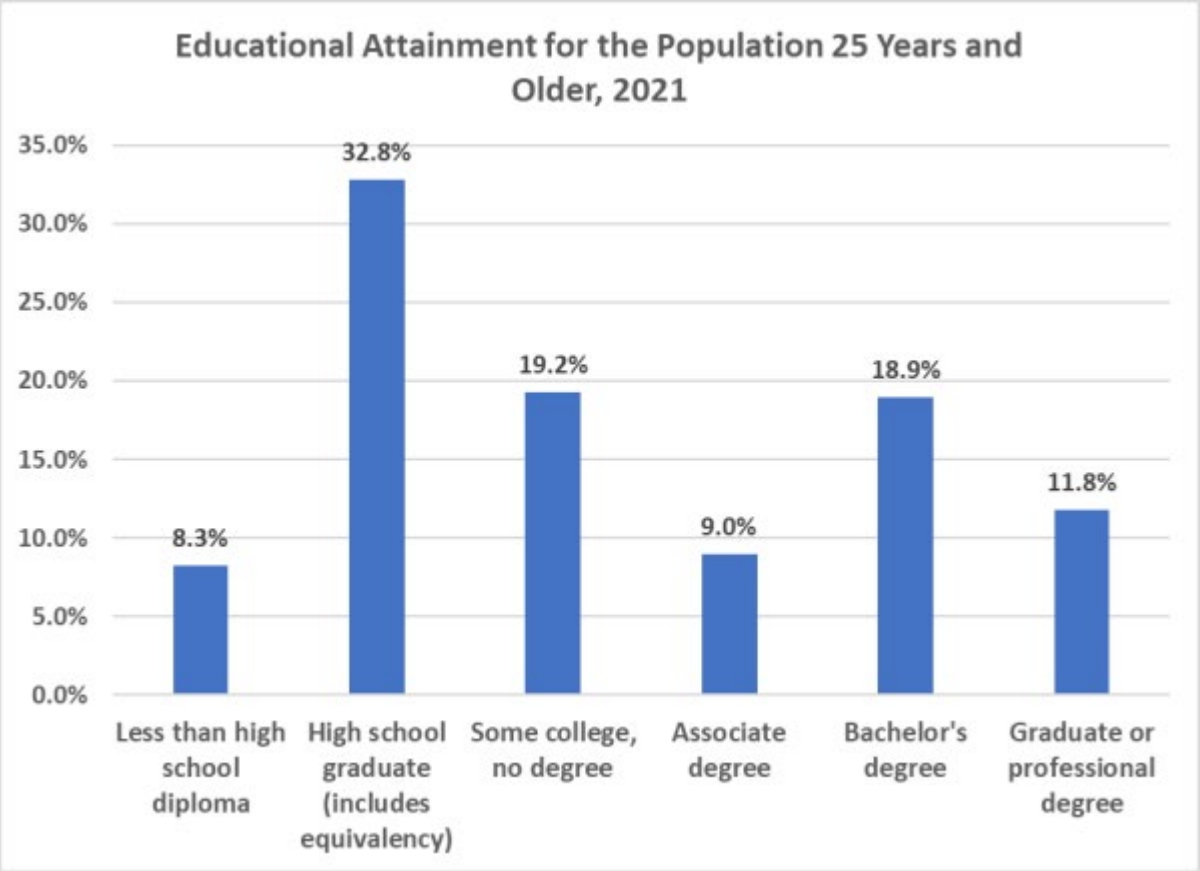
Figure 8. Ohio Labor Force Status by Disability Status, 2021



Source: American Community Survey, 2019, US Census Bureau

Individuals with Low Literacy Levels. As shown in **Figure 9. Educational Attainment for the Population 25 Years and Older, 2021**, 8.3 percent of working age adults lack a high school diploma or equivalency. This translates into over 670,300 individuals (8.3 percent of estimated 8,117,973 citizens over age 25).

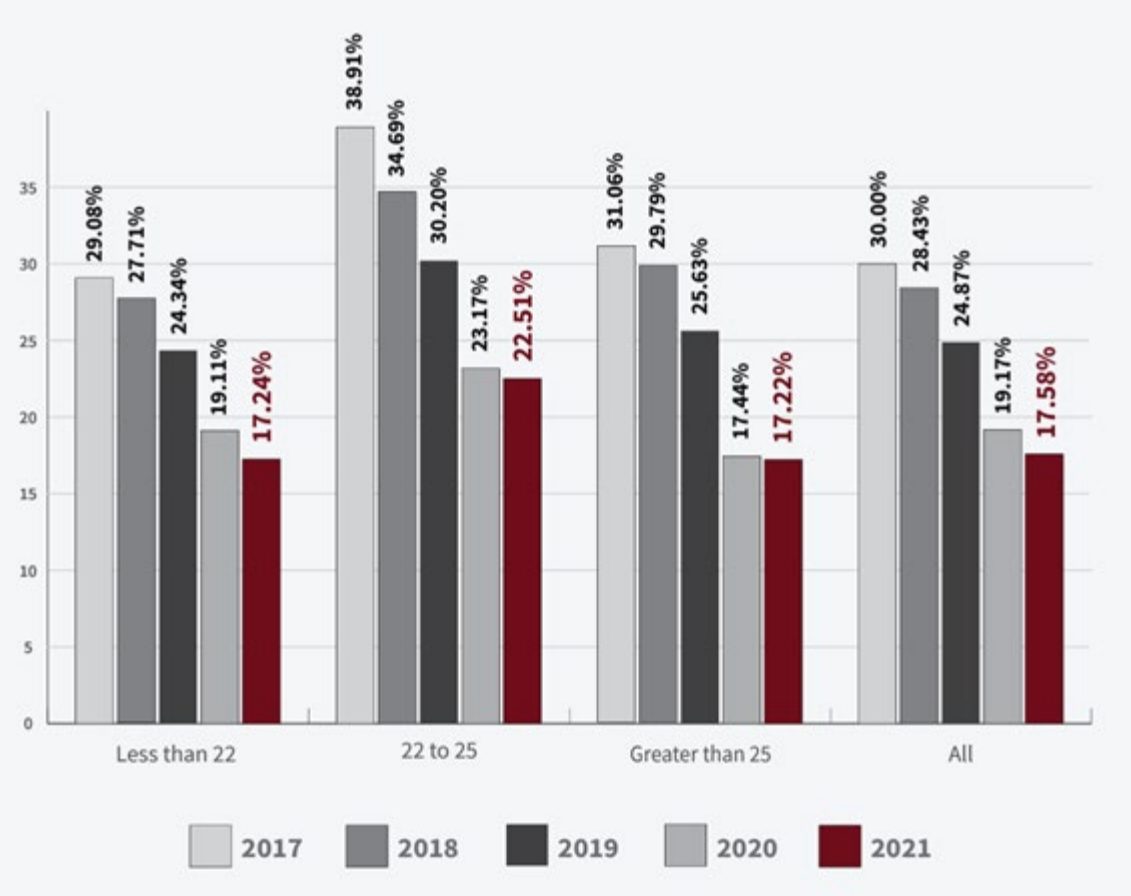
Figure 9. Educational Attainment for the Population 25 Years and Older, 2021



Source: American Community Survey, 2021, US Census Bureau

Figure 10. Ohio Remediation Report, 2022 shows that the percent of adults enrolled in Ohio's public colleges who took either remedial math (12.9 percent) or remedial English classes (8.95 percent) has decreased over the 2017 through 2021 reporting period. Approximately 4.6 percent took both remedial math and remedial English classes. The report demonstrates that efforts to reduce remediation of adult students have been working.

Figure 10. Ohio Remediation Report, 2022



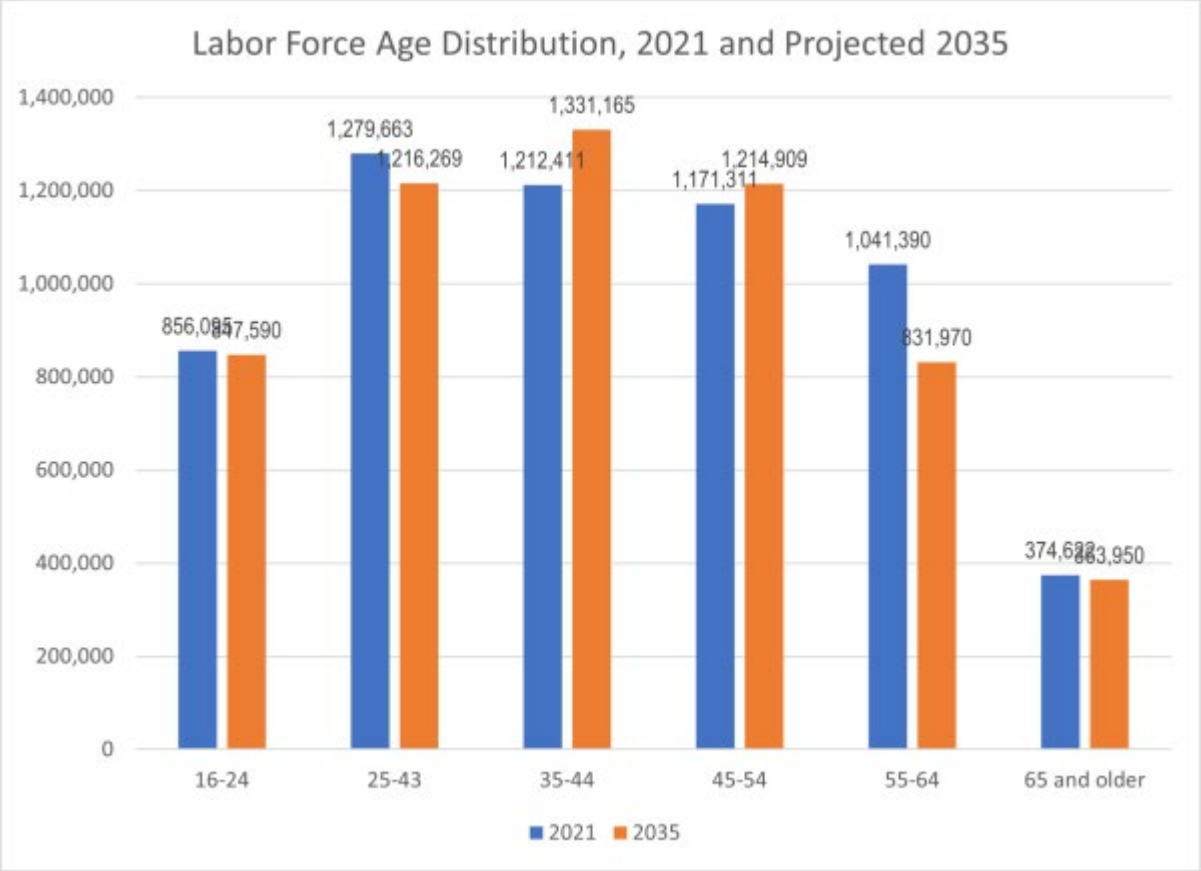
Source: Ohio Department of Higher Education

To help adults with low literacy levels improve their skills so that they can achieve better occupations and careers, the State will expand access to its Aspire Adult Education and Literacy program.

Older Individuals. As shown in **Figure 11. Labor force Age Distribution, 2021 and Projected 2035,** Ohio's labor force is expected to decrease by 129,639 (from 5,935,492 to 5,805,853). The most significant decrease will be the loss of 209,420 workers aged 55 and older (from 1,416,012 to1,195,920). Additionally, there is projected to be a reduction of 58,629 workers aged 16-24 (from 856,095 to 847,590) and 25-43 (1,279,663 to 1,216,269). These decreases will be partially offset by a projected increase of 162,352 workers aged 35-54 (from 2,383,721 to 2,546,073).

There is a risk that there may not be an adequate pipeline of younger workers to replace individuals who choose to retire and leave the labor force. Ohio is addressing this issue by implementing specific initiatives that are designed to attract and retain emerging talent, upskill the existing workforce, and better assist and engage individuals who may have barriers to employment.

Figure 11. Labor Force Age Distribution, 2021 and Projected 2035



Source: ODJFS calculation; Ohio Development Services Agency and US Bureau of Labor Statistics data

Veterans. As shown in **Figure 12. Ohio Veteran Statistics**, there are approximately 621,890 veterans living in Ohio, of which 49 percent are under the age of 65. With respect to education, 36.8 percent possess a high school diploma or equivalency, 35.1 percent have some college or associate degree, and 22.9 percent hold a bachelor's degree or higher. Overall, 30.4 percent have a disability, 4.7 percent are unemployed, and 8.0 percent live in poverty.

In addition to these statistics, the US Department of Housing and Urban Development's report, 2022 Point-in-Time Estimate of Veteran Homelessness in the US, indicates thatOhio's capacity to house homeless veterans far exceeds the number of homeless veterans in the state.

The OhioMeansVeteranJobs.com website is a resource used by multiple partner programs to provide veterans with workforce services. As part of its Ohio Values Veterans initiative, ODHE has formed the Military Strategic Implementation Team (MSIT) to work with Ohio's public institutions to conduct a thorough review of current institutional policies and practices, and to improve the process for awarding college credit for military training, experience, and coursework.

Figure 12. Ohio Veteran Statistics, 2021

VETERAN STATUS			Civilian population 18 years and over	621,890	
	Veterans	% Veterans		Veterans	% Veterans
PERIOD OF SERVICE			MEDIAN INCOME IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS (IN 2021 INFLATION ADJUSTED DOLLARS)		
Gulf War (9/2001 or later) veterans	123,040	19.8%	Civilian population 18 years and over with income	$41,839	
Gulf War (8/1990 to 8/2001) veterans	126,246	20.3%	Male	$42,649	
Vietnam-era veterans	224,395	36.1%	Female	$33,422	
Korean War veterans	32,211	5.2%	EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT		
World War II veterans	7,686	1.2%	Civilian population 25 years and over	612,346	
SEX			Less than high school graduate	32,038	5.2%
Male	570,787	91.8%	High school graduate (includes equivalency)	225,276	36.8%
Female	51,103	8.2%	Some college or associate's degree	214,987	35.1%
AGE			Bachelor's degree or higher	140,045	22.9%
18 to 34 years	44,513	7.2%	EMPLOYMENT STATUS		
35 to 54 years	137,139	22.1%	Civilian population 18 to 64 years	303,862	
55 to 64 years	122,210	19.7%	Labor force participation rate		77.6%
65 to 74 years	169,366	27.2%	Civilian labor force 18 to 64 years	235,937	
75 years and over	148,662	23.9%	Unemployment rate		4.7%
RACE AND HISPANIC OR LATINO ORIGIN			POVERTY STATUS IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS		
White alone	523,601	84.2%	Civilian population 18 years and over for whom poverty status is determined	609,609	
Black or African American alone	63,869	10.3%	Income in the past 12 months below poverty level	48,571	8.0%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	1,400	0.2%	Income in the past 12 months at or above poverty level	561,038	92.0%
Asian alone	3,301	0.5%	DISABILITY STATUS		
Some other race alone	5,600	0.9%	Civilian population 18 years and over for whom poverty status is determined	609,609	
Two or more races	23,540	3.8%	With any disability	185,166	30.4%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	12,113	1.9%	Without a disability	424,443	69.6%

Source: American Community Survey, 2021, US Census Bureau

Low-Income Individuals. As shown in **Figure 13. Ohio Household Income in the Past 12 Months (2021 Inflation-Adjusted Dollars)**, 10.9 percent of households earned less than $15,000 in annual income. Of these, more than half (6.6 percent) earned less than $10,000.

Figure 13. Ohio Household Income in the Past 12 Months (2021 Inflation-Adjusted Dollars)

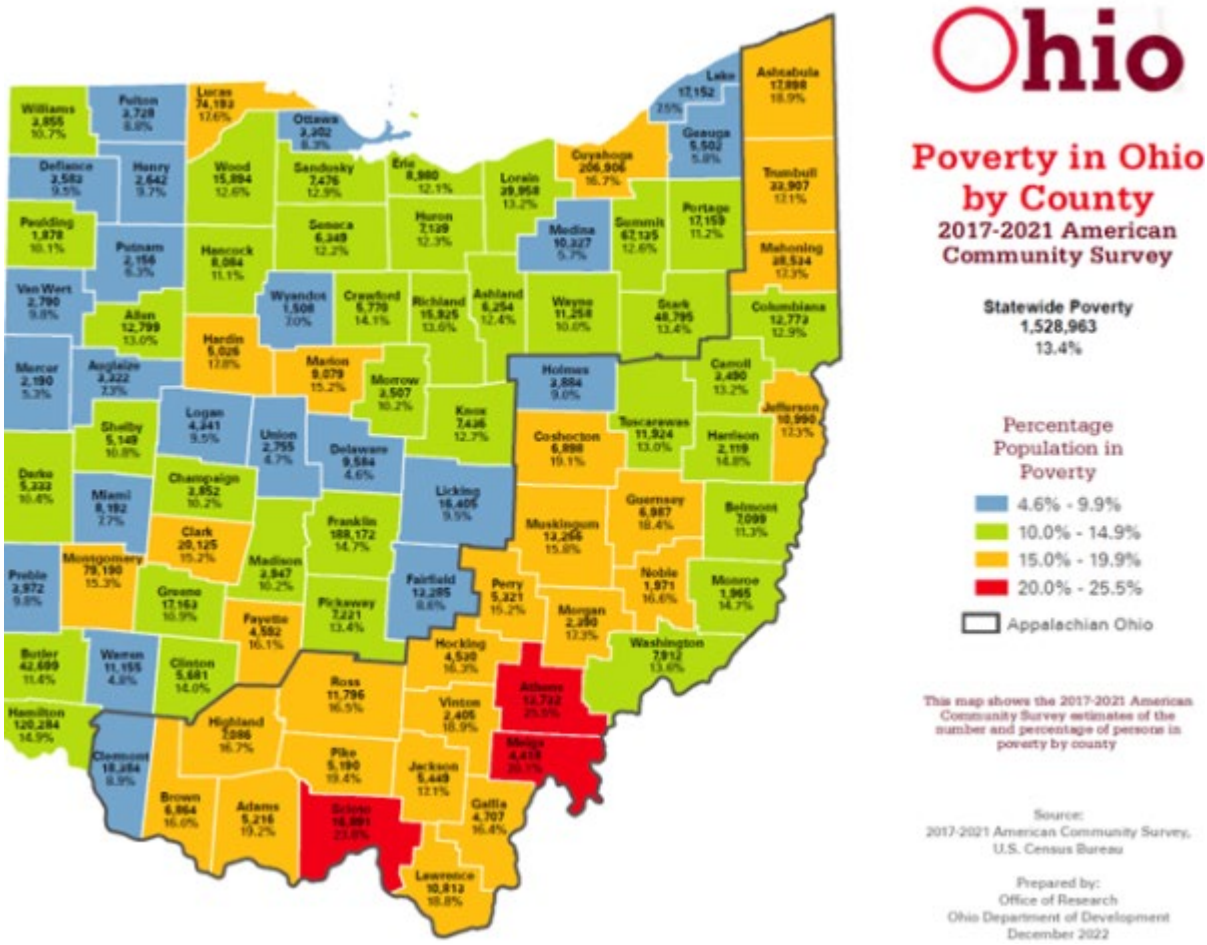
INCOME IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS (IN 2021 INFLATION-ADJUSTED DOLLARS)				
	Households	Families	Married-couple families	Nonfamily households
Label	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate
Total	4,832,922	2,986,455	2,162,168	1,846,467
Less than $10,000	6.6%	4.0%	1.4%	11.8%
$10,000 to $14,999	4.3%	2.3%	0.9%	7.8%
$15,000 to $24,999	8.3%	4.9%	2.4%	14.4%
$25,000 to $34,999	8.7%	6.2%	4.0%	13.1%
$35,000 to $49,999	12.8%	10.9%	8.6%	16.1%
$50,000 to $74,999	17.9%	17.8%	17.4%	17.8%
$75,000 to $99,999	13.2%	15.7%	17.2%	8.5%
$100,000 to $149,999	15.4%	20.2%	24.9%	6.7%
$150,000 to $199,999	6.4%	8.9%	11.4%	1.9%
$200,000 or more	6.5%	9.2%	12.0%	1.8%
Median income (dollars)	$62,262	$80,760	$97,373	$37,034
Mean income (dollars)	$84,572	$103,110	$121,275	$51,276

Source: American Community Survey, 2019, US Census Bureau

Additionally, as depicted in **Figure 14. Poverty in Ohio by County**, there are very high levels of poverty found in Appalachian Ohio. Most counties in this region have poverty levels between 15 to 19.9 percent and 3 possess rates between 20.0 to 25.5 percent.

Because low-income individuals may have significant transportation and/or childcare issues that make it difficult to travel on-site to an OhioMeansJobs Center, education institution, or training facility, Ohio will develop alternative means for access, such as using the existing electronic OhioMeansJobs.com portal and expanding the use of library locations.

Figure 14. Poverty in Ohio by County



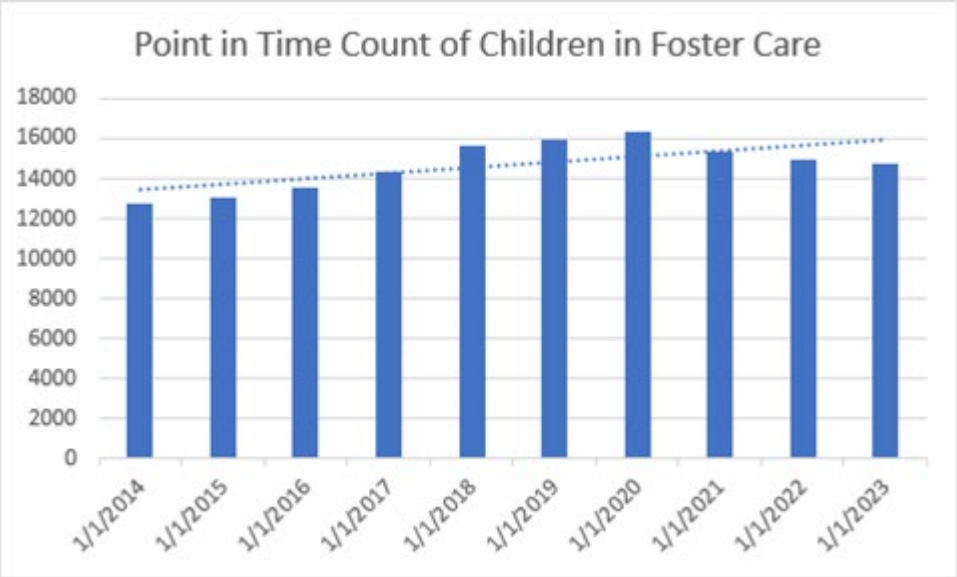
Source: American Community Survey, 2012-2016, US Census Bureau

Ex-Offenders and Justice-Involved Persons. The State is working to ensure that justice-involved persons have access to education and job training before they are released, preparing them for employment upon return to their communities. Ohio offers career-technical programs in its youth and adult prisons and has implemented a Reentry Employment program.

Youth in Foster Care. As shown in **Figure 15. Number of Ohio Children in Foster Care,** the number of children living away from their homes has decreased by nearly 1,200 over the last five years. All in all, nearly 15,000 are living away from their homes because their parents are not able to care for them safely. Many young adults "age-out" of foster care each year without permanent home connections and are at higher risk than their peers of dropping out of high school, becoming a pregnant or parenting youth, not participating in postsecondary education,

falling into poverty, and/or becoming unemployed or homeless. Ohio's innovative Bridges program aims to mitigate these risks by allowing young adults who age out of care to request supports toward independence any time up until their 21st birthday, promoting education and encouraging young adults to pursue life-long careers.

Figure 15. Number of Ohio Children in Foster Care

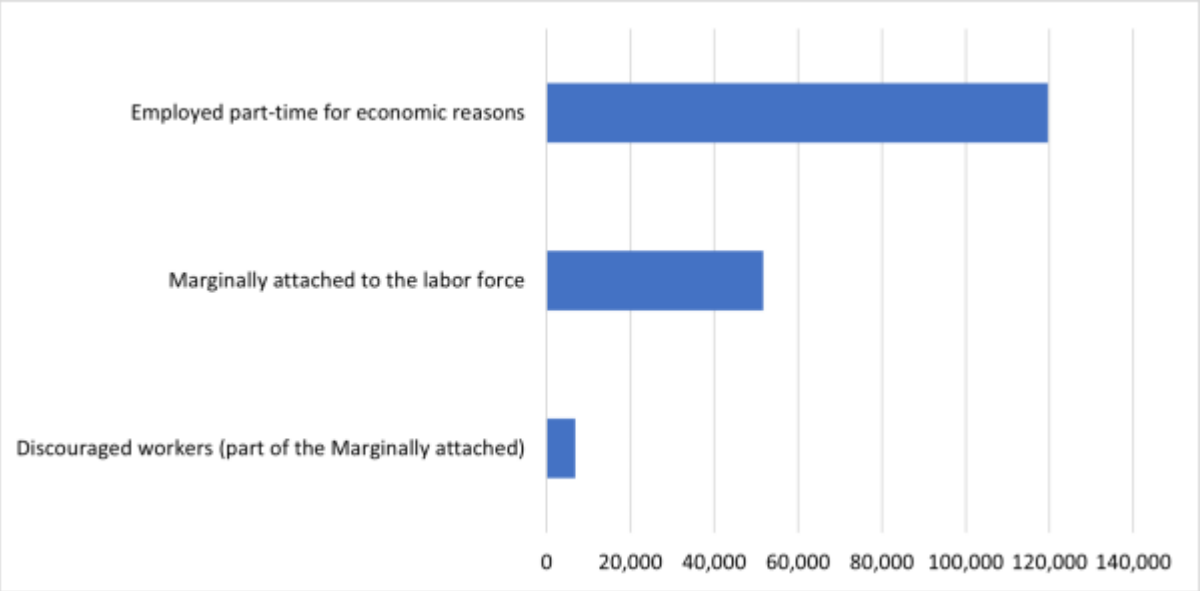


Source: ODJFS Data Dashboard

Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers. Ohio is increasing its outreach efforts to expand our reach into the agricultural community in the state. Adding 2 full-time and 3-intermittent staff (during peak season) Ohio will be able to increase contact with the migrant and seasonal farm worker community by visiting more farm labor camps as well as areas with higher concentration of migrant workers. Attention has been paid to the geographical location of staff headquarters to further aid in the accessibility and ease in assisting the agricultural community. By having increased outreach activity further attention can be paid to the individual and familial needs of the migrant and seasonal workers. Historically workers have barriers to other employment due to lack of education and difficulty speaking English. As discussed in the response to (c) State Strategy, the Ohio Migrant Education Center supports local education agencies in developing supplemental instruction and supportive services to help youth stay in high school and achieve a diploma or equivalent as well as master English as a Second Language.

Under-Employed Individuals. As shown in **Figure 16. Numbers of Selected Underutilized Workers, Ohio 2022 Annual Averages,** there were approximately 171,300 under-employed individuals in the State in 2022. This population included 119,600 who were employed part-time for economic reasons, such as slack work or business conditions, or because they were unable to find a full-time job. It also included another 51,700 who were considered to be marginally attached to the labor force (i.e., those who indicated that they would like to work, were available to work, and had looked for work at some time during the past 12 months). The State's use of tools such as virtual services, TechCred, and experiential learning willprovide these individuals with opportunities to earn industry-recognized credentials and improve their Occupational skills for career advancement.

Figure 16. Numbers of Selected Underutilized Workers, Ohio 2022 Annual Averages



Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020

Long-Term Unemployed Individuals. Ohio's long-term unemployment rate has decreased significantly in the past few years. However, pockets of high unemployment remain, especially within the Appalachian Region. To help individuals return to work more quickly, the State has implemented Active Re-Employment Engagement processes.

Persons Impacted by Substance Misuse. Many Ohioans are struggling with substance misuse issues that impact their ability to find work or keep a job. **Figure 17. Narcotic Seizures by the Ohio State Highway Patrol 2018-2022** shows an increase in confiscation of methamphetamine, heroin, fentanyl, cocaine, and illegal prescription stimulants. Substance misuse and overdose deaths have become one of the most pressing workforce challenges facing Ohio. In addition to the devastation that occurs at the personal level, it impacts businesses in the form of absenteeism, decreased productivity, and worker shortages. Ohio has implemented a number of workforce initiatives to help persons impacted by substance misuse.

Figure 17. Narcotic Seizures by the Ohio State Highway Patrol 2018-2022

Marijuana		4,791	2,946	6,160	6,682	7,853	+1,171	+18%	28,432	5,686
Methamphetamine		410	120	229	558	370	-188	-34%	1,688	338
Heroin		213	172	38	69	8.7	-60	-87%	502	100
Fentanyl		188	91	127	154	400	+246	+160%	959	192
Cocaine		569	337	280	427	577	+150	+35%	2,191	438
Crack		4.4	2.7	1.9	5.9	1.9	-4.0	-67%	17	3.4
Prescription Pills	Opiates	25,609	18,508	19,294	15,769	17,278	+1,509	+10%	96,457	19,291
	Stimulants	3,712	2,546	5,169	3,513	1,836	-1,677	-48%	16,776	3,355
	Depressants	8,350	4,964	10,043	14,087	3,786	-10,301	-73%	41,230	8,246
	Hallucinogens	432	1,581	694	1,121	811	-311	-28%	4,638	928
	Other Pills	8,622	8,564	12,503	43,621	4,598	-39,024	-89%	77,908	15,582

Source: OSHIP Case Management System; SAU Pill Seizure Database. Data is provisional as of 10/23/2023. All narcotic weights are in pounds, except for prescription pills (dosage units). "Other Pills" includes all other scheduled and non-scheduled prescription as well as over-the-counter pills.

Source: Ohio State Highway Patrol, Office of Planning and Finance-Statistical Analysis Unit

ii. Labor Market Trends. Provide an analysis of key labor market trends, including across existing industries and occupations.

With respect to current labor market trends, as shown in **Figure 18. Industry Employment**, total nonagricultural employment increased by 312,500 jobs (+5.9%) from December 2020 to June 2023, largely because of the recovery from the pandemic. Leisure and Hospitality saw an increase of 107,600 jobs (+22.9%) over the period. Manufacturing employment increased by 30,000 (+4.5%).

Figure 18. Industry Employment, December 2020 to June 2023

	Dec-20	Jun-23 (p)	Actual Change	% Change
Total Nonfarm	5,310,000	5,622,500	312,500	5.9%
Total Private	4,561,500	4,849,700	288,200	6.3%
SECTORS				
Mining and Logging	8,700	9,500	800	9.2%
Construction	221,800	240,400	18,600	8.4%
Manufacturing	659,900	689,900	30,000	4.5%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	1,019,000	1,055,400	36,400	3.6%
Information	65,000	67,400	2,400	3.7%
Financial Activities	305,800	319,100	13,300	4.3%
Professional and Business Services	711,600	737,200	25,600	3.6%
Private Education and Health Services	904,400	936,200	31,800	3.5%
Leisure and Hospitality	469,300	576,900	107,600	22.9%
Other Services	196,000	217,700	21,700	11.1%
Government	748,500	772,800	24,300	3.2%

Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics

Additionally, data contained in online job advertisements on OhioMeansJobs.com also provides information regarding key labor market trends, including useful insights into the worker knowledge, skills, and abilities required by employers.

Figure 19. Online Job–Postings by Education Level (January - October 2023) shows that 40.9 percent (232,507 out of 568,850) of recent job listings include a requirement for at least a high school diploma, 14.2 percent (80,910 out of 568,850), require an Associate Level education, and 38.4 percent (218,369 out of 568,850) require a bachelor's degree.

Figure 19. Online Job Postings by Education Level (January – October 2023)

Education Level	Ads
GED/High School	232,507

Education Level	Ads
Associate Level	80,910
Bachelor's Degree	218,369
Master's Degree	15,899
Doctoral Degree	17,910
Missing Education Requirements	3,255
Total	568,850

Source: OhioMeansJobs.com

Figure 20. Top 10 Job Skills Listed in Online Job Postings (January - October 2023) shows the skills most requested by employers in recent job advertisements. The top three skills advertised for this timeframe include Scheduling, Supervision, and Customer Service.

Skills	Ads
Scheduling	177,545
Supervision	134,658
Customer service	133,838
Operations	130,504
Nursing	61,051
Microsoft Office	59,485
Teaching	50,029
Computer usage (basic)	49,657
Mathematics	47,231
Project management	43,035

Source: OhioMeansJobs.com

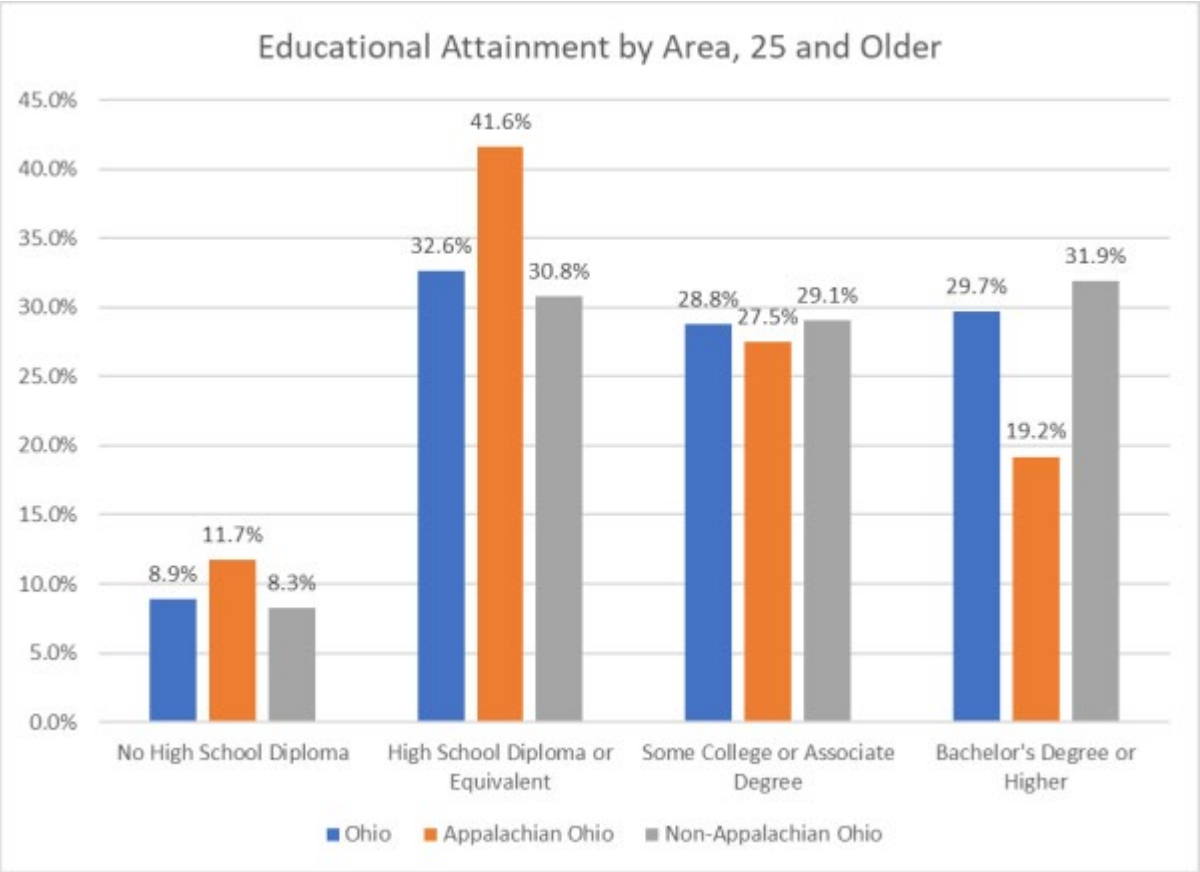
iii. Education and Skill Levels of the Workforce. Provide an analysis of the educational and skill levels of the workforce.

As shown in **Figure 21. Labor force Educational Distribution by Area,** 91.1 percent of Ohioans 25 and older have a high school diploma or equivalent. Of these, 28.8 percent have some college or associate degree, and 29.7 percent possess a bachelor's degree or higher.

However, when further analyzing education levels, a disparity is found in the Appalachian Region. The high school dropout rate for individuals living in the Appalachian Region is 3.4 percentage points higher than those living in the non-Appalachian Region (11.7 percent as compared to 8.3 percent). This difference is further compounded at higher educational levels. Appalachian residents fall behind by 12.7 percentage points for persons who hold a bachelor's

degree or higher as compared to these same populations for rest of the State (19.2 percent as compared to 31.9 percent).

Figure 21. Labor Force Educational Distribution by Area



Source: U.S. Census American Community Survey 5-year data, 2017-2021

As shown above in **Figure 21. Labor force Educational Distribution by Area,** 8.9 percent of Ohio's labor force have not graduated from high school, 32.6 percent have only a high school diploma or equivalent, and 58.5 percent have some form of postsecondary education.

C. COMPARISON OF ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE ANALYTICAL CONCLUSION. DESCRIBE AREAS OF OPPORTUNITY FOR MEETING HIRING, EDUCATION, AND SKILLS NEEDS IDENTIFIED IN THE ECONOMY COMPARED TO THE ASSETS AVAILABLE IN THE LABOR FORCE IN THE STATE.

The State of Ohio has a population of 11.7 million, the 7th largest in the country. It has the 10th largest highway network and is centrally located within a day's drive of 50 percent of North America's population. Major metropolitan areas of Columbus, Cleveland, Cincinnati, and Toledo are strategically situated in the central, northeast, southwest, and northwest areas of the state. Ohio's Appalachian region includes 32 counties that sweep along the Ohio River, across the southern and southeastern portions of the State, up into the Mahoning Valley.

Ohio is home to many historically strong industries, such as banking and insurance, plastics and rubber manufacturing, research and development, automotive assembly, steel production, and traditional agriculture. Industry is also expanding to include new and developing sectors,

including advanced manufacturing, technology, bioscience, green energy, information, and food processing.

Ohio is quickly building a strong domestic electrification industry, and recent investments in the state, topping nearly $10 billion, signal Ohio's rise as a global hub of EV innovation and manufacturing. The Honda and LG Energy Solution battery plant in Fayette County alone is expected to create 2,200 new jobs. Ford's new EV manufacturing plant in Lorain County is expected to create an additional 1,800 jobs, and SEMCORP's new separator film facility, producing a key component in lithium-ion batteries, another 1,200 jobs, to name a few examples. Through these investments, combined with pending federal funding and bespoke demand models, it's estimated that roughly 25,400 new jobs will be created in Ohio by 2030 from EV, battery, EVSE manufacturing, EV maintenance, and EVSE installation and operations. OWT has released a state EV Workforce Strategy to directly address this need.

The State of Ohio has also been catalyzing developments in its broadband and 5G infrastructure, pursuing an aggressive expansion strategy supplemented by substantial investment. Over $1 billion has been secured, combining both state and federal funding, to drive forward this critical network augmentation for the future of connectivity in Ohio. A significant portion of funding comes from the Broadband Equity Access and Deployment ("BEAD") program which accounts for $793 million of the overall investment. This injection of capital is earmarked to solve enduring connectivity issues, extend the reach of high-speed, wireless communications technologies to underserved rural areas, and improve the quality of life and economic prospects of Ohio's residents. Moreover, it will further propel Ohio's digital transformation journey, reinforcing the state's status as an influential digital hub thereby attracting innovative industries and creating numerous employment opportunities within the technology sector. These investments are projected to generate 2,500 direct construction jobs related to the expansion of broadband. Additionally, 5G in Ohio is expected to create approximately 107,000 new jobs in the state, with approximately 26,000 of these jobs directly tied to the network deployment of 5G. In combination, these factors should facilitate economic stability and ensure a brighter outlook for Ohioans through increased employment opportunities and the cultivation of an innovative and technology-driven workforce. OWT has released a nationally-recognized Broadband Workforce Strategy to ensure a trained workforce as these investments are being made into the future.

2. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, EDUCATION AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES ANALYSIS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the workforce development activities, including education and training in the State, to address the education and skill needs of the workforce, as identified in (a)(1)(B)(iii) above, and the employment needs of employers, as identified in (a)(1)(A)(iii) above. This must include an analysis of—

A. THE STATE'S WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Provide an analysis of the State's workforce development activities, including education and training activities of the core programs, Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan, and required [6] and optional one-stop delivery system partners.[7]

[6] Required one-stop partners: In addition to the core programs, the following partner programs are required to provide access through the one-stops: Career and Technical Education

(Perkins), Community Services Block Grant, Indian and Native American programs, HUD Employment and Training programs, Job Corps, Local Veterans' Employment Representatives and Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program, National Farmworker Jobs program, Senior Community Service Employment program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) (unless the Governor determines TANF will not be a required partner), Trade Adjustment Assistance programs, Unemployment Compensation programs, and YouthBuild.

[7] Workforce development activities may include a wide variety of programs and partners, including educational institutions, faith- and community-based organizations, and human services.

B. THE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Provide an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the workforce development activities identified in (A), directly above.

C. STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY

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

A.

Ohio emphasizes coordination among its many workforce development services, including the education and training programs delivered by the core and partner programs:

- It requires all customers of Title I employment and training services, Aspire (the name for Adult Education and Literacy in Ohio), Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act programs, Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) programs, State-administered Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) activities, and Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants to register on OhioMeansJobs.com.
- It encourages the co-design and development of priority workforce programs between State agencies and with input from key business, education, and workforce stakeholders.
- It allows and promotes co-enrollment among the partner programs.
- It includes a career readiness certification as part of its high school graduation requirements.
- It promotes a common counseling approach for its workforce and education partners, including K-12 and postsecondary education.
- It utilizes a combination of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funding to create the Comprehensive Case Management and Employment Program (CCMEP) for youth.
- It has 22 certified comprehensive OhioMeansJobs Centers located throughout the State which include mandated and optional workforce, education, employment, and training partners.
- It encourages the Local Workforce Boards to create and adopt MOUs with non-mandated organizations in addition to the required partners.

- It uses OhioMeansJobs.com to provide job matching activities, career exploration, assessments, alternative high school testing, training coursework, and information about in-demand occupations, career pathways, and training centers.

B.

The strengths and weaknesses of the aforementioned workforce development activities are as follows:

- Registration of all customers on OhioMeansJobs.com creates greater efficiency and consolidated access.
- The co-design and development of priority workforce programs enables the State to better serve individuals and businesses in a consistent and complementary manner.
- Although the State of Ohio is constantly working toward better collaboration, the number of workforce-related programs and agencies presents its own set of challenges. Ohio is working to establish better, more regular communication and planning across state agencies. The objective is to prevent further fragmentation of workforce development activities and make informed decisions about programs, priorities, and funding.
- Co-enrollment between the partner programs promotes a no-wrong door approach and enables customers to move more quickly from service to service.
- Ohio has 20 workforce areas of varying sizes. The benefit of this approach is that it allows areas to tailor services based on the needs of the communities they serve. The challenge with this approach is that customers may experience inconsistencies in workforce programming and quality of services depending on where they received the services.
- The career readiness certification as part of its high school graduation requirements creates a pipeline of young adults that are better prepared to contribute to the workplace and their communities.
- The Ohio workforce areas developed over the years in a way that did not maintain a consistent regional or industry-based strategy or even at times regional contiguity.
- The common counseling approach for its workforce and education partners helps customers transition to higher levels of training and credentials and promotes life-long learning for long-term career pathways.
- CCMEP expands and enhances employment and training opportunities for low-income youth at the local level.
- The comprehensive OhioMeansJobs Centers and affiliate centers offer a broad array of on-site services for jobseeker and business customers from the core and partner programs.
- The locally driven MOUs promote the inclusion of ancillary and holistic services that target specific workforce needs.

- OhioMeansJobs.com provides a robust array of online services that go well beyond traditional employment and training activities.
- Ohio has received feedback from students, job seekers, and other customers that OhioMeansJobs.com is difficult to navigate. To address this challenge, Ohio has redesigned the website and continues to make updates to address user feedback. Initial updates have included a redesigned, more accessible OhioMeansJobs.com website for Ohio jobseekers and employers. The redesign has made it much easier to register for an account, navigate job opportunities, and apply for positions on mobile devices, all driven by user feedback and upgraded technology tools

Ohio has a network of approximately 200 different workforce programs that are spread across 18 state partners. To promote consistency between services and to determine a uniform methodology to evaluate performance outcomes, the State is implementing this Combined State Plan that includes a common vision, goals, and strategies across its core workforce programs.

C.

Ohio has approximately 200 education, employment, and training programs, including adult basic education; career centers; two-year and four-year colleges and universities; local workforce boards and OhioMeansJobs Centers; employer training programs; economic development organizations; and community-based organizations. For the purposes of this Combined State Plan, the primary workforce development programs are organized as indicated below:

- ODA administers the SCSEP.
- ODHE administers Postsecondary, Adult Career-Technical Education Carl Perkins Act, Aspire, and the Foster Youth Scholarship Fund.
- ODOD administers the TechCred program, Industry Sector Partnerships Grant program, the Ohio Export Internship Program, and the Diversity and Inclusion Internship Program.
- OOD administers VR services.
- ODEW administers K-12 education and Career-Technical Education (Carl D. Perkins Act).
- ODJFS administers the WIOA Title IB and Title III Wagner-Peyser Act (W-P), JVSG, UI, Apprenticeship, Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker (MSFW), Bureau of Labor Statistics Program, TANF, and CCMEP.
- The Local Workforce Development Boards oversee 22 comprehensive OhioMeansJobs Centers as well as 68 additional affiliate centers located throughout the state. Each of the comprehensive OhioMeansJobs Centers has been certified that it includes all mandated partner programs and services. The affiliate centers serve as additional locations for jobseeker and business customers to access services.

At the State and Local levels, the primary workforce programs work collaboratively and cooperatively to optimize service delivery. Under this Combined State Plan, they will build on this existing platform to further coordinate their efforts to continue to reduce unnecessary

duplication and maximize resources. The following section highlights some of the many workforce development activities. Customers entering the workforce system are provided comprehensive services and targeted referrals to other core partners through the OhioMeansJobs Centers.

Title I - Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Programs

ODJFS receives and administers Title I - Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth funds. These funds are passed through to 20 local workforce development boards (LWDBs) to provide direct case management services and to fund training and employment services and supports for eligible individuals who have barriers to employment. WIOA career services are provided, based on the needs of the customer and may consist of:

Screening and eligibility determination for WIOA programs;

- Referral to WIOA adult, dislocated worker and youth programs and services
- Referrals to programs and activities carried out by one-stop partners
- Coaching on labor market trends and career exploration activities
- Individualized career counseling and planning
- Development of an individual employment plan
- Access to group and individual work-search and job readiness workshops and information;
- Screening participants for work-based learning opportunities;
- Comprehensive and specialized assessments;
- Short-term pre-vocational services and other workforce preparation activities;
- English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs;
- Supportive services that help remove barriers to employment; and
- Training services

Services coordinated and presented to businesses by the LWDBs are intended to be customized and based on the express needs of business, instead of being agency siloed or menu-driven. Business services include:

- Job postings, and assistance writing job descriptions,
- Applicant screening and referral of qualified applicants,
- Provision of labor law and hiring practices information,
- Coordinating and recruiting for hiring events and job fairs, providing a work-space for hiring events,
- Classroom training,
- Work-based learning opportunities to train incumbent and future workers,

- Sharing workforce intelligence with businesses for more informed decision making (ie,hiring trends, talent pool development, competitive wages and benefits, etc…)
- Coordination with businesses on alignment of sector strategies, critical occupations, skill gaps, and in-demand occupations and
- Coordination of programs and services with partner agencies and community resources

Comprehensive Case Management & Employment Program (CCMEP)

The Comprehensive Case Management & Employment Program (CCMEP) helps 14- to 24-year-olds who are low income or have barriers to employment build career paths, find employment, and break the cycle of poverty. CCMEP braids funding from WIOA Youth and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) programs to provide a wide range of employment, training, and support services tailored to each participant's needs. Most recipients of cash public assistance within the target age range are required to participate in CCMEP while other eligible youth may volunteer for the program.

Participants spend about 20 hours per week in activities designed to help them attain employment in their chosen career, increase earnings, and/or obtain a credential. After achieving these goals, they continue to receive follow-up services including leadership training, help with work-related problems, mentoring, and peer support. CCMEP is implemented by a lead agency selected by the Board of Commissioners in each county: either the LWDB or County Department of Job and Family Services (CDJFS).

Title II - Adult Education and Family Literacy Program (Aspire)

Ohio's Aspire program is administered through ODHE and provide services for individuals who need assistance acquiring the skills to be successful in post-secondary education and training and employment. Local programs offer classes at flexible locations and times to meet the diverse needs of adult learners. All students are required to attend orientation, where an assessment is given to help determine the individual's educational plan and goals. Services available at programs throughout all 88 Ohio counties include:

- Basic math, reading and writing skills
- Adult Secondary Education/High School Equivalence preparation
- English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)
- Transition services – helping students develop essential skills for employment and post-secondary
- Life skills, employability skills and computer literacy
- Workplace Education – education services offered in collaboration with an employer to increase the productivity of the workforce
- Corrections Education – a partnership with a jail, detention center, community-based rehabilitation center or other similar institution
- Distance Education - enhancing learning using technology

All Aspire programs who have a grant or a combination of grants for sections 231, 225, or 243 are required to offer workforce preparation activities. Programs must prepare adult learners and support them in achieving successful transition to postsecondary education and training or employment. The 7th grant obligation states that Aspire grantees will have an alignment between their proposed services and the local WDB plan. Information was outlined in the grant guidance document which is available for public access at Aspire Grants | The Ohio Department of Higher Education.

Workforce preparation activities as defined to Aspire programs and outlined in grant guidance are programs or services designed to help an individual acquire a combination of basic academic skills, critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills, and self-management skills, including competencies in utilizing resources, using information, working with others, understanding systems, and obtaining skills necessary for successful transition into and completion of postsecondary education or training, or employment. The state Aspire office and our Professional Development Network team have supported the Teaching Skills that Matter initiative which includes a workforce preparation component. Lesson plans and activities are available in the LINCS Toolkit to support all Aspire programs in successfully integrating workforce preparation into all their classes for ABE, ESOL, Corrections, and IELCE adult learners. Optional program components include offering an Integrated Education and Training program (IET) which is designed to provide adult education and literacy, workforce preparation, and workforce training activities. IETs are created to address workforce needs in specific regions and provide students the opportunity to start a career pathway, with the potential to earn a credential/certificate or enter the workforce upon completion of the IET. Another optional activity under the grant is to offer Workplace Education. An Aspire provider may offer adult education and literacy activities in collaboration with an employer at a workplace location designed to improve the productivity of the workforce. Professional Development (PD) activities are also provided to Aspire programs guiding practitioners to contextualize curriculum to support transitions services and to support students entrance into the workforce.

Professional Development activities continue to increase to support capacity to carryout workforce preparation activities throughout the local providers. The State Aspire office has shown support to the Connecting Adults to Success: Evaluation of Career Navigator Training which is being sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education. The study looks to examine whether training for career navigators increases adult learners' further education, employment, and earnings. Multiple Aspire programs are in final conversations with the study team to move forward. We believe participation in this activity will increase quality professional development activities to career navigators to help strengthen programs alignment to supporting learners' career goals. Career navigator PD is a new piece that we have not formally offered. A continued conversation that comes up is that many of our adult learners have unique learning needs, and many of our students do not have an employment goal. Aspire needs to focus on programming that continues to contextualize English and civics instruction and individualized career exploration and skill development to support all learners.

Title III - Wagner-Peyser

ODJFS receives and administers Wagner-Peyser, or Employment Services. This program provides job-related labor exchange services including assistance with job searches, referrals to

open positions, and filling of job openings for employers seeking talent. Unemployment insurance claimants receive re-employment assistance to reduce the duration of their benefits. 90 percent of the grant is spent on services for universal customers and 10 percent must be used for special populations.

State merit staff in the local OhioMeansJobs centers funded with Wagner-Peyser 90% dollars provide universal access to the array of labor exchange services for workers, job seekers, and businesses under minimal eligibility requirements. Services may be delivered in three modes: self-service, facilitated self-help, and staff assisted.

Services for job seekers include job placement, resume preparation, testing, job-seeking skills workshops, computer-based job matching, and labor market information.

Services for employers include referral of applicants to available job openings, assistance in developing job order requirements, help with special recruitment needs and hard-to-fill job orders, arranging for Job Fairs, and assistance with restructuring and layoffs.

The Wagner-Peyser Act sets aside 10 percent of the state grant for services to groups with special needs, performance incentives, or exemplary models of service delivery. In Ohio, the funds are used to expand services for job seekers with barriers to employment, particularly migrant and seasonal farmworkers (MSFW) and military veterans.

Under this funding, ODJFS employs a unit of bilingual outreach staff (three full-time and one intermittent) to help migrant workers from across the United States connect to employment and housing in Ohio, ensuring that growers have the workers they need to harvest their produce on time. Also, Wagner-Peyser 10 percent funds enable additional services for military veterans transitioning into civilian employment, particularly those who do not have significant barriers to require assistance from the Jobs for Veterans State Grant, but who still need some support to re-enter the civilian labor force.

Title IV - Vocational Rehabilitation

OOD administers the Vocational Rehabilitation program. The Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation (BVR) provides individuals with disabilities services and supports necessary to help them attain and maintain employment. Disabilities may include physical, intellectual, mental health, or sensory disabilities. Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services are customized for each individual through assessments and one-on-one meetings with professional VR Counselors. VR services are available in all 88 counties and include:

- Evaluation and treatment of an individual's disability;
- Information and referral services;
- Vocational counseling and training;
- Job search and job placement assistance;
- Educational guidance (tuition resources and other support);
- Transportation services;
- Occupational tools and equipment;

- Personal attendant services (reader, interpreter, etc.).

The Bureau of Services for the Visually Impaired (BSVI) assists eligible people, beginning at age 14, with low vision and blindness by providing direct, personalized services to assist them in finding and retaining meaningful work and personal independence. Basic services include:

- Personal and work adjustment training,
- Vocational training,
- Mental and physical restoration, and
- Placement assistance.

OOD also administers the State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, which delivers workforce development services to individuals with disabilities throughout Ohio, including education and training services. OOD has the capacity to serve individuals in all 88 counties of Ohio and is currently operating without a waiting list. Services to both students and adults with disabilities are provided both in-person and remotely, depending upon the disability-related needs and the preference of the individual being served. OOD maintains a strong presence at OhioMeansJobs Centers throughout Ohio (currently in 78 counties) to promote collaboration with workforce partners and co-enrollment across workforce programs. Improving the tracking of individuals co-enrolled in other workforce programs continues to be a goal for OOD. In addition to providing vocational rehabilitation services to approximately 29,000 students and adults with disabilities annually, OOD's Business Relations Team develops strategic partnerships with more than 700 employer partners to help address their hiring needs and achieve their disability inclusion goals.

Other Combined State Plan Partners:

Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG)

ODJFS receives federal formula funding to administer the Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG) program. Funds are used to hire staff to provide individualized career and training – related services to veterans and eligible persons with significant barriers to employment and to assist employers fill their workforce needs with job-seeking veterans. The JVSG program supports the Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist position. DVOP specialists provide individualized career services to veterans with significant barriers to employment, with the maximum emphasis directed toward serving veterans who are economically or educationally disadvantaged. Veterans with barriers include homeless veterans and vocational rehabilitation clients.

The Ohio JVSG employment and training program currently funds 61 Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialists who provide an array of Individualized Career Services to alleviate unemployment or underemployment of economically, or educationally disadvantaged military veterans and eligible spouses with significant barriers to employment (SBE). Ohio's JVSG program's innovative approach to solely fund DVOP staff has enabled Ohio to serve veterans more effectively, with higher levels of DVOP staff. The Ohio JVSG program DVOP Specialists currently have the capacity and serve JVSG eligible customers in all 88 OhioMeansJobs Centers through a combination of in-person and remote employment and training services. The Ohio JVSG program continually reevaluates and adjusts optimal staff alignment and its resource

distribution methodology across the state based on U.S. Census data. Considerations are given to veteran job seeker populations and veteran unemployment rates. DVOPs work collaboratively with partners across workforce programs through integration of a veteran questionnaire referral form and co-enrollment. This collaboration helps determine the best course of action to overcome identified barriers to employment and to work with veterans in creating individualized opportunity development plans (IOP). This process is designed to enhance the partnership between veteran program staff and OhioMeansJobs Center partners. The DVOP program has also formed external federal partner program referral partnerships with programs such as the Homeless Veteran Reintegration Program (HVRP) and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA)Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment (VR&E) program to serve veterans within these programs.

Consistent JVSG program knowledge among local center intake staff continues to be a challenge across the workforce system due to high turnover rates. The Ohio JVSG program continues to provide/reinforce routine training to these intake teams to overcome knowledge gaps when turnover of local center intake staff occurs. Local areas have been encouraged to include DVOP Specialists in OhioMeansJobs Center workgroups and organizational teams to reinforce knowledge and local veteran processes. Local workforce area directors are also trained to increase familiarity with program and priority of service requirements and reinforce center veteran integration strategies. Another challenge, is the improved U.S. economic climate coupled with low veteran unemployment rates, resulting in a lower number of veterans visiting OhioMeansJobs centers. This in turn, has resulted in lower DVOP caseloads. DVOPs have increased outreach efforts directly to veterans to help increase both center traffic and customers to be served by DVOPs.

The Ohio JVSG program does not fund Local Veteran Employment Representative (LVER) staff which advocate on behalf of all veterans to employers and provide employer services. In lieu of LVERs, DVOPs leverage and work closely with Workforce Specialist staff integrated within local business service teams across all parts of Ohio to match veterans with employers. These Business service teams are trained to advocate on behalf of all job seekers to include veterans. Additionally, Ohio's business service teams, workforce specialists, and apprenticeship service providers have been tasked to promote the U.S. DOL HIRE Vets Medallion Program to employers. Outreach is conducted on social media to create awareness of Ohio veteran employment and training programs, employment related articles, events, and Ohio veteran resources to the military veteran community and veterans alike. We have enabled veteran's resumes appear first in business services team or employer resume search queries on OhioMeansJobs.com. Business service teams give priority of service to veterans when performing resume searches. Lastly, the Ohio JVSG program continues to partner with external workforce system stakeholders in providing referrals to local business service teams and sharing of employer opportunities among DVOPs.

Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education

In Ohio, ODEW's Office of Career Technical Education (ODE) and ODHE's Office of College and Career Access and Success monitor the Perkins grant. These two agencies work collaboratively to ensure that local grant recipients receive the technical assistance needed for program implementation and improvement.

A primary focus of the Ohio Perkins V State Plan is improving access, enrollment, engagement and performance for all students, with an intentional focus on students in special populations and subgroups. To support the educational community in ensuring students have meaningful access and are engaged in high-quality career-technical education programs, the Ohio Department of Education, Office of Career-Technical Education has made ensuring an equitable education for each student a priority.

Perkins V Special Populations

- Students from economically disadvantaged families
- Students with disabilities
- Students preparing for nontraditional fields
- English learners
- Students experiencing homelessness
- Youth who are in, or have aged out of, the foster care system
- Youth with a parent in the armed forces and on active duty
- Single parents, including single pregnant women
- Out-of-workforce individuals

Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)

ODA administers the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) SCSEP provides on-the-job assignments with non-profit and government agencies. These assignments are half-time, minimum wage positions designed to provide training and skills acquisition to workers over 55 years of age with barriers to employment. In addition the program may provide other training in classrooms or other venues.

SCSEP provides community service and work-based training opportunities for eligible older adults, targeting both in-demand and critical jobs. SCSEP participants must be at least 55 years of age, unemployed, and have an annual household income of no more than 125% of the federal poverty level. Local Program Directors work with SCSEP participants to develop individual employment plans based on each participant's particular skills, experiences, and interests. SCSEP participants gain work experience in a variety of community service activities at non-profit and public facilities. SCSEP participants also gain skills needed to move into unsubsidized employment. SCSEP recently began offering a digital inclusion program to teach participants skills to navigate the electronic and remote workplace opportunities we are seeing as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

SCSEP is pursuing new avenues to expand enrollment and to serve target priority populations. SCSEP is seeing success in enrolling incarcerated individuals, by partnering with Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections (ODRC). Three correctional facilities in Ohio provide job training and work opportunities to people who are within 6-12 months of release. Project Directors work with correctional facility staff to identify eligible individuals and provide a structured job training program. Participants receive a small stipend that they can use upon

release and to assist with any needs related to finding unsubsidized employment upon re-entry. Ohio SCSEP has also developed a unique program called Employer Pledge. This is an agreement with regional, state, and national employers to create hiring pipelines for some of these employers' routinely available positions, and SCSEP participants can be moved into unsubsidized employment with those employers quickly. SCSEP has had challenges related to receiving referrals from and co-enrolling participants from the Ohio Means Job Centers. We are committed to strengthening this relationship and increasing referrals and enrollments.

SCSEP is offered in all 88 Ohio counties and can serve over 1,400 participants each year.

B. STATE STRATEGIC VISION AND GOALS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include the State's strategic vision and goals for developing its workforce and meeting employer needs in order to support economic growth and economic self-sufficiency. This must include—

1. VISION

Describe the State's strategic vision for its workforce development system.

2. GOALS

Describe the goals for achieving this vision based on the analysis in (a) above of the State's economic conditions, workforce, and workforce development activities. This must include—

(A) Goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including preparing youth and individuals with barriers to employment[8] and other populations.[9]

(B) Goals for meeting the skilled workforce needs of employers.

[8] Individuals with barriers to employment include displaced homemakers; low-income individuals; Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians; individuals with disabilities, including youth who are individuals with disabilities; older individuals; ex-offenders; homeless individuals, or homeless children and youths; youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system; individuals who are English language learners, individuals who have low levels of literacy, and individuals facing substantial cultural barriers; eligible migrant and seasonal farmworkers (as defined at section 167(i) of WIOA and Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 35-14); individuals within 2 years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program; single parents (including single pregnant women); and long-term unemployed individuals.

[9] Veterans, unemployed workers, and youth and any other populations identified by the State.

3. PERFORMANCE GOALS

Using the tables provided within each Core Program section, include the State's expected levels of performance relating to the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance described in section 116(b)(2)(A) of WIOA. (This Strategic Planning element only applies to core programs.)

4. ASSESSMENT

Describe how the State will assess the overall effectiveness of the workforce development system in the State in relation to the strategic vision and goals stated above in sections (b)(1), (2), and (3) and how it will use the results of this assessment, which may include evaluation findings, and other feedback to make continuous or quality improvements.

1.Vision

Ohio's strategic vision for the State's workforce development system is "**an Ohio where business, training, and education are aligned to meet the needs of employers, individuals, and their communities."**

Each core and partner program has its own strategies that support and compliment the State's overall philosophy.

2. Goals

To support its strategic workforce vision, Ohio has identified the following four goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including youth and individuals with barriers to employment and other populations along with meeting the skilled workforce needs of employers.

Goal 1: Coordinate efforts across entities (public, private, local, and State) to reduce unnecessary duplication and maximize resources.

Goal 2: Leverage technology and data to create efficiencies and improve services and outcomes.

Goal 3: Deploy locally driven programs that produce results.

Goal 4: Invest in and promote education and training for jobs that

1. **empower people with 21st Century skills and strengthen Ohio's strategic economic advantage, and**
2. **ensure that our State has a workforce to support the health and well-being of Ohioans, their families, and communities.**

Specific strategies and action items for each of the goals are outlined in the **response to (c) State Strategy.**

3. Performance Goals

Ohio's performance goals are found under **Appendix 1**.

4. Assessment

Ohio is committed to developing an evidence-based workforce system. Evaluation and research projects on activities under the WIOA core programs first requires access to relevant data. Ohio has a considerable history in supporting State, Federal and external research and program evaluations through access to relevant data streams by way of information sharing agreements. Ohio has every intention of maintaining this approach. This capability has been enhanced through the Workforce Data Quality Initiative (WDQI) grant and the creation of the Ohio

Longitudinal Data Archive (OLDA) Partnership. The OLDA Partnership is a historical, cross-agency archive of administrative program data, with the specific objective of supporting policy analysis, research and program transparency (dashboards).

The OLDA Partnership has also led to coordination among State agencies in established priority research interests, as well as conducting specific research projects. This has included the OWD, ODJFS, ODEW, ODHE, and OOD. This can easily be extended under the WIOA umbrella by incorporating input and guidance from the Core State Programs, OWT, GEWB, and representatives from local and regional areas, particularly the Ohio Workforce Association.

In an effort to develop an evidenced-based workforce system, Ohio is looking forward to establishing evidenced-based strategies within the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) grant.

State partners have collaborated with one another on grant opportunities, specifically with the apprenticeship expansion grant. These collaborations have led to a joint effort to evaluate such programs as required by USDOL, requiring each entity to collect, analyze, and report data on the progress and effectiveness of the project.

Additionally, each core program uses their performance data to measure success or to identify areas of improvement for the implementation of the program.

Ohio will readily share research and evaluation pertinent to WIOA with Federal Departments of Labor and Education. Ohio will also continue to coordinate with Federal research interest, whether specific to grant required program evaluation studies or more broadly envisioned analysis or policy research.

C. STATE STRATEGY

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include the State's strategies to achieve its strategic vision and goals. These strategies must take into account the State's economic, workforce, and workforce development, education and training activities and analysis provided in Section (a) above. Include discussion of specific strategies to address the needs of populations provided in Section (a).

1. DESCRIBE THE STRATEGIES THE STATE WILL IMPLEMENT, INCLUDING INDUSTRY OR SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS RELATED TO IN-DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTORS AND OCCUPATIONS AND CAREER PATHWAYS, AS REQUIRED BY WIOA SECTION 101(D)(3)(B), (D). "CAREER PATHWAY" IS DEFINED AT WIOA SECTION 3(7) AND INCLUDES REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP. "IN-DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTOR OR OCCUPATION" IS DEFINED AT WIOA SECTION 3(23)

2. DESCRIBE THE STRATEGIES THE STATE WILL USE TO ALIGN THE CORE PROGRAMS, ANY COMBINED STATE PLAN PARTNER PROGRAMS INCLUDED IN THIS PLAN, REQUIRED AND OPTIONAL ONE-STOP PARTNER PROGRAMS, AND ANY OTHER RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO THE STATE TO ACHIEVE FULLY INTEGRATED CUSTOMER SERVICES CONSISTENT WITH THE STRATEGIC VISION AND GOALS DESCRIBED ABOVE. ALSO DESCRIBE STRATEGIES TO

STRENGTHEN WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES IN REGARD TO WEAKNESSES IDENTIFIED IN SECTION II(A)(2)

To support its strategic workforce vision and four goals, Ohio has developed the following strategies and action items for implementation or expansion. As shown, Goal 1 relates directly to the alignment of core program resources while Goals 2, 3, and 4 relate primarily to promoting in-demand occupations and career pathways.

Goal 1

Coordinate efforts across entities (public, private, local, and State) to reduce unnecessary duplication and maximize resources.

Strategy: Promote consistency across core programs

Action Items

Combined State Plan. Ohio's Combined State Plan includes the core programs of WIOA, W-P, JVSG, Aspire Adult Education and Literacy, Carl D. Perkins Act, VR programs, and SCSEP. This united approach will further support the State's efforts to promote consistency, reduce unnecessary duplication, and maximize resources.

In-Demand Jobs List. The State has created an In-Demand Jobs List that includes sectors and occupations with greater than average projected job openings or growth, along with median wages equal to or greater than 80 percent of Ohio's median wage. The list influences how Ohio invests in its education and training programs as well as its how it promotes career pathways to students within the K-12 system. The State will use the In-Demand Job List across all core programs to foster cross-agency workforce alignment, promote consistent training investments and curricula development, and encourage comparable career planning services. The list is updated every two years.

Critical Jobs List. The Critical Jobs List is informed by the expertise of outside partners as well as members of the Governor's cabinet, including the directors of the Governor's Children's Initiative and RecoveryOhio. It includes sectors and occupations that have been identified as crucial to the health and wellness of Ohioans. Included jobs must provide long-term career pathways. The Critical Jobs List is available on the TopJobs portal and is utilized across all core programs in a manner similar to the In-Demand Jobs List to further promote alignment of services and resources. The list will be updated in early 2024.

Inter-Agency Listing of Workforce Programs. For the second time in the DeWine-Husted Administration, OWT recently identified and inventoried all workforce-related programs across the State's cabinet agencies. The detailed register includes information about each program's name, population served, primary activities, lead agency, partners and stakeholders, funding levels and sources, and data tracking and reporting systems. The Inter-Agency Listing will help increase awareness about the various types of workforce services that are available throughout Ohio, further promoting consistency, cooperation, and collaboration among the core programs.

WIOA Regional Plans. The State has fully embraced the regional planning efforts allowed under WIOA. It has created 10 distinct regions that represent Ohio's unique labor markets. Each has created its own WIOA Regional Plan. These plans were updated in 2023 to reflect the most current demographics, needs, and strategies needed to navigate post COVID-19 pandemic

landscape. The State will continue to encourage the local workforce areas that comprise each of the regions to work collaboratively and actively identify how to streamline processes, provide consistent services, and eliminate duplicative efforts.

Goal 2

Leverage technology and data to create efficiencies and improve services and outcomes.

Strategy: Use technology effectively

Action Items

Improved Customer Experience. Ohio is committed to continuously improving services and outcomes for its customers. It secured multiple vendors to make critical changes to OhioMeansJobs.com. New features implemented in March 2021 included a redesigned user-friendly dashboard and connecting the Ohio Identification system known as OH|ID for ease of use to have 1 ID for all State-Owned website/applications. The redesign made unified the account creation process with other State-Owned sites and systems, improved organization of activities for State Program tied individuals such as those on Unemployment Insurance., driven by user feedback and Governor Executive Order.

Virtual Services. Ohio currently has a variety of virtual workforce services, including job-searching, upskilling, and career-pathing activities available on OhioMeansJobs.com. Additionally, the State is offering virtual classrooms and training programs for its Aspire Adult Education and Literacy program to increase its ability to reach customers with barriers that prevent them from fully participating in a traditional setting.

- Due to the increase in utilization of remote services, Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) has increasingly relied on technology, including assistive technology, to deliver services. OOD has invested in additional technology for program participants that is needed to participate in services, including Pre-Employment Transition Services. Due to the high satisfaction with remote services, it is anticipated that this will continue for the foreseeable future.

Workforce Supply Tool. Another mechanism that supports Ohio's strategy of using technology effectively is the Workforce Supply Tool. This tool provides businesses with information on students currently enrolled in high demand fields, as well as projections for individuals who currently possess skills and educational requirements in these occupations. Employers are able to obtain specific contact information for educational programs that train individuals in their particular sectors, and training providers are able to identify similar programs and better coordinate degree and certificate curricula.

Goal 3

Deploy locally driven programs that produce results.

Strategy 1: Identify local business needs

Action Items

Electric Vehicle Workforce. The EV workforce strategy will be deployed through a regional node infrastructure, based on the OMA's industry sector partnership (ISP) network, to capitalize

on existing local success in adjacent industries and to develop and expand solutions tailored to each region's unique workforce demand and supply profiles. This regionally led approach through the ISPs will allow programs to be tailored for local industry and workforce needs. These entities already maintain strong relationships with community partners, educational institutions, and other key players, while formalized governance structures will enable us to move quickly and capture the moment. ISPs will function as a key coordinator within the six regional nodes, mirroring the economic development regions of Ohio, and will be the core coordinator of industry, academic, and community partners.

Broadband and 5G Workforce. The Ohio Broadband and 5G Workforce Strategy also implemented six regional nodes across each JobsOhio region. Each node will comprise a 4-year institution serving as the fiscal lead, a community college developing and implementing training programs for participants, and a local workforce development board within the corresponding JobsOhio region assisting participants with program enrollment and employer connections. Additionally, each node will partner with a Community Action Agency, striving to connect with underrepresented communities and boost enrollment.

Intel Expansion. Intel's decision to invest in Ohio will be catalytic for the entire state. Before Intel announced their plans to build two fabs in Central Ohio, the state already had 140 suppliers to the company. In approximately 18 months, Ohio increased the number of suppliers to the company to 200, covering all six economic development regions of Ohio. Intel demonstrated their commitment to impacting the entire state through their Semiconductor Education and Research Program (SERP), which will impact 80 institutions of higher education across all parts of Ohio. A statewide workforce development effort will be needed to support both Intel and the emerging semiconductor industry in Ohio. These efforts include investments in underserved regions of the state like the Appalachian Southeast Ohio region. Ohio University leads the Appalachian Semiconductor Education & Technical Ecosystem (ASCENT) proposal under SERP. ASCENT is a 14-school coalition of Appalachian-region institutions that will strive to recruit students from underrepresented groups and offer training programs for fab technicians, entry-level engineers, and advanced-degree graduates to fulfill the workforce demands of Intel and broader community. The emerging semiconductor industry will also benefit from a world-class microelectronics program that has existed in Northeast Ohio for over a decade in Lorain County Community College's microelectronics program. In the area immediately surrounding where Intel is building their fabs, the workforce development boards are aligning to serve jobseekers and support both Intel and other employers in the region.

Ohio's Industry Sector Partnerships. Ohio's Industry Sector Partnership Grant Program helps fund collaborative efforts between local business, education, training provides, and community stakeholders that are invested in improving their region's workforce. The grant invests in local collaboration that benefits Ohio residents and Ohio job creators. Industry sector partnerships design and implement workforce strategies for specific sectors in individual regions. Three rounds of funding have been awarded since the program began, representing 38 partnerships across the state. A fourth round of applications recently closed and is under review.

Business Advisory Councils at Local School Districts. Ohio law requires every school district and educational service center to have a Business Advisory Council. To increase quality and accountability, the State recently established specific standards regarding these Councils' roles and responsibilities. Business Advisory Councils should (1) advise local school districts on

changes in the economy and job market and the area in which future jobs are most likely to be available, (2) advocate for the employment skills most critical to business and industry and the development of curriculum to teach these skills, and (3) aid and support local school districts by offering suggestions for developing a working relationship among businesses, labor organizations, and educators. These new unified standards will better align education and training programs with local business needs. The state also acknowledges Councils that are performing at a high standard with award designations that note their quality.

Inter-Agency Business Teams. Ohio is encouraging its Local Workforce Development Boards to implement Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with additional partners beyond the core programs, such as JobsOhio, the Ohio Department of Veterans Services, and local and regional economic development organizations. The Inter-Agency Business Teams will promote a more collaborative approach to business relations, including consistent outreach methodologies, transparency among partner organizations, and packaging of collective services is used at the local level. The development and expansion of business teams within the Local Workforce Development Areas are a critical service to address employer needs and businesses negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. To assist in these efforts, ODJFS set aside another $4.5M of recaptured WIOA Funds for the 2023 Business Resource Network (BRN) initiative. The funds are designated for interested Local Workforce Development Areas to use to build business resource teams, increase employer and business engagement and increase outreach efforts to employers and labor force participants. This is the third round of BRN funds and will be available from July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024.

Strategy 2: Increase Access to Services

Action Items

Public Libraries. Ohio public libraries play a key role in addressing the varied employment related needs of workers, job seekers and employers. Over 8 million Ohioans have library cards and there are over 251 libraries in the state**.** Collaboration with public libraries increase the quality and quality of access points for individuals to receive needed career information and assistance.Currently, Aspire classes are held at libraries across Ohio, greatly increasing access to adult education and literacy services. To improve access to other workforce development services, especially in rural areas with limited public transportation options, each Local Workforce Area has created strategic MOUs with its local library system. Collaborative efforts included in these MOUs range from the sharing of information and training on WIOA programs and library resources to allowing library space for WIOA case managers to provide services to businesses and jobseekers. In some local areas, the library may be a partner in the OhioMeansJobs center, a member of the local workforce development board, or both.

LinkedIn Learning. In addition to physical locations such as libraries, the State has also invested in technology to further increase access to workforce services. All Ohioans with a library card are able to take unlimited, free online training courses through LinkedIn Learning (which is typically a paid service). Customers may use either a computer or mobile device to participate in over 15,000 courses such as software development, data analytics, and cyber security that are taught by industry experts.

Community College Acceleration Program. Ohio's community colleges serve as critical entry points for individuals to gain and improve skills that lead to long-term employment and

continued career advancement. However, many people discontinue their postsecondary education prior to securing a credential or diploma. To help students remain in school, Ohio is implementing the Community College Acceleration Program. The State will use Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAP E&T) funding to match 50 percent of community college expenditures for financial, academic, and personal support services provided to students in need. The Community College Acceleration Program is currently offered at four test locations.

Centers for Training Excellence. The Ohio Technical Centers (OTCs), formerly known as Adult Workforce Education Career Centers, have provided an opportunity since the 1980s to offer a cost efficient and effective way to train and upskill employees at local companies within their service areas. OTCs that qualified for this distinction were granted additional funding to offer a common core of training and student support services. In 2016, ODHE, in collaboration with Career and Technical Education Superintendents, Directors, and Treasurers, reimagined this original concept known as "Full Service Centers" to be more inclusive of all OTCs with a specific focus around customized/contract training and business consultation services. OTCs that are recognized as Centers for Training Excellence (CTXs) are in the prime position to quickly respond to the needs of local and regional businesses across the state.

Goal 4

Invest in and promote education and training for jobs that:

(a) empower people with 21st Century skills and strengthen Ohio's strategic economic advantage, and

(b) ensure that our State has a workforce to support the health and well-being of Ohioans, their families, and communities.

Strategy 1:Expand career opportunities through education and training

Action Items

EV Workforce. As with any nascent industry, there are not yet standardized curricula and credentials that enable the workforce to fully understand career progression, transition between employers, or build the logical competencies. The statewide EV industry sector partnership will coordinate syllabi and curriculum cooperation among education providers, OEMs, and suppliers to review and validate through coordinated curriculum assessment sessions. Existing advanced manufacturing programs could then be supplemented with EV-specific content developed by education partners and OEMs. Opportunity exists for scaffolding curriculum with stackable credentials across Ohio. This requires opening eligibility for funding to ensure that existing and new workers can be successfully upskilled and reskilled for new opportunities.

Semiconductor Workforce. Similar to the EV industry, semiconductor roles are, for the most part, new to Ohio. Fortunately, the manufacture of semiconductors and the roles within the operation have significant crossover with both legacy manufacturing operations in Ohio and other nascent industries, such as EVs. The public and private sector are collaborating to supplement the broad existing advanced manufacturing training infrastructure with semiconductor-specific skills. One example of this collaboration is the creation of a 1-year Semiconductor Fundamentals Certificate, which is 100% stackable to Engineering Technology

associate degrees at Ohio community colleges. The makeup of this certificate is 80% previously existing advanced manufacturing curriculum and 20% semiconductor-specific curriculum. Using the combination of foundational technical and manufacturing skills with industry-specific coursework enables institutions of higher education to prepare students for the variety of technical careers that exist in Ohio's thriving economy.

Broadband Workforce. In the Broadband-5G space, Ohio currently offers 11 training programs, including Certified Fiber Optic Technician, Telecommunication Tower Technician, 5G Readiness, and Broadband Infrastructure Training Programs. These programs aim to cultivate a workforce highly skilled in broadband and 5G technology deployment. The Sector Partnership, housed at the Ohio State University, is in the process of developing undergraduate programs in these fields. It has also established micro-credentials such as 5G Readiness, helping students to attain a high school diploma by earning Industry-Recognized Credentials. As regional nodes commence operations and expand, additional training programs will be introduced throughout the state, bolstering the deployment of broadband and 5G technology across Ohio for years to come.

Streamlined Process for Students accessing College Credit. ODEW has streamlined processes for students to access college credit while in high school in multiple ways through systematic partnerships with other state agencies:

- Each Student in high school can take up to 30 credit hours of College Courses per year through CCP
- Students taking CTE coursework can earn CTAG credit simply by taking high school coursework and passing end-of-course technical assessments or earning credentials. This is true across all career fields, and it is easy for students to access due to partnerships between ODEW and ODHE/the community college system.
- Developing systems to be agile in response to emerging workforce needs in Ohio:
    - Semiconductor 1-year Certificate will be earnable in high school and students will be able to earn the credit in whatever way works for them
    - ODEW Staff traveling to Oregon to learn from Intel about semiconductors and meeting with community college partners in the region.

Career Awareness and Exploration Funding. To support the implementation of a more career-focused approached to education, funding in the biennial budget was allocated for career awareness and exploration in each city, local, exempted village, and joint vocational school district, community school, and STEM school.

- Career Awareness and Exploration funds will be calculated by the Department for each city, local, exempted village, and joint vocational school district, community school and STEM school and should be used to enhance career awareness and exploration for Ohio students. Schools will generate funds for these purposes based on their enrollment in the amount of $7.50 per student in the 2023-2024 school year and $10.00 in the 2024-2025 school year.
- While the Department will calculate funds at each educating school through the state foundation payment process, the funds will be transferred to the Career-Technical

Planning District (CTPD) by the Department. The Career-Technical Planning District shall utilize these funds to deliver relevant career awareness and exploration programs to all students within its Career-Technical planning district, consistent with CareerTechnical planning district's plan on file with the Department of Education and Workforce.

- Career development activities range from developing and implementing grade appropriate career focused lessons to elementary students aligned to Ohio's Learning Standards, Business and Industry Hands On Career Exploration Events, coordination of career speakers, career days for elementary students, mock interviews, creating social media resources, micro credential programs for middle school students, and creating satellite programs in middle grades focusing on career connections.

Innovative Workforce Incentive Program. To inspire youth to identify paths to success through career-focused learning, the State has allocated $32 million in funding through the biennial budget to help students earn industry-recognized credentials. Of this total, $21 million will be used to provide the $1,250 incentive payments to districts for each credential a student earns from the Innovative Workforce Incentive Program (IWIP) as well as reimburse the examination costs of credentials included in this program. The $11 million remaining will be used to pay for the credentialing assessments, for those credentials not included on the IWIP list, so that students do not have to pay these fees out-of-pocket. Students can earn industry-recognized credentials while in school through comprehensive Career-Technical Education programs, through programs dedicated specifically to credentials for students in their senior year, or through existing courses that integrate the content needed to successfully obtain the credential.

Ohio Career Technical Education Equipment Grant Program – The biennial budget allocated $100 million over two fiscal years, to award competitive grants to schools to establish or expand Career Technical Education (CTE) and/or Industry Credential programs with priority for programs that support careers on Ohio's Top Jobs list and establish or expand credentialing programs from the Governor's Office of Workforce Transformation Innovative Workforce Incentive Program list.

Career-Technical Construction Program - The Ohio Facilities Construction Commission (OFCC) approved a $200 million dollar line item to support construction projects that establish or expand career-technical education programs. Funds will be distributed to joint vocational school districts (JVSD) and city, local, and exempted village school districts designated as the lead district of a career-technical planning district (CTPD), according to guidelines established by OFCC, in consultation with the Governor's Office of Workforce Transformation (OWT) and the Department of Education and Workforce (ODEW). The guidelines must consider establishing or expanding career-technical education programs that support the occupations on Ohio's Top Jobs List or that qualify for the Innovative Workforce Incentive Program under ODEW.

Readiness Seals for High School Graduates. To ensure that every student is prepared for career and college when they graduate high school, Ohio recently adopted new graduation standards for the class of 2023 and beyond. Students will prepare for their future by completing course requirements, demonstrating competency in English and math, and earning new Readiness Seals in key areas that show foundational and well-rounded knowledge, skills, and

competencies. These include the OhioMeansJobs Readiness Seal, a College-Ready Seal, A Military Enlistment Seal, and an Industry-Recognized Credential Seal.

SuccessBound. The SuccessBound initiative began in 2017 under a grant from JP Morgan Chase to better engage and inspire students about the variety of exciting careers available in Ohio. The multi-pronged approach includes schools, businesses, students, families, and communities. The State will continue to use this innovative program to further raise student awareness about career-preparation opportunities available through College Credit Plus, Choose Ohio First, OTCs, community colleges, Career-Technical Education options, intentional academic coursework options, and apprenticeship programs.

Work-Based Learning Toolkit. To help high school educators implement high quality work-based learning experiences, ODEW is currently expanding their work-based learning toolkit. The toolkit will provide resources for districts, students, and industry in fulfilling their prospective roles in work-based learning experiences. The resources will include readily accessible technical assistance, guiding documents regarding implementation of programs, and facilitation of professional development opportunities.

College Credit Plus. The State has developed its College Credit Plus initiative that establishes clear pathways for students to earn college credit and offers the program to college-ready students in grades 7 through 12. Under College Credit Plus, students are able to take college courses at no cost from local community colleges or universities, allowing them to earn high school and college credits at the same time. They are provided with a wider range of class options, enabling them to complete general education college requirements while in high school. To date, more than 6,700 students have earned full associate degrees before their high school graduation through the program.

Choose Ohio First. The Choose Ohio First Scholarship is designed to significantly strengthen Ohio's STEM workforce and increase the number of STEM teachers. Over the next two years, the state will invest $62 million in the Choose Ohio First initiative. Funding will be distributed to Ohio's colleges and universities through a competitive process to provide scholarships to students in innovative academic programs. Participating universities and colleges award scholarships to students desiring a certificate, associate degree, baccalaureate degree, or graduate degree in eligible STEM fields or to students who want to become STEM teachers. Designated Choose Ohio First programs are integrated with regional economies; meet statewide educational needs; facilitate the completion of certificates, undergraduate, and graduate degrees in a cost-effective manner; and recruit underrepresented STEM student groups into STEM fields. Participating institutions match state grants funds dollar for dollar.

Applied Bachelor's Degree Programs. In 2017, the State established a program allowing its community colleges, state community colleges, and technical colleges to offer Applied Bachelor's Degrees. This expanded approach increases Ohioans' access to higher education degree opportunities.

Work Based Training. Ohio increased access to apprenticeships by allowing an OTC, community college, higher education institution, or local workforce board to serve as a registered sponsor for an approved program which reduces the time businesses must spend filling out paperwork. The State will now explore creating additional avenues for work-based

training, such as flexible apprenticeships, internships, and co-op programs that will enable individuals to earn while they learn.

TechCred. In October 2019, Ohio announced the TechCred program that will help businesses better prepare their existing workforces for jobs in today's advanced, technology-infused economy. TechCred gives employees the ability to earn technology-focused credentials, making them more valuable and leading to improved job security and increased career advancement opportunities. Using TechCred, businesses can identify the current or prospective employees whose skills they want to improve for more advanced positions in technology-focused jobs, such as advanced manufacturing and information technology. Credentials eligible for the program must be short-term, industry-recognized, and technology-focused.

Industry-Recognized Credentials of Value. Ohio will work with key employers, sector partnerships, business associations, trade organizations, and others to identify credentials of value that are needed to fill jobs in its in-demand and emerging industries. The primary focus will be to classify specific credentials that provide entryway into employment along with additional "stackable" credits that may be obtained later, leading to additional certifications and further career advancement. Moreover, as discussed under Goal 1 above, Ohio will explore creating consistent methods and approaches for the core programs to use when vetting and approving training providers that offer instruction for the Industry-Recognized Credentials of Value.

Industry Recognized Credential Transfer Assurance Guides (ITAGs). ITAGs provide a new entry ramp to higher education from the workforce and are a statewide transfer initiative that guarantees the award of college level, course-specific credit to students earning agreed upon industry-recognized credentials. The knowledge, skills, and abilities demonstrated by credential attainment are aligned to postsecondary learning outcomes by faculty and industry experts as needed. ITAG credentials are selected based upon several factors including workforce needs for the state and career pathway alignment to higher education.

Strategy 2: Provide targeted assistance for key populations within the labor force

Action Items

ISP Network. The State of Ohio and the Ohio Manufacturers' Association's industry sector partnership network will strengthen partnerships with local organizations, open new talent tools, and increase access to critical supports like transportation and childcare. One goal is to filter in talent pools that don't yet contribute significantly to the automotive workforce like currently incarcerated individuals and restored citizens, immigrant populations, and underrepresented communities, ensuring that these thousands of people who are eager to and possess - or could develop - the skills employers seek are a part of Ohio's growing EV industry.

Ohio College2Careers. The State continues to implement the Ohio College2Careers program to ensure college students with disabilities have the support they need to complete their degree and/or credential, earn higher wages, and meet the demands of tomorrow's labor market. The program embeds an OOD VR Counselor Ohio's public colleges and universities. They assist students with disabilities by providing additional supports such as career exploration, career counseling, assistive technology, resume and interview preparation, and placement at internships and permanent employment. Ohio College2Careers also expands OOD's business relations staff at the career services offices at these same institutions, coordinating employment

efforts for students with disabilities and better connecting them to OOD's expansive employer partner network.

Vocational Apprenticeships. OOD launched OVAP in 2019 to support Governor DeWine's Executive Order 2019-03D, which established Ohio as a Disability Inclusion State and Model Employer of Individuals with Disabilities. OVAP provides opportunities for students and adults with disabilities to gain work experience, exposure, and access to state government employment through paid apprenticeships with state agencies. The goal of the program is for apprentices to secure permanent employment in state government upon completion of the apprenticeship. A member of the Business Relations Team collaborates with state agencies to identify occupations in high demand, and then works with VR Counselors to identify candidates who meet qualifications and have an aligned job goal. OOD supports the application and onboarding process at the state agency and funds the apprentice's wages for up to 1,000 hours. With support from a grant from the Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council, OOD is expanding the program to the Ohio General Assembly and Statewide Elected Officials. This program has gained national recognition and has been highlighted on several national webinars and conferences. OOD has met virtually with representatives from Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Virginia, and Wisconsin to help them replicate the program.

Jobs for Recovery. Governor DeWine's Executive Budget for SFY 2020-21 established the OOD Jobs for Recovery program. This program replicates a successful model established in partnership with the Butler County Mental Health and Addiction Recovery Services Board and Butler County Court of Common Pleas drug court. In this model, OOD embeds a VR Counselor and a Job Developer as active members of the drug court team. This service delivery model ensures rapid engagement in services that are needed for the individual to get a job, such as career counseling, job placement and retention services. In addition to this initiative, OOD has established liaison counselors to drug court programs in several additional counties. Liaison counselors are expected to serve individuals with disabilities participating in additional specialized dockets, as OOD continues our general outreach to this population. OOD continues to implement the OOD Jobs for Recovery initiative. OOD currently has 12 teams serving 13 counties and partnering with multiple dockets within each county. To support the OOD Jobs for Recovery Initiative, OOD and additional specialized dockets continue to collaborate and work together to provide services to eligible individuals through identified VR liaisons.

Ohio's Literacy Plan. Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement serves as a guide to evidence-based language and literacy teaching and learning for all learners from birth through grade 12. Acquiring language and literacy skills affects learners' access to, and interest in, content materials and instruction at all grade levels and all aspects of their lives. **Ohio's vision is for all learners to acquire the knowledge and skills to become proficient readers.**

- The plan articulates a state literacy framework aimed at promoting proficiency in reading, writing, and communication for all learners. It is driven by scientific research and encourages a professional movement toward implementing data-based, differentiated, and evidence-based practices. Specifically, this plan illustrates the strong language and literacy efforts in place in Ohio and the state's vision to expand and strengthen them to support improvement. For support in operationalizing the evidence-based practices in Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement, implementation resources are available for school leaders.

Aspire. To assist adults with low literacy levels, Ohio will continue to offer Adult Education and Literacy programs virtually and in-person at locations across Ohio, including public libraries.

Skills Training for Older Workers. The State actively uses its Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) to provide community service and work-based training opportunities for eligible older adults, targeting both in-demand and critical jobs. SCSEP participants must be at least 55 years of age, unemployed, and have an annual household income of no more than 125% of the federal poverty level. Through SCSEP, older adults develop individual employment plans based on each participant's particular skills, experiences, and interests. SCSEP participants gain work experience in a variety of community service activities at non-profit and public facilities.

Military Strategic Implementation Team (MSIT). ODHE created MSIT to work with Ohio's public institutions to conduct a thorough review of current institutional policies and practices and to improve the process for awarding college credit for military training, experience, and coursework. These efforts have resulted in an infrastructure and system that is welcoming and responsive to the needs of veterans. To recognize outstanding service to members of the military, veterans, and their families, ODHE established the Collegiate Purple Star award. Currently 51 colleges and universities have attained this designation.

Alternative Service Points. To improve accessibility to programs for low-income individuals, the State will develop alternative delivery mechanisms, such as providing workforce services at public libraries or using technology to deliver education and training coursework. It will also work to expand skill training offerings at the OTCs and community colleges located within and near the Appalachian Region.

Career-Tech in Correctional Facilities. Career-technical programs are offered in youth and adult correctional facilities in Ohio. The corrections agencies – Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction, through the Ohio Central School System, and the Ohio Department of Youth Services, through Buckeye United School District - collaborate with the Office of Career-Technical Education at ODEW to receive career-technical support from Federal Perkins and State dollars.

Reentry Employment. To help restored citizens re-enter the workforce, Ohio has set up one-stop centers in six adult and three juvenile correctional facilities across the State. Prior to release, individuals are able to participate in a variety of workforce services, including career planning, education and training courses, and job search activities. During the remainder of this planning period, two additional one-stops will be established in adult facilities and all of the centers will have the option to become certified as specialized OhioMeansJobs centers in the American Job Center network.

Bridges. Bridges is a voluntary program designed to provide supports to young adults who are leaving foster care make the connections needed to successfully transition into adulthood with resources for housing, employment, education assistance, and well-being. To be eligible for Bridges you must have left the foster care system after turning 18 and be under the age of 21. You must also meet at least one of the following criteria: Be completing secondary education or a program leading to an equivalent credential; Be enrolled in college or other post-secondary school; Be participating in a program or activity designed to remove barriers to employment; Be

employed at least 80 hours a month; Be incapable of doing any of the above activities due to a physical or mental health condition.

Migrant Education Program. The State helps the few migrant and seasonal farmworkers who temporarily reside in Ohio by providing targeted assistance to migrant youth.The Ohio Migrant Education Center, funded in part by the Federal Migrant Education Program, supports local education agencies in developing supplemental instruction and supportive services that are designed to help youth stay in high school and achieve a diploma or equivalent as well as master English as a Second Language.

Active Re-Employment Engagement. Ohio has developed Active Re-Employment Engagement processes to help long-term unemployed individuals return to work more quickly. These initiatives include the proactive identification of unemployed persons who may be at risk of not returning to work in their former occupations. Through the State's comprehensive Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessments (RESEA) program, these individuals are provided with one-on-one services with an employment professional at one of the many OhioMeansJobs Centers. Additionally, The Helping Ohioans Pursue Employment (HOPE) initiative is delivered by the Wagner-Peyser Employment Services (ES) program. The purpose is to outreach and provide ES career services to individuals who have recently applied for unemployment insurance (UI) benefits. By providing a customer centered approach to service delivery, the initiative has the following goals:

1. To be the gateway into the workforce delivery system (e.g., referrals to other partner programs in the OhioMeansJobs center, including JVSG and WIOA Title I);
2. To assist UI claimants with work search requirements to continue receipt of benefits (e.g., labor exchange activities);
3. To provide career services to claimants (e.g., career readiness workshops, career counseling, etc.);
4. To help claimants find job opportunities to reduce the amount of time claimants receive UI benefits (e.g., job search and placement activities);
5. To set the foundation for the delivery of the Reemployment Eligibility and Assessment (RESEA) for those claimants selected to participate (e.g., resume and career profiles will have been completed, allowing RESEA to focus on customer's employment plan); and
6. To address Ohio's labor shortage demands.

Recovery Initiatives. Ohio maintains a "Strategies for Helping Individuals Impacted by Opioid Use Disorder: A Toolkit for Ohio's Public Workforce System" to help guide the core partners as they assist persons affected by substance misuse. Working together, the partners will prepare workers for jobs that help prevent and mitigate substance dependency; provide education, training, and supportive services to individuals in treatment; and develop recovery-friendly workplaces.

ApprenticeOhio. Ohio is continuing efforts to integrate ApprenticeOhio into the statewide and local workforce service delivery systems. Currently, ApprenticeOhio is collaborating with OWT and state partners to expand Registered Apprenticeship and high quality pre-apprenticeship programs in key sectors with current and projected need, including: Electric Vehicle

manufacturing, maintenance, and infrastructure development; Semiconductor Manufacturing/Advanced Manufacturing; Broadband & 5G; K-12 Teacher Occupations; and Construction and Extraction.

III. OPERATIONAL PLANNING ELEMENTS

Some content in this area is under revision.

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an Operational Planning Elements section that supports the State's strategy and the system-wide vision described in Section II(c) above. Unless otherwise noted, all Operational Planning Elements apply to Combined State Plan partner programs included in the plan as well as to core programs. This section must include—

A. STATE STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include–

1. STATE BOARD FUNCTIONS

Describe how the State board will implement its functions under section 101(d) of WIOA (i.e., provide a description of Board operational structures and decision making processes to ensure such functions are carried out).

The Governor's Executive Workforce Board (GEWB) was created to advise the governor and the Governor's Office of Workforce Transformation (OWT) on the development, implementation, and continuous improvement of Ohio's workforce system.

Its mission is to engage communities, state agencies, and stakeholders in Ohio to identify ways to prepare Ohioans with skills needed for in-demand jobs. Its purpose is to focus on in-demand, quality wage jobs that empower Ohioans and give the State a strategic economic advantage.

GEWB members are innovative leaders in business, education, labor, and workforce development. They are responsible for advising Governor DeWine, Lt. Governor Husted, and OWT about merging workforce needs, solutions and best practices. Each member is involved in planning and implementing the State's workforce development system as required under both Federal law and section 6301.04 of the Ohio Revised CODE (ORC), including:

- Providing oversight and policy direction to ensure State workforce development activities are aligned and serving the needs of the State's employers, incumbent workers, and jobseekers;
- Developing, implementing, and modifying the State workforce development plan;
- Reviewing statewide workforce policies and programs and recommendations on actions to be taken by the State to align workforce development program to support a comprehensive and streamlined workforce development system;

- Recommending measures for development and continuous improvement of the workforce development system in the State, including updating comprehensive State performance accountability measures, also known as workforce success measures;
- Continuing to identify and disseminate information on promising practices in the area of workforce development; and
- Performing other related work that is required of the board by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) or requested by the governor.

The GEWB has adopted by-laws to guide its work. Board members engage communities, state agencies, and stakeholders in Ohio to identify ways to prepare Ohioans with skills needed for the current and future nature of work. Committees are formed to conduct "deep dives" into specific workforce subject matter. As of this writing, several committees of the board have been created for this purpose.

2. IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE STRATEGY

Describe how the lead State agency with responsibility for the administration of each core program or a Combined Plan partner program included in this plan will implement the State's Strategies identified in Section II(c). above. This must include a description of—

A. CORE PROGRAM ACTIVITIES TO IMPLEMENT THE STATE'S STRATEGY

Describe the activities the entities carrying out the respective core programs will fund to implement the State's strategies. Also, describe how such activities will be aligned across the core programs and Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan and among the entities administering the programs, including using co-enrollment and other strategies, as appropriate.

For the Reader's convenience, the activities that will be funded and undertaken to implement Ohio's strategic workforce vision are organized below by the State Agency(ies) that will take the lead. Individuals may be co-enrolled into multiple services and activities based on their particular needs and in compliance with each core program's specific eligibility and suitability requirements.

OWT will take the lead in ensuring consistency of workforce activities and services across all agencies. This includes the identification of Industry-Recognized Credentials of Value, a uniform listing of in-demand credentials and certifications along with consistent methods and approaches for vetting and approving training providers. OWT will also develop and maintain the Inter-Agency Listing of Workforce Programs to increase awareness about the broad array for activities and services that are available. It will market the Workforce Supply Tool to help businesses forecast and understand the availability of workers with specific skills, certifications, and/or degrees.

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) will serve as the lead for many of the of continuing and new workforce activities that support the State's strategic vision. It will identify alternative service points so that low-income individuals can receive workforce services or may participate in education and training through other means, such as libraries, technology, or new locations. It will continue to use the Reentry Employment program to provide ex-offenders and justice-involved persons workforce services prior to re-entry so that

they can seamlessly transition to an OhioMeansJobs Center upon release. It will use the Migrant Education Program to give migrant and seasonal farmworkers under age 22 supplemental instruction and supportive services to achieve a high school diploma and/or English skills. ODJFS will continue to use Active Re-Employment Engagement strategies to assist long-term unemployed individuals in securing new careers more quickly. It will implement approaches to combat substance misuse, including the development of qualified care professions, intensive supportive services, and recovery-friendly employers. Moreover, ODJFS will serve as the lead in developing and implementing the Inter-Agency Business Services Teams and ensuring that the strategies articulated in the Combined State Plan are included and supported in the Local and Regional WIOA Plans. ODJFS, and soon a new cabinet agency known as the Department of Children and Youth (DCY), will use Bridges to help youth aging out of foster care get support to age 21 to assist with education and careers.

The Ohio Department of Education and Workforce (ODEW) will lead a number of activities that implement the State's workforce strategies. It will be responsible for ensuring the Business Advisory Councils are operational at the Local School Districts so that education and training programs at the high school level are better aligned with local business needs. It will coordinate the Innovative Workforce Incentive Program which offers funding to schools to cover the costs of credentials for high school students and help build capacity to offer new programs in areas with emerging workforce demand. It will also promote the receipt of a job readiness seal as a part of high school diploma attainment. Moreover, (ODEW) will use SuccessBound to teach high school students about exciting career opportunities in Ohio, including how to prepare for them. It will develop a Work-Based Learning Toolkit to help improve high school students' and instructors' occupational knowledge. It will use its Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement program to help youth with low Literacy levels improve their skills through a statewide framework that promotes proficiency in reading, writing, and oral language. Finally, ODEW will continue to support the provision of services to ex-offenders and justice-involved persons through the career-technical programs at Ohio's youth and adult correctional facilities.

The Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE) will continue to expand the Ohio Technical Centers (OTCs) into full-service Centers for training Excellence that offer customized training services to meet specific business needs. Additionally, it will use College credit Plus to help college-ready junior high and high school students earn college credit. ODHE will use Choose Ohio First to better promote Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) studies and degrees, including providing scholarships in these in-demand areas. Additionally, it will enable approved community colleges to provide Applied bachelor's degree programs. Finally, ODHE will continue to take the lead in delivering the Aspire program to ensure individuals have increased access to adult education and literacy programs, including participation via virtual classrooms.

The Ohio Department of Aging (ODA) will lead the Skills Training for Older Workers initiative. It will use the Senior Community Service Employment Service Program (SCSEP) to help older individuals receive training for in-demand and critical jobs.

Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) will be responsible for Ohio College2Careers that helps students with disabilities build job-specific and employability skills. It will use vocational apprenticeships to provide individuals disabilities receive work-based

learning. Additionally, OOD will implement Jobs for Recovery to connect individuals who are referred to a drug court with a Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Counselor.

The Ohio Department of Development (ODOD) administers Ohio's Industry Sector Partnership Grant. It provides funding to programs and initiatives that develop the qualified workers that meet the needs of the State's businesses. Additionally, Ohio's latest two-year budget appropriated $50 million for the TechCred program. ODOD is responsible for helping businesses upskill their employed workers through these technology-focused training programs.

Additionally, a number of activities will be jointly led by two or more agencies. OWT and ODJFS will be responsible for the submission of the Combined State Plan, as well as the development of the In-Demand Jobs List and the Critical Jobs List. Additionally, they will work together to use technology to improve the customer experience, ensuring services and systems are better aligned with stakeholder needs and demands.

ODJFS and ODHE will be jointly responsible for implementing the Community College Acceleration Program to make financial, academic, and personal support services available to students in need at select community college campuses.

ODJFS will work with InnovateOhio to develop and implement new technologies to provide new ways for customers to access services, including the continual refinement of OhioMeansJobs.com to offer an improved user experience.

Finally, ODJFS, ODHE, and ODEW will promote Experiential Learning through work-based learning options, such as flexible apprenticeships, internships, and co-op programs, enabling individuals to earn while they learn.

B. ALIGNMENT WITH ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE THE PLAN

Describe how the activities identified in (A) will be aligned with programs and activities provided by required one-stop partners and other optional one-stop partners and activities provided under employment, training (including Registered Apprenticeships), education (including career and technical education), human services and other programs not covered by the plan, as appropriate, assuring coordination of, and avoiding duplication among these activities.

Ohio is involved in multiple initiatives to align the core and additional partner programs contained in this Combined State Plan with other optional programs not covered officially in this plan.

Technology, including OhioMeansJobs.com, has allowed Ohio to increase coordination between workforce and K-12 and postsecondary education to promote more career awareness, career exploration, career planning, and student exposure to in-demand careers. This is a coordinated effort between the ODEW, ODHE, ODJFS, and OWT to help students better prepare themselves for careers earlier in their academic careers and increase knowledge about which jobs are in-demand, what those occupations involve, and what steps are needed to get the training and education for each job.

With respect to adult education, each Aspire grantee is encouraged to have a postsecondary education and training partnership or Bridge Program. Bridge programs prepare adults with

limited academic or limited English skills to enter and succeed in postsecondary education and training programs, thus reducing the need for remedial education provided in the postsecondary institutions.

OOD, Ohio's VR agency, is leveraging its independent living programs to strengthen employment outcomes. Additionally, OOD is engaging the State's apprenticeship sponsors to offer disability awareness training and discuss hiring and retaining workers with disabilities. This collaboration also is focused on identifying career pathways in Ohio's apprenticeship programs for individuals with disabilities.

The apprenticeship system in Ohio is also engaged in a multi-pronged approach to ensure that registered apprentices are concurrently awarded college and apprenticeship credit for the related instruction portion of their training experience. Ohio Administrative Code 5101:11-3-02 requires apprenticeship sponsors to have curriculum designed or provided in conjunction with a college or university, which includes Ohio's public institutions of higher learning as well as Adult Career Technical Education Centers. This provides for the framework of articulated credit and dual enrollment. ODJFS staff is providing technical support to apprenticeship sponsors who do not currently have a relationship for articulated credit, regarding how these relationships can be built and fostered.

Additionally, ODJFS, in conjunction with ODHE and the Ohio Association of Community Colleges, is engaged in a statewide articulation initiative that builds upon already established bilateral agreements and makes those agreements effective through all the two-year public institutions. This provides student learners/apprentices with the ability to continue their education at any of those institutions without duplicating coursework. In addition, ODHE is developing statewide Ohio Guaranteed Transfer Pathway that provide statewide articulation agreements allowing community college students to complete a bachelor's degree at any state public university.

C. COORDINATION, ALIGNMENT AND PROVISION OF SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS

Describe how the entities carrying out the respective core programs, Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan, and required and optional one-stop partner programs will coordinate activities and resources to provide comprehensive, high-quality, customer-centered services, including supportive services (e.g. transportation), to individuals, including those populations identified in section II(a)(1)(B), and individuals in remote areas. The activities described shall conform to the statutory requirements of each program.

Ohio's core programs and Combined State Plan partner programs collaboratively use their respective resources to provide comprehensive, high-quality, customer-centered services to individuals. Coordination and alignment efforts occur at the State and local levels and are documented through a variety of mechanisms, such as Memoranda of Understanding (MOU), interagency initiatives, and regular meetings.

At the local level, the primary means of detailing the coordination, alignment, and provision of services to individuals is the MOU that the LWDBs develop and enter into with the core programs, Combined State Plan partner programs, and required and optional One-Stop Partner programs. Ohio has a rich history of assisting local boards with MOU development and execution in order to ensure alignment and coordination of services. These agreements define the activities and resource contributions of each program.

At the State and local levels, a key example of coordination of activities and resources, alignment, and provision of services is the continual enhancement and common use of OhioMeanJobs.com by core, Combined State Plan, and additional partner programs. Ohio requires all participants of Title I employment and training, Aspire, VR, Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education (Perkins) Act, and SCSEP to register in OhioMeansJobs.com. This ensures consistency among programs, enhances job readiness and placement efforts, supports career planning, and expands the talent pipeline for in-demand jobs. TANF recipients enrolled in the CCMEP, individuals required to pay child support, food and cash assistance recipients, and UI and workers' compensation claimants also register and use the website's comprehensive resources.

Ohio recognizes veterans as a valuable, talented, and skilled workforce, and is committed to increasing the number of military service members and veterans living and working in Ohio. Ohio has implemented executive orders and legislation to ensure veterans are receiving the appropriate credit and credentialing for their military training and experience. These efforts have focused on streamlining the occupational licensing process for veterans to ensure their relevant military education, skills training, and experience are taken into account when determining equivalency for issuing licenses and certificates. As part of its Ohio Values Veterans initiative, ODHE has formed the Military Strategic Implementation Team (MSIT) to work with Ohio's public institutions to conduct a thorough review of current institutional policies and practices, and to improve the process for awarding college credit for military training, experience, and coursework. These efforts have resulted in an infrastructure and system that is welcoming and responsive to the needs of veterans. To recognize outstanding service to members of the military, veterans, and their families, ODHE established the Collegiate Purple Star award. Currently 51 colleges and universities have attained this designation. In addition, the OhioMeansVeteranJobs.com website is a common resource used by veterans and multiple partner programs serving them.

Although TANF is not officially included in this Combined State Plan, Ohio has developed a common application, initial assessment strategy and tools, and individual opportunity plan and case management system for the Title I youth and TANF programs, through CCMEP. This innovative program benefits both the individual and the workforce system by providing consistency, simplifying referral and service delivery, supporting co-enrollment, and maximizing resources. Ohio requires each CDJFS and workforce development board to develop a County CCMEP Plan that details how the two program funding sources and entities will coordinate, align services, focus on individualized case management and employment planning, address each individual's barriers to employment, and provide supportive services. Starting with youth and young adults ages 14 to 24, Ohio's goal is to break the generational cycle of dependency among low-income families.

To provide early intervention services to individuals who receive workforce and employment-related services, the ODJFS offices of Unemployment Insurance Operations and Workforce Development provide local workforce administrative entities data and information. Local areas requesting data enter into a Data Sharing and Confidentiality Agreement with OWD. Each quarter, OWD pulls participants enrolled in Title I employment and training from the Advancement through Resources, Information and Employment Services (ARIES) System who received services during the reference quarter or four previous quarters, combined with participants who exited the program during the reference quarter or four previous quarters.

These participants are matched against the Ohio Wage Record data identified in the Data Sharing and Confidentiality Agreement. From the wage record file, local area points of contact receive wages, number of weeks worked, the year and quarter wages are reported, NAICS 6-digit code, and NAICS title. The point of contact will also receive the information to identify each participant. In addition, on a monthly basis, the Office of Unemployment Insurance Operations emails a report that lists claimants who are within four weeks of exhausting their UI benefits and claimants who were profiled for Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessments (RESEA). On a weekly basis, a list of individuals who recently applied for unemployment benefits is sent. The goal of this initiative is to improve information sharing and coordination of program activities so unemployed Ohioans can be served earlier and return to work more quickly.

Ohio has several initiatives to provide access to services for individuals with disabilities. Ohio's Workforce Inventory of Education and Training (WIET) provides the institutional and program data for occupational training along with information on how providers are making reasonable accommodations for those individuals with disabilities and special needs. Local workforce development professionals are able to rate providers on how well they accommodated their participants with disabilities.

Ohio's standards for OhioMeansJobs Center certification also includes requirements to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) as well as Section 188 of WIOA. Certifications require OhioMeansJobs Center staff to receive training to understand and better serve individuals with disabilities. This training was done in coordination with the Vocational Rehabilitation program in the Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD). Furthermore, the CCMEP program and Vocational Rehabilitation are collaborating to ensure there is a coordinated service delivery between the two programs.

Aspire services are aligned with local needs and are coordinated with local partner programs as part of the Title II planning process. Training services are available to all WIOA participants on a continuum of skill levels. Individuals with less than postsecondary level skills are referred to the local Aspire/Title II programs to upskill their basic academic skills that prepare participants for postsecondary education, training, and employment. Career pathways allow for all individuals on the skills continuum to earn certificates and credentials that contribute to local economic needs, including a high school equivalence diploma and first-rung occupational certificates in an Aspire integrated education and training (IET) program.

D. COORDINATION, ALIGNMENT AND PROVISION OF SERVICES TO EMPLOYERS

Describe how the entities carrying out the respective core programs, any Combined State Plan partner program included in this plan, required and optional one-stop partner programs will coordinate activities and resources to provide comprehensive, high-quality services to employers to meet their current and projected workforce needs and to achieve the goals of industry or sector partners in the state. The activities described shall conform to the statutory requirements of each program.

Ohio's core, Combined State Plan partner program, and other One-Stop partner programs coordinate activities and resources to provide comprehensive, high-quality services to employers to meet their current and projected workforce needs.

A key element in this process is Ohio's development and continual revision of the In-Demand Jobs List. It includes sectors and occupations with greater than average projected job openings or growth, along with median wages equal to or greater than 80 percent of Ohio's median wage. It influences how Ohio invests in its education and training programs as well as its how it promotes career pathways to students within the K-12 system. The State uses the In-Demand Job List across all core programs to foster cross-agency workforce alignment, promote consistent training investments and curricula development, and encourage comparable career planning services.

Along with the In-Demand Jobs List, Ohio maintains a Critical Jobs List that includes sectors and occupations that have been identified as crucial to the health and well-being of its citizens. It will be utilized across all core programs in a manner similar to the In-Demand Jobs List to further promote alignment of services and resources.

Another key approach in the coordination of services to employers is the universal brand for Ohio's One-Stop system: OhioMeansJobs, proud partner of the American Job Center network. The consistent use of this brand across the State enables businesses and jobseekers to easily identify where to access workforce services in their local communities.

Additionally, at the local level, Inter-Agency Business Services Teams comprised of personnel from Wagner-Peyser (W-P), WIOA, Veterans, and other core programs and Combined State Plan partner programs are embedded in the comprehensive OhioMeansJobs Centers throughout the State. They work directly with businesses to determine their recruiting, hiring, training, and overall workforce needs. They provide timely solutions and broker connections to available resources. They are responsible for coordinating their work in the local areas to ensure non-duplication of efforts.

To help build relationships between businesses and schools, Ohio law (ORC section 3313.82) requires that both K-12 school districts and educational service centers (ESCs) have business advisory councils. They include regional business leaders who are familiar with local business and industry needs. They help make the education system more aware of the local labor market; promote work-based experiences; and help students prepare for successful learning and employment opportunities. Overall, local business advisory councils foster cooperation among K-12 schools, businesses, and the communities they serve.

OOD offers technical assistance to employers and has created the Inclusive Employer Toolkit and On-Demand webinar archive. The toolkit supports the hiring, onboarding and retention of workers with disabilities with a variety of resources and best practices. It features information about hiring incentives and tax credits such as the Federal Work Opportunity Tax Credit to provide incentives to employers who hire individuals from a number of underserved populations, including individuals with disabilities. It is available at https://ood.ohio.gov/information-for-employers/inclusive-employer-toolkit.

Along with its local partners, including the OhioMeansJobs Centers, ODA conducts regional older worker forums aimed at employers, economic development professionals, workforce development professionals, and policy makers. Forums highlight the benefits of hiring and retaining older workers, provide strategies to support the needs of older workers, and share how the SCSEP can support their organization's needs.

Ohio's Aspire program assists employers by offering on-site workplace Literacy programs that focus on basic skills for workers to gain new employment, retain present jobs, and advance in their careers or increase productivity. Aspire also offers integrated education and training that provides contextualized academic content to specific occupations and career pathways that are responsive to regional and local demand.

E. PARTNER ENGAGEMENT WITH EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND OTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROVIDERS.

Describe how the State's Strategies will engage the State's community colleges, adult education providers, area career and technical education schools, providers on the State's eligible training provider list, and other education and training providers, as partners in the workforce development system to create a job-driven education and training system. WIOA section 102(b)(2)(B)(iv). Include how the State's strategies will enable the State to leverage other Federal, State, and local investments to enhance access to workforce development programs at these institutions.

The Governor's Office of Workforce Transformation (OWT) continues to facilitate state agencies and local institutions of these agencies in stakeholder meetings to continue the implementation of the Ohio Combined State Plan in alignment with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Perkins is a required partner in this legislation and the state office and local postsecondary Perkins providers continue to participate in regional WIOA planning, services and activities. WIOA updates were also provided at all postsecondary Perkins informational meetings and the new Perkins Coordinator training. ODHE Perkins staff continue to meet with OWT and other WIOA partnering agencies to provide updates on initiatives and work to accomplish workforce strategies.

Additionally, Ohio's educational institutions are provided with the State's In-Demand Jobs List and the Critical Jobs List to enable them to strategically develop and modify their education and training curricula as needed to meet any new or emerging certification requirements.

EV, telecommunications, and Semiconductor training is currently restricted by costly equipment and faculty shortages. To mitigate this, OWT, with industry representation, will facilitate collaboration among education partners to create collective purchasing agreements, optimize resources, and avoid unnecessary expenses. Industry-experienced faculty will also be shared across regions to ensure high-quality faculty are providing training statewide. Coupled together, faculty- and equipment-sharing have the potential to accelerate training in high growth sectors and supply across the state. Some potential strategies may include:

- Sharing equipment and simulators between training and education partners to enable student learning across facilities and technology
- Working across key regional institutions to submit budget requests and provide students transportation to learn at other sites
- Planning faculty rotations between institutions to maximize the impact of industry professionals who are eager to share their expertise

The State also engages community colleges and OTCs as partners in the workforce development system to create a jobs-driven education and training system.

With respect to adult education and literacy, the majority of Aspire/Title II fiscal agents are postsecondary educational institutions, primarily OTCs. This foundation helps promote a natural transition of students into postsecondary education opportunities upon their successful completion of their Aspire coursework. Community college and career technical center staff work with Aspire programs to provide bridge classes that align curricula to postsecondary programs. For example, medical readiness classes are provided through the Aspire programs at many of the OTCs as a prerequisite for students preparing for CTE medical programs. Students are better prepared for the rigor of the postsecondary program and are more likely to successfully complete it if they have learned the basic skills required of the career field first.

ODEW and ODHE continue to expand and maintain the Career-Technical Credit Transfer (CT^2) initiative. This initiative facilitates statewide credit transfer among public high school, career-technical, OTC and college/university institutions. ODHE staff and consultants continue to convert bilateral articulation agreements between secondary and postsecondary institutions into statewide agreements. These statewide agreements guarantee that the credits earned by students will be honored at every public community college in Ohio that offers the career field.

The Secondary Career-Technical Alignment Initiative (SCTAI) (https://www.ohiohighered.org/sctai) is a collaborative effort between ODHE and ODEW (CTE). This initiative creates additional Career-Technical Assurance Guides (CTAGs), or statewide articulation agreements, specifically for secondary high school students who complete agreed upon Career-Technical coursework and assessments. This is accomplished through curriculum alignment of secondary career-technical content standards and post-secondary coursework. Increasing the number of secondary career-technical articulation agreements encourages new and expanded post-secondary credit opportunities for secondary students in career-technical education, reduces the likelihood that a student would repeat technical content in which they can demonstrate knowledge and skill, and supports Ohio's comprehensive credit transfer system.

OOD offers Ohio College2Careers at all of Ohio's public colleges and universities to ensure students with disabilities have the support they need to complete their degree and/or credential, earn higher wages, and meet the demands of tomorrow's labor market.

Ohio's postsecondary institutions are encouraged to work with OhioMeansJobs Centers within their county and/or region to forge partnerships with other providers and share best practices to enhance student support services and learner success. The ODHE will also encourage postsecondary education providers to partner with other education and training providers that are a part of Ohio's Eligible Training Provider list when possible, and if it is in the best interest of the institution's mission and goals. Based on the institution's accreditation requirements, all partnerships must meet accreditor and ODHE policy and approval.

A key goal for the Title II Aspire services providers will be improving access to, and completion of, postsecondary credentials. An important means to address this goal will be to increase integrated education approaches through various programs such as the Adult Hight School Diploma Program (Credit Recovery), Adult Diploma Program (high school diploma and an industry credential), Integrated Education and Training (IET) programs, and Vocational English as a Second Language. Local Aspire providers will be updating the local career pathway plans in response to local needs. Providers will work with the State and local boards to clearly define

career pathways across the State that promote transition of adult education students into industry recognized credentials, licenses, and portable certificates.

Other ways in which the State has partnered with other education and training providers is through the USDOL Building State Capacity to Expand Apprenticeship through Innovation Grant. ODJFS was awarded a grant for over $9 million to expand registered apprenticeship (RA) in Ohio. The projected planned to build on the strength of ODJFS's existing partnerships with the ODHE, ODEW, The Ohio Workforce Association (OWA), and Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD).

The grant provided ODJFS the ability to create a mechanism that increased the state ability to meet both the workforce needs of individuals who want to pursue occupations through an apprenticeship, and the skill needs of Ohio's in-demand employers through Pre-Apprenticeship to Registered Apprenticeship Hubs.

The Pre-Apprenticeship Hubs were created to integrate ApprenticeOhio with our Local Workforce Areas. Serving as a catalyst to bring Pre-Apprenticeship providers for youth and adults to Ohio's Workforce Development system, the Hubs provide a full spectrum of services designed to assist pre-apprentices in obtaining the knowledge, skills, and abilities to be successful in a Registered Apprenticeship program. Highlights of the project include:

- Registered Apprenticeship Sponsor Incentive;
- Six pilot Pre-Apprenticeship to Registered Apprenticeship Hubs (Local Workforce Areas 1, 3, 11, 12, 14, and 20) focusing on providing training and wrap around partner services to pre-apprentices.
- Administrative support for the pilot Hubs;
- A workflow system for the ApprenticeOhio team and sponsors to connect real time on Registered Apprenticeship technical assistance and program development.
- A continued partnership with Ohio TechNet; aligned with Lorain County Community College's Scaling Apprenticeship Through Sector-Based Strategies.

An additional grant focusing on partner engagement with other institutions and training providers is another USDOL apprenticeship grant, Scaling Apprenticeship Through Sector-Based Strategies. On June 24, 2019, the USDOL awarded $183.8 million to private-public apprenticeship partnerships in information technology, advanced manufacturing, and healthcare. These grants will support the training of more than 85,000 apprentices in new or expanded apprenticeship programs and increase apprenticeship opportunities for all Americans. Recipients include colleges, universities, and state systems of higher education, in partnership with national industry associations, employers representing an industry sector, and other partners. Industry partners provide partial matching funds to the institutions to develop in-demand skills as part of these programs. Ohio had the most recipients, with three (3) institutions being awarded this grant:

- Columbus State Community College (and an additional 25 colleges and universities), partnering with 10 firms for information technology;

- Lorain County Community College, partnering with the Manufacturing Institute of the National Association of Manufacturers, the Ohio Manufacturers' Association, and the National Institute of Metalworking Skills for advanced manufacturing;
- University of Cincinnati (and an additional five (5) colleges), partnering with Northrup Grumman, IBM, GE Aviation, and four firms for information technology.

F. IMPROVING ACCESS TO POSTSECONDARY CREDENTIALS

Describe how the State's strategies will improve access to activities leading to recognized postsecondary credentials, including Registered Apprenticeship certificates. This includes credentials that are industry-recognized certificates, licenses or certifications, and that are portable and stackable.

Ohio will improve access to recognized postsecondary credentials, included Registered Apprenticeships, certificates, and licenses that are portable and stackable.

The State is currently working with partner agencies to identify lists of credentials maintained by each agency. OWT and the Governor's Office will work together to simplify and reduce the number of credential lists used across state government. The objective is to improve clarity for institutions of education and training providers that frequently use lists offered by the state, and to help job seekers make better-informed decisions about their career pathways. Moreover, Ohio will explore creating consistent methods and approaches for the core programs to use when vetting and approving training providers that offer instruction for the Industry-Recognized Credentials of Value.

Additionally, the State has reduced bureaucracy and increased access to apprenticeships by allowing an OTC, community college, higher education institution, or local workforce board to serve as a registered sponsor for an approved program. Ohio will now explore creating additional avenues for work-based training, such as flexible apprenticeships, internships, and co-op programs that will enable individuals to earn while they learn.

Other ways the State is improving access to post-secondary credentials is to assist individuals in obtaining a secondary diploma or its equivalent. The Adult Diploma Program provides job training and a new pathway for adults, ages 18 or older, to earn a high school diploma and industry credentials aligned to one of Ohio's in-demand jobs. What makes this program different from a traditional high school setting is the delivery of instruction to adults. Instead of measuring academic achievement through clock hours, seat time or credits earned, the focus is on a competency-based approach that provides a self-paced option. Once competencies have been learned, adults then demonstrate mastery of skill. Each eligible adult works with the provider to create a customized student success plan.

The Ohio Department of Education and Workforce is improving access to postsecondary credentials through new policy efforts. Governor Mike DeWine and Lt. Governor Jon Husted partnered with the General Assembly to create the Innovative Workforce Incentive Program, which is supported by a $32 million investment over the next two years. The program seeks to increase the number of high school students who earn industry-recognized

credentials in priority industry sectors. It offers schools additional dollars when students earn eligible credentials and implementation dollars to aid in establishing these programs.

Additionally, policy was created requiring schools to pay for all credentials earned by students and the department will reimbursement districts for credentials earned through industry credential reimbursement schedule annually.

The Department continues to promote approved Career-Technical Education senior only industry credential programs as a flexible option for districts to implement for seniors wanting to earn in an industry credential. Lastly, the prep for success school report card measure includes student industry credential attainment as part of the measure providing another incentive for districts to increase student access to industry credential programs.

Individual Microcredential Assistance Program Update

In July 2020, OWT, in partnership with the Ohio Department of Development, launched the Individual Microcredential Assistance Program (IMAP). This program reimburses training providers when an Ohioan who is partially or totally unemployed earns a technology-focused credential.

Training providers can include universities, colleges, Ohio technical centers, and private sector training businesses. They can be reimbursed up to $3,000 for each completed credential issued, up to $250,000 per provider. Eligible Ohioans work directly with the awarded training provider of their choice to enroll in the most suitable training program at no cost to them.

To date, more than $6.1 million has been awarded to 24 training providers to help up to 4,278 Ohioans. Additionally, of the 136 training programs offered, 128 can be completed online from anywhere in the state. This program is open for applications in November 2023.

Industry Sector Partnership Grant Update

The Ohio Industry Sector Partnership Grants illustrate an investment by Ohio to fill in-demand jobs and to diversify and grow a high-quality, dynamic workforce. The grants support new and existing collaborations between businesses, education and training providers, and other community leaders who are invested in improving their region’s workforce. These collaborations create a more skilled workforce and benefit both Ohioans and Ohio's job creators.

For the first three rounds of Industry Sector Partnership Grants, 38 partnerships have been awarded funds. The Industry Sector Partnerships represent various industries, including manufacturing and technology. The fourth round of applications is currently under review.

TechCred Update

TechCred is Ohio's innovative workforce program that reimburses employers for industry recognized, technology-focused, credentialed training programs and certificates. For the January 2024 round of TechCred, 438 Ohio employers were approved for funding with 108 employers joining the program for the first time, resulting in the opportunity for Ohio employees to earn up to 4,947 technology-focused credentials. The interest in the TechCred program shows there is a strong desire among business leaders to improve the skills of the workforce through short-term industry-recognized credentials. The credentials being earned by

Ohio workers will help both employees and businesses prepare for the future as well avert potential layoffs.

ApprenticeOhio Update

ApprenticeOhio, which is housed within the ODJFS Office of Workforce Development, registers and monitors apprenticeship programs that meet national criteria for quality and safety. The unit supports program sponsors, answers questions about the apprenticeship model, guides partners in developing programs, connects businesses to training providers, and assists with marketing outreach.

Registered Apprenticeship programs are industry-driven, high-quality career pathways where employers can develop their future workforce and individuals can obtain paid work experience, classroom instruction, and receive a nationally recognized credential. Ohio has impressive numbers and continues to be a national leader in Registered Apprenticeship programs:

- Currently, Ohio ranks third in the nation for the number of registered apprentices, with more than 21,000 apprentices enrolled. Of those enrolled, 1,806 are female, and 1,336 are veterans.
- Ohio was fourth in the nation for new apprentices in fiscal year 2023 (program year 2022), with approximately 7,000 new apprentices.
- Ohio graduated over 2,500 apprentices in fiscal year 2023.
- Ohio has 608 Registered Apprenticeship sponsors that administer apprenticeships in 267 occupations.

Traditionally, apprenticeships have primarily been offered in skilled trades, such as boilermakers, carpenters, electricians, glaziers, etc. However, a growing number of other occupations now offer apprenticeships, such as broadband and 5G, supply chain automation, cyber security, teaching, and government occupations.

ApprenticeOhio received a no-cost, year-long extension to the 2020 “Building State Capacity to Expand Apprenticeship through Innovation” grant to further strengthen the state’s Registered Apprenticeship system and expand the number of apprenticeship opportunities available for Ohioans. Among other things, the grant was used to develop pre-apprenticeship programs to teach basic technical and job readiness skills and help prepare participants for apprenticeship programs. Currently, Ohio has 145 active pre-apprenticeship programs.

ApprenticeOhio also received a State Apprenticeship Expansion Formula grant. The purpose of this grant is to increase the state’s ability to serve, improve, and strategically expand the National Apprenticeship System. Specifically, the grant will allow Ohio to expand the number of programs and apprentices, diversify the industries that utilize registered apprenticeship, and increase access to and completion of Registered Apprenticeships for underrepresented populations and underserved communities. The grant period is July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024.

To assist with expansion and recruitment efforts, five workforce development boards are serving as pre-apprenticeship hubs. Hubs work with employers and schools to meet local workforce needs. In each hub, at least one community provider delivers services and activities

directly to participants. ApprenticeOhio holds monthly technical assistance calls with the hubs to provide collaboration and support.

The OWD Bureau of Labor Market Information and ApprenticeOhio collaborated on a Statewide Registered Apprenticeship Dashboard. The dashboard is interactive and allows users access to a variety of statewide and local apprenticeship data. The dashboard is housed on OhioLMI.com and Apprenticeship in Ohio.

Additionally, ODJFS, the Ohio Department of Education, and the Ohio Department of Higher Education are working together to develop pre-apprenticeship programs for schools and to create efficient ways to share participant data. They formed a Tiger Team to better collaborate and maintain a common vision.

Expansion grant funds also were used to create a "Chat with Virtual Assistant" feature at Apprentice.Ohio.gov, to provide a quick and easy way for individuals to get answers to their questions about apprenticeships. The automated assistant, named "Antonio," was built with artificial intelligence software. Users can simply type in their questions or – to see categories of information – click "What can Antonio help you with?" This feature is beneficial not only to Ohioans, but also to ApprenticeOhio staff, who can now dedicate more time to providing complex technical assistance. 13

ApprenticeOhio also used expansion grant funds to offer training and tool reimbursement grants to eligible ApprenticeOhio sponsors and employers. Through July 31, 2023, sponsors and employers could apply for up to $25,000 each to help cover training and tool costs incurred since July 1, 2020. Sponsors and employers could receive reimbursement of up to $2,500 per apprentice.

G. COORDINATING WITH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

Describe how the activities identified in (A) will be coordinated with economic development entities, strategies, and activities in the State.

JobsOhio is a private, non-profit economic development corporation that is singularly focused on growing existing Ohio companies and attracting new businesses to the State. JobsOhio is led by a board of directors that is appointed by the governor to represent growth industries in the State. It works with a group of regional economic development partners, known collectively as the JobsOhio Network, to help drive job creation, retention, and new capital investment. With deep ties to local business communities, the six member JobsOhio Regional Network helps attract and support domestic and international businesses and connect them to the thriving industries operating in each region. This collaborative approach highlights each region's strengths while serving the entire state in attracting, growing, and serving companies in Ohio.

OWT and the core programs work closely with JobsOhio to ensure the business perspective drives the work of the entire workforce development system. Coordination of activities occurs both at the executive leadership and program execution levels. Lt. Governor Jon Husted, Director of the Governor's Office of Workforce Transformation, and JP Nauseef, President and Chief Executive Officer of JobsOhio meet regularly to coordinate strategic planning of workforce development and economic development activities at the state level. Specific examples of coordination between state workforce and education activities and economic development include:

- JobsOhio consults and provides input on determining Ohio's "In-Demand Jobs" list, which guides workforce spending. The shared "In-Demand Jobs" list is used across agencies, such as the Ohio Department of Higher Education, Ohio Department of Education and Workforce, and Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, to focus and shape programming scope.
- JobsOhio is represented on the credential approval panel for Ohio's TechCred program, helping to ensure that the program is focusing on credentials that are demanded by employers and will improve Ohio's strategic economic advantage.
- Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities' (Ohio's VR Program) regional Business Relations Specialists collaborate with the regional JobsOhio Project Managers to promote disability inclusion with JobsOhio business partners. These regional staff work together to promote OOD's services to business, including candidate sourcing, disability etiquette and awareness training, worksite accessibility services, and sourcing of college students with disabilities for internship opportunities. These staff plan and execute multiple virtual and in-person hiring events throughout the year.
- Higher Education Workforce Alignment group has regular/monthly/as needed meetings with JobsOhio to share updates, program sharing opportunities, and idea generation activities.
- JobsOhio focuses on nine key sectors, as well as opportunities within the military and federal areas: Advanced Manufacturing, Aerospace & Aviation, Automotive, Energy & Chemicals, Financial Services, Food & Agribusiness, Healthcare, Logistics & Distribution, and Technology JobsOhio provides insights to OWT and ODJFS on talent trends and needs from businesses in those key sectors.

While JobsOhio is Ohio's private economic development organization, Ohio Department of Development (ODOD) is the state's public economic development lead. ODOD plays a critical role in Ohio's overall workforce development efforts by administering TechCred and the College Tech Internship Program.

B. STATE OPERATING SYSTEMS AND POLICIES

Some content in this area is under revision.

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include a description of the State operating systems and policies that will support the implementation of the State strategy described in section **II Strategic Elements**. This includes—

1. THE STATE OPERATING SYSTEMS THAT WILL SUPPORT COORDINATED IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE STRATEGIES (E.G., LABOR MARKET INFORMATION SYSTEMS, DATA SYSTEMS, COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS, CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS, JOB BANKS, ETC.).

A key component of the combined plan is the ability to collect, maintain and update the critical information needed by all its stakeholders. Without timely, accurate, relevant, and accessible information, there can be no integration or efficiency in operation. There are several domains to the State operating systems:

1. **Program Implementation and Operational System.** Cross-agency alignment and provision of WIOA services requires a common system for program operation and provision of workforce services on a day-to-day basis. This promotes uniformity and consistency and increases efficiency through common tools and practice. As mentioned previously, OhioMeansJobs.com establishes a statewide brand to workforce development and serves as a virtual career exploration, career planning, talent acquisition and employment center. OhioMeanJobs.com is a hub that serves many different populations, programs, and entities. Through such an approach, OhioMeanJobs.com is a unifying agent, offering system-wide service covering programs within and external to the ODJFS.

OhioMeansJobs.com supports numerous State agencies and plays a role in implementing numerous programs, including:

- ODJFS Programs:
    - WIOA Title I Employment and Training
    - Title III W-P Employer Services
    - Veterans
    - Jobseekers
    - Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)
    - Foreign Labor Certification
    - Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers
    - Unemployment Insurance (UI)
    - Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) (UI-related)
    - Unemployment Compensation Reemployment Services (UCRS) (UI-related)
    - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
    - TANF Ohio Works First
    - CCMEP
    - Child Support
    - Workforce Professionals
    - ApprenticeOhio
    - OhioMeansSkills (local program)
- ODEW:
    - K-12 students, parents, and teachers
- ODHE:
    - Higher education students

- Aspire students

- OOD
  - VR participants
- SCSEP
  - Older worker participants
- Other Partners
  - Department of Rehabilitation and Correction
  - Department of Youth Services
  - Bureau of Workers' Compensation
  - Department of Veteran's Services
  - Department of Medicaid
  - OWT
  - Department of Children and Youth

2. **Labor Market Information (LMI) System.** The Ohio Bureau of Labor Market Information (BLMI) collects, analyzes, and publishes data and information regarding the Ohio labor force, industries and occupations. It is the primary source for measures of labor market activity in Ohio and its substate areas. The BLMI is housed within the Office of Workforce Development and supports workforce and strategic planning and policy and economic development by providing information to assist policy makers, businesses and jobseekers in their decision making and in developing strategies. BLMI maintains a dynamic website located at www.ohiolmi.com that provides data for individuals, workforce professionals, researchers and economic development. Customizable query tools allow visitors to find occupation, wage and industry data specific to their needs. BLMI also has the OhioLMI mobile application. The app, which is available for Apple products and Android phones and tablets, provides easy access to key metrics necessary to stay informed about the labor market in Ohio, including statewide labor force and payroll jobs estimates, and unemployment rates.

Ohio also maintains several non-traditional LMI data sources. The State publishes monthly reports using the Gartner TalentNeuron™ analytics platform. This real-time platform gathers labor demand data using its exclusive methodology to analyze online job posting trends and produce descriptive profiles of job ads organized by top employers, industries, occupations, and more. Correspondingly, Ohio offers resume trends and characteristics through Monster's TalentBank product. These reports are offered in standardized and custom formats for Ohio's workforce development community.

The Ohio Analytics Partnership is a cooperative arrangement between ODJFS, ODHE, ODEW, OOD, the Ohio Housing Finance Agency (OHFA), and The Ohio State University Center for Human Resource Research through which a longitudinal repository for data on workforce, housing and education is maintained. The resulting Ohio Longitudinal Data Archive (OLDA)

serves as a resource for State government and the larger research community for policy-relevant research and analysis on Ohio.

3. **Communication System.** State-level communication and information is distributed to workforce stakeholders across all workforce programs through an e-mail list developed and maintained by the OWT. Members of the e-mail distribution list include business leaders, legislators, policy makers, program administrators, non-profit organizations and more. The OWT is also using X (formerly known as Twitter), Facebook, and LinkedIn to communicate with employers, individuals, and workforce professionals. Currently, it has 2,468 followers on X, 856 on Facebook, and 4,276 on LinkedIn.

ODJFS disseminates information via a system of e-mail "alerts" to almost 2,000 Workforce Development Board members, staff and other workforce development professionals. These alerts notify subscribers of relevant information and additions to the Office of Workforce Development web site. This website is designed to target specific audiences, featuring access on the front page for employers, individuals seeking jobs, and workforce development professionals. All new Federal guidance is found through links on this website. In addition, all new Ohio draft guidance is posted on the website for public comment and then the final guidance is posted when approved. Ohio is utilizing additional communication systems as well. The OhioMeansJobs.com website is not just a job matching tool; it is also an important communication tool. Special events, job fairs, training workshops, and much more are featured on the home page and targeted to employers looking for talent and individuals seeking jobs. Ohio's Combined State Plan partners also have distribution lists for their programs, partners, and stakeholders.

Ohio leverages several social media platforms to promote workforce programs and to communicate with employers, individuals, and workforce professionals. The OhioMeansJobs.com accounts have over 51,000 followers, including over 32,000 followers on Facebook, over 9,000 on X (formerly known as Twitter), over 7,900 on LinkedIn, over 1,700 on Instagram, and over 700 subscribers on YouTube.

In addition to posting about the OhioMeansJobs.com tools and services available to employers and job seekers, Ohio uses social networking to post events, informative videos, and to answer questions from job seekers and employers.

Ohio also offers a comprehensive array of technical training through a cadre of speakers to disseminate state and national cutting-edge information. Ohio conducts quarterly regional training sessions to share information among various stakeholders and State agencies. These communication tools are in addition to the current array of Workforce Development Board Directors' Association meetings, fiscal managers meetings, workforce board meetings, and many committees that process and disseminate information through venues such as meeting minutes and local websites.

4. **Case Management and Data Collection System.** ARIES is an integrated case management system facilitating service delivery across programs including Title I employment and training, national dislocated worker and other special grants, Wagner-Peyser Employment Services, Rapid Response, Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG), Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker (MSFW), Foreign Labor Certification (FLC), TAA,

Registered Apprenticeship, and CCMEP. This integrated data is stored in a reporting database that provides "canned" and "ad hoc" reporting capabilities to its users.

OhioMeansJobs.com, the State's web-based self-service tool for both employers and individuals, improves Ohio's ability to help employers fill jobs more quickly, more efficiently, and with individuals who have the specific talent required for the job. More recently, OhioMeansJobs.com includes a portable case record and career plan, streamlining the process for individuals to seek service across programs, whether public, nonprofit, or private in nature.

WIOA VR participants are captured in AWARE, the OOD case management system. AWARE is a product of Alliance Data Systems and is used by vocational rehabilitation agencies in 38 states.

Fiscal System. County Finance Information System (CFIS) is a web-based format that allows CDJFS agencies and workforce development agencies to capture and report financial data in a way that is compatible with the State's financial system. It also gives county agencies and ODJFS the ability to "talk" to each other in the same financial language, using automated rather than manual processes. CFIS-Web has been operational since July 2012. Counties now have 24/7 access to CFIS reports and data, and ODJFS imports financial data from any county finance system. A module known as CFIS WIOA Client Tracking tracks expenses at the participant level, links the financial system to the case management system, tracks basic career services, and better aligns financial reporting with WIOA and Uniform Guidance requirements.

ARIES is a web-based application used to record activity for WIOA Title III Wagner-Peyser Employment Services and WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth participants. Within ARIES, case managers at OhioMeansJobs Centers can register an individual, calculate an individual's eligibility for WIOA Title I services, enroll them in Title I and Title III services, and track the jobseeker's post-exit activity. They can also record information about any special grants a jobseeker is eligible to receive. ARIES stores all recorded information in a reporting database that utilizes SAP Business Objects (BO) to provide various canned reports on customers, employers, providers, and staff activity. SAP BO is also utilized to provide application users the ability to create ad-hoc queries and data reports.
Staff can pick from the following options to view, enter, update or report on participants in the WIOA program:

- **Profile/Core tab.** Used to record basic information about jobseekers, including contact information, address, and employment status. One can also record financial, skill level, and other information required only for Title I youth. Certain information entered on this option is used to determine jobseekers' eligibility for Title I employment and training programs and special grants.

- **Profile/Education.** The Education tab isused to record jobseekers' education history and credentials received. ARIES does not require an education history for all jobseekers. Education data entered on this tab, as well other data elements, will populate the PIRL for the WIOA credential attainment measure. The Education tab also allows the case manager to upload supporting documentation for monitoring.

- **Profile/OMJ Career info & plans.** Used to display activities that the jobseeker has completed on OhioMeansJobs.com. These activities include Resume Data, Events,

Tutorials, Career Profile Assessment, Work Values Assessment, Budget Calculator, and Lifestyle Calculator.

- **OMJ Employment Opportunities.** Used to display and record all emailed job leads, jobs saved to the jobseeker's backpack on OhioMeansJobs.com, and staff entered job placements.
- **Experience Summary.** Used to display and record the jobseeker's employment experience, desired occupation(s), education attainment, and ADA modifications if needed. This information contains data entered by caseworkers and populated via interfaces to assist in efficient case management.
- **Goals.** Used to record performance, long-term, and short-term goals that the caseworker sets for the jobseeker to achieve. The goals are separated into Education and Employment goals. They are designed to be linked to complete short-term goals leading up to achieving the jobseekers' performance goal.
- **Dashboard/Customer Services tab.** Used to create a services plan for jobseekers and enroll jobseekers in services for Title I employment and training programs. One can also enroll jobseekers in services for grants. Jobseekers must be eligible for at least one Title I employment and training program or grant before one can access the Services menu option. Once one has completed all services and goals for a program or grant, one can close the program or grant. Once one closes each program or grant in which jobseekers are enrolled, the system will exit them 90 days after the last day of receiving their last service.
- **Post Exit and Wages**. Used to capture jobseekers' activity for up to four quarters after exit from WIOA. The information collection includes post-exit employment, enrollment in post-secondary education and credential or degree attainment.
- **Follow-Up.** Used to record follow-up services and activities.

OhioMeansJobs Center operators can query the SAP BO database to create any number of ad-hoc reports. SAP BO has a series of State-created reports that can be used or edited by local area staff including services provided, job placement, educational attainment, and primary performance measure reports.

Under Title IV's OhioMeansJobs Center partner program, OOD's VR program's case management system, AWARE, is used by vocational rehabilitation agencies in the majority of U.S. states. OOD also partners with ODJFS to obtain Ohio employment verification and wage data. It should be noted that access to only Ohio wage information limits the VR program from accurately identifying the full population of individuals employed after receiving services (i.e., individuals who may be employed out of state, overseas, with a Federal agency, or as an independent contractor are not in the Ohio wage file). OOD will continue to research opportunities to develop additional data collection activities that will support the accurate identification of the full population of individuals employed after receiving VR services, particularly those employed by Federal agencies, overseas business, or as independent contractors.

Under Title II's OhioMeansJobs partner program, the LACES (Literacy, Adult and Community Education System) is Aspire's online student information management system. The system

collects student information for local program and state-level reporting and allows local programs to manage students' educational activities and post-program outcomes. LACES contains a number of pre-set reports to address accountability processes and also allows users to download information sets to create custom queries and reports. All Aspire grantees are required to utilize LACES. Aspire partners with ODEW for high school equivalence credential verification, ODJFS for employment and wage verification, and ODHE to verify entry into post-secondary education.

Although TANF, SNAP, UI, and TAA have separate data systems, Ohio established various levels of interface with ARIES to capture relevant information for tracking and reporting purposes.

2. THE STATE POLICIES THAT WILL SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STATE'S STRATEGIES (FOR EXAMPLE. CO-ENROLLMENT POLICIES AND UNIVERSAL INTAKE PROCESSES WHERE APPROPRIATE). IN ADDITION, PROVIDE THE STATE'S GUIDELINES FOR STATE-ADMINISTERED ONE-STOP PARTNER PROGRAMS' CONTRIBUTIONS TO A ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM AND ANY ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR ONE-STOP PARTNER CONTRIBUTIONS.

All core programs have established state policies that support the implementation of the State's strategies and the establishment of the one-stop system. Specifically, there are several statewide strategies that are supported in State policy. The first is registration into OhioMeansJobs.com. Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Policy Letter (WIOAPL) No. 16-07 requires that OhioMeansJobs.com be utilized for labor exchange activities, which include job placement activities and resume posting for jobseekers and talent acquisition for employers. By having all jobseekers register into OhioMeansJobs.com to post resumes and to search for jobs, these jobseekers all gain access to many other career planning tools.

ORC 3304.71, 3333.92 and 6301.18 requires all consumers of WIOA Titles I and III employment and training programs, WIOA Title II Aspire, Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act (Perkins Act) programs, WIOA Title IV VR programs, and the State-administered SCSEP to enroll in OhioMeansJobs.com.

WIOAPL 15-11.3 focuses on the use of individual training accounts (ITAs) identifying the parameters of a local area ITA policy and standardizing the delivery of ITAs so local areas consistently provide training opportunities to participants leading to employment in an in-demand occupation. The policy requires that each program year at least 85 percent of new ITA enrollments for each local area must be in an in-demand occupation or critical job as defined by the State. Critical jobs are determined through state strategic priority and considered critical to the health and well-being of Ohioans, their families, and our communities. Ohio's Top Jobs List includes both In-Demand Jobs and Critical Jobs. The Top Jobs link provides access to in-demand occupation and critical jobs data: https://topjobs.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/indemand/top-jobs-list. This policy ensures that training funds are utilized for training in occupations that are more likely to lead to permanent employment for participants.

Each LWDB, by law, has representation from Aspire (Title II), Wagner-Peyser Employment Services (Title III), Vocational Rehabilitation (Title IV), as well as higher education entities. This has increased the collaboration between the core program and other OhioMeansJobs Center partners to implement statewide strategies of robust intake and referral processes, integration

of partners within the OhioMeansJobs Centers, and the development of regional and local combined plans that are responsive to the needs of students, adults, and employers within their community. WIOAPL No. 16-03, Regional and Local Planning, provides the guidelines for engaging in the local and regional planning as well as completion of these plans.

Further, each LWDB reviews and provides feedback on Title II's (Aspire) grant applications to ensure that the proposals area in line with the state and LWDB's workforce strategy.

Co-enrollment is another important way Ohio is opening the lines of communication among workforce partners, providing for additional funding for services as well as increasing access to more services. WIOA emphasizes integrating services to better serve workforce customers. The TAA regulations further this effort by requiring the co-enrollment of trade-affected workers with the WIOA DW program. In accordance with 20 CFR Part 618, co-enrollment is mandated between the TAA Program and WIOA DW program and it strongly encourages co-enrollment in other programs to ensure coordinated services for trade-affected workers. To mandate this requirement, Ohio published WIOA Policy Letter 22-01 Guidance on Trade Adjustment Assistance and WIOA Dislocated Worker Co- Enrollment on September 27, 2022, to communicate the procedures for co-enrolling recipients of Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program services into the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Dislocated Worker (DW) program. Like the TAA Program, the WIOA DW program is designed to help dislocated workers overcome barriers to employment and return to work as quickly as possible. When individuals become dislocated due to job loss, mass layoffs, global trade dynamics, or transitions in economic sectors, the WIOA DW program provides services to assist them in re-entering the workforce. Services for dislocated workers include career, training, and supportive services to help them re-enter the workforce.

In the CCMEP, co-enrollment is greatly encouraged to allow youth participants access to TANF services and funds in addition to Title I employment and training services and funds. This streamlines eligibility and provides participants with increased access to other supportive services that can be paid for with either funding stream. The Ohio Administrative Code rules that govern CCMEP outline the requirements for co-enrollment.

Ohio collaborated the core partners and the LWDB directors to create a policy to address infrastructure funding processes as well as the State funding mechanism, should it need to be implemented. WIOAPL No. 16-06 State Mechanism for Funding OhioMeansJobs Center Infrastructure Costs provides guidelines to apply a cap for partner contributions for infrastructure costs based on the WIOA requirements but also allows for annual increases (supported by documentation) that maintain the cap levels. The policy allows for local negotiation for non-infrastructure costs such as personnel and shared services above the required infrastructure caps.

3. STATE PROGRAM AND STATE BOARD OVERVIEW

Some content in this area is under revision.

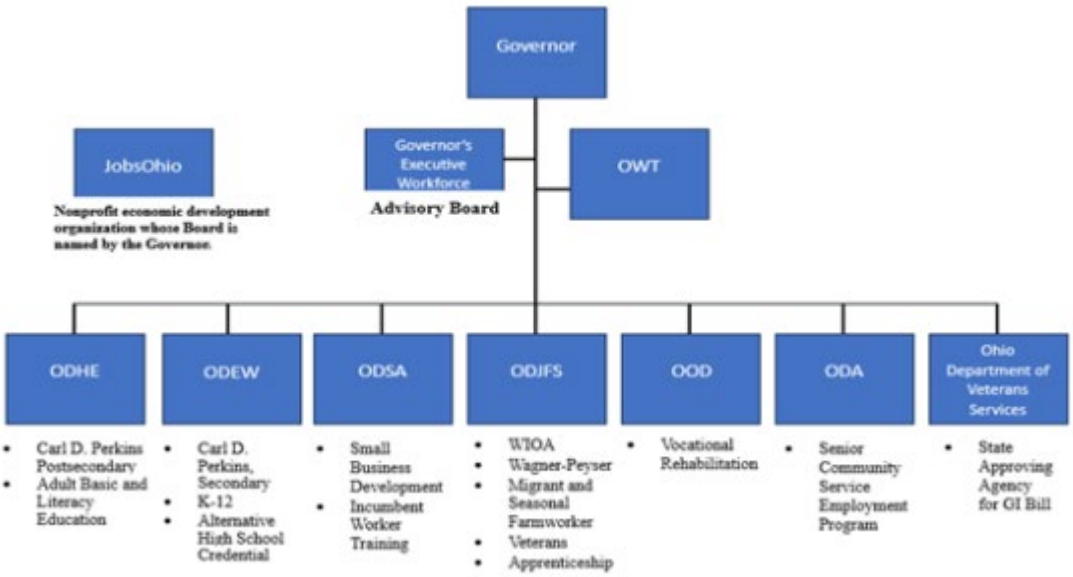
A. STATE AGENCY ORGANIZATION

Describe the organization and delivery systems at the State and local levels for the programs covered in the plan, including the organizational structure. Include an organizational chart.

An organizational chart that delineates the relationship to the governor of the agencies involved in the workforce investment system, including education and economic development and the required and optional partner programs managed by each agency is provided below in **Figure 22. Organizational Structure of Ohio's Workforce Development Office and Agencies.**

OWT, whose Director is Lt. Governor Husted, is charged with coordinating and aligning workforce programs, policies and resources across the State. The OWT office has four full-time staff members. OWT and its partner agencies work collaboratively to coordinate the State's workforce system to promote seamless services for both employers and individuals.

Figure 22. Organizational Structure of Ohio's Workforce Development Office and Agencies



The State's workforce system also includes LWDBs and OhioMeansJobs Centers, OhioMeansJobs.com, employer training programs, economic development organizations, and faith- and community-based organizations as well as adult basic education programs, career centers, two-year and four-year colleges, and universities. Each entity is charged by both Federal and State policies and laws to ensure business engagement.

At the local level, Title I employment and training programs are governed by 20 LWDBs, whose membership is primarily made up of business representatives. Customers access services through the 22 comprehensive OhioMeansJobs Centers that include all mandated partner services and approximately 64 affiliate centers throughout the State. Coordination and alignment occur at the State and local levels and are documented through MOU, interagency initiatives, and regular meetings, which include business and business interest.

B. STATE BOARD

Provide a description of the State Board activities that will assist State Board members and staff in carrying out State Board functions effectively. Also, provide a membership roster for the State Board consistent with 20 CFR 679.110-120, including members' organizational affiliations and position titles.

The narrative content below is under revision.

The Governor's Executive Workforce Board (GEWB) was created to advise the governor and the Governor's Office of Workforce Transformation (OWT) on the development, implementation, and continuous improvement of Ohio's workforce system. Each member is involved in planning and implementing the State's workforce development system as required under both Federal law and section 6301.04 of the Ohio Revised Code (ORC), including:

- Providing oversight and policy direction to ensure State workforce development activities are aligned and serving the needs of the State's employers, incumbent workers, and jobseekers;
- Developing, implementing, and modifying the State workforce development plan;
- Reviewing statewide workforce policies and programs and recommendations on actions to be taken by the State to align workforce development program to support a comprehensive and streamlined workforce development system;
- Recommending measures for development and continuous improvement of the workforce development system in the State, including updating comprehensive State performance accountability measures, also known as workforce success measures;
- Continuing to identify and disseminate information on promising practices in the area of workforce development; and
- Performing other related work that is required of the board by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) or requested by the governor.

The GEWB has adopted by-laws to guide its work. Board members engage communities, state agencies, and stakeholders in Ohio to identify ways to prepare Ohioans with skills needed for the current and future nature of work. Committees are formed to conduct deep-dives into specific subject matter of interest.

Below is the Membership Roster of the Governor's Executive Workforce Board (GEWB), including members' affiliations:

- Governor Mike DeWine, Governor of Ohio
- Andrea Kramer, President, City Apparel
- Andrea White, State Representative
- Bill Reineke, State Senator, Ohio Senate (26th District)
- Brett Burgett, President & Co-CEO, CK Construction
- Chad Minor, Chief of Workforce Strategies and Associate Chief Caregiver Officer at Cleveland Clinic
- Craig Mathes, Vice President of Safety, Human Resources, and Business
- Dan Luston, Vice President and Chief of Human Resources

- Dan Meyer, CEO, Nehemiah Manufacturing
- Dave Levacy, Fairfield County Commissioner
- Deborah Saunders, Library Director, Dr. Samuel L. Bossard Memorial Library
- DJ Swearingen, State Representative
- Don Mason, Mayor of Zanesville
- Dr. John Marschhausen, Superintendent, Dublin City Schools
- Dr. Para Jones, President, Stark State College
- Eric Burkland, President, Ohio Manufacturers' Association
- Gordon M. Gough, President & CEO, Ohio Council of Retail Merchants
- Kenneth Field, Training Director, Cleveland Electrical Joint Apprenticeship & Training Committee
- Kevin Hoggatt, Intel's Director of State Government Affairs for Ohio
- Kevin Miller, Executive Director, Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities
- Lydia Mihalik, Director, Ohio Department of Development
- Maggie Hess, Executive Director, Ohio Association of Career Technical Superintendents
- Matt Damschroder, Director, Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS)
- Melissa Wideman, Vice President ESG Initiatives for the CVG Airport Authority
- Meredith Reffey, Honda-Ohio State University Partnership Government & Industry Relations American Honda Motor Co., Inc.
- Michael Bertolone, Business Manager, International Union of Operating Engineers, Local 18
- Michael Linton, Principal, Accurate Heating and Cooling
- Mick Given, CEO, Ferguson Construction Company
- Mike Knisley, Secretary & Treasurer, Ohio State Building and Construction Trades Council
- Neville Pinto, President, University of Cincinnati
- Pat Tiberi, CEO, Ohio Business Roundtable
- Mike Duffey, Chancellor, Ohio Department of Higher Education
- Rocky Parker, Senior External Affairs Officer - Nationwide Insurance
- Scot McLemore, Executive in Residence for Columbus State Community College

- Sean Dunn, President, Sean P. Dunn & Associates, LLC
- Shana Marbury, General Counsel and Senior Vice President, Education and Workforce, Greater Cleveland Partnership
- Stephanie Kunze, State Senator, Ohio Senate (16th District)
- Trace Fraley, Plant Manager, King Kutter Inc.

4. ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION OF PROGRAMS AND ONE-STOP PROGRAM PARTNERS

A. ASSESSMENT OF CORE AND ONE-STOP PROGRAM PARTNER PROGRAMS.

Describe how the core programs will be assessed each year based on State performance accountability measures described in section 116(b) of WIOA. Describe how other one-stop delivery system partner program services and Combined State Plan partner programs included in the plan will be assessed each year. This State assessment must include the quality, effectiveness, and improvement of programs broken down by local area or provider. Such state assessments should take into account local and regional planning goals.

The State's assessment of core programs uses the US Department of Labor's (USDOL) performance criteria that build in accountability through appropriate performance and outcome standards for Ohio, each region and local area. The State has utilized the following WIOA Primary Performance Measures for all WIOA core programs: Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Aspire, VR, and W-P. (Note: W-P will be excluded from performance measures 4 and 5).

1. Employment 2nd Quarter After Exit: The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program.

- For Youth: Placement in Employment or Education 2nd Quarter After Exit: The percentage of program participants who are in education or training activities, or in unsubsidized employment, during the second quarter after exit from the program.

2. Employment 4th Quarter After Exit: The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program

- For Youth: Placement in Employment or Education 4th Quarter After Exit: The percentage of program participants who are in education or training activities, or in unsubsidized employment, during the fourth quarter after exit from the program.

3. Median Earnings: The median earnings of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program.

4. Credential / Diploma: The percentage of program participants who obtain a recognized postsecondary credential, or a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent during participation in or within one year after exit from the program. Program participants who obtain a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent shall be included in the percentage counted as meeting the criterion if such participants, in addition to obtaining such diploma or its recognized equivalent, have obtained or retained employment or are in an education or training program leading to a recognized postsecondary credential within one year after exit from the program.

5. Skill Gains: The percentage of program participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains toward such a credential or employment.

6. Serving Employers: The indicators of effectiveness in serving employers.

ODJFS will continue to negotiate performance standards biennially with USDOL and in turn will require local areas to submit proposed performance standards for the Title I performance measures. Ohio will send a biennial memo to each local area instructing them on procedures for negotiating their local performance standards. Ohio's performance level goals for these primary performance measures will help Ohio achieve continuous improvement for each new program year.

Ohio's Title I Youth performance level goals will be negotiated taking into account WIOA's focus on out-of-school youth, as well as the State's focus on traditionally harder-to-serve youth and young adults in coordination with the TANF program to establish the Ohio's CCMEP.

For the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs, Ohio will set performance goals that will balance the commitment to continuous performance improvement while recognizing current economic conditions. With Ohio's economic outlook improving, Ohio will be concentrating on enrolling the harder to serve individuals, making it imperative for Ohio to continually improve programs and service delivery strategies in order to achieve our goals.

In addition to the measuring the annual performance outcomes, quarterly progress is measured, and these interim reports are shared with the local areas. The local areas use these reports to identify any areas for improvement before they become problematic. Should local areas fall significantly behind on their goals, they will be required to submit a performance improvement plan outlining the steps needed to bring their performance outcomes up to standards.

As required in the 20 CFR § 679.260, Ohio developed a State-established definition of meets and fails for performance assessment. These definitions changed compared to prior years.

WIOA One-Stop partner programs, such as VR and Aspire will use the same primary performance outcome measures. However, each program will negotiate its own statewide and local standards. The failure of any of the six WIOA core programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Aspire, VR, and W-P) on their established statewide performance standards could potentially lead to sanctions in the form of reduced WIOA funding to the State, which would apply to all of the WIOA core programs. Additional partner programs, such as TAA program and SCSEP will use their own performance measures, standards and monitoring for program compliance and improvement.

Ohio Department of Aging and its local partners plan to develop and implement a survey to measure the experience and interaction SCSEP participants and other older jobseekers have with OhioMeansJobs Centers. The results will be shared with OhioMeansJobs Center operators and partners to support continuous improvement of service delivery to customers.

Local areas are required to select or procure providers to deliver services to program participants. The performance outcomes of each service provider will be established by each local area with the State providing assistance with data analysis and technical guidance. Ultimately, however, responsibility for successfully meeting the established WIOA primary

performance outcome measures will fall on each local area at the area-wide level and not at the provider level.

Assuring State assessments, for One-Stop Program Partner Programs, consider local and regional planning goals follow the same principles and practices as with core programs. The major difference is that there are additional levels of coordination and communication around planning and goal setting. This involves recognition and coordination among:

- State-level partner programs.
- OhioMeansJobs Center and local partner programs.
- Local entities and procured service providers.

There are different levels of authority in executing program objectives. The role of State program partners and GEWB oversight is to provide policy, guidance, and technical assistance in assuring successful coordination and communication. With this, information will be available to provide State assessments that take into account local and regional planning goals in the same manner as with core programs.

B. PREVIOUS ASSESSMENT RESULTS

For each four-year state plan and state plan modification, provide the results of assessments of the effectiveness of the core programs and other one-stop partner programs and Combined State Plan partner programs included in the Unified or Combined State plan during the preceding 2-year period (i.e. the 2-year period of the plan modification cycle), in accordance with methods described in 4(A). Describe how the State is adapting its strategies based on these assessments.

The Performance Outcome data for the past three years is represented in **Figure 23. Performance Outcomes.**

Figure 23. Performance Outcomes

Wagner-Peyser	PY2020	PY2021	PY2022
Total Served	8,693	12,118	9,835
Employment 2nd Qtr After Exit	67.30%	64%	72.40%
Employment 4th Qtr After Exit	66.20%	57.00%	70.90%
Median Earnings 2nd Qtr After Exit	$7,443	$8,053	$9,644
Adult	**PY2020**	**PY2021**	**PY2022**
Total Served	9,182	9,838	11,524
Measurable Skills Gains	67.70%	53.10%	69.10%
Employment 2nd Qtr After Exit	75.80%	76.40%	75.40%

Wagner-Peyser	PY2020	PY2021	PY2022
Employment 4th Qtr After Exit	74.10%	73.30%	75.80%
Median Earnings 2nd Qtr After Exit	$6,786	$7,653	$7,869
Credential Attainment	74.20%	66.30%	72.60%
Dislocated Worker	**PY2020**	**PY2021**	**PY2022**
Total Served	3,442	2,848	1,809
Measurable Skills Gains	67.10%	58.80%	62.50%
Employment 2nd Qtr After Exit	75.10%	76.60%	74.90%
Employment 4th Qtr After Exit	75.10%	77.30%	76.40%
Median Earnings 2nd Qtr After Exit	$8,803	$9,458.00	$9,754
Credential Attainment	77.30%	69.40%	74.50%
Youth	**PY2020**	**PY2021**	**PY2022**
Total Served	8,570	8,331	8,895
Measurable Skills Gains	53.90%	42.10%	61.50%
Employment 2nd Qtr After Exit	71.70%	70.10%	72.40%
Employment 4th Qtr After Exit	72.70%	69.00%	71.40%
Median Earnings 2nd Qtr After Exit	$3,171	$3,457	$3,941
Credential Attainment	56.50%	53.80%	51.60%
ASPIRE	**PY2021**	**PY2022**	**PY2023**
Enrolled Participants	16,539	18,984	23,290
Measurable Skills Gains	42.14%	44.61%	45.47%
Employment 2nd Qtr After Exit	41.17%	62.36%	40.37%
Employment 4th Qtr After Exit	42.25%	29.78%	46.24%
Median Earnings 2nd Qtr After Exit	$4,542	$1,789	$6,073
Attained Secondary School Diploma/Equivalent and Enrolled in Postsecondary	1.27%	3.73%	5.11%

Wagner-Peyser	PY2020	PY2021	PY2022
Education or Training Within One Year of Exit			
Attained a Secondary School Diploma/Equivalent and Employed Within One Year of Exit	21.13%	13.35%	16.73%
Vocational Rehabilitation	**PY2020**	**PY2021**	**PY2022**
Total Served	27,085	25,878	26,881
Employment 2nd Qtr After Exit	57.6%	54.3%	67.5%
Employment 4th Qtr After Exit	53.3%	58.1%	62.5%
Median Earnings 2nd Qtr After Exit	50.5%	55.0%	60.4%
Credential Attainment	$2,900	$3,262	$3,411

ODJFS has utilized outcome data as a tool to evaluate the state and local workforce area implementation of WIOA programs. Local workforce areas have been in receipt of performance trainings, interim reports, and technical assistance provided by the state designed improve operations to produce successful programmatic outcomes. Additionally, performance data is utilized to develop strategies on state and local program delivery and coordination efforts across partner programs.

The Aspire office has adapted strategies to improve these outcomes by providing targeted technical assistance to local programs, monitoring performance with the local provider at least quarterly, and offering evidence-based professional development for practitioners to improve teaching and learning. In addition, the Aspire office is no longer using the standard geographic regional program division and has focused program assignments to provide stronger technical assistance and additional tailored supports to strengthen Aspire performance outcomes. Data continues to strengthen post 2020.

OOD has been working continuously to implement various WIOA alignment activities. The strategies used to achieve our goals in terms of the negotiated performance measures above have all been similar in nature. This has involved a significant investment of staff time participating in training related to new policies, procedures, federal reporting requirements, and case management upgrades. OOD has kept a key focus on ensuring our staff have the necessary training and tools be successful with our performance. In addition to training, OOD has utilized compliance reports, activity reminders in our case management system, email reminders, job aids, FAQs, and Supervisor targeted case reviews to ensure these indicators stay at the forefront of all staff. OOD has also aligned performance evaluation goals for staff with these negotiated performance measures. In addition, OOD has implemented several upgrades to the AWARE case management system that have been necessary to allow OOD to report on these WIOA performance accountability indicators. OOD has been able to submit the required quarterly RSA-911 report for both open and closed cases by the deadlines established by RSA.

OOD continues to work with state level partners to implement data sharing agreements that will facilitate the most efficient and accurate data reporting possible, with a particular focus on the credential and measurable skill gains indicators. Staff have done an excellent job of meeting the needs of individuals served by the VR program while at the same time focusing on these performance indicators.

ODE and ODHE will continuously make meaningful progress toward improving the performance of all career-technical education students, including subgroups and special populations, the State will use Perkins leadership funds to monitor, evaluate and create improvement tools to be used at the local level across the State. Activities include, but are not limited to:

- Using the State career-technical planning district report card to evaluate local district performance and the results of improvement efforts;
- Managing the Quality Program Review process to ensure programs meet the State's in compliance' benchmark;
- Piloting regional equity labs to assist districts in evaluating and interpreting performance target data to ensure all students have meaningful access to and are engaged in high-quality career-technical education programs and performing to their potential in those programs;
- Using Quality Program Standards for career-technical education to identify gaps in indicators directly related to student achievement;
- Identifying thematic disparities and gaps in subgroups and special populations performance and developing targeted assistance that can be used across all affected districts;
- Holding programs accountable for performance measures targeting student attainment of technical and academic knowledge and skills.

C. EVALUATION

Describe how the State will conduct evaluations and research projects of activities carried out in the State under WIOA core programs; how such projects will be coordinated with, and designed in conjunction with, State and local boards and with State agencies responsible for the administration of all respective core programs; and, further, how the projects will be coordinated with the evaluations provided for by the Secretary of Labor and the Secretary of Education under WIOA (WIOA Section 116(e)).

Ohio is committed to developing an evidence-based workforce system. Evaluation and research projects on activities under the WIOA core programs first requires access to relevant data. Ohio has a considerable history in supporting State, Federal and external research and program evaluations through access to relevant data streams by way of information sharing agreements. Ohio has every intention of maintaining this approach. This capability has been enhanced through the Workforce Data Quality Initiative (WDQI) grant and the creation of the Ohio Longitudinal Data Archive (OLDA) Partnership. The OLDA Partnership is a historical, cross-agency archive of administrative program data, with the specific objective of supporting policy analysis, research and program transparency (dashboards).

The OLDA Partnership has also led to coordination among State agencies in established priority research interests, as well as conducting specific research projects. This has included the OWD, ODJFS, ODEW, ODHE, and OOD. This can easily be extended under the WIOA umbrella by incorporating input and guidance from the Core State Programs, OWT, GEWB, and representatives from local and regional areas, particularly the Workforce Development Board of Directors.

In an effort to develop an evidence-based workforce system, Ohio is looking forward to establishing evidence-based strategies within the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program.

Ohio is currently partnering with Abt Associates, who is providing technical assistance and guidance to states and helping them adopt a culture of evidence and align their FY 2023 RESEA State Plans and program design with federal evaluation and evidence-based requirements. Through this partnership, Ohio is developing an evaluation to learn whether there are differences between unemployment insurance claimants who: 1) receive RESEA services as delivered today, 2) received RESEA services with enhanced workshop experiences, and 3) did not receive any RESEA services.

The evaluator for this study is The Ohio State University (OSU). A workgroup was formed to include RESEA program administrators, OSU staff, and local WIOA Title I delivery staff, and leadership. The workgroup is developing a workshop to help job seekers understand the job market and undertake more impactful job searches.

A randomized controlled trial will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the RESEA program, including an implementation and impact study. A pilot study is planned to begin in 2024, with statewide randomization of 30,000 unemployment claimants to begin shortly thereafter.

Additionally, in PY 23, ODJFS partnered with the Ohio Workforce Association and the local workforce development board directors to fund an evaluation of program performance for CCMEP, Ohio's WIOA youth program. This evaluation leverages a mixed-methods approach, with both a participant outcomes study and an implementation study to provide qualitative context to the findings.

The implementation approach will assess fidelity, identify best practices, present expansion opportunities, uncover challenges, and document solutions. It will include state- and county-level components, including document reviews, surveys, and interviews with staff, as well as focus groups with staff and participants. This evaluation will also review data for specialized groups – including racial groups and cash assistance recipients – to identify opportunities to improve equity. It will also look specifically at Ohio's coaching case management model, which is being implemented statewide, with over half of counties currently using it.

The outcome examines five years of data (PY2017 to PY2021) to identify the characteristics, types of services offered and received, and outcomes of CCMEP participants. The study's findings will provide insights into how well the program recruited and served young adults. This evaluation, and the accompanying report, is scheduled to be completed by April 2024.

State partners have collaborated with one another on grant opportunities, specifically with the apprenticeship expansion grant. These collaborations have led to a joint effort to evaluate such

programs as required by USDOL, requiring each entity to collect, analyze, and report data on the progress and effectiveness of the project.

Additionally, each core program uses their performance data to measure success or to identify areas of improvement for the implementation of the program.

Ohio will readily share research and evaluation pertinent to WIOA with Federal Departments of Labor and Education. Ohio will also continue to coordinate with Federal research interest, whether specific to grant required program evaluation studies or more broadly envisioned analysis or policy research.

5. DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS FOR CORE PROGRAMS

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

A. FOR TITLE I PROGRAMS

Provide a description of the written policies that establish the State's methods and factors used to distribute funds to local areas for—

I. YOUTH ACTIVITIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH WIOA SECTION 128(B)(2) OR (B)(3)

The Title I Adult and Youth formula distribution methods comply with the statutory allocation method described in WIOA. After removing the portion of funding for statewide activities, the remaining funds are distributed among the local areas using three factors. Each of the following factors distributes one third of the total allocation:

- Relative number of unemployed individuals in areas of substantial unemployment compared to the total number of individuals in areas of substantial unemployment (where substantial unemployment is an area with average unemployment of at least 6.5 percent for the most recent 12 months);
- Relative excess number of unemployed individuals in each area compared to the total excess number of unemployed individuals (where excess unemployed is the number of unemployed individuals exceeding 4.5 percent of the area's civilian labor force); or the number of unemployed individuals in excess of 4.5 percent of the civilian labor force in ASUs in such local area; and
- Relative number of disadvantaged population (either Adults or Youth in accordance with the relevant WIOA Title I funding stream) living in each area compared to the total number of disadvantaged population (where disadvantaged Adults are individuals age 22 to 72 and disadvantaged Youth are individuals age 14 through 21, with income or in a family with income that does not exceed the poverty line or 70 percent of the lower living standard income level for the family size, whichever is less).

Hold harmless provision.

The hold harmless provision mandates that each area's percentage share of the local funds must equal at least 90 percent of the area's percentage share averaged over the prior two years. If, after applying the above factors, an area's planned share of the local allocations is below 90 percent of its prior two-year average share, the allocations for the other areas must be reduced

on a prorated basis and shifted to the area being held harmless until no area's share is less than the mandated 90 percent of its prior two-year share (Each area must receive 90% of the area's share in the past two years averaged).

If the amount of the WIOA funds appropriated in a fiscal year are not sufficient to provide the amount specified in previous paragraph to all local areas, ODJFS will proportionately reduce the amounts allocated to each local area.

II. ADULT AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH WIOA SECTION 133(B)(2) OR (B)(3)

The Title I Adult and Youth formula distribution methods comply with the statutory allocation method described in WIOA. After removing the portion of funding for statewide activities, the remaining funds are distributed among the local areas using three factors. Each of the following factors distributes one third of the total allocation:

- Relative number of unemployed individuals in areas of substantial unemployment compared to the total number of individuals in areas of substantial unemployment (where substantial unemployment is an area with average unemployment of at least 6.5 percent for the most recent 12 months);
- Relative excess number of unemployed individuals in each area compared to the total excess number of unemployed individuals (where excess unemployed is the number of unemployed individuals exceeding 4.5 percent of the area's civilian labor force); or the number of unemployed individuals in excess of 4.5 percent of the civilian labor force in ASUs in such local area; and
- Relative number of disadvantaged population (either Adults or Youth in accordance with the relevant WIOA Title I funding stream) living in each area compared to the total number of disadvantaged population (where disadvantaged Adults are individuals age 22 to 72 and disadvantaged Youth are individuals age 16 through 21, with income or in a family with income that does not exceed the poverty line or 70 percent of the lower living standard income level for the family size, whichever is less).

Hold harmless provision.

The hold harmless provision mandates that each area's percentage share of the local funds must equal at least 90 percent of the area's percentage share averaged over the prior two years. If, after applying the above factors, an area's planned share of the local allocations is below 90 percent of its prior two-year average share, the allocations for the other areas must be reduced on a prorated basis and shifted to the area being held harmless until no area's share is less than the mandated 90 percent of its prior two-year share (Each area must receive 90% of the area's share in the past two years averaged).

If the amount of the WIOA funds appropriated in a fiscal year are not sufficient to provide the amount specified in previous paragraph to all local areas, ODJFS will proportionately reduce the amounts allocated to each local area.

III. DISLOCATED WORKER EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH WIOA SECTION 133(B)(2) AND BASED ON DATA AND WEIGHTS ASSIGNED

For the Title I Dislocated Worker funding distribution, the State withdraws the portion of funds for statewide activities and Rapid Response and distributes the remainder to the local areas using six statistical factors, each with an assigned weight that determines the percentage of the total to be allocated by each factor. **Figure 24. Six Statistical Factors for Dislocated Worker Funding Distribution** lists the factors, their weights, and the statistic used to determine each county's ratio to the statewide total.

Figure 24. Six Statistical Factors for Dislocated Worker Funding Distribution

Factor	Weight	Statistic
1. UI Claimants	30 percent	Relative number of unemployment insurance claimants, most recent January – December
1. Unemployment Concentrations	20 percent	Relative number of excess unemployed individuals adjusted by ratio of county average unemployment rate to excess unemployment baseline (4.5 percent)
2. Plant Closings and Mass Layoffs (both Non WARN and WARN)	10 percent total	Relative number of displaced workers (three-year average) affected by layoffs that are not subject to WARN Act reporting, tracked using State's Rapid Response database Relative number of displaced workers (three-year average) affected by layoffs that are subject to WARN Act reporting
3. Declining Industries	5 percent	Relative number of jobs lost within industries experiencing declining employment
4. Farmer-Rancher Economic	5 percent	Relative share of deficits

Factor	Weight	Statistic
Hardship		between farm earnings and the Federal poverty guideline for a family of four multiplied by number of farms
5. Long-Term Unemployment	30 percent	Relative number of unemployment insurance claimants who have received benefits for 15 or more weeks.

Hold harmless provision.

The hold harmless provision mandates that each area's percentage share of the local funds must equal at least 90 percent of the area's percentage share averaged over the prior two years. If, after applying the above factors, an area's planned share of the local allocations is below 90 percent of its prior two-year average share, the allocations for the other areas must be reduced on a prorated basis and shifted to the area being held harmless until no area's share is less than the mandated 90 percent of its prior two-year share (Each area must receive 90% of the area's share in the past two years averaged).

If the amount of the WIOA funds appropriated in a fiscal year are not sufficient to provide the amount specified in previous paragraph to all local areas, ODJFS will proportionately reduce the amounts allocated to each local area

B. FOR TITLE II

I. DESCRIBE THE METHODS AND FACTORS THE ELIGIBLE AGENCY WILL USE TO DISTRIBUTE TITLE II FUNDS.

The ODHE Aspire Adult Education program office will award multi–year AEFLA (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) grants on a competitive basis, every three years, to eligible providers. After year one of the grant cycle, ODHE retains the right to grant recipients for up to two consecutive fiscal years. All providers will be subject to the same funding cycles. An eligible provider is an organization that has demonstrated effectiveness in providing adult education activities to eligible individuals and may include: a local education agency; a community-based or faith-based organization; a volunteer Literacy organization; an institution of higher education; a public or private nonprofit agency; a library; a public housing authority; a nonprofit institution with the ability to provide adult education and Literacy services; a consortium or coalition or agencies, organizations, institutions, libraries, or authorities described above; and a partnership between an employer and an entity described above.

An eligible provider must establish that it has demonstrated effectiveness through performance data on its record of improving the skills of eligible individuals, particularly those who have low levels of Literacy in the content domains of reading, writing, mathematics, English language acquisition, and other subject areas relevant to the services contained in the application for funds. An eligible provider must also provide information regarding its outcomes for the participants related to employment, attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized

equivalent, and transition to postsecondary education and training. ODHE will use a checklist to determine if an applicant has demonstrated effectiveness. If affirmative, the application will be forwarded for review, scoring, and consideration for funding.

Census data regarding the eligible population in each county and the projected enrollment to be served of the eligible population is factored into the funding decision. Past performance holds a weighted point value in the Aspire competitive grant application since quality education and successful performance outcomes are essential. Applicants must provide statistical evidence of program effectiveness for the prior three years related to successful student outcomes of academic gains, attainment of a secondary diploma/equivalent, employment, and transitions to postsecondary education and training.

The first WIOA 3-year AELFA grant cycle was implemented July 1, 2018, and covered PY 2018 – PY 2020. The state office prepared for a new grant cycle in spring 2021 by opening the Aspire Instructional, IELCE, and Corrections education grants for competitive bid. Grant applications for PY 2021 – 2023 were posted on the ODHE website on the Grant Resources and Requests for Proposals webpage. In addition, applications were posted on the ODHE Aspire website along with a plethora of grant resources. After passing the Demonstrated Effectiveness screening, proposals were evaluated by a review panel of national adult education content experts using an established point rating system. Grant resources remain available on the website to keep the public informed about the Aspire Adult Education grant procedures and timeline. The applications for the next grant cycle will be posted publicly spring 2024.

II. DESCRIBE HOW THE ELIGIBLE AGENCY WILL ENSURE DIRECT AND EQUITABLE ACCESS TO ALL ELIGIBLE PROVIDERS TO APPLY AND COMPETE FOR FUNDS AND HOW THE ELIGIBLE AGENCY WILL ENSURE THAT IT IS USING THE SAME GRANT OR CONTRACT ANNOUNCEMENT AND APPLICATION PROCEDURE FOR ALL ELIGIBLE PROVIDERS.

ODHE ensures direct access to apply for grants or contracts to all eligible providers in the State. All applicants eligible under Section 231 will submit applications to the agency. Direct application will be the norm regardless of whether an applicant would be considered a grantee or contractor. Direct access will also apply for the Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Individuals, Section 225 and the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE), Section 243.

ODHE provides direct and fair access to all eligible providers by posting the announcement and application procedures on its website / Grant Resources and Requests for Proposals. All eligible providers must meet the initial minimum qualifications for review by submitting a complete application that is received by a designated date, time, and location. All AEFLA grant-related resources are on the ODHE Aspire Grants website. All grant-related questions come through one email portal, aspiregrants@highered.ohio.gov, and Frequently Asked Questions are posted on the ODHE Aspire Grants website weekly during the competitive period. All applications are first screened for demonstrated effectiveness in serving basic skills-deficient, eligible individuals. If affirmative, applications go through a review process scored by teams of readers using a standardized rating rubric.

C. VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM

In the case of a State that, under section 101(a)(2)(A)(i) of the Rehabilitation Act designates a State agency to administer the part of the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services portion of the

Unified or Combined State Plan under which VR services are provided for individuals who are blind, describe the process and the factors used by the State to determine the distribution of funds among the two VR agencies in the State.

OOD, Ohio's designated State agency for the VR program, is a combined agency serving all individuals eligible for VR services. It should be noted that OOD, through its Bureau of Services for the Visually Impaired (BSVI), does have dedicated counselors with specialized training to provide services to individuals who are blind or visually impaired.

6. PROGRAM DATA

A. DATA ALIGNMENT AND INTEGRATION

Describe the plans of the lead State agencies with responsibility for the administration of the core programs, along with the State Board, to align and integrate available workforce and education data systems for the core programs, unemployment insurance programs, and education through postsecondary education, and to the extent possible, the Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan. The description of the State's plan for integrating data systems should include the State's goals for achieving integration and any progress to date.

Describe data-collection and reporting processes used for all programs and activities, including the State's process to collect and report data on co-enrollment, and for those present in the one-stop centers.

I. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S PLANS TO MAKE THE MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS FOR THE CORE PROGRAMS INTEROPERABLE TO MAXIMIZE THE EFFICIENT EXCHANGE OF COMMON DATA ELEMENTS TO SUPPORT ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

With WIOA requiring common performance standards and a single outcome reporting structure across State agencies including the ODHE (Aspire), OOD (VR), and the ODJFS (Title I employment and training and W-P), data alignment and integration are paramount.

Ohio has separate case management systems across agencies and is investigating means of collecting and transferring relevant data from each of these systems for the required reporting data elements of each agency on a quarterly and annual basis.

To coordinate data and resources across agencies, the InnovateOhio Platform is being developed to improve and streamline technology across agencies and maximize the efficient exchange of data. The InnovateOhio Platform uses applied analytics and secure data sharing to enable agencies to become more efficient and effective.

Additionally, the Ohio Analytics Partnership is a cooperative arrangement between ODJFS, ODHE, ODEW, OOD, the Ohio Housing Finance Agency (OHFA), and The Ohio State University Center for Human Resource Research through which a longitudinal repository for data on workforce, housing and education is maintained. The resulting Ohio Longitudinal Data Archive (OLDA) serves as a resource for State government and the larger research community for policy-relevant research and analysis on Ohio.

II. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S PLANS TO INTEGRATE DATA SYSTEMS TO FACILITATE STREAMLINED INTAKE AND SERVICE DELIVERY TO TRACK PARTICIPATION ACROSS ALL PROGRAMS INCLUDED IN THIS PLAN

Ohio saw the need for clear authority, management and responsibility to remain within the agencies running specific programs. Each agency needs the flexibility to conduct analysis, evaluate data, engage service providers and prepare data for internal and State uses, as well as meet their unique reporting requirements of their corresponding Federal agencies. As such, the strategy for data integration was to modify each agency's case management system to correspond with the needs of WIOA. The data from these case management systems are merged and matched to form a central data warehouse from which analysis, evaluation and reporting on the WIOA program as a whole occurs through the ODJFS. Specific examples include:

1) Title I and III share the same case management system (ARIES) which allows for tracking participants across programs.

2) In ARIES, Title I and III share a common exit and the system produces a singular integrated PIRL for federal reporting.

3) Employer services data from ODHE and OOD are shared with ODJFS, then aggregated and deduplicated for the purposes of reporting for the effectiveness in serving employers pilot for the state.

4) Public training provider data from the WIET list is matched with ODHE data to report the "all students" credential attainment and employment outcomes for the eligible training provider reporting. 5) Title I and III enrollment data from ODJFS is shared with OOD for co-enrollment with Title IV reporting and vice versa.

6) ODJFS is the access PACIA providing SWIS data to OOD (a non-access PACIA) and also provides SNAP and TANF data from our Office of Family Assistance for Title IV reporting. And

7) ODJFS provides UI wage data to OOD and ODHE for the purposes of reporting Title II and IV employment outcomes.

InnovateOhio has built a platform for use across state government to drive more shared services among agencies. It is also developing a statewide strategy to improve information and data sharing across agencies. Through collaboration and innovation, the InnovateOhio Platform creates an integrated customer experience that brings high-quality services to the public.

III. EXPLAIN HOW THE STATE BOARD WILL ASSIST THE GOVERNOR IN ALIGNING TECHNOLOGY AND DATA SYSTEMS ACROSS REQUIRED ONE-STOP PARTNER PROGRAMS (INCLUDING DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMON INTAKE, DATA COLLECTION, ETC.) AND HOW SUCH ALIGNMENT WILL IMPROVE SERVICE DELIVERY TO INDIVIDUALS, INCLUDING UNEMPLOYED INDIVIDUALS

The strategic focus of Governor DeWine, GEWB, and other executive leadership has been on a business-driven, person-centered approach, as opposed to program- or institution-centered approach. In April 2019, Governor Mike DeWine and Lt. Governor Jon Husted announced the launch of the InnovateOhio Platform, which coordinates data and resources across state government to improve the way Ohio tackles our most challenging problems. It also streamlines technology service across agencies to give Ohio citizens and businesses a better experience when interacting with state government. To put the platform in motion, Governor DeWine signed Executive Order 2019-15D, which requires all state agencies, boards, and commissions to adopt and use the platform.

A key focus has been the development of virtual career exploration, career planning, talent acquisition, and employment center via OhioMeansJobs.com. This has created a single branding across the workforce development system and, more importantly, a unified set of service tools. Integration of services and efficiencies are promoted through portable case records and career plans, streamlining the process for individuals to seek services across programs, whether public, non-profit or private in nature.

Ohio has now further refined OhioMeansJobs.com to improve the customer experience, making the technology solutions more intuitive and easier-to-use. The 2nd phase of the website refresh will focus on using secure authentication and identity practices to create personalized journeys for jobseekers and employers.

While the OhioMeansJobs.com website has been redesigned, ODJFS is building a new cloud-based case management system that will be utilized by case managers at the in-person one stop centers. Data entered by case managers or directly by self-service jobseekers or employers will also be stored in the InnovateOhio Platform data lake.

Improving these systems will unlock the ability for Ohio to use technology to create a personalized and catered digital journey, comparable to the experience available on market-leading commerce and social media platform, for Ohioans accessing workforce services.

In addition to the OhioMeansJobs.com redesign and the InnovateOhio platform, Governor DeWine and Lt. Governor Husted established an office known as InnovateOhio. InnovateOhio is charged with utilizing technology to improve government services, reduce costs, and spur a culture of innovation with an eye on the customer's experience. Each agency represented in this plan works with InnovateOhio to meet that goal.

IV. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S DATA SYSTEMS AND PROCEDURES TO PRODUCE THE REPORTS REQUIRED UNDER SECTION 116, PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM. (WIOA SECTION 116(D)(2)).

Ohio has implemented changes to its system, ARIES, to gather the new information required by WIOA Title I and III employment and training to develop reports. Ohio has implemented business rules to extract quarterly data to create Ohio's Participant Individual Record Layout (PIRL) file from ARIES and Wage Record.

Per the guidance from USDOL Employment and Training Administration, Ohio is submitting the PIRL extract file to USDOL's Workforce Integrated Performance System (WIPS) to generate quarterly and annual performance outcome reports.

In 2016, ODJFS implemented a new financial tracking module known as CFIS WIOA Client Tracking that will link program performance and service data at the participant level to local area financial outcomes. This module is expected to meet the requirements for fiscal and management accountability.

The Title II Aspire program uses LiteracyPro Systems, Inc. LiteracyPro provides an Adult Education Data Management System (DMS) called the Literacy, Adult, and Community Education System (LACES), which is a custom-built application that allows all local Aspire programs access to data that specifically relates to their program. The DMS is a vendor-hosted, web-based application and will provide tools for data entry of student records, management of student records, generating all accountability reports for the

National Reporting System (NRS) under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act of 2014 (WIOA) and providing reports to support local and state adult education program operations.

Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities, Ohio's State Vocational Rehabilitation Program, utilizes a web-based case management system, AWARE, that includes all necessary data fields for required federal reporting as well as mechanisms for producing the reports. OOD also has established processes for reviewing data and correcting errors prior to the submission of federal reports.

B. ASSESSMENT OF PARTICIPANTS' POST-PROGRAM SUCCESS

Describe how lead State agencies will use the workforce development system to assess the progress of participants who are exiting from core programs in entering, persisting in, and completing postsecondary education, or entering or remaining in employment. States may choose to set additional indicators of performance.

Post-program success in educational attainment and/or employment across State agencies' workforce development programs is dependent on three things: The adoption of USDOL's performance criteria, which mirror Ohio's Workforce Success Measures, builds in accountability through appropriate performance and outcome standards for the State. Ohio agencies' case management systems are modified to capture these common performance measures.

Beginning with Program Year 2016, the State has utilized WIOA's Primary Performance Measures for all WIOA core programs: (W-P is excluded from the credential attainment and skill gains performance measures).

Employment 2nd Quarter After Exit. The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program.

Youth - Placement in Employment or Education 2nd Quarter After Exit. The percentage of program participants who are in education or training activities, or in unsubsidized employment, during the second quarter after exit from the program. Employment 4th Quarter After Exit: The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program.

Youth - Placement in Employment or Education 4th Quarter After Exit. The percentage of program participants who are in education or training activities, or in unsubsidized employment, during the fourth quarter after exit from the program.

Median Earnings. The median earnings of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program.

Credential / Diploma. The percentage of program participants who obtain a recognized postsecondary credential, or a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent during participation in or within one year after exit from the program. Program participants who obtain a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent shall be included in the percentage counted as meeting the criterion if such participants, in addition to obtaining such diploma or its recognized equivalent, have obtained or retained employment or are in an education or training program leading to a recognized postsecondary credential within one year after exit from the program.

Skill Gains. The percentage of program participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains toward such a credential or employment.

Serving Employers. The indicators of effectiveness in serving employers

Follow-Up services will be utilized to ensure post-program success by offering post-program services as necessary to ensure continued employment and for those enrolled in post-secondary education or training, ensure their educational success in attaining their credential. Case managers can track their follow-up services in OWCMS, as well as document post-program employment, earnings, and credential attainment.

C. USE OF UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE (UI) WAGE RECORD DATA

Explain how the State will meet the requirements to utilize quarterly UI wage records for performance accountability, evaluations, and as a source for workforce and labor market information, consistent with Federal and State law. (This Operational Planning element applies to core programs.)

Ohio has routinely used UI wage record data to meet program objectives of WIOA; in particular to assess employment outcomes. More specifically, program case management data are cross matched to UI wage records on a quarterly basis to capture employment, wages, and industry (using the North American Industry Classification System - NAICS).

To protect personal identifiable information and comply with Federal and State laws, the ODJFS Office of Workforce Development (OWD) complies with the following protocols:

- All staff receives annual training in securing personal identifiable information and overall computer security procedures;
- Data is specified only for program administration, including Federal and State performance reporting, evaluation and statistical or research purposes;
- Access is controlled on a “need to know” basis for meeting program requirements;
- Except under special agreement, data can only be shared in de-identified and aggregate formats; and
- All staff must sign and acknowledge compliance with ODJFS’ CODE of Responsibility covering information security and confidentiality policy and laws.

Any sharing of information beyond the ODJFS program staff requires a legal agreement (information sharing agreement) restricting data use to program administration, performance reporting, evaluation and statistical or research purposes. This includes submitting a Privacy Impact Assessment reviewing risks and safeguards in the exchange of personal identifiable information to ODJFS’ Chief Privacy Officer. The same or corresponding protocols listed above are also stipulated in the agreement. ODJFS also requires that data exchange or transmission of personal identifiable information be conducted through encryption and secure formats and systems.

D. PRIVACY SAFEGUARDS

Describe the privacy safeguards incorporated in the State's workforce development system, including safeguards required by section 444 of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g) and other applicable Federal laws.

The same protocols ODJFS applies to wage record data are applied to education data. The State of Ohio's workforce system complies with all federal and state laws and guidelines for the handling and protection of Personally Identifiable Information (PII), including but not limited to 2 CFR and Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 39-11, and ensures compliance through the following means: data sharing agreements with workforce partners, state and local memorandums of understanding (MOU), local area agreements, and resource sharing agreements. Additionally, PII is maintained and disposed of in a secure and confidential manner, and policies and procedures for the handling of PII are in place and reviewed regularly.

WIOA does specify the collection of enrollment, educational progress and completion data. ODJFS is applying business rules in the collection of these data to maintain only the minimum data necessary to meet WIOA requirements, often just a date record. Information such as grades and other detailed information will not be captured. As with wage record data, education data will only be used for program administration, including Federal and State performance reporting, evaluation and statistical or research purposes. Only de-identified aggregate education data will be reported in any public manner.

The usage of LACES, the student information management system of Aspire, is in line with Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) regulations and monitored on an ongoing basis to assure alignment. Users of LACES must annually sign and submit a Personal Confidentiality Statement which serves to safeguard personally identifiable information. Aspire also requires each local program to sign an assurance as a part of the funding application indicating adherence to outlined technology requirements. The technology requirements describe the minimum level of security required by local programs. Aspire participants have the ability to opt-out of information sharing through a Release of Information (RIF) form. Students who refuse the RIF are not shared for any purpose including Federal/State match.

Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities, Ohio's State Vocational Rehabilitation Program, utilizes a web-based case management system, AWARE, that includes safeguards that protect confidential information regarding program participants. OOD further has policies and procedures in place that establish direction and protocols for staff to secure equipment and documents associated with the program.

7. PRIORITY OF SERVICE FOR VETERANS.

A. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL IMPLEMENT THE PRIORITY OF SERVICE PROVISIONS FOR COVERED PERSONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE JOBS FOR VETERANS ACT, CODIFIED AT SECTION 4215 OF 38 U.S.C., WHICH APPLIES TO ALL EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAMS FUNDED IN WHOLE OR IN PART BY THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR.

B. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL MONITOR PRIORITY OF SERVICE PROVISIONS FOR VETERANS.

C. DESCRIBE THE TRIAGE AND REFERRAL PROCESS FOR ELIGIBLE VETERANS AND OTHER POPULATIONS DETERMINED ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE SERVICES FROM THE JOBS FOR

VETERANS STATE GRANTS (JVSG) PROGRAM'S DISABLED VETERANS' OUTREACH PROGRAM (DVOP) SPECIALIST/CONSOLIDATED POSITION.

A. Describe how the State will implement the priority of service provisions for covered persons ....

Ohio continues to prioritize workforce services for veterans, military service members and their families. OWT, together with State agency partners, is assisting military service members, veterans and their families in preparing for Ohio's in-demand jobs. Partnerships with other agencies and programs including Ohio's Inter-Service Family Assistance Committee (ISFAC), Wright-Patterson Air Force Base Transition Assistance Program (TAP), Department of Defense (DoD) Military Spouse Warm Handoff Pilot Program, and the Department of Veterans Services (DVS) Veterans Workforce Team are also imperative in helping Ohio reach this goal. Several key initiatives have been implemented:

- Ohio's licensing departments boards and commissions consider relevant military education, training and experience when determining equivalency for issuing licenses and certificates. Special provisions have been made to expedite processing, ease license renewal, provide temporary credentials, and discount or wave associated fees;
- State institutions of higher education award course credit for military education and experience;
- Veterans in Ohio can use GI Bill benefits to pay for national and State occupational licensing testing;
- The ODJFS developed the Veterans Business Support Center - accessible at OhioMeansJobs.com - to better connect employers to qualified veterans, all for free;
- OhioMeansJobs.com prioritizes veteran resumes, allowing employers to review these first when looking for perspective employees; and
- OhioMeansVeteranJobs.com provides a single point of entry for veterans seeking information about employment, education and financial benefits available in Ohio.
- Ohio's Hilton Honors Military Program provides Hilton Honors points for hotel stays related to job search activities.

Under WIOA, veterans receive priority of service in all USDOL-funded employment and training programs. Priority of service to veterans and eligible persons remains the responsibility of all OhioMeansJobs Center staff members, not simply DVOP specialists. As part of Ohio's monitoring process, central office staff plans on-site visits to OhioMeansJobs Centers each year to assist in the established workflow for veterans, monitor implementation of Priority of Services for Veterans and Eligible Spouses, and provide training and technical assistance as needed. State monitoring and educating OhioMeansJobs Center partners in reference to priority of service, to include covered persons monitoring, is a shared responsibility between ODJFS Program Delivery Managers, local areas, and OhioMeansJobs Center operators. Physical copies of the local priority of service policy and posters are displayed at all service delivery points, including the OhioMeansJobs Centers and, to the extent practicable, displayed in a way that makes it possible for members of the general public to have easy access to them. OhioMeansJobs Center staff is routinely trained on the implementation of priority of service for veterans and eligible

persons (covered persons). Local areas are instructed to create policies outlining the procedures whereby veterans and covered persons are identified at the point of entry.

B. Describe how the State will monitor priority of service provisions for veterans.

Ohio has implemented and monitors the priority of service provisions by publishing and enforcing State policy, training all USDOL grantee and subgrantee personnel, and includes a clause pertaining to priority of service in the OhioMeansJobs Center MOU template. WIOAPL No. 15-20.2 Priority of Service for Veterans and Eligible Spouses ensures that covered persons are aware of their entitlement to priority of service, the full array of services available, and any applicable eligibility requirements. The policy also outlines the requirements for the LWDBs to develop and include policies in their local plan to implement priority of service for the OhioMeansJobs Centers and for local service and training providers. Prioritized services available to veterans include registration, job referral, guidance, counseling, dislocated worker services, referral to supportive services, job development, job search workshops, and resume preparation. All OhioMeansJobs Center staff is trained on veterans' preference and priority of service by ODJFS staff. Either the veteran gains access to services or resources earlier than non-covered persons or covered persons receive services or resources instead of non-covered persons when resources are limited. Veterans are always placed at the top of any existing waiting list for service.

C. Describe the triage and referral process for eligible veterans and other populations determined eligibleto receive services from JVSG DVOP specialist/Consolidated Position.

As part of the initial intake process, OhioMeansJobs Center staff ask customers if they or their spouse served in the military so they can be informed about priority of service. If an affirmative answer is provided, then the veteran or eligible spouse receive a Veteran Questionnaire. The veteran or eligible spouse is then referred to the next available staff member for an assessment. If the assessment determines that the veteran possesses a significant barrier to employment, then the veteran is immediately referred to a DVOP specialist. If the OhioMeansJobs Center lacks a DVOP specialist, or the DVOP specialist is unavailable, then the veteran goes to the next available staff member. Veterans and eligible spouses receive priority of service in all programs offered by partner agencies within OhioMeansJobs Centers. Once an OhioMeansJobs Center staff member determines that a veteran meets the criteria for a specific program, the veteran is automatically afforded priority of service. Ohio's policy requires workforce development areas to address each of the following:

- Awareness of priority of service through posters and handouts strategically placed at the OhioMeansJobs Centers to alert covered persons of their priority of service rights;
- Notification of priority of service rights on the local area's and/or the OhioMeansJobs Center's website or other portals by which jobseekers remotely access resources, including self-service resources;
- Inclusion of a reference to priority of service rights, in OhioMeansJobs Center orientations, whether in-person or electronically (including local websites);
- Descriptions of how job openings/matches and referrals, including electronic referral processes, electronic job posting systems, and in-person handling of job orders, give veterans and eligible spouses priority of service; and

- Descriptions of how partner program staff within the centers and at other service delivery points are made aware of priority of service requirements. This must be accomplished at both the State and local levels through partner meetings and other types of communication such as information sheets or desk aids, self-service kiosks, and information bulletin boards.

Every covered person's resume is clearly designate as such in OhioMeansJobs.com and are put at the top of all resume search results. Referrals are made in the same order if the covered person meets the minimum job posting qualifications.

Other than the existing statutory requirement regarding eligibility, ODJFS has no other priority that supersedes the Priority of Service for Veterans and Eligible Spouses policy.

Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist personnel in the OhioMeansJobs Centers provide individualized career services to those veterans and eligible spouses who are identified as having at least one significant barrier to employment, as defined by USDOL. When veterans enter an OhioMeansJobs Center, they are asked to fill out a Veterans Questionnaire to determine if there are any identified significant barriers to employment. If the individual meets the definition of an eligible veteran for the JVSG program or is an eligible spouse, has at least one significant barrier to employment, and/or is a member of an additional population identified by the US Secretary of Labor (e.g., veterans aged 18-24 and Vietnam-era veterans), the OhioMeansJobs Center staff refers this covered person to the DVOP specialist within the JVSG program. A covered person should also be referred to the DVOP specialist if he or she is later, after further assessment, determined by OhioMeansJobs Center staff to have a significant barrier to employment. The DVOP specialist will provide individualized career services to mitigate the significant barriers to employment and transition these individuals into the civilian workforce.

DVOP specialists develop job and training opportunities for veterans, with special emphasis on veterans with service-connected disabilities. They provide direct services to veterans enabling them to be competitive in the labor market. In addition, they provide outreach and offer assistance to disabled and other veterans by promoting community and employer support for employment and training opportunities, including apprenticeship and on-the-job training (OJT). DVOP specialists work with employers, veterans' organizations, the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Department of Defense, and community-based organizations to link veterans with appropriate jobs and training opportunities.

8. ADDRESSING THE ACCESSIBILITY OF THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

Describe how the one-stop delivery system (including one-stop center operators and the one-stop delivery system partners), will comply with section 188 of WIOA (if applicable) and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs, services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities. This also must include a description of compliance through providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities. Describe the State's one-stop center certification policy, particularly the accessibility criteria.

Physical accessibility has always been a priority at the OhioMeansJobs Centers, and this has been addressed thoroughly through the One-Stop certification process. ODJFS, in collaboration with the OhioMeansJobs Centers, comply with the language detailed in the State's Methods of Administration Element 5: Compliance with 504 Disability Requirements. In part, ODJFS and the OhioMeansJobs Centers will continue to work together to ensure all centers are in compliance with all Federal and State laws as it relates to disabilities.

Ohio's One-Stop certification process under WIOA outlined in WIOAPL 16-10 (Certification of the Workforce Delivery System) addresses the needs of those with disabilities by providing an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Tool Box that includes on-site disability awareness training for staff (including "Windmills" and At Your Service training), an ADA Checklist Guide, examples of State Term Contract information, Internet links and resources to be used by OhioMeansJobs Centers, an ADA plan outlying the process for identifying an ADA local coordinator, a reasonable accommodations policy, and a self-assessment tool to assist in ensuring compliance as it relates to Section 188. The attainment of full certification requires full center staff training on issues relating to working with individuals with disabilities. Specific benchmarks and critical success factors are included in the certification documents that directly relate to being compliant with ADA requirements and serving individuals with disabilities.

The AEFLA grant requires grantees to answer questions that are specific to Serving Individuals with Disabilities, including an assurance that individuals with disabilities have equitable access to programs and related services and a description of the policies and services adopted by the program to accommodate students and staff with disabilities.

Moreover, Aspire grantees are required to adhere to an annual Accessibility and Inclusion Policy and Planning Guide; the policy addresses how the program will provide services to students with disabilities, including learning disabilities. Research indicates a significant incidence of adult literacy students have learning disabilities, many undiagnosed; therefore, all Aspire teachers and administrators are required to complete a Learning to Achieve course tailored for working with students with special learning needs. The training focuses on legal issues, screenings, and accommodations for serving students with learning disabilities and incorporating Universal Design methods as best practices for all students.

9. ADDRESSING THE ACCESSIBILITY OF THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Describe how the one-stop delivery system (including one-stop center operators and the one-stop delivery system partners) will ensure that each one-stop center is able to meet the needs of English language learners, such as through established procedures, staff training, resources, and other materials. Describe how English language learners will be made aware of the opportunity to enroll and/or co-enroll in all the core programs for which they are eligible.

OhioMeansJobs Centers provide signage, documents, and interpretation services for non-English speakers and English language learners to ensure these individuals have meaningful access to the services provided. Procedures have been established for interpreter resources and services for both phone calls and in-person appointments. Vital documents are available in the most common languages spoken in Ohio. Provisions and services will comply with current Federal, State and local laws. WIOA codifies and strengthens the integrated English Literacy and Civics education program for individuals to effectively participate in education, work and civic

opportunities. Ohio's Aspire program is a strong partner in OhioMeansJobs Centers. Ohio will continue to strengthen program design to prepare adults who are English language learners for, and place them in, unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to self-sufficiency and to integrate with the local workforce development system and its functions to carry out programs.

IV. COORDINATION WITH STATE PLAN PROGRAMS

Describe the methods used for joint planning and coordination among the core programs, and with the required one-stop partner programs and other programs and activities included in the Unified or Combined State Plan.

Strategic planning occurred between all partners in the Combined State Plan:

- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I;
- Adult Education and Family Literacy Title II (Aspire);
- Wagner-Peyser (W-P) Employment Services Title III;
- Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Title IV;
- Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical education (Perkins) Act;
- Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG); and
- Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP).

Representatives from these programs worked in close collaboration, along with OWT and the Governor's Office, through a series of meetings and discussions to determine and outline the vision, goals, strategies, and action items.

These meetings ran from August 2023 through November 2023. Starting with the vision for workforce established by the Governor and Lieutenant Governor, the program representatives discussed initiatives, programs, and other innovative practices that fit within the workforce vision.

The state plan program partners all have representation on the GEWB, at the state level, and for the most part, on the LWBD, at the local level. Representation on these boards allow for a common vision and strategies to tackle workforce issues. Furthermore, the plan program partners have also collaborated on numerous occasions, including participation in the SuccessBound conferences, sector collaborates, and other overarching partnerships. These collaborations built the partnership needed to successful develop and implement Ohio's Combined State Plan. All initiatives established in this plan are not done in a vacuum, but rather a partnership of agencies working together to impact Ohio's workforce system.

These partner agencies have worked on previous strategic endeavors and will continue to work together to carry out the strategies and achieve the goals outlined in this Combined State Plan.

V. COMMON ASSURANCES (FOR ALL CORE PROGRAMS)

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include assurances that:

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The State has established a policy identifying circumstances that may present a conflict of interest for a State Board or local board member, or the entity or class of officials that the member represents, and procedures to resolve such conflicts;	Yes
2. The State has established a policy to provide to the public (including individuals with disabilities) access to meetings of State Boards and local boards, and information regarding activities of State Boards and local boards, such as data on board membership and minutes;	Yes
3. The lead State agencies with optimal policy-making authority and responsibility for the administration of core programs reviewed and commented on the appropriate operational planning elements of the Unified or Combined State Plan, and approved the elements as serving the needs of the populations served by such programs;	Yes
4. (a) The State obtained input into the development of the Unified or Combined State Plan and provided an opportunity for comment on the plan by representatives of local boards and chief elected officials, businesses, labor organizations, institutions of higher education, the entities responsible for planning or administrating the core programs, required one-stop partners and the other Combined Plan programs (if included in the State Plan), other primary stakeholders, including other organizations that provide services to individuals with barriers to employment, and the general public, and that the Unified or Combined State Plan is available and accessible to the general public; (b) The State provided an opportunity for review and comment on the plan by the State Board, including State agency official(s) for the Unemployment Insurance Agency if such official(s) is a member of the State Board;	Yes
5. The State has established, in accordance with WIOA section 116(i), fiscal control and fund	Yes

The State Plan must include	Include
accounting procedures that may be necessary to ensure the proper disbursement of, and accounting for, funds paid to the State through allotments made for the core programs to carry out workforce development activities;	
6. The State has taken appropriate action to secure compliance with uniform administrative requirements in this Act, including that the State will annually monitor local areas to ensure compliance and otherwise take appropriate action to secure compliance with the uniform administrative requirements under WIOA section 184(a)(3);	Yes
7. The State has taken the appropriate action to be in compliance with WIOA section 188, Nondiscrimination, as applicable;	Yes
8. The Federal funds received to carry out a core program will not be expended for any purpose other than for activities authorized with respect to such funds under that core program;	Yes
9. The State will pay an appropriate share (as defined by the State board) of the costs of carrying out section 116, from funds made available through each of the core programs;	Yes
10. The State has a one-stop certification policy that ensures the physical and programmatic accessibility of all one-stop centers with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA);	Yes
11. Service providers have a referral process in place for directing Veterans with Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE) to DVOP services, when appropriate; and	Yes
12. Priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses is provided in accordance with 38 USC 4215 in all workforce preparation, development or delivery of programs or services funded directly, in whole or in part, by the Department of Labor.	Yes

VI. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR CORE PROGRAMS

The State must address all program-specific requirements in this section for the WIOA core programs regardless of whether the State submits either a Unified or Combined State Plan.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR ADULT, DISLOCATED WORKER, AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES UNDER TITLE I-B

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include the following with respect to activities carried out under subtitle B—

A. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

1. REGIONS AND LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREAS

A. IDENTIFY THE REGIONS AND THE LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREAS DESIGNATED IN THE STATE

The following are the current local workforce development areas in Ohio:

- Area 1: Adams, Brown, Pike, and Scioto Counties
- Area 2: Medina and Summit Counties
- Area 3: Cuyahoga County
- Area 4: Lorain County
- Area 5: Lake County
- Area 6: Stark and Tuscarawas Counties
- Area 7: Allen, Ashland, Champaign, Clark, Clinton, Coshocton, Darke, Defiance, Delaware, Erie, Fayette, Fulton, Gallia, Greene, Guernsey, Hancock, Henry, Highland, Holmes, Huron, Knox, Jackson, Lawrence, Licking, Logan, Madison, Marion, Miami, Montgomery, Morrow, Muskingum, Ottawa, Paulding, Preble, Putnam, Sandusky, Seneca, Shelby, Union, Wayne, Williams, Wood, and Wyandot Counties
- Area 8: Auglaize, Hardin, Mercer, and Van Wert Counties
- Area 9: Lucas County
- Area 10: Crawford and Richland Counties
- Area 11: Franklin County
- Area 12: Butler, Clermont, and Warren Counties
- Area 13: Hamilton County
- Area 14: Athens, Meigs, and Perry Counties
- Area 15: Monroe, Morgan, Noble, and Washington Counties
- Area 16: Belmont, Harrison, Carroll, and Jefferson Counties
- Area 17: Columbiana and Mahoning Counties
- Area 18: Trumbull County

- Area 19: Ashtabula, Geauga, and Portage Counties
- Area 20: Fairfield, Hocking, Pickaway, Ross, and Vinton Counties

B. DESCRIBE THE PROCESS AND POLICY USED FOR DESIGNATING LOCAL AREAS, INCLUDING PROCEDURES FOR DETERMINING WHETHER THE LOCAL AREA MET THE CRITERIA FOR "PERFORMED SUCCESSFULLY" AND "SUSTAINED FISCAL INTEGRITY" IN ACCORDANCE WITH 106(B)(2) AND (3) OF WIOA. DESCRIBE THE PROCESS USED FOR IDENTIFYING REGIONS AND PLANNING REGIONS UNDER SECTION 106(A) OF WIOA. THIS MUST INCLUDE A DESCRIPTION OF HOW THE STATE CONSULTED WITH THE LOCAL BOARDS AND CHIEF ELECTED OFFICIALS IN IDENTIFYING THE REGIONS

Each of the local workforce development areas identified in VI.A.1.A were initially designated in March 2016 pursuant to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Policy Letter (WIOAPL) No. 15-1.1. In March 2021, they were subsequently designated pursuant the WIOAPL No. 16-04 and the WIOA Combined State Plan.

At this time, Ohio has identified 10 workforce regions. As shown below, five are considered Planning Regions and five are Single Area Regions.

Planning Regions

- Northeast Region, consisting of Areas 2, 3, 4, 5, and 19:
- East Region, consisting of Areas 6, 17, and 18;
- Southeast Region, consisting of Areas 14, 15, and 16;
- Southwest Region, consisting of Area 12 and 13; and
- Southcentral Region, consisting of Areas 11 and 20.

Single Area Regions

- South Region, consisting of Area 1;
- West Region, consisting of Area 8;
- Northwest Region, consisting of Area 9;
- Northcentral Region, consisting of Area 10; and
- Central Region, consisting of Area 7.

WIOAPL Number 15-01.1 Local Workforce Development Area Initial Designation and WIOAPL Number 16-04 Local Workforce Development Area Subsequent Designation outline the process of determining local workforce development areas for initial and subsequent designation, including the criteria for a local workforce development area and the procedure to apply for designation. To be considered for initial designation, the local area must:

1. Have been designated as a local area for purposes of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) for the two-year period preceding the date of enactment of WIOA;

2. Have performed successfully*; and
3. Have sustained fiscal integrity**.

To be considered for subsequent designation, the local area must:

1. Have performed successfully*;
2. Have sustained fiscal integrity**; and
3. In the case of a local area in a planning region, have met the regional planning requirements per section 106 (c)(1) of WIOA and WIOAPL No. 16-03, Regional and Local Planning.

***Performed Successfully**. Met or exceeded the negotiated levels of performance for the last two consecutive program years. Pursuant to 20 C.F.R 679.260 (b), the local area met or exceeded the levels of performance the State negotiated with the local workforce development board and chief elected official for core indicators of performance and that the local area has not failed any individual measure for the last two consecutive program years in accordance with a State-established definition, provided in the State Plan, of met or exceeded performance.*

***Sustained Fiscal Integrity**. The Secretary of Labor has not made a formal determination that either the grant recipient or the administrative entity of the area mis-expended funds due to willful disregard of the requirements of the provision involved, gross negligence, or failure to comply with accepted standards of administration for the two-year period preceding the determination.*

When making the decision to designate local areas, the State consults and considers comments received through a public comment process which includes stakeholders, including:

- Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs);
- Local elected officials;
- Businesses;
- Institutions of higher education:
- Labor organizations;
- Other primary stakeholders; and
- General public.

In Ohio, consultation entails one or more of the following activities:

- E-mail notification of requested local workforce development area initial designation to the Chief Elected Officials (CEOs) and LWDB directors with the opportunity to provide comment;
- Dialogue with the one or more of the following associations which provide support and guidance to the CEOs and LWDBs:
    - County Commissioner Association of Ohio; and
    - Ohio Workforce Association.

- In-person meetings and/or teleconferences with individual CEOs and LWDB Directors;
- Collaboration with the Governor's Executive Workforce Board (GEWB) and the Governor's Office of Workforce Transformation (OWT);
- Presentations at training events and/or at LWDB meetings; and
- The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) legal public comment process for workforce policies.

WIOAPL No. 16-03 Regional and Local Planning was published on October 21, 2016. This policy identified Ohio's regions and provided guidance to local and regional planning. Pursuant to this policy, Ohio used the following criteria to assign local workforce development areas to a planning region:

- Single labor market;
- Common economic development area;
- Possession of the Federal and non-Federal resources to administer workforce development activities;
- Commuting patterns;
- Population centers;
- Labor force conditions;
- Industrial composition; and
- Geographic boundaries (including the requirement that a local workforce development area shall not be split into separate planning regions).

C. PROVIDE THE APPEALS PROCESS AND POLICY REFERRED TO IN SECTION 106(B)(5) OF WIOA RELATING TO DESIGNATION OF LOCAL AREAS

WIOAPL Number 15-01.1 Local Workforce Development Area Initial Designation and WIOAPL Number 16-04 Local Workforce Development Area Subsequent Designation, outline the appeal rights for a local area whose initial or subsequent designation as a local area is denied. The appeal rights are as follows:

Within 14 days from the date of receipt of the notice of denial, the CEO(s) may file an appeal to the Governor's Executive Workforce Board (GEWB) by submitting in writing all of the following information:

- a statement that the CEO(s) is appealing the denial of initial or subsequent designation;
- the reason(s) why the local area should be designated; and
- signature of the CEO(s).

The written appeal shall be submitted by e-mail to OWDPOLICY@jfs.ohio.gov. Pursuant to 20 CFR 679.290 (b) and 20 CFR 683.630 (a), the GEWB will provide the parties with the

opportunity for a hearing, review the appeal, and make a ruling on the appeal within 60 days after the submission of the appeal.

The GEWB shall notify the CEO(s) in writing, of its decision on whether or not to approve initial or subsequent designation of an area as a local area under section 106 (b)(2) or (b)(3) of WIOA and 20 CFR 679.250.

In the event the GEWB denies the appeal or fails to issue a decision within 60 days of the date the appeal is submitted, the CEO(s) may further appeal the GEWB's decision or lack thereof to the US Department of Labor (USDOL).

Pursuant to 20 CFR 683.640, appeals made to USDOL, must be filed no later than 30 days after receipt of written notification of the denial from the state. The appeal must be submitted by certified mail, with return receipt requested, to the following address: Secretary - USDOL, 200 Constitution Ave. N.W. Washington, D.C. 20210 Attention: ASET

The appellant must establish in its appeal to USDOL that it was not accorded procedural rights under Ohio's appeal process, or that it meets the requirements for designation in section 106 (b)(2) or (b)(3) of WIOA and 20 CFR 679.250. The appellant must provide a copy of the appeal to the GEWB at the same time that the appellant sends the appeal to USDOL.

D. PROVIDE THE APPEALS PROCESS AND POLICY REFERRED TO IN SECTION 121(H)(2)(E) OF WIOA RELATING TO DETERMINATIONS FOR INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING

WIOAPL No. 16-06, State Mechanism for Funding OhioMeansJobs Center Infrastructure Costs, outlines the appeal rights for partners who believe the determination of the State infrastructure funding contribution is inconsistent with WIOA and State policy.

If a partner appeals the determination of State infrastructure funding contributions, the partner may appeal the determination through the following appeals process:

- Within 21 calendar days from the date of receipt of the notice of State infrastructure funding determination, the partner(s) may file an appeal to the State in writing indicating why the partner is in disagreement with the determination of State infrastructure funding contribution.
- The State will review the request for appeal.
- The State will notify the partner of its actions in writing.

2. STATEWIDE ACTIVITIES

A. PROVIDE STATE POLICIES OR GUIDANCE FOR THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM AND FOR USE OF STATE FUNDS FOR WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES

Ohio has issued numerous policies and procedures to implement WIOA and to ensure the quality-of-service delivery for the statewide workforce development system. Additional policies and procedures will continue to be developed beyond the preparation period and submission of this Combined State Plan. The following WIOA Policy Letters (WIOAPL) and Workforce Program Policy Letters (WPPL) have been developed and published:

Rule/WIOAPL Number	Description
5101: 10-3-01	Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Youth Program: Eligibility Requirements
5101: 14-1-01	Comprehensive Case Management and Employment Program: Definitions
5101: 14-1-02	Comprehensive Case Management and Employment Program: General
5101: 14-1-04	Comprehensive Case Management and Employment Program: Referral, Comprehensive Assessment, Individual Service Strategy, and Individual Opportunity Plan
5101: 14-1-05	Comprehensive Case Management and Employment Program: Case Management
5101: 14-1-06	Comprehensive Case Management and Employment Program: Program Exit and Follow-Up Services
5101: 14-1-07	Comprehensive Case Management and Employment Program: Primary Performance Measures
WIOAPL No. 15-01.1	Local Workforce Development Area Initial Designation
WIOAPL No. 15-02.1	Adult and Dislocated Worker Eligibility
WIOAPL No. 15-03.1	Youth Program Eligibility
WIOAPL No. 15-04	Selective Service Registration
WIOAPL No. 15-05	Serving Applicants with Close Relationship to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Program
WIOAPL No. 15-06	Determination of Dependent Status
WIOAPL No. 15-07.3	Source Documentation for WIOA Eligibility
WIOAPL No. 15-08.1	Career Services for Adults and Dislocated Workers (includes Priority of Service for Individuals Who are Public Assistance Recipients, Low Income or Basic Skills Deficient)
WIOAPL No. 15-09.1	Training Services for Adults and Dislocated Workers (includes Priority of Service for Individuals Who are Public Assistance Recipients,

Rule/WIOAPL Number	Description
	Low Income or Basic Skills Deficient)
WIOAPL No. 15-10	Youth Program Services
WIOAPL No. 15-11.3	Use of Individual Training Accounts
WIOAPL No. 15-12	Work Experience for Adults and Dislocated Workers
WIOAPL No. 15-13	Work Experience for Youth
WIOAPL No. 15-14.1	Needs-Related Payments Using Adult and Dislocated Worker Formula Funds
WIOAPL No. 15-15.3	Rapid Response Program Requirements-Employer Closure, Mass Layoff, Disaster Mass Job dislocation, and Trade Adjustment Assistance Events.
WIOAPL No. 15-16.2	Rapid Response Program Requirements - Layoff Aversion
WIOAPL No. 15-17.1	Local Workforce Development Board Certification Process
WIOAPL No. 15-18.1	Local Workforce Development Area Governance
WIOAPL No. 15-19.1	Poverty Line and Lower Living Standard Income Level
WIOAPL No. 15-20.2	Priority of Service for Veterans and Eligible Spouses
WIOAPL No. 15-21.1	Reporting Requirements for OhioMeansJobs Center Universal Customers
WIOAPL No. 15-22.1	On-the-Job Training Policy
WIOAPL No. 15-23.2	Incumbent Worker Training Guidelines
WIOAPL No. 15-24	Customized Training Guidelines
WIOAPL No. 15-25	Transfer of Funds between Adult and Dislocated Worker Local Formula Funds
WIOAPL No. 15-26	Individual Training Account (ITA) Financial Definitions
WIOAPL No. 16-02.2	Eligible Training Providers
WIOAPL No. 16-03.1	Regional and Local Planning

Rule/WIOAPL Number	Description
WIOAPL No. 16-04	Local Workforce Development Area Subsequent Designation
WIOAPL No. 16-05	Re-designation of Local Workforce Development Areas
WIOAPL No. 16-06	State Mechanism for Funding OhioMeansJobs Center Infrastructure Costs
WIOAPL No. 16-07	OhioMeansJobs and American Job Center Branding
WIOAPL No. 16-08	Procurement of the OhioMeansJobs Center Operator and Provider of Career Services
WIOAPL No. 16-09.1	Establishment of the Workforce Delivery System
WIOAPL No. 16-10	Certification of the Workforce Delivery System
WIOAPL No. 16-11.1	Development of the Memorandum of Understanding for the Workforce Delivery System
WIOAPL No. 17-01	Mandate Use of OhioMeansJobs.com for Labor Exchange Activities
WIOAPL No. 17-02	WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Programs Performance Accountability
WIOAPL No. 17-03	Procurement of the Comprehensive Case Management and Employment Program Provider for WIOA Youth-Funded Activities and Services
WIOAPL No. 17-04.3	Waivers for the Implementation of the Comprehensive Case Management and Employment Program
WIOAPL No. 17-05.1	Funding for Rapid Response – Employer Closure, Mass Layoff, Disaster Mass Job Dislocation, and Trade Adjustment Assistance Events
WIOAPL No. 17-06.2	Disaster Recovery National Dislocated Worker Grants
WIOAPL No. 18-01.1	Funding for Rapid Response Layoff Aversion
WIOAPL No. 18-02	Implementation of Workforce Development Services Under the Trade and Economic Transition National Dislocated Worker Grant (Opioid Transition Grant)

Rule/WIOAPL Number	Description
WIOAPL No. 18-03	WIOA Funds Rescission Policy
WIOAPL No. 18-04.1	Employment Recovery National Dislocated Worker Grants
WIOAPL No. 18-05	Transitional Jobs
WIOAPL No. 19-01.1	Implementation of Workforce Development Services Under the Opioid Emergency Recovery Grant
WIOAPL No. 19-03	Employer Service Delivery Under WIOA
WIOAPL 21-02	Implementation of Workforce Development Services Under the Fresh Start Grant
WIOAPL 21-03	State-Recognized Pre-Apprenticeship
WIOAPL 22-01	Guidance on Trade Adjustment Assistance and WIOA Dislocated Worker Co-Enrollment
WPPL Number	Description
WPPL 20-02.1	Unemployment Insurance (UI) Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) Program Policy
WPPL 20-01	On-the-Job Training (OJT) for Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)
WPPL 20-03	Wagner-Peyser Employment Services for Job Seekers
WPPL 22-01	Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC)

B. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE INTENDS TO USE GOVERNOR'S SET ASIDE FUNDING FOR MANDATORY AND DISCRETIONARY ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING HOW THE STATE WILL CONDUCT EVALUATIONS OF TITLE I ADULT, DISLOCATED WORKER, AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES.

A portion of the statewide WIOA funds covers the costs of program oversight and management at the State level, including technical assistance, monitoring, and grant management functions. A portion will be used to continue updating State information systems to ensure compliance with changes mandated in WIOA. The case management system for determining eligibility and reporting performance, the database of Eligible Training Providers (ETPs), and the financial reporting system all require significant revisions to implement the new legislation. The local area designation provisions in WIOA may also result in changes to the size and shape of some local areas. If re-designation occurs, the ODJFS will issue statewide funds to help each affected area realign and meet the requirements for local areas. ODJFS will continue to expend a portion of statewide funds to provide staff to the GEWB and OWT. ODJFS also plans to use statewide

funds to build capacity in the local areas for regional planning, industry sector strategies, and career pathways.

C. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL UTILIZE RAPID RESPONSE FUNDS TO RESPOND TO LAYOFFS AND PLANT CLOSINGS AND COORDINATE SERVICES TO QUICKLY AID COMPANIES AND THEIR AFFECTED WORKERS. STATES ALSO SHOULD DESCRIBE ANY LAYOFF AVERSION STRATEGIES THEY HAVE IMPLEMENTED TO ADDRESS AT RISK COMPANIES AND WORKERS.

The ODJFS Rapid Response Unit oversees Ohio's Rapid Response service delivery system by

- Ensuring compliance with Federal and State requirements;
- Implementing program initiatives; and
- Providing support, guidance, technical assistance, and financial resources to the local Rapid Response Teams.

Each local workforce development system must have a State/Local Rapid Response Team comprised of State and local partners. All areas must have a complete array of Rapid Response services available for local employers and impacted workers. The State allows local areas to apply for Rapid Response funding to respond to layoffs and closures or to avert layoffs, if formula funding is not sufficient. This funding enables local areas to implement strategies such as re-employment assistance, training services, employee skill upgrades, expansion of service delivery at transition centers, and early warning networks to identify worksites in danger of potential layoff.

Rapid Response encompasses the strategies and activities necessary to plan for and respond as quickly as possible following an announcement of a closure or layoff or natural or other disaster that results in mass job loss. This is covered in TEGL 03-15 and WIOAPL 15-15.3 Rapid Response Program Requirements - Employer Closure, Mass Layoff, Disaster Mass Job Dislocation, and Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Events.

When circumstances allow, Rapid Response may provide guidance and/or financial assistance to establish community transition teams to assist the impacted community in organizing support for dislocated workers and in meeting the basic needs of their families, including heat, shelter, food, clothing, and other necessities and services that are beyond the resources and ability of the OhioMeansJobs centers to provide.

D. DESCRIBE THE STATE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES TO PROVIDE RAPID RESPONSES IN CASES OF NATURAL DISASTERS INCLUDING COORDINATION WITH FEMA AND OTHER ENTITIES.

Beyond an immediate and initial response by Rapid Response if deemed necessary, ODJFS will coordinate with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), organize a response, submit an application for a National Dislocated Worker Grant, and manage the project, including the community transition teams.

In the event a natural disaster occurs within the State, the ODJFS - Office of Workforce Development (OWD) can support the provision of re-employment services to eligible

individuals. The following is a step-by-step list to be followed, including actions to be taken and by whom, as a result of a disaster:

1. Identify the local workforce area(s) affected and the specific counties – OWD Rapid Response;
2. Contact appropriate local workforce area designees for both the workforce development board and fiscal agent – OWD Rapid Response;
3. Reach out to FEMA - OWD Grant Management Unit;
4. Discuss extent of the disaster and current dislocated worker fund availability - OWD Rapid Response;
5. Discuss projected participant service levels and re-employment needs to address the results of the disaster - OWD Rapid Response;
6. Provide a copy of the Rapid Response funding request application to the local workforce area(s) - OWD Rapid Response;
7. Complete Rapid Response funding application and submit it via email to OWD Rapid Response at RAPDRESP@jfs.ohio.gov and the local workforce area designee(s) as listed in application;
8. Review application and process for signatures - OWD Rapid Response;
9. Send to OWD budget group for transmittal to ODJFS Fiscal - OWD Rapid Response;
10. Inform local workforce area designee(s) that award has been approved by ODJFS - OWD Rapid Response; and
11. Consider applying for a national dislocated worker grant - OWD Grant Management Unit.

E. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE PROVIDES EARLY INTERVENTION (E.G., RAPID RESPONSE) AND ENSURES THE PROVISION OF APPROPRIATE CAREER SERVICES TO WORKER GROUPS ON WHOSE BEHALF A TRADE ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE (TAA) PETITION HAS BEEN FILED. (SECTION 134(A)(2)(A) AND TAA SECTION 221(A)(2)(A) .) THIS DESCRIPTION MUST INCLUDE HOW THE STATE DISSEMINATES BENEFIT INFORMATION TO PROVIDE WORKERS IN THE GROUPS IDENTIFIED IN THE TAA PETITIONS WITH AN ACCURATE UNDERSTANDING OF THE PROVISION OF TAA BENEFITS AND SERVICES IN SUCH A WAY THAT THEY ARE TRANSPARENT TO THE DISLOCATED WORKER APPLYING FOR THEM (TRADE ACT SEC. 221(A)(2)(A) AND SEC. 225; GOVERNOR-SECRETARY AGREEMENT). DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE FUNDS THAT HAVE BEEN RESERVED FOR RAPID RESPONSE TO PROVIDE SERVICES FOR EVERY WORKER GROUP THAT FILES A TAA PETITION AND HOW THE STATE WILL ENSURE THE PROVISION OF APPROPRIATE CAREER SERVICE TO WORKERS IN THE GROUPS IDENTIFIED IN THE PETITION (TAA SEC. 221(A)(2)(A)).NOTE: UNTIL THE TAA PROGRAM IS REAUTHORIZED, THE REQUIREMENTS TO PROVIDE RAPID RESPONSE AND APPROPRIATE CAREER SERVICES TO WORKER GROUPS ON WHOSE BEHALF A PETITION HAS BEEN FILED IS NOT APPLICABLE.

Ohio provides early intervention to all worker groups, including worker groups on whose behalf a TAA petition has been filed. Rapid Response efforts can be triggered in many ways, including TAA petition filing, Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN), media information, or laid-off worker inquiries. A Rapid Response Team member contacts the employer to confirm the information and to request an on-site employee meeting to be held within 24 to 48 hours, if possible. The goal is to provide services prior to the layoff date, at the worksite, and on company time. Once verified, each event is entered into the integrated case management system (ARIES), and Rapid Response services are initiated. Rapid Response is an opportunity to provide customized adjustment services to address each specific dislocation event. If a TAA petition has not been filed, filing a petition is encouraged, both when contacting the employer and at the employee meeting, in appropriate circumstances.

TAA staff in the OWD engage all companies that have a mass layoff or have filed a WARN. TAA staff contacts the human resources representative at the company to introduce the agency, inform the company about TAA program benefits, and encourage the organization to file a TAA petition on behalf of the workers. When a petition is filed, staff also contacts the company to let it know what information will be required if the petition is certified (worker list, mailing and email address of the representative, etc.).

Once the petition becomes certified by USDOL, TAA staff contacts the company to request a list of its displaced workers or workers with a threat of layoff. After staff receives the worker list from the company, staff contacts the OhioMeansJobs Center to schedule a Benefit Rights Information (BRI) session. Once the session is scheduled, TAA staff sends meeting notices to the affected workers inviting invite them to the BRI and stress the importance of attending. During the BRI session, the workers are advised of the benefits that are potentially available to them through the TAA program.

B. ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKERS PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

1. WORK-BASED TRAINING MODELS

If the State is utilizing work-based training models (e.g. on-the-job training, incumbent worker training, transitional jobs, and customized training) as part of its training strategy and these strategies are not already discussed in other sections of the plan, describe the State's strategies for how these models ensure high quality training for both the participant and the employer.

Ohio's local areas utilize a variety of training models for WIOA-eligible youth and unemployed or underemployed adults and dislocated workers. Use of these alternative training models is determined based on the best method to meet the needs of the participants as well as employers.

On the Job Training. WIOAPL 15-22.1 (On-the-Job Training (OJT) Policy) - OJT continues to be a key method of delivering training services to adults, dislocated workers, and youth. Through OJT activities provided under WIOA, adult, dislocated worker, and youth participants can obtain the skill sets necessary to fill the jobs that are available and that are being created in this economy. OJT is a type of training or work experience that is provided by an employer to a participant. During the training or work experience, the participant is engaged in productive work in a job for which he or she is paid, and the training provides knowledge or skills necessary to the full and adequate performance of the job. Employers must commit to hire and retain the participant at the end of a successful training period. OJT activities support the

development of a workforce with skills that meet the needs of employers and provide additional training options for workers and employers. OJT provides an incentive to employers to hire individuals and invest in their skill development, and trainees can earn a wage as they learn. It is a critical tool that helps job seekers enter successful employment.

Incumbent Worker Training. (Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) Guidelines) WIOAPL 15-23.2 - IWT under WIOA provides both workers and employers with the opportunity to build and maintain a quality workforce and increase both participants' and companies' competitiveness. It is a type of work-based training and upskilling designed to ensure that employees of a company can acquire the skills necessary to retain employment and/or advance within the company, or to acquire the skills necessary to avert a layoff.

IWT is an employer service designed to develop a highly skilled workforce which will result in increased financial viability, stability, competitiveness, and productivity. To avert the risk of closing, IWT may be developed with a business or business association to maintain its competitive status, incorporate new technology, or prevent downsizing. IWT can also be an important means of ensuring an adequate workforce for vital community services, whether in the private or public sector.

Workers participating in IWT will benefit by enhancing their existing skills, learning new skills, or earning employer- or industry-recognized credentials, in addition to retaining employment, maintaining their careers, and/or increasing their earnings potential. IWT will also allow the opportunity for back-filling vacated positions resulting from the promotion of newly trained workers.

Local workforce development areas (local areas) can use up to 20 percent of their Adult and Dislocated Worker program allocations to provide for the federal share of the cost of providing IWT.

Customized Training. (WIOAPL 15-24 (Customized Training Guidelines) - Customized training is one of several types of allowable training identified in Section 134 (c)(3)(D) of WIOA. This training may be offered to individuals under local area formula-funded programs or as a type of incumbent worker training. As a type of training offered in local formula-funded programs, participants must meet all adult or dislocated worker eligibility requirements prior to the start of customized training.

Overall, customized training is training designed to meet the needs of a specific employer, or group of employers (employer consortiums). It may be provided for the introduction of new technologies, new production or service procedures, upgrading existing skills, or other appropriate purposes identified by the local WDB. The employer must commit to employ, or continue to employ, the worker(s) upon successful completion of any form of customized training. As with all training services, the customized training must enable individuals to obtain industry or employer-recognized skills.

Customized training may be provided through individual training accounts (ITAs) or through contracts for services. If the training is provided through an ITA, all requirements of such ITA must be followed, including the use of approved eligible training providers. If a contract is used to provide customized training, this contract must have been established through proper procurement procedures.

Transitional Jobs. (WIOAPL 18-05 Transitional Jobs). Transitional jobs (TJ) are a type of work-experience that local areas may provide under WIOA and are considered an individualized career service. TJs are time-limited and wage-paid work experiences that are subsidized up to 100 percent. These jobs are in the public, private, or nonprofit sectors and are only available for individuals with barriers to employment who are chronically unemployed or have an inconsistent work history, as determined by the local area.

Because TJs are a type of work experience, the requirements delineated in the policy letter on work experience for adults and dislocated workers, including the requirement for the local WDB to establish a worksite agreement between the participant, the host employer, and the provider of career services, also apply to TJs.

However, TJs are differentiated from other types of work experiences by the following characteristics:

- TJs are a paid, subsidized work experience, unlike other types of work experience that may be unpaid;
- TJs are meant to establish work history while demonstrating success in an employer-employee relationship and developing skills, whereas the purpose of other types of work experience may be to explore various career options or to assess the participant's employability; and
- TJs must be combined with the provision of comprehensive career services and supportive services, which is not mandated for other types of work experiences.

Similar to other types of work experience, neither the employer-of-record nor the host employer where the TJ participant performs his or her work duties is required to employ the participant after the conclusion of the TJ (however, retention, where appropriate, is preferred for the benefit of the worker and employer).

Local areas may only use up to 10 percent of adult and dislocated worker formula funds for TJs. Also, national dislocated worker grant (NDWG) funding may be spent on TJs in accordance with any requirements, limitations, or maximum expenditure amounts related to TJs that apply to each such grant.

2. REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP

Describe how the State will incorporate Registered Apprenticeship into its strategy for service design and delivery (e.g., outreach to sponsors and prospective sponsors, identifying potential participants and connecting them to apprenticeship opportunities).

Ohio's Registered Apprenticeship program is a part of the array of strategies and services available to employer sponsors and individuals. Registered apprenticeship programs will be included in the Workforce Inventory of Education and Training, Ohio's eligible providers of training services.

The Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE), Ohio Department of Education and Workforce (ODEW), and Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) partnered to develop program standards and add the occupation of K-12 teacher to the registered apprenticeships in Ohio. Ohio's Teacher Apprenticeship model is designed to strengthen

partnerships between K-12 schools, their communities, and the educator preparation programs in Ohio's institutions of higher education by incorporating leading practices in educator preparation with the rigors of a registered apprenticeship program.

In addition, the ODHE is working to leverage these programs into college degree pathways, helping students in selected fields also earn college credit that articulates to degrees. Ohio Administrative Code 5101:11-3-02 requires apprenticeship sponsors to have curriculum designed or provided in conjunction with a member of the University System of Ohio, which includes Ohio's public institutions of higher education as well as adult career technical education centers. This provides for the framework of articulated credit and dual enrollment. ODJFS staff is providing technical support to apprenticeship sponsors, who do not currently have a relationship for articulated credit, of how these relationships can be built and fostered.

Ohio continues to increase integration and align with existing Local Workforce Areas and their partners. ApprenticeOhio provides specific technical assistance and training for workforce, industry, and education individuals across the state. Apprenticeship Informational Sessions are training opportunities geared to educate local business service teams, OhioMeansJobs center staff, including Workforce innovation and Opportunity At, Wagner Peyser, and other partners. Training opportunities are building local infrastructure and staff capacity within the local workforce system for program expansion.

ApprenticeOhio received the 2020 State Apprenticeship Expansion grant in July 2020 to expand and further integrate Registered Apprenticeship into Ohio's workforce system. Ohio is expanding sector strategies to expand Registered Apprenticeship programs to new industries and/or new or non-traditional occupations within existing sectors. Ohio continues to emphasis development of new Registered Apprenticeship programs in innovative and growing industries to increase enrollment. Through continued partnership with the Ohio Workforce Association, Ohio Department of Higher Education, Ohio Department of Education and various healthcare and information technology leaders, Ohio is actively working to venture into new industries.

Additionally, as a result of the 2020 State Apprenticeship Expansion grant, ODJFS and the Ohio Department of Education are working together to develop pre-apprenticeship programs for schools and share participant data.

3. TRAINING PROVIDER ELIGIBILITY PROCEDURE

Provide the procedure, eligibility criteria, and information requirements for determining training provider initial and continued eligibility, including Registered Apprenticeship programs (WIOA Section 122).

Overview.

Ohio maintains an online portal for ETPs called the Workforce Inventory of Education and Training (WIET). Providers complete an in-depth online application related to the provider, location(s), program(s), credentials, and performance. They must meet the minimum requirements outlined in WIOAPL 16-02.2. If a Provider meets all criteria and submits a training program that will result in a recognized postsecondary credential (RPC), it will be eligible to receive WIOA funding to provide training services. WIOAPL 16-02.2 Eligible Training Providers establishes the criteria for ETPs who may receive WIOA funding to provide training services and the procedures for approving them on the State Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL).

Management of the State ETP List

ODJFS is responsible for establishing the criteria, information requirements and procedures for the State ETP list, including procedures identifying the respective roles of the State and the local areas governing the eligibility of ETPs. The State will review all applications for inclusion on the State ETP list and will notify each training provider via e-mail of the approval or denial decision for the provider and for each training program proposed by the provider. The State is responsible for the following activities:

1. Ensuring the development and maintenance of the State ETP list;

2. Ensuring programs meet the eligibility criteria and performance levels established by the State;

3. Removing programs that do not meet State-established program criteria or performance levels;

4. Taking appropriate enforcement actions against providers that intentionally provide inaccurate information or that substantially violate the requirements of WIOA; and

5. Disseminating the State ETP list to the public and the local WDBs.

Dissemination of State ETP List

To assist participants in choosing employment and training activities, the State ETP list will be disseminated to local WDBs in the state, members of the public, the OhioMeansJobs delivery system, and program partners, including the State's secondary and post-secondary education systems.

To ensure informed consumer choice, the State ETP list is widely available to the public through electronic means and includes searchable databases. The State ETP list is accessible to individuals seeking information on training outcomes and participants in employment and training activities funded under WIOA, including individuals with disabilities.

The State ETP list contains appropriate information to assist participants in choosing employment and training activities, including:

1. Recognized post-secondary credential(s) offered;

2. Provider-supplied information as part of eligibility; and

3. Training program performance and cost information.

Eligible Training Providers (ETPs)

ETPs may include:

- Accredited institutions of higher education that provide programs which lead to recognized postsecondary credentials;
- Entities carrying out programs registered under the National Apprenticeship Act (29 U.S.C. 50); or
- Public or private providers of training services, which may include:

- Community-based organizations;
- Joint labor-management organizations; and
- Eligible providers of adult education and literacy activities under title II of WIOA (in Ohio, known as Aspire) if such activities are provided in combination with occupational skills training.

Ohio may approve training providers who do not have a physical training location in Ohio, if the provider meets all other eligibility and performance reporting criteria.

Initial Eligibility Procedures for ETPs

Any provider offering a program of training services to be funded through WIOA using ITAs must be included in the State ETP list. Except for registered apprenticeships, all providers must apply for consideration by submitting all required information in the State's designated online system for managing the State ETP list.

To qualify as an ETP in Ohio, a provider of training services must meet the following criteria:

A. Remained in business for two years or longer;

i. As indicated by the date upon which the provider initially registered with the Ohio (or other state) Secretary of State.

B .Registered with the Ohio Secretary of State to do business in Ohio, is exempted from such registration, or registered to do business in another state if the provider does not have a significant presence in Ohio;

C .Is not debarred, suspended, proposed for disbarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in transactions by USDOL or the State of Ohio;

D. Does not owe any outstanding tax liability to the State or Federal government more than six months past due; and

E. Does not owe any outstanding civil, criminal, or administrative fines or penalties at the State or Federal level.

ETPs may apply for approval of programs of training services at any time after their provider application has been approved.

Program Initial Eligibility

After the provider application has been approved, the provider may apply for approval of their programs of study, A provider will not appear in a public search of the state of Ohio's ETP list until they have at least one approved program.

For each program of training services to be offered by the provider, all of the required information fields must be submitted in the State's designated online system for managing the State ETP list. For initial eligibility, this information includes but is not limited to:

1. Description of each program of training services to be offered;
2. Information addressing a factor related to WIOA performance indicators;

3. Information concerning whether provider is in a partnership with a business.; and
4. Information addressing the alignment of training with in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

Program Performance for Initial Eligibility

To assist participants in selecting training activities and providers of training services, for an initial eligibility approval, ETPs are required to provide outcome data for at least one of the below indicators of program performance for individuals who attended each approved training program:

a. Employment 2nd Quarter after exit;

b. Employment 4th Quarter after exit;

c. Median earnings in the 2nd Quarter after exit, or

d. Graduation or Credential attainment rate.

"After exit" in this context means after a student has left the program or has graduated.

ETPs are responsible for ensuring the timeliness and accuracy of their performance reports. Failure to submit this information will result in removal from the ETP list. The State will review all submitted initial approval requests and will deny programs that fail to meet the criteria necessary to remain eligible. The training provider will be notified via e-mail when its program status has either been approved or denied.

Continued Eligibility Procedures for ETPs

To remain active on the State ETP list and continue to receive WIOA funding, an ETP must renew each of its programs in the State's designated system for managing the State ETP list at least once every 12 months following the date of the previous approval.

The renewal process requires an update of the information pertaining to each program offered by the ETP, and the indicators of program performance to reflect outcomes using the most recently available data that pertain to each performance measure (if such data are available) as required for performance reporting.

For a continued eligibility determination, ETPs are required to submit all required information which includes but is not limited to:

1. ETP performance on WIOA performance indicators

2. Information regarding access to training services throughout the state (including rural areas and through technology use).

3. Information reported to state agencies on federal and state training programs other than WIOA Title I-B programs.

4. The degree to which training programs relate to in-demand industry sectors and occupations in the state.

5. State licensure requirements of training providers, and licensing status of providers of training services, if applicable.

6. ETP's ability to offer industry-recognized certificates and credentials.

7. ETP's ability to offer programs that lead to a recognized post-secondary credential.

8. Quality of the program of training services including a program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential.

9. ETP's ability to provide trainings that are physically and programmatically accessible for individuals who are employed and individuals with barriers to employment, including individuals with disabilities.

Program Performance for Continued Eligibility

For a continued eligibility determination, ETPs are required to provide outcome data for all four of the below indicators of program performance for individuals who attended each approved training program:

a. Employment 2nd Quarter after exit;

b. Employment 4th Quarter after exit;

c. Median earnings in the 2nd Quarter after exit, or

d. Graduation or Credential attainment rate.

The State will review all submitted program renewal requests and will remove programs that fail to meet the criteria necessary to remain eligible. The training provider will be notified via e-mail when its program has either been renewed or denied.

If an ETP does not renew the status of one or more of its training programs within 90 days following the 12-month renewal date for that program, the program(s) will be removed.

ETPs are responsible for ensuring the timeliness and accuracy of their performance reports. Failure to submit this information will result in removal from the ETP list. The State will review all submitted continued eligibility requests and will deny programs that fail to meet the criteria necessary to remain eligible. The training provider will be notified via e-mail when its program status has either been approved or denied.

Registered Apprenticeships.

Registered apprenticeship programs, upon approval by ODJFS, are given the opportunity to be included on the State ETP list. Sponsors may request to be excluded. When applying to become a registered apprenticeship program, the sponsor will be informed of this opportunity and the benefits of inclusion on the State ETP list. Once included on the State ETP list, registered apprenticeship programs will remain on the list until they are deregistered or until the registered apprenticeship program notifies ODJFS that it no longer wishes to be included on the list. All registered apprenticeship programs listed on the statewide ETP list must also be located on all local ETP lists.

National Apprenticeship programs are automatically eligible for inclusion on the State ETP list. National programs are not required to register their program in the State of Ohio in order to gain inclusion on the ETP list.

Inclusion of a registered apprenticeship program on the State ETP list allows eligible adults, dislocated workers, and youth who are authorized to receive ITAs to use WIOA funds to cover the costs of classroom training provided as part of the apprenticeship program, subject to policy limitations by ODJFS or the local WDB. All registered apprenticeship programs are considered to be in-demand. Local areas do not need to determine occupational-demand status for registered apprenticeship sponsors who are hiring.

Loss of ETP Eligibility

A training provider must deliver results and provide accurate information to retain its status as an ETP. If a change should occur between eligibility review periods, training providers must immediately submit to ODJFS information regarding any changes in their eligibility and/or accreditation. Providers must disclose any factors that may change their eligibility status. Failure to do so may result in a finding of a substantial violation and removal from the State ETP list.

Criteria for Substantial Violations

ODJFS considers an institution to have committed a "substantial violation" when:

1. ODJFS determines that the institution intentionally supplied inaccurate information.

2. ODJFS determines that the institution has substantially violated any provision of title I of WIOA or the WIOA regulations, including 29 CFR part 38.

3. There is an order against the institution under 29 CFR 38.113 suspending, terminating, denying, or discontinuing WIOA Title I financial assistance to the institution.

If ODJFS determines that an institution committed a substantial violation, ODJFS will remove the institution and all its programs, including registered apprenticeships, from the State ETP list for a minimum of two years. The period of removal lasts for two years from the date of that determination. However, the period of removal may extend beyond two years if there are multiple determinations stemming from multiple levels of review, including determinations made under 29 CFR part 38. The two-year period, in these cases, is calculated from the date of the final determination. During the period of removal, the institution is prohibited from publishing new training programs to the State ETP list. ODJFS determines WIOA substantial violation periods of noncompliance and fund reclamation procedures on a case-by-case basis.

A provider of training services whose eligibility is terminated for committing a substantial violation shall be liable for the repayment of funds improperly secured or received during the period the violation(s) occurred.

Typically, ODJFS terminates a training program's eligibility and removes it from the ETPL website during the continued eligibility process; however, ODJFS may terminate eligibility at any time if it determines that there are grounds to do so. When ODJFS terminates a training program's ETPL eligibility, it sends an email that identifies the reason(s) for the termination.

Programs may also be removed during routine reviews or during continued eligibility reviews, if ODJFS determines that the program does not meet the criteria outlined for inclusion.

Appeals

Per 20 C.F.R. 680.480, providers of training services who have been rejected from Ohio's eligible training program list may appeal this decision using the following procedure. This procedure remains the same for appealing the rejection of a training program.

Within 14 days from the date the rejection notice was received, the provider may file an appeal to the Office of Workforce Development by submitting in writing all of the following information:

- A statement appealing the rejection;
- Information as to why the training program should be eligible; and
- Who the primary point of contact for the training provider will be.

Providers should also submit any documentation pertaining to the program or credential associated with the program. For example-information regarding the credential attained upon completion of the program.

The written appeal shall be submitted to WIOAQNA@jfs.ohio.gov.

The State will review the appeal and conduct an internal hearing process using the information submitted in the appeal and issue a written decision/response within 60 days of the receipt of the appeal.

Local WDB Requirements

The local WDB is responsible for the following activities pertaining to ETPs:

1. Carrying out procedures assigned to the local WDB by the State, such as informing the State of concerns related to the quality of providers or inaccurate performance data;
2. Working with the State to ensure there are sufficient numbers and types of providers of training services, including ETPs with expertise in assisting individuals with disabilities or in need of adult education and literacy activities; and
3. Ensuring the wide dissemination and appropriate use of the information available in the State ETP list.

Additionally, the local WDB may:

1. Make recommendations to the State on the best procedure for identifying qualified ETPs;
2. Request additional information from ETPs to assist adults, dislocated workers, and youth in making an informed choice; and
3. Conduct site visits to assess the quality of the providers, and report on the findings.
4. Local WDBs may supplement information requirements defined in this policy to support informed customer choice and the achievement of local performance measures. This additional information may include:

1. Information on programs of training services that are linked to local in-demand occupations;

2. Information that shows how programs are responsive to local workforce development area needs; and
3. Other appropriate information related to the objectives of WIOA.

Local WDBs are not required to provide WIOA funding to a training provider listed on the State ETP list and may establish local policy regarding how ETPs will be utilized locally. However, this policy must not inhibit consumer choice. For example, a local WDB may decide against using ETPs that did not provide data on the indicators of program performance if a sufficient number of ETPs remain available within a reasonable commuting distance for participants to receive the training services they need to enter in-demand occupations.

4. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL IMPLEMENT AND MONITOR FOR THE ADULT PRIORITY OF SERVICE REQUIREMENT IN WIOA SECTION 134 (C)(3)(E) THAT REQUIRES AMERICAN JOB CENTER STAFF, WHEN USING WIOA ADULT PROGRAM FUNDS TO PROVIDE INDIVIDUALIZED CAREER SERVICES AND TRAINING SERVICES, TO GIVE PRIORITY OF SERVICE TO RECIPIENTS OF PUBLIC ASSISTANCE, LOW-INCOME INDIVIDUALS, AND INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE BASIC SKILLS DEFICIENT (INCLUDING ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS).

WIOAPL No. 15-08.1 Career Services for Adults and Dislocated Workers and WIOAPL No. 15-09.1 Training Services for Adults and Dislocated Workers state that priority of career services and training services funded by and provided through the adult program shall be given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient for receipt of those career and training services determined appropriate to obtain or retain employment. These policies emphasize that the requirement to prioritize individualized career and training services to those individuals who have the most barriers to employment and to provide those individuals with the opportunity to benefit from employment and training services.

WIOA policy letters are used to state requirements and to provide guidance to the local workforce development areas in the implementation of WIOA. The ODJFS Office of Workforce Development provides the technical assistance to the local areas to assist in the implementation of the requirement to prioritize individualized career services and training services to those adults who are low-income, on public assistance, including development of local workforce area policies. This provision of the law will also be part of the annual WIOA programmatic monitoring, which includes interviews with staff and review of participant files, for adherence to Federal law, regulations, and State and local policies.

5. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S CRITERIA REGARDING LOCAL AREA TRANSFER OF FUNDS BETWEEN THE ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKER PROGRAMS

As the designated State Workforce Agency operating under the authority of the governor, ODJFS performs certain functions relegated to the governor in the Act, including the process for approving transfers of local formula dollars between the Adult and Dislocated Worker funding streams. WIOAPL No. 15-25 Transfer of Funds between the Adult and Dislocated Worker Local Formula Funds permits local areas to transfer adult funding to the dislocated worker program and vice versa. Areas will be permitted to transfer up to 50 percent of each funding stream

without constraint and will be able to ask permission from the State workforce agency to raise their transfer limit up to either 75 percent or 100 percent of adult or dislocated worker funding in a fiscal year. The purpose of this provision is for the State workforce agency to ensure the area has sufficient resources remaining available to be able to meet potential demand, such as if the area wishes to transfer dislocated worker funds to adult when a potential layoff event may be approaching.

As explained in WIOA Policy Letter 15-25, local boards wishing to transfer more than 50 percent of the area's Adult or Dislocated Worker funds may e-mail such request to the ODJFS mailbox at WIOAQNA@jfs.ohio.gov with "Fund Transfer Request" in the subject line of the e-mail. The board's request must specify which fund (Adult or Dislocated Worker by year of appropriation) that the funds are being transferred from and whether the area is seeking 75 percent or 100 percent transfer authority. In the request e-mail, the board must also provide written justification of the need for the transfer, explanation of available funds remaining to serve enrolled participants, how the area will respond to unforeseen events such as mass layoffs, and the short- and long-term impacts of the transfer. A team of subject matter experts (i.e., policy and budget administrators) at the ODJFS-OWD will receive the board's e-mail, review the justification and feasibility of the requested transfer, and provide an e-mail response within 30 days. If the higher transfer limit is granted by the State, the board should notify the local Fiscal Agent of the ability to transfer more than 50 percent of the allocation, and the Fiscal Agent will complete the transfer using expenditure codes available in the financial system that signify Adult funds being spent on Dislocated Workers, or Dislocated Worker funds being spent on Adult participants as appropriate.

6. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S POLICY ON WIOA AND TAA CO-ENROLLMENT AND WHETHER AND HOW OFTEN THIS POLICY IS DISSEMINATED TO THE LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARDS AND REQUIRED ONE-STOP PARTNERS. TRADE ACT SEC. 239(F), SEC. 235, 20 CFR 618.325, 20 CFR 618.824(A)(3)(I).

WIOAPL 22-01 (Guidance on Trade Adjustment Assistance and WIOA Dislocated Worker Co-Enrollment) is the policy used to communicate the procedures for co-enrolling recipients of Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program services into the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Dislocated Worker (DW) program. This policy is posted publicly on the ODJFS website and training is provided to local workforce area and TAA staff annually.

<u>Background</u>

WIOA emphasizes integrating services to better serve workforce customers. The TAA regulations further this effort by requiring the co-enrollment of trade-affected workers with the WIOA DW program. In accordance with 20 CFR Part 618, co-enrollment is mandated between the TAA Program and WIOA DW program and it strongly encourages co-enrollment in other programs to ensure coordinated services for trade-affected workers.

Like the TAA Program, the WIOA DW program is designed to help dislocated workers overcome barriers to employment and return to work as quickly as possible. When individuals become dislocated due to job loss, mass layoffs, global trade dynamics, or transitions in economic sectors, the WIOA DW program provides services to assist them in re-entering the workforce. Services for dislocated workers include career, training, and supportive services to help them re-enter the workforce.

Additionally, section 121 of WIOA designates the TAA Program as a required one-stop partner and 20 CFR 618.305 directs states to ensure the TAA Program complies with WIOA's one-stop partnership requirements, which include, among other requirements, paying infrastructure costs where the TAA Program is being carried out.

Requirements

To ensure the availability of a comprehensive array of services, all TAA participants, including Adversely Affected Incumbent Workers must be referred and co-enrolled into the WIOA DW program unless the TAA recipient is not eligible for the WIOA DW program or opts-out of the co-enrollment opportunity. As outlined in § 618.325, a State must co-enroll trade-affected workers who are eligible for WIOA's dislocated worker program. Workers may choose to decline co-enrollment in WIOA. A State cannot deny such a worker benefits or services under the TAA Program solely for declining co-enrollment in WIOA. Detailed information about the participant's choice to not be co-enrolled must be documented through case notes in Ohio's designated case management system as defined in OAC 5101:9-30-04.

Although not required, co-enrollment of trade-affected workers can also be expanded to include a broad range of services available through other workforce programs such as, Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service (ES) activities, WIOA Adult program, WIOA Dislocated Worker special grants, other WIOA partner programs, vocational rehabilitation services, and services for veterans. See Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 4-20 Guidance on Integrating Services for Trade-Affected Workers under the Trade Adjustment Assistance Program with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I Dislocated Worker (DW) Program for additional opportunities to align workforce programs.

TAA Enrollment

The Trade Delivery Professional (TDP) will conduct the standard TAA application and enrollment process, including assistance with registration on OhioMeansJobs.com.

To assist with WIOA DW eligibility, the TDP will check the TAA participant's Selective Service registration status and will document this information in Ohio's designated case management system. Selective Service registration can be documented using any of the allowable sources outlined in WIOAPL 15-07.2 Source Documentation for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title I Program Eligibility in the Attachment A Allowable Source Documentation for WIOA Program Eligibility.

The TDP will provide the customer with a general introduction to the WIOA program and the benefits of co-enrollment.

The TDP will complete a Co-Services Possibilities List (see Section D., below) to identify the services that could be provided by TAA as well as those that could be provided by WIOA.

Referral Process

All TAA participants will be referred to the WIOA DW program via the Co-Enrollment Referral Report. The location of TAA participants generated on this report are based on their county of residence.

The Co-Enrollment Referral Report will be sent to the WIOA local area designees once per week. The generation of the Co-Enrollment Referral Report will serve as the starting date for the 30-day co-enrollment window into WIOA DW.

Upon receiving the Co-Enrollment Referral Report, the WIOA local area designee will coordinate WIOA DW co-enrollment by assigning the TAA participants to a WIOA staff member for service delivery.

Co-Enrollment into the WIOA DW program

WIOA staff will review the Co-Services Possibilities List (see Section A,. above) and will start conducting outreach to the participant to coordinate co-enrollment into the WIOA DW program immediately after receiving the referral.

WIOA staff must note all efforts to contact the customer in case notes to provide clear documentation of the actions taken to promote co-enrollment.

Upon contact, the WIOA staff should ask the TAA participant what county they would like to receive WIOA services (i.e., the specific OhioMeansJobs location). The WIOA staff should either setup an appointment or make the referral to WIOA staff in the participant's desired county. If a referral is made, it should be noted in case notes in Ohio's designated case management system.

WIOA staff will collect supplemental information as needed to meet eligibility requirements and co-enroll into the WIOA DW program, including but not limited to assistance with Selective Service registration, identification of barriers to employment, notification of WIOA complaint process, declaration of related party, information about being impacted by substance misuse disorder, and/or any other Local Area requirements.

After determining eligibility, WIOA staff must make every effort to provide a participating career service (per WIOAPL 15-08.1) to referred TAA participants within 30 days of receiving the Co-Enrollment Referral Report. This will promote co-enrollment within the same quarter as the first TAA service.

In the event WIOA staff is unable to contact the TAA participant or the TAA participant is no longer interested in WIOA DW co-enrollment, the WIOA staff must document that the TAA participant is unable or unwilling to complete the WIOA DW eligibility documentation or participating service in case notes.

Co-Services

Upon co-enrollment into the WIOA DW program, the TDP and WIOA staff will coordinate service delivery through a Co-Services strategy for participants using the Co-Services Possibilities List. The Co-Services Possibilities List along with frequent communication (i.e., phone, e-mail, messenger, and case notes) are key components of this strategy and will assist the TDP and WIOA staff in determining the best combination of appropriate services for the participant, keeping in mind the requirements of each of the programs. The Co-Services Possibilities List should be updated and modified as needed throughout the participant's enrollment in both programs. WIOA staff and the TDP must use Ohio's designated case management system to record the customer's services, needs, and progress. Please note that the Co-Services Possibilities list is intended to assist in the coordination of service delivery and does not replace the Individual Opportunity Plan (IOP).

To increase efficiency and reduce unnecessary duplication, assessments (initial, comprehensive, and specialized) and IOPs must be shared between TAA and WIOA. The TDP and WIOA staff may supplement these assessments and document any additional information that may be required or aid in the service delivery of their respective program.

Of note, TAA funds will serve as the primary source of Federal assistance to trade-affected workers. Sharing training costs with WIOA may only occur if TAA funds are not available to cover the total cost of training. In the event a participant was enrolled in WIOA prior to being enrolled in TAA, then TAA may not reimburse WIOA for any training costs that were accrued before the date the training program was approved under TAA. (See 20 CFR 618.625(c)1-3)

Co-Exit and Follow-up

The Participation Period for the TAA/DW participant can be completed once no additional services are needed. The closure of all WIOA services does not complete the Participation Period, nor does the closure of all TAA services complete the Participation Period. The Participation Period is closed once all programs have been completed and requires a coordinated effort between the TDP and WIOA caseworkers to ensure services have been completed for both programs.

After both programs are completed and the Participation Period is closed, the WIOA caseworkers will provide and document follow-up services to the TAA/DW participant in accordance with WIOAP 15-08.1 and local policy. The WIOA caseworker will share all appropriate follow-up information with the TAA caseworker.

Reporting Requirements

Local areas must report participant data in the state's designated case management reporting system. Each participant enrollment, service, and all other case information must be reported in that manner, within 30 days of occurrence.

The outcomes of participants co-enrolled in WIOA DW and TAA will be included in performance outcome metrics for both programs.

Monitoring

At the local level, the local area must conduct oversight of the implementation of the TAA/DW co-enrollment requirement to ensure that customers have been properly co-enrolled and provided identified services.

Through the state's monitoring system, ODJFS program monitors will conduct annual reviews, including a participant file review during the onsite monitoring review of the local area for compliance with all applicable federal and state laws, regulations, and guidance letters including this guidance letter. Any findings will be addressed through the state's monitoring resolution process.

7. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S FORMAL STRATEGY TO ENSURE THAT WIOA AND TAA CO-ENROLLED PARTICIPANTS RECEIVE NECESSARY FUNDED BENEFITS AND SERVICES. TRADE ACT SEC. 239(F), SEC. 235, 20 CFR 618.816(C)

Ohio continues to improve services for workers who lose their jobs or whose hours of work and wages are reduced due to increased imports. On July 1, 2022, the Trade Adjustment Assistance

(TAA) program was terminated, and a gradual phase-out began. USDOL stopped investigating petitions for worker group eligibility, and no new TAA determinations have been issued. Benefits and services to current participants and eligible workers have continued.

From May 9 through July 8, 2022, USDOL conducted a compliance review for TAA and Trade Readjustment Allowance. The purpose of the review was to measure progress, identify areas of compliance, offer opportunities for technical assistance to help resolve non-compliance issues, and ensure that federal funds are used responsibly. The exit meeting was conducted on July 8, 2022. Two findings were identified that needed to be resolved with corrective action. To address the non-compliance issues and prevent future discrepancies, Ohio's TAA staff updated and created new written procedures conducted training sessions in October 2022. USDOL was given copies of all updated policies, procedures, and training conducted in response to the report.

TAA regulations require that all Trade participants be co-enrolled in the WIOA Dislocated Worker program. ODJFS launched the co-enrollment protocol statewide in August 2022. The efforts of the co-enrollment workgroup were successful in improving Ohio's performance. In fact, USDOL tasked Ohio with creating a webinar on co-enrollment to provide guidance for other states. The webinar was held on January 11, 2023. In addition, USDOL requested that Ohio create three blogs addressing co-enrollment for the Workforce GPS website:

1. Minimizing the Burden of Co-Enrollment Choice: OPT IN "Why not? Why wouldn't we?" (posted 2/27/23)
2. Creating Buy-In (leadership, ongoing training, feedback channels etc.) (posted 3/14/23)
3. Continued Co-enrollment Engagement "Ask Away Sessions" (posted 3/22/23)

Along with implementing the TAA and Dislocated Worker co-enrollment process, ODJFS engaged in the following activities designed to modernize the TAA program:

- During PY2022, a TAA Padfolio was developed for Trade-impacted workers to receive upon their completion of the Benefits Rights Information session and initial assessment with the case manager. The padfolio is designed to assist with job search and reemployment.
- The BRI presentation video was upgraded to include Rapid Response information. This aligns with the TAA Reversion 2021 law. The new presentation will be accessible and available to customers to view and complete online at OhioMeansJobs.com.

TAA is collaborating with WIOA with reviewing and updating the On-the-Job Procedure Manual (WPPL 20-01 OJT Policy), ensuring co-enrollment between WIOA and TAA is covered satisfactorily.

8. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S PROCESS FOR FAMILIARIZING ONE-STOP STAFF WITH THE TAA PROGRAM. 20 CFR 618.804(J), 20 CFR 618.305

Ohio uses a variety of methods to ensure OhioMeansJobs center staff are familiar with the TAA program. Joint training and "Ask Away" sessions on the TAA/WIOA co-enrollment process are conducted for both local area and TAA staff. These trainings are held bi-annually and help staff gain familiarization of processes for both programs, while allowing them to ask any questions

they may have about the other program. TAA staff are also co-located within the OhioMeansJobs centers allowing them to attend partner meetings to ensure optimal collaboration between programs.

C. YOUTH PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS.

With respect to youth workforce investment activities authorized in section 129 of WIOA, States should describe their strategies that will support the implementation of youth activities under WIOA. State's must-

1. IDENTIFY THE STATE-DEVELOPED CRITERIA TO BE USED BY LOCAL BOARDS IN AWARDING GRANTS OR CONTRACTS FOR YOUTH WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES AND DESCRIBE HOW THE LOCAL BOARDS WILL TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION THE ABILITY OF THE PROVIDERS TO MEET PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES BASED ON PRIMARY INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE FOR THE YOUTH PROGRAM AS DESCRIBED IN SECTION 116(B)(2)(A)(II) OF WIOA.[11] FURTHER, INCLUDE A DESCRIPTION OF HOW THE STATE ASSISTS LOCAL AREAS IN DETERMINING WHETHER TO CONTRACT FOR SERVICES OR TO PROVIDE SOME OR ALL OF THE PROGRAM ELEMENTS DIRECTLY.

[11] Sec. 102(b)(2)(D)(i)(V)

Chapter 5116 of the Ohio Revised Code establishes the Comprehensive Case Management and Employment Program (CCMEP), the statewide operational framework used to deliver integrated, services to eligible youth aged 14- to 24-years. It pushes traditional program boundaries by integrating components of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program and Title I employment and training programs to create a better-coordinated, person-centered case management system. CCMEP is moving towards implementation of a science-informed, career coaching model called Goal4 It! which was designed by Mathematica. This model leverages motivational interviewing techniques to increase participant motivation while helping participants build their self-regulation and executive functioning skills. This model promotes participant goal identification and achievement so participants can receive services that support the achievement of participant life and career goals.

CCMEP takes a coordinated, holistic approach to stabilizing individuals and families by supporting participant goals to improve their lives and enter careers, including health, housing, education, training, transportation, and childcare. In conjunction with supportive services, the program provides access to employment and training services, including career counseling, job placement, and services to facilitate job retention and career advancement. By leveraging the strengths of both the workforce and human services systems, it seeks to improve employment and education outcomes for low-income youth and young adults by helping recipients achieve their goals to prepare for employment and develop the skills local employers seek.

CCMEP requires each board of commissioners to designate a single lead agency to be responsible for administrating the program and meeting performance goals established by the State. The lead agency may be the County Department of Job and Family Services (CDJFS) or the workforce development agency that serves the county. Regardless of which agency is chosen as the lead agency, successful implementation of CCMEP requires strong partnerships and collaboration between the CDJFS, the county's workforce development agency, and the local area's workforce development board.

The State has issued policy pertaining to the procurement of WIOA youth program provider. WIOAPL No. 17-03 outlines the requirements for selecting providers of service for the youth program. Contract or grant awarding criteria should include consideration of the provider's ability to work with youth and young adults in Ohio Works First, the cash assistance portion of the TANF program, other TANF-eligible youth, as well as Title I Youth. Also, criteria should include the service provider's ability to link youth to additional social services to support their life and career goals, including mental health and substance abuse treatment or other supports needed. The criteria for selection of youth providers must also consider the providers ability to engage youth and provide the necessary supports and services for participants to enter unsubsidized employment or training opportunities.

2. EXPLAIN HOW THE STATE ASSISTS LOCAL WORKFORCE BOARDS IN ACHIEVING EQUITABLE RESULTS FOR OUT-OF-SCHOOL AND IN-SCHOOL YOUTH. DESCRIBE PROMISING PRACTICES OR PARTNERSHIP MODELS THAT LOCAL AREAS ARE IMPLEMENTING AND THE STATE'S ROLE IN SUPPORTING AND SCALING THOSE MODELS WITHIN THE STATE FOR BOTH IN-SCHOOL AND OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH.

CCMEP ends the siloed, fragmented approach that has tried to treat the collected "symptoms" of poverty instead of seeking a cure for the underlying challenges that needy Ohioans face. The State's teens and young adults face higher rates of unemployment than any other age group and many struggle to complete high school. Many of these youth also encounter additional barriers to reaching their full potential including homelessness, substance abuse, teen pregnancy, and mental health issues. Addressing these issues early on in a coordinated way by supporting youth's life and career goals can break the cycle of poverty by helping youth develop self-regulation and executive functioning skills.

Most of the CCMEP population will be out-of-school youth. By connecting clients to the right resources and services across various programs and partners, including adult and family literacy, Carl Perkins Career Tech, and local community-based organizations, standardizing eligibility, and combining resources to improve education and training outcomes, the participants will be able to establish pathways to employment and begin to move up and out of poverty. This program integrates the funding from two existing programs, TANF and WIOA, to focus on each individual's unique needs and strengths to make better use of these existing funds which are already allocated for purposes of employment and training and reaching self-sufficiency.

Moreover, the addition of TANF funding allows the workforce areas to serve more in-school and out-of-school youth. One of Ohio's most promising best practices is the use of a coaching model that is motivation driven. This coaching model provides a reliable structure that ensures participants receive a consistent and anticipated level of service. Piloted by 4 workforce areas initially in 2018, and based on their positive feedback, the model is being expanded across Ohio's workforce areas on a voluntary basis. The last 3 workforce areas will likely be trained over the next 2 years. This model ensures each youth's motivations are prioritized so both in and out-of-school youth can receive individualized services that support them achieving their individual goals.

Ohio also provides robust training and technical assistance supports to gather and share best practices amongst workforce areas, including semi-monthly webinars and in-person technical assistance visits.

3. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE ASSISTS LOCAL WORKFORCE BOARDS IN IMPLEMENTING INNOVATIVE MODELS FOR DELIVERING YOUTH WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING EFFECTIVE WAYS LOCAL WORKFORCE BOARDS CAN MAKE AVAILABLE THE 14 PROGRAM ELEMENTS DESCRIBED IN WIOA SECTION 129(C)(2); AND EXPLAIN HOW LOCAL AREAS CAN ENSURE WORK EXPERIENCE, INCLUDING QUALITY PRE-APPRENTICESHIP AND REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP, IS PRIORITIZED AS A KEY ELEMENT WITHIN A BROADER CAREER PATHWAYS STRATEGY.

CCMEP takes a coordinated, holistic approach to stabilizing individuals and families by supporting life and career goal achievement of youth. In conjunction with supportive services, the program will provide access to employment and training services, including career counseling, job placement and services to facilitate job retention and career advancement.

Local workforce areas and CCMEP lead agencies must submit a biennial WIOA Youth plan which also requires details on how each of the 14 program elements is made available locally whether through a local government agency, youth service provider or other community resource. Ohio also provides trainings and technical assistance on various options for procuring program elements services, especially the importance of work experience provision including pre-apprenticeships and registered apprenticeships.

LWDBs and CCMEP lead agencies must make available to participants the 14 youth program elements of WIOA that include:

- Tutoring, study skills training, instruction and dropout prevention;
- Alternative secondary school services, or dropout recovery services;
- Paid and unpaid work experience (with an academic and occupational education component);
- Occupational skill training;
- Education offered concurrently with workforce preparation activities;
- Leadership development opportunities;
- Supportive services;
- Adult mentoring;
- Follow-up services for not less than 12 months;
- Comprehensive guidance and counseling;
- Financial literacy education
- Entrepreneurial skills training;
- Labor market and employment information; and

- Activities to prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and training.

These services will be made available and/or will be provided through the procured youth provider. Assurance that all local workforce development areas and the lead agency are making the 14 program elements available and implemented will be done through the State monitoring program.

In addition, LWDBs and lead agencies must make available supportive services that are customer-focused and meet the needs and circumstances of the individual to help participants achieve their life and career goals so they can enter employment.

Finally, job retention is a primary outcome measure for CCMEP. All participants, unless they decline follow-up services or their location cannot be determined, must receive some form of follow-up services support for a minimum of 12 months. The type and intensity of follow-up services will differ for each participant. Follow-up services may include supportive services and regular contact with the participant's employer, including assistance in addressing work-related problems, assistance in securing better paying jobs, labor marketing information, financial literacy, career pathway development and/or adult mentoring and activities to prepare participants for the transition to post-secondary education.

4. PROVIDE THE LANGUAGE CONTAINED IN THE STATE POLICY FOR "REQUIRING ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE TO ENTER OR COMPLETE AN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM, OR TO SECURE AND HOLD EMPLOYMENT" CRITERION FOR OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH SPECIFIED IN WIOA SECTION 129(A)(1)(B)(III)(VIII) AND FOR "REQUIRING ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE TO COMPLETE AN EDUCATION PROGRAM, OR TO SECURE AND HOLD EMPLOYMENT" CRITERION FOR IN-SCHOOL YOUTH SPECIFIED IN WIOA SECTION 129(A)(1)(C)(IV)(VII). IF THE STATE DOES NOT HAVE A POLICY, DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL ENSURE THAT LOCAL AREAS WILL HAVE A POLICY FOR THESE CRITERIA.

For both the in-school and out-of-school youth programs, an individual who requires additional assistance to complete an education program or to secure or hold employment is one who receives or has received in the past six months, assistance from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), TANF, or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or other criteria defined by the local area's workforce development board. See Paragraph K of OAC 5101:10-3-01:

An individual who requires additional assistance to enter or complete an education program or to secure or hold employment is one that is receiving, or has received in the past six months, SNAP, TANF, or SSI per the state plan, or who meets other criteria established by the local workforce development board. The local workforce development board shall establish definitions and eligibility documentation requirements to verify that the local criteria have been met. The local area's policy should be reasonable, quantifiable, and based on evidence that the specific characteristics of the youth identified in the policy objectively require additional assistance. Of the total in-school youth enrolled by a local area during a program year, no more than five per cent may be individuals who require additional assistance to complete an education program or to secure or hold employment.

The local WDB must establish definitions and eligibility documentation requirements to verify that the local criteria have been met by youth who require additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment. The local area's policy

should be reasonable, quantifiable, and based on evidence that the specific characteristics of the youth identified in the policy objectively require additional assistance.

Of the total ISY enrolled by a local area during a program year, no more than five percent may be individuals who require additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment.

D. SINGLE-AREA STATE REQUIREMENTS

In States where there is only one local workforce investment area, the governor serves as both the State and local chief elected official. In such cases, the State must submit any information required in the local plan (WIOA section 106(d)(2)). States with a single workforce area must include—

1. ANY COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD THAT REPRESENT DISAGREEMENT WITH THE PLAN. (WIOA SECTION 108(D)(3).)

2. THE ENTITY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DISBURSAL OF GRANT FUNDS, AS DETERMINED BY THE GOVERNOR, IF DIFFERENT FROM THAT FOR THE STATE. (WIOA SECTION 108(B)(15).)

3. A DESCRIPTION OF THE TYPE AND AVAILABILITY OF WIOA TITLE I YOUTH ACTIVITIES AND SUCCESSFUL MODELS, INCLUDING FOR YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES. (WIOA SECTION 108(B)(9).)

Ohio does not function as a single-area; therefore, this section is not applicable.

4. A DESCRIPTION OF THE ROLES AND RESOURCE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE ONE-STOP PARTNERS.

Ohio does not function as a single-area; therefore, this section is not applicable.

5. THE COMPETITIVE PROCESS USED TO AWARD THE SUBGRANTS AND CONTRACTS FOR TITLE I ACTIVITIES.

Ohio does not function as a single-area; therefore, this section is not applicable.

6. HOW TRAINING SERVICES OUTLINED IN SECTION 134 WILL BE PROVIDED THROUGH INDIVIDUAL TRAINING ACCOUNTS AND/OR THROUGH CONTRACTS, AND HOW SUCH TRAINING APPROACHES WILL BE COORDINATED. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL MEET INFORMED CUSTOMER CHOICE REQUIREMENTS REGARDLESS OF TRAINING APPROACH.

Ohio does not function as a single-area; therefore, this section is not applicable.

7. HOW THE STATE BOARD, IN FULFILLING LOCAL BOARD FUNCTIONS, WILL COORDINATE TITLE I ACTIVITIES WITH THOSE ACTIVITIES UNDER TITLE II. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE BOARD WILL CARRY OUT THE REVIEW OF LOCAL APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED UNDER TITLE II CONSISTENT WITH WIOA SECS. 107(D)(11)(A) AND (B)(I) AND WIOA SEC. 232.

Ohio does not function as a single-area; therefore, this section is not applicable.

8. COPIES OF EXECUTED COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WHICH DEFINE HOW ALL LOCAL SERVICE PROVIDERS WILL CARRY OUT THE REQUIREMENTS FOR INTEGRATION OF AND ACCESS TO THE ENTIRE SET OF SERVICES AVAILABLE IN THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM, INCLUDING COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH ENTITIES ADMINISTERING REHABILITATION ACT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES.

Ohio does not function as a single-area; therefore, this section is not applicable.

E. WAIVER REQUESTS (OPTIONAL)

States wanting to request waivers as part of their title I-B Operational Plan must include a waiver plan that includes the following information for each waiver requested:

1. IDENTIFIES THE STATUTORY OR REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS FOR WHICH A WAIVER IS REQUESTED AND THE GOALS THAT THE STATE OR LOCAL AREA, AS APPROPRIATE, INTENDS TO ACHIEVE AS A RESULT OF THE WAIVER AND HOW THOSE GOALS RELATE TO THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN;

2. DESCRIBES THE ACTIONS THAT THE STATE OR LOCAL AREA, AS APPROPRIATE, HAS UNDERTAKEN TO REMOVE STATE OR LOCAL STATUTORY OR REGULATORY BARRIERS;

3. DESCRIBES THE GOALS OF THE WAIVER AND THE EXPECTED PROGRAMMATIC OUTCOMES IF THE REQUEST IS GRANTED;

4. DESCRIBES HOW THE WAIVER WILL ALIGN WITH THE DEPARTMENT'S POLICY PRIORITIES, SUCH AS:

A. SUPPORTING EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT;

B. CONNECTING EDUCATION AND TRAINING STRATEGIES;

C. SUPPORTING WORK-BASED LEARNING;

D. IMPROVING JOB AND CAREER RESULTS, AND

E. OTHER GUIDANCE ISSUED BY THE DEPARTMENT.

5. DESCRIBES THE INDIVIDUALS AFFECTED BY THE WAIVER, INCLUDING HOW THE WAIVER WILL IMPACT SERVICES FOR DISADVANTAGED POPULATIONS OR INDIVIDUALS WITH MULTIPLE BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT; AND

6. DESCRIBES THE PROCESSES USED TO:

A. MONITOR THE PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING THE WAIVER;

B. PROVIDE NOTICE TO ANY LOCAL BOARD AFFECTED BY THE WAIVER;

C. PROVIDE ANY LOCAL BOARD AFFECTED BY THE WAIVER AN OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT ON THE REQUEST;

D. ENSURE MEANINGFUL PUBLIC COMMENT, INCLUDING COMMENT BY BUSINESS AND ORGANIZED LABOR, ON THE WAIVER.

E. COLLECT AND REPORT INFORMATION ABOUT WAIVER OUTCOMES IN THE STATE'S WIOA ANNUAL REPORT.

7. THE MOST RECENT DATA AVAILABLE REGARDING THE RESULTS AND OUTCOMES OBSERVED THROUGH IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EXISTING WAIVER, IN CASES WHERE THE STATE SEEKS RENEWAL OF A PREVIOUSLY APPROVED WAIVER.

Ohio is applying for three waivers as follows:

Waiver 1: Allow TANF funds to count toward the 75 percent expenditure requirement on out-of-school youth and to calculate the expenditure requirement on a statewide basis.

1. **Identify the statutory or regulatory requirements for which a waiver is requested and the goals that the State or local area, as appropriate, intends to achieve as a result of the waiver and how those goals relate to the Combined State Plan.**

Section 129 (a)(4) and 20 CFR 681.41 requires that local workforce development areas must expend a minimum of 75 percent of WIOA youth funds on out-of-school youth. Ohio would like to waive the requirement to allow for the inclusion of a percentage of TANF funds as part of the 75 percent expenditure for out-of-school youth requirement. Additionally, as part of this waiver, Ohio would like to calculate this expenditure requirement on a statewide basis. Ohio is requesting this waiver for PY24 and PY25- July 1, 2024-June 30, 2026.

Under CCMEP, with its emphasis on co-funding to benefit more cost-effective service delivery, the number of disconnected youth who can be served will increase, particularly given the large infusion of TANF dollars. This will ultimately allow WIOA youth dollars to have a further reach and greater impact in local communities. Additionally, by allowing the calculation of the expenditure rate to be statewide, there would be more flexibility amongst all the local workforce development areas to serve the population of participants unique to that local area.

To recognize the influx of TANF dollars being invested in the WIOA out-of-school youth (OYS) population under CCMEP, ODJFS will include the amount of TANF dollars spent on co-enrolled WIOA OSY during a program year in both the numerator and denominator of the OSY rate calculation. We will continue to utilize the formula proposed as the alternative calculation, starting with PY 20 funds.

Proposed OSY Rate Calculation Under Waiver Authority

$$\frac{\text{WIOA OSY expenses}}{\text{Total WIOA OSY + ISY expenses}} + \frac{\text{TANF spent on co-enrolled WIOA OSY}}{\text{TANF spent on co-enrolled WIOA OSY}}$$

The example below compares the OSY rate calculation under current WIOA law to the proposed waiver flexibility for a local area that spent $400,000 of its $600,000 in PY18 WIOA Youth

program funds during the two years of availability as well as $200,000 of its CCMEP TANF funds spent during the second year of the Youth grant on services for OSY who are co-enrolled:

Of $600,000 in Youth spending, $400,000 was spent on OSY:	$400,000 / $600,000 = 67%	*The area also invests $200,000 of its TANF funds on co-enrolled OSY WIOA youth:*	**WIOA**		**TANF**		
			$400,000 / $600,000	+	$200,000 / $200,000	=	$600,000 / $800,000 = 75%

The waiver supports the principles of streamlining services, increasing accountability and accessibility, State and local flexibility and ease of administration. Furthermore, this waiver supports the implementation of CCMEP by using both WIOA and TANF funding sources together to support the different needs of the same customer while easing administrative burden associated with managing two different Federal funding streams.

It should be noted that the LWDB still maintains the authority to determine how to fund the WIOA youth program, including how much funding should be dedicated to the WIOA in-school and out-of-school programs.

2. Describe the actions that the State or local area, as appropriate, has undertaken to remove State or local statutory or regulatory barriers;

There are no State or local statutory or regulatory barriers to implementing the proposed waiver.

3. Describes the goals of the waiver and the expected programmatic outcomes if the request is granted;

Using this waiver, Ohio's statewide out of school youth expenditure rate for the PY 2021 funds was 86.1% and for the PY 2022 funds it was 82.4%. The number of WIOA participants co-funded with TANF dollars was 4,821, which was an increase from the previous program year (4,721 participants). Also, the overall percentage of co-funded participants increased from 24.9% to 25.7% in PY 2022.

Although the pandemic and the increasingly tight labor market decreased out of school enrollment, Ohio has been working with local workforce areas to amplify outreach and to develop strategies to boost enrollment of this population through training and technical assistance. ODJFS has been working with a marketing firm to develop a social media toolkit and videos to help with outreach which we anticipate releasing early in 2024.

Ohio is also anticipating increases in our WIOA youth outcomes. With the implementation of CCMEP, the WIOA youth outcomes pertaining to employment and training 2nd and 4th quarter after exit have consistently been above 70%. The Median earnings number has consistently increased every year. For example, in PY 17, the employment and training 2nd quarter after exit was 71.9%. In PY 18, this same measure was 75.3%. PY 19's data for this measure was 75.7%; in PY 20 it was 71.7% and most recently 70.1% in PY 21. Another example is median earnings. In PY 17, the median earnings number for youth was $2,766. In PY 18, this same measure was $2,856. PY 19's data was $3,216, PY 2020 was $3,300, and PY 2021 was $3,457.

With increased co-enrollment and a delivery of services methodology that focuses on the individual, we anticipate that our outcomes will continue to increase while continuing to serve youth with multiple barriers to employment and training. Our goal is to increase enrollments back to pre-pandemic numbers, which would mean a projected outcome of serving 9,000 youth by the end of PY24.

1. Increase the number of WIOA funded youth participants;
2. Continuity and greater efficiency of service delivery;
3. Flexibility in deciding the funding source for CCMEP participants who are eligible for these separate funding sources;
4. Increase enrollment in youth populations which are harder to serve;
5. Increase the co-enrollment in WIOA and TANF so that youth have the full array of services and funding necessary to complete services;
6. Decrease in administrative costs to deliver services;
7. Increased percentage of youth who obtain employment or enroll in training and are able to maintain employment and/or training; and
8. Integration of WIOA and TANF services as part of the CCMEP program.

4. Describe how the waiver will align with the Department's policy priorities, such as:

1. **supporting employer engagement;**
2. **connecting education and training strategies;**
3. **supporting work-based learning;**
4. **improving job and career results, and**
5. **other guidance issued by the Department**

Ohio's 2024 Combined State Plan identified four specific strategic goals:

1. Coordinate efforts across entities (public, private, local, and State) to reduce unnecessary duplication and maximize resources.
2. Leverage technology and data to create efficiencies and improve services and outcomes.
3. Deploy locally driven programs that produce results.
4. Invest in and promote education and training for jobs that
    a. empower people with 21st Century skills and strengthen Ohio's strategic economic advantage, and
    b. ensure that our State has a workforce to support the health and well-being of Ohioans, their families, and communities.

With the development of CCMEP, Ohio is pushing traditional program boundaries by integrating components of Ohio's TANF program with WIOA employment programs to create a better-coordinated, person-centered case management system. CCMEP takes a coordinated, holistic approach to stabilizing individuals and families by addressing the myriad of factors that may be contributing to poverty and unemployment, including health, housing, education, transportation, and childcare. In conjunction with supportive services, the program will provide access to employment and training services, including career counseling, job placement, and the fourteen program elements to facilitate job retention.

This waiver supports co-funding and coordination of services and provides more flexibility on how funding is allocated. Furthermore, this waiver would extend WIOA funds and allow resources to go further. It will allow CCMEP to serve more youth by allowing both TANF and WIOA funds to be used when calculating the 75 percent expenditure requirement for out-of-school youth.

The population of youth and young adults fluctuates across Ohio. The population in some local areas is high density with a lot of resources to serve this population. In other local areas in the State, particularly the rural and Appalachian areas, the population is lower and resources are minimal. The waiver to calculate this expenditure requirement on a statewide basis would provide flexibility in serving CCMEP participants, allow the LWDB to focus on the populations who need services the most, and reflect the populations of participants who should be served.

5. Describe the individuals affected by the waiver, including how the waiver will impact services for disadvantaged populations or individuals with multiple barriers to employment

CCMEP serves TANF work-eligible recipients and WIOA in-school and out-of-school youth ages 14 to 24 years. By virtue of the program eligibility requirements, CCMEP is directly addressing service delivery for disadvantaged populations and individuals with multiple barriers to employment. This waiver will allow local areas to fund services in a manner which best meets the needs of the participant. The waiver to allow the use of TANF funds as part of the 75 percent expenditure requirement for out-of-school youth will allow additional funding flexibility so that both TANF and WIOA youth program funds can be used effectively and efficiently.

Furthermore, by allowing the 75 percent expenditure rate to be calculated on a statewide basis, the local areas may focus on serving the populations the LWDB has chosen to serve as well as the population of individuals who may benefit from the delivery of CCMEP services.

6.Describes the processes used to:

1. Monitor the progress in implementing the waiver;
2. Provide notice to any local board affected by the waiver;
3. Provide any local board affected by the waiver an opportunity to comment on the request;
4. Ensure meaningful public comment, including comment by business and organized labor, on the waiver.

5. Collect and report information about waiver outcomes in the State's WIOA Annual Report.

ODJFS will monitor implementation and impact of this waiver through a combination of reporting from the local level using the Advancement of Resources through Information and Employment Services (ARIES) system and State monitoring, oversight, and evaluation functions. Monitoring of the waiver may be conducted through a variety of approaches that may include routine desk reviews and on-site compliance monitoring. ODJFS may also monitor the implementation of this waiver through feedback from local workforce development areas and review of all fiscal data systems. Meetings between ODJFS staff and local board directors are held on a regular basis, which serves as a venue to address any issue with the implementation of this waiver.

In addition to monitoring, The USDOL Behavioral Insights team, which includes researchers from the American Institutes for Research, worked with approximately 10 Ohio counties to design, implement, and assess a texting behavioral intervention to encourage CCMEP participants to maintain engagement in the program and benefit fully from available program services. Selected CCMEP participants were randomly placed in either one of two groups: intervention (treatment) or no intervention (control). Participants in the treatment group received encouraging text messages once per week over 12 weeks to foster engagement and prompt continuation with the CCMEP program. Outcome measures, including services received and completed, were compared for the two groups to understand the effectiveness of utilizing an external prompt (the text messages) on CCMEP participants' engagement and success."

The study learned that a sustained messaging effort can increase participant service use and the service completion rates among youth. Also, the study learned that these impacts vary based on population characteristics. On an operations feasibility front, the study showed that text messages can be incorporated at relatively low cost for the state and counties that already have access to mass messaging technology. This confirmed that automation can play a constructive role in supplementing staff outreach efforts. It requires careful and thoughtful design with input from customers of the program.

Additionally, the WIOA annual report published each year and provided to USDOL will include a section related to the effects of this waiver showing a re-calculation of the statewide OSY rate to include the TANF funds spent on co-enrolled OSY during the program year being reported.

Workforce development stakeholders, including local boards, businesses, and organized labor organizations, were notified of the proposed waiver request through an e-mail alert. The e-mail alert contained instructions on how to submit comments. In addition, both the general public and stakeholders had access to the waiver request on the OWD website.

7.Provide the most recent data available regarding the results and outcomes observed through implementation of the existing waiver, in cases where the State seeks renewal of a previously approved waiver.

See information in above responses.

Waiver 2: Allow the use of individual training accounts (ITA) for in-school youth, ages18-21 years.

1. Identify the statutory or regulatory requirements for which a waiver is requested and the goals that the State or local area, as appropriate, intends to achieve as a result of the waiver and how those goals relate to the Combined State Plan.

20 CFR 681.550 allows ITAs funded by WIOA youth funds to be used by out-of-school youth. The final rule did not expand the use of ITAs to in-school youth. Instead, in-school youth wishing to access ITAs may only do so through the WIOA adult program. Ohio would like to waive the requirement to only allow ITAs for out-of-school youth and expand this flexibility to in-school youth.

The intent of using ITAs in the WIOA out-of-school youth program is to expand training options, increase program flexibility, enhance customer choice, and reduce paperwork. Ohio would like in-school youth to also have this option. This waiver encourages this youth population to seriously look at career pathways and in-demand occupations and empowers them to make their own decisions, thereby taking responsibility for their actions.

This waiver request supports the principle of accountability and ease of administration. Co-enrollment in the WIOA adult program would not be necessary under this waiver. The ITA could be issued from one funding source and will increase accountability.

2. Describes the actions that the State or local area, as appropriate, has undertaken to remove State or local statutory or regulatory barriers;

There are no State or local statutory or regulatory barriers to implementing the proposed waiver.

3. Describes the goals of the waiver and the expected programmatic outcomes if the request is granted;

Ohio expects to achieve the following goals and programmatic outcomes:

- Improve the ability of LWDBs, youth program providers, and CCMEP lead agencies to respond quickly to the needs of in-school youth;
- Increase the quality of learning opportunities;
- Increase employment and training opportunities;
- Improve coordination by reducing fragmentation of service delivery;
- Improve customer choice and increase empowerment for youth, making them capable and responsible for making thoughtful choices about their career;
- Reduce unnecessary paperwork;
- Develop the emerging workforce with prepared candidates ready for work; and
- Increase accountability.

During PY 2020, ITAs were provided to 552 in-school youth. That was an increase from the last program year, which was 491. In PY 2021, we have served 588 in-school youth with an ITA (Participant counts based on Quarters 1-3) We anticipate serving 615 in-school youth by the end of PY23. Without the approval of this waiver, we will be unable to serve any in-school youth

with an ITA. Ohio is unable to provide more recent data at this point due to a recent transition in case management systems. Ohio is requesting this waiver for PY24 and PY25- July 1, 2024-June 30, 2026.

4. Describes how the waiver will align with the Department's policy priorities, such as:

1. **supporting employer engagement;**
2. **connecting education and training strategies;**
3. **supporting work-based learning;**
4. **improving job and career results, and**
5. **other guidance issued by the Department.**

In the WIOA Final Rule, the intent of using ITAs in the WIOA out-of-school youth program is to expand training options, increase program flexibility, enhance customer choice, and reduce paperwork. Ohio would like in-school youth to also have this option. This waiver encourages this youth population to seriously look at career pathways and in-demand occupations and empowers them to make their own decisions, thereby taking responsibility for their actions. The waiver not only helps WIOA Youth to have an opportunity to graduate high school even if their standardized test scores do not meet the state's requirements since an industry-recognized credential can serve as a substitute for minimum required scores, but it also assists in the preparation of an emerging workforce with candidates who are ready for work.

5. Describe the individuals affected by the waiver, including how the waiver will impact services for disadvantaged populations or individuals with multiple barriers to employment

WIOA in-school youth participants will benefit from this waiver. In Ohio, CCMEP serves TANF work-eligible recipients and WIOA in-school and out-of-school youth. By virtue of the program eligibility requirements, CCMEP is directly addressing service delivery for disadvantaged populations and individuals with multiple barriers to employment. This waiver also helps youth at risk of not graduating high school by providing another opportunity to qualify for a high school diploma. This waiver will allow this youth population to seriously look at career pathways and in-demand occupations, increase training and employment opportunities for this population of youth, and empower youth to make their own decisions.

6. Describe the processes used to:

- **A. Monitor the progress in implementing the waiver;**
- **B. Provide notice to any local board affected by the waiver;**
- **C. Provide any local board affected by the waiver an opportunity to comment on the request;**
- **D. Ensure meaningful public comment, including comment by business and organized labor, on the waiver.**
- **E. Collect and report information about waiver outcomes in the State's WIOA Annual Report.**

Report.

ODJFS will monitor implementation and impact of this waiver through a combination of reporting from the local level using the Advancement of Resources through Information and Employment Services (ARIES) system and State monitoring, oversight, and evaluation functions. Monitoring of the waiver may be conducted through a variety of approaches that may include routine desk reviews and on-site compliance monitoring. ODJFS may also monitor the implementation of this waiver through feedback from local workforce development areas and review of all fiscal data systems. Meetings between ODJFS staff and local board directors are held on a regular basis, which serves as a venue to address any issue with the implementation of this waiver.

Workforce development stakeholders, including local boards, businesses, and organized labor organizations, were notified of the proposed waiver request through an e-mail alert. The e-mail alert contained instructions on how to submit comments. In addition, both the general public and stakeholders had access to the waiver request on the OWD website.

7. Provide the most recent data available regarding the results and outcomes observed through implementation of the existing waiver, in cases where the State seeks renewal of a previously approved waiver.

See information in above responses.

Waiver 3: Allow TANF funds to count towards the 20 percent work experienceexpenditure requirement.

1. Identify the statutory or regulatory requirements for which a waiver is requested and the goals that the State or local area, as appropriate, intends to achieve as a result of the waiver and how those goals relate to the Combined State Plan.

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) is the state workforce agency. In that capacity, ODJFS is seeking a waiver from provisions in 20 CFR 681.590 (b) that requires tracking WIOA youth program funds spent on paid and unpaid work experiences as calculated based on the total local area WIOA youth funds and report such expenditures as part of the local WIOA youth financial reporting.

Ohio is requesting a waiver to include TANF work experience wages towards the 20% requirement in addition to WIOA youth program funds spent on paid and unpaid work experiences, including wages and staff costs for development and management of work experiences. The purpose of this waiver is to increase participant enrollment in work experiences by having TANF funded, co-enrolled participants count towards the 20% requirement defined in 20 CFR 681.590. The waiver supports the principles of streamlining services, increasing accountability and accessibility, state and local flexibility and ease of administration.

If TANF funds are used for a co-enrolled youth's work experience wages, we would like to add those funds to the numerator and denominator of the existing 20% work experience calculation.
WIOA paid youth wages for work experience

+ WIOA staff costs for development and maintenance of work experiences

+ TANF paid youth wages for co-enrolled work experience

= Total Work Experience Calculation

By allowing the State of Ohio to include TANF work experience wages, the local area will not be limited to just WIOA Youth program funds when developing work experience opportunities.

This will allow for more youth to be served in the WIOA Youth program, more work experiences to be developed and ultimately better outcomes for co-enrolled WIOA and TANF youth.

Without this waiver, the local areas may be reluctant to develop work experiences funded with TANF dollars because it negatively affects their 20% work experience requirement. Approval of this waiver will ultimately benefit both programs, grow overall work experience enrollments, and increase access to services for our participants.

2. Describe the actions that the State or local area, as appropriate, has undertaken to remove State or local statutory or regulatory barriers.

There are no State or local statutory or regulatory barriers to implementing the proposed waiver.

3. Describe the goals of the waiver and the expected programmatic outcomes if the request is granted.

Ohio expects to increase the percentage of WIOA youth funds used for work experience as a direct result of this waiver. We anticipate an increase in the State-wide percentage and an increase in each local area. Ohio anticipates that with approval of the waiver, there will be an increase to the work experience percentage that exceeds the 20% minimum.

For PY 2020, Ohio's youth programs (TANF, WIOA, and co-enrolled) had a total of 18,942 participants. Of those, **8,465** (44.7%) were enrolled in work experience programs. For PY 2021, Ohio's youth programs had a total of 18,779 participants. Of those, **8,022** (42.7%) were enrolled in work experience programs. For PY 2022, Ohio's youth programs had a total of 18,845 participants. Of those, **7,872** (41.8%) were enrolled in work experience programs.

Although the number of work experiences did not increase in the last program year with this waiver, Ohio continues to provide training and technical assistance about this waiver and methods for increasing outreach and enrollment to ensure work experiences will increase over the next two program years. Ohio is projecting a 5% increase in the rate of the number of enrolled youth who receive a work experience service.

4. Describe how the waiver will align with the Department's policy priorities, such as:

- **Supporting employer engagement;**
- **Connecting education and training strategies;**
- **Supporting work-based learning;**
- **Improving job and career results, and**
- **Other guidance issued by the Department.**

Ohio's 2024 Combined State Plan identified four specific strategic goals:

1. Coordinate efforts across entities (public, private, local, and State) to reduce unnecessary duplication and maximize resources.
2. Leverage technology and data to create efficiencies and improve services and outcomes.
3. Deploy locally driven programs that produce results.
4. Invest in and promote education and training for jobs that
    a. empower people with 21st Century skills and strengthen Ohio's strategic economic advantage, and
    b. ensure that our State has a workforce to support the health and well-being of Ohioans, their families, and communities.

Approval of this waiver will directly impact Goal #2. Our data shows that Ohio's local workforce areas are successfully co-enrolling participants in WIOA and TANF. The reporting also suggests that with the ability for TANF enrollments to count towards the work experience percentage, a larger number of participants will eventually receive this valuable service with continued training and technical assistance for our areas. Work-based learning services have been shown to propel young adults towards self-sufficiency with improved long-term outcomes.

This waiver would also directly impact Goal #1. By allowing the flexibility for local workforce development areas to co–enroll TANF eligible and Title I youth program eligible participants they are better able to utilize funding in a manner that is most cost–effective and in a way that maximizes resources. Taking advantage of the TANF funds also helps to reduce the impact of diminishing WIOA Youth funding allocations for Ohio's workforce areas.

The U.S. Department of Labor FY 2022-2026 Strategic plan, Strategic Goal 1, ETA Strategic Objective 1.1 is, Create customer-focused workforce solutions that serve all workers, including underserved communities.

ETA plans to prepare America's workers for the jobs of the 21st century by investing in high-quality workforce training programs and expanding access to underserved communities.

This includes expanding and increasing access to Registered Apprenticeship and effective work-based training. Work-based learning programs where youth receive wages are shown to have positive employment outcomes, labor force participation, and wage and earning increases.

This proposed waiver directly correlates with the Department of Labor priority to expand opportunities for work-based learning.

Approval of this waiver will greatly increase access to work experience opportunities because the local areas will be able to use both WIOA Youth funds and TANF funds for paid work experiences. With both programs offering paid work experience for youth, more youth in Ohio will gain experience that will improve employment outcomes and wages, as they transition into the unsubsidized labor force.

5. Describe the individuals affected by the waiver, including how the waiver will impact services for disadvantaged populations or individuals with multiple barriers to employment.

Individuals enrolled in the WIOA youth program will directly benefit from this waiver. Approval of this waiver will allow more youth with barriers to ultimately be served in Ohio's youth program. By virtue of the program eligibility, CCMEP is directly addressing service delivery for disadvantaged populations and individuals with multiple barriers to employment. This waiver will allow local areas to fund services in a manner that best meets the needs of the participant.

Ohio businesses will also benefit from approval of this waiver. According to the Short Term Forecast (2022-2024) report using data derived from Ohio Labor Market Information, the top five occupations in Ohio with the most annual openings are Laborers (Freight and Stock), Stockers and Order Fillers, Cashiers, and Retail Salespersons. These occupations generally operate within business hours that are conducive to youth participants. Upon approval of this waiver, Ohio will seek to enroll more youth in work experiences and assist Ohio businesses in filling crucial roles needed to operate successfully.

6. Describe the processes used to:

- **Monitor the progress in implementing the waiver;**
- **Provide notice to any local board affected by the waiver;**
- **Provide any local board affected by the waiver an opportunity to comment on the request;**
- **Ensure meaningful public comment, including comment by business and organized labor, on the waiver.**
- **Collect and report information about waiver outcomes in the State's WIOA Annual**

Report.

Local areas are currently required to report WIOA youth work experience dollars as part of their monthly expenditure reports. Local areas will continue to report these expenditures and each local area will be required to report on any dollars from TANF funds used for work experiences as a separate category. Combining the WIOA youth work experience dollars with the TANF work experience dollars will create an overall youth experience percentage.

All local areas will be notified once the waiver is approved and be given formal reporting instructions.

Annual WIOA on-site programmatic reviews will include an evaluation of how local waivers are being utilized to ensure programmatic goals and outcomes are being met.

Workforce development stakeholders, including local boards, businesses, and organized labor organizations, were notified of the proposed waiver request through an e-mail alert. The e-mail alert contained instructions on how to submit comments. In addition, both the general public and stakeholders had access to the waiver request on the OWD website.

7. Provide the most recent data available regarding the results and outcomes observed through implementation of the existing waiver, in cases where the State seeks renewal of a previously approved waiver.

See information in above responses.

TITLE I-B ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include assurances that:

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The State has implemented a policy to ensure Adult program funds provide a priority in the delivery of training services and individualized career services to individuals who are low income, public assistance recipients and basic skills deficient;	Yes
2. The State has implemented a policy to ensure local areas have a process in place for referring veterans with significant barriers to employment to career services provided by the JVSG program's Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist;	Yes
3. The State established a written policy and procedure that set forth criteria to be used by chief elected officials for the appointment of local workforce investment board members;	Yes
4. The State established written policy and procedures to ensure local workforce investment boards are certified by the governor every two years in accordance with WIOA section 107(c)(2);	Yes
5. Where an alternative entity takes the place of a State Board, the State has written policy and procedures to ensure the alternative entity meets the definition under WIOA section 101(e) and the legal requirements for membership;	Yes
6. The State established a written policy and procedure for how the individuals and entities represented on the State Workforce Development Board help to determine the methods and factors of distribution, and how the State consults with chief elected officials in local areas throughout the State in determining the distributions;	Yes
7. The State will not use funds received under WIOA Title I to assist, promote, or deter union	Yes

The State Plan must include	Include
organizing in accordance with WIOA section 181(b)(7);	
8. The State distributes adult and youth funds received under WIOA equitably throughout the State, and no local area suffers significant shifts in funding from year-to-year during the period covered by this plan;	Yes
9. If a State Workforce Development Board, department, or agency administers State laws for vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, that board, department, or agency cooperates with the agency that administers Wagner-Peyser services, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and Youth Programs under Title I;	Yes
10. The State agrees to report on the impact and outcomes of its approved waivers in its WIOA Annual Report.	Yes
11. The State has taken appropriate action to secure compliance with the Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 2900, including that the State will annually monitor local areas to ensure compliance and otherwise take appropriate action to secure compliance with the Uniform Guidance under section WIOA 184(a)(3);	Yes

ADULT PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as “baseline” indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A “baseline” indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, “baseline” indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted

levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as "baseline" based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as "baseline" for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as "baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA." The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as "baseline" for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as "baseline" for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as "baseline." Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state's plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	76.5%		76.5%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	74.0%		74.0%	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	$7,200.00		$7,200.00	
Credential Attainment Rate	71.0%		71.0%	
Measurable Skill Gains	65.0%		65.0%	
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]

1

The Departments have not issued the final rule defining Effectiveness in Serving Employers. As a result, states will not submit expected levels of performance for this indicator and the Departments will not establish negotiated levels of performance for PYs 2024 and 2025.

DISLOCATED PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as "baseline" indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A "baseline" indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, "baseline" indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as "baseline" based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the

Departments will designate the following indicators as "baseline" for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as "baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA." The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as "baseline" for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as "baseline" for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as "baseline." Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state's plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	76.5%		76.5%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	77.0%		77.0%	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	$9,000.00		$9,000.00	

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Credential Attainment Rate	74.0%		74.0%	
Measurable Skill Gains	64.0%		64.0%	
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]

1

The Departments have not issued the final rule defining Effectiveness in Serving Employers. As a result, states will not submit expected levels of performance for this indicator and the Departments will not establish negotiated levels of performance for PYs 2024 and 2025.

YOUTH PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as "baseline" indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A "baseline" indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, "baseline" indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as "baseline" based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and

- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as "baseline" for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as "baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA." The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as "baseline" for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as "baseline" for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as "baseline." Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state's plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	70.0%		70.0%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	69.0%		69.0%	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	$3,300.00		$3,300.00	
Credential Attainment Rate	50.0%		50.0%	
Measurable Skill Gains	50.0%		50.0%	
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]

1

The Departments have not issued the final rule defining Effectiveness in Serving Employers. As a result, states will not submit expected levels of performance for this indicator and the Departments will not establish negotiated levels of performance for PYs 2024 and 2025.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR WAGNER-PEYSER PROGRAM (EMPLOYMENT SERVICES)

All Program-Specific Requirements provided for the WIOA core programs in this section must be addressed for either a Unified or Combined State Plan.

A. EMPLOYMENT SERVICE STAFF

1. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL STAFF THE PROVISION OF LABOR EXCHANGE SERVICES UNDER THE WAGNER-PEYSER ACT, SUCH AS THROUGH STATE EMPLOYEES, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO STATE MERIT STAFF EMPLOYEES, STAFF OF A SUBRECIPIENT, OR SOME COMBINATION THEREOF.

Ohio is not seeking to utilize the staffing flexibility at this time and will continue to utilize state merit staff employees to conduct labor exchange services under the Wagner-Peyser Act.

2. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL UTILIZE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES FOR EMPLOYMENT SERVICE STAFF TO ENSURE STAFF IS ABLE TO PROVIDE HIGH QUALITY SERVICES TO BOTH JOBSEEKERS AND EMPLOYERS

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) is dedicated to the professional development of its employees. The Office of Workforce Development (OWD) has a unit dedicated to addressing the training and educational services needed to support the individual, team and organizational performance goals. Six trainers are available to ensure the Federal merit staff are trained on all program areas, including but not limited to, Wagner-Peyser (W-P), Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), and Unemployment Compensation (UC).

OWD has strategically focused on the employment service delivery model targeting local integration. Restructuring the delivery of the programs has improved efficiency while streamlining services. Program-specific Employment Service (ES) staff are solely responsible for the delivery of a single program, focusing on specific customer base and developing a hands-on method to employment services. Specialization of program delivery gives us the ability to easily train staff, the flexibility to assess the needs of the customer/employer and to better assist these clients with employment services. On a local basis, the specialization allowed for the ES staff to be the subject matter expert and allowed for flexibility in meeting the local demands. ES staff provide services to the following populations: claimants receiving Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA), Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFW), participants engaged in Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA), and Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants who come to the OhioMeansJobs Centers.

In addition, unique local workflows were established to ensure partner collaboration, reduction in duplication and the referrals processes were addressed. Ohio has placed Labor Exchange Workforce Specialist in all comprehensive centers, working in conjunction with established local Business Service Team.

Surface Pros with remote access to internal Federal systems have been given to the ES staff which allow for the ability to use technology to reach customers where they are, provide virtual career services, and allow the staff to be more mobile and effectively capture the work that is being performed.

3. DESCRIBE STRATEGIES DEVELOPED TO SUPPORT TRAINING AND AWARENESS ACROSS CORE PROGRAMS AND THE UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE (UI) PROGRAM AND THE TRAINING PROVIDED FOR EMPLOYMENT SERVICES AND WIOA STAFF ON IDENTIFICATION OF UI ELIGIBILITY ISSUES AND REFERRAL TO UI STAFF FOR ADJUDICATION

It is essential that Ohio ensures that its workforce professionals across the core partners are up to date on UI eligibility issues and understand the referral process to UI staff for adjudication when appropriate. Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Policy Letter (WIOAPL) No.16-09.1, Establishment of the Workforce Delivery System, provided guidance on UI assistance within the OhioMeansJobs Centers. A thorough description of “meaningful assistance” for UI customers was included in the policy. It should be noted that MSFW participants filing for UI benefits will be provided with appropriate services and assistance. The five activities which are comprised of meaningful assistance were also outlined. A recorded webinar training on meaningful assistance to UI customers was provided for WIOA and ES staff. This remains accessible online through the OWD website.

WIOAPL No. 16-09.1 also specified the requirements on the exchange of information and training across the core programs to ensure all partners understand the essential elements of the programs and have on-going opportunities to engage one another. This policy includes a requirement for regular partner meetings during which designated partners to provide information and training when needed for their respective programs. This is Ohio's first policy that provides specific requirements for One-Stop Operators and is a solution to the ongoing challenge of internal communication among partners.

This policy is also tied to WIOAPL No. 16-10, Certification of the WorkforceDelivery System, and program monitoring. Local areas will need to provide evidence that partner meetings are taking place as required and that designated partners are providing workforce professionals from all core partners and others within the OhioMeansJobs Centers with program-specific information. Ohio will be looking specifically for evidence that UI program eligibility issues and referral processes are provided, and that attendance at the meetings are documented along with the partner program they represent.

Another vehicle for UI collaboration and educating partners is through Rapid Response. UI is a required team member on all Rapid Response Teams. Every workforce area is required to have a team, comprised of the ES regional coordinator, ES program delivery supervisor, business services staff, and the local Rapid Response Coordinator. Some areas have added additional team members. During the planning and implementation phases of Rapid Response services, the UI representative informs the team of any significant challenges around this event, discusses mass layoff procedures if applicable, and makes presentations during worker orientation sessions about applying for UI benefits and basic requirements. Each and every event provides opportunities for learning about and/or keeping up to date on UI program requirements, and with all local teams having one or more local team members, this is an effective way to keep partners informed about UI eligibility issues and referral processes when needed.

B. EXPLAIN HOW THE STATE WILL PROVIDE INFORMATION AND MEANINGFUL ASSISTANCE TO INDIVIDUALS REQUESTING ASSISTANCE IN FILING A CLAIM FOR UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION THROUGH ONE-STOP CENTERS, AS REQUIRED BY WIOA AS A CAREER SERVICE

ES staff in the OhioMeansJobs (aka "One-Stop" or "American Job") Centers focus their assistance with UI customers on reemployment activities, such as job search, resume writing, and related activities. In addition to reemployment, there are five activities that OhioMeansJobs Centers are instructed to provide UI customers. They are as follows:

1. Computers must be made available for individuals to file a claim for UI or to file an appeal of their claim.
2. Telephones must be made available with access to the toll-free phone numbers established by the Office of UI Operations for individuals to use when seeking assistance from UI merit staff in filing claims or appeals. Individuals must not simply be referred to a general information phone number.
3. Posters providing claimants information on how to file UI claims must be visible in the resource room.

4. Additional documents that provide assistance to claimants must be available in the resource room.

5. Resource room staff must be trained and have the knowledge to navigate Ohio's claims filing processes and to provide general information to the claimant on their responsibilities as a claimant. Training on the provision of meaningful assistance will be offered to all OhioMeansJobs Center staff on a regular basis as changes to the UI process are made and meaningful assistance guidance is updated.

However, there are times when all staff, including local OhioMeansJobs Center staff need to provide assistance over and above informational services without bypassing or circumventing the established UI filing process that is already in place. In order to ensure W-P and local staff have access to specific processes and procedures related to UI filing, the Meaningful Assistance Memo was updated in August, 2023 and training sessions were held with all W-P staff, as well as local Workforce Boards/Operators. This memo outlines steps necessary to assist customers with the activities related to their UI Claim, including Appeals, Fraud, Locked Claims, OH|ID, OhioMeansJobs.com requirements, Overpayments, and Identity Verification, ODJFS recognizes that in rural and areas of the state with limited broadband access, customers commonly rely on the OMJ Centers and staff as their access points for electronic systems/website and communicating with OUIO staff. This memo allows for all OhioMeansJobs Center staff to be able to provide accurate guidance to UI customers with many of the most common questions.

One of the most common problems an UI claimant faces is navigating the Ohio Identity (OH|ID) verification process to access their claim. Training and resources have been provided outlining current processes for effectively utilizing OH|ID.

If a claimant filed their week(s) of unemployment as required and is experiencing either of the two issues listed below, further assistance by partner staff in an OhioMeansJobs Center can occur.

1. The UI Claimant has a “locked” claim.

2. The UI Claimant states they completed their resume and/or career profile assessment requirement more than 24 hours ago, but the completion is not reflected in the system.

To handle these issues, a unique Customer Service phone line for partner staff only has been established. This phone line gives direct access to a UI representative that can quickly assist in resolving the identified issues.

Additionally, the Office of Unemployment Insurance Operations (OUIO) has established several chat line features to their website, allowing further assistance to UI claimants who may be experiencing difficulties in filing their claims. ES staff in the OhioMeansJobs Centers have received several resources regarding the use of the chat line. OUIO has also developed a “Connect Ohio Inquiry Form”, which allows claimants to submit a request for service related to their claim specific issues. OUIO also maintains communication, with ES staff and the OhioMeansJobs Centers for technical assistance; this assistance includes global emails and training and resource materials, and written guidance (e.g., frequently asked questions).

C. DESCRIBE THE STATE’S STRATEGY FOR PROVIDING REEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE TO UI CLAIMANTS AND OTHER UNEMPLOYED INDIVIDUALS

ES staff plays a key role in providing reemployment assistance to UI claimants and other unemployed individuals, and that assistance is delivered through a variety of methods.

First and foremost, all UI claimants are required to register in the State's primary job matching tool, OhioMeansJobs.com. This ensures all claimants have access to resources that will assist them in finding employment. This site also includes a comprehensive array of information, resources, and assessment tools designed to meet the needs of individuals who lack a clear career goal as well as to advanced jobseekers who know what they want and just need to know where to find the job opportunities. Individuals can create a personal profile that keeps all their information, job leads, assessment results, and related information in one location. This is a state-of-the-art system that is constantly evolving to keep up with new technology, new resources, and tools that all jobseekers, claimants, or universal customers need.

Ohio continued to improve the RESEA programs to not only meet the Federal requirements but emphasize quality of the services delivered. The RESEA program serves transitioning veterans receiving UI benefits as Unemployment Compensation for Ex-Service Members (UCX) and claimants likely to exhaust their UI benefits. In March 2021, the delivery of RESEA was transitioned to the local workforce development areas. With this transition, RESEA is delivered in all 20 local workforce development areas and in all 88 counties. Once an UI claimant completes the RESEA program, ES staff provide additional career and follow-up services based on the needs of the claimant.

Claimants also attend an OhioMeansJobs Center orientation conducted by OhioMeansJobs Center partners/ locals to learn about additional services available through other stakeholders such as WIOA, Aspire, Ohio Department of Aging (ODA), Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD), and faith-based resources.

ES staff members are involved in serving the general population through a variety of ways, depending upon staff levels and existing resources at the OhioMeansJobs Centers. Typical reemployment activities include supporting the Resource Room, where assistance is provided to individuals without regard of program eligibility and the delivery of workshops including interview preparation and resume writing. Additionally, ES staff members may conduct job clubs or boot camps providing attendees with a comprehensive and focused job search curriculum, mock interviews, and job placement activities. These activities are open for all job-ready candidates through referrals from partners to ES staff members. This approach fosters integration of programs, co-enrollment and strengthens the partnerships among all partners at the OhioMeansJobs Centers.

ES staff also assists with Rapid Response events in most areas of the State, helping impacted workers find new jobs. Workers who are not interested in training, but rather need to get back to work as quickly as possible are often assisted by ES staff.

Ohio has also integrated Labor Exchange Workforce Specialists within the local OhioMeansJobs Center service delivery system. A Labor Exchange Workforce Specialist is assigned to each comprehensive OhioMeansJobs center to increase the capacity of the Business Service Teams. These staff focus their activities on conducing OhioMeansJobs.com help sessions; assisting at job fairs and hiring events; resume mining OhioMeansJobs.com and connecting employers with jobseekers.

Ohio also continues to place an increase emphasis on integrating ES team members within the local OhioMeansJobs center delivery system. ES staff continue to provide services to job seekers who are part of a special population and/or have significant employment barriers to re-enter the job force. Ohio recognizes a customer centered approach is essential to meet the customer's individual needs and to use technology to provide necessary services.

D. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE W-P FUNDS TO SUPPORT UI CLAIMANTS, AND THE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN W-P AND UI, AS APPROPRIATE INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING:

1. COORDINATION OF AND PROVISION OF LABOR EXCHANGE SERVICES FOR UI CLAIMANTS AS REQUIRED BY THE WAGNER-PEYSER ACT;

W-P ES staff members coordinate and provide labor exchange services targeting UI claimants in the following manner: through RESEA follow-up activities, referrals to the HOPE Initiative, integration with TAA, and walk-in claimants at the OhioMeansJobs centers, including those from Rapid Response events and grants targeting dislocated workers, such as National Dislocated Worker Grants. W-P funds also pay for Federal services for MSFW and the growers who employ them in order to supplement the array of services available from Ohio's MSFW grant recipient funded by the US Department of Labor (USDOL).

Claimants have access to the full array of W-P and labor exchange services, including reemployment assistance, referral to appropriate partners within the OhioMeansJobs Center, referrals to training opportunities and assistance with applying for PELL grants and other grants, and career guidance. ES staff also discusses work search requirements with claimants and reviews job contacts.

UI representatives from the Adjudication and Delivery Centers are knowledgeable of the OhioMeansJobs Center delivery system, locations, and basic services. As they interact with claimants on the phone and through the website chat feature, they inform them of resources at the centers if claimants are in need of additional assistance.

Written communication between UI and ES staff is conducted via e-mail when there are UI programmatic changes, and other updates related to claimants that ES staff members need to know. Typically, these e-mails are UC-Tech memos, which are easily referenced by staff. In addition to written communication, webinars are often conducted for ES staff to inform of changes or new initiatives.

Unfortunately, not all claimants are aware of the OhioMeansJobs Centers and the services that are available to them. Because of this, local areas have the ability to sign a Data Sharing Agreement, which provides them access to a variety of information that can be used to recruit claimants for services. This includes an "Early Intervention Report" consisting of claimants early in their claims as well as an "End of Benefits Report" consisting of claimants who are within a few weeks of exhausting their benefits. These reports can be used to reach out to claimants and encourage them to come to the OhioMeansJobs Centers for assistance in finding a job.

Wagner-Peyser's vision for providing re-employment services to UI claimants is based on strengthening re-employment connections between the UI program and the OhioMeansJobs workforce systems through the HOPE (Helping Ohioans Pursue Employment) initiative. HOPE will serve as the gateway for UI applicants to obtain valuable services available on OhioMeansJobs.com and local OhioMeansJobs Centers upon application and subsequent

reemployment communications. These communications provide the UI claimants one-on-one assistance through Wagner-Peyser Employment Professionals and direct referral to their local workforce system services.

In an effort to make Title I Dislocated Worker services easier to access from an eligibility perspective, Ohio has developed the WIOAPL 15-02 Adult and Dislocated Worker Eligibility to include specific targeted groups as defined in WIOA Statute Section 3, (15)(A)(i) Dislocated Worker eligibility. These targeted groups include RESEA participants and TAA eligible workers. Additionally, in March 2021, the RESEA program was transitioned to a local workforce area service delivery model. This coordination between UI and the local Title I Dislocated Worker program is an excellent example of how the programs are working together to assist claimants in accessing services efficiently.

2. REGISTRATION OF UI CLAIMANTS WITH THE STATE'S EMPLOYMENT SERVICE IF REQUIRED BY STATE LAW;

UI claimants are required to register in the State's premier job matching system, OhioMeansJobs.com. Individuals receive their log-in information in the mail or electronically. ES staff at the OhioMeansJobs Centers are able to assist claimants who have questions about their accounts and also assist them if they are experiencing challenges logging into the system. Moreover, ES staff are available to help those with physical disabilities who are unable to utilize the computer, those with limited English language proficiency, and those who are barred from using computers due to criminal background issues.

Once claimants register in OhioMeansJobs.com, job leads are sent to them on a regular basis. State law requires them to complete specific activities to continue receiving benefits. OhioMeansJobs.com documents their actions.

3. ADMINISTRATION OF THE WORK TEST FOR THE STATE UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION SYSTEM, INCLUDING MAKING ELIGIBILITY ASSESSMENTS (FOR REFERRAL TO UI ADJUDICATION, IF NEEDED), AND PROVIDING JOB FINDING AND PLACEMENT SERVICES FOR UI CLAIMANTS; AND

ES staff members review work search/job contacts following RESEA one-on-one appointments. If it is found that claimants (whether participating in RESEA or not) have not provided adequate documentation on the work search requirement, ES staff enter an "alert" in the Advancement through Resources, Information and Employment Services (ARIES) system. The alert goes to Ohio's UI system and is addressed by UI staff at the Adjudication Centers.

OWD and Office of Unemployment Insurance Operations are coordinating an initiative to enhance the current work search policy to include a broad range of activities beyond just employer contacts. The following list is not meant to be all-inclusive of every type of work search activity, but it captures a majority of the current/popular work search methods and allows flexibility to accept other efforts.

- Creating a reemployment plan;
- Creating an application cover letter or resume;
- Adding a resume to an online job board;

- Registering for work with the Federal labor exchange system, placement firm, temporary work agencies, or educational institution with job placement offices;
- Using online career tools (e.g., job match advisors or My Skills My Future);
- Logging on and looking for work in the Federal labor exchange or other online job matching system;
- Using reemployment services in OhioMeansJobs Centers:
    - Obtaining and using labor market and career information;
    - Participating in RESEA activities;
    - Participating in skills assessments for occupational matching;
    - Completing online or staff-assisted workshops; and
    - Other specialized activities;
- Following through on job referrals or job development attempts, as directed by Federal workforce or UI staff;
- Taking an exam required as part of the application process for a new job;
- Interviewing for a job (virtually or in-person);
- Applying for and/or participating in partner-sponsored reemployment services, or non-WIOA-related/sponsored training;
- Creating a personal user profile on a professional networking site (e.g., LinkedIn, Facebook, etc.);
- Participating in work-related networking events (e.g., job clubs, job fairs, industry association events, etc.);
- Participating in a public speaking class (e.g., Toastmasters, etc.)
- Taking civil service exam; and
- Any other reemployment strategy that is reasonably expected to result in reemployment.

The initiative is designed to align the work search policy with reemployment objectives, using data from ES and Labor Market Information (LMI), and data received from an OUIO driven LinkedIn pilot to drive and inform policy decisions and to better understand work search in evolving economic conditions. The initiative is to promote a “good faith effort" clause in work search policy to allow for proven reemployment strategies and work search verification flexibility.

4. PROVISION OF REFERRALS TO AND APPLICATION ASSISTANCE FOR TRAINING AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES.

Ensuring UI Claimants have ready access to information about training and education programs is a high priority. Over the past few years, Ohio has conducted an exhaustive review of demand

occupations and created a user-friendly process for exploring the information in order to make informed decisions about their search for employment. Likewise, this same information is used by ES staff to guide customers toward occupations that are currently in-demand with Ohio employers. This powerful tool is part of OhioMeansJobs.com, where it becomes essentially an online career counselor. The "First Up" feature recommends activities to prepare claimants for jobs, tracks progress, and permits sharing of progress with multiple programs' career counselors and service providers. Assessments help claimants determine career options that match their individual interests and view occupations that fit their profile. A "thumbs up" symbol indicates which occupations are in demand. A budget calculator helps claimants determine what target salary is needed, occupations that provide that salary, what training and education is required, which educational institutions or programs offer the training, and more.

Claimants and universal customers are informed of this feature in the OhioMeansJobs Resource Rooms, during RESEA program follow-up activities, Rapid Response activities, during orientations with local WIOA dislocated worker programs, and when interacting with both state and local workforce professionals at the OhioMeansJobs Centers.

This information, in combination with Ohio's online portal for ETPs, Workforce Inventory of Education and Training (WIET), creates a comprehensive packet of information that claimants can access any time to plan their futures - whether it is with a workforce professional or self-directed, it is always available. WIET includes a complete catalog of the approved training programs, including all types of providers, cost of the program, length of training, type of credential earned, program capacity, etc. All ETPs will be required to enter their information in this system, and keep the information updated in order to ensure that Ohioans can have this information at their fingertips to plan their futures.

E. AGRICULTURAL OUTREACH PLAN (AOP). EACH STATE AGENCY MUST DEVELOP AN AOP EVERY FOUR YEARS AS PART OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN REQUIRED UNDER SECTIONS 102 OR 103 OF WIOA. THE AOP MUST INCLUDE AN ASSESSMENT OF NEED. AN ASSESSMENT NEED DESCRIBES THE UNIQUE NEEDS OF FARMWORKERS IN THE AREA BASED ON PAST AND PROJECTED AGRICULTURAL AND FARMWORKER ACTIVITY IN THE STATE. SUCH NEEDS MAY INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO: EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING, AND HOUSING.

1. ASSESSMENT OF NEED. PROVIDE AN ASSESSMENT OF THE UNIQUE NEEDS OF FARMWORKERS IN THE AREA BASED ON PAST AND PROJECTED AGRICULTURAL AND FARMWORKER ACTIVITY IN THE STATE. SUCH NEEDS MAY INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO: EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING, AND HOUSING.

Three areas of unique needs of farmworkers emerge as a prominent focus of Ohio's services to MSFWs:

Employment. Migrant farmworkers may need help obtaining employment that ensures an adequate income through the year. During peak activity periods, Ohio crop farming employs nearly 10,500 workers. But while growers often struggle to fill these demanding jobs, it can be equally hard for workers to find them. Heavy reliance is placed on farm labor contractors by both the MSFWs and the growers. The farm labor contractors, referred to as crew leaders, recruit workers for employers. MSFWs turn to crew leaders to help them find employment wherever they find themselves. The farm crew leaders may recruit MSFWs to work near the

areas where they live or to migrate to other states to perform agricultural work. The hiring schedule is unpredictable, as it changes with the varying degrees of weather from year to year, county to county and state to state. And within the active months, farm work can be reduced by random events such as bad weather, pests, mold, etc. For example, 2023 saw above-average rainfall during the spring. Some crops were flooded and left inedible. Hiring at the start of a local season, replacing a lost job, or finding supplemental employment in another sector is especially challenging for workers who migrate from other states and thus lack employer contacts within Ohio.

Training. Migrant farmworkers encounter special barriers to education and training. These barriers threaten their long-term employment prospects. Migrant farmworkers are too busy working and stay in one place for such a brief period that it is often difficult to fully explore the learning options of a given location. The cycle of movement from one seasonal job to another in widely scattered locations makes it nearly impossible to complete an entire school year in one school district. It is even more difficult to complete a full course of study at a school or program that is based at one address. This problem starts early in a worker's life. MSFWs tend to travel in family groups, including children, who at age 12 can legally start contributing to the family income. State laws require children to attend classes throughout the academic year, but children in migrant families leave their community and school in the early spring and late fall. As a result, half of MSFWs fail to complete high school. Many workers do not get beyond sixth grade. This results in career obstacles, including above-average levels of illiteracy. Limited English proficiency is also an obstacle, especially among farmworkers from Spanish-speaking countries. The Ohio Migrant Education Center (OMEC), funded in part by the Federal Migrant Education Program, supports local education agencies in developing supplemental instruction and supportive services that are designed to help youth stay in high school and achieve a diploma or equivalent as well as master English as a Second Language.

Housing. Migrant farmworkers often lack the time and resources to find housing for the limited periods when they are in Ohio. Each year, roughly 3,500 workers (about a third of the Federal's agricultural labor force) live in employer-provided temporary agricultural labor camps. As a result, they are dependent on employers for the quality of their shelter and the related plumbing, grounds, and amenities. At the same time, it is to employers' advantage to meet those needs adequately. Differences in housing between areas with concurrent work seasons affect employers' ability to compete for the labor they need, when they need it, on a time-sensitive work calendar.

To protect the interests of both the farmworkers and the employers, the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) licenses the farm labor camps for health and safety. In Ohio, 137 camps were licensed to operate as temporary housing for MSFWs;

2. AN ASSESSMENT OF THE AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITY IN THE STATE MEANS: 1) IDENTIFYING THE TOP FIVE LABOR-INTENSIVE CROPS, THE MONTHS OF HEAVY ACTIVITY, AND THE GEOGRAPHIC AREA OF PRIME ACTIVITY; 2) SUMMARIZE THE AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS' NEEDS IN THE STATE (I.E. ARE THEY PREDOMINANTLY HIRING LOCAL OR FOREIGN WORKERS, ARE THEY EXPRESSING THAT THERE IS A SCARCITY IN THE AGRICULTURAL WORKFORCE); AND 3) IDENTIFYING ANY ECONOMIC, NATURAL, OR OTHER FACTORS THAT ARE AFFECTING AGRICULTURE IN THE STATE OR ANY PROJECTED FACTORS THAT WILL AFFECT AGRICULTURE IN THE STATE

ODJFS recognizes the cyclical schedule of crop farming, with multiple but separate rounds of planting, crop maintenance and tending to the harvest, all start and end at different times in different climate zones. This calls for workers who can travel between Federals as employment becomes available. The work is taxing because there is significant heavy labor that includes bending, lifting, and stooping performed for many hours, often in extreme heat. This requires individuals who can tackle the rigors of continuing migration, while continuing to bear the elements of ever-changing weather and environmental conditions. The top five labor-intensive crops in Ohio are tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, nursery and orchard crops. The peak season varies between the crops as detailed in the **Figure 25. Ohio's Top Crops and Seasons.**

Figure 25. Ohio's Top Crops and Seasons

Crop	Season	Geographic Area
Peppers	May - October	Northwest: Sandusky, Huron, Ottawa, Seneca, Erie, Fulton, Henry Counties
Tomatoes	May - October	Northwest: Sandusky, Huron, Ottawa, Seneca, Erie, Fulton, Henry Counties
Cucumbers	March - November	Northwest: Sandusky, Huron, Ottawa, Seneca, Erie, Fulton, Henry Counties
Nurseries	March - November	Statewide
Orchard Crops	March - November	Statewide

Ohio's agricultural employers rely heavily on the migrant worker to meet their labor needs. This workforce accepts the terms and conditions of employment which includes free housing, which is a strong incentive for the workforce to come to Ohio. Data has shown that the seasonal workforce is not willing to work in the agricultural industries for a variety of reasons, including being exempt from overtime and the irregular work hours. Ohio has documented a decrease in the number of migrant workers coming to Ohio. Consequently, Ohio employers are sharing resources to ensure the work is completed. With rising minimum wage, and the labor shortage across multiple sectors in Ohio, migrant workers are finding it easier to transition out of seasonal work and find comparable pay in other industries.

3. AN ASSESSMENT OF THE UNIQUE NEEDS OF FARMWORKERS MEANS SUMMARIZING MIGRANT AND SEASONAL FARM WORKER (MSFW) CHARACTERISTICS (INCLUDING IF THEY ARE PREDOMINANTLY FROM CERTAIN COUNTRIES, WHAT LANGUAGE(S) THEY SPEAK, THE APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF MSFWS IN THE STATE DURING PEAK SEASON AND DURING LOW SEASON, AND WHETHER THEY TEND TO BE MIGRANT, SEASONAL, OR YEAR-ROUND FARMWORKERS). THIS INFORMATION MUST TAKE INTO ACCOUNT DATA SUPPLIED BY WIOA SECTION 167 NATIONAL FARMWORKER JOBS PROGRAM (NFJP) GRANTEES, OTHER MSFW ORGANIZATIONS, EMPLOYER ORGANIZATIONS, AND STATE AND/OR FEDERAL AGENCY DATA SOURCES SUCH AS THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR (DOL) EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ADMINISTRATION

ODJFS compiles data throughout the year, via outreach activity logs related to the MSFW population. This data is compared to the data collected by partners, including the WIOA Section 167 National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) grantee, PathStone.

During the 2022 peak seasons, for both field crops and nursery crops, it is estimated that 18,000 MSFWs worked in Ohio. The bulk of this population are of Hispanic background, mostly from Mexico, Guatemala, and Honduras, with Spanish as their primary language and educational attainment as an additional barrier that threatens their long-term employment prospects.

The non-peak MSFW population is estimated to be less than ten percent of the peak numbers.

Ohio has recalculated the estimated MSFW workforce by combining estimates from the Ohio Department of Agriculture, Ohio Labor Market Information projections, DOL Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), and outreach reports provided by Ohio's Migrant Outreach Specialists for the 2022 season. By taking the historical average percentages of the MSFW workforce compared to the total agricultural workforce in Ohio, we are able to extrapolate a figure of an estimated 18,000 MSFW in Ohio working during the 2022 season that includes information from the Agricultural Census, which shows an estimated MSFW population of around 6500 and BLS data that shows approximately 18,000 agricultural workers in total for Ohio in 2022. The NFJP grantee in Ohio (Pathstone) has calculated a similar amount of estimated MSFW for the same time period.

4. OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

The local offices outreach activities must be designed to meet the needs of MSFWs in the State and to locate and contact MSFWs who are not being reached through normal intake activities. Describe the State agency's proposed strategies for:

Please continue to e.4.A, B, C, D and E for Ohio's proposed strategies.

A. CONTACTING FARMWORKERS WHO ARE NOT BEING REACHED BY THE NORMAL INTAKE ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED BY THE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE OFFICES

ODJFS has four full-time bilingual outreach staff to contact agricultural employers and to inform migrant farmworkers of available services. Ohio is continuously analyzing staffing levels to ensure adequate outreach coverage. Ohio extends the outreach to farmworkers who are not located by normal intake through targeted outreach on a consistent basis at important venues such as church gatherings, entertainment events, clinics, laundromats, grocery stores, specialty shops and taquerias. The outreach staff will have the flexibility to work outside normal business hours during peak season to ensure they are available during MSFW gathering times. Staff invite workers to OhioMeansJobs Centers to help them find jobs. Where necessary, the training needed to meet the hiring criteria will be provided. Additional intermittent staff may be hired to conduct targeted outreach during peak periods in certain agricultural areas and industries. Northeast Ohio has many plant nurseries with peak seasons starting in February and March through November. In the northwest and the west-central districts, farms are especially active from May through October.

The Migrant Seasonal Farmworker Outreach and embraced innovation through technology to enhance the customer experience through multiple touchpoints. Because of their work, the employers and agricultural workers we engage with and the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) we report out to have seen significant process and information improvements. They implemented

performance tracking to streamline internal processes and automate statistical feedback among the team. They built a new webpage that allows agricultural jobseekers to see all jobs available and quickly connect to employers. They also implemented a power automate response on the website that alerts staff immediately when customers need assistance.

A centralized Teams channel was created that allows the most MSFW-focused OhioMeansJobs centers a unified space to communicate and access resources, and, perhaps most importantly, completely overhauled Ohio's Agricultural Prevailing Wage and Practices Surveys process. They digitized the survey process using Microsoft Forms. This innovation streamlines the process for employers, establishing a fair wage rate for agricultural employees and ensures an even, predictable playing field for those who use the Agricultural Recruitment System or hire H2A workers.

B. PROVIDING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO OUTREACH STAFF. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE MUST INCLUDE TRAININGS, CONFERENCES, ADDITIONAL RESOURCES, AND INCREASED COLLABORATION WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS ON TOPICS SUCH AS ONE-STOP CENTER SERVICES (I.E. AVAILABILITY OF REFERRALS TO TRAINING, SUPPORTIVE SERVICES, AND CAREER SERVICES, AS WELL AS SPECIFIC EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES), THE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE AND EMPLOYMENT-RELATED LAW COMPLAINT SYSTEM ("COMPLAINT SYSTEM" DESCRIBED AT 20 CFR 658 SUBPART E), INFORMATION ON THE OTHER ORGANIZATIONS SERVING MSFWS IN THE AREA, AND A BASIC SUMMARY OF FARMWORKER RIGHTS, INCLUDING THEIR RIGHTS WITH RESPECT TO THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT.

ODJFS' outreach staff are required to attend organizational training provided by the Office of Employee and Business Services and programmatic training provided by the OWD. As shown in **Figure 26. Outreach Worker Programmatic Training/Statewide Issues Awareness**, the topics of the programmatic training and statewide issues awareness includes, but is not limited to, the following:

Figure 26. Outreach Worker Programmatic Training/ Statewide Issues Awareness

ES Complaint System and Apparent Violations
OhioMeansJobs.com (Ohio's Labor Exchange system)
Human Trafficking
Agency, Safety, Positivity, Inclusion, Respect and Equity (ASPIRE)
Other advocacy groups
Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)
UI, Online Unemployment Benefits Submission and Application Instructions
Foreign Labor Certification
US DOL Wage and Hour
Community Development Institute (CDI) Head Start

Advancement through Resources, Information and Employment Services (ARIES)
Opioid Crisis
Protecting Farmworker from Sexual Harassment
Special Population Da Training, Serving Farmworkers
Ohio Migrant Education Center (OMEC)
Disaster Preparedness
Equal Employment Opportunity
Ohio Commission on Hispanic and Latino Affairs (OCHLA)

The outreach staff are encouraged to participate in coalitions that provide services to the MSFW populations such as the Farmworker Agencies Liaison Communication and Outreach Network (FALCON), Dayton Latino Connection and Hartville Migrant Ministries. Furthermore, the outreach staff are encouraged to participate in special projects such as the Farmworker Appreciation Day.

C. INCREASING OUTREACH WORKER TRAINING AND AWARENESS ACROSS CORE PROGRAMS INCLUDING THE UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE (UI) PROGRAM AND THE TRAINING ON IDENTIFICATION OF UI ELIGIBILITY ISSUES

ODJFS provides programmatic training for all of its employees. Core programmatic training, including UI training, is conducted annually to all employees, including migrant outreach staff. Additionally, migrant outreach staff work in conjunction with Federal merit staff in their respective OhioMeansJobs Centers. This structure supports reporting potential UI eligibility issues to the assigned processing centers as required.

D. PROVIDING STATE MERIT STAFF OUTREACH WORKERS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES TO ENSURE THEY ARE ABLE TO PROVIDE HIGH QUALITY SERVICES TO BOTH JOBSEEKERS AND EMPLOYERS

ODJFS is dedicated to the professional development of its employees. The Office of Employee and Business Services has a stand-alone unit to address the training and educational services needed to support the individual, team, and organizational performance goals. Furthermore, the Office of Workforce Development has regional trainers to ensure the Federal merit staff are trained on all program areas, including but not limited to W-P, WIOA, and UC.

E. COORDINATING OUTREACH EFFORTS WITH NFJP GRANTEES AS WELL AS WITH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE COMMUNITY SERVICE AGENCIES AND MSFW GROUPS

ODJFS plans outreach efforts to target concentrations of need while also maximizing its impact statewide. Agency outreach staff participate in activities such as the Community Legal Education Presentations of Farmworker Legal Services and the parental advisory committee meetings sponsored by other partners. As discussed previously, other important venues include church gatherings, entertainment events, clinics, laundromats, grocery stores, specialty shops, and taquerias. Staff will also regularly review the ODH list of licensed agricultural labor camps to identify those that have not been visited.

Migrant outreach staff will be located strategically to reach the maximum number of farmworkers. All outreach staff receive training at the beginning of the year to review and update information from the previous year.

ODJFS signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with WIOA167 grantee, PathStone, to jointly provide migrant farmworker services.

The Regional monitor advocate coordinated a series of visits around Ohio that included the WIOA167 grantee, PathStone; outreach staff; and management. The outreach staff helps coordinates such efforts. For example, staff can identify and inform the MSFW partners about problems Ohio may be facing, including work reductions, down-time, and income impacts stemming from weather issues.

5. SERVICES PROVIDED TO FARMWORKERS AND AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS THROUGH THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM

Describe the State agency's proposed strategies for:

A. PROVIDING THE FULL RANGE OF EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING SERVICES TO THE AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITY, BOTH FARMWORKERS AND AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS, THROUGH THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM. THIS INCLUDES:

I. HOW CAREER AND TRAINING SERVICES REQUIRED UNDER WIOA TITLE I WILL BE PROVIDED TO MSFWS THROUGH THE ONE-STOP CENTERS

II. HOW THE STATE SERVES AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS AND HOW IT INTENDS TO IMPROVE SUCH SERVICES

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ODJFS outreach staff are bilingual and can capably inform farmworkers through written material and oral presentations about the services available in the OhioMeansJobs Centers. During these contacts, outreach staff register farmworkers for agency services; refer them to jobs and other needed resources; and make appointments for them and arrange transportation. Other topics of discussion may include:

- Resources and tools available on OhioMeansJobs.com;
- Services available by referral, including agriculture/non-agricultural employment, training, supportive services, assessments, and other job development activities
- Farmworker rights, including Federal and Federal laws and employment-related protections;
- The OhioMeansJobs Center complaint system;
- WIOA Title, I employment and training services;
- Other entities and programs that serve MSFWs, including: the WIOA167 grantee, PathStone; the ODH; Advocates for Basic Legal Services; migrant health clinics; food assistance; K-12 education through the OMEC; and the Ohio Department of Agriculture (for pesticide issues);

- UI and Online Unemployment Benefits Submission and Application Instructions (online or by phone); and
- Federal wage/hour laws.

Additional activities include joint outreach visits with partners who serve MSFWs. The outreach staff and the State Monitor Advocate identify and work with local entities that provide MSFW services, especially in areas where our Statewide partners have limited presence.

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ODJFS migrant outreach staff have been the primary point of contact with agricultural employers. However, the W-P staff have been trained in the MSFW program and can help agricultural employers with their workforce needs.

B. MARKETING THE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE COMPLAINT SYSTEM TO FARMWORKERS AND OTHER FARMWORKER ADVOCACY GROUPS

Migrant outreach staff inform farmworkers and agencies about the complaint system individually and in group settings with verbal and written material in appropriate language(s). Staff meet regularly with the partners during agency visits and in coalition meetings to solve problems and offer the complaint system as means to resolve problems.

C. MARKETING THE AGRICULTURAL RECRUITMENT SYSTEM FOR U.S. WORKERS (ARS) TO AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS AND HOW IT INTENDS TO IMPROVE SUCH PUBLICITY.

ODJFS MSFW program and outreach staff encourage the use of the Agricultural Recruitment System (ARS) in all contacts with employers and groups, including at the beginning of the season, end of the season, and partner and employer meetings. Ohio further provides technical assistance to those employers throughout the ARS and interstate clearance order process.

ODJFS utilizes the efforts Wagner-Peyser Workforce Specialists in conjunction with local OhioMeansJobs Business Resource Networks. These groups are in direct engagement with Ohio employers, employment agencies, Local Workforce Development Boards, chambers of commerce, and local entities related to workforce development. The Workforce Specialists will promote ARS to these entities through informational fairs, recruitment events, and meetings, as well as provide training and marketing materials to employers throughout the state.

6. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

A. COLLABORATION

Describe any collaborative agreements the state workforce agency (SWA) has with other MSFW service providers including NFJP grantees and other service providers. Describe how the SWA intends to build upon/increase collaboration with existing partners and in establishing new partners over the next four years (including any approximate timelines for establishing agreements or building upon existing agreements).

ODJFS signed an MOU with the WIOA 167 grantee, PathStone, to jointly provide migrant farmworker services. The State Monitor Advocate coordinated a series of visits around Ohio that included the WIOA167 grantee staff, outreach staff, and the ODJFS workforce specialists who work with employers. The State currently has MOUs with OMEC, the Department of Labor

Wage and Hour Division (DOLWHD), and finalizing a partnership agreement with, Great Lakes Community Action Partnership (GLCAP).. -. Efforts between these groups help to provide a safe working environment and educating migrant season farm workers. During the pandemic, strong collaborative extended efforts have been formed with Ohio Department of Agriculture, Ohio Department of Health and Ohio Department of Insurance.

Continuing partnerships and collaboration with advocate groups provide information and education on minimizing exposure and the spread of COVID-19. Bilingual resources are available to provide health and safety solutions to protect MSFW and H2A workers. Personal protection equipment, tests kits and printed posters and digital videos regarding safety guidance are available as needed to extend guidance, support and education. Collaborative efforts with NFJP grantee PathStone, other federal, state and local health care agencies use technology to improve messaging and practices to safeguard the well-being of Ohio workers. Resources such as:

Migrant-Seasonal-Farmworker-Guide.pdf (ohio.gov)

ODJFS has developed monthly cadences with Ohio Department of Health to foster teamwork and collaboration. ODJFS has also created shared Microsoft Teams Channels to share resources and outreach calendars with Pathstone (NFJP). During the current program year, ODJFS intends to utilize similar models of communication with existing and new partners to build upon and increase collaboration.

B. REVIEW AND PUBLIC COMMENT

In developing the AOP, the SWA must solicit information and suggestions from NFJP grantees, other appropriate MSFW groups, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations, and other interested organizations. In addition, at least 45 calendar days before submitting its final AOP, the SWA must provide a proposed plan to NFJP grantees, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations, and other organizations expressing an interest and allow at least 30 days for review and comment. The SWA must: 1) Consider any comments received in formulating its final proposed AOP; 2) Inform all commenting parties in writing whether their comments have been incorporated and, if not, the reasons therefore; and 3) Transmit the comments and recommendations received and its responses with the submission of the AOP.

The AOP must include a statement confirming NFJP grantees, other appropriate MSFW groups, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations and other interested employer organizations have been given an opportunity to comment on the AOP. Include the list of organizations from which information and suggestions were solicited, any comments received, and responses to those comments.

ODJFS solicited information and suggestions from NFJP grantees, other appropriate MSFW groups, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations, and other interested

organizations. The following agencies and organizations listed below have been have been given an opportunity to comment on the Federal Agricultural Outreach Plan (AOP):

- 1. Adelante - Dayton;
- 2. CDI,
- 3. OMEC;
- 4. Migrant Health Clinics;
- 5. Advocates for Basic Legal Equality;
- 6. Hartville Migrant Ministries;
- 7. Latino Coalition of Clark & Champaign;
- 8. ODH;
- 9. USDOL-ESA-Wage & Hour;
- 10. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA);
- 11. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC);
- 12. Ohio Civil Rights Commission (OCRC);
- 13. Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC);
- 14. Ohio Attorney General;
- 15. Ohio Producers, Growers and Marketing Association (OPGMA);
- 16. Nursery Growers of Lake County Ohio (NGLCO);
- 17. Ohio Nursery and Landscape Association;
- 18. Ohio Farm Bureau (OFB);
- 19. Ohio Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs (OCHLA); and
- 20. PathStone.

The AOP Plan went out for comment on 12/5/2023. No comments were submitted.

C. DATA ASSESSMENT

Review the previous four years Wagner-Peyser data reports on performance. Note whether the State has been meeting its goals to provide MSFWs quantitatively proportionate services as compared to non-MSFWs. If it has not met these goals, explain why the State believes such goals were not met and how the State intends to improve its provision of services in order to meet such goals.

Ohio has taken steps to ensure that services to Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers are qualitatively equivalent and quantitatively proportionate to those provided to non-Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers.

The State Monitor Advocate (SMA) collects statewide participant information on a quarterly basis from an automated data collection system, ARIES (SAP BO), to determine if the state's MSFWs are referred to the full range of employment opportunities, training programs, testing, counseling and career guidance services. The automated reports are compared to the daily logs reported by the outreach specialists to ensure accuracy.

In addition, Ohio's performance reporting process takes this a step further. Reports submitted to U.S. Department of Labor on program activity and performance outcomes provide a comparison of the service indicators of the MSFW and non-MSFW registrants. Ohio's statewide performance reports are as follows:

STATE	OHIO	REGION CODE	Region V			
		# MSFWs		# Non-MSFW		
	Program Year	Denominator	%	Denominator	%	Equity
A. Total Applications	2019	198	100.0%	18,375	100.0%	YES
	2020	331	100.0%	8,700	100.0%	YES
	2021	236	100.0%	12,199	100.0%	YES
	2022	348	100.0%	9,790	100.0%	YES
		# MSFWs		# Non-MSFW		
	Program Year	Numerator	%	Numerator	%	Equity
1. Referred to Jobs	2019	154	77.8%	5,666	30.8%	YES
	2020	240	72.5%	2,378	27.3%	YES
	2021	1	0.4%	15	0.1%	YES
	2022	65	18.7%	98	1.0%	YES
		# MSFWs		# Non-MSFW		
	Program Year	Numerator	%	Numerator	%	Equity
2. Received Staff Assisted Services	2019	197	99.5%	17,636	96.0%	YES
	2020	331	100.0%	8,243	94.7%	YES

	2021	236	100.0%	12,187	99.9%	YES
	2022	348	100.0%	9,782	99.9%	YES

	Program Year	# MSFWs		# Non-MSFW		Equity
		Numerator	%	Numerator	%	
3. Referred to Support Service	2019	1	0.5%	935	5.1%	NO
	2020	0	0.0%	275	3.2%	NO
	2021	89	37.7%	920	7.5%	YES
	2022	99	28.4%	210	2.1%	YES

	Program Year	# MSFWs		# Non-MSFW		Equity
		Numerator	%	Numerator	%	
4. Career Guidance	2019	107	54.0%	4,793	26.1%	YES
	2020	261	78.9%	2,868	33.0%	YES
	2021	164	69.5%	1,719	14.1%	YES
	2022	9	2.6%	499	5.1%	NO

	Program Year	# MSFWs		# Non-MSFW		Equity
		Numerator	%	Numerator	%	
5. Job Development Contact	2019	177	89.4%	9,840	53.6%	YES
	2020	262	79.2%	5,461	62.8%	YES
	2021	203	86.0%	9,900	81.2%	YES
	2022	84	24.1%	8,879	90.7%	NO

Ohio historically has met 4 out of 5 equity ratio indicators, however with the launch of Ohio's new case management system ARIES in April of 2022 "referral to supportive services" "provided unemployment claim assistance" and "referral to federal training" services were not available for staff to take. As of November 2023, these issues have been corrected and should be accurately represented moving forward.

To aid in the accurate reporting of services provided by outreach staff, Microsoft Forms surveys are being used in the field by outreach staff. Outreach staff will display a menu of services available and present a QR code for MSFW and H2a workers to complete a survey indicating services they may be interested in and report any complaints or violations.

The SMA ensures all data captured and reported are accurate. In addition, physical monitoring of the four significant MSFW offices are conducted for deficiencies, problems, or improper practices.

D. ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

The plan must include an explanation of what was achieved based on the previous AOP, what was not achieved and an explanation as to why the State believes the goals were not achieved, and how the State intends to remedy the gaps of achievement in the coming year.

Figure 27. Previous Years' History (Based on October – September Data) presents what was achieved based on the previous AOP. Ohio anticipates more typical weather conditions in the upcoming years. In addition, the State plans to mitigate the shortfall in previously established outreach goals by hiring adequate outreach staff during peak season to contact agricultural employers and to inform migrant farmworkers of available services, while increasing targeted outreach. ODJFS plans to raise awareness and promote agricultural activities. The goal is to effectively coordinate efforts with the OhioMeansJobs Center's business teams to reach agricultural employers and with the Employment Services Professional to meet the MSFW needs. A special emphasis will be placed on promotion of the ARS. Ohio projects to not only meet but exceed the performance indicators.

Figure 27. Previous Years' History (Based on October – September Data)

Year	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Agricultural Job Orders Received	103	149	122	186	225
Agricultural Job Order Filled	98	146	122	186	223
Interstate Clearance Order Initiated	0	222	0	0	0
Interstate Clearance Order Received to include H-2A	254	325	192	229	252

Ohio has four full-time and 3 part-time outreach workers for the peak season. All outreach workers speak Spanish, which is the prevailing language spoken by MSFWs in Ohio. The outreach staff visit each of the significant MSFW ES offices and additionally, non-significant MSFW ES offices. The SMA along with the outreach specialist and Pathstone, participate collaboratively to engage with many Ohio MSFWs, growers and partners.

The outreach staff actively promoted labor exchange activities at the beginning of the season including employment services to the agriculture employers in their areas of coverage. They participated in conferences, partner collaboration meetings, training sessions and meetings to apply a more effective delivery of their services. Through the off-peak season, the outreach staff continued to develop and maintain productive relationships with their agricultural employers through agricultural employer orientation sessions, phone calls and one-on-one meetings with the employers. The outreach staff facilitated these orientations for the agricultural employers in January and February to inform the employers of any program updates and/or process changes within the state's services to MSFWs.

In early spring, Ohio's outreach team facilitate an Agriculture Employer Open House in which local employers are invited to network with local advocacy groups serving the MSFWs. Participants included Community Development Institute Head Start, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), Bureau of Workers Compensation (BWC), U.S. Department of Labor Wage & Hour, National Farmworker Jobs Program-PathStone, Ohio Migrant Education Center (OMEC), OhioMeansJobs (OMJ), and Advocate for Basic Legal Equality (ABLE).

Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker outreach specialists participate in a Pre-Season Training held in late March to early April. Technical and operational training is conducted by the State Monitor Advocate and State Workforce Agency. All technical training is collaborated, reviewed and approved by the State Monitor Advocate. At the end of every MSFW peak season, October/November, a Post-Season Training conference is held. Training topics include:

- Employment Service Complaint System
- Identifying and Reporting Apparent Violations
- Agricultural Recruitment System
- Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act
- Referral Process for Agricultural Jobs
- MSFW Outreach Log Reports
- Sexual Harassment
- Labor Trafficking
- OhioMeansJobs Center Employment Services

The outreach staff continue to assist MSFWs needing help obtaining employment and assisting agricultural employers locate qualified workers for planting and harvesting crops, help in dairies, nurseries, forestry and fisheries. They work contract with the Department of Health who inspect and license the Agricultural Labor camps in Ohio. The MSFW outreach staff and OMJ Center staff conduct active recruitments when trying to assist H-2A employers fill open positions with qualified U.S. domestic workers, prior to foreign workers coming into Ohio. The outreach staff promote the Agricultural Recruitment System (ARS) to help agricultural employers recruit qualified workers on a temporary or seasonal basis by recruiting MSFWs from the southern supply states. Ohio's outreach staff have been successful in recruiting and filling the ARS job orders, which help agricultural employers fill their labor needs in a timely manner.

Ohio's outreach efforts are also accomplished by partnering with the Farmworker Agencies Liaison Communication and Outreach Network (FALCON), a coalition of about 20 government agencies and advocacy groups that work on behalf of the MSFW population. This conglomerate of MSFW advocates meet either virtually or in-person on a monthly basis throughout the program year to address issues, concerns and best practices.

E. STATE MONITOR ADVOCATE

The plan must contain a statement confirming the State Monitor Advocate has reviewed and approved the AOP.

The State Monitor Advocate provided input into developing this AOP. The plan was reviewed and approved by the State Monitor Advocate prior to its submission. The Advocate will also ensure that all interested agencies and individuals have an opportunity to view this plan and make comments.

WAGNER-PEYSER ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include assurances that:

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service is co-located with one-stop centers or a plan and timeline has been developed to comply with this requirement within a reasonable amount of time (sec 121(e)(3));	Yes
2. If the State has significant MSFW one-stop centers, the State agency is complying with the requirements under 20 CFR 653.111, State Workforce Agency staffing requirements;	Yes
3. If a State Workforce Development Board, department, or agency administers State laws for vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, that board, department, or agency cooperates with the agency that administers Wagner-Peyser Act services, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and Youth Programs under Title I; and	Yes
4. SWA officials: 1) Initiate the discontinuation of services; 2) Make the determination that services need to be discontinued; 3) Make the determination to reinstate services after the services have been discontinued; 4) Approve corrective action plans; 5) Approve the removal of an employer's clearance orders from interstate or intrastate clearance if the employer was granted conditional access to ARS and did not come into compliance within 5 calendar days; 6) Enter into agreements with State and Federal enforcement agencies for enforcement-agency staff to conduct field checks on the SWAs' behalf (if the SWA so chooses); and 7) Decide whether to consent to the withdrawal of complaints if a party who requested a hearing wishes to withdraw its request for hearing in writing before the hearing.	Yes
5. The SWA has established and maintains a self-appraisal system for ES operations to determine	Yes

The State Plan must include	Include
success in reaching goals and to correct deficiencies in performance (20 CFR 658.601).	

WAGNER PEYSER PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as "baseline" indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A "baseline" indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, "baseline" indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as "baseline" based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as "baseline" for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as "baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA." The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as "baseline" for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as "baseline" for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as "baseline." Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state's plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	70.0%		70.0%	

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	69.0%		69.0%	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	$8,000.00		$8,000.00	
Credential Attainment Rate	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Measurable Skill Gains	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]

1

The Departments have not issued the final rule defining Effectiveness in Serving Employers. As a result, states will not submit expected levels of performance for this indicator and the Departments will not establish negotiated levels of performance for PYs 2024 and 2025.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAMS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include a description of the following as it pertains to adult education and literacy programs and activities under title II of WIOA, the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA).

A. ALIGNING OF CONTENT STANDARDS

Describe how the eligible agency has aligned its content standards for adult education with State-adopted challenging academic content standards, as adopted under section 1111(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (20 U.S.C. 6311(b)(1)).

Ohio's adult education program has a long history, over 28 years, of standards-based education. In 2014, the ODHE Aspire program adopted the rigorous *College and Career Readiness (CCR) Standards for Adult Education* (U.S. Department of Education, 2013) for use in all ABE/ASE classes. In 2018, the Aspire program adopted and adapted the *English Language Proficiency Standards (ELP) for Adult Education* (U.S. Department of Education, 2016) for use in all ESOL classes. By utilizing national standards, Ohio Aspire programs were situated to meet the academic rigor outlined in WIOA. The CCR standards, intended to provide all adult students with the opportunity to be prepared for postsecondary education/training and the workforce without needing basic skills remediation, were developed, and aligned to the K-12 Common Core State Standards, adopted by the Ohio Department of Education, now known as the Department of Education and Workforce.

All Aspire programs are required to implement these standards as a grant requirement. To ensure Aspire programs are aligned with these standards, Ohio requires initial PD covering the standards for new Aspire educators. Ohio also provides ongoing professional development to support the implementation of intentional, standards-based instruction in Aspire ABE/ASE and ESOL classrooms and online environments. Standards-based lesson plans are reviewed regularly as part of on-site local monitoring and classroom observations. Links to the standards are available through the ohioaspire.org website, and local program staff can access the specific standards in the ABE/ASE or ESOL Teacher Resources section.

Quality instruction has been a continued focus for our PDN and state office. Standards have been a vital part of that conversation. Our programs have worked diligently to align curriculum with CCR standards. In Ohio many programs are collaborating and sharing processes, documentation, and best practices with aligning standards to approved curricula and DE software.

At our state professional development conferences, there were several sessions offered on aligning standards led by our PDN. There were also sessions offered by practitioners that were sharing best practices when it comes to lesson planning and standards.

Additionally, our state staff, has been providing focused technical assistance on aligning Integrated Education and Training single set of learning objectives and curriculum with our standards.

B. LOCAL ACTIVITIES

Describe how the eligible agency will, using the considerations specified in section 231(e) of WIOA and in accordance with 34 CFR 463 subpart C, fund each eligible provider to establish or operate programs that provide any of the following adult education and literacy activities identified in section 203 of WIOA, including programs that provide such activities concurrently. The Unified or Combined State Plan must include at a minimum the scope, content, and organization of these local activities.

ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY ACTIVITIES (SECTION 203 OF WIOA)

- Adult education;
- Literacy;
- Workplace adult education and literacy activities;
- Family literacy activities;
- English language acquisition activities;
- Integrated English literacy and civics education;
- Workforce preparation activities; or
- Integrated education and training that—

1. Provides adult education and literacy activities, concurrently and contextually with both, workforce preparation activities, and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster, and

2. Is for the purpose of educational and career advancement.

Special Rule. Each eligible agency awarding a grant or contract under this section shall not use any funds made available under this title for adult education and literacy activities for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are under the age of 16 and are enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under State law, except that such agency may use such funds for such purpose if such programs, services, or activities are related to family literacy activities. In providing family literacy activities under this title, an eligible provider shall attempt to coordinate with programs and services that are not assisted under this title prior to using funds for adult education and literacy activities under this title for activities other than activities for eligible individuals.

The ODHE agency selects and funds eligible providers through a Request for Proposal (RFP) process; the current grant cycle is PY21-23 (SFY22-24) and will conclude June 30th, 2024. The RFP has been released for SFY 2025-2027. Ohio runs the same competition process for Section(s) 231, 243, and 225 in accordance with 34 CFR 463 subpart C. Proposals are reviewed through an objective process that focuses on the program content, specifically the thirteen considerations in section 231(e) of WIOA, organizational capacity, geographic distribution, and alignment to the core activities of Ohio's Combined State Plan. Once selected, eligible providers operate programs that provide adult education and literacy activities based on best practices derived from rigorous research, including programs that offer activities concurrently. Grants are awarded on a multi-year basis, typically three years.

Aspire students come with diverse skill levels, ranging from non–literate to secondary levels of education. Many students have disabilities, including a large percentage with learning disabilities and learning difficulties. To ensure that programs are offering the best, research-based practices to serve students, the ODHE Aspire office has established a network of professional development. Through evidence-based professional development, Aspire practitioners are trained to assist students holistically, using instructional practices that include the essential components of reading, and capitalizing on students' strengths while addressing their skill deficits. A myriad of teaching strategies, including individualized, small and large group instruction, and computer-assisted instruction are offered to meet the various needs and skill levels of adult students. Distance education is a learning option available through all Aspire providers; distance learning opens access to instruction for students with barriers to attending and provides increased instructional hours for students wanting to accelerate their learning.

Aspire providers coordinate with other workforce partners in the community for the development of career pathways. Providers also coordinate with local support services such as childcare, transportation, mental health services, and career planning to enable all students to attend and complete programs.

Aspire programs may provide the following adult education and literacy activities: Adult education, literacy, English language acquisition, Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE), Integrated Education and Training (IET), Workplace Education (WE), and workforce preparation activities. Details of these activities are provided in each program's proposal.

Adult education and literacy activities include instruction and education services below a postsecondary level in reading, writing, computing, and solving problems.

These services increase a student's ability to achieve a secondary school diploma or its equivalent, transition to postsecondary education and training, and obtain employment.

Adult education and literacy activities include instruction and education services below a postsecondary level in reading and writing, computing and solving problems. These services increase a student's ability to achieve a secondary school diploma or its equivalent, transition to postsecondary education and training, and obtain employment.

English language acquisition includes adult education and literacy activities for English language learners with an additional skill requirement, comprehension of the English language.

Integrated English literacy and civics education will provide immigrants and English language learners access to English language acquisition services and civics education and may include workforce training. English infused with civics education helps immigrants and English learners understand the American system of government and what it means to be a citizen and to be involved in civic activities. To live and work in the United States not only means a command of the language, but equally important, the civics–related skills and knowledge necessary to become involved parents, workers, and community members. Civics Education integration is a requirement of the IELCE grant, and optional for the 231 Basic Instructional ESOL grant.

Workforce preparation includes activities, programs, or services designed to help individuals acquire a combination of basic academic skills, critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills, and self–management skills. These activities include competencies in utilizing resources, using information, working with others, understanding systems, and obtaining skills necessary for a successful transition into and completion of postsecondary education or training, or employment.

Workforce preparation skills are integrated into the Aspire curriculum, therefore, occurring concurrently with adult basic and literacy skills instruction. Per grant requirements, instructors must include technology use in their lesson plans, and students must have access to and use computers and technology to enhance their learning and digital literacy skills. Aspire programs assist students registering for OhioMeansJobs.com to access resources and investigate workforce opportunities available in the region.

Aspire providers continuously seek collaborative opportunities with WIOA partners, other educational institutions, and businesses, to provide basic skills training as an on-ramp for success in certificate and credential training. Per WIOA, the focus in adult education on career pathways has resulted in innovative practices to help Aspire students at all levels achieve credentials and transition to additional training and employment.

Aspire programs offering workplace adult education and literacy activities work together with an employer or employee organization at a workplace or an off–site location that is designed to improve the productivity of the workforce. Successful workplace activities involve strong partnerships with employers in the design and delivery of the instructional program based on workplace needs. Workplace education is offered, valued, and encouraged throughout the state, but it is not a required activity for Ohio Aspire providers. The State Aspire Office is working to expand our Workplace Education classes in Ohio, and we proactively offered a Workplace

Education Training in Fall of SFY2024. Our guidance will also focus on accurately recording MSG Type 4, and using the Progress Toward Milestone Report. In SFY2025, a state staff member will focus on employer partnerships, to help local programs collaborate and sustain/grow their work with employers to support Ohio's workforce needs.

Similarly, IET is encouraged and is expanding throughout the state, but is not required of Aspire providers, unless the provider is offering an Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE/IET) class with section 243 funds. IET activities include adult education and literacy activities offered contextually and concurrently with workforce preparation activities and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster for educational and career advancement. Education is provided in the context of industry–specific needs that involve employers and is integrated with occupational skills training. Ohio Aspire offered five IETs at inception in 2017 and has now expanded with 28 out of 51 Aspire providers offering some form of IET, and 2 additional Aspire providers actively creating IETs. With the focus on IET programs, the Aspire State office is seeing a promising positive trajectory with students earning industry recognized credentials and student enrollment into post-secondary education. In SFY 2023, 758 Aspire students earned an industry recognized credential and 2,679 Aspire students enrolled in post-secondary education. As Aspire highlights the value we play in preparing students for training, one local Aspire grantee increased their Industry Recognized Credential Attainment by 1,940%. This program went from 5 credentials in SFY2022 to 103 credentials in SFY2023.

Aspire is excited to see many students working on their education pathway while earning a credential. As we set our state vision and work to develop new partnerships to build robust IET opportunities for students, we continue to grow in the career clusters offerings of IETs, we are working to serve our English language learners with 13 credentials equipping these students to enter the workforce, and we are focused on growing our IETs available to our Corrections Education students, with 7 credentials currently being offered. It is our goal to create career pathways for many Ohioans and to provide opportunities and access to all of our learners.

Family literacy, with the four required components, is not an allowable activity with Aspire state or federal dollars. With limited workforce dollars, Aspire programs will assist adult learners in their roles as parents and family members by providing foundational skills that enable them to support their children’s learning needs and improve economic self–sufficiency for their families.

C. CORRECTIONS EDUCATION AND OTHER EDUCATION OF INSTITUTIONALIZED INDIVIDUALS

Describe how the eligible agency will, using the considerations specified in section 231(e) of WIOA and in accordance with 34 CFR 463 subpart C, fund eligible providers to establish or operate programs that provide any of the following correctional educational programs identified in section 225 of WIOA:

- Adult education and literacy activities;
- Special education, as determined by the eligible agency;
- Secondary school credit;
- Integrated education and training;

- Career pathways;
- Concurrent enrollment;
- Peer tutoring; and
- Transition to re-entry initiatives and other post release services with the goal of reducing recidivism.

Each eligible agency using funds provided under Programs for Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Individuals to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution must give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within 5 years of participation in the program.

Using the using the considerations specified in section 231(e) of WIOA and in accordance with 34 CFR 463 subpart C, fund eligible providers to establish or operate programs that provide any of the following correctional educational programs identified in section 225 of WIOA, Ohio (Aspire) will allow the following activities:

- Adult education and literacy activities (this may include ABE, ASE, HSE, and ESOL services)
- Integrated education and training
- Career pathways
- Peer tutoring
- Transition to re-entry initiatives and other post release services with the goal of reducing recidivism

A priority will be given to each eligible agency using funds provided under Programs for Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Individuals to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution in serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within 5 years of participation in the program. Ohio will continue to give opportunities to students who are not likely to leave the correctional institution within 5 years of participation in the program.

Aspire programs partner with correctional facilities to offer adult education and literacy activities for criminal offenders in County Jails, Community Based Correctional Facilities, and Halfway Houses throughout Ohio. Ohio competes Corrections section 225 funds using the same competitive process as 231 and 243 funds.

Workplace preparation activities are required in corrections to prepare students with the skills necessary for a successful transition to postsecondary education and training and employment, critical elements to reduce recidivism. The corrections education programs focus on measurable skill gains, such as academic level gains, passing a technical skills exam in an IET program, and high school equivalency completions. Aspire programs in correctional facilities support offenders with the transition to post-release services by being a conduit for referrals to local educational agencies. With a signed release of information, students' records are submitted to local education institutions for a seamless transition for continued services. Aspire program

managers assist correctional facilities with transition to re-entry initiatives and other post release services by disseminating information across the state at many correctional re-entry fairs. They also attend working groups focused on post-release services available to recently or soon to be released individuals. In PY24, Aspire will be assigning one program manager to oversee corrections 225 grants to ensure continuity of services.

No more than 20 percent of the state's Aspire Instructional funds will be used for corrections education.

As per the Chief at the Bureau of Community Sanctions for the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections (ODRC), recidivism is only measured in state prisons, not in CBCFs or county jails. The State of Ohio puts out a Recidivism Report every three years. According to the most recent report, published in May of 2021, the 3-year recidivism rate for those who were returned to prison because of the commission of a new crime was 20.8% down from 21.7 in 2019. The report also states that this represents the lowest recidivism rate for new crimes in over 15 years.

In Ohio, 22 out of 52 grantees offered corrections education in PY22. There were adult education classes conducted in 39 different correctional facilities, most of which were community-based or county jails. IETs were offered in corrections by 4 programs. Participants in correctional institutions had the opportunity to earn industry recognized credentials in areas such as Microsoft Office Suite, ServSafe Food Manager, Rise Up Warehouse Inventory and logistics and Certified Manufacturing Association. We look to create and expand more robust IET offerings for the next 3-year grant cycle.

In PY22, Ohio Aspire served 2,211 participants in corrections which represents more than an 8% increase over those served in PY21. During PY22, there were over 93,537 hours of adult education programming in corrections. 739 students made an EFL gain, 246 students earned a high school equivalency diploma, and 158 students received an IET credential. The overall MSG in corrections for PY 22 was 55.65% with a persistence rate of more than 45 hours. The goal for the next 3-year grant cycle is to see an increase in these outcomes.

D. INTEGRATED ENGLISH LITERACY AND CIVICS EDUCATION PROGRAM

Describe how the eligible agency will, using the considerations specified in section 231(e) of WIOA and in accordance with 34 CFR 463 subpart C, fund eligible providers to establish or operate Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) programs under section 243 of WIOA. Describe how adult English language learners, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries, are served in IELCE programs.

Describe how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be offered in combination with integrated education and training activities found in 34 CFR section 463.36.

Describe how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will include instruction in literacy and English language acquisition and instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation.

Describe how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be designed to prepare adults who are English language learners for, and

place such adults in, unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency.

Describe how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be designed to integrate with the local workforce development system and its functions to carry out the activities of the program.

Aspire programs provide high-quality, evidence-based instruction in reading, writing, speaking, and understanding English, mathematics skills, and civics education to all English language learners, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries.

By utilizing the national ELP standards, Ohio Aspire programs are situated to meet the academic rigor outlined in WIOA. These competencies allow English language learners to obtain secondary school credentials and succeed in further education and training. Immigrants acquire an understanding of what it means to be a citizen and to participate in civics responsibilities.

In collaboration with the Ohio Office of Opportunities for New Americans, the Aspire office has created licensure charts to succinctly guide professionals with foreign degrees and credentials to employment pathways in Ohio. In recent conversations with the ONA, the Aspire state office will remove the licensure charts from the ONA website, with a goal to create a new section of our Professional Development Network ESOL subsite that will work to serve all levels of ELLs and Internationally Trained Professionals (ITPs).

Through collaboration with local workforce development partners and alignment with the regional and local workforce plans, Aspire programs, using 243 funds, will assist English language learners with career goals by offering integrated English literacy and civics education concurrently with IET as part of a career pathway. IET will focus on in-demand occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency. English language learners seeking IELCE but not the workforce training component, may still participate in IELCE services.

The Ohio Department of Higher Education Aspire office will continue to promote and fund IELCE programs. The IELCE programs help meet the need for an increasing immigrant population in Aspire classes. In addition to the 13 considerations, IELCE applicants must address how the program will:

- Provide instruction in literacy and English language acquisition, civic participation and the rights and responsibilities of citizens, and workforce training. Activities must be provided in combination with integrated education and training activities.
- Prepare adults who are English Language Learners (ELLs) for unsubsidized employment in in-demand occupations or career pathways, which lead to economic self-sufficiency;
- Assist English Language Learners in achieving competency in English reading, writing, speaking, and comprehension;
- Lead to a secondary school diploma or its equivalent (HSE – high school equivalency);
- Lead to ELLs entering postsecondary education or training; and

- Offer adult education instruction in combination with integrated education and training (IET), a minimum of one IET per fiscal year (State Requirement). Students do not have to attend the IET but must be afforded the opportunity.

Workforce preparation activities, such as basic skills, digital literacy skills, critical thinking skills, and self-management skills are integrated into the IELCE programs.

ODHE requires the same application process for eligible providers for sections 225, 231, and/or 243 to ensure applications are evaluated and scored consistently and that all eligible providers have direct and fair access to apply for grants and contracts.

Questions from the OCTAE IET checklist, other AEFLA grantees, and organizations providing resources such as AIR and EARN are integrated into the IELCE grant application. The next competitive RFP will be more strategic to support the large number of ESOL students Ohio is currently serving. In SFY 2023, Ohio's served and enrolled ESOL population was about 40%. The future RFP will strategically support Internationally Trained Professionals and encourage applicants to create bridge-IETs to prepare ELLs for the full IET program. Applicants will first review IET as a service approach and WIOA law and regulations that were established by the U.S. Department of Education for IET programs. Prospective applicants will then complete questions that pertain to state regulations for IETs, employer partnerships, modality, certifications, credentials, LMI, recruitment and outreach plan, academic and nonacademic supports, SSLO, and budget grid. All required questions will be in the RFP grant guidance to support direct and fair access for all.

The grant application requires applicants to describe the local and/or regional workforce needs of the identified geographical/service delivery areas as identified by the local workforce plan and include how adult education fits into the workforce strategies identified in the plan.

Other IELCE/IET grant questions will ask about the IET program activities that relate to employer partnerships, how the certification leads to additional credentials along a pathway and increased future wage potential, what occupation the IET certification will prepare students for, and additional pieces about LMI. All of these deeper questions will help grantees reflect the IET criteria of being a part of a career pathway aligned to the local workforce plan and how it supports the requirements that a career pathway helps an individual enter or advance within a specific occupation or occupational cluster. The integration of the USDOE Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE) IELCE Self-Assessment Tool helps programs self-evaluate if they are integrating IELCE program activities that meet the needs of the local workforce development system.

E. STATE LEADERSHIP

1. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE THE FUNDS TO CARRY OUT THE REQUIRED STATE LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES UNDER SECTION 223 OF WIOA

In Ohio, State Leadership funds are used to facilitate a culture of sustained learning and to provide evidence-based, high-quality professional development to enhance the adult education system as a core partner in Ohio's Combined State Plan. Funds support the Professional Development Network (PDN), a collaboration with the ODHE Aspire office and Kent State University (KSU). State leadership funds are used to contract with national, state, and local content experts to provide high-quality professional development (PD) as needed. The Aspire

state director, in combination with state staff, supervise all state leadership activities to ensure alignment with activities identified in the Combined State Plan.

Alignment of adult education and literacy activities with other one-stop required partners to implement the strategies in the Unified or Combined State Plan as described in section 223(1)(a).

Ohio (both the state level and local programs) will continue to leverage opportunities to work with other Core partners and one stop programs in the development of career pathways to provide access to employment and training services for adult education participants. The State Aspire office has had conversations with various staff who work with the Department of Job and Family Services with the Title 1 Adult, Youth, and Dislocated Worker program. The goal is to support more job training and partnerships to support English Language Learners in Ohio. JFS and Aspire have a goal to create a collaboration of providing a specific type of class to English Language Learners who are seeking Unemployment services. Aspire and JFS are creating create a statewide plan. A possible idea to support the collaboration and development of career pathways is to use approved Distance Education software that has built-in Career Pathways components.

The state Aspire office is also working to collaborate to make sure Title II WIOA Adult Education is at the table of the Auto and Advanced Mobility Strategy which is led by the Governor's Office of Workforce Transformation and JFS. Aspire would like to support contextualized curriculum and leverage career pathway opportunities for bridge and IET programs. In addition, we would like to be included in providing Workplace Education as opportunities are available. We would also like to collaborate on opportunities for Corrections Education's students to provide opportunities to these students.

Additionally, 1-2 colleagues from the Aspire state office are included in a bi-monthly Comprehensive Case Management and Employment Program CCMEP (Title I) webinar to collaborate and work to create career pathways opportunities for students ages 16-24 who may be served through Aspire.

Finally, under the direction of the Governor's Office of Workforce Transformation, a High School Diploma, Equivalency Option Workgroup has been established, and includes representation from different agencies, including representation from Title I and Perkins. The goal is to increase awareness of and enrollment in programs for those who left high school without a diploma, enabling students to receive a high school equivalency that can be the first step in advancing career opportunities.

Establishment or operation of a high quality professional development programs as described in section 223(1)(b).

State Leadership funds in Ohio will continue to facilitate a culture of sustained learning and provide evidence-based, high-quality professional development to enhance the adult education system as a core partner in Ohio's Combined State Plan. For PY 2024, State Leadership funds will continue to support the Professional Development Network (PDN), comprised of a collaboration with the ODHE Aspire office and Kent State University (KSU). State leadership funds will be used to contract with national, state, and local content experts to provide high-quality PD.

The PDN consists of highly qualified trainers and content experts, both full-time staff or contractor. State leadership funds will support a variety of training including sustaining a variety of delivery methods(in-person, virtual synchronous, hybrid, and self-directed/asynchronous learning). The ODHE Aspire office analyzed data and trends to determine the next 1-3 year plan for PD to align with the Combined State Plan and the new grantees for SFY 2025-2027.

The state PD policy requires new hires to complete job-specific trainings that focus on improving local adult education and literacy activities. Examples of required trainings include Orientation by job role (teacher, support staff, administrator), LINCS Learning to Achieve modules, Distance Education Basics, Assessment Fundamentals, TABE 11/12 Certification, TABE CLAS-E Training, new assessment trainings for Ohio's NRS approved assessments for PY2023 and role-specific trainings for our data management system, LACES. We continue to create new reports that allow the state office and program administrators to ensure that local staff adhere to the training and timeline requirements outlined in the PD Policy. In addition, our office will have an updated PD Policy for PY2024 and will continue to evaluate necessary updates through PY2027.

To align with the WIOA CSP for PY2024-2027, to meet the goals of the ODHE agency, and to meet the needs of the grantees that will begin on July 1st, 2024, the following priority PD projects are planned, with initial implementation beginning on July 1st, of 2024.

- ESOL Instruction/Workshops/Training
    - It is very clear to the ODHE Aspire team that there is a high demand for English Language services across the state, and that ½ of the students served in Aspire are marked as English Language Learners. In addition, the ELLs that we serve can vary from pre-literate all the way to being an Internationally Trained Professional. At the current time, Ohio wants to invest financial support to a contractor (non-Aspire field practitioners) and bring in national expertise and presenters to work with our state. We will support the PDN to consult with ODHE to determine proper PD support and trainings to target programs and instructors that will help programs to design strong section 231 ESOL classes and strong section 243 IELCE/IET programs.
- Focus on Grant Management and Fiscal Responsibility with EDGAR and the CFRs.
- Administrator Mentoring Cohort for both seasoned and new administrators.
    - Focus points include WIOA: Title II legislation, State legislation, polices, and procedure, Uniform Grant Guidance, National Reporting System, Building Partnerships, and Leadership and Management.
- Assessment Trainings for NRS approved assessments.
- NASDAE LEAD Institute (Cohort 2)
- STAR and also looking into the Science of Reading
- Aspire Administrator Leadership Series
- Book club series

- Addressing GEPA
- Career Pathways Development and Workplace Education

Provision of technical assistance to funded eligible providers as described in section 223(1)(c).

1. Ohio will continue to develop and disseminate instructional and programmatic practices based on the most rigorous or scientifically valid research available in reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, ELA programs, DE, and staff training. The plan is to continue this model and these approaches beginning in PY2024.

- PD activities emphasize research-based features for effective PD, such as longer-term, job embedded activities with opportunities for participation and application of new skills. The required New Teacher Orientation, for example, begins with asynchronous online work detailing the overview of AEFLA, teacher standards, preparing for instruction, and assessing student learning. Next, teachers participate in a synchronous class, customized for ABE/ASE or ESOL instruction, to identify strategies and resources specific to the teachers' content area. All new teachers are provided with a toolkit consisting of either Parrish's *Teaching ESL to Adults: Classroom Approaches in Action* (ESOL) or Tomlinson's *How to Differentiate Instruction in Academically Diverse Classrooms* (ABE/ASE) book and resources for use in the classroom. Trainers maintain contact with new teachers through available office hours, electronic lists, and new teacher book clubs.
- Statewide and regional opportunities will be provided for adult educators to develop and share their knowledge through discussion lists, statewide conferences, online courses, and webinars. In addition, much of the TA that is provided is directly related to initiatives that receive federal support or are recognized as high quality trainings such as STAR, TSTM, and Standards Action. The Literacy Information and Communication System (LINCS) is highly valued in our state and many of the OER courses are imported into our LMS or linked through our PD System to the LINCS Learning Portal. In addition, a PDN staff member will continue to send out a weekly highlight of upcoming LINCS events.
- Ohio will disseminate toolkits, such as the IET Design Camp Toolkit and TSTM Toolkit, and advocate for our eligible providers to participate in PD activities that support Distance Education and Digital Literacy, such as Transforming Distance Education; Moodle courses on distance-only and hybrid instruction; and instructional strategies for engaging students online.
- The State Director continues to encourage her state team to attend Shop Talk discussions so that each program manager can share information that will help develop stronger programmatic practices in the state. We recognize that many important trainings are shared on the Shop Talks, and we desire to keep our state apprised of relevant opportunities to make sure that our learners are receiving high quality instruction.

2. Ohio will continue to fulfill our role to provide access to employment, education, and training services as required one-stop partners.

- Ohio Aspire programs continue to participate in the U.S. Department of Education's Connecting Adults to Success: Evaluation of Career Navigator Training study with a goal of helping Ohio programs to participate to help students have access to employment, education, and training. 9 Aspire providers are participating (Fall 2022, Spring 2023, and Fall 2024) and will receive free training for their career navigators.
- In addition, the Ohio Aspire team continues to work to create a true collaboration of services with WIOA partners, and to expand from just basic referrals and to create programming to serve the most at-risk populations. Goals aligned with the WIOA CSP include having a stronger referral service for ODJFS customers to receive Aspire services. In addition, the State Director has met with other ODJFS staff to discuss how Title II Aspire program that offered IETs could get on the eligible training provider list to potentially braid Title 1 and Title II funds, to off-set some of the cost burden of IETs. The Aspire state director will continue to attend a bimonthly WIOA stakeholder meeting to discuss coordination of services and other highlights that will provide Ohioans access to employment, education, and training. The Aspire team will continue to have more opportunities to present and share with other core partners.
- 25 Aspire programs maintained 63 classes held at local one-stop centers across the state. Referrals continue between Aspire programs and local one-stop centers. Aspire programs may offer student assessments, in person or virtually, for partner programs. The newest RFP expanded and asked for detail on how prospective grantees would work with their local one-stop centers and enter into the MOU/MOA.

Monitoring and evaluation of the quality and improvement of adult education activities as described in section 223(1)(d).

The monitoring and evaluation of the quality of education in Aspire programs continues to be performed primarily by ODHE Aspire program managers with more support and collaboration from the Kent State University PDN. For PY 2024, Ohio will release a new Risk with additional criteria to take in suggestions and ideas from the State Director Training in Spring of 2023. For monitoring purposes, in PY 24, the current state director is working to take a new monitoring approach and instead of assigning programs to one program manager at the state office, the state office program manager will have assigned duties. Ohio would like to leverage this approach because of strategies shared from other states, and it will allow our team to leverage the strengths and expertise of each team member and help to align with the needs of the WIOA CSP. One person would oversee each of the 5 activities below.

1. Strategic Partnerships, Workplace Education, and NRS Reporting
2. Data, Assessments, and NRS Reporting
3. 231 Basic Instructional Grant, 225 Corrections Grant, and ABE Initiatives
4. IELCE Section 243 Grant, 231 ESOL Basic Instruction Grant, and ESOL Initiatives
5. Financial Accountability and Grants Management (Needs to be hired)

For PY2024, Ohio will customize a new Desk Review to reflect a better format to evaluate quality and improvement.

Aspire providers will continue to submit an annual Local Program Data Certification Checklist modeled after the federal checklist. This document certifies programs' compliance with NRS data quality standards. Aspire staff monitor compliance with this document annually.

These tools for monitoring programs help the state staff and PD staff work collaboratively with the local programs to implement strategies for program improvement and stay on top of local performance issues.

The state office and PD providers will use various methods to ensure information about evidence-based practices and promising models to disseminated to Aspire practitioners. These methods may include:

- Offering "just-in-time" virtual trainings at the state and local levels to meet programs' immediate needs. By focusing on the specific needs of the program, more local staff can participate.
- Sending a weekly electronic digest with information about training opportunities and quality resources.
- Providing more peer-facilitated best practices webinars, webchats, and facilitated practitioner discussion listservs.

2. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE THE FUNDS TO CARRY OUT PERMISSIBLE STATE LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES UNDER SECTION 223 OF WIOA, IF APPLICABLE

Ohio continued to support one state literacy resource center located at Kent State University known as the PDN. For quality customer service, all PD- related questions were handled through one main point of contact at KSU. KSU responded to technical assistance requests through a phone hotline, email, and instant messenger. The resource center houses a lending library where resources, such as sets of books, devices, manipulatives, reproducible materials, toolkits and curriculum, are mailed to teachers through the lending library. Other high-cost items such as the TABE test in braille are kept on reserve. KSU contracts with content experts (at the local, state, and national level) to provide training, technical assistance, curriculum development, and support to local programs and staff.

F. ASSESSING QUALITY

Describe how the eligible agency will assess the quality of providers of adult education and literacy activities under title II. Describe how the eligible agency will take actions to improve such quality, including providing the activities described in section 223(a)(1)(B) of WIOA. Describe how the eligible agency will use evaluations, data analysis, program monitoring, or other methods to improve the quality of adult education activities in the State.

The ODHE uses monitoring tools to assess the quality of Ohio's adult education and literacy providers including program reviews, pre- and post-award risk assessments, technical site visits, desk reviews, and quarterly desk monitoring.

The program review is a comprehensive, on–site review of all components of the local Aspire program including, but not limited to, program administration, student instruction, and fiscal compliance. During the program review, local Aspire providers must demonstrate adherence to

all Aspire policies and procedures, the Student Experience Model, and data entry protocols. The goals of the program review are to do the following:

- Ensure that programs meet Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) and state requirements;
- Continuously improve the quality of federally and state funded activities;
- Provide technical assistance in identifying and resolving compliance/accountability issues;
- Ensure the accuracy, validity, and reliability of data collection and reporting as well as adherence to current policies and procedures;
- Interact with program administration, staff, students and stakeholders to get other perspectives of the program; and
- For local programs, provide an opportunity for professional growth and continuous improvement.

Local Aspire programs are identified for on-site monitoring based, in part, on identified risk factors, such as low performance data, key personnel changes, newly approved program, change in organization of the program, and time since the last review.

Similar to the program review, the technical site visit is on-site monitoring that is used to assist local Aspire programs with a specific, pre-determined problem area. Both the program review and the technical site visit result in a formal follow-up report addressed to the Aspire administrator and the program chief executive officer, president, or superintendent citing any issues of non-compliance (findings) and program improvement recommendations. Local Aspire programs respond in writing to the formal report with action items illustrating how they plan to correct the identified findings and implement the program improvement recommendations. The on-site review includes a 90-day follow-up visit, wherein the program will show, in writing and verified by state staff, implementation of the response to the formal report and correction of the issue(s).

The ODHE Aspire office will continue to use a Risk Monitoring Tool to evaluate the local programs' level of risk for managing a federal grant. The risk assessment is one tool used each year to determine the amount and type of intervention needed for the provider. In the competitive application, the ODHE includes a Financial Management Survey to assess, pre-award, the capacity of the applicant to manage federal grant funds. Information from this risk assessment is used to assess an organization's structure and capacity-building needs and identify appropriate technical assistance and/or resources to strengthen operations if funded. The Risk Monitoring Tool has been updated to help hold local grantees accountable and takes into consideration different pieces mentioned during trainings and TA offered through OCTAE, noting the State Directors Training in Spring of 2023.

The ODHE utilizes an annual desk review to evaluate program success through analysis of data. As the annual report card, the desk review provides a comparison between the local program's final fiscal year actual data to the negotiated targets from the federal government relative to skills gain and performance outcomes. To assist with data validation, the Aspire office conducts quarterly desk monitoring with each of the local programs. Desk monitoring allows the local

program to see the "state" of their data, in both progress toward meeting targets and the condition of the data (error clean-up). Desk monitoring complements the preparation of the quarterly PICP. The primary objectives of the PICP are for the state staff and local providers to work together to:

- Identify program goals, strategies, resources and tools to support successful program improvement; and
- Assist programs in analyzing data and performing a gap analysis to identify program improvement efforts.

The ODHE uses the monitoring tools mentioned above to assess the quality of local providers of adult education and literacy activities. The PDN provides professional development activities to promote continuous improvement of these activities with a goal of impacting student learning outcomes. Data is used for refining and adjusting PD activities. This is done by:

- Collecting participant evaluations/surveys for all PD activities;
- Gathering evaluations and surveys used to determine quality of training (adjustments are made based on the results); and
- Conducting discussions with local providers regarding PD activities as part of the quarterly PICP check-in.

A combination of methods is used to assess effectiveness of PD and dissemination of promising practices and models including classroom observations, student educational gains by teacher, focus groups, and self-reporting tools. Data from the data management system is used to determine if PD activities impact student learning outcomes including priority areas such as reading instruction and other specific needs of adult learners. PD effectiveness may also be measured by examining student learning gains by teacher.

ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAM CERTIFICATIONS

States must provide written and signed certifications that:

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The plan is submitted by the State agency that is eligible to submit the plan;	Yes
2. The State agency has authority under State law to perform the functions of the State under the program;	Yes
3. The State legally may carry out each provision of the plan;	Yes
4. All provisions of the plan are consistent with State law;	Yes
5. A State officer, specified by title in the certification, has authority under State law to receive, hold, and disburse Federal funds made	Yes

The State Plan must include	Include
available under the plan;	
6. The State officer who is submitting the plan, specified by the title in the certification, has authority to submit the plan;	Yes
7. The agency that is submitting the plan has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan; and	Yes
8. The plan is the basis for State operation and administration of the program;	Yes

ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAM ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include assurances that:

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The eligible agency will expend funds appropriated to carry out title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) only in a manner consistent with fiscal requirements under section 241(a) of WIOA (regarding the supplement-not-supplant requirement);	Yes
2. The eligible agency will ensure that there is at least one eligible provider serving each local area, as defined in section 3(32) of WIOA;	Yes
3. The eligible agency will not use any funds made available under title II of WIOA for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are not “eligible individuals” within the meaning of section 203(4) of WIOA, unless it is providing programs, services or activities related to family literacy activities, as defined in section 203(9) of WIOA;	Yes
4. Using funds made available under title II of WIOA to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution, the eligible agency will give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program.	Yes
5. The eligible agency agrees that in expending	Yes

The State Plan must include	Include
funds made available under Title II of WIOA, the eligible agency will comply with sections 8301 through 8303 of the Buy American Act (41 U.S.C. 8301-8303).	

AUTHORIZING OR CERTIFYING REPRESENTATIVE

CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING

Certification for Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements

The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

(1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

(2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, ''Disclosure of Lobbying Activities,'' in accordance with its instructions.

(3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly. This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than $10,000 and not more than $100,000 for each such failure.

Statement for Loan Guarantees and Loan Insurance

The undersigned states, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, ''Disclosure of Lobbying Activities,'' in accordance with its instructions. Submission of this statement is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the

required statement shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than $10,000 and not more than $100,000 for each such failure.

Please download and sign the forms below. Please scan and return the forms to wioa@ed.gov at the same time you submit your State Plan via the portal.

1. SF424B - Assurances – Non-Construction Programs (http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html)
2. Grants.gov - Certification Regarding Lobbying (http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html)
3. SF LLL Form – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (required, only if applicable) (http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html)

SECTION 427 OF THE GENERAL EDUCATION PROVISIONS ACT (GEPA)

EQUITY FOR STUDENTS, EDUCATORS, AND OTHER PROGRAM BENEFICIARIES

OMB Control Number 1894-0005 Expiration 02/28/2026

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity. The State applicant is also responsible for ensuring that its subrecipient applicants complete the GEPA Section 427 form or a State developed form that sufficiently meets the GEPA Section 427 requirement for any local-level-project and activity and maintains the subrecipients' responses in the State office.

GEPA Section 427 Form Instructions for State Applicants

State applicants must respond to the following four questions:

1. Describe how your entity's existing mission, policies, or commitments ensure equitable access to, and equitable participation in, the proposed project or activity.

2. Based on your proposed project or activity, what barriers may impede equitable access and participation of students, educators, or other beneficiaries?

3. Based on the barriers identified, what steps will you take to address such barriers to equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity?

4. What is your timeline, including targeted milestones, for addressing these identified barriers?

• Applicants identify any barriers that may impede equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity, including, but not limited to, barriers based on economic disadvantage, gender, race, ethnicity, color, national origin, disability, age, language, migrant status, rural status, homeless status or housing insecurity, pregnancy, parenting, or caregiving status, and sexual orientation.

• Applicants use the associated text box to respond to each question. However, applicants might have already included some or all this required information in the narrative sections of their applications or their State Plans. In responding to this requirement, for each question, applicants may provide a cross-reference to the section(s) in their State Plans that includes the information responsive to that question on this form or may restate that information on this form.

• Applicants are not required to have mission statements or policies that align with equity to apply.

• Applicants that have already undertaken steps to address barriers must still provide an explanation and/or description of the steps already taken in each text box, as appropriate, to satisfy the GEPA Section 427 requirement.

• Applicants that believe no barriers exist must still provide an explanation and/or description to each question to validate that perception, as appropriate, to satisfy the GEPA Section 427 requirement.

GEPA Section 427 Instructions to State Applicants for their Subrecipient Applicants

The State grantee provides a subrecipient applicant seeking Federal assistance instructions and guidance for how it must comply with the GEPA Section 427 requirement. The State grantee determines the form and content of the information a subrecipient applicant must include in its application regarding the steps it proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and equitable participation in, its local-level project or activity. For example:

• The State grantee may require its subrecipient applicant to use and submit the GEPA Section 427 form that it is required to submit to the Department; or

• The State grantee may use a State-developed form that is sufficient to meet the GEPA Section 427 requirement.

• The State grantee maintains the subrecipient applicants' responses in the State office.

Please refer to GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for AEFLA Application Package

1. DESCRIBE HOW YOUR ENTITY'S EXISTING MISSION, POLICIES, OR COMMITMENTS ENSURE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO, AND EQUITABLE PARTICIPATION IN, THE PROPOSED PROJECT OR ACTIVITY.

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) *(20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity. The State applicant is also responsible for ensuring that its subrecipient applicants complete the GEPA Section 427 form or a State developed form that sufficiently meets the GEPA Section 427 requirement for any local-level-project and activity and maintains the subrecipients' responses in the State office.*

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for AEFLA Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The first of four questions is:

Describe how your entity's existing mission, policies, or commitments ensure equitable access to, and equitable participation in, the proposed project or activity.

ODHE Aspire/WIOA Title II program ensures equal access to and participation for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries and will modify and offer a variety of services to assist students and practitioners achieve educational, personal, or work-related goals. For this reason, several policies and procedures are required of all Aspire programs including that each prospective Title II grantee will complete the GEPA Section 427 form during the SFY2025 Competitive Grant process. All providers receiving AEFLA funding will work with state staff to ensure their responses on the GEPA Section 427 form are being implemented within the program. The state office will provide TA, program monitoring, and PD to support the local grantees carry out their GEPA plans where needed.

2. BASED ON YOUR PROPOSED PROJECT OR ACTIVITY, WHAT BARRIERS MAY IMPEDE EQUITABLE ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION OF STUDENTS, EDUCATORS, OR OTHER BENEFICIARIES?

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) *(20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity. The State applicant is also responsible for ensuring that its subrecipient applicants complete the GEPA Section 427 form or a State developed form that sufficiently meets the GEPA Section 427 requirement for any local-level-project and activity and maintains the subrecipients' responses in the State office.*

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for AEFLA Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The second of four questions is:

Based on your proposed project or activity, what barriers may impede equitable access and participation of students, educators, or other beneficiaries?

The state of Ohio is composed of 88 counties. ODHE Aspire/Title II programs serve each of the 88 counties which reside in both rural and urban settings. While equitable access may look different in each of these geographical settings, ODHE Aspire/Title II has identified the following overarching potential barriers which could impede equitable access for students, educators, and other beneficiaries:

- transportation issues to sites and classes
- limited types of class offerings and availability
- Lack of access to Integrated Education and Training (IET)
- language barriers for multilingual learners

- mental health concerns, special needs, sensory processing needs and other disabilities

3. BASED ON THE BARRIERS IDENTIFIED, WHAT STEPS WILL YOU TAKE TO ADDRESS SUCH BARRIERS TO EQUITABLE ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION IN THE PROPOSED PROJECT OR ACTIVITY?

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) *(20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity. The State applicant is also responsible for ensuring that its subrecipient applicants complete the GEPA Section 427 form or a State developed form that sufficiently meets the GEPA Section 427 requirement for any local-level-project and activity and maintains the subrecipients' responses in the State office.*

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for AEFLA Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The third of four questions is:

Based on the barriers identified, what steps will you take to address such barriers to equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity?

- Potential Barrier: geographical concerns ranging for both rural and urban settings, which could create transportation issues to sites and limit types of class offerings and availability.
    - Ohio's response to address: All Aspire providers are required to offer a distance learning option to increase access to participation while contextualizing digital literacy skill integration. Given the recent guidance provided in OCTAE Program Memorandum 24-3, Ohio will create guidance and policy to leverage AEFLA funds to help local programs help with transportation barriers that may exist with their students. In addition to self-directed/asynchronous distance education options, encouraging local programs to offer live virtual synchronous course to increase course offerings, including IET, to allow for eligible students in the state to participate in a variety of offerings. Programs are required to offer a myriad of instructional approaches – large group, small group, individual, and computer-based, to meet the diverse learning styles of Aspire students and teachers.
- Potential Barrier: A cultural barrier may include language barriers for multilingual learners
    - Ohio's response to address: High quality PD is offered through planned State Leadership activities designed to strengthen the quality of instruction for ELLs and to support practitioners in providing a holistic classroom approach to ELLs. Ohio is currently participating in Literacy Education and Second Language Learning for Adults (LESLLA) to support the further professionalization for our

instructors. To reach out to English language learners, Aspire programs provide recruitment materials in multiple languages.

- Potential Barrier: Mental health concerns, special needs, sensory processing needs and other disabilities.
    - Ohio's response to address: All practitioners are required to complete the Learning to Achieve training, offered through State Leadership, which is designed to build teacher effectiveness in providing instruction for adults with learning difficulties. Aspire providers are required to have a plan in place for ensuring that the ten policy statements in ODHE Aspire's Accessibility Policy are being addressed at the local program which includes provisions for staff and students with disabilities. Aspire offers braille literacy classes to help improve the literacy levels for visually impaired or blind students. Aspire provides a statewide virtual deaf literacy class to provide literacy instruction through American sign language. To address mental health concerns for both staff and students, Aspire has collaborated with Ohio's 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline in Ohio, and has and will continue to offer Mental Health First Aid for Adults which teaches people how to recognize signs of mental health or substance use challenges in adults ages 18 and older, how to offer and provide initial help, and how to guide a person toward appropriate care if necessary. Topics covered include anxiety, depression, psychosis, and addictions.

4. WHAT IS YOUR TIMELINE, INCLUDING TARGETED MILESTONES, FOR ADDRESSING THESE IDENTIFIED BARRIERS?

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) *(20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity. The State applicant is also responsible for ensuring that its subrecipient applicants complete the GEPA Section 427 form or a State developed form that sufficiently meets the GEPA Section 427 requirement for any local-level-project and activity and maintains the subrecipients' responses in the State office.*

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for AEFLA Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The final of four questions is:

What is your timeline, including targeted milestones, for addressing these identified barriers?

Ohio's timeline will begin on July 1st, 2024 (FY25) which is when the next grant cycle begins. Each of the grantees will have completed the GEPA Section 427 form. It is the goal of the state office to help each local provider meet targeted milestones within one program year. As the state office and readers review the submitted AEFLA grant applications, a TA plan will be created in consultation with our PDN to schedule PD to assist programs with meeting program timelines that address the identified barriers. The objective is to not wait a full year to address

identified barriers, but rather to address as issues may arise, also recognizing that a program may need to adjust their GEPA plan as the year progresses.

ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as "baseline" indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A "baseline" indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, "baseline" indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as "baseline" based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as "baseline" for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as "baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA." The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as "baseline" for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as "baseline" for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as "baseline." Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state's plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	44.0%	44.0%	44.1%	44.1%

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	44.0%	47.0%	44.1%	48.0%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	$5,000.00	$6,150.00	$5,001.00	$6,250.00
Credential Attainment Rate	21.2%	21.2%	21.3%	21.3%
Measurable Skill Gains	44.5%	46.0%	44.6%	46.5%
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]

1

The Departments have not issued the final rule defining Effectiveness in Serving Employers. As a result, states will not submit expected levels of performance for this indicator and the Departments will not establish negotiated levels of performance for PYs 2024 and 2025.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR STATE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (COMBINED OR GENERAL)

The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan must include the following descriptions and estimates, as required by sections 101(a) and 606 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA.

A. STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL.

1. ALL VR AGENCIES, EXCEPT FOR THOSE THAT HAVE AN INDEPENDENT CONSUMER-CONTROLLED COMMISSION, MUST HAVE A STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL (COUNCIL OR SRC) THAT MEETS THE CRITERIA IN SECTION 105 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT. THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY OR DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, AS APPLICABLE, HAS:

Select A or B:

(A) is an independent State commission

(B) has established a State Rehabilitation Council

(B) has established a State Rehabilitation Council

2. IN ACCORDANCE WITH ASSURANCE (A)(1)(B), IF SELECTED, PLEASE PROVIDE INFORMATION ON THE CURRENT COMPOSITION OF THE COUNCIL BY REPRESENTATIVE TYPE, INCLUDING THE TERM NUMBER OF THE REPRESENTATIVE, AS APPLICABLE, AND ANY VACANCIES, AS WELL AS THE BEGINNING DATES OF EACH REPRESENTATIVE'S TERM.

Select 'Edit' to edit the narrative.

Note, please do not edit the table header or formatting. Only edit the table contents.

If you accidentally edit the table headers and structure, open this link to the blank table. You can copy and paste the table into the narrative field, and start over if needed.

Council Representative	Current Term Number/Vacant	Beginning Date of Term Mo./Yr.
Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC)	1st	7/2021
Parent Training and Information Center	2nd	7/2021
Client Assistance Program	1st	10/2022
Qualified Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Counselor (Ex Officio if Employed by the VR Agency)	1st	10/2023
Community Rehabilitation Program Service Provider	2nd	9/2023
Business, Industry, and Labor	2nd	6/2021
Business, Industry, and Labor	2nd	7/2021
Business, Industry, and Labor	1st	10/2023
Business, Industry, and Labor	1st	10/2023
Disability Advocacy Groups	1st	10/2023
Current or Former Applicants for, or Recipients of, VR services	Vacant	
Section 121 Project Directors in the State (as applicable)	N/A	
State Educational Agency Responsible for Students with Disabilities Eligible to Receive Services under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)	2nd	6/2022
State Workforce Development Board	1st	8/2022
VR Agency Director (Ex Officio)	1st	8/2018

Council Representative	Current Term Number/Vacant	Beginning Date of Term Mo./Yr.

3. IF THE SRC IS NOT MEETING THE COMPOSITION REQUIREMENTS IN SECTION 105(B) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT AND/OR IS NOT MEETING QUARTERLY AS REQUIRED IN SECTION 105(F) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT, PROVIDE THE STEPS THAT THE VR AGENCY IS TAKING TO ENSURE IT MEETS THOSE REQUIREMENTS.

The OOD Council (SRC) meets quarterly. There currently are two vacancies on the OOD Council. OOD works proactively to recruit new members, in collaboration with the OOD Council. OOD staff assist potential applicants in the application process for seats on the Council and OOD's Legislative Liaison communicates with the Governor's Office to advise on the eligibility of candidates according to statutory criteria in Ohio Rev. Code *§3304.*

As a cabinet-level state agency, OOD is in close and constant communication with the Office of Governor Mike DeWine. OOD's legislative liaison works directly with the Governor's Office of Boards and Commissions to ensure appointment are made to the OOD Council.

OOD reached out to the Governor's Office of Board and Commissions on January 18, 2024, February 13, 2024, March 28, 2024, and April 10, 2024, to discuss current and future vacancies. There were two (2) candidates that did apply, but later withdrew their names from consideration. Several candidates have applied for current and future vacancies, and OOD expects the current vacancy to be filled soon. OOD will remain in close contact with the Governor's Office to fill vacancies on the OOD Council as they occur.

4. IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS IN SECTION 101(A)(21)(A)(II)(III) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT, INCLUDE A SUMMARY OF THE COUNCIL'S INPUT (INCLUDING HOW IT WAS OBTAINED) INTO THE STATE PLAN AND ANY STATE PLAN REVISIONS, INCLUDING RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE COUNCIL'S ANNUAL REPORTS, THE REVIEW AND ANALYSIS OF CONSUMER SATISFACTION AND OTHER COUNCIL REPORTS.

This input from the Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) Council was developed through discussions at both full OOD Council meetings and the OOD Council State Plan Subcommittee. OOD Staff provided information to the council on the requirements of the state plan and potential content to be included. OOD Council feedback over time regarding agency initiatives, rules and policies were taken into account as OOD developed this potential content. OOD incorporated feedback from these discussions into this state plan.

The council would first like to acknowledge and commend Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) for addressing and also accomplishing the goals that were set forth by the council in the previous state plan. OOD has proven that they are an agency that puts customer service in the forefront of all they do, whether it is an individual seeking services or a community stakeholder looking to provide services. OOD has shown that they can rise to the occasion when it comes to being a leader in developing new initiatives that help unlock the potential of the citizens they serve, and the council has been moved and is energized by its interaction with the staff of OOD.

The council would like to acknowledge that the process for preparing this document was greatly impacted by Governor Mike DeWine's decision, with the support of the Ohio General Assembly, to fully match all available federal funds for vocational rehabilitation work in Ohio. This is truly a great testament to the work of OOD.

Customer service and outreach are significant focal points for this council, and during this past year the staff at OOD have ensured that the council was well informed and abreast of the agency's progress in both. The council would like to acknowledge the noticeable increase in the feedback and satisfaction that has been received. There has also been a significant increase in OOD's targeted outreach efforts, which has been reflected with the growth and development of the program.

Outreach and Expansion: We continue to encourage and support the outreach to underserved populations throughout the state. The fruits of this can be seen in OODs increased investment in services to the deaf population with the provision of a full-time state coordinator of services, as well as increased support of the deaf community centers, and deaf/blind population in an effort to help fulfill their service needs. The OOD Council looks forward to continuing to work with OOD as they complete the 2024 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment to further inform these outreach efforts.

As we continue to move forward, the council has asked OOD for further information regarding efforts among youth who are transitioning from foster care, as well as Ohioans moving from our correctional institutions to gainful employment. In addition, the council has asked that ODD continue to pursue the application of assistive technology to reach Ohio's rural population, and provider support to ensure that best practices are continually being employed.

Employer Engagement: The council would like to note that its diverse membership has been instrumental when it comes to providing input and guidance as OOD expands its outreach, especially to employers. For example, OOD is expanding its workplace accessibility services through hiring additional consultants to assist Ohio employers in making their workplaces and hiring practices accessible and inclusive for all.

Informed Choice: The council was greatly gratified by reports that OOD has shown significant improvement on the information that is available to individuals to help support informed choice of providers. OOD's Provider Search tool, including provider scorecards, have been instrumental in facilitating the informed choice process for individuals when it comes to provider selection. The OOD Council was pleased to work with OOD on the development and implementation of a provider selection video to further enhance the provider selection process for VR participants.

Focus on Credential Attainment and Increased Earnings: The council is pleased about the expansion of OOD's College2Careers (C2C) program, the increase in the number of embedded counselors in high schools, and outreach to the Joint Vocational School systems in Ohio. OOD is also investing in additional staff to specialize in connecting more participants with short-term credential programs, Registered Apprenticeships Programs, and occupations in the skilled trades. This expansion will help individuals with disabilities pursue a wider range of employment goals with increased earnings, an important priority for the program.

This council stands firmly on the belief that with their continued input, and the vision of OOD's staff and leadership, the agency will continue to implement statewide programs that meet the needs and aspirations of Ohioans with disabilities.

5. PROVIDE THE VR AGENCY'S RESPONSE TO THE COUNCIL'S INPUT AND RECOMMENDATIONS, INCLUDING AN EXPLANATION FOR THE REJECTION OF ANY INPUT AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

List each recommendation/input followed by the VR agency response

OOD greatly appreciates the input and recommendations the OOD Council has provided into the development of this state plan. As they have pointed out, this is an important and exciting time of expansion for the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program in Ohio and their input has proven valuable as strategic initiatives and priorities are being developed.

OOD agrees with the OOD Council's recommendation of outreach to underserved populations throughout the state. Targeted outreach, guided by the results of the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment, input from the OOD Council and other stakeholders and the expansion of partnerships, will be a primary focus for OOD as the program expands.

OOD appreciates the OOD Council's support of OOD's employer engagement efforts as well as our expansion of workplace accessibility services to assist more Ohio employers in making their workplaces and hiring practices accessible and inclusive for all. OOD looks forward to continuing to work with the OOD Council and OOD's more than 700 employer partners to support them in creating inclusive workplaces.

OOD shares the OOD Council's perspective on the importance of informed choice for VR program participants. OOD appreciates the OOD Council's partnership in making enhancements in this area.

OOD agrees with the OOD Council's recommendation of expansion of partnerships to support increased credential attainment and earnings for individuals served by the vocational rehabilitation program. This has been an important focus for the program and will continue to be so over the course of this state plan. OOD will continue to obtain input from the OOD Council on policy changes related to post-secondary education and the removal of barriers to successful completion of training programs for VR participants.

B. COMPREHENSIVE STATEWIDE NEEDS ASSESSMENT (CSNA).

Section 101(a)(15), (17), and (23) of the Rehabilitation Act require VR agencies to provide an assessment of:

1. THE VR SERVICES NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES RESIDING WITHIN THE STATE, INCLUDING:

A. INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES AND THEIR NEED FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT;

OOD's 2021 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) was published and concurrently submitted to the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) in October 2021. This CSNA was produced by OOD's Division of Employer and Innovation Services to assess the vocational rehabilitation (VR) service needs of Ohioans with disabilities. The CSNA focused on five primary disability categories as follows: Blindness and Low Vision, Deaf and Hard of Hearing and Communicative, Physical Disabilities, Psychosocial Disabilities, and Cognitive Disabilities. Data was collected from various sources and used to illustrate OOD's ability to meet

the demand for VR services. The methodology focused on the extent to which OOD was serving prospective job seekers with disabilities, and how balanced OOD was in serving the cross-section of individuals with disabilities seeking employment.

The CSNA addressed the following questions: What is the projected number of individuals that will experience each category of disability in Ohio, How many individuals with disabilities are projected to be seeking employment, who currently are not working?, How do prevalence estimates differ for individuals by race/ethnicity and age groups?, How many individuals with disabilities received services from OOD?, What are the gaps in serving disability populations and how should gaps be prioritized?

Questions specific to minority groups are addressed in section (B).

Questions specific to the survey of individuals with disabilities included: For individuals served by VR, how well did the services provided or coordinated by OOD meet their needs and expectations? For individuals not served by VR, what services are most needed to assist in the pursuit of employment and independence?

Projections of the number of individuals with disabilities in need of VR services by disability category and county of residence in Ohio were developed by the CSNA team. Similarly, service data from OOD's VR case management system and employment statistics were utilized to develop estimates of the number of individuals likely to need VR services by disability category and by county. This provided a basis for developing estimates of the number of individuals actively participating in the labor force that needed services to assist them in finding a job and who could benefit from OOD VR services. OOD also developed an electronic survey to gather input from recent or current VR participants and potential VR participants to identify areas where OOD can better meet their needs.

Need for services and Review of Existing Data:

According to the American Community Survey (ACS), in 2018 approximately 1.6 million (14.1 percent) Ohioans experienced disabilities. This ranks Ohio sixth among U.S. states and territories in the number of residents with disabilities and 16th in the percentage of individuals with disabilities out of the total population. For Ohioans ages 18 to 64, cognitive and ambulatory disabilities were the largest categories (approximately 26 percent of individuals with disabilities in each category), and self-care disabilities were the smallest (9.3 percent of individuals with disabilities).

Approximately 31 percent of individuals with disabilities ages 18 to 64 were employed, and 29.5 percent of individuals with disabilities ages 21 to 64 were living in poverty. According to the ACS, in 2018, it was estimated that 29.5 percent of Ohioans with disabilities ages 21 to 64 were living in poverty as compared to 10.6 percent of individuals without disabilities (a gap of nearly 19 percentage points). In 2018 the median annual earnings for Ohioans with disabilities who worked full-time and year-round was $39,000 compared to $48,600 for individuals without disabilities who worked full-time and year-round (a difference of $9,600).

Comparing 2020 to 2017:

- OOD received $17,725,261 in General Revenue Funding, which was an 11.9 percent increase;

- 4,959 OOD participants achieved a successful employment outcome, which was a 17.1 percent decrease; and
- 12,873 VR service plans were written, which was a 4.5 percent decrease.

In 2020, the U.S. unemployment rate for working-age (16 - 64) individuals with disabilities was 11.5 percent, an increase of 2.8 percentage points from 2018. Over the same period, the labor force participation rate for these individuals decreased from 33.3 percent to 33.2 percent, reflecting a slight decrease in the number of individuals with disabilities who were working and/or actively seeking work. The discrepancy between the employment rate for individuals with and without disabilities in the U.S. is mirrored at the state level in Ohio. According to the ACS, in 2018 38.3 percent of individuals with disabilities ages 16 to 64 in Ohio were employed compared to 77.3 percent of individuals without disabilities. This data reveals an employment gap of 39.0 percentage points between the two groups. Furthermore, only 24.0 percent of the total population of individuals with disabilities ages 21 to 64 were employed full-time and year-round, whereas 62.7 percent of the population without disabilities ages 21 to 64 were employed full-time and year-round in Ohio. This represents a gap of 38.7 percent.

OOD VR Service Rate: Needs Ratio in Ohio Counties:

A VR service rate: need ratio represents the number of working-age Ohioans with disabilities who receive OOD VR services out of the total number of Ohioans with disabilities who want to work that could be served. OOD VR Service Rate: Needs Ratio of Primary Disability Categories refers to the number of individuals with a specific disability served as a percentage of the total number who could potentially be served; this is also known as a penetration rate. The total number who could potentially be served refers to estimates of working-age (15 to 64) individuals with disabilities looking for work.

As shown in the below table, OOD has attained the lowest service rate: need ratios in the Blind and Low Vision category. 87 Ohio counties have ratios less than or equal to 20 percent; the remaining county, Union, has a ratio of 24.1 percent. Low service rate: need ratios are also prevalent in the Physical category (77 counties less than or equal to 20 percent) and the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and Communicative category (74 counties less than or equal to 20 percent).

Range	Blind and Low Vision	Cognitive	Deaf and hard of Hearing and Communicative	Physical	Psychosocial
0 to 10%	49	0	40	26	7
10.1 to 20%	38	5	34	51	24
20.1 to 30%	1	17	7	7	28
30.1 to 40%	0	25	4	2	18
40.1 to 50%	0	19	2	2	6
Higher than 50%	0	22	1	0	5

OOD has attained a high service rate: need ratio among individuals ages 15 to 24. 74 counties have a ratio higher than 50 percent and no counties are below 20.1 percent. This is attributed to a relatively low percentage of the population in this age group who are seeking employment in contrast to the high percentage of OOD's caseload included in this age group. These ratios decrease as the age group increases, culminating in 86 counties with ratios between 0 and 10 percent for individuals ages 65 or older.

Balance Ratio:

Also known as "relative proportionality," the balance ratio is another means to assess the discrepancy between the need for services and the number of individuals served. This considers OOD's investment in the provision of services to individuals with disabilities among the five primary disability categories in relation to the distribution of those in need within the working-age population of Ohioans with disabilities. The table below provides a Balance Ratio for Ohio-Working Age Population.

Disability Category	Estimated Seeking Employment	Proportion of Total Est. Seeking Employment	OODVR Served 2020	Proportion of OODVR Served 2020	Percentage Point Difference
Blind and Low Vision	15,758	9.9%	1,409	4.8%	-5.1
Cognitive	42,019	26.3%	11,891	40.5%	14.2
Deaf and Hard of Hearing and Communicative	17,084	10.7%	2,337	8.0%	-2.7
Physical	44,404	27.8%	4,295	14.6%	-13.2
Psychosocial	40,362	25.3%	9,464	32.2%	6.9
Total	159,627	100.0%	29,396	100.0%	N/A

Survey of Individuals with Disabilities:

The purpose of the survey was to gather information from current or recent VR participants, as well as individuals with disabilities who have not received VR services, to learn more from their experiences in employment or with the VR program.

Of the individuals with disabilities who responded that they had received VR services, most (54.0 percent) responded that services helped them find, keep, or get a better job and 31.0 percent responded that services did not help them. Some (14.8 percent) respondents indicated they are still receiving services. Of those who responded that services did not help them, the most common reason cited was "not happy with my service provider" (26.0 percent), followed by illness or disability-related issues (21.9 percent), no jobs available (19.3 percent), and no job training provided (16.0 percent). Employer attitude toward people with disabilities was cited as the greatest challenge to finding employment.

B. INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES WHO ARE MINORITIES AND INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES WHO HAVE BEEN UNSERVED OR UNDERSERVED BY THE VR PROGRAM;

Building on the information presented in the 2018 CSNA, OOD approached its 2021 CSNA with an increased focus on evaluating the diversity of individuals served by the VR program compared to the Ohio population and employment outcomes attained by those individuals. Questions specific to minority groups with disabilities included: Are there any differences in patterns of service when comparing White VR participants with minority VR participants?, Are there any differences in the outcomes attained when comparing White VR participants with minority VR participants?, If so, are there any correlating variables that may contribute to the disparity in outcomes?

ACS 2018 data indicate that the estimated prevalence of disability for working-age Ohioans (ages 16 to 64) was:

- 11.3 percent among Whites, estimated 670,700 individuals
- 15.0 percent among Black or African Americans, estimated 136,900 individuals
- 4.9 percent among Asians, estimated 9,700 individuals
- 36.4 percent among Native Americans or Alaskan Natives, estimated 7,400 individuals
- 14.3 percent among Other Races, estimated 35,500 individuals

In 2020, OOD served 29,396 individuals, 6,597 (22.4 percent) of whom were Black or African American. A served individual is one who has been determined eligible for VR services and has signed an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). The total number of working-age Black or African American individuals with disabilities in Ohio is estimated to be 189,489. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported in 2019 that 69.1 percent of working-age individuals with disabilities were not working, and that 7.9 percent of these individuals were actively seeking employment at any given time. This means that approximately 10,344 working-age Black or African American individuals with disabilities in Ohio were seeking employment. OOD provided services to 6,597 of these individuals, resulting in a service rate: need ratio of 63.8 percent. (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2019). More than eight out of 10 working-age Black or African American individuals with disabilities (83.5 percent) reside in the following eight Ohio counties: Cuyahoga, Franklin, Hamilton, Montgomery, Lucas, Summit, Mahoning, and Butler. (U.S. Census – ACS, 2019) (OOD – AWARE)

In 2020, Ohio's working-age population of Hispanic or Latino/a ethnicity was estimated to be 289,079. The prevalence of disability for the working-age Hispanic or Latino/a population is 11.6 percent. (Cornell University, http://disabilitystatistics.org) The total number of working-age Hispanic or Latino/a individuals with disabilities in Ohio is estimated to be 33,533, of whom 1,171 are seeking employment. In 2020, OOD served 580 Hispanic or Latino/a individuals with disabilities, resulting in a service rate: need ratio of 49.6 percent. More than six out of 10 (63.9 percent) of working-age Hispanic or Latino/a individuals with disabilities reside in the following eight counties: Franklin, Cuyahoga, Lucas, Lorain, Hamilton, Butler, Montgomery, and Mahoning. (U.S. Census – ACS, 2019) (OOD – AWARE). Below are the findings related to race and ethnicity:

1. In 2020, OOD provided VR services to 29,396 individuals; 6,597 or 22.4 percent were Black or African American and 968 or 3.3 percent were Hispanic or Latino/a individuals.
2. The American Community Survey (ACS) estimates that 15.0 percent of working-age Black or African American individuals experience disabilities. This equates to approximately 189,489 Ohioans. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 69.1 percent of these individuals are not working at any given time, and 7.9 percent of these individuals are actively seeking employment. Statewide, OOD served 6,597 Black or African American individuals with disabilities out of an estimated 10,344 who were seeking employment, resulting in a service rate: need ratio of 63.8 percent.
3. More than eight out of 10 working-age African Americans (83.5 percent) reside in the following eight Ohio counties: Cuyahoga, Franklin, Hamilton, Montgomery, Lucas, Summit, Mahoning, and Butler.
4. The ACS estimates that 11.6 percent of Hispanic or Latino/a working-age individuals experience disabilities. This equates to approximately 33,533 Ohioans. Statewide, OOD served 968 Hispanic or Latino/a individuals with disabilities out of an estimated 1,831 who were seeking employment, resulting in a service rate: need ratio of 52.9 percent.
5. More than six out of 10 working-age Hispanic or Latino/a individuals (63.9 percent) reside in the following eight Ohio counties: Franklin, Cuyahoga, Lucas, Lorain, Hamilton, Butler, Montgomery, and Mahoning.

Service Patterns and Case Outcomes by Race

OOD was interested in understanding if any disparities exist in patterns of service among Black or African American and White participant groups that correlate to the outcomes achieved. An analysis of services delivered in closed cases and the outcomes of those cases broken out by race was conducted. The following elements were considered: service category and subcategory, units of service (or, in the case of performance-based services, duration of service), and overall time in service from first plan date to closure outcome. There were 33,924 cases closed in FFY 2019 and FFY 2020, combined. Of these, 23,071 were White participant cases, 8,761 were Black or African American participant cases, and 1,006 cases were Latino/a participant cases. Because the sample size for Hispanic or Latino/a participant cases was significantly smaller, this analysis compared White participant cases and Black or African American participant cases. Below are the key findings from the analysis:

1. There is a difference of 10 percentage points between the two groups, indicating that White participant cases close with an employment outcome more frequently than Black or African American participant cases.

2. A greater portion of White participants completed high school by a margin of six percentage points.

3. There was no difference in the median number of days from Application to Eligibility, indicating a consistent eligibility process was applied across both groups.

4. For closures with an outcome of employment, the median number of days from Application to Closure was 45 days longer for Black or African American participants. These statistics indicate

that Black or African American participant cases progress to an employment outcome more slowly than White participant cases.

5. Median hours per week and median wages were nearly identical for both groups.

6. For cases closed without an outcome of employment, the top reason for White participant cases was “No longer interested in services,” which involves an indication by the participant that they no longer wish to continue with services. The top reason for Black or African American participant cases was “Disengaged,” which involves a lack of response from the participant.

C. INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES SERVED THROUGH OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM; AND

OOD works closely at the state level with the Office of Workforce Transformation (OWT), Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS), the Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE), and other entities to align programs and services and to improve outcomes for individuals with disabilities served in the workforce development system. At the local level, Area Managers and Supervisors serve on local workforce boards and OOD VR Counselors have a presence at local OhioMeansJobs (OMJ) Centers. OOD continues to partner specifically with local OMJ Centers in a variety of ways. This includes the utilization of available job seeking skills training and other career resources, participation in OOD hiring events and job fairs, and partnering related to other workforce initiatives throughout the state.

Agencies subject to WIOA regulations are required to report the rate at which participants of their program are co-enrolled in other WIOA programs. OOD previously utilized self-reporting of individuals to determine if a VR participant was co-enrolled. However, individuals would not always know the formal name of the program in which they are participating or may have other barriers resulting in incorrect self-reporting. As a result and to improve data integrity, OOD and ODJFS collaborated together on securing a data sharing agreement to document this co-enrollment. This process has allowed us to populate information received from ODJFS directly into our case management system, AWARE. Utilization of this cross-match file between VR and ODJFS will result in a higher reportable percentage of co-enrollment per year.

The match between OOD and ODJFD was implemented for PY2023 Quarter 1 submission. Below is a chart displaying the increase from Q4 PY 2022 to Q1 and Q2 PY 2023. We continue to increase the number of individuals identified.

Program Year and Quarter	Adult	Adult ED	Dislocated Worker	JobCorps	Wagner-Peyser	Youth	YouthBuild
PY 2022 Q4	0	6	1	0	0	19	2
PY 2023 Q1	45	11	8	0	7	279	2
PY 2023 Q2	84	15	10	0	21	372	2

D. YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES, INCLUDING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES AND THEIR NEED FOR PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES. INCLUDE AN ASSESSMENT OF THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES FOR TRANSITION CAREER SERVICES AND PRE-

EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES, AND THE EXTENT TO WHICH SUCH SERVICES ARE COORDINATED WITH TRANSITION SERVICES PROVIDED UNDER IDEA.

Since 2016, OOD has continued to expand services to youth and students with disabilities. In addition to assigning VR counselors specifically to serve this population, OOD has a formal agreement with the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce (DEW) that establishes the Ohio Transition Support Partnership. These efforts have allowed OOD to increase the number of individuals served between the ages of 14 and 25 by nearly 20 percent from 13,903 in FFY 2016 to 16,640 in FFY 2023.

Based on the U.S. Census Five-Year population projections from 2019, Ohio's population ages 18 to 34 is approximately 2,533,133. Estimates indicate that approximately 7.5 percent of these individuals experience a disability, which represents 189,626 individuals. The ACS indicates that approximately 7.4 percent of the disability population in Ohio (ages 21 to 64) is not working but actively looking for work at any given time. Of the individuals with disabilities ages 18 to 34, approximately 14,032 individuals were likely to have benefitted from OOD services. In 2020, OOD served 14,150 individuals ages 18 to 34, representing a service rate: need ratio greater than 100 percent for this age group. It should be noted that OOD serves youth beginning at age 14 to help them prepare for employment as they transition from secondary education to postsecondary education or the workforce. Although the service rate appears greater than the need, this is because many of these youth are not actively seeking employment while still in school and preparing for adult life.

While the 2021 CSNA did not address questions specific to Youth with Disabilities, including Students with Disabilities, it will be one of the focus areas of the 2024 CSNA.

OOD and DEW work in collaboration to educate VR staff, Local Education Agencies (LEAs), students, families, and other community partners about the availability of Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS). Representatives from OOD and DEW present on Pre-ETS and attend multi-agency planning meetings together to provide technical assistance on VR services and Pre-ETS. In addition, Pre-ETS information is housed on both websites, and both agencies utilize and distribute a Pre-ETS fact sheet and flyer to interested parties. The fact sheet outlines the process for connecting both students who are potentially eligible (PE) and students with an open VR case with Pre-ETS.

Transition services are funded by the various state agencies that serve the individual youth in accordance with requirements under WIOA, IDEA and other pertinent laws. In addition to the Interagency Agreement between DEW and Opportunities for OOD, Ohio's Employment First Task Force works across multiple systems to align policies and practices and issues guidance to the field as needed to ensure that students receive the services needed to ensure achievement of employment and other postsecondary outcomes. While OOD and DEW are the two lead agencies with regard to facilitating transition services for students with disabilities, ODJFS, Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD), Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (MHAS), and Ohio Department of Medicaid (ODM), as Employment First Task Force agencies also support this work, including funding services for mutually served students and youth with disabilities.

The final report from the CSNA can be found at https://ood.ohio.gov/about-us/statistics2. OOD has incorporated findings from the CSNA as a part of the strategic focus and has been using the

data and analysis for informed decision-making. A wealth of additional knowledge can be obtained by referencing the CSNA report for more specific findings. Based on the recommendations made in the CSNA, OOD has developed program objectives outlined in the agency strategic plan to meet the needs of Ohioans with disabilities.

OOD has continued to utilize the CSNA for informing VR management; guiding outreach efforts; implementing changes to the VR fee structures; forming Employer Partnerships and developing tools, trainings, and resources for Ohio employers; establishing the size and market power of the population of individuals with disabilities in Ohio by legislative and fiscal staff; Executive Team review and prioritization of VR program needs; and strategic planning.

2. IDENTIFY THE NEED TO ESTABLISH, DEVELOP, OR IMPROVE COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE.

Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) operates as the designated State unit in Ohio. Due to circumstances within the State and consistent with the requirements of 34 CFR 361.29(a)(1)(ii), OODhas determined it necessary to engage in activities to establish, develop, or improve facilities for community rehabilitation programs (CRPs) (hereinafter "establishment projects) in the State for the purpose of providing vocational rehabilitation (VR) services to applicants and eligible individuals, as well as pre-employment transition services to students with disabilities who are eligible or potentially eligible for the VR program. In assessing the need for establishment projects in the State, OOD has determined it may be necessary to incur capital expenditures to acquire equipment or improve the field offices of OOD**,** which satisfy the definition of a CRP at 34 CFR 361.5(c)(8), in order to ensure the continuity of quality service delivery to individuals with disabilities seeking to receive services under the VR program. The State assures it will submit requests for prior written approval to RSA for those costs that exceed the capital expenditure threshold applicable to the State, or for any capital improvements necessary to ready the space for its intended use under the VR program, consistent with requirements set forth in 2 CFR part 200.

OOD continues to support community rehabilitation programs within the State through a variety of methods. For existing community rehabilitation programs, OOD will continue to provide training, technical assistance, support and management from the Provider & Contract Management Unit (PCMU) as well as local provider liaisons. PCMU supports provider onboarding, support, technical guidance, and, when necessary, works with providers to develop Corrective Action Plans (CAPs). CAPs address and remedy significant safety, service quality, and/or fiscal integrity concerns.

OOD is also working on a VR Fee Schedule update as part of a plan to support community rehabilitation program costs, including staff salaries for the current competitive labor market. OOD has established a stakeholder VR Fee Schedule workgroup to gather input needed to start this work and is updating the methodology utilized to develop rates, which will be memorialized in an agency policy. Alignment of the VR Fee Schedule with the actual costs of providers will support them in providing an expanded volume of services with improved quality. The updated VR Fee Schedule will also support provider stability and growth, which will enhance service coverage and ensure efficient service delivery to support Ohioans with disabilities.

C. GOALS, PRIORITIES, AND STRATEGIES

Section 101(a)(15) and (23) of the Rehabilitation Act require VR agencies to describe the goals and priorities of the State in carrying out the VR and Supported Employment programs. The goals and priorities are based on (1) the most recent CSNA, including any updates; (2) the State's performance under the performance accountability measures of Section 116 of WIOA; and (3) other available information on the operation and effectiveness of the VR program, including any reports received from the SRC and findings and recommendations from monitoring activities conducted under Section 107 of the Rehabilitation Act. VR agencies must—

1. DESCRIBE HOW THE SRC AND THE VR AGENCY JOINTLY DEVELOPED AND AGREED TO THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES AND ANY REVISIONS; AND

Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) has developed a strategic plan for State Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025 to guide the expansion of the vocational rehabilitation program. This strategic plan was developed taking into account feedback from the OOD Council over time regarding priorities to address the findings of the 2021 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment, the development of partnerships that expand outreach to individuals with disabilities that could benefit from vocational rehabilitation services, the results of Participant Focus Groups on a variety of topics and the development of policies that will better meet the needs of individuals with disabilities receiving services from OOD. OOD will continue to work with the OOD Council on the development of strategic priorities as this strategic plan is implemented and as the 2024 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment is completed.

2. IDENTIFY MEASURABLE GOALS AND PRIORITIES IN CARRYING OUT THE VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS AND THE BASIS FOR SELECTING THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES (E.G., CSNA, PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES, SRC RECOMMENDATIONS, MONITORING, OTHER INFORMATION). AS REQUIRED IN SECTION 101(A)(15)(D), (18), AND (23), DESCRIBE UNDER EACH GOAL OR PRIORITY, THE STRATEGIES OR METHODS USED TO ACHIEVE THE GOAL OR PRIORITY, INCLUDING AS APPLICABLE, DESCRIPTION OF STRATEGIES OR METHODS THAT—

A. SUPPORT INNOVATION AND EXPANSION ACTIVITIES;

B. OVERCOME BARRIERS TO ACCESSING VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES;

C. IMPROVE AND EXPAND VR SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, INCLUDING THE COORDINATION OF SERVICES DESIGNED TO FACILITATE THE TRANSITION OF SUCH STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL TO POSTSECONDARY LIFE (INCLUDING THE RECEIPT OF VR SERVICES, POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, AND PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES); AND

D. IMPROVE THE PERFORMANCE OF THE VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS IN ASSISTING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES TO ACHIEVE QUALITY EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES.

List and number each goal/priority, noting the basis, and under each goal/priority, list and number the strategies to achieve the goal/priority

Ohio Governor Mike DeWine's Operating Budget for Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025 reinforces his commitment to making Ohio a Disability Inclusion State and Model Employer of Individuals with Disabilities.

The budget allows OOD to maximize federal grant dollars available within two years. It also establishes a new initiative, Accessible Ohio, to support Ohio's businesses, communities, attractions, and venues to be accessible and inclusive.

This historic investment significantly increases efforts to support Ohioans with disabilities, empowering them to find careers, stability, purpose, meaning, connection, and independence.

The mission of OOD is to empower Ohioans with disabilities through employment, disability determinations, and independence.

OOD continues to use the following guiding principles on the path towards service excellence:

- Listen first
- Act with a sense of urgency
- Honor diversity
- Foster inclusiveness
- Value collaboration
- Inspire innovation
- Be transparent
- Be accountable
- Celebrate success

OOD develops its Strategic Plan on a biannual basis. The Strategic Plan for 2024 and 2025 includes the following goals:

1. Increasing access to employment for Ohioans with disabilities.

- This historic investment will allow OOD to expand programs and services to an additional 7,000 Ohioans with disabilities annually, for a total of 41,000.

2. Assisting Ohioans with disabilities to earn credentials needed for in-demand jobs.

- With these additional funds, more Ohioans will be able to earn credentials, leading to better jobs at higher wages.

3. Partnering with Ohio employers to assist them in attracting qualified Ohioans with disabilities.

- OOD's Business Relations Team will expand partnerships with Ohio businesses to increase the hiring and retention of Ohioans with disabilities and support businesses to meet their workforce goals.

4. Providing greater access to services and resources to Ohioans who are Deaf or hard of hearing to increase community engagement and independence.

- Additional financial support for Ohio's Community Centers for the Deaf increases their capacity to provide quality services for Ohioans who are Deaf or hard of hearing

5. Optimizing entrepreneurial opportunities for small business owners who are blind.

- Modernized equipment and business practices will support the success of individuals participating in OOD's Business Enterprise Program.

6. Transforming how Ohioans with disabilities access all our great state has to offer.

- The Accessible Ohio Initiative will allow OOD to provide individualized consultations, training, and resources to Ohio's businesses, communities, attractions, and venues to be more accessible and inclusive.

OOD will continue to utilize a portion of available General Revenue Funds awarded to support the Independent Living Program as match for Innovation and Expansion activities under the VR program. This funding was utilized to support the operation of Ohio Statewide Independent Living Council (OSILC), consistent with federal regulations. By using Innovation and Expansion funding to support OSILC, Ohio was able to award all Part B, Title VII funds to CILs for the provision of direct independent living services.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) establishes performance accountability indicators and performance reporting requirements to assess the effectiveness of states in achieving positive outcomes for individuals with disabilities served by VR program. OOD negotiated the following performance indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023:

1. The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program: 54.3% for PY 2022; 56.3% for PY 2023

2. The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program: 53.9% for PY 2022; 55.9% for PY 2023

3. The median earnings of programs participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program: $3,000 for PY 2022; $3,100 for PY 2023

4. The percentage of program participants who attain a recognized postsecondary credential, or a secondary diploma or its recognized equivalent, during participation in or within one year after exit from the program: 39.3% for PY 2022; 39.8% for PY 2023

5. The percentage of program participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains (MSGs) toward such a credential or employment: 58.0% for PY 2022; 58.4% for PY 2023

The U.S. Departments of labor and Education determined that it is appropriate and reasonable to assess performance for PY 2022 for the first four indicators above. It was determined that the available baseline data is not sufficient to produce reliable estimates for the fifth indicator above (MSG). Therefore, the assessment of the MSG indicator is being delayed.

OOD has been working continuously to implement various WIOA alignment activities. The strategies used to achieve our goals in terms of the negotiated performance measures above have all been similar in nature. This has involved a significant investment of staff time participating in training related to new policies, procedures, federal reporting requirements, and case management upgrades. OOD has kept a key focus on ensuring our staff have the

necessary training and tools in order to be successful with our performance. In addition to training, OOD has utilized compliance reports, activity reminders in our case management system, email reminders, job aids, FAQs, and Supervisor targeted case reviews to ensure these indicators stay at the forefront of all staff. OOD has also aligned performance evaluation goals for staff with these negotiated performance measures. In addition, OOD has implemented several upgrades to the AWARE case management system that have been necessary to allow OOD to report on these WIOA performance accountability indicators. OOD has been able to submit the required quarterly RSA-911 report for both open and closed cases by the deadlines established by RSA. OOD continues to work with state level partners to implement data sharing agreements that will facilitate the most efficient and accurate data reporting possible, in particular related to the credential and measurable skill gains indicators. Staff have done an excellent job of meeting the needs of individuals served by the VR program while at the same time focusing on these performance indicators.

Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) operates as the designated State unit in Ohio. Due to circumstances within the State and consistent with the requirements of 34 CFR 361.29(a)(1)(ii), OOD has determined it necessary to engage in activities to establish, develop, or improve facilities for community rehabilitation programs (CRPs) (hereinafter "establishment projects) in the State for the purpose of providing vocational rehabilitation (VR) services to applicants and eligible individuals, as well as pre-employment transition services to students with disabilities who are eligible or potentially eligible for the VR program. In assessing the need for establishment projects in the State, OOD has determined it may be necessary to incur capital expenditures to acquire equipment or improve the field offices of OOD, which satisfy the definition of a CRP at 34 CFR 361.5(c)(8), in order to ensure the continuity of quality service delivery to individuals with disabilities seeking to receive services under the VR program. The State assures it will submit requests for prior written approval to RSA for those costs that exceed the capital expenditure threshold applicable to the State, or for any capital improvements necessary to ready the space for its intended use under the VR program, consistent with requirements set forth in 2 CFR part 200.

D. EVALUATION AND REPORTS OF PROGRESS: VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT GOALS

For the most recently completed program year, provide an evaluation and report of progress for the goals or priorities, including progress on the strategies under each goal or priority, applicable to that program year. Sections 101(a)(15) and 101(a)(23) of the Rehabilitation Act require VR agencies to describe—

1. PROGRESS IN ACHIEVING THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES IDENTIFIED FOR THE VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS;

List the goals/priorities and discuss the progress or completion of each goal/priority and related strategies

Governor DeWine's budget for fiscal years 2024-2025 supports the mission of Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) to provide individuals with disabilities opportunities to achieve quality employment, independence, and disability determination outcomes. With a strong commitment of investing in Ohioans with disabilities, to ensure they are not left behind, the budget represents a state investment of General Revenue Funds in the first year of $24.8 million (an increase of 31% from 2023) and in the second year is $30.0 million (an increase of 21%

from 2024). This budget will strengthen our current program's efforts to expand and improve upon the delivery of services to ensure we are meeting the employment needs of all Ohioans with disabilities.

OOD outlined several program goals in the previous Combined State Plan. A summary of these goals and related progress are as follows:

Goal 1. To increase competitive integrated employment and independent living outcomes for Ohio citizens with disabilities.

- Objective 1a: Increase the number and percentage of individuals with competitive integrated employment outcomes.
- Objective 1b: Remove barriers so individuals may obtain and maintain quality employment.
- Objective 1c: Increase the number of youth and students who receive transition services.

The Ohio Transition Support Program (OTSP) with the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce (DEW): OOD has continued this successful partnership with DEW and Governor Mike DeWine's Executive Budget for SFY 2024-25 expands OTSP to serve additional students with disabilities throughout Ohio. This successful partnership has substantially improved the capacity of the VR program to serve students with disabilities and improve the employment outcomes achieved by these students.

One area of focus moving forward will be OOD's increased efforts regarding family engagement as OOD collaborates in the Ohio Cross-Agency Establishing Families as Partners Training team, led by DEW. The team has worked together to develop curriculum and training intended to improve family involvement in transition planning, leading to better postsecondary outcomes. Information and training plans continue to be developed and will be rolled out to local areas across the state.

Additional information about the progress of this successful partnership can be found in section (j).

Ohio Deaf and Blind Education Services, individually known as Ohio State School for the Blind (OSSB) and Ohio School for the Deaf (OSD): OOD is continuing this successful model to immerse a Bureau of Services for the Visually Impaired (BSVI) counselor at OSSB and a Rehabilitation Counselor for the Deaf (RCD) who is proficient in ASL at OSD so that students have ready access to their Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor at school.

Goal 2. To expand OOD's statewide network of businesses, providers and partnerships to effectively deliver services.

- Objective 2a: Increase service delivery capacity through statewide partnerships and provider networks.
- Objective 2b: Increase the number of employers that hire individuals with disabilities.
- Objective 2c: Improve awareness of OOD services through coordinated outreach and marketing efforts.

Employment First Partnership Agreement with the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD): OOD has continued this successful partnership with DODD, including engaging in capacity building activities to increase the number of providers delivering employment services in both the vocational rehabilitation (VR) and the developmental disabilities systems. This allows individuals to maintain a continuity of service provider as they transition from time-limited VR services to extended services provided by the developmental disabilities system. This provides the foundation for improved quality and efficiency of services for both individuals served by the programs as well as for business partners.

Additional information about the progress of this initiative can be found in sections (e) and (l).

Partnership with Ohio Mental Health and Addiction Services (Ohio MHAS): OOD has continued its partnership with Ohio MHAS to increase access to the Individualized Placement and Support Supported Employment (IPS-SE) model. OOD continues to work with Ohio MHAS to improve access to an IPS model of supported employment for individuals with mental illness. OOD and Ohio MHAS have continued to increase the number of Behavioral Health Agencies and counties where individuals can receive IPS supported employment services. OOD continues to conduct joint training and technical assistance for OOD Liaisons and Supervisors along with staff of the partnering IPS provider.

OOD Jobs for Recovery Program: Governor DeWine's Executive Budget for SFY 2020-21 established the OOD Jobs for Recovery program. This program replicates a successful model established in partnership with the Butler County Mental Health and Addiction Recovery Services Board and Butler County Court of Common Pleas drug court. In this model, OOD embeds a VR Counselor and a Job Developer as active members of the drug court team. This service delivery model ensures rapid engagement in services that are needed for the individual to get a job, such as career counseling, job placement and retention services. In addition to this initiative, OOD has established liaison counselors to drug court programs in several additional counties. Liaison counselors are expected to serve individuals with disabilities participating in additional specialized dockets, as OOD continues our general outreach to this population.

OOD continues to implement the OOD Jobs for Recovery initiative. OOD currently has 12 teams serving 13 counties and partnering with multiple dockets within each county. To support the OOD Jobs for Recovery Initiative, OOD and additional specialized dockets continue to collaborate and work together to provide services to eligible individuals through identified VR liaisons.

Ohio College2Careers (Ohio C2C) Program with the Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE): Governor DeWine's Executive Budget for SFY 2024-25 expanded Ohio C2C through a partnership with the ODHE that provides two million in additional appropriations each fiscal year. This will allow OOD to increase to 32 total Counselors who will serve all state public 2- and 4-years colleges and universities including the branch campuses, as well as the 2 Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) in Ohio. This further increases opportunities for college students with disabilities at schools that are dedicated to educating minority students. These partnerships also demonstrate OOD's commitment to serving minorities and underserved populations.

OOD Ohio C2C Counselors work closely with the disability services offices on campus to ensure that students have the support they need to complete their degree and/or credential, earn

higher wages and meet the demands of tomorrow's labor market. Services may include career exploration, assistive technology, placement services for internships and other work experiences, and placement and on the job supports for permanent employment upon graduation to ensure the success of students served.

Prior to the start of each academic year, Counselors complete an individualized OOD Contribution Worksheet for each eligible student with a disability (e.g., physical, learning, mental health, sensory, hearing, vision, and more) to determine the amount of OOD support based on FAFSA information. Students on SSI or SSDI and those with a zero estimated family contribution are exempt from the financial needs assessment. Students may also qualify for additional OOD Education Support Funds which further ease financial barriers while providing individualized career guidance, technology, tools, resources, and connection to a large network of employer partners. The OOD Education Support Funds help students with disabilities in their pursuit of continued education. OOD will provide all eligible students with disabilities up to $7,000 per term for the 2023-24 academic year, while participating in OOD services, to be used for tuition or other educational expenses. This includes students with disabilities participating in colleges, apprenticeships, trade schools, and credentialing programs.

Ohio C2C along with the OOD Education Support Funds have significantly increased outreach efforts to college students with disabilities. In Federal Fiscal Year 2023, nearly 1,800 students received services through the Ohio C2C program alone.

OOD expanded its business relations efforts for this initiative to five total Career Development Specialists who work directly with the disability and career offices at these partnering colleges to promote the hiring of students with disabilities for internships and permanent placement opportunities.

In addition to this initiative, OOD has established liaison counselors for many of the other private colleges and universities across Ohio to ensure access to VR services for all students with disabilities.

To further support college students with disabilities, OOD hosts virtual Ohio C2C Career & Internship Spotlight events in the fall and spring for college students with disabilities and/or recent graduates. Through these events, attendees learn about internship and career opportunities with OOD Employer Partners and engage in a live Q&A with the presenters to ask questions.

Goal 3. To ensure excellence and accountability of OOD's programs, services and partnerships.

- Objective 3a: Maximize the use and accountability of available funds.
- Objective 3b: Increase the knowledge and productivity of staff through training and lean processes.
- Objective 3c: Improve service delivery quality through technological enhancements.

Medical, Psychological and Dental Fee Schedules. OOD is currently updating the Medical, Psychological and Dental Fee Schedules to ensure timely high-quality services are available to individuals with disabilities receiving vocational rehabilitation services. It is anticipated that these updates will be implemented in the spring of 2024.

Vocational Rehabilitation Fee Schedule: The Vocational Rehabilitation Fee Schedule was updated in October 2022. This included updated rates as well as new services such as Bridge Support Services that are designed to remove barriers to participation in services and/or achievement of an employment outcome. OOD is currently reviewing and updating the methodology used to establish rates under this fee schedule and intends to establish a new procedure to document this process for the future. OOD will update the VR Fee Schedule once this is complete.

In-house Service Delivery. OOD continues to provide in-house job development services in addition to the purchase of services from providers under the VR Fee Schedule. OOD has recently hired designated job developer supervisors, one in each OOD area, to supervise all internal job developers. This new model is designed to enhance the quality of services provided and ensure statewide consistency.

OOD continues to employ in-house-work incentive consultants who provide services under OOD's Employment First (EF) Partnership Agreement with the DODD. These staff are supervised centrally by OOD's Work Incentives Program Administrator and are available to provide both in person and remote service delivery for work incentives services statewide. In 2023, OOD increased the number of in-house work incentives consultants expanding services to participants served outside of the EF Partnership Agreement.

OOD will be expanding in-house services to include rehabilitation technology, orientation and mobility, activities of daily living and sign language interpretation. These new units are expected to be implemented in early 2024, increasing the availability and timeliness of services.

AWARE Enhancements: During Federal Fiscal Year 2022, OOD onboarded all approved Ohio VR providers to the AWARE Vendor Portal. The AWARE Vendor Portal is a long-requested online payment system which moved provider payments from faxes (which were later sorted and uploaded to the AWARE case management system by OOD VR Staff) to an online payment portal. This new way of submitting and tracking authorizations, reports, and bills online within the AWARE system streamlines the process for timely payments all in one location, providing efficiencies and additional resources for providers. Several enhancements have been made to the system since the original deployment of the system and OOD will continue to work with Alliance to add new features in support of even greater efficiencies of the system.

OOD is also in the process of testing and implementing an update to its referral portal that will allow referral partners to electronically assist individuals with disabilities to apply for vocational rehabilitation services. It is anticipated that this will be implemented early in 2024.

Below is the list of recommendations from the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) and the steps taken to address them.

1. **Explore opportunities to expand engagement with individuals who are blind or have low vision, including the development of service providers with expertise in meeting their needs.**

OOD has established an outreach plan for increasing engagement with individuals who are blind or have low vision. This outreach plan has resulted in an increase in the number of new applications and eligibility decisions.

OOD has a plan to increase internal staff and expand resources to the providers to increase services and outreach to individuals who are blind or have low vision. By creating an in-house services unit to provide Rehabilitation Technology services, OOD will increase the availability of these services and provide more choices for participants. OOD will also create an in-house services unit to provide Orientation & Mobility and Activities of Daily Living services to VR participants with blindness or low vision, especially focusing on rural areas.

OOD has also entered into agreements with AIRA and Vispero to make AIRA, JAWS and Zoom Text available to all of our VR participants with visual impairments while they are working with OOD. In most cases, AIRA, JAWS and ZoomText are purchased through these agreements as part of an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). They can be purchased prior to an IPE, if it is determined necessary in order to complete an assessment that will clarify the vocational goal.

2. **Provide a dedicated resource to support VR staff, partners, and providers to increase outreach and improve services for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing.**

In December 2021, following the release of the CSNA, OOD established and filled a Deaf Services Supervisor position within the Bureau of Services for the Visually Impaired (BSVI). That supervisor has developed programs (e.g., ACT Test Prep program), expanded partnerships with state (e.g., Ohio Deaf and Blind Education Services) and national (e.g., National Deaf Center) entities, and created training programs for internal staff to improve cultural competency. In July 2023, OOD moved all counselors who specialize in serving Deaf individuals under the same leadership with the goal of improving communication among these specialists, improving consistency in service provision, and creating a career ladder for staff in this specialty. Also in July 2023, BSVI created and filled a Deaf Services Manager position. This person will lead both the Deaf Services and Statewide American Sign Language (ASL) Interpreter Services teams. In October 2023, OOD will post an Interpreter Services Supervisor position, and in early 2024, OOD plans to expand the total staff interpreter pool from two interpreters to six staff interpreters. After these positions are established, OOD plans to focus on improving supports and services to the DeafBlind community by creating a position that directly serves that population and creating training opportunities for all staff who serve the Deaf community.

3. **Conduct an examination of the service needs of individuals with physical disabilities to determine if OOD's current service options address those needs.**

OOD has been examining barriers to services for individuals served by the vocational rehabilitation program, including individuals with physical disabilities. In particular, OOD is increasing investments in credential attainment including both college and short-term credential programs and is expanding access to assistive technology services. In 2024, OOD will be expanding on this examination through the use of Participant Focus Groups to identify additional areas of focus to improve services to individuals with physical disabilities.

4. **Explore opportunities to engage with employers and participants to dispel common myths about disability and employer perceptions.**

OOD has provided several in-person and virtual training and resources to Ohio Employers and OOD Employer Partners to dispel common myths about disability and employer perceptions. OOD maintains an Inclusive Employer Toolkit and an On-Demand webinar archive on its website.

5. **Explore opportunities to improve outcomes for individuals with disabilities from minority groups through engagement with partners to increase employment outcomes and educational attainment.**

OOD partners with Wilberforce University and Central State University, Ohio's two Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU), to implement Ohio College2Careers (C2C) on campus. Through this program, the OOD C2C counselor maintains a presence on campus to provide direct access to VR services for students with disabilities. In addition, Ohio C2C counselors engage with the Minority Affairs offices at each of the schools.

OOD has established a partnership with the Ohio Latino Affairs Commission (OLCA). VR Administration and Human Resources at Central Office have had conversations about the statewide need and how best to approach collaboration. It was determined that the Northeast and East Central areas partner with the local chapters by attending quarterly meetings where OOD presented the services we can provide to their constituents. There have been recent leadership changes at the OLCA, and we expect to continue to expand our partnership.

OOD's Deaf Services team has engaged the National Deaf Center (NDC) to conduct seven training sessions over the course of one year to address unconscious bias, systemic bias, root cause analysis, and engaging marginalized communities training. This training started in February 2023 and will conclude in March 2024.

As OOD expanded the Ohio Transition Support Partnership (OTSP) with the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce, caseloads were added with a priority to serve school districts in underserved areas.

6. **Conduct targeted VR case reviews to explore discrepancies in case closure reasons for cases closed without an employment outcome.**

A Targeted Review of VR cases was completed, and results of the review were shared with all VR field staff to obtain additional feedback regarding the results of the review. A training plan is being developed based on the results of the Targeted Review and these discussions.

2. PERFORMANCE ON THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY INDICATORS UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA FOR THE MOST RECENTLY COMPLETED PROGRAM YEAR, REFLECTING ACTUAL AND NEGOTIATED LEVELS OF PERFORMANCE. EXPLAIN ANY DISCREPANCIES IN THE ACTUAL AND NEGOTIATED LEVELS; AND

In April of 2022, OOD finalized negotiated levels of performance for new accountability indicators under WIOA as outlined under section (c) above.OOD implemented several updates to the AWARE case management system over the past several years that have been necessary to allow OOD to report on these new performance accountability indicators. OOD continues to work with state level partners to implement data sharing agreements that will also facilitate the most efficient and accurate data reporting possible.

In Program Year 2022, OOD achieved the following results in relation to the WIOA negotiated performance indicators:

1. Employment 2nd Quarter After Exit: OOD surpassed the negotiated target of 54.3% by achieving an employment rate of 62.5%

2. Employment 4th Quarter After Exit: OOD surpassed the negotiated target of 53.9% by achieving an employment rate of 60.4%
3. Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit: OOD surpassed the negotiated target of $3,000 by achieving median earnings of $3,411
4. Credential Attainment Rate: OOD surpassed the negotiated target of 39.3% by achieving a credential rate of 49.6%
5. Measurable Skill Gains: Even though it was determined that the available baseline data is not sufficient to produce reliable estimates for the MSG indicator, in Program Year 2022 OOD surpassed the negotiated target of 58.0% by achieving an MSG rate of 67.5%.

During PY 2022 OOD began sending compliance reports for cases currently enrolled in school. These reports were pulled from our case management report and provided a reminder to complete either the educational goal information or enter a Measurable Skill Gain. We continue to send this report out monthly and will increase reminders at the end of the school year. The assisted us with increasing our Measurable Skill Gains and Credential Attainment. For post exit wages in addition to UI wages, we began implementing SWIS wages. We have also seen an increase in average for closures with employment outcome.

3. THE USE OF FUNDS RESERVED FOR INNOVATION AND EXPANSION ACTIVITIES (SECTIONS 101(A)(18) AND 101(A)(23) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT) (E.G., SRC, SILC).

OOD continues to utilize a portion of available General Revenue Funds awarded to support the Independent Living Program as match for Innovation and Expansion activities under the VR program. This funding is utilized to support the operation of Ohio Statewide Independent Living Council (OSILC), consistent with federal regulations.

E. SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES, DISTRIBUTION OF TITLE VI FUNDS, AND ARRANGEMENTS AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES.

1. ACCEPTANCE OF TITLE VI FUNDS:

(A) VR agency requests to receive title VI funds.

2. IF THE VR AGENCY HAS ELECTED TO RECEIVE TITLE VI FUNDS, SECTION 606(B)(3) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT REQUIRES VR AGENCIES TO INCLUDE SPECIFIC GOALS AND PRIORITIES WITH RESPECT TO THE DISTRIBUTION OF TITLE VI FUNDS RECEIVED UNDER SECTION 603 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES. DESCRIBE THE USE OF TITLE VI FUNDS AND HOW THEY WILL BE USED IN MEETING THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES OF THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM.

OOD continues to expend all Title VI, Part B funds on direct supported employment case services. OOD understands that the VR agency may expend Title VI or Title I funds on supported employment services after job placement and that prior to job placement, OOD may only spend Title I funds. OOD also understands that the VR agency may only provide extended services directly to youth with a most significant disability and not to any other individuals who do not meet the definition of a youth with a most significant disability. OOD may provide extended

services to a youth with a most significant disability until the youth turns 25 or receives 4 years of extended services, whichever occurs first. OOD then arranges for a different extended services provider to continue providing the services as needed. In addition, OOD understands that a maximum of 2.5 percent of Title VI funds may be used for administrative costs and that the State must provide the non-Federal share of 10 percent for Title VI-B funds.

The purpose of OOD's Supported Employment services is to assist individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities, to achieve supported employment outcomes in competitive integrated employment by developing and implementing collaborative programs with entities that provide extended supports.

The following individuals are targeted for supported employment services:

- Individuals participating in day programs, employed in sheltered workshops and other facility-based settings;
- Students in special education programs transitioning to community employment;
- Individuals moving from institutional care into the community;
- Individuals with Severe Mental Illness (SMI), who have traditionally been unsuccessful in obtaining and maintaining competitive, integrated employment;
- Individuals with multiple disabilities who require coordinated services from diverse agencies; and
- Individuals who have been traditionally underserved in supported employment by virtue of ethnic origin, geographical considerations or an inability to access extended supports, and who require the development of natural supports for employment retention.

Eligibility for supported employment services is established in OOD's supported employment procedure. OOD's VR Counselors evaluate individuals as early as possible and on an ongoing basis to determine the need for supported employment, including extended services, to achieve or maintain their employment outcome. Individuals who are eligible for supported employment services include individuals with a most significant disability, including students and youth with a most significant disability, who require ongoing support services provided by a partnering entity (e.g., county board of developmental disabilities, local behavioral health authority, natural supports, non-profit organization, etc.) to maintain employment.

3. SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES MAY BE PROVIDED WITH TITLE 1 OR TITLE VI FUNDS FOLLOWING PLACEMENT OF INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES IN EMPLOYMENT. IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(22) AND SECTION 606(B)(3) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT, DESCRIBE THE QUALITY, SCOPE, AND EXTENT OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED TO INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES; AND THE TIMING OF TRANSITION TO EXTENDED SERVICES.

Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRP) typically provide services purchased by OOD for Ohioans served in Supported Employment. Currently these services are purchased on a fee-for-service basis, according to OOD's Services & Standards (Provider Manual). The Provider Manual

provides specific rates and service definitions for Supported Employment Job Development services. The service definition specifies that these are intensive, ongoing support services that are needed to assist an individual with the most significant disabilities to work in a competitive integrated employment setting. There are requirements for more frequent contacts, as well as higher rates compared to standard Performance Based Job Development services.

Qualified Supported Employment Job Development providers are dually certified by the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD) in career planning or individual employment supports or meet Ohio MHAS fidelity requirements for the Individualized Placement and Support Supported Employment (IPS-SE). Providers offering this service must be certified in IPS model for individuals with SMI, or the supported employment training that has been established for providers serving individuals with developmental disabilities under the Employment First (EF) Partnership Agreement. Individual provider staff offering Supported Employment Job Development outside of the IPS model are required to hold Certified Employment Support Professional (CESP) credential through the Association of People Supporting Employment First (APSE) effective January 2019. The VR Fee Schedule (Provider Manual) removed the CESP requirement for Tier III (retention) portion of Supported Employment Job Development and allowed staff who are Certified Rehabilitation Counselors (CRC) to provide this service without CESP certification. As of December 1, 2022, OOD has allowed a temporary allowance for providers who are working towards their CESP. This allows provider staff to work under the supervision of or with a CESP or Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) certified staff (e.g., supervisor, peer mentor) and provide SE-JD services after completion of Supported Employment Web Course modules and successful testing. This temporary allowance has been implemented in order to assist providers in addressing staffing shortages while maintaining quality service delivery.

In accordance with federal requirements, supported employment services provided include the following:

- Assessment services supplementary to the comprehensive assessment needed to ensure appropriate job match and supports;
- Job development and training;
- Social skills training;
- Intensive on-the-job training or coaching of individuals with the disability, their employer, supervisor, and/or coworkers by skilled employment consultants;
- Other VR or support services needed to ensure success in community employment;
- Follow-up and monitoring of job performance during the stabilization process;
- Discrete post-employment services not commonly available from those who provide extended services;
- Identification and development/facilitation of natural supports; and
- Customized employment.

In accordance with federal requirements of section 511 of WIOA, OOD has been meeting the requirements by providing services and supports, including career counseling, to individuals,

including youth with disabilities, who are receiving sub-minimum wages. OOD has designated staff to meet this requirement and ensure individuals with disabilities who are paid subminimum wage have access to career counseling, designed to promote opportunities for competitive integrated employment. Topics covered includes information on Employment First; places on the path to community employment; competitive integrated employment; supported employment services; work incentives and benefits; overview of OOD services, including application process; and explanation of individuals' rights and informed choice. In addition, through the Works4Me grant, OOD will be working with local partners to improve upon the services and supports needed to help individuals with developmental disabilities transition to competitive integrated employment from subminimum wage employment. This will be accomplished through services such as: family engagement; peer mentoring; work skills, which are designed to help participants prepare for the independence and social aspects of community employment; Works4Me customized site development to develop rotating internship opportunities; and a premium for providers who help Works4Me participants find jobs.

OOD works with the same supported employment providers as the mental health boards and the Developmental Disabilities agency, which assists in a seamless transition from VR funded supported employment to extended services. Individuals, including youth, with most significant disabilities, can receive supported employment services for up to 24 months unless additional time is needed and specified on the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE), prior to the transition to extended services.

Transition to extended services only occurs after the counselor, community partner, employer, and individual have discussed the transition and have confirmed the source of extended services to ensure continuity of these services. For youth with disabilities, age 14-24, with a supported employment outcome in CIE, if no other source of extended service is available, extended services can be provided by OOD for 4 years or until the age of 25, whichever comes first.

4. SECTIONS 101(A)(22) AND 606(B)(4) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT REQUIRE THE VR AGENCY TO DESCRIBE EFFORTS TO IDENTIFY AND ARRANGE, INCLUDING ENTERING INTO COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS, WITH OTHER STATE AGENCIES AND OTHER APPROPRIATE ENTITIES IN ORDER TO PROVIDE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES. THE DESCRIPTION MUST INCLUDE EXTENDED SERVICES, AS APPLICABLE, TO INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING THE PROVISION OF EXTENDED SERVICES TO YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH 34 C.F.R. § 363.4(A) AND 34 C.F.R. § 361.5(C)(19)(V).

Ohioans with the most significant disabilities who are determined eligible for SSI or SSDI, designated as eligible for services from county boards of DD, and those designated as having a SMI and eligible for services from a community mental health board, are targeted populations for supported employment. OOD has developed Interagency Agreements with the DODD, Ohio Department of Medicaid, and Ohio MHAS, to develop and implement improved coordination of supported employment services. The Interagency Agreements include training opportunities and technical assistance for staff across all involved agencies.

For all supported employment cases, OOD ensures the coordination and facilitation of extended services for individuals, which can be funded through HCBS waivers, local county board of DD

or county behavioral health authorities, including natural supports. Such services provide the supports individuals with the most significant disabilities need to sustain long-term employment. Within the Interagency Agreements, there is also a focus on data collection between agencies.

F. ANNUAL ESTIMATES

Sections 101(a)(15) and 101(a)(23) of the Rehabilitation Act require all VR agencies to annually conduct a full assessment of their resources and ability to serve all eligible individuals before the start of the Federal fiscal year. In accordance with 34 C.F.R. § 361.29(b), annual estimates must include the following projections:

1. ESTIMATES FOR NEXT FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR—

A. VR PROGRAM; AND

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Priority Category (if applicable)	No. of Individuals Eligible for Services	No. of Eligible Individuals Expected to Receive Services under VR Program	Costs of Services using Title I Funds	No. of Eligible Individuals Not Receiving Services (if applicable)
D	730	592	$1,440441	N/A
SD	14,590	11,836	$38,916,768	N/A
MSD	21,156	17,162	$56,429,314	N/A
Total	36,476	29,590	$86,678,579	N/A

B. SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM.

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Priority Category (if applicable)	No. of Individuals Eligible for Services	No. of Eligible Individuals Expected to Receive Services under Supported Employment Program	Costs of Services using Title I and Title VI Funds	No. of Eligible Individuals Not Receiving Services (if applicable)
MSD	6,405	5,636	$17,291,248	N/A

G. ORDER OF SELECTION

1. PURSUANT TO SECTION 101(A)(5) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT, THIS DESCRIPTION MUST BE AMENDED WHEN THE VR AGENCY DETERMINES, BASED ON THE ANNUAL ESTIMATES DESCRIBED IN DESCRIPTION (F), THAT VR SERVICES CANNOT BE PROVIDED TO ALL ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE STATE WHO APPLY FOR AND ARE DETERMINED ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES.

* VR agencies may maintain an order of selection policy and priority of eligible individuals without implementing or continuing to implement an order of selection.

The VR agency is not implementing an order of selection and all eligible individuals will be served.

2. FOR VR AGENCIES THAT HAVE DEFINED PRIORITY CATEGORIES DESCRIBE—

A. THE JUSTIFICATION FOR THE ORDER

No order of selection is being implemented at this time.

B. THE ORDER (PRIORITY CATEGORIES) TO BE FOLLOWED IN SELECTING ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS TO BE PROVIDED VR SERVICES ENSURING THAT INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES ARE SELECTED FOR SERVICES BEFORE ALL OTHER INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES; AND

OOD has established, by way of Administrative Rule, the following definitions for priority categories under the order of selection.

Individual with Most Significant Disability (MSD): an individual who meets the definition of significant disability but whose disability seriously limits three or more functional capacities in terms of an employment outcome; and

Individual with Significant Disability (SD): an individual who has a disability that seriously limits one or two functional capacities (such as mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction, interpersonal skills, work tolerance, and work skills), in terms of an employment outcome, and who is expected to need multiple VR services over an extended period of time; and

Individual with Disability (D): an individual who meets the definition of eligible per rule 3304-2-54 of the Ohio Administrative Code (consistent with 34 CFR 361.42(a,)) but whose impairment does not rise to the level of a significant disability.

C. THE VR AGENCY'S GOALS FOR SERVING INDIVIDUALS IN EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY, INCLUDING HOW THE AGENCY WILL ASSIST ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS ASSIGNED TO CLOSED PRIORITY CATEGORIES WITH INFORMATION AND REFERRAL, THE METHOD IN WHICH THE VR AGENCY WILL MANAGE WAITING LISTS, AND THE PROJECTED TIMELINES FOR OPENING PRIORITY CATEGORIES. NOTE: PRIORITY CATEGORIES ARE CONSIDERED OPEN WHEN ALL INDIVIDUALS IN THE PRIORITY CATEGORY MAY BE SERVED.

N/A

3. HAS THE VR AGENCY ELECTED TO SERVE ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS OUTSIDE OF THE ORDER OF SELECTION WHO REQUIRE SPECIFIC SERVICES OR EQUIPMENT TO MAINTAIN EMPLOYMENT?

Yes

H. WAIVER OF STATEWIDENESS.

The State plan shall be in effect in all political subdivisions of the State, however, the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (Commissioner) may waive compliance with this requirement in accordance with Section 101(a)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act and the implementing regulations in 34 C.F.R. § 361.26. If the VR agency is requesting a waiver of statewideness or has a previously approved waiver of statewideness, describe the types of services and the local entities providing such services under the waiver of statewideness and how the agency has complied with the requirements in 34 C.F.R. § 361.26. If the VR agency is not requesting or does not have an approved waiver of statewideness, please indicate "not applicable."

N/A

I. COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT.

In accordance with the requirements in Section 101(a)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act, the VR agency must develop and maintain annually a description (consistent with the purposes of the Rehabilitation Act) of the VR agency's comprehensive system of personnel development, which shall include a description of the procedures and activities the State VR agency will undertake to ensure it has an adequate supply of qualified State rehabilitation professionals and paraprofessionals that provides the following:

1. ANALYSIS OF CURRENT PERSONNEL AND PROJECTED PERSONNEL NEEDS INCLUDING—

A. THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL CURRENTLY NEEDED BY THE VR AGENCY TO PROVIDE VR SERVICES, BROKEN DOWN BY PERSONNEL CATEGORY; AND

B. THE NUMBER AND TYPE OF PERSONNEL THAT ARE EMPLOYED BY THE VR AGENCY IN THE PROVISION OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES, INCLUDING RATIOS OF QUALIFIED VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION COUNSELORS TO CLIENTS;

C. PROJECTIONS OF THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL, BROKEN DOWN BY PERSONNEL CATEGORY, WHO WILL BE NEEDED BY THE VR AGENCY TO PROVIDE VR SERVICES IN 5 YEARS BASED ON PROJECTIONS OF THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS TO BE SERVED, INCLUDING INDIVIDUALS WITH SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL EXPECTED TO RETIRE OR LEAVE THE FIELD, AND OTHER RELEVANT FACTORS.

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Data Report Extraction Date for Information Below: September 12, 2023

Personnel Category	No. of Personnel Employed	No. of Personnel Currently Needed	Projected No. of Personnel Needed in 5 Years
Account Examiner 2, Admin Professional 1	79	104	104
Account Examiner 3, Admin Professional 2 & 4	7	18	18
Business Enterprise Specialist	7	8	8
Deputy Director 4, 5, & 6 & Human Services Program Admin 3&4	15	17	17
Program Admin 2, 3, HCM Sr. Analyst & Info Tech 3	33	40	40
Rehab Program Specialists	15	21	21
Personnel Category	No. of Personnel Employed	No. of Personnel Currently Needed	Projected No. of Personnel Needed in 5 Years
VR Caseload Assistants	104	121	127
VR Counselors & Sr. VR Counselors	326	384	403
Work Incentives Consultant	5	10	10
Business Operations Manager 1/Customer Support Supervisors	5	5	5
VR Supervisors,	74	85	89

Personnel Category	No. of Personnel Employed	No. of Personnel Currently Needed	Projected No. of Personnel Needed in 5 Years
Managers (1 & 2)			

D. RATIO OF QUALIFIED VR COUNSELORS TO CLIENTS:

1:106

E. PROJECTED NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS TO BE SERVED IN 5 YEARS:

44,000

2. DATA AND INFORMATION ON PERSONNEL PREPARATION AND DEVELOPMENT, RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION, AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING:

A. A LIST OF THE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE STATE THAT ARE PREPARING VR PROFESSIONALS, BY TYPE OF PROGRAM; THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED AT EACH OF THOSE INSTITUTIONS, BROKEN DOWN BY TYPE OF PROGRAM; AND THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO GRADUATED DURING THE PRIOR YEAR FROM EACH OF THOSE INSTITUTIONS WITH CERTIFICATION OR LICENSURE, OR WITH THE CREDENTIALS FOR CERTIFICATION OR LICENSURE, BROKEN DOWN BY THE PERSONNEL CATEGORY FOR WHICH THEY HAVE RECEIVED, OR HAVE THE CREDENTIALS TO RECEIVE, CERTIFICATION OR LICENSURE.

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Kent State University, Ohio University, and Wilberforce University are the three CACREP-accredited (Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs) Master of Science in Rehabilitation Counseling (MRC) programs in Ohio. OOD contacted each CORE-accredited MRC program in Ohio for its enrollment, graduation and credentialing information. Belowshows the number of students enrolled and the number of graduates for each program. All graduates from each of these programs are qualified to sit for the Certified Rehabilitation Counselor examination administered by the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC).

Institute of Higher Education	Type of Program	No. of Students Enrolled	No. of Prior Year Graduates
Kent State University	Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling	22	5
Ohio University	Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling	12	9

Institute of Higher Education	Type of Program	No. of Students Enrolled	No. of Prior Year Graduates
Wilberforce University	Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling	12	5

B. THE VR AGENCY'S PLAN FOR RECRUITMENT, PREPARATION AND RETENTION OF QUALIFIED PERSONNEL, WHICH ADDRESSES THE CURRENT AND PROJECTED NEEDS FOR QUALIFIED PERSONNEL; AND THE COORDINATION AND FACILITATION OF EFFORTS BETWEEN THE VR AGENCY AND INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS TO RECRUIT, PREPARE, AND RETAIN PERSONNEL WHO ARE QUALIFIED, INCLUDING PERSONNEL FROM MINORITY BACKGROUNDS AND PERSONNEL WHO ARE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.

A Human Capital Management (HCM) Senior Analyst in OOD's Human Resources (HR) selections unit is responsible for recruitment efforts for the agency. The HCM Senior Analyst continues to maintain relationships with CACREP accredited programs in Ohio and contiguous states. These networking relationships have proven invaluable when sourcing, recruiting, and hiring qualified graduates as VR Counselors. OOD has strengthened its relationships with CACREP-accredited universities from contiguous states (University of Pittsburgh, Michigan State University, West Virginia University) and will continue to expand its network. OOD has conducted outreach for unpaid internships for students in CACREP-accredited programs. OOD's HR selection unit in collaboration with VR administration have continued to re-establish a paid college internship program to create bridges between university's programs and recruitment of future talent.

The key to an effective recruitment strategy is recognizing that recruitment efforts must target both active and passive jobseekers. Using this as a starting point, a multi-dimensional recruitment strategy is developed for the positions to be filled. Each vacancy is evaluated and depending upon various factors (e.g., rural areas, small towns) a specialized plan may be developed.

The recruitment plan is devised prior to an announcement. Announcements are posted for a minimum of a two-week period and the recruitment plan is launched simultaneously. All recruitment plans are multi-faceted and could include social networking (e.g., LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram), job fairs, web-based advertising (e.g., Indeed, Glassdoor, diversity focused career boards), partnering with CACREP -accredited universities in Ohio and contiguous states and outreach to the disability community. OOD makes extensive use of cost-effective recruitment resources to include maintaining an extensive list of contacts to reach out to when a vacancy become available. Announcements for vacancies are posted on university electronic bulletin boards (e.g., Handshake, Simplicity, Grad Recruiters), professional association job boards (e.g., National Association of Social Workers – Ohio Chapter, Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification, Ohio Counseling Association) and websites that target marginalized communities (e.g., Professional Diversity Network, Hire for Diversity, veteranjoblistings.com).

In surveying applicants, OOD HR has found most applicants identified careers.ohio.gov as the primary recruitment source. Applicants have begun to identify specific recruitment sources

including job fairs, Indeed.com, Handshake, Internal email, LinkedIn, Twitter/X, etc. OOD will direct future recruitment efforts toward the most frequented sources.

OOD is committed to recruiting and hiring diverse and qualified staff who embrace OOD's mission and vision and reflect Ohio's population. Announcements are shared with Ohio's Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) Wilberforce University and Central State University. Announcements are also shared with sixty-one HBCUs, ninety-three Hispanic-Servicing Institutions (HSIs), fifty-eight Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions through Handshake. OOD secured a contract with Web Scribble to increase diversity focused recruitment through thirty-six diversity centered websites.

OOD is exploring ways to utilize a pipeline requisition in our applicant tracking system for the positions most frequently posted and for hard to fill positions. This will allow OOD to build a continuous list of candidates and streamline recruitment efforts.

OOD has continued to hire VR Counselors and as recruitment trends and technology evolve, so does the recruitment plan. Addressing current and projected needs for personnel who are qualified in accordance with paragraph (c) of this section is critical to successfully fulfilling OOD's mission to empower Ohioans with disabilities though employment.

C. DESCRIPTION OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND ACTIVITIES THAT ENSURE ALL PERSONNEL EMPLOYED BY THE VR AGENCY RECEIVE APPROPRIATE AND ADEQUATE TRAINING AND CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR PROFESSIONALS AND PARAPROFESSIONALS:

I. PARTICULARLY WITH RESPECT TO ASSESSMENT, VOCATIONAL COUNSELING, JOB PLACEMENT, AND REHABILITATION TECHNOLOGY, INCLUDING TRAINING IMPLEMENTED IN COORDINATION WITH ENTITIES CARRYING OUT STATE PROGRAMS UNDER SECTION 4 OF THE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 1998; AND

II. PROCEDURES FOR THE ACQUISITION AND DISSEMINATION OF SIGNIFICANT KNOWLEDGE FROM RESEARCH AND OTHER SOURCES TO VR AGENCY PROFESSIONALS AND PARAPROFESSIONALS AND FOR PROVIDING TRAINING REGARDING THE AMENDMENTS TO THE REHABILITATION ACT MADE BY THE WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT.

OOD continues to be a learning organization with ongoing commitment to fostering the skill development of staff at all levels. Specifically, VR staff are offered both internal and external educational opportunities for position-specific skill gain. OOD encourages staff to pursue knowledge related to the changing needs of the agency, the individuals with disabilities that are served, and the evolution of the roles within the VR role. OOD also works to ensure staff are informed of critical information at all levels of the organization. Information is shared at monthly leadership meetings and team meetings. OOD seeks to provide various avenues to share critical information so that all staff are informed and trained.

OOD seeks to provide meaningful training for all personnel. Every new staff member is required to attend a two-day new employee orientation (NEO) which includes a hybrid of on-demand and virtual – live instruction. Following NEO, OOD has designed position specific training that aids in the development of skills that are needed for each designated position. For example, new counselors are provided job specific training and information surrounding topics such as

conducting a thorough intake, determining eligibility, VR services, assessments, Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) development, case closure, Pre-ETS, College/vocational training, and social security work incentives. OOD has recently doubled the number of VR Training Supervisors for new staff, with a specific focus on both new counselors and new caseload assistants. This allows each VR Counselor and VR Caseload Assistant to have hands-on, individualized training in the field that builds upon what is learned in the virtual classroom. This on-boarding training model incorporates various training techniques such as observation, on-the-job training, in-depth case analysis and caseload specific topics. VR also provides continuous training opportunities for specialized caseloads such as Transition, Employment First, Jobs for Recovery, and College2Careers. Field supervision has also been restructured to increase the specialized training and support for Job Developers, Talent Sourcing Coordinators, Rehabilitation Counselors for the Deaf, Customer Support Specialists and Accountant Examiners who all provide assistance and support to VR counseling staff.

OOD has a designated VR Training Unit that provides training through a variety of modalities, including virtual – live regional trainings, virtual – live statewide trainings, pre-recorded webinars, interactive web-based learning, and question/answer sessions to augment information delivered to staff. These opportunities offer a platform for up-to-date case management updates (e.g., policy/procedures, new programs, AWARE case management system updates), disability related topics and other topics such as confidentiality and ethics. The VR Training Unit also provides weekly notifications to staff surrounding external training opportunities and highlights this information on an internal SharePoint site. This information includes RSA grant funded Technical Assistance Center and monthly disability themed topics. Compliance tips are also delivered monthly to staff in a newsletter format or short video.

Offering these regularly scheduled training sessions also supports VR counseling staff by providing continuing educational credits to support relevant licensures and/or certifications (i.e., Licensed Social Worker, Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor, and Licensed Professional Counselor). The virtual training opportunities allow staff to receive the information they need without leaving their desks. This format allows interaction via polling staff and also via chat sessions. For those who cannot attend training or may need a refresher, each session is accessible via a recording. Various additional training topics are offered within field offices, agency administrative offices, regional locations and area meetings. Staff have been trained on assessments, apprenticeships, rehabilitation technology, justice involved individuals, case documentation/management, work incentives, traumatic brain injuries, career pathways, community resources, pre-employment transition services, person-centered planning, comparable benefits, using labor market information, writing effective case notes, conducting a skilled interview, hearing aid purchasing, rehabilitation technology, WIOA common performance measures, and more. OOD brings in topic experts and partners with other state and/or county agencies, which allows staff to remain up to date on the latest research and techniques. For example, OOD continues to partner with AT Ohio to make training available to VR staff. As OOD establishes a Rehabilitation Technology Unit, it is anticipated that additional internal resources will be available for staff on this topic, along with this continued partnership with AT Ohio.

OOD has developed e-modules that have proven extremely helpful to new VR counseling staff. The modules include “VR Application and Intake” which teaches staff how to handle a referral and application for services; “VR Eligibility and Order of Selection” which teaches the

requirements for eligibility determination and identifying the functional limitations imposed by disabilities; "VR Comprehensive Assessment and IPE" which teaches staff to use vocational counseling and guidance to facilitate informed choice with the selection of appropriate services and a competitive integrated employment outcome; and "VR Case Closure" which teaches staff how to close a case with an employment outcome and how to handle challenging situations which may lead to case closure. Most of the e-modules have a "choose your adventure" element that helps staff with decision-making and offers outcomes based upon the options that they choose. All e-modules have an assessment as well to test and assess the knowledge gained. Staff complete each e-module, participate in the topic's lecture, then participate in the topics lab or practical application, and finally take a final assessment to ensure they have accomplished the learning objectives.

VR continues to assess training methods and curriculum in order to make necessary improvements to the development and delivery of training. Training needs are identified through survey, dialogue, supervisor recommendations, staff feedback, agency directives, quality reviews, and CSNA recommendations. Topics requested range from cultural competence/humility to VR Services and Reentry: Navigating Employment Obstacles.

OOD is currently exploring the availability of third-party on-demand VR themed trainings that will allow staff flexibility in participating in required trainings and obtaining CEUs.

OOD values its employees and strives to create a work environment that supports the retention of qualified staff. The availability of training as described above serves to keep staff feeling challenged and interested in future opportunities for growth, whether in a current position or in seeking a promotion. OOD supports the ability of staff to pursue on-going training by allowing each staff person up to 40 hours of release time for external, voluntary training each FFY. This release time may include, but is not limited to seminars, conferences and workshops geared toward the professional development of staff. All staff also have access to voluntary training funding, either through their union or, for exempt and 1199 staff, through Employee Development Funds (EDF). Annual funding amounts through EDF can be up to $3,500 per year for union staff and up to $4,500 for exempt staff.

3. DESCRIPTION OF VR AGENCY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF PERSONNEL STANDARDS CONSISTENT WITH SECTION 101(A)(7)(B) TO ENSURE THAT VR AGENCY PROFESSIONAL AND PARAPROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL ARE ADEQUATELY TRAINED AND PREPARED, INCLUDING—

A. STANDARDS THAT ARE CONSISTENT WITH ANY NATIONAL OR STATE-APPROVED OR -RECOGNIZED CERTIFICATION, LICENSING, REGISTRATION, OR OTHER COMPARABLE REQUIREMENTS THAT APPLY TO THE PROFESSION OR DISCIPLINE IN WHICH SUCH PERSONNEL ARE PROVIDING VR SERVICES; AND

B. THE ESTABLISHMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(7)(B)(II) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT, TO ENSURE THAT THE PERSONNEL HAVE A 21ST CENTURY UNDERSTANDING OF THE EVOLVING LABOR FORCE AND THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.

The State of Ohio neither certifies nor licenses VR Counselors; therefore, data is not available in those areas. All graduates from Ohio's CORE-accredited programs are eligible to sit for the nationally recognized Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) examination administered by

the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC). All of these graduates would meet the minimum qualifications to be VR Counselors at OOD.

OOD's qualifications and educational standards for VR Counselors model the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 34-Subtitle B-Chapter III-Part 361, as the state of Ohio does not define a standard for VR professionals. OOD's qualifications for Counselors are Master's degree in VR counseling, counseling, social work, psychology, disability studies, special education, or related rehabilitation or human services area;

Or, Master's degree in business administration, human resources, law, management, public administration or related field which provides competence in the employment sector &/or the field of disability; 12 months direct work experience with individuals with disabilities (e.g., Independent Living Center) or 12 months experience providing direct service or advocacy activities with individuals with disabilities.

Or, Bachelor's degree in VR counseling, counseling, social work, psychology, disability studies, special education, business administration, human resources, economics or related rehabilitation or human services area; 24 months experience direct work with individuals with disabilities (e.g., Independent Living Center or 24 months providing direct service or advocacy activities with individuals with disabilities. In addition, students who are currently enrolled in qualifying degree programs with a graduation date prior to the hire date are encouraged to apply.

OOD works with organizations both in Ohio and throughout the country to identify qualified individuals with disabilities for employment with OOD. For example, HR notifies all OOD staff, including all VR Counselors, each time a vacancy occurs at OOD. VR Counselors notify job ready candidates about opportunities for external applicants. In addition, all announcements are posted through the state of Ohio's website at http://careers.ohio.gov. In turn, these announcements are picked up by a job posting consolidating site such as http://Indeed.com, expanding the audience to whom vacancies are publicized.

4. METHOD(S) THE VR AGENCY USES TO ENSURE THAT PERSONNEL ARE ABLE TO COMMUNICATE IN APPROPRIATE MODES OF COMMUNICATION WITH OR IN THE NATIVE LANGUAGE OF APPLICANTS OR ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE LIMITED ENGLISH SPEAKING ABILITY.

OOD's Language Access Plan (LAP) was implemented in May 2022. The development of the LAP assists the agency in delivering consistent high quality and appropriate language services when individuals with limited English proficiency seek services. This plan informs OOD staff, individuals with disabilities receiving services and community constituents about language access services and supports.

It consists of the following four components:

Section 1: Needs Assessment:

Information about the needs of current and prospective individuals whose preferred spoken and written language is a language other than English, including the number of individuals with limited English proficiency, places in which individuals with limited English proficiency interact with the agency, and ways in which individuals interact with the agency.

Section 2: Language Services:

Description of the types of services the agency will provide, such as in-person interpretation and remote interpretation.

Section 3: Notices:

Description of how the agency will let its individuals, their family members/guardians, other state agencies and partners know about the availability of services.

Section 4: Training:

Description of how the agency will train staff on its processes, policies, procedures for providing language assistance services, including who and how often.

Section 5: Evaluation:

Plan for when and how the agency will monitor and update its plan, policies, procedures to ensure that needs are met and that there is a framework for continuous quality improvement.

OOD's LAP is reviewed annually with input from individuals who receive services, staff and community constituents.

Individuals who are Deaf, DeafBlind, hard of hearing, experience Language Deprivation Syndrome (LDS) or others with communication barriers due to disability:

For individuals prior to application for VR services, OOD staff coordinate communication services with the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) team in the Human Services (HR) division at OOD. DEIA maintains contracts with a variety of interpreting and captioning providers who provide American Sign Language (ASL) interpreting, interpreting using a Deaf Interpreter (DI), tactile interpreting, c-print, and Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART). These services are provided both in-person and virtually and are funded with administrative (non-case services) dollars. Historically, Requests for Quotes (RFQs) are posted though the State of Ohio's procurement system every two years; however, RFQs may be posted more frequently to ensure effective coverage throughout the state. Both DEIA staff and Deaf Services staff, housed within the Bureau of Services for the Visually Impaired (BSVI), are available for consultation when the requesting staff require additional support or problem-solving to provide these accommodations to applicants.

For eligible individuals, OOD staff purchase language services using case service dollars via the VR Fee Schedule. Eligible providers identify the counties and methods by which they agree to provide services, including both in-person and virtually. Examples of services include American Sign Language (ASL) interpreting, interpreting using a Deaf Interpreter (DI), tactile interpreting, c-print, and Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART). Deaf Services staff are available to consult on cases where communication services are not effective or where additional problem-solving is required.

OOD currently employs one (1) full-time staff ASL interpreter, with the goal of increasing this number to six (6) full-time staff interpreters and one (1) interpreter supervisor. Currently, the staff interpreter's main focus is to provide reasonable accommodation (RA) interpreting to OOD staff and interpreting for individuals prior to VR application. The staff interpreter is also available to interpret or consult on complicated cases for eligible individuals.

OOD also employs Rehabilitation Counselors for the Deaf (RCDs), Vocational Rehabilitation Supervisors (VRSs), and management staff who have fluency in ASL and are able to communicate directly with pre-applicants and eligible individuals who use ASL. These staff serve individuals in all of Ohio's 88 counties.

OOD staff also have access to the artificial intelligence (AI) captioning technology in Microsoft Teams. Staff are cautioned on the reliability of this technology, but it is an available option when presenting eligible individuals with informed choice. There are a variety of additional AI and AI-assisted captioning tools available free of charge and for purchase. Deaf Services staff are available to consult on these tools and assist with coordinating the purchase of these tools.

Lastly, OOD staff who specialize in serving this population receive annual training on the various federal programs and equipment designed to assist individuals with communication barriers, including Video Relay Service (VRS), Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS), and the iCanConnect program.

5. AS APPROPRIATE, DESCRIBE THE PROCEDURES AND ACTIVITIES TO COORDINATE THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT WITH PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT UNDER THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT.

OOD and DEW collaborate on a regular basis to provide guidance to educational agencies and VR personnel responsible for facilitating transition services. These staff also offer consultation and technical assistance resources to assist schools and related community support entities in planning for transition of students with disabilities.

At the state level, both agencies have designated personnel to provide oversight and leadership for the development of policies, procedures, interagency training and other state-level partnership activities for transition services. On the local level, VR Counselors are assigned as liaisons to schools and work with local school districts' transition specialists.

OOD will provide targeted training to enhance personnel development. This will include targeted training on Employment First, supported employment, eligibility, transition procedures and clarification of roles and responsibilities of OOD and school personnel.

J. COORDINATION WITH EDUCATION OFFICIALS.

In accordance with the requirements in Section 101(a)(11)(D) of the Rehabilitation Act—

1. DESCRIBE PLANS, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES FOR COORDINATION BETWEEN THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AND EDUCATION OFFICIALS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PUBLIC EDUCATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, THAT ARE DESIGNED TO FACILITATE THE TRANSITION OF THE STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES FROM THE RECEIPT OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICES IN SCHOOL TO THE RECEIPT OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES, INCLUDING PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES.

Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) implemented its current Transition Services procedure (Procedure 80-VR-11-12) in October 2022 which further clarifies the provision of transition services to students with disabilities. The procedure complies with 34 CFR 361.45, ensuring that the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) for students with disabilities is developed as early as is reasonably possible, but no later than the time at which the student leaves the school setting. Specifically, the transition procedure states that the IPE must be

completed, and a specific employment outcome identified as soon as they are able but at minimum prior to the eligible student exiting school.

The current transition procedure outlines a practice to foster partnership and collaboration, in which a vocational rehabilitation (VR) staff person is assigned to each local school district and/or high school, known as Transition Liaisons. The procedure directs these liaisons to conduct outreach and referral development and provide information about available transition services, including Pre-Employment Transition Services. Transition Liaisons hold initial meetings with school staff members at the beginning of the school year to discuss OOD updates, reviewing the process for students to apply or receive services as a potentially eligible (PE) student and the arrangement and provision of Pre-Employment Transition Services. These discussions are also intended to facilitate the timelines; discuss planning activities; provide updates and review student progress; request meeting space at the school as needed; and coordinate education and outreach activities for students and families.

The current transition procedure outlines a service delivery model with increased focus on the skill development needs of each eligible student with a disability, as young as age 14, in order to meet them where they are on their path to employment. It is designed to be person-centered with flexibility in service provision based on each individual student's unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capacities, interests, circumstances, and experiences. Students with disabilities, regardless of age, who need to gain a general understanding about employment and/or help identifying their career interests may participate in pre-employment transition services and, as necessary, other developmental activities while other students may already have basic work skills and a fundamental understanding about employment and may benefit from paid work experiences such as a summer youth work experience or assistance obtaining and maintaining a seasonal or after school job. The flexibility of this service delivery model allows VR program staff to provide more highly individual services and become involved with the student at an earlier age, as young as 14, thus becoming a more active participant in the transition planning process overall.

In accordance with 34 CFR 361.65, OOD reserves 15 percent of the state's allotment for the provision of pre-employment transition services, as described in 34 CFR 361.48(a) and described below. OOD, also, approved its most current VR Pre-Employment Transition Services Subcategories procedure (Procedure 80-VR-11-18) in October 2022. The procedure addresses both students with disabilities who are PE and students who are eligible for VR services. The procedure outlines the process for connecting PE students with disabilities with Pre-Employment Transition Services. It details how designated staff process Pre-Employment Transition Service requests, enter student information into a PE case type, and authorize services for PE students. The procedure also, outlines the process for students with disabilities who are eligible for VR Services and complies with 34 CFR 361.46 ensuring Pre-ETS is added to the IPE when a student has an IPE.

Currently, entities with one-year experience working with students with disabilities can be approved to provide pre-employment transition services after attending a mandatory training on the requirements of delivering Pre-Employment Transition Services. Providers develop curricula and must be focused on VR activities and outcomes outlined in OOD's Pre-Employment Transition Services Matrix document. OOD is exploring the option of contracting for a Pre-ETS curriculum specifically designed for students in Ohio. This curriculum will be

made available to any provider who would like to utilize it. In addition, the curriculum will have activities more strongly related to credential attainment and will include better education strategies, tools, and activities allowing the curriculum to be delivered more effectively to students with diverse learner needs.

OOD has worked with the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce's (DEW) Office for Exceptional Children (DEW/OEC) to promote collaboration between local education authorities and OOD field staff to coordinate Transition and Pre-Employment Transition Services. Both agencies now have public facing documents on their websites to highlight the availability of services. OOD created a "Students 14+" area on the agency website where students with disabilities, families, schools, county boards of developmental disabilities, and other interested parties can easily obtain information about services and learn how to be connected with OOD.

In addition, OOD currently hosts six (6) regional Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) sites for high school students with disabilities. The program has a focus on one of the five pre-employment transition services, instruction in self-advocacy, and is designed to bring students with disabilities together to learn and improve leadership, citizenship, independence, self-advocacy, and social skills. Moving forward, OOD plans to provide additional flexibility to improve access for more students.

To facilitate each regional YLF site, OOD contracts with the Ohio Statewide Independent Living Council (OSILC) to increase access for high school students with disabilities who want to participate in a regional Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) hosted by various Centers for Independent Living (CIL) across the state. The program continues to follow the YLF framework set forth in the California Model Youth Leadership Forum for Students with disabilities (i.e., YLF model)

In addition, OSILC follows up with the previous year's delegates to discuss each individual's progress with their Personal Leadership Plan (PLP), assess their interest in becoming a peer mentor in future events, and get information about what skills the former delegates have employed since their participation.

2. DESCRIBE THE CURRENT STATUS AND SCOPE OF THE FORMAL INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE VR AGENCY AND THE STATE EDUCATIONAL AGENCY. CONSISTENT WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE FORMAL INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT PURSUANT TO 34 C.F.R. § 361.22(B), PROVIDE, AT A MINIMUM, THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION ABOUT THE AGREEMENT:

A. CONSULTATION AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, WHICH MAY BE PROVIDED USING ALTERNATIVE MEANS FOR MEETING PARTICIPATION (SUCH AS VIDEO CONFERENCES AND CONFERENCE CALLS), TO ASSIST EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES IN PLANNING FOR THE TRANSITION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES FROM SCHOOL TO POST-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES AND OTHER VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES;

B. TRANSITION PLANNING BY PERSONNEL OF THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AND EDUCATIONAL AGENCY PERSONNEL FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES THAT FACILITATES THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THEIR INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS (IEPS) UNDER SECTION 614(D) OF THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT;

C. THE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES, INCLUDING FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES, OF EACH AGENCY, INCLUDING PROVISIONS FOR DETERMINING STATE LEAD AGENCIES AND QUALIFIED PERSONNEL RESPONSIBLE FOR TRANSITION SERVICES AND PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES;

D. PROCEDURES FOR OUTREACH TO AND IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES WHO NEED TRANSITION SERVICES AND PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES. OUTREACH TO THESE STUDENTS SHOULD OCCUR AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE DURING THE TRANSITION PLANNING PROCESS AND MUST INCLUDE, AT A MINIMUM, A DESCRIPTION OF THE PURPOSE OF THE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM, ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS, APPLICATION PROCEDURES, AND SCOPE OF SERVICES THAT MAY BE PROVIDED TO ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS;

E. COORDINATION NECESSARY TO SATISFY DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS SET FORTH IN 34 C.F.R. PART 397 REGARDING STUDENTS AND YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES WHO ARE SEEKING SUBMINIMUM WAGE EMPLOYMENT; AND

F. ASSURANCE THAT, IN ACCORDANCE WITH 34 C.F.R. § 397.31, NEITHER THE SEA NOR THE LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY WILL ENTER INTO A CONTRACT OR OTHER ARRANGEMENT WITH AN ENTITY, AS DEFINED IN 34 C.F.R. § 397.5(D), FOR THE PURPOSE OF OPERATING A PROGRAM UNDER WHICH YOUTH WITH A DISABILITY IS ENGAGED IN WORK COMPENSATED AT A SUBMINIMUM WAGE.

According to the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce (DEW), there are more than 110,000 students with disabilities ages 14 to 21 with an Individualized Education Program (IEP), many of which may be potentially eligible for OOD VR services. In 2022, OOD served over 15,000 youth between the ages of 14 and 24. This demonstrates the high number of youth with disabilities mutually served by both VR and education and highlights the importance of having a streamlined partnerships to improve outcomes of youth with disabilities who are currently enrolled in school or who have recently exited school.

OOD maintains interagency agreements (IAA) with DEW/OEC. This includes an overarching agreement that outlines how the agencies will work together to support effective service and improved outcomes for students with disabilities in Ohio. A data sharing agreement for mutually served students with disabilities is also maintained.

The IAA between OOD and DEW/OEC was recently updated and will remain in effect until June 30, 2025. The purpose of this agreement is to share efforts to prepare students with disabilities for competitive integrated employment and independent living; outline a collaborative framework for coordinating state and local resources; and provide basic guidance for coordinating plans, policies and procedures, to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities, including receipt of VR services. It also addresses the following:

- roles and responsibilities;
- outreach to and identification of students with disabilities;

- consultation and technical assistance to assist VR and educational personnel in planning for the transition of students including the development and implementation of a student's individualized education program (IEP) and IPE;
- documentation requirements set forth in section 511 of the Rehabilitation Act with regard to youth with disabilities who are seeking subminimum wage employment; and

In addition to language in the IAA between OOD and DEW/OEC, there is also an Employment First Taskforce Joint Guidance document, "Limitations on Use of Subminimum Wage: Section 511 of the WIOA." This joint guidance document outlines the coordination necessary to satisfy documentation requirements prior to payment of subminimum wage to youth with disabilities. Included in this document is specific language regarding the prohibition of schools from contracting with entities for the purpose of paying subminimum wage to students with disabilities.

While the IAA with DEW/OEC outlines the overarching partnership between the two agencies, it also includes an addendum to establish the Ohio Transition Support Partnership (OTSP). This statewide collaboration between OOD and DEW expands transition services for students with disabilities, ages 14 to 21, who are receiving services under an Individualized Education Program and meet OOD eligibility criteria. Through the OTSP model, VR staff have an increased presence in each of the 92 Career Technical Planning Districts (CTPDs) and other local education agencies statewide. The most recent agreement expands OTSP and allows 65 dedicated VR Counselors to serve approximately 6,000 students annually through this partnership alone.

The OTSP partnership expands access for students with disabilities to engage in career exploration and skill development at a younger age, preparing them for career success and independence. By dedicating 65 VR Counselors, this allows more participation of OOD in IEP team meetings to ensure cross-agency planning and earlier career preparation and strengthens the partnership between OOD staff and DEW's regional state support teams.

The OTSP model utilizes a person-centered, agency-neutral and outcome-focused approach to comprehensive career planning that is based on established evidence-based predictors of success. The model is designed to increase independence and career readiness. While a full range of VR services are available, service provision is based on individual specific data driven decisions and is designed to meet people where they are on their unique path to employment.

VR Counselors assigned to the OTSP, in addition to other VR Counselors providing services to students with disabilities, receive training in transition-specific items, including coordinated multi-agency planning, approach to service delivery for student with disabilities, the roles and functions of VR and education in serving students with disabilities; and strategies for communication and outreach. To develop and strengthen relationships between counselors and educators at the local level, DEW's Regional Support Teams and OOD staff coordinate meetings with local education agencies and CTPDs. These meetings provide an opportunity for local partners to learn about the program model and discuss potential referrals at the local level. Partners work together to plan for upcoming outreach events with students and their families.

OOD and DEW's data sharing agreement, The Interagency Data Sharing Agreement, allows for the exchange of student/participant data through utilization of an intermediary contractor. This agreement calls for a cross-agency data governance group. The two agencies share data

collected related to students with disabilities who are receiving special education services and those potentially eligible or eligible for VR services in order to facilitate statewide coordination of VR, transition, and pre-employment transition services; referral development; and technical assistance to better support students with disabilities in meeting their competitive integrated employment goals.

The data is utilized for the purposes of identifying and determining outreach efforts; anticipating demographic need for staff and caseload distribution for both VR and PE case types; evaluating OTSP effectiveness; determining where service delivery gaps have closed; and providing technical assistance where gaps continue to exist. Recently the data share was utilized to compare the number of students on an IEP in each school with the number of open VR cases in those same schools. The information is being utilized to determine staffing and outreach needs.

Consultation and Technical Assistance under the Interagency Agreement. DEW/OEC staff and OOD central office staff provide statewide oversight and leadership for the development of policies, procedures, interagency training and other partnership activities that promote competitive integrated employment for students with disabilities in Ohio. Through the network of 16 State Support Team transition contacts and four CTPD consultants, OOD leadership and field staff, local partnerships are strengthen by Multi Agency Planning meetings and other collaborative meetings to streamline efficiencies in referring students for VR services, ensuring the coordination of transition services at the local level, and expanding opportunities for students who are interested in finding community employment.

DEW maintains Operating Standards for the Education of Children with Disabilities to guide the provision of special education and related services for students with disabilities, including transition services. The document defines “transition services” to include the development of competitive integrated employment goals. It also requires that staff coordinating transition shall either obtain the Transition to Work endorsement or possess the skills and knowledge necessary to facilitate a planning process with multiple agencies, communicate with other agencies, assist in referring students to adult services systems, and create strategies that support the career development pathways of students with disabilities leading to career and college readiness.

OOD staff at the state and local level provide consultation and technical assistance to school personnel, students, families and other agency partners through formal and informal trainings, joint problem solving and the exchange of information on policies and procedures. VR Counselors serve as liaisons to local schools, attend IEP meetings regularly for potential referrals and serve on state and local interagency groups. OOD staff also present at state and local conferences and training seminars and participate in local district career fairs and other interagency forums on VR eligibility and services.

The Interagency Agreement outlines how transition planning is to occur at the local level for individual students with disabilities. Specifically, the agreement provides for consultation and technical assistance to educational agencies and VR personnel in planning for the transition of students with disabilities that facilitates the development and completion of individualized plans prior to the student exiting school. This includes the IPE, the 504 Plan, the Individualized Education Program, and any other plans that lead to postsecondary vocational outcomes. The agreement encourages educational agencies to develop linkages with VR offices as early as

possible in the transition process. The agreement also specifies training efforts to promote the use of evidence-based practices and predictors to improve youth skills for competitive, integrated employment and community participation, driven by principles of informed choice, community-based services and measurable results. Additionally, Ohio Administrative Code now requires transition planning and services under an IEP to begin no later than age 14 and include a statement describing appropriate measurable postsecondary goals based on age-appropriate transition assessments related to employment in a competitive environment in which workers are integrated regardless of disability.

The Interagency Agreement between DEW and OOD outlines roles and responsibilities including assurances that local education agencies are implementing Ohio's Operating Standards for the Education of Children with Disabilities. This means that transition services are based on the individual student's needs, taking into account the student's strengths, preferences, and interests, and includes: instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment in an integrated competitive environment and other post-school adult living objectives, and when assessment data supports, a need for acquisition of daily living skills and provision of a functional vocational evaluation.

Roles and responsibilities for VR staff under the Interagency Agreement between DEW and OOD include providing a liaison counselor for each local school district and/or high school to formalize collaboration in planning and referral development and facilitating identification of students with disabilities who may benefit from VR services as early as possible during the transition planning process. This ensures that transition services and goals on a student's IPE are aligned with the IEP, utilizing existing documentation of the student's disability as well as information needed to determine appropriate services whenever possible. Staff also finalizes the IPE prior to a student exiting school. VR services should complement services funded by schools, but not replace those services. This means that neither the local education agency nor OOD may shift the financial burden for providing a service for which it would be responsible for to the other entity.

OOD and DEW work in collaboration to educate VR staff, Local Education Agencies (LEAs), students, families, and other community partners about the availability of Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS). Representatives from OOD and DEW present on Pre-ETS and attend multi-agency planning meetings together to provide technical assistance on VR services and Pre-ETS. In addition, Pre-ETS information is housed on both websites, and both agencies utilize and distribute a Pre-ETS fact sheet and flyer to interested parties. The fact sheet outlines the process for connecting both students who are potentially eligible (PE) and students with an open VR case with Pre-ETS. The fact sheet, also, outlines the school's responsibility in signing, completing, and submitting a "Request for Pre-Employment Transition Services" for any potentially eligible student interested in participating.

Transition services are funded by the various state agencies that serve the individual youth in accordance with requirements under WIOA, IDEA and other pertinent laws. In addition to the Interagency Agreement between DEW and OOD, Ohio's Employment First Task Force works across multiple systems to align policies and practices and issues guidance to the field as needed to ensure that students receive the services needed to ensure achievement of employment and other postsecondary outcomes. While OOD and DEW are the two lead agencies with regard to facilitating transition services for students with disabilities, the Ohio Department

of Job and Family Services (ODJFS), the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD), Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (Ohio MHAS), and Ohio Department of Medicaid (ODM), as Employment First Task Force agencies, also support this work, including funding services for mutually served students and youth with disabilities.

As noted above, OOD's transition procedure outlines a practice to foster outreach and partnership collaboration, in which a liaison VR staff person is assigned to each local school district and/or high school to formalize collaborative approaches to student planning, referral development, tracking, as well as coordination and provision of pre-employment transition services, transition services, and other VR services. The procedure directs these liaisons to hold initial meetings with school staff members to discuss transition services at the beginning of each school year. These discussions are intended to facilitate the coordination of transition services, including projections for new referrals, timelines, planning activities and meeting space at the school, as well as education and outreach activities for students and families.

VR staff are also directed to conduct outreach activities including proactive introductions and education with multiple partners, attending transition fairs, conducting presentations, and attending school-based meetings in order to: promote early engagement, as early as age fourteen; describe the purpose of the VR program; discuss the application process; review the process for linking potentially eligible students with pre-employment transition services; and to distribute transition specific publications for future reference.

OOD updated its publicly facing website with new visuals and links on the "Students 14+" page. This page includes both general transition and Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) information as well as information about how to apply for services. VR staff utilize many of the tools available on the website in their outreach efforts by attaching website and video links to e-mails and sharing videos in presentations. DEW and OOD worked together on a new Pre-ETS video now housed on both websites which is geared for schools who want to become a Pre-ETS provider. There are, also, a variety of different marketing materials on the students 14+ page offered in both English and Spanish including a "Connecting Students with Work" flyer , a "Are you in High School?" postcard with a QR code to market to students directly, and a "Pre-Employment Transition Services" flyer. In addition, OOD created a statewide school liaison list housed and updated on the extranet for all staff to link potential applicants quickly and efficiently with staff assigned to their school.

To further assist with outreach to students with disabilities, OOD has recently created a Pre-Employment Transition Services fact sheet and flyer distributed through OOD and DEW to help students, families, school staff and other interested parties gain understanding about each of the five (5) services, how to access services, and that services are made available to both potentially eligible students with disabilities and students with open VR cases.

K. COORDINATION WITH EMPLOYERS

In accordance with the requirements in Section 101(a)(11)(E) of the Rehabilitation Act, describe how the VR agency will work with employers to identify competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities in order to facilitate the provision of VR services; and transition services for youth and students with disabilities, including pre-employment transition services for students with disabilities.

OOD's Division of Employer and Innovation Services works with more than 700 Employer Partners to promote a talent pool of job-ready candidates, and to support businesses in the hiring and retention of individuals with disabilities. OOD supports employers through a regional Business Relations Team approach. In each of OOD's five service areas, an Employer Services Manager leads a team comprised of a Business Relations Specialist, a Career Development Specialist, a Career and Credential Consultant, and two Talent Sourcing Coordinators. In addition to the duties specified below, these staff provide no-cost disability etiquette and awareness training, share information about employer tax credits, and coordinate local career connection and hiring events to link employers with job-ready candidates with disabilities.

Business Relations Specialists develop and manage partnerships with employers, local workforce organizations, chambers of commerce, Society of Human Resource Management chapters, economic development agencies, and JobsOhio regional talent coordinators to promote OOD services and employment of OOD participants. These staff plan and execute multiple virtual and in-person hiring events throughout the year. OOD hosts a minimum of five virtual Employer Spotlight events each quarter for its Employer Partners to present information about their company, available positions, and hiring needs to VR and provider staff. They also create educational workshops and training on a variety of disability inclusion topics, such as creating Employee Resource Groups, self-identification campaigns, and inclusive hiring and onboarding.

Career Development Specialists support the Ohio College2Careers program. These staff develop and manage partnerships with employers who have internship programs and career services staff at Ohio colleges and universities to assist students with disabilities served by OOD in obtaining internship and job placement opportunities in their career field. These staff proactively engage with employer partners to assist in the development of inclusive internship opportunities for college students with disabilities. These staff also develop resources for students on various career development topics, such as resume writing, interviewing, networking, requesting an accommodation and self-advocacy.

Career and Credential Consultants, a new addition to the regional Business Relations Team, develop and manage partnerships with Registered Apprenticeship Program(RAP) employers and facilitate partnerships with career-technical centers, and workforce development training programs to promote the hiring of qualified candidate with disabilities, specifically for careers that require certificates, certifications, licensures, or other short-term credentials. These staff also develop resources for students on career pathways, and career advancement, and provide technical assistance to VR counselors about credential programs, their requirements, duration, coursework expectations, and employer hiring needs.

Talent Sourcing Coordinators collaborate with the Business Relations Specialist, Career Development Specialist, and Career and Credential Consultant to coordinate business relations activities and serve as the main point of contact for VR staff and external job developers to maximize job placement opportunities for OOD participants. These staff conduct resume reviews and mock interviewing for OOD participants and support the coordination of multiple hiring events. They also co-facilitate disability etiquette and awareness training.

The Business Relations Team utilizes current labor market information tools and industry growth projections to identify those employers that have in-demand jobs and/or are experiencing job growth, and approach them about partnership opportunities. They share

information with VR counselors about current labor market information and industry growth projections. Counselors use this information to counsel students with disabilities about the occupations with the greatest potential for employment opportunities and the skills needed to compete for those jobs.

Many of the Employer Partners OOD works with have entry-level employment opportunities that may be appropriate for students and youth with disabilities, including retail, food service, customer service, and other sectors. Because many of these opportunities are also part-time with flexible schedules, students with disabilities may work at after- school or summer jobs while also attending school. When a student or youth applies for a job opportunity with an Employer Partner, the Business Relations Specialist will advocate on their behalf.

OOD hosts Employer Showcase events for college students with disabilities to learn about internship and career tips on how to apply. Students have the opportunity to ask questions during this interactive session. Employer Partners also participate in Youth Leadership Forum events for high school juniors and seniors. These business representatives share information with the youth participants about employment opportunities at their companies and the skills and characteristics they look for when hiring candidates.

OOD's Accessible Ohio Team is available to provide personalized consultations on workplace accessibility and job accommodations. These regional staff consult with employer partners about their responsibilities under Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act and explore possibilities for reasonable accommodations in the workplace. These consultations can help employers boost employee productivity and keep employees with disabilities on the job. They also learn about possible funding options for purchasing reasonable accommodations or other accessibility items.

Employer Partner Jobs List: OOD maintains this list as a way to promote job opportunities with its Employer Partners to participants, VR staff, and providers. This web-based searchable database is updated monthly and contains typical jobs offered by OOD's more than 700 Employer Partners categorized by the employer's industry. OOD also maintains an Internship Dashboard for counselors to identify potential internship opportunities for the students on their caseloads. This dashboard is an internal searchable database that is updated weekly.

Inclusive Employer Toolkit: OOD maintains this toolkit, which is a web-based tool for employers to easily locate information and resources to help them recruit, hire, and retain employees with disabilities and foster an inclusive workplace. This Toolkit is a curation of webinars, fact sheets, and other resources and is organized in five topic areas: Building the Business Case, Inclusive Workplace, Recruiting, Hiring, and Supporting Employees, Workplace Accessibility, and Workplace Accommodations.

Career Development Toolkit: OOD maintains a virtual Career Development Toolkit on its website for college students with disabilities covering a variety of topics, such as networking, social media etiquette, disability disclosure, and self-advocacy. Many of these resources have been converted into on- campus workshops for college students with disabilities in partnership with Ohio C2C partnering colleges and universities.

Career Pathways Toolkit: OOD maintains a Career Pathways Toolkit on its website that is designed to assist job seekers in discovering career options in an in-demand field and learn about career clusters, career pathways, and short-term credentials. The toolkit includes typical

job duties and wages, credentials needed to get a job, where and how to get started in training, and additional support needed while working toward a degree, certification, or other credential, such as training in communication skills, financial basics, and self-advocacy.

OOD delivers no-cost webinars for employers about every month and offers continuing education through the Human Resources Certification Institute (HRCI) and the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM). OOD also maintains an on-demand library of archived webinars for employers that cover a variety of topics, such as supervisors and Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act, reasonable accommodations, digital accessibility, artificial intelligence in hiring and employment, employee resource groups and self-identification.

Ohio Vocational Apprentice Program (OVAP): OOD launched OVAP in 2019 to support Governor DeWine's Executive Order 2019-03D, which established Ohio as a Disability Inclusion State and Model Employer of Individuals with Disabilities. OVAP provides opportunities for students and adults with disabilities to gain work experience, exposure, and access to state government employment through paid apprenticeships with state agencies. The goal of the program is for apprentices to secure permanent employment in state government upon completion of the apprenticeship. A member of the Business Relations Team collaborates with state agencies to identify occupations in high demand, and then works with VR Counselors to identify candidates who meet qualifications and have an aligned job goal. OOD supports the application and onboarding process at the state agency and funds the apprentice's wages for up to 1,000 hours. With support from a grant from the Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council, OOD is expanding the program to the Ohio General Assembly and Statewide Elected Officials. This program has gained national recognition and has been highlighted on several national webinars and conferences. OOD has met virtually with representatives from Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Virginia, and Wisconsin to help them replicate the program.

National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM): Every October, in recognition of NDEAM, OOD hosts five regional in-person hiring events in Cincinnati, Columbus, Toledo, Canton, and Cleveland. These hiring events provide a unique opportunity for OOD job seekers to connect one-on-one with employers for job interviews. Employers who participate in these events are hiring for actual job openings and often extend job offers on the spot.

In addition to the five major hiring events/job fairs held each October, OOD also hosts approximately 15 "OOD Hiring Days" throughout the year. These one-day events typically feature one Employer Partner who conducts scheduled interviews with OOD participants. These events are held at the local VR office or the Employer Partner's location. OOD also hosts a statewide work-from-home virtual hiring event annually, providing an opportunity for OOD participants to interview with Employer Partners hiring for work-from-home/remote positions. Common industry sectors/occupations include finance, insurance, customer service, and sales.

Ohio's In-Demand Jobs Week: During the first full week of May, OOD celebrates Ohio's In-Demand Jobs Week by hosting regional hiring or career connection events to promote jobs that are in high demand and pay a sustainable wage. Examples of these events include in-person and virtual hiring events, job fairs, transition expos, roundtables, employer tours, and employer panels. Many of these events are coordinated with local school districts to educate students on career opportunities that are in-demand.

OOD partners with the Ohio Department of Education and local school districts to host transition expos for high school students with disabilities. Employer Partners share information about their companies and job opportunities. OOD recruits employers to participate in the event to meet students looking for jobs or preparing for employment through pre-employment transition services.

In accordance with House Bill 110, each October during National Disability Employment Awareness Month, the governor of Ohio presents an award to employers who meet the criteria for having a workplace inclusive of individuals with disabilities. OOD is responsible for determining the criteria for the award and promoting participation by Ohio employers. The Governor's Inclusive Employer Award application allows employers to self-select to be considered for the award and respond to questions in four areas: Inclusive Workplace; Recruiting, Hiring, and Supporting Employees; Workplace Accommodations; and Workplace Accessibility. The employer(s) with the highest score are awarded the Governor's Inclusive Employer Award.

Further reinforcing OOD's role as a core workforce agency in Ohio, OOD's Director is appointed by the governor to serve on the Governor's Executive Workforce Board (GEWB), a statewide panel that advises Governor DeWine and the Governor's Office of Workforce Transformation (OWT) on the development, implementation, and continuous improvement of Ohio's workforce system.

L. INTERAGENCY COOPERATION WITH OTHER AGENCIES

In accordance with the requirements in Section 101(a)(11)(C) and (K), describe interagency cooperation with and utilization of the services and facilities of agencies and programs that are not carrying out activities through the statewide workforce development system to develop opportunities for community-based employment in integrated settings, to the greatest extent practicable for the following:

1. STATE PROGRAMS (DESIGNATE LEAD AGENCY(IES) AND IMPLEMENTING ENTITY(IES)) CARRIED OUT UNDER SECTION 4 OF THE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 1998;

AT Ohio is the agency that oversees Ohio's Assistive Technology program carried out under Section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998. AT Ohio periodically provides training regarding assistive technology to Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) staff. OOD Business Relations staff regularly recommend employer partners reach out to AT Ohio, including their Device Lending Library, when they are seeking options for accommodations in the workplace. In addition, OOD partners with AT Ohio for their Computer Refurbishing Program. An OOD representative serves on AT Ohio's Board, which supports the agencies in identifying additional opportunities for further partnership.

2. PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT BY THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE;

OOD has a partnership with the Ohio AgrAbility program, which is administered by The Ohio State University (OSU) in partnership with Easter Seals. AgrAbility is part of a national program from the US Department of Agriculture that promotes independence for people in agriculture who want to continue to farm after experiencing the onset of a disability. OOD works with individuals served by the AgrAbility program to support access to the assistive technology and

other VR services needed to continue farming. OOD has worked with the Ohio Department of Agriculture to bring awareness to Ohio's AgrAbility program and share the impact the program has on the lives of Ohio farmers with disabilities. OOD's Provider and Contract Management Unit has a staff person who is the established point of contact for Ohio's AgrAbility program to provide targeted technical assistance to VR field staff. This OOD staff person co-presented with Ohio AgrAbility staff at the National AgrAbility Conference in FFY 2023 on how state VR agencies can work together with their state AgrAbility programs, and the best practices learned from the partnership between OOD and Ohio AgrAbility.

3. NON-EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES SERVING OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH;

OOD staff work with a variety of agencies that serve out-of-school youth at the local level. OOD collaborates locally with county boards of developmental disabilities in addition to other community partners such as local mental health agencies and OhioMeansJobs Centers. OOD is a member of Ohio's Employment First Taskforce that is developing a transition vision plan as a result of Ohio being one of 16 states selected to participate in the Employment First State Leadership Mentor Program (EFSLMP) coordinated by the Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP). The vision plan is centered on serving transition age youth and increasing community employment outcomes for youth with disabilities. Members of the taskforce include Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD); Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD); Ohio Department of Education and Workforce (DEW); Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (Ohio MHAS); Ohio Department of Medicaid; Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS); and Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council. Those same partners also collaborated to develop the employment first transition framework that is intended to address barriers to transition planning and services in order to achieve meaningful adult outcomes.

OOD is a representative on the Ohio Interagency Council for Youth focusing on serving youth in different systems. OOD is, also, a representative on the Ohio DD Council, working together with council members and other stakeholders towards the mission to improve independence, productivity, and inclusion for people with developmental disabilities and their families in community life. In addition, OOD is a statutory member of the re-entry coalition where the Ohio Department of Youth Services is also a member. An example of this collaboration is increased outreach and link of youth with OOD services prior to release. OOD, also, participates in the state Interagency Work Group on Autism (IWGA). This work group meets to improve the coordination of the state's efforts to address the service needs of individuals with autism spectrum disorders and their families.

4. STATE USE CONTRACTING PROGRAMS;

The State of Ohio's Community Rehabilitation Program (CRP) is a purchasing program mandated by the Ohio Revised Code. CRP Suppliers are:

- nonprofit organizations
- State contract holder
- employ Ohioans with work-limiting disabilities

State agencies, political subdivisions, and state institutions are required by the Ohio Revised Code (125.60 through 125.6012) and the Ohio Administrative Code (125:5-3-1 and 123:5-3-12) to purchase goods and services from CRP Suppliers before all other sources.

OOD collaborates with the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) by participating on the CRP steering committee. This committee is comprised of representatives from DAS, multiple CRPs across the state; the Ohio Department of Transportation; the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD) and Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD).

5. STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR ADMINISTERING THE STATE MEDICAID PLAN UNDER TITLE XIX OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT (42 U.S.C. 1396 ET SEQ.);

OOD, DODD, and Ohio MHAS have consistently worked together to serve mutually eligible individuals with disabilities. As OOD provides services to an increased number of individuals with the most significant disabilities, the development of long-term supports and services is essential to the maintenance of achieving supported employment outcomes.

Ohio is an Employment First state with an active taskforce of state agency representatives, of which OOD is an active member. The task force is charged with expanding community employment opportunities by reducing barriers and aligning state policy. The taskforce meets regularly to develop best practices for supporting students and adults with developmental disabilities, discuss funding and planning for services and supports that prioritize competitive integrated employment and to establish training plans for providers and staff.

The state agencies participating in the Employment First Taskforce agencies have jointly agreed to Common Principles, which have been memorialized in a written agreement. This includes the DODD, DEW, ODJFS, Ohio MHAS, ODM, the Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council, and OOD. The member agencies agree that community employment should be the first and preferred option for all working age adults and transition-age youth with developmental disabilities. The member agencies have agreed to develop or review state-level interagency agreements to ensure coordination of services and enable data sharing. The agencies have developed cross agency tools and processes to reduce duplication of services such as enrollment, eligibility, assessment and planning.

Ohio is a core state in the State Employment Leadership Network. Through this grant, which is funded through the US Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), the Employment First Taskforce has identified action steps that each agency will complete to promote the core principles for transition youth in Ohio:

- Competitive, integrated employment is expectation for all youth with disabilities;
- Transition planning for youth requires multi-agency collaboration;
- Early dialogue with individuals and families is critical to ensuring employment outcomes;
- There are multiple pathways to employment; and
- Person-centered planning is key to the development of effective services and supports for transition-age youth.

OOD has a joint interagency agreement with DODD and ODM in accordance with the requirements of WIOA. DODD and ODM maintain a separate interagency agreement that outlines programmatic and fiscal responsibilities between the two agencies, in which ODM delegates the day-to-day operations of the DODD HCBS waiver programs to DODD. The purpose of OOD's interagency agreement with DODD and ODM is to improve opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities, including individuals with developmental disabilities enrolled in a HCBS waiver administered by DODD, in accordance with its interagency agreement with ODM to achieve employment and independence. The agreement outlines a collaborative framework for coordinating services that prioritizes competitive integrated employment and assists individuals with developmental disabilities to move from non-integrated settings to competitive integrated employment. The agreement identifies methods to improve outreach to individuals with developmental disabilities and their families regarding VR programming and services. It also improves information and data sharing between the agencies and provides technical assistance and training to DODD and local county boards to increase employment opportunities for people with developmental disabilities.

6. STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING SERVICES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES;

As part of the Employment First Initiative, OOD and DODD established an Interagency Agreement to expand supported employment services for working-age adults with developmental disabilities, and starting in FFY22, was expanded to include youth with developmental disabilities including individuals with complex needs, students with disabilities, individuals enrolled in home and community-based waivers, and individuals residing in Intermediate Care Facilities (ICF). OOD and DODD collaborate to hold virtual and regional Community of Practice (COP) meetings.

Through the current interagency agreement with DODD, OOD has created and maintained policy and procedure guiding the provision of supported employment services in accordance with requirements under WIOA. The policy and procedure provide a strong foundation for improving supported employment service delivery and relative employment outcomes for individuals with the most significant disabilities. OOD reviews the policy and procedure every two years, in line with our review cycle for all policies and procedures, to make needed updates and trains staff accordingly. Needs assessment data, along with the data use agreement with DODD, will continue to serve as an ongoing tool to identify mutually served individuals and identify areas in the state where there is an opportunity to build capacity for supported employment and long-term supports.

According to DODD data, there are over 26,000 working-age adults who receive adult services, the vast majority of which are in facility-based settings. In September 2022, OOD received a five-year Disability Innovation Fund (DIF) grant for the Subminimum Wage to Competitive Integrated Employment (SWTCIE) Demonstration Project. Through this grant, OOD developed a program called Works4Me to help people who are employed in subminimum wage or contemplating subminimum wage employment to find competitive integrated employment. OOD contracts with the Ohio State University Nisonger Center for the evaluation of Works4Me. OOD also partners with DODD to connect with and deliver guidance to local organizations. To design Works4Me and meet regional needs, OOD and DODD organized local steering committees comprised of 14(c) certificate holders and county boards of developmental

disabilities. These steering committees helped develop outreach plans and new services for potential Works4Me participants. In October 2023, OOD began the outreach and implementation of Works4Me.

OOD VR Counselors provide VR services to eligible individuals who may also be county board eligible. VR Counselors work with local partners, including county boards of developmental disabilities, to identify individuals interested in competitive integrated employment. VR Counselors deliver individualized, person-centered career planning services to assist in the development of the IPE. They purchase supported employment services, including supported employment - job development (SE-JD), from approved providers who have passed the Certified Employment Support Professionals (CESP) exam. Beginning January 2019, individual Job Developers who deliver supported employment- job development services are required to be CESP. In addition, OOD has internal Certified Work Incentive Consultants on staff to support the partnership. The staff hold either a Community Partner Work Incentives Counselor (CPWIC) certification or a Work Incentive Practitioner (WIP) certification and are tasked with expanding the availability of work incentives counseling for individuals with developmental disabilities. OOD also has a Work Incentives Program Administrator to oversee the agency's delivery of work incentives consultation services.

An important component of the EF partnership includes professional development activities for both internal OOD and DODD staff and providers and are offered both virtually and in-person across the state. The dual-certification process allows DODD-certified Medicaid Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) waiver providers to deliver both VR services and long-term follow-along supports to ensure continuity of services. Training for all other service providers includes web-based competency-based supported employment training and requires a passing score prior to serving individuals within the program.

For individuals with developmental disabilities who are eligible for Medicaid HCBS waivers, OOD works with local county boards of developmental disabilities and providers to transition individuals with developmental disabilities into long-term supports needed to maintain competitive integrated employment once the individual's case has been successfully closed. For those individuals with developmental disabilities who are not eligible for an HCBS waiver, OOD will coordinate with the county board to establish alternative funding for long-term supports.

Supported employment performance-based job development (SE-JD) was added to OOD's VR Fee Schedule (Provider Manual) in 2017 and the service rate was most recently updated in October 2023. Qualified providers of this service are dually certified by the DODD in employment services or meet Ohio Mental Health and Addiction Service's fidelity requirements for Individual Placement and Support – Supported Employment (called IPS-SE or IPS). A CESP is required for dually certified job developers who provide SE-JD for those who are connected to county boards of developmental disabilities. In order to expand provider capacity to serve individuals with developmental disabilities who have a supported employment outcome, OOD has offered a temporary allowance for providers who are working towards their CESP starting December 1, 2022. This allows provider staff to work under the supervision of or with a CESP or Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) certified staff (e.g., supervisor, peer mentor) and provide SE-JD services after completion of Supported Employment Web Course modules and successful testing.

As mentioned previously, OOD partners with the DODD to expand VR services to individuals with developmental disabilities as part of the state's overall Employment First Initiative. It also should be noted that DODD is the lead agency for Ohio's Employment First initiative, which was implemented in March 2012. OOD is an active member of the Employment First Task Force, which is examining existing practices in the state system to identify and address barriers to employment for people with developmental and other disabilities.

7. STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES; AND

Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) and the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (Ohio MHAS) maintain an Interagency Agreement to assist in promoting positive employment outcomes for individuals with SMI and/or co-occurring substance use disorders. The purpose of the Interagency Agreement is to outline a collaborative framework for coordinating services to improve engagement and facilitate outreach to individuals, as well as facilitate eligibility and improved utilization of state VR services. The agreement identifies the roles and responsibilities of each agency, methods for providing technical assistance to the field including information and consultation on each agency's programs and procedures for outreach, and data sharing. This will ensure consistent information and guidance about VR programming and availability of services is provided for individuals served through the two programs.

OOD and Ohio MHAS also continue several important projects to promote supported employment services for individuals with serious mental illness (SMI). The agencies are working together to increase the utilization of an evidenced-based supported employment model, also known as Individualized Placement and Support (IPS) or IPS-SE. OOD is committed to improving employment outcomes for individuals with SMI and considers IPS to be an important component to achieving this commitment. OOD also partners Ohio MHAS to conduct joint training on the IPS-SE model for VR staff and IPS qualified providers.

Ohio MHAS has four dedicated staff as IPS Trainers who conduct fidelity reviews with providers throughout the state and to provide technical assistance as needed. OOD and Ohio MHAS also continue as active participants of the IPS Learning Community, which is connected to the IPS Employment Center. This program works with states and a variety of different countries to implement IPS for individuals with SMI who are interested in gaining employment. OOD and Ohio MHAS are often called upon by members of the community to help their states with the implementation of IPS and other supported employment models. OOD and Ohio MHAS staff also work together to provide training for all OOD field staff on rapidly engaging individuals in employment related services, relationship building between agencies, and trauma informed care in an effort to better support individuals with behavioral health needs.

OOD Jobs for Recovery is a partnership with the Supreme Court of Ohio, RecoveryOhio, Ohio MHAS, and OOD to embed a VR Counselor and an internal Job Developer as an active member of the drug court team to help eligible individuals with employment. The program model supports the recovery of individuals served by providing rapid engagement in OOD services, timely access to job placement services, on-the-job supports and retention services, and case service funding to meet additional needs. Currently, there are 12 teams serving 13 counties and partnering with multiple dockets within each county. Now as part of the Jobs for Recovery initiative, OOD, also, collaborates with other specialized dockets to provide services to eligible individuals through assigned VR liaisons. At the end of FFY23, OOD Jobs for Recovery

successfully closed over 170 individuals in competitive integrated employment and served about 950 eligible individuals.

OOD is also a member of The Ohio Community Recovery Support Planning Council (OCRSPC) which advises Ohio MHAS on the needs of the community and how the funding received from Substance Abuse and Mental Health Block Grants and other Federal Programs should be allocated for individuals with behavioral health conditions. More than half of the Council's membership includes individuals with personal or family experience with mental health or addiction.

8. OTHER FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL AGENCIES AND PROGRAMS OUTSIDE THE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM.

OOD has a long history of interagency cooperation with agencies and programs not carrying out activities through the statewide workforce development system. These cooperative partnerships contribute towards available services and promote the achievement of competitive integrated employment for individuals with disabilities served by the VR program.

OOD has also established Interagency Agreements with several state agencies that serve individuals with disabilities in Ohio. These agreements cover the biennium and include the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD), the Ohio Department of Medicaid (ODM), the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce (DEW), and the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (Ohio MHAS). These Interagency Agreements describe how the agencies coordinate services in a manner that will maximize resources and promote the achievement of competitive integrated employment for mutually eligible individuals with disabilities.

More specifically, these Interagency Agreements describe how the agencies will:

- Partner to identify and refer individuals with disabilities who may be interested in VR services,
- Share diagnostic and other collateral information needed to determine eligibility for VR services and/or to assist the eligible individual in career planning,
- Coordinate services such as employment readiness services, treatment services, transportation or long term supports needed to achieve competitive integrated employment,
- Provide technical assistance and consultation to field staff, and
- Share data to jointly evaluate and improve services to mutually eligible individuals.

Additional details about these Interagency Agreements are provided in previous sections of this stat plan.

OOD is part of a multi-agency group of transition professionals who have developed a family engagement training titled "Establishing Families as Partners in the Secondary Transition Planning Process." The training materials were developed by a team of cross agency representatives, including OOD, at the National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NTACT) Capacity Building Institute conference and was later integrated into Ohio's

Employment First Taskforce Visionary Work Plan. The intended outcome is to increase the understanding of family engagement of students at the state, regional, and local levels.

The training consists of 7 different sessions roughly 90 minutes in length. The first session lays the groundwork for family engagement research and the local plan that a local cross-agency transition team could develop. Subsequent sessions focus on different aspects of family engagement including the value of family partnerships, cultural and linguistically diverse families, implicit bias and the evolution of disability, having authentic and necessary conversations, and universal design. The final session focuses on setting goals and action steps the local cross-agency transition team to implement. In a train the trainer style, regional agency staff are trained who then can go out and train others. Training can be offered in-person or virtually. OOD staff are committed to facilitate portions of the training and the training is open to transition teams, including VR Counselors, to then implement what they learned at the local level.

9. OTHER PRIVATE NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS.

OOD partners with over 300 providers that deliver vocational rehabilitation (VR) services included on the VR Fee Schedule to assist individuals with disabilities to obtain and maintain competitive integrated employment within the community. Prior to providing VR services, providers must go through a process to become an approved VR service provider. This process includes meeting certain accreditation or certification requirements and completing a VR Provider Agreement. By signing the VR Provider Agreement, the provider agrees to abide by the requirements for service delivery as outlined in the VR Fee Schedule and the VR Provider Manual, including accepting the established rates for services, utilizing standardized service reports, and submitting invoices in a timely fashion. For other programs and services the provider offers that are not subject to the VR Fee Schedule, the provider completes a Fee Schedule Addendum. Examples of services that commonly fall under this addendum include occupational skills training programs.

Since FFY 2013, OOD has used a standardized VR Fee Schedule that is designed to ensure a consistent pattern and quality of services purchased statewide. The VR Fee Schedule provides standard service definitions and outlines standard rates for services. In FFY 2017, the VR Fee Schedule was updated to move rates from market-based rates to cost-informed rates. The VR Fee Schedule was updated again in FFY 2020 and in FFY 2023.

The FFY 2023 VR Fee Schedule update, which was effective October 1, 2022, included not only increased rates but also new services to better meet the needs of individuals with disabilities seeking employment. In developing this update, OOD solicited feedback from stakeholders and providers throughout the state. One of the new services added was Bridge Support Services designed to enhance participant engagement, focus on removing employment barriers, and offer diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility. Bridge Support Services includes short-term activities such as assisting individuals with obtaining an ID, setting up a bank account, obtaining interview or work clothing, and connecting with community resources (e.g., accessing childcare, addressing homelessness). Also included in the VR Fee Schedule update was the creation and implementation of a Critical Need Rate, which is an enhanced rate paid to providers for traveling and providing VR services in underserved counties with little or no in-county or nearby providers.

OOD is currently working on updating the VR Fee Schedule to ensure high quality, consistent service provision for individuals with disabilities and to assist in addressing some provider challenges. OOD established a provider workgroup to gather initial input on this update, including updating OOD's rate-setting methodology and defining costs to be included as part of this methodology. This will result in an agency policy regarding rate setting for VR services. Stakeholder and provider feedback meetings will also occur throughout the state as part of this planned VR Fee Schedule update. Some key focus areas for the update include:

- Improving the quality of outcomes achieved by participants served (e.g., increased median earnings, credential attainment and measurable skill gains)
- Removing additional barriers to employment for our participants
- Supporting providers in addressing their workforce needs to ensure availability of high-quality services for the increased number of participants to be served
- Simplifying the language and structure of the fee schedule so it is more understandable to individuals and their families and also to better align with federal definition of services
- Complying with the federal regulations regarding the establishment of rates for services
- Considering alignment with other State of Ohio agencies' rates

Since 2015, OOD has had an online tool known as the Provider Management Program (PMP) for use by VR service providers. This self-service tool provides an interface for OOD to work with the provider community, as well as an interface where certain information inputted in the PMP is integrated into the Provider Search tool for individuals with disabilities to identify available providers and make more informed decisions about provider selection. The PMP system allows the provider to designate which of the services, subject to the fee schedule, it will provide and which counties it will serve. Once agreements and addendums are approved, the provider is notified. The PMP system allows providers to make changes to their services and delivery area at any time. This allows for expansion of services if a need arises during the fiscal year. The Provider Search tool has the functionality to allow individuals served by the VR program, their families and VR counseling staff to research provider information to facilitate informed choice when selecting a provider. The Provider Search tool also houses a provider scorecard for each provider listed in the tool, that includes demographic information about individuals historically served by the provider, as well as performance data related to outcomes achieved by the provider. In FFY 2023, OOD completed an update to the PMP which automated the processes for producing the scorecards and greatly reduced the production time for each batch of scorecards, resulting in more efficient, accessible, and timely provider scorecards.

In FFY 2022, OOD implemented the VR Vendor Portal, which allows providers to electronically submit all their bills and VR service reports; this replaced the previous fax submission system. The portal has allowed for greater standardization of the reporting and billing process and has offered process efficiencies as well for providers and OOD staff. Since implementation, there have been several upgrades to the system that have allowed for more robust reporting capabilities for providers to better track their own bill submissions and anticipate when payments will be received.

Also, in FFY 2022, an update to Rule 3304-2-53 Qualifications and Standards for Service Providers and Vendors went into effect on March 27, 2022. This update included safety standards and provider background checks to better align with similar State of Ohio agencies and provide transparency to individuals with disabilities, their families, and the public. The rule update also included consolidation of information currently found in other locations (such as the VR Provider Manual) and memorialization of standards for maintaining confidential information, reporting significant incidents, and provider management and support. OOD worked with providers and other stakeholders throughout the process. An additional update to the rule is being considered to correlate and be consistent with changes made with the planned VR Fee Schedule update.

In addition to vocational rehabilitation providers, OOD works with a variety of partners to conduct outreach to and deliver quality services to individuals with disabilities. This includes but is not limited to:

- American Council of the Blind
- Centers for Independent Living/Statewide Independent Living Council
- Community Centers for the Deaf
- Disability Rights Ohio
- Helen Keller National Center
- National Federation of the Blind
- Ohio Association of County Boards of Developmental Disabilities
- Ohio Association of Goodwill Industries
- Ohio Council of Behavioral Health and Family Services Providers
- Ohio Provider Resources Association

ASSURANCES

The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate and identified in the State certifications included with this VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, through signature of the authorized individual, assures the Commissioner, that it will comply with all of the requirements of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, as set forth in sections 101(a) and 606 of the Rehabilitation Act. The individual authorized to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement makes the following assurances:

The VR agency must select the "Edit" button to review and agree to the VR State plan Assurances.

The State Plan must include
1. Public Comment on Policies and Procedures: The designated State agency assures it will comply with all statutory and regulatory requirements for public participation in the VR Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, as required by section 101(a)(16)(A) of

The State Plan must include
the Rehabilitation Act.
2. Submission of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and Its Supplement: The designated State unit assures it will comply with all requirements pertaining to the submission and revisions of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement for the State Supported Employment Services program, as required by sections 101(a)(1), (22), (23), and 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act; section 102 of WIOA in the case of the submission of a Unified State plan; section 103 of WIOA in the case of a submission of a Combined State Plan; 34 CFR 76.140.
3. Administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan: The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures it will comply with the requirements related to:
3.a. the establishment of the designated State agency and designated State unit, as required by section 101(a)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act.
3.b. either a State independent commission or State Rehabilitation Council, as required by section 101(a)(21) of the Rehabilitation Act.
3.c. consultations regarding the administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, in accordance with section 101(a)(16)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act.
3.d. the financial participation by the State, or if the State so elects, by the State and local agencies, to provide the amount of the non-Federal share of the cost of carrying out the VR program in accordance with section 101(a)(3).
3.e. as applicable, the local administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, in accordance with section 101(a)(2)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act.
3.f. as applicable, the shared funding and administration of joint programs, in accordance with section 101(a)(2)(A)(ii) of the Rehabilitation Act.
3.g. statewideness and waivers of statewideness requirements, as set forth in section 101(a)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act.
3.h. the requirements for cooperation, collaboration, and coordination, as required by sections 101(a)(11) and (24)(B); and 606(b) of the Rehabilitation Act.
3.i. all required methods of administration, as required by section 101(a)(6) of the Rehabilitation Act.
3.j. the requirements for the comprehensive system of personnel development, as set forth in section 101(a)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act.
3.k. the compilation and submission to the Commissioner of statewide assessments, estimates, State goals and priorities, strategies, and progress reports, as appropriate, and as required by sections 101(a)(15), 105(c)(2), and 606(b)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act.
3.l. the reservation and use of a portion of the funds allotted to the State under section 110 of

The State Plan must include
the Rehabilitation Act for the development and implementation of innovative approaches to expand and improve the provision of VR services to individuals with disabilities, particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities as set forth in section 101(a)(18)(A).
3.m. the submission of reports as required by section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act.
4. Administration of the Provision of VR Services: The designated State agency, or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures that it will:
4.a. comply with all requirements regarding information and referral services in accordance with sections 101(a)(5)(E) and (20) of the Rehabilitation Act.
4.b. impose no duration of residence requirement as part of determining an individual's eligibility for VR services or that excludes from services under the plan any individual who is present in the State in accordance with section 101(a)(12) of the Rehabilitation Act.
4.c. provide the full range of services listed in section 103(a) of the Rehabilitation Act as appropriate, to all eligible individuals with disabilities in the State who apply for services or, if implementing an order of selection, in accordance with criteria established by the State for the order of selection as set out in section 101(a)(5) of the Rehabilitation Act.
4.d. determine whether comparable services and benefits are available to the individual in accordance with section 101(a)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act.
4.e. comply with the requirements for the development of an individualized plan for employment in accordance with section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act.
4.f. Comply with requirements regarding the provisions of informed choice for all applicants and eligible individuals in accordance with section 102(d) of the Rehabilitation Act
4.g. provide vocational rehabilitation services to American Indians who are individuals with disabilities residing in the State, in accordance with section 101(a)(13) of the Rehabilitation Act.
4.h. comply with the requirements for the conduct of semiannual or annual reviews, as appropriate, for individuals employed either in an extended employment setting in a community rehabilitation program or any other employment under section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, as required by sections 101(a)(14) and 511 of the Rehabilitation Act.
4.i. meet the requirements in sections 101(a)(17) and 103(b)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act if the State elects to construct, under special circumstances, facilities for community rehabilitation programs.
4.j. With respect to students with disabilities, the State,
4.j.i. has developed and will implement,
4.j.i.A. strategies to address the needs identified in the assessments; and
4.j.i.B. strategies to achieve the goals and priorities identified by the State, to improve and

The State Plan must include
expand vocational rehabilitation services for students with disabilities on a statewide basis; and
4.j.ii. has developed and will implement strategies to provide pre-employment transition services (sections 101(a)(15), 101(a)(25) and 113).
4.j.iii. shall reserve not less than 15 percent of the allocated funds for the provision of pre-employment transition services; such funds shall not be used to pay for the administrative costs of providing pre-employment transition services.
5. Program Administration for the Supported Employment Title VI Supplement to the State plan:
5.a. The designated State unit assures that it will include in the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan all information required by section 606 of the Rehabilitation Act.
5.b. The designated State agency assures that it will submit reports in such form and in accordance with such procedures as the Commissioner may require and collects the information required by section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act separately for individuals receiving supported employment services under title I and individuals receiving supported employment services under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act.
6. Financial Administration of the Supported Employment Program (Title VI):
6.a. The designated State agency assures that it will expend no more than 2.5 percent of the State's allotment under title VI for administrative costs of carrying out this program; and, the designated State agency or agencies will provide, directly or indirectly through public or private entities, non-Federal contributions in an amount that is not less than 10 percent of the costs of carrying out supported employment services provided to youth with the most significant disabilities with the funds reserved for such purpose under section 603(d) of the Rehabilitation Act, in accordance with section 606(b)(7)(H) and (I) of the Rehabilitation Act.
6.b. The designated State agency assures that it will use funds made available under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act only to provide supported employment services to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including extended services to youth with the most significant disabilities, who are eligible to receive such services; and, that such funds are used only to supplement and not supplant the funds provided under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act, when providing supported employment services specified in the individualized plan for employment, in accordance with section 606(b)(7)(A) and (D), of the Rehabilitation Act.
7. Provision of Supported Employment Services:
7.a. The designated State agency assures that it will provide supported employment services as defined in section 7(39) of the Rehabilitation Act.
7.b. The designated State agency assures that the comprehensive assessment of individuals with significant disabilities conducted under section 102(b)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act and funded under title I of the Rehabilitation Act includes consideration of supported employment

The State Plan must include
as an appropriate employment outcome, in accordance with the requirements of section 606(b)(7)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act an individualized plan for employment that meets the requirements of section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act, which is developed and updated with title I funds, in accordance with sections 102(b)(3)(F) and 606(b)(7)(C) and (E) of the Rehabilitation Act.

Do you attest that these assurances will be met?
Yes

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (COMBINED OR GENERAL) CERTIFICATIONS

States must provide written and signed certifications that:

1. THE (ENTER THE NAME OF DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY OR DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, AS APPROPRIATE,) IS AUTHORIZED TO SUBMIT THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN UNDER TITLE I OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973 (REHABILITATION ACT), AS AMENDED BY TITLE IV OF WIOA[1], AND ITS STATE PLAN SUPPLEMENT UNDER TITLE VI OF THE REHABILITATION ACT;

[1] Public Law 113-128.

ENTER THE NAME OF DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY OR DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, AS APPROPRIATE

Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities

2. IN THE EVENT THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY IS NOT PRIMARILY CONCERNED WITH VOCATIONAL AND OTHER REHABILITATION OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES, THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY MUST INCLUDE A DESIGNATED STATE UNIT FOR THE VR PROGRAM (SECTION 101(A)(2)(B)(II) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT). AS A CONDITION FOR THE RECEIPT OF FEDERAL FUNDS UNDER TITLE I OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR THE PROVISION OF VR SERVICES, THE (DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY OR THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WHEN THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY HAS A DESIGNATED STATE UNIT)[2]AGREES TO OPERATE AND IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE STATE VR SERVICES PROGRAM IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN[3], THE REHABILITATION ACT, 34 CFR 361.13(B) AND (C), AND ALL APPLICABLE REGULATIONS[4], POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES ESTABLISHED BY THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION. FUNDS MADE AVAILABLE TO STATES UNDER SECTION 111(A) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT ARE USED SOLELY FOR THE PROVISION OF VR SERVICES AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN;

[2] All references in this plan to "designated State agency" or to "the State agency" relate to the agency identified in this paragraph.

[3] No funds under title I of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

[4] Applicable regulations, in part, include the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 76, 77, 79, 81, and 82; 2 CFR part 200 as adopted by 2 CFR part 3474; and the State VR Services program regulations at 34 C.F.R. part 361.

ENTER THE NAME OF DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY

Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities

3. AS A CONDITION FOR THE RECEIPT OF FEDERAL FUNDS UNDER TITLE VI OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES, THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY, OR THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WHEN THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY HAS A DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, AGREES TO OPERATE AND IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE STATE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES PROGRAM IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SUPPLEMENT TO THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN[5], THE REHABILITATION ACT, AND ALL APPLICABLE REGULATIONS[6], POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES ESTABLISHED BY THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION. FUNDS MADE AVAILABLE UNDER TITLE VI ARE USED SOLELY FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE SUPPLEMENT TO THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN;

[5] No funds under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved supported employment supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

[6] Applicable regulations, in part, include the citations in footnote 4, as well as Supported Employment program regulations at 34 C.F.R. part 363.

4. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT OR, IF NOT APPLICABLE, THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY HAS THE AUTHORITY UNDER STATE LAW TO PERFORM THE FUNCTIONS OF THE STATE REGARDING THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT AND IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE VR PROGRAM IN ACCORDANCE WITH 34 CFR 361.13(B) AND (C);

5. THE STATE LEGALLY MAY CARRY OUT EACH PROVISION OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT.

6. ALL PROVISIONS OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT ARE CONSISTENT WITH STATE LAW.

7. THE (ENTER THE NAME OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW) HAS THE AUTHORITY UNDER STATE LAW TO RECEIVE, HOLD, AND DISBURSE FEDERAL FUNDS MADE AVAILABLE UNDER THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT;

ENTER THE NAME OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW

Kevin L. Miller

8. THE (ENTER THE TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW) HAS THE AUTHORITY TO SUBMIT THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND THE SUPPLEMENT FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES;

ENTER THE TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW

Director of OOD

9. THE AGENCY THAT SUBMITS THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT HAS ADOPTED OR OTHERWISE FORMALLY APPROVED THE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT.

FOOTNOTES

[1] Public Law 113-128.

[2] All references in this plan to "designated State agency" or to "the State agency" relate to the agency identified in this paragraph.

[3] No funds under title I of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

[4] Applicable regulations, in part, include the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 76, 77, 79, 81, and 82; 2 CFR part 200 as adopted by 2 CFR part 3474; and the State VR Services program regulations at 34 C.F.R. part 361.

[5] No funds under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved supported employment supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

[6] Applicable regulations, in part, include the citations in footnote 4, as well as Supported Employment program regulations at 34 C.F.R. part 363.

CERTIFICATION SIGNATURE

To review and complete the Certification section of the VR portion of the State plan, please select the "Edit" button.

Note, please do not edit the table header or formatting. Only edit the table contents.

If you accidentally edit the table headers and structure, open this link to the blank table. You can copy and paste the table into the narrative field, and start over if needed.

Signatory information	Enter Signatory information in this column
Name of Signatory	Kevin L. Miller
Title of Signatory	Director of Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities
Date Signed	2/28/2024

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Each State VR program must submit expected levels of performance in its Unified or Combined State Plan and in the two-year modification of that plan. Expected levels of performance for the first two years of a state plan must be submitted in the initial submission of the Unified or Combined State Plan and in the initial submission of the two-year modification of that Plan, for years three and four, as described in 34 CFR § 361.170(a). Expected levels of performance must be stated to the nearest tenth of a percent (XX.X %) or to the nearest whole dollar for median earnings. State VR programs are reminded that the expected levels of performance must be published for public comment prior to plan submission in accordance with state law, regulation, and policy.

After the Unified or Combined State Plan submission, each State VR program must reach agreement with RSA on the negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the Unified or Combined State Plan (or for the third and fourth years of the Unified or Combined State Plan during the required two-year modification process) in accordance with WIOA section 116(b)(3)(A)(iv).

RSA will use its statistical adjustment model to derive pre-program year estimated levels of performance for each indicator. Each State VR program and RSA will consider the negotiation factors outlined in WIOA section 116(b)(3)(A)(v) during the negotiation process. Once negotiated levels of performance are agreed upon, each State VR program must incorporate the negotiated levels of performance into the Unified or Combined State Plan and the two-year modification of that plan prior to the plan's approval (section 116(b)(3)(A)(iv) of WIOA).

Effectiveness in Serving Employers

In the final rule implementing WIOA, the Departments indicated that they would initially implement this indicator in the form of a pilot to test the feasibility and rigor of three proposed approaches. During Program Year (PY) 2022, the Departments initiated the rulemaking process to establish a standard definition of Effectiveness in Serving Employers. States will continue to report two of three proposed approaches until the Departments issue the final rule and implement the indicator.

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	63.0%	63.0%	63.5%	63.5%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	60.9%	60.9%	61.4%	61.4%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	$3,600	$3,600	$3,700	$3,700
Credential Attainment Rate	50.1%	50.1%	50.6%	50.6%

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Measurable Skill Gains	68.5%	68.5%	68.9%	68.9%
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]

1

The Departments have not issued the final rule defining Effectiveness in Serving Employers. As a result, states will not submit expected levels of performance for this indicator and the Departments will not establish negotiated levels of performance for PYs 2024 and 2025.

GEPA 427 FORM INSTRUCTIONS FOR APPLICATION PACKAGE - VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

EQUITY FOR STUDENTS, EDUCATORS, AND OTHER PROGRAM BENEFICIARIES

OMB Control Number 1894-0005 Expiration 02/28/2026

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity.

GEPA Section 427 Form Instructions for State Applicants

State applicants must respond to the following four questions:

1. Describe how your entity's existing mission, policies, or commitments ensure equitable access to, and equitable participation in, the proposed project or activity.

2. Based on your proposed project or activity, what barriers may impede equitable access and participation of students, educators, or other beneficiaries?

3. Based on the barriers identified, what steps will you take to address such barriers to equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity?

4. What is your timeline, including targeted milestones, for addressing these identified barriers?

• Applicants identify any barriers that may impede equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity, including, but not limited to, barriers based on economic disadvantage, gender, race, ethnicity, color, national origin, disability, age, language, migrant status, rural status, homeless status or housing insecurity, pregnancy, parenting, or caregiving status, and sexual orientation.

• Applicants use the associated text box to respond to each question. However, applicants might have already included some or all this required information in the narrative sections of their

applications or their State Plans. In responding to this requirement, for each question, applicants may provide a cross-reference to the section(s) in their State Plans that includes the information responsive to that question on this form or may restate that information on this form.

• Applicants are not required to have mission statements or policies that align with equity to apply.

• Applicants that have already undertaken steps to address barriers must still provide an explanation and/or description of the steps already taken in each text box, as appropriate, to satisfy the GEPA Section 427 requirement.

• Applicants that believe no barriers exist must still provide an explanation and/or description to each question to validate that perception, as appropriate, to satisfy the GEPA Section 427 requirement.

Please refer to GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for Application Package

1. DESCRIBE HOW YOUR ENTITY'S EXISTING MISSION, POLICIES, OR COMMITMENTS ENSURE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO, AND EQUITABLE PARTICIPATION IN, THE PROPOSED PROJECT OR ACTIVITY.

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) *(20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity.*

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The first of four questions is:

Describe how your entity's existing mission, policies, or commitments ensure equitable access to, and equitable participation in, the proposed project or activity.

Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) is the State of Ohio agency that is responsible for providing vocational rehabilitation (VR) services. OOD empowers Ohioans with disabilities through employment, disability determinations, and independence. OOD does not discriminate on the basis of disability in its services, programs or activities, and OOD partners with businesses, education, and non-profits to facilitate individualized employment plans for Ohioans with disabilities.

OOD considers diversity comprehensively including race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, and all other human dynamics that share creative perspective and professional experience. Through OOD's Office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA), OOD staff learn to intentionally create and cultivate an environment that is inclusive, diverse and equitable where all voices are heard, respected and valued. This is demonstrated by the treatment of the individuals who are served.

OOD conducts cultural competency assessments of service delivery to develop, implement, and assess a strategy for evaluating agency programs and services across diverse cultures (ethnic, regional, religious, generational, etc.). The goal is to identify potential barriers within the service delivery model and devise corrective measures to eliminate biases.

OOD policies and procedures follow federal code, which outlines that in determining eligibility for VR services, the decisions are not based on any of the protected groups. OOD makes modifications to policies and procedures on a regular basis to ensure that people with disabilities have an equal opportunity to participate in programs, services, and activities. In addition, to ensure compliance and understanding of the procedures, OOD provides regular training to all staff.

Through employment, OOD helps connect individuals with disabilities with the resources, support and opportunities that fit their unique needs, abilities, and interests so they can find and retain meaningful employment.

Through disability determinations, OOD supports individuals applying for insurance or supplemental income by determining their medical qualification for federal disability benefits through the Social Security Administration.

Helping individuals with disabilities regain or maintain their independence is the driving force behind OOD. OOD's services programs and partnerships aim to help individuals with disabilities live with greater independence and create a dependable foundation for their lives, which has been demonstrated throughout the VR Services portion of this State Plan in sections (d) and (k).

2. BASED ON YOUR PROPOSED PROJECT OR ACTIVITY, WHAT BARRIERS MAY IMPEDE EQUITABLE ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION OF STUDENTS, EDUCATORS, OR OTHER BENEFICIARIES?

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) *(20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity.*

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The second of four questions is:

Based on your proposed project or activity, what barriers may impede equitable access and participation of students, educators, or other beneficiaries?

OOD works to remove barriers that may impede equitable access and participation in the VR program. OOD provides goods and services based upon the individualized need of the person(s) served. For example, OOD provides auxiliary aids and services leading to effective communication for people with disabilities. Upon request, or when deemed appropriate, OOD provides qualified sign language interpreters, assistive listening devices, documents in Braille, and other formats of accessible communication.

OOD continues to develop and improve upon methods and ways to evaluate its services. OOD is capturing the voice of its participants and using the feedback to implement change.

OOD has established a State Rehabilitation Council that provides feedback to OOD on its programs and services. The OOD Council meets quarterly with OOD to discuss, review, and provide their input and insight into the review of policies, service needs, and service provision. The results of this collaboration are discussed in the VR Services portion of this State Plan, located in section (a).

OOD continues to conduct its Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessments (CSNA) to assess the vocational rehabilitation service needs of the individuals that they serve, in order to ensure equitable access and participation. The results of the most recent CSNA can also be located in the VR Services portion of this State Plan, in section (b).

OOD has developed Participant Focus Group Surveys, to gather input from individuals receiving VR services to ensure that strategic initiatives are developed with the experience of the customer at the forefront of the decision-making.

3. BASED ON THE BARRIERS IDENTIFIED, WHAT STEPS WILL YOU TAKE TO ADDRESS SUCH BARRIERS TO EQUITABLE ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION IN THE PROPOSED PROJECT OR ACTIVITY?

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) *(20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity.*

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The third of four questions is:

Based on the barriers identified, what steps will you take to address such barriers to equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity?

Many of the action steps taken by OOD to address barriers to equitable access and participation can be located throughout the VR Services portion of the State Plan. OOD's action steps and progress on those steps can be located in Section (d) of the VR Services portion.

During the pandemic, OOD added new methods to help participants access and participate in services, offering phone and virtual options for intakes and other appointments. Those methods have since remained options in the way that OOD conducts business. OOD has also included additional methods in which participants can apply for services. OODWorks.com is the agency's online portal where individuals can go to apply for VR services, in addition to methods that were already in place.

OOD has also added new services to help address barriers that impede upon equitable access and participation in services. Bridge Support Services are designed to enhance participant engagement, focus on removing employment barriers, and offer diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility. Bridge Support Services includes short-term activities such as assisting individuals

with obtaining an ID, setting up a bank account, obtaining interview or work clothing, and connecting with community resources (e.g., accessing childcare, and addressing homelessness).

In addition to Bridge Support Services, OOD has allowed for the purchase of technology (e.g. laptops, cell phones, tablets, and other devices) in order to ensure our participants have equitable access and participation in services.

4. WHAT IS YOUR TIMELINE, INCLUDING TARGETED MILESTONES, FOR ADDRESSING THESE IDENTIFIED BARRIERS?

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) *(20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity.*

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The final of four questions is:

What is your timeline, including targeted milestones, for addressing these identified barriers?

Equitable access and participation in the VR program and its services is an ongoing continuum that the agency plans to monitor and assess. We are constantly monitoring our performance measures, surveying participants, and evaluating service provision at the very least every quarter. Through these efforts we are gathering information that brings about challenging discussions, creates new ideas, and other opportunities for eliminating barriers that could result in inequities in service delivery.

GEPA 427 FORM INSTRUCTIONS FOR APPLICATION PACKAGE - SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

EQUITY FOR STUDENTS, EDUCATORS, AND OTHER PROGRAM BENEFICIARIES

OMB Control Number 1894-0005 Expiration 02/28/2026

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity.

GEPA Section 427 Form Instructions for State Applicants

State applicants must respond to the following four questions:

1. Describe how your entity's existing mission, policies, or commitments ensure equitable access to, and equitable participation in, the proposed project or activity.

2. Based on your proposed project or activity, what barriers may impede equitable access and participation of students, educators, or other beneficiaries?

3. Based on the barriers identified, what steps will you take to address such barriers to equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity?

4. What is your timeline, including targeted milestones, for addressing these identified barriers?

• Applicants identify any barriers that may impede equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity, including, but not limited to, barriers based on economic disadvantage, gender, race, ethnicity, color, national origin, disability, age, language, migrant status, rural status, homeless status or housing insecurity, pregnancy, parenting, or caregiving status, and sexual orientation.

• Applicants use the associated text box to respond to each question. However, applicants might have already included some or all this required information in the narrative sections of their applications or their State Plans. In responding to this requirement, for each question, applicants may provide a cross-reference to the section(s) in their State Plans that includes the information responsive to that question on this form or may restate that information on this form.

• Applicants are not required to have mission statements or policies that align with equity to apply.

• Applicants that have already undertaken steps to address barriers must still provide an explanation and/or description of the steps already taken in each text box, as appropriate, to satisfy the GEPA Section 427 requirement.

• Applicants that believe no barriers exist must still provide an explanation and/or description to each question to validate that perception, as appropriate, to satisfy the GEPA Section 427 requirement.

Please refer to GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for Application Package

1. DESCRIBE HOW YOUR ENTITY'S EXISTING MISSION, POLICIES, OR COMMITMENTS ENSURE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO, AND EQUITABLE PARTICIPATION IN, THE PROPOSED PROJECT OR ACTIVITY.

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) *(20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity.*

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The first of four questions is:

Describe how your entity's existing mission, policies, or commitments ensure equitable access to, and equitable participation in, the proposed project or activity.

Ohio is an Employment First state with an active taskforce of state agency representatives, of which Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) is an active member. The task force is charged with expanding community employment opportunities by reducing barriers and aligning state policy.

As part of the Employment First Initiative, OOD and Ohio's Department of Developmental Disabilities established an interagency agreement to expand supported employment services for working-age adults with developmental disabilities. More information about the interagency agreement and the supported employment services can be located in the VR Services portion of this State Plan in Section (l), (5), (6), and (7).

OOD is the State of Ohio agency that is responsible for providing vocational rehabilitation (VR) and supported employment services. OOD empowers Ohioans with disabilities through employment, disability determinations, and independence. OOD does not discriminate on the basis of disability in its services, programs or activities, and OOD partners with businesses, education, and non-profits to facilitate individualized employment plans for Ohioans with disabilities.

OOD considers diversity comprehensively including race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, and all other human dynamics that share creative perspective and professional experience. Through OOD's Office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA), OOD staff learn to intentionally create and cultivate an environment that is inclusive, diverse and equitable where all voices are heard, respected and valued. This is demonstrated by the treatment of the individuals who are served.

OOD conducts cultural competency assessments of service delivery to develop, implement, and assess a strategy for evaluating agency programs and services across diverse cultures (ethnic, regional, religious, generational, etc.). The goal is to identify potential barriers within the service delivery model and devise corrective measures to eliminate biases.

OOD policies and procedures follow federal code, which outlines that in determining eligibility for VR services, the decisions are not based on any of the protected groups. OOD makes modifications to policies and procedures on a regular basis to ensure that people with disabilities have an equal opportunity to participate in programs, services, and activities. In addition, to ensure compliance and understanding of the procedures, OOD provides regular training to all staff.

Through employment, OOD helps connect individuals with disabilities with the resources, support and opportunities that fit their unique needs, abilities, and interests so they can find and retain meaningful employment.

Through disability determinations, OOD supports individuals applying for insurance or supplemental income by determining their medical qualification for federal disability benefits through the Social Security Administration.

Helping individuals with disabilities regain or maintain their independence is the driving force behind OOD. OOD's services programs and partnerships aim to help individuals with disabilities live with greater independence and create a dependable foundation for their lives, which has been demonstrated throughout the VR Services portion of this State Plan, in sections (d) and (k).

2. BASED ON YOUR PROPOSED PROJECT OR ACTIVITY, WHAT BARRIERS MAY IMPEDE EQUITABLE ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION OF STUDENTS, EDUCATORS, OR OTHER BENEFICIARIES?

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) *(20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity.*

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The second of four questions is:

Based on your proposed project or activity, what barriers may impede equitable access and participation of students, educators, or other beneficiaries?

OOD works to remove barriers that may impede equitable access and participation in the VR program. OOD provides goods and services based upon the individualized need of the person(s) served. For example, OOD provides auxiliary aids and services leading to effective communication for people with disabilities. Upon request, or when deemed appropriate, OOD provides qualified sign language interpreters, assistive listening devices, documents in Braille, and other formats of accessible communication.

Section (l), (6), in the VR Services portion of this State Plan, discusses the Employment First Initiative, and the interagency agreement between OOD and DODD to expand supported employment services.

OOD continues to develop and improve upon methods and ways to evaluate its services. OOD is capturing the voice of its participants and using the feedback to implement change.

OOD has established a State Rehabilitation Council that provides feedback to OOD on its programs and services. The OOD Council meets quarterly with OOD to discuss, review, and provide their input and insight into the review of policies, service needs, and service provision. The results of this collaboration are discussed in the VR Services portion of this State Plan, located in section (a).

OOD continues to conduct its Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessments (CSNA) to assess the vocational rehabilitation service needs of the individuals that they serve, in order to ensure equitable access and participation. The results of the most recent CSNA can also be located in the VR Services portion of this State Plan, located in section (b).

OOD has developed Participant Focus Group Surveys, to gather input from individuals receiving VR services to ensure that strategic initiatives are developed with the experience of the customer at the forefront of the decision-making.

3. BASED ON THE BARRIERS IDENTIFIED, WHAT STEPS WILL YOU TAKE TO ADDRESS SUCH BARRIERS TO EQUITABLE ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION IN THE PROPOSED PROJECT OR ACTIVITY?

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) *(20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity.*

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The third of four questions is:

Based on the barriers identified, what steps will you take to address such barriers to equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity?

Many of the action steps taken by OOD to address barriers to equitable access and participation in the Supported Employment Program can be located throughout the VR Services portion of the State Plan. OOD's action steps and progress on those steps can be located in Section (d).

During the pandemic, OOD added new methods to help participants access and participate in services, offering phone and virtual options for intakes and other appointments. Those methods have since remained options in the way that OOD conducts business. OOD has also included additional methods in which participants can apply for services. OODWorks.com is the agency's online portal where individuals can go to apply for VR and Supported Employment services, in addition to methods that were already in place.

OOD has also added new services to help address barriers that impede upon equitable access and participation in services. Bridge Support Services are designed to enhance participant engagement, focus on removing employment barriers, and offer diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility. Bridge Support Services includes short-term activities such as assisting individuals with obtaining an ID, setting up a bank account, obtaining interview or work clothing, and connecting with community resources (e.g., accessing childcare, and addressing homelessness).

In addition to Bridge Support Services, OOD has also developed Supported Employment Job Development services, which are more intensive on-going support services that are needed to assist individuals with the most significant disabilities to work in a competitive integrated employment setting. More information regarding supported employment services can be located in Section (e) of the VR Services portion in this State Plan.

Lastly, OOD has allowed for the purchase of technology (e.g. laptops, cell phones, tablets, and other devices) in order to ensure our participants have equitable access and participation in the Supported Employment Program and services.

4. WHAT IS YOUR TIMELINE, INCLUDING TARGETED MILESTONES, FOR ADDRESSING THESE IDENTIFIED BARRIERS?

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) *(20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity.*

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The final of four questions is:

What is your timeline, including targeted milestones, for addressing these identified barriers?

Equitable access and participation in the Supported Employment Program and its services is an ongoing continuum that the agency plans to monitor and assess. We are constantly monitoring our performance measures, surveying participants, and evaluating service provision at the very least every quarter. Through these efforts we are gathering information that brings about challenging discussions, creates new ideas, and other opportunities for eliminating barriers that could result in inequities in service delivery.

VII. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR COMBINED STATE PLAN PARTNER PROGRAMS

States choosing to submit a Combined State Plan must provide information concerning the six core programs—the Adult program, Dislocated Worker program, Youth program, Wagner-Peyser Act program, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act program, and the Vocational Rehabilitation program— and also submit relevant information for any of the eleven partner programs it elects to include in its Combined State Plan. When a State includes a Combined State Plan partner program in its Combined State Plan, it need not submit a separate plan or application for that particular program. 24 If included, Combined State Plan partner programs are subject to the "common planning elements" in Sections II-IV of this document, where specified, as well as the program-specific requirements for that program.

[24] States that elect to include employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.) under a Combined State Plan would submit all other required elements of a complete CSBG State Plan directly to the Federal agency that administers the program. Similarly, States that elect to include employment and training activities carried by the Department of Housing and Urban Development would submit all other required elements of a complete State Plan for those programs directly to the Federal agency that administers the program.

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS AUTHORIZED UNDER THE THE CARL D. PERKINS CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION ACT OF 2006, AS AMENDED BY THE STRENGTHENING CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION FOR THE 21ST CENTURY ACT (PERKINS V) (TITLE 20, UNITED STATES CODE (20 U.S.C. 2301 ET SEQ.))

NOTE: Unless otherwise noted, statutory references in this section are to Pub. L. 115–224,— *The Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act* ("Perkins V" or "the Act"). (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.) The term "the State" used throughout this section refers to the State Perkins Eligible Agency and "the State Plan" refers to the "Perkins State Plan".

(OMB Control Number: 1830-0029)

A. PLAN DEVELOPMENT AND CONSULTATION

1. Describe how the State plan was developed in consultation with the stakeholders and in accordance with the procedures in section 122(c)(2) of Perkins V. See Text Box 1 for the statutory requirements for State plan consultation under section 122(c)(1) of Perkins V.
2. Consistent with section 122(e)(1) of Perkins V, each eligible agency must develop the portion of the State plan relating to the amount and uses of any funds proposed to be reserved for adult career and technical education, postsecondary career and technical education, and secondary career and technical education after consultation with the State agencies identified in section 122(e)(1)(A)-(C) of the Act. If a State agency, other than the eligible agency, finds a portion of the final State plan objectionable, the eligible agency must provide a copy of such objections and a description of its response in the final plan submitted to the Secretary. (Section 122(e)(2) of Perkins V)
3. Describe opportunities for the public to comment in person and in writing on the State plan. (Section 122(d)(14) of Perkins V)

Text Box 1: Statutory Requirements for State Plan Consultation

- (c) PLAN DEVELOPMENT.—
- (1) IN GENERAL.—The eligible agency shall—
    - (A) Develop the State plan in consultation with—
        - (i) Representatives of secondary and postsecondary career and technical education programs, including eligible recipients and representatives of 2-year minority serving institutions and historically Black colleges and universities and tribally controlled colleges or universities in States where such institutions are in existence, adult career and technical education providers, and charter school representatives in States where such schools are in existence, which shall include teachers, faculty, school leaders, specialized instructional support personnel, career and academic guidance counselors, and paraprofessionals;
        - (ii) Interested community representatives, including parents, students, and community organizations;
        - (iii) Representatives of the State workforce development board established under section 101 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3111) (referred to in this section as the ‘‘State board’’);
        - (iv) Members and representatives of special populations;
        - (v) Representatives of business and industry (including representatives of small business), which shall include representatives of industry and sector partnerships in the State, as appropriate, and representatives of labor organizations in the State;
        - (vi) Representatives of agencies serving out-of-school youth, homeless children and youth, and at-risk youth, including the State Coordinator for Education of Homeless Children and Youths established or designated under section 722(d)(3) of the

Text Box 1: Statutory Requirements for State Plan Consultation

McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11432(d)(3));

- (vii) Representatives of Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations located in, or providing services in, the State; and
- (viii) Individuals with disabilities; and

- (B) Consult the Governor of the State, and the heads of other State agencies with authority for career and technical education programs that are not the eligible agency, with respect to the development of the State plan.

- (2) ACTIVITIES AND PROCEDURES.—The eligible agency shall develop effective activities and procedures, including access to information needed to use such procedures, to allow the individuals and entities described in paragraph (1) to participate in State and local decisions that relate to development of the State plan. (3) CONSULTATION WITH THE GOVERNOR.—The consultation described in paragraph (1)(B) shall include meetings of officials from the eligible agency and the Governor's office and shall occur—
  - (A) During the development of such plan; and
  - (B) Prior to submission of the plan to the Secretary.

(Section 122(c)(1) of Perkins V)

(a1) Plan Development and Consultation

Describe how the State plan was developed in consultation with the stakeholders and in accordance with the procedures in section 122(c)(2) of Perkins V. See Text Box 1 for the statutory requirements for State plan consultation under section 122(c)(1) of Perkins V.

The Ohio Department of Education and Workforce (ODEW) and the Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE) developed the Perkins State Plan collaboratively with feedback from a variety of stakeholders across the State. Stakeholders were selected through collaborative efforts with professional organizations representing business, industry and the education community. This work was completed in three phases.

1. Beginning in April and May of 2019, four topically focused workgroups began meeting approximately one time per month, with more meetings scheduled as needed. The topical workgroups collaborated on details of the State Plan, including policy development and implementation timelines. The workgroups deeply studied the contents of the Perkins V legislation, reviewed current Ohio policies and made recommendations for how Ohio will address these requirements in the Perkins V State Plan.
2. Recommendations from the topically focused workgroups were used by an internal working group to draft the contents of the State Plan. In addition to drafting sections of the State Plan, the internal workgroup, comprised of staff from across ODEW and ODHE,

created and updated relevant guidance, ensuring the appropriate changes were made to data and reporting and information technology systems. The group then communicated the work to relevant internal stakeholders.

3. The stakeholder committee then reviewed the content of the plan and provided feedback to the internal working group and topical work groups. Topics reviewed included accountability; local needs assessments and applications; programs of study to be developed and/or supported by the State; and implementation timelines, ensuring all Ohioans have access to the programs supported through Perkins and connections to other programs across the State. Members of the stakeholder group represented all stakeholder requirements outlined in the Perkins V legislation. Feedback from the stakeholder committee was summarized and provided to the internal working group and topical workgroups for consideration of relevant edits and updates.

Topical Working Groups

The agencies organized and facilitated workgroups on specific topics required in the law. These groups met monthly, with additional meetings scheduled as needed. Topics include:

- Equity (workgroup ongoing)
    - **Facilitator:** Ben Williams, National Alliance for Partnerships in Equity
    - **Key ODEW staff:** Leah Amstutz, Brenna Bartlett, Crystal Dortch, Cheryl Krohn, Amy Szymanskiand Becky Crance
        - **Purpose:** Provide input on equity labs, data and supports needed at the local level to enact the equity provisions in the law.
        - Representatives collaborate with other workgroups to ensure equity provisions are being carried throughout the plan.
- ***External members:***
    - Joyce Malainy, Career-Technical Education Center of Licking County
    - Ben Carter, Canton City Schools

  - Amy Schakat, Southwestern City Schools
  - Laura Gale, Great Oaks Career Campus
  - Joel King, Warren County Career Center
  - Dan Murphy, RG Drage Career Center
  - Sharon Mastroianni, EHOVE Career Center
  - Dennis Blatt, Washington County Career Center
  - Jesse Maxfield, Mad River Local Schools
  - Keith Horner, Apollo Career Center

- Local Needs Assessment and Application
  - **Facilitator**: Tawanna Fields-Mphande, Education Program Specialist, Office of Career-Technical Education
  - **Key ODEW staff:** Leah Amstutz
  - **Key ODHE staff:** Brett Visger, Anthony Landis
  - **Purpose**: The State is required to develop templates for the needs assessment and application. This group will:
    - Provide input and feedback on templates for the needs assessment and application;
    - Provide input and recommendations on the supports local Perkins recipients need to successfully complete the needs assessment and use the results to make any changes indicated by the needs assessment.
  - ***External members:***
    - Cory Stein, Terra State Community College
    - Marisa Rohn, Stark State Community College
    - Katie Good, Washington State Community College
    - Frank Polen, Buckeye Career Center
    - Ken Porter, Ashtabula County Technical and Career Campus
    - Kip Crain, Wayne County Career Center
    - Bob Timmons, Polaris Career Center
    - Nancy Luce, Upper Valley Career Center
    - Glenn Faircloth, Lorain County Joint Vocational School
    - Krista Gearhart, Canton South High School
    - Liz Jenson, Kettering City Schools

        - Nathan Runyan, Akron City Schools
        - Peggy Reeves, Medina County Career Center
        - Terri Sandu, Lorain Community College
- Data and Accountability
    - **Facilitators:** Chris Woolard, Senior Executive Director for Performance and Impact

Shelby Robertson, Accountability and School Performance Administrator

- **Key ODEW staff**: Kelsey Stephens, David Ehle, Leah Amstutz
    - **Key ODHE staff:** Brett Visger, Anthony Landis
    - **Purpose**: Provide input on accountability measures, data collection supports, and reports needed to implement the data and accountability provisions of Perkins V.
    - ***External members:***
        - Brian Bachtel, Six District Compact
        - Ron Matter, Penta Career Center
        - Brook Click, Penta Career Center
        - Matt Meyer, Upper Valley Career Center
        - Marcy Roll, Upper Valley Career Center
        - Mary Beth Freeman, Delaware Area Career Center
        - Cheryl Mellen, Delaware Area Career Center
        - Krista Gearhart, Canton Local
        - Joshua Jennings, Global Impact STEM Academy
        - Kyle Newton, Warren Local
        - William Nye, Grand Valley School District
        - Amy Pogacsnik, Medina County Career Center
- High-Quality Programs of Study
    - **Facilitator:** Graham Wood, Program Administrator, Office of Career-Technical Education
    - **Key ODEW staff:** Graham Wood
    - **Key ODHE staff:** Brett Visger, Anthony Landis, Paula Compton
    - **Purpose:** Review and provide feedback on existing programs of study, with the intent of:

- Ensuring existing programs of study meet the requirements of law;
- Reviewing labor market data, including future data, to suggest areas where the State may need to add additional programs of study;
- Reviewing labor market data to suggest areas where programs may need to be phased out;
- Reviewing and providing feedback on Quality Program Standards; and
- Reviewing and providing input on Annual Program Review processes for ensuring programs are of high quality.

- ***External members:***
  - Roger Wright, Four Cities Compact
  - Julie Sanford, Sylvania City Schools
  - Michelle Patrick, Springfield Clark Career Technology Center
  - Jerome Brockway, Ashtabula County Technical and Career Campus
  - Kyle Copley, Scioto County Career-Technical Center
  - Kevin Kratzer, Southern Hills Career-Technical Center
  - Carrie Fife, Pickaway-Ross Career Center
  - Tracy Green, Lorain County Community College
  - Lada Gibson-Shreve, Stark State Community College
  - Loleta Collins, Edison State Community College
  - Marcy Green, Cuyahoga County Career Center
  - Sonja Pluck, Madison Local Schools

Internal Working Group

- The internal working group was charged with drafting sections of the State Plan and considering recommendations from the topical workgroups and feedback from the stakeholder committee. This committee coordinated with working group facilitators and stakeholder committee facilitators to consider feedback.
- **Facilitator:** Leah Amstutz, Director, Office of Career-Technical Education
- **Purpose: To** share and discuss outcomes from topical and stakeholder engagement meetings, assist with drafting and reviewing plan sections and coordinate with ODHE.
- **Internal Members:**
- Steven Tate (Office of Learning and Instructional Strategies)
- Neeta Agrawal (Office of Learning and Instructional Strategies)
- Shelby Robertson (Office of Accountability)

- Kelsey Stephens (Office of Data Quality and Governance)
- Anthony Landis (ODHE)
- Paula Compton (ODHE)
- Brett Visger (ODHE)
- Shannon Teague (Office for Improvement and Innovation)
- Cheryl Krohn (Center for Teaching, Leading and Learning)
- Amy Szymanski (Office for Exceptional Children)
- Susannah Wayland (Office of Integrated Student Supports)
- Matthew Imperato (Office of Integrated Student Supports)
- Becky Crance (Office of Career-Technical Education)
- Diane Neal (Office of Federal Programs)
- Scott May (Office of Federal Programs)
- Jason Wagner (Office of Chief Legal Counsel)
- Toby Lichtle (Office of Communication and Outreach)

Note: This group sought expertise from other staff from ODEW and ODHE as needed throughout the plan development process

Stakeholder Engagement Committee

The committee reviewed and provided feedback on key topics in the Perkins Four-Year State Plan, including accountability, local needs assessments and applications, programs of study to be developed and/or supported by the State, implementation timelines, ensuring all Ohioans have access to the programs supported through Perkins, and connections to other programs across the State.

- **Facilitators:** Kate Kreamer, Advanced CTE and Alisha Hyslop, Association for Career-Technical Education
- **Purpose:** To review all materials in advance and share relevant information with their constituents to garner feedback to share at meetings. Additionally, share relevant opportunities for engagement (such as meetings and public comment periods) with the groups they represent.
- External Members:

Secondary Educators

- Rich Baird, North Union Local Schools
- Greg Edinger, Vanguard-Sentinel
- Josh Gallagan, Delaware Area Career Center

- Krista Gearhart, Canton Local Schools
- Alicia Henry, Flex High School of Ohio
- Heather Powell, Williamsburg High School
- Sarah Taylor, Great Oaks Career Center
- Suzanne Wittmer, Mad River Local Schools
- Diane Zimmer, Firelands Local Schools

Postsecondary Educators

- Michael Evans, Ohio Association of Community Colleges
- Cassie Rickenberg, Northwest State Community College
- Lauren Massie, Career-Technical Education Center of Licking County
- Crystal Jones, Clark State Community College

Parents, Students and Community Representatives

- Rev. Landon Adams, Alpha Rho Lambda Education Foundation
- Jackie Arendt, Ohio Parent Teacher Association
- Lisa Newman, Mt. Healthy Preparatory and Fitness Academy
- Reese White, Delaware Area Career Center

- Eric Burkland, Ohio Manufacturer's Association
- Roger Geiger, National Federation of Independent Business – Ohio
- Gordon Gough, Ohio Council of Retail Merchants
- Lisa Gray, Ohio Excels
- Claudia Kovach, City Machine Technologies, Inc.
- Craig Sernik, Northeast Ohio Consortium Council of Governments
- John Sherwood, Governor's Office of Workforce Transformation (OWT)

State Staff

- Leah Amstutz, ODEW
- Devin Babcock, Office of Governor Mike DeWine
- Amy Dumbaugh, Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS)
- Senator Theresa Gavarone, Ohio Senate
- Julie Hance, Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD)

- Christine Kohler, Ohio Department of Youth Services
- Representative Susan Manchester, Ohio House of Representatives
- Susannah Wayland, ODEW

This committee met to provide input on the State Plan according to the schedule below. June 2019:

Overview of the law and requirements, current Career-Technical Education system across the State and the transition plan.August 2019:

Local needs assessment and application discussion.

September 2019: Equity discussion.November 2019: Data, accountability and program quality discussion. February 2020: Review final draft of the State Plan, discuss public comment, finalize draft submission to governor's office

Ohio Stakeholder Engagement Summary

Plan Development with Stakeholder Consultation			
Meeting Date	Location	Meeting Name	Attendees/Registrants
July 23-25, 2018	Ohio ACTE, Hilton Easton	2018 Connections to Education	200
September 18, 2018	Ohio University/Dublin Campus	Lead for Equity in Perkins V	38
September 18,2019	Webinar	Perkins V Webinar	18
September 19, 2019	Webinar	Perkins V Webinar	10
September 27, 2018	The Lodge at Hocking College	Regional Meetings	21
October 5, 2018	Columbus CC-Delaware	Regional Meetings	71
October 19, 2018	Great Oaks	Regional Meetings	43
Nobember 1, 2018	Mahoning County CTC	Regional Meetings	41
November 5, 2018	Penta Career Center	Regional Meetings	46
March 3, 2019	(RG Drage Auditorium)	Perkins V Regional Meetings	39
March 11, 2019	Sindair Community College	Perkins V Regional Meetings	62
February 7, 2019	Owens Community College	Perkins V Regional Meetings	64
February 11, 2019	Columbus City Southland Facility	Perkins V Regional Meetings	71
February 14, 2019	Washington County Career Center	Perkins V Regional Meetings	25
November 19, 2018	Conference Call	Perkins V Conference Calls	14
December 4, 2018	Conference Call	Perkins V Conference Calls	24
December 18, 2018	Conference Call	Perkins V Conference Calls	26
January 15, 2019	Conference Call	Perkins V Conference Calls	14
January 29, 2019	Conference Call	Perkins V Conference Calls	19
February 12, 2019	Conference Call	Perkins V Conference Calls	No record
February 26, 2019	Conference Call	Perkins V Conference Calls	39
March 12, 2019	Conference Call	Perkins V Conference Calls	No record
March 28, 2019	Conference Call	Perkins V Conference Calls	10
April 17, 2019	Conference Call	Perkins V Conference Calls	6
April 29, 2019	Conference Call	Perkins V Conference Calls	14
May 14, 2019	Conference Call	Perkins V Conference Calls	No record
May 29, 2019	Conference Call	Perkins V Conference Calls	6
June 13, 2019	Conference Call	Perkins V Conference Calls	8
June 27, 2019	Conference Call	Perkins V Conference Calls	4
July 11, 2019	Conference Call	Perkins V Conference Calls	5
July 25, 2019	Conference Call	Perkins V Conference Calls	7
August 8, 2019	Conference Call	Perkins V Conference Calls	9
August 22, 2019	Conference Call	Perkins V Conference Calls	10
September 5, 2019	Conference Call	Perkins V Conference Calls	6
September 19, 2019	Conference Call	Perkins V Conference Calls	9
October 3, 2019	Conference Call	Perkins V Conference Calls	14
October 31, 2019	Conference Call	Perkins V Conference Calls	17
November 14, 2019	Conference Call	Perkins V Conference Calls	23
July 31, 2019	Ohio ACTE, Hilton Easton	Equity Workgroup	26
September 9, 2019	Ohio Department of Education	Equity Workgroup	19
June 27, 2019	Ohio Department of Education	High Quality Programs of Study Workgroup	13
July 31, 2019	Ohio ACTE, Hilton Easton	High Quality Programs of Study Workgroup	17
August 29, 2019	Ohio Department of Education	High Quality Programs of Study Workgroup	19
October 30, 2019	Conference Call	High Quality Programs of Study Workgroup	11
June 27, 2019	Ohio Department of Education	Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment Workgroup	11
July 31, 2019	Ohio ACTE, Hilton Easton	Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment Workgroup	20
August 20, 2019	Ohio Department of Education	Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment Workgroup	20
September 23, 2019	Skype Session	Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment Workgroup	14
September 27, 2019	Ohio Department of Education	Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment Workgroup	19
July 31, 2019	Ohio ACTE, Hilton Easton	Data & Accountability Workgroup	27
September 5, 2019	Delaware Career Center	Data & Accountability Workgroup	18
September 25, 2019	Conference Call	Data & Accountability Workgroup	17
January 15, 2019	Ohio Department of Education	Data & Accountability Workgroup	13
October 8, 2019	Skype Session	Perkins V Kick-Off Secondary /Postsecondary	215
Novmber 11, 2018	Skype Session	Perkins Re-authorization and FCS Post-secondary	7
Ocotober 17, 2018	Ohio State University	Ohio Ag Ed Community Meeting	18
July 29, 2019	Ohio ACTE, Hilton Easton	2019 Connections to Education / CTE Updates	125
July 30, 2019	Ohio ACTE, Hilton Easton	2019 Connections to Education / Perkins Roundtable	40
September 12, 2019	Penta Career Center	Mock Equity Lab	15
June 28, 2019	Ohio Department of Natural Resources	Perkins V Comprehensive Stakeholder Engagement	36
August 27, 2019	Ohio Department of Natural Resources	Perkins V Comprehensive Stakeholder Engagement	24
November 22, 2019	Ohio Department of Natural Resources	Perkins V Comprehensive Stakeholder Engagement	19
February 3, 2020	Ohio Department of Natural Resources	Perkins V Comprehensive Stakeholder Engagement	17

(a2) Consistent with section 122(e)(1) of Perkins V, each eligible agency must develop the portion of the State plan relating to the amount and uses of any funds proposed to be reserved for adult career and technical education, postsecondary career and technical

education, and secondary Career and technical education after consultation with the State agencies identified in section 122(e)(1)(A)-(C) of the Act. If a State agency, other than the eligible agency, finds a portion of the final State plan objectionable, the eligible agency must provide a copy of such objections and a description of its response in the final plan submitted to the Secretary. (Section 122(e)(2) of Perkins V)

The State Plan was developed in collaboration between ODEW and ODHE. ODEW is responsible for secondary education in Ohio, while ODHE coordinates postsecondary education, which includes universities, colleges and adult career centers. No objections were made in the development of the State Plan.

(a3) Describe opportunities for the public to comment in person and in writing on the State plan. (Section 122(d)(14) of Perkins V)

To disseminate the plan and provide opportunities for public comment, ODEW, in collaboration with ODHE, conducted two public hearings on the State Perkins V plan.

The following groups were informed about the hearings through various channels, including social media advertising that was published 30 days prior to the first hearing: teachers, faculty, specialized instructional support personnel, paraprofessionals, school leaders, college and career center administrators, authorized public chartering agencies and charter school leaders employers, labor organizations, parents, students, and community organizations.

The following text was provided:

ODEW is holding public hearings on Ohio's four-year (FY2020-2023) Career-Technical Education plan, *Strengthening Career-Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V)*. This law reauthorizes the Carl D. Perkins Career-Technical Education Act of 2006, known as Perkins IV. Perkins V makes key changes to implementing Career-Technical Education programs and administrative processes.

A draft of Ohio's plan will be available on ODEW's website; and the department will present and take comments during the two public-comment hearings:

- Wednesday, December 4, 10 a.m., Pike County Career Tech Center, 175 Beaver Creek Rd. Piketon; and
- Wednesday, January 8, 10 a.m., Sandusky High School/Career Center, 2130 Hayes Ave., Sandusky.

For answers to general questions about the public hearings, contact Rhedeshia Young-Willingham or call (614) 387-6001.

Perkins V requires each eligible agency desiring assistance for any fiscal year under the Act to prepare and submit a State Plan to the Secretary. Each eligible agency must develop its State Plan in consultation with key stakeholders, the Governor, and other State agencies with authority for career-technical education, consistent with section 122(c) of the Act.

Each eligible agency shall make the State Plan publicly available for public comment for a period of not less than 30 days, by electronic means and in an easily accessible format, prior to submission to the Secretary for approval under this subsection. In the plan the eligible agency files under this

subsection, the eligible agency shall provide an assurance that public comments were taken into account in the development of the State Plan. Section 122(a)(3)(4).

A draft of Ohio's plan will be shared and public comment taken during the hearings. For more information go to Perkins V webpage*. Further information can be obtained* Rhedeshia Young-Willingham or call (614) 387-6001.

The following audiences were notified prior to the hearings:

- K-12 principals;
- Community school principals;
- Community school superintendents;
- Public school superintendents;
- Education associations;
- Ohio public libraries;
- Perkins V Stakeholder Committee (September 2019);
- Ohio technical Center directors; and
- Community college stakeholders.

The following means of communication were used:

- EdConnection (53,719);
- Social Media – Twitter;
- Facebook advertisement;
- GovDelivery (171,965); and
- Postsecondary email List Serves.

In addition to public hearings, the State Plan was posted on the Perkins V page of ODEW website, with a survey link clearly identified and available for public comment.

Public Hearing Process

The two hearing locations were selected to geographically represent the north and south regions of the State. The director of the Office of Career-Technical Education at ODEW and the senior director who oversees postsecondary Career-Technical Education presented formal information and monitored the discussion and questions at each of the three-hour hearings. The draft plan was posted on ODEW and ODHE websites seven days prior to the hearing. Additionally, paper copies were available at each hearing site.

Names of those attending were documented via a sign-in sheet. Those giving formal, oral testimony (limited to five minutes per person, per site) also signed a separate sheet. Spoken testimony was audio taped. An option of written (regular mail, submission at the site or email) also was communicated. Any written comment received by 5 p.m. on Jan. 10, 2020, 40 days from the plan posting date, was accepted into record.

Spoken testimony was transcribed by a court reporter and combined with written testimony that is provided verbatim in **Appendix A.6A** and **Appendix A.6B** of this plan with a synthesis of the formal testimony topics and respective responses from the State. The appendices also include data with specific numbers of attendees at each hearing.

Additionally, the Office of Career-Technical Education provided two staff members to take handwritten notes of public hearing informal comments and questions. This informal discussion, along with formal testimony, was studied and used to form the final Perkins V plan. Likewise, both before and after public hearings, input was solicited and received from various constituent professional associations, such as the Ohio Association of Career-Technical Superintendents, Ohio Association of City Career-Technical Schools, Ohio Council of Chief Academic Officers of Two-Year Colleges and Ohio Association for Career-Technical Education. Input from these groups was considered by those drafting the plan and their views were communicated to the State leadership who finalized the plan.

As a result of Ohio submitting a Combined State Plan to better align the state's largest workforce programs to better connect to businesses to qualified workers. On December 4, 2023, Ohio released the draft of its Combined State Plan for a 30-day public comment period. The plan covers the time period July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2028, for all of the following programs:

- Title I of the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), which funds county OhioMeansJobs Centers and job training and job search assistance programs for adults, dislocated workers, and low-income youth;
- The Wagner-Peyser Act Program, which funds a variety of employment services to connect job seekers and employers;
- Adult Basic and Literacy Education (known as ASPIRE), which funds GED preparation, adult math, reading, and literacy courses;
- The Vocational Rehabilitation Program through Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities, which supports vocational rehabilitation programs for individuals with disabilities;
- Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education, which provides funding for career technical training for secondary and post-secondary students;
- Senior Community Service Employment Program, which is a community service and work-based job training program for older Ohioans; and
- Jobs for Veterans State Grants Programs, which helps veterans find jobs through employment services at local OhioMeansJobs Centers.

Ohio's Combined State Plan is built through the collaboration of various state agencies and stakeholders to incorporate programs required under WIOA.

B. PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

- 1. State's Vision for Education and Workforce Development

- a. Provide a summary of State-supported workforce development activities (including education and training) in the State, including the degree to which the State's career and technical education programs and programs of study are aligned with and address the education and skill needs of the employers in the State identified by the State workforce development board. (Section 122(d)(1) of Perkins V)
- b. Describe the State's strategic vision and set of goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including special populations) and for meeting the skilled workforce needs of employers, including in existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations as identified by the State, and how the State's career and technical education programs will help to meet these goals. (Section 122(d)(2) of Perkins V)
- c. Describe the State's strategy for any joint planning, alignment, coordination, and leveraging of funds between the State's career and technical education programs and programs of study with the State's workforce development system, to achieve the strategic vision and goals described in section 122(d)(2) of Perkins V, including the core programs defined in section 3 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3102) and the elements related to system alignment under section 102(b)(2)(B) of such Act (29 U.S.C. 3112(b)(2)(B)); and for programs carried out under this title with other Federal programs, which may include programs funded under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 and the Higher Education Act of 1965. (Section 122(d)(3) of Perkins V)
- d. Describe how the eligible agency will use State leadership funds made available under section 112(a)(2) of Perkins V for each of the purposes under section 124(a) of the Act. See Text Box 2 for the required uses of State leadership funds under section 124(a) of Perkins V. (Section 122(d)(7) of Perkins V)

Text Box 2: Required Uses of State Leadership Funds

(a) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—

From amounts reserved under section 112(a)(2), each eligible agency shall—

- (1) Conduct State leadership activities to improve career and technical education, which shall include support for—
  - (A) Preparation for non-traditional fields in current and emerging professions, programs for special populations, and other activities that expose students, including special populations, to high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand occupations;
  - (B) Individuals in State institutions, such as State correctional institutions, including juvenile justice facilities, and educational institutions that serve individuals with disabilities;
  - (C) Recruiting, preparing, or retaining career and technical education teachers, faculty, specialized instructional support personnel, or paraprofessionals, such as preservice, professional development, or leadership development programs; and

Text Box 2: Required Uses of State Leadership Funds

- (D) Technical assistance for eligible recipients; and

(2) Report on the effectiveness of such use of funds in achieving the goals described in section 122(d)(2) and the State determined levels of performance described in section 113(b)(3)(A), and reducing disparities or performance gaps as described in section 113(b)(3)(C)(ii)(II).

(Section 124 of Perkins V)

- 2. Implementing Career and Technical Education Programs and Programs of Study
  - a. Describe the career and technical education programs or programs of study that will be supported, developed, or improved at the State level, including descriptions of the programs of study to be developed at the State level and made available for adoption by eligible recipients. (Section 122(d)(4)(A) of Perkins V)
  - b. Describe the process and criteria to be used for approving locally developed programs of study or career pathways (see Text Box 3 for the statutory definition of career pathways under section 3(8) of Perkins V), including how such programs address State workforce development and education needs and the criteria to assess the extent to which the local application under section 1321 [1] will—
    - i. Promote continuous improvement in academic achievement and technical skill attainment;
    - ii. Expand access to career and technical education for special populations; and
    - iii. Support the inclusion of employability skills in programs of study and career pathways. (Section 122(d)(4)(B) of Perkins V)
  - c. Describe how the eligible agency will—
    - i. Make information on approved programs of study and career pathways (including career exploration, work-based learning opportunities, early college high schools, and dual or concurrent enrollment program opportunities) and guidance and advisement resources, available to students (and parents, as appropriate), representatives of secondary and postsecondary education, and special populations, and to the extent practicable, provide that information and those resources in a language students, parents, and educators can understand;
    - ii. Facilitate collaboration among eligible recipients in the development and coordination of career and technical education programs and programs of study and career pathways that include multiple entry and exit points;
    - iii. Use State, regional, or local labor market data to determine alignment of eligible recipients' programs of study to the needs of the State,

regional, or local economy, including in-demand industry sectors and occupations identified by the State board, and to align career and technical education with such needs, as appropriate;

- iv. Ensure equal access to approved career and technical education programs of study and activities assisted under this Act for special populations;
- v. Coordinate with the State board to support the local development of career pathways and articulate processes by which career pathways will be developed by local workforce development boards, as appropriate;
- vi. Support effective and meaningful collaboration between secondary schools, postsecondary institutions, and employers to provide students with experience in, and understanding of, all aspects of an industry, which may include work-based learning such as internships, mentorships, simulated work environments, and other hands-on or inquiry-based learning activities; and
- vii. Improve outcomes and reduce performance gaps for CTE concentrators, including those who are members of special populations. (Section 122(d)(4)(C) of Perkins V)

Text Box 3: Statutory Definition of Career Pathways

The term 'career pathways' has the meaning given the term in section 3 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3102)

(7) Career pathway.--The term "career pathway'' means a combination of rigorous and high-quality education, training, and other services that—

- (A) Aligns with the skill needs of industries in the economy of the State or regional economy involved;
- (B) Prepares an individual to be successful in any of a full range of secondary or postsecondary education options, including apprenticeships registered under the Act of August 16, 1937 (commonly known as the "National Apprenticeship Act''; 50 Stat. 664, chapter 663; 29 U.S.C. 50 et seq.) (referred to individually in this Act as an "apprenticeship'', except in section 171);
- (C) Includes counseling to support an individual in achieving the individual's education and career goals;
- (D) Includes, as appropriate, education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster;
- (E) Organizes education, training, and other services to meet the particular needs of an individual in a manner that accelerates the educational and career advancement of the individual to the extent practicable;
- (F) Enables an individual to attain a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and at least 1 recognized postsecondary credential; and

Text Box 3: Statutory Definition of Career Pathways

- (G) Helps an individual enter or advance within a specific occupation or occupational cluster. (Section 3(7) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act [Public Law 113- 128])

(Section 3(8) of Perkins V)

- d. Describe how the eligible agency, if it opts to do so, will include the opportunity for secondary school students to participate in dual or concurrent enrollment programs, early college high school, or competency-based education. (Section 122(d)(4)(D) of Perkins V)
- e. Describe how the eligible agency will involve parents, academic and career and technical education teachers, administrators, faculty, career guidance and academic counselors, local business (including small businesses), labor organizations, and representatives of Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations, as appropriate, in the planning, development, implementation, and evaluation of its career and technical education programs. (Section 122(d)(12) of Perkins V)
- f. Include a copy of the local application template that the eligible agency will require eligible recipients to submit pursuant to section 134(b) of Perkins V. See Text Box 4 for the statutory requirements for local applications under section 134(b) of Perkins V.
- g. Include a copy of the comprehensive local needs assessment template and/or guidelines that the eligible agency will require of eligible recipients to meet the requirements of section 134(c) of Perkins V. See Text Box 5 for the requirements for the comprehensive local needs assessment under section 134(c) of Perkins V.
- h. Provide the eligible agency's definition for "size, scope, and quality" that will be used to make funds available to eligible recipients pursuant to section 135(b) of Perkins V.

Text Box 4: Statutory Requirements of Local Applications

- (b) CONTENTS.—The eligible agency shall determine the requirements for local applications, except that each local application shall contain—
- (1) A description of the results of the comprehensive needs assessment conducted under subsection (c);
- (2) Information on the career and technical education course offerings and activities that the eligible recipient will provide with funds under this part, which shall include not less than 1 program of study approved by a State under section 124(b)(2), including—
    - (A) How the results of the comprehensive needs assessment described in subsection (c) informed the selection of the specific career and technical education programs and activities selected to be funded;
    - (B) A description of any new programs of study the eligible recipient will develop and submit to the State for approval; and
    - (C) How students, including students who are members of special populations, will learn about their school's career and technical education course offerings and whether each course is part

Text Box 4: Statutory Requirements of Local Applications

of a career and technical education program of study;

- (3) A description of how the eligible recipient, in collaboration with local workforce development boards and other local workforce agencies, one-stop delivery systems described in section 121(e)(2) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3151(e)(2)), and other partners, will provide—
    - (A) Career exploration and career development coursework, activities, or services;
    - (B) Career information on employment opportunities that incorporate the most up-to-date information on high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand industry sectors or occupations, as determined by the comprehensive needs assessment described in subsection (c); and
    - (C) An organized system of career guidance and academic counseling to students before enrolling and while participating in a career and technical education program;
- (4) A description of how the eligible recipient will improve the academic and technical skills of students participating in career and technical education programs by strengthening the academic and career and technical education components of such programs through the integration of coherent and rigorous content aligned with challenging academic standards and relevant career and technical education programs to ensure learning in the subjects that constitute a well-rounded education (as defined in section 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965);
- (5) A description of how the eligible recipient will—
    - (A) Provide activities to prepare special populations for high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand industry sectors or occupations that will lead to self-sufficiency;
    - (B) Prepare CTE participants for non-traditional fields;
    - (C) Provide equal access for special populations to career and technical education courses, programs, and programs of study; and
    - D) Ensure that members of special populations will not be discriminated against on the basis of their status as members of special populations;
- (6) A description of the work-based learning opportunities that the eligible recipient will provide to students participating in career and technical education programs and how the recipient will work with representatives from employers to develop or expand work-based learning opportunities for career and technical education students, as applicable;
- (7) A description of how the eligible recipient will provide students participating in career and technical education programs with the opportunity to gain postsecondary credit while still attending high school, such as through dual or concurrent enrollment programs or early college high school, as practicable;
- (8) A description of how the eligible recipient will coordinate with the eligible agency and institutions of higher education to support the recruitment, preparation, retention, and training, including professional development, of teachers, faculty, administrators, and specialized instructional support personnel and paraprofessionals who meet applicable State certification and licensure requirements

Text Box 4: Statutory Requirements of Local Applications

(including any requirements met through alternative routes to certification), including individuals from groups underrepresented in the teaching profession; and

- (9) A description of how the eligible recipient will address disparities or gaps in performance as described in section 113(b)(3)(C)(ii)(II) in each of the plan years, and if no meaningful progress has been achieved prior to the third program year, a description of the additional actions such recipient will take to eliminate those disparities or gaps.

(Section 134(b) of Perkins V)

Text Box 5: Statutory Requirements for Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment

- (c) COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT.—
- (1) IN GENERAL.—To be eligible to receive financial assistance under this part, an eligible recipient shall—
    - (A) Conduct a comprehensive local needs assessment related to career and technical education and include the results of the needs assessment in the local application submitted under subsection (a); and
    - (B) Not less than once every 2 years, update such comprehensive local needs assessment.
- (2) REQUIREMENTS.—The comprehensive local needs assessment described in paragraph
    - (1) Shall include each of the following:
    - (A) An evaluation of the performance of the students served by the eligible recipient with respect to State determined and local levels of performance established pursuant to section 113, including an evaluation of performance for special populations and each subgroup described in section 1111(h)(1)(C)(ii) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.
    - (B) A description of how career and technical education programs offered by the eligible recipient are—(i) sufficient in size, scope, and quality to meet the needs of all students served by the eligible recipient; and (ii)(I) aligned to State, regional, Tribal, or local in-demand industry sectors or occupations identified by the State workforce development board described in section 101 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3111) (referred to in this section as the ''State board'') or local workforce development board, including career pathways, where appropriate; or (II) designed to meet local education or economic needs not identified by State boards or local workforce development boards.
    - (C) An evaluation of progress toward the implementation of career and technical education programs and programs of study.
    - (D) A description of how the eligible recipient will improve recruitment, retention, and training of career and technical education teachers, faculty, specialized instructional support personnel, paraprofessionals, and career guidance and academic counselors, including individuals in groups underrepresented in such professions.
    - (E) A description of progress toward implementation of equal access to high-quality career and

Text Box 4: Statutory Requirements of Local Applications

technical education courses and programs of study for all students, including— (i) strategies to overcome barriers that result in lower rates of access to, or performance gaps in, the courses and programs for special populations; (ii) providing programs that are designed to enable special populations to meet the local levels of performance; and (iii) providing activities to prepare special populations for high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand industry sectors or occupations in competitive, integrated settings that will lead to self-sufficiency.

(Section 134(c) of Perkins V)

- 3. Meeting the Needs of Special Populations
    - a. Describe the eligible agency's program strategies for special populations, including a description of how individuals who are members of special populations—
        - i. Will be provided with equal access to activities assisted under this Act;
        - ii. Will not be discriminated against on the basis of status as a member of a special population;
        - iii. Will be provided with programs designed to enable individuals who are members of special populations to meet or exceed State determined levels of performance described in section 113, and prepare special populations for further learning and for high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand industry sectors or occupations;
        - iv. Will be provided with appropriate accommodations; and
        - v. Will be provided instruction and work-based learning opportunities in integrated settings that support competitive, integrated employment. (Section 122(d)(9) of Perkins V)
- 4. Preparing Teachers and Faculty
    - a. Describe how the eligible agency will support the recruitment and preparation of teachers, including special education teachers, faculty, school principals, administrators, specialized instructional support personnel, and paraprofessionals to provide career and technical education instruction, leadership, and support, including professional development that provides the knowledge and skills needed to work with and improve instruction for special populations. (Section 122(d)(6) of Perkins V)

[1]Based on the context of this requirement, the reference to the local application process under "section 132" appears to be a typographical error in the Perkins V statute. The correct section for local applications in Perkins V is section 134. Therefore, eligible agencies should respond to this item using the provisions in section 134 of Perkins V.

B.1.a. Provide a summary of State-supported workforce development activities (including education and training) in the State, including the degree to which the State's career-technical education programs and programs of study are aligned with and

address the education and skill needs of the employers in the State identified by the State workforce development board. (Section 122(d)(1) of Perkins V).

Ohio is engaged in a wide variety of workforce development activities aligned to the education and skill needs of Ohio employers, as identified by the State workforce development board. In many respects, these activities are changing the culture of the education system and the way business and industry interface with that system. The OWT, whose mission is to connect Ohio's business, training and education communities to build a dynamically skilled, productive and purposeful workforce, is a driving force for this change. The Office of Workforce Transformation coordinates the activities of the State's workforce development board. Collaboration between business, government and education is happening more than ever before in the context of the following education and workforce development activities.

State-Supported Workforce Development Activities

Career Connections

Career Connections is a joint initiative between ODEW, OWT, ODHE and OhioMeansJobs. Career Connections began in 2012 by providing a framework for students to develop a vision and realistic plan for their futures – from kindergarten through grade 12 and beyond. Career-focused learning strategies are embedded into Ohio's Learning Standards for English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies, allowing teachers to easily integrate career-related information into their daily classroom instruction. Career Connections aligns the many efforts around college and career readiness to support students to be challenged, prepared and empowered.

OhioMeansJobs-Readiness Seal

The OhioMeansJobs-Readiness Seal is a formal designation students can earn on their high school diplomas and transcripts indicating they have the personal strengths, strong work ethic and professional experiences businesses have identified as important employability skills. The Readiness Seal includes 14 competencies a student can demonstrate across at least three work- or community-based learning experiences, as certified by adult mentors.

Work-Based Learning

Work-based learning is a coordinated sequence of experiences designed to provide students with real-world learning through partnerships with local business and industry. These learning activities help a young person explore careers and choose an appropriate career path.

ODEW maintains and shares tools to aid businesses and schools in creating and managing work-based learning opportunities for students.

ApprenticeOhio

Apprenticeships are an integral part of Ohio's career-technical education work-based learning framework. ApprenticeOhio is a one-stop resource for apprenticeship information. Current and prospective apprentices and employers can use this tool to learn more about becoming an apprentice or sponsoring a registered apprenticeship program

Registered apprenticeship programs teach high-level skills for today's workplace. Ohio has more than 600 registered apprenticeship programs in diverse fields such as construction,

energy, healthcare, manufacturing and utilities. Ohio is committed to facilitating student access to the proven advantages of registered apprenticeship training. The Ohio State Apprenticeship Council registers and monitors apprenticeship programs to ensure quality and safety.

Quality pre-apprenticeship programs provide an important bridge to apprenticeships for Ohioans who may lack the skills or experience to take that step on their career paths. The pre-apprenticeship program teaches basic technical and job-readiness skills for a designated apprentice occupation or sector to prepare students for a formal registered apprenticeship training program.

Though pre-apprenticeship training is not subject to laws governing the registered apprenticeship system, it has a direct effect on stakeholders in that system. For the benefit of its stakeholders – the workers, employers and apprenticeship sponsors of Ohio – the Ohio State Apprenticeship Council has established a means to identify and publicly recognize quality pre-apprenticeship training.

Ohio's In-Demand Jobs List

Ohio's In-Demand Jobs List is comprised of the jobs for which there is the greatest need and that pay a living wage. The list allows the State to align resources and policies to address the critical workforce needs of employers. Educators and trainers can use this information to tailor workforce training programs to meet the future hiring needs of employers and allow businesses to grow.

Business Advisory Councils and Career-Technical Advisory Committees

To help build relationships between businesses and schools, Ohio law (Revised CODE section 3313.82) requires every school district and educational service center to have a business advisory council. Recently, the Ohio General Assembly enacted Ohio Revised CODE section 3313.821, which directs the superintendent of public instruction, in consultation with the Governor's Executive Workforce Board, to develop standards for the operation of business advisory councils established by the boards of education of school districts or the governing boards of educational service centers throughout the State.

Business advisory councils foster cooperation among schools, businesses and the communities they serve, ensuring the work of educators aligns with the needs of businesses. This cooperation can make a local education system more aware of the local labor market, promote work-based experiences within businesses, increase the awareness among students of career opportunities, and help students prepare for successful learning and employment. Business advisory councils include local and regional business leaders who are familiar with business and industry needs and partner with district leaders to plan and carry out the council's work.

Ohio law (Ohio Administrative CODE section 3301.61) directs Career-Technical Education programs to develop and maintain career-technical advisory committees reflecting career fields and authorized by local boards of education. Committees engage business and industry and postsecondary representatives and use input from professional associations, labor, government and the community. Advisory committees identify new and emerging careers; advise current programs on curriculum, assessment, work-based learning, facilities and equipment; engage educators to improve and expand programs; and ensure the quality of the program using ODEW's Quality Program Standards.

Career-Technical Construction Program

The Ohio Facilities Construction Commission (OFCC) approved a $200 million dollar line item to support construction projects that establish or expand career-technical education programs. Funds will be distributed to joint vocational school districts (JVSD) and city, local, and exempted village school districts designated as the lead district of a career-technical planning district (CTPD), according to guidelines established by OFCC, in consultation with the Governor's Office of Workforce Transformation (OWT) and the Department of Education and Workforce (ODEW). The guidelines must consider establishing or expanding career-technical education programs that support the occupations on OWT's Ohio's Top Jobs List or that qualify for the Innovative Workforce Incentive Program under ODEW.

Industry Credential Initiatives

To support career-focused learning, the State's most recent biennial budget included a series of initiatives and requirements designed to incentivize the earning of industry-recognized credentials. The following are explanations of these new initiatives.

1. ***Notifying Students of Industry Credential Opportunities:*** Ohio now requires each school district to notify students who are enrolled in relevant, Career-Technical Education courses about industry-recognized credential opportunities.
2. ***Industry Credential Payment and Reimbursement ($11 million):*** Each school district now must pay for the cost of any student's industry-recognized credential. The district can then seek reimbursement from ODEW for the costs when the student earns the credential. The biennial budget appropriated $11 in each fiscal year for this purpose.
3. ***Innovative Workforce Incentive Program ($21 million):*** The budget legislation created the Innovative Workforce Incentive Program to promote high school students earning industry-recognized credentials in priority industry sectors. The program will identify credentials eligible for an additional $1,250 to be paid to the educating entities. These incentive dollars will be paid to a school district that reports a student as earning a credential from the Innovative Workforce Incentive Program list.
4. ***Equipment Grant for Ohio's Top Jobs*** – The biennial budget allocated $100 million over two fiscal years, to award competitive grants to schools to establish or expand Career Technical Education (CTE) and/or Industry Credential programs. With priority for programs that support careers on Ohio's Top Jobs list and establish or expand credentialing programs from the Governor's Office of Workforce Transformation Innovative Workforce Incentive Program list.
5. ***TechCred ($50 Million):*** This program provides resources for postsecondary incumbent worker training that leads to a technology-focused career-technical credential. It is administered through the Development Services Agency, and the chancellor of ODHE is responsible for developing the list of eligible credentials.

Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment

Ohio will use the comprehensive local needs assessment (**Appendix A.3**) to ensure programs of study align to, and are validated by, local, regional and Statewide workforce needs and economic priorities. The comprehensive local needs assessment will be completed by each local

recipient every two years and will be a required element to start a new program or to renew existing programs. The comprehensive local needs assessment will ensure labor market alignment, high-quality programs, and equity and access for all populations. In addition, the program application and renewal process will require alignment with Ohio's In-Demand Jobs List. If a pathway program does not align to the list, a narrative with supporting evidence showing local or regional demand will be required.

The listed activities highlight some of the formal ways business and industry are involved in the career preparation of students in Ohio. Throughout the design and maintenance of Career-Technical Programs of Study, as provided by ODEW and ODHE, business and industry partners are invited and encouraged to share their needs. These processes are discussed in detail in the response to question b.2.A, including the involvement of featuring and advisory panels.

B.1.b. Describe the State's strategic vision and set of goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including special populations) and for meeting the skilled workforce needs of employers, including in existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations as identified by the State, and how the State's career-technical education programs will help to meet these goals. (Section 122(d)(2) of Perkins V)

The OWT, ODEW, ODHE, OOD, the Ohio Department of Aging (ODA), and ODJFS have developed a shared vision and goals that support the creation and execution of the WIOA Combined State Plan.

Vision. An Ohio where business, training and education are aligned to meet the needs of employers, individuals and their communities.

Goals:

- Coordinate efforts across entities (public, private, local and State) to reduce unnecessary duplication and maximize resources.
- Leverage technology and data to create efficiencies and improve services and outcomes.
- Deploy locally driven programs that produce results.
- Invest in and promote education and training for jobs that:
    - Empower people with 21st century skills and strengthen Ohio's strategic economic advantage;
    - Ensure our State has a workforce to support the health and well-being of Ohioans, their families and communities.

Ohio's Career-Technical Education programs are positioned to assist the State in meeting these goals by infusing the following guiding principles set by the OWT into the delivery of programs through its secondary and postsecondary workforce development programs.

- **Guiding Principle 1.** Connect business and education to make significant progress toward the vision. Agencies must work to connect business and education efforts throughout the State to build a dynamically skilled, productive and purposeful workforce.

- **Guiding Principle 2.** Create a culture of continuous learning to empower Ohioans to succeed in the 21st century workplace and meet business needs. Agencies must provide opportunities for individuals to continuously learn, upskill and reskill, and create a culture that encourages continuous learning.
- **Guiding Principle 3.** Build career pathways to prepare Ohioans for future jobs. Agencies must build career pathways that offer on ramps and off ramps for educational attainment to suit the individual needs and aptitudes of Ohio's students and job seekers while preparing them for successful and purposeful careers.
- **Guiding Principle 4.** Leverage data for accountability to pursue continuous innovation and improvement of workforce initiatives while remaining accountable to the taxpayer. Agencies must consistently collect data and measure the results.
- **Guiding Principle 5.** Coordinate workforce efforts to prevent duplication and increase efficiency and effectiveness. Agencies must collaborate with partners and governments to coordinate workforce efforts for the benefit of Ohio's job seekers and businesses.

Further, this work is guided by Each Child, Our Future, Ohio's shared plan for its preK-12 education system, which envisions that each Ohio student is *challenged*, *prepared* and *empowered* for his or her future success. Ohio's Career-Technical Education programs assist in supporting meeting the needs of the whole child through integrating the plan's three core principles in the secondary and postsecondary Career-Technical Education system, as follows:

1. **Equity.** Each child has access to relevant and challenging academic experiences and educational resources necessary for success across race, gender, ethnicity, language, disability, family background and/or income.
2. **Partnerships.** Everyone, not just those in schools, shares the responsibility of preparing children for successful future.
3. **Quality Schools.** Schools are an important destination where many individuals and factors come together to serve the student, including school leaders, teachers, curriculum, instruction, student supports, data analysis and more.

B.1.c. Describe the State's strategy for any joint planning, alignment, coordination, and leveraging of funds between the State's career and technical education programs and programs of study with the State's workforce development system, to achieve the strategic vision and goals described in section 122(d)(2) of Perkins V, including the core programs defined in section 3 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3102) and the elements related to system alignment under section 102(b)(2)(B) of such Act (29 U.S.C. 3112(b)(2)(B)); and for programs carried out under this title with other Federal programs, which may include programs funded under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 and the Higher Education Act of 1965. (Section 122(d)(3) of Perkins V)

Ohio is submitting its plan for career-technical education as part of a WIOA Combined State Plan. The decision to collaboratively develop and submit this Combined State Plan is a direct result of the two supporting goals for the State's strategic vision:

- Coordinate efforts across entities (public, private, local and State) to reduce unnecessary duplication and maximize resources;
- Leverage technology and data to create efficiencies and improve services and outcomes.

The following State agencies participated in Combined State Plan strategy and writing sessions to ensure alignment of plan elements and utilization of collaborative resources:

- ODEW
- ODHE
- OWT
- ODJFS
- OOD
- ODA

The sessions resulted in the identification of strategies to align programming and initiatives across agencies to the State's strategic vision. The immediate goal was to produce a comprehensive plan for Ohio's future workforce with aligned supporting strategies. The sustainable result will be a common vision, language and system of supports for future collaboration.

To support its strategic workforce vision and four goals, Ohio has developed the following strategies and action items for implementation or expansion. As shown, Goal 1 relates directly to the alignment of core program resources while Goals 2, 3, and 4 primarily relate to promoting in-demand occupations and career pathways.

Goal 1 - Coordinate efforts across entities (public, private, local, and State) to reduce unnecessary duplication and maximize resources.

Strategy: Promote consistency across core programs

Action Items

- **Combined State Plan.** Ohio's Combined State Plan includes the core programs of WIOA, W-P, JVSG, Aspire Adult Education and Literacy, Carl D. Perkins Act, VR programs, and SCSEP. This united approach will further support the State's efforts to promote consistency, reduce unnecessary duplication, and maximize resources.
- **In-Demand Jobs List.** The State has created an In-Demand Jobs List that includes sectors and occupations with greater than average projected job openings or growth, along with median wages equal to or greater than 80 percent of Ohio's median wage. The list influences how Ohio invests in its education and training programs as well as its how it promotes career pathways to students within the K-12 system. The State will use the In-Demand Job List across all core programs to foster cross-agency workforce alignment, promote consistent training investments and curricula development, and encourage comparable career planning services. The list is updated every two years.

- **Critical Jobs List.** The Critical Jobs List is informed by the expertise of outside partners as well as members of the Governor's cabinet, including the directors of the Governor's Children's Initiative and RecoveryOhio. It includes sectors and occupations that have been identified as crucial to the health and wellness of Ohioans. Included jobs must provide long-term career pathways. The Critical Jobs List is available on the TopJobs portal and is utilized across all core programs in a manner similar to the In-Demand Jobs List to further promote alignment of services and resources. The list will be updated in early 2024.

- **Inter-Agency Listing of Workforce Programs.** For the second time in the DeWine-Husted Administration, OWT recently identified and inventoried all workforce-related programs across the State's cabinet agencies. The detailed register includes information about each program's name, population served, primary activities, lead agency, partners and stakeholders, funding levels and sources, and data tracking and reporting systems. The Inter-Agency Listing will help increase awareness about the various types of workforce services that are available throughout Ohio, further promoting consistency, cooperation, and collaboration among the core programs.

- **WIOA Regional Plans.** The State has fully embraced the regional planning efforts allowed under WIOA. It has created 10 distinct regions that represent Ohio's unique labor markets. Each has created its own WIOA Regional Plan. These plans were updated in 2023 to reflect the most current demographics, needs, and strategies needed to navigate post COVID-19 pandemic landscape. The State will continue to encourage the local workforce areas that comprise each of the regions to work collaboratively and actively identify how to streamline processes, provide consistent services, and eliminate duplicative efforts.

Goal 2 - Leverage technology and data to create efficiencies and improve services and outcomes.

Strategy: Use technology effectively

Action Items

- **Improved Customer Experience.** Ohio is committed to continuously improving services and outcomes for its customers. It secured multiple vendors to make critical changes to OhioMeansJobs.com. New features implemented in March 2021 included a redesigned user-friendly dashboard and connecting the Ohio Identification system known as OH|ID for ease of use to have 1 ID for all State-Owned website/applications. The redesign unified the account creation process with other State-Owned sites and systems, as well as improved the organization of activities for State Program tied individuals such as those on Unemployment Insurance, driven by user feedback and an Executive Order.

- **Virtual Services.** Ohio currently has a variety of virtual workforce services, including job-searching, upskilling, and career-pathing activities available on OhioMeansJobs.com. Additionally, the State is offering virtual classrooms and training programs for its Aspire Adult Education and Literacy program to increase its ability to reach customers with barriers that prevent them from fully participating in a traditional setting.

Due to the increase in utilization of remote services, Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) has increasingly relied on technology, including assistive technology, to deliver services. OOD has invested in additional technology for program participants that is needed to participate in services, including Pre-Employment Transition Services. Due to the high satisfaction with remote services, it is anticipated that this will continue for the foreseeable future.

- **Workforce Supply Tool.** Another mechanism that supports Ohio's strategy of using technology effectively is the Workforce Supply Tool. This tool provides businesses with information on students currently enrolled in high demand fields, as well as projections for individuals who currently possess skills and educational requirements in these occupations. Employers are able to obtain specific contact information for educational programs that train individuals in their particular sectors, and training providers are able to identify similar programs and better coordinate degree and certificate curricula.

Goal 3 - Deploy locally driven programs that produce results.

Strategy 1: Identify local business needs

Action Items

- **Electric Vehicle Workforce.** The EV workforce strategy will be deployed through a regional node infrastructure, based on the OMA's industry sector partnership (ISP) network, to capitalize on existing local success in adjacent industries and to develop and expand solutions tailored to each region's unique workforce demand and supply profiles. This regionally led approach through the ISPs will allow programs to be tailored for local industry and workforce needs. These entities already maintain strong relationships with community partners, educational institutions, and other key players, while formalized governance structures will enable us to move quickly and capture the moment. ISPs will function as a key coordinator within the six regional nodes, mirroring the economic development regions of Ohio, and will be the core coordinator of industry, academic, and community partners.

- **Broadband and 5G Workforce.** The Ohio Broadband and 5G Workforce Strategy also implemented six regional nodes across each JobsOhio region. Each node will comprise a 4-year institution serving as the fiscal lead, a community college developing and implementing training programs for participants, and a local workforce development board within the corresponding JobsOhio region assisting participants with program enrollment and employer connections. Additionally, each node will partner with a Community Action Agency, striving to connect with underrepresented communities and boost enrollment.

- **Intel Expansion**. Intel's decision to invest in Ohio will be catalytic for the entire state. Before Intel announced their plans to build two fabs in Central Ohio, the state already had 140 suppliers to the company. In approximately 18 months, Ohio increased the number of suppliers to the company to 200, covering all six economic development regions of Ohio. Intel demonstrated their commitment to impacting the entire state

through their Semiconductor Education and Research Program (SERP), which will impact 80 institutions of higher education across all parts of Ohio. A statewide workforce development effort will be needed to support both Intel and the emerging semiconductor industry in Ohio. These efforts include investments in underserved regions of the state like the Appalachian Southeast Ohio region. Ohio University leads the Appalachian Semiconductor Education & Technical Ecosystem (ASCENT) proposal under SERP. ASCENT is a 14-school coalition of Appalachian-region institutions that will strive to recruit students from underrepresented groups and offer training programs for fab technicians, entry-level engineers, and advanced-degree graduates to fulfill the workforce demands of Intel and broader community. The emerging semiconductor industry will also benefit from a world-class microelectronics program that has existed in Northeast Ohio for over a decade in Lorain County Community College's microelectronics program. In the area immediately surrounding where Intel is building their fabs, the workforce development boards are aligning to serve jobseekers and support both Intel and other employers in the region.

- **Ohio's Industry Sector Partnerships.** Ohio's Industry Sector Partnership Grant Program helps fund collaborative efforts between local business, education, training provides, and community stakeholders that are invested in improving their region's workforce. The grant invests in local collaboration that benefits Ohio residents and Ohio job creators. Industry sector partnerships design and implement workforce strategies for specific sectors in individual regions. Three rounds of funding have been awarded since the program began, representing 38 partnerships across the state. A fourth round of applications recently closed and is under review.

- **Business Advisory Councils at Local School Districts.** Ohio law requires every school district and educational service center to have a Business Advisory Council. To increase quality and accountability, the State recently established specific standards regarding these Councils' roles and responsibilities. Business Advisory Councils should (1) advise local school districts on changes in the economy and job market and the area in which future jobs are most likely to be available, (2) advocate for the employment skills most critical to business and industry and the development of curriculum to teach these skills, and (3) aid and support local school districts by offering suggestions for developing a working relationship among businesses, labor organizations, and educators. These new unified standards will better align education and training programs with local business needs. The state also acknowledges Councils that are performing at a high standard with award designations that note their quality.

- **Inter-Agency Business Teams.** Ohio is encouraging its Local Workforce Development Boards to implement Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with additional partners beyond the core programs, such as JobsOhio, the Ohio Department of Veterans Services, and local and regional economic development organizations. The Inter-Agency Business Teams will promote a more collaborative approach to business relations, including consistent outreach methodologies, transparency among partner organizations, and packaging of collective services is used at the local level. The development and expansion of business teams within the Local Workforce Development Areas are a critical service to address employer needs and businesses negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. To assist in these efforts, ODJFS set aside another $4.5M of

recaptured WIOA Funds for the 2023 Business Resource Network (BRN) initiative. The funds are designated for interested Local Workforce Development Areas to use to build business resource teams, increase employer and business engagement and increase outreach efforts to employers and labor force participants. This is the third round of BRN funds and will be available from July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024.

Strategy 2: Increase Access to Services

Action Items

- **Public Libraries.** Ohio public libraries play a key role in addressing the varied employment related needs of workers, job seekers and employers. Over 8 million Ohioans have library cards and there are over 251 libraries in the state**.** Collaboration with public libraries increase the quality and quality of access points for individuals to receive needed career information and assistance.Currently, Aspire classes are held at libraries across Ohio, greatly increasing access to adult education and literacy services. To improve access to other workforce development services, especially in rural areas with limited public transportation options, each Local Workforce Area has created strategic MOUs with its local library system. Collaborative efforts included in these MOUs range from the sharing of information and training on WIOA programs and library resources to allowing library space for WIOA case managers to provide services to businesses and jobseekers. In some local areas, the library may be a partner in the OhioMeansJobs center, a member of the local workforce development board, or both.

- **LinkedIn Learning.** In addition to physical locations such as libraries, the State has also invested in technology to further increase access to workforce services. All Ohioans with a library card are able to take unlimited, free online training courses through LinkedIn Learning (which is typically a paid service). Customers may use either a computer or mobile device to participate in over 15,000 courses such as software development, data analytics, and cyber security that are taught by industry experts.

- **Community College Acceleration Program.** Ohio's community colleges serve as critical entry points for individuals to gain and improve skills that lead to long-term employment and continued career advancement. However, many people discontinue their postsecondary education prior to securing a credential or diploma. To help students remain in school, Ohio is implementing the Community College Acceleration Program. The State will use Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAP E&T) funding to match 50 percent of community college expenditures for financial, academic, and personal support services provided to students in need. The Community College Acceleration Program is currently offered at four test locations.

- **Centers for Training Excellence.** The Ohio Technical Centers (OTCs), formerly known as Adult Workforce Education Career Centers, have provided an opportunity since the 1980s to offer a cost efficient and effective way to train and upskill employees at local companies within their service areas. OTCs that qualified for this distinction were granted additional funding to offer a common core of training and student support services. In 2016, ODHE, in collaboration with Career and Technical Education

Superintendents, Directors, and Treasurers, reimagined this original concept known as "Full Service Centers" to be more inclusive of all OTCs with a specific focus around customized/contract training and business consultation services. OTCs that are recognized as Centers for Training Excellence (CTXs) are in the prime position to quickly respond to the needs of local and regional businesses across the state.

Goal 4 - Invest in and promote education and training for jobs that

(a) empower people with 21st Century skills and strengthen Ohio's strategic economic advantage, and

(b) ensure that our State has a workforce to support the health and well-being of Ohioans, their families, and communities.

Strategy 1: Expand career opportunities through education and training

Action Items

- **EV Workforce.** As with any nascent industry, there are not yet standardized curricula and credentials that enable the workforce to fully understand career progression, transition between employers, or build the logical competencies. The statewide EV industry sector partnership will coordinate syllabi and curriculum cooperation among education providers, OEMs, and suppliers to review and validate through coordinated curriculum assessment sessions. Existing advanced manufacturing programs could then be supplemented with EV-specific content developed by education partners and OEMs. Opportunity exists for scaffolding curriculum with stackable credentials across Ohio. This requires opening eligibility for funding to ensure that existing and new workers can be successfully upskilled and reskilled for new opportunities.

- **Semiconductor Workforce.** Similar to the EV industry, semiconductor roles are, for the most part, new to Ohio. Fortunately, the manufacture of semiconductors and the roles within the operation have significant crossover with both legacy manufacturing operations in Ohio and other nascent industries, such as EVs. The public and private sector are collaborating to supplement the broad existing advanced manufacturing training infrastructure with semiconductor-specific skills. One example of this collaboration is the creation of a 1-year Semiconductor Fundamentals Certificate, which is 100% stackable to Engineering Technology associate degrees at Ohio community colleges. The makeup of this certificate is 80% previously existing advanced manufacturing curriculum and 20% semiconductor-specific curriculum. Using the combination of foundational technical and manufacturing skills with industry-specific coursework enables institutions of higher education to prepare students for the variety of technical careers that exist in Ohio's thriving economy.

- **Broadband Workforce.** In the Broadband-5G space, Ohio currently offers 11 training programs, including Certified Fiber Optic Technician, Telecommunication Tower Technician, 5G Readiness, and Broadband Infrastructure Training Programs. These programs aim to cultivate a workforce highly skilled in broadband and 5G technology deployment. The Sector Partnership, housed at the Ohio State University, is in the process of developing undergraduate programs in these fields. It has also established

micro-credentials such as 5G Readiness, helping students to attain a high school diploma by earning Industry-Recognized Credentials. As regional nodes commence operations and expand, additional training programs will be introduced throughout the state, bolstering the deployment of broadband and 5G technology across Ohio for years to come.

- **Streamlined Process for Students accessing College Credit.** ODEW has streamlined processes for students to access college credit while in high school in multiple ways through systematic partnerships with other state agencies:
    - Each Student in high school can take up to 30 credit hours of College Courses per year through CCP
    - Students taking CTE coursework can earn CTAG credit simply by taking high school coursework and passing end-of-course technical assessments or earning credentials. This is true across all career fields, and it is easy for students to access due to partnerships between ODEW and ODHE/the community college system.
    - Developing systems to be agile in response to emerging workforce needs in Ohio:
        - Semiconductor 1-year Certificate will be earnable in high school and students will be able to earn the credit in whatever way works for them
        - ODEW Staff traveling to Oregon to learn from Intel about semiconductors and meeting with community college partners in the region.
- **Career Awareness and Exploration Funding**. To support the implementation of a more career-focused approached to education, funding in the biennial budget was allocated for career awareness and exploration in each city, local, exempted village, and joint vocational school district, community school, and STEM school.
    - Career Awareness and Exploration funds will be calculated by the Department for each city, local, exempted village, and joint vocational school district, community school and STEM school and should be used to enhance career awareness and exploration for Ohio students. Schools will generate funds for these purposes based on their enrollment in the amount of $7.50 per student in the 2023-2024 school year and $10.00 in the 2024-2025 school year.
    - While the Department will calculate funds at each educating school through the state foundation payment process, the funds will be transferred to the Career-Technical Planning District (CTPD) by the Department. The Career-Technical Planning District shall utilize these funds to deliver relevant career awareness and exploration programs to all students within its Career-Technical planning district, consistent with CareerTechnical planning district's plan on file with the Department of Education and Workforce.
    - Career development activities range from developing and implementing grade appropriate career focused lessons to elementary students aligned to Ohio's

Learning Standards, Business and Industry Hands On Career Exploration Events, coordination of career speakers, career days for elementary students, mock interviews, creating social media resources, micro credential programs for middle school students, and creating satellite programs in middle grades focusing on career connections.

- **Innovative Workforce Incentive Program.** To inspire youth to identify paths to success through career-focused learning, the State has allocated $32 million in funding through the biennial budget to help students earn industry-recognized credentials. Of this total, $21 million will be used to provide the $1,250 incentive payments to districts for each credential a student earns from the Innovative Workforce Incentive Program (IWIP) as well as reimburse the examination costs of credentials included in this program. The $11 million remaining will be used to pay for the credentialing assessments, for those credentials not included on the IWIP list, so that students do not have to pay these fees out-of-pocket. Students can earn industry-recognized credentials while in school through comprehensive Career-Technical Education programs, through programs dedicated specifically to credentials for students in their senior year, or through existing courses that integrate the content needed to successfully obtain the credential.

- **Ohio Career Technical Education Equipment Grant Program–** The biennial budget allocated $100 million over two fiscal years, to award competitive grants to schools to establish or expand Career Technical Education (CTE) and/or Industry Credential programs with priority for programs that support careers on Ohio's Top Jobs list and establish or expand credentialing programs from the Governor's Office of Workforce Transformation Innovative Workforce Incentive Program list.

- **Career-Technical Construction Program -** The Ohio Facilities Construction Commission (OFCC) approved a $200 million dollar line item to support construction projects that establish or expand career-technical education programs. Funds will be distributed to joint vocational school districts (JVSD) and city, local, and exempted village school districts designated as the lead district of a career-technical planning district (CTPD), according to guidelines established by OFCC, in consultation with the Governor's Office of Workforce Transformation (OWT) and the Department of Education and Workforce (ODEW). The guidelines must consider establishing or expanding career-technical education programs that support the occupations on Ohio's Top Jobs List or that qualify for the Innovative Workforce Incentive Program under ODEW.

- **Readiness Seals for High School Graduates -** To ensure that every student is prepared for career and college when they graduate high school, Ohio recently adopted new graduation standards for the class of 2023 and beyond. Students will prepare for their future by completing course requirements, demonstrating competency in English and math, and earning new Readiness Seals in key areas that show foundational and well-rounded knowledge, skills, and competencies. These include the OhioMeansJobs Readiness Seal, a College-Ready Seal, A Military Enlistment Seal, and an Industry-Recognized Credential Seal.

- **SuccessBound -** The SuccessBound initiative began in 2017 under a grant from JP Morgan Chase to better engage and inspire students about the variety of exciting careers available in Ohio. The multi-pronged approach includes schools, businesses, students, families, and communities. The State will continue to use this innovative program to further raise student awareness about career-preparation opportunities available through College Credit Plus, Choose Ohio First, OTCs, community colleges, Career-Technical Education options, intentional academic coursework options, and apprenticeship programs.
- **Work-Based Learning Toolkit -** To help high school educators implement high quality work-based learning experiences, ODEW is currently expanding their work-based learning toolkit. The toolkit will provide resources for districts, students, and industry in fulfilling their prospective roles in work-based learning experiences. The resources will include readily accessible technical assistance, guiding documents regarding implementation of programs, and facilitation of professional development opportunities.
- **College Credit Plus - The** State has developed its College Credit Plus initiative that establishes clear pathways for students to earn college credit and offers the program to college-ready students in grades 7 through 12. Under College Credit Plus, students are able to take college courses at no cost from local community colleges or universities, allowing them to earn high school and college credits at the same time. They are provided with a wider range of class options, enabling them to complete general education college requirements while in high school. To date, more than 6,700 students have earned full associate degrees before their high school graduation through the program.
- **Choose Ohio First - The** Choose Ohio First Scholarship is designed to significantly strengthen Ohio's STEM workforce and increase the number of STEM teachers. Over the next two years, the state will invest $62 million in the Choose Ohio First initiative. Funding will be distributed to Ohio's colleges and universities through a competitive process to provide scholarships to students in innovative academic programs. Participating universities and colleges award scholarships to students desiring a certificate, associate degree, baccalaureate degree, or graduate degree in eligible STEM fields or to students who want to become STEM teachers.
- **Applied Bachelor's Degree Programs -** In 2017, the State established a program allowing its community colleges, state community colleges, and technical colleges to offer Applied Bachelor's Degrees. This expanded approach increases Ohioans' access to higher education degree opportunities. There are currently 20 bachelor's degree programs being offered at community colleges.
- **Work Based Training -** Ohio increased access to apprenticeships by allowing an OTC, community college, higher education institution, or local workforce board to serve as a registered sponsor for an approved program which reduces the time businesses must spend filling out paperwork. The State will now explore creating additional avenues for work-based training, such as flexible apprenticeships, internships, and co-op programs that will enable individuals to earn while they learn.

- **TechCred -** In October 2019, Ohio announced the TechCred program that will help businesses better prepare their existing workforces for jobs in today's advanced, technology-infused economy. TechCred gives employees the ability to earn technology-focused credentials, making them more valuable and leading to improved job security and increased career advancement opportunities. Using TechCred, businesses can identify the current or prospective employees whose skills they want to improve for more advanced positions in technology-focused jobs, such as advanced manufacturing and information technology. Credentials eligible for the program must be short-term, industry-recognized, and technology-focused.

- **Industry-Recognized Credentials of Value -** Ohio will work with key employers, sector partnerships, business associations, trade organizations, and others to identify credentials of value that are needed to fill jobs in its in-demand and emerging industries. The primary focus will be to classify specific credentials that provide entryway into employment along with additional "stackable" credits that may be obtained later, leading to additional certifications and further career advancement. Moreover, as discussed under Goal 1 above, Ohio will explore creating consistent methods and approaches for the core programs to use when vetting and approving training providers that offer instruction for the Industry-Recognized Credentials of Value.

- **Industry Recognized Credential Transfer Assurance Guides (ITAGs) -** ITAGs provide a new entry ramp to higher education from the workforce and are a statewide transfer initiative that guarantees the award of college level, course-specific credit to students earning agreed upon industry-recognized credentials. The knowledge, skills, and abilities demonstrated by credential attainment are aligned to postsecondary learning outcomes by faculty and industry experts as needed. ITAG credentials are selected based upon several factors including workforce needs for the state and career pathway alignment to higher education.

Strategy 2: Provide targeted assistance for key populations within the labor force

Action Items

- **ISP Network.** The State of Ohio and the Ohio Manufacturers' Association's industry sector partnership network will strengthen partnerships with local organizations, open new talent tools, and increase access to critical supports like transportation and childcare. One goal is to filter in talent pools that don't yet contribute significantly to the automotive workforce like currently incarcerated individuals and restored citizens, immigrant populations, and underrepresented communities, ensuring that these thousands of people who are eager to and possess - or could develop - the skills employers seek are a part of Ohio's growing EV industry.

- **Ohio College2Careers.** The State continues to implement the Ohio College2Careers program to ensure college students with disabilities have the support they need to complete their degree and/or credential, earn higher wages, and meet the demands of tomorrow's labor market. The program embeds an OOD VR Counselor Ohio's public colleges and universities. They assist students with disabilities by providing additional supports such as career exploration, career counseling, assistive technology, resume and interview preparation, and placement at internships and permanent employment. Ohio

College2Careers also expands OOD's business relations staff at the career services offices at these same institutions, coordinating employment efforts for students with disabilities and better connecting them to OOD's expansive employer partner network.

- **Vocational Apprenticeships.** OOD launched OVAP in 2019 to support Governor DeWine's Executive Order 2019-03D, which established Ohio as a Disability Inclusion State and Model Employer of Individuals with Disabilities. OVAP provides opportunities for students and adults with disabilities to gain work experience, exposure, and access to state government employment through paid apprenticeships with state agencies. The goal of the program is for apprentices to secure permanent employment in state government upon completion of the apprenticeship. A member of the Business Relations Team collaborates with state agencies to identify occupations in high demand, and then works with VR Counselors to identify candidates who meet qualifications and have an aligned job goal. OOD supports the application and onboarding process at the state agency and funds the apprentice's wages for up to 1,000 hours. With support from a grant from the Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council, OOD is expanding the program to the Ohio General Assembly and Statewide Elected Officials. This program has gained national recognition and has been highlighted on several national webinars and conferences. OOD has met virtually with representatives from Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Virginia, and Wisconsin to help them replicate the program.

- **Jobs for Recovery.** Governor DeWine's Executive Budget for SFY 2020-21 established the OOD Jobs for Recovery program. This program replicates a successful model established in partnership with the Butler County Mental Health and Addiction Recovery Services Board and Butler County Court of Common Pleas drug court. In this model, OOD embeds a VR Counselor and a Job Developer as active members of the drug court team. This service delivery model ensures rapid engagement in services that are needed for the individual to get a job, such as career counseling, job placement and retention services. In addition to this initiative, OOD has established liaison counselors to drug court programs in several additional counties. Liaison counselors are expected to serve individuals with disabilities participating in additional specialized dockets, as OOD continues our general outreach to this population. OOD continues to implement the OOD Jobs for Recovery initiative. OOD currently has 12 teams serving 13 counties and partnering with multiple dockets within each county. To support the OOD Jobs for Recovery Initiative, OOD and additional specialized dockets continue to collaborate and work together to provide services to eligible individuals through identified VR liaisons.

- **Ohio's Literacy Plan** Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement serves as a guide to evidence-based language and literacy teaching and learning for all learners from birth through grade 12. Acquiring language and literacy skills affects learners' access to, and interest in, content materials and instruction at all grade levels and all aspects of their lives. **Ohio's vision is for all learners to acquire the knowledge and skills to become proficient readers.**

    - The plan articulates a state literacy framework aimed at promoting proficiency in reading, writing, and communication for all learners. It is driven by scientific research and encourages a professional movement toward implementing data-

based, differentiated, and evidence-based practices. Specifically, this plan illustrates the strong language and literacy efforts in place in Ohio and the state's vision to expand and strengthen them to support improvement. For support in operationalizing the evidence-based practices in Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement, implementation resources are available for school leaders.

- **Aspire.** To assist adults with low literacy levels, Ohio will continue to offer Adult Education and Literacy programs virtually and in-person at locations across Ohio, including public libraries.
- **Skills Training for Older Workers**. The State actively uses its Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) to provide community service and work-based training opportunities for eligible older adults, targeting both in-demand and critical jobs. SCSEP participants must be at least 55 years of age, unemployed, and have an annual household income of no more than 125% of the federal poverty level. Through SCSEP, older adults develop individual employment plans based on each participant's particular skills, experiences, and interests. SCSEP participants gain work experience in a variety of community service activities at non-profit and public facilities.
- **Military Strategic Implementation Team (MSIT)**. ODHE created MSIT to work with Ohio's public institutions to conduct a thorough review of current institutional policies and practices and to improve the process for awarding college credit for military training, experience, and coursework. These efforts have resulted in an infrastructure and system that is welcoming and responsive to the needs of veterans. To recognize outstanding service to members of the military, veterans, and their families, ODHE established the Collegiate Purple Star award. Currently 51 colleges and universities have attained this designation.
- **Alternative Service Points.** To improve accessibility to programs for low-income individuals, the State will develop alternative delivery mechanisms, such as providing workforce services at public libraries or using technology to deliver education and training coursework. It will also work to expand skill training offerings at the OTCs and community colleges located within and near the Appalachian Region.
- **Career-Tech in Correctional Facilities**. Career-technical programs are offered in youth and adult correctional facilities in Ohio. The corrections agencies – Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction, through the Ohio Central School System, and the Ohio Department of Youth Services, through Buckeye United School District - collaborate with the Office of Career-Technical Education at ODEW to receive career-technical support from Federal Perkins and State dollars.
- **Reentry Employment**. To help restored citizens re-enter the workforce, Ohio has set up one-stop centers in six adult and three juvenile correctional facilities across the State. Prior to release, individuals are able to participate in a variety of workforce services, including career planning, education and training courses, and job search activities. During the remainder of this planning period, two additional one-stops will be established in adult facilities and all of the centers will have the option to become certified as specialized OhioMeansJobs centers in the American Job Center network.

- **Bridges**. Bridges is a voluntary program designed to provide supports to young adults who are leaving foster care make the connections needed to successfully transition into adulthood with resources for housing, employment, education assistance, and well-being. To be eligible for Bridges you must have left the foster care system after turning 18 and be under the age of 21. You must also meet at least one of the following criteria: Be completing secondary education or a program leading to an equivalent credential; Be enrolled in college or other post-secondary school; Be participating in a program or activity designed to remove barriers to employment; Be employed at least 80 hours a month; Be incapable of doing any of the above activities due to a physical or mental health condition.

- **Migrant Education Program.** The State helps the few migrant and seasonal farmworkers who temporarily reside in Ohio by providing targeted assistance to migrant youth.The Ohio Migrant Education Center, funded in part by the Federal Migrant Education Program, supports local education agencies in developing supplemental instruction and supportive services that are designed to help youth stay in high school and achieve a diploma or equivalent as well as master English as a Second Language.

- **Active Re-Employment Engagement.** Ohio has developed Active Re-Employment Engagement processes to help long-term unemployed individuals return to work more quickly. These initiatives include the proactive identification of unemployed persons who may be at risk of not returning to work in their former occupations. Through the State's comprehensive Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessments (RESEA) program, these individuals are provided with one-on-one services with an employment professional at one of the many OhioMeansJobs Centers. Additionally, The Helping Ohioans Pursue Employment (HOPE) initiative is delivered by the Wagner-Peyser Employment Services (ES) program. The purpose is to outreach and provide ES career services to individuals who have recently applied for unemployment insurance (UI) benefits. By providing a customer centered approach to service delivery, the initiative has the following goals:

1. To be the gateway into the workforce delivery system (e.g., referrals to other partner programs in the OhioMeansJobs center, including JVSG and WIOA Title I);

2. To assist UI claimants with work search requirements to continue receipt of benefits (e.g., labor exchange activities);

3. To provide career services to claimants (e.g., career readiness workshops, career counseling, etc.);

4. To help claimants find job opportunities to reduce the amount of time claimants receive UI benefits (e.g., job search and placement activities);

5. To set the foundation for the delivery of the Reemployment Eligibility and Assessment (RESEA) for those claimants selected to participate (e.g., resume and career profiles will have been completed, allowing RESEA to focus on customer's employment plan); and

6. To address Ohio's labor shortage demands.

- **Recovery Initiatives.** Ohio maintains a "Strategies for Helping Individuals Impacted by Opioid Use Disorder: A Toolkit for Ohio's Public Workforce System" to help guide the core partners as they assist persons affected by substance misuse. Working together, the partners will prepare workers for jobs that help prevent and mitigate substance dependency; provide education, training, and supportive services to individuals in treatment; and develop recovery-friendly workplaces.

B.1.d. Describe how the eligible agency will use State leadership funds made available under section 112(a)(2) of Perkins V for each of the purposes under section 124(a) of the Act. See Text Box 2 for the required uses of State leadership funds under section 124(a) of Perkins V. (Section 122(d)(7) of Perkins V)

The delivery of Career-Technical Education in Ohio is a multi-faceted undertaking that engages ODEW and ODHE, traditional middle schools and high schools, community (charter) schools, career centers, Ohio Technical Centers, correctional institutions, community colleges and universities. These entities work in robust collaboration to form a workforce training and development infrastructure that is vital for the State's citizens and its businesses.

ODEW serves as the fiscal agent and coordinating body for this plan and the Perkins grant. The agency also works with 90 career-technical planning districts that serve Ohio's 612 school districts and 319 community (charter) schools to ensure all students in grades 7-12 have access to high-quality career-technical education.

Ohio law requires all school districts and community (charter) schools to be members of career-technical planning districts. Of Ohio's 90 Career-Technical Education planning districts, 49 are led by joint vocational school districts. A joint vocational school district serves an area consisting of adjacent school districts in one or more counties, and each is governed by a joint vocational school board consisting of representatives from the member districts. A joint vocational school district is funded in part through tax levies in all participating counties. Generally, the joint vocational school districts provide most of the Career-Technical Education programming in a dedicated career-technical education-focused building, as well as in member traditional and/or community schools.

The remaining 41 career-technical planning districts are either *comprehensivedistricts* or *compacts*. *Comprehensive districts* are single districts that provide all career-technical opportunities to students either spread across multiple buildings or in concentrated buildings specifically devoted to career-technical programs. *Compacts* are groups of districts that contractually share responsibility without creating a separate joint vocational school district, sharing resources and opportunities across district lines. ODEW provides oversight and leadership to all secondary Career-Technical Education programs regardless of structure.

ODHE is a coordinating authority with a focus on delivering high-quality educational services that result in Ohioans earning credentials or degrees that support their future success. The work of ODHE includes authorizing and approving new degree and certificate programs, managing State-funded financial aid programs, and developing and advocating policies to maximize higher education's contributions to the State and its citizens. ODHE works with each of Ohio's autonomously governed public colleges, universities, and adult career and technical centers to support the development and approval of education programs that serve nearly

600,000 students and offer every option from a Graduate Equivalency Degree to a Ph.D., ensuring all Ohioans have easy access to a high-quality, affordable higher education.

Allocated State leadership funds will be used to conduct the following State leadership activities to drive and support continuous improvement of Career-Technical Education in Ohio, including the identification and reduction of disparities and performance gaps.

Technical Assistance

ODEW and ODHE will provide technical assistance through both off-site and on-site services. Administrative staff for both agencies will provide technical assistance to all secondary school districts offering State-approved career-technical programs and all postsecondary Perkins participants. Technical assistance will involve collaborative efforts between State staff, local administrators, instructors and the local business community.

Targeted technical assistance for secondary schools will focus on:

- Identification and closure of equity gaps discovered in the Regional Equity Labs;
- Data-driven decision-making as a result of the comprehensive local needs assessment;
- Increasing and implementing high-quality work-based learning opportunities for students;
- Annual program monitoring through the Quality Program Review process;
- Quality Program Standards, including program design, instructional delivery and strategies to enhance learner performance.

Targeted technical assistance for postsecondary institutions will focus on:

- Identification and closure of equity gaps discovered in the Postsecondary Equity Workshops and through institutional self-evaluation results specific to the issue of closing equity gaps;
- Career awareness, career development and career pathway support;
- Strengthening program quality standards by ensuring consistency in program review processes.

Targeted technical assistance for correctional institutions will focus on:

- Identifying and meeting the unique needs of correctional programs and learners;
- Evaluation of programs, monitoring of Perkins recipient data and program approval renewal processes.

Technical assistance will encompass a broad range of State-supported activities aligned to the Perkins V required uses of State leadership funds. Activities are listed below and grouped according to the six categories of analysis, discovery and implementation found in the comprehensive local needs assessment (**Appendix A.3**):

1. Evaluation of student performance;
2. Size, scope and quality;

3. Labor market alignment;
4. Programs of study;
5. Recruitment, retention and training of Career-Technical Education educators;
6. Improving equity and access.

1. Evaluation of Student Performance

State Approved Career-Technical Education Assessment System

Ohio's Career-Technical Education programs use career field pathway end-of-course exams as a valid and reliable assessment of technical content. The Statewide Career-Technical Education testing system complements the local districts' systems for assessing student academic performance. In addition to measuring the technical skill attainment of students, the State testing system supports seamless transitions between secondary and postsecondary education by integrating the assessments into Statewide articulated credit transfer agreements. Where approved, attainment of industry credentials or dual enrollment credit may be used in lieu of a student's end-of-course assessment. The State will use Perkins leadership funds to maintain the assessment system, expand performance-based assessments in relevant courses and assist local recipients in evaluating performance data and driving continuous improvement efforts.

State-Determined Levels of Performance

To continuously make meaningful progress toward improving the performance of all Career-Technical Education students, including subgroups and special populations, the State will use Perkins leadership funds to monitor, evaluate and create improvement tools to be used at the local level across the State. Activities include, but are not limited to:

- Using the State career-technical planning district report card to evaluate local district performance and the results of improvement efforts;
- Managing the Quality Program Review process to ensure programs meet the State's 'in compliance' benchmark;
- Piloting regional equity labs to assist districts in evaluating and interpreting performance target data to ensure all students have meaningful access to and are engaged in high-quality Career-Technical Education programs and performing to their potential in those programs;
- Using Quality Program Standards for Career-Technical Education to identify gaps in indicators directly related to student achievement;
- Identifying thematic disparities and gaps in subgroups and special populations performance and developing targeted assistance that can be used across all affected districts;
- Holding programs accountable for performance measures targeting student attainment of technical and academic knowledge and skills.

2. Size, Scope and Quality

Career-Technical Education Program Review

Ohio law requires ODEW and the lead district of each secondary career-technical planning district to conduct an annual review for each Career-Technical Education program within the district. The intent of the Career-Technical Education program review is to maximize the use of resources improving the quality of Career-Technical Education programs.

Programs that do not meet benchmarks must participate in the appropriate performance improvement planning process, as identified by ODEW, using the **Quality Program Standards for Career-Technical Education Programs**. The instrument, developed in collaboration with education support agencies, establishes indicators for each of 10 standards. In addition to the review and examination elements contained within the document, Quality Program Standards serve as a foundation for State staff consultation, program improvement efforts, Statewide professional development and curricular upgrades by encouraging the following activities:

- A career-technical planning district report card aligned with the State-determined performance indicators for use as a tool for program quality evaluation and continuous improvement;
- Data-driven decision-making resulting from the comprehensive local needs assessment and program application process to drive program quality, equity and alignment to local, regional and State economic demand;
- State-level career field advisory councils that include business and industry representatives, secondary and postsecondary academic and technical educators and representatives of other relevant State agencies, along with other Statewide stakeholders, will provide input into all aspects of program design, development, delivery, assessment and evaluation at the State level;
- Local career field advisory committees that include business and industry representatives will be a required component of approved secondary career-technical programs;
- Ohio Career Field Technical Content Standards developed and updated with validation from business and industry and both secondary and postsecondary academic and career-technical educators;
- State-approved technical skill assessments aligned with business and industry-validated content standards and reflect input of business and industry and both secondary and postsecondary academic and career-technical educators;
- State-approved programs of study developed in collaboration with business and industry representatives and both secondary and postsecondary academic and career-technical educators;
    - Secondary and postsecondary institutions will hold an institution-specific meeting of stakeholders at least once per year to plan for the efficient and effective delivery of Career-Technical Education programs and services and will collaboratively update their local application every two years;
- Tech Prep consortia will focus on providing services to Career-Technical Education students at all stages in their pathways to ensure preparedness for postsecondary education and employment for more students of diverse backgrounds;

- Ohio will emphasize pathways leading to STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) and other high-skill, high-wage and in-demand pathways based on workforce and economic development needs in the State by coordinating and leveraging initiatives such as:
    -
        - Approval and renewal of programs based on labor market alignment identified in the comprehensive local needs assessment;
        - Collaboration with ODJFS to provide job postings and future-demand data by region;
        - Reserve fund grants to spur innovation and identify promising career-technical education programs, including those that prepare individuals for non-traditional fields.

3. Labor Market Alignment

Industry Relevant Career-Technical Education Programs

The State will support student understanding of all aspects of an industry through:

- Industry-validated career field technical content standards;
- Expansion of work-based learning opportunities including, but not limited to, apprenticeships, pre-apprenticeships and job placements designed to create sustained interactions with industry or community professionals in real workplace settings.
- Development of work-based learning resources;
- Aligning State Career-Technical Education pathways with high-wage, high-skill and in-demand occupations;
- Monitoring of adherence to secondary Quality Program Standards; and
- Approval for State-weighted funding based on secondary program assurance to deliver the broad knowledge and skills that relate to all aspects of an industry within a career field.

Coordination with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

Perkins postsecondary recipients will partner with the Ohio Means Jobs center in their respective areas to assist in the delivery of workforce services and provide information or support on how to access educational opportunities offered at these institutions. This collaboration is part of the WIOA's Combined State Plan efforts to better serve Ohioans who might be identified as needing assistance, preparing them for workforce opportunities.

4. Progress Toward Implementing Programs of Study

Programs of Study

The purpose of programs of study is to ensure, through collaboration between secondary and postsecondary institutions, that Career-Technical Education programs will:

- Support 100 percent graduation rate from high school and the successful transition to and through the completion of postsecondary education, including matriculation without the need for remediation;
- Provide rigorous coursework at the secondary and postsecondary levels that will prepare learners for the attainment of diplomas, industry credentials and/or college degrees without remediation;
- Provide all learners with the appropriate academic, technical and workplace readiness skills to enable them to graduate from high school and transition seamlessly to postsecondary pathways and the workplace;
- Eliminate duplication of coursework between secondary and postsecondary systems;
- Meet the workforce needs of Ohio's economic growth industries;
- Support pathways leading to science, technology, engineering and mathematics and other high-skill, high-wage and in-demand occupations; and
- Ensure employer-validated skills are defined broadly, to enable workers to move laterally within career fields and are specialized, where appropriate, to enable workers to secure positive occupational placements in positions needed by employers.

ODEW, in collaboration with ODHE, will:

- Develop and disseminate a program of study template to be used for both State- and locally developed program of study samples;
- Disseminate the following criteria for development of a program of study:
    - Programs are aligned with State, regional and local economic growth priorities and demands for employment and prepare students for careers that generate sustaining wages;
    - Programs meet a need for Career-Technical Education programs by industries in the State and availability of the program within the career-technical planning districts;
    - Districts support all aspects of a quality program by maintaining a system that measures program quality and provides for continuous development;
    - Programs comply with guidelines from other State agencies, as appropriate, regarding coursework, licensure and instruction;
    - Programs address the State Board of Education-approved Career Field Technical Content Standards;
    - Programs reinforce ODEW-approved learning standards in mathematics, English language arts, science and social studies;
    - Multiple measures are used to assess student attainment of academic and technical content standards including, but not limited to, State Board of Education-approved technical assessments; assessments for State-recognized

national credentialing/certifications, where applicable; and accrediting association and/or licensing agency examinations, where applicable;

- Technical and academic course offerings are designed in an ODEW-approved sequence of courses/program of study that meet State-approved graduation requirements;
- Establish career-technical advisory committees to engage business and industry and postsecondary representatives that consider input from professional associations, labor, government and the community;
- Program coursework includes articulated credit related to the secondary program of study and postsecondary career fields;
- Students have access to career and technical student organizations;
- Programs meets all State and federal requirements regarding access, non-discrimination and meeting of performance expectations for special populations, including preparation for careers in industry sectors requiring technical expertise;
- Districts receiving State Career-Technical Education supplemental funds for Career-Technical Education programs and courses shall annually report performance data;
- Facilities and equipment shall support instruction of the technical and academic content standards and reflect current and emerging technology in the Career-Technical Education program;

- Provide technical assistance to aid local recipients in developing local programs of study;
- Review and approve locally developed programs of study;
- Assure that programs of study align with and support other Statewide seamless transition initiatives; and
- Support career and technical student organizations that:
  - Foster both academic and technical learning based on Ohio's Learning Standards and Career Field Technical Content Standards;
  - Provide opportunities through a variety of activities to demonstrate both academic and technical knowledge and skill identified in Ohio's Learning Standards and Career Field Technical Content Standards;
  - Recognize learners for their accomplishments and contributions; and
  - Address the needs of Career-Technical Education learners in grades 7-12.

Local Implementation of Programs of Study

The State will support implementation of programs of study in the following ways:

- Review and monitor local programs of study through the five-year renewal process;

- Provide technical assistance and professional development to local districts as needed as they develop local programs of study;
- Develop program of study samples that emphasize the integration of technical and embedded academic content and include a sequence of courses that address Ohio's Learning Standards, as well as the technical content standards appropriate for a seamless pathway from secondary to postsecondary education;
- Support educator professional development opportunities that emphasize integration of academic and technical instruction; and
- Support districts in implementation of the recently enacted expanded graduation requirements; these rigorous requirements will be applied to both career-technical and academic students in all student groups who enter the ninth grade on or after July 1, 2023.

Articulation Agreements

The State will support eligible recipients in developing and implementing articulation agreements in the following ways:

- Identification of essential elements and criteria to be used locally and Statewide for development of articulation agreements;
- Development of the Career-Technical Articulation Verification, an electronic platform allowing the exchange of data between ODEW and ODHE to facilitate postsecondary career-technical transfer credit opportunities;
- Automation of Career-Technical Credit Transfer into the Program of Study Application;
- Alignment among Programs of Study Career-Technical Credit Transfer elements, Ohio Transfer Assurance Guides, Transfer Modules, Stackable Certificates and Ohio's Partnership for Continued Learning recommendations;
- Communication of common definitions and processes for transfer and dual enrollment/credit opportunities using established State definitions and recommendations provided by Ohio's Partnership for Continued Learning;
- Development and dissemination of a Statewide placement policy for non-remedial postsecondary English and mathematics courses; based on a common understanding of what competencies and skills are necessary to anticipate learner success in beginning college-level courses, which will be spearheaded by the work of ODHE Articulation and Transfer Advisory Council's Secondary to College Articulation Committee; and
- Support of the design of a system that will remove barriers to full participation of secondary and higher education institutions in dual enrollment/credit programs.

Information about Programs of Study

The following will be disseminated Statewide via ODEW and ODHE websites to encourage recipients throughout the State to collaborate where applicable:

- Sample programs of study;

- State criteria for local development of a program of study; and
- State-approved programs of study implemented by local districts.

Additionally, information on adopted programs of study will be disseminated through other electronic communications and State-sponsored meetings and conferences.

Use of Technology

The use of both instructional technology and State-of-the-art industry technology will be expanded and supported by the State in the following ways:

- Establish and monitor secondary Quality Program Standards that include the use of both instructional technology and State-of-the-art industry technology;
- Ensure secondary programs provide adequate facilities and equipment to support the use of technology in the instructional delivery of State-adopted technical and academic content standards;
- Assure classroom practices reflect current and emerging technology used by business and industry within career fields as a compliance factor both relative to qualify as a Perkins subrecipient and for State-weighted career-technical funding;
- Require programs to meet quality standards regarding the use of technology as part of the State approval process for all postsecondary institutions and accrediting organizations where industry program accreditation is sought;
- Enable postsecondary institutions to use resources from Regionally Aligned Priorities in Delivering Skills (RAPIDS) to ensure regions are purchasing necessary equipment to provide skill training that meets labor market demand; and
- Allow businesses to train potential and incumbent employees on new and emerging technologies within their industries using the TechCred initiative.

Program of Study Monitoring and Compliance

All Perkins planning, compliance and monitoring guidance will require recipients to:

- Document local stakeholder committee participation and discussions that have occurred regarding the dissemination of information about programs of study to counselors, learners and their families (if applicable);
- Conduct and document a local needs assessment that includes, at a minimum, the requirements set forth in Section 134 of the Perkins V Act;
- Emphasize STEM and other high-skill, high-wage and in-demand programs of study;
- Include special populations as a target audience for program of study counseling and information dissemination; and
- Encourage collaboration with partner education agencies (for example, educational service centers, associate districts, education organizations, Tech Prep) in disseminating programs of study information.

For the State monitoring process, recipients will produce examples of their information dissemination on programs of study, which will be evaluated against the following criteria:

- Engagement of stakeholders;
- Identifying and improving results from the required local needs assessment;
- Emphasis on STEM and other high-skill, high-wage and in-demand programs;
- Addressing of special population needs; and
- Engagement of partner entities as additional disseminators of programs of study information.

5. Recruitment, Retention, and Training of Faculty and Staff

To increase the quality, quantity and diversity of career-technical educators, Ohio will:

- Collaborate with the Career-Technical Education community to recruit and retain instructors who:
    - Represent underrepresented groups, especially in new and emerging areas;
    - Have experience in business and industry;
    - Have sufficient academic and pedagogical knowledge; and
    - Are skillful in working with all learners, including special populations.
- Support a supplemental licensure route for educators holding current teaching licenses and experience related to the career fields in which they will be teaching;
- Support a second supplemental licensure route without additional postsecondary requirements for those with current teaching licenses who can pass a content-knowledge test in one of five high-demand career fields:
    - Agriscience;
    - Family Consumer Science;
    - Integrated Business;
    - Marketing; and
    - Technology Education.
- Support postsecondary teacher preparation programs and an initial licensure route for business and industry professionals that is time and cost-effective;
- Align alternative career-technical educator preparation programs with the Ohio Resident Educator Summative Assessment, allowing them to be exempt from certain portions of the process; and
- Offer licensure programs throughout the State that are flexible and structured around traditional school schedules.

ODEW and ODHE will ensure quality teacher preparation programs by maintaining:

- Teacher and administrator licensure program standards for career-technical teacher preparation programs;
- Licensure standards for career-technical teachers;
- Teacher licensure programs that are competency-based and can be completed in tandem with teaching experience;
- Consistent discussions with a network of career-technical teachers about critical issues impacting career-technical teacher preparation programs; and
- Support for career-technical preparation programs emphasizing quality Career-Technical Education through use of the quality program standards.

Professional Development for Educators

ODEW and ODHE will support and foster professional development for preservice and practicing career-technical teachers, postsecondary faculty, administrators, and career and academic counselors according to ODEW and Perkins standards for professional development. Professional development activities will be evaluated to examine who is being served and the extent to which Career-Technical Education goals are being achieved. Ohio's Quality Program Review and Quality Program Standards will align and share in the development and use of professional development activities. An emphasis in professional development will be placed upon:

- Integration of coherent and rigorous academic and career-technical content standards in local programs of study and instructional practices;
- Knowledge and skills that enable educators to address the individual and special needs of learners in rigorous curriculum that lead to STEM and other high-skill, high-wage or in-demand careers;
- Access, engagement and maintenance of high performance for special populations to all career-technical pathways;
- Providing integrated student support that addresses the comprehensive needs of students, such as incorporating accelerated and differentiated learning opportunities supported by evidence-based strategies for special populations;
- Instructional delivery that balances between inquiry-based classroom and laboratory instruction, Experiential Learning and engagement in the relevant career and technical student organizations;
- Evaluating student performance data to make informed programming and classroom decisions.

6. Improving Access and Equity

Equitable Access, Enrollment and Outcomes

Through a system whereby expectations for student outcomes, performance indicators and provider accountability are the same regardless of population served, Ohio will make every effort to ensure students who are members of special populations are provided the necessary supports and services needed for success in both academic and career-technical coursework.

The State will require all subrecipients to describe, as part of the locally developed and State-approved comprehensive local needs assessment and application, how students who are members of special populations will:

- Have equitable access to and enrollment in high-quality Career-Technical Education programs;
- Meet or exceed State-adjusted levels of performance;
- Be prepared for high-skill, high-wage and in-demand occupations.

Local subrecipients will be required to identify barriers to access and enrollment for members of special populations. Additionally, local subrecipients will be required to identify gaps in student outcomes for special populations and will be responsible for implementing strategies to address these gaps. Ohio will support implementation at the State and local levels using the following strategies and activities:

- Facilitate secondary equity labs and postsecondary workshops with local recipients to identify gaps in access, engagement and outcomes for special populations. These labs will support recipients by:
    -
        - Providing local recipients with data regarding enrollment and performance measures, disaggregated by special populations and subgroups;
        - Aiding local recipients in ensuring all students, including those who are members of special populations, have equitable access to and are enrolling in Career-Technical Education programs aligned to their individual preferences, interests, needs and strengths;
        - Identifying barriers to experiential and extended learning experiences, such as work-based learning, career and technical student organization participation, and articulated credit, for all students, including special populations and subgroups.
- Provide technical assistance on using data to select and implement strategies for program improvement, including the expansion and development of appropriate services specific to special populations, as identified by local needs. Maintain ongoing collaboration between ODEW's Office of Career-Technical Education and Office for Exceptional Children and ODHE to collectively provide technical assistance to local recipients regarding recommendations and requirements for students with disabilities participating in Career-Technical Education programs;
- Support the work of five regional career-technical planning district consultants who are based out of the regional State support team offices and provide direct technical

assistance and professional development to identified districts with regard to students with disabilities participating in Career-Technical Education programs;

- Maintain a network of Career-Technical Education teacher preparation program providers emphasizing the need to provide strategies to preservice and in-service Career-Technical Education teachers (particularly those without previous pedagogical experience) to effectively instruct members of special populations;
- Support the provision of high-quality career exploration and guidance opportunities for all students, including members of special populations, through the OhioMeansJobs K-12 Backpack, Student Success Plan, and other personalized learning tools into which the Backpack and Student Success Plan may be integrated;
- Provide technical assistance, program performance evaluation and professional development to the educational leadership and instructional staff of Ohio's State-operated correctional facilities, with regard to the delivery of Career-Technical Education programs;
- Maintain an ODEW Equity in Career-Technical Education webpage as a resource for local recipients in identifying and selecting evidence-based practices for addressing the needs of special populations participating in career-technical education;
- The State reserve fund should be used to spur innovation and identify promising Career-Technical Education programs, including those that prepare individuals for non-traditional fields;
- Support ongoing development and alignment of the data collection systems for secondary and postsecondary Career-Technical Education programs to improve data-driven decision-making and strategic planning with regard to special populations;
- Require subrecipients, as part of their comprehensive local needs assessments, to consider within their delivery of career-technical education programs supports and/or services to address the needs of:
- Pregnant or single parent students;
- Students who are experiencing homelessness, students and/or families who are economically disadvantaged, and students who are in, or have aged out of, the foster care system;
- Students with at least one parent deployed in active military service;
- English learners;
- Students with disabilities who receive specialized support services as required by individualized education programs; and
- Students who are members of special populations as to support their effective transitions from secondary to postsecondary programs.
- **Subrecipients also will be required to consider:**

- How they will encourage increased participation of special populations in career and technical student organizations;
- How they will identify and encourage participation in high-quality work-based learning experiences for special populations;
- How their allocation funds will be used to promote preparation for special populations in non-traditional fields;
- How secondary and postsecondary programs will prepare members of special populations to earn diplomas, degrees and/or credentials and;
- How they will provide professional development activities for leadership and instructional staff with regard to serving special populations.

As part of the State accountability system, if subrecipients fail to meet at least 90 percent of an agreed-upon performance level for any Perkins performance indicator, they will be required to develop and implement improvement plans with special consideration to access, enrollment and outcome gaps for special populations.

Non-discrimination for Special Populations

The State will provide consultant services for secondary and post-secondary leadership on civil rights compliance. These services will include ongoing technical assistance and professional development to district leadership related to equitable access, non-discrimination and improving outcomes for members of special populations. In addition, the State will perform on-site monitoring of civil rights compliance at several career-technical planning districts and colleges per the Methods of Administration document. All subrecipients will provide certificates of assurance of non-discrimination as part of their local plans. The State will facilitate, as needed, the provision of Title IX professional development to coordinators and State staff in cooperation with the federal Office of Civil Rights.

State Correctional Facilities

Using Perkins leadership funds, the State will continue to provide a 1 percent set-aside to support approved career-technical programs operated within the 28 State-operated secure correctional facilities. Currently, funds are distributed evenly to the Department of Youth Services and Department of Rehabilitation and Correction, the agencies that operate secondary and adult career-technical programs in correctional facilities. These programs served 5,570 incarcerated adults and 1,750 incarcerated youth in Fiscal Year 2018. Funds will be used to improve programs through mODErnization efforts, including support for programs that serve non-traditional learners, and purchase equipment and provide professional development for teachers, including in-service activities for newly hired faculty. As specified in the Perkins Act, no funds from this set-aside will be used for administrative costs.

ODEW and ODHE will collaborate with the Department of Youth Services and Department of Rehabilitation and Correction to provide consultant services for technical assistance to career-technical programs operated by State corrections agencies, including, but not limited to:

- Funding approval;
- Program development and approval;

- Comprehensive program performance evaluation;
- Professional development in-service activities; and
- Strategic planning assistance.

Federally Assisted Program

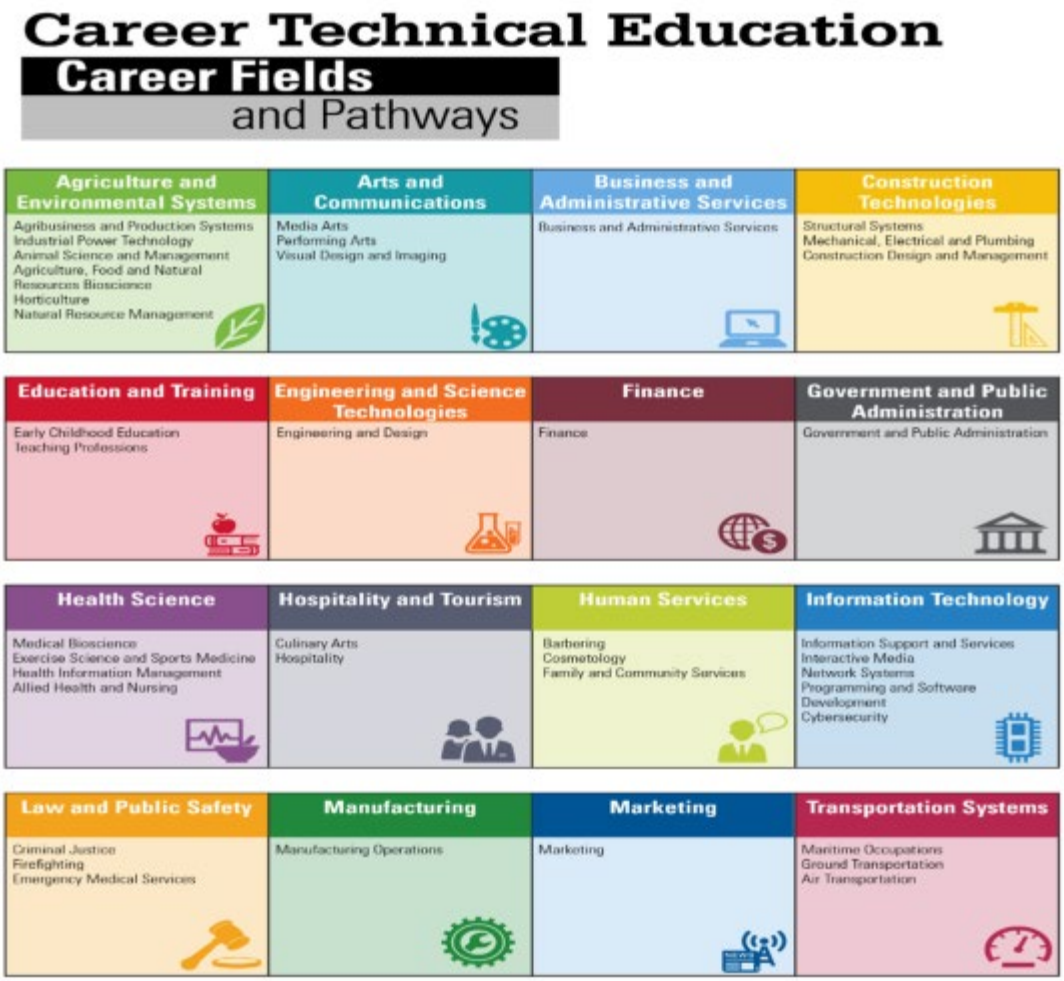
To assure compliance with Section 427(b) of the federal General Education Provisions Act, local recipients will be required to assess their Career-Technical Education programs and include in the Perkins application a description of the steps the applicant proposes to take to ensure equitable access to and participation in those programs referenced in Section 427(b). A requirement for State approval of a local application will include an assessment by State staff that activities funded by Perkins do not impede equitable access, participation or potential success based on gender, race, national origin, color, disability or age. The State will evaluate the steps outlined in the application and recommend any necessary changes or additions as part of a standardized approval process.

2. Implementing Career and Technical Education Programs and Programs of Study

A. Describe the career and technical education programs or programs of study that will be supported, developed, or improved at the State level, including descriptions of the programs of study to be developed at the State level and made available for adoption by eligible recipients. (Section 122(d)(4)(A) of Perkins V)

Secondary Career-Technical Education Programs of Study

Ohio supports 39 career-technical programs of study across 16 career fields, as shown in the graphic below. All State-approved secondary career-technical programs are based on State-approved career pathways and programs of study. Ohio's programs of study include a nonduplicative series of courses that span secondary and postsecondary levels, have multiple entry and exit points, and culminate in a diploma, credential and/or degree. Programs of study developed by ODEW and ODHE are responsive to Ohio's in-demand occupation data, as identified by the Bureau of Labor Market Information and disseminated through OhioMeansJobs.com.



At the ***secondary level***, Ohio's State-developed programs of study encompass:

1. Standards-Based Career-Technical Coursework: Coursework in a chosen career field is based on technical content standards. Content standards and courses are developed through a multi-step process that includes industry, business, educators and other subject matter experts. These standards and subsequent courses are updated on a five-year cycle, unless industry changes warrant an earlier review, and are developed using the following three-step process:

- **Step 1**: **Research and Development –** Engage subject matter experts (educators and industry partners) in reviewing current standards and identifying areas of the standards needing to be updated or enhanced.
- **Step 2: Futuring/Advisory Panels –** Panelistscontribute perceptions regarding changes in the workplace, employment trends, changes in technical skill requirements, needed workplace readiness skills and available industry-recognized standards and credentials. The feedback is used to develop and streamline the standards into what is most demanded by the labor market. The panels also review all public comments and propose changes to ODHE, ODEW, and educators engaged in the standards-setting process. Any suggested changes are made and then standards are vetted through the futuring/advisory panels for finalization of the standards.

- **Step 3: Development of Courses –**Standards are then organized into courses, in consultation with secondary and postsecondary faculty as well as ODHE. Wherever possible, standards are organized into courses that align to postsecondary courses to facilitate the development of Statewide articulated credit agreements and allow students opportunities to be dually enrolled while in high school. Introductory courses provide a broad overview of the career field, and courses become increasingly specific and occupationally focused as students advance through the program.

2. Academic Coursework: Programs of study integrate rigorous instruction that meets Ohio's Learning Standards and grade-level expectations. Students in career-technical programs are subject to the same academic requirements as students not in engaged in career-technical programs. Students must take and earn a minimum of 20 credits in specific subject areas (one credit is equivalent to a standard, one-year high school course.) For most career-technical students, their elective credits are earned through career-technical education options.

Courses	State Minimum
English language arts	4 credits
Health	½ credit
Mathematics	4 credits
Physical education	½ credit
Science	3 credits
Social studies	3 credits
Electives	5 credits

Schools and districts are encouraged to teach these academic disciplines in the context of a student's career-technical pathway.

3. Electives that Relate to Career Objectives: Students are encouraged to complete elective courses, including additional career-technical education or academic coursework that relates to their career aspirations.

4. Enhanced Learning Experiences: Programs of study include instructional enhancements, such as experiential and authentic learning opportunities (for example, work-based learning, mentorships or internships) and career-technical student organization participation. Ohio has chosen work-based learning as one of the federal program quality indicators, and this indicator will be added to Ohio's program review system. These additions to Ohio's accountability system will enhance students' learning experiences by increasing work-based learning opportunities.

5. Industry-Recognized Credentials and Licenses: Ohio offers many opportunities for students to earn certification and licensure in many career program areas. Ohio maintains a list of industry-recognized credentials approved for use as part of a student's demonstration of readiness to graduate from high school, as well as for use in the State's accountability system. Credentials are reviewed annually to identify areas of alignment to career-technical courses.

6. College Credit While in High School: All state-approved pathways include opportunities to earn college credit while in high school. This ensures students can manage an effective transition to either the workforce or college depending on their aspirations and interests.

7. Program Performance Expectations: Performance targets include high school academic and technical testing and postsecondary placement requirements. Each career-technical education program is annually reviewed for performance against the State's expectations for student technical skill attainment and placement. Districts not meeting State expectations are supported through technical assistance in developing and implementing improvement plans.

8. Preparation for Transition to Employment with Advancement Opportunities: Programs of study focus on ensuring students are prepared for a successful post-high school transitions. These include opportunities to prepare for a range of careers, including multiple employment opportunities after high school; opportunities for students to enter and succeed in postsecondary and continuing education programs and obtain transferable skills required for employment in the range of occupations aligned to the pathway; and opportunities to learn skills across the pathway and in specialized areas.

Program of Study Requirements

Programs of study at the secondary level require local recipients to offer a minimum of four secondary career-technical courses, identify at least one opportunity for secondary students to receive articulated or transcripted college credit, identify the appropriate academic courses needed for success in the career pathway, and specify an example set of aligned postsecondary courses in the pathway.

All standards, courses, assessment requirements and credentials are available on ODEW. During 2019-2020, Ohio updated standards for Health Science programs and assessments for Construction programs as part of the State's regular standards review cycle. During 2020-2024, Ohio is updating standards and assessments for the following career fields:

- Transportation;
- Human Services;
- Law and Public Safety;
- Business and Administrative Services, Finance and Marketing;
- Agricultural and Environmental Systems;
- Hospitality and Tourism.

Once a local Perkins recipient has adopted a State-developed program of study, it is expected to implement the program with fidelity and in accordance with **Ohio's Quality Program Standards.** These standards, developed in coordination with Ohio career-technical educators, provide a common vision for quality in all career-technical programs across the State.

- **Standard 1: Instructional Facilities and Resources:** The facility supports implementation of the career-technical program and provides students with opportunities for the development and application of technical knowledge and skills.

- **Standard 2: School and Community Relations:** School, community, and industry partners are engaged in developing and supporting the career-technical education program.
- **Standard 3: Program Planning and Evaluation:** A results-driven needs assessment and evaluation exists for continual program development, improvement and alignment with labor market needs.
- **Standard 4: Quality Educators that Contribute to the Profession:** Career-technical educators continuously develop as professionals and support the growth of the profession they serve.
- **Standard 5: Curriculum and Program Design:** The career-technical education program includes foundational and specialized courses designed to prepare each student for lifelong learning within a career pathway.
- **Standard 6: Instruction:** Career-technical education programs promote high academic achievement, technical knowledge and skill development of all students.
- **Standard 7: Assessment:** Career-technical education programs use authentic and performance-based assessments to measure student learning and skill attainment of Ohio's Career Field Technical Content Standards.
- **Standard 8: Experiential Learning Experience Programs:** All students participate in an experiential learning program that connects the technical knowledge and skills learned in both the classroom and laboratory to the workplace.
- **Standard 9: Leadership Development/Career and Technical Student Organizations:** Students participate in intracurricular career and technical student organizations that promote cognitive knowledge and skill and leadership development.
- **Standard 10: Student Access:** Career-technical education programs serve each student interested in preparing for a career in any of Ohio's 16 career fields and are reflective of the school's student population. Capacity should permit students to schedule first choices of career area.

Postsecondary Career-Technical Education Programs

Ohioans can access certificate and degree programs after high school through Ohio Technical Center programs, as well as community colleges and universities. These programs provide multiple entry and exit options, allowing students to access programming in the ways that best suit their career needs. Ohio's robust articulation and transfer system ensures programs of study are seamless between and across the secondary and postsecondary systems. Ohio implements processes that create alignment between secondary career-technical education and postsecondary technical course outcomes, allowing a student to meet the desired competencies of the postsecondary program for articulated credit. These pathways serve secondary students, traditional-age college students and returning adults, helping them attain credentials (technical certificates, certification, licensure, applied associate or bachelor's degrees) in their selected pathway. Students in postsecondary career-technical education can enter from articulated pathways in secondary programs, but just as many enter independent of their secondary programs or as adult learners into certificate and degree pathways.

Within certificate and degree programs, introductory courses provide a broad overview of the career field. Higher level courses progress in specificity and occupational focus as students advance through the program. Certificate programs must receive technical designation to be considered career-technical education programs in Ohio. Applications for technical designation are reviewed by ODHE staff and must include proof of labor market demand from Ohio's In-Demand Jobs List, articulation of clear learning objectives and demonstrable labor market outcomes. Once designated as a technical certificate program, institutions can stack these certifications to degree programs, allowing for multiple entry and exit points. For the purpose of the Perkins program, Ohio's focus is on technical certificates, licensure and two-year applied associate degree programs. Still, through Ohio's articulation and transfer process, these credentials and the programs associated with the coursework may articulate into apprenticeship and bachelor's degree programs. Specifically, the structure of these programs includes:

- **One-Year Technical Certificate/Technical Certificate:** Certificates awarded by a postsecondary institution for the completion of an organized program of study in at least 30 semester credit hours or 900 clock hours, with the majority of the coursework completed in a prescribed technical area. While the certificates are designed to have value apart from a degree, these certificates should serve as building blocks to an associate degree. The technical certificate is designed for an occupation or specific employment opportunities. These certificates prepare students for a valid occupational license or third-party industry certification, if available, related to the field of study.
- **Less Than One-Year Technical Certificate/Short-Term Technical Certificate:** Certificates awarded by a postsecondary institution for the completion of an organized program of study in fewer than 30 semester credit hours or fewer than 900 clock hours that are designed for an occupation or specific employment opportunities. These certificates prepare students for a valid occupational license or third-party industry certification, if available, related to the field of study.
- **Applied Associate Degrees:** Applied associate degrees (Associate of Applied Business, Associate of Applied Science, Associate of Technical Studies and Associate of Individualized Studies) must include at least 30 semester hours of non-technical coursework, which includes both general education and applied general education ("basic") courses. The general education portion of the non-technical coursework must include at least 15 semester credit hours. A minimum of six semester hours must be found in the following two categories:
    - At least one course (three semester credit hours) in the English Composition and Oral Communication area (for example, First Writing, Second Writing, Public Speaking);
    - At least one course (three semester credit hours) in the Mathematics, Statistics and Logic area (for example, Algebra, Trigonometry, Calculus, Statistics, Formal/Symbolic Logic).

A minimum of six semester hours must come from the following three categories, and at least two of the three categories must be represented:

- At least one course (three semester credit hours) in the Arts and Humanities area (for example, Art History, Ethics, History, Literature, Philosophy, Religion, Ethnic or Gender Studies);
- At least one course (three semester credit hours) in the Social and Behavioral Sciences area (for example, Communication, History, Economics, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology);
- At least one course (three semester credit hours) in the Natural Sciences area (for example, Anatomy, Biology, Chemistry, Environmental Science, Physics, Physiology).

To assure maximum transferability, institutions are strongly encouraged to implement general education programs that include coursework in all five general education categories and use a three-semester hour First Writing course to fulfill the minimum requirement in the English Composition and Oral Communication area.

Validating Third-party Industry Certifications for Both Ohio Technical Centers and Community Colleges

ODHE, in collaboration with ODEW, developed a list of approved industry certifications. There is an established process for submitting certifications for approval. To be approved as third-party industry-recognized certifications, the certifications must:

- Demonstrate preparation for an occupation or occupational cluster. Certifications, such as OSHA 10 or CPR, that only encompass basic safety or a basic skill requirement and do not demonstrate a distinguishable competency for a specific job are not requested for State reporting and, standing alone, may not qualify a certificate program as "technical" according to ODHE criteria;
- Be governed by a regional, Statewide, national, or international body for the related field or industry. Preference is given for national and international bodies;
- Be recognized and valued by employers, especially sector partnerships, as leading to employment. Certifications that only are valued for association or affinity group membership are not recommended;
- Be related to the learning objectives of the program of study; and
- Be awarded based on results from standardized and reliable assessments that measure the designated competencies of the occupation or skill set. The State also prefers, but does not require, that assessments are independently graded from the educational institution.

Industry-recognized credentials also can be embedded in some degree programs. For many of the Ohio Technical Centers, an embedded certification is a minor certification in and of itself, as well as a component of a more comprehensive industry certification. For example, Manufacturing Skills Standards Council Safety is an embedded certification for the Manufacturing Skills Standards Council Certified Production Technician, and Microsoft Word is an embedded certification for Microsoft Office. Embedded skill certifications as standalone certifications may be collected for the purpose of reporting outcomes related to the Perkins Act but, standing alone, may not qualify a certificate program as "technical" according to ODHE

criteria. In the case of colleges, institutions also are developing specific certificates with labor market value embedded within degree programs.

B. Describe the process and criteria to be used for approving locally developed programs of study or career pathways (see Text Box 3 for the statutory definition of career pathways under section 3(8) of Perkins V), including how such programs address State workforce development and education needs and the criteria to assess the extent to which the local application under section 13225 will—

- **i. promote continuous improvement in academic achievement and technical skill attainment;**
- **ii. expand access to career and technical education for special populations; and**
- **iii. support the inclusion of employability skills in programs of study and career pathways. (Section 122(d)(4)(B) of Perkins V)**

Secondary Career-Technical Education Program Approval Process and Criteria

Local districts, schools and joint vocational school districts submit new or renewal applications for secondary career-technical education pathway programs through the Career-Technical Education-26 electronic system. Approval is contingent upon complying with the Ohio Career-Technical Program of Study Assurances, which address a variety of quality elements that are derived from and aligned to Ohio Revised Code, Ohio Administrative Code, and Perkins legislation. Approved applications are valid for a five-year period and follow a rolling renewal schedule based on approval date.

Required elements for approval are:

- A minimum of least four testable Vocational Tech Prep courses and a minimum of 450 hours from a single pathway;
    - Middle school courses (Vocational Middle School or Vocational Tech Prep codes) must show a continuation to a high school program (can be grade 7 and/or grade 8 courses).
- A minimum of three semester credit hours of college credit opportunities aligned to the technical content of the pathway;
- Secondary-recommended non-career technical courses shall identify all non-technical courses that are appropriate to the career pathway to show integration of academic courses that enhance the program of study;
- Postsecondary-recommended non-career technical courses through the first four semesters of the degree/certificate track. The pathway also identifies recommended academic and technical electives in the same or related field within a pathway;
- Evidence supporting alignment to labor market demand; and
- Evidence of equitable access for each student.

Applications are completed by the local districts, schools and joint vocational school districts and are reviewed for approval by the following entities:

- Ohio Tech Prep;
- Career Technical Planning District;
- ODEW; and
- Community school sponsor, if applicable.

Continuous Improvement for Secondary Career-Technical Education Programs

Ohio promotes continuous improvement for its programs of study through the Quality Program Review. The intent of the Quality Program Review is to maximize the use of resources improving the quality of career-technical education programs. The Career-Technical Education Program Review is an annual process. The district conducts a self-review in the first two years of not meeting benchmarks in the compliance system. In the third year, a district implements identified improvement strategies with the assistance of the career-technical planning district and ODEW. The fourth and fifth years require additional on-site reviews by ODEW, in collaboration with the career-technical planning district if a career-technical education program is not in compliance with the targets established for the performance indicators.

Expanding Access for Secondary Career-Technical Education Programs

Through the use of equity labs, continued technical support and professional development, Ohio is focused on expanding access to career technical education programs for special populations. The initiatives will support the development of strategies to make continuous progress toward reducing the identified access gaps for special populations.

The criteria for approving locally developed programs of study or career pathway local applications expands access for special populations by requiring:

- Acknowledgement of potential special population access gaps for the requested pathway;
- Strategies for increasing equitable access to the program or pathway for special populations;
- Description of the necessity for the program or career pathway in promoting equitable access for special populations;
- Proposed strategies to provide equitable access for special populations; and
- Alignment of the career pathway or program of study with high skill, high wage, in-demand jobs for special populations.

Secondary Career-Technical Education Programs Integration of Employability Skills
Employability competencies are embedded within the Career Field Technical Content Standards for each area. The competencies are included in the courses for each program of study and each end-of-course assessment. Districts have a variety of resources for teaching employability skills, including the use of career and technical student organizations to enhance students' learning experiences.

Career and technical student organizations are a partnership of students, teachers and industry representatives working together to ensure the nation has a skilled workforce. Student learning

is enhanced through contextual instruction, leadership and personal development, applied learning and real-world application. Career and technical student organizations work as an integral component of the classroom curriculum and instruction. In addition, students have opportunities to hold leadership positions at the local, State, and national levels and attend leadership development conferences to network with other students and business and industry partners.

Career and technical student organizations are a critical component of each program of study. Ohio Administrative Code ensures students have access to career and technical student organizations and districts are encouraged and supported to participate in career field-appropriate organizations to help gain leadership and employability skills.

Postsecondary Program Approval for Colleges

At the postsecondary level, institutions begin the program development process by engaging business advisory groups; these groups inform the need to create new programs, provide advice and counsel on industry standards, and ensure continuous improvement with regular review of program outcomes and curricula. However, these programs must be approved by ODHE to be eligible for State funding and Perkins support. The process for approving local programs of study requires institutions to demonstrate labor market need for the program, demonstrate how technical skill will be measured, and identify the certificates, credentials or degrees students will complete.

Ongoing requirements from accreditors and data reporting to ODHE foster continuous improvement for postsecondary institutions. ODHE provides desk reviews and site visits to institutions and programs. Desk reviews are performed for all colleges and Ohio Technical Centers on a rotating basis, while site visits are conducted with institutions that have poor performance outcomes and/or poor desk reviews. Outcomes for special populations also are reviewed, and poor outcomes for these groups are factors considered in review processes. ODHE will engage institutions in data review to inform continuous improvement to ensure students have effective academic and technical skill attainment.

Ohio's colleges and universities must go through a program approval process. All institutions seeking approval or authorization to offer instruction must demonstrate the following institutional and program standards are met during the review.

The process for degree review functions are as follows:

1. **Initial inquiry**: The institution completes a five-step initial inquiry to begin the approval process.
2. **Posting of request**: Once the Program Review Plan is sent to the institution, the institution and name of proposed degree are posted on ODHE.
3. **Proposal**: After the new degree has received all required internal approvals, the institution's president or chief academic officer submits a proposal to the chancellor of ODHE at least four months prior to the planned implementation of the new degree. The proposal provides information to demonstrate the program meets the General Standards for Academic Programs.

4. **Peer review**: Content experts from Ohio public colleges and universities provide peer reviews of proposals. Peer reviews focus on the qualifications, experience and sufficiency of faculty, curriculum and its alignment with expectations for the discipline; need for the degree; and resources (classrooms, libraries, technology, laboratory, equipment) available to support the degree. Peer institutions have 30 days to submit comments.
5. **Resolution of concerns**: The institutional mentor works with the institution proposing the program to address questions or concerns raised during the peer review period.
6. **Public comment period**: If the program is recommended to the chancellor of ODHE for approval, a background summary is posted on ODHE.
7. **Chancellor's approval**: The request and public comments are forwarded to the chancellor of ODHE for final approval.

Postsecondary Program Approval for Ohio Technical Centers

Ohio Technical Center programs also must go through a formal program approval process administered by ODHE. This includes Ohio Technical Center programs that will be administered in partnership with another institution. Only programs with a "technical" designation will be approved for Ohio Technical Center State funding by ODHE. Programs not approved as technical will be considered "General" programs (not having immediate occupational value associated with them) and will not be counted for Ohio Technical Center State funding. The requests for new technical programs at Ohio Technical Centers are processed in the following manner:

1. **Program approval process**: An Ohio Technical Center must complete the Ohio Technical Centers Program Approval Application within the Ohio Technical Center/Higher Education Information (HEI) database system and be granted final approval by the chancellor before submitting it to its accreditors. Once the Ohio Technical Centers Program Approval Application is completed, ODHE program approval representative will review it within a minimum three-week time period.
    a. Programs that require approval from another State agency, such as the Department of Public Safety, State Board of Nursing and others still must submit for ODHE approval in conjunction with the submission of approval from the related agency and before enrolling students.
    b. Institutions must select an approved industry credential for which the program prepares students. If a certificate program would like to use a credential not yet approved by the chancellor as its primary industry credential, it must submit information about the credential for review in addition to the approved list by completing the New Industry Credential Submission Form.
2. **Review**: ODHE program approval representative will review the submission to determine if it meets the approval criteria. The following criteria and steps are taken during this part of the approval process:
    a. **General information**:The institution must provide information about contract training and required classroom or lab components, if applicable.

b. **Market supply and demand**:The institution provides information on businesses with which it consulted while developing the program. There must be supporting evidence for this work, such as documents that include names of individuals and organizations, advisory committee notes and meeting minutes. Additionally, the institution must include State and local labor market data, specific employer or industry need for the program, and/or projected job openings and placement opportunities for students.

c. **Program/certificate**:The institution must provide the program curriculum with details on the course name and hours associated with it, as well as information about its status as an apprenticeship program or whether it includes experiential learning components.

d. **Industry credentials**: The institution must include industry credential information for those programs that offer them. If a certificate program would like to use a credential not yet approved by the Chancellor as its primary industry recognized credential, it must submit information about the credential for review and addition to the approved list by completing the New Industry Credential Submission Form. If the ***program does not align*** to an occupational license or certification, ***it is required*** to provide a rationale and/or justification for the program.

e. **Regulatory approval**: Programs that require approval from another state agency, such as the Department of Public Safety, Department of Health, the State Board of Nursing, and others, still must submit for ODHE approval in conjunction with the submission of approval from the related agency and before enrolling students. The institution must explain if the governing body for the industry credential or an external regulatory entity (for example, State Board of Nursing) requires approval for program, facilities, curriculum, faculty, ratios, or other items.

f. **Credit, transfer and placement**: The institution must indicate ODHE articulation and transfer initiatives in which the certificate program being offered and its related courses are participating. Also, it must address any bilateral articulation agreements that are connected to it and whether there is any assistance being provided to students to transition into the workforce or continue their education.

ODHE staff member, based on initial review, will recommend the following for approval:

1. **Technical Program Approval:** The Ohio Technical Center is authorized to offer the program and is eligible for State funding.
2. **Declination**: The Ohio Technical Center should not offer the program as currently submitted.
3. **General Program:** The Ohio Technical Center may offer the program as a General Program.

2. **Not approved:** If declination is recommended or it is recommended as a General Program, the Ohio Technical Center will receive a communication from ODHE staff providing the rationale for the decision. The institution will have an opportunity to resubmit and/or appeal the decision.

3. **Appeals**: If not approved, institutions may do the following:

    a. An Ohio Technical Center may appeal a declination or General Program status by completing and returning an appeal form that addresses the reason for the declination within 30 days of the original decision notification.

    b. ODHE staff members will review the information under the Case Review Process. This process may include a secondary review of the submission by a committee of Ohio postsecondary education system peers who review and make a recommendation to the chancellor regarding the program's approval.

4. **Chancellor approval**: If the program is recommended as a Technical Program, it will be submitted to the chancellor for review and final approval. Once final approval has been granted, the Ohio Technical Center will receive approval documentation from the chancellor's staff. The program is now "active," considered "technical," can be offered by the Ohio Technical Center and eligible for State funding.

In addition to ODHE processes, accreditors require annual reporting on satisfactory completion, assessment by third-party certification authorities and placement. Negative changes in student-level outcomes endanger program and institutional accreditation.

Expanding Access for Postsecondary Career-Technical Education Programs

Through engagement with postsecondary subrecipients on equity populations as well as continued technical support and professional development, Ohio is focused on expanding access to postsecondary career technical education programs for special populations. The initiatives will support the development of strategies to make continuous progress towards reducing identified access gaps for special populations. Institutions will be engaged to consider how effective these approaches are in improving access for special populations.

Postsecondary Career Technical Education Programs Integration of Employability Skills
All postsecondary career technical programs rely on business advisory councils in the development of learner outcomes, ensuring program content is embedded with employability competencies. ODHE's approval process ensures consideration of employability skills during review. Finally, outcomes data and accreditor requirements allow for measurement of job placement, which stands as the ongoing balance that employability skills are fully integrated. Review processes by accreditors, triggered by low placement rates, create opportunities to address gaps.

C. Describe how the eligible agency will—

i. make information on approved programs of study and career pathways (including career exploration, work-based learning opportunities, early college high schools, and dual or concurrent enrollment program opportunities) and guidance and advisement resources, available to students (and parents, as appropriate), representatives of secondary and postsecondary education, and special populations, and to the extent

practicable, provide that information and those resources in a language students, parents, and educators can understand;

Secondary Career-Technical Education Program Communication

One of the three core principles for Ohio's education system is partnerships. Each Child, Our Future, Ohio's strategic plan for education, reinforces that everyone, not just those in schools, shares the responsibility for preparing children for successful futures. The most important partners are parents and caregivers, who have the greatest impact on a child's development. Other critical partners include educators, business, philanthropy, employers, libraries, social service organizations, community members, health care providers, behavioral health experts and many more. Put simply, partnerships transform the educational experience.

Ohio uses a multi-faceted approach to provide information on approved programs of study and career pathways to these stakeholders. In addition to communication strategies deployed by the State, schools themselves are an important and deliberate component of outreach to students and families. Schools use the information produced by the State, as well as locally produced information, to communicate with families and other stakeholders about career-technical education opportunities.

Students and Parents/Caregivers

Ohio employs three main mechanisms for communicating directly with parents and caregivers and students about programs of study.

1. **Agency Websites**: All information regarding approved programs of study can be found on ODEW website and is available to parents and caregivers and students. The suite of resources found on the website include the Families and Students Work-Based Learning Toolkit, a toolkit on career exploration, advising and career pathways, and dozens of sample career pathways, including a suggested program of study and suggestions on the on and off ramps to these pathways. ODHE also posts information on programs of study and career pathways on its website. Resources on ODHE's website include videos, webinars and presentations.

Both ODEW and ODHE use social media and email as additional means of communication. Parents and caregivers and students may sign up for ODEW's general email list and receive information and updates via email.

2. **OhioMeansJobs.com**: Ohio's no-cost, career planning system on OhioMeansJobs.com offers comprehensive career exploration tools, guidance and advisement services, online training and resources specifically for students, teachers and school counselors. OhioMeansJobs.com allows students to learn more about their career interests and in-demand jobs, build résumés, search for college and training programs, create budgets based on future expenses, and develop meaningful academic and career plans for high school and beyond. This system allows students to take practice exams, such as the ACT, SAT and WorkKeys, and practice job interviews. Once students graduate, their "backpack" accounts transition to "job seeker" accounts where they can activate their résumés to be posted to public job sites and be connected to postsecondary internship opportunities. All of this and more is available for teachers to use and see their students' activity through "OhioMeansJobs K-12 Reporting Tools," which is a system available to

educators and registered users that provides reports on activity both at a district level and individual student level to support thoughtful career advising.

Information also is available in OhioMeansJobs.com for postsecondary students and adult learners. As with K-12 students, these individuals can research career interests and in-demand opportunities in the job market and discover information on approved programs of study and career pathways for postsecondary and returning adult students. OhioMeansJobs.com is used by all WIOA providers and can be accessed by the general population via the internet. All Ohio Technical Center participants are required to create OhioMeansJobs.com profiles as part of their programs.

3. **State Law Requirements (Dual Credit):** State law requires that families have the opportunity to learn about the State's dual enrollment program, College Credit Plus, on an annual basis. In addition to ODEW and ODHE communications to families about College Credit Plus, local school districts must annually hold meetings educating families of students in grades 7-12 about how they can access postsecondary credit opportunities, including courses that are part of career-technical education programs of study. ODHE's website provides dedicated space to transparently share requirements of College Credit Plus to students and families.

Representatives of Secondary and Postsecondary Education

Ohio has several mechanisms for communicating information regarding programs of study to secondary and postsecondary educators and administrators. Detailed information about programs of study is posted on ODEW. Website resources include standards for all courses within each program of study, resources for assessments, industry-recognized credential information and career and technical student organizations.

- The Department also regularly communicates with the education community via email.
    - Major updates and announcements are included in the Department's weekly e-newsletter, EdConnection;
    - ODEW maintains and uses an email list for career-technical education superintendents and secondary directors, who receive targeted communications regarding programs of study;
    - SuccessBound, the agency's initiative to support student, educator and employer engagement in high-quality career pathways, issues a regular newsletter to interested parties;
    - ODEW communicates with and through the State's professional associations for career-technical educators, including the Ohio Association for Career-Technical Education, the Ohio Association of Career-Technical Superintendents and Ohio Association of Comprehensive and Compact Career-Technical Schools.
- ODHE regularly communicates broadly about the importance of career-technical education to constituents through emailed newsletters, social media, and its website.
- ODHE's website includes information on articulated programs of study, including guidance and training materials for students and teachers. Emails and social media

posts with infographics share data on progress of Ohio's public higher education system and often include career-technical information. Finally, HigherEd Highlights is a weekly video series that promotes high points occurring in higher education.

- ODEW and ODHE regularly provide information during local, regional, and statewide meetings. ODEW and ODHE regularly present updates to the education community during at least eleven meetings during a typical program year:
    - Fall and Spring Ohio Career-Technical Administrators Association meetings;
    - Summer Ohio Association for Career-Technical Education conference;
    - Annual regional meetings;
    - Annual Career Connections conference;
    - Fall and Spring Postsecondary Perkins meetings.

The departments regularly meet with representatives of the education community to provide information and get feedback on state policy and implementation of career pathways. These groups include:

1. Career Connections Advisory Council;
2. New Skills for Youth Cross Sector Team;
3. Sector advisory councils;
4. Ohio Association for Career-Technical Education Council of Presidents;
5. Faculty panels for the Secondary Career-Technical Alignment Initiative;
6. Quarterly meetings with career-technical education association leadership (associations meet with State Superintendent and other career-technical leadership staff).

Multiple Languages: The Department ensures all documents on the Department website can be translated from English into other languages.

Special Populations

The Office for Exceptional Children and Office of Career-Technical Education have collaborated on the development of a tool for school districts to use to ensure:

- Consistent and timely collaboration and communication occurs between school personnel, families and students related to the recruitment, application, selection, placement and service delivery for students with disabilities in career-technical pathways;
- Procedures and practices for the recruitment, application, selection and service delivery for students with disabilities meet all State and federal requirements. School personnel, families and students are provided this information and receive relevant training;
- Technical and academic course offerings meet all State and federal requirements regarding access, non-discrimination and meeting of performance expectations for

special populations, including preparation for careers in industry sectors requiring technical expertise;

- Students with disabilities have access to all career-technical pathways. Career-technical education providers make every effort to ensure students with disabilities are provided supplementary services (defined as curriculum modifications, equipment modification, supportive personnel, and instructional aides and devices) within these pathways;
- Special education services and supports are provided per the student's individualized education program in the least restrictive environment.

ii. facilitate collaboration among eligible recipients in the development and coordination of career and technical education programs and programs of study and career pathways that include multiple entry and exit points;

Career-Technical Education Programs Multiple Entry and Exit Point Options

Ohio has four mechanisms in place to ensure collaboration among Perkins recipients to provide seamless educational and training pathways for learners with multiple entry and exit points.

1. Career-Technical Credit Transfer – The language in section 3333.162 of the Ohio Revised Code requires ODHE and ODEW to develop policies and procedures ensuring that students at an adult career-technical education institution or secondary career-technical education institution can transfer agreed-upon technical courses completed there (that adhere to recognized industry standards) to any public institution of higher education "without unnecessary duplication or institutional barriers."

Students are guaranteed the transfer of applicable credits among Ohio's public colleges and universities and equitable treatment in the application of credits to admissions and degree requirements. Career-Technical Credit Transfer helps more high school and adult career-technical students go to college and enter with college credit. Technical credit saves students money and time, and Ohio business and industry will benefit from more employees with higher education and advanced skills.

Students who successfully complete specified technical programs are eligible to have technical credit transfer to public colleges and universities. This transfer of credit is described in Career-Technical Assurance Guides, which are advising tools that assist students moving from Ohio secondary and adult career-technical institutions to Ohio public institutions of higher education.

2. Ohio College Tech Prep – The six Ohio College Tech Prep Regional Centers serve as liaisons to Ohio's 90 career-technical planning districts, 22 community colleges, 14 universities, and 49 adult career centers to ensure high-quality career-technical education programs for students. The regional centers work with their education partners to increase student access to quality career-technical education pathways that provide opportunities to earn college credit while in high school.

The College Tech Prep Regional Centers are jointly managed by ODHE and ODEW's Office of Career-Technical Education.

3. Career-Technical Education-26 Application Assurances –New applications or renewals of existing secondary career-technical education pathway programs are facilitated through the

Career-Technical Education-26 application process. Approval is contingent upon complying with the Ohio Career-Technical Program of Study Assurances, which address a variety of quality elements that are derived and aligned to Ohio Revised Code, Ohio Administrative Code, Perkins IV/V and are State Board of Education approved.

The assurances assist applicants in confirming that: *Technical and academic course offerings must be designed in an Ohio State department of education approved sequence of courses/program of study that meets State approved graduation requirements, creates an educational pathway for grades seven through twelve, and identifies a high-school pathway, a postsecondary pathway, and employment options OAC 3301-61-03 (D)(9).*

4. One Year Option and CTAGs – ODHE has developed tools that facilitate articulation and transfer at the postsecondary level, enabling students to leverage credentials – credit and non-credit – to additional postsecondary credentials. These mechanisms value all learning and provide multiple entry and exit points for learners engaging in postsecondary credentials.

iii. use State, regional, or local labor market data to determine alignment of eligible recipients' programs of study to the needs of the State, regional, or local economy, including in-demand industry sectors and occupations identified by the State board, and to align career and technical education with such needs, as appropriate;

Secondary Career-Technical Education Program Alignment to Labor Market Data

Perkins V focuses on aligning programs of study to high-wage, high skill and in-demand occupations. In the comprehensive local needs assessment, local leadership teams will provide an analysis of how career-technical education programs are meeting workforce and economic development needs on the State, regional or local levels. The assessment will look at how different resources are used to determine which career-technical education programs of study are made available for students.

The comprehensive local needs assessment (**Appendix A.3**) provides an unprecedented opportunity to ensure programs of study are aligned to, and validated by, local, regional and Statewide workforce needs and economic priorities. Ohio will continually review the alignment between in-demand occupations and the State's career pathways. The alignment will be a resource for local recipients to use when aligning programs of study to local in demand occupations.

Programs of Study that do not Meet the Statewide Criteria for "In-Demand Occupation"

Local recipients will be required to ensure the program of study meets the requirements of the Perkins V legislation. Recipients will need to display local or regional demand to be permitted to use Perkins funds for these specific pathways. Applications will include answers to narrative questions and must show they meet four of six elements of evidence.

Narrative Questions

1. What drove your decision to apply for or renew this program of study?
2. What career pathway would you expect students to follow who graduate from this pathway?

3. Programs of study must be tied to labor market demand. How does this program of study align to local labor market needs?

Elements of Evidence

1. 25 percent of students participating in work-based learning experiences.
2. 50 percent of students placed in industry-relevant jobs or programs within six months after graduation.
3. 70 percent of students attaining 12 points of industry-recognized credentials in the relevant career field.
4. Documented job openings in local area (county and surrounding counties) indicating openings for at least 85 percent of students in average program cohort.
5. More than 90 percent post-program placement (not limited to industry relevance).
6. At least two letters from industry partners indicating future intent to hire students from the pathway.

As part of the Career-Technical Education-26 process, local districts, schools and joint vocational school districts will be required to upload applicable State, regional or local employment data and provide narrative justification for the program. Local implementation of career pathways and programs of study will be subject to:

- Adherence to the review and monitoring by the State;
- Renewal of approvals every five years; and
- Adherence to the Career-Technical Program of Study Assurances.

The State will maintain open communication and collaboration with local districts, schools and joint vocational school districts in the development of career pathways and programs of study. This will be accomplished by widely vetting the State criteria in the Perkins planning process and disseminating the criteria through State websites and Statewide meetings and conferences. The State will continue providing technical assistance and professional development to local schools and districts as needed as they develop local career pathways and programs of study.

iv. ensure equal access to approved career and technical education programs of study and activities assisted under this Act for special populations;

Improving Access for Special Populations in Secondary Career-Technical Education Programs

A primary focus of the Ohio Perkins V transition and four-year plans, with an initial focus on students in special populations, is:

- Improving access;
- Enrollment and engagement; and
- Performance for all students.

To support districts in ensuring students have meaningful access and are engaged in high-quality career-technical education programs, ODEW piloted regional equity labs in year one for secondary career-technical programs. Participants in the equity labs reviewed and analyzed data in three main categories: access, engagement and enrollment, and performance. Participants identified performance gaps for students in special populations and identified the largest or most pressing gaps and performed a root cause analysis. Participants clearly articulated a commitment to advancing equity with a plan to specifically address and continually make meaningful progress toward improving the performance of special populations. During the equity labs, participants completed data analysis, discovery and goal-setting activities and exercises that will be useful in fulfilling the Perkins V local needs assessment (**Appendix A.3**) and local application (**Appendix A.1**) requirements for equity. The career-technical planning districts are encouraged to set ambitious and achievable goals, collaborate on best practices and share resources. It is not feasible or realistic to expect districts to correct all inequities at once, but it is an expectation that career-technical planning districts identify the greatest opportunities for growth, create plans and commit to improving Ohio's equity in education.

The Root Cause Analysis performed during these labs will provide information for multiple resources that will be made available on the Equity web page. This web page will include,

- Equity Gap Root Cause Toolkit for each special population and subgroup;
- Best practices for addressing equity gaps;
- Pedagogy tips for implementing a more equitable experience for students;
- Schedule of equity activities; events; webinars and trainings; and
- Urban Expansion link for equity in instructor recruitment, onboarding and retention.

During the second year of the plan, ODEW will pilot training for equity ambassadors within the secondary career-technical planning districts, who will serve as in-district equity support. These ambassadors will be invited to engage in professional development with ODEW in the form of webinars and labs to create and develop ongoing equity plans. These ambassadors will be offered training potentially addressing:

- Equity awareness education;
- Research strategies to address equity labs root causes for focused gaps on specific demographic groups;
- Support in selecting the strategies with the most meaningful impact & viability using local resources; and
- Support in creating metrics and evaluation plans.

Year three, ODEW will conduct another round of regional equity labs. These labs will provide the secondary career-technical programs and the equity ambassadors an opportunity to dive deeper into their data analysis in the three main categories:

- Access;

- Engagement and enrollment; and
- Performance.

Participants will be provided with district data and be asked to bring additional data and materials for a more comprehensive view of their district equity gaps. Activities will include addressing the most meaningful equity gaps and planning new strategies to make continuous progress in closing these gaps using best practices. Participants will leave the labs with a five-year equity plan that will be used as a tool for the Perkins V local needs assessment (**Appendix A.3**) and local application (**Appendix A.1**).

Over the four years of the State Plan, Ohio will continue to focus on improving equal access to programs of study for all students. ODEW will use its experiences with the equity labs to provide more resources and support for local recipients in ensuring all students have equal access to programs of study. The State Plans to partner with relevant organizations in developing multiple professional development opportunities that will build on the success of the equity labs to provide teachers and school administrators meaningful resources**.**

v. coordinate with the State board to support the local development of career pathways and articulate processes by which career pathways will be developed by local workforce development boards, as appropriate;

Implementation of career pathways and programs of study will be monitored through a State-established review process and must adhere to ODEW Career-Technical Program of Study Assurances. The assurances are developed from applicable sections of Ohio Revised Code and Ohio Administrative Code.

ODEW and ODHE work collaboratively with State workforce development agencies to ensure pathways are aligned to high-wage, high-skill and in-demand jobs. Local recipients are encouraged to collaborate with local workforce development boards to ensure specific programs of study are aligned to local and regional workforce needs.

vii. support effective and meaningful collaboration between secondary schools, postsecondary institutions, and employers to provide students with experience in, and understanding of, all aspects of an industry, which may include work-based learning such as internships, mentorships, simulated work environments, and other hands-on or inquiry-based learning activities; and

Ohio recognizes the critical need to connect businesses with qualified people to fill high-demand job openings. Secondary and postsecondary schools need to work in partnership with business and education to identify opportunities to expose and inform students of Ohio's most in-demand jobs. By fostering collaboration and awareness, the education and training system will be in a better position to fill the gaps. This is a key element for preparing a skilled and productive workforce in Ohio.

The Ohio College Tech Prep Centers

The six Ohio College Tech Prep Regional Centers serve as the liaison to Ohio's 90 career-technical planning districts, 22 community colleges, 14 universities, and 49 adult career centers to ensure high-quality career-technical education programs for students. The regional centers work with their education partners to increase student access to quality career-technical

education pathways that provide opportunities to earn college credit while in high school. The College Tech Prep Regional Centers are jointly managed by ODHE and ODEW's Office of Career-Technical Education.

Work-Based Learning Resources

Ohio has selected work-based learning as a measure of program quality for career-technical education. Work-based learning experiences are conducted at a work site during or after school. They are designed to provide authentic learning experiences to students that link academic, technical, and professional skills. Business and education partners work together to evaluate and supervise the experience, which must be documented with training or learning plans and evaluation forms.

ODEW's Work-Based Learning webpage includes resources for business and community partners, schools, educators, and families and students to assist in initiating the student-industry relationship and creating a seamless process for the experience.

SuccessBound

To address career-focused opportunity knowledge gaps, Ohio has launched SuccessBound. SuccessBound is an educational approach and communication strategy that brings together Ohio's strong business and education partnerships to engage and inspire students about career opportunities.

- SuccessBound businesses collaborate with schools to develop the local workforce. They invest in schools to create educational pathways and provide work-based learning experiences that prepare students for jobs that are available now. They communicate openly with schools about what skills students need to have when they graduate.
- SuccessBound students take active roles in planning their futures by exploring career interests early and considering how to align their interests to careers. They consider what education and training is needed to reach their goals. They respond to financial concerns by earning free college credits in high school and following a pathway that allows them to work in a related field while continuing their education. These students dedicate themselves to long-term goals and commit to continuous lifelong learning.
- SuccessBound families support the pathways that help their students meet their goals. They encourage districts to find ways for the students to gain the skills they need. They are aware of the demands of their local economies, and they encourage businesses and schools to prepare students to work in those economies. They encourage lifelong learning.
- SuccessBound communities communicate with schools about the needs of the local economy. They actively foster collaboration between schools and businesses to help grow the local workforce.

Ohio Means Internships and Coops (OMIC)

At the postsecondary level, ODHE has worked to build linkages between coursework and the workplace through Ohio Means Internships and Co-ops. Through this initiative, ODHE distributes financial and technical assistance resources to strengthen work-based learning opportunities for college and university students at employers. This includes guidance on ways

in which faculty can work with employers to ensure students have meaningful learning experiences in their placements. These grants have built institutional capacity and provided resources to support student wages. The program received funding through FY2019 and ODHE is in now completing the process to close the program out. The participating institutions demonstrated positive results with internships and co-ops in a wide range of businesses across the state.

vii. improve outcomes and reduce performance gaps for CTE concentrators, including those who are members of special populations. (Section 122(d)(4)(C) of Perkins V)

Equity Labs and Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment.

The comprehensive local needs assessment will assist districts in identifying performance gaps for career-technical education concentrators and members of special populations, allowing the State to identify thematic performance gaps and develop targeted assistance that can be used to benefit all local recipients. While some initiatives may be applicable at the State level, the process enables districts to recognize gaps and develop strategies at the local level using State-provided geographic information system spatial data mapping tools and disaggregated State-determined indicator reports.

ODEW is integrating equity-focused requirements across Statewide processes associated with career-technical education. The Department piloted equity labs with local Perkins recipients during the transition year to identify access, engagement and performance gaps, analyze causes of those gaps, and create plans to reduce those gaps in coming years. The equity labs provided the opportunity for local recipients to work with the Office of Career-Technical Education in a facilitated environment to complete the equity section of the comprehensive local needs assessment (**Appendix A.3**). The work performed in the equity labs "trained the trainer," allowing local recipients to complete the remaining five sections of the assessment in collaboration with their local stakeholders. Piloted equity labs served as a developmental model for sustainable implementation throughout the Perkins V four-year period.

Urban Expansion Team

The Urban Expansion Team provides career-technical support to Ohio's eight largest urban school districts. These districts were selected for additional support due to their size, the diverse populations they serve, and the challenges associated with successfully implementing career-technical programming in a large urban setting. Targeted areas of support are:

- Challenges surrounding recruitment and retention;
- Expansion of career-technical programming;
- District planning and goals; and
- Reduction of participation and performance gaps.

Office for Improvement and Innovation

ODEW's Office for Improvement and Innovation oversees and is part of the State System of Support. The State System of Support is in place to assist schools and districts in increasing student outcomes and achievement. This system includes educational service centers, State support teams, instruction technology centers and direct supports from the Department. This

system uses the Ohio Improvement Process as a framework to establish systemic collaborative structures designed to support development and implementation of focused goals and a strategic plan looking at both students' academic and non-academic needs. The continuous improvement cycle becomes the process for district and school core work and is used to implement, monitor and evaluate their goals and strategic plan.

The Office for Improvement and Innovation also provides information and support for vulnerable student populations, including children who are homeless, in the foster care system or involved in the justice system.

State Support Teams

When targeting areas to improve achievement, schools and districts can access resources through a state support team to assist and support their efforts.

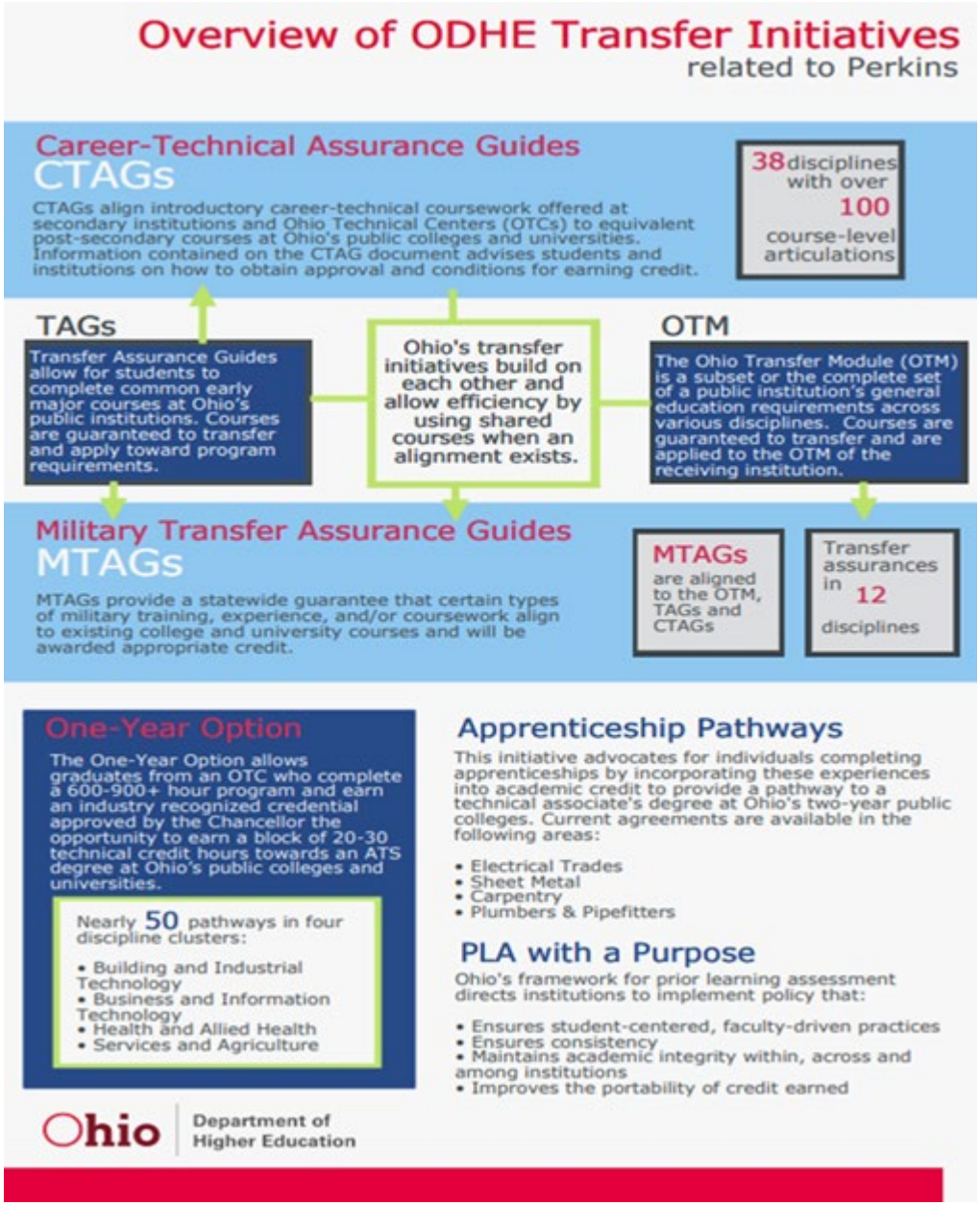
State support teams are comprised of local and regional Ohio educators with a history in school improvement, preschool and special education. ODEW coordinates 16 regional teams.

The State support team expands a district's leadership team to add specially trained educator experts to work to improve climate and learning outcomes for all students. The State support team uses research-based practices to help build custom solutions with the district team for central office staff, building administrators and teachers and partners to design concrete measures. These solutions boost organizational efficiency and provide coordination and support for common barriers in school improvement and services for low-performing students.

d. Describe how the eligible agency, if it opts to do so, will include the opportunity for secondary school students to participate in dual or concurrent enrollment programs, early college high school, or competency-based education. (Section 122(d)(4)(D) of Perkins V)

Career-Technical Education Student Postsecondary Credit Options

Ohio secondary career-technical education students have a variety of options for earning postsecondary credit while in high school and completing competency-based options. Secondary and postsecondary Perkins recipients collaborate to ensure students have seamless pathways from secondary to postsecondary education as part of their career-technical education programs of study. All State-approved pathways at the secondary level are required to have postsecondary credit opportunities in place. This could be a Statewide articulation agreement, bilateral articulation agreement, or a College Credit Plus course. If a Statewide articulation opportunity is available, programs must use that option rather than creating a bilateral articulation agreement. The graphic below shows the State's articulation and transfer initiatives that support Ohio career-technical education students.



Dual Enrollment: College Credit Plus

College Credit Plus is Ohio's dual enrollment program that provides students in grades 7 -12 the opportunity to earn college and high school credits simultaneously by taking courses from Ohio colleges or universities. The purpose of this program is to enhance students' career readiness and postsecondary successes, while providing a wide variety of options to college-ready students at no or limited cost to students and families. Students may take postsecondary career-technical courses and academic courses through College Credit Plus at Ohio colleges and universities. Students who successfully complete postsecondary career-technical education courses may use them as part of their career-technical education pathways to meet high school graduation requirements. ODEW and ODHE maintain guidance for families, districts, and postsecondary institutions on how students can access College Credit Plus courses, including career-technical education courses, on the agencies' websites.

Articulated Credit: Career-Technical Assurance Guides

In addition to College Credit Plus, Ohio career-technical students can earn postsecondary credit through the State's extensive credit articulation system. Career-Technical Assurance Guides are Statewide articulation agreements specifically for secondary high school and adult technical center students who complete agreed-upon career-technical coursework and assessments. The Secondary Career-Technical Alignment Initiative was developed from the Career-Technical Assurance Guides process. The initiative is a collaborative effort between ODHE, ODEW, and Ohio's public institutions of higher education. Aligned and agreed-upon technical courses provide students with opportunities to earn college credit without unnecessary duplication or institutional barriers.

The Career-Technical Articulation Verification technical initiative is a collaborative effort between ODEW and ODHE to eliminate the barriers of the previous paper-based process and streamline post-secondary career-technical transfer credit opportunities. New technology will allow the electronic exchange of data between the two agencies into the Higher Education Information system. The integration of ODEW's Career-Technical Education-26 application process and ODHE's Course Equivalency Management System will allow for the automation of the submission and approval of secondary courses that align to Career-Technical Assurance Guides.

Career-Technical Assurance Guides are developed using a faculty-led, five-step process:

Step 1: Defining – Faculty panel meets to define the learning outcomes;

Step 2: Agreeing – Statewide surveying seeks to obtain agreement on the learning outcomes;

Step 3: Matching – Faculty match, or align, ODEW Career Field Technical Content Standards to each of the learning outcomes and distribute a second endorsement survey Statewide;

Step 4: Submitting – Institutions with similar or equivalent courses must submit course materials to determine if there is an alignment with the newly created theCareer-Technical Assurance Guides; and

Step 5: Reviewing – Faculty review panels validate course materials.

Students who successfully complete secondary technical courses and who pass the required end-of-course exams for the approvedCareer-Technical Assurance Guides will earn equivalent credit at postsecondary institutions with comparable courses.

Competency-Based Options: Work-Based Learning

ODEW and ODHE maintain resources related to work-based learning opportunities for students. Secondary students and educators, as well as Ohio businesses, can access the Work-Based Learning Toolkit on ODEW's website. Students can demonstrate mastery of competencies identified in their training plans to earn credit in academic and technical coursework.

e. Describe how the eligible agency will involve parents, academic and career and technical education teachers, administrators, faculty, career guidance and academic counselors, local business (including small businesses), labor organizations, and representatives of Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations, as appropriate, in the

planning, development, implementation, and evaluation of its career and technical education programs. (Section 122(d)(12) of Perkins V)

Topical stakeholder committees were assembled to review and provide feedback on key topics in the Perkins Four-Year State Plan, including equity, local needs assessment, data and accountability, programs of study to be developed and/or supported by the State, high-quality programs of study, implementation timelines and connections to other programs across the State. Members of the stakeholder committees were expected to:

- Attend all meetings, either in person or virtually;
- Review materials in advance and share relevant information with their constituents to receive feedback;
- Share their feedback, as well as any comments received from the groups they represent; and
- Share opportunities for engagement with the groups they represent.

To assist in the plan development process, Ohio created a State Plan stakeholder engagement committee and appointed all required stakeholders necessary to develop the full four-year State Plan. Positions and organizations represented are described in A.1. of this plan. In addition to the established functions of business advisory councils described in B.1.a, they are included as a required stakeholder group for many sections of the comprehensive local needs assessment process.

Ohio's Quality Program Standards for Career-Technical Education Programs were created as an instrument to guide and facilitate continuous program improvement with a common set of standards for all secondary career-technical education programs. Standards surrounding school and community relations and program planning and evaluation guide programs in the involvement of all stakeholders in the planning, development, implementation and evaluation of its career-technical education programs.

f. Include a copy of the local application template that the eligible agency will require eligible recipients to submit pursuant to section 134(b) of Perkins V. See Text Box 4 for the statutory requirements for local applications under section 134(b) of Perkins V.

Reference Appendix A.1 Local Application

g. Include a copy of the comprehensive local needs assessment template and/or guidelines that the eligible agency will require of eligible recipients to meet the requirements of section 134(c) of Perkins V. See Text Box 5 for the requirements for the comprehensive local needs assessment under section 134(c) of Perkins V.

Reference Appendix A.2 Local Needs Assessment Guidebook

Reference Appendix A.3 Local Needs Assessment Template

h. Provide the eligible agency's definition for "size, scope, and quality" that will be used to make funds available to eligible recipients pursuant to section 135(b) of Perkins V

Ohio has defined size, scope and quality as appropriate for secondary and postsecondary recipients.

Definitions of size, scope and quality for secondary recipients are:

Size: Maintaining a minimum threshold of career-technical education programming (12 programs in eight career fields for career-technical planning districts with enrollment greater than 2,250 in grades 7-12; otherwise, 10 programs in eight career fields). Should waitlists for programs exceed 50 percent of current program capacity, the recipient shall consider how programming may be expanded.

Scope: Programs must:

- Include at least four courses within the program of study;
- Include all aspects of the industry identified in career-technical content standards for the chosen courses;
- Include the opportunity for students to earn postsecondary credit in the technical area;
- Include the opportunity for students to earn relevant credentials of value as appropriate for the technical area;
- Integrate academic content as appropriate for the course;
- Integrate career and technical student organizations, to the extent possible;
- Integrate work-based experiences, to the extent possible; and
- Assess the attainment of technical skills within the program using the appropriate technical assessment, as identified in the program and assessment matrix.

Quality: Programs must meet the State's "in compliance" benchmark, as outlined in the State's annual program review process. For FY20, this requires the State-determined percentage of program participants receive scores of proficient or higher on the State-identified assessment, as shown in the career-technical education program and assessment matrix and the State-determined placement rate. Programs that do not meet the benchmarks for placement and technical skill must participate in the appropriate corrective action planning process, as identified by ODEW. Perkins recipients must examine student performance data by subgroup and special populations. If students in subgroups or subpopulations are performing lower than the all-student average and lower than the local target (subgroup or subpopulation has a lower performance level than the all-student average and lower than the locally negotiated target), the recipient must implement strategies to support students in those subgroups in meeting the all-student average and locally negotiated target.

Definitions of size, scope and quality for postsecondary recipients are below.

Size: Ohio Perkins postsecondary institutions must:

- Offer career-technical education programs in not fewer than three different occupational fields leading to immediate employment but not necessarily leading to baccalaureate degrees;
- Offer technical programs that generate enough concentrator enrollment to meet the $50,000 federal minimum grant threshold for allowable Perkins participation;

- Join a Perkins consortia if they do not generate enough credit hours or clock hour full-time equivalents to be eligible Perkins concentrators that can meet the $50,000 federal minimum grant threshold for allowable Perkins participation.

Scope: Ohio Perkins postsecondary institutions must:

- Demonstrate connection to labor market validation by obtaining technical program designation as determined through ODHE's program approval processes;
- Provide equal access to high-quality career-technical education programs of study for all students, especially those identified as underrepresented and a part of special populations groups;
- Review regional labor market demand to ensure programs prepare students for careers that will provide them with high skills and opportunities to earn high wages within in-demand occupations;
- Provide adequate and appropriate services of support that may assist students with program completion.

Quality: Ohio Perkins postsecondary institutions must:

- Hold relevant institutional and program accreditation by an accrediting body recognized by the United States ODEW;
- Continue to maintain accreditation and academic standards of high quality for programs and student support services offered by the institutions as defined by their accreditors;
- Have submitted all pertinent student and program information based on ODHE's data submission policies meeting all submission deadlines;
- Not be in violation of any State or federal rules associated with providing adequate support for students (student financial aid, admission requirements, civil rights abuses, etc.);
- Follow all State- and institution-prescribed data security protocols to protect students, faculty, staff and administrators from identity theft and information manipulation;
- Ensure programs are of quality to meet ODHE's Career Technical Credit Transfer Assurance Guides and College Credit Plus standards;
- Be able to demonstrate the ability to adequately place students in further education and related employment; and
- Have an institutional program review process in place to assess the effectiveness of programs every three years, if it is not already required by a regional or program accreditor.

i.Meeting the Needs of Special Populations

1. **Describe the eligible agency's program strategies for special populations, including a description of how individuals who are members of special populations—**

i. will be provided with equal access to activities assisted under this Act;

ii. will not be discriminated against on the basis of status as a member of a special population;

iii. will be provided with programs designed to enable individuals who are members of special populations to meet or exceed State determined levels of performance described in section 113, and prepare special populations for further learning and for high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand industry sectors or occupations;

iv. will be provided with appropriate accommodations; and

v. will be provided instruction and work-based learning opportunities in integrated settings that support competitive, integrated employment. (Section 122(d)(9) of Perkins V)

Ohio is committed to ensuring students have equitable access, engagement and performance in all aspects of their education, including career-technical education programs. This commitment to equity is underscored in Each Child, Our Future, Ohio's strategic plan for education. Equity is one of the three core principles of the strategic plan and recognizes that Ohio's greatest education challenge remains equity in education achievement for each child. The path to equity begins with a deep understanding of the history of discrimination and bias and how it has come to impact current society. *Each Child, Our Future* renews Ohio's commitment to creating the learning conditions that ensure each child is challenged, prepared and empowered.

To support this, ODEW is integrating equity-focused requirements across Statewide processes associated with career-technical education. The Department piloted equity labs with local Perkins recipients during the transition year to identify access, engagement and performance gaps, analyze causes of those gaps, and create plans to reduce those gaps in coming years. Additionally, all State-approved secondary career-technical education programs must meet all State and federal requirements regarding access, non-discrimination and the meeting of performance expectations for special populations, including preparation for careers in industry sectors requiring technical expertise. This policy is amplified in Ohio regulations (Ohio Administrative Code 3301-61-03 (D) (8)), and all secondary recipients agree to ensure non-discrimination and access in the assurances for each program of study they implement.

ODEW's Office of Career-Technical Education and Office for Exceptional Children collaborate extensively on cross-agency activities with OOD. Teams from the Office of Career-Technical Education and Office for Exceptional Children meet regularly to jointly develop common messaging regarding the equitable access and provision of career-technical education for students with disabilities and the provision of special education and related services within career-technical pathways. The team has identified personnel within each office who serve as liaisons to ensure consistent communication and implementation. Other examples of intra-agency collaboration include an internal team dedicated to expanding and improving work-based learning opportunities for students with disabilities, the development of a Frequently Asked Questions document on this topic and the development of a joint memorandum to career-technical educators regarding the provision of special education services in career-technical pathways.

Additionally, the Office for Exceptional Children finances and supports the work of five regional career-technical planning district consultants at the State support team offices. The primary responsibilities of career-technical planning district consultantsare to providedifferentiated and tiered information, professional learning, coaching and technical assistance regarding the equitable access and provision of career-technical education for students with disabilities and the provision of special education and related services within career-technical pathways. The consultants also work with career-technical centers on the development of a communications plan.

To ensure students with disabilities are being appropriately served in career-technical education programs, the Office for Exceptional Children's Supports and Monitoring Team conducts selective reviews to ensure career-technical centers are meeting requirements set forth by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Part B and the Operating Standards for the Education of Children with Disabilities in Ohio. Corrective Action Plans are required and developed to address areas that are not met.

Representatives from the also connect with, and engage in, Statewide initiatives to support this population. For example, representatives serve on the Ohio Employment First Taskforce and the National Technical Assistance Center on Transition's State transition plan team. Office for Exceptional Children staff and OOD have created the Ohio Transition Support Partnership to increase vocational rehabilitation services to students with disabilities and are in the process of developing data sharing agreements to identify mechanisms to continue improving services for this population. Additionally, the offices worked together to ensure students participating in secondary career-technical education courses are provided relevant accommodations per their individualized education programs when taking technical assessments.

Ohio piloted regional career-technical education equity labs for secondary career-technical programs as part of the completion of the local needs assessment. These labs were facilitated by ODEW staff and required each of the career-technical planning districts to bring a team of local stakeholders together. Teams identified by each career-technical planning district include local educators and administrators, workforce development professionals, Tech Prep Center regional staff, school counselors and other participants identified by the lead district. State staff guided local teams through a series of facilitated activities to identify and plan for equity. Activities included:

- Data analysis and review
    - ODEW developed a report displaying local recipients' data in three main categories: meaningful access, engagement and enrollment, and student outcomes. Data for all student subgroups and subpopulations was included, as well as demographic information for all potential students in the recipients' areas of responsibility (member districts within a career-technical planning district).
- Identification of performance gaps
    - Local recipients identified all access, engagement and performance gaps between student subgroups and subpopulations. This information is used as the

basis for local equity planning and shared with local stakeholders as part of the local needs assessment process.

- Root cause analysis
    - Local recipients identified the largest and/or most pressing gaps to be addressed in their local applications. Teams then conducted root cause analyses on their identified gaps.
- Planning for equity
    - Teams developed goals and action plans to address their identified gaps, as well as plans to evaluate their successes and adjust plans as needed each year. The resulting plan is included as part of the local needs assessment and application.

In the future, continued support will be provided through technical assistance offerings and further in-person interactions.

ODHE's Equity Workshops were developed to assist postsecondary institutions in understanding how equity gaps within the data and institutional practices can be identified and modified to reflect institutional missions of serving all students and staff in an equitable manner. The Workshops were done in conjunction with National Alliance for Partnerships in Equity and focused on the following:

- Review of the National Alliance for Partnerships in Equity Program Improvement Process for Equity as a model for institutional improvement within the Perkins Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment;
- Apply an equity lens to the Perkins Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment process within Ohio;
- Analyze existing institutional data to identify equity gaps in participation, concentration, and completion of student subpopulations;
- Understand how to complete a grounded root cause analysis.

Institution representatives have the responsibility of taking what they learned in the workshop and explaining it to their Perkins stakeholder teams and then using what they've learned to identify gaps in quantitative and qualitative data helping institutions to design strategies and goals to close equity gaps. ODHE will continue to work with institutions using what has been learned through the workshops to continually throughout the Plan to provide technical assistance and support in closing equity gaps.

ODHE will ensure all participating institutions have non-discrimination clauses that promote equal access to individuals enrolling at their schools. The clause should emphasize that the institution "does not discriminate against any person in employment or educational opportunities because of race, color, religion, age, national origin, ethnicity, national ancestry, sex, pregnancy, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, military service or veteran status, mental or physical disability, genetic information, or special population status." These non-discrimination clauses will be posted on websites and other relevant materials with

an emphasis on serving students, staff members (faculty, administrators, counselors) and the public at large.

Further, ODHE will make it a priority to collaborate with the State's chief student affairs officers at community colleges and student support services staffs at the Ohio Technical Centers to identify promising practices and develop strategies to assist students within special populations categories. This collaboration will have an overall focus on equity and closing equity gaps within these special population areas. These efforts will help postsecondary institutions focus strategies and tactics to improve access and outcomes for special populations.

j. Preparing Teachers and Faculty

i. Describe how the eligible agency will support the recruitment and preparation of teachers, including special education teachers, faculty, school principals, administrators, specialized instructional support personnel, and paraprofessionals to provide career and technical education instruction, leadership, and support, including professional development that provides the knowledge and skills needed to work with and improve instruction for special populations. (Section 122(d)(6) of Perkins V)

Competent, caring teachers are the single greatest contributor to a child's success in school. Principals are a close second. Effective principals know how to inspire teachers, serve as instructional leaders, and transform a school's culture. Excellent educators use high-quality, culturally responsive instructional practices to enhance each child's learning experience.

To find enough skilled and qualified instructors to teach skills required in EV, telecommunications, and semiconductor roles, Ohio will pursue activities that bolster the pipeline of educators through providing opportunities to learn to teach, identify career pathway expansion, break down barriers to entry, and provide a more competitive value proposition for the best to teach the rest. The state will reassess instructor eligibility criteria to reflect maturity of the EV industry, and the Ohio Manufacturers' Association will work with its ISPs and education partners to identify and deploy creative incentives for faculty recruitment and retention. These incentives may include increases in pay, formalized pathways, and retooled promotion timelines.

A steady stream of highly effective new teachers is necessary to educate Ohio's increasingly diverse body of students who have nuanced learning needs. Although Ohio has many teacher preparation programs, national indicators signal that the supply of teachers might be decreasing. In the face of this looming shortage, today's classrooms present increasingly complex challenges for current and new teachers. More children enter Ohio's classrooms with exposure to trauma. Changing State demographics mean children and families bring greater cultural diversity into the classroom. As a result, more children need personalized learning and differentiated instruction that is culturally relevant. Ultimately, teachers need school leaders who understand how to create and sustain an environment where all students — and all caring, committed adults — grow and learn.

In addition to the career-technical education specific initiatives found in Recruitment, Retention, and Training of Faculty and Staff (b.1.D.5.), the State has developed the following strategies to ensure a steady talent pool of highly effective teachers, including special education teachers, faculty, school principals, administrators, specialized instructional support personnel and paraprofessionals. Efforts will be needed at the State level to address the educator career

continuum. Illustrated below, the continuum begins when a prospective teacher candidate enters an educator preparation program. It ends when an educator retires or exits the system.

Growing and attracting excellent candidates: In conjunction with key educator stakeholder groups, Ohio and its partners are taking steps to attract more individuals to the teaching profession. Low morale, limited compensation, and other issues have discouraged individuals from becoming teachers. At the same time, many educators are motivated and impassioned by positively touching the lives of children, and jobs in education are among the most stable in the economy.

The State also supports school and district efforts to groom prospective teacher candidates to stay in their communities and teach in their local schools. Many regions across Ohio have created and applied "grow your own" programs. The programs expose local candidates to the teaching profession at a young age and recruit them back to teach after they earn initial licensure. This strategy has been effectively used to recruit individuals from under-represented groups.

Culturally Responsive Educators: Ohio is addressing its equity issues by taking actions to ensure each student has access to an effective teacher. During piloted equity labs, State staff is engaging with local recipients in analysis of teacher educator demographic data to identify disparities in relation to student populations. As local recipients develop strategies to ensure a culturally responsive environment for all students, they are encouraged to take advantage of State resources for culturally responsive practices. The State has developed a culturally responsive practices program to assist educators, administrators and support staff in improving instruction for special populations.

A culturally responsive practices program is an approach that encompasses and recognizes both students' and educators' lived experiences, culture and linguistic capital. Culturally responsive educators reflect on their students', as well as their own lived experiences, culture and linguistic capital to inform, support and ensure high-quality instruction. They have high expectations of their students and demonstrate positive attitudes toward student achievement; they are committed to involving their students in multiple phases of academic programming, thereby supporting the unique abilities and learning needs of each student and fostering student success.

The culturally responsive practices program includes four courses (listed below), which are available through ODEW and the Ohio Leadership Advisory Council. Learning can be facilitated in professional learning communities and is supported with facilitator guides and train-the-trainer opportunities. It also can be accessed by an individual through the online learning platforms. The four courses include:

- Introduction to Culturally Responsive Practice;
- Cultural Responsiveness;
- Socio-Political Awareness;

- Academic Achievement.

Strengthening and refining teacher preparation: In collaboration with colleges of education and teacher preparation programs, Ohio is improving preservice training and individualized preservice supports. Examples include requiring sharpening the focus of preparation programs to better address differentiation, instructional practices (including trauma-informed practices), cultural relevancy and student supports. Ohio's Resident Educator Program, regarded as a national model, provides additional early service supports to teachers as they aspire to full licensure.

ODHE prepares Ohio Educator Performance Reports on an annual basis. The report can be used to inform and enhance teacher preparation practices. The report permits the public to view aggregate data for all graduates Statewide and by institution and program area. School districts and charter schools can use the report to make informed decisions about hiring. Students interested in pursuing educator preparation programs can use the report to make decisions regarding which program to attend. Institutions of higher education can use the report to inform continuous improvement efforts, program planning, and research. The data will also assist State and institutional leaders in identifying trends to guide development of targeted improvements in educator preparation programs throughout Ohio. ODHE will continue its current practice of regularly convening representatives from schools, colleges, and ODEW to review report data and format and continuously address improvement opportunities related to emerging research and information learned from key State and national efforts.

Leveraging alternative preparation programs: In the face of a looming educator shortage, State- and federally approved alternative teacher preparation programs can help expand the talent pool. Some of the best alternative programs apply rigorous selection processes, emphasize personalized preservice training and deliver in-service supports that continue once the teacher is assigned to the classroom.

Successful school leaders create the conditions necessary for teachers to excel and students to succeed. They provide clear direction, analyze data, visit classrooms, transform building culture, review school and system goals and cultivate an environment of continuous learning that engages teachers in their professional learning at every step of the way. However, identifying and developing effective leaders is no easy task.

Finalizing new principal standards and refining the preparation process: To help, Ohio revised its standards for principals. These define what principals need to know and be able to do and emphasize a leader's role in building a collaborative learning culture for students and caring, committed adults. The newly revised standards will drive improvements to principal preparation programs and the State's principal evaluation system.

Supporting school leaders: In turn, the State is providing additional technical assistance to help in-service principals build capacity and hone their skills. To that end, Ohio increased its support for principal mentorship programs that pair new and seasoned principals together. The experienced principal provides ongoing counsel and support. The program helps new principals provide high-quality, actionable feedback to teachers. It also helps them creatively manage school schedules so that teachers can collaborate, reflect, adjust lessons and practice new approaches.

Supporting leader recruitment: The State is working with educational service centers and other education intermediaries to offer technical assistance aimed at helping schools and districts identify candidates who are likely to become effective principals.

As Ohio shifts to recognize the importance of all four equal learning domains, educators need to implement instructional practices that reflect and maximize a student's understanding of those domains. The most effective instructional practices are personalized, culturally relevant and directly engage the student in the experience.

Sharing best practices: At the State level, steps are being taken to share and disseminate instructional best practices with teachers, including curriculum, instructional approaches and materials that are informed by research, the school's individual needs, local community standards, student composition and teacher capacity. Educators also should have access to options for delivering the best digital and personalized learning (building on the Future Ready Framework). Options include project and case-based learning, STEM and STEAM (science, technology, engineering, the arts and math) or other similar instructional techniques that challenge students to solve problems creatively through an integrated approach to learning. To effectively teach, educators must know how to individualize and differentiate instruction to meet the learning needs of students with disabilities, students of all cultures, English learners and gifted students.

Partners play a critical role in ensuring an abundant supply of educator talent. This starts with higher education, which has the greatest hand in preparing tomorrow's teachers and school leaders. Business, industry and community partners enrich professional learning opportunities for educators and transform instructional delivery through real-world experiences.

C. FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

- 1. Describe the criteria and process for how the eligible agency will approve eligible recipients for funds under this Act, including how—
    - a. Each eligible recipient will promote academic achievement;
    - b. Each eligible recipient will promote skill attainment, including skill attainment that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential; and
    - c. Each eligible recipient will ensure the local needs assessment under section 134 takes into consideration local economic and education needs, including, where appropriate, in-demand industry sectors and occupations. (Section 122(d)(5) of Perkins V)
- 2. Describe how funds received by the eligible agency through the allotment made under section 111 of the Act will be distributed—
    - a. Among career and technical education at the secondary level, or career and technical education at the postsecondary and adult level, or both, including how such distribution will most effectively provide students with the skills needed to succeed in the workplace; and

- b. Among any consortia that may be formed among secondary schools and eligible institutions, and how funds will be distributed among the members of the consortia, including the rationale for such distribution and how it will most effectively provide students with the skills needed to succeed in the workplace. (Section 122(d)(8) of Perkins V)

- 3. For the upcoming program year, provide the specific dollar allocations made available by the eligible agency for career and technical education programs and programs of study under section 131(a)-(e) of the Act and describe how these allocations are distributed to local educational agencies, areas career and technical education schools and educational service agencies within the State. (Section 131(g) of Perkins V)

- 4. For the upcoming program year, provide the specific dollar allocations made available by the eligible agency for career and technical education programs and programs of study under section 132(a) of the Act and describe how these allocations are distributed to eligible institutions and consortia of eligible institutions within the State.

- 5. Describe how the eligible agency will adjust the data used to make the allocations to reflect any changes in school district boundaries that may have occurred since the population and/or enrollment data was collected, and include local education agencies without geographical boundaries, such as charter schools and secondary schools funded by the Bureau of Indian Education. (Section 131(a)(3) of Perkins V)

- 6. If the eligible agency will submit an application for a waiver to the secondary allocation formula described in section 131(a)—

    - a. Include a proposal for such an alternative formula; and

    - b. Describe how the waiver demonstrates that a proposed alternative formula more effectively targets funds on the basis of poverty (as defined by the Office of Management and Budget and revised annually in accordance with section 673(2) of the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9902(2)) to local educational agencies with the State. (Section 131(b) of Perkins V)

Also indicate if this is a waiver request for which you received approval under the prior Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (Perkins IV).

- 7. If the eligible agency will submit an application for a waiver to the postsecondary allocation formula described in section 132(a)—

    - a. Include a proposal for such an alternative formula; and

    - b. Describe how the formula does not result in a distribution of funds to the eligible institutions or consortia with the State that have the highest numbers of economically disadvantaged individuals and that an alternative formula will result in such a distribution. (Section 132(b) of Perkins V)

Also indicate if this is a waiver request for which you received approval under the prior Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (Perkins IV).

- 8. Provide the State's fiscal effort per student, or aggregate expenditures for the State, that will establish the baseline for the Secretary's annual determination on whether the

State has maintained its fiscal effort, and indicate whether the baseline is a continuing level or new level. If the baseline is new, please provide the fiscal effort per student, or aggregate expenditures for the State, for the preceding fiscal year. (Section 211(b)(1)(D) of Perkins V)

C.1. Describe the criteria and process for how the eligible agency will approve eligible recipients for funds under this Act, including how - a. each eligible recipient will promote academic achievement; b. each eligible recipient will promote skill attainment, including skill attainment that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential

Secondary Career-Technical Education Program Approval Process and Criteria

In the first year, subrecipients will use Ohio's Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Plan, an electronic tool for grant approval, as means to submit four-year applications for local Perkins implementation and annual approval as Perkins recipients. For subsequent years, a comprehensive electronic system will be developed for the comprehensive local needs assessment and application approval. Recipients will be required to complete the comprehensive local needs assessment every two years and adjust the local application, where applicable, based on identified improvement opportunities.

Assigned State staff will review secondary local applications for completeness and compliance with Perkins requirements. To secure final approval, applications must a) ensure that resources are targeted to promote academic achievement and technical skill attainment, including skill attainment that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential; and b) ensure the comprehensive needs assessment under section 134(c) takes into consideration local economic and education needs, including, where appropriate, in-demand industry sectors and occupations. State staff approving applications will be trained in the use of criteria designed specifically for Perkins V approval.

Applicants must follow all requirements of section 134 of the Perkins Act. All required and permissible uses of funds, as described in the Perkins Act, apply under Ohio's Four-Year Plan. A description of results from the comprehensive local needs assessment must include, at a minimum:

- Student performance gaps among subgroups and how those gaps will be addressed;
- Work-based learning opportunities;
- Decision-making progress for offering programs based on local needs assessment and review of alignment to current labor market information and a description of any new programs being offered;
- Integration of academic and Career-Technical Education content through use of Ohio's Learning Standards and opportunities for postsecondary credit in high school;
- Process for recruiting, retaining and professionally developing teachers, faculty, administrators, specialized instructional support personnel and all other relevant parties; and

- Strategies for increasing access to and success in Career-Technical Education programs for special populations, equitable and widespread career exploration and guidance for each student throughout their experience with career-technical education.

All expenditures must show alignment with the results in the following categories of the comprehensive local needs assessment and developed implementation strategies to close identified gaps. Applicants will be able to select the required uses of funds they wish to address. Highly encouraged expenditures will be those that directly connect to:

- Career exploration and career development activities through an organized, systematic framework designed to aid students, including in the middle grades, before enrolling and while participating in Career-Technical Education programs, in making informed plans and decisions about future education and career opportunities and programs of study;
- Professional development for teachers, faculty, school leaders, administrators, specialized instructional support personnel, career guidance and academic counselors, or paraprofessionals;
- Strategies for increasing access to and success in Career-Technical Education programs for special populations;
- Within career-technical education, the skills necessary to pursue high-skill, high-wage or in-demand industry sectors or occupations;
- Support for the integration of academic skills into Career-Technical Education programs and programs of study to supports;
- Planning and execution of elements that support the implementation of Career-Technical Education programs and programs of study that result in increasing student achievement of the local levels of performance established under section 113; and
- Development and implementation of evaluations of activities carried out with funds under this part, including evaluations necessary to complete the comprehensive needs assessment required under section 134(c) and the local report required under section 113(b)(4)(B).

All secondary recipients approved to receive Perkins funds must agree to the assurances outlined by the Department for approved Career-Technical Education providers. These assurances are supported by Ohio regulations. The assurances for FY20 can be found on ODEW and include the following:

Assurance 3. Potential for student enrolled in the program to receive the training that will qualify the student for industry credentials, postsecondary education or both. Ohio Revised CODE Sec. 3317.161 (C) (1) (c)

a. Complies with guidelines from other State agencies as appropriate regarding coursework, licensure and instruction; OAC 3301-61-03 (D)(3)

b. Address the State board of education approved career field technical content standards (http://www.education.ohio.gov), including at a minimum, all competencies identified by

business and industry as essential; and/or accrediting association and/or licensing agency standards where applicable; OAC 3301-61- 03 (D)(5)

c. Reinforce Ohio's State board of education approved academic content standards (http://www.education.ohio.gov) in mathematics, English language arts, science and social studies; OAC 3301-61-03 (D)(6)

d. Provide multiple measures to assess student attainment of academic and technical content standards (http://www.education.ohio.gov), including but not limited to State board of education approved technical assessments, assessments for State recognized national credentialing/certifications where applicable and accrediting association and/or licensing agency examinations where applicable; OAC 3301-61-03 (D)(7)

Annually, all recipients are evaluated on the attainment of both academic and technical skills via the Career-Technical Education Report Card. The report card includes measures for achievement in English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies through the Performance Index measure. Technical skill attainment also is included as a graded measure on the report card. Report cards for Perkins recipients can be found at reportcard.education.ohio.gov.

Ohio annually reviews each approved secondary Career-Technical Education program in the State, a requirement set forth in State law. The Annual Program Review process evaluates program quality against three performance expectations, including technical skill attainment. Programs with fewer than 90 percent of students completing technical assessments or 70 percent of students passing technical assessments are supported through increasingly intensive activities over five years, designed to improve program performance.

Postsecondary Career-Technical Education Program Approval Process and Criteria
All postsecondary recipients approved to receive Perkins funds must agree to the operational standards established in consultation with all Ohio postsecondary institutions by ODHE.

Ohio’s colleges must adhere to academic program approval standards that are pursuant to Chapter 1713 of the Ohio Revised CODE and Chapters 3333-1.04 (associate degrees) of the Ohio Administrative CODE. Also, they must follow general standards for academic programs when seeking approval or authorization to offer instruction. They must demonstrate the following institutional and program standards are met:

- Accreditation;
- Mission and Governance;
- Resources and Facilities;
- Academic Policies;
- Student Support Services;
- General Education;
- Program Operations;
- Faculty Credentials;

- Faculty Capacity;
- Program Curriculum;
- Assessment;
- Online Learning;
- Evidence of Workforce Relevance, Need and Student Interest;
- Program Budget, Resources and Facilities; and
- Dual Enrollment.

Also, colleges must make sure programs are well aligned to Ohio's Articulation and Transfer Policy, as well as consider collaboration with other institutions to avoid unnecessary duplication of programs if feasible.

The Ohio Technical Centers, offering adult career and technical certificates and training, also must adhere to a set of standards that incorporate academic and technical skill development, along with institutional supports to promote and ensure a holistic approach to learning. They must demonstrate the following institutional and program standards are met:

- Accreditation;
- Mission and Governance;
- Resources and Facilities;
- Postsecondary Career-Technical Education Policies;
- Student Support Services;
- Program Operations;
- Faculty Credentials; and
- Program Curriculum.

For these institutions to remain in good standing with their accreditors and ODHE, they must continue to maintain academic standards of high quality for programs and student support services and submit all pertinent student and program information to ODHE through the proper channels, meeting all submission deadlines.

c. Each eligible recipient will ensure the local needs assessment under section 134 takes into consideration local economic and education needs, including, where appropriate, in-demand industry sectors and occupations. (Section 122(d)(5) of Perkins V)

Secondary and Postsecondary Career-Technical Education Program Labor Market Alignment

Ohio has developed a comprehensive local needs assessment template (**Appendix A.3**) to assist Perkins recipients in ensuring a tight match between local program offerings and labor market needs. The Labor Market Alignment section of the assessment provides an opportunity for the recipient to investigate, analyze and provide findings and actions for the following questions:

- What are the highest projected growth industries in my region? What occupations are part of that industry?
- How are Career-Technical Education programs offered aligned to engage learners in the high-skill, high-wage or in-demand industry sectors or occupations in your region? How do Career-Technical Education program enrollments align to projected job openings for each industry sector?
- How are local stakeholders being consulted and engaged to ensure the Career-Technical Education programs are aligned to high-skill, high-wage or in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the region (for example, pathway advisories, Business Advisory councils and program advisory boards)?
- How often does the local recipient receive information from the WIOA Board on plans for the county and region to enhance workforce and economic development opportunities? How often is this information reviewed to help determine what technical programs to develop?
- In evaluation of students enrolled in Career-Technical Education programs aligned with high-wage, high-skill or in-demand, what gaps exist?
- What are the Career-Technical Education programs that have under representations of the subpopulations?
- What systems and processes are in place to ensure equitable opportunities for students of subpopulations in programs and programs of study leading to high-skill, high-wage or in-demand industry sectors or occupations?

Recipients will be required to upload their comprehensive local needs assessments as a part of their local applications for Perkins funds. They also will be required to provide economic data, along with a narrative justification of State, local or regional need as a component of the Career-Technical Education-26 program approval and renewal process.

C.2. Describe how funds received by the eligible agency through the allotment made under section 111 of the Act will be distributed -

a. Among career-technical education at the secondary level, or career-technical education at the postsecondary and adult level, or both, including how such distribution will most effectively provide students with the skills needed to succeed in the workplace; and

Ohio Career-Technical Education Funding Levels

Ohio currently determines the split of funds between secondary, postsecondary and adult recipients via agreement between ODEW and ODHE. This agreement acknowledges shared Statewide goals for academic, technical and professional skill attainment, as well as common goals around increasing the share of Ohioans who hold postsecondary certificates, certifications and degrees.

Of the funds allocated via formula to eligible recipients, Ohio allocates roughly 78 percent to secondary recipients, 12 percent to postsecondary recipients and 10 percent to adult Career-Technical Education providers. Ohio also will allocate 3-5 percent to secondary, postsecondary or adult recipients via competitive grant using the Reserve Fund. This grant will prioritize

applications in which secondary and postsecondary partners are collaborating. Furthermore, the grant will target closing equity gaps in Career-Technical Education programs on the secondary and postsecondary levels aligned to in demand jobs in the State.

b. Among any consortia that may be formed among secondary schools and eligible institutions, and how funds will be distributed among the members of the consortia, including the rationale for such distribution and how it will most effectively provide students with the skills needed to succeed in the workplace. (Section 122(d)(8) of Perkins V)

Ohio does not have consortia at the secondary level.

Postsecondary Career-Technical Education Program Consortia Structure

For consortia formed at the postsecondary level, the consortium's fiscal agent will manage Perkins funds in the following manner:

1. The Carl D. Perkins Act, Sec. 132 (a)(3)(B) States that funds allocated to a consortium formed to meet the requirements of this section shall be used only for purposes and programs that are mutually beneficial to all members of the consortia and shall be used only for programs authorized under this title.
2. The consortia's fiscal agent will be responsible for accessing funds through ODEW's Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Plan budget system.
3. The fiscal agent will be responsible for submitting all fiscal information to the Department's Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Plan budget system.
4. Funds may not be reallocated to individual members of the consortia for purposes or programs benefiting only one member of the consortia.
5. Funds cannot be divided between Perkins-eligible institutions within the consortia based on percentages or other institutional-based formulas for the purposes of distributing funds to Perkins-eligible institutions for separately planned institutional activities.
6. Consortia partners must jointly decide on goals and strategies, determining how funding will be used to address these specific goals and strategies at each Perkins-eligible institution.
7. Consortia will operate as single entities, selecting one Perkins-eligible institution within the consortia to serve as the consortia's fiscal agent.
8. The fiscal agent also will be responsible for submitting cash requests for funds through the system, as well as submitting budget information at the close of the year for the Final Expenditure Report (FER).
9. The fiscal agent will serve as the primary contact for the consortia's Perkins grant. Inquiries, site visits, monitoring visits or other requests by the State will be directed to the consortia's fiscal agent. It is the responsibility of the fiscal agent to coordinate and collaborate with consortia partners to respond to State requests and inquiries.

C.3. For the upcoming program year, provide the specific dollar allocations for each eligible recipient made available by the eligible agency for Career and technical education programs and programs of study under section 131(a)-(e) of the Act and describe how these allocations are distributed to local educational agencies, areas Career and technical education schools and educational service agencies within the State. (Section 131(g) of Perkins V)

Eligible recipients for secondary Perkins funds in Ohio are career-technical planning districts. Ohio law requires all school districts and charter schools be part of career-technical planning districts. Allocations are distributed to the lead district of each career-technical planning district and distributed locally based on local application approval. Lead districts are determined locally, based on agreement within the career-technical planning district. Ohio assigns all charter schools to the career-technical planning district in which their physical facilities reside. For electronic charter schools, career-technical planning district assignment is based on the location of the home office of the school.

The Office of Career-Technical Education uses the total secondary allocation and career-technical planning district membership, as well as the most recent Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE) of the ages 5-17 population and ages 5-17 population in poverty for all Ohio school districts. School district data then is aggregated to the assigned career-technical planning districts, and the population and poverty rates for each career-technical planning district population are calculated. Career-technical planning district allocation amounts then are calculated and weighted based on poverty rate (70 percent) and population (30 percent). The total allocation to secondary recipients via this formula is $29,591,169.98.

C.4. For the upcoming program year, provide the specific dollar allocations mad available by the eligible agency for career-technical education programs and programs of study under section 132(a) of the Act and describe how these allocations are distributed to eligible institutions and consortia of eligible institutions within the State.

Postsecondary Institutions and Adult Career-Technical Education Allocations to Providers

The total allocation to postsecondary and adult institutions is $9,445,121.75. Of those funds, $4,507,899.02 is allocated for adult career-technical education providers, and $4,937,222.73 will be made available to postsecondary institutions or consortia.

Funds will be allocated as a non-duplicated count based on the proportion of postsecondary concentrators that are Pell grant eligible, have received Pell grants or are verifiably documented as economically disadvantaged (beneath poverty line, SNAP, TANF, etc.) through other State-approved means at a given institution. The colleges will use headcounts and the Ohio Technical Centers will use FTE (450 clock hours in an approved technical program = 1 FTE) to identify the number of Perkins-eligible students.

The Perkins-eligible student concentrators at each institution then will be divided by the total number of all Perkins-eligible student concentrators to calculate the percentage of the State's total postsecondary allocation, determining each institution's allocated amount.

Perkins postsecondary institutions falling below the $50,000 allowable amount for Perkins participation will be given the opportunity to form or join a consortium. Each consortium must select one institution to serve as the fiscal agent. The economically disadvantaged concentrator numbers of all members of the consortia will be added to create the Perkins-eligible student concentrator number, which will be used to calculate the consortia's new allocated amount.

C.5. Describe how the eligible agency will adjust the data used to make the allocations to reflect any changes in school district boundaries that may have occurred since the population and/or enrollment data was collected, and include local education agencies without geographical boundaries, such as charter schools and secondary schools funded by the Bureau of Indian Education. (Section 131(a)(3) of Perkins V)

Secondary Career-Technical Education Data Adjustment Processes

ODEW annually verifies any changes to school district boundaries or relationships within career-technical planning districts prior to releasing Perkins allocations to local recipients. Additionally, the Office of Career-Technical Education reviews the assignments of community schools to Career-Technical Education planning districts. The Office of Career-Technical Education uses the total secondary allocation and career-technical planning district membership, as well as the most recent Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE) of the ages 5-17 population and ages 5-17 population in poverty for all Ohio school districts. School district data then are aggregated to the assigned career-technical planning districts, and the population and poverty rates for each career-technical planning district population are calculated. Career-technical planning district allocation amounts then are calculated and weighted based on poverty rate (70 percent) and population (30 percent).

As described above, all charter schools are assigned to career-technical planning districts. However, charter school students are captured within the Small Area Income and Poverty Estimate Program estimates in the districts in which they reside.

C.6. If the eligible agency will submit an application for a waiver to the secondary allocation formula described in section 131(a) - a. include a proposal for such an alternative formula; and b. describe how the waiver demonstrates that a proposed alternative formula more effectively targets funds on the basis of poverty (as defined by the Office of Management and Budget and revised annually in accordance with section 673(2) of the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9902(2)) to local educational agencies with the State. (Section 131(b) of Perkins V)

Also indicate if this is a waiver request for which you received approval under the prior Carl D. Perkins Career-technical education Act of 2006 (Perkins IV).

The ODEW will not submit an application for a waiver to the secondary allocation formula described in section 131(a).

C.7. If the eligible agency will submit an application for a waiver to the postsecondary allocation formula described in section 132(a) - a. include a proposal for such an alternative formula; and b. describe how the formula does not result in a distribution of funds to the eligible institutions or consortia with the State that have the highest numbers of economically disadvantaged individuals and that an alternative formula will result in such a distribution. (Section 132(b) of Perkins V) Also indicate if this is a waiver

request for which you received approval under the prior Carl D. Perkins Career-technical education Act of 2006 (Perkins IV).

Postsecondary Career-Technical Education Alternative Allocation Formula

An alternative allocation formula is proposed by ODHE for distribution of the postsecondary allocations. The proposed formula creates a single formula for both higher education and adult workforce education and has the effect of increasing the number of disadvantaged learners who can be reflected in the allocations. The alternative formula reflects not only Pell Grant recipients but also the following: a) learners who are Pell Grant eligible; and b) learners who are documented as economically disadvantaged under other State and federal aid initiatives, such as TANF/SNAP funding. In this alternative formula, all counts will be nonduplicative.

The addition of Pell Grant eligibility in combination with receipt of a Pell Grant captures more disadvantaged individuals for reasons such as:

- Not all learners collect the Pell Grant for reasons such as program length is less than Pell eligibility, so they simply don't apply; and
- Misunderstanding about the student aid process and an unwillingness to take out student loans.

In addition, by including other federal and State evidence of economic disadvantage in the formula, more economically disadvantaged individuals will be counted because some individuals do not apply for Pell grants. Especially those participating at the Ohio Technical Centers because often they do not qualify for Pell grants because the length of their credential-based rather than degree-based educational programs do not qualify them for Pell grants. These individuals do, however, experience economic disadvantage that can be verified through other sources. This is a similar waiver request which was received under the prior Carl. D. Perkins Act; however, it is very specific to economically disadvantaged as opposed to all special populations students, whom may not adequately reflect individuals in economic need.

C8. If the eligible agency will award reserve funds to eligible recipients under section 112(c) of Perkins V, describe the process and criteria for awarding those funds.

Ohio's greatest education challenge remains equity in education achievement for each child. In preparing to increase equitable access, engagement, and outcomes for Ohio's students, particularly those that are included in special populations as defined in the Strengthening Career and technical education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V), Ohio has committed to assisting local recipients in identifying "equity gaps" in their local enrollment and performance data, particularly in career field pathways that are aligned to in-demand jobs. To foster and incentivize innovative strategies to address these gaps, Ohio will allocate 3-5 percent to secondary, postsecondary or adult recipients via competitive grant using the Reserve Fund.

This competitive grant will assist applicants and the State in identifying and promoting promising practices for equity in Career-Technical Education delivery. The grant will prioritize applications that include collaboration between secondary and post-secondary partners, with strategies that focus on the promotion or expansion of programs of study aligned with State-identified high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand jobs. Additionally, the grant will support local recipients in the ongoing development and alignment of local data collection systems to

improve data-driven decision-making and strategic planning regarding special populations and subgroups. Ohio's aggregate annual expenditures for Career-Technical Education are $350,413,314. This not a new baseline and is not a waiver request.

D. ACCOUNTABILITY FOR RESULTS

- 1. Identify and include at least one (1) of the following indicators of career and technical education program quality—
    - a. The percentage of CTE concentrators (see Text Box 6 for the statutory definition of a CTE concentrator under section 3(12) of Perkins V) graduating from high school having attained a recognized postsecondary credential;
    - b. The percentage of CTE concentrators graduating high school having attained postsecondary credits in relevant career and technical education programs and programs of study earned through a dual or concurrent enrollment program or another credit transfer agreement; and/or
    - c. The percentage of CTE concentrators graduating from high school having participated in work-based learning. (Section 113(b)(2)(A)(iv)(I) of Perkins V)

Include any other measure(s) of student success in career and technical education that are statewide, valid, and reliable, and comparable across the State. (Section 113(b)(2)(A)(iv)(II) of Perkins V) Please note that inclusion of "other" program quality measure(s) is optional for States.

Provide the eligible agency's measurement definition with a numerator and denominator for each of the quality indicator(s) the eligible agency selects to use.

- 2. Provide on the form in Section V.B, for each year covered by the State plan beginning in FY 2020, State determined performance levels or each of the secondary and postsecondary core indicators, with the levels of performance being the same for all CTE concentrators in the State. (Section 113(b)(3)(A)(i)(I) of Perkins V)

Text Box 6: Statutory Definition of CTE Concentrator

The term 'CTE concentrator' means—

- (A) At the secondary school level, a student served by an eligible recipient who has completed at least 2 courses* in a single career and technical education program or program of study; and
- (B) At the postsecondary level, a student enrolled in an eligible recipient who has—
    - (i) Earned at least 12 credits within a career and technical education program or program of study; or

Text Box 6: Statutory Definition of CTE Concentrator

- (ii) Completed such a program if the program encompasses fewer than 12 credits or the equivalent in total. (Section 3(12) of Perkins V)

* This means that once a student completes 2 courses in a single CTE program or program of study, they are counted as a CTE concentrator.

(Section 3(12) of Perkins V)

- 3. Describe the procedure the eligible agency adopted for determining State determined levels of performance described in section 113 of Perkins V, which at a minimum shall include—
  - a. A description of the process for public comment under section 113(b)(3)(B) of Perkins V as part of the development of the State determined levels of performance (see Text Box 7 for the statutory requirements for consultation on State determined performance levels under section 113(b)(3)(B) of Perkins V);
  - b. An explanation for the State determined levels of performance that meet each of the statutory requirements in Text Box 8; and
  - c. A description of how the State determined levels of performance set by the eligible agency align with the levels, goals and objectives other Federal and State laws, (Section 122(d)(10) of Perkins V).

As part of the procedures for determining State determined levels of performance, describe the process that will be used to establish a baseline for those levels.

- 4. Provide a written response to the comments regarding State determined performance levels received during the public comment period pursuant to section 113(b)(3)(B) of Perkins V. (Section 113(b)(3)(B)(iii) of Perkins V).

As part of the written response, include a description of any the changes made to the State determined performance levels as a result of stakeholder feedback.

- 5. Describe how the eligible agency will address disparities or gaps in performance as described in section 113(b)(3)(C)(ii)(II) of Perkins V in each of the plan years, and if no meaningful progress has been achieved prior to the third program year, a description of the additional actions the eligible agency will take to eliminate these disparities or gaps. (Section 122(d)(11) of Perkins V)

As part of the written response, and pursuant to the Report of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP),[2] the eligible agency could indicate that it will analyze data on the core indicators of performance to identify gaps in performance, explain how they will use evidence-based research to develop a plan to provide support and technical assistance to eligible recipients to address and close such gaps, and how they will implement this plan. The eligible agency is not required to submit a new State plan prior to the third program year in order to address this requirement.

Text Box 7: Statutory Requirements for Consultation on State Determined Performance Levels

Text Box 7: Statutory Requirements for Consultation on State Determined Performance Levels

- (B) PUBLIC COMMENT.—
    - (i) IN GENERAL.—Each eligible agency shall develop the levels of performance under subparagraph (A) in consultation with the stakeholders identified in section 122(c)(1)(A).
    - (ii) WRITTEN COMMENTS.—Not less than 60 days prior to submission of the State plan, the eligible agency shall provide such stakeholders with the opportunity to provide written comments to the eligible agency, which shall be included in the State plan, regarding how the levels of performance described under subparagraph (A)—
        - (I) Meet the requirements of the law;
        - (II) Support the improvement of performance of all CTE concentrators, including subgroups of students, as described in section 1111(h)(1)(C)(ii) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, and special populations, as described in section 3(48); and
        - (III) Support the needs of the local education and business community.
    - (iii) ELIGIBLE AGENCY RESPONSE.—Each eligible agency shall provide, in the State plan, a written response to the comments provided by stakeholders under clause (ii).

(Section 113(b)(3)(B) of Perkins V)

[2] See page 11 of Committee Report at https://www.congress.gov/115/crpt/srpt434/CRPT-115srpt434.pdf.

D.1.Identify and include at least one (1) of the following indicators of career-technical education program quality—

a. the percentage of career-technical education concentrators (see Text Box 6 for the statutory definition of a career-technical education concentrator under section 3(12) of Perkins V) graduating from high school having attained a recognized postsecondary credential;
b. the percentage of career-technical education concentrators graduating high school having attained postsecondary credits in relevant career-technical education programs and programs of study earned through a dual or concurrent enrollment program or another credit transfer agreement; and/or
c. the percentage of career-technical education concentrators graduating from high school having participated in work-based learning. (Section 113(b)(2)(A)(iv)(I) of Perkins V)

The State of Ohio will use the percentage of Career-Technical Education concentrators graduating from high school having participated in work-based learning as an indicator of Career-Technical Education program quality. Stakeholders representing the Career-Technical Education community felt the work-based learning indicator provided equitable access for all students in all career pathways. Additionally, State policy already exists for industry credential

and postsecondary credit attainment through the State report card and graduation requirements.

Work-based learning is defined as sustained interactions with industry or community professionals in real workplace settings, to the extent practicable, or simulated environments at an educational institution that fosters in-depth, firsthand engagement with the tasks required in a given career field, that are aligned to curriculum and instruction. Experiences may include one or more of the following:

- Job Site Placement and Internship;
- Apprenticeship and Pre-Apprenticeship;
- Remote/Virtual Placement;
- Entrepreneurship;
- School-based Enterprise;
- Simulated Work Environment.

Students should accumulate 250 hours of work-based learning aligned to the program of study, graduation plan for students in the classes of 2023 and beyond, or student Success Plan beginning when students identify as ninth-graders. Students may accumulate hours across multiple types of work-based learning experiences.

Reference Appendix A.5 Work-based Learning Guidance Document

D.1 Include any other measure(s) of student success in career-technical education that are statewide, valid, and reliable, and comparable across the State. (Section 113(b)(2)(A)(iv)(II) of Perkins V) Please note that inclusion of "other" program quality measure(s) is optional for States.

The State of Ohio will use technical skill attainment as an additional measure of student success in career-technical education. Technical skill attainment measures the proportion of students passing state-approved end-of-course technical assessments. The assessments are designed to measure the skills and knowledge learned in a student's Career-Technical Education program.

D.1 Provide the eligible agency's measurement definition with a numerator and denominator for each of the quality indicator(s) the eligible agency selects to use.

The State of Ohio will use the following equations for its quality indicators:

5S3 Program Quality -Work-based Learning	Numerator: The number of Career-Technical Education concentrators in the 4yr graduation cohort who participated in a minimum of 250 hours of state-defined work-based learning. Denominator: The total number of Career-Technical Education concentrators in the 4yr graduation cohort.
5S4	**Numerator:** The number of Career-Technical

5S3 Program Quality -Work-based Learning	Numerator: The number of Career-Technical Education concentrators in the 4yr graduation cohort who participated in a minimum of 250 hours of state-defined work-based learning. Denominator: The total number of Career-Technical Education concentrators in the 4yr graduation cohort.
Program Quality-Technical Skill Attainment	Education concentrators in the reporting year who were calculated as proficient or higher in technical skill assessments aligned with their program of concentration. **Denominator:** The number of Career-Technical Education concentrators in the reporting year who participated in technical assessments aligned to their program of concentration.

D.2. Provide on the form in Section V.B, for each year covered by the State plan beginning in FY 2020, State determined performance levels or each of the secondary and postsecondary core indicators, with the levels of performance being the same for all CTE concentrators in the State. (Section 113(b)(3)(A)(i)(I) of Perkins V)

Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4	Column 5	Column 6	Column 7	Column 8	Column 9	Column 10
Indicators	**Baseline Level**	**Performance Levels**							
		PY 2021	**PY 2022**	**PY 2023**	**PY 2024**	**PY 2025**	**PY 2026**	**PY 2027**	**PY 2028**
Secondary Indicators									
1S1: Four-Year Graduation Rate	85.3%	88.0%	89.0%	90.0%	91.0%	95.8%	95.9%	96%	96.1%
1S2: Extended Graduation Rate	85.9%	90.0%	91.0%	92.0%	93.0%	97.4%	97.5%	97.6%	97.7%
2S1: Academic Proficiency in Reading Language Arts	78.0 (65.0%)	80.0 (66.7%)	82.0 (68.3%)	84.0 (70.0)	86.0 (71.7%)	84.5 (70.41%)	85 (70.83%)	85.5 (71.25%)	86 (71.66%)
2S2: Academic Proficiency in Mathematics	54.0 (45.0%)	56.0 (46.7%)	58.0 (48.3%)	60.0 (50.0%)	62.0 (51.7%)	69.5 (57.91%	70 (58.33%)	70.5 (58.75%)	71 (59.16%)
2S3: Academic Proficiency in Science	78.0 (65.0%)	80.0 (66.7%)	82.0 (68.3%)	84.0 (70.0)	86.0 (71.7%)	86.5 (72.08%)	87 (72.5%)	87.5 (72.91%)	88 (73.33%)
3S1: Post-Program Placement	70.0%	71.0%	72.0%	73.0%	74.0%	93%	93.1%	93.2%	93.3%
4S1: Non-traditional Program Enrollment	17.0%	17.5%	18.0%	18.5%	19.0%	20.6%	20.7%	20.8%	20.9%
5S3: Program Quality – Participated in Work- Based Learning	12.0%	12.0%	13.0%	14.0%	15.0%	15%	15.25%	15.5%	15.75%
5S4: Program Quality – Technical Skill Attainment	66.0%	67.0%	68.0%	69.0%	70.0%	79.25%	79.5%	79.75%	80%

Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4	Column 5	Column 6	Column 7	Column 8	Column 9	Column 10
Indicators	**Baseline Level**	**Performance Levels**							
		PY 2021	**PY 2022**	**PY 2023**	**PY 2024**	**PY 2025**	**PY 2026**	**PY 2027**	**PY 2028**
Postsecondary Indicators									
1P1: Post-Program Placement	80.00%	80.00%	80.50%	81.00%	81.30%	86.31%	86.53%	86.74%	86.96%
2P1: Earned Recognized Postsecondary Credential	74.00%	74.00%	74.25%	74.80%	75.30%	76.94%	77.02%	77.10%	77.17%
3P1: Non-traditional Program Concentration	12.00%	12.00%	12.25%	12.75%	13.00%	22.06%	22.08%	22.19%	22.30%

Note: Each eligible recipient shall agree to accept the State determined levels of performance for each year of the plan as local levels of performance or negotiate with the State to reach agreement on new local adjusted levels of performance, for each of the core indicators of performance. The level of performance shall be expressed in a percentage or numerical form and shall require the eligible recipient to continually make progress toward improving the performance of all CTE concentrators, including subgroups of students described in section

1111(h)(1)(C)(ii) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 and special populations, as described in section 3(48).

D.3 Describe the procedure the eligible agency adopted for determining State determined levels of performance described in section 113 of Perkins V, which at a minimum shall include—

a. a description of the process for public comment under section 113(b)(3)(B) of Perkins V as part of the development of the State determined levels of performance (see Text Box 7 for the statutory requirements for consultation on State determined performance levels under section 113(b)(3)(B) of Perkins V);

To disseminate the State-determined levels of performance and provide opportunities for public comment, the ODEW, in collaboration with the ODHE, posted the levels of performance table (refer to the response to (d)(2)), along with a narrative description, including the numerator and denominator of each indicator (refer to the response to (d)(3)(B)) on the Perkins V page of the ODEW website with a survey link clearly identified and available for public comment.

The public comment period for the State-determined levels of performance opened on December 5, 2023, and closed January 5, 2024. This information also was included in the public hearing process for the State Perkins V Plan, as described in the response to (a)(3).

b. an explanation for the State determined levels of performance that meet each of the statutory requirements in Text Box 8.

The following tables provide a summary description of the baseline and progress expectations for each State-determined level of performance that meets the Perkins V statutory requirements. An explanation of the numerator and denominator is provided for each measure, except for the three academic indicators. For the academic indicators, a description of the calculation, aligned to ESSA, is provided in Appendix A.7.

1S1 **Student Graduation** **Rate - 4 Year**	**Numerator:** Number of Career-Technical Education concentrators who graduated within four years of the fiscal year in which they were first reported as ninth-graders (including summer graduates) in alignment to the graduation rate described in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act. **Denominator:** Number of Career-Technical Education concentrators who were ninth graders in the same fiscal year as the numerator in alignment to the graduation rate described in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act.
The draft performance levels begin with a baseline of 85.3 percent and increase to 91.0 percent in FY23. The baseline was established using the class of 2018 four-year graduation rate (published in September 2019). These performance levels are aligned to the interim goals established in Ohio's Every Student Succeeds Act plan for the 'All Students' group. The FY25 performance level was set by showing meaningful progress of .10% from the average of the actual performance from the most recent completed program years of FY21 and FY22.	
1S2 **Student Graduation** **Rate - Extended**	**Numerator:** Number of Career-Technical Education concentrators who graduated within five years of the fiscal year in which they were first reported as ninth-graders (including summer graduates) in alignment to the graduation rate described in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act. **Denominator:** Number of Career-Technical Education concentrators who were ninth graders in the same fiscal year as the numerator in alignment to the graduation rate described in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act.
The draft performance levels begin with a baseline of 85.9 percent and increase to 93.0 percent in FY23. The baseline was established using the class of 2017 five-year graduation rate (published in September 2019). These performance levels are aligned to the interim goals established in Ohio's Every Student Succeeds Act plan for the 'All Students' group. The FY25 performance level was set by showing meaningful progress of .10% from the average of the actual performance from the most recent completed program years of FY21 and FY22.	

2S1 **Academic Attainment – Reading/** **Language Arts**	The weighted average of individual student performance levels on each achievement test in all subject areas for grades 3 through 8, plus the English language arts alternate assessment for students in grade 10, and the applicable end-of-course assessments in English language arts for any student taking the end-of-course assessment for the first time. For the purpose of creating the Performance Index score, all applicable assessments (both standard and alternate) are included.
2S2 **Academic Attainment - Mathematics**	The weighted average of individual student performance levels on each achievement test in all subject areas for grades 3 through 8, plus the Mathematics alternate assessment for students in grade 10, and the applicable end-of-course assessments in Mathematics for any student taking the end-of-course assessment for the first time. For the purpose of creating the Performance Index score, all applicable assessments (both standard and alternate) are included.
2S3 **Academic Attainment - Science**	The weighted average of individual student performance levels on each achievement test in all subject areas for grades 3 through 8, and the applicable end of course assessments in science for any student taking the end-of-course assessment for the first time. For the purpose of creating the Performance Index score, all applicable assessments (both standard and alternate) are included.

The draft performance levels are aligned to the method of measurement for academic achievement described in Ohio's approved ESSA plan. The Performance Index measures performance levels using a score range of 0 – 120, and the goals mirror this calculation. The baseline noted is a combination of all students' actual performance and career-technical student simulations, adjusted based on public comment and stakeholder input. The measures increase annually similar to the ESSA interim goals increase for English language arts and math.

The FY25 performance level was set by showing meaningful progress of .50 from the average of the actual performance from the most recently completed program years of FY22 and FY23.

Academic Indicator	Baseline	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024
2S1: Academic Proficiency in Reading Language Arts	78.0 (65.0%)	80.0 (66.7%)	82.0 (68.3%)	84.0 (70.0%)	86.0 (71.7%)
2S2: Academic Proficiency in Mathematics	54.0 (45.0%)	56.0 (46.7%)	58.0 (48.3%)	60.0 (50.0%)	62.0 (51.7%)
2S3: Academic Proficiency in Science	78.0 (65.0%)	80.0 (66.7%)	82.0 (68.3%)	84.0 (70.0%)	86.0 (71.7%)

3S1 **Post-program Placement**	**Numerator:** Number of status-known Career-Technical Education concentrators who left secondary education the previous year and, in the second quarter following the program year in which they left secondary education, are in postsecondary education or advanced training, military service or a service program that receives assistance under Title I of the National and Community Service Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12511 et seq.), are volunteers as described in section 5(a) of the Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2504(a)), or are employed. **Denominator:** Number of status-known Career-Technical Education concentrators who left secondary education the previous year.
While post-program placement has been a consistent measure from Perkins IV to Perkins V, the new definition of Career-Technical Education concentrators will impact this measure. For this reason, the draft performance levels provided have been lowered to acknowledge the transition to more students being included in the required follow-up and calculation. Under Perkins IV, the performance levels for post-program placement ranged from 87 percent to 90 percent. The draft performance levels for Perkins V begin at 70 percent and increase to 74 percent by FY24. The FY25 performance level was set by showing meaningful progress of .10% from the average of the actual performance from the most recent completed program years of FY21 and FY22.	
4S1 **Non-traditional Program Enrollment**	**Numerator:** The number of Career-Technical Education concentrators, in the reporting year, enrolled in programs that lead to employment that is non-traditional for their gender. **Denominator:** The number of Career-Technical Education concentrators enrolled in the reporting year in programs with non-traditional designations.
Non-traditional program enrollment (previously called non-traditional concentration) has been carried over from Perkins IV to Perkins V; however, the change in the definition of Career-Technical Education concentrators also will impact this measure and should be considered when setting the performance levels. Under Perkins IV, the performance levels ranged from 18.5 percent to 35 percent (between the targets and actual percentages at the State level). With the shift in the Career-Technical Education concentrator definition, the performance levels for Perkins V have been adjusted to account for the transition. The draft performance levels for Perkins V begin at 17.0 percent and increase to 19.0 percent by FY24. These draft performance levels were simulated using the class of 2018 graduation cohort as the baseline. The FY25 performance level was set by showing meaningful progress of .10% from the average of the actual performance from the most recent completed program years of FY22 and FY23.	

5S3 **Program Quality -Work-Based Learning**	**Numerator:** The number of Career-Technical Education concentrators in the 4yr graduation cohort who participated in a minimum of 250 hours of state-defined work-based learning. **Denominator:** The total number of Career-Technical Education concentrators in the 4yr graduation cohort.

While many career-technical planning districts across Ohio have been offering work-based learning opportunities for their students, the approved definition and requirements and calculation of work-based learning is a new focus with Perkins V. With the increasing value placed on work-based learning, and the known transition to implement opportunities for students, the Perkins V performance levels range from 12 percent to 15 percent by FY24. There is no available data to simulate these performance levels — and Ohio will review the established performance levels after two years of implementation as allowed by Perkins V.

The FY25 performance level was set by showing meaningful progress of .25% from the average of the actual performance from the most recent completed program years of FY21 and FY22.

5S4 **Program Quality-Technical Skill Attainment**	**Numerator:** The number of Career-Technical Education concentrators in the reporting year who were calculated as proficient or higher in technical skill assessments aligned with their program of concentration. **Denominator:** The number of Career-Technical Education concentrators in the reporting year who participated in technical assessments aligned to their program of concentration

Technical skill attainment has been measured throughout Perkins IV and a part of Ohio's career-technical planning district report cards. The performance levels established in Perkins IV ranged from 74 percent to 77 percent. As the new definition for Career-Technical Education concentrators also impacts this measure, the performance levels for Perkins V have been established at 66 percent to 70 percent by FY24. The Department worked with the testing vendor to establish a simulated baseline taking the new definition into account.

The FY25 performance level was set by showing meaningful progress of .25% from the average of the actual performance from the most recent completed program years of FY22 and FY23.

1P1 **Post-Program Placement**	**Numerator:** Number of Career-Technical Education concentrators who, during the second quarter after program completion, remain enrolled in postsecondary education; are in advanced training, military service, or a service program that receives assistance under title I of the National and Community Service Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12511 et seq.); are volunteers as described in section 5(a) of the Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2504(a)); or are placed or retained in employment. **Denominator:** Number of Career-Technical Education concentrators who completed their programs in the reporting year.
The draft performance levels begin with a baseline of 80 percent and increase to 81.30 percent in FY24. The baseline was established by combining three years of trend data (FY17, FY18 and FY19) and calculating the average for postsecondary institutions that participate in Ohio's Perkins program. These institutions are: 1) community colleges; and 2) Ohio Technical Centers (career centers that offer non-credit technical certificate programs in clock hours). These proposed performance levels are based on goals associated with Ohio's workforce development initiatives, as well as Ohio's Attainment Goal. The FY25 performance level was set by showing meaningful progress of .22% from the average of the actual performance from the most recent completed program years of FY21 and FY22.	
2P1 **Earned Recognized Postsecondary Credential**	**Numerator:** Number of Career-Technical Education concentrators who receive recognized postsecondary credentials during participation in or within one year of program completion. **Denominator:** Number of Career-Technical Education concentrators who left postsecondary education in the prior reporting year.
The draft performance levels begin with a baseline of 74 percent and increase to 75.30 percent in FY24. The baseline was established by combining three years of trend data (FY17, FY18 and FY19) and calculating the average for postsecondary institutions that participate in Ohio's Perkins program. These institutions are: 1) community colleges; and 2) Ohio Technical Centers (career centers that offer non-credit technical certificate programs in clock hours). These proposed performance levels are based on goals associated with Ohio's workforce development initiatives, as well as Ohio's Attainment Goal. The FY25 performance level was set by showing meaningful progress of .08% from the average of the actual performance from the most recent completed program years of FY21 and FY22.	
3P1 **Non-traditional Program Concentration**	**Numerator:** Number of Career-Technical Education concentrators from underrepresented gender groups in Career-Technical Education programs and programs of study that lead to nontraditional fields.

	Denominator: Number of Career-Technical Education concentrators in a Career-Technical Education program or program of study that leads to nontraditional fields during the reporting year.
The draft performance levels begin with a baseline of 12 percent and increase to 13 percent in FY24. The baseline was established by combining three years of trend data (FY17, FY18 and FY19) and calculating the average for postsecondary institutions that participate in Ohio's Perkins program. These institutions are: 1) community colleges; and 2) Ohio Technical Centers (career centers that offer non-credit technical certificate programs in clock hours). These proposed performance levels are based on goals associated with Ohio's workforce development initiatives, as well as Ohio's Attainment Goal. The FY25 performance level was set by showing meaningful progress of .10% from the average of the actual performance from the most recent completed program years of FY21 and FY22.	

c. a description of how the State determined levels of performance set by the eligible agency align with the levels, goals and objectives other Federal and State laws, (Section 122(d)(10) of Perkins V). As part of the procedures for determining State determined levels of performance, describe the process that will be used to establish a baseline for those levels.

The following summarizes both the strong alignment between the state-determined performance levels and the levels, goals and objectives of Perkins V and other federal and state laws.

- The Student Graduation Rates (1S1,1S2), based on the concentrator population, are aligned to the graduation rate interim and long-term goals established in Ohio's approved State Plan under the Every Student Succeeds Act.
- The indicators of academic proficiency in Reading/Language Arts (2S1), Mathematics (2S2) and Science (2S3), based on the concentrator population, are aligned to the interim and long-term academic goals established in Ohio's approved State Plan under the Every Student Succeeds Act.
- The State of Ohio Post-Program Placement indicator of performance is aligned with the Perkins 3S1 core indicator of performance (Post-Program Placement).
- The State of Ohio Non-traditional Program Concentration indicator is aligned with the corresponding Perkins 4S1 core indicator of performance (Non-traditional participation).
- The State of Ohio Work-Based Learning Indicator is aligned with the corresponding Perkins 5S3 Indicator of Program Quality. Required parameters of the work-based learning experience are aligned with the work-based learning requirement of an alternate State of Ohio graduation option.
- The State of Ohio Technical Skill Attainment measure, meeting requirements of one of the measures of program quality, is aligned to the technical skill measure on Ohio's career-technical planning district report card, as required by the ODEW (Ohio Revised CODE Section 3302.033).

- Ohio's Attainment Goal (1P1, 2P1, and 3P1) is offset to increase the number of Ohioans with postsecondary credentials that lead to employment. Ohio's emphasis on adult learner strategies is aligned to positively impact these measures. The attainment goal was established by Department of Higher Education in conjunction with postsecondary stakeholders at the state's colleges, universities, and adult career centers.

ODEW, in collaboration with the ODHE, calculated State baseline levels using current performance level data, when available, and simulated data based on the Perkins V concentrator definition for each core indicator of performance. Baseline levels, along with growth targets, then were shared with the data and accountability working group and the postsecondary Perkins fall meeting participants to gain consensus prior to disseminating for public comment.

D.4 Provide a written response to the comments regarding State determined performance levels received during the public comment period pursuant to section 113(b)(3)(B) of Perkins V. (Section 113(b)(3)(B)(iii) of Perkins V).

As part of the written response, include a description of any the changes made to the State determined performance levels as a result of stakeholder feedback.

Secondary state-determined performance levels were analyzed using the following methodology:

- **Don't Know** responses were ignored;
- **Strongly Agree** and **Agree** responses were combined;
- **Strongly Disagree** and **Disagree** responses were combined;
- Combined responses were compared to determine public approval/disapproval of each measure;
- Individual comments were analyzed to determine root cause of disapproval.

Analysis Summary

Secondary Indicators	Results	Comments
1S1: Four-Year Graduation Rate	50% or more supported all measures	
1S2: Extended Graduation Rate	50% or more supported baseline and years 1-2 50% or more did not support years 3-4	Measures too aggressive. Special populations should be excluded.
2S1: Academic Proficiency in Reading Language Arts	50% or more supported baseline. 50% or more did not support years 1-4	Measures too aggressive. Measures can be irrelevant to success in career tech. Measures are outside of career tech sphere of control.
2S2: Academic Proficiency in Mathematics	50% or more supported baseline and year 1 50% or more did not support years 2-4	
2S3: Academic Proficiency in Science	50% or more did not support any measure	
3S1: Post-Program Placement	50% or more supported all measures	
4S1: Non-traditional Program Enrollment	50% or more supported baseline. 50% or more did not support years 1-4.	This should not be a measure. It is a personal choice and not in scope of control.
5S3: Program Quality – Participated in Work- Based Learning	50% or more did not support any measure.	Measures too aggressive without simulations. Not applicable for all careers.
5S4: Program Quality – Technical Skill Attainment	50% or more supported all measures	

Based on survey results and public comment, the data and accountability internal workgroup met to review data and prepare proposed revisions to present to the data and accountability external workgroup. The results of this collaboration were then sent to the Stakeholder Engagement Committee for final approval.

As a result of this collaborative process, performance levels were adjusted as indicated below for all three academic indicators, non-traditional program enrollment and work-based learning.

Secondary Indicators	Baseline Level	Performance Levels			
		FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024
2S1: Academic Proficiency in Reading Language Arts	87.8 (73.2%)	89.9 (74.9%)	91.9 (76.6%)	93.9 (78.3)	95.9 (80.0%)
2S1: Academic Proficiency in Reading Language Arts - Revised	78.0 (65.0%)	80.0 (66.7%)	82.0 (68.3%)	84.0 (70.0)	86.0 (71.7%)
2S2: Academic Proficiency in Mathematics	88.2 (73.5%)	90.2 (75.2%)	92.1 (76.8%)	94.1 (78.4%)	96.1 (80.1%)
2S2: Academic Proficiency in Mathematics - Revised	54.0 (45.0%)	56.0 (46.7%)	58.0 (48.3%)	60.0 (50.0%)	62.0 (51.7%)
2S3: Academic Proficiency in Science	91.8 (76.5%)	92.7 (77.3%)	93.6 (78.0%)	94.6 (78.8%)	95.5 (79.6%)
2S3: Academic Proficiency in Science - Revised	78.0 (65.0%)	80.0 (66.7%)	82.0 (68.3%)	84.0 (70.0)	86.0 (71.7%)
4S1: Non-traditional Program Enrollment	17.0%	17.5%	18.0%	18.5%	19.0%
4S1: Non-traditional Program Enrollment - Revised	No change - workgroup felt these measures were appropriate.				
5S3: Program Quality – Participated in Work-Based Learning	25.0%	25.0%	26.0%	27.0%	28.0%
5S3: Program Quality – Participated in Work-Based Learning - Revised	12.0%	12.0%	13.0%	14.0%	15.0%

The responses to the postsecondary State-determined performance levels during the comment period were collected through an online survey mechanism. They were reviewed and assessed. The following is a summary of the results:

Postsecondary State-determined performance levels were analyzed using the following methodology:

- Don't Know responses were ignored;
- Strongly Agree and Agree responses were combined;
- Strongly Disagree and Disagree responses were combined;

- Combined responses were compared to determine public approval/disapproval of each measure;
- Individual comments were analyzed to determine root cause of disapproval.

Analysis Summary

Postsecondary Indicators	Baseline Level	Performance Levels			
		FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024
1P1: Post-Program Placement	83%	83.5%	84%	84.6%	85.1%
1P1: Post-Program Placement - Revised	80%	80%	80.50%	81%	81.30%
2P1: Earned Recognized Postsecondary Credential	81%	81.25%	81.80%	82.50%	83%
2P1: Earned Recognized Postsecondary Credential - Revised	74%	74%	74.25%	74.80%	75.30%
3P1: Non-Traditional Program Concentration	13%	13.25%	13.75%	14.30%	14.75%
3P1: Non-Traditional Program Concentration - Revised	12%	12%	12.25%	12.75%	13%

As a result of Ohio submitting a Combined State Plan to better align the state's largest workforce programs to better connect to businesses to qualified workers. On December 4, 2023, Ohio released the draft of its Combined State Plan for a 30-day public comment period. The plan covers the time period July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2028, for all of the following programs:

- Title I of the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), which funds county OhioMeansJobs Centers and job training and job search assistance programs for adults, dislocated workers, and low-income youth;
- The Wagner-Peyser Act Program, which funds a variety of employment services to connect job seekers and employers;
- Adult Basic and Literacy Education (known as ASPIRE), which funds GED preparation, adult math, reading, and literacy courses;
- The Vocational Rehabilitation Program through Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities, which supports vocational rehabilitation programs for individuals with disabilities;
- Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education, which provides funding for career technical training for secondary and post-secondary students;
- Senior Community Service Employment Program, which is a community service and work-based job training program for older Ohioans; and

- Jobs for Veterans State Grants Programs, which helps veterans find jobs through employment services at local OhioMeansJobs Centers.

Ohio's Combined State Plan is built through the collaboration of various state agencies and stakeholders to incorporate programs required under WIOA.

To view the draft plan or offer comment, please visit jfs.ohio.gov/combinedstateplan. The online portal will be open to public comment until 5 p.m. on January 4, 2024.

The draft Combined State Plan included revisions to establishing state determined performance levels for FY2024 through FY2027. There were zero public comments related to the state determined performance levels.

D.5 Describe how the eligible agency will address disparities or gaps in performance as described in section 113(b)(3)(C)(ii)(II) of Perkins V in each of the plan years, and if no meaningful progress has been achieved prior to the third program year, a description of the additional actions the eligible agency will take to eliminate these disparities or gaps. (Section 122(d)(11) of Perkins V)

As part of the written response, and pursuant to the Report of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP),8 the eligible agency could indicate that it will analyze data on the core indicators of performance to identify gaps in performance, explain how they will use evidence-based research to develop a plan to provide support and technical assistance to eligible recipients to address and close such gaps, and how they will implement this plan. The eligible agency is not required to submit a new State plan prior to the third program year in order to address this requirement.

The State annually will review and analyze State performance results for each core indicator of performance to identify disparities or gaps. For identified gaps, the State will develop and implement an improvement plan in consultation with appropriate stakeholders and stakeholder agencies and organizations. Implementation will occur the first program year succeeding the program year for which the State identified disparities or performance gaps.

The improvement plan will be based on State-collected Career-Technical Education data, evidence-based research and stakeholder feedback. As part of the plan development process, Ohio will require resources and support strategies to be identified and developed in collaboration with stakeholders. The State will use a process that mirrors the comprehensive local needs assessment to develop goals and improvement strategies. Potential resources and support strategies may include:

- Regional workshops;
- Webinars;
- Distribution of evidence-based or research-based strategies;
- Targeted professional development;
- Targeted assistance for outlier districts; and
- Prescribed improvement plans.

If no meaningful progress has been made prior to the third year, an evaluation of the local recipient's performance improvement efforts will be made. If the State determines a subrecipient is not properly implementing its responsibilities or is not making substantial progress, the State will provide technical assistance to the subrecipient focusing on implementation of improvement activities.

The State will determine whether to impose sanctions of withholding from the subrecipient all, or a portion, of the subrecipient's allotment, if a subrecipient meets any of the following conditions:

- Fails to implement an improvement plan;
- Fails to make any improvement in meeting the local adjusted level of performance for any of the core indicators of performance within the first program year of implementation of its improvement plan; or
- Fails to meet at least 90 percent of an agreed-upon local adjusted level of performance for the same core indicator of performance for three consecutive years.

Any determination regarding sanction will not be made without notice and opportunity for the local entity to have a hearing. In determining whether to impose sanctions, the State will consider:

- Exceptional or uncontrollable circumstances, such as a natural disaster or a precipitous and unforeseen decline in the financial resources of the subrecipient; or
- The impact of the small size of the Career-Technical Education program operated by the subrecipient on the subrecipient's reported performance.

If the State does withhold funds due to performance as described above, the State will use those funds to provide (through alternative arrangements) services and activities to students within the area served by the subrecipient.

JOBS FOR VETERANS' STATE GRANTS

(OMB Control Number: 1293-0017)

Components of the Jobs for Veterans State Grants State Plan

Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG) recipients must provide a four-year state plan as a condition for the receipt of annual funding in accordance with 38 U.S.C. § 4102A(c). This plan must include responses to each of the components below.

A. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE INTENDS TO PROVIDE EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING, AND JOB PLACEMENT SERVICES TO VETERANS AND ELIGIBLE PERSONS UNDER THE JVSG PROGRAM (I.E., VIRTUALLY AND IN-PERSON).

The goal of the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services' (ODJFS') Veterans Workforce Services program is to help all members of Ohio's military veteran community alleviate unemployment and underemployment. To accomplish this, Ohio determines the optimal Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) and Local Veterans' Employment Representatives (LVER) staff alignment and resource distribution. This methodology is based on U.S. Census Bureau data showing the number of veteran jobseekers in each county versus the number of

veteran jobseekers in the entire State. This percentage is then applied to determine the appropriate number of veteran staff in each area. This allows Ohio to position the DVOP staff in areas of greatest need while maintaining Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) mandated presence in the state's 88 OhioMeansJobs centers. DVOP staff are deployed statewide. All of whom are veterans themselves. DVOP staff are split into East and West regions. Each region is managed by a Wagner-Peyser funded JVSG only Program Delivery Manager who directly reports to the Ohio Veteran Services Administrator. Each Program Delivery Manager has three sub-regional area Wagner-Peyser funded JVSG only Program Delivery Supervisors (6) that directly supervise DVOP staff.

To meet the training and employment needs of veterans, ODJFS answers to two USDOL agencies, the U.S. DOL Veterans Employment and Training Service (VETS) and the Employment and Training Administration (ETA). Through collaboration with VETS, ODJFS administers the Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) program, which allows for veterans with Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE) and other eligible persons to receive tailored employment and training services. ODJFS also administers important ETA programs, such as Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Programs, and Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Services. These programs are universally accessible to all eligible jobseekers. Pursuant to Title 38 of the United State Code (U.S.C.) and rules and regulations issued by U.S. DOL, veterans, and eligible spouses, including widows and widowers as defined in applicable law, receive Priority of Service for all programs or services for workforce preparation, development, or delivery that is directly funded, in whole or in part, by U.S. DOL. Both VETS and ETA administered programs are offered by OhioMeansJobs centers, a proud partner of the American Job Center (AJC) network.

Through OhioMeansJobs centers, ODJFS connects employers with work-ready veterans and provides veterans with comprehensive employment and training services. Partner agencies interested in connecting veterans with employment services are encouraged to contact their nearest OhioMeansJobs center. DVOP specialists provide individualized career services and facilitate placements to meet the employment needs of veterans as described in 38 U.S.C. 4101. Pursuant to 38 U.S.C. 4103A, "special disabled veterans," "other disabled veterans," and "other eligible persons" receive priority in the provision of individualized career services in accordance with priorities determined by the U.S. Secretary of Labor. In any event, maximum emphasis must be placed in meeting the employment needs of veterans who are economically or educationally disadvantaged, including homeless veterans and those with Significant Barriers to Employment.

DVOP specialists are tasked to serve eligible veterans, other eligible persons, transitioning service members, their spouses and, indirectly, employers. Ohio maintains a continued emphasis on eligible transitioning service members, their spouses, and other eligible persons to the workforce. OMJ Centers have developed local Priority of Service processes and/or workflows to help veterans to make use of their priority of services including finding a job; enrolling in training or applying for educational assistance (credential attainment) accessing center resource room services or workshops and connecting veterans to resources or information on immediate needs such as housing, food, medical or mental health services.

Veterans and eligible spouses, (as defined in 38 U.S.C. 4215A as covered persons), receive priority of service in all functions and entities at the OhioMeansJobs center. When jobseekers

enter an OhioMeansJobs center, the receptionist asks jobseekers if they served in the U.S. military or are an eligible spouse. If an affirmative answer is provided, then the veteran or eligible spouse receives a Veteran Questionnaire (VQ) and will receive priority of service. During this initial intake triage process, staff will further explore the veteran's or eligible spouse's status (number of days served, discharge status, etc.) and assess whether the covered person has a Significant Barrier to Employment (SBE) as outlined in U.S. DOL VETS VPLs. Upon completion of the VQ the covered person is enrolled into the OhioMeansJobs center system. If the VQ determines the covered person does not possess an SBE, they are referred to the next available non-DVOP staff member for services. If the assessment determines that the veteran does possess an SBE(s), then the veteran is immediately referred to a DVOP specialist. At OhioMeansJobs center locations where DVOPs are not available on-site, the next available center staff shall provide same day services and make referrals to DVOPs assigned to that area as needed, using either through traditional in-person paper Veteran Questionnaires (VQ) or through electronic referrals in Ohio's case management system.

DVOPs will respond and perform follow-up contact as expediently as possible, either same day or within twenty-four hours for further assessment, either in-person or virtually for individualized career services. DVOP specialists work with referred veterans to ensure their veteran details are accurately captured in Ohio's case management system for program eligibility, ensure they register with OhioMeansJobs.com, and provide tailored individualized career services either in-person or virtually. DVOPs will also work with OhioMeansJobs center staff (including business service teams) and partners to connect veterans and other eligible persons to training and employment opportunities through system referrals and in-person/virtual on-demand case staffing as needed.

Ohio's DVOPs are strategically positioned to provide services virtually. Ohio provides DVOPs with Microsoft Surface Pros and cell phones to increase their effectiveness, portability, and communication methods with perspective or current caseload customers in their assigned coverage area. Virtual services are conducted using Microsoft Teams meetings, Microsoft Outlook, and telephonically. Additionally, Ohio's case management system enables both DVOPs and caseload veterans to share and sign documents electronically (e.g., employment plans), removing antiquated paper signature processes. Ohio's case management system is additionally linked to Ohio's Employment Service Delivery System (ESDS) OhioMeansJobs.com, where the two systems share data on current job seeker activities and other information (e.g., assessments, resume uploads, etc.).

OhioMeansJobs.com is Ohio's premiere jobs site, where transitioning service members, veterans, military spouses, and other eligible persons can post their resume, view resources, tools, and thousands of jobs to help guide their career search to their next opportunity. Additionally, employers interested in hiring military veterans and spouses can visit the OhioMeansJobs.com Hire-a-Veteran page to learn about employing military veterans, becoming a military-friendly employer, hiring tax credits, and much more. When employers search for candidates on OhioMeansJobs.com, resumes of veterans prioritized with a red and blue "V" to appear in employer search results. Military spouse resumes are designated with a red and blue "S" to identify this population to military-friendly employers. Employers can additionally request help with finding military veteran and spouse talent on our OhioMeansJobs.com Meet Our Workforce Services Team page. Employers and veterans are encouraged to follow us on our OMVJ social media feeds (@OMVetJobs) for veteran employment events & information.

Additionally, within OhioMeansJobs.com, there is the Military Service Career Center or the OhioMeansVeteranJobs (OMVJ) portal. OMVJ is designed specifically for military community members. OMVJ contains information pertaining to professional licenses & certifications, education and training, list of military-friendly employers, starting a business, transitioning from military service, Uniformed Services Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA), and other useful tools for the military community.

Examples of such useful tools include the ability to fill out an online veteran questionnaire, a military skills translator, military occupation search and veteran transition plan. When military members, their spouses, and veterans register for OhioMeansJobs.com, they're prompted to answer a brief Veteran Questionnaire (VQ) asking if they'd like to be contacted by an employment specialist. VQ responses are routed in real-time for staff to reach out for assistance (virtual triage/front desk). The Military Skills Translator tool designed to map a veteran's military skills with open positions to learn how their Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) codes or job titles translates to careers in Ohio. The Military Occupation Search tool translates MOS code duties into civilianized terminology to help veterans build their resume and search for a new career The Veteran Transition Plan contains a comprehensive list of suggested tasks ranging from 0 – 19 months out in their transition. Users can select tasks and measure progress to their post-military transition goals. Each task is linked to articles, information, and tools to help them effectively complete each task to successfully navigate their post-military transition.

Annually, Ohio recognizes November as Hire a Veteran Month (HAVM) in honor of Ohio's military veterans for their selfless service to our country. Information is sent to Ohio's workforce system community members. Information includes resource and training materials on priority of service and veteran community resource information for workforce professionals to reference when assisting veteran customers. Additionally, Ohio deploys a social media campaign through OMVJ (@OMVetJobs) annually during HAVM. The goal of the campaign is to increase knowledge of local OhioMeansJobs center available reemployment services, knowledge of OMVJ tools and information, and share HAVM veteran employment events & other information to Ohio's military community.

Additionally, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) Veterans' Employment & Training Services (VETS), the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) Veteran Readiness & Employment (VR&E) program and the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) JVSG program have jointly partnered to provide services to disabled veterans participating in the VR&E program. Per the VR&E partnership, DVOP specialists assist disabled veterans as a priority group as outlined in U.S. DOL VETS Veteran Program Letter (VPL) 03-14. Ohio JVSG DVOP specialists work closely with VA VR&E program staff prior to veterans receiving training to provide career guidance and pre-rehab plan assessment information. DVOPs also receive VR&E disabled veteran employment services referrals for those determined job ready or within the 90-day window and/or recently completing VR&E training activities. This collaboration is in accordance with the processes outlined in VPL 01-16 and VPL 01-16 change 1, DOL VETS and VA VR&E Joint Partnership Modernization Project.

The Ohio JVSG program does not have any LVER or consolidated DVOP and LVER positions.

B. LIST THE POPULATIONS TO BE SERVED BY DISABLED VETERANS' OUTREACH PROGRAM (DVOP) AND CONSOLIDATED POSITION STAFF, INCLUDING THE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR REFERRAL FOR DVOP SERVICES.

All duties assigned to Ohio JVSG program DVOP specialists and services provided are performed in accordance with those duties as prescribed by Title 38, Chapters 41 and 42. For OhioMeansJobs center partner, they furnish career services under 134(b)(2)(A) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Referrals are made when appropriate to DVOP staff using a Veteran Questionnaire (VQ) to identify veterans with a significant barrier to employment (SBE). In accordance with federal guidance as required by 38 U.S.C. Chapters 41 and 42 and guidance issued by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) Veterans' Employment & Training Services (VETS), through its various Veterans Program Letters (VPLs) (e.g., 03-14, 03-14 change 1 & 2, 03-19, & 07-14), the Ohio JVSG DVOP program, places maximum emphasis on assisting eligible veterans who are economically or educationally disadvantaged. JVSG eligibility criteria for DVOP services is as follows:

- A special disabled or disabled veteran, as those terms are defined in 38 U.S.C § 4211(1) and (3); special disabled and disabled veterans are those:
    - Who are entitled to compensation (or those who would be entitled to compensation, yet are not receiving it due to the receipt of military retired pay) under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans' Affairs; or
    - Who were discharged or released from active duty because of service-connected disability.
- Eligible veterans as defined under 38 U.S.C. § 4211(4); eligible veteran means a person who:
    - Served on active duty for a period of more than 180 days and was discharged with other than a dishonorable discharge;
    - Was discharged or released from active duty because of a service-connected disability;
    - As a member of a reserve component under an order to active duty pursuant to section 12301(a), (d), or (g), 12302, or 12304 of title 10, served on active duty during a period of war or in a campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge is authorized and was discharged or released from such duty with other than a dishonorable discharge; or
    - Was discharged or released from active duty by reason of a sole survivorship discharge.
- A homeless person, as defined in Sections 103(a) and (b) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. I 1302(a) and (b), as amended;
- A recently separated service member, as defined in 38 U.S.C § 4211(6), who has been unemployed for 27 or more weeks in the previous 12 months;
- An offender, as defined by WIOA Section 3 (38), who is currently incarcerated or has been released from incarceration;
- A veteran lacking a high school diploma or equivalent certificate;
- A low-income individual, as defined by WIOA Section 3 (36);

- Veterans aged 18-24-year-old;
- Vietnam Era veterans (February 28, 1961, to May 7, 1975);
- Eligible Transitioning Service Members, Spouses, and Caregivers:
    - Transitioning service members of the Armed Forces identified as in need of individualized career services because they were assessed as not meeting Career Readiness Standards, or being involuntarily separated through a service reduction-in-force as defined under Public Law 113-76;
    - Members of the Armed Forces who are wounded, ill, or injured and receiving treatment in Military Treatment Facilities or Warrior Transition Units (MTFs – WTUs); and
    - The spouses or other family caregivers of such wounded, ill, or injured members.

Veterans and other eligible persons who do not fall into one of the categories targeted for services by DVOP specialists are entitled to priority of service and may be eligible for services under WIOA Title I for adults, dislocated workers, and youth or WIOA Title III for employment services under the Wagner-Peyser program.

C. DESCRIBE THE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES ASSIGNED TO DISABLED VETERANS' OUTREACH PROGRAM (DVOP) SPECIALISTS, LOCAL VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT REPRESENTATIVE (LVER) STAFF, AND CONSOLIDATED DVOP/LVER POSITIONS BY THE STATE. THESE MUST BE CONSISTENT WITH 38 U.S.C. 4103A AND 4104.

Ohio's goal of "To help all members of Ohio's military veteran community alleviate unemployment and underemployment" aligns with that of the U.S. Department of Labor's (USDOL) Veterans' Employment and Training Service (DOL/VETS) vision statement "To enable all veterans, service members, and military spouses to reach their full potential in the workplace." The Ohio JVSG program will continue to remain compliant with DVOP federal guidance as required by 38 U.S.C. Chapters 41 and 42 and guidance issued by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) Veterans' Employment & Training Services (VETS) through its various Veterans Program Letters (VPLs).

DVOP specialists provides individualized career services and facilitates placements to eligible veterans and spouses (eligible persons) to meet their employment needs, prioritizing service to special disabled and other disabled veterans, as defined by 38 U.S.C. 4103A, and to other eligible persons in accordance with priorities determined by the Secretary. The statute also requires that DVOP specialists place maximum emphasis on assisting veterans who are economically or educationally disadvantaged. DVOP specialists will provide employment assistance to veterans with identified Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE), including disabled and special disabled veterans. Individualized career services are provided to both unemployed participants who require such services to obtain employment and to employed participants who require such services to obtain or retain employment leading to self-sufficiency.

These individualized career services can include: a comprehensive assessment to identify a veteran's employment barriers and appropriate employment goals, development of an employment plan to help veterans meet their employment goals, career coaching and guidance, utilizing local labor market information, short-term prevocational services for career goals, (e.g.,

learning and communication skills, interviewing skills, personal maintenance skills, professional conduct; resume skills, networking skills, and online job search skills), job lead development and placement services, and follow-up services to ensure veterans maintain employment successfully. Additionally, DVOPs will conduct outreach activities to veterans and organizations that serve veterans in their local communities to enroll veterans with Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE) and other priority category veterans into an AJC (AKA OhioMeansJobs centers), in the event a DVOP specialist does not have a full caseload as outlined in U.S. DOL VETS Veteran Program Letter 03-14.

To ensure DVOPs understand and fulfill their statutory roles, Ohio prioritizes sending DVOPs to attend their required National Veteran Training Institute (NVTI) coursework as soon as possible. Ohio additionally encourages JVSG staff to take optional NVTI case management framework courses (e.g., special populations) to stay current with serving veterans practices. 38 U.S.C. 4102A (c)(8)(A)) and as amended by the Veterans Benefit Act of 2010, mandates all Jobs for Veterans Act (JVA) state staff funded under the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS) Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG), attend training at the National Veterans' Training Institute (NVTI) in Dallas, Texas. NVTI training is funded in whole by the U.S. Department of Labor and offers many required and optional courses. All Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists are required to enroll in their required NVTI DVOP training per U.S. DOL VETS Veteran Program Letters (VPL) 05-18, 01-19, & 02-24. The training guidelines will be met under current applicable classes.

Customer Service DVOP specific duties per their ODJFS position description, are as follows:

- Under general supervision, provides individualized career services to veterans with a SBE as defined by the Department of Labor (DOL) (e.g., assessment; development of Individual Employment Plan; vocational guidance; coordinated supportive services; job development contacts; case management; referral to jobs and training); operates personal computer to enter, update, and retrieve data(e.g., applicant registration and referrals to jobs; placements; reports); assists veterans in use of computer terminals at OhioMeansJobs (OMJ) center or outstation location (e.g. satellite OMJ center); provides and facilitates full range of employment and training services to veterans and eligible persons with the primary focus of meeting the needs of those who are unable to obtain employment through core services provided in an OMJ center or other outstation location; conducts and/or assists in facilitation and/or provides logistical support for veterans job search workshops; assists management in responding to inquiries and complaints from veterans and government officials; develops jobs and job training opportunities for eligible veterans through contacts with employers (e.g., small/medium size private sector employer) or OMJ as required by Title 38 and Public Law 107-288 Jobs for Veterans Act; promotes and develops apprenticeship and other on-job training positions; carries out other duties to promote development of entry-level and career job opportunities for veterans with a SBE as defined by DOL; conducts outreach activities for the purpose of locating eligible veterans who could benefit from intensive services of various programs at different locations (e.g., Veteran Readiness and Employment (VA VR&E); Homeless Veterans Reintegration Project [HVRP]; VA hospitals and Veteran centers; Civic and Service Organizations; Ohio Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation [OBVR]).

- Attends National Veterans Training Institute and other additional training (e.g., veterans training conference) as required; attends meetings, conferences, and training; loads and transports equipment and informational materials; travels to and conducts on-site visits at various locations (e.g., support office; employers; County Department of Job and Family Services [CDJFS]; veteran organizations; job/resource fairs). Provides appropriate assistance to local OMJ Employment and Training centers attends local OhioMeansJobs center partner meetings and provides input that assists in surveying customers (e.g., employers; job seekers' partners; community agencies) verbally and in writing to determine customer satisfaction with disabled veteran services. Performs other related duties as assigned (e.g., participates in staff meetings; operates personal computer to produce correspondence, reports, and other documents; maintains logs, records, and files).

The Ohio JVSG program does not have any LVER or consolidated DVOP and LVER positions.

D. DEMONSTRATE THE MANNER IN WHICH DVOP, LVER AND CONSOLIDATED DVOP/LVER STAFF ARE INTEGRATED INTO THE STATE'S EMPLOYMENT SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEMS OR AMERICAN JOB CENTER (AJC). THIS DEMONSTRATION SHOULD SHOW ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT BETWEEN JVSG AND OTHER AJC STAFF, SUCH AS THROUGH PARTICIPATION IN STAFF MEETINGS AND CROSS-TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES.

The following efforts have been taken to ensure the strategic integrated development of the JVSG program in OhioMeansJobs centers. Local workforce area directors and OhioMeansJobs center management teams are trained by JVSG program management to increase familiarity with the JVSG program and priority of service requirements throughout the year on-demand as needed and at least once annually during Ohio's Hire a Veteran Month each November. Integration strategies (e.g., veteran customer workflows) are continually discussed with local workforce area directors, the JVSG State Veterans Services Administrator and/or Veteran Program Manager(s), and the Deputy Director for the ODJFS Office of Workforce Development. Local areas have been encouraged to include DVOP specialists in OhioMeansJobs center workgroups, organizational teams, and partner meetings. Local workforce directors and OhioMeansJobs center staff are also encouraged to receive additional training from the National Veterans' Training Institute.

ODJFS recognizes that all OhioMeansJobs center staff members are responsible for providing services to veterans and eligible spouses. The DVOPs are integrated into all of Ohio's 88 county OhioMeansJobs centers. DVOPs are headquartered full-time at comprehensive OhioMeansJobs centers. DVOPs provide appointment only coverage to surrounding non-comprehensive (affiliate) centers. Any eligible veteran visiting either comprehensive or non-comprehensive centers are screened using a Veteran Questionnaire (VQ) for possible Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE). Veterans are provided same day career services under 134(b)(2)(A) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) by WIOA, or other partner program staff (e.g., Wagner-Peyser, Trade, RESEA, etc.) to best meet their immediate employment and training needs. Referrals are made when appropriate to DVOP staff using a VQ following local customer flows upon identification of an SBE. Partner staff send an electronic version of the VQ to area assigned DVOP staff when not available on-site. DVOP staff respond and perform follow-up contact as expediently as possible, either same day or within twenty-four hours, for further assessment either in-person or virtually for services. Veterans with a SBE being served by a

DVOP are not limited to receiving services only from DVOP specialists. DVOPs can make referrals to center partner programs as necessary for employment, training, and supportive services.

At any point in the process, if a veteran is interested in training or supportive services furnished by WIOA, veterans referred to the appropriate WIOA staff member from JVSG or other partner program staff (e.g., Wagner-Peyser, Trade, RESEA, etc.). WIOA staff will then conduct assessments for such training services, applying Priority of Service requirements and keeping applicable partner program staff informed of the veteran's progress or outcome for such training or supportive service. Center teams will also document it electronically in Ohio's case management system through referral notifications and case note entries. Upon approval, veterans are co-enrolled is the case management system for training or support services. Any center case manager partner staff (WIOA, Wagner-Peyser, DVOP, etc.) linked to the case can view case notes, track progress, and continue to provide services, including individualized career services, to veterans and eligible spouses as appropriate under the programs the staff administer.

DVOPs further integrate into the OhioMeansJobs center system by conducting outreach among comprehensive and non-comprehensive OMJ centers and other OMJ partner organizations at least quarterly. Through outreach, DVOPs establish, actively collaborate, and foster productive partner relationships through variety of partner meetings, routine communications, and events. DVOPs share OhioMeansVeteranJobs.com tool functionality, the myriad of veteran benefits and resources, and other veteran related news or information with OhioMeansJobs center partners to help center partners better serve the military veteran community.

The Ohio JVSG program does not utilize LVER positions to engage employers. Ohio instead leverages Wagner Peyser and local WIOA business service teams (BST) members integrated in each workforce area to provide similar LVER functions. When employers engage the JVSG program to hire veterans, they are referred to local workforce area BSTs. Workforce area Wagner Peyser Workforce Specialists and other BST members are trained to outreach to employers to assist veterans and other priority job seekers in gaining employment and facilitate employment, training, and placement services furnished to veterans under our workforce system. BSTs prioritize veteran candidate's resumes found on OhioMeansJobs.com when fulfilling employer candidate requests. Each workforce area is fully capable to advocate in the hiring of veterans and promotion of veteran employer workforce programs (e.g., Honoring Investments in Recruiting and Employing (HIRE) Vets Medallion program). DVOPs facilitate placements on behalf of their caseload veterans to meet their employment needs by engaging with these BST members to advocate their caseload veterans' skills, education, experience, and career aspirations. BST members will use this information to illustrate the value of hiring veterans more effectively to employers, to help get veterans hired.

Additionally, the Ohio JVSG program partners with the Ohio Department of Veteran Services (DVS) Veteran Workforce Team's Regional Veteran Workforce Consultants, who advocate to employers on behalf of the military veteran community and provide veteran hiring strategies through consultative services and education opportunities for employers interested in hiring and retaining veterans. DVS Regional Veteran Workforce Consultants empower Ohio employers with knowledge of military skills and culture so they can better recognize the advantages of hiring veterans through their accredited SHRM series of trainings. Employment opportunities

are also shared between DVS and ODJFS JVSG programs. DVS furthermore helps foster employer recruiting connections to local OhioMeansJobs center business service teams and OhioMeansJobs.com.

The Ohio JVSG program does not have any consolidated DVOP and LVER positions.

E. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S PERFORMANCE INCENTIVE AWARD PROGRAM TO ENCOURAGE INDIVIDUALS AND/OR EMPLOYMENT SERVICE OFFICES TO IMPROVE AND/OR ACHIEVE EXCELLENCE IN THE PROVISION OF SERVICES TO VETERANS, INCLUDING:

1. THE NOMINATION AND SELECTION PROCESS FOR ALL PERFORMANCE INCENTIVE AWARDS TO INDIVIDUALS AND/OR OFFICES;

Expected Objectives

The intent of the VETS O.N.E. Incentive Award program is to encourage the improvement and modernization of employment, training, and placement services for veterans; recognize OhioMeansJobs centers for excellence in the provision of such services; and/or for having made demonstrable improvements in the provision of services to veterans. The incentive program will bring attention to veterans with special employment needs and will reinforce the special federal regulations that support priority of services to veterans. Secondarily, the intended results of the incentive plan are to encourage participation, promote veteran centric organization partnerships leading to more veterans being served and increased knowledge of local veteran supportive services among OhioMeansJobs center partners.

Nomination and Selection Process

Funds will be awarded to OhioMeansJobs centers that provide superior employment and training services to veterans through an award program called the Ohio Network for Employment (VETS O.N.E.) Incentive Award. Ohio will designate one percent of the funds made available to support the DVOP and LVER programs for incentive awards. This amount will be disbursed to OhioMeansJobs centers and/or workforce areas who achieve this distinction. The award process will be inclusive of the full spectrum of DOL employment and training-related programs.

The criteria for selection will be fashioned around the following items:

- Program improvement by the OhioMeansJobs centers as evidenced through collaborative activities.
- Innovation in promoting services to veterans as evidenced through creative program materials aimed at veterans.
- Innovation in provision of priority of service (above those already mandated); and
- Outstanding outreach on behalf of veterans who have barriers to employment (with an emphasis on homeless, incarcerated, disabled, and recently separated veterans) as evidenced by improvement in entered employment and earnings rates of veterans in the workforce area.

An incentive award package will be developed and distributed through the Office of Workforce Development to all 88 centers in Ohio. It will include information on the program, timelines for

submission, and a self-assessment that will require the OhioMeansJobs center to demonstrate how they have met the selection criteria. Selection of award recipients will be determined by a panel consisting of JVSG Program Delivery Managers, the JVSG Veterans Services Administrator, and/or other senior leadership within the Office of Workforce Development (OWD). They will evaluate all nominees based on the nomination form and all attachments. The selection committee will notify all nominees of the status of their nominations, verify that nominees have met performance standards, and notify award recipients and their nominators of individual selections.

2. THE APPROXIMATE NUMBER AND VALUE OF CASH AWARDS USING THE ONE PERCENT INCENTIVE AWARD ALLOCATION;

Disbursement

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services Office of Workforce Development will administer and disburse the full amount of incentive awards funds to the winning OhioMeansJobs center(s) or workforce area(s) leadership and fiscal teams. The plan is to award three centers annually using a 60/30/10 split using the full allotted amount of the Ohio JVSG Incentive Award 1% of its base allocation funding. In cases where the VETS O.N.E is unable to be awarded to three centers, funds will be distributed 60/40, or 100% in cases of one eligible award nomination. Specific amounts will vary annually as they are dependent on the incentive award amount given to Ohio and the number of applications received from centers. The award will be given as a cash award to a local OhioMeansJobs center or workforce area. Each selected center(s) or workforce area(s) will spend funds in accordance with state law and workforce policies. All incentive award funds will be obligated by September 30th and liquidated by December 31st in accordance with guidance outlined VPL 03-22 and VPL 01-22. The incentive award report will follow USDOL VETS reporting requirements outlined in VPL 03-22.

3. THE GENERAL NATURE AND APPROXIMATE VALUE OF NON-CASH PERFORMANCE INCENTIVE AWARDS TO BE CHARGED TO THE BASE ALLOCATION; AND

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services Office of Workforce Development will not charge any non-cash performance incentive awards to the base allocation.

4. ANY CHALLENGES THE STATE MAY ANTICIPATE TO CARRYING OUT A PERFORMANCE INCENTIVE AWARD PROGRAM AS MANDATED BY 38 U.S.C. § 4102A(C). THIS SHOULD INCLUDE ANY STATE LAWS OR POLICIES THAT PROHIBIT SUCH AWARDS, IF APPLICABLE. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S EFFORTS IN OVERCOMING THOSE CHALLENGES.

Public Law 107-288 (38 United States Code (U.S.C.) § 4102A(c)(2)(A)(i)(III)), the Jobs for Veterans Act, requires Ohio to administer performance incentive awards for quality employment training and placement services. However, Ohio Ethics law (R.C. 2921.42) prohibits employee supplemental compensation for all state agencies, departments, offices, institutions, boards, and commissions. As an alternative, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services Office of Workforce Development uses incentive funds to award OhioMeansJobs centers that provide superior employment and training services to veterans through an award program called the VETS Ohio Network for Employment (VETS O.N.E.) Incentive Award.

F. LIST THE PERFORMANCE TARGETS FOR DIRECT SERVICES TO VETERANS PROVIDED BY JVSG STAFF, AS MEASURED BY PARTICIPANTS':

- employment rate in the second quarter after exit from the program;
- employment rate in the fourth quarter after exit; and
- median earnings in the second quarter after exit.

We've increased our JVSG performance figures, utilizing the JVSG State Performance Target Tool found on the DOL VETS Performance website. Our planned figures match at least 90% of the performance for the state of Ohio over the last several years on the tool.

Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit	57%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit	54%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit	$7,000

SENIOR COMMUNITY SERVICE EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM (SCSEP)

(OMB Control No. 1205-0040)

A. ECONOMIC PROJECTIONS AND IMPACT

1. DISCUSS LONG-TERM PROJECTIONS FOR JOBS IN INDUSTRIES AND OCCUPATIONS IN THE STATE THAT MAY PROVIDE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR OLDER WORKERS. (20 CFR 641.302(D)) (MAY ALTERNATIVELY BE DISCUSSED IN THE ECONOMIC ANALYSIS SECTION OF STRATEGIC PLAN.)

Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) providers utilize the State's long-term projections for occupations that may be suitable for older adults.

The Ohio Occupational Employment Projections Report 2020-2030, points to job growth for those with a high school diploma or some college in home health care, transportation, animal care, restaurant cooks, and construction, all of which may provide employment opportunities for older workers.

A review of PY 2022 participant data for most Ohio SCSEP operators reveal that 47 percent have a high school diploma or equivalent or some school education and 42 percent have some college experience. Only 11 percent of the participants possess a bachelor's degree or higher. Therefore, Ohio SCSEP operators will focus on entry-level jobs with established career ladders and high annual openings that do not require a college degree. While developing relationships with employers offering entry-level opportunities, Ohio's SCSEP operators will also pursue opportunities for SCSEP participants who are qualified for positions beyond entry level.

Individuals in SCSEP arrive with a vast array of skills and educational backgrounds. For a large number of entering participants current marketable skills may be absent, especially technology skills. The transferable skills eligible individuals possess are as varied as the individuals themselves; among them, retail, basic clerical, and various manual labor skills are common. Many participants also have life skills, such as driving or caregiving, which can serve as a basis for occupational training, and many of these skills align with employment projections.

Below is the Ohio Occupational Employment Projections Report 2020-2030 top 100 occupations by expected percentage growth for workers 55+.

		Employment 2020	Employment 2030	Change in Employment 2020-2030	Change in Employment 2020-2030
Code	**Occupational Title**	**Annual**	**Projected**	**Change**	**Percent**
35-2014	Cooks, Restaurant	33,547	47,620	14,073	42.0%
39-2021	Nonfarm Animal Caretakers	9,367	12,118	2,751	29.4%
11-9111	Medical and Health Services Managers	14,815	19,063	4,248	28.7%
13-1081	Logisticians	7,282	9,342	2,060	28.3%
39-9031	Fitness Trainers and Aerobics Instructors	9,981	12,515	2,534	25.4%
39-6011	Baggage Porters and Bellhops	455	567	112	24.6%
31-1120	Home Health and Personal Care Aides	95,559	118,538	22,979	24.0%
25-2011	Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education	13,520	16,705	3,185	23.6%
35-3011	Bartenders	19,282	23,705	4,423	22.9%
35-9011	Dining Room and Cafeteria Attendants and Bartender Helpers	7,155	8,715	1,560	21.8%
21-1018	Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors	9,223	11,140	1,917	20.8%
25-3021	Self-Enrichment Education Teachers	10,172	12,237	2,065	20.3%
33-9092	Lifeguards, Ski Patrol, and Other Recreational Protective Service	5,125	6,141	1,016	19.8%

		Employment 2020	Employment 2030	Change in Employment 2020-2030	Change in Employment 2020-2030
	Workers				
35-9031	Hosts and Hostesses, Restaurant, Lounge, and Coffee Shop	10,610	12,628	2,018	19.0%
21-1094	Community Health Workers	2,167	2,563	396	18.3%
49-3092	Recreational Vehicle Service Technicians	381	449	68	17.8%
13-1161	Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	26,474	31,088	4,614	17.4%
35-1012	First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	39,481	46,183	6,702	17.0%
25-2059	Special Education Teachers, All Other	907	1,060	153	16.9%
35-1011	Chefs and Head Cooks	2,586	3,002	416	16.1%
29-2053	Psychiatric Technicians	1,438	1,665	227	15.8%
35-9099	Food Preparation and Serving Related Workers, All Other	1,875	2,169	294	15.7%
33-9091	Crossing Guards	2,455	2,837	382	15.6%
11-3031	Financial Managers	22,648	26,146	3,498	15.4%
53-3031	Driver/Sales Workers	33,387	38,473	5,086	15.2%
39-9041	Residential Advisors	2,817	3,223	406	14.4%
43-4081	Hotel, Motel, and Resort Desk Clerks	4,315	4,931	616	14.3%

		Employment 2020	Employment 2030	Change in Employment 2020-2030	Change in Employment 2020-2030
35-3031	Waiters and Waitresses	67,080	76,548	9,468	14.1%
31-9092	Medical Assistants	26,454	30,010	3,556	13.4%
35-9021	Dishwashers	11,242	12,677	1,435	12.8%
31-9097	Phlebotomists	5,967	6,726	759	12.7%
11-9151	Social and Community Service Managers	5,090	5,719	629	12.4%
11-9031	Education Administrators, Preschool and Childcare Center/Program	1,884	2,116	232	12.3%
27-2022	Coaches and Scouts	13,693	15,327	1,634	11.9%
21-1093	Social and Human Service Assistants	17,143	19,187	2,044	11.9%
47-2042	Floor Layers, Except Carpet, Wood, and Hard Tiles	881	985	104	11.8%
25-3031	Substitute Teachers, Short-Term	7,256	8,101	845	11.6%
49-9011	Mechanical Door Repairers	979	1,092	113	11.5%
21-1021	Child, Family, and School Social Workers	10,760	11,964	1,204	11.2%
13-1121	Meeting, Convention, and Event Planners	3,345	3,719	374	11.2%
47-2044	Tile and Marble Setters	865	961	96	11.1%
53-3099	Motor Vehicle Operators, All Other	1,886	2,092	206	10.9%

		Employment 2020	Employment 2030	Change in Employment 2020-2030	Change in Employment 2020-2030
53-7051	Industrial Truck and Tractor Operators	33,770	37,387	3,617	10.7%
11-9021	Construction Managers	10,543	11,667	1,124	10.7%
11-9051	Food Service Managers	10,638	11,759	1,121	10.5%
53-3033	Light Truck or Delivery Services Drivers	35,532	39,172	3,640	10.2%
35-3023	Fast Food and Counter Workers	152,724	168,182	15,458	10.1%
11-3071	Transportation, Storage, and Distribution Managers	5,998	6,595	597	10.0%
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	116,999	128,382	11,383	9.7%
13-1111	Management Analysts	28,325	31,058	2,733	9.6%
43-5111	Weighers, Measurers, Checkers, and Samplers, Recordkeeping	1,629	1,786	157	9.6%
11-9039	Education Administrators, All Other	1,020	1,117	97	9.5%
43-5011	Cargo and Freight Agents	2,364	2,588	224	9.5%
13-1071	Human Resources Specialists	30,109	32,944	2,835	9.4%
49-3052	Motorcycle Mechanics	661	723	62	9.4%

		Employment 2020	Employment 2030	Change in Employment 2020-2030	Change in Employment 2020-2030
13-1131	Fundraisers	5,103	5,574	471	9.2%
51-6011	Laundry and Dry-Cleaning Workers	6,827	7,454	627	9.2%
25-9045	Teaching Assistants, Except Postsecondary	40,773	44,419	3,646	8.9%
13-1151	Training and Development Specialists	13,125	14,292	1,167	8.9%
23-2011	Paralegals and Legal Assistants	11,156	12,145	989	8.9%
47-2161	Plasterers and Stucco Masons	200	217	17	8.5%
47-2111	Electricians	25,572	27,727	2,155	8.4%
21-1099	Community and Social Service Specialists, All Other	2,109	2,281	172	8.2%
47-2061	Construction Laborers	43,962	47,485	3,523	8.0%
51-4121	Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers	17,610	18,994	1,384	7.9%
53-6021	Parking Lot Attendants	3,478	3,751	273	7.8%
49-3042	Mobile Heavy Equipment Mechanics, Except Engines	4,027	4,342	315	7.8%
25-2058	Special Education Teachers, Secondary School	7,962	8,571	609	7.6%
49-3041	Farm Equipment Mechanics and Service Technicians	1,443	1,553	110	7.6%

		Employment 2020	Employment 2030	Change in Employment 2020-2030	Change in Employment 2020-2030
39-9032	Recreation Workers	13,060	14,048	988	7.6%
11-9081	Lodging Managers	1,336	1,436	100	7.5%
51-7011	Cabinetmakers and Bench Carpenters	4,843	5,205	362	7.5%
49-2098	Security and Fire Alarm Systems Installers	2,502	2,685	183	7.3%
49-9099	Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Workers, All Other	7,337	7,872	535	7.3%
51-7042	Woodworking Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Except Sawing	3,416	3,664	248	7.3%
29-1141	Registered Nurses	131,398	140,783	9,385	7.1%
25-2012	Kindergarten Teachers, Except Special Education	2,815	3,016	201	7.1%
17-2051	Civil Engineers	7,013	7,510	497	7.1%
11-3121	Human Resources Managers	4,017	4,298	281	7.0%
47-3019	Helpers, Construction Trades, All Other	458	489	31	6.8%
29-2010	Clinical Laboratory Technologists and Technicians	11,967	12,776	809	6.8%
43-6013	Medical Secretaries	31,953	34,108	2,155	6.7%
25-2031	Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical	48,036	51,273	3,237	6.7%

		Employment 2020	Employment 2030	Change in Employment 2020-2030	Change in Employment 2020-2030
	Education				
25-2052	Special Education Teachers, Kindergarten and Elementary School	6,341	6,757	416	6.6%
49-3031	Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists	9,883	10,520	637	6.4%
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	66,139	70,391	4,252	6.4%
27-3031	Public Relations Specialists	8,026	8,538	512	6.4%
47-2121	Glaziers	1,540	1,637	97	6.3%
11-2021	Marketing Managers	6,744	7,164	420	6.2%
47-2221	Structural Iron and Steel Workers	2,787	2,960	173	6.2%
25-2057	Special Education Teachers, Middle School	3,459	3,673	214	6.2%
25-2022	Middle School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	27,599	29,291	1,692	6.1%
51-3011	Bakers	7,299	7,745	446	6.1%
15-1299	Computer Occupations, All Other	12,457	13,217	760	6.1%
25-2021	Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	51,045	54,158	3,113	6.1%
53-3032	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck	78,801	83,606	4,805	6.1%

		Employment 2020	Employment 2030	Change in Employment 2020-2030	Change in Employment 2020-2030
	Drivers				
39-6012	Concierges	858	910	52	6.1%
25-2032	Career/Technical Education Teachers, Secondary School	5,049	5,347	298	5.9%
29-1292	Dental Hygienists	8,667	9,174	507	5.8%
47-2131	Insulation Workers, Floor, Ceiling, and Wall	754	798	44	5.8%
41-3091	Sales Representatives of Services, Except Advertising, Insurance, Financial Services, and Travel	29,946	31,676	1,730	5.8%

2. DISCUSS HOW THE LONG-TERM JOB PROJECTIONS DISCUSSED IN THE ECONOMIC ANALYSIS SECTION OF STRATEGIC PLAN RELATE TO THE TYPES OF UNSUBSIDIZED JOBS FOR WHICH SCSEP PARTICIPANTS WILL BE TRAINED AND THE TYPES OF SKILL TRAINING TO BE PROVIDED. (20 CFR 641.302(D))

The Ohio Occupational Employment Projections Report 2020 -2030 points to job growth for those with a high school diploma or some college in home health care, transportation, animal care, restaurant cooks and construction, which may provide employment opportunities for older workers.

Since the majority of SCSEP participants have some schooling, or a high school diploma, Ohio SCSEP operators will continue to focus on entry-level jobs with established career ladders and high annual openings that do not require a college degree. Local SCSEP Project Directors will work with participants to identify interest in these jobs sectors and attempt to place the participant in a community service assignment that will afford them the skills to pursue these jobs in unsubsidized employment. Project Directors and Participants will develop an Individual Employment Plan (IEP) that documents steps to be taken to gain skills and pursue unsubsidized employment.

Ohio Department of Aging (ODA) SCSEP is and will continue to implement an additional training program where a Training Navigator is assigned to participants and assist with identifying training and learning programs to develop skills and knowledge above and beyond what they are learning in their community service assignment.

Many positions in customer service and office work have become available and are requiring digital job skills. Older workers may not be prepared for these opportunities. SCSEP activities

are now and will be designed to expand individual skills for the purpose of improving employment outcomes for older individuals who may have struggled with the digital economy and are negatively impacted by the digital divide. ODA and Vantage Aging SCSEP is and will continue to implement a digital inclusion program to prepare SCSEP participants for the modern technology filled workplace. The program will expand internet and computer access, grow individuals' digital literacy and competencies with workplace digital technologies and prepare older Ohioans for unsubsidized employment through increased opportunities for conducting job searches online while refining workplace competencies and skills. Participants will be assigned a Digital Navigator that coordinates and monitors skills-based training modules.

3. DISCUSS CURRENT AND PROJECTED EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE STATE (SUCH AS BY PROVIDING INFORMATION AVAILABLE UNDER §15 OF THE WAGNER-PEYSER ACT (29 U.S.C. 491-2) BY OCCUPATION), AND THE TYPES OF SKILLS POSSESSED BY ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS. (20 CFR 641.325(C))

Ohio's current in-demand jobs list includes several occupations that require at least some education beyond a high school diploma, including registered nurses, software developers, and medical assistants. Other in-demand occupations such as construction laborers do not require any formal education, though because of the physical aspects of the industry, it may not be feasible for many SCSEP participants.

Ohio's Occupational Employment Projections by Occupational Group, 2020-2030 include healthcare, personal care, community and social service, and computer and mathematical occupations. Healthcare and related fields offer the opportunity to earn advanced certifications to support occupations such as a chemical dependency counselor assistant, state tested nursing aide and pharmacy technician.

Most SCSEP participants will be trained for entry-level positions due to lack of postsecondary education and/or specialized skills. SCSEP operators ensure that their trainings align with jobs that have high annual openings. When these occupations list qualifications such as short-term credentials, SCSEP operators can change their course of current trainings to meet the needs of employers through specific credentials. Typical skills possessed by SCSEP eligible individuals may include training in basic office skills and specific computer programs.

B. SERVICE DELIVERY AND COORDINATION

1. A DESCRIPTION OF ACTIONS TO COORDINATE SCSEP WITH OTHER PROGRAMS. THIS MAY ALTERNATIVELY BE DISCUSSED IN THE STATE STRATEGIES SECTION OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN, BUT REGARDLESS OF PLACEMENT IN DOCUMENT, MUST INCLUDE:

A. PLANNED ACTIONS TO COORDINATE ACTIVITIES OF SCSEP GRANTEES WITH WIOA TITLE I PROGRAMS, INCLUDING PLANS FOR USING THE WIOA ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM AND ITS PARTNERS TO SERVE INDIVIDUALS AGED 55 AND OLDER. (20 CFR 641.302(G), 641.325(E))

ODA will collaborate with the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) to ensure all Ohio SCSEP operators coordinate activities with Ohio's local OhioMeansJobs (OMJ) through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

As a required partner, all SCSEP operators in Ohio will require participants to register for an OhioMeansJobs.com account. Goodwill will require participants to create a resume on OhioMeansJobs.com, and their Program Managers will attend WIOA partner meetings.

Ohio SCSEP operators will continue to be active partners in OMJ Centers and encourage co-enrollment, when possible. Local collaborations vary from area to area, ranging from the placement of SCSEP staff at OhioMeansJobs Centers, co-sponsoring training and outreach events, and placing SCSEP participants in job training assignments at the OMJ.

The National Council on Aging (NCOA) collaborates with the OMJ to offer all new SCSEP participants a three-week orientation at the OMJ. National Caucus and Center on Black Aging (NCBA) will host a Senior Expo where the OMJ and other aging network partners will be present to offer referrals and services. Goodwill will require participants to create a resume on OhioMeansJobs.com, and their Program Manager will attend WIOA partner meetings. Goodwill will also encourage their SCSEP participants to utilize OMJ resume writing trainings as well as other OMJ trainings.

Easterseals, Vantage Aging and ODA have and will continue to have a physical presence in some of the OMJ centers in their assigned territories.

ODA's SCSEP administrator will continue to represent SCSEP in State level OhioMeansJobs Center partners' meetings and initiatives. OhioMeansJobs.com has been redesigned and now includes resources for older workers.

B. PLANNED ACTIONS TO COORDINATE ACTIVITIES OF SCSEP GRANTEES WITH THE ACTIVITIES BEING CARRIED OUT IN THE STATE UNDER THE OTHER TITLES OF THE OLDER AMERICANS ACT (OAA). (20 CFR 641.302(H))

Ohio's seven SCSEP operators will continue to cultivate partnerships with Ohio's twelve Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) and Older Americans Act (OAA) funded service providers. These partnerships will provide opportunities for cross referrals of eligible SCSEP participants, the designation of aging network sites as host agencies and sharing of training opportunities. One SCSEP operator is planning an annual senior fair in the spring, where various partners in the aging network, including the AAAs, will be present to offer information, referrals and services to attendees. Vantage Aging will utilize several home delivered meal services as host agencies for community service assignments. Some SCSEP offices will utilize AmeriCorps Senior volunteers to assist in training SCSEP participants in work readiness skills. Goodwill will utilize the Area Agency on Aging in Richland county as a host agency.

Aging network partners in Ohio will support SCSEP participants with nutrition, in-home care, transportation, disease prevention and health promotion, and caregiver support programs and services. OAA services are targeted to populations with the greatest economic and social needs. In FFY2022 (10/01/2021 – 9/30/2022), OAA funds coupled with State and local resources served more than 516,000 older Ohioans, including approximately 18% minority older adults and 21% rural older adults who received services where demographics information is required at time-of-service initiation, and more than 4,700 registered family caregivers. All Ohio SCSEP operators include supportive services as part of their program offerings and will rely on Area Agencies on Aging and other OAA providers to deliver many of these needed supportive services to SCSEP participants.

C. PLANNED ACTIONS TO COORDINATE SCSEP WITH OTHER PRIVATE AND PUBLIC ENTITIES AND PROGRAMS THAT PROVIDE SERVICES TO OLDER AMERICANS, SUCH AS COMMUNITY AND FAITH- BASED ORGANIZATIONS, TRANSPORTATION PROGRAMS, AND PROGRAMS FOR THOSE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS OR DISABILITIES. (20 CFR 641.302(I))

Ohio SCSEP operators will coordinate with public and private entities and programs to serve older Ohioans. Many community and faith-based organizations, transportation programs and programs for those with special needs or disabilities will serve as host agency sites for Ohio SCSEP.

COMMUNITY, FAITH-BASED AND VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATIONS.

Ohio SCSEP operators will coordinate activities with local housing coalitions, faith-based organizations, mental health and drug addiction boards, ex-offender reentry coalitions and other entities that that can connect participants with wrap-around services and supports. The National Council on Aging will partner with faith-based food pantries to provide nutrition services to SCSEP participants. Goodwill will attend events in the community that are targeted to older Ohioans, and they will encourage their participants to attend as well. Goodwill will utilize several faith-based organizations and safety councils as host agency sites and they will work with Citizen Circle to obtain leads for housing, obtaining driver license and assistance with paying legal fines.

TRANSPORTATION PROGRAMS.

ODA will continue to advocate for innovative solutions to ensure SCSEP participants and all older Ohioans have access to transportation. ODA has been and will continue to work with Ohio's Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) to fund transportation services including rides to and from employment. The AAAs will partner with local Mobility Managers who assist individuals with navigating and securing transportation to job sites. ODA will participate in several workgroups with the Ohio Department of Transportation including an Older Road Users Action Team and the Mobility Ohio Workgroup. The Older Road Users Action Team produces resources and tools to improve older road user safety and mobility. Additionally, the Mobility Ohio Workgroup, a collaboration between Ohio's state agencies that fund human service transportation, strives to improve the safety, availability and quality of transportation for older adults, people with disabilities and those with lower incomes.

PROGRAMS FOR THOSE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS OR DISABILITIES.

SCSEP operators will partner with local vocational rehabilitation providers across the State to ensure qualified individuals have access to case management and wrap-around services. The ODA and Ohio's SCSEP operators also have a longstanding partnership with Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) and with Lott Industries. SCSEP and these agencies have a shared goal to provide competitive employment for people with disabilities. Goodwill will partner with Catalyst Life Services who offers individuals help with mental health, addiction, vocational and audiology and deaf services.

D. PLANNED ACTIONS TO COORDINATE SCSEP WITH OTHER LABOR MARKET AND JOB TRAINING INITIATIVES. (20 CFR 641.302(J))

ODA and SCSEP operators will coordinate with labor market and job training initiatives.

Labor Market Information:Ohio is home to nationally recognized labor market information and data tools. SCSEP operators and participants will continue to use web-based tools, including OhioMeansJobs.com, Wanted Analytics, Ohio labor market information, O*Net, and Local Employment Dynamics (LED) statistics. These tools provide valuable information down to the county or zip code area on numbers of jobs, available jobs, and which industries are currently hiring significant numbers of older workers.

Job Training Initiatives:ODA SCSEP will offera series of job readiness training webinars related to resume writing, job searching, developing a winning mindset, etc. OMJs will assist with the marketing of these events by posting announcements at local offices. Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) will disseminate the registration information to local Workforce Development Boards for further sharing in the network and to possible participants. ODJFS and OMJ staff will be encouraged to attend as well, to gain valuable insight on serving older workers. Easterseals SCSEP participants will be encouraged to take advantage of the many assessments, trainings and core services available through OhioMeansJobs.com including job search training, occupational skills training, ESL classes, improving computer skills, preparation for career certification, leadership and soft skills, etc. SCSEP participants will be invited to and often take advantage of local in-person training events at the OMJ offices as well. SCSEP and OMJ staff will support each other by offering trainings and speakers as needed for local professional development events. NCOA SCSEP will refer participants to specialized training opportunities such as forklift operation, computer training and home health aide training. Goodwill SCSEP staff will participate in local Society for Human Resource Management meetings to network and learn best practices for managing employees and of training opportunities for SCSEP participants. Goodwill will also focus on developing skills that match the demands of unsubsidized jobs and emphasizing transferable skills to enhance employability.

E. ACTIONS TO ENSURE THAT SCSEP IS AN ACTIVE PARTNER IN THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM AND THE STEPS THE STATE WILL TAKE TO ENCOURAGE AND IMPROVE COORDINATION WITH THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM. (20 CFR 641.335)

ODA will collaborate with the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) to ensure all Ohio SCSEP operators coordinate activities with Ohio's local OhioMeansJobs (OMJ) through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). As a required partner, SCSEP participants must register for an OhioMeansJobs.com account.

Ohio SCSEP operators will continue to be active partners in OhioMeansJobs Centers and encourage co-enrollment, when possible. Local collaborations will vary from area to area, ranging from the placement of SCSEP staff at OhioMeansJobs Centers, co-sponsoring training and outreach events, and placing SCSEP participants in community service assignments at the OMJ. The National Council on Aging will offer all new SCSEP participants a three-week orientation at and in cooperation with the OMJ. Vantage Aging will offer job readiness webinars and other initiatives that will benefit both SCSEP participants and job seekers that are utilizing OMJ services. NCBA will be represented at OMJ meetings and in various workgroups. Goodwill attends WIOA partner meetings. Easterseals will have a regular presence at the One-stops to coordinate referrals from partners.

ODA's SCSEP administrator will continue to represent SCSEP in State level OhioMeansJobs Center partners' meetings and initiatives including the Ohio Workforce Stakeholders meeting group. OhioMeansJobs.com has been redesigned and now includes resources for older workers.

ODA recognizes the importance of the partnership with OhioMeansJobs and is committed to maintaining this partnership and revitalizing it where necessary. ODA would like to strengthen referrals between the programs and increase co-enrollments. Ohio SCSEP will continue to work in partnership with the local State workgroups and One-Stop centers to strengthen and reinforce coordination between SCSEP and WIOA.

F. EFFORTS TO WORK WITH LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OFFICES IN RURAL LOCATIONS.

There is an ongoing effort to serve older adults in rural areas. The State has relationships with OhioMeansJobs Centers in all 88 counties, 50 being designated as rural.

SCSEP operators will work with local chambers of commerce, economic development offices and small business development centers across the state, especially in rural regions, to ready older job seekers for in-demand jobs, support education and training needs and promote the benefits of older workers. SCSEP operators will have physical offices across Ohio in locations where job seekers are already visiting, some of which are in or near OhioMeansJobs centers.

Some specific examples, amongst many are: Local SCSEP Project Directors will be involved with the SW Ohio region investment board and on the business engagement committee. Another will be on the Hillsboro workforce development board and SCSEP will be represented on the Clinton County Workforce Development Taskforce.

The Ohio Department of Aging will be making an effort to get to know the Ohio Workforce Development Boards and examine how we can partner to increase hot agency sites and enrollment particularly in rural areas that are chronically underenrolled.

Goodwill plans to better understand the Chambers of Commerce in their area as a SCSEP resource. They also will be utilizing government agencies in rural areas as host agencies. SCSEP participants will learn job skills that are in demand in the government sector.

2. THE STATE'S LONG-TERM STRATEGY FOR ENGAGING EMPLOYERS TO DEVELOP AND PROMOTE OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE PLACEMENT OF SCSEP PARTICIPANTS IN UNSUBSIDIZED EMPLOYMENT. (20 CFR 641.302(E)) (MAY ALTERNATIVELY BE DISCUSSED IN THE STATE STRATEGIES SECTION OF STRATEGIC PLAN.)

Ohio SCSEP operators will be working to improve employer relationships to maximize unsubsidized employment opportunities. Ohio's strategy consists of advocating and promoting the benefits of hiring older workers. Goodwill will communicate with employers about how older workers are often dedicated to their jobs, have strong work ethics and are reliable. Vantage Aging will be implementing a collaboration with Akron Zoo, where SCSEP participants have a dedicated time frame to apply for Akron Zoo jobs before they are open to the general public. They will be exploring expanding this model to other employers in the coming years. Goodwill will be establishing a feedback mechanism for ongoing program evaluation and making program adjustments to enhance the effectiveness of SCSEP. Easterseals will host a SCSEP Business Advisory Council to meet once a quarter in the service area. Easterseals will also partner with CVS Pharmacy to make use of their current training curricula in the areas of

customer service, store associate, pharmacy assistant and photo lab technician. SCSEP participants that take advantage of these trainings may become job ready to apply for these positions when they become available in their areas. Easterseals will partner with an agency that provides training for the hotel and lodging industries as another avenue to targeted job sectors.

3. THE STATE'S LONG-TERM STRATEGY FOR SERVING MINORITY OLDER INDIVIDUALS UNDER SCSEP. (20 CFR 641.302 (C))

According to the SCSEP Analysis of Service to Minority Individuals PY2021 Report, Ohio's SCSEP percent minority in PY2021 was 55.2%, with the census percent minority of 15.7%. Ohio SCSEP is proud to serve a diverse group of individuals. SCSEP operators will be deliberate about recruitment and service delivery to ensure all eligible Ohioans have the opportunity to participate in our program. SCSEP staff is comprised of a diverse set of individuals with backgrounds representing different age groups, genders, races, ethnicities, veteran status, and educational backgrounds. SCSEP staff will participate in trainings related to Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion, Trauma Informed Care, LGBTQ+ Awareness, and Mental Health First Aid. The better we know how to relate to diverse participants, the better we can serve them.

Recruitment methods include encouraging referrals through OMJs, digital recruitment through success stories and employment blog posts, radio and newspaper ads in targeted communities, representation at senior-friendly events, and through relationships with other community agencies. Outreach is planned at churches, senior centers, community-based organizations, senior housing developments, bingo halls and community centers that are in minority neighborhoods or serve minority populations. The Ohio Department of Aging SCSEP prison partnership enrolls incarcerated individuals six to nine months prior to their release to ensure Ohio's program is available to the most recent addition to the list of priority service demographics. Goodwill plans to advertise via social media to reach minority populations.

In the most recent Minority Report, ODA participant service levels resulted in two disparities with regards to the Asian and Hispanic populations. ODA served 0.0% Asian participants compared to Census Data of 0.9% and served 0.3% Hispanic participants compared to Census Data of 1.8%.

The ODA SCSEP program serves three of the top ten counties in Ohio with the largest number of Asian individuals by total individuals and percent in county: Franklin, Cuyahoga and Summit County. ODA SCSEP is proposing to explore partnerships with non-profit agencies and local health departments in these areas to increase Asian American SCSEP participants.

Historically, service to the Hispanic community has been above census levels, but turnover in participants in recent years reduced this percentage. As enrollment and outreach efforts increase and resume, we anticipate this percentage to rise and exceed census levels, as in the past.

ODA SCSEP will also prioritize the recruitment of Host Agency Training Sites that serve international communities. These training sites will serve as both recruitment opportunities and training placements with resources for translation as necessary.

4. A LIST OF COMMUNITY SERVICES THAT ARE NEEDED AND THE PLACES WHERE THESE SERVICES ARE MOST NEEDED. SPECIFICALLY, THE PLAN MUST ADDRESS THE NEEDS AND

LOCATION OF THOSE INDIVIDUALS MOST IN NEED OF COMMUNITY SERVICES AND THE GROUPS WORKING TO MEET THEIR NEEDS. (20 CFR 641.330)

According to The Ohio Poverty Report, June 2020, the counties in Ohio with the greatest levels of poverty are:

- Adams
- Ashtabula
- Athens
- Gallia
- Guernsey
- Highland
- Meigs
- Scioto
- Vinton

All of these counties are in Ohio's Appalachian region; the percentage of the population in poverty in those counties ranged from 20% to 30.6%. In addition, 15.8 percent of the people in urban places (densely populated areas of 2,500 or more) were poor, compared with 10.0 percent in rural areas (farms and smaller places); within metropolitan areas, 25.7 percent of those living in the central or principal cites were poor, while 10.1 percent of residents in other metropolitan urban areas were poor.

Ohio SCSEP operators have shared that the most community service needs were transportation, broadband internet connectivity, lack of computer skills, affordable housing, food, utility support, temporary financial assistance, training for communication and social skills and ex-offender employment services. Free training opportunities are difficult to secure in Eastern Ohio.

State of Ohio government agencies offer solutions to many of these needs. The Ohio Department of Transportation has Mobility Managers to match residents with transportation options, and there is funding for rural transit programs. Several SCSEP operators refer residents to the Affordable Connectivity Program for reduced cost internet. Agencies offer Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) and other financial assistance programs. The Ohio Department of Aging and the local Area Agencies on Aging assist older Ohioans with identifying resources and services for transportation, employment, food and others. Goodwill will tap into their ability to provide supportive services and assist with bus passes and gas cards. Ohio has a robust network of local county and city health departments to address the health needs of Ohioans. In addition, Ohio is home to a vast array of statewide and local non-profit agencies that assist with resources and services. Ohio Governor Mike DeWine just allocated over $100 million to support Ohio's transit infrastructure. Ohio SCSEP operators will watch the developments of this funding closely to take advantage of how this may present transportation opportunities for SCSEP

participants. The funding may also lead to job growth and unsubsidized employment opportunities for SCSEP participants.

Several Ohio SCSEP operators will offer programs to reduce the digital divide. This includes partnerships to provide affordable internet connectivity and digital devices, offering digital skills courses and assigning Digital Navigators to participants to guide them through the learning process.

5. THE STATE'S LONG-TERM STRATEGY TO IMPROVE SCSEP SERVICES, INCLUDING PLANNED LONG-TERM CHANGES TO THE DESIGN OF THE PROGRAM WITHIN THE STATE, AND PLANNED CHANGES IN THE USE OF SCSEP GRANTEES AND PROGRAM OPERATORS TO BETTER ACHIEVE THE GOALS OF THE PROGRAM. THIS MAY INCLUDE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE DEPARTMENT AS APPROPRIATE. (20 CFR 641.302(K))

ODA SCSEP currently operates the program in 30 counties through a subrecipient that was chosen via competitive bid. The subrecipient divides their assigned area into seven smaller regions that operate mostly independently. ODA SCSEP will continue this arrangement to support and operate SCSEP. In addition, there are six national grantees that operate the program directly in their assigned areas, which cover the remaining 58 counties in Ohio. This model works well for Ohio which is a very diverse state. This regional approach allows local operators to implement the program in the areas where they live, work and socialize, and know the intended audience.

Recently, the ODA SCSEP and Vantage Aging have modified their approach to implementing SCSEP and have added additional training and supportive services to the program. Training and Supportive Services Navigators will case manage training that is above and beyond a participant's service assignment and they will identify and secure supportive services opportunities for participants to reduce barriers to employment and help them thrive at home. The Navigators and the service they provide will enhance the SCSEP experience in a way that will accelerate the employment journey and sets the participants up for continued success in unsubsidized employment. This model will allow staff who recruit, enroll, develop IEPs and arrange for community service assignments for participants to focus more on those tasks and allow for a higher quality experience for participants overall. ODA SCSEP and Vantage Aging will continue this model for the foreseeable future.

The NCOA SCSEP will be focusing on pairing participants with specialized training and certifications in areas where there are in-demand jobs. These certifications will help our older workers stand out in a pool of applicants to employers and direct participants to unsubsidized employment opportunities.

Goodwill will rely on their position in their nationwide structure to learn about new and innovative training and employment techniques for older adults and those with disabilities, that can be mirrored to SCSEP. Goodwill also recognizes the need for placing older workers in areas such as health care and personal care and will explore ideas to expand job training opportunities within their program to include these topics.

Easterseals will implement a 27 month durational limit cap, though will allow a waiver for up to one additional year for those with significant barriers to employment.

The Ohio Department of Aging plans to convene all SCSEP operators in Ohio to discuss strategies and share best practices for program implementation.

6. THE STATE'S STRATEGY FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT IN THE LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE FOR SCSEP PARTICIPANTS' ENTRY INTO UNSUBSIDIZED EMPLOYMENT, AND TO ACHIEVE, AT A MINIMUM, THE LEVELS SPECIFIED IN OAA SECTION 513(A)(2)(E)(II). (20 CFR 641.302(F))

SCSEP operators offer a variety of services to increase the likelihood of placement into unsubsidized employment. Placements are measured as part of an entered employment percentage to align the SCSEP program with DOL common measures. The state will conduct compliance and program monitoring of SCSEP subrecipients at a minimum annually, and those local programs will monitor their own programs as well for program performance. If needed, local projects are asked to submit a plan of action to address the performance issue and establish benchmarks for continuous improvement.

Vantage Aging will be implementing new program policies to address movement into unsubsidized employment, such as mandatory resume updates after specialized training, job search office hours, and mandatory job search logs.

To move or place participants into unsubsidized employment, Ohio SCSEP plans to develop employer partnerships and work to increase awareness of SCSEP overall. Ohio SCSEP plans to promote the benefits of hiring older workers, inform the business community about SCSEP services and target participant job search assistance based on participants' skills and job interests. The regional approach that Ohio takes for SCSEP implementation allows for more informed identification of possible employers, and local relationships and benefits that may not be attainable without local representation.

Ohio will also focus on increasing awareness of SCSEP at a broader State level. Many employers, community organizations and even workforce development professionals are unaware of the benefits offered to them by SCSEP. To generate increased awareness of SCSEP, ODA will continue to strengthen partnerships at the State level, with other agencies and State offices. This includes ongoing work with Ohio Department of Job and Family Services and OhioMeansJobs to develop content that highlights the benefits of hiring and retaining older workers and strategies to support the needs of older workers. It will also include programmatic SCSEP information as a workforce solution designed to meet an employer's needs. The State will also increase awareness of SCSEP with the Area Agencies on Aging. A statewide referral fact sheet has been developed, job readiness webinars will be offered, and the Program Administrator will develop new ways to introduce SCSEP and AAAs with hopes of increasing enrollment and increasing AAAs and others in the aging network as host agency sites and employers.

NCOA SCSEP plans to offer specialized training and certifications in areas where there are in-demand jobs. These certifications will help our older workers stand out in a pool of applicants to employers and direct participants to unsubsidized employment opportunities. Vantage Aging SCSEP will seek out partnerships with benefits counselors to help participants better understand how working may affect their benefits and how to avoid the benefits cliff. NCBA will rely on a strong follow up system, providing supportive services and offering enhanced job readiness training.

Goodwill will seek out training opportunities at libraries and area colleges, and utilize in-house training opportunities for forklift, OSHA 10, ServSafe and CPR to maximize skills and job readiness.

SCSEP operators plan to continue digital training and offering additional training and supportive services that will create stability at home and new skills that will lead to unsubsidized employment.

By increasing awareness of the program and value in older workers among these groups and providing participants with digital skills to be successful in today's workforce, Ohio SCSEP anticipates an increase in the number and quality of placements. Increasing the number of placements into quality community service assignments will ultimately lead to more entry into unsubsidized employment.

C. LOCATION AND POPULATION SERVED, INCLUDING EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION

1. A DESCRIPTION OF THE LOCALITIES AND POPULATIONS FOR WHICH PROJECTS OF THE TYPE AUTHORIZED BY TITLE V ARE MOST NEEDED. (20 CFR 641.325 (D))

Section 507 of the Older Americans Act requires the ODA to ensure that services are provided equitably. SCSEP uses Census data by county and annual program appropriations to calculate the number of authorized positions or slots that are allocated to each county. The number of authorized positions is proportional to the number of eligible people in the county compared to the eligible State population. For every authorized position, one or more individuals can receive services during the program year. For instance, when a participant exits the program for employment or when participants are on an approved break, a grantee may enroll a new individual based on remaining program funds.

Grantees will enroll participants who reside in the county in which they have authorized positions. Ensuring SCSEP positions are equitably distributed is an ongoing effort. If needed, movement of SCSEP slots between counties and grantees will occur in consultation with ODA, with the approval of the ODA SCSEP Program Administrator. ODA's SCSEP Program Administrator will work with all SCSEP operators to balance and rebalance as needed throughout the duration of this plan.

To reach SCSEP eligible individuals within the project areas in isolated geographic communities, such as those in the Appalachian region, SCSEP operators will increase collaborative efforts with regional stakeholders to obtain and retain host agencies, employers, transportation providers and other supportive services.

Ohio SCSEP operators have a long history of serving those eligible individuals who are most in need and therefore, most at-risk. Ohio SCSEP operators will continue to build upon relationships with organizations serving individuals with disabilities, the homeless, and other multi- challenged groups. ODA's SCSEP administrator will continue to work with State agencies and community partners who represent special populations to ensure those in need of services are aware of SCSEP and are actively recruited by SCSEP operators.

According to The Ohio Poverty Report, June 2020:

- 17.0 percent of the people in Appalachian Ohio, a band of 32 counties stretching across the eastern and southern regions of the state, were poor; the poverty rate for the rest of Ohio averaged 14.0 percent (five-year averages).
- Adams, Athens, Gallia, Meigs and Scioto had the highest poverty rates, ranging from 30.6 to 22.4 percent – all are Appalachian (five-year averages).
- 15.8 percent of the people in urban places (densely populated areas of 2,500 or more) were poor within metropolitan areas, 25.7 percent of those living in the central or principal cites were poor.

According to the Ohio Annual Economic Report 2021:

- 2.0% of men and 2.8% of women aged 55-64 are unemployed.
- 3.9% of men and 4.8% of women age 65+ are unemployed.
- The proportion of initial unemployment claims filed by those 65 and older increased from 5.2% in 2020 to 13.7% in 2021.

Despite a large increase in first time unemployment claims in 2021, unemployment in these age groups in Ohio is low and has declined since 2020.

2. LIST THE CITIES AND COUNTIES WHERE THE PROJECT WILL BE CONDUCTED. INCLUDE THE NUMBER OF SCSEP AUTHORIZED POSITIONS AND INDICATE WHERE THE POSITIONS CHANGED FROM THE PRIOR YEAR.

This chart depicts the distribution of Ohio counties, SCSEP operators, authorized positions and any change in position numbers from prior year as of October, 2023.

County	Operators	Authorized Positions	Change From Prior Year
Adams	State, Vantage	8	
Allen	NCOA	15	
Ashland	State	7	
Ashtabula	Vantage	22	
Athens	Goodwill	12	
Auglaize	NCOA	6	
Belmont	Goodwill	14	
Brown	State, Vantage	9	
Butler	Vantage	39	
Carroll	Goodwill	5	
Champaign	NCOA	5	

County	Operators	Authorized Positions	Change From Prior Year
Clark	State, Easterseals	21	
Clermont	Vantage	26	
Clinton	Vantage	6	
Columbiana	Goodwill	18	
Coshocton	Goodwill	7	
Crawford	Goodwill	8	
Cuyahoga	State, AARP, NCBA	256	
Darke	Easterseals	6	
Defiance	NCOA	4	
Delaware	AARP	10	
Erie	Goodwill	10	
Fairfield	State, Vantage	16	
Fayette	Vantage	5	
Franklin	State, AARP	156	
Fulton	NCOA	4	
Gallia	State	7	
Geauga	State	10	
Greene	AARP	18	
Guernsey	Goodwill	8	
Hamilton	Vantage	122	
Hancock	Goodwill	9	
Hardin	Goodwill	5	
Harrison	Goodwill	3	
Henry	NCOA	4	
Highland	State, Vantage	10	
Hocking	State, Vantage	6	+1
Holmes	State	5	

County	Operators	Authorized Positions	Change From Prior Year
Huron	Goodwill	7	
Jackson	State, Vantage	8	
Jefferson	Goodwill	14	
Knox	State	9	
Lake	State, Vantage	28	
Lawrence	State, Vantage	15	
Licking	State	20	
Logan	NCOA	7	
Lorain	Vantage	41	
Lucas	NCOA	77	
Madison	AARP	5	+1
Mahoning	Vantage	49	
Marion	Goodwill	10	
Medina	State, Vantage	15	
Meigs	State	6	
Mercer	NCOA	4	
Miami	Easterseals	14	
Monroe	Goodwill	3	
Montgomery	Easterseals	89	
Morgan	Goodwill	4	
Morrow	Goodwill	5	
Muskingum	Goodwill	17	
Noble	Goodwill	4	
Ottawa	Goodwill	6	
Paulding	NCOA	3	
Perry	Goodwill	8	
Pickaway	State	7	

County	Operators	Authorized Positions	Change From Prior Year
Pike	State	7	
Portage	State	18	
Preble	Easterseals	7	
Putnam	NCOA	3	
Richland	Goodwill	23	
Ross	State, Vantage	14	
Sandusky	Goodwill	10	
Scioto	State, Vantage	20	
Seneca	Goodwill	7	
Shelby	NCOA	5	
Stark	State, Vantage	59	+1
Summit	State, Vantage	83	
Trumbull	State, Vantage	39	
Tuscarawas	State	17	
Union	Goodwill	6	
Van Wert	NCOA	4	
Vinton	State	3	
Warren	AARP	15	
Washington	Goodwill	11	
Wayne	State	14	
Williams	NCOA	5	
Wood	Goodwill	14	
Wyandot	Goodwill	3	
TOTAL		1764	

3. DESCRIBE CURRENT SLOT IMBALANCES AND PROPOSED STEPS TO CORRECT INEQUITIES TO ACHIEVE EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION.

There are some counties in Ohio that are lagging behind in enrollment, and others that are overenrolled. Recruitment efforts will be focused on the counties that have slots available, and enrollment freezes and wait lists may be implemented in counties that are overenrolled until

space becomes available. There are also plans to focus on job development in overenrolled areas, to create opportunities for participants to move into unsubsidized employment. Program policies will be implemented to encourage job searching and movement into unsubsidized employment. SCSEP operators will prioritize host agency recruitment in all areas, to offer a variety of job training opportunities. Recruitment efforts that rely on traditional, non-digital methods will be employed, such as yard signs, transit advertising, tray liners at diners, newspaper and radio ads.

The Ohio Department of Aging will be exploring partnerships with the Area Agencies on Aging, local health departments and Workforce Development Boards statewide so they have a greater awareness of SCSEP and to further connections to local resources, and potential participants and host agencies.

Across the state, enrollments tend to be higher in areas where there is a physical SCSEP office located. It is not financially possible to have offices in all counties. Goodwill will host recruitment activities in areas where there is not a physical location, and they will rely on partnerships with the OMJ offices in those areas to get the word out about SCSEP.

4. THE STATE'S LONG-TERM STRATEGY FOR ACHIEVING AN EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF SCSEP POSITIONS WITHIN THE STATE THAT:

A. MOVES POSITIONS FROM OVER-SERVED TO UNDERSERVED LOCATIONS WITHIN THE STATE IN COMPLIANCE WITH 20 CFR 641.365.

Ohio's SCSEP operators will monitor equitable distribution and position distribution as assigned by DOL in each Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) and through each equitable distribution report. SCSEP operators will analyze enrollment trends over time and look for consistent over enrollment in some counties and consistent under enrollment in others. The SCSEP operator will attempt to diagnose the issue, by determining why this is happening and if it is related to recruitment, operator territory distribution, urban or rural populations, etc. Possible solutions may be new recruitment strategies, position swaps, territory redistribution, etc. If over or under enrollment appears to be a regular occurrence in a county, the SCSEP operator will consider if positions need to be reassigned. If a SCSEP operator determines that positions must be transferred from one geographic area to another, they must first notify the Ohio Department of Aging, as they are responsible for preparing the State Plan and equitable distribution reports. The Ohio Department of Aging will submit any proposed changes to the DOL for approval. Areas that are overserved will be instructed to restrict recruitment activities and there will be a focus on moving participants into unsubsidized employment to reduce participants through attrition. SCSEP operators will be instructed to turn attention to job development in overserved areas as well, to provide opportunities for participants to move into unsubsidized employment. SCSEP operators in underserved areas will be instructed to increase recruitment, and foster relationships with agencies that serve likely SCSEP participants. The State grantee will collaborate with the National grantees in counties where there is overlap to ensure slots are filled.

B. EQUITABLY SERVES RURAL AND URBAN AREAS.

Ohio's SCSEP operators operate in both urban and rural locations and have the experience necessary to serve all populations within their service area. Except for the National Black Caucus and Center on Black Aging (serving Cuyahoga County), all SCSEP operators serve both

urban and rural areas. Ohio SCSEP operators will use recruitment strategies that make the most sense for each specific community.

Easterseals has found that participants in rural areas often need more supportive services, especially related to transportation and therefore will be partnering with other community-based organizations and agencies in the rural areas to leverage resources and minimize transportation obstacles. NCOA plans to engage with local senior centers, Ohio Means Job centers and senior housing developments in their rural counties as a means of recruitment. Vantage Aging will have staff participants located in the rural counties, to assist with participant intake and represent SCSEP at local events. Vantage also will partner with Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities and Community Action Agencies that serve their rural counties. Goodwill has found that word of mouth is the most powerful recruitment tool in rural areas and will rely on their current participants and host agencies in rural areas to spread the word. Goodwill will also have a program manager in each of the rural counties that are served in order to have a more local presence. In Southeastern Ohio, Goodwill will continue their relationship with administrative agencies within small towns and villages. These agencies will serves as a referral source and as host agencies. They find that in-person recruitment efforts work the best in rural areas and will continue pursuing in-person opportunities. In the northwestern portion of Ohio, Goodwill will place SCSEP flyers in Goodwill store customer bags and will host a SCSEP informational table at a county fair and at various senior events.

While efforts are made to equitably serve both rural and urban areas in Ohio, SCSEP's recruitment of participants tends to be easier in urban counties like Franklin and Cuyahoga where the referral sources and training opportunities are plentiful, public transportation is available, and prospects for job opportunities are concentrated. Recruitment is also traditionally higher in counties where actual SCSEP physical offices are located, especially when SCSEP shares facilities with other social service organizations or Ohio Means Jobs (OMJ) Centers. Other recruitment activities include job fairs, meet & greets at senior centers, and recruiting through our prison training program.

The statewide population distribution of those living in urban vs rural areas is: 76% urban and 24% rural. According to the PY22 quarterly progress report, 26.55% of SCSEP participants reside in rural areas, which mirrors the overall distribution in Ohio.

C. SERVES INDIVIDUALS AFFORDED PRIORITY FOR SERVICE UNDER 20 CFR 641.520. (20 CFR 641.302(A), 641.365, 641.520)

Priority will be given to potential applicants who have one or more of the following characteristics:

- Are 65 years of age or older;
- Have a disability;
- Have limited English proficiency or low literacy skills;
- Reside in a rural area;
- Are veterans (or, in some cases, spouses of veterans)
- Have low employment prospects;

- Have failed to find employment after using services provided through the one-stop delivery system;
- Are homeless or are at risk for homelessness; or
- Are formerly incarcerated individuals

SCSEP operators will actively recruit individuals afforded priority service through outreach at OhioMeansJobs Centers and Local Workforce Development Boards. SCSEP will also maintain partnerships in their communities to continuously recruit job seekers that are priority and eligible for SCSEP including at Area Agencies on Aging.

Ohio SCSEP aims to enroll participants across the state according to the Modified Positions allowed through Equitable Distribution.

ODA SCSEP and Vantage Aging SCSEP have begun partnerships with Ohio Department of Rehabilitation to provide job training and work opportunities to people who are within 6-12 months of release. As part of this program, participants are placed at the OMJ onsite office and receive SCSEP wages that they can use upon release. Project Directors work with correctional facility staff to identify eligible individuals and provide a structured job training program. Project Directors work to find a community service assignment where participants can be placed upon release. This program will continue and hopefully expand. Goodwill has a similar partnership in Richland County with Citizens Circle, who provides resources to returning citizens in the county, they will continue this partnership. NCBA will also partner with re-entry programs.

Goodwill will also partner with agencies that serve people who meet our most in need criteria, such as Sight Center of Northwestern Ohio. NCBA will work with homeless shelters and veterans' agencies to recruit these individuals.

The NCOA SCSEP will conduct outreach and recruitment with local Veterans Affairs offices and seek out job training opportunities for those who may have physical limitations or disabilities. Easterseals will also work with Veterans Affairs offices, as well as Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities to attempt to serve those in the priority groups. Easterseals will also be working with other disability focused agencies, public assistance offices, and recovery houses to reach our priority populations. They will also be offering on the job employment, skills development programs and career advancement opportunities to help individuals succeed in their training.

No SCSEP operators in Ohio will be extending durational limits due to waiver factors.

5. THE RATIO OF ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS IN EACH SERVICE AREA TO THE TOTAL ELIGIBLE POPULATION IN THE STATE. (20 CFR 641.325(A))

All 88 counties in Ohio are served by SCSEP. The Ohio Department of Aging serves 30 counties. Six additional agencies serve the remaining 58 counties.

According to the 2022 American Community Survey 5-year estimates, there are 357,529 Ohioans age 55+ living below poverty level that are likely eligible for SCSEP. With 1,740 authorized positions, the State has approximately one position for every 205 eligible individuals, which is .49% of all potentially eligible candidates.

County	55+ below poverty level	SCSEP positions PY23	% of SCSEP positions to eligible population (55+ and income)
Ohio	357,529	1,740	0.49%
Adams	1,396	8	0.57%
Allen	2,758	8	0.29%
Ashland	1,407	8	0.57%
Ashtabula	4,224	8	0.19%
Athens	2,346	8	0.34%
Auglaize	961	6	0.62%
Belmont	2,227	14	0.63%
Brown	1,612	9	0.56%
Butler	8,407	39	0.46%
Carroll	815	5	0.61%
Champaign	909	5	0.55%
Clark	4,952	21	0.42%
Clermont	5,262	26	0.49%
Clinton	1,409	6	0.43%
Columbiana	3,806	18	0.47%
Coshocton	1,342	7	0.52%
Crawford	1,322	8	0.61%
Cuyahoga	52,935	256	0.48%
Darke	1,714	6	0.35%
Defiance	819	4	0.49%
Delaware	2,544	10	0.39%
Erie	2,587	10	0.39%
Fairfield	3,436	16	0.47%
Fayette	1,014	5	0.49%
Franklin	31,827	156	0.49%

County	55+ below poverty level	SCSEP positions PY23	% of SCSEP positions to eligible population (55+ and income)
Fulton	1,014	4	0.39%
Gallia	1,131	7	0.62%
Geauga	2,071	10	0.48%
Greene	3,766	18	0.48%
Guernsey	1,533	8	0.52%
Hamilton	23,661	122	0.52%
Hancock	1,754	9	0.51%
Hardin	966	5	0.52%
Harrison	675	3	0.44%
Henry	484	4	0.83%
Highland	1,999	10	0.50%
Hocking	1,216	6	0.49%
Holmes	905	5	0.55%
Huron	1,906	7	0.37%
Jackson	1,418	8	0.56%
Jefferson	2,779	14	0.50%
Knox	1,772	9	0.51%
Lake	5,727	28	0.49%
Lawrence	3,136	15	0.48%
Licking	4,437	20	0.45%
Logan	1,281	7	0.55%
Lorain	10,617	41	0.39%
Lucas	15,891	77	0.48%
Madison	959	5	0.52%
Mahoning	9,805	49	0.50%
Marion	2,261	10	0.44%
Medina	3,404	15	0.44%

County	55+ below poverty level	SCSEP positions PY23	% of SCSEP positions to eligible population (55+ and income)
Meigs	1,331	6	0.45%
Mercer	646	4	0.62%
Miami	2,465	14	0.57%
Monroe	698	3	0.43%
Montgomery	17,586	89	0.51%
Morgan	654	4	0.61%
Morrow	1,002	5	0.50%
Muskingum	3,122	17	0.54%
Noble	833	4	0.48%
Ottawa	1,281	6	0.47%
Paulding	415	3	0.72%
Perry	1,401	8	0.57%
Pickaway	1,542	7	0.45%
Pike	1,569	7	0.45%
Portage	3,611	18	0.50%
Preble	1,080	7	0.65%
Putnam	793	3	0.38%
Richland	4,288	23	0.54%
Ross	2,670	14	0.52%
Sandusky	1,791	10	0.56%
Scioto	4,084	20	0.49%
Seneca	1,289	7	0.54%
Shelby	1,171	5	0.43%
Stark	10,847	59	0.54%
Summit	16,003	83	0.52%
Trumbull	8,212	39	0.47%
Tuscarawas	3,029	17	0.56%

County	55+ below poverty level	SCSEP positions PY23	% of SCSEP positions to eligible population (55+ and income)
Union	833	6	0.72%
Van Wert	555	4	0.72%
Vinton	620	3	0.48%
Warren	3,500	15	0.43%
Washington	2,467	11	0.45%
Wayne	2,892	14	0.48%
Williams	1,029	5	0.49%
Wood	2,929	14	0.48%
Wyandot	692	3	0.43%

6. THE RELATIVE DISTRIBUTION OF ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WHO:

A. RESIDE IN URBAN AND RURAL AREAS WITHIN THE STATE

The statewide population distribution of those living in urban vs rural areas is: 76% urban and 24% rural.

According to the final PY22 quarterly progress report, 26.55% of SCSEP participants reside in rural areas, which mirrors the overall distribution in Ohio. Ohio's SCSEP operators have the experience necessary to serve all populations within their service area.

Except for the National Black Caucus and Center on Black Aging (serving Cuyahoga County), all SCSEP operators serve both urban and rural areas and use recruitment strategies that make the most sense for each specific community.

While a large portion of Ohio is considered rural, most of the Ohio population resides in urban areas, where there is more access to employment, housing and transportation.

B. HAVE THE GREATEST ECONOMIC NEED

According to the 2022 American Community Survey 1-year estimates, there are 389,245 Ohioans age 55+ living below poverty level that are likely eligible for SCSEP.

Per the PY22 quarterly progress report, 71.2% of Ohio SCSEP participants had a family income at or below poverty level. SCSEP providers will form their recruitment strategies to engage older adults with the greatest social and economic need, and work to identify barriers to access by utilizing a variety of recruitment tools that include digital outreach, traditional print media, and word of mouth through partnerships with local community-based organizations. Other recruitment strategies will include ads in church bulletins, presence at job fairs, and radio ads and interviews.

C. ARE MINORITIES

Utilizing the SCSEP Analysis of Service to Minority Individuals PY2021 Report, overall, Ohio's SCSEP percent minority in PY2021 was 55.2 percent, with the census percent minority of 15.7 percent. When reviewing specific minority groups, there exists opportunity to engage and enroll more Asian participants into Ohio SCSEP.

ODA and partners will work to connect and strengthen relationships with Asian communities and their community-based organizations. This will require increasing the visibility of SCSEP through targeted recruitment strategies that more effectively reach this population. Ohio has several organizations that serve and represent our Asian community, and we are eager to collaborate with them.

Ohio SCSEP providers will implement strategies to ensure service to all older Ohioans, including minority populations. Should gaps be identified, ODA and state partners can share resources and establish partnerships to better reach underserved populations.

D. ARE LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT

According to the 2022 American Community Survey 5-year estimates, less than 1/10 of a percent of the Ohio population is limited English speaking. Most counties in Ohio have very low numbers of people that are limited English speaking. The top 10 counties in Ohio that have the highest concentrations of people with limited English proficiency are:

County	Population	Population 5 years and older living in limited English-speaking homes	% of total Ohio population living in limited English-speaking homes by county
OHIO	**11,780,000**	**149,081**	**0.00%**
Lake		3,279	0.03%
Lorain		3,323	0.03%
Wayne		3,728	0.03%
Holmes		3,875	0.03%
Montgomery		6,451	0.05%
Summit		8,035	0.07%
Butler		10,703	0.09%
Hamilton		11,042	0.09%
Cuyahoga		28,192	0.24%
Franklin		36,154	0.31%

The major metropolitan areas in Ohio have the largest numbers and percentages of those living in limited English-speaking homes. The other counties rounding out the top ten surround major metropolitan areas, with the exception of Holmes and Wayne counties. Those counties house large populations of Amish, who often do not speak English, but who also tend to resist participating in government funded programming.

To engage people whose first language is Spanish, a Project Director that is bi-lingual, with their first language being Spanish, was recently hired. Partnerships will be made within the Asian community as well, to allow for interpretation services.

Individuals with limited English proficiency are most often located in specific regions and neighborhoods in the State. SCSEP operators will identify networking groups, non-profit organizations and social service agencies to identify the best points of contact. NCOA will be developing materials in multiple languages for distribution in their service area, and they connect those already in the program with English as a Second Language classes at Water for Ishmael. Easterseals will circulate referral collateral in multiple languages and will collaborate with local community centers and immigrant support organizations. Easterseals staff will have language assistance during the application and interview process. NCBA will attend local cultural heritage events to promote SCSEP.

Goodwill will increase recruitment efforts in counties with higher ethnic populations. They will also work with the Ohio ASPIRE program providers in their counties for recruitment, education and referral opportunities.

For PY22 in the 30 counties that are part of the ODA SCSEP grant, two participants had limited English proficiency. This is less than 1% of participants for that program year, which mirrors the overall population in Ohio.

E. HAVE THE GREATEST SOCIAL NEED. (20 CFR 641.325(B))

For PY22, in the 30 counties that are part of the ODA SCSEP grant, 273 participants were receiving public assistance. This is 81% of program participants for that program year. This percentage had been increasing due to the expansion of assistance programs in the COVID era. However, according to the 2022 ACS 5-year estimates, unemployment rates in Ohio are low, especially in the 55+ age group with only 1.2% unemployed. About 9% of those 55 and older are living below the poverty level.

County	Ohio population	Population 55+	55+ - Unemployed	55+ below poverty level
Ohio	11,780,000	3,665,506	46,899	357,529
Adams		8,979	58	1,396
Allen		32,447	307	2,758
Ashland		17,487	230	1,407
Ashtabula		33,375	505	4,224
Athens		15,958	247	2,346

County	Ohio population	Population 55+	55+ - Unemployed	55+ below poverty level
Auglaize		15,193	127	961
Belmont		24,125	200	2,227
Brown		14,584	96	1,612
Butler		109,745	1,812	8,407
Carroll		10,130	44	815
Champaign		12,880	54	909
Clark		45,745	507	4,952
Clermont		66,166	1,030	5,262
Clinton		13,404	111	1,409
Columbiana		36,958	566	3,806
Coshocton		12,338	77	1,342
Crawford		14,481	49	1,322
Cuyahoga		410,764	7,027	52,935
Darke		17,610	128	1,714
Defiance		12,460	66	819
Delaware		57,164	543	2,544
Erie		28,398	470	2,587
Fairfield		46,750	280	3,436
Fayette		9,054	80	1,014
Franklin		312,576	4,716	31,827
Fulton		14,054	78	1,014
Gallia		9,781	26	1,131
Geauga		34,922	465	2,071
Greene		52,463	352	3,766
Guernsey		13,239	251	1,533
Hamilton		239,613	3,760	23,661
Hancock		23,480	171	1,754

County	Ohio population	Population 55+	55+ - Unemployed	55+ below poverty level
Hardin		8,684	15	966
Harrison		5,695	2	675
Henry		9,126	49	484
Highland		14,049	157	1,999
Hocking		9,702	119	1,216
Holmes		11,082	76	905
Huron		18,517	242	1,906
Jackson		10,158	70	1,418
Jefferson		24,148	245	2,779
Knox		20,124	206	1,772
Lake		83,539	1,257	5,727
Lawrence		19,041	116	3,136
Licking		54,915	439	4,437
Logan		15,422	159	1,281
Lorain		103,776	1,337	10,617
Lucas		129,467	2,257	15,891
Madison		13,018	112	959
Mahoning		82,813	1,047	9,805
Marion		20,758	196	2,261
Medina		60,859	685	3,404
Meigs		7,785	55	1,331
Mercer		13,719	56	646
Miami		35,563	312	2,465
Monroe		5,112	101	698
Montgomery		168,725	2,424	17,586
Morgan		5,158	71	654
Morrow		11,738	47	1,002

County	Ohio population	Population 55+	55+ - Unemployed	55+ below poverty level
Muskingum		27,358	189	3,122
Noble		6,734	67	833
Ottawa		17,404	144	1,281
Paulding		6,312	13	415
Perry		11,192	187	1,401
Pickaway		17,074	168	1,542
Pike		8,782	30	1,569
Portage		50,565	935	3,611
Preble		14,022	79	1,080
Putnam		11,121	39	793
Richland		41,268	424	4,288
Ross		24,107	135	2,670
Sandusky		19,996	220	1,791
Scioto		23,596	185	4,084
Seneca		17,831	81	1,289
Shelby		14,962	90	1,171
Stark		127,362	1,485	10,847
Summit		177,238	2,383	16,003
Trumbull		73,775	755	8,212
Tuscarawas		31,377	305	3,029
Union		16,171	166	833
Van Wert		9,555	154	555
Vinton		4,404	0	620
Warren		68,900	1,238	3,500
Washington		21,765	237	2,467
Wayne		36,902	259	2,892
Williams		12,615	135	1,029

County	Ohio population	Population 55+	55+ - Unemployed	55+ below poverty level
Wood		36,672	471	2,929
Wyandot		7,430	40	692

Ohio's area agencies on aging (AAAs) will serve as a resource for Ohio's SCSEP operators, referring clients that have both an economic and social need for SCSEP. The 12 AAAs across the State have current partnerships that align with the goals of SCSEP. The Areas Agencies on Aging, Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities, OhioMeansJobs centers and others who serve individuals with social needs will continue to serve as referral sources for the SCSEP program.

Easterseals will utilize census data to better understand population demographics, income and educational levels and socioeconomic status and plan recruitment efforts accordingly. They will also utilize tools within their participant database, Salesforce, that will provide customized supports and referrals based on participant geographical locations.

The ODA SCSEP and Vantage Aging have a unique program structure that includes employing Supportive Service Navigators. These Navigators will match current participants with supportive services that may ease barriers to employment. The Navigator program will also be used as a recruitment tool for the program.

Goodwill will partner with local organization, Catalyst, which works with individuals with physical, mental and emotional disabilities as well as with people in addiction recovery. Goodwill will also partner with the Zanesville Welfare Organization, Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities and County Boards of Developmental Disabilities for recruitment referrals and supportive service referrals. They will increase recruitment efforts in counties with higher minority populations and work with minority focused organization such as the Athens Chinese Cultural Center. In northwestern Ohio, Goodwill provides supportive services such as computer training and equipment for those with visual needs.

NCBA will offer a monthly health and wellness webinar with a wide range of topics, including support in dealing with disabilities, mental health and behavioral health. While these will be offered online, they will also host in-person viewing events to address social isolation. NCBA will also refer participants to supportive services partners that host educational opportunities that focus on independent living with disabilities.

F. FORMERLY INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS, AS DEFINED IN TEGL 17-20

The 2020 reauthorization of OAA included individuals who have been incarcerated within the last five years or are under supervision following release from prison or jail within the last five years as a new priority population for SCSEP enrollment.

Vantage Aging will strengthen partnerships with correctional facilities in Ohio to provide job training and work opportunities to people who are within 6-12 months of release. As part of this program, participants will receive SCSEP wages that they can use upon release. Project Directors will work with correctional facility staff to identify eligible individuals and provide a structured job training program. Participants will use these skills to find additional job training opportunities or employment upon release. This program will continue, and Vantage Aging is looking to expand it.

For PY22, in the 30 counties that are part of the ODA SCSEP grant, one participant was formerly incarcerated, which is less than 1% of SCSEP enrollees for that program year. This number is anticipated to increase as the relationship with correctional facilities is nurtured and expanded.

7. A DESCRIPTION OF THE STEPS TAKEN TO AVOID DISRUPTIONS TO THE GREATEST EXTENT POSSIBLE, WHEN POSITIONS ARE REDISTRIBUTED, AS PROVIDED IN 20 CFR 641.365; WHEN NEW CENSUS OR OTHER RELIABLE DATA BECOME AVAILABLE; OR WHEN THERE IS OVER-ENROLLMENT FOR ANY OTHER REASON. (20 CFR 641.325(I), 641.302(B))

Participants will not be terminated due to redistribution. If positions must be redistributed, the first step taken is to encourage those currently enrolled in the program to seek unsubsidized employment before their slot is moved to the new location. Otherwise, those participants will continue to be served until they exit the program and slots will be redistributed through attrition. In those areas with over-enrollment, recruitment activities would be ceased, and a waitlist would be implemented.

Ohio employs various recruitment strategies across the state and will continue to do so when slots are redistributed and when openings are available.

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR APPENDIX

ALL WIOA CORE PROGRAMS

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

ADULT, DISLOCATED WORKER, AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES - ADULT PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as “baseline” indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A “baseline” indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, “baseline” indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as

"baseline" based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as "baseline" for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as "baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA." The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as "baseline" for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as "baseline" for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as "baseline." Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state's plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	76.5%		76.5%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	74.0%		74.0%	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	$7,200.00		$7,200.00	
Credential Attainment Rate	71.0%		71.0%	
Measurable Skill Gains	65.0%		65.0%	
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]

1

The Departments have not issued the final rule defining Effectiveness in Serving Employers. As a result, states will not submit expected levels of performance for this indicator and the Departments will not establish negotiated levels of performance for PYs 2024 and 2025.

ADULT, DISLOCATED WORKER, AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES - DISLOCATED PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as "baseline" indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A "baseline" indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, "baseline" indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as "baseline" based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as "baseline" for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as "baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA." The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as "baseline" for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as "baseline" for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as "baseline." Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state's plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	76.5%		76.5%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	77.0%		77.0%	

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	$9,000.00		$9,000.00	
Credential Attainment Rate	74.0%		74.0%	
Measurable Skill Gains	64.0%		64.0%	
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]

1

The Departments have not issued the final rule defining Effectiveness in Serving Employers. As a result, states will not submit expected levels of performance for this indicator and the Departments will not establish negotiated levels of performance for PYs 2024 and 2025.

ADULT, DISLOCATED WORKER, AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES - YOUTH PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as “baseline” indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A “baseline” indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, “baseline” indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as “baseline” based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);

- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as "baseline" for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as "baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA." The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as "baseline" for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as "baseline" for the VR

program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as "baseline." Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state's plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	70.0%		70.0%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	69.0%		69.0%	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	$3,300.00		$3,300.00	
Credential Attainment Rate	50.0%		50.0%	
Measurable Skill Gains	50.0%		50.0%	
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]

1

The Departments have not issued the final rule defining Effectiveness in Serving Employers. As a result, states will not submit expected levels of performance for this indicator and the Departments will not establish negotiated levels of performance for PYs 2024 and 2025.

WAGNER-PEYSER ACT - WAGNER PEYSER PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as "baseline"

indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A "baseline" indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, "baseline" indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as "baseline" based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as "baseline" for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as "baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA." The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as "baseline" for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as "baseline" for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as "baseline." Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state's plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	70.0%		70.0%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	69.0%		69.0%	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	$8,000.00		$8,000.00	
Credential Attainment Rate	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Measurable Skill Gains	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]

1

The Departments have not issued the final rule defining Effectiveness in Serving Employers. As a result, states will not submit expected levels of performance for this indicator and the Departments will not establish negotiated levels of performance for PYs 2024 and 2025.

ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAM - ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as "baseline" indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A "baseline" indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, "baseline" indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as "baseline" based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as "baseline" for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as "baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA." The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as "baseline" for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as "baseline" for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as "baseline." Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state's plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	44.0%	44.0%	44.1%	44.1%

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	44.0%	47.0%	44.1%	48.0%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	$5,000.00	$6,150.00	$5,001.00	$6,250.00
Credential Attainment Rate	21.2%	21.2%	21.3%	21.3%
Measurable Skill Gains	44.5%	46.0%	44.6%	46.5%
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]

1

The Departments have not issued the final rule defining Effectiveness in Serving Employers. As a result, states will not submit expected levels of performance for this indicator and the Departments will not establish negotiated levels of performance for PYs 2024 and 2025.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM (COMBINED OR GENERAL) - VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Each State VR program must submit expected levels of performance in its Unified or Combined State Plan and in the two-year modification of that plan. Expected levels of performance for the first two years of a state plan must be submitted in the initial submission of the Unified or Combined State Plan and in the initial submission of the two-year modification of that Plan, for years three and four, as described in 34 CFR § 361.170(a). Expected levels of performance must be stated to the nearest tenth of a percent (XX.X %) or to the nearest whole dollar for median earnings. State VR programs are reminded that the expected levels of performance must be published for public comment prior to plan submission in accordance with state law, regulation, and policy.

After the Unified or Combined State Plan submission, each State VR program must reach agreement with RSA on the negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the Unified or Combined State Plan (or for the third and fourth years of the Unified or Combined State Plan during the required two-year modification process) in accordance with WIOA section 116(b)(3)(A)(iv).

RSA will use its statistical adjustment model to derive pre-program year estimated levels of performance for each indicator. Each State VR program and RSA will consider the negotiation factors outlined in WIOA section 116(b)(3)(A)(v) during the negotiation process. Once negotiated levels of performance are agreed upon, each State VR program must incorporate the negotiated levels of performance into the Unified or Combined State Plan and the two-year modification of that plan prior to the plan's approval (section 116(b)(3)(A)(iv) of WIOA).

Effectiveness in Serving Employers

In the final rule implementing WIOA, the Departments indicated that they would initially implement this indicator in the form of a pilot to test the feasibility and rigor of three proposed approaches. During Program Year (PY) 2022, the Departments initiated the rulemaking process to establish a standard definition of Effectiveness in Serving Employers. States will continue to report two of three proposed approaches until the Departments issue the final rule and implement the indicator.

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	63.0%	63.0%	63.5%	63.5%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	60.9%	60.9%	61.4%	61.4%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	$3,600	$3,600	$3,700	$3,700
Credential Attainment Rate	50.1%	50.1%	50.6%	50.6%
Measurable Skill Gains	68.5%	68.5%	68.9%	68.9%
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]

1

The Departments have not issued the final rule defining Effectiveness in Serving Employers. As a result, states will not submit expected levels of performance for this indicator and the Departments will not establish negotiated levels of performance for PYs 2024 and 2025.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM (BLIND) - VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Each State VR program must submit expected levels of performance in its Unified or Combined State Plan and in the two-year modification of that plan. Expected levels of performance for the first two years of a state plan must be submitted in the initial submission of the Unified or Combined State Plan and in the initial submission of the two-year modification of that Plan, for years three and four, as described in 34 CFR § 361.170(a). Expected levels of performance must be stated to the nearest tenth of a percent (XX.X %) or to the nearest whole dollar for median earnings. State VR programs are reminded that the expected levels of performance must be published for public comment prior to plan submission in accordance with state law, regulation, and policy.

After the Unified or Combined State Plan submission, each State VR program must reach agreement with RSA on the negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the Unified or Combined State Plan (or for the third and fourth years of the Unified or Combined State Plan during the required two-year modification process) in accordance with WIOA section 116(b)(3)(A)(iv).

RSA will use its statistical adjustment model to derive pre-program year estimated levels of performance for each indicator. Each State VR program and RSA will consider the negotiation factors outlined in WIOA section 116(b)(3)(A)(v) during the negotiation process. Once negotiated levels of performance are agreed upon, each State VR program must incorporate the negotiated levels of performance into the Unified or Combined State Plan and the two-year modification of that plan prior to the plan's approval (section 116(b)(3)(A)(iv) of WIOA).

Effectiveness in Serving Employers

In the final rule implementing WIOA, the Departments indicated that they would initially implement this indicator in the form of a pilot to test the feasibility and rigor of three proposed approaches. During Program Year (PY) 2022, the Departments initiated the rulemaking process to establish a standard definition of Effectiveness in Serving Employers. States will continue to report two of three proposed approaches until the Departments issue the final rule and implement the indicator.

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)				
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)				
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)				
Credential Attainment Rate				
Measurable Skill Gains				
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]

1

The Departments have not issued the final rule defining Effectiveness in Serving Employers. As a result, states will not submit expected levels of performance for this indicator and the Departments will not establish negotiated levels of performance for PYs 2024 and 2025.

ADDITIONAL INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Appendix 1: Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

Include the state's expected levels of performance relating to the performance accountability indicators based on primary indicators of performance described in section 116(b)(2)(A) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

	Title I – Adult Program			
	Program Year: 2024		Program Year: 2025	
	Expected Level	Negotiated Level	Expected Level	Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	76.5%		76.5%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	74.0%		74.0%	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)	$7,200.00		$7,200.00	
Credential Attainment Rate	71.0%		71.0%	
Measurable Skill Gains	65.0%		65.0%	

	Title I – Dislocated Worker Program			
	Program Year: 2024		Program Year: 2025	
	Expected Level	Negotiated Level	Expected Level	Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	76.5%		76.5%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	77.0%		77.0%	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)	$9,000.00		$9,000.00	
Credential Attainment Rate	74.0%		74.0%	
Measurable Skill Gains	64.0%		64.0%	

	Title I – Youth Program			
	Program Year: 2024		Program Year: 2025	
	Expected Level	Negotiated Level	Expected Level	Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit) [9]	70.0%		70.0%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)[10]	69.0%		69.0%	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)	$3,300.00		$3,300.00	
Credential Attainment Rate	50.0%		50.0%	
Measurable Skill Gains	50.0%		50.0%	

[9] For Title I Youth programs, employment, education or training.
[10] For Title I Youth programs, employment, education or training.

	CCMEP Youth			
	Program Year: 2024		Program Year: 2025	
	Expected Level	Negotiated Level	Expected Level	Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	71.0%		71.0%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	70.0%		70.0%	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)	$3,300.00		$3,300.00	
Credential Attainment Rate	50.0%		50.0%	
Measurable Skill Gains	50.0%		50.0%	

	Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service Program			
	Program Year: 2024		Program Year: 2025	
	Expected Level	Negotiated Level	Expected Level	Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	70.0%		70.0%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	69.0%		69.0%	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)	$8,000.00		$8,000.00	
Credential Attainment Rate	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Measurable Skill Gains	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

	Vocational Rehabilitation Program			
	Program Year: 2024		Program Year: 2025	
	Expected Level	Negotiated Level	Expected Level	Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit) [22]	63.0%		63.5%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit) [22]	60.9%		61.4%	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit [11]	$3,600		$3,700	
Credential Attainment Rate	50.1%		50.6%	
Measurable Skill Gains	68.5%		68.9%	

All WIOA Core Programs Effectiveness in Serving Employers	PY 24 Expected Level	PY 24 Negotiated Level	PY 25 Expected Level	PY 25 Negotiated Level

Additional Indicators of Performance
1.
2.
3.
4.

OTHER APPENDICES

- A.1 Local Application
- A.2 Local Needs Assessment Guidebook
- A.3 Local Needs Assessment Workbook
- A.4 Equity Lab Workbook
- A.5 Perkins Work-Base Learning
- A.6A Public Comment
- A.6B Public Comment
- A.7 Performance Index